



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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HUMAN RESOURCES  
DIVISION

October 26, 1982

The Honorable Claude Pepper  
Chairman, Select Committee on Aging  
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

By letters dated December 11 and 14, 1981, supplemented by later discussions, you, together with six members of the Committee requested that GAO review the planning, conduct and reporting of the 1981 White House Conference on Aging. Cited in the Committee's letters were numerous factors that had resulted in much controversy during the period leading up to and during the Conference itself. It was anticipated that a GAO study of the 1981 Conference would result in recommendations for preventing problems with future Conferences. On September 27, 1982, you requested an interim summary of information developed to date.

We divided our inquiry into pre-Conference concerns, the 4-day Conference itself, and post-Conference period activities. We have talked with or attempted to talk with many persons from the organizations that played key roles with respect to the Conference. However, our work is incomplete and we are still in the data gathering stage because thus far:

- Several key persons have declined to meet with us.
- Several persons have declined to discuss certain issues or answer certain questions.
- We have been unable to arrange followup meetings with several persons to obtain additional information, elaboration of information previously provided, or resolve conflicting information.
- Certain documents and information obtained have not been authenticated or verified.

Thus, we have not drawn conclusions, and we caution readers of the enclosed material to bear in mind the limitations of the material. Further, we have not yet provided persons or organizations from whom we obtained information an opportunity to review the context in which their information is presented in the enclosure. The perspectives and additional information they can add may well shed a different light on the matters discussed.

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As arranged with your Office, copies of this summary are being provided today to the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services; the Assistant to the President for Public Liaison; the Co-Chairman, Republican National Committee; and to several key individuals whose activities are discussed in the summary. Copies of the summary are enclosed for distribution by your Office to the members of your Committee who also requested our review.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Philip A. Bernstein".

Philip A. Bernstein  
Director

Enclosure

INTERIM SUMMARY  
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE  
ON AGING

By letters dated December 11 and 14, 1981, supplemented by later discussions, the Chairman and six members of the House Select Committee on Aging requested that GAO review the planning, conduct and reporting of the 1981 White House Conference on Aging. Cited in the Committee's letters were numerous factors that had resulted in much controversy during the period leading up to and during the Conference itself. It was anticipated that a GAO study of the 1981 Conference would result in recommendations for preventing problems with future Conferences. On September 27, 1982, the Chairman requested an interim summary of information developed to date.

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Thus, we have not drawn conclusions, and we caution readers of the material which follows to bear in mind the limitations of the material. Further, we have not yet provided persons or organizations from which we obtained information an opportunity to review the context in which their information is presented in the material which follows. The perspectives and additional information they can add may well shed a different light on the matters discussed.

#### THE PRE-CONFERENCE PERIOD

The Comprehensive Older Americans Act -Amendments of 1978 (Public Law 95-478) authorized the President to convene a White House Conference on Aging (WHCOA) in 1981. Pursuant to statutory mandate, the Conference's purpose was to determine facts and develop recommendations concerning the utilization of skills, experience, and energies, and the improvement of the conditions of older Americans. The law also required a final report of the Conference setting forth a comprehensive coherent national policy on aging together with recommendations for the implementation of the policy. The law states that this report shall be submitted to the President and that its findings and recommendations shall be made available to the public. It requires that the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) shall subsequently transmit to the President and the Congress his recommendations for administrative action and legislation necessary for

implementing the recommendations contained in the report. The Act specifically states that the Conference shall be planned and conducted under the direction of the Secretary, HHS.

The Congress appropriated \$6 million for the direct costs of the Conference. According to the final report of the Conference, this does not include \$600,000 that the Administration on Aging (AOA) agreed to provide for State conferences; AOA and other Federal agency contributions for mini-conferences and lending of personnel; and State and local government expenditures for activities, such as training sessions for delegates to the national meeting.

For purposes of this summary, we are considering the pre-Conference period to include from March 1981 to commencement of the national meeting on November 30, 1981.

March thru May 1981

--During March, Mr. David A. Rust was named Executive Director of the WHCOA by the newly appointed HHS Secretary Richard S. Schweiker.

