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August 15, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. NIXON

PREPARING FOR THE POST-ELECTION TRANSITION

Until November, you will be preoccupied with winning the election. A few steps taken now, however, can give you a headstart on meeting the wholly different, and almost impossible, demands that face a President-elect.

There are only ten-plus weeks between election and inauguration. Within that period, and in many cases within the first few weeks of it, you will face some of your most crucial decisions.

First, you will have to make a few dozen top appointments. You will entrust the nation's fate and your own place in history to men you may not know, after a selection process necessarily less thorough than that of any professional firm, business organization, or university.

Second, you must initiate the alterations in government organization most critical for your objectives.

Third, you must formulate the substantive positions necessary to make best use of the "honeymoon period," to engage the enthusiasms of a divided nation, and to deal with early crises.

The quality of your administration may be determined in the ten weeks before you take office.

Advance preparations are therefore imperative. But there are two problems. First, you and your immediate staff must give top priority to the campaign. Second, advance preparations might be misunderstood as overconfidence of victory. (There would be little risk of such misunderstanding if it were known that both major candidates were undertaking advance preparations.) Both problems can be overcome if you entrust these preparations to discreet and trusted personal advisers not immersed in the campaign.

The four areas requiring advance work are personnel, substantive program, government organization, and transitional arrangements.

I recommend that you now ask at least one person to begin identifying possible appointees for specific key positions. If his activities are to be of real use to you, a personnel adviser must enjoy your complete trust. He should have a wide circle of acquaintances and possess good judgment about people and about the qualities needed for effective government service. In addition, he must understand the particular qualities demanded by particular positions. He must be known to be a man of great integrity with no tendency to "play favorites." Hopefully, he would be intimate enough so that you and he could discuss specific individuals in candid detail. He ought also to enjoy the full confidence of your staff.

It should be understood by the adviser and by any others who might learn of his activities that he does not select, but only gathers names

and information for you. This adviser might or might not be useful in the post-election period when you may wish to entrust larger scale recruitment to a different person, possibly one now more actively engaged in your campaign. Two or three pre-election advisers, acting separately, might be equally or even more useful. We describe in a later section those key appointments which require decisions almost immediately after the election. If you undertake this preliminary effort, you will be much better prepared for that ordeal.

II We recommend that you request substantive studies on issues which may be in crisis during the first three to six months of 1969, issues likely to demand some early response from your administration, and issues otherwise likely to be important in your first year program, particularly those to be stressed in your Inaugural Address and other early messages. To some extent, the campaign apparatus is now doing this, but additional steps outside the campaign effort may be vital for three reasons: First, there are issues which may be important to you as President, but which are not important campaign issues. Second, campaign priorities usually preclude the pursuit of issues in sufficient depth or concreteness to provide for specific executive actions or legislative proposals. Third, such an effort might enlist participants or consultants who would not be available for the campaign itself. It is difficult to identify the issues worthy of special pre-election inquiry, but we offer some suggestions in a later section.

III We recommend that you solicit selected studies on government organization. The success of your administration in carrying out your

politics will depend primarily on the quality of people selected. The division of responsibilities among executive departments and between the departments and the White House Staff could, however, influence your choices for particular posts. You may need to determine how you expect to handle national security policy or welfare-urban-labor-transportation problems even before you make your major Cabinet and Staff appointments. Your personal preferences and working habits will determine the kind of White House Staff that would best serve you and would bear strongly on the other questions as well. You will have little time to pursue or even discuss these questions before the election, but prior staff work in these three areas at least (national security, urban problems, White House Staff) should facilitate the actions you must take immediately after November 5. You might, for example, wish to ask a man experienced in each area to recommend sensible approaches that could be implemented within existing statutory authority and thus be of immediate relevance to you. We offer further observations later.

IV We recommend that prior to the election you prepare administrative arrangements for the transition period. You will need someone to deal with the old administration after the election, or, if President Johnson suggests it, earlier. You and your appointees will also need advice on useful past transition experiences and on methods of moving smoothly and efficiently into power. These are clearly temporary functions. More generally, you will need staff services other than those required during the campaign and similar to those you will soon need in the White House. We would be prepared to offer suggestions in a later memorandum.

