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THE ADMINISTRATOR

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

File / McManus w/ tape

STAB.

*Bill
I think this
shd be done at
state without RR
I still want
confirmation
on Mozambique
program.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE MICHAEL K DEEVER
Assistant to the President and
Deputy Chief of Staff
The White House

From: M. Peter McPherson *hpm*

Subject: A meeting involving the President to announce
the \$90 million food supplemental and the
Economic Policy Initiative (EPI) for Africa,
followed by a press briefing

Purpose:

PO
The purpose of this meeting is to have the President take the
lead in announcing the emergency food supplemental and the
Economic Policy Initiative for Africa. You and I have agreed
in concept to this.

Background:

Because of an unusually widespread drought, Africa is
threatened by an increasingly critical food shortage. The most
recent estimate of the Food and Agricultural Organization of
the UN puts this year's food needs between 1.5 and 2 million
metric tons in over 20 countries. The U.S. has already
committed almost 200,000 tons of food over and above our base
food program for Africa this fiscal year.

Unfortunately, the current situation is not unique in history.
Africa is prone to droughts. Because of a deepening economic
crisis which began in the 1970s, African countries do not have
the capacity to finance necessary food imports from their own
resources. In fact, African food production has declined by
over 20 percent per capita between 1961 and 1982. Food aid
alleviates human suffering but it does little to prevent the
reoccurrence of such emergencies.

A primary cause has been poor African economic policies, which
have made the state the principal economic player while
stifling the incentive for individuals to produce more.

The Administration is proposing a two-pronged approach to the crisis. (1) A supplemental appropriation of \$90 million to help relieve the immediate food emergency needs in Africa during FY 84. (2) A \$500 million five-year Economic Policy Initiative (EPI) for Africa to stimulate coordinated multilateral efforts to effect policy reform oriented toward economic growth.

Proposed Meeting:

I propose that 5 minutes be reserved on the President's calendar for January 26 or 27, 1984. This way the meeting will not be overshadowed by the State of the Union or the President's announcement for re-election.

The meeting would include the following:

The President

M. Peter McPherson, Administrator (A.I.D.)

Frank J. Donatelli, Assistant Administrator (A.I.D.)
Africa

A Representative of the Department of State

The meeting would be followed by a press briefing in the White House briefing room where I would read a statement from the President announcing the EPI and food supplemental. The statement would be prepared by A.I.D. under my direction.

I would then elaborate and handle questions from the press. Background material prepared by A.I.D. would be available for press.

cc: Michael Baroody
Craig Fuller
Mike McManus

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 9, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR MICHAEL K. DEEVER

FROM: CRAIG L. FULLER 
SUBJECT: Communications Plan for the Food Assistance
Task Force

Monday, January 9, 1984

- WSJ editorial supporting the work of the Task Force
- copies of the draft report (reworked over the weekend) made available to the press at the Task Force meetings
- expect news coverage tonight on the Task Force meeting

Tuesday, January 10, 1984

- Clay LaForce will appear on one of the morning shows to discuss the work of the Task Force
- Clay LaForce will hold a press briefing at the Department of Labor (final arrangements TBD) prior to arrival at the White House
- WH guidance should be that we will comment on the report after we see it
- at 1:30 p.m. Clay LaForce will meet the President in the Oval Office for a greeting and will escort him into the Cabinet Room and introduce him to the Task Force members
- between ~~1:40~~ p.m. and ~~2:00~~ p.m. the Task Force will brief the President on their report and leave without press contact
- a WH statement will be issued late in the day (we will need a small group meeting to discuss this matter--I'll get back to you on it)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

file

January 6, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR MICHAEL K. DEEVER

FROM: CRAIG L. FULLER *CS*

SUBJECT: Briefing on the Report of the Task
Force on Food Assistance

As you know we are holding time on the President's schedule at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 10, 1984 for a briefing on the Report of the Task Force on Food Assistance. I have attached a schedule proposal with my recommendations on how I would like to use the time.

