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Ambassador Hinton Is Leaving El Salvador

U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Deane Hinton will leave his post sometime this year, according to senior Reagan administration officials. Hinton, 60, is said to be exhausted after nearly two years of wrestling with the El Salvador crisis. The blunt, burly ambassador has been especially exasperated by the country's dubious judicial system. One candidate to succeed Hinton is Ambassador to Honduras John Negroponte. But Negroponte, who was posted to Vietnam and has been associated with covert operations against Nicaragua, may be too controversial for the job.

Is the GOP Running Scared?

GOP campaign official Newt Gingrich is sounding an electoral alarm to his colleagues. Gingrich, vice chairman of the Republican congressional campaign, has sent a confidential letter to his House party mates asserting that in contrast to the Democrats, "the White House appears to be in disarray, Senate Republicans are in disarray and House Republicans are waiting to see what will happen. We're like a divided, passive army." Gingrich may have overcooked his prose to galvanize the party, but when the Democrats obtained a copy of the letter it was read with great satisfaction.

The principal cause of the GOP malaise is President Reagan's coyness about seeking re-election. But there are other problems:

- Democratic congressional campaign chairman Tony Coelho proved himself to be a brilliant strategist during the 1982 campaign. He will have considerably more money to work with in 1984.
- Richard Lugar has just taken over the chairmanship of the National Republican Senatorial Committee from Bob Packwood after an intraparty struggle and is still getting organized.
- Nineteen Republican senators will be up for re-election; only 14 Democratic incumbents are running. In addition, the Republicans are mainly "coattail" candidates who won their seats during strong GOP years. With an unpopular Republican president in office, they may find it much harder to win.

Weinberger Woos the Jews

As the presidential-election season gets under way, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, the administration's most vocal critic of Israel's Begin government, is moving to improve his standing with American Jews. Weinberger wants to arrange speaking engagements and private meetings with leaders of the American Jewish community to convince them of his concern for the welfare and security of Israel. Weinberger has asked Albert Spiegel, head of the National Republican Jewish Coalition, for advice on organizing his friendship campaign. The first sign that Weinberger is moderating his hawkish public stance on Israel came last week. When he received an official complaint from the Marine Corps about Israeli troop conduct in Lebanon (page 25), the defense secretary passed it along to the State Department without adding any critical comment of his own.

Another Term for Volcker?

There seems to be little sentiment within the Reagan administration for replacing Paul Volcker as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board when his current term expires next August, according to Treasury Department sources. Both presidential adviser James A. Baker III and chief economist Martin Feldstein are thought to favor reappointing Volcker. One potential rival would

be Treasury Under Secretary Beryl Sprinkel, who is eager to have the job. But Sprinkel has been out of favor with his boss, Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, whose backing he would need to challenge Volcker.

The Campaign Roadshow: A Box-Office Hit

The crowd-pleasing presidential "cattle shows"—in which several contenders appear before groups of the party faithful—are bringing in surprisingly large amounts of money for state Democratic organizations. In Atlanta earlier this month, 3,000 people turned out to size up six of the seven most prominent Democratic contenders. It was the largest, most lucrative, political dinner in the state's history, raising more than \$250,000. As long as pre-election-year events remain so profitable, state party officials are likely to oppose any effort to shorten the campaign season.

A Reagan Alumnus on South Africa's Team

Stuart Spencer, who has served as an adviser to Ronald Reagan in a number of capacities over the years, has registered as a lobbyist for South Africa. In return for \$150,000 a year, Spencer's public relations firm will help the South African government promote its policies on Namibia. The contract calls for Spencer to assist South African officials "in establishing close links" with U.S. officials, members of Congress and their staffs. The South African government also retains two well-connected law firms—one Republican, one Democratic—to represent its interests in Washington.

Jackson's New Corporate-Equity Pacts

Jessie Jackson, head of Operation PUSH, is about to sign economic-equity agreements with Burger King and the Southland Corp., operator of the 7-Eleven stores. The companies will enlist more black franchisees and increase their spending in the black community. The Burger King deal could mean as much as \$100 million for black workers and black-owned businesses such as food distributors and advertising agencies. Jackson has signed similar agreements with Coca-Cola, Heublein and Seven-Up.

The Sorry State of Surinam

The International Commission of Jurists will release a report this week charging that "the human-rights situation in Surinam appears to have deteriorated dramatically" since the last ICI evaluation in 1981. In December, for example, 15 prominent persons were arrested and killed. The two ICI investigators, who spent a week in Surinam, say that the victims' wounds contradicted the official explanation that they were shot while trying to escape.

Prague's New Drive to Check the Church

Church-state relations in Czechoslovakia—already the most hostile in Eastern Europe—appear to be getting worse. Vatican sources say that last month's Czechoslovakian nun who lives in Rome was arrested while on a visit to her homeland. She was charged with illegal currency transactions, a common pretext for political detentions. Police searched her and discovered a list of "underground" nuns (members of secret orders) with whom she had planned to meet. The police detained and interrogated several of the women on the list. The visiting nun remains in custody.

ERIC GELMAN with bureau reports