

Mr. Buchen

August 8, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT

John Byrnes, Bryce Harlow, Bob Griffin, Bill Scranton, Bill Whyte, Tom Whitehead and I have had lengthy discussions about your assumption of the Presidency and how the transition should be managed for the first few weeks. The following is a distillation of the most important items, the decisions, and the information we need from you.

I. Transition Organization

In addition to a trusted group of advisers, this group recommends strongly that you need a temporary operational group interposed between you and the old White House staff to enable you to exercise the powers of the Presidency. This transition staff would also provide liaison with key members of your Vice Presidential staff and with the old White House staff. They will also be needed to deal with the Cabinet, Governors, business, labor, etc. We recommend the following functions and candidates for this transition team, and need your judgments on both. However, there is a great deal of flexibility in tailoring jobs to fit the people.

Team Coordinator: We share your view that there should be no Chief of Staff, especially at the outset. However, there should be someone who could rapidly and efficiently organize the new staff organization, but who will not be perceived or be eager to be Chief of Staff.

Recommendation: Frank Carlucci, \* Bill Clements,  
Don Rumsfeld

Your choice:

Don Rumsfeld

Liaison with Cabinet and Agencies:

We recommend that this be someone <sup>familiar with</sup> in the Cabinet and also close to you personally.

Recommendation: Donald Rumsfeld, \* Rogers Morton

Your choice:

Roger Morton

Press Secretary: Jerry ter Horst

Political Liaison: Congress, Governors, business and labor groups, etc., will need to be contacted and will want a point of contact.

Recommendation: Jack Marsh\*, Bob Ellsworth, ~~John Byrne~~

Your choice:

Jack Marsh

Personnel Chief: You will have to begin immediately reviewing resignations, considering new appointments already in process, and considering a recruitment process.

Recommendation: Bill Scranton\* - John Barnum

Your choice:

Bill Scranton

II. The Business of Government

For public confidence, to keep the executive branch administration intact, and to assure the smoothest, most rapid assumption of the Presidential mantle, you should have a series of meetings the first few days to assert your personal direction and control over the executive branch of the government. We will see to the agendas, briefings, etc., you may need, and you will have a chance to change schedules, formats, etc., as the time approaches. However, we believe we should begin to plan for the following schemes of meetings in the following approximate order:

Congressional leadership (Right after swearing-in)  
Key White House staff (Saturday morning)  
Cabinet, followed by NSC (Saturday morning)  
Address of Joint Session (Monday)  
Governors (Tuesday)  
Diplomatic Corps (Monday and Tuesday)

MAYORS  
COUNTY  
OFFICIALS

JOINT CHIEFS OF  
STAFF

Recommendation: These be scheduled.

Your choice: \_\_\_\_\_

For the same reasons you should meet with a number of key American and foreign individuals. Moreover, you will need their support, their good will, and their expression to their peers and to the press. Still others you will want to consult for advice.

Recommendation: That this group or one of our members such as Bryce Harlow be asked to prepare a list for your review at the earliest date.

Your choice: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Old White House Staff

You must walk a delicate line between compassion and consideration for the former President's staff and the rapid assertion of your personal control over the executive branch. The old White House staff will submit their resignations, but they should be asked to stay on for a time to help with the transition. It will be clear that most of the political types will be expected to leave within a reasonable time. The one exception we recommend is Al Haig. Al has done yeoman service for his country. You should meet with him personally as soon as possible and prevail upon him to help you and your transition team, thus completing the holding-together he has done for so long. He also will be needed for liaison with Mr. Nixon and his family. However, he should not be expected, asked, or be given the option to become your Chief of Staff.

Recommendation: You give special treatment status and recognition to Haig. Assure him of your need for his unique capability at this time and of your assistance and support for the future.

#### IV. Vice Presidential Search Process

You will be under considerable pressure to move immediately, and you should, but this cannot deter you and your transition team from the business of government. Therefore, we recommend that you follow the same procedure that Mr. Nixon did in eliciting suggestions from the Congress, the Governors, etc., regarding candidates and that these letters be requested to be in the hands of one of your personal secretaries on a date certainly a week or so hence.

Your choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Philip W. Buchen

