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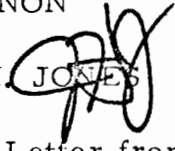
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 20, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM LYNN
JIM CANNON

FROM: JERRY H. JONES 

SUBJECT: Attached Letter from Ansel Adams

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

-- Copy to Domestic Council and
OMB for comment.

Please follow-up with the appropriate action.

Thank you.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 19, 1975

MR. PRESIDENT:

David Kennerly requested that the attached letter be forwarded for your information. It will be handled routinely unless otherwise indicated.

*MR 7
copy to Donnette
Council & OMB
for comment*

Jerry H. Jones
Jerry H. Jones
Staff Secretary



ANSEL ADAMS

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *dy.*

ROUTE 1, BOX 181, CARMEL, CALIFORNIA 93921 TELEPHONE (408) 624-2558

May 14, 1975

President Gerald Ford
The White House
Washington, D.C.

My Dear Mr. President,

Your continuing interest in my ideas concerning our National Parks is a source of great pride. I am fully aware of the honor you have accorded me, first by meeting with Bill Turnage and me, and now by responding to my memorandum in your good letter of 8 April. I have pondered long and hard about a response, as I do not wish to take your time with polite but meaningless sentiments. I believe the President, more than anyone else, must be exposed to frank and candid views, even if they differ in substance, as mine will in this letter. But I respond in a spirit of constructive candor because I have great respect for your openness and remarkably direct approach. I have asked our mutual friend, David Kennerly, to personally deliver this letter to you because I wish to maintain that marvelous directness of communication that David has done so much to foster.

I accept the high level of idealism presented in your letter and warmly congratulate you for the stated commitment to the National Parks Idea. I continue to feel, however, that a clearer statement and more emphatic element of leadership is needed from The White House. The appointment of a career man to lead the National Park Service is nice, but frankly raises further concern about the commitment to change and to imaginative new concepts in Park management. I sincerely question whether the necessary leadership is going to come from the NPS at this time and under the present staffing. Like many old bureaucracies, the Park Service needs a real and recurring push from "the top" - and that means the President.

I must further state the deep dismay with which I and, I think, all of my environmentalist friends, view the selection of Stanley Hathaway as Secretary of the Interior. This appointment has caused a major trauma in the environmental community, and has grievously eroded the credibility of the Administration's commitment to a positive environmental ethic. I believe you underestimate the depth and strength of the new environmental concern in America. What is done is done, of course. May I, Mr. President, suggest an ameliorative next step? The appointment of a strong Under Secretary of Interior, acceptable to environmental

President Gerald Ford

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groups, would be very much the most constructive decision you could make. The present Assistant Secretary of Interior, Nathaniel P. Reed, would without question be the candidate most able to "redress the balance." Bill Turnage and I would be honored to work with your staff and our environmentalist colleagues in effecting a new and progressive modus operandi. Again, I implore you to have a high regard for the eternal realities of our physical environment. The economic crisis is a short-term phenomenon; our "little planet" is the only one we have, and we must have it for a long time. A balance between economies and environment is possible. Indeed, it must be possible, if we are all to survive and progress. Your leadership, Mr. President, must -- as on the Parks issue -- be dynamic and not passive.

I would like to ask for a further commitment to new leadership in the area of the National Parks. Your letter mentions that a Task Force has been established to take a fresh look at the Park Service. This gives me little comfort, as the Task Force is totally internal (NPS) and led by a tired, superannuated bureaucrat from the Santa Fe, New Mexico office. What kind of new and truly imaginative broad-scale thinking can we expect from a group of that calibre and composition? Why not a distinguished Presidential-level Commission to define the role of National Parks in their second century? Do not the Parks deserve the very best minds and hearts our nation has?

