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MEETING WITH THE STAFF OF THE
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
RESEARCH OFFICE
ADVOCATES OFFICE
NEWS SUMMARY OFFICE

Saturday, August 7, 1976
9:45 am - 12:30 pm
Situation Room

Present:

Ron Nessen
John Carlson
Larry Speakes
Bill Roberts

David Gergen
Bill Rhatigan
Agnes Waldron
Jim Shuman
Warren Hendricks
Margaret Earl
Richard Brannon
Wanda Phelan
Libby Goltra
Stef Halper
George VanCleve
Fred Slight
Melanie Berney
John Rogers

Connie Gerrard

COMMUNICATIONS, ADVOCATES, NEWS SUMMARY
AND RESEARCH STAFF MEETING

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John Carlson	Bill Rhatigan	Richard Brannon	George VanCleve
Larry Speakes	Agnes Waldron	Judy Muhlberg	Fred Slight
Bill Roberts	Jim Shuman	Wanda Phelan	Melanie Berney
Connie Gerrard	Warren Hendricks	Libby Golt ra	John Rogers

Dave Gergen: Ron and John Carlson and other members of the Press Office staff were trying to organize a weekend at Camp David where various members could talk over their activities -- like what are the problems of the areas and to discuss them and talk about how to do a better job. You all know the President prvented us from going to Camp David. We will do the same thing here.

Last night the Press Advance Office met from 4 - 8 pm. They have been off the road for a short period of time. They did some analysis of things like photos of Jimmy Carter and the President showing what kind of press we are getting and what the pictures are conveying as a theme - Carter vs. us. They also did analysis on the kind of play the President is getting out of fixed events -- speeches and crowd ralleys and airport arrivals. They showed what angles were being played. They are going to expand those reports.

What emerged from that is that we have some very bright people in the Press Advance Office and they are very anxious to cooperate with the rest of us and the Press Office. They might be calling on Agnes and others for help. They know a very good deal. I am impressed with what they put together.

Ron and John thought it might be helpful to spend a couple of hours talking. We are talking about the general structure and then open it up. I thought Agnes might talk about the news summary, Fred about his job.

Does anyone here need any more briefing on our structure? We would like to go immediately to the news summary. Agnes has just started with that. Please tell us what you do, Agnes.

Agnes Waldron: What we hope to do in the news summary is to tighten it up -- make it briefer and make it a quicker thing to read, and also to give a better sense of how the news is played -- both in the writing press and in television. I don't know how long this will take to go about. But I hope we can see some changes in this next week. Also I am going to try to give more

attention to the regional play and their editorial comment on issues and the candidates.

As for the research operation, we have pretty well indexed Mr. Carter, at least since he began his campaign in November. We are trying to get stuff from the National Committee that they have dredged up from Georgia. I will get a reading today on what kind of stuff they do have. PFC people have been there inspecting it. We are now on a day to day basis putting stuff into our system. We have cleaned up the backlog. We are now going to do some analysis. George and I are going to work together to make a booklet.

Dave Gergen: Are some of you familiar with the 1972 book? It was organized on such a nature so that on any area subject we will have his most interesting quotes.

What Agnes has is 4 or 5 boxes of quotes that have been put together. They are taken from every day newspapers here and out of town, marking them up and putting the quotes down. We file them by subject matter. They are available to anybody who needs that information. We are going to put that into a quote book.

I would like to talk about the regional news collection. Bill Rhatigan now is working for the media center so that you would know what advocates are going to be in what media center between now and the election. That is not locked. I was wondering whether information could be collected in the same way so that you would have information into advocates going into the center.

Agnes: It is in our state files. Sandy has them. She gets most of her material from the National Committee. They have 55 papers -- at least one from each state.

Margaret Earl: They have a regular run that they clip. Sandy keeps her clippings in her office.

Dave Gergen: We would like to plug into that.

Bill Rhatigan: By close of business Wednesday we will have programs for every advocate between Labor Day and the election.

Agnes Waldron: That is one thing Wanda Phelan will be doing.

Dave Gergen: We are in the process of implenting ideas.

John Carlson: For any people detailed, is there any problem with them doing political work?

Dave Gergen: We are checking it out with the lawyers. Here is where I draw the line in my mind. The people who are hatched, you can't do anti-Arter work. People who are hatched co do Ford on the issues. Each secretary has it. It is my assumption that secretaries can. I want to make sure of that.

Wanda Phelan: What I will be doing is gathering up as many editorials as I can get my hands on -- handling endorsements and see that letters go out; as you go through them to find editorials in various parts of the country to make on views of the issues of the region. You can see what the issues are that need speaking to. If it turns out to be a major area where a large daily clearly does not understand background facts of the issue, you can get your advocates in for an editorial background. You can tell them what is expected. That is one of the major areas with endorsements. We have to get a system to get more editorials.

