

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

4/15/94

Per your request
enclosed is an update
our African American outreach.

While I have sent this
new thought normal
channels, there are
some concerns I have
not put in writing.
You indicated in our
conversation you wanted
to discuss some concerns
you had. Should I
schedule the time? Alexia

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April 12, 1994
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DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE

INFORMATION

MARKING INITIALS: MS DATE: 12/9/21

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

209-0990-5

FROM: Alexis Herman

SUBJECT: African American Report

I. SUMMARY

Per your request, the following report outlines African American participation with OPL and the White house during the first quarter of 1994.

II. DISCUSSION

POTUS EVENTS

We organized three POTUS events this quarter, two in January and one in March. In January, we had the primary role of putting together the MLK event at Howard University and the White House reception for children of the civil rights movement. In March, we were successful in coordinating your visit to the UNCF dinner and reception in New York City.

HEALTH CARE

We conducted health care briefings for several African American groups including doctors, directors of national associations, labor leaders, newspaper publishers, businesses, associations and nurses. Currently, we are in the planning stages of organizing a health care briefing for clergy from every major denomination in the African American community. This event is expected to culminate into a national day of prayer in support of universal health coverage. The primary goal for hosting this event is to generate an outpouring of African American religious support for the President's plan.

CRIME

As part of OPL's state leadership crime briefings, we arranged for African American participation at each of the crime leadership day briefings. We invited police officials, religious leaders, and educators in from 19 different states. We also coordinated the African American policemen to be honored and recognized at the White House event for police heroes.

SOUTH AFRICA

We are coordinating targeted briefings with the NSC on developments in South Africa. To date, we have briefed black college presidents as well as key African American leaders on events unfolding around the upcoming elections.

Additionally, we are assisting in delegate selection for various U.S. delegations to South Africa after the elections for the Inauguration. We are also currently involved in a coordination role with Africare aimed at providing exposure to American governance for individuals expected to assume leadership positions in the new South African government. (Africare is a leading African American organization involved in training and technical assistance projects in over 30 African countries.) As part of the training for individuals slated to hold cabinet level position, we have been asked to arrange meetings related to our transition efforts. It is hoped that the first of these meetings and interaction can occur during the inaugural period immediately following the elections. The project is funded by USAID and is to be implemented over a three year period.

AFRICAN AMERICAN CONSTITUENCY DAY

Working with political and the DNC, we are working on plans that will lead to an African American early supporters day in May or June.

SENSITIVE NOMINATIONS

We were involved in extensive work on behalf of the two nominees for the position of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Needless to say, our involvement with John Payton was mostly damage control until he withdrew his name from consideration. With Deval Patrick, we employed a hands on approach to his nomination from the beginning. Shortly after you announced your intention to nominate Patrick, we hosted a reception and introduced him to a broad coalition of civil rights leaders representing over 100 important organizations in the civil rights community. We arranged for Patrick to meet with key members of the CBC and organized a series of private meetings with leaders of traditional civil rights organizations. We later arranged for him to receive positive media coverage from key newspapers and magazines throughout the U.S. During this period, we were also actively engaged in building public support for Bill Gould, the nominee for NLRB Chairman. We hosted several meetings on his behalf and successfully generated public support for his nomination from several key African American organizations nationwide.

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U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

We have had numerous phone conversations and meetings with members of the civil rights community regarding the problems associated with the Republican holdovers on the Civil Rights Commission. These and other discussions were centered around developing a strategy aimed at Congressional reauthorization of the Commission to allow the President to appoint the Staff Director without having to get concurrence from a majority of the Commissioners. In addition, we have engaged in numerous discussions with key civil rights leaders regarding the suit brought against the Acting Staff Director by a Republican Commissioner. The fact that the case was recently decided in favor of the Republican, requires us to redouble our efforts in the Congress around reauthorization.

PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATIONS

We arranged African American representation on various delegations to international events, such as the funeral of the late President of the Ivory Coast. We also assisted with delegate selection for South African and Mexican trade missions.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

We arranged for Presidential messages to be sent to various individuals, including messages to Ben Chavis around the recent loss of two family members. We also arranged for numerous messages to be sent to organizations hosting annual meetings including Blacks in Government, the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education and the Black Psychiatrist of America. In addition, we arranged for presidential birthday and anniversary messages to be sent to key constituents, including Addie Wyatt, Curtis Mayfield and Rodney Slater's mother-in-law, to name a few. We were also instrumental in getting a proclamation issued for Black History Month and assisted in getting special messages sent to groups such as the Harlem Globetrotters, the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, the Greater Washington Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

SURROGATE SPEAKERS

During this quarter, we have assisted several organizations in obtaining surrogate speakers for their conferences and annual meetings. We were successful in getting speakers for the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Business League, the National Black Nurses Association and the NAACP, among others. Our message has focused on legislative initiatives and implementation of EITC and our Empowerment Zones.

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PROBLEM AREAS REQUIRING GREATER ATTENTION

Haiti: We are receiving numerous calls from individuals citing unfairness in our Haitian refugee policy. Many callers are expressing outrage over the perceived difference in treatment received upon arrival by refugees from Cuba and Haiti. Civil rights groups are bitterly complaining that there is a double standard when it comes to our Haitian and Cuban policy. The groups are livid because the Haitians are detained upon arrival while the Cubans are perceived to be welcomed into the U.S. with open arms. The emotions are very strong on this issue and many groups including the CBC feel we aren't doing enough to restore democracy to Haiti. Randall Robinson, of TransAfrica recently began a hunger strike to protest U.S. Haitian policy.

Redistricting: Several groups have become alarmed over the lawsuits filed against some CBC members regarding redistricting. To counter their nervousness, we have cited your strong support for voting rights and have sent your press statement on the subject to key constituents throughout the nation. We also arranged for Deval Patrick to meet with affected CBC members to calm them and learn the details of their cases. We are in the process of meeting with key opinion makers on this subject with Justice officials. While CBC members have not been overly critical of our approach to this issue, most civil rights groups however, are upset that we filed amicus briefs in some cases and are pressing for nothing less than Justice Department intervention in all remaining cases. I am very worried about Jewish/African American relationships because of conversations that are reminiscent of the Bake Era.

Minority Business Outreach: In anticipation of criticism directed at the administration by our opponents, we are in the process of assembling information on minority business programs throughout government. We have held meetings with representatives from several federal agencies to determine if these programs are being effective in fulfilling their legislative mandates and policy requirements. Meanwhile, we are trying to counter a growing concern among some business people that a procurement bill winding its way through Congress may be harmful to minority businesses. Some of our business friends are asking us to insure that the reinventing government initiative won't harm set aside efforts aimed at assisting business development in minority communities.

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