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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 9, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Weeks of Dec. 29, 1975 -  
January 9, 1976.

Incoming mail during this holiday period totalled approximately 37,300 pieces. The majority of it dealt with legislation.

Veto of the common situs picketing bill was approved by 6,275 writers; 1,756 opposed the veto. In contrast, signing of the energy bill was supported by only 13 persons while 1,061 criticized its enactment.

Two pieces of pending legislation have also been drawing steady attention over the past weeks. Since December 1 you have received 5,647 letters opposing the Child and Family Services Act and 9,949 letters opposing any amendments to the Hatch Act. Concerning the former, writers express fear that the legislation will give the Federal Government control over their private family lives. Opposition to Hatch Act changes stems from the "additional power" writers believe they would give to labor unions.

The Railroad Reform Act is also beginning to draw public response: pro: 1,572; con: 34. Virtually all of the support mail is coming from within the railroad industry.

In the area of foreign policy, concern was voiced over the U.S. role in Angola. Mail ran roughly 6 to 1 against American involvement: pro: 99; con: 628.

You also continued to receive mail protesting the UN resolution on Zionism: 939 pieces. This mail is clearly being inspired by the pro-Israeli lobby.



The remaining mail was highly diverse and most often covered numerous subjects within a single letter. You received 438 letters of general support; another 195 were critical, and 265 offered political comment. Within this general mail two areas appeared of greatest concern.

Writers were angered at the matching Federal campaign funds given to political candidates. Several cited this as an example of Washington's "waste" of taxpayers' money, and several others argued that most candidates who received the funds had "no real chance" at their Party's nomination and therefore should not be funded.

The other area of general dismay was over the postal rate increases. Writers were unanimous in condemning what they saw as consistently poor service and many protested that, having raised the rates, the postal service "didn't even have" the new denomination stamps available for sale.

Mail opposing Federal gun controls also continues steady: 3,914.

Also, during this two week period you received 1,336 messages of Christmas greetings and good wishes for the New Year.

*Review to  
Ed Walsh  
per RW instructions  
1-25-76*

*1/6*

*file*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: 1975 PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Incoming Presidential mail for 1975 totaled 1,856,639. It covered a multitude of subjects and controversies, both foreign and domestic. Yet whatever the topic or issue at hand, certain fundamental themes prevailed throughout the year. I have tried to assess the concerns and sentiments that were most consistently expressed by those citizens writing to their President. For the purpose of this report I have divided the mail into three broad categories: Domestic Policy, Foreign Policy, and General Non-Issue.

I. DOMESTIC POLICY

Virtually all the mail you received in 1975 on domestic subjects can be roughly divided under two general themes:

- 1) The state of the economy - of which energy policy was an integral part;
- 2) The role of Government in citizens' lives

These two concerns cut across geographic and socio-economic lines. There was general agreement that, while most Americans continued to maintain an acceptable standard of living, this was becoming far more difficult and fear of "slippage" was growing. There was similar agreement that Government intrudes far too much into citizens' lives. Writers did differ in their beliefs as to how best to meet these two problems, and their differing beliefs clearly reflected socio-economic levels.

Beginning with your State of the Union Address, economic concern has been expressed steadily (46,500 pieces) throughout the year. Concern over Administration energy policy, which was seen as a major economic determinant, was also steady (40,000 pieces).



Middle- to lower-income writers were principally concerned with costs of living and fuel, and of social program tax burdens. Overall, this group formed the early core opposition to energy decontrol proposals, fearing rising fuel costs. Most vocal during the winter months, they gradually lost interest and virtually ceased to write as the year wore on -- and warmed up. Evidently they resigned themselves to higher fuel prices -- if such can be concluded from their lack of support (83 pieces) for the recent Congressional Energy Bill, with its price roll-back provisions.

In contrast, upper middle-income persons strongly supported Administration efforts to decontrol fuel prices and to deregulate the private economic sector. They supported your State of the Union Address (3,177); and most recently, they urged a veto of the Energy Bill (14,863) and backed efforts to match Federal tax cuts with equal reductions in the growth of Federal spending (1,758). Also, in keeping with their views on decontrol, they opposed the proposal for an Energy Independence Authority by a margin of 8 to 1.

Overall, higher-income individuals see the Federal government as ponderous and intrusive, isolated, authoritarian, and wasteful. Accordingly, they opposed not only economic controls, but also new Federal agencies, such as the Agency for Consumer Advocacy (3,353), Federal export monitoring (924), and Federal regulation generally. Areas coming under particular attack were EPA, OSHA, ERISA, FAA, SEC, and EEOC.

Concern about the proper role of the Federal government is not, however, limited to upper-income groups. It is an issue that cuts across economic lines. But the kinds of intervention that most bother people do reflect social class levels.

Middle- to upper-income writers expressed greatest concern over economic interference by the Government. Complaints focused on regulatory policies, Federal reporting (paperwork) requirements, deficit spending, and an ever-expanding bureaucracy.

In contrast, middle- to lower-income families were most concerned over the social impact of Government on their lives. They objected strenuously to busing (20,244) and to Federal gun controls (65,050). "Liberal judges" -- a group largely blamed for busing -- were also seen as largely responsible for "soaring" crime rates. Gun control was viewed as an inappropriate and inadequate solution to the crime problem. Strict law enforcement and swift, effective punishment would resolve the crime problem, while "law-abiding" citizens would continue to exercise their "Constitutional" right to hold arms.

In addition to public concern over the power of the Federal government, there appeared to be a similar strong concern over the power of labor unions to control and alter American life patterns. This showed up most clearly in Common Situs mail, the heaviest subject mail of the year:

PRO: Letters: 7,179; Forms: 200;

CON: Letters: 47,459; Forms: 598,693.

This same concern over union power was dominant in mail opposing any changes to the Hatch Act (9,413), and in mail opposing the longshoremen's boycott of Soviet grain shipments (6,496). In addition, it was expressed as a strong secondary concern in mail about NYC: unions were frequently blamed for contributing to the city's plight through their "exorbitant" wage and benefit demands.

A variety of Federal social programs drew brief attention over the year. Each clearly had a limited but dedicated constituency who wrote in support of the individual program. Overall, however, there was considerable general dissatisfaction with the costs and the abuses of Federal social programs. This concern was particularly strong on the part of "middle class" writers who saw their own standard of living squeezed by inflation on the one hand and ever-higher taxes to fund Federal welfare and assistance programs on the other.