I

APPOINTMENTS

1. An impossible task. In the brief period between election and inauguration, you will have to select most of the several hundred top-level appointees upon whom the fate of your administration will largely depend. No President-elect can know beforehand more than a handful of men qualified for these posts. Many of those he chooses will be strangers. The number of appointments to be made, coupled with the shortness of time, impairs the selection process. Further complicating the President-elect's almost impossible task is pressure to reward faithful service to campaign or party. The authors--who have never felt the heat--believe that the dissatisfaction of disappointed office-seekers and their supporters are transient and minor compared to the harm to the country, and to the President, resulting from appointees of modest competence or mere acceptability. The next President's responsibilities are too grave to be entrusted either to the bureaucracy or to the merely competent.

A. Large Scale Talent Hunt

2. You will need a large-scale talent hunt primarily for the several hundred sub-Cabinet posts you must fill. For your Cabinet, you will probably draw on your intimate advisers and other major political figures. These sources in turn may suggest to you people whom you will want to use, but whom you may know casually, if at all. It may be instructive to

credentials for younger persons, lest the opportunity be lost--as in 1953-1960--to draw new vitality into the party.) They should seek not only the more senior people who would be appropriate Presidential appointees but the younger men who might be their deputies and assistants, or who might be useful later in the administration.

The places to look are many. Among the more obvious sources are (1) foundations, (2) boards of directors of national companies (and especially of the insurance companies that often expend considerable effort to secure broadly qualified and public spirited national representation), (3) metropolitan law firms, (4) major investment banking firms and other financial institutions, (5) universities, and (6) such business organizations as the Committee for Economic Development. The latter may be of particular aid in identifying able middle-level corporate executives.

B. Seminars with Prospective Appointees

4. The traditional method by which Presidents-elect have selected appointees has been the private interview. In some instances, your interests could also be served by arranging for a few seminars to be conducted by small groups, including some possible appointees.

The format of such seminars should not be uniform. To one on domestic and international financial matters, three to six men might be invited; most would be "experts" in the sense of having qualifications for appointment to the Treasury, Commerce, or the Council of Economic Advisers. They could receive invitations and be given agenda a week or so in advance. In an hour or two with such a group, you could inform yourself on complex,

technical subjects, and at the same time obtain impressions of how these men might perform as members of your administration.

In a less technical area, you might alternatively invite a few possible appointees to join you in a briefing session conducted by representatives of the departing administration. You could find it profitable to see how these men interact with experts and with each other. This device is available before the election as well as later, and it could both extend the range of your knowledge and spare you some fruitless private interviews.

C. Appointment Priorities

5. Earlier the better. To be ready to operate the government upon its inauguration, the new administration must be formed as much before January 20 as possible. The new appointees need time to familiarize themselves with the fundamentals of their offices before assuming actual responsibilities, to get to know one another, to extricate themselves from their previous occupations, and to make the necessary personal moves. Although it was once customary to announce the Cabinet on Inauguration Day, major appointments should now be made as soon as possible after the election. We have divided appointments into "immediate" and "less-immediate" categories and arbitrarily placed the dividing line at fifteen days after the election. All major appointments should be completed by mid-December.

6. Superior positions first. It is generally preferable to name a department's Secretary before naming its Assistant Secretaries. This might seem obvious, but President Kennedy tried the opposite in order to "plant his own men" in the departments and thus provide alternative

channels to the departments. The Kennedy effort did not accomplish that purpose but tended to impair effective working relationships within the departments; the Secretary's position was made ambiguous both with respect to his nominal subordinates and with respect to the White House. That is not the way to make the departments effective entities (and especially not in State with its chronic organizational difficulties). The President-elect should, of course, participate in selecting major departmental appointees--especially the Deputy or Undersecretary. But we believe he will achieve a more effective administration if he accords the Secretary-designate some role in this process.

7. Criteria for immediate appointments. Before naming the positions that should be filled immediately--a list that is meant to be suggestive rather than definitive--we enumerate some relevant criteria. Prompt appointment seems required for positions with one or more of the following characteristics:

(1) The agency is concerned with matters in which decisions are required and in which wrong decisions may have disastrous consequences. Here the appointee must be given the utmost time to prepare. (State, Defense, and perhaps Justice)

(2) The agency is so complex, so ill-organized, or so poorly staffed--or all of these--that successful mastery by the new administration requires the longest possible preparation. (State, Defense, and, depending on your plans, HEW, HUD, or Transportation)

(3) For these or other reasons, early preparation must be undertaken by second and third level Presidential appointees whose appointment

requires some attention from a Secretary-designate.