--In response to our written questions, Mrs. Elizabeth Dole, Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, advised us that other than providing initial guidance regarding deletion of regional conferences to save funds and the replacement of President Carter's political appointees with those of the new Administration, the full responsibility for the conduct of the WHCOA rested with Secretary Schweiker. Since this was a "White House" Conference, Mrs. Dole told us it was deemed appropriate that there be an ongoing general liaison function to be filled by her office that

consisted of facilitating decisions from the White House when needed by HHS or WHCOA staff. Mrs. Dole said she exchanged information on an "as needed" basis with Secretary Schweiker and David Newhall, the Secretary's Chief of Staff, on the progress of planning. She further told us that she did not have authoritative responsibility over any area of the WHCOA.

June thru July 1981

--According to David Newhall, the Republican National Committee (RNC) approached both him and Mr. Rust about the upcoming Conference. According to Mr. Rust, the RNC asked him for a listing of the Conference delegates so that RNC could survey the delegates. Mr. Rust said he refused to provide such a list to anyone.

--The former WHCOA Staff Director, Jarold Kieffer, told us the RNC proposed to Mr. Rust (1) moving the Conference to Houston, Texas, (2) assigning a person(s) from within the RNC to act as a link between the RNC and the WHCOA staff, and (3) conducting a pre-Conference poll of the delegates to find out what their views were towards the President's policies. Mr. Newhall told us that the RNC proposed relocating the national meeting to Houston and bringing in a political consultant. According to Mr. Newhall, the RNC's proposals were rejected. He said he felt that any RNC involvement would detract from the credibility of the Conference.

--We asked Mr. Rust, currently Deputy Commissioner, Administration on Aging, about the RNC's three proposals. He said he was aware of the RNC's concerns about the location of the Conference and about

the RNC's interest in polling the delegates. Mr. Rust could not recall being approached by the RNC about the services of a political consultant.

--We asked Mrs. Dole if she or others in the White House were aware of these proposals. She stated that Mr. Rust brought to her attention that consideration was being given to moving the Conference, possibly to Houston. She said Ms. Betty Heitman, RNC Co-Chairman, also mentioned this to her. She said that during the conversations with both Mr. Rust and Ms. Heitman, she mentioned that she did not think that was a good idea. She also recalled a poll being discussed as a proposal.

--Effective July 14, 1981, Moshman Associates, Inc., entered into a \$1.1 million contract to handle the logistics for the Conference.  
August thru September 1981

--A former WHCOA employee provided us copies of six letters, dated between August 23, 1981, and September 24, 1981. This person said the letters came from WHCOA files. These letters, five from Republican State Committee offices and one from the office of a Governor, all addressed to the RNC, identified the political party affiliation of their States' delegates to the Conference. Our review of WHCOA files did not disclose such letters.

--We were told by a former WHCOA employee that the employee (1) was asked by supervisors to obtain information on the political affiliation of delegates by making calls to State registrars and Republican State Committees, (2) called the registrars in 10 or 15

States to obtain political registration information, and (3) provided this information to the supervisors. Mr. Rust confirmed that he had requested several WHCOA employees to obtain such information on less than 100 delegates because he was concerned about an imbalance of Democratic delegates inherited from the Carter Administration. He told us he planned to use the information to appoint additional delegates and to fill the leadership slots.

--The process for making committee assignments began in August 1981. On August 28, the Conference staff sent the delegates questionnaires to obtain the delegates' first, second, and third preferences for committee assignments. The Conference staff requested the delegates to return the questionnaires to the logistics contractor no later than September 10, 1981.

--According to Mr. Newhall, he attended a September 11, meeting where Mr. Richard Richards, Chairman of the RNC, met with Secretary Schweiker to express dissatisfaction with the RNC's inability to obtain a list of delegates. Mr. Newhall said that during this meeting he gave the RNC a list of Conference delegates.

--The logistics contractor developed a computer program to assign the delegates to the 14 Conference committees taking into account desired committee size, the delegate preferences, and composition of the committees in terms of (1) State, (2) sex, and (3) minority representation. The written criteria developed by the logistics contractor stated that after each individual was assigned to a committee by the computer using the above criteria, any necessary adjustments would be done manually.

