

Harlow Bryce N.

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March 17, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR:

✓ DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
RICHARD M. NIXON



I attach several items of interest compiled by Steve Hess, some of which might be exploitable by certain of the boys on the Hill and have been passed along to them with that thought in mind.

There is an interesting development, Mr. President, involving your "Farewell Address." At least two vigorous young Republicans in the House (Bob Michel of Illinois and Brad Morse of Massachusetts) have interested themselves in your warning to America against excessive power being accumulated by the military-industrial complex and are girding their loins to raise a rumpus through the Congressional investigation route. Nation magazine, of all things, has suddenly interested itself in the same thing and has run a column on the subject written by Jerry Greene, one of the most conservative correspondents in Washington. Congressional Quarterly, widely read, will run a whole spread on this in its next issue. The point is, this part of the Address turns out to be curiously yeasty, and one can expect some fall-out from it in the Congressional-political area over coming months. All of the interested parties (except Nation, of course!) have been in touch with me about this: I have quietly, without attribution, sought to add fuel to this still small flame.

The Congressional Leaders have at last hired Bob Humphreys as their full-time staff man, much to my relief and gratification. He should do a splendid job, provided they will give him running room, and I would anticipate that within the next month the public imprint of Ev and Charlie will be noticeably more powerful and positive. There is a growing undercurrent of discontent, especially among the new House Republicans (a very large class approximating 40), but including Tom Curtis who is a veritable bulldog, over the leadership (and party) image now being projected by the Leaders, and this could evolve into a serious problem for Charlie, Johnny Byrnes and Les, but my hope is that Bob Humphreys' imaginative help will ease this strain before it reaches serious proportions.



You recognize in this, of course, the old problem in the House -- that of keeping new members feeling useful and as part of the team. What is needed is assignment to the new freshman class, and to our very attractive young leaders, such as Byrnes, Ford, Laird, Rhodes and Frelinghuysen, speaking and other public chores so they will not only feel more a part of things but also will brighten the party image. Charlie is acutely aware of this need, having seen it intimately in his struggle with Joe Martin, and I am hopeful that he will move in reasonable time to meet it.

The National Chairmanship problem remains substantially as it was, as far as I can determine, with no clear decision as to Thrus Morton's successor or as to when Thrus will step aside. Halleck is stoutly for Ray Bliss but would be willing to have an attractive front man with Bliss in second place, if this turns out to be preferred. Bill Miller of New York begins to be talked about for the post but ought to be subject to the same disability as Thrus -- re-election problems in 1962. Barry Goldwater still stands for Bliss, I am informed, as does Ev Dirksen, but more important than any of this is the continuing confusion and lack of tight forward planning. The National Committee career staff is considerably discombobulated by all of this, Thrus being rarely at the Committee, Hal Short serving really as Acting Chairman, and no one quite sure where authority truly lies and what the continuing policies and programs are to be. In sum, the problem is no less difficult than it was last January, as all of us feared would be the case. A tough party fight over this spot seems definitely in prospect.

As a side note*, Arthur Summerfield is chairman of the June 1 dinner here being put on at the Armory by the Senate and House Republican Campaign Committees. I need hardly report that he is throwing himself heart and soul into this effort; it is safe to predict, knowing him, that he will turn it into a real extravaganza. The Democratic Party will put on a big party here only three days before. Art swears that he is going to outdo the competition. I have no doubt at all that he will.

There was extraordinary tribute inherent in the passage of the 5-star bill. One complaining voice only was raised among the 537 members in both Houses -- that of Dale Alford, who opposed the bill because he represents Little Rock, Arkansas, and contended that the South ought, by opposing this bill, to register disapproval of the use of force in the Little Rock school fracas. No one paid him the slightest heed.

