

The original documents are located in Box 131, folder “Morton, Rogers” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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January 20, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ROGERS MORTON

SUBJECT: "Sixty Minutes" Interview

I recommend that you decline this interview. So and Stu Spencer concur.

There are two negative aspects of the interview over which we have no control.

1. The "Sixty Minutes" procedure of editing an actual one-hour interview into a twenty-minute report gives them the opportunity to create a controversial piece.

2. Mr. Wallace may very well approach the interview in an argumentative style that would place you in an unfavorable light.

TAustin:sss:1/20/76
cc: Morton (3)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: RON NESSEN
FROM: TIM AUSTIN
SUBJECT: Counsellor Morton's Interviews

Rog has agreed to talk with the following people about the campaign and his role here at the White House. We wanted to make sure you were aware of these interviews:

Feb. 2	Walter Meers, AP
Feb. 4	Dennis Farney, <u>Wall St. Journal</u>
Feb. 6	Tom DeFrank, <u>Newsweek</u>

Is there any information Rog should be aware of about these reporters before the interviews?

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

4435 WISCONSIN AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016 244-354

FOR DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PROGRAM The Ten O'Clock News

STATION WTTG TV

DATE January 26, 1976 10:00 PM

CITY Washington, D. C.

SUBJECT Allegations of Influence Peddling

ALAN SMITH: Ever since Watergate, the relationships between our public officials and business interests has been spotlighted with intensity. So when Channel 5 News learned of one situation that fell into that category, quote, "of questionable situations," unquote, three months ago, Marvin Scott began tracking down the facts on what appeared to be some questionable transactions and some seemingly corrupt practices.

Some of our national officials are involved and the Federal Maritime Administration. Tonight after many weeks of careful research, the first in a series of exclusive reports.

MARVIN SCOTT: It boils down to questions of just how much "public" is left in public service, the questions of how regulatory agencies dispense favors and to whose benefit. Our investigation has uncovered evidence that this country's private shipping industry has at least taken advantage of the public treasury at the same time the industry has rewarded favored congressmen and other public officials in what seems to amount to collusion.

Take the case of Rogers C. B. Morton, once a congressman and Republican National Chairman. He just left as Secretary of Commerce to become President Ford's sometimes White House counselor and sometimes political agent. Morton was allegedly involved in what our sources explicitly describe as a shakedown of the maritime industry in the late sixties while he was a congressman and a member of the committee which monitors shipping subsidies that amount to billions of dollars.

Mike Trupp was high in the Federal Maritime Commission

while all this allegedly was going on. He says he saw it all firsthand, a rather unusual admission for a former public official.

MYER TRUPP: Through contacts that he had at the Federal Maritime Commission, [he] penetrated the shipping industry. He had a bullroast on the Eastern Shore. He had high-priced tickets for those bullroasts. And he saw that the shipping industry was informed that Rogers Morton was having that bullroast and would like to sell them tickets. The shipping industry bought those tickets from Roger[s] Morton. The money was forwarded to Roger[s] Morton and went into his coffers as congressman.

SCOTT: How would you -- how would you characterize the actions by Rogers Morton?

TRUPP: They are of questionable morality, of questionable judgment, and, again, touch upon the question of extortion in a borderline, but substantial manner.

SCOTT: You had at one point prior to the filming said that this was a shakedown.

TRUPP: It is my feeling and it is my general belief that all of these approaches which bring money from the coffers of industry to the political benefit of people running for office are, in fact, a strong-arm method of shaking down American industry.

SCOTT: For twenty-two years Mike Trupp moved in the highest circles as Director of International Affairs for the Maritime Commission, which regulates the shipping industry. His allegations, he says, are not loose charges.

TRUPP: I was close enough to consider this a personal experience, personally observed by myself and practically at times forced to participate.

SCOTT: How was that?

TRUPP: Well, when the word came over from high government officials that we were stuck with "x" number of tickets for Roger[s] Morton's bullroast and that we were going to have to try to get rid of them some way, we did what we could to help Rogers Morton.

SCOTT: Did you handle some of the checks yourself?

TRUPP: I saw them, yes.

SCOTT: So to the best of your knowledge, has this been

a standard operating procedure for Mr. Morton over the years?

TRUPP: It happened in more than one of Mr. Morton's election tries for his congressional seat.

SCOTT: A spokesman for Mr. Morton confirmed for us tonight that he did hold bullroasts annually over a period of eight years, raising an average twenty thousand dollars at each bullroast. Total: one hundred sixty thousand dollars. How did it work? According to our sources, then Congressman Morton's office would arrange to have blocks of one hundred tickets for the bullroasts hand-delivered to various Maritime Commissioners, who, in turn, would arrange for subordinates to sell them to representatives of the shipping industry and unions as well.