The Federal Executive pay raise was overwhelmingly opposed by writers (pro: 42; con: 5,186). Anger was particularly directed at the inclusion of Congress in the raise. Writers were also upset over abuses in social welfare programs and about official and bureaucratic "high living" at their expense.

In this latter connection there was limited but consistent criticism of Presidential travel (994 pieces). The costs to the taxpayer and the energy consumption involved were the major objections.

## II. FOREIGN POLICY

Doubts about America's proper world role, suspicion of detente, and opposition to foreign aid were the principal attitudes expressed. These reflected, in turn, the prevalent domestic attitude of cautious, belt-tightening self-interest. People seemed more and more to feel that we must take care of ourselves and that the rest of the world could, and would have to, survive largely without U.S. assistance.

The collapse of South Vietnam provided the first solid indication of this attitude. A majority did not want to extend additional American aid to "save" South Vietnam (pro aid: 7,998; con aid: 28,602).

Further, as the country's fall became inevitable, the question of refugees drew a sharply divided response (pro: 8,341; con: 10,215). Here the concern was almost exclusively economic. Opponents expressed fear that a tight U.S. job market could not absorb the refugees, and they protested the costs of refugee settlement and education to American taxpayers.

At the same time, however, there was an increased hardening toward those who would challenge our world position. Response to the MAYAGUEZ incident was instantaneous and overwhelmingly in favor of rescue. This very high level of support for the exercise of U.S. authority remained constant throughout the incident:

PRO: 28,745

CON: 2,662

Similarly, with regard to the American position in the Panama Canal Zone, mail has been solidly in support of retention of all U.S. rights and privileges over the Canal (1,747).

In contrast, the Helsinki Conference drew critical response (pro: 68; con: 1,069) because it was seen as a weakening of American resolve and commitment to freedom. Writers saw Helsinki as conferring on the Soviet Union a legitimacy in its control of the "captive nations" which it had hitherto been unable to gain.

In addition, there were approximately 10,000 pieces of mail specifically requesting that the U.S. recognize no change in the status or territorial integrity of the Baltic States.

At this mid-summer point -- with the Helsinki Conference, the Panama Canal negotiations, and the U.S. visit of Alexander Solzhenitsyn -- the first mail specifically directed against detente began to appear. These three issues, particularly the Solzhenitsyn affair, caused a definite hardening toward the Soviet Union. Writers began to suggest that detente was one-sided and not in the best interests of the U.S.

Besides the above issues, questions about enforcement of the SALT treaty and about the "advantages" of U.S.-Soviet grain sales began to be raised. And again, detente, it was argued, was working heavily to the benefit of the Soviets.

Mixed with the growing criticism of detente was similar criticism of Secretary Kissinger who was seen as its author and principal proponent. This criticism climaxed with the firing of Secretary Schlesinger in November (pro: 246; con: 2,190). The con mail argued that Schlesinger was the one effective counter to Kissinger, and that Schlesinger's ability and willingness to challenge on foreign policy and defense preparedness were vital to American security.

A growing desire to withdraw from global responsibility, seen earlier in Vietnam mail, was again seen in mail concerning the Egyptian-Israeli interim peace agreement (pro: 1,967; con: 2,030). Objections were voiced both to the stationing of American observers in the Sinai -- "another Vietnam" -- and to the provisions for extensive U.S. aid to Israel. Moreover, the opposition mail came fast and heavy from across the country. As these one-sided figures became publicized, an inspired mail campaign was launched by the pro-Israel lobby which ultimately came close to balancing the pro-con ratio.

Opposition to U.S. financial assistance to foreign countries, which surfaced concerning Vietnam and Israel, was also strongly reflected in mail arguing in support of aid to New York City. Repeatedly, writers pointed out how much was requested for foreign aid -- the request for Zaire being particularly mentioned -- and suggested that "charity begins at home."

### III. GENERAL NON-ISSUE

Children's Mail: 136,817.

Invitations to Events and Requests for  
Appointments: 8,423.

Requests for and Endorsements of Positions  
within the Federal Government: 11,028.

Autograph and Autograph Photo Requests: 7,982.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 12, 1976

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THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
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Christmas Greetings: 17,507.

General Support: 16,793.

General Criticism: 8,440.

*Rn  
has seen*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 16, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of January 12-16, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 23,000 pieces. It dealt primarily with legislative issues.

You received 1,888 letters in support of your veto of the Common Situs Picketing Bill. Only 41 writers voiced disagreement with the veto.

Mail commenting on your signing of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act dropped noticeably this week, to 91 pieces. However, 88 of these opposed enactment of the bill.

Pending legislation on a variety of issues also drew heavy public attention, although it should be noted that much of this mail was inspired by special interest groups.

1,247 persons wrote to urge you to sign the Railroad Reform Act. Virtually all of these writers were in some way connected with the railroad industry and a majority of the letters were actually forms, although personally written. 15 persons urged a veto of the bill.

You also continued to receive mail opposing any amendments to the Hatch Act: 145. As in previous weeks, opponents argued that the proposed changes would too greatly increase the power of organized labor within the Federal bureaucracy.

Opposition to Federal gun control laws also continued steady (187), as did opposition to the Child and Family Services Act (729). This latter mail came largely from small town-rural community areas, but it was geographically diverse. Writers claimed that the bill would deny parental rights in favor of Government authority and would "communize" American family life.

Right-to-life mail, specifically requesting your position on a Constitutional amendment, picked up this week (154). It came almost exclusively from Missouri and was apparently inspired to coincide with the approaching "anniversary" of the Supreme Court decision and the opening of the presidential election year.

Full-funding for the National Endowment for the Arts was urged by 409 writers, in what appeared to be yet another inspired mail campaign.

Foreign policy mail was relatively light and diverse: 526 pieces. Of this mail, 187 specifically opposed U.S. involvement in Angola; 38 urged U.S. action. 93 persons wrote to protest the U.N. resolution on Zionism. Several writers (approximately 40) also protested covert U.S. involvement in Italian political affairs. A few others wrote to express opposition to detente.

General support mail amounted to 275 pieces, while 103 persons wrote in criticism of Administration policies or actions.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Paul Theis  
Ron Nessen

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 23, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of January 19-23, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled 43,000 pieces. It covered a range of subjects, including your State of the Union Address, Congressional legislation, and political comment.

Mail to date on the SOTU address totals 746 pieces: pro: 528; con: 122; comment: 96. Within the support mail, no single aspect of the speech attracted particular notice; rather, overall approval was expressed, with many writers also expressing the hope that Congress will cooperate in your efforts.

