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# World/Nation

## Bush's personnel chief interacted with Reagan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Even before George Bush was elected president, his personnel chief was closeted with President Reagan's, going over hundreds of sheets of paper that will help shape the staffing of the new administration.

It was part of a project initiated by the Office of Presidential Personnel designed in part to provide the incoming president with an unprecedented amount of information about the nature and requirements of the jobs he must fill.

Bradley H. Patterson, a White House staffer in three past Republican administrations, discussed the project in his new book, "Ring of Power," saying, "Such interpresidential foresightedness shows the modern White House at its best."

"A catalogue of all the full-time and part-time presidentially appointed jobs in the Executive Branch — their titles, terms, pay levels, and in brief their current duties — is being saved for the recruiters who, serving the next president, will occupy the Presidential Personnel Office chairs," Patterson said.

"The catalogues may even be available to the candidates following the conventions," he wrote.

It didn't turn out quite that way, though. Although Bush's people were poring over the documents before Nov. 8, aides to Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis never even got a peek. However, many allegations concerning Dukakis have been circulating before, during and after the election.

"We never heard from the Dukakis people," Robert H. Tuttle, director of presidential personnel, said in an interview. "They never called." He conceded he didn't call them, either, but said: "They knew where I was. They knew my number."

He said the information was shared with the Bush staff "in anticipation of Bush's victory."

Tuttle said he met with Chase Untermeyer, Bush's transition personnel director, "just about the time of the election — I think we did some before and some after."

Untermeyer, briefing reporters Wednesday, said, "The people whom we are hiring right now to go

to work on ... recommending the jobs to be filled on behalf of the president-elect have as much material preparation as has ever been the case before."

"One of the resources available to me that, frankly, wasn't available to my counterpart on the Dukakis campaign, was being able to spend 12 different sessions in the White House with Bob Tuttle and his people, going over just what is the current presidential personnel system," Untermeyer said.

Too often in the past, said Untermeyer, the system used was one known by the acronym BOGSAT, which he said stands for "bunch of guys sitting around a table" among other synonyms.

Tuttle said there are 551 Executive Branch positions, not counting 135 ambassadors, filled by presidential appointment subject to Senate confirmation.

"We went through each one in detail with my associate director and so we probably spent 20 or 30 hours with Chase Untermeyer going through these," he said.

## Many nursing homes fail to meet standards

WASHINGTON (AP) — A fourth of Texas nursing homes failed to administer drugs properly and one-fifth did not meet sanitary standards for food, according to the federal government's first consumer guide to nursing homes.

Yet in almost all of the 32 health, safety and care standards surveyed, the performance of Texas nursing homes was equal to or better than nursing homes nationally, according to ratings released Thursday by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Three cases of either physical or mental abuse were found, however.

The agency's Health Care Financing Administration examined some 1,047 skilled and intermediate care nursing homes in Texas qualified to receive federal or state funds through Medicare or Medicaid.

HCFA chief Dr. William L. Roper said the "met-unmet" criteria for each of the 32 categories included in state-by-state reports contains no measure of severity and represented a one-time "snapshot" of conditions at the nursing home's most recent unannounced inspection. To some degree, he said, it relied on the subjective judgment of the inspector.

"It would be a big mistake for anyone to try to choose a nursing home out of this guide. Anyone would be bet-

ter off using common sense," said Sara Speights, a spokesman for the state's largest nursing home association, the Texas Health Care Association.

One criticism of the four volume, 3,400-page report on Texas nursing homes is that it is based on only 32 criteria out of the more than 500 requirements that nursing homes must meet, she said, and "this isn't going to tell anybody about a nursing home or the quality of care given in a nursing home."

"You have to go visit, see how the patients are cared for, visit with patients' family members, sit down and eat a meal, and see how the patients and staff interact," Speights said.

Roper also cautioned against reading more into the figures than is warranted. "This is not the ultimate report card for nursing homes around the country."

John Willis, state ombudsman and director of the advocacy department at the Texas Department on Aging, said the study, while only a snapshot, still shows there is room for improvement in the state's nursing homes.

Part of the problem, he said, is the state's low daily reimbursement rate for Medicaid patients. The state ranks 47th nationally in what it reimburses nursing homes, giving them \$47.17 a day for skilled care patients and \$34.64 for intermediate care patients on Medicaid.

