

March 24, 1975

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ROBERT T. HARTMANN

1. Attached is a memorandum from Jack Calkins for your consideration. I generally concur in his conclusions although I am less certain as to the timing of such a move. Certainly it is a matter which ought to be given careful consideration in the very near future.
2. With respect to paragraph 4 of the Calkins' memo, I believe the matter of reconciling a Ford Committee with your CREEP speech in Chicago as Vice President can be met by forthrightly promising to conduct your Presidential campaign, after having been officially nominated at the Convention, through the regular Party organization. Both in the meantime and throughout the campaign you would continue as President to do your best to assist the National Committee, State parties and candidates in their efforts to rebuild the Party, and you might call upon other Republicans to do likewise. It can be pointed out that the new Campaign Reform Law of October 15, 1974 was not enacted at the time of the Chicago speech on March 30, 1974 and that it virtually mandates the creation of pre-primary candidate committees.



March 24, 1975
(Dictated Saturday, March 22)

MEMORANDUM TO: ROBERT T. HARTMANN

FROM: JACK CALKINS

After giving the subject a great deal of thought during the past two months, I have come to the firm conclusion that the President should give an affirmative signal for the formation of a campaign finance and operational organization outside of the White House. My reasons are outlined below.

1. The President's several statements of intended candidacy in 1976 are losing their credibility so long as political writers and other interested observers can detect no signs of a campaign organization and finance arm being formed. It has reached the point where every time he states his intention to run, it is being less believed in some quarters because they know that an effective Presidential effort must be mounted many many months in advance. One political writer told me that the Nixon people were telling him in the spring of 1969 what they were going to do to win in 1972. Under the new election law, a candidate may become one by his own declaration or by operation of law. It has been my assumption that the President wanted no overt campaign actions taken so that he would not become a candidate by operation of law and thus start the meter ticking on the \$10 million limitation which the law imposes for pre-convention expenditures. However, this has not inhibited any of the Democratic aspirants, and the more I have thought about it, the less important it seems to me. Therefore, while the President may, for strategic reasons, not wish to formally declare his candidacy for 1976 as yet, I believe he should permit the formation of a campaign and finance unit to begin collecting funds and making organizational plans for next year. So long as that does not



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happen, we not only have a credibility hazard but, further, we are extremely limited in actions we can take because of having no funds available.

2. The President Ford Committee should be headed by a prominent American who has the President's confidence, and it should be set up outside the White House but with a direct liaison link within the White House structure to the President. Presumably, the individual chosen to head the President Ford Committee would become the campaign manager or chairman for the general campaign following the Republican National Convention. A talented individual or group of campaign consultants should be hired to plan the broad outlines and organizational facets of the pre-convention campaign as well as the post-convention general campaign.

3. The liaison link between the external campaign organization and the President should be clearly designated by the President himself. Presumably the President will have on-going personal contact with the Chairman of the President Ford Committee, but subordinates within the campaign organization must know of the designated contact point within the White House and must have the assurance that such individual or office speaks for the President. This is extremely important in order to avoid a multiplicity of opinions, instructions, etc. which will only serve to confuse the organization rather than aid it. Because you and your staff currently have the responsibility of liaison with the RNC, Congressional and Senatorial Committees, and State Committees throughout the country, the added function of liaison with the President Ford Committee would seem to fall naturally within your office. If that proves to be the President's decision, then it should be very clearly stated, both externally and internally.

It has been obvious over the past two months to me and to many others outside of the White House that there are other elements in the White House Staff which have taken unto themselves the type of political liaison and contact point which your office was



created to have sole jurisdiction over. This is naturally very confusing to those who must do political business with the White House. It means that political information which is important to the conduct of the Presidency is often diffused between several offices and may or may not reach the President. Further, it gives the impression of inefficient and sloppy organization and assignment of duties within the White House Staff because of the obvious overlap. I have considered the possibility that the President may prefer this sort of double-track system. If that is the case, I believe he should advise us to that effect because we are all here to serve the President and will abide by his decisions. However, if that is not his wish, then he should be equally clear in expressing his feelings.

4. The decision to set up the President Ford Committee should not be inhibited by the unfortunate past history of the Committee to Re-elect the President. While President Ford has expressed his intention to operate the general election campaign in 1976 through the established Republican organizations and the RNC, these entities must perforce remain neutral until the 1976 Convention chooses its nominee. Therefore, it is obvious that a separate organization must be formed to deal with and plan for the primary elections and other organizational problems which will precede the convention. The President Ford Committee should be instructed to cooperate fully with any Republican entity which seeks such cooperation pre-convention, but it must also plan for the inclusion of independents and disaffected Democrats in the post-convention campaign as well as in states where voters who are not enrolled Republicans can nonetheless vote in the Republican Primary. The problem of how to honor the President's pledge concerning the RNC and the 1976 General Election can be addressed at a later time and after the President Ford Committee has been organized and staffed. The important thing is that we must begin, and very soon, to establish the organizational and finance functions for public announcement no later than midsummer, in my opinion.



Robert T. Hartmann

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It is my hope that you agree with the conclusions and opinions expressed above and that you will discuss them with the President very soon.

Gwen Anderson concurs in the above.

JTC:rg