In contrast, slightly more than 50% of the critical mail was specifically directed against the proposed increase in social security taxes.

There was virtually no mention of the income tax reduction proposals in any of the mail. However, there did appear to be an underlying concern with the general state of the economy in the majority of SOTU mail.

Legislative matters drew heavy public attention once again this week. Your veto of the Common Situs Picketing Bill continued to receive overwhelming support (pro: 1,758; con: 16).

Of pending legislation, the Railroad Reform Act drew the heaviest mail (pro: 5,742). Also of concern were the Child and Family Services Act (con: 1,184) and Federal gun controls (con: 1,053).



In connection with the Right-to-Life Rally this week, mail concerning abortion picked up slightly: con Supreme Court ruling: 169.

In the area of foreign policy the main issues were aid to Angola (pro: 44; con: 238), aid to Lebanon (pro: 98), and continued protest over the UN resolution on Zionism (309).

Of the more general mail, you received 337 letters expressing overall support, 79 critical, and 143 offering political comment. Supportive letters expressed the view that you were doing a good job with very difficult problems and in very difficult circumstances.

Letters of criticism and comment focused not specifically on Executive actions, but more generally on "Government officials and policies" which included the Congress and the Federal bureaucracy. Writers complained of "excessive and wasteful" Federal spending which contributed to a weakened economy, of a confusion of policies, and of political expediency and self-interest on the part of public officials. Most frequently cited examples of such "abuses" were an inefficient but expensive postal system, overly generous Congressional recesses and a high degree of absenteeism, and the appointment of Secretary Morton to a "political" job at taxpayers' expense.

cc: Bob Hartmann/Ron Nessen

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of January 26-30, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 18,000 pieces.

In response to your State of the Union Address you received 1,743 letters, telegrams and mailgrams:

PRO:	<u>1,204</u>
CON:	<u>258</u>
COMMENT:	<u>281</u>

Writers expressed overall support for the speech. Many spoke of "the right direction" you had set and of the country's need for "responsible" programs and leadership. Support mail generally did not single out for comment any specific part of the address. There was some slight mention and support for your positions against gun controls and for stricter crime enforcement and punishment.

Criticism of the SOTU focused mainly (roughly 65%) on the proposal to raise social security taxes. A majority of these writers called for reform of the entire system, while the rest simply related the personal hardships an increase would place on their families.

Of the remaining CON mail, about 25% criticized the "priorities" set in the address. They favored increases in social services programs rather than in defense spending. A few other writers (about 5%) expressed concern over the projected deficit for FY 1977.

"Comment" mail was so designated because, while writers agreed generally with the SOTU, they did object to a specific item or action proposed in it. Most frequently, they opposed any raise in social security taxes. A few opposed increases for defense spending and a few others objected to detente.

Mail on the Budget Message has been very light: pro: 30; con: 93; comment: 19. As with SOTU mail, support is general, with some specific endorsement of your call for "fiscal responsibility." Criticism of the budget is directed mainly to cuts in assistance to Israel (roughly half the con mail), to the size of the deficit, and to funding for defense versus domestic programs.

Of other domestic issues, mail opposing present abortion laws roughly doubled this week: 304. Virtually all writers urged enactment of a Constitutional amendment and many asked your personal views on the issue.

Of legislative matters, the Common Situs Picketing Bill continues to draw attention, although the count is down noticeably. 773 wrote in support of your veto, while 4 opposed it. Also, as in previous weeks, the Child and Family Services Act drew heavy opposition (728), and the Railroad Reform Act considerable support (244).

Foreign policy issues of concern this week were the questions of U.S. aid to Angola (pro: 24; con: 99; comment: 6), and U.S. assistance to Lebanon (pro: 127; con: 1; comment: 3). This latter support appears to come almost exclusively from within the Lebanese-American community.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen

bcc: Gwen Anderson  
Larry Speakes  
Judy Berg-Hansen  
Betty Nolan

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 6, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of February 2-6, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 36,000 pieces. It was wide-ranging and diverse.

You continued to receive mail commenting on your State of the Union and Budget Messages. Cumulative figures for each are:

SOTU:	Pro:	<u>1,296</u>
	Con:	<u>288</u>
	Comment:	<u>318</u>
Budget:	Pro:	<u>42</u>
	Con:	<u>98</u>
	Comment:	<u>17</u>

Critical SOTU mail was primarily concerned with the proposed increase in social security taxes. Critical budget mail, however, appears to concentrate mainly on the proposed FY '77 deficit and on the recommended amounts for defense versus domestic spending. The deficit is generally opposed, but the mail on spending priorities is about evenly divided between support and opposition to defense spending increases.

Also in connection with the budget, there is some opposition to proposed cuts in aid to Israel: con: 221.

Issues of immediate interest this week were the Moynihan resignation (pro: 2; con: 160; comment: 4), the decision to allow limited landings of the Concorde (pro: 15; con: 219; comment: 2), and your statement on abortion (pro: 33; con: 204; comment: 4).

Concerning the abortion issue, throughout 1975 mail had averaged about 115 pieces per week, in opposition to abortion. This mail comes from pro-life groups and since the beginning of the year it has increased to approximately 160 pieces per week. Concerning your February 3 statement specifically, however, the opposition mail has come largely from those who support the Supreme Court ruling and oppose any weakening of the decision.

A large variety of legislative issues also drew public comment this week. Among them were:

1. Common Situs Veto:  
pro: 641; con: 1;
2. Child and Family Services Act:  
con: 1,252;
3. Railroad Reform Act:  
pro: 104; con: 198 (190 forms);
4. Federal Gun Control:  
pro: 9; con: 728 (551 forms);
5. Busing:  
con: 190;
6. Steel Import Quotas:  
pro: 455 (390 forms);
7. Control of Starlings, Blackbirds:  
pro: 398; con: 109.

You have also received about 500 letters urging you to participate in a National Day of Prayer sponsored by the Christian Broadcasting Network and to be held in Cape Henry, Virginia on April 29. This mail reflects fairly wide geographic diversity.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen

bcc: Gwen Anderson  
Larry Speakes  
Judy Berg-Hansen  
Betty Nolan

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 13, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of February 9-13, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 32,000 pieces. It covered a wide range of subjects and points of view.

You received 258 pieces of mail expressing overall support and appreciation for the job you are doing. 100 wrote to register general disapproval of Administration actions and policies, and 124 offered political comments or suggestions for the campaign/election.

