

REAGANAGRAM REPRISE

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As the curtain rises on the denouement to the Reagan years, it seems appropriate to renew the search for apposite transposals of the President's name. In the May 1984 issue of **Word Ways**, the term Reaganagram was introduced by Mike Morton and A. Ross Eckler in reference to interesting permutations of the eighteen letters in RONALD WILSON REAGAN, or, alphabetically arranged, AAADEGILL-NNNOORRSW. To the hundreds of examples of computer-generated scramblings contained in their article, the human touch was added in the August 1984 issue through various contributions from readers.

Reaganagrams abound, no substantive sequel has so far appeared. One purpose of the present piece is to record a handful which have occurred to me lately. Another is to stimulate reader review of recent incidents and findings with the intent of discovering other examples.

The first specimen notes that while this President has campaigned and won office twice, polls progressively indicate a decline in popular esteem for his management style and decision-making prowess:

RAN: RAN. ALL-WISE? GOD, NO!

While military aid to the Contras in Nicaragua has been an Administration goal of the highest priority, particularly during the second term, Congressional opposition has mounted significantly:

SNAG - A "NO" ON DRILL WARE

More below on this theme and its complex intwinement with affairs in the Middle East.

Perhaps the most enduring impact of this Presidency on the domestic scene will be its influence on the ideological orientation of the Supreme Court through Reagan appointments. Last June, another opportunity was created via the resignation of Justice Powell who announced his plan in a rare press conference:

A GRAND LAW NINER SOLO

The events leading up to the Iran-Contra Congressional hearings appear to constitute a serious obstacle to continued credence worldwide in current U.S. foreign policy. The ploy of arms for hostages is alluded to in:

SOLD ON IRAN WAR ANGLE

As secret agreements formed and dissolved, opportunities for personal profit flourished, presumably without notice at the highest levels:

WAR! [NOD] ALL GAIN!! [SNORE]

To the surprise of many, these operations appear to have been directed through an astoundingly low link in the chain of command:

OLLIE RAN WARS. NO! DANG!!

To put all this into proper historical perspective, let it be noted through the concluding item that Middle Eastern problems were a heavy burden of the previous President and will doubtless remain one for the next:

IRAN - AN OLD, SLOW ANGER

1000 MOST CHALLENGING WORDS

The third in a series (earlier volumes being 1000 Most Important and 1000 Most Practical Words) by Norman W. Schur, this book, published by Facts on File in 1987 for \$18.95, consists of one thousand words accompanied by definitions and etymologies up to a page long. Schur's admittedly subjective criteria for inclusion: "Words that I have come across myself, words that have challenged me by giving me pause or somehow exciting my interest and inviting investigation." Analyzing the first 100 words (A through APATETIC), I note that 37 are found in Webster's Pocket Dictionary, 8 are words related to grammar and rhetoric, and 10 are adjectives pertaining to living creatures (ACCIPITRINE, ANOPHELINE, etc.). Logologists will be pleased by his inclusion of FLOCCINAUCI-NIHILIPILIFICATION (a truly SESQUIPEDALIAN word), as well as PALINDROME, KICKSHAW, HOMONYM, PARANOMASIA, LOGO-GRIPH, and MACARONIC. Curiously, the midpoint word (half-way through the 322 pages) is HALIDOM, surprisingly early in the alphabet. Like all such idiosyncratic word lists (Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary; Dimboxes, Epopts, and other Quidams), the book is great for browsing, but unlikely to be used in place of a dictionary: one is too likely not to find the word one is looking up.