In closing, Mr. President, I wish to renew my personal plea for leadership from you. The Office of Management and Budget casts a pall over every agency in Washington, and even Cabinet Officers cannot alter the course of government-by-accountant. Only you can set the priorities. Only you can stimulate new approaches and new levels of energy. I deeply believe that the American people would respond, in the Bicentennial Year, to bold leadership from you on a program of National Parks for the Future.

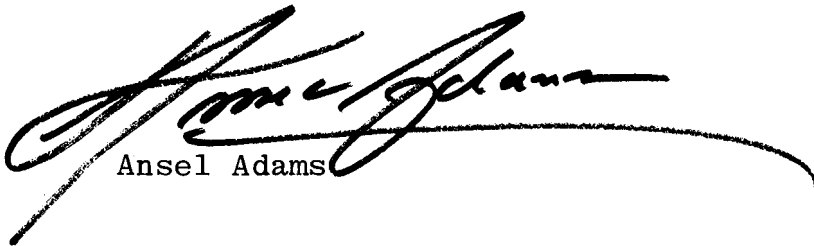
Thank you, Mr. President, for taking the time to read my plea. I hope we can work together in the months and years ahead. I regret my inability to join you at the State Dinner tomorrow, but, as I explained to Mrs. Ford, I must be in Tucson to receive an honorary degree from the University of Arizona. Meanwhile, I have invited your daughter to come to Yosemite National Park in June and study at my annual photography workshop. If she accepts, rest assured that we will look after her with "parental concern." If she is seriously interested in photography, I believe she would find the workshop a remarkable learning experience.

President Gerald Ford

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My warmest personal regards to you and Mrs. Ford, as well as to that superb young photographer who is doing so much to raise both the public's esteem for photography as well as its understanding of your work as President. It has been one of the great opportunities of my life to know you, Mrs. Ford and David.

Warmest personal regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ansel Adams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Ansel Adams

cc: David Hume Kennerly



"DON'T BE SO MELODRAMATIC! MAYBE THE SENATE WON'T CONFIRM HATHAWAY"

Hi Dave! We feel (hope) this way too! *[Signature]*

April 8, 1975

Dear Ansel: *Adams*
x

Following up on our recent discussion and your memorandum concerning the management of National Parks, I asked officials at the Interior Department to take a close look at the issues you raised. They have now gotten back to me, and I want to share with you some of the points they made.

To begin with, it is our hope that many of the difficulties can be resolved by strong, professional leadership. The selection of a professional, Gary Everhardt, as the Director of the National Park Service, and the positive reports of the Secretary and members of Congress regarding his initial efforts, give every indication that we are well on our way in achieving this objective.

On the matter of taking a fresh look at the policies of the Park Service, I couldn't agree more, and a task force has now been put to work to redefine the priorities of the Park Service.

Along these same lines, you also urged a reexamination of the scope of the National Park Service as well as its mission. As you know, past Administrations and several Directors of the National Park Service have wrestled with the great issues of how

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best to provide for our present and future needs, and I think we share a common objective in this area. That is, the National Park System should be comprised of quality examples of our Nation's historical, cultural and natural resources.

Lastly, our efforts to reconcile our energy conservation needs and promote sound environmental policies, while at the same time improving living conditions in our major cities have thrust upon us the necessity of reexamining the role of the Federal Government, and particularly the National Park Service, in meeting urban recreation requirements. The Santa Monica situation you highlighted was but one of several that are repeated throughout the major metropolitan areas of this country. I support the need to preserve existing open space, close to larger urban centers, that will serve local recreation programs and provide the city dweller a valuable outdoor experience.

I am very grateful for your help in focusing public attention in support of our national parks. Your help in this area will further add to the magnificent and unique contribution you have made in interpreting the American landscape. I assure you of this Administration's support of the national park concept and hope that the actions which we take will demonstrate to you and to the American people our commitment to the National Park System.

Warm personal regards,

JERRY FORD

Mr. Ansel Adams
Route 1, Box 181
Carmel, California 93921

GRF:DRAFT:JHH:RLE:aby

50 re managing Natl Parks