There were also about 200 letters expressing general economic concern. While some writers spoke of excessive Federal spending, deficits and taxes, a majority of this mail was concerned with the high -- and in most opinions, still rising -- cost of living. Writers recounted tales of personal hardship caused by increases in food and fuel prices. Comment came especially from older, pensioned citizens who particularly protested "the doubling" of gas and electric utility bills.

Your statement on abortion drew heavy comment this week: pro: 141; con: 864; comment: 25. Mail supporting the statement came from right-to-life proponents, many of whom suggested they would have liked to see the statement go further. About 75% of the opposition mail came from people who support the 1973 Supreme Court decision and the "right" of women to make their "own choice." The other 25% were anti-abortion people who argued that the statement did not go far enough, that it was a case of "political fence straddling."



Foreign policy issues this week were intertwined with domestic politics. Chief among these issues was the resignation of U.N. Ambassador Moynihan, which was supported by 4 and opposed by 361. Most writers expressed agreement with his "tell-it-like-it-is" approach to diplomacy and indicated a renewed sense of pride in the U.S. Many writers indicated confusion about "why" Moynihan had resigned and many expressed skepticism that "all the facts" concerning the resignation "have come out."

The announced trip of former President Nixon to the People's Republic of China drew heated, if somewhat limited, response. 114 wrote to oppose the trip. Most said they did not want Mr. Nixon to "represent" the U.S., or themselves as citizens, "anywhere" in the world. Another dominant theme was the concern that Mr. Nixon "knew too much" and therefore would be a "security risk" if left with the Chinese. There were suggestions that Nixon be denied a passport and others that you "do everything possible" to stop the trip.

You continued to receive mail this week opposing the proposed cut in aid to Israel: pro: 8; con: 98.

The decision of DOT Secretary Coleman to allow limited landings of the Concorde drew further comment this week: pro: 14; con: 375. Opponents were primarily concerned with the alleged environmental hazards of the plane, but some also made a point of rebutting the argument that Concorde must be allowed to land as a gesture of friendship between long-time allies.

Domestically, the Child and Family Services Act continues to draw very steady, heavy opposition (con: 1,355). This mail is obviously inspired by religious groups, but it does reflect a nationwide geographic spread. Moreover, interest in the bill appears to be increasing.

Another issue of concern is the imposition of import quotas on specialty steel products (pro: 1,080). This latter mail is coming almost exclusively from within the steel industry.

You also received approximately 1,450 invitations this week to participate in the Christian Broadcasting Network's "National Day of Prayer" on April 29 at Cape Henry, Virginia. This mail, while obviously inspired by the sponsoring network, did reflect wide geographic diversity.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 20, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of February 16-20, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 22,000 pieces. It concentrated heavily on domestic matters, with no single issue dominating.

Your press conference of February 17 has drawn light response to date: pro: 29; con: 24; comment: 11.

However, there was a substantial amount of general support (278) and political comment (108) mail this week. Also, there have been about 30 letters specifically requesting that action be taken against Daniel Schorr for his release of classified CIA material.

Former President Nixon's upcoming trip to China has also drawn specific critical comment (con: 113).

On the 1975 Child and Family Services Act, you received 2,814 pieces of mail (1,000 form) opposing passage of this Act.

Concerning Secretary Coleman's decision on Concorde, there were 246 pieces of critical mail.

An area of more general but continued concern is the economy (171). Writers express particular concern over rising food and utility costs, over tax rates and inequities, and over the social security system. This concern about social security appears to be growing. The major concern expressed is that individuals will not receive a return from the system at all



in line with their personal contribution. Further, many argue that it would be far more advantageous for them to invest in a private retirement system.

You also continue to receive mail commenting on your February 3 abortion statement: pro: 43; con: 289; comment: 17. Approximately 90% of those who oppose the statement express support for the Supreme Court decision.

There were also 2,526 pieces of mail (600 form) urging the imposition of quotas on specialty steel products. This mail is coming exclusively from within the industry.

cc: Bob Hartman  
Bob Orben  
Ron Nessen

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 27, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of February 23-27, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 24,000 pieces. It covered a very wide range of subjects, with no single issue dominant.

You have received 61 telegrams and letters of congratulations on the New Hampshire primary victory. Another 359 persons wrote to express general support and appreciation "for the job you are doing." Particular approval was expressed for your efforts to control Federal spending and to reduce bureaucratic regulation. Many also indicated disgust over what they saw as the "self-interest" and "lack of cooperation" from the Congress.

This latter view was particularly strong in mail commenting on the CIA and your reform proposals (pro: 93; con: 46; comment: 54). A majority of writers indicated their anger over "leaks" of sensitive national security information. Some also voiced support for your reform proposals, but almost an equal number wrote simply to protest the Congressional "politicking" that was "seriously harming" US security. Another 38 called specifically for the prosecution of Daniel Schorr.

There were also 147 pieces of political comment mail this week. These ranged from expressions of support for school prayer, to calls for tightened crime enforcement, to suggestions for your campaign.

Other "political" issues included strong protests (413) over the trip of former President Nixon to China and light comment (pro: 11; con: 11) on the nomination of former Governor Scranton as U.N. Ambassador. Concerning the Nixon trip, people particularly opposed its cost to the taxpayers and the fact that Nixon would be "de-briefed" on his return to the U.S. Apparently, they view this latter as giving a kind of "legitimacy" or official character to the trip and status to Nixon.

The general question of the economy also drew response this week (167). Perhaps one-third of this mail specifically commented on the social security system. The prevalent attitude was that the system, as presently constituted, took too much and returned too little to those who were by law "required" to support it. Approximately another one-third specifically protested heavy increases in utility costs. The main complaint was that while people were now "conserving" and using far less gas and/or electricity, bills had risen "excessively" and were a real economic hardship.

Other issues which drew some attention this week were:

- 1) Request for quotas on Specialty Steel imports;  
pro: 2057;
- 2) Killing of wolves in Alaska:  
con: 472;
- 3) Permission for Concorde to land in U.S.:  
con: 51;
- 4) Repeal of the Hatch Act:  
con: 150.

Of social and welfare issues, your statement on abortion continued to draw response (pro: 24; con: 140; comment: 7, as did the Child and Family Services Act (con: 1219).

One case of particular interest this week was that of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Flint, an elderly couple in Dallas, Texas. Mrs. Flint is now very sick and must be placed in a nursing home. On a monthly pension of \$488, the couple cannot afford to pay the nursing care costs. Neither, however, can they qualify for Federal assistance, unless they are divorced. Thus, after 62 years of marriage, Mr. Flint has taken preliminary steps to divorce his wife in order that she may get the assistance necessary to enter a nursing home.

