

Reporters knew that *they* would be on trial at President Reagan's press conference, and so they treated him with a deference that has, over time, become an art. Like old shoes, kid gloves become more comfortable with age.

Questions about what the President now "feels in his heart" about the Iran arms sale, or whether he now "agrees" with pesky critics are purely fatuous. More to the point would have been questions about other issues he raised. For example, what is the meaning of economic "miracles" such as a potentially disastrous deficit, the increasing numbers of homeless "on his watch," and the return of unemployment to levels current when he took office. Or, perhaps, why is the Administration helping Marxist Mozambique while it tries to destroy Marxist Angola (and not-so-Marxist Nicaragua)? It is possible, of course, that no one in the press corps notices such contradictions.

Under the "Reagan Revolution," the Fourth Estate looks more like a chapter of the "old boy" network.

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