(4) The agency is likely to be confronted by early urgent demands for executive action or legislative recommendations such that concrete agency preparations must begin at once. (Treasury and others)

(5) The position is so prestigious or of such controversial policy importance that the leading political figures in the party are regarded as contenders. Until such positions are assigned, the President-elect will have difficulty obtaining impartial advice regarding the many other posts he must fill.

(6) The position requires early appointment for psychological or symbolic reasons. (UN Ambassador)

8. Early staff appointments. Your own staff needs for the transition period must be attended to. Summarizing matters of great complexity, we would suggest that you will need one assistant or more for each of nine functions. Since you will require permanent White House Staff to handle all but two of these functions, you might appoint to your transition staff men whom you are considering using in the same roles after January 20. The transition period can then give you an opportunity to find out in advance whether they have the special capacities needed to help you carry your post-Inauguration responsibilities. The functions to be performed for you both during the transition and later are:

a) Management of your calendar and of administrative arrangements for yourself and your staff. This could be your permanent Appointments Secretary.

b) Contact with the press and advice on public relations. One

man usually performs both functions and he could become your permanent Press Secretary.

c) National security liaison and advice--a role similar to that performed by Restow for Johnson, Bundy for Kennedy, and Gray and Goodpaster for Eisenhower.

d) Liaison for and "translation" of military and intelligence documents.

e) Personnel advice. There might be need for two persons: one concerned with the general talent hunt and the other handling patronage recommendations.

f) Oversight of task forces and similar substantive work. This might be done by a general aide for policy and programs--by a man with the breadth of jurisdiction (though not necessarily the powers) of a Sherman Adams or Theodore Sorensen. This function could be divided among several men who would also collect ideas and prepare initial drafts of your Inaugural Address and later public messages. Actual assignments depend, of course, on many factors including the distribution of literary talent.

g) Special contact for Senators and Congressmen. This could be done by your permanent Congressional liaison assistant(s).

The following functions need to be performed only during the transition and for a short time thereafter. You might assign them to men whose wisdom you want but who, because of business commitments, age, health, or some other reason, will not accept long-term appointments.

h) Advice on organization and reorganization.

i) Advice on transition questions and transition contact with the old administration.

Among decisions which you will have to work out before or during the transition period will be some regarding organization of your White House Staff. You will have to determine how much access each assistant is to have and, for example, whether there is to be a staff coordinator like Adams. You will have to decide whether your best interests will be served by giving each assistant a strict functional assignment or by using them to some extent interchangeably. Since the purpose of the White House Staff is to give the President the extra eyes, ears, and hands he needs for his incredibly difficult task, your decisions on these questions and others related to them could have profound effects on your presidency. We hope to describe the issues in greater detail in a subsequent memorandum.

9. Early appointments in the national security area. Most of the following positions meet several criteria for early appointment: *

a) Secretary of State and two Undersecretaries. The qualities you seek will depend in part on your conception of his office. See For. 21 below. **

* Lest we presumptuously state the obvious, we relegate to the footnotes our limited observations on the qualities needed for certain offices.

** Also, we believe it important that the top team in State have the capacity to advise the President, to guide the Department, to deal with friends and critics in Congress, and generally to explain administration policies in ways that will maximize public understanding and support. Dulles, Hexter, and Rusk each possessed some of these qualities, but the lack of confidence, communication, and team spirit at the top level of the Kennedy-Johnson State Department is not a happy precedent.

b) Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary. ***

c) Central Intelligence Agency Director. If you intend to appoint a new Director during your first few months, he should be appointed early. You might wish to continue Mr. Harbo, who is a CIA official with, we understand, an excellent reputation. That course requires no immediate action; you would simply have to ask him sometime before Christmas to stay on and to announce that fact. (Either an indefinite reappointment or a commitment of six months or so would seem courteous in such a case.)

d) Ambassador to the United Nations. If you wish to continue the symbolic importance of this position and to fill it with a prominent figure, then the appointee will have to be named about the same time as the other high national security officials.

