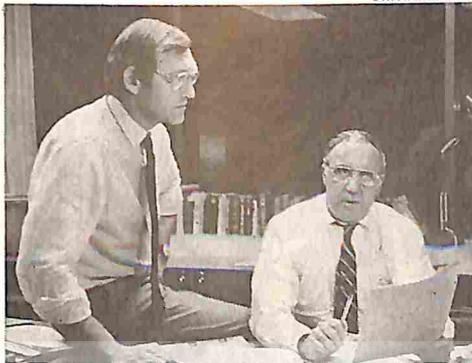


A Letter from the Publisher

As the Inauguration of the nation's 40th President and the long-awaited release of the American hostages in Iran coincided last week, TIME's Washington bureau was faced with the task of covering two major news events simultaneously. "This was a remarkable week for us," says Washington Bureau Chief Robert Ajemian. "Two Presidents coping with high drama, the absolute splendor of an Inauguration eclipsed, if that is possible, by the tension and thrill of the hostage release." Like a general fighting a war on two fronts, Ajemian had to move quickly to deploy correspondents where they were most needed. White House Correspondent Laurence Barrett stayed with President-elect Reagan while Correspondent Neil MacNeil headed up a team assigned to cover the Inaugural speech and ceremony. When word came that the hostages were finally free, News Editor Dean Fischer coordinated long-standing plans to gather information on the hostages and their families. Reporter Susan Schindehette was with the family of former Hostage Gary Lee when his call came through from Wiesbaden, West Germany. Schindehette recorded the family's reaction and then spoke to Lee, be-

coming one of the first journalists to interview a hostage. Correspondent Johanna McGeary went with Jimmy Carter from Washington to Plains, Ga., where in a moment of high emotion he made his own announcement that the 52 Americans were finally out of Iran. Says she: "It was the most dramatic end of a presidential term any of us expected to see."

DIRCK HALSTEAD



Fischer and Ajemian in Washington

Back in Washington, Barrett donned a black tie and joined the small group of journalists who were allowed to accompany the Reagans to all ten Inaugural Balls. The next morning, as Reagan began his new job, Barrett was busy keeping track of the announcements and executive orders already coming from the Oval Office. Says Barrett: "It is important to dig out what the President is saying in Cabinet meetings, how his senior staff is operating, whether there are differences in nuance between what Reagan promised as a candidate and what he is doing during his very first days." Adds Ajemian: "The look and style of the new Administration was a substantial

story in itself. Reagan looks good on the job, easy, imposing, but the image is still blurred. Carter always told too much of what he knew; Reagan has told very little."

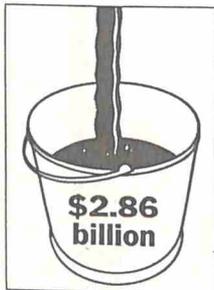
John C. Meyers

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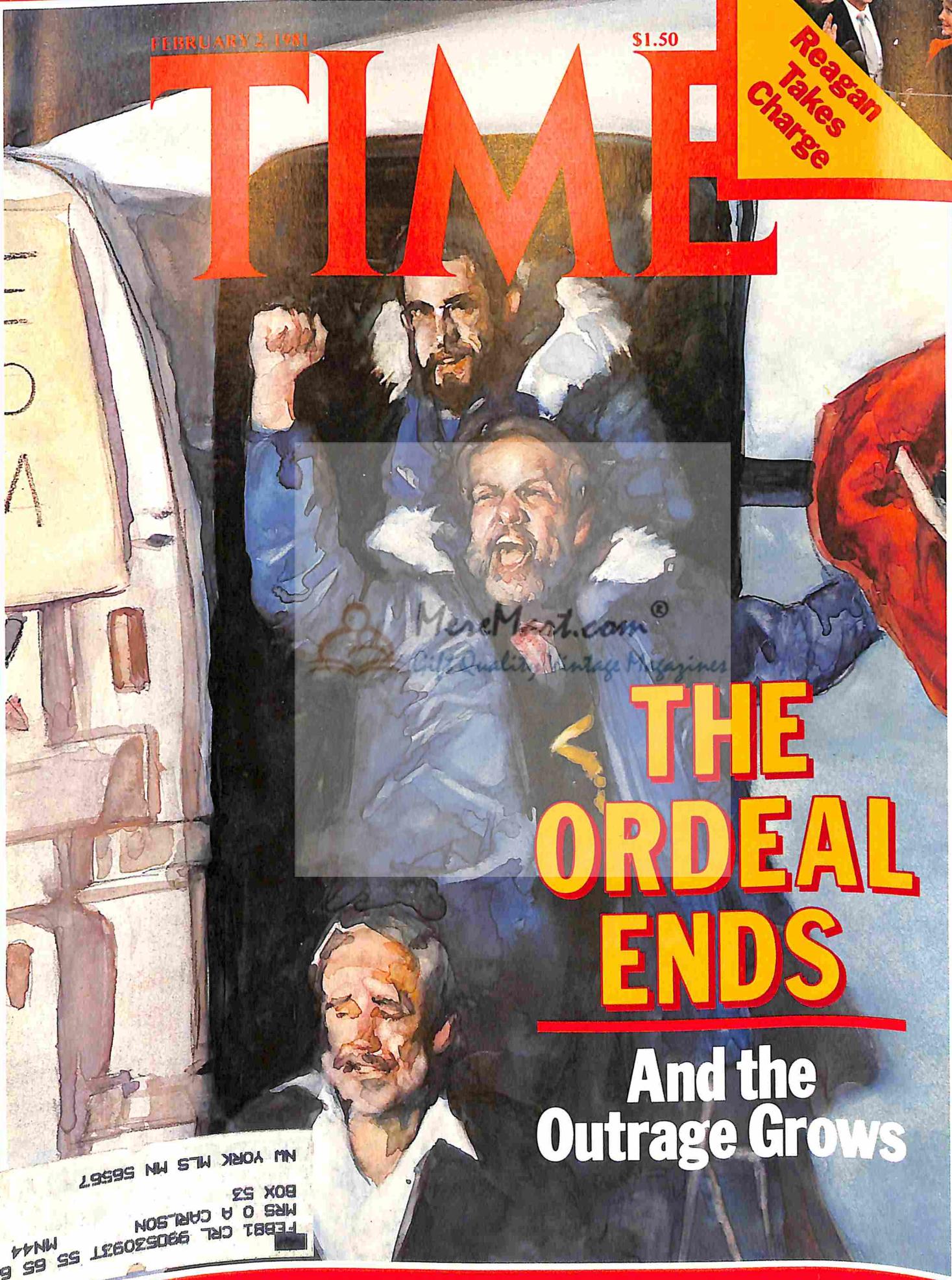
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