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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 25, 1976

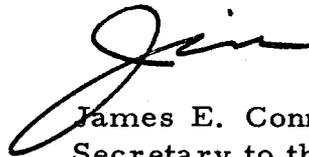
MEMORANDUM FOR

THE HONORABLE ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

The President reviewed your memorandum of February 5 on the subject of "Oceans Policy" and approved the following recommendation:

"Establish a Cabinet Committee on Oceans Policy consistent with the discussion of January 21."

Please follow-up with appropriate action.



James E. Connor
Secretary to the Cabinet

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 24, 1976

MR PRESIDENT:

Oceans Policy

The Staffing of Secretary Richardson's memorandum of February 5 on the subject of "Oceans Policy" resulted in a variety of opinions:

Messrs. Buchen, Cannon, Friedersdorf and Morton concur in Secretary Richardson's recommendation. Messrs. Morton and Cannon added some additional comments.

Rogers Morton

- "There is a need for such a Cabinet Committee. Commerce should have lead. Elliott perfect guy for the job."

Jim Cannon

- "Although there will be concern over which agency should take the lead in this Committee, I believe the basic expertise and experience in dealing with the complex technical issues rests within NOAA. Additionally, NOAA has a long exposure in handling both domestic and foreign sensitivities and would be better suited for this role."

Messrs. Lynn, Seidman and Scowcroft have all taken very strong positions against the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Oceans Policy as suggested by Secretary Richardson. Their detailed comments and alternate proposal are attached at TAB A.

Jim Connor

*Cab. comm on
Food & agric
out of EPA.*

ok



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

February 5, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Oceans Policy

As we discussed on January 21, "oceans policy" is an issue area of increasing importance--an area in which the Executive Branch is now inadequately organized for the development of sound and comprehensive policy. In order to increase the opportunity for Presidential leadership in this emerging area, I recommend the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Oceans Policy--to be chaired by the Secretary of Commerce, with appropriate representation from State, Defense, Treasury, Transportation, Interior, EPA, OMB, NSC and ERC--for reasons which follow:

- A sound and comprehensive oceans policy holds great promise for ameliorating many of our food, energy, mineral resource and environmental problems.
- Our progress has been slow in taking advantage of the opportunities which the ocean affords--in part because of the lack of unified policy guidance within the Administration.
- In contrast to the Administration, Congress has taken the initiative--and is critical of our failure to exhibit policy leadership. A GAO report released last October noted that while twenty-one separate organizations conduct ocean programs, there is no comprehensive national oceans policy. The Senate's National

Ocean Policy Study is proceeding with strong bi-partisan support. A recent letter from Senators Magnuson, Hollings and Stevens has urged greater Administration leadership.

-In August 1974, the Administration committed itself to establish a Cabinet-level committee--but no follow-up action has been taken. (The commitment was formalized in the Secretary of Commerce's reply to the Annual Report of the President's National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere.)

-In the very near future, either through a Law of the Sea treaty or by unilateral action, the United States will have economic jurisdiction over ocean areas equivalent to two-thirds our present land area--an increased responsibility for which comprehensive plans must be developed. The Commerce Department has promised the National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere that it would provide it with a national marine fisheries plan. The House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee are both looking to Commerce for the plan's development. But there is, of course, a wide range of additional resource and environment issues (ranging from sea mining to OCS leasing to coastal zone development) with which the fisheries policy development should be integrated.

-The range of issues involved includes both foreign and domestic policy--and is not therefore appropriately the natural responsibility of either the Domestic Council or the National Security Council. (It is perhaps worth noting explicitly that the proposed Cabinet Committee would not supplant the existing mechanism for addressing Law of the Sea issues. Rather, it would deal with selected management issues growing out of the LOS, and with the wide range of oceans-related energy, resource, environment and domestic development issues not addressed in the LOS context.)



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

FEB 17 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: JIM CONNOR
FROM: JAMES F. LYNN
SUBJECT: Secretary Richardson's Memorandum of
February 5, 1976, re Oceans Policy

In response to your request of February 10, we are providing our comments and recommendations on Secretary Richardson's proposal to establish a Cabinet Committee on Oceans Policy to develop a "comprehensive oceans policy."

We believe that a comprehensive oceans policy is neither necessary nor feasible. It is like trying to establish a "comprehensive non-oceans policy." Policies which are related to the oceans include food policies, energy policies, natural resource policies, environmental protection policies, transportation policies, recreation policies, defense policies, foreign relations policies, etc.

It is necessary to consider issues related to the oceans in the same way we consider those related to non-ocean areas--by looking at problems to be solved or goals to be pursued. The oceans as such are neither a problem nor a goal.

If we consider the oceans in terms of problems or goals, it becomes quite clear that almost all such issues must be viewed in a context broader than the oceans. For example, defense policies related to the oceans cannot be developed except in the context of overall defense strategies; environmental policies concerning the oceans are inextricably tied to broader environmental issues; fisheries policies cannot be properly considered without looking at total food policies; and ocean energy exploitation is certainly a part of total energy policies. It is correct that there is a need for coordination of issues in these various areas, but that certainly also is true for the similar issues in non-ocean areas.

