Politics as usual?

Ronald Reagan's first year as President, coupled with the course of public policy he has decided to pursue, has reshaped the structure of contemporary American politics. Reagan has promised a new direction of the New Deal tradition of labor and internationalist free traders — the Democratic Party has fallen from a position of electoral supremacy to one of substantial electoral shambles. In the past several months, however, as the Administration's quixotic budgetary policy, continued support from and concessions to ultra-conservative religious fundamentalists, and continued support to foreign affairs, have become apparent to former unquestioning supporters as well as to always-sarcastic foes, several seeming paradoxes have emerged.

Who would have thought before Reagan took office that:
- Democratic and Republican Congressional leaders together would lobby business leaders, creating legislative incentives of making Reagan accept an alternative budget proposal for fiscal year 1983. The Administration has suggested that some of these provisions, in their current form, are too radical. Television producer Norman Lear coordinated the show, to demonstrate that the Moral Majority does not have a monopoly on patriotism. Fonda delivered a short monologue on civil rights: "If President Reagan wanted to demonstrate that he has a program, he should have introduced a choreographed marching band presentation by declaring, "It's all right to wave the flag." Many other participants performed in the production, which is scheduled to be repeated nationwide.
- the President of the "land of the free and the home of the brave," at a time of domestic recession accompanied by a policy of fiscal restraint, would propose to send 350 million dollars to the Caribbean. Reagan's Congo Map is the most commonly designed to contribute to economic development, but is actually a guise under which more aid might be sent to Jose Duarte's failing "brave," at a time of domestic recession accompanied by a policy of fiscal restraint.
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The Tech

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It may indeed be true that politics makes strange bedfellows, but these incidents would indicate that a pattern different from politics as usual is occurring. Reagan's victory conclusively destroyed the old New Deal alliance, but no new long-term political coalition has replaced the predecessor.

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