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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *dg.*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

March 14, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON

by Dick Dunham

MR-1

SUBJECT: Plans for Presenting Your Consumer Policies

Following our Tuesday meeting with you we have drawn up a tentative plan to present and focus attention upon your consumer policies.

SUMMARY

The general policy outline we have followed is that you are opposed to establishing an independent consumer agency. A Consumer Protection Agency (CPA) would be a new program not only at a time when your Administration is trying to cut the size of the Federal Government, but also at a time when you are trying to reform Federal regulatory activity.

What you are proposing, instead, is a Regulatory Review Commission to study Federal regulatory activity. Included in this review would be the extent to which consumer interests are considered in Government regulation. Simultaneously you will be proposing specific regulatory reforms that could be undertaken immediately.

Furthermore, you feel that the existing structures of the Executive branch are adequate to protect consumer interests. But to see that they are fully represented in each department you will be requesting that certain additional measures be undertaken by the Cabinet.

Together the following activities would give visibility to each aspect of your consumer policy and publicly position you as a consumer advocate.

OUTLINE OF POSSIBLE CONSUMER ACTIVITY

Senate floor action on a CPA bill is scheduled for the week after Easter. Most of this activity would be in that week.

- Presidential Letters to Chairmen of House and Senate Committees Considering CPA

These letters would outline your reasons for opposing a CPA, your general consumer philosophy, and note that you intend to undertake certain consumer-oriented measures within the Executive branch.

- Presidential Speech on Consumerism

In a public speech you would discuss your consumer policies and your views on the appropriate Federal role in protecting consumer interests.

- Message to Congress on Regulatory Reform

You would send a special message to Congress that would resubmit your proposal for a Regulatory Review Commission and transmit reforms for immediate action such as surface transportation, repeal of fair trade laws, etc.

A White House press briefing would coincide with the message.

- Swearing-In of New Members on National Consumer Advisory Council

New members of the National Consumer Advisory Council will soon be announced. Many national consumer leaders are in this group; Virginia Knauer is executive director. You could swear the members in and speak briefly at that meeting of the Council.

- Discussion of Consumer Policies at Cabinet Meeting

You would tell the Cabinet of your consumer policies and discuss with them how they could better include consumers in their decisions. You would ask them to hold public hearings and meetings with consumer representatives even when not required by law before taking final action in areas of consumer interest.

- Meeting with Heads of Independent Regulatory Agencies

Following your Cabinet meeting you would have a similar session with the heads of the independent agencies. You would be requesting them to consider additional steps to ensure better consumer representation. A possibility would be to include the relevant Congressional chairmen here so as to: (1) Enlist their support in this effort with the regulatory agencies, and (2) guarantee that no misunderstanding of coercion could come out of the meeting.

- Opening Statement at Presidential Press Conference

Additional attention could be focused on your actions by a Presidential statement at the first press conference following your other steps.

- Congressional Consultation

Through Jack Marsh we would arrange necessary Congressional involvement both before and after your policies are announced.

- Follow-Up Activities

Following the initial Presidential activity we would work with Bill Baroody and Jerry Warren in setting up appropriate regional briefings, distribution of relevant material to both consumers and businessmen as well as interviews in the press and on TV.