--According to Jo Harris, the WHCOA Operations Director, on about September 25, the delegates' committee assignments were made by computer, although about 50 percent of the delegates had not



submitted committee preferences. She said that, whenever committee preferences were not known, the computer based assignments on the remaining criteria.

--Secretary Schweiker had delegated authority for formulating rules to the WHCOA national advisory committee, subject to his review and approval. On September 25, the advisory committee adopted the Conference rules after two days of debate.

#### October 1981

--On October 2, the Executive Director was replaced. David Rust was appointed Deputy Commissioner, Administration on Aging, and his position as Executive Director was filled by Ms. Betty Brake. The former Associate Executive Director's position was eliminated.

--According to Mrs. Dole, neither she nor others in the White House were involved in the decision to replace Mr. Rust. She said that to the best of her knowledge the decision was made by Secretary Schweiker. We have not yet discussed this matter with the Secretary.

--According to Mr. Rust, the Secretary told him that he wanted another team on board with more "hands on" experience.

Mr. Rust also said his refusal to cooperate with the RNC may have led to his removal. He told us the RNC thought that he should have been doing more to protect the interests of the Administration.

--According to Mr. Kieffer, his authority was essentially taken away after October 2.

--Also, on October 2, Mr. Paul Manafort, a partner in the political consulting firm of Black, Manafort, and Stone, Inc., became involved in Conference activities. Mr. Newhall told us he was responsible for bringing Mr. Manafort on board to assist the Executive Director with management of the Conference, and that the Secretary was consulted on this decision. He told us that leadership of the Conference was equally divided between the Executive Director (Ms. Brake) and Mr. Manafort. He further told us that Ms. Brake handled all activities dealing with the public or requiring a knowledge of "aging issues", and Mr. Manafort managed all other aspects of the Conference. According to both Ms. Brake and Mr. Manafort, Mr. Manafort reported to Ms. Brake.

-We were told by WHCOA officials that no paperwork was prepared concerning the appointment of Mr. Manafort and that Mr. Manafort was not paid by the Conference for his services. Mr. Manafort told us that he served as a "volunteer" to the Conference out of his commitment to the Administration.

--Mrs. Dole told us that she did not know whose idea it was to bring on Mr. Manafort, nor did she recall anyone in the White House who did know. Mrs. Dole told us that she was informed by Ms. Brake that Mr. Manafort was going to be donating his time (a day or so a week in the beginning, possibly more later) to try to get all the logistics in order and that he had agreed to work through the Conference in this capacity. Mrs. Dole said she did not know of any title or any specific duties for Mr. Manafort other than as characterized by Ms. Brake.

--Mr. Manafort told us that the RNC had been a client of Black, Manafort, and Stone, but neither he nor his firm had the RNC as a client during his involvement with the Conference. Mr. Manafort said his Conference activities began when Ms. Brake took office (on October 2, 1981), and continued thru the end of the Conference. We could not determine the exact date for the termination of his activities. Although Mr. Manafort was involved during the 4-day Conference, we found no indications that he was involved during the post-Conference period.

--In March 1982, the RNC paid \$19,500 to the firm of Black, Manafort, and Stone. Documents provided us by the RNC show that the payment was for consulting services rendered during September 1, 1981, thru January 31, 1982. The RNC purchase order for these services did not specify what services were involved but the RNC House Counsel told us that the RNC paid for the services from its "White House Support Division funds."

--We made repeated but unsuccessful efforts to contact Ms. Heitman. In response to our inquiries, the RNC House Counsel provided a written statement to us that says "The function of the White House Support Division is to provide political support to the President in his programs" and "You have already received a photocopy of our bill from Black, Manafort, and Stone. I am unable to provide you with further more specific details since we have no other bill or itemization from this firm." He suggested that we seek further information from the firm.

--Mr. Manafort subsequently told us the payment was for services rendered in connection with the New Jersey Gubernatorial campaign.

--Information provided by the Assistant Executive Director of the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission and the former treasurer of the campaign committee in question, did not corroborate Mr. Manafort's statement.

--We made repeated unsuccessful attempts to reach Mr. Manafort to discuss further the \$19,500 payment.

