

Incident on Air Force One

Former Secretary of Labor Raymond Donovan tells the story of being on Air Force One. He was in the back compartment of the jet while President Ronald Reagan was in the front compartment.

The telephone rang in the back compartment and the voice said, “Mr. Donovan, the president would like for you to join him for lunch.”

Secretary Donovan straightened his tie and thought to himself how important he was to have the president ask him to lunch.



Just as Donovan walked through the doorway into the president’s compartment, the red phone – the presidential hot line – rang.

Wow! What a moment to be present. Some history-making event must be in process, Donovan thought.

Reagan picked up the phone and said, “Yes, uh-huh. Yes. What are my options?”

Donovan’s heart almost stopped. His mind raced.

Then President Reagan continued, “Okay. I’ll have the iced tea.”

Donovan’s ego was deflated.

The story, while humorous, illustrates a certain point. Often, we are inclined to jump to conclusions concerning matters when we don’t have all the facts.

Many times I have discovered – and, most likely, so have you – that information first received is not always as serious as we may be led to believe. Conversely, the news may not always portray the gravity of a certain situation.

As we say in the South, let’s look before we leap.

– Beecher Hunter