

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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July 10, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN EHRLICHMAN

FROM: WILLIAM E. TIMMONS *pk*

SUBJECT: Jack Woolley

You asked me to fire the chief of the congressional relations office at HUD, Jack Woolley. There are a number of the legislative liaison officers in the departments I would like to see transferred and Mr. Woolley is one. However, I have no authority over departmental personnel but would welcome an opportunity to discuss this with you.

The unfortunate situation of yesterday has been investigated and these are the facts:

1. The President gave instructions for an all-out effort to kill Cooper-Church in the House.
2. It was agreed that Bob Finch would coordinate the Cabinet effort.
3. I compiled a list of 23 Republicans who needed a high-level contact and suggested the Cabinet Members who might be most appropriate to call each.
4. About 12:30 p.m. Dick Cook called from the Hill to inform me of word moving around the House Floor that HUD personnel were calling liberal Democrats, offering to trade projects for votes. As you know, Jerome Waldie (D-Calif) and Don Fraser (D-Minn) -- both prominent in the DSG -- publicly blasted the HUD contacts.
5. I called Wooley who was out but I talked with his deputy, Owen Cornell, and was told that their instructions came from Secretary Romney; that about 50% of the whole House had been contacted, but he would close down the operation immediately.

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6. I then called Bob Finch and talked to his assistant, Bill Horton to ask him to investigate the situation. He explained that Bob had given Secretary Romney the names we had submitted and when Bob was asked if there were others Romney should contact, Finch explained that the Secretary could call other Representatives with whom he has a personal acquaintanceship if those calls might be productive.
7. After the vote I reached Woolley to ask how this blooper could have occurred. He explained the Secretary had instructed him to contact all Members -- Democrats and Republicans -- with whom HUD had a working relationship and to inquire about their position on the Cooper-Church issue. Jack said they never mentioned contracts or projects. The work was undertaken by HUD's various congressional desk officers, each with about 50 members with whom they have worked.
8. There is evidence that other Cabinet members merely delegated Finch's instructions all the way down to Departmental Congressional Relations staffs. Wally Hickel, for instance, was testifying on the Hill and asked that his C.R. shop handle it. Fortunately, in this case, his man called my office before proceeding and was told contacts had to be made either by the Secretary or Undersecretary

CONCLUSIONS:

1. There was a misunderstanding between Woolley and Romney -- or between Romney and Finch -- on the mission. (It was White House intention for the Cabinet officer only, or possibly the Undersecretary, to personally call).
2. Woolley exercised extremely poor judgment in not challenging the Secretary's instructions and checking the operation with my office. He should have known the ramifications of HUD's efforts.
3. Of the 23 Republicans supposedly contacted by the Cabinet, only 2 voted for the President. And of the two, one was committed through my personal effort, not the Secretary's.

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RECOMMENDATION:

That we further discuss the relationship of the White House and Cabinet Officers' congressional staffs in order to better achieve the goals of the President's legislative programs.

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