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VOTING RIGHTS ACT EXTENSION

The President might take the following approach:

1. State his belief that there is no right more important than the vote, and state his commitment to enforcing all laws that guarantee that this right will not be abridged by reason of race or color.
2. Note that when the Act was passed in 1965 and extended in 1970, he voted for such actions on both occasions, and therefore approaches the extension issue with an affirmative attitude.

The President might note that he is advised that the Department of Justice and the civil rights community are actively engaged in updating and gathering relevant information about the Act, and the possible need for an extension.

When this study is completed, the Administration will formulate a position and take appropriate action on the Hill. The most important point to be made, in whatever way appropriate, is that the President does not have a private political agenda to torpedo the Voting Rights Act, particularly if compelling arguments for extension are made.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Question: Latest government statistics show black adult unemployment above 9%--twice that of whites; black teenage unemployment averaged about 35%, what is your solution to the problem?

Response:

- * To respond to the unemployment problem in general, improvements in UI(including expanded coverage) and additions to public service job creation funds should be considered as contingencies in case the unemployment rate should rise sharply later this year. (Rush, Simon, and Burns have already testified publicly that these measures should be considered).
- * To respond to the severe employment prospects facing black youth, the following possibilities could be examined, as a complement to continuing neighborhood Youth Corps-type programs, etc.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 21, 1974

MEETING WITH CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

Wednesday, August 21, 1974

10:30 a.m.

The Cabinet Room

From: Stan Scott *SS*

I. PURPOSE

To establish a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to work with all segments of American society to help insure success of the Administration's civil rights and minority-oriented programs generally.

Girls must direct - Rangel chair
Nancy 7/21/74

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS & PRESS PLAN

A. Background: New York Congressman Charles Rangel, Chairman of the Caucus, accepted your personal invitation to meet with his colleagues for an "honest exchange", leaving with you a position paper on what the Caucus considers to be of priority concern to blacks and disadvantaged Americans.

B. Participants: Robert Hartmann, *Marsh - TerHorst* Jerald terHorst, Stan Scott, John Calhoun (Staff Asst. in Scott's office), Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Ken Cole.

C. Press Plan: Press photo opportunity. Designated participants meet news media in press room after adjournment.

III. GENERAL TONE

In my view, the single most important concern in the upcoming meeting is to avoid the President's seeming to approach the subject of black and low income interests from a defensive posture. Too often in the past when such meetings have been arranged, they began on a downhill direction because the traditional pattern for the blacks was to propose, the President to

David Wilner on Barbara Watson

react; or for the President to begin by attempting to lecture on the accomplishments of his Administration.

To vary from this nonproductive pattern, it would be a plus for the President to open the session with his affirmative list of actions that he is either committed to take or contemplating (See Tab A) taking for the Caucus' reaction. The advantageous benefit from this arrangement is that it enables the President to be forthcoming while aggressively expressing his interests on how the power of his office can be creatively mobilized in serving those neglected areas of national interest.

IV. TALKING POINTS

The following is a list of talking points which I believe capable of commanding the Caucus' support:

1. AFRICA-- The President can assure the Caucus that it was not intentional that Africa was not mentioned as such in his address to Congress... that he asked Secretary Kissinger to meet with the African Ambassadors the day after his inauguration to confirm the continuity of our foreign policy and to indicate our interest in Africa's problems and our desire to work more closely together. President Ford might want to tell the Caucus that our humanitarian concerns for Africa will continue, along with economic development, to be a central theme of our policy toward Africa.
2. VOTING RIGHTS --The President might want to make the point that he does not have a private political agenda to torpedo the Voting Rights Act, particularly if compelling arguments for extension are made. The President might note that he is advised that the Department of Justice and the civil rights community are actively engaged in updating and gathering relevant information about the Act, and the possible need for an extension.
3. LEGAL SERVICES --The President can assure the Caucus that a representative number of qualified blacks will be appointed to the new Legal Services Corporation.
4. BLACK OPINION--The President can announce that, in addition to his meeting with the Caucus, he has directed Stan Scott to launch a series of meetings with a cross-section of black Americans to gain their views and insights regarding the present and the future to assist the President and his new Administration.
5. LEAA-- The President can commit his Administration to using the full weight of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to guarantee the substantial integration of all State and local law enforcement agencies.

- (?) 6. CIVIL RIGHTS MONITORING-- The President can commit himself to the creation of a super departmental coordination and monitoring staff to give policy direction for all Federal civil rights activity. (The laws are on the books and must be implemented under White House leadership).
7. BLACK FEDERAL JOBS-- The President can assure the Caucus that he will appoint additional qualified blacks and other minorities to top level jobs in the Federal Government.
- (?) 8. REVENUE SHARING-- The President can commit himself to increasing the number of civil rights personnel responsible for monitoring Revenue Sharing guidelines. (This has been a sore spot with the Caucus. The main recurring criticism of Revenue Sharing is that the staff is too small to achieve civil rights compliance in 38,000 governments).
9. QUOTAS AND GOALS-- The Black Caucus would be pleased if the President were to acknowledge his belief that despite important and significant progress in the field of equal employment opportunity, there still are situations where jobs are denied because of race and national origin, and that he believes that it is important for all citizens to have a fair chance to work at their chosen jobs.
10. BUSING-- The President's views on this issue are clear and already a matter of record. (I doubt that this will be a key issue with the Black Caucus.) The President might undertake the following:

State his views that he is opposed to busing of school children, especially the younger ones, outside their neighborhoods in order to achieve racial balance. He might note that while the Oval Office requires a broad perspective on this issue, he still believes that his views represent sound public policy.

Reiterate that he intends to see that the laws of the land are faithfully executed and that the law established by the Supreme Court, as the final arbiter of Constitutional rights, will be carried out even where he might personally have some disagreement with those decisions.

HOUSING

KEY POINTS

1. Rebuilding the inner city, increased low income housing production, high interest rates on home loans -- all are major concerns of the Ford Administration.
2. I will sign into law S-3066, the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. As you know, this Bill will revamp our subsidized housing program, provide bloc grants to the cities using a poverty factor that will be weighed twice in the formula used to disburse \$2.5 billion authorized under this Act.
3. Interests rates are extremely high for home loans at this time; however, I am confident they will fall more in line once we bring inflation in general under some reasonable control.

OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The development of minority business enterprise is not only a top priority of this Administration, but one to which I have a personal commitment.

You might sound out Congressman Mitchell on the idea of establishing a dialogue with the Black Caucus on the range of concerns the Caucus members have, including the minority enterprise programs. We would want not just to explain Administration policy and programs, but also to receive criticism and suggestions. We believe that Congressman Mitchell might be receptive to the idea.

OEO FUNDING AND POVERTY PROGRAMS

The President's views seem to be well formulated in this area. As I see it, his response might go along the following lines:

A restatement of his belief in the concept of revenue sharing, rather than categorical grants, as the basic system for carrying out the Federal Government's responsibility to participate in community-based programs. The concern of the Black Caucus should not be that this basic design is flawed, but that they must be assured of genuine minority participation in the program.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH INSURANCE

KEY POINTS

1. Comprehensive Health Insurance is an idea whose time has come in America.
2. Every American, without regards to their station in life, whether poor, black or white, must be assured access to high quality health care.