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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 2, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

ROBERT T. HARTMANN
PAUL THEIS

FROM:

JAMES E. CONNOR



The President reviewed your memorandum of August 29 concerning his address to the National Baptist Convention in St. Louis on September 12 and approved the following:

"Option #3 - A history of the Black contribution to America"

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

VIA: ROBERT T. HARTMANN

FROM: PAUL THEIS 

#3
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Here are three possible options for your address to the (Black) National Baptist Convention in St. Louis on September 12:

1. Education -- the Black community, particularly a religious body of this type, is very interested in the general subject of education. A speech could be developed to show the extraordinary progress which Blacks have made in this field since the 1954 Supreme Court decision. It could also stress the importance and value of the family in the educational process -- an aspect very important to this group. The sanctity of the family and its importance to all American life would be considered in a most favorable light.

On the negative side: a speech on education to this Black group would almost necessitate the consideration of a section on busing. Officials at HEW, on the Domestic Council, and two Black staff members here at the White House believe you would open yourself to criticism if you gave an education speech to Blacks without a discussion on busing. None considers this the most appropriate audience for explanations on busing. Yet, you must still face the issue at this point in time because of anticipated trouble in Boston. It is reasoned that you would be in a better position with a clear, well considered statement here -- or elsewhere -- rather than leaving the subject to hit-and-miss interpretation in a news conference.

2. Minority Business Enterprise -- Stan Scott believes a speech on this subject would "gain an awful lot of credibility from the minority community." Scott notes that you issued a memo last November to Departments and Agencies stressing support of OMBE and requested reports on the effectiveness of the Government's program by January 31, 1975. Scott helped set up a task force (minority leaders) -- with OMB approval -- to work with OMB, SBA and OMBE in designing a new policy to make the OMBE program more effective. He says the study is now complete and announcement of new initiatives in this area would "attract widespread positive reaction."

On the negative side: OMB -- in consultation with Commerce -- reports that the conclusions of the study do not lend themselves to new initiatives or directions at this time. OMB says it would find itself straining to support an announcement of any new moves. It flatly disagrees with Scott.

3. A history of the Black contribution to America -- including a discussion of values such as the family, church and school. John C. Calhoun (who works with Baroody) says that no President has ever given a speech on Blacks' contribution and says this would have great impact on this audience and on Black Americans. Calhoun explains that this group needs to be motivated, to be inspired and expects addresses of the type mentioned. He says it also expects emotion. You could cover both material and spiritual progress, emphasizing the importance of basic values in our lives. Again, the sanctity of the family, the home, the church and school could be emphasized.

On the negative side: a minor caution -- care in the language used about the "family." Blacks are particularly sensitive to even remote implications relative to a "matriarchal" society. But this could be overcome in the wording of the speech.

Writer's Recommendation: Jack Casserly, who developed these options, suggests the last one. The audience analysis suggests it comes closest to the mark. It is a positive speech, not negative or defensive. The idea does seem to contain greater impact.