## Socialists, capitalists try new trends for economy

NEW YORK (AP) — In socialist and capitalist societies alike, the motive is the same — to increase economic values by a greater reliance on private initiative. It is a worldwide trend.

Their economies bogged down by bureaucratic obstacle courses, socialist nations are allowing — and relying on — a much greater degree of private sector initiative in the form of profit-seeking businesses.

And for reasons roughly similar, countries more inclined toward capitalism than socialism are seeking ways to privatize, or turn over to the private sector a variety of governmental activities.

In each instance the goal is to stimulate economies, raise revenues and clear away bottlenecks through reliance on individual initiative in the belief that society is best served when goals are clear and achievement is rewarded.

Though action is stalled for the time being, the privatization effort in the United States is building support because of one of the country's most persistent failures, the inability to live within the constraints of budgets.

Government is seen as wasteful, cumbersome and unable to extricate itself from its problems, especially debt. Wouldn't it be better, say the advocates of privatization, to let the private sector handle some of the problems?

It is hardly an American phenomenon, since Britain, France, Japan, New Zealand and other nations have done more. Since 1979, for example, the British government has sold more than \$36 billion in public assets.

Not only did the British Treasury boast a \$17 billion surplus for 1987, but some of the once subsidized state-owned enterprises are now profitable, tax-paying private enterprises.

Often ridiculed just a couple of decades ago, U.S. privatization advocates now can be found in government, academe, industry, not-for-profit institutions, and even to some extent in the labor movement.

While movement has been slow, the agenda is packed. Consider some of the items: Selling government

loans, federal lands, surplus military bases, the U.S. Postal Service, the airwaves and even the nation's highways and bridges.

The air traffic control system is a candidate for privatization. Education too. So is the Tennessee Valley Authority. Prisons also. Even Social Security.

Some privatizing already has occurred in the United States, but only on a relatively modest scale. Conrail, the rail freight operation, went for \$1.7 billion. More than \$5 billion in federal loans were sold during the Reagan administration. Some low-income housing was privatized. And contracting out of government services and production has occurred on a small scale.

Of greater future consequence, however, is the research that has been stimulated at the Heritage

Foundation, the Reason Foundation, the Political Economy Research Center, the Pacific Research Institute and elsewhere.

The Reason Foundation, headed by Robert W. Poole Jr., often credited with coining "privatization" in his 1980 book, "Cutting Back City Hall," has just published "Federal Privatization," with emphasis on the federal deficit.

Among other things, the foundation's book lists assets that could be sold for about \$310 billion, plus huge savings in the annual operation of these assets.

Included are obsolete military bases, TVA, 370 million acres of land, a multibillion-dollar loan portfolio, Dulles and National airports serving Washington, D.C., Amtrak, the postal service and naval petroleum reserves.

## Soviets decide to drop visa denials for Jews

MOSCOW (AP) — Soviet officials informed 45 Jewish refuseniks who have been denied visas on the grounds of state secrecy that barriers to their leaving the country are being dropped, a refusenik spokesman said Thursday.

The notification, made in telephone calls from the OVIR visa agency Wednesday and Thursday, did not amount to permission to emigrate, but was a signal that officials probably will let many of them leave in the near future.

"They told several people to expect permission in a month," Vladimir Kislik, a spokesman for Jews denied permission to leave the Soviet Union, said.

Kislik, a physicist who first applied to emigrate in 1973, and Yuli Kosharovsky, who has been awaiting permission for 17 years, were among those who received telephone calls. Kosharovsky had been denied a visa for classified work he performed as an electronics engineer until 1968.

No reason was given, but in the

past Soviet officials sometimes let prominent refuseniks go before a major international meeting. President Mikhail S. Gorbachev leaves next week on a trip that will take him to the United States, Cuba and Britain.

Thursday's move followed the apparent ending of Soviet jamming of American-financed Russian language broadcasts. Together, the two steps were seen as representing a major improvement in human rights by Gorbachev before his meeting next week with President Reagan and President-elect George Bush.

Under Gorbachev's more liberal policies, most prominent refuseniks were allowed to emigrate in late 1987 and early 1988. The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews said 13,039 Jews were allowed to emigrate between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31, 1988.

Many lesser-known refuseniks remain behind, and they complain that the Soviet Union arbitrarily has used access to state secrets as a pretext for keeping them here.

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