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CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST

Room B-339, Rayburn Office Building

September 17, 1969

Introducing White House Congressional Staff
and
VIP's at White House



MR. CHAIRMAN --

I do appreciate those flattering words.

You could have done it far more simply by describing me as Winston Churchill once described Clement Attlee: "a nice, modest fellow, with a great deal to be modest about."

But what you said almost led me to believe that our Congressional relations are improving.

Trouble is the conduct of Congressional relations, I've found over the years, is much like the gyrations of amorous cats.

From beginning to end there is constant loud complaint; with the participants totally out of sorts over the whole business, but given time things usually work out pretty well.

So I suppose not a little grumping will continue to mark our Executive-Congressional relationships as time moves along, no matter our efforts to engender universal delight.

I can ardently report to you, however, that we in The White House are genuinely devoted to the maintenance of constructive relations and to harmony and good will -- and where we fail in any of this, I trustfully -- indeed, confidently -- hope you will continue to speak out to us about it.

My function this morning is not to regale you with our efforts to achieve rapport, but rather to introduce a number of key staff assistants who labor in the immediate vicinity of the President and who, therefore, pack varying amounts of wallop in areas of interest to you.



Over the years politics seems to incline one to view with suspicion, if not with alarm, those in influential positions whom you don't know. It is to dispel this tendency just a bit in respect to President Nixon's staff that we are here this morning. Also, being here saves us from a staff meeting under the tender tutelage of Bob Haldeman. For this we are all gratified.

The plain fact is, all of us want to know all of you far better than we now do -- and in the great intensity of your and our labors this is ever so difficult to accomplish. This, therefore, is in effect a group handshake from us to you. All of us hope it will lead to closer relations in the future.

So let me first present my own staff concerned with Congressional affairs, and then I will introduce various puffs of the high cotton in the White House.

My two principal Congressional folk are Bill Timmons for the House and Ken BeLieu for the Senate. Both are Deputy Assistants to the President and are kept busy, as I am, keeping track of the President's legislative program and performing services for individual members.

THE
CARL ALBERT
CENTER



TIMMONS

I am sure most of you know Bill Timmons -- young, yes, but long since a veteran of Capitol Hill. He came here as a Congressional assistant the same year as Bill Cramer, Bill Minshall and Chuck Teague -- all seniors now. In fact, only thirty-one of this august body were serving when Bill came aboard up here. He came to the White House after laboring with Bill Brock, as most of you know, for six years, and his wife was secretary to Sam Devine for a number of years. Bill is an Air Force veteran and a graduate of Georgetown. He was selected "Outstanding Young Republican" in the whole United States in 1965, and two years later was just barely aced out as the most aged YR. He did volunteer work for Nixon in 1960, Goldwater in 1964, Nixon again in 1969, and was Nixon's Convention coordinator in Miami last year. Bill, take a bow.....

BELIEU

Next, I'd like you to meet Ken BeLieu. Ken is an old friend whom we managed to lure back into government service after he had escaped to private life.

Ken operates primarily on the Senate side but an added duty is to look after the House Armed Services Committee because of his tremendous background in that area.

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I'm sure many of you know him, but for those who don't, let me explain. A Republican from Oregon, Ken spent 15 years in the Army and came out a bird colonel. He lost a leg in Korea and you know the Army -- they think you have to have two feet in order to think.

After Army retirement, Ken became staff director for the Senate Armed Services, Preparedness Subcommittee and for the Senate Space Committees. Then he went to the Navy -- where they don't require marching -- first as Assistant Secretary and then as Undersecretary.

Along about there he discovered that while you don't march in the Navy, you do have to float. And he found it didn't pan out to be eye-to-eye with Bob McNamara and Lyndon Johnson, so he divorced the government for private business. I consider it one of my major accomplishments to have seduced him back to the public trough. Stand up, Ken, and be recognized.

GRUBB

Working with Ken BeLieu and on various special projects as well, is Dale Grubb. Years ago Dale got embroiled in this business as a member of the secret service detail guarding Vice President Nixon.

Since those days, Dale has served both with NASA as Congressional liaison and as a Washington representative for AVCO. Like many others, he is an old Nixon campaigner, having served in 1960, 1964, 1966 and, of course, last year.

Dale also has a couple of other things going for him. He comes from Oklahoma and is part Indian. You can't heat that unless you're a full blood with oil lands. Dale.....

