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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 4, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CANNON
FROM: JIM CONNOR *JEC*
SUBJECT: Olympic Sports Initiative

The President reviewed your memorandum on the above subject and approved the following option:

Option #2 - Announce an extension of the Commission and your personal commitment to take action based upon your review of the Commission's final report.

The following notation was also made:

"I assume #2 is the recommended action."

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Jim Lynn
Dick Cheney

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: Dick Cheney

FROM: TERRY O'DONNELL ^{TOD}

The President asked
that this go to ~~the~~
CANNON ASAP —

THE WHITE HOUSE

DECISION

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON *Jul*
DAN MCGURK (for Paul O'Neill)

SUBJECT: Olympic Sports Initiative

You asked us to explore possible initiatives related to the Olympics that you could announce on Thursday in your meeting with the American athletes who participated in the Montreal Olympics.

BACKGROUND

The current problem in American Olympic participation is not the identification of potential Olympic-class athletes, but rather giving them the support, training and top-flight coaching they need to realize their full potential. Most athletes in school have access to facilities and some level of coaching, but in the summer period and after graduation, it is difficult for promising athletes to work out the financial and physical problems of full competitive training and development.

OPTIONS

We have explored the possibilities for assisting American athletes in future Olympic games and believe there are three options:

1. Announce a National Foundation on Olympic Sports to assist private organizations in assuring that Olympic class athletes receive the best available competitive opportunities and coaching, and to raise funds to defray the costs of that preparation for the Olympics;
2. Announce that you have directed the President's Commission on Olympic Sports to broaden its study and make recommendations to you on how this country can assure that American athletes

will have even better opportunities for coaching, training and preliminary competition for the Lake Placid and Moscow Olympics in 1980 and all future international games.

3. Announce that you will expand the responsibilities of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports to include activities to improve performance in the Olympics.

Discussion

Option 1. National Foundation on Olympic Sports. Such a Foundation could be a Federal agency, a federally established private entity, or a private organization that would apply for and receive a Federal charter. It could provide full Federal funding for a range of activities related to Olympic sports, or it could provide Federal matching funds for private contributions. Federal funding could also be limited to administrative expenses for a fixed period. Alternatively, a Foundation could be created by private groups or through Federal legislation without Federal funding.

Option 2. Direct your Commission on Olympic Sports to not only address the problem of sports organization but also to recommend a clear mechanism for adequate funding of the training and development of Olympic class athletes. You would announce your commitment to propose the necessary steps -- after reviewing the report in December -- to assure that Americans who participate in the Lake Placid and Moscow Olympics in 1980 are of the highest caliber and have had the best coaching and preliminary competition possible.

Option 3. Announce an expansion of the responsibilities of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. The Council is now authorized by Executive Order. You could amend the existing Executive Order to assign the Council the responsibility for raising funds and working with the sports organizations, e.g., AAU, NCAA, and USOC, to facilitate Olympic participation in the future. The Council, however, has no statutory authorization for program activities. Expansion of the Council to allow it to make grants would require legislation.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Announcing a Foundation could easily be misconstrued as a Federal takeover of higher level sports activities. This would be controversial, and might be opposed by AAU, NCAA, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and other sports federations and organizations.
- You gave the Commission on Olympic Sports the specific responsibility of analyzing "the organization and developmental problems of each Olympic sport," and "the financial and facilities requirements of each sport," as well as recommending "ways to provide needed funds." An announcement now of a new Foundation or an expanded Council could undercut your Commission and draw criticism from the Congress and others as being premature.
- A proposal for additional Federal funding of sports by a new Foundation or expanded Council--even if limited--could result in drying up existing private sources of financial support for the Olympics. Moreover, in light of your public opposition and veto of certain congressional spending bills, e.g., the social programs in the Labor-HEW bill, seeking additional funds for sports could be criticized.
- A Presidential statement that there will be better funding for the training of future Olympic athletes, coupled with a Presidential directive to an existing commission to give you recommendations for an organizational structure to accomplish this, would meet your desire for a positive step now--and at the same time give us time to work out a complex and sensitive problem.

RECOMMENDATION

In view of the above considerations, we recommend that you use your meeting with the Olympic athletes to announce your new institution to the Commission and your strong personal commitment to ensure that the final report of your Commission will cover the financial needs of Olympic sports. In that connection, you can point out the variety

of financing modes possible through the private sector to assure that American athletes have access to the best coaching and competitive opportunities before the Lake Placid and Moscow Olympics in 1980.

DECISION

- Option 1: Announce legislation to create the Olympic Sports Foundation.
- Option 2: Announce an extension of the Commission and your personal commitment to take action based upon your review of the Commission's final report.
- Option 3: Announce an expansion of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and necessary legislation, if any.

I assume #2 is the recommended action.

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON OLYMPIC SPORTS

Gerald B. Zornow, Chairman
Donna de Varona
W. Michael Elliott
Dr. Barbara E. Forker
Dr. Jerome H. Holland
Lamar Hunt
Rafer L. Johnson
Captain Micki King
Dr. James A. McCain
Howard K. Smith
William A. Toomey
Dr. Ernest Vandeweghe
Willye White
Charles "Bud" Wilkinson

U.S. Senators:

J. Glenn Beall, Jr.
John C. Culver
Ted Stevens
Richard (Dick) Stone

U.S. Representatives:

Jack Kemp
Ralph H. Metcalfe
Robert H. Michel
Norman Y. Mineta

Michael T. Harrigan
Executive Director