

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

AL - Part in
March 2, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. HALDEMAN
MR. EHRLICHMAN
✓ DR. KISSINGER

FROM: THE PRESIDENT

For discussion with the group and implementation.

After a great deal of consideration of our performance during the first year, I have decided that our greatest weakness was in spreading my time too thin -- not emphasizing priorities enough. This may sound strange in view of the fact that I did arrange my time to do the November 3rd speech and the State of the Union adequately; but the balance of this memorandum will demonstrate what I want implemented for the future. Also, while this applies primarily to my time, I want Ehrlichman and Kissinger to apply the same rules to allocating their time to the extent that they find it possible.

What really matters in campaigns, wars or in government is to concentrate on the big battles and win them. I know the point of view which says that unless you fight all the little battles too that you do not lay the ground work for winning the big ones. I do not agree with this point of view to the extent that it means that I will have to devote ~~my time~~ any significant part of my time to the lower priority items, or to the extent that Ehrlichman and Kissinger have to do so.

This means that there must be delegation to the Departments and within the White House staff of complete responsibility for those matters which are not going to have any major effect on our success as an Administration.

Applying this general rule to specifics, in the field of Foreign Policy, in the future all that I want brought to my attention are the following items.

1. East-West relations.
2. Policy toward the Soviet Union.

~~SECRET~~

-2-

3. Policy toward Communist China.
4. Policy toward Eastern Europe, provided it really affects East-West relations at the highest level.
5. Policy toward Western Europe, but only where NATO is affected and where major countries (Britain, Germany and France) are affected. The only minor countries in Europe which I want to pay attention to in the foreseeable future will be Spain, Italy, and Greece. I do not want to see any papers on any of the other countries, unless their problems are directly related to NATO. At the next level out where I am indicating policy toward the Mid-East and then finally in the last is policy with regard to Vietnam and anything that relates to Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, etc. As far as the balance of ~~XXXX~~ Asia is concerned, that part of Africa which is not directly related to the Mid-East crisis, and all of Latin America and all countries in the Western Hemisphere with the exception of Cuba and anything else that may be concerned with the East-West conflict, I do not want matters submitted to me unless they require Presidential decision and can only be handled at the Presidential level.

This is going to require a subtle handling on Kissinger's part. He must not let members of his staff or members of the establishment and the various Departments think that I do 'not care' about the under-developed world. I do care, but what happens in those parts of the world is not, in the final analysis, going to have any significant effect on the success of our foreign policy in the foreseeable future. The thing to do here is to farm out as much of the decision-making in those areas to the Departments, and where Kissinger does not have confidence that State will follow up directives that I have previously laid down with regard to Latin America, Africa and the under-developed countries of Asia, he should farm that subject out to a member of his staff but he, himself, should not bother with it. I want him to concentrate just as hard as I will be concentrating on these major countries and these major problem areas.

In the future, all that I want to see with regard to what I consider the lower priority items would be a semiannual report indicating what has happened; and where a news conference is scheduled, of course, just enough information so that I can respond to a question, although it is interesting to note that we have received very few questions on the

DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
April 21, 2005

~~EYES ONLY~~

-3-

low priority items in news conferences to date.

Haldeman, in the arranging of my schedule, have in mind these priorities. Great pressures will build up to see this and that minor or major officials from the low priority countries. All of this is to be farmed out to Agnew. For example, the Minister of Mines from Venezuela is a case in point; he should not have been included on the schedule, and I do not want this to happen again.

MORE