
KAREN

On Friday

National Security Adviser **Frank Carlucci** was guarded in his conversation to pals at **Dean Witter's** small dinner at the Georgetown Club the other evening, except to assure them that he told **the president** he'd report anything of substance directly to him, and would go through no conduits. And of course, he noted, *all* NSC business is substantive.

There was little talk of Iran or politics at the Kennedy Center Honors the other evening. **Stevie Wonder** said he was too busy "programming" to give it a thought. Honoree **Ray Charles**, who sat next to **the first lady** during the show, said they just exchanged "niceties." **Lucille Ball**, another honoree and longtime Reagan pal, said, "We talked a little shop and a little home, but no politics." Said she: "The president didn't say it, but he hinted he'll be glad to get back home."

Well, the people at the White House think *they* have a crisis. **Sally Quinn** and **Florence Henderson** wore the same black dress and matching jacket trimmed in mink. When Sally asked the singer if she had noticed, the singer retorted, "Do you want me to take it off?" Mrs. Ben Bradlee thought for a moment before conceding, sweetly, "No, that's OK."

The American Association of Political Consultants, who met here this week, aren't playing the favorites in the '88 presidential sweepstakes. Their '88 presidential poll showed that 82 percent of the consultants thought Sen. **Gary Hart** would not be the Democratic nominee, and 73 percent thought Vice President **George Bush** would not be the Republican nominee. The political consultants are putting their money on Sen. **Joe Biden** of Delaware and Senate Republican Leader **Bob Dole**. Then they held an election of their own. **Brad O'Leary**, a Republican consultant, is the new president; **Bill Hamilton**, a Democratic pollster, is vice president.

New Orleans, one of the cities bidding for the '88 Democratic National Convention, requested that the full-site selection committee postpone its visit. The city has such severe budget deficits that they can't afford to host the entire committee. Although the committee has agreed to delay its trip, insiders say that hurts New Orleans.

When columnist **Bob Novak** was asked by one of the political consultants, "How do you see the leadership coming out of the White House in the next year?" he responded, without missing a beat, "I don't know if you mean that literally." On a more serious note, Bob suggested a new crew to revitalize the White House would be two former Democrats: Ambassador **Jeane Kirkpatrick** for national security adviser and Secretary of Education **Bill Bennett** to head domestic policy.

At **Barry Groom** and **Martin Malarkey's** elegant dance at the Ritz-Carlton, **Buffy Cafritz** was telling pals that it pays to be a night owl. She was one of the lucky few who stayed at the Kennedy Center until the wee hours when Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder gave an impromptu performance.

Other guests were amused that hosts Groom and Malarkey had to pay the tab in cash. The word is "no credit," now that **John Coleman**, the owner of the posh boarding house, has filed bankruptcy.

Carol Dawson, chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, who was married to former Maryland Rep. **Bob Bauman** for many years, has quietly remarried. The new man in her life is **Frank Smith**.

Publishing giant **Robert Maxwell** advised journalists at a reception at the Willard Hotel the other evening, "Don't let Ronnie Reagan be destroyed. We can't afford it."

— **Karen Feld**