My sources so far are the news summary and the RNC. There is a lot of help there. On ways to increase that, I will shortly be going over to the Ford Committee and ask them to set up a mechanism to get more editorials. You can actually draw in Committee people from across the country.

Bill Rhatigan: Getting the book to the advocates early is important. I have a small group hidden away in EOB that has taken on what invitations have gone to each Cabinet officer and analyzed them, overlad them where we anticipate wanting our advocates speaking. Without a document for campaign strategy, that is difficult.

As of right now, we have every major media market, what we consider to be key geographic areas covered twice a week. Included in that is another overlay that syas when you go to Philadelphia this is a good television or radio talk show to do. You should do an editorial board meeting with this newspaper. That is automatically plugged into the list.

We got 3 or 4 PIOs together who among us have been in every media area market and sat down and drew up what our guy did. What we anticipate is that this will be complete for me and Greener to take a look at by close of business Wednesday. It will be in draft booklet form. There will be changes we want to look at.

We ran a test where we wanted to see how much of our dream schedule sat with reality. Warren called a number of Cabinet officers. It worked out with the except of Richardson and seemed to do surprisingly well.

What we anticipate doing as soon as this is put together and before we launch these guys out on the road is to have all the PIOs in and give them it as a package. You get an envelope with Richardsons' schedule. There is no appearance of a huge machine working. We anticipate meeting with schedulers once a week to check on the accuracy and how well the plan is working. We want to sit down where they will have follow-up action.

Warren Hendricks: We want to make that easier by the use of this computer. They come back and tell us the TV stations or boards were receptive. We put it into the computer. We can change it daily as we add to it.

Dave Gergen: It is clear Bill Rhatigan is taking charge of the PIO's in government.

Bill Rhatigan: We have met with the PIO's 4 times in 3 weeks.

Dave Gergen: This is one of the invaluable parts of Bill's service. He knows them personally.

Bill Rhatigan: It blew their minds when Cheney met with them. They need access to their principles just as we do. There are personality conflicts there just as there are here. That is exactly what happens in departments. It is extremely helpful to have a PIO you can plug into the inner circle of the Cabinet officer. By being able to feed him information from our office, it is material he can't get from his own people. It is important to them and makes them more important in their own staffs. If we can provide them with as much information in advance it makes them much more effective in doing their legitimate job.

Margaret Earl: Treasury, HEW, Labor PIO's are on the air right now. Three Assistant Secretaries: Defense, State, HEW are Assistant Secretaries. The rest are "hacks".

Ron Nessen: When you are putting that book together of information for local cities where advocates are going to go, give it to the Press Advance Office too. The Advance Office is putting their own books together. You might want to share some information.

Dave Gergen: They are interested in the orientation of newspapers, talk shows, and what information we have.

Ron Nessen: On the subject of letters of appreciation for editorial endorsements. That has always been unstructured. We however happened to see one sent out thank you. Now we have all that systemized. Starting now you are keeping track of them.

Margaret Earl: I am concerned with the daily PIO announcements that might affect us. Bill and I talked about this a week ago. Generally we are having

success depending on the agency or department. The thing works pretty well. We have reasonably good cooperation. There is some confusion but it has been clarified.

Bill Rhatigan: We are trying to cut down the number of people calling the White House for direction.

Margaret Earl: We could use improvement on keeping them informed of announcements coming out of here.

Bill Rhatigan: That has always been a problem. They have not been kept informed. That is an area that can and should be more frequently utilized.

Margaret Earl: Regular announcements are no problem. We can handle that easily. The problem is the policy things in which we are involved. We are headed in different directions.

John Carlson: Yesterday we put out a statement on the Tax Bill. Somebody should have called Treasury and told them we were doing that.

Bill Rhatigan: On that kind of announcement Margaret should do that.

John Carlson: Who should call you and let you know from the Press Office?

Larry Speakes: Gail could do that.

Warren Hendricks: During the primaries many things were sent out in the morning. We had a meeting saying something was going to be announced. I would immediately find out which Cabinet officers were on the road, and call our contacts and tell them what the President would announce today. It established us as their contacts.

Bill Rhatigan: This is very valuable. Some of the Cabinet officers are good about maintaining contact with their offices. Some of them are not. If we can force feed these guys as they are travelling, it is excellent.

Ron Nessen: Do we have a system for calling out when they are on the road?

Warren Hendricks: I have a system for calling them.

Bill Rhatigan: Do we get to their offices in Washington or to them on the road?

Warren Hendricks: It depends on the Cabinet officer.

Ron Nessen: What about the positive things like Carter just said this and it would be terrific if you could say this? Are we equipped to do that yet?

Dave Gergen: Hopefully we'll get around to that. The group that meets in the mornings to discuss what is happening that day and what happened last night -- Warren could get to them with that.

Ron Nessen: But we are moving toward that.

Dave Gergen: It was my hope that by now we would have that. But we haven't. With the President going to the convention and then to Vail how can rapidly can we get something into place? The next 2 or 3 weeks?