e) The JCS. The terms of both General Wheeler, the Chairman, and General McConnell, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, will expire in 1969. Following the precedent set by President Eisenhower, you could indicate before Inauguration, or even in November, your choices for these posts, or you could defer action. Your decisions both on individuals and on timing will require careful consideration. These decisions will be taken as indicative of many of your policies. They will also be read as suggestive of your basic attitude toward the military establishment and can influence the amount of cooperation you and your appointees

*** The prescription is easy to state: judgment and wisdom plus Clifford's reputed ability to deal with both the Congress and the JCS and McNamara's reputed analytical ability.

obtain from the inner reaches of the Pentagon. Many complex issues are involved, especially if, as a result of your decisions on Vietnam, or for other reasons, you were to contemplate asking the other two chiefs to step down or to take other posts. (Admiral Moorer's term as Chief of Naval Operations runs to 1971; General Westmoreland's as Chief of Staff of the Army to 1972.) We are prepared to submit an additional memorandum on this subject.

f) The field commander in Vietnam? We raise the question because reconfirmation or replacement might have significant effects in Saigon or Paris and on your concepts for the conduct of the war within Vietnam.

10. Early appointments in foreign operations.

a) The Ambassador to Moscow is an important bridge between the two governments. Not only are his functions important, but he may also be a symbol to the Russians of your administration's prospective attitudes. Moscow is no place for an inexperienced academic or other amateur. Unless early inquiries persuade you otherwise, you will want to consider reconfirming the present ambassador as a symbol of continuity. If there is to be a change, the new appointee must be highly qualified. In any event, an early announcement would be desirable to permit the new appointee to consult fully with his predecessor.

b) Ambassador to Saigon. This post will remain important for the foreseeable future. If you intend to continue the incumbent, it could be wise to announce it early to preserve his effectiveness in Saigon. If you make a change--perhaps necessary as a symbol of the popular mandate

for change in Vietnam policy—the successor should have a minimum time to prepare.

c) Paris negotiating team with North Vietnam. Your actions here will appear to signal the direction of your policies toward the negotiations and the war. You will want to consider with your Vietnam experts the appropriateness or manner of changing the Paris team. If you continue them for the near future as a symbol of a continued "tough" negotiating position (if that would be its meaning), it would be advisable to announce your decision quickly.

d) Ambassador to Paris. The country is important to us, but its government is so highly sensitive and difficult to deal with that an early appointment is advisable.

e) Ambassadors at large. These positions, as such, do not require immediate attention unless you have particular functions in mind.

f) Most other ambassadorships can probably be deferred until after Inauguration in favor of more pressing work. A few caveats are, however, in order: (1) The State Department's views on the relative urgency of other positions should be considered. Bonn and Tokyo, for example, might be thought to require early attention, as might London, Prague, Warsaw, Rio, or the special ambassadors to NATO and the OAS. (2) The governments not receiving immediate attention may feel slighted and undervalued by the United States. To preserve feelings, you might dispatch special envoys to explain the delay and give assurances of our interest. (3) Most ambassadors would be asked to continue (i) indefinitely,

(11) for a few months, or (112) briefly. This will present few problems for career officials who would stay or for political hacks who won't be missed. Others may require gentle treatment if you wish them to remain.

(4) The longer such posts remain unfilled, the greater will be the pressure for political appointments. Your Secretary of State-designate could form an advisory committee to identify the ambassadors who should be dropped quickly (former political appointees of modest quality), those who should be retained (the best career people and those non-career ambassadors who have served with unusual distinction), and to screen names proposed for vacated posts.

ii. Early "domestic" appointments.

a) Budget Director. This agency's name does not connote the breadth of qualities required by the office. The Budget Bureau and the White House Staff provide the President's principal protection against departmental and congressional special pleading. Only with their help can he make the executive apparatus serve his purposes. The Budget Director should be the one man in government with an outlook virtually as broad as that of the President, and he must be able to judge not only costs but also relative importance among competing programs. The office needs a man of wisdom and vision with understanding of many policy issues. Though no particular professional background is vital, all testimony we have taken suggests that economists have proved unusually effective in this post. An early appointment is crucial to master the current budget and to gain early use of the invaluable resources of the Budget Bureau.

b) Secretary of the Treasury.* It is likely that the problems of balance of payments, taxation, and the general state of the economy will argue for a November appointment. If the economic front is quiet, however, it may be possible to delay this appointment until December.

c) Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors. This post should be filled early if the Treasury is. The Department is a powerful agency and its Secretary has tended to consider himself the President's primary economic advisor. In any case, it may be useful to have the Chairman of the CEA at hand from the beginning.

d) Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and/or Secretary of Housing and Urban Affairs.** The new administration has two problems in this area: it will encounter strong demands for action and legislative recommendations to deal with the "urban crisis." Because it is important

* A Republican administration enjoys the presumptive confidence of the financial community. Thus, your appointment need not be specially directed to assuring them. But a different audience may need reassurance: your appointee should not only understand compensatory fiscal policy; he should be able to speak the language and perhaps even appeal to the economists and economic critics who do most of the popular and serious writing in this area and who thus tend to shape the general reception of an administration's economic program--often in the long-run as well as the short. This "criticism" is almost certain to be satisfied by your CEA Chairman.

** These are critical agencies for the new administration. This is the area of key and explosive domestic challenges with the least assurance of "solution" in principle or legislation in practice. Innovations are necessary, but innovations (e.g., the "negative income tax") may be costly and irreversible even though experience or later analysis may prove them unwise. Yet, the pressure for action from politics and "the streets" will be enormous. And it is a Republican administration in particular that needs to win acceptance, trust, and confidence in this area. These agencies require at least as much attention and care as are customarily assigned to the State

to respond and because a failure to push affirmative proposals will force it into an unhappy defensive posture, the new administration must be ready to move. Secondly, a Republican President has a strong need to demonstrate concern with poverty, urban decay, and associated problems. An early appointment could dramatize your concern. Certain outstanding appointments could induce opposition critics to "wait and see" and to give the administration a chance "to prove itself." And the earlier the appointments are made, the sooner you can begin to ask your administration for results.

e) Secretary of Agriculture. There seems to have been a sweeping partisan turnover of Agriculture personnel in 1961. If similar turnover is to occur in 1969, the Secretary should be appointed early to allow time for departmental recruiting and orientation.

12. Other appointments.

a) Attorney General.* He is involved in matters that are intrinsically and politically of great importance: civil rights, criminal

and Defense appointments--and even more because the qualities required are even rarer. It will be difficult to find the men who can manage the departments, who can delegate but not too much, who can both reign and rule, who can react and appraise but who can also innovate and generate enthusiasm, who can refrain from bucking every demand up to the White House, who have sufficient idealism and clarity of purpose to demonstrate "concern" and "commitment" and indeed to push for improvement but who are also sufficient team players to accept intra-administration "defeat" without looking all or resigning in a huff. Whether such persons exist outside of heaven, we cannot say.

* The Attorney General can be a much more important asset to an administration than is commonly realized. (1) Presidents may lament the subsequent behavior of their Supreme Court appointees without appreciating the frequent

procedure, riot control, organized crime, the FBI. The course of the campaign, in particular, may require an early appointment for symbolic purposes. Nevertheless, the Attorney General has relatively less need than, for example, the Secretary of Defense to master the technicalities of ongoing problems, or to prepare for early crises (at least if riots remain infrequent during the winter).

b) Secretary of Labor.* Appointment before Thanksgiving would

source of their problem: they relied for advice on an Attorney General who did not learn or appreciate the significance of an appointee's judicial philosophy but who relied instead on others' conclusionary appraisals of quality and political opinions. A President may have his most lasting impact through his judicial appointments (including the lower courts); the Attorney General will have a role in that process. It is important to have an Attorney General who will do you and the nation credit in that role. To do so with appropriate attention to Senatorial and other patronage requests requires great judgment and finesse. (2) The Solicitor General's office traditionally attracts brilliant talent from law firms and law schools. With appropriate leadership from the Attorney General, the Department can do the same both at the level of Presidential appointees and below. This resulting reservoir of high-powered talent can multiply the Department's effectiveness and also serve, by loan or otherwise, other departments and the White House. (3) The Attorney General's rectitude, vigilance, and readiness to inquire can give you an important defense against corruption within the government.

