

FOIA MARKER

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Subgroup/Office of Origin: Press Secretary

Series/Staff Member: Dee Dee Myers

Subseries:

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Networks

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Robin Vierbuchen Sproul
Vice President
Washington News Coverage

File: Nets

November 15, 1993

Ms. Dee Dee Myers
Press Secretary
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Dee Dee:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the letter from NABET regarding Presidential motorcades. ABC News has no intention of asking for a change in the way these events are covered: crews assigned to the White House have successfully covered Presidential motorcades for decades under the same basic guidelines.

The safety issues raised by the individual involved, and by his union, will continue to be addressed by ABC News management.

Thanks again for your concern.

Rdin Sproul



CNN AMERICA, INC.
The CNN Building
820 First Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

FILE: Nets

WILLIAM W. HEADLINE
Vice President and Bureau Chief
(202) 898-7907

August 16, 1993

Mr. David R. Gergen
Counselor to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear David:

I write on behalf ABC, CBS, CNN, and NBC.

We were encouraged by the tenor of the recent meeting that we had with you, Mark Gearan, and Dee Dee Myers. Unfortunately, events on the trip which is currently in progress have not only dampened our optimism, but have eliminated it.

Attached are some excerpts from a memo written last weekend to one of the bureau chiefs by one of the producers on the trip. It is excerpted because the original is too angry for formal business correspondence. I have dealt with six administrations and never have I seen working level relations between the networks and White House staff fraught with such tension. Our people can be tough to deal with but I don't think we are the culprits here.

Also on this current trip, the advance work has fallen short. We hope that the rumor that Martha's Vineyard was advanced by a college intern is not true. In any event, our inability to get simple location information in order to do the basics such as ordering telephones is extremely frustrating.

We are also concerned that the bulk of the traveling press had to precede the president to Tulsa by half a day. The entire idea is for the traveling press to be where the president is. We understand that arrangements for this trip could only be made late. That seems to be the fundamental problem and when the rest of the process also runs late and confused it becomes difficult if not impossible to do the professional job of coverage that we all wish to do.

David R. Gergen, Travel Problems
August 16, 1993, Page 2

Any help that you can give us with these problems will be greatly appreciated. If further meetings can help we or our White House producers will be happy to get together with you or your people whenever a mutually convenient time can be set.

We believe it is in everyone's best interest to solve these problems as quickly as possible.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Gergen".

cc: Mark Gearan
Dee Dee Myers
Bureau Chiefs

Excerpts from network producer's memo dated August 14, 1993

"The travel pool sits all day long while the [President] spends five and one half hours playing golf ... and at the end, on the 18th green, Rabinowitz denies coverage of the President at the hole and greeting the public. He tells Dan Erlenborn, baby sitting the pool for NBC today ... that it "isn't the deal."

"This is not the first time "the deal" has been mentioned. The "deal" in fact, has been mentioned since the first trip we took with Clinton to Georgia to campaign for Wyche Fowler. There, as now, this mystery deal was brought up during some ropeline situations.

"The problem is that nobody at any network knows what this "deal" is. I think Rabinowitz, Eller and the White House think that the deal is this: The White House agrees to a travel pool if we agree to shoot only what the White House tells us to shoot.

"Today, Rabinowitz says he made a deal with the pool, but that when the deal was made Dan Erlenborn wasn't there ... [phrase questioning Mr. Rabinowitz's veracity]. Dan was told that if he didn't like it, Rabinowitz would kick him off the course.

"I have never been a party to any deal about what the travel pool can shoot and what it can't. If we're there we shoot it. If the deal is that we only get to shoot what they want us to shoot, then that's not a deal, it's censorship. This "deal" needs to be explored."



CNN America, Inc.
The CNN Building, 820 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002

WILLIAM W. HEADLINE
Vice President and Bureau Chief
(202) 898-7900

file: Nets

September 2, 1993

Ms. Dee Dee Myers
Press Secretary
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Dee Dee:

I write on behalf of ABC, CBS, CNN, and NBC.

We have all received bills from the White House Travel Office for the Tokyo trip. Contrary to expectations of reduced costs, these bills are considerably higher than anything we have experienced in the past. Worse, the bills do not contain charges for ground transportation, which costs will make the overall charges even less tolerable. There were inconsistencies and in some cases there were charges for people who did not travel.

Before any of the bureau chiefs can approve these bills for payment we will need a complete explanation for the charges, an explanation of anticipated ground transportation costs, an indication of future plans to reduce these costs, and an explanation of the system under which various costs are prorated.

We suggest a meeting of the appropriate White House representatives with our representatives as soon as possible. If one of your people can contact me I will be pleased to coordinate with the other networks.

Sincerely yours,

William W. Headline
Pool Chairman

cc: Bureau Chiefs