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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 11, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JIM CAVANAUGH

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JCC*

As discussed, the attached letter was returned in the President's outbox with the following notation:

"I spoke to Jim Cavanaugh on this."

Am also attaching another letter was returned in the President's outbox on June 7 and referred to Jerry Jones.

Understand you will handle this matter for the President.

cc: Dick Cheney
Jerry Jones

Attachment -

Letter from John Nidecker dated 6/9/76 re
250 Anniversary of Parish of Christ Episcopal Church

Letter from David E. Betts on same subject dated 4/20/76

JOHN E. NIDECKER
905 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

June 9, 1976.

AREA CODE 202
638-6628
6150

Dear Bill:

This is a plea of desperation in which I seek your help, advice, guidance and counsel.

Some time ago, Mr. David Betts met with the President at Burning Tree Country Club and discussed with him the coming Two Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Parish of Christ Episcopal Church. He asked the President, at that time, if he would join with the Parish in the celebration of the event and read one of the Biblical Lessons. Apparently, the President agreed in principle. As we both know, any tentative agreement by the President, under such circumstances requires further exploration in order to coordinate it with a schedule. Unfortunately, this was not understood by Mr. Betts who labored under the misapprehension that it was firm.

On another occasion, the two met again in the locker room and after some discussion, the President told Mr. Betts to write to him and to send the letter to Miss Leonard. He did that and subsequently received a letter from your office stating that the President could not attend and later received a letter of congratulations to the Parish.

The Rector of the Parish, The Rev. Elwyn D. Brown, then wrote to the President making an appeal for him to come to the Church or to send someone in his stead. His hope was that a member of the Ford family or the Vice President might attend in lieu of the President. In addition, Senators Mathias, Beall, Congressman Gil Gude and the President's friend Bill White contacted the White House endorsing the request.

Last Saturday, Dave Betts again talked with the President in the locker room at Burning Tree. As a result of that conversation, Mr. Betts had the impression that the President would appear at Christ Church on next Sunday, June 13. This latest conversation has taken on proportions that are unfortunate inasmuch as we are now faced with an assumed assurance, on the part of Mr. Betts, that the President will be there and the apparent reality that he will not be able to come.

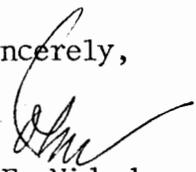
Crombaugh
I spoke to Jim C. on this

Since there has been no activity on the part of the White House with respect to the possible visit, I was asked to try and determine the status of the situation. The reason for my entry into the problem is that I am a very active Layreader in the Parish and a former White House staff member. My loyalties are such that I hope to do the best possible for all concerned in this dilemma. We have 1000 people who plan to attend and have been issued tickets for the occasion. We will have closed circuit television to meeting rooms in the Church to carry the program to them and will have the entire Service on video tape. A host of people believe that the President will be there or will send someone to represent him at this very unusual time of celebration in our Bicentennial year. My desire is to do the best that I can for the Church and at the same time do the best that I can for the President.

Thus my appeal to you to determine whether or not the Vice President or some member of the first family can attend this service. Failing that, is it possible to have an official representative of the President come to the Service on this next Sunday? Perhaps we might even think in terms of having someone from Warren Hendriks' list of official spokesmen come to Rockville for the brief ceremony. Please, Bill, try and work something out for the best interests of President Ford and for the interests of the Church in which he is the first layman of the land.

Anything that you might do to alleviate this problem will be appreciated and thanksgivings to God will be offered in your behalf.

Sincerely,


John E. Nidecker.

Mr. William W. Nicholson
Director, Scheduling Office
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500