



The Washington Diaries: 1981-1989

Allan Gotlieb

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Canada's legendary ambassador to the United States reveals his personal diaries from his time in Washington, from 1981 to 1989.

Allan Gotlieb was ambassador to the United States during a high point in U.S.-Canada relations, the Reagan and Mulroney eras. One of our country's most effective diplomats, he was renowned for forging inside connections to the capital's key decision-makers, and as he has said, "In Washington, gossip is not gossip — gossip is intelligence."

Gotlieb kept a diary almost daily during his time in Washington, and its entries are filled with anecdotes about meetings and parties with the capital's social, media, and political elite. Katharine Graham, Jesse Helms, and Sandra Day O'Connor are just a few who appear in its pages, as are such Canadian visitors as Jean Chrétien, Joe Clark, and even Wayne Gretzky.

With frankness and self-deprecating wit, Gotlieb recounts the absurdities and pretensions of life in Washington and his fight to make Canada's voice heard. His diaries chronicle not only the major international issues of the time — such as the forging of the Free Trade Agreement — but also his own growth from Washington outsider to sophisticated power-broker.

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