The Flints' story was published in a local newspaper and picked up by the AP wires. Subsequently, it has run in papers across the country and you have received 286 letters protesting the "awful inequity" of a welfare system that, for whatever reasons, cannot help "those who truly need it."

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 5, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of March 1-5, 1976

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 60,000 pieces. More than half of it was specifically directed to legislative proposals that would permit greater political activity by Federal employees and by unions.

You received 23,598 pieces of mail expressing opposition to the Federal Employees Political Activities Act of 1975. Included in this total were 21,000 form cards and 2,053 opinion ballots. There were an additional 7,513 pieces opposing the Labor Campaign Reform Bill. Mail on both of these proposals came from all parts of the country, but the similarity of wording in the telegrams and letters and the use of forms indicated opposition to each was inspired.

You received 302 messages of general support this week, and another 138 congratulating you on your primary victories. There were also 226 letters offering political comment. Many of these writers express their views on the primary campaigns and candidates to date, with particular support given for your positions on control of Federal spending, tightened crime enforcement, prayer, and national defense.

The Nixon trip to China continued to draw comment, 782 pieces. Most of these, 752, opposed the trip, its cost to the taxpayers and Nixon's reemergence into public life. 30 writers supported his trip.

There were also 336 letters commenting on the economy. Writers appear to remain most concerned about inflation and Federal spending, with many suggesting ways to put

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 5, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of March 1-5, 1976

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 60,000 pieces. More than half of it was specifically directed to legislative proposals that would permit greater political activity by Federal employees and by unions.

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The Nixon trip to China continued to draw comment, 782 pieces. Most of these, 752, opposed the trip, its cost to the taxpayers and Nixon's reemergence into public life. 30 writers supported his trip.

There were also 336 letters commenting on the economy. Writers appear to remain most concerned about inflation and Federal spending, with many suggesting ways to put

"those on welfare to work." About 25% of the economic mail this week was specifically concerned with social security, with writers critical of the system and the "inequity" of its cost versus its potential return to them personally.

Other issues of continuing public interest included:

1) Child and Family Services Act of 1975:

con: 1,717 (500 forms);

2) Quotas on Specialty Steel Imports:

pro: 2,908 (500 forms);

3) Killing of Alaskan Wolves:

con: 221.

You also continue to receive letters (700 this week) urging you to proclaim April 29 a National Day of Prayer and to attend the ceremonies that day in Cape Henry, Virginia.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen  
Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of March 8-12, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 32,000 pieces. It covered a wide range of subjects and viewpoints.

You received 335 messages of general support and appreciation. Another 86 wrote specifically to congratulate you on your primary victories. There were also 239 letters offering political comments. These ranged from suggestions for the campaign to comments about detente -- with most writers appearing to favor a hardened attitude toward the Soviet Union -- to comments about the other primary candidates and the conduct of campaigns to date.

Economic comment mail continues at a steady rate, 144 this week, with the cost of living still apparently the primary concern. While most writers indicate they are aware that the economy is "improving," they also indicate that for them personally costs continue to rise. Food and utility costs are of greatest concern.

Social security costs/benefits are also of concern (54). Not surprisingly, writers identifying themselves as "workers" express concern about social security taxes, oppose any increase, and argue they will not receive a return commensurate with their contribution. In contrast, mail commenting on the "inadequacy" of social security payments comes from the elderly, who frequently give detailed information about their monthly expenses which are often far in excess of their social security check. Also in this regard, there was some concern over any changes that would limit or eliminate food stamps and food programs for the elderly.

There were also a few letters specifically commenting on your proposal to change estate tax laws. While the general proposal was supported, writers invariably argued that the exemption should be raised higher than \$150,000 (\$250,000 being most frequently cited) and that other provisions should be liberalized beyond what has been suggested.

Two specific issues drawing heavy public attention were H.R. 12015, Federal Election Campaign Act Amendment (con: 8,312), and H.R. 8617/S372, Federal Employees Political Activities Act (con: 1,962). Mail on both of these bills came from all parts of the country, but much of it was inspired. Concerning H.R. 8617, there were an additional 1,112 "Opinion Ballots" this week, which expressed opposition to any changes in or repeal of the Hatch Act. Cumulative figures since January 1 on H.R. 8617/S372 are: con: 27,458 (24,165 forms).

Other issues of public interest this week included:

1) Limitations on Specialty Steel Imports:  
pro: 1,559;

Cumulative since January 22:  
pro: 10,585 (2,030 forms);

2) Executive Order 11888:  
Removal of import duties on specified exports of Third World nations:  
con: 92;

3) Child and Family Services Act of 1975:  
con: 470;

Cumulative: since January 1:  
con: 12,865 (2,670 forms);

4) Arms Sales to Egypt:  
con: 279.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Bob Orben; Ron Nessen



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 19, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of March 15-19, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 91,000 pieces. More than two-thirds of it, 64,055 pieces, specifically opposed S372/H.R. 8617, Federal Employees Political Activities Act of 1975 (Hatch Act revisions). This mail is coming from all parts of the country, but most of it is form mail (60,300). Cumulatively, since January 1, you have received 91,513 pieces (84,465 forms) opposing S372/H.R. 8617.

You received 394 messages of support and/or appreciation this week. Writers particularly complimented you on "the job you are doing" and the "leadership" you are providing. Another 114 wrote specifically to congratulate you on your primary victories.

There were also 313 letters offering political comment. One increasingly common theme in this mail is the belief that everyone should "do his share." Writers talk about Federal programs that "discourage work," recommend public works programs for those on welfare, and question whether government programs and the bureaucracy are in fact stifling individual initiative.

Specific complaints about the "bureaucracy" and about Federal regulations are also growing in frequency and intensity. These appear somewhat related to your own speeches and public statements; that is, there is usually more of this mail following Presidential remarks about reform of government. Writers argue against the "cost"

and the "waste" of the bureaucracy; it is seen as non-productive and often as incompetent. The bureaucracy and the regulations they implement and enforce are seen by writers as an impediment to their own freedoms, including their most basic right to earn a living. Coming under particular attack are EPA, OSHA, ERISA, and EEOC.

This view of the bureaucracy and Federal regulations is also quite common in mail critical of social security and of busing. This latter issue is picking up again (242 pieces this week), with writers insisting that forced busing violates the will of the majority and the rights of the individual.

Other political comment issues this week included support for your proposals to liberalize estate tax laws (about 100 letters) and continued comment and suggestions about the conduct of the campaign. There were also about 25 messages commenting on the Callaway incident.