In making a determination on this, I would ask that you bear in mind the following:

- at the present time, 11 of the 13 members support the draft report (one thinks the report goes too far in suggesting there is a hunger problem, one thinks it does not go far enough);
- there will be a news story on Monday when the Task Force meets;
- the White House press corps will be looking for the President's reaction on Tuesday (and will get White House reaction one way or another);
- the lead story out of the White House on Tuesday will be the Chinese Premier's visit and the lead story on Wednesday will be the Kissinger Commission report;
- we should not walk away from the Food Assistance Task Force and we should not send home at least 11 and maybe 13 people who endorse something that we can accept...we can "low key" the meetings but we should be willing to allow the President and the press to have contact with the Task Force.

cc: Ed Meese

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

DATE: JANUARY 6, 1984

FROM: CRAIG L. FULLER 

MEETING: Briefing by Clay LaForce on the Report of the Food Assistance Task Force and dropby with the members of the Task Force

DATE: Tuesday, January 10, 1984 @ 1:30 p.m.

PURPOSE: The Food Assistance Task Force will meet and finish their report on January 9th. This meeting will provide the Task Force Chairman with an opportunity to brief the President on the report and will allow the members of the Task Force to meet briefly with the President for a photograph.

FORMAT: 1:30 p.m. -- Oval Office briefing with LaForce for 20 minutes

1:50 p.m. -- The President, LaForce and others from Oval Office join the members of the Task Force who will have been assembled in the Roosevelt Room for greeting and photographs (10 minutes)

CABINET PARTICIPATION: Secretary John Block

SPEECH MATERIAL: Talking points for the Oval Office will be provided.

PRESS COVERAGE: None. However, LaForce will brief the press following the meeting (WH press room suggested/USDA press briefing room is second choice)

STAFF: Craig L. Fuller

RECOMMEND: Ed Meese, Craig Fuller

OPPOSED:

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION: None with the Task Force


APPROVE _____

DISAPPROVE _____

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 4, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR MICHAEL K. DEEVER

FROM: CRAIG L. FULLER 
SUBJECT: Food Assistance Task Force

You asked me yesterday in the Communications Planning Group to coordinate efforts concerning the Food Assistance Task Force. I have been briefed on the report and will arrange the following:

- a detailed briefing late today on the Task Force recommendations for a limited, senior group;
- a meeting will be schedule with senior administration officials later this week to determine if the President can "accept in principle" the Task Force recommendations;
- the Task Force Chairman and executive director concur in this approach and will accept reactions from us;
- guidance over the weekend when the report leaks should be that we will not comment on the report until we have been briefed on it--we should also say that the President took the leadership in assembling this group and is anxious to hear their recommendations and intends to take prompt action;
- we will meet on Monday with Task Force representatives following their public meeting in order to analyze the final version of the report and its recommendations.
- I suggest that our Tuesday meeting at 1:30 p.m. be expanded to 30 minutes, giving the chairman an opportunity to brief the President in some detail on the findings and recommendations--following that meeting, La Force could go into the press room for a detailed press briefing with the President making an opening statement that he endorses in principle the recommendations and has ordered USDA and OPD to begin work immediately on legislation and administrative directives to implement the recommendations. (There will not be a recommendation to continue the Task Force. Any addition study required for rural areas or other issues will be done by the Administration.)

As a general operating approach we are going to refrain from having the White House receive the report or call a meeting in the White House with the Task Force chairman. The briefings will be by phone and we will not indicate to anyone that we are being briefed.

Let me know if other steps should be taken.

In order to develop a strategy for dealing with the report, I did receive a detailed briefing of what is in the report. The report is about 100 pages long. In addition there will be 12 to 15 appendixes with technical information. The following points are contained in the report. This information should be held close.

FOOD ASSISTANCE TASK FORCE SUMMARY

The report will make the following points:

- Many say hunger is widespread and growing...the problem is complex...it is related to poverty and unemployment.
- Different groups are affected differently: the Task Force identifies new poor; traditional poor and street people.
- The question is asked, "Are there people in the United States with unmet basic needs?" The Task Force believes that anytime it is documented that a need exists, it is taken care of; however, they indicate that there are probably undocumented cases of hunger that exist which are not taken care of.
- There will be strong statements that the "safety net" exists and is effective...although, the safety net is viewed as a federal, state, local and private sector assistance network that when combined forms an effective safety net.
- The Task Force will report that it has not seen or heard of severe malnutrition.
- Hunger is defined as "inadequate access to sufficient quantities of food for constituting a nutritionally satisfactory diet.
- Five general claims are discussed in some detail. They are:
 - (1) The number of people getting assistance is steadily rising in the private sector programs---the Task Force says this is true but not evidence that there is an unmet need

for food assistance...better distribution, more publicity about free food all contribute to higher demand.