We spoke to one of the former Commissioners who supposedly received some of those tickets. While James F. Fanseen remembers attending a few of the Morton fundraisers, he told us he does not recall being involved in any of the transactions. While never questioned for his alleged role in the Morton fundraising activities, Fanseen subsequently was indicted in Baltimore in another matter for illegally picking up corporation checks for the Nixon reelection campaign. Fanseen did not contest the charges, and he appealed to the court for mercy.

We called the White House for a response from Mr. Morton today. An assistant reached him in California, and, tonight, this response: "Mr. Morton has no way of knowing if it happened. He delegated the responsibility to two staff members who made arrangements for the bullroasts." Morton's assistant said "You'll have to talk to Jim Webster and Bill Mills, but quickly added "That'll be difficult since both of them are dead."

Morton's alleged methods of extracting funds from the shipping industry while in a position to influence decisions affecting that industry is only one aspect of how the industry carefully compensates friendly congressmen and other public officials. Highly placed sources within the industry have told us that Gerald Ford, as a congressman, was, quote, "in tight with the industry and the unions," unquote. He reportedly was the recipient of campaign contributions and other favors from shipping interests.

TRUPP: I know from my position and discussions which I had with people in the maritime industry who were raising funds to aid congressmen that Congressman Ford, the Minority Leader in the House, was looked upon as a person especially favored by the maritime industry. They considered him a friend and they considered him a point of their strength upon the Hill.

SCOTT: A spokesman in the Justice Department confirmed for us the existence of a secret file of congressmen who allegedly

received illegal contributions. They would not, however, say whether Gerald Ford's name is on that list.

American President Lines' and Pacific Far East Lines' officials who were convicted and fined fifty thousand dollars each under the Corrupt Practices Act reportedly conceded that Mr. Ford's name, indeed, is on the list of recipients. These contributions were funneled through a special bank account maintained by the shipping corporations back in 1970. Ford and fourteen other congressmen were not pursued because government attorneys said there was no indication that they knew the contributions were illegal.

Information developed from our sources also indicate that Congressman Ford was among the beneficiaries of a seven hundred fifty thousand dollar political fund set up by the Seafarers International Union. In connection with this fund, the union and its top officers were indicted under the Corrupt Practices Act, but never brought to trial on the grounds that the Justice Department had unaccountably delayed pressing the case.

Apart from contributions, there are questions of what our sources describe as payoffs direct to Congressman Ford from elements in the maritime industry. Now these payoffs, we were told, took the form of fees for speaking engagements before the Maritime Trade Department of the AFL-CIO. According to Mike Trupp and other sources, Ford and other congressmen were invited to weekly cocktail lunches where they would deliver a speech, frequently written by the labor group. This one was delivered by Gerald Ford in December of 1970.

In return for delivering the speeches, congressmen would receive fees -- honorariums, they're called. Sources who criticize these honorariums as a vote purchase allege that Gerald Ford was among the highest paid. A maritime union official told us that Ford's speeches yielded four thousand dollar a year between 1968 and 1973.

We asked the Maritime Trade Department of the AFL-CIO whether all this was true. While they confirm that Ford had spoken to the group, they would not tell us how many times or how much he was paid. A spokesman declared: "We don't have to tell anyone what we pay anyone. We report honorariums to the IRS. Ask them. Ask Ford." We did.

The IRS doesn't make its records public. The White House responded with this statement: "The President has never knowingly accepted illegal contributions. Any honorariums were listed in tax returns, which were audited in the confirmation process. The available records on his campaign contributions were turned over to the Senate Rules and House Judiciary Committees." End, White House statement.

Seemingly corrupt practices among congressmen are also mirrored by unethical practices within the Maritime Administration. One of those practices is cited by Admiral Harllee, former Chairman of the Maritime Commission.

ADMIRAL JOHN HARLLEE [Ret.]: Well, you have certain situations like a previous Maritime administrator awarding a multimillion dollar contract for the construction of tankers to a company which had hitherto been involved only in inland waters, and then very shortly stepping out into a tremendous job, with I think about a million dollar contract himself personally. This seems highly questionable to me in terms of whether a public office was prostituted for private gain. It, I think, requires further explanation.

SCOTT: Admiral Harllee would not name the individual involved, but Channel 5 News has discovered that he is Andrew E. Gibson, a former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Maritime Affairs under the Nixon administration. Reportedly, Gibson accepted an eight hundred eighty-eight thousand dollar job as president of Interstate Oil Transport Company less than six months after he, as Maritime Administrator, approved a ninety million dollar government subsidy to that same shipping company.

According to published reports, after only sixteen months with that company, Gibson left, but is still being paid eighty-eight thousand dollars a year for the balance of his contract.

Although there appears to have been conflict of interest here, there's no evidence at all that an investigation was ever conducted into these questionable actions.

In the next part of this investigative report, we'll show you how some shipping corporations got their hands on some old ferry boats and converted rusting iron into solid gold.