COWEN

Also consorting with the Senators is Eugene Cowen. His title is Special Assistant to the President, and his job is to help Ken tend to the needs of your colleagues in the other house.

Gene comes from the staff of Senator Hugh Scott, but like the rest of us, stands totally loose from the leadership tussle they've got going over there. He is a former newspaperman, but we can forgive that since he wrote his last story back in 1953.

Gene also worked for Frances Bolton and for HEW and has been active in Republican campaigns in Pennsylvania. We count ourselves very lucky to have him aboard. Gene.....

NOFZIGER

Another familiar face to many of you is that of Franklyn "Lyn" Nofziger. Lyn is our poet laureat -- though he writes only prose -- and the chief wordsmith of my staff. He comes to the White House from California where he was senior partner in the public relations and campaign management firm of Index Associates.

Not long ago he was Communications Director for Governor Reagan. For eight years he was National Politics Writer and Washington Correspondent for the Copley News Service. Lyn is the master of the "one minute remark" (with permission to revise and extend) and stands ready to assist you in the preparation of speeches and other written material lauding the President's programs and policies. Other writings you will have to do for yourself. Lyn.....

COOK

Our newest staff addition is Dick Cook, only recently ours straight from the staff of the House Banking and Currency Committee. With that background he surely ought to give you and us our money's worth. Dick helps Bill Timmons with House legislative matters, especially at the committee level.

We're fortunate to have Dick as a "Special Assistant to the President." He spent nearly eight years on the Hill working for Congressman Ed Dooley and Ollie Bolton before going to the Committee. Like most of our staff he's been active in Republican politics for a number of years. Dick.....

NIDECKER

John Nidecker, already well known across the Capitol, is Deputy Special Assistant to the President. "Rally John" he is called by the many admirers of his campaign magic. He is peerless in the staging of political rallies and election festivities and has been associated with the President clear back to 1956. Indeed, there are those who say that John did President McKinley's first balloon drop. His task is to give you advance notices of projects and awards -- indeed a paramount assignment. John comes to us via the Nixon campaign tour from Cities Service Company where he was corporate manager in charge of business development. John, say hello.

CASSELMAN

Working also with Bill Timmons is another Bill -- William Casselman, another lawyer and another former advanceman from the Nixon-Agnew campaign.

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Bill, too, is an ex-Hill man, having served as legislative assistant to Congressman Bob McClory from 1965 until the campaign fever bit him in 1968 and he joined the Nixon team.

Before coming to us, Bill earned his spurs, and got quite a few from up here, over in Harry Flemming's personnel shop for six months....
Bill....

ALEXANDER

Next, I'd like to introduce my personal gadfly, organizer and overseer, Lamar Alexander, a young feller from the Volunteer State who came to Washington with Howard Baker back in 1967.

Lamar is a lawyer who once served as law clerk to U. S. Judge John Minor Wisdom. I know you'll agree that our office can use a lot of minor wisdom.

Lamar shares my office to help distribute the burdens and field the phones. I don't know what I'd do without him because he not only gets the messages straight, but he also separates the wheat from the chaff and poultices the bleats from the chapped. He will expertly help you every chance you give him. Lamar.....

SECRETARIES

Our White House secretaries, too, represent a broad range of Hill experience. We have ladies who worked with me in White House Congressional Relations during the Eisenhower years, and others from the offices of Senators Dirksen and Dominick and Congressmen Lukens, Winn, Hogan and Pelly --

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one from the National Committee staff, and another from the Department of the Navy. They're top notch -- I suppose they have to be to put up with us -- as well as you.

I really shouldn't have to present now some of the White House VIP's here this morning.

But I will, so they won't be slighted. I must start, of course, with Dr. Arthur Burns, Counselor to the President and advisor also to other Presidents. He is our rankest staffer, with Cabinet status.

Dr. Burns, as you know, is one of our nation's most eminent economists.

He is a former chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors and emits expert advice on almost anything else. He has academic degrees going clear back to 1925 and clear up to 1963 and affiliates with such lofty organizations as the Econometric Society, and the American Philosophical Society, and the Republican Party.

He also writes books.

He can be recognized by the billows of pipe smoke perpetually enveloping his head like clouds around Mt. Olympus..... Dr. Burns.....