--In response to our question about whether Mr. Manafort was reporting to Mrs. Dole or others in the White House with respect to Conference activities, Mrs. Dole said Mr. Manafort did not report to her. She said that he joined Ms. Brake for a meeting in her office in late October 1981. Mrs. Dole said the purpose of the meeting was to simply brief her on the progress of the Conference. She stated that on another occasion, just before the beginning of the Conference, she organized a meeting of representatives from the involved entities (White House Staff, WHCOA, HHS, OPD 1/) to brief Mr. James Baker on the WHCOA status to assist him in making a recommendation on Presidential participation. Mrs. Dole said that Mr. Manafort attended this session for the WHCOA in place of Ms. Brake.

--Between October 7 and 14, a telephone survey of the delegates was conducted. Market Opinion Research billed the RNC \$3,607 for

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1/Mrs. Dole's written response did not specify to what "OPD" refers but we assume it refers to the Office of Policy Development in the White House.

(1) designing the interview document and (2) mailing 2,200 copies of the questionnaire to the RNC. The RNC paid Campaign Marketing Group \$11,400 to conduct the telephone survey of the Conference delegates.

--The RNC survey solicited delegate opinions on (1) recent budget cuts, (2) the level of government responsible for dealing with elderly issues, (3) whether Social Security benefits should be reduced, (4) the most pressing issue for discussion at the national meeting, and (5) the current Administration.

--Affidavits obtained by the House Select Committee on Aging from seven delegates stated that the pollsters led them to believe that the survey was an official undertaking of the Conference.

--On October 14, Campaign Marketing Group terminated the survey after having surveyed only 979 delegates.

--In an October 15, letter to the delegates, the WHCOA Executive Director stated that WHCOA was not conducting a poll nor had it authorized the conduct of any poll. Ms. Brake told the delegates that they were under no obligation as delegates to respond to such inquiries.

--On October 15, according to documents provided by Moshman Associates, the Conference staff made 815 manual changes to committee assignments.

--Ms. Jo Harris told us the changes were made to accommodate delegates whose preferences only recently had been made known. Ms. Harris, who had the responsibility for making committee assignments, told us she reported to Mr. Manafort for logistical direction.

--At an October 22, House Select Committee on Aging oversight hearing, Richard Richards, Chairman, RNC, denied that the survey results were intended to influence the assignment of delegates to committees. He said the RNC undertook the survey to determine whether the delegates fully understood the President's policies in relation to the Conference agenda. Mr. Richards stated that the RNC would turn over the results of its survey to White House officials if the results were interesting.

--Mrs. Dole stated she was not aware that any RNC polling results were turned over to the White House and she did not see any.

--During the October 22, hearing, Ms. Brake testified that committee assignments were being made by computer, and that information obtained by any poll would not be used to influence the computer in making committee assignments.

--On October 22, 554 additional changes to committee assignments were manually made.

--Ms. Harris told us that these changes, like the ones made on October 15, were made to accommodate those delegates who were late in providing their committee preferences. She told us that the computer program was not used to reassign delegates to committees primarily because it would have taken too long.

--We asked Leo Marcus, Senior Associate of Moshman Associates, who designed the program, how long it would have taken to rerun the program and reassign the delegates (including those whose

preferences were received late) to committees. He told us it could have been done overnight.

--At our request, the RNC provided us with the documents used to record the delegates' responses to the telephone survey.

Included in the survey documents was an analysis showing that of the 979 delegates surveyed, 864 delegates completed the survey and the remaining 115 delegates either did not answer all or some of the questions or did not plan to attend the national meeting.

--The questionnaires were coded to characterize delegate positions as shown below:

Volunteered Comments about Reagan/Reagan Administration/Reagan Program

- (1) Very favorable comments made
- (2) Favorable comments made/couldn't tell how strongly held
- (3) Worry/doubts/reservations expressed about Reagan, his administration or policies
- (4) Critical comments made, couldn't tell how strongly held
- (5) Very critical comments made
- (6) No mention of Reagan made during interview

--On the front of the questionnaire, delegates that made favorable comments about the Administration (numbers 1 and 2 above) had a Roman numeral I, delegates making unfavorable comments (numbers 3, 4, and 5) had a Roman numeral II, and delegates making no comments (number 6) had a Roman numeral III.

