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5:30 PM - Presidential Meeting
American Enterprise
Institute (20 minutes)

Wednesday, May 7, 1975

Did not attend.

*(JMK would like to
meet w/ group at
another time.)*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 1975



THE WHITE HOUSE


WASHINGTON

MEETING WITH BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Wednesday, May 7, 1975

5:30 p.m. (30 minutes)

The Cabinet Room

From: William J. Baroody, Jr. 

I. PURPOSE

To discuss public policy issues generally and to compliment Board on AEI contributions through its policy research efforts.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS PLAN

A. Background: Your knowledge of and relationship to AEI goes back many years. Bill Baroody, Sr., is its president; Mel Laird is Chairman of AEI's National Energy Project; Bryce Harlow is Chairman of its bipartisan Program Priorities Committee; Paul McCracken is Chairman of its Advisory Board and Coordinator of its academic affairs; and, though non-endowed as yet, its impact and influence throughout academia, government, and the press are increasingly being acknowledged. (A recent New York Times story is attached.)

B. Participants: Officers and trustees, Chairmen of Advisory Board, National Energy Project, Program Priorities Committee, and Senior AEI staff members. (Lists attached)

C. Press Plan: David Hume Kennerly photo only.

III. TALKING POINTS

1. I am particularly pleased to welcome you because my association with AEI dates back to the early days. I can recall the breakfast meetings when AEI would bring in a Murray Weidenbaum, a Milton Friedman, a Paul McCracken, and other academic experts

to discuss particular policy problems--and it was refreshing to know that we weren't being lobbied. The intent was to help-- and it was indeed helpful.

2. I like and have always liked the basic concept of the American Enterprise Institute--the effective competition of ideas. Without it, as Paul McCracken and Bill Baroody keep insisting, we cannot maintain a free society. And, in these days, there is nothing more important facing us than to do just that--keep a free society here in the United States. Unless we do, freedom cannot exist on this planet. That's what's at stake.

3. I find the work AEI is doing across the entire spectrum of issues--international and domestic--of vital importance if we are to have effective competition in the idea arena of policy making in this country. The strides you have made in identifying and mobilizing scholars who have the courage to think innovatively in addressing the problems of today's and tomorrow's society are impressive. We must find ways of intensifying, expanding and accelerating the work of AEI--because the non-doctrinaire, non-ideological approach to problem solving is the only sure way to achieve the better America we all seek.

4. I applaud the way you have been handling the National Energy Project and, believe me, its studies like Ed Mitchell's and Paul MacAvoy's for example, have been badly needed to get some sanity into national thinking on our energy problem--and your related studies on the Middle East problem itself such as Bob Pranger's work are extremely important if we are to achieve a just peace in that area and assure the protection of our national interest.

5. I am personally excited about your plans to form an AEI Center on the Study of Government Regulation, which will provide a concerted and sustained longer-range effort to cope with this vital problem. You know where I stand on the need to unshackle the productive energies of the private sector and I sincerely hope that you can establish and adequately fund this proposed AEI Center.

6. Finally, let me come back to the basic AEI concept of effective competition of ideas. Whether you are aware of it or not, we have endorsed that idea in this Administration through the program of the Public Liaison Office which a younger Bill Baroody heads up. That program in which I am sure several of you have directly participated tries to insure that we have the direct benefit of varying points of view on the many, many issues that confront us today.

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A Think Tank for Conservatives

By STEVEN RATTNER

WASHINGTON—"There is a clear national need for a Republican conservative counterpart to Brookings," wrote former Presidential speechwriter Pat Buchanan to Richard M. Nixon in March, 1970, "which can generate the ideas Republicans can use, [and] which can serve as a repository of conservative and Republican intellectuals."

The institute's 52 full-time staff members coordinate the efforts of 27 adjunct scholars—mostly college professors who work part-time for the institute—who produce several dozen policy studies a year.

The Institute also runs a half-dozen major conferences each year, generally quite broad in scope, such as the Conference on World Oil problems on 1974; puts out Public Policy Forums, televised by 370 stations, and offers a miscellany of lectures, seminars and symposia.

Institute staffers were particularly proud on receiving in 1972 a \$300,000 grant from the Ford Foundation, long a Brookings supporter. They took it as a demonstration that A.E.I. had been accepted as belonging in the policy mainstream and being "relevant and credible," as Robert J. Pranger, director of foreign and defense studies, said.

The policy studies appear as unadorned five-by-eight-inch pamphlets ranging from

10 to 200 pages in length. Some are collections of on-

pointed out. Even Mr. Baroody, who continually stresses A.E.I.'s position as an open forum, acknowledged that people "find themselves more comfortable in one place or another."

One who is more comfortable at A.E.I. is resident scholar Gottfried Haberler, who came to Washington after 35 years on the economics faculty at Harvard.

Mr. Haberler, who calls himself a "conservative in a scholarly way" urges fiscal and monetary restraint in the current recession in order to avoid inflation. He strongly