(2) The number of people below the poverty line is increasing---the Task Force agrees but indicates that this is driven by recession and the nation is succeeding at coming out of recession.

(3) Malnutrition is increasing---there is much bad research in this area according to the Task Force...they found no evidence to suggest that malnutrition is increasing and, in fact, it may be declining.

(4) Food stamps run out prior to the end of the month---they do, but this is because the Congress ended the purchase requirement several years ago and food stamps, for people who earn something, were never intended and are not now intended to provide 100% of the cost of food for the month.

(5) There very low participation rates in food assistance programs---the Task Force concurs with respect to some groups, particularly the elderly and the "higher income" poverty population.

-- There are four sets of recommendations:

(1) Allow the states the option of establishing autonomous food assistance programs which would receive a single food assistance payment from the federal government (in our jargon, a block grant...but that term will not be used).

(2) Improve program targeting and administration by: reducing overpayment errors; simplifying application procedures; restoring food stamp allotment to 100% of thrifty food plan for those without income; raise asset limits; lengthen state food stamp office office hours; stagger delivery of food stamps to reduce store price adjustments; consider cashing-out food stamp benefits for disabled and elderly; reauthorize WIC program at current spending levels pending USDA reevaluation of WIC.

(3) Encourage greater private sector efforts and greater military efforts: clarify tax treatment and provide enhanced deductions for certain types of food assistance programs; highlight the work done by the military with food banks (Mrs. Baker's program).

(4) Improve measures of poverty and nutritional statistics: improve techniques for establishing the poverty line

- The irony of the price support program which helps the farmers but keeps the price of food and milk high is pointed out without specific recommendations along with the irony of paying people not to produce food products while at the same time giving as much as we can to feed the hungry.
- The difficulty of designing federal programs with work incentives is commented upon in a statement that encourages workfare, but the Task Force will not support workfare.

More information will be made available at the upcoming briefing.

rec'd
12-30

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 30, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR MIKE DEEVER

FROM: MIKE BAROODY MB

SUBJECT: The Pentagon Commission Report on the Beirut Attack and The Food Assistance Task Force Report

Attached are two documents Mike McManus said you needed by Tuesday. As he asked, they synopsise key points about the two reports.

The first, a one-pager, discusses the Pentagon report. It is designed to re-emphasize the main themes in the President's Wednesday statement and has been checked by NSC. There will be some amplification from Secretary Weinberger on the status of the report's recommendations (e.g. to strengthen security measures for the Marines in Beirut). Weinberger's comments are expected Tuesday.

The second, a two-pager, discusses the hunger issue in light of recent press accounts and leaks about the contents of the Task Force' report. This document is written as general guidance for those who may have to comment on the issue over the next several days.

With respect to the Task Force report itself, two upcoming events are sure to generate major press attention.

- 1) On January 9th when the Task Force meets to finalize its report here in Washington (site yet to be determined), the meeting will be open to the press and public. This event will amount to the unveiling of the Task Force' recommendations. May generate controversy. Will certainly lead almost immediately to questions about how the Administration will respond (Do we agree or not? Which recommendations will we accept? etc.).
- 2) Release of the final report -- expected on or about January 16th. We must be prepared, it seems to me, to announce in some detail what we intend to do about the recommendations at about the same time the report is issued.

I understand from Mary Jarratt (Food and Nutrition at USDA) that Dick Lyng of Agriculture is having discussions with Craig Fuller here about how we should respond to the report.

Of course, the equally important question is who should respond -- White House or USDA. (My view is that the White House must be active in this, but final plans should wait until more about the recommendations is known.)