--The numerical summary included in the materials we obtained from the RNC follows:

I	Favorable to Reagan/Reagan Administration	349
II	Worry, doubts, or critical about Reagan	243
III	No mention of Reagan during interview	<u>272</u>
	Total	864 ===

GAO note: Although the summary was as shown above, the survey documents provided by the RNC included 884 coded survey documents as follows.

I	349
II	236
III	<u>299</u>
	884 ===

--The RNC survey asked, among other matters, the subject the delegate would be most interested in discussing at the national meeting. Among the survey documents obtained from the RNC was an analysis of 177 responses to this particular question. The majority of the responses cited economy (committee #1), Social Security (committee #2), health (committees #5 and 6), and housing (committee #8) issues.

--We compared final committee assignments of the 884 delegates with their computer assignments made prior to the RNC survey. The comparison follows:



<u>Committee</u>		<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No Comment</u>
1	Implications for the Economy of an Aging Population (Economy)	29	Pre survey	26	18
		47	Final	19	23
2	Economic Well-Being (Social Security)	23	Pre survey	26	21
		45	Final	16	29
3	Older Americans as a Continuing Resource (Employment)	28	Pre survey	8	31
		20	Final	19	17
4	Promotion and Maintenance of Wellness (Preventive Health)	27	Pre survey	13	29
		12	Final	21	19
5	Health Care and Services	32	Pre survey	27	18
		44	Final	12	25
6	Options for Long-Term Care	23	Pre survey	19	21
		28	Final	10	31
7	Family and Community Support	16	Pre survey	23	22
		14	Final	24	19
8	Housing Alternatives	38	Pre survey	16	24
		46	Final	12	28
9	Conditions for Continuing Community Participation	29	Pre survey	10	23
		14	Final	25	16
10	Education and Training Opportunities	16	Pre survey	7	14
		16	Final	9	21
11	Concerns of Older Women	20	Pre survey	17	19
		14	Final	20	18
12	Private Sector Roles, Struc- tures, and Opportunities	25	Pre survey	15	26
		18	Final	20	19
13	Public Sector Roles and Structures	17	Pre survey	12	17
		14	Final	14	17
14	Research	23	Pre survey	14	15
		17	Final	15	17

Note: The 14 committees ranged in size from 149 to 184 delegates.

--Further analysis shows that for committees 1,2, and 5 (and to a lesser degree, committees 6 and 8), the number of delegates making favorable comments or no comments increased while the number of delegates making unfavorable comments decreased. The other committees showed the reverse.

Net Change in Delegates  
Following RNC Survey

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Favorable</u> <u>Comments</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u> <u>Comments</u>	<u>No Comments</u>
1	18	(7 )	5
2	22	(10)	8
5	12	(15)	7
6	5	(9)	10
8	8	(4 )	4
3	( 8)	11	(14)
4	(15)	8	(10)
7	( 2)	1	( 3)
9	(15)	15	( 7)
10	0	2	7
11	( 6)	3	( 1)
12	( 7)	5	( 7)
13	( 3)	2	0
14	( 6)	1	2

--We asked Mrs. Dole if she or others in the White House knew whether the results of the RNC's pre-Conference survey were used to assign delegates to Conference committees. She told us that she was not aware of such use and that she was unaware of anyone in the White House who was.

--Copies of documents we obtained from a former WHCOA employee and allegedly obtained from Conference files analyzed the composition of delegates assigned to Conference committees. These documents (obtained for committees 1,3,4,5,6, and 13) show the number of delegates classified as either (1) favorable, (2) not favorable, or (3) not identifiable, as follows:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Favorables</u>	<u>Not Favorables</u>	<u>Not Identified</u>	<u>Delegate Total</u>
1	90	17	54	161
3	16	53	90	159
4	11	49	93	153
5	94	32	58	184
6	74	21	59	154
13	21	54	74	149

Our review of WHCOA files did not disclose any of these documents.

--We have been unable to determine who prepared these documents.

We were able to determine that these documents were analyses of the final committee assignments because the delegate totals shown on each document coincided with the committee totals as of November 20, 1981. Prior to this date, committee size changed frequently, but as of November 20, 1981, the committee assignments had been finalized.

