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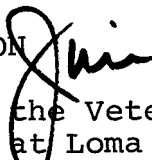
THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 15, 1975

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON 

SUBJECT: Renaming the Veterans Administration Hospital at Loma Linda, California

I. BACKGROUND

In a March 7, 1975, letter to you (Tab A), Richard Roudebush, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, recommended that you issue a proclamation designating the Veterans Administration hospital at Loma Linda, California as the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital. Mr. Pettis had worked toward the establishment of a Veterans Administration Hospital near Loma Linda University prior to his death earlier this year.

There is no known precedent for the naming of a Veterans Administration facility by Presidential proclamation. President Truman did request the Administrator, by letter, to name two Veterans Administration hospitals for individuals.

Three bills, with a total of 59 sponsors, have been introduced in Congress to accomplish this name designation. There appears to be no legal barrier to your issuing such a proclamation for this purpose or directing the Administrator to rename the Loma Linda Hospital without legislative approval. However, considering that there are already three bills introduced to accomplish this, a proclamation by you might be considered by Congress as "preemptive," and also encourage additional requests for you to rename other Veterans Administration facilities for individuals. If Congress fails to act on the pending legislation, the Administrator can accomplish the desired purpose upon his own initiative or by direction from you.

II. OPTIONS

- A. Issue proclamation renaming the Veterans Administration Hospital at Loma Linda, California as Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Hospital.
- B. Request Administrator of Veterans Affairs to rename the Loma Linda Hospital.
- C. Encourage Congressional efforts to rename the hospital. If for some reason Congress fails to act or rejects the proposal, you may then decide on what actions, if any, you may wish to take.

III. DECISION

_____ Option A. (Prepare appropriate proclamation)

Recommended by: Roudebush, Friedersdorf, Cannon and Hartmann, who recommends action before the California Special Election on April 29th.

_____ Option B.

BAR Option C.

Recommended by: Marsh, Baroody (Marrs), Buchen (Lazarus), OMB (Nichols).

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VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

March 7, 1975

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

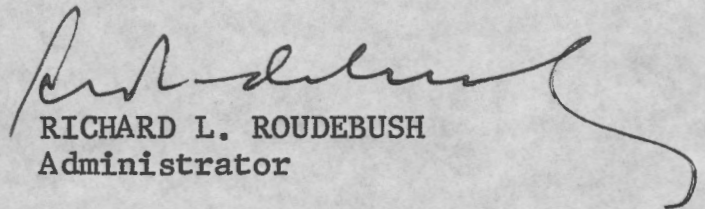
As you know, on Friday, February 14, 1975, a tragic plane accident took the life of our mutual friend, Jerry Pettis, Member of Congress from the 37th District of California.

Jerry Pettis was one of the finest and brightest members of the House of Representatives and was rapidly rising in esteem and prospects for leadership among the Republican members. He was one of your steadfast supporters. He was also a leading Seventh-Day Adventist layman in the United States. His widow, Mrs. Shirley Pettis, will be a candidate for the Congressional seat left vacant by Jerry's untimely death.

One of Jerry's chief goals was the establishment of a Veterans Administration Hospital near his beloved Loma Linda University, and he worked untiringly in support of that endeavor. Three bills have been introduced in the House of Representatives to name the new VA Hospital now being constructed at Loma Linda, California, in his honor. Those three bills have a total of 59 cosponsors. I have also received many letters from members of Congress, veterans organizations in California, and many of Jerry's former constituents recommending that action.

My General Counsel has advised me that you have the authority to direct by proclamation that the Hospital be so named. I have discussed this matter with Dr. Theodore Marrs of your staff. I strongly recommend that you designate the Veterans Administration Hospital, Loma Linda, California, as the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans' Hospital. A proposed proclamation which would accomplish this recommendation is enclosed, should you desire to take that action.

Respectfully yours,



RICHARD L. ROUDEBUSH
Administrator

Enclosure

PROCLAMATION
DESIGNATING THE VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL,
LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA,
AS THE JERRY L. PETTIS
MEMORIAL VETERANS' HOSPITAL

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Friday, February 14, 1975, a tragic plane accident ended the outstanding career of a fine public servant--Jerry L. Pettis Member of Congress from the 37th District of California.

In 1966, Jerry L. Pettis was selected by the people of his district to represent them in the United States House of Representatives. He brought to that office a rare and valuable blend of experience and talent. He was a veteran of service in the United States Air Force during World War II. He was an inventor, a businessman, an educator, a rancher, a philanthropist, and an aviator, both in times of peace and war. He was a Professor of Economics at Loma Linda University, as well as Vice President and Chairman of its Board. He was a deeply religious man who was always willing to extend a helping hand to others.

In his service in the House of Representatives, Jerry L. Pettis was known as a good and loyal friend, an individual who worked hard for the Congress and for the people of his district. He displayed the highest qualities of statesmanship, integrity, and dedication to the interests of his constituents and the Nation. He was a public servant in the best sense of that term. He was vitally concerned with the health of all Americans, including veterans,

their widows, and orphans. He gave much of his individual resources to assist medical school students requiring help in order to complete their education. He was steadfast in his support of the new Veterans' Administration Hospital being constructed at Loma Linda, California, in the vicinity of his beloved Loma Linda University. This health facility will stand as a living monument to his outstanding record of accomplishments.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby direct the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to designate the Veterans' Administration Hospital, Loma Linda, California, as the JERRY L. PETTIS MEMORIAL VETERANS' HOSPITAL.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of ^{April}~~March~~, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-ninth.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 25, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CANNON
FROM: JERRY H. ~~LOVELL~~
SUBJECT: Renaming the Veterans Administration
Hospital at Loma Linda, California

Your memorandum to the President of April 15 on the above subject has been reviewed and Option C -- encourage Congressional efforts to rename the hospital. If for some reason Congress fails to act or rejects the proposal, you may then decide on what actions, if any, you may wish to take -- was approved.

Please follow-up with the appropriate action.

Thank you.

cc: Don Rumsfeld
Jack Marsh
Bill Baroody
Phil Buchen
Bill Nichols
Bob Linder