Larry Speakes: What about a group like the American Legion group that brings out what Carter has said on draft dodgers.

Dave Gergen: We don't have that. We are not working special interest groups right now.

Ron Nessen: The other thing is on the PIO's I don't sense there is a lot of problem with what we are about to do or have done. But I have the feeling we might get ourselves into a fair amount of trouble because we don't know the timing or substance of major announcements coming out of the departments.

Dave Gergen: My sense is that we have a much better anticipation rate now than before.

Stef Halper: We have more focus on events within one week now. Our real strength of the system is it shows us opportunities for the Presidential statements. Also shows problem areas. Another part of the system is advance information about negative events coming in from agencies which allows us to respond faster than otherwise.

Margaret Earl: It will never be a perfect system because the dependence so much on the human factor. Some people are very conscientious in letting us know. Some are very slow.

Bill Rhatigan: It is a problem. It depends on so many factors: Does the agency itself know what it is doing, if the people work through the problem, does the PIO see the papers before they get to the Secretary? If he does, he has an indication. Some give it to the PIO after the Secretary has seen it and want it released one hour later.

Dave Gergen: At an early Cabinet meeting we need to take 10 minutes to talk about insuring that the White House is properly informed and the necessity of keeping a close relationship with the White House. They need to understand our system of getting out information to them. The President needs to do it -- to crack the whip. Word has to be put out on how important this effort will be in the fall.

Bill Rhatigan: When the President does that, he should not indicate that the PIOs are the critical area. In some departments we don't want the PIO in for good reasons. We want to make sure we have the right person. In some departments if we went through the PIO it would end up in Jimmy Carter's campaign by close of business that day.

Ron Nessen: Along the same lines, what departments are keeping us informed of what they are about to do? Does the State Department get plugged in to the same degree as the other departments?

Stef Halper: Kathy Troia gets plugged in, mostly on events on the Hill that might make news. They send us twice a week plug in with a written paper projecting Rumsfeld's and HAK's schedule.

Ron Nessen: Is that a high enough level to deal with? There have been things you read on the wire completely counter to whatever strategy the President is following.

Stef Halper: Bud McFarlene sometimes is plugged in, but not usually.

Larry Speakes: Bud gives good input into Jerry Jones meetings.

Dave Gergen: State is the worst offender.

Stef Halper: We might establish more regular contact with Bud.

Dave Gergen: Maybe a more direct route to Bob Funseth would be better.

Bill Rhatigan: I'll call Bob Funseth and try to work something out.

Stef Halper: Another part of the system is a land mine system of things that could blow up on us. What has happened is that instead of being eclectic list, it has turned out to be a legislative list. The reason it has gotten that way is because the most systematic list is of legislation. Some effort should be made to make multiple input. If everybody were aware of our need to know things which might come along.

Margaret Earl: It's the same problem of PIO's not being informed.

Dave Gergen: Another responsibility of Agnes is taking over the wire service distribution. It's a problem for many people to be informed.

Agnes Waldron: We will distribute them to 28 people. 160 get the news summary and 28 get the wires. They are clipped, xeroxed, and distributed every hour.

Bill Rhatigan: It would be helpful if we have someone who would not just drop the clips in the in-box, but would bring them to the attention of the person who is to be informed.

John Carlson: 28 people is a lot. Does everyone need them?

Dave Gergen: You have to know what is happening. Our service is wire service distribution. It has been too relaxed, and we need to do what is necessary.

Ron Nessen: Let's go back to the Department of State question. I think Funseth is a fine guy. But the problem is the State Department thinks less in political terms of any department. You need to make contact with someone with a political sense more than Funseth has. McCloskey is my choice. He knows the problems better. We don't want to go over Funseth's head.

The other thing I was going to ask is whether in the land mine report, what happens after you call it to people's attention -- what happens then?

Stef Halper: We have been tracking issues as they emerge. We first list it, and track through press releases. I try to call people most directly affected. The function of that activity is to alert people there is an action that will occur.

Ron Nessen: They need to follow up on it.

Bill Rhatigan: Bill Greener will be used on the follow-up on issues such as Humphrey-Hawkins and Postcard Registration. Bill has now run the route. He wants to find out status of these bills, what's where, starting putting together some information on what our positions are on those so that we can rise question in 9:30 meeting to discuss in advance where we want to position the President today, tomorrow, Tuesday, anticipating he will act on Thursday. We then have the luxury of having Simon slip information on Postcard Registration into a speecon on a TV show to start laying out segments before we are forced with a piece of paper in front of the President.

Margaret Earl: Carter is starting to come out more and more on certain pieces of legislation. The Postcard Registration and zero-based budgeting. It seems like he will try to get these guys pushing these things through. It will be important to us to establish our position clearly. Postcard Registration has been slowed down. It will be too late to implement for the November election.