We believe that existing mechanisms are adequate to effectively deal with the real problems and goals related to the oceans, and that the proposed committee is not necessary.

If such a committee were to be established, we see no reason why Commerce should serve as Chairman. State, Defense, Interior and Transportation Departments all have responsibilities related to the oceans which probably equal or exceed those of Commerce.

We have the following additional specific comments on the memorandum:

- . There is no evidence that the U.S. has been slow in taking advantage of opportunities in the oceans.
- . The Administration is not "committed" to establishing a cabinet-level committee. Certainly the Commerce Department's letter to its Advisory Committee does not represent a Presidential commitment that must be met.
- . The particular problem of developing a fisheries plan does not require a formal committee. This can be coordinated adequately by existing organizations, including the Domestic Council, the EPB, and OMB, or through informal arrangements.

We believe that the formal creation of such a committee would be interpreted by some, including Commerce (NOAA), that the Administration is prepared to undertake a substantially expanded role of general ocean exploration and exploitation (a wet-NASA effort). An expanded effort of this nature is not programmatically justified and could not be supported within existing budget policies.

I recommend against establishing the proposed Cabinet committee, and recommend that Secretary Richardson be advised that the offices of the Executive Office of the President will be happy to assist the Department in coordinating fisheries policy development with other agencies through existing mechanisms or with new informal arrangements.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 17, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: L. WILLIAM SEIDMAN *LWS*

SUBJECT: Secretary Richardson's February 5 Memorandum
on Oceans Policy

I have reviewed Secretary Richardson's memorandum to you of February 5 recommending establishment of a Cabinet-level Committee on Oceans Policy, under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Commerce.

As Secretary Richardson's memorandum points out there is much current congressional interest in oceans policy and there is a genuine need for improved interagency coordination on oceans policy issues within the Administration.

At the outset of this Administration, there was a conscious decision to replace the large number of existing specialized Cabinet committees with a set of coordinating councils in the Executive Office of the President responsible for large areas of public policy. These coordinating councils, which report directly to the President, include the National Security Council, the Economic Policy Board, the Domestic Council, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Energy Resources Council.

Interagency committees or task forces at the Assistant Secretary level or higher have been formed by these coordinating councils to review and analyze policy alternatives and make recommendations in specific policy areas. The work of these committees is then reviewed by the Cabinet-level coordinating council before policy recommendations are submitted to the President.

When a policy area involves one or more coordinating councils, joint committees have been established at the Assistant Secretary level or higher -- such as the EPB/NSC Commodity Policy Committee. Such committees report to the Cabinet-level coordinating councils on a regular basis. This process has worked extremely well during the past year.

Since the oceans policy issues outlined in Secretary Richardson's memorandum merit close interagency coordination and since the policy issues involve both economic and national security policy, I recommend that an EPB/NSC Oceans Policy Committee be established at the Assistant Secretary level or higher.

The scope of the Committee's activity would parallel the range of issues outlined in Secretary Richardson's memorandum. It would not supplant nor duplicate the existing mechanism for Law of the Sea issues.

The Committee would be chaired by the Department of Commerce and would include representatives from State, Treasury, Defense, Interior, Transportation, OMB, FEA, NSC, EPB, and CIEP.

Recommendation: That you approve establishment of an EPB/NSC Oceans Policy Committee as outlined above.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 24, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES CONNOR

FROM:

BRENT SCOWCROFT 

SUBJECT:

Commerce Secretary Richardson's February 5
Memorandum on Oceans Policy

In response to your request of February 10, we have reviewed Secretary Richardson's memorandum of February 5 to the President recommending establishment of a Cabinet-level Committee on Oceans Policy, under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Commerce.

Secretary Richardson highlights the wide variety and the considerable complexities of the oceans policy issues confronting the Administration. These issues involve more than a dozen U. S. departments and agencies, and range in nature from domestic science and technology decisions, to coastal zone management, to coastal marine pollution, to international scientific, economic and security issues. We agree with Secretary Richardson that there is a continuing need for policy-level attention to these issues. We believe, however, there already exist in the Executive Office of the President effective councils (the Domestic Council, the EPB, and NSC and OMB) to deal with interagency issues -- policy, programs and budget -- relating to U. S. oceans policy.

Each of these councils has a clear and different mandate, and each reports directly to the President. The fact is that U. S. oceans policy involves so many different domestic, international and functional interests that to attempt to deal with them in a single forum, as suggested by Secretary Richardson, does not seem desirable.

I recommend against the establishment of still another interagency mechanism. We should not fall into the habit of providing a new inter-agency structure for every functional issue which arises. The Secretary of Commerce, through NOAA, has substantial interagency authority in the area of oceans policy. The Secretary of Commerce should, of course, be a leader in the development of oceans policy. To the extent that the proposals he initiates do not fall within his own juris-

diction, he should forward them to the appropriate existing inter-agency organization -- the NSC, EPB, Domestic Council. In the event that the jurisdiction for a particular proposal is not clear, assignment of responsibility could be decided in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary, who is in touch with all the interagency organizations.

In the event it is determined that some formal interagency structure for oceans policy be established, I support the recommendations of Bill Seidman.