*This position has commonly been viewed as "labor's voice in the Cabinet." When important matters are at stake, however, union leaders want to deal with you and your representative. And, of course, neither management nor Congress will respect a mere union labor spokesman, whatever his title. To advise you, to serve as a buffer and (when appropriate) mediator on industrial relations matters, to supervise the mediation services, and to deal (as appropriate) with the National Labor Relations Board--your appointee must be tolerable to labor but probably not a union man. You might find the right man in industrial relations; among respected arbitrators, mediators, or umpires; or even in a Business School, Economics or Law faculty.

not seem necessary unless (1) there is or might be pressure for federal involvement in important national strikes in progress or prospect before March, or (2) you intend to take a very early position on "wage-push" inflation.

c) Secretary of Transportation.* Nothing inherent in this post requires that appointment be made in November rather than December.

There is a serious organizational problem on the domestic welfare front. As one interim approach, you might insist that the Secretaries of HEW, HUD, Labor, perhaps Transportation, and perhaps others form a subgroup of the Cabinet and work very closely together to formulate and implement policy. If that is to be done, it should be done from the beginning and calls for roughly simultaneous appointments. Thus, if one is appointed early, all should be. (Alternatively, if you intend to give one Secretary primary responsibility for the overlapping welfare functions of the several departments, he could be appointed early and the others late.)

* A trouble-avoiding holding operation may not be too difficult in this department. It will not be easy, however, to find a man who can promote innovation and cope with it in the effort to keep the country livable notwithstanding its expanding and increasingly-concentrated population. More common than creativity, but still rare enough to emphasize is the strength to stand up to the special interests, such as the "highway lobby" or the protagonists of the merchant marine or supercoastal transports. He will also have to consider the desirability of new steps to consolidate or coordinate Executive Branch operations with those of the "independent" Civil Aeronautics Boards and Interstate Commerce Commission. Whether new steps would be both wise and politically practicable is not clear, but your appointee should be one who can both answer the question and carry out any necessary steps.

d) Postmaster General. Appointment before Thanksgiving is not required unless you must take a position in your first few months on the proposal of the recent Presidential Commission that the postal service be performed not by a regular government department but by a public corporation. If delay would impede reform, your appointees cannot begin soon enough to appraise the substantive merits and political possibilities of reform.

e) Secretary of Commerce. There is less need for appointment before December. The basic question is whether you can make something more of this post than it has been in recent decades. If you are considering merging the Labor and Commerce Departments, your appointees should be made aware of this at the time of appointment.

f) Secretary of the Interior.* Again, early action may not seem necessary.

g) White House Scientific Adviser. The "scientific community" attaches great importance to this post and became very restive about President-elect Kennedy's intentions until the post was filled in 1961. The same sensitivity can be expected today. A strong and relatively early, though not necessarily immediate, appointment can reassure this community of your respect for them and help gain their respect for your White House and thus facilitate the recruitment of top scientific talent in Defense and elsewhere.

* In addition to the usual functions, it's worth noting that the man who can cleanse our rivers, save our parks, and conserve our natural spaces in the face of growing population will make a President's place in history--and in the here-and-now as well if it doesn't cost too much. And the man who can please public and private power partisans and keep the oil and mineral interests off the President's back will be doubly precious.

h) FBI Director. Unless you are persuaded that you want Mr. Hoover to continue, judicious silence about this post should give him ample opportunity (which he might welcome in view of his age) to indicate that he does not wish reappointment. If a new appointment is to be made, it must receive the greatest care, for you cannot later remove the Director without being charged with "political misuse" of an agency that should be "above politics." For an agency long subject to single control, there is reason to appoint an outsider who could look at the Bureau with a fresh eye. At least, there should be no automatic presumption that a present Bureau official would be better than a first-rate urban police chief, an effective administrator not now in police work, or an elder statesman who could serve for a short period, reassure the public and give you a breathing spell in which to assert your control over this important but currently semi-sovereign agency. Although your Attorney General should probably have a voice in the appointment, its importance requires your close attention.

i) White House liaison with the academic community. Your two predecessors had resident academics in the White House presumably in the hope of generating a sympathetic chronicle and a bridge to "intellectuals" at large. The first function is unsure (compare Schlesinger with Goldman) and the second silly. You reach "intellectuals" not by having a special communicator for that purpose, but by the actions and statements of your administration. By all means, do not neglect academics in your operating and staff appointments. And, of course, their use in pre-

and post-inauguration task forces is both (1) an effective and easy way to impress "intellectuals" and (2) useful on the merits.