George Van Cleve: In terms of wires there is no distinction made between importance of stories -- Carter speech wires and the day book. Should we separate them so that 5 or 6 people who need to immediately respond need to be flagged?

We have no way of getting the actual transcript of what Carter says -- a full text. We get a wire story but nobody knows what entirely he said.

Stef Halper: Don't we have a system in the PFC where we record speeches and have them transcribed within 48 hours?

George VanCleve: We have a real problem with this. We need a way of getting in a relatively short time a read-out on how he looked and what was his tone on statements.

Dave Gergen: Someone from Peter Kaye's office would get it, and is supposed to be there.

Fred Slight: They would tape it and feed it back, mark tape for selected spots so we could have it transcribed that night. Didn't have the efficiency that is needed.

Dave Gergen: What are they going to use over there?

Fred Slight: It is not worked out. I don't know if it will be the RNC or the PFC. They are trying to have two people on the Carter trial to do the stuff. There are a lot of loose ends.

George Van Cleve: It seems to me very clear that Congress will use Carter's people as a weapon against us. The people up there back off and re-write the bill. The problem we have is people who run into meetings, and say they will deal with it when it comes.

We need more advance work in the gut bills. If you have enough to do you will put something someone else tells you in advance at the bottom of your list. People deal with the immediate first and put off the advance planning until later. On the Nixon Arms Bill, people have known for two years. They were waiting to bring it up until HAK went to Iran. That is an example of the sorts of things that are sitting in committee ready to go.

Stef Halper: On the Sunshile Bill, OMB has known about it for 6 months.

Margaret Earl: Seeing that stuff coming down the pike is not really as bad a problem as knowing how to respond to it. This runs into a whole policy development area of the White House, which is a mess.

Dave Gergen: What we are saying is that the Democrats are taking the best parts of the 1972 program the Republicans had on orchestration, theatrics, and surrogates program and building around that because it worked.

Frank Brannon: One of the issues this year will be the one party government. Maybe we should develop that issue right now -- Democratic Congress controlling government and electing their man.

Dave Gergen: That is what is happening. The question is whether we can do something about it.

George VanCleve: We get hit for this 2-year report. You have your situation where Congress spends a lot to push forward its own view. We should be able to come back. They spend money on themselves. They are vulnerable.

Dave Gergen: We have a Cabinet link which is getting better. We have no Congressional thing that I am aware of. We have no sense of how to get our people organized up there. They have no direction. In 1972 we had a guy here who met every morning to talk about what the line was from the communications standpoint. He talked with key AA's and Congressmen on the Hill by mid-morning. We wrote speeches for them. It didn't work perfectly but it worked well regionally. We don't have anything like that right now. We don't have a mechanism through our legislative office or anywhere else to do that. Walter Johnson did it in 1972.

John Carlson: We should have Rhatigan talking to special interest groups to know what is happening.

Dave Gergen: In 1972 we had a group to make sure someone did talk to special interest groups advocates. We had a network that covered every phase of the communications process. 45 minutes later you had your assignment for the day -- what your unit had to produce. The Press Office didn't have to carry all the water. They had workers from 1701 and from the RNC. They had a loop that went through the whole system. Everyone knew what they were expected to do. There was an awful lot of stuff going on behind the confines of that group.

This year we are faced with how much the law has changed. We are in a situation where we cannot be as totally political as that operation was in 1972. Every moment of your time was spent on politics. This year we must give 40 hours a week to the government.

You should put the other guy on the defensive when he appears before groups you had already briefed. McGovern couldn't respond to all the charges that were being made. We don't have that kind of sophistication. Shouldn't we have a truth squad? Shouldn't we try to sandwich Carter and Mondale? The question is to what extent do you want to go? I talked to a guy from Rocky's staff last night who talked about 1966 truth squad and wondered why we didn't have a truth squad? How can we get people on Hill involved?

Frank Brannon: Do we have anything in the PFC to get together Democrats for Ford operation? There are conservative Democrats who don't like Carter at all. That would be effective in the mechanism. I talked to Governor Edward of Louisiana who doesn't like Carter at all. He might be available.

Jim Shuman: That is well underway. I don't know the names.

Warren Hendricks: Not only should we have Governors and Mayors involved. But we get ourselves out of joint because we don't get them involved. Even Cabinet wives and Assistant Secretaries are frustrated because they want to help and don't know what to do.

Dave Gergen: We should have party regulars out there handled by the PFC. We handle advocates from here -- governors, mayors, members of Congress.

Warren Hendricks: We have a hang-up on who will pay for them.

Bill Rhatigan: I don't think our advocates program should include Members of Congress, Governors and Mayors. I think under the new law and new morality that would open us up to the kind of piece Fred Barnes wrote in the Star. We would lose more than we would gain. There should be an advocates program for Congress, Mayors and Governors, though.