Other issues of public interest this week were:

1) Sale of Aircraft to Egypt:

con: 944;

2) Import Quotas on Specialty Steel Products:

pro: 1,912;

3) H.R. 12015: Federal Election Campaign Act Amendment:

con: 1,817;

4) Child and Family Services Act:

con: 676.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 26, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for the  
Week of March 22-26, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 27,000 pieces. No particular subject or issue was dominant.

There were 246 letters of support and appreciation, and another 67 specifically commenting on the primaries to date. Only 6 commented directly on the North Carolina primary.

Political comment mail was wide-ranging and diverse (301). As always, there were suggestions for your campaign and comments about the other candidates. There were also extensive comments about the state of the country, as perceived by the individual writer. Many voice opposition to Federal spending and the bureaucracy, which are seen as restrictive of personal rights and freedom. Taxes, Federal regulation of the private enterprise system, continued fear of crime, and the declining quality of education are cited as "problems" which need solution.

Also, criticism of Congress appears to be increasing again. There have been frequent general references to the "waste," "ineptitude" and "corruption" of Congress. And specifically, in the past two days there have been 93 letters opposing a planned Congressional trip to London to receive a copy of the Magna Carta. Writers are particularly angered at the "cost" of the trip at a time of budget deficits and a tightened economy.

Foreign policy has also received increased public attention in recent weeks. Interest is not centered on any one aspect, but rather writers discuss US relations with the Soviet Union, Secretary Kissinger, the Panama Canal negotiations, Cuba, Taiwan, etc. The common thread in all this mail, however, appears to be a shared belief that America is being "used," a situation writers clearly want remedied.

Of specific foreign policy interest this week were the proposed sale of aircraft to Egypt (con: 1,055), and Ambassador Scranton's United Nations speech opposing permanent Israeli settlements in occupied Arab territories (con: letters: 209; telephone calls: 22).

Legislative issues of interest included:

- 1) H.R. 12015: Federal Election Campaign Act Amendment:

con: 474;

- 2) H.R. 8617: Hatch Act Revisions:

con: 420 (half forms);

- 3) S. 1267: Financial Reform Act of 1976:

con: 395;

- 4) H.R. 2966: Child & Family Services Act:

con: 221.

cc: Bob Hartmann, Ron Nessen, Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of March 29-April 2, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled approximately 27,000 pieces. It was very diverse, with no single issue dominant.

Support, encouragement and appreciation were expressed by 327 writers. All commended you on "the job you are doing" and many pledged to work for your election.

Political comment mail (578) touched on many issues this week. These included the primary elections (75) and busing (56). But the bulk of this mail appears to be directed to the issue of "government versus the people." Writers question the costs versus the efficiency and benefits of a wide variety of Federal programs. There are references to "cheaters," to "waste," and to the "burdening" of middle class taxpayers. There are also increasingly frequent questions about both the integrity and the competence of "those who serve us" in the Congress.

Economic comment mail (124) continues to express concern over the cost of living. Much of it comes from the elderly, who speak of the "inadequacy" of social security payments to meet rising costs. There is also great concern that, when social security does rise with the cost of living, other Federal benefits, such as veterans pensions, are reduced proportionately.

While much mail in recent weeks has suggested growing voter attention to Federal "over-spending" and "waste," there has also been clear support for programs for the elderly. Local recreation centers, hot lunch, nutrition and food stamp programs, and projects like Green Thumb that provide work for the elderly are frequently mentioned as "worthwhile" by writers generally critical of Federal programs.

Public interest in foreign policy also appears to be increasing. There were 3,191 letters this week, the bulk of which dealt with U.S. - Israeli policy (2,503). Writers opposed the sale of aircraft to Egypt (pro: 13; con: 2,094) and criticized Ambassador Scranton's UN speech concerning Israeli - occupied territory (pro: 24; con: 366). Also, there were an additional 1,462 forms urging aid to Israel.

Other foreign policy mail dealt with the questions of US support for Rhodesia (about 75, generally opposed) and US military action against Cuba (pro: 24; con: 129), and with the crisis in Lebanon. 460 urged US action to resolve the fighting.

Other issues of public interest this week included:

- 1) H.R. 8617: Hatch Act Revisions;  
pro: 237; con: 5,617 (5,500 forms);
- 2) S.626: Child & Family Services Act:  
con: 444;
- 3) H.R. 12015: Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments:  
con: 223;
- 4) Cut in V.A. Education Benefits:  
con: 579;
- 5) Influenza Immunization Program:  
pro: 75; con: 89.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 9, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of April 5-April 9, 1976.

Incoming Presidential mail for this past week was unusually light totaling only about 21,400 pieces. The paucity of this week's take is especially evident when it is noted that nearly one-fourth (over 4,000 pieces) was from children writing mainly about the Bicentennial.

There was a smattering of mail on a variety of domestic and political issues with only one subject really dominating. This was the Animal Transit Bill (S. 1941/H.R. 5808) on which we received 2,548 letters urging your approval. While this mail was not of the form variety, it does appear to be part of a campaign inspired by local humane societies around the country.

On other domestic subjects there were 287 letters protesting cuts in VA educational benefits; opposition to the Child/Family Services Act of 1975 accounted for 173 letters; and on the Hatch Act Reform Bill there were 244 letters in support and 144 expressing opposition. In addition we received nearly 300 pieces of correspondence urging you to invoke the Taft-Hartley law in the Teamster's Union strike, and in another after the fact issue we received 262 letters urging your veto of the Day Care Center Bill.

In the area of political comment you received 215 pieces of mail conveying support and appreciation and an additional 202 letters making general political comments. We received only 56 letters commenting on Ronald Reagan's televised speech of March 30, and this broke down evenly between pro and con.

On a lighter note we have received 38 requests for copies of Liberty's paw print.

In the foreign policy realm the single largest topic is the Lebanon situation on which we have received 827 letters and telegrams urging the United States to intercede or in some other undescribed fashion to use its influence to bring peace to this troubled area. Also, with respect to the Middle East, we have received 432 letters opposing the sale of arms to Egypt. Lastly, there were 198 pieces of correspondence critical of Ambassador Scranton's remarks about Israel on March 23.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen  
Bob Orben

bcc: Gwen Anderson  
Larry Speakes  
Judy Beth Berg-Hansen  
Betty Nolan



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 16, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of April 12-16, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled 36,100 pieces. As in the past weeks, it was generally diverse in nature; however, there does appear to be growing public concern about U.S. foreign policy positions and U.S. military capabilities.