EHRlichman

Well, so everybody has to have a lawyer to stay out of trouble, and the White House, forever in trouble, is no exception. Our in-house top barrister is John Ehrlichman. His official title is Counsel to the President, but his

official functions are legion. I'd just say, if it's important, it's John who nails it down. For the President I'd judge that his charter is to get everything done.

John is another veteran comrade of the President, having served as a Nixon advanceman in 1960. Last year he was campaign Tour Director, the man blamed for every lost suitcase and every minute off schedule. Every political commentator described the '68 campaign as the smoothest in history, and to John rightly goes much of the credit. There would be no better seasoning than this for the hot seat which he now occupies.

Stand up, John and cool it a bit.....

HALDEMAN

And here he is -- our already legendary Bob Haldeman, the President's administrative chieftain, a position he also held in the campaign last year.

Bob's associations with the President go clear back to 1956 when he served as an advanceman to the Vice President. He and the President have come a long way together and God willing, they still have a long way to go.

Bob is sort of the glue, the focal point, the primus inter pares, the chief factotum at the White House. It is he and his staff who make things tick, not only for the President, but also for the rest of us. Like the President, Bob is a Californian. He also is a former member of the University of California Board of Regents, which doubtless is a superb obstacle course to condition someone for service in the White House. Bob, stand up so the Congressmen can see what a President's right arm really looks like.

FLANIGAN

Peter Flanigan is another of the besieged sextet entitled Assistant to the President. Among other things, like looking after all the independent agencies, Pete worries about whom to appoint to all those high level jobs everybody wants.

Last year he was Deputy Campaign Manager for Nixon-Agnew -- #2 to John Mitchell -- but as long ago as 1959 he was organizing New Yorkers for Nixon. To show you how dedicated he is, Pete worked without pay clear up to the middle of April. Greater love hath no man... than to rob Peter to pay Dick. Mr. Peter Flanigan.....

KISSINGER

The story of Henry Kissinger is the story of a Harvard professor who overcame it.

Henry is the most prolific author on the President's staff, writing largely in the field of current foreign affairs but sometimes straying into such arcane matters as "Reflections on the Political Thought of Metternich."

As you know, Dr. Kissinger is the President's staff chief on foreign affairs.

He has a long background as a top adviser to the government in the areas of national security and foreign affairs.

Recently he visited with former President Johnson by direction of the President Nixon. For the first hour LBJ called him Herr. Kissinger, the next hour Schlesinger. With Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Press Secretary

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Ziegler, Herr Kissinger rounds out our Gauleiters.

Herr Kissinger.....

DENT

Yes, and the intense, incisive Harry Dent is here.

He's simultaneously a Baptist Deacon and Deputy Counsel to the President -- in other words, a teetotaler who passed the bar. Despite his legal duties in the Counsel job the President allows him a little time for politics -- just to keep his canny head and deft hand in.

Harry used to be Chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, and he's one of the big reasons so many of the southern states voted Republican last year. You can ask Rog Morton, or John Tower, or Bob Wilson, or scores of others about Harry Dent -- and the answers always come out good.

Harry!

WHITAKER

Another ex-Advanceman who made good is John Whitaker, Secretary to the Cabinet. John has been associated with Nixon since 1960, first advancing and then raising a little money and, in the 1966 campaign, scheduling him into 80-odd congressional districts.

In 1968, beginning with the New Hampshire primary, John was in charge of the President's schedule. And then, after the Miami convention, he supervised the schedule for the Nixon/Agnew ticket, as well as for a group of Congressmen and Senators known, I suppose for lack of a better

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word as "surrogate candidates".

John is the former Vice President of International Aero Services Corporation, and holds a Ph. D in Geology. His rock hunting talents are being put to good use collecting and classifying nuggets of wisdom from and for the President's cabinet. John.....

That seems to be about all of the presidential staff people here. I had hoped to show off a few more -- Don Rumsfeld and Herb Klein, for example. Don all of you know; Herb, of course, is communications director and a long-time associate of the President. They had conflicting engagements, but we'll try to get them and some others up here another time.

Rather than now presenting the President's legislative program -- which you know -- or discussing our internal operations in more detail -- which you don't care about -- or trying to explain Administration policy decisions -- which I don't know enough about -- I should like to use the remaining time, if any, in fielding any questions you may have. Since I take credit only for what's right, I'll refer critical inquiries to my omniscient colleagues. Is that okay, John?

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