Dave Gergen: We have no trouble with Members of Congress. Just so it is effective. The real question is whether they are effective. Do you have a sense of follow up?

Fred Slight: No, They are glaring up over there.

Bill Rhatigan: Another point is that while all of this coverage is helpful, I am not sure this is the right forum for us to discuss all this stuff.

Dave Gergen: Back to the news summary, do you sense, Agnes, the news summary will be fundamentally different or much the same?

Agnes Waldron: Fundamentally different. Shorter and more succinct. I would like to put out a mid-morning edition and an overnight edition, depending on the typing help. The mid-morning would be overnight wires and morning news shows.

Dave Gergen: We haven't had resources for the two-shift system. We have been emphasizing the evening stuff.

Agnes Waldron: There has been some morning stuff, but more often the news at the end of the day.

John Carlson: The news summary is read the very first thing. It is extremely valuable, but it is too long. That is the only criticism is that it is a little bit lengthy.

Agnes Waldron: We hope to cut down on the over-all length because there is too much for people to plough through.

Dave Gergen: The table of contents is very valuable.

Jim Shuman: There may be somewhere in stock a cover in red because we originally wanted to do a morning edition. It would be a good differentiation. I'll find out where they are.

Dave Gergen: What about including magazines?

Agnes Waldron: We don't get very many magazines. I don't see much sense in re-printing stuff from Time and Newsweek. I would like to concentrate on things like New Times, Village Voice, etc. But we will just have to see.

We don't want to duplicate the whole article because no one will read it. Again, it is a matter of bodies. I do want to expand the subscription list. It was cut way back.

Dave Gergen: ;I used to find policy-type problems that would be discovered out in the local areas. We could use it as a policy tool, and as a check point. It was a screen for us. That is hard to do.

Melanie Berney: We did that during the primaries.

Margaret Earl: Couldn't you do a weekly supplement on that?

Dave Gergen: It is terribly difficult to do.

Margaret Earl: The PFC gets a lot of that because people complain to them and then they call us.

Agnes Waldron: With the use of volunteers we hope to speed up the reading of the newspapers. We can work with Ann Higgins for volunteers and also with John Rogers.

Wanda Phelan: On picking up stories that should get out to departments, is it run through the PIO rather than the Domestic Council?

Margaret Earl: It depends on whether it's a White House issue or a department issue.

Wanda Phelan: We would have a full tickler system, where handling departments on one-to-one basis.

(At this point the meeting broke for a short rest period.)

Dave Gergen: The legal problems and the legal implications have to be watched. We have to make sure we are invulnerable. The Finance Law is very complicated and hard to figure out. If anyone is in doubt of something, don't do it. I know a lot of people in 1972 were asked to do things that they were uncomfortable about. That is the wrong attitude. It was the people who raised questions who survived and came out of the thing clear. What would scare me a lot is if we had GAO trying to find out what all these people were doing. They would find we were not breaking the law, but they would have a little fun with it.

On the news summary: There is something set up on television news so there is a news summary of televised news in the morning. WHCA excerpts all critical Administration stories and election stories which they show in one film. Does everyone know that is on every day at 9:30 am? It was done for the President's use, to see while he eats lunch. The staff can also watch it.

My questions is could we also excerpt things from the morning news shows? We should formalize this information so that everyone knows it is available. We must have some way of doing it. Morning news shows are taped but not edited down. Maybe we should do the same thing for the morning news shows. Let's get a piece of paper informing staff that the edited news shows are available.

Jim Shuman: WHCA sent out a memo when it was first started.

Ron Nessen: Then they are not taping the morning news shows and editing them down?

Agnes Waldron: They don't edit them down. We will have to ask them to do that.

Melanie Berney: The news summary office tells WHCA what to put on the televised summary from the evening shows. We are required to keep the film of the first family for the archives, which we send over there after 2 or 3 weeks.

Dave Gergen: The advertising people have to buy the film. But they could look at it here and know what they wanted, and then buy the film from the networks.

Ron Nessen: You are going to begin to go to the two shifts so people will monitor the morning shows, too. You could put into operation for the morning shows the same thing as the evening shows.

Agnes Waldron: Yes.

Ron Nessen: It might be read for noon-time watching. It would increase the time to over 1/2 hour.

Dave Gergen: We'll look into that. We'll also renotify the White House staff that the service is available.

Jim Shuman: The time when the President sees it is when he eats lunch. It would be helpful if the staff could see it a specific time each day -- if they knew it would play then.

John Carlson: Ron should see it before his briefing. Maybe he could watch it at 10 am daily. Could they get it done that soon?

Melanie Berney: It takes them 20 minutes about to edit it.

Dave Gergen: Someone from my office should monitor it every day if Ron can't see it himself.

Ron Nessen: If you are going to send a memo around saying it is available, you could send a list also of what is taped on a normal basis.