This is Marvin Scott, Metromedia News, New York.

SMITH: To clarify a statement in that special Scott report, the American President Lines and the Pacific Far East Lines -- those lines were convicted as corporations, not their officials.

February 2, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

TIM AUSTIN ✓

FROM:

RON NESSEN

That's a good group of reporters Reg is seeing initially. I have no specific suggestions to make since Reg deals very well with news-men.

RN/jb



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

NOTE FOR: *Tim Austin*

FROM : *RON NESSEN*

Looks OK

to me

RHN

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

2/16

To: Con Tussen

Attached is the proposed
copy for the N. H. newspaper
ads for the President. These
will run Wed. & Thurs.
of this week in the N. H. dailies
& weeklies & on Sunday
in Boston papers. Please
make any comments
& return to me by COB
today. Thanks -

Room 175

Justin

Campaign '76
Media Communications, Inc.

1828 L STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036 (202) 833-8950

February 13, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: TIM AUSTIN
VIA BO CALLAWAY
FROM: BRUCE WAGNER ~~✓~~
SUBJECT: NEW HAMPSHIRE NEWSPAPERS

Copy for our full-page newspaper insertion in New Hampshire
is attached.

cc. Peter Dailey
Peter Kaye
Fred Slight
Stu Spencer

Tuesday, New Hampshire
will start President Ford on the road
to victory in November

COPY: This Tuesday, February 24, we can cast a vote we will always remember proudly.

We can endorse the man whose unquestioned character and strong, steady leadership have restored public confidence in government and have turned the economy around: President Ford.

In the election of 1976, he is the best-qualified candidate in either party. He understands the Presidency, and he has the ability to get things done to meet the needs of New Hampshire and the nation.

President Ford is the one Republican who can win in November. He can rally all Republicans and millions of Independents with his realistic, responsible approach to government.

New Hampshire voters have strong personal reasons for believing in President Ford:

1. We trust him. He means it when he says, "We must be more honest with the American people, promising them no more than we can deliver, and delivering all that we promise." He deals with reality instead of rhetoric.
- 2.. He has the courage to say "No" to runaway spending, to stand up for his principle: "To hold down the cost of living, we must hold down the cost of government." That's our kind of government.

3. He has the common sense to stick to his steady course that is leading us out of the recession, that has cut inflation in half, that is reducing unemployment every month (nearly 800,000 more jobs in January alone).
4. He is experienced. He did not seek the Presidency, but his entire public career has been a preparation for the job. He has grown steadily throughout his lifetime of accomplishment in government.
5. We respect him as a man of outstanding personal character and integrity, dedicated and hard-working, a devoted husband and father.
6. Others respect him. Even his opponents recognize him as a fighter, a determined leader who used his power of veto and the knowledge gained from 25 years in Congress to win a series of victories for common sense.

He is a man of force and action. President Ford acts, where others can only promise. He initiates, he persuades, he leads. His career has been dedicated to the causes of peace, national defense, accountability of government to the people and, above all, financial integrity. He is firmly opposed to the idea that the Federal government can do everything better than the people can do for themselves.

Courage, common sense and self-control are the prime ingredients of President Ford's character. They underlie his style of open, visible government, which has nothing to hide and no need to apologize. President Ford is not afraid to take unpopular positions if he believes they are right. He does not ignore criticism, he stands up to it. He will compromise on details, but not on principles.

isplay: President Ford has earned our support.

Vote for the President on Tuesday.

isplay: President Ford is your President. Keep him.

gnature: President Ford '76

claimer: Paid for by the President Ford Committee, Howard H. Callaway, Chairman, Robert C. Moot, Treasurer.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 2, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO

RON NESSEN

FROM

ROY HUGHES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rog", is written over the name "ROY HUGHES".

While Rog was in Columbus yesterday, George Lehner from WCMH-TV, Columbus, asked Rog to assist in his obtaining an interview with the President. Rog was impressed with Lehner, and thought it was worth passing along to you. Lehner can be reached on (614) 263-5441 or 263-1512.

Please advise your standard procedure for this sort of interview request.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 3, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY
ROGERS C.B. MORTON
BO CALLAWAY
JERRY JONES
BOB MEAD

FROM: RON NESSEN

RHN

Phil Buchen has been notified that Ronald Reagan has asked for, and been granted, time on all three TV stations in Orlando, Florida tomorrow.