** and possibly related to the preceding paragraph!*



Incidentally, Alford is potentially an opponent of Wilbur Mills as a result of Arkansas redistricting, but Mills tells me (1) that Alford has promised not to oppose him, preferring to run for governor, and of perhaps equal interest Mills says (2) that Faubus now states categorically, that he will not run against Fulbright. Rumors are extant that Mills will receive a judgeship from the new Administration in order to remove him from the Ways and Means Committee before the medical care fight next year. The talk is that Mills would be inclined to accept because his wife's health is poor and because he got enough of the day-to-day political struggle during the Rules Committee fight early this year, in which he had to pick between standing with Sam Rayburn and standing with his constituency (he chose Rayburn). All conservative-minded people would, of course, be aghast if Mills should leave the Committee; his departure would be a blow to Congressional responsibility worse than the packing of the Rules Committee. Mills' successor would be leftist Cecil King of California.

Kennedy's legislative program faces real trouble in the House. Conservatives have an excellent chance to control the minimum wage bill when it hits the House Floor next week; the school bill is in deep trouble, as of course you know, over the Catholic and race issues as well as teacher salaries; farm legislation is in traditional travail; the measure to reduce tourist buying abroad from \$500 to \$100 has been called back, even after tentative Ways and Means Committee approval, for second thinking by the State Department; the backdoor financing part of the distressed areas bill will almost surely be defeated in the House; defense reorganization is stymied for at least a year; medical care for the aged is likewise deferred to next year and still faces a tough time; highway financing has run up against the same huge lobby from truckers that defeated a like attempt some five years ago; mutual security faces its traditional Armageddon, with the minority far more intransigent than heretofore; the peace corps increasingly comes up against somber second thoughts and will likely be entwined in a whole web of restrictive amendments before it escapes the Congress; improving economic prospects are depressurizing most key domestic measures of whatever kind, and more and more the minority in both Houses begins to veer about to slash at the Democratic jugular. There will surely be a loud outcry over the budget amendments due in a week or ten days, because a substantial deficit will be forecast; civil rights legislative pledges are still to be redeemed; a Pentagon roil



begins to develop as the Army, Navy and Marines develop deep resentments over Air Force influence in the new defense scheme; things abroad look progressively bleaker; Soapy Williams looks more and more like a really profitable minority target; White House moves to control the regulatory commissions, to close the mouths of Administration people, to take care of cronies and relatives and rejected candidates (see enclosures), and White House inability to persuade Congress to cooperate, lay the foundation for severe criticism in the months ahead. At the moment the popularity of the new President appears to be high because of the ease with which the public confuses motion with progress -- but it is deeply meaningful that here, in mid-March, the only substantive bill that has yet been passed by Congress turns out to be the unanimously accepted 5-star bill for Dwight D. Eisenhower -- a bill for which the groundwork had been laid before the new Administration took office. I foresee growing troubles for this new crowd that will warm the cockles of ~~the~~ Republican hearts all across the country, and I gladly report that everywhere on the Hill politicians still report a Republican morale and an eagerness to work wonderful to behold. If only the Party can cleanse itself of (1) negativism, (2) the big business stigma, (3) the hard-hearted image, and can come up with a genuine national issue (such as toeing in the union monopoly might conceivably be), I anticipate startling Democratic reverses in 1962 and later. Tom Curtis even reports that there is a genuine possibility of electing a Republican mayor in St. Louis; Sam Rayburn most uncomfortably confided that no person alive can foretell the Texas special election; Jim Mitchell's prospects seem good in New Jersey, provided the primary challenge can be surmounted; Mumma's replacement (John Kunkel) in Pennsylvania seems certain of victory -- and so, given a little imagination and energy the Democratic bloom ought soon to fade.

Nate Twining, of course retired, is on the precipice of letting out a violent complaint about new trends in national defense. He fully appreciates the possibility of severe reaction against him by the new Administration leaders but feels duty bound to protest. He could trigger off an unending series of attacks on Kennedy and McNamara in the defense area; as indicated, the Pentagon soil grows increasingly fertile for this kind of thing.

By next week, Hess having gotten fully under way, we hope to have a few suggested notes that you might usefully send to various

Members of the Senate and House and perhaps to some of the press. It is time that the boys here know that the two of you are watchful of their antics, it seems to me.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be "BH" with a horizontal line through it.

Bryce N. Harlow

Enclosures