Bill Roberts: I wanted to talk a minute about the problem of putting things out late in the afternoon. We have been getting the President's statements and administration statements in the Press Office for 2 years 90% of the time coming in between 5 and 7 pm. We would get the word in the morning something would be coming, but it drags around. We get it so late in the evening it gets no play anywhere. I understand you are going to be sort of the over-all supervisors of this, Dave. If there is anything you can do to impress on the people involved that those statements get no play when they come in as late as 5 or 6 o'clock, we should either hold them for the next day or get them out earlier the day they are being prepared, when they will get play on the wires, papers, and TV shows.

A large amount of the late statements have been reaction. The one yesterday was a prime example, on the Congress voting on the tax bill, but not on swine flu vaccine. We should have been out Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday or the next day in advance of the vote saying there is an important vote coming out and it is the President's tax program, and we hope record will show clearly who is favoring a tax reduction for the American people. Put the pressure on people before the vote comes. Instead all these statements come after the fact.

Larry Speakes: A lot of people don't understand how the wires work during the course of the day. At 12:30 or 1:00 pm the schedule of major stories runs. At about 2:00 pm they are moving the night leads. If we don't put out a statement until 5 pm it will move only as an insert into the story. At 5:00 pm the statement never catches up with the story.

The same thing happens for television. When Ron finished his briefing in the morning the guys call into their desks, and say what they think they have a story on. In the afternoon they have their pieces set for the day. Maybe it makes it on the show, and maybe it doesn't. At 5:00 pm the show will be locked up. It needs to be done at 2 pm. Only the block-busters will get on the air after 5 pm.

Ron Nessen: Larry has given us a good account of the mechanisms of journalism. When decisions are made here the media needs are one consideration. There are other decisions that affect the kind of play it will get.

Dave Gergen: I don't think the general staff knows the mechanics of the press things. I don't know what time the press can put on a press clip. We can do it around 2 pm which is OK, but at 11 is the best time to go. Given all these things, my question is would it not be worthwhile to give a briefing to the Senior Staff on the objectives and mechanics -- what we are trying to achieve. People who need this information for daily use probably don't know a lot of it.

The whole news operation and how we project the President on television and the written word is very, very critical to the whole success of this campaign.

John Carlson: We could take 5 minutes of the Senior Staff meeting and have Ron run through the basics.

Dave Gergen: I wonder if it wouldn't take more than that. Then maybe a secondary meeting with other people. We have to convert people to the idea of how we communicate is a major part of how successful we are.

Larry Speakes: Is there a way for reaction statements to short-circuit the system? At 5 pm it is still lost in the system after beginning at 8 am. Could you draft it, and have it approved, and get it ready to go at 10:30 am?

Bill Rhatigan: There comes a time when the program people will have to sit back and let the communicators communicate. We need to look at events in terms of the communications: What is the story, what is the picture?

Dave Gergen: Jim Shuman is starting to help on statements. We are using his writing talents full-time. We need more help on that side. Once we have our plans in place we could take charge much more.

John Carlson: The next thing is to get the clearance procedure around the White House to 4 or 5 people -- walk it around to each and wait for them to approve it.

George VanCleve: It might be possible. A lot of times the changes are not substantive, but petty, and they want pretty words. They change it because it isn't in their language.

Jim Shuman: The Domestic Council is constantly failing to get in their information for the briefing book, and also for the 2 year report, on time.

Margaret Earl: I'll speak in defense of the Domestic Council. In the statement we shouldn't have to call the individual policy guys. We should just say to Cannon - we need this in 10 or 15 minutes, and have him contact his people. The Domestic Council problem could be overcome by Cannon bringing in his policy guy, writing the statement, approving it, and giving it to us for release.

Dave Gergen: Bill Rhatigan can essentially run a lot of what we are doing and get it done. The division is more and more toward having Bill run things and have him focus on statements, and work with Jim to see things get done.

The hope is that I can get separated out to do things like statements. I would like to think every day we can focus in on the event for that day and the next day that we want to have on TV. I care about what happens on TV and in the newspaper headlines.

Tom Brannon: Is there a deliberate attempt each day to try to determine the news event?

Ron Nessen: It is the first thing in our 7:30 press office staff meeting. We say, What is the news story out of the White House?

Dave Gergen: It evolves a lot and gets diverted. The final determination is chance.

Ron Nessen: The concluding thing is chance, and it is beyond our control. There is a lot of miscalculation. We talked last night about having a good story and not having it get out.

Bill Rhatigan: One of the problems of statements and Presidential events and words is that it is decided to recommend today that next Saturday the President does this. It is planned for and the day before it is to happen someone will say, "do we really want to do this?" You should stick to it when a decision is made.

Dave Gergen: You go back to the statement business. I think we can do the statements. A major problem is the lines of authority are not clear-cut. We never do the same thing the same way twice. You never know who is responsible. The only way you run an organization of this size is to make sure everyone knows who is doing what.

Margaret Earl: Also for everyone to know when major events are scheduled for.