--Mr. Manafort, Ms. Brake, and Ms. Harris said they did not receive any information relating to Conference activities from the RNC.

November 1981

--During the first week in November, the delegates were informed by letter of their committee assignments.

--On November 27, 3 days prior to the national meeting, the HHS Secretary approved the Conference's official rules of procedure.

THE 4-DAY CONFERENCE

--During November 30, thru December 3, 1981, delegates and observers attended the national meeting in Washington, D.C. Each delegate and observer was assigned to 1 of the 14 committees for the entire 4-day period.

--Any delegate could present recommendations for consideration by his or her assigned committee, and equal time was required for pro and con statements on motions. Observers were permitted to address a committee as time permitted, but only official delegates could offer or vote on motions. A majority vote was needed to carry a motion as a recommendation.

--Recommendation #27, passed in the Economic Well-Being Committee (committee #2) by a 111 to 34 margin on December 1, 1981. It recommended that the Government preserve the financial integrity of Social Security, but precluded the use of general revenue funds to finance Social Security.

-The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) regarded decisions made within the economy (committee #1), Social Security (committee #2), and the health (committee #5) committees with some alarm, because they ran counter to recommendations the leadership council supported. The LCAO called a meeting for Tuesday night (December 1) to give the delegates a chance to develop a strategy for countering what they considered to be unpopular recommendations.

--According to Mr. Jack Ossofsky, Chairman of the LCAO, one decision made in the Tuesday night meeting was to have delegates introduce Social Security recommendations in other committees. At least 8 of the 14 committees passed Social Security recommendations, and the Continuing Resource Committee (committee #3) passed recommendation #70 which explicitly rejected recommendation #27 (committee #2) and recommended the use of general revenue funds, "should the Congress in its wisdom deem such action necessary."

--In September 1982, a former WHCOA employee provided us with copies of documents which the person said came from WHCOA files. Our review of WHCOA files did not disclose the documents. The documents listed the names of delegates who allegedly served as whips and deputy whips for 8 of the 14 committees at the national meeting. Thus far, we have been able to contact 5 of the delegates alleged to have served as whips. Three denied being a whip. Another said he didn't want to talk about it. One admitted being a whip and said he received a letter, which he indicated he would provide to us, requesting that he serve as a whip and attend a meeting in Washington prior to the Conference. He said that a day or two before the

Conference, he attended a meeting that Mr. Manafort led in which there was a general discussion of what would be happening at the Conference. During a subsequent conversation, he said that the request for him to be a whip was made orally and not by letter.

--During the four days of committee deliberations, 668 recommendations were passed. The closing plenary session of the Conference was held on Thursday, December 3. At this session, each committee chairman presented a brief summary report on the committee's recommendations. Copies of the summary reports were made available to each delegate. Under the rules of procedure, the Conference Chairman was required to call for a single vote from the delegates on their acceptance of all 14 reports without further debate or amendment. The delegates accepted the summary reports at that session.

--Since the tape recordings of the committee proceedings are the "official" Conference transcripts, we listened to the tapes for committee #2 to verify the accuracy of the printed recommendations attributed to this committee. We found no discrepancies.

#### THE POST-CONFERENCE PERIOD

The 1981 WHCOA's post-Conference period covered December 3, 1981 (the final day of the national meeting) through June 2, 1982, when the final report of the Conference was submitted to the President. Outlined below are events that occurred during this period.

#### December 1981 thru January 1982

--On December 22, after the 668 Conference recommendations had been compiled, along with supplemental statements and additional

views, a package was sent to all delegates and observers. The package also included a voting ballot for rating, on a scale of 1 (strongly unfavorable) to 5 (strongly favorable), the Conference as a whole as well as each of the 14 committee reports. In addition, separate sheets were provided for recording narrative comments about the recommendations. In order for their responses to be considered for analysis, the delegates and observers were asked to respond no later than January 22.

--Of the over 3,000 persons surveyed by the WHCOA, over 50% (1,708) responded by the January 22, 1982, deadline. Among the 1,708 were 1,265 delegate responses (or 56% of total delegates) and 443 observer responses (or 38% of total observers). There were 176 responses which were post-marked after January 22, 1982, and according to a WHCOA staff member, were not analyzed.

