

The original documents are located in Box 9, folder “Office of Telecommunications Policy” of the Richard B. Cheney Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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1250 28th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
January 14, 1975

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Did you get an answer -

*Return to D.D.R.
J.M.G.*

Dear Mr. President:

I was shocked to hear of your decision to seek elimination of the Office of Telecommunications Policy, especially so since there was no consultation with the Congress or the only former Director of that Office. As a principal contributor to the report of the Transition Team recommending a reduction and streamlining of the Executive Office of the President, I can certainly understand how you might look at OTP as a candidate for such action. As one who caused OTP to have a high political profile for awhile during the Nixon Administration, I can understand how you might seek a way of symbolizing a new era in relations between your Administration and broadcasters.

But having labored with all parts of the communications industry, with the Defense community, with the Congress, and with the press extensively over the last four years, I also know there are better ways to deal with the problems of OTP. Its abolishment or transferral at this time would reverse 30 years of progress in the growth of the Executive Branch's capability to manage its own large and complex communications infrastructure and to deal responsibly and openly with the Congress and the public on vital communications issues facing the nation.

I feel most strongly that you would be embarrassed in the press and in the Congress by an effort to eliminate OTP, which has stood strongly for the freedom of the electronic media, for more competition in the communications industry, for individual rights of privacy in this increasingly electronic age, and has advanced many proposals for those ends, not the least of which was the establishment of the Domestic Council Committee on Privacy which you chaired as Vice President.

Mr. President, I request that you reconsider your decision and request the opportunity to meet with you personally to discuss the issues involved, before implementation is directed.

Sincerely,

Tom

Clay T. Whitehead



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 17, 1975

Dear Tom:

The President asked me to respond to your letter of January 14th concerning the future of the Office of Telecommunications Policy.

Let me assure you that there was never any intention to abolish the Office of Telecommunications Policy or to eliminate its important functions in the Executive Branch.

Consideration was given to the possibility of moving it out of the Executive Office of the President, as part of the President's desire to reduce the number of things being done within the White House complex and to increase the responsibilities and authority of Cabinet Agencies and Departments.

After reviewing the matter, a decision has been made to retain the Office of Telecommunications Policy in its present location as part of the Executive Office and to provide funding for fiscal year 1976.

Hope you will keep in touch.

Best regards,

Sincerely,

Richard B. Cheney
Deputy Assistant to the President

Mr. Clay T. Whitehead
1250 28th Street, NW.
Washington, D. C. 20007