13. Immediate action by new appointees. Many of your appointees will need time--perhaps six to eight weeks--to extricate themselves from other affairs. Even so, all appointees should be asked to begin immediately, if only on a part-time basis, not only to familiarize themselves with their new jobs, but to confer with members of the outgoing administration, meet the civil servants who will work for them, and learn the routine of their agencies.

D. Political Criteria Generally; Holdover Personnel

14. Political considerations have an inevitable place in appointments. Many excellent candidates will also enjoy excellent political credentials. But not all those with political support will be worthy of important responsibilities.

a) Though judgeships need no special caveat since everyone understands their importance, regulatory agencies do. They are often viewed as convenient "dumping grounds" for persons of minimum qualifications, the assumption being that a commission of five or seven members can carry a few weak members. Often, however, most of the members turn out to be weak. Even when this is not the case, the weak appointees vote, and not always wisely. It has reached the point where well-qualified men frequently decline to serve on regulatory commissions. To correct that situation, the new President would need to instruct his personnel recruiters in unequivocal

terms and, in order to induce a good man to join an agency, he may have to give assurances that he will fill future vacancies with men of similar high quality.

b) There are positions--often wasteful and unnecessary--of some prestige that can be filled with persons of minimum quality without undue damage to you or to the nation. A thorough (and secret) pre- and post-election attempt to identify such positions would be useful to you.

15. Some personnel and patronage advisers have, in past administrations, appeared to insist on political credentials for every Presidential appointee and for every lower position at the disposal of such appointees. Such an approach will deprive your administration of valuable services and will miss the opportunity to win independents to the Republican cause. There is obviously reason to avoid highly partisan Democrats, but independents and even nominal Democrats should be welcomed with open arms even as Presidential appointees and especially at lower levels. And if academics who supported Democrats are excluded from task forces and from consultation, an important resource will be lost.

16. Continuing old officials.

a) At least one Presidential appointee in each agency should be asked to remain for a few days after Inauguration in order to provide each department with an "Acting Secretary" to perform the formal departmental functions that cannot be performed by your appointees prior to their official Senate confirmation.

b) Some Presidential appointees in the outgoing administration are essentially career men of a quality you will wish to retain. (This is especially likely in such departmental positions as the Assistant Secretary for Administration--who will be useful for a few months at least.)

c) Some non-career officials of the outgoing administration might be of such outstanding quality that you would want them to stay. Your pre- and post-election personnel advisers should make the effort to identify any such persons.

d) The preceding considerations are applicable with even greater force to those non-Presidential appointees occupying positions that are at the disposal of the new administration.

II

SUBSTANTIVE POLICY PLANNING

17. We have refrained thus far from mentioning the Bay of Pigs, though that episode dramatizes the dangers facing an administration that takes office ill-prepared for the exercise of power. We refer to it now because it illustrates some problems almost certain to face you in your early months in office.

(1) Elements in the bureaucracy will refurbish and attempt to sell ideas studied and rejected by the previous administration or, as in the case of the Bay of Pigs plan, represent as beyond the point of no return programs about which the previous administration had, in fact, been skeptical, reserved, or undecided.

(2) Your appointees will be less willing than later to go against what seems a consensus among departmental experts. As with the Bay of Pigs plan, they may feel hesitant to express doubts. In other instances, they may hesitate to question bureaucratic advice that something or the other cannot be done.

(3) Your appointees will be less prone than later to recommend courses of action involving risks of public or Congressional criticism. With each hoping for maximum accomplishments, each will be reluctant to see you incur political costs except in behalf of his program. After six months or so, your appointees will hopefully have become not only more realistic but more conscious of how their departmental interests fit into the whole program of the administration.

16. From mere mention of these problems, several obvious conclusions emerge:

(1) Your appointees should identify as quickly as possible the hobby horses of otherwise valuable and trustworthy men in the permanent government. They should also make every effort to learn from their predecessors the exact status of issues likely to arise between January and July, 1969.

(2) Your appointees will need to acquire as much advance knowledge as possible about higher-level personnel in their agencies and about the major issues which they are apt to face in the settling-in period.

(3) To cope with the third problem, your appointees will need better understanding than has been the case in the past of what the President expects--of what you expect.

