Governor Ronald Reagan promises that, if elected president, he will view his election as a mandate to reduce the size of government. He vows to eliminate waste and fraud in federal spending, cut unnecessary programs and transfer many federal programs - including welfare and education - back to states and localities.
Transcript

Reagan Calls Education Department “Bureaucratic Boondoggle”

Governor RONALD REAGAN (R – California):

At 11:01 am Eastern Standard Time on a Sunday, President Carter’s new bureaucratic boondoggle was born, the Department of Education. Despite his campaign promises to reign in government growth, the president has helped the bureaucracy again split and multiply. Indeed this is the president’s second new cabinet department. The first was the Department of Energy; unfortunately he didn’t learn his lesson from it.

The answers to our problems are not still more federal agencies and federal spending. In contrast to Mr. Carter I would view my election as a mandate to reduce the size of government and the amount of federal spending. I would implement this mandate in three ways. First I would seek to develop a systematic and effective method to root out fraud and waste in federal programs. The Justice Department has estimated that the federal government may be upset by up to fifty billion dollars in fraud alone and this is a disgrace. The amount of waste cannot be calculated and may be even more. Eliminating all of this misspending may be impossible, and reducing it may be difficult, but I believe it can be controlled if the administration makes its control a major priority. Among other things I will draw from my experience in California to create a commission of professionals and businessmen and women to study federal programs and make recommendations as to how to make them more efficient.

Second, I will use every resource at my command to eliminate programs, which serve no useful purpose. One need only look at the programs sited by Senator Proxmire to find many that are arguably well administered, but which spend money in a manner that is incomprehensible. Cutting such programs would be a high priority in my administration.
Finally, I would work to transfer back to states and local--localities programs, which do not belong at the federal level. Welfare and education are two functions that should be primarily be carried out at the state and local levels. There are undoubtedly many other programs, which should similarly be returned to their proper levels of government. The sources of revenue to fund these programs should also return to local government. Such a return would eliminate an unneeded level of bureaucracy and give the people more control over these important and expensive programs. It’s necessary to control the growth of government both at the bureaucracy and in spending. President Carter has failed miserably to carry out his promises in this area. Though it will not be easy to reign in a government that seems to grow inextricably, I will make it a top priority in my administration. With that commitment on my part and the help and support of the people, we can do it.