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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 25, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JERRY JONES

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JJC*

The attached letter from William Scranton was returned in the President's outbox with the following notation:

"one or both"

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 18, 1975

MR. PRESIDENT -

The attached will be
handled in a routine manner unless
you indicate otherwise.

Jim Connor

one or both

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

William W. Scranton
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503

August 13, 1975

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Lackawanna County and Northeastern Pennsylvania have two invitations to issue to you, one this autumn and one next spring. We would like you to undertake both, of course, but since I personally know of the tremendous number of requests that come to you literally daily, I thought it best to outline both events and see if you would be willing to undertake at least one of them.

First, The Lackawanna County Republican Committee and the candidates running in this fall's election (which determines the control of the County) have requested unanimously that I invite you to come to Scranton any evening that is available on your schedule in October for a dinner which, of course, would be the crowning event of their fall campaign. On the attached sheet I have outlined background of this event, the political situation here, and why I personally believe this could be of considerable interest to you. I hope you will have the time to read the attachment as I believe this is an unique situation.

Second, the Trustees of the University of Scranton, a Jesuit institution, want you for their commencement speaker on Sunday, May 23, 1976. This is one of the big events every year in Lackawanna County (ask Bob Hope; he was the speaker this year!). Incidentally, Mary is a trustee of the University (the first woman and the first Protestant) and her term of office ends with that commencement. Needless to say, she is particularly eager to have you.

Few people know better than I the constant infringements on your time by requests like these, but I implore

The President

you to read the attachment as this will tell you why I am bothering you with these requests.

With all best wishes always.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill".

William W. Scranton

Attachment

Lackawanna County is ethnic to the core. 42 nationalities are represented here. Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Italians (galore!), Irish, Welsh, Scotch, Germans, Ruthenians, Slovaks - and more and more and more. And they are all good Americans! They firmly believe in this country and its traditions of freedom.

The County is overwhelming Democratic. The registration is two to one Democratic. But they are patriotic Americans and, as such, deeply conservative in their basic thinking because of what this country has offered them and their immediate forbears. Surprisingly, at the present time, the County is run by Republicans (and it is the Republican County Commissioners - Luger (a Jew) and Pettinato (an Italian) - who are running for re-election in this fall's campaign). And the city of Scranton, which is again overwhelmingly Democratic, has a Republican (Lebanese) mayor. In short, this is an unique situation.

Charlie Luger and Bob Pettinato are well thought of in this County. I have sent Don Rumsfeld polls taken in late June showing their consistently good standing. They have given the County sound, progressive government, even reducing taxes! I also sent Don a poll taken in June re. the presidency, indicating the high standing that President Ford sustains in Lackawanna County despite the overwhelming Democratic registration majority here and very heavy unemployment.

My personal belief is that coming to Scranton for this campaign in October would be a good warm-up for President Ford in testing his support in areas of high unemployment and large ethnic groups. It would be a sound way of finding out what approach would work best in such areas in 1976.

Another interesting factor is that, despite their tendency toward the Democratic Party in registration, their basic conservatism and their patriotism - and the fact that this is a hinterland area - the people here have great respect for the Presidency and will show it.

Either event will be useful to the President for all these reasons. One is obviously political and a warm-up for 1976, the other non-partisan, Catholic, and ethnic.

I commend them both.