

The original documents are located in Box 9, folder “Congressional Leadership Meetings with the President - 11/3/75: Bipartisan” of the John Marsh Files 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 Gerald R. Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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

November 3, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF *mf*

SUBJECT: Bipartisan Meeting - November 3, 1975 - 6:30 p.m.

Attached is a list of those Bipartisan Members of the House and Senate who will attend this evening's meeting with the President in the Cabinet Room on the subject of personnel changes.

All attendees have been invited to remain after the meeting to watch the President's 7:30 p.m. Press Conference.

Television sets have been set up in the Roosevelt Room, and liquid refreshments will be offered.



PARTICIPANTS

The President
The Vice President

HOUSE

Carl Albert
John Rhodes
Bob Michel
John McFall
Mel Price
Bob Wilson
Phil Burton
George Mahon
Al Cederberg
Bill Broomfield

SENATE

Mike Mansfield
Hugh Scott
Bob Griffin
Bob Byrd
Carl Curtis
Frank Moss
Strom Thurmond
John McClellan
Milt Young
John Sparkman
Cliff Case
John Tower

STAFF

Don Rumsfeld
Bob Hartmann
Jack Marsh
Phil Buchen
Ron Nessen
Jim Cannon
Jim Lynn
Max Friedersdorf
Dick Cheney
Vern Loen
Bill Kendall
Pat O'Donnell
Charles Leppert
Tom Loeffler
Bob Wolthuis

REGRETS

Rep. John Anderson - out of town
Rep. Tip O'Neill - out of town
Rep. "Doc" Morgan - out of town
Sen. Jim Eastland - no reason
Sen. John Stennis - recuperating from illness



BIPARTISAN LEADERSHIP MEETING
November 3, 1975 6:30 P.M. Cabinet Room

President

On August 9 when I became President I was concerned about continuity and stability during the transition process, so I did not make any changes. At the same time I knew that eventually changes would have to be made in the White House structure and the Cabinet to get my kind of team.

I have made changes in the White House and in the domestic area. To carry out foreign policy and national security policy and have my team with which I am comfortable changes had to be made. As emphatically and strongly as I can, I want to say these decisions were mine alone. They were initiated by me. There are rumors in the papers and on television to the contrary, but they were mine.

At a press conference at 7:30 this evening I will announce:

Don Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense. Don is a former Navy pilot, Ambassador to NATO, and served in the White House under the Nixon Administration. Don has been head of the White House reorganization. He will do a first class job at DOD. The country owes a deep debt of gratitude to Jim Schlesinger for great service at AEC, CIA and as Secretary of Defense.

Henry Kissinger has been most effective as Secretary of State and head of NSC.

I will announce Brent Scowcroft as my new Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Since I took office there has been constant criticism of the intelligence community and the CIA. Some of this is proper and some is out of proportion. Bill Colby has done a good job. He has been loyal, frank and honest. I am grateful for his good service to the country. The CIA now needs a new head. George Bush will return from the Peoples Republic of China to head the CIA.



Several weeks ago a dear friend in the Cabinet indicated to me that he wanted to retire after the first of the year. At his request I will accede to his request. I have given much thought to his successor. Please keep this confidential until I announce it. I will nominate Elliott Richardson as Secretary of Commerce to succeed Rogers Morton. Ambassador Richardson has agreed to do so.

Dick Cheney will replace Don Rumsfeld as the new head of the White House Staff.

All of these changes are in the national interest. I thank Jim Schlesinger and Bill Colby for long and loyal service but with these changes I can operate more effectively and I ask your support.

Senator Tower May I put in for the Court of St. James.

Senator Curtis Responsibilities of the President and the people around you are so great, you must have a free rein. I vigorously support you.

Speaker Albert I echo that. I know them all and I think you have made good choices.

Senator Thurmond Mr. President, I disagree on Dr. Schlesinger but since you have made the decision I will back you up.

President Thank you, Strom, I appreciate it.

