

### 3. NEWS STUDIO AGAIN

*CHAOS of voices, news feeds, ads etc - back exactly where we were in the opening scene.*

*Images of all channels. Cameras are put into position.*

*Voices call from the CONTROL ROOM - but this time we also follow the conversation that is going on within the control room along side the cacophony of voices on the news set: The Production Assistant, the Director and Harry Hunter are all in the control booth, with others.*

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

One minute to go.

FLOOR MANAGER

One minute to go.

~~DIRECTOR~~

~~Can we have Howard, please.~~

~~OK. We run the Presidential item. How long is Snowden's package.~~

~~HARRY HUNTER~~

~~One twenty.~~

~~7.~~

~~DIRECTOR~~  
~~We're on the air in fifty-~~  
~~three seconds.~~  
~~One Twenty. Tag on Ron~~  
~~Neeson. The cut to the Ads.~~  
~~Open the second segment~~  
~~with the Iranian piece and~~  
~~the terrorist report. All~~  
~~Good.~~  
~~Can we have Howard, please.~~

~~FLOOR MANAGER~~  
~~Fifty five seconds to~~  
~~broadcast.~~

~~FLOOR MANAGER (CONT'D)~~

~~Howard.~~

~~Howard walks confidently onto the set followed by make up and wardrobe.~~

HARRY HUNTER

*Are we using Squeaky Fromme?*

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Give me A camera. Do we have sound?

*DIRECTOR*

No, Snowden nixed Squeaky Fromme.

## FLOOR MANAGER

Check.

HARRY HUNTER

*But we are keeping the map in?*

DIRECTOR

B camera.  
Yes, keep the map. Hold the news-pix.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Thirty seconds....

## FLOOR MANAGER

Check.

DIRECTOR

Sound.

## FLOOR MANAGER

Check.

~~A countdown is taking place, nervous tension, people dash round executing the last second technical stuff;~~

~~DIRECTOR~~

~~Howard.~~

~~FLOOR MANAGER~~

~~Check.~~

8.

DIRECTOR

~~Studio ready?~~

~~FLOOR MANAGER~~

~~Studio ready.~~

~~We see the ad breaks. The make up artist and costume person rush away from Howard's desk. In the control room the countdown starts. The Ads conclude.~~

At 15 seconds

DIRECTOR

Continuity.

CONTINUITY ANNOUNCER

It's time for Tonight, with Howard Beale.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Ten...

DIRECTOR

Cue music and titles.

*The theme music blasts out, the floor manager is shouting over the top of this:*

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

...nine..eight..seven..six..

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

five..four...

*Howard takes a swig of water*

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

...three, two, one.

DIRECTOR

Camera, and HOWARD!

HOWARD

Good evening. It is Monday September the Twenty Second, and I am Howard Beale. ~~Today, a shot was fired at President Ford's motorcade in San Francisco. The President was unharmed. The incident happened late this afternoon just 17 days after an attempt on his life in Sacramento. The shot was fired as Mr Ford was leaving the St Francis Hotel on his way to the airport. Our reporter Jack Snowden is on the scene with the latest, Jack.~~

~~As Howard hands over to Snowden the Make up person comes onto set and administers more make up.~~

~~We see Snowden doing his piece to camera on the monitors  
around the studio and in the auditorium.~~

~~DIRECTOR~~

~~Cue Jack.~~

~~SNOWDEN~~

~~(on monitor)~~

~~Howard, the first attempt on President  
Ford's life was seventeen days ago, and  
again today in San Francisco. In spite of  
two attempts, Mr Ford said in a press  
conference he will not become  
A prisoner of the Oval Office -~~

~~All the while a Technical Director does a countdown  
whilst Snowden's report is on air.~~

We also hear the conversation in the Control Room

DIRECTOR

Shelia, do 'ya wanna get a drink later?

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

I can't I said I'd see Jeff from  
downstairs.

HARRY HUNTER

Jeff!? You realize he's a married man.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

I happen to like married men.

HARRY HUNTER

Shelia, if you are so hot for married men  
- why go to strangers? What's wrong with  
me?

SNOWDEN

(on monitor)

A hostage of would be assassins...

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Headroll... counting.... ten, nine,  
eight...

PRESIDENT FORD

(on monitor)

The American people are good people  
Democrats, Independents, Republicans and  
others Under no circumstances will I  
capitulate to those who want to undercut  
all that's good in America

DIRECTOR

Clear make up. Clear sound.

FLOOR MANAGER  
Make up clear. Sound clear.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
Seven, six, five, four, three, (two,  
one).

~~The Floor Manager points to Howard. He's back on air.~~

HOWARD  
~~Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like at  
this moment to announce that I will be  
retiring from this program in two weeks  
time because of poor ratings ..~~

DIRECTOR  
~~Pull out to A camera. (snaps)~~

HOWARD  
~~But since this show was the only thing I  
had going for me in my life, I have  
decided to kill myself...~~

HOWARD (CONT'D)  
~~I'm going to blow my brains out right on  
this program a week from today.~~

DIRECTOR  
~~And cut to B camera... (snaps) Now.~~

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
~~Ten seconds to commercial. Nine, eight,  
seven..etc...~~

HOWARD  
~~So tune in next Monday. That'll give the  
public relations people a week to  
promote the show. It ought to get a hell  
of a rating, a fifty share at least.~~

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT  
~~...three, two, one.~~

DIRECTOR  
~~And commercial break. Cue VT A. Thank  
you, Howard. Come on, just one drink  
won't harm you.~~

FLOOR MANAGER  
~~Jesus Christ. Did you hear what he said?~~

~~The ad for cat food is playing. Howard calmly takes a  
glass of water.~~

DIRECTOR  
~~What?~~