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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 16, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE
E.O. 12812
By EWAP Name, Date 11-24-80

TO: Bob Haldeman

FROM: Bryce Harlow *BH*

As directed, I have talked to Governor Holton. His response, in summary form, is that even if he were to acquiesce in supporting Senator Byrd as an "independent candidate," he would be unable to deliver; the Virginia Republican organization would not take it, and, therefore, the only result would be that Holton's power base in the State would be destroyed.

Holton would gladly come up and survey this problem with the President, if the President would like. Holton remains intensely sensitive to the President's desires.

In more detail:

1. The entire State organization is committed to running a Republican candidate for the Senate. If this is stopped now, the organization would be outraged, and the new State Chairman, Warren French, would resign.
2. Holton sent word to Byrd well before the 1968 election that he would be guaranteed Republican support if Byrd should switch parties, even if he should wait until after the election to do so.
3. Immediately after the election, when Harlow saw Holton, he sent top emissaries to Byrd, again telling him he would be welcome in the Party and would be guaranteed the nomination, but he would have to move very fast, because the Party was going after someone else.
4. The way things are now shaping up in Virginia, both for the Governor and the Party organization, they no longer need Byrd.
5. The Democratic Party has now informed Byrd that he must sign the loyalty oath if he is to run on the Democratic ticket. Accordingly, he is in trouble.

6. Because the Senator's waffling has gotten him into trouble, it ill behooves the Republican Party to save him; "Indeed," says Holton, "I simply can't do it." It is plain that if Byrd runs in a Democratic primary, the Democrats will beat him.
7. In a three-way race -- with a Republican, a Democrat and Independent Byrd all running -- Byrd will win.
8. If I make a deal with Byrd now, after all this delay, it will destroy everything I have tried to do to build a Republican Party in Virginia; moreover, we have at least two excellent candidates to make a race.
9. I am committed to a person to make this race. He now holds office in Virginia and has led the ticket in his area. He will attract the same coalition that elected me. For this to proceed, the President will have to stand neutral at least.
10. Other Congressmen will not go independent or become Republican based on what Byrd does. Satterfield, this past weekend, announced that he is still a Democrat. He may switch, however -- but if he does, it will be because he can't win as a Democrat and not because of what Harry Byrd does.
11. Senator Byrd would bring in the red necks if he joined the Party now, and this would destroy what we have been doing extremely well in Virginia. The present Republican Party in Virginia has no desire to befoul its ranks with white supremists.
12. Whatever the situation in Washington, I am totally unable to deliver for Byrd. Even if I went along, my people won't go with me, and all that would result would be the destruction of what I have tried to create for the Republican Party in Virginia.
13. I will gladly come up and survey all of this with the President. I am desperately eager for him to understand the situation.

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~