The focus of this concern appears to be Secretary Kissinger. For the past several weeks, you have been receiving an average 100 letters per week critical of Mr. Kissinger. Last week, following the Reagan television speech, about 25 wrote in support of Mr. Kissinger. This week the count is pro: 18, con: 141. Writers question whether the Secretary views the U.S. as equal in strength and will to the Soviet Union. They refer to "his words versus his actions." Specifically this week writers protested the so-called "Sonnenfeldt Doctrine," and questioned the solidity of U.S. commitments generally in Europe, Asia and Africa. In addition, 138 wrote to urge against concession of any U.S. rights over the Panama Canal.

Also in this regard, there is some questioning about U.S. military strength and capabilities. This mail is still light, but it appears to be increasing.

You continue to receive mail expressing support and appreciation (245), and also mail offering congratulations and encouragement for the primaries (56). Political comment mail (130) is wide-ranging in subject matter but largely conservative in tone. Writers recommend review and change in the areas of Federal regulation, high taxes, union power, and military strength.

The Middle East and Israel particularly continue to draw public attention. Unlike the Kissinger foreign policy mail, however, Israeli mail appears inspired rather than spontaneous. Nevertheless, this week you were urged to approve additional transition funding for Israel (pro: 347; con: 63) and to disallow sales of arms/aircraft to Egypt (807). Also, Ambassador Scranton's UN remarks about Israeli settlements continued to draw critical response (324).

Other domestic matters of varying public interest included:

1. Animal Transit Bill:  
pro: 3,270; con: 220;
2. Hatch Act Amendments (pre-veto):  
pro: 95; con: 1,708;
3. Day Care Centers (pre-veto):  
pro: 14; con: 235;
4. Supplemental Funding for Postal Service:  
pro: 170; con: 3.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen  
Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 23, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of April 19-23, 1976.

Incoming Presidential mail for this past week has been especially light, totaling only 13,621 pieces. This is one of the lowest weekly figures since you assumed office. A large part of this week's mail was of an essentially routine nature including 2,634 children's letters, 714 requests for birthday and anniversary messages, 311 invitations and requests for interviews and 116 requests for autograph photos.

On domestic matters the dominant issue was the Animal Transit Bill on which we received 1,790 letters supporting the Bill which you signed on April 22. On other domestic items there were 174 pieces of mail in support of increased appropriations for the Postal Service, and about 100 letters supporting your veto of the Hatch Act Reform Bill.

In addition, there were 253 letters expressing support and appreciation for the job you are doing as President. On the other side there were 80 letters critical of your performance. Also, there were 139 pieces of mail expressing political comments on unions, the Federal bureaucracy and financial waste in various Federal programs.

In a separate area we received 111 pieces of correspondence on the "NBC Saturday Night" television show. The bulk of these (95) were highly critical calling the show "offensive", "in poor taste", "lewd" and "an insult to the Presidency." On the pro side of this issue you and your Press Secretary were commended for your sense of humor and the ability of not taking yourselves too seriously.

In the foreign policy area letter writers were principally concerned with the Panama Canal. There were over 400 letters on this issue and virtually all of them urged that we retain full possession and control of the Canal. On other foreign policy items there were 108 letters opposing the sale of arms to Egypt, 99 letters critical of Secretary Kissinger and 160 writing in support of aid to Israel.

cc: Bob Hartmann  
Ron Nessen  
Bob Orben

bcc: Gwen Anderson  
Larry Speakes  
Judy Berg-Hansen  
Betty Nolan

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of April 26-30, 1976.

Incoming Presidential mail continued relatively light in volume again this week. It totalled 20,137 pieces and was diverse in subject matter. One issue of immediate interest was the Federal Election Commission Bill: pro: 469; con: 184.

While mail has been generally wide-ranging and diffuse in recent weeks, one common and distinctive characteristic has been noted: writers appear increasingly to take a national rather than personal view of issues. That is, whereas mail a year ago dealt overwhelmingly with the economy, inflation, the cost of living, price of gas, etc., as these immediately and directly affected the individual, today the concern is shifting to the writer's perception of America, its present state and future direction.

While many continue each week to express support and confidence in the Administration (216), growing numbers appear to share a sense that "things are not right." Many speak of a "moral weakening" or a "decay of values" in the country. Such attitudes are held with regard to both domestic and foreign policy issues.

For example, mail critical of Ron Nessen's "Saturday Night" appearance (285) invariably objected to the show's mocking treatment of serious and/or private subjects.

Other letters, whether concerned with the present tax structure, social and welfare programs, public education and forced busing, or crime, also convey this general sense that "things are not right." While no single one of these issues is drawing a large weekly volume of mail, taken together they do average a few hundred letters per week. This week, with a very light volume of mail, there were approximately 350 such letters.

The bigness of government, the power of national labor unions, and the inability of the individual to influence decisions are all ideas included in writers' sense of "what is wrong" in the country. Generally, few directly blame you or the Administration for the country's domestic problems. However, many do express the view that "leadership" must come from the President if we are to meet the problems and make the necessary changes.

With regard to foreign policy, however, many do directly blame Secretary Kissinger for what they view as "slippage" of the US world position. This week there were 136 letters specifically critical of the Secretary, 478 critical of the Panama Canal negotiations, and 218 critical of his statements on US - African policy, particularly concerning Rhodesia.

Naturally, there is also mail which takes an opposite view from the foregoing. This week 87 supported the Nessen appearance, 25 endorsed Secretary Kissinger, 8 specifically backed the Canal negotiations, and 3 agreed with the African policy/Rhodesia statements. But, as these figures indicate, the far larger group of writers is expressing concern about both the moral and the material strength of America, as reflected in policies and actions at home and abroad.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 7, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of May 3-7, 1976

Incoming Presidential mail for the week totalled approximately 17,400 pieces. Foreign policy issues and the Federal Election Commission Bill were of dominant interest.

The FEC bill was supported by 1,340 writers (many apparently encouraged by a Common Cause campaign). They urged you to sign the bill to ensure a "clean" election and "fair" competition among all candidates. In contrast, 480 persons urged you to veto the bill because they believe it would give organized labor too great an advantage in political fundraising.

Secretary Kissinger's statements of U.S.-African-Rhodesian policy drew 767 critical letters and telegrams this week. Writers speak of the "stability and progress" of Rhodesia and South Africa vis-a-vis the rest of Africa, of U.S. "meddling" in the internal affairs of a sovereign state, and of the "hypocrisy" of the Rhodesian policy in that the U.S. has reflected no similar concern for "self-determination" within Soviet bloc countries. Some also criticize Administration support for repeal of the Byrd Amendment. Ten persons wrote in approval of Mr. Kissinger's statements. Cumulative figures on the issue are:

Pro: 13;  
Con: 985.

