

campaign '80

Bush and Reagan to debate

Both Ronald Reagan and George Bush have agreed to a one-on-one, "front-runner" debate in New Hampshire three days before the Feb. 26 primary.

Bush had agreed more than a week ago to participate in the event which will be sponsored by the Nashua Telegraph. His New Hampshire chairman, former Gov. Hugh Gregg, said by telephone from Lebanon, N.H., that "we're delighted and we'll be ready."

The joy was not universal, however.

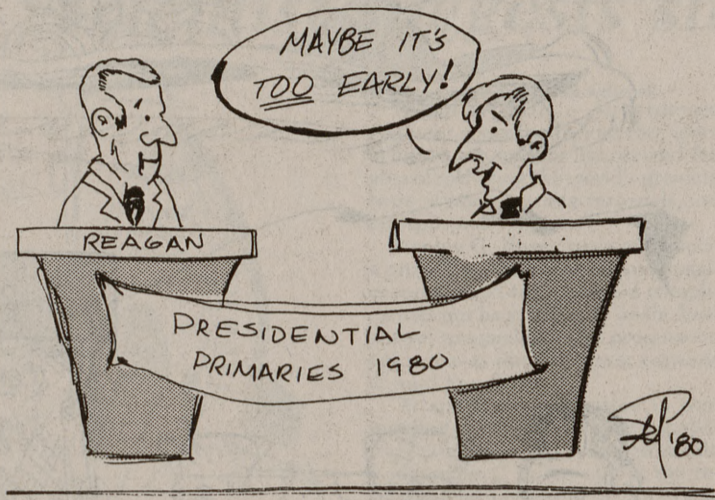
Former Gov. Walter Peterson, who is backing Senate GOP leader Howard Baker, has been anything but delighted with the idea and complained it is too early to narrow the Republican field to two candidates.

Bush and Reagan also have agreed to take part in the League of Women Voters' presidential forum Wednesday in Manchester, when five other GOP candidates also will participate.

One of the five, Sen. Robert Dole decided Tuesday against entering the presidential primary in Kansas, his home state. He passed up the filing deadline for getting his name on the ballot, but his aides insist he is not withdrawing from the campaign.

Dole, who was Gerald Ford's vice-presidential running mate in 1976, has fallen from a high of about 7 percent to around 2 percent in most GOP presidential polls.

He said in a statement: "My Senate duties continue to be my first priority. I am confident that the people of Kansas and the rest of the na-



tion will support a candidate who places his job above politics."

Dole also issued a statement Wednesday urging all voters in Sunday's Puerto Rican GOP primary to support Baker. Dole explained that although his name will appear on the ballot, his campaign plans "have not encompassed an active effort in this primary."

"He is a proven leader in the Congress and the nation," Dole said of Baker. "He is a man of his word who delivers what he promises. I urge all Puerto Rican voters to support Howard Baker."

Dole's Senate seat is at stake this year, but the filing deadline for that race is not until June 20, so he has time to continue his presidential

quest for several months before he must choose between the two.

He said if he does well in primaries between now and April 1 and he remains in the Republican race, he is confident his absence from the Kansas ballot would not prevent his nomination.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, meanwhile, in a speech at the John F. Kennedy center at Harvard University, made his harshest speech yet about President Carter, accusing him of posturing as "the high priest of patriotism," and warning that previous presidents "have discovered to their regret that hiding in the bushes only left them impaled on the thorns of Rose Garden strategy."

United Press International
ORLANDO, Fla. — Republican presidential hopeful John Connally said Tuesday he'd give the Democrats the White House for the next 16 years — if the Republicans can control Congress.

He complained the Democrat-controlled Congress has all the power to "legislate, create and appropriate — all the president can do is articulate. If I could do it, I'd give them the White House for the next 16 years, if they'd give us the Congress."

Connally, speaking at a GOP fundraiser, also blamed Congress for the country's weakened military capabilities, deterioration of the dollar and the lack of an energy policy.

The former Texas governor said, despite Sen. Edward Kennedy's poor start, Kennedy should not be counted out of the Democratic race. And he predicted an eventual end to President Carter's campaign strategy of not campaigning.

"Look, one of these days, the hostages are going to be out of Tehran and the president is going to have to

come home and talk about jobs, talk about the rate of inflation. His fortunes could turn around just as fast they went up," Connally said.

Reminded his Florida support is waning, Connally said, "You have ups and downs in the political arena, and I think as soon as the campaign starts up again in Florida, why, we will be right back where we were."

Connally said he still plans to devote substantial time and money to winning Florida's March 11 primary. He said, however, that his campaign will not die if he loses any one

of the Southern primaries.

"We hype everything up, as if each state was the crucial, critical state you have to carry," he said. "As a matter of fact, I think the person who gets nominated might not carry any state — might run second or third all during the campaign," Connally said.

"That might well be the best position to be in when you get to Detroit (site of the GOP National Convention)," he said. "So when you ask me, 'Do I have to carry it?' Certainly not."

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Kennedy offers hostage proposal

United Press International
NASHUA, N.H. — Sen. Edward Kennedy Wednesday suggested that the U.S. hostages in Iran could be released to a third country prior to the proposed U.N. investigation of the deposed shah.

Campaigning for votes in the Feb. 26 New Hampshire Democratic presidential primary, Kennedy told reporters that the hostages could be released to the United States once any commission begins its investigation.

"I think the most important proposal would be the establishment of a commission made up of distinguished men and women that had a widely accepted reputation of con-

cern for human rights and liberties," the Massachusetts Democrat said.

"Once the investigators began their deliberations" the hostages could be "returned to the United States," he said.

Aides to the senator said Kennedy explained the third country proposal in a Senate floor speech last week.

However, Kennedy said he did not have a particular third country in mind.

"There are many countries in the world that I am sure would be willing to offer their good offices for such a function," he said. "I have no specific one in mind, but I don't think it would be difficult to find."

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