Dave Gergen: Information is not widely shared on the staff. In order to have a confidence level in ourselves we have to trust in each other. We have to have lives of responsibility.

Tom Brannon: For a long time after I got here I found resistance to orchestrating an event -- to just let it happen. There is nothing wrong with orchestrating of what you want.

Agnes Waldron: Who sits in on the Scheduling meeting and decides on the schedule?

Dave Gergen: It is done in different ways. There is a morning scheduling meeting. That meeting was effective for awhile. Now it is overloaded with people and it got bogged down. Now submeetings are going on about scheduling. Too many people are into scheduling. We need to get a schedule that is imaginative and good and keep other people working on implementing it. You get the best schedule to go and then go with it. Don't keep arguing about it. You spend your whole mornings in meetings and then the day is gone before you go and get to work on it.

Tom Brannon: What is wrong with a scheduling meeting in the afternoon?

Bill Rhatigan: The 9:30 meeting is more of a reporting meeting.

Ron Nessen: Maybe there should be a 5:00 pm meeting for the next day's schedule.

Dave Gergen: You need two different kinds of scheduling meetings: (1) for the fine-tuning meeting where everyone has a sense of what is happening, and (2) a creativity meeting which pushes around crazy ideas. It should be held for the week ahead.

Larry Speakes: There used to be a Friday afternoon meeting for the next week.

Fred Slight: If we had problems on the Panama Canal this spring, imagine what it will be this fall. You need to get a hand on that.

Tom Brannon: Everyone after the convention will be out of pocket. They all say they are taking a week of so off. You can't afford to do that.

Agnes Waldron: Maybe you should come down that no vacation until after the November election.

Dave Gergen: We need to give the President a list. I am confused about Vail and what it is supposed to do.

George VanCleve: People should go for 5 days during the convention if they want time off.

Fred Slight: If we are intent on trying to work out better flow, it might be helpful over the next 2 to 3 week period to try to see what kind of play we get. It makes sense to quantify it a little bit.

John Carlson: Someone has to sit down with Cheney and say who is doing the statements? We can't wait for 3 weeks. We had this same discussion 3 weeks ago and nothing has happened.

Tom Brannon: Someone needs to sit down with Cheney and tell him what has come out of this meeting.

Ron Nessen: We talked about this last night. But between now and the conven Dick will not concentrate on how to pull this together. We will pull together a presentation for Vail. Dick is totally focused on the convention this week. Then next week is the convention. The first time to get his attention is on Vail.

Agnes Waldron: There are only 74 working days til elections. That includes Saturdays, but not Sundays. Two weeks is too long to wait.

Another thing that concerns me is that we look inadequate. The public perception is that things are disorganized. Public perception of Carter is that he is an organized individual. We are going to look incompetent.

Ron Nessen: I agree the sooner the better. I'm willint to throw myself under any wheels of any car. I don't know if we'll have it pulled together.

Tom Brannon: I think you should try for a Monday meeting, even if things aren't totally pulled together.

Dave Gergen: Warren is very involved right now in this film. There are 4 people on the advocates staff. You are talking about future personnel needs. We are taking the heart of what CREEP did in 1972, we are doing here.

Bill has put together Cabinet officers schedule which has helped. Our heavies are locked in. The problem we are going to have is satisfying people's needs. They all want heavies which are already locked in.

Warren Hendricks: We have everything in a computer. It tells where they are by state, every day. The computer tells where we have invitations available. The same thing with media invitations. We will keep a record of receptive stations in an area so another Cabinet officer going to that area can use the same station.

They are going to have some very specific guides from us. We are not trying to take over their schedules. They have not been receiving anything from the White House. My existence is dependent upon two relationships. They have to expect from me information, guides, strategy or whatever. If they get it someplace else, I become ineffective.

I have no idea what is happening on the caucus teams with the Cabinet. Some of our best advocates have never been contacted about whether they are going to the convention.

There has to be one office in touch with the Cabinet. They can't hear from several different people. There are exceptions. But when it comes time to ask them to do something, it has to stay with one office.

I look at my shop this way. I would like to keep that contact centralized so that it won't get confused. I have a good relationship with assistants and public information people.

Tom Brannon: Have a Cabinet meeting to tell them what they are expected to do. I think if they know they are supposed to be responsive, they will be.

Warren Hendricks: I think that is being done.

Dave Gergen: When we get into Caucus meetings, it will be through Rhatigan.

Fred Slight: I've just started here last week. Essentially what we are looking at is to try to identify where the President ought to posture himself with some of these things. These things go into direct contrast to Carter. I am sympathetic to the way things operate around here. On the Carter business, I think it is very important for those who have a feeling for what President's position is. We do have an awful lot of work ahead of us. The RNC has a quote book going to press Monday. It needs improvement. It is going to be too thick it won't be useful. There are people I need to talk with.