The Panama Canal Treaty negotiations also continued to draw public attention. 522 persons urged against any concession of U.S. authority over the Canal. These people seemed to be motivated largely by national pride and a belief that the Canal is essential to U.S. security. Seven persons expressed support for renegotiation of the Treaty. Cumulative figures on renegotiation are:

Pro: 15;  
Con: 1,538.

Also this week there were 248 messages of support and appreciation and 164 offering political comment. As in past weeks, comment mail was concerned with the issues of "big government" and Federal regulation (busing, crime and the judiciary, EPA, OSHA, etc.), Soviet-American relations, and the U.S. position in the world.

There was little direct comment on recent primaries (40). Those who did write, however, mostly encouraged you "not to worry" about primary losses and not to move "too far right."

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of May 10-14, 1976.

Incoming mail for the week totalled 18,400 pieces. The election campaign, U.S.-African policy and the Panama Canal were issues of major interest. All of the mail was heavily political in tone.

There was a noticeable increase in support mail this week (332). Writers, a surprising number of whom identified themselves as "democrats," expressed approval of the "steady, consistent" job you are doing and urged you not to be "discouraged." Many pledged not only their vote, but also their active assistance in the campaign.

There was also a heavy increase in Political Comment mail this week (614), with writers offering their opinions on "what is wrong" in your campaign. The consensus was that you should "run on your record," which is "very good"; that you should "ignore" Ronald Reagan; but also that you should "explain" more fully the reasons for actions taken, the significance of achievements gained, and the goals toward which you will work in the next four years.

The domestic political impact of foreign policy positions was clearly evident in this week's mail. The focus was Secretary Kissinger (pro: 18; con: 145), but the bulk of the mail was directed to specific U.S. policy positions: U.S.-African policy: pro: 20; con: 528; Panama Canal negotiations: pro: 30; con: 365.

Concerning Africa, writers viewed the situation as both racial and ideological ("Marxist" v. "free"). Most spoke of Rhodesia and South Africa as two of the few "democracies" in Africa, as longtime "allies," as "stable" or "sovereign" countries with which the U.S. "has no right to interfere." There was also heavy reference to the "hypocrisy" of the "self-determination" position in view of U.S. dealings with Soviet bloc countries, and some protest over using "taxpayers' money" to "support a dictator" (Mozambique).

Concerning the Canal negotiations, writers argued that it belonged to the U.S. -- "bought and paid for by taxpayers" -- that it was essential for national security, and that control should not be relinquished. Perhaps half of this mail this week appears to have come from California, the result of an inspired mail campaign.

Requests for Presidential Birthday and Anniversary greetings also roughly doubled this week (1,236), apparently because of information about these recently printed in several newspapers. In addition, you have received 779 graduation announcements.

On legislative matters, you received 1,059 letters and telegrams in support of the Federal Campaign Amendments Act, 933 against it, and 591 pieces of mail in support of the Animal Transit Bill.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 21, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail  
for the Week of May 17-21, 1976.

Incoming Presidential Mail for the week totalled approximately 19,700 pieces. While no single issue dominated, foreign policy was clearly the major area of interest.

Support mail continues at a steady pace, 327 pieces this week, with a surprising number of writers (perhaps 25-30%) identifying themselves as "democrats." In addition, there were 48 telegrams of congratulations following the Maryland and Michigan primaries.

Political comment mail was also heavy this week (431). The "comment" was most often critical of U.S. foreign policy positions and Secretary Kissinger. Some writers also offered campaign "advice:" "run on your record," "take the gloves off," "don't move too far right" were common recommendations.

Your remark to the heckler in Michigan to "look for a job" drew roughly 65 letters in response. Writers, mostly from urban areas and well educated, insisted that for many jobs are not available, despite motivation and effort.

Mail from California is not generally any different from other mail, except that there does appear to be an organized campaign to protest Panama Canal negotiations. There have been 208 letters this week opposing negotiations, more than half of which came from California.

Attorney General Levi's pending decision on intervention in the busing issue is just beginning to draw public response: pro: 24; con: 23; comment: 4.

The following were also of interest:

1) Secretary Kissinger:

pro: 19; con: 110;

2) U.S. - African Policy:

pro: 15; con: 299;

3) Panama Canal Negotiations:

pro: 5; con: 208;

4) FEC Amendments Act:

pro: 66; con: 212.

You also received 1410 requests for birthday and anniversary messages this week, roughly double the usual number.

cc: Bob Hartmann; Ron Nessen; Bob Orben

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 28, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT  
THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY  
FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT  
SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for  
the Week of May 24-28, 1976

Incoming mail for the week was light, totalling approximately 11,000 pieces. No particular subject was dominant.

You received 303 messages of support and encouragement for the campaign. Another 119 offered specific congratulations on your Michigan-Maryland primary victories.

There were also 306 letters offering political comment. Much of this suggested you "run on your record" and that you "ignore the opposition." Many writers also commented on particular issues which they believe important in the campaign. "Foreign policy" was perhaps most frequently mentioned as "hurting" your chances.

Mail expressing general opposition to busing increased noticeably this week, to 459 pieces (255 petitions). It appears to come largely from those parts of the country now under court order to bus.

This mail has apparently picked up as a result of publicity over the possible intervention of Attorney General Levi in a busing case. The actual question of intervention itself has drawn 102 pieces pro, 92 con.

Foreign policy matters also continued to attract substantial voter attention this week. You received 60 letters critical of Secretary Kissinger and 11 in support; 15 pro and 148 con U.S.-African policy; 17 in support, 90 opposing Panama Canal negotiations.

New domestic issues of interest include the Hart-Bayh Senate bill requiring divestiture within major oil companies (con: 155), and the question of an increased subsidy for the U.S. Postal Service (pro: 146). So far, each of these appears to be a "special interests" issue, with much of the mail on each inspired. About half the mail concerning divestiture is coming from oil company employees in the South while virtually all the postal subsidy mail is from rural areas threatened with closure of their local post office (and loss of jobs).

Mail from California does not appear to be significantly different from mail from other States. There does seem to be somewhat more interest in retaining the Panama Canal and there is definitely more criticism of former Governor Reagan.

You also received 1028 requests for birthday/anniversary messages this week and 1736 graduation announcements.

cc: Bob Hartmann, Ron Nessen, Bob Orben