--On January 13, 1982, Stephen F. Gibbens, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (HHS), replaced Ms. Brake as the WHCOA's Executive Director. At this time, most WHCOA staff were released, and only those directly involved in survey tabulation and final reporting remained.

--On January 14, the Senate Special Committee on Aging, in cooperation with the National Retired Teachers Association/American Association of Retired Persons, began conducting an independent poll of delegates. According to Committee staff, the poll was undertaken in an effort to prioritize the voluminous recommendations and identify the most important. The Senate poll asked delegates--not observers--to rank the top three priority recommendations from each committee, and then select the top 10 most

important recommendations overall, regardless of the committee. It also asked the delegates to indicate up to five recommendations which they most opposed. The Senate poll was conducted by sending a survey package to the delegates for their use in making their recommendation choices, followed-up by a telephone call during which the delegate's choices were recorded. In order to arrive at an overall ranking of the top 10 recommendations, a weighting process was used which took into account the ranking (1st, 2nd, ,.. 10th) of each recommendation made by the respondents.

February thru May 1982

--On February 9, in response to our questions about how the final Conference report would be developed, Mr. Gibbens stated that while the national aging policy would be built on the Conference, it would reflect the Administration's positions and not necessarily the positions endorsed by the Conference. He told us the final report to the President would not recommend actions inconsistent with the Administration's policies.

--On March 23, the Senate Special Committee released the results of its survey of 1,390 completed telephone interviews with delegates. Results were as follows:



SENATE-NATIONAL RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF RETIRED PERSONS

SUMMARY RANKING OF THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS AS VIEWED  
BY DELEGATES

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Recommendation #</u>	<u>Committee #</u>	<u>Brief Description of Recommendation</u>
1	27	2	Assure fiscal integrity of Social Security without using general revenue
2	113	4	Development of a national health policy with full, comprehensive health services for all Americans
3	215	7	Affirm support for Social Security System; preserve current benefits
4	189	6	Preserve current Social Security benefits; expand coverage to all employees
5	1	1	Reduce or eliminate all restrictions on older workers
6	163	6	Create a community-based continuum of care system
7	70	3	Transfer general revenue funds to support Social Security System if deemed necessary by Congress
8	262	8	Support rent assistance to low and moderate income elderly
9	131	5	Expand home health care and in-home services
10	10	1	Assign high priority to the use of economic policies to stop inflation

--The delegates selected the following recommendations as the ones they opposed the most.

SENATE-NATIONAL RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF RETIRED PERSONS  
SUMMARY OF THE FIVE MOST OPPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS AS VIEWED BY DELEGATES

<u>Recommendation #</u>	<u>Committee #</u>	<u>Brief Description of Recommendation</u>
27	2	Assure fiscal integrity of Social Security without use of general revenue funds
134	5	More private market forces in Medicare-Medicaid
40	2	Commend Congress and the Administration for support of Social Security and anti-inflation efforts
45	2	Eliminate income tax on an additional \$2,500 for a single person, and \$5,000 for a couple, over 65
11	1	Moderate, steady, certain money supply growth

--Recommendation #27 - dealing with preserving the financial integrity of the Social Security system without the use of general revenues funds - was rated as the most important as well as the most opposed recommendation by the Senate poll of delegates. According to the Senate report,

"While the delegates agree as to the primacy of social security, there is at least one aspect of that issue that provokes intense disagreement. Recommendation #27 (ranked first overall) - which specifically rejects the use of general revenues - was also ranked first by the delegates as the recommendation they disagreed with most strongly. Recommendation 27's call to reject general revenue financing for social security was also contradicted in part in recommendation 70 (ranked 7th), which calls for general revenue financing "should the Congress deem such actions necessary."

--During this period, WHCOA staff analyzed the results of its post-Conference survey. Approximately 1,100 delegates (of the total 1,265 that responded) rated the Committee reports, and 633 provided specific comments about 1 or more of the 668 recommendations. According to the WHCOA staff, the narrative comments were difficult to interpret.

--To analyze the narrative comments, the WHCOA staff developed a numerical coding system which required reviewers to judge whether the narrative comments were favorable, neutral, unfavorable, or unclassifiable. Due to the voluminous data to be coded, the WHCOA staff (with the assistance of other HHS employees) coded about one half of the responses and hired DATAWARES, Inc., of Waldorf, Maryland, to code the remainder.