Dave Gergen: We are looking to Fred to talk to the PFC and the RNC. They are going on separate roads, and the White House is going on a third road. What has to be done -- absolutely essential -- it has to be coordinated so that we don't waste a lot of our time and they don't waste theirs. We need one good product.

My experience with the RNC is that they are not as capable of producing as good a final product, as generally we could produce. We have to rely on our own resources. Our experience with the RNC in 1972 was they had on file good stuff, but you always got it late. If you wanted to get it in 3 hours you had it to have it at your fingertips. Our Reagan effort in the primary started off beautifully. But the thing got bogged down. The net result was we weren't prepared. We have to have our own in-house group capable of coordinating these things.

Warren and Fred have to be in regular contact every day with these people to coordinate what is going on.

We need to coordinate interest groups. We need to coordinate ethnics, religious groups, Veterans, elderly.

Bill Rhatigan: That is a sample of things that should have been done. The Legionaire is published monthly. We have no plans for the magazine to have the President's picture on the cover. They lock up their issues a couple of

months in advance.

Fred Slight: This has been a reaction process. We haven't been going out and saying, what are the groups we want to have impact on?

Bill Rhatigan: This is a very serious problem we should realize before we jump in. We haven't talked to them for two years. Now it is August in an election year. Four years of making-up plus taking brief from them for the heavy-handed way things were handled 4 years ago. I don't anticipate we will get the kind of cooperation from those organizations. Of course anything now will be better than nothing before the election.

Dave Gergen: We have discussed a lot of problems -- all the months we are going to try to cram in the next 90 days. It is possible to get pessimistic because so much needs to be done.

I am fully sensitive to the complexity of the problems. But I do have the feeling that in the last 3 or 4 weeks we have started to put this together. Three weeks ago no one thought it would be possible to do a film for the convention. I think it will work. I has gotten moving.

Five weeks ago we couldn't have produced a two-year report of this quality. It is a solid document. George, Jim pushed in having put that thing together. We have a very credible thing. We are going to make good use of that. It is going to be very, very helpful.

Three or 4 weeks ago there was a question about our television office. We now have Bill Carruthers and Helen Collins to move ahead.

We now have a staff on the Communications side to implement. I have a lot of confidence about what we can achieve as a group. I would like to think we can operate with that spirit of determination and team work and spread it throughout the White House. There is more enthusiasm now.

Bill Rhatigan: In EOB there are a lot of people professional and non-professional coming into my office asking, do you have an opening? That is a real encouragement. We have raised problems that we recognize. We have a willingness to face up to the problems and deal with them. And a recognition by others that people are starting to deal with those problems. There is increased enthusiasm and an effort to cooperate. The PFC is starting to send things over to us to make sure we know what they are doing.

Dave Gergen: I am upbeat about this. There was a big question a few weeks ago of how are you going to handle the egos of Gergen, Nessen, Carlson, Rhatigan, Greener together in the same room. It has worked out very, very well. I am pleased with the teamwork. It is an essential part of what we do, and my respect for Ron has increased. Let's all move forward.

AGENDA ITEMS
FOR
"CAMP DAVID II" MEETING

9:30 - 9:45 a. m. Ron Nessen Introduction

9:45 - 10:00 a. m. View of Tom DeCair

10:00 - 10:45 a. m. Review of Recommendations from Camp David

10:45 - 11:45 a. m. Discussion of Two Foreign Trips (Europe and China)
and Vail

11:45 a. m. -
12:30 p. m. Discussion of Daily Briefings and Postings


12:30 - 2:00 p. m. Lunch - White House Conference Dining Room

2:00 - 2:30 p. m. Margita White's Items

1. Review of Handling of Out-of-Town Media Requests
2. Review of Communications Office Press Plans
3. Press Activities by Other White House Offices

2:30 - 3:00 p. m. Bill Roberts' Items

1. Better Coordination between the Various
Executive Offices in Scheduling Briefings;
Releases of Information or Reports;
Announcements of Major-Importance;
Presidential Appearances
2. Better Communication during Unexpected Events
3. Better Weekend Rotation



3:00 - 3:30 p. m.

Jack Hushen's Items

1. More Information Must Flow from Upper Press Office to Lower Press Office
2. Telephone Answering Should be Equalized Between Upper and Lower Offices by Having Telephones Ring Upstairs
3. The Daily Briefing Should Start at 11:00 a. m.
4. The Briefing Room Should be Reconfigured to Provide More Space for the Additional TV Cameras That Are so Often in Attendance at the Briefing as well as Bringing more Order to the Briefing Room
5. Better Liaison Must be Established between Mrs. Ford's Press Office and Our Office
6. Copies of the Foreign Policy Guidance Should be given to the Assistant Press Secretaries

3:30 - 4:00 p. m.

Travel Problems
Press Advance Coordination
Bibles
Coordination with White House Advance Office, etc.

4:00 - 5:00 p. m.

Personnel and Free for All