In requesting this Florida TV time, Reagan's representatives told the stations it was to be used for a very strong attack on President Ford. No subject was specified.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Ron -

FYI -----

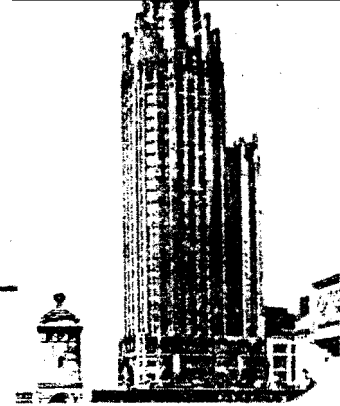
Tim Austin

3/16

17

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TA

CLAYTON KIRKPATRICK
EDITOR

March 8, 1976

Gerald R. Ford
President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Ford:

Thank you so much for your gracious letter of March 3.

I am delighted to see the momentum which your campaign is generating, and I have every confidence that Illinois will deliver a strong majority for you.

All the best.

Sincerely,

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO:

Jim

FROM:

CONNIE GERRARD



Do you and Larry want
to consider this? I think
the answer is NO in keeping
① our policy of only to CVG
Staff and Cabinet
Departments. But you
can decide.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



TO: Larry

FROM: Thym Smith

I ran this down, and our records show the ~~REpublican~~ REpublican National Committee has a daily pick-up from Press Releases and they also receive RN's Briefing.

I think that ~~you~~ we would want to reject this

*Larry Conroy
Lounie talked to by phone
3-29-76*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 22, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR

RON NESSEN

FROM

TIM AUSTIN

Pat Hutar, President of the National Federation of Republican Women, would like to be added to the distribution list for the news releases from your office, including the press conference transcripts.

Her address is

Mrs. Pat Hutar, President
National Federation of Republican Women
310 First Street, S. E.
Washington, D. C. 20003

Many thanks.

484-6670
Mary Foster

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

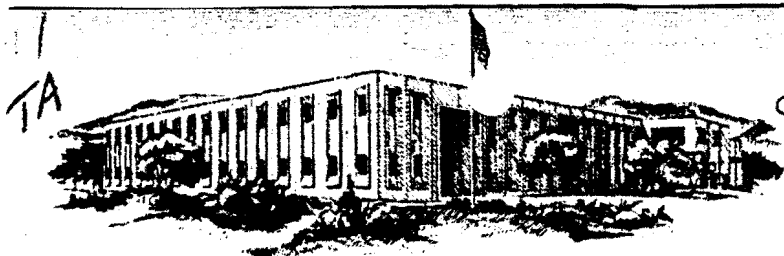
Ron:

FYI -----

I'll do a draft response and forward
it to you for OK.

Tim Austin

4/14



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April 8, 1976

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The Honorable Gerald R. Ford
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20000

Dear President Ford:

Margaret and I were thrilled beyond words to be invited to the formal State dinner for King Hussein and Queen Alia on Tuesday, March 30, at the White House.

We particularly appreciate your talking to us from your plane en route from California to Wisconsin. The climax was your permitting us to have a private audience with you in the Oval Office on March 31.

Your Press Secretary, Ron Nessen, did everything possible to make our stay most enjoyable. The arrangement for a private tour of the first and second floors of the White House was particularly interesting since it gave my wife an opportunity to take the pictures she so thoroughly enjoys taking. She was in her glory and we are forever indebted to you for making this possible.

This was the most memorable trip we have ever taken and we deeply appreciate your inviting us. I assure you that I will do whatever I can to help in your present campaign to return to the office you hold. I was impressed with the caliber of the men around you and with their willingness to furnish information on difficult problems.

Your campaign is blossoming and should continue to accelerate as the months progress. Perhaps your most formidable state will be California because of the genuine affection and admiration so many people have for Governor Reagan because of his outstanding career as a Governor. I had been on the fence for quite some time but was disturbed by Governor Reagan's claim to slash eighty billion dollars from the budget and by his recommendation that Social Security be voluntary and that some of the funds be invested in the stock market. Furthermore, he has not had the experience upon the national and international level that a President of the United States should have before entering that office.

April 8, 1976

This has been a difficult decision for me because Governor Reagan appointed me to the fifteen-member Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Thereafter, three years ago, he appointed me to an eight-year term on the Board of Trustees of the California State University and Colleges System, the largest four-year college educational system in the world. Five per cent of all bachelor's degrees granted in the United States come from our nineteen campuses with 316,000 students. Three per cent of the master's degrees granted in the entire nation likewise come from our system.

It was during my term of service on the Community College Board of Governors that my wife and I contributed substantially toward the three-story library at Merced College where we own a daily paper and lived for years. I serve on campus planning on the State University System and advocate libraries equipped to serve fully the needs of the students.

That is the reason why I was interested when Louis Lerner (a Chicago publisher) of the National Library Commission proposed Phil Powers of Bloomfield, Michigan, and myself to serve on that Commission. Phil and I are fellow newspaper publishers and serve together on the Board of Directors of Suburban Newspapers of America.

Margaret and I are still walking on air over the trip and will be forever grateful to you for giving us the opportunity to make it. We cherish the pin and cuff links you gave us.

Sincerely,

Louis Lerner

DSL:jr