--The net score for each recommendation (for example, +1) was determined by subtracting the number of unfavorable responses (for example, -49), from the number of favorable responses (for example, +50), for each recommendation.

--We read specific comments made by 56 of the 633 delegates and had no significant disagreement with the codes assigned.

--The ten most favorable recommendations according to the WHCOA post-Conference survey are shown below.

HCOA FINAL REPORT  
 SUMMARY RANKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVING THE HIGHEST  
 POSITIVE NET SCORES BY THE DELEGATES

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<u>Rank</u>	<u>Recommendation #</u>	<u>Committee #</u>	<u>Brief Description of Recommendation</u>
1	1	1	Reduce or eliminate all restrictions on older workers
2	131	5	Expand home health care and in-home services
3	137	5	Give tax credits, alter SSI to facilitate family care of elderly at home
4	510	13	Federal, State and local governments should provide continuum of services to meet the needs of the elderly
5	112	4	Provide Medicare reimbursement for preventive care
6	30	2	Permit interfund borrowing if necessary to preserve Social Security System
7	37	2	Oppose cuts in Social Security benefits to current Social Security recipients
8	217	7	Provide greater resources to families who care for elderly relatives at home
9	215	7	Affirm support for Social Security system; preserve benefits
10	282	8	Develop comprehensive program to reduce crimes against the elderly

--Shown below, from the WHCOA post-Conference survey results are the recommendations which received negative net scores from the delegates.

WHCOA SURVEY RESULTS  
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVING  
NEGATIVE NET SCORES FROM THE DELEGATES

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Recommendation #</u>	<u>Committee #</u>	<u>Brief Description of Recommendation</u>
1	20	1	Provide cash discounts in lieu of credit cards
2	13	1	Reduce Marginal Tax Rates
3	16	1	Use regulation to promote private competition, where appropriate
4	15	1	Balance budget in anti-inflation plan
5	134	5	More private market forces in Medicare-Medicaid
6	11	1	Moderate, steady, certain money supply growth
7	17	1	Government should be wary of contributing to inflation
8	19	1	Overcome public's inflation mentality
9	12	1	Reduce growth of Federal budget outlays
10	18	1	Refrain from new regulations which lessen competition
11	27	2	Assure fiscal integrity of Social Security without the use of general revenue funds
12	14	1	Eliminate government regulations which cost in excess of their benefits

--The WHCOA post-Conference survey asked participants to rate each of the 14 committee reports on a 1 to 5 scale; strongly favorable (5), favorable (4), neutral (3), unfavorable (2), and strongly unfavorable (1). Each of the 14 committee reports received overall favorable ratings based on this scale.

However, as a percent of total delegate comments, committees 1, 2 and 5 received a higher percentage of unfavorable comments; 21, 24 and 17 percent, respectively, versus a range of 4 to 9 percent for the other committees.

#### June 1982

--The Final Report of the 1981 White House Conference on Aging was sent to the President on June 2, 1982. It consisted of three volumes. The first volume set forth a national policy on aging together with implementing recommendations. The second volume discussed past Conferences and the procedures of the 1981 Conference on aging. The third volume was an analysis of the 1981 Conference recommendations and responses, including the scores, analyses, and responses of delegates and observers. Delegate and observer responses were separately presented. Also issued on June 2, was a report to the President and Congress detailing the legislative and administrative steps needed to implement the national policy on aging.

--Volume I stated that the national aging policy "...is built on the comments, findings, and recommendations that emerged from the WHCOA." This report was divided into five chapters: the economy, income in old age, health care, social benefits and services, and research, containing a total of 53 recommendations. According to a

WHCOA official, the Conference's 668 recommendations were considered in arriving at the 53 implementing recommendations. The Executive Director said the 53 recommendations were developed by himself and four staff members by extracting the core concepts of the 668 Conference recommendations. He further stated that there were no available supporting work papers explaining how the final recommendations were formulated.

--With regard to Social Security, the final report defers recommendations about financing approaches to the National Commission on Social Security Reform.