This means that you will need to make a number of early decisions about policy issues and to communicate these decisions as clearly as possible to your prospective and actual appointees. These decisions will concern not only policy positions, many of which will be developed during the campaign, but also relative priorities, tactics to be followed (i.e., a push for legislation, an effort first to stimulate public pressure, or simple administrative action), and desired timetables (e.g., some symbolic action on cities before the summer even if high priority measures have to come later).

19. With this as prologue, we suggest below some of the more obvious issues on which you might want to initiate serious pre-election study, with a view to helping you make the tough decisions on policy and tactics which you will want to make as soon as possible after November 5:

(1) A first group of issues would be those which could be in crisis in early 1969: Vietnam, Thailand, Berlin and East Europe, the Middle East, urban "ghettos," federal-state-local welfare programs, monetary policies, threats to wage-price stability, and the balance of payments.

(2) A second group consists of issues with continuing or long range ramifications requiring early decisions. This category does not admit easy definition and is perhaps better described by example. General defense and space programs, NATO, ABM, manned bombers, relations with Cuba and Red China, long-range anti-crime policies, and relations with regulatory agencies all illustrate in several ways matters upon which you may have to make early choices that will set in motion programs lasting the length of your administration.

(3) A third group of issues would be in those areas in which you plan early legislative proposals. You, of course, know what these will be; any guesswork on our part would be irrelevant.

A considerable body of experience exists with regard to task forces and how to get the most out of them. We would be happy to prepare a summary on this subject if it would be of use.

III

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

20. In a number of key policy areas your ability as President to formulate, coordinate, and execute programs will depend on putting into particular posts men who can do what you want the occupants of these posts to do. Given the number of high level officials that must be named soon after the election, you might usefully have some pre-election attention given to the division of responsibilities most compatible with your purposes as President. The following paragraphs will identify two major issues bearing on your prospective appointments.

A. Responsibility for National Security

21. Prior to choosing your Secretary of State, you might well consider the extent to which you will want your Secretary to be your principal adviser on all foreign policy problems, including military, financial and economic policy. This decision will affect both the qualities you will seek in a Secretary, and the breadth of charter you will assign to the National Security adviser on your own staff.

You face many alternatives, each involving complex considerations. We are prepared to develop a further memorandum on the subject.

a) Meanwhile, it is important to recognize that if you choose to give your Secretary of State a broader mandate, the consequence will be twofold: First, the Secretary-designate must be a man who wants this role and who understands what he has to do to perform it effectively. Second, the State Department would have to recruit a staff of men able to think of foreign policy not merely in terms of diplomacy, but in much broader terms.

b) If State does not perform this role, such a staff must be part of the White House or National Security Council staff under the direction of a national security adviser. Thus, resolution of this issue affects not only the requirements for a Secretary of State, but also those for your national security adviser and their personal staffs.

22. In any event, there are perennial organizational problems within the State Department which in the past have prevented it from being as useful to the President as it might be. In particular, the relationships among foreign service and non-foreign service men, the regional desks and functional bureaus, and the foreign service on the one hand and program groups such as AID on the other, need to be rationalized. The Secretary-designate must understand that you care about the efficiency of State and that he must address this problem, or at least entrust it, to an Undersecretary with genuine delegated power. You will want to be sure that your top team in State has the interests and resources to perform both the policy and the management tasks.

B. Centralizing to Deal with Urban Affairs

23. The ability of the federal government to respond to urban problems is reduced by the diffusion of responsibility and power in this area among many governmental departments and agencies. No matter how much responsibility is transferred to states or localities, the federal government will remain concerned with inter-urban transportation, assistance to local police, and other forms of grants-in-aid. Moreover, the transfer of other responsibilities will require considerable study and, at best, will take time. In short, the problem will continue.

24. The major issues here are whether and to what extent federal responsibility for dealing with urban affairs should be centralized, and if so, whether the centralization should occur within the existing departmental framework, within the White House or Executive Office staff, within some other agency, or within a super-department created by merging existing departments and agencies. Any such steps would, of course, affect your personnel requirements for Justice, HUD, OEO, and White House assistant(s) primarily concerned with urban affairs.

25. If you contemplate reorganization requiring Congressional action, preliminary studies looking toward proposals for legislation might well be undertaken prior to election. And if, as you have indicated, you are to provide encouragement to the development of locally owned housing and business in black communities and to enlist private industry in efforts to rebuild the ghettos, then pre-election studies of how the White House could