

Congress of the United States
Office of the Minority Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 28, 1970

Mr. William E. Timmons
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bill:

I have discussed your letter of July 10 with other Members of our House Leadership individually and at a meeting last week. There seems to be a general feeling that if the Tuesday morning meetings were moved up a half hour earlier, from 8 to 10, there would be less interference with Members' committee work. I may add that this would probably also improve the press coverage we get at the conclusion of these meetings.

Other thoughts voiced were that more time should be allotted for individual Members to bring up matters, beyond those which Senator Scott and I generally cover in our retrospective reports, and that meetings sometimes try to cover too many topics, none of them getting sufficient time to be discussed meaningfully.

The foregoing ideas are somewhat contradictory, but both have some merit. It occurs to me, personally, that as we move from the inauguration of new Presidential programs to a more routine anticipation of and collaboration on political problems, there is need for more free exchange of Members' views.

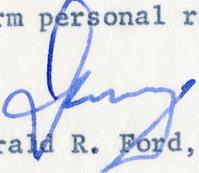
However, these views have value to the President only if the broad geographical and philosophical spectrum which our leadership represents is presented, rather than an exposition of individual pet peeves. We would all benefit, I believe, from getting more of the President's personal counsel rather than such large doses of factual briefing from his specialists.

The current legislative concerns of the House and Senate do not always, or even very often, coincide. I wonder if it might not be worth trying to have White House meetings from time to time for House leaders only and Senate leaders only. I believe there would

be more free and frank discussion under such circumstances, and of course the groups would be smaller. This suggestion is made, however, under the assumption that all the attention would not wind up being given to the other body.

I hope these thoughts will prove helpful to you.

Warm personal regards,


Gerald R. Ford, M. C.

GRF:rn