

The original documents are located in Box C48, folder “Presidential Handwriting, 9/15/1976” of the Presidential Handwriting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

9/15/76
11:30 pm

Stef Halper in Gergen's office called. When Jim was unavailable to take the call, he left the following message:

Re Richardson's legislative strategy suggestion, Dave Gergen gave the action to him - OMB has serious reservations about this - Paul O'Neill expressed this to Halper - Halper therefore gave the action to Paul O'Neill and he understands that Paul O'Neill will talk to Jim Connor about it. Halper therefore wants us to know that the action is now with Paul O'Neill.

ec

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 7, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

DAVE GERGEN

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JEC*

SUBJECT:

Legislative Strategy

The attached memorandum from Secretary Richardson was returned in the President's outbox with the following notation:

"It may have merit. Cannot make valid judgment until I see a draft of document. Have one rough drafted. No final decision until I have seen same."

Please prepare the rough draft requested and return it to this office by c.o.e. Thursday, September 9.

cc: Dick Cheney

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Jim Connor

It may have merit.
Cannot make valid judgment
until I see a draft of
document.

Have one rough draft.
No final decision until
I have seen same.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 6, 1976

MR PRESIDENT:

Legislative Strategy

Staffing of Secretary Richardson's memorandum on the above subject resulted in the following comments and recommendations:

Jack Marsh - "Concur in this type of policy."

Max Friedersdorf -

"I see a great deal of merit in Elliot's suggestion."

Bill Seidman - "I think this is a good idea. Richardson and OMB should be asked to draft a proposed message which could be reviewed in making a final decision."

Jim Cannon - "I oppose the Presidential public statement recommended by Secretary Richardson.

This would be perceived as a partisan attack on Congress; and all evidence I have seen, primary results and polls, indicates that the President is at his worst in an attack situation.

The substance of Secretary Richardson's proposal is perfectly sound but I believe that the statement as proposed, and particularly the threat to call them back into session, would hurt the President."

Jim Lynn - Comments attached at TAB A.

Jim Connor

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

August 31, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY

Under Secretary Ed Vetter has briefed me on yesterday's Cabinet meeting at which, among other things, Jack Marsh reviewed the situation with respect to pending legislation. In this regard, I am forwarding the following comments which I would have made had I been able to attend the meeting.

In spite of contemplated Administration efforts, the Democratic Congress will undoubtedly send you several bills which deal with important problems but which undesirably complicate, deviate from or go beyond your preferred approach--i.e., bills which you would wish to veto, but which may in several cases be politically difficult to veto. With this in view, it would seem desirable for you to assume now a public posture of leadership with respect to the emerging Congressional situation.

Specifically, I recommend that you promptly offer a public statement (perhaps in the form of a message to the Congress) which:

- o builds upon your recent message concerning legislative priorities;
- o notes that a set of bills (specified) addressing important public policy problems continues to await positive Congressional action;
- o states that if these bills reach your desk in responsible form (citing examples, as appropriate), you will sign them--and again urges the Congress to take responsible action promptly;
- o laments what seem to be signs that the Congress will not act responsibly--citing specific examples of delays, of excessive funding, and of bill-cluttering with flurries of last minute amendments;

- o warns that you will continue to veto irresponsible legislation--citing examples of specific provisions which are unacceptable; and
- o announces that if the Congress does not promptly address the important public business before it--or if it becomes necessary to veto important bills--you will, if reelected, call the Congress back into session in order to assure that responsible, positive action is forthcoming.

Such a statement could not only help affirm an image of leadership toward responsible, positive action, but also serve as a useful reference point when vetos become necessary.

I have discussed this suggestion in a preliminary way with Jim Lynn and Bill Seidman--and am forwarding copies of this memo to Jack Marsh, Jim Cannon and Jim Baker.



Elliot L. Richardson



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

SEP 3 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR JIM CONNOR

FROM: James F. Lynn

SUBJECT: Elliot Richardson's Proposal for a Presidential Message on Legislation

The following comments are submitted regarding the proposed Presidential statement:

- Only 4 of the 80 specific legislative items covered by the July 22 message have been enacted. A second message would be largely a rerun.
- It would be surprising if Congress enacts more than 15-20 of the remaining bills on the earlier priorities list with only about 20 legislative days left, if the October 2 adjournment target holds.
- A lamenting prediction that Congress will not act responsibly, though probably accurate, would not be consistent with the basic theme calling for Congress to act on the President's priority bills.
- Another warning that bad bills will be vetoed would not be news but would bring forth renewed criticisms of past vetoes and would probably not be effective in preventing their enactment.
- Citing examples of specific unacceptable provisions of pending legislation would be an encyclopedic list, giving a carping tone to the message and could have a boomerang effect on perceptions of Presidential leadership.
- A post-election special session of Congress would almost certainly be unproductive and perhaps disastrous, given the inevitable post-election emotional hangover and anger and the large number of lame-duck members. This Congress is simply not going to enact many of the President's major legislative initiatives. A post-election session could poison attitudes as the next Congress begins.

- To do a good job, in time, would require priority use of resources already loaded with work to meet other Presidential priorities.