One final point, as mentioned in the attachment, deserves emphasis: The Administration has maintained a "hands off" policy toward the Task Force and its studies. We have provided only logistical support to their efforts, but no policy input.

cc: Mike McManus

January 2, 1983

THE PENTAGON REPORT ON THE ATTACK AT THE BEIRUT AIRPORT

- o President Reagan spoke on this subject December 27th. In his statement he accepted the report, said many of its recommendations had been implemented and that others would be. He also made the following points:
 - "If there is to be blame, it properly rests here in this office and with this President. I accept responsibility for the bad as well as the good."
 - He agreed with the finding that the U.S military is inadequately equipped "by tradition and training" to deal with the "fundamentally new phenomenon of state-supported terrorism."
 - He also said local commanders have suffered enough and should not be punished for "not fully comprehending the nature of today's terrorist threat."

(The President's comments preclude action by the military courts, but allow administrative action.)

 - The appropriate response to this terrorism is not to run from it, the President said, but for civilized countries to work together to curb it by sharing intelligence, improving training and "most important of all, to hold increasingly accountable those countries which sponsor terrorism..."
- (The DoD report referred to "Iranian connection" to the attack, but did not directly accuse the Iran government of involvement or sponsorship.)
- o The President said the presence of the Marines in Lebanon had helped lay the foundation for future peace, restoration of a central government, and establishment of an effective Lebanese army.
- o He saw hope of new progress toward Lebanese national reconciliation and the removal of foreign forces.
- o The 144 page report was made public on December 28th. It contained the findings of a five member commission established by the Secretary of Defense on November 7th and chaired by retired Navy Admiral Robert Long.
- o The Commission was asked to examine security measures in place at the time of the October 23 truck-bomb attack, security measures taken since and to make recommendations for improvements.

January 2, 1983

PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON FOOD ASSISTANCE

- o President Reagan appointed a 13 member Task Force last August to review food and nutrition programs.
- o The President said he was perplexed by reports of hunger in America when public and private efforts to provide food for the needy were so extensive. The task force was charged with discovering the extent of the problem and the reasons for it.
- o The President has said that one hungry American is one too many. He asked the task force to examine the operation of existing public and private programs to see if improvements were needed in distribution of food assistance or information about how to get it.
- o The group will meet in Washington on January 9th to approve its report. The meeting will be open to press and public.
- o The report itself will be made public as soon as possible after this meeting (probably during the week of January 16th).
- o The task force held seven hearings around the country.
- o The Administration has had no policy input but did provide logistical assistance. Like the public, Administration officials await publication of the report to learn of the task force' recommendations.

Statements by task force members

- o Press accounts have quoted some task force members describing the contents of a draft version of the report.
- o These reports suggest the task force has found localized pockets of poverty and malnutrition in the country, among children and elderly -- and the report is said to contain "a menu of recommendations" for dealing with this problem.
- o Press accounts also suggest the task force will not recommend major spending increases in food assistance programs.

- o AP quoted one member, Dr. George Graham of Johns Hopkins University, asserting the problem is not of national scope. "I don't believe anyone in their right mind believes that there is a massive hunger problem," he said. He said the task force found there were mal-nourished Americans, including abused and battered children and "the lonely elderly, who are afraid to come out."
- o Of course, these accounts are not authoritative and report the individual views of those task force members who have chosen to speak publicly. Task force members and staff are still reviewing the draft report and the task force' work will not be complete until after the meeting on January 9th.

What will the Administration do with the report?

- o Officials will review the report and recommendations as soon as available.
- o We are prepared to work with appropriate members and committees of Congress, where necessary, on ways to implement feasible recommendations.
- o USDA is separately reviewing the operation of food assistance programs to learn, for example, why some jurisdictions which have turned back federal food assistance dollars nonetheless report significant incidence of hunger.

What is the Administration now doing to feed the needy?

- o In short, quite a lot. For example, the federal government subsidizes 95 million meals a day.
- o USDA alone spent over \$19 billion on food assistance in fiscal 1983.
- o That year, more people benefitted from food stamps than ever in history. The peak participation rate hit 22 million -- up 12% from 1980 levels (a recession year). One out of every 11 Americans got benefitted in FY83.
- o Food stamp spending rose more than 40% over 1980 -- from \$8.3 billion then to about \$12 billion in FY83.
- o Virtually every student from a low-income family (\$12,870 for a family of four) can receive a free school lunch.