Senator Case Senator Curtis stated it well.

President These men are all known. They work hard, are honorable and effective. I can work with them.

Senator Mansfield I agree. They are all good people.

President This team will keep our national security program second to non

Congressman Rhodes I approve your choices and I have a personal reason. I have a \$10 bet with Elliott Richardson that he wouldn't be in England for one year.

Congressman Wilson I nominate Sam Steiger as Ambassador to China.

Congressman Mahon I too endorse your nominations.



President

Thanks. I thought a lot about this and feel it is in the National interest. I would appreciate your support.

Senator Byrd

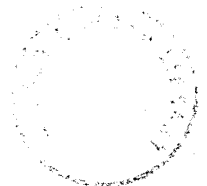
Mr. President, I appreciate these facts, but I view with concern the dismissal of Jim Schlesinger. He spoke my views and concerns on detent. Lest we go too quickly down the road to detente, the voice of dissent by Jim Schlesinger was a good thing. We need a devil's advocate. After consultation, these decisions may be in the best interest of the country, but I hope the dismissal of Jim Schlesinger does not mean that dissent will be stifled. I am concerned. This does not mean a lack of support for his successor. Don Rumsfeld is very talented. I would be remiss if I didn't express my concern. This viewpoint may be the view of many Americans. I have much respect for Henry Kissinger, but I am pleased one of his hats is removed. I am not too satisfied with your choice of his successor. I just hope these changes will not curtail the freedom of dissent.

President

My record in Congress has been one of strong national defense. I was labled a Hawk as George Mahon knows. I believe in a strong national defense and a strong foreign policy. Don Rumsfeld knows this. I also know he will speak his view whether it's opposite to mine. Don's role in NATO was to strengthen the alliance against the Warsaw Pact. He will do equally well at DOD. We will have frank and full discussions. I will evaluate different views and make the decision. Don Rumsfeld will speak his piece with authority.

Senator Mansfield

Mr. President, you've got to get ready to meet the press.



Meeting with the President, Senior Staff and
Congressional Relations Staff - Roosevelt Room
November 3, 1975 - 12:50 P. M.

President

You have heard about certain changes and I would like to remove the speculation and describe these changes to the Senior staff.

One of the first decisions I made when I became President was to ask for no resignations. I did this because of the continuity which I felt was essential. Consequently everybody remained.

I strongly feel a President should have his own well coordinated, cooperative team.

From the first day I became President the C. I. A. and Intelligence matters have generally surfaced and have been erupting almost daily since.

I have decided to make the change I am about to announce to get the needed strength to successfully carry out National security policy and U. S. foreign policy.

Domestic changes were made and they have worked out well.

I need a team that I am most comfortable with; that will provide the best possible liaison. I need a structure that is comfortable with my working habits.

These decisions were mine alone. Tonight at 7:30 I will officially announce:

Don Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense
Brent Scowcroft as Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
George Bush as CIA Director
Dick Cheney-successor to Don Rumsfeld

These are major changes that will be constructive. These posts are vital roles and highly important to our national security and foreign policies. They will make a good working team which I alone picked.



There will also be some changes in the way we operate here in the White House. These will be announced in the next few days after talking with Dick Cheney.

You may have also heard about the Vice President's letter. Let me stress one point. The Vice President's letter was on his own initiative. I am very appreciative of the kind things he said. Let me see if I can remember his exact words "...I have decided further that I do not wish my name to enter into your consideration for the upcoming Republican Vice Presidential nominee."

The Vice President has done a superior job. I picked him because I feel he was the best man to serve until the conclusion of the present term. This was a difficult decision. He has handled some very difficult chores. We are very close personally and I regret his decision. The Vice President has assured me he will carry out his present efforts and activities until the end of his term.

Let me reiterate and re-emphasize. The above personnel changes were my decision. I need closer team work. This will be the most successful combination for a good foreign policy and national defense. I need people close to me.

Please keep this confidential. I will announce these changes at 7:30 P.M. tonight.

