

The original documents are located in Box 120, folder “Swimming Pool” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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POOL

November 6, 1975

Three purchases are being made:

1. A so-called "Solar Blanket" -- an insulated cover that will hold the heat in and keep the pool at a warmer temperature. Cost \$400. (FYI: It is a gift, but a 'fair market value' has been set and it is recorded as a contribution.)
2. A second conventional pool heater. This is simply to supplement the present small heater and will keep the water at a warmer temperature. Cost ~~\$1,000~~ **\$1,950**.
3. A pool cover. This is an ordinary pool cover. Cost ~~about \$1,000~~ **\$1,468**.

Q. Does this utilize solar heating?

A. No. The decision was made not to purchase any solar heaters at this time. It will be delayed until more studies into what is proper and necessary. After this study, then a "go" or "no-go" decision will be made on solar heating.

Q. How much money is left?


A. About \$36,000. This will be transferred to the Park Service as a "depository" for future pool purchases. No specific purchases are planned at this time.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 16, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR RON NESSEN

FROM: LARRY SPEAKES 

SUBJECT: SWIMMING POOL

Jack Stiles and the swimming pool are with us again.

By telephone today, Stiles says plans are going ahead to construct a "backyard swimming pool" at the White House.

Cost will not exceed \$75,000, with the total to be held to a minimum under standards set for security and by the Fine Arts Commission. Starting date is about May first--thirty to forty days are needed for construction. Some survey work is going on at present. The pool is described as similar to the one at the Ford home in Alexandria.

Stiles says there is sufficient money in "nickles and dimes" to start construction. There will be a contribution from the Swimming Pool Institute. In addition, volunteer contributions are coming from people over the country through various swimmers' organizations.

He says he has briefed Jack Marsh on this.

I see no need for action on our part--unless you want to initiate some discussion with Marsh to be sure we are in the clear. Also, there should be some announcement made--because the survey work on the South Grounds will be spotted sometime soon.

SWIMMING POOL

Q. Newsweek's Periscope has an item on the White House swimming pool. What is the status of the pool?

A. As you know, some time ago, the President put the pool idea on the "back burner," so to speak. He said he could not ask the American people to contribute to build a pool while he was asking them to tighten their belts because of inflation. So, as far as the White House is concerned, nothing is being done about the pool.

Q. Newsweek says a group of swimming coaches has organized a committee to raise funds. What do you know about this?

A. It is my understanding that a group of people who include some members of the U. S. Olympic Swimming Committee, some swimming coaches and some AAU officials has expressed an interest in the pool idea. I do not know if they are raising money.

Q. Is the President receptive to this idea?

A. Of course, the President continues to be very interested in having a swimming pool. I think Dr. Lukash feels very strongly that having a pool at the White House would be beneficial to this President and others who follow him. But, as far as this group of swimming officials are concerned, I have not asked the President -- and, of course, what this group of private citizens does is something that we are not in a position to dictate.

SWIMMING POOL QUESTIONS

1. With more than 8 million people out of work, how can you justify spending over \$200,000 to build a swimming pool for one man to swim in?
2. You have drawn the line on spending. How can you expect to get support for your goals when you now spend \$200,000 for a swimming pool?
3. Isn't this in effect "Nixon money" being spent on a pool since it was money raised for his inauguration ?
4. Is it true that some of the Inaugural Committee money was used to pay ex-Watergate defendants after their trials? (Magruder and Porter)?
5. Where did this money come from? Did the people who gave the money know it was going to be spent on the swimming pool? Isn't the Inaugural Committee a continuing bi-partisan effort? Have the Democrats then agreed to spending this money? Wouldn't it be better just to hold it in trust and spend it on the next Inaugural?
6. Would you be willing to provide a list of contributors -- people who put up this \$200,000? Are there a lot of "fat cats" involved? Is there anyone who gave this money who might expect favors from the Federal Government? How much came from corporations which have pled guilty to Federal campaign violations?
7. Would there be an opportunity for anyone else -- say "welfare kids" -- to swim in this pool that the American people are paying for?
8. Why not use \$200,000 to build several public swimming pools -- for the people who really need it ... to keep kids off the streets during the hot Washington summers...it might reduce the crime rate in the Nation's Capital.
9. Please explain why it will cost \$200,000 to build a swimming pool? I understand the pool itself only costs about \$20,000. Is the rest being spent on frills for the President -- saunas, plush dressing rooms, special heating systems, air conditioning?
10. The Swimming Pool Institute has been involved in promoting this pool. Don't they have a vested interest here? Won't it help the manufacturers who fund the Pool Institute to sell pools by using the President in their advertisements? Don't some of these Institute members do business with the Federal Government?

11. You are so concerned about the Vietnamese refugees..wouldn't this money be better spent to help some of them get settled? This money would give several Vietnamese families enough money to live out the rest of thier lives in comfort?
12. How is your mail running on this thing? Could we look at some of the public reaction?
13. What if the next President is not a swimmer? Wouldn't this be money wasted for one year-- or five at the best?