

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON STAFF
FROM: ALEXIS M. HERMAN
RE: ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC LIAISON
Frequently asked questions about the Office of Public Liaison
DATE: January 27, 1993

Following are some key questions frequently asked about the function of the Office of Public Liaison, and my answers consistent with the mission of the OPL as we discussed in the staff meeting today. Let me re-emphasize that we are the "Office of Public Liaison for Presidential Priorities."

I. Question: HOW SHOULD THE PUBLIC LIAISON OFFICE BE ORGANIZED?

Answer: Organize around a group of senior assistants who are capable of dealing with a variety of issues and interest groups and focus on support for Presidential policies.

II. Question: WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE OPL HAVE IN POLICY FORMULATION?

Answer: The OPL should be involved in policy involving major Presidential priorities from the beginning of the policy development process.

III. Question: SHOULD THE OPL BE INVOLVED IN CONGRESSIONAL LOBBYING ACTIVITIES?

Answer: The OPL should only participate in lobbying and develop lobbying strategies with interest groups in coordination with the Congressional Liaison office.

IV. Question: HOW SHOULD INTEREST GROUP REQUESTS FOR ROUTINE WHITE HOUSE OR PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS -- SUCH AS MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT, GREETINGS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE -- BE COORDINATED?

Answer: Routine interest group requests should be responded to only in coordination with the OPL although other White House offices might be in charge of that request.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

TO: To Interested White House Staff
FR: Alexis Herman
RE: Routine Requests from Interest Groups

Routine requests from interest groups can include meetings with the President or senior White House staff; photo opportunities with the President; speakers; letters or acknowledgements. It is imperative that these kind of requests from interest groups be coordinated with the OPL.

Requests can arise from all sorts of sources. For example, a member of the Administration or a Member of Congress could request that the President meet with a particular group. The danger is that the President's meeting with that group could be a precedent requiring the President to meet with other groups or it could send signals to other groups which might have different policy objectives. The OPL should be the repository of political information concerning the impact of White House involvement with interest groups. Even the wording of a Presidential greeting to a particular organization could have political ramifications within an interest group or for Presidential priorities that may not be recognized by the requestor.

This is not to say that the Congressional Liaison Office should not coordinate Presidential meetings with interest group representatives when requested by a Senator or House Member. Rather, it is to say that those types of requests should be coordinated with the OPL prior to being granted and in terms of the substance of the meeting. Although scheduling and the logistics of the President's involvement is the responsibility of the Appointments Secretary, the development of the strategy for the particular meeting, the agenda and the substance is the responsibility of the OPL working with the relevant White House policy staffs, communications and media personnel, congressional liaison and key agency officials where relevant.

Issue:

How should interest group requests for routine White House or Presidential actions -- such as meetings with the President, greetings from the White House -- be coordinated?

Options:

- A. Routine interest group requests should be responded to only in coordination with the OPL although other White House offices might be in charge of that request.
- B. All interest group routine requests should be handled through the OPL in consultation with other White House staffs.
- C. White House staffs receiving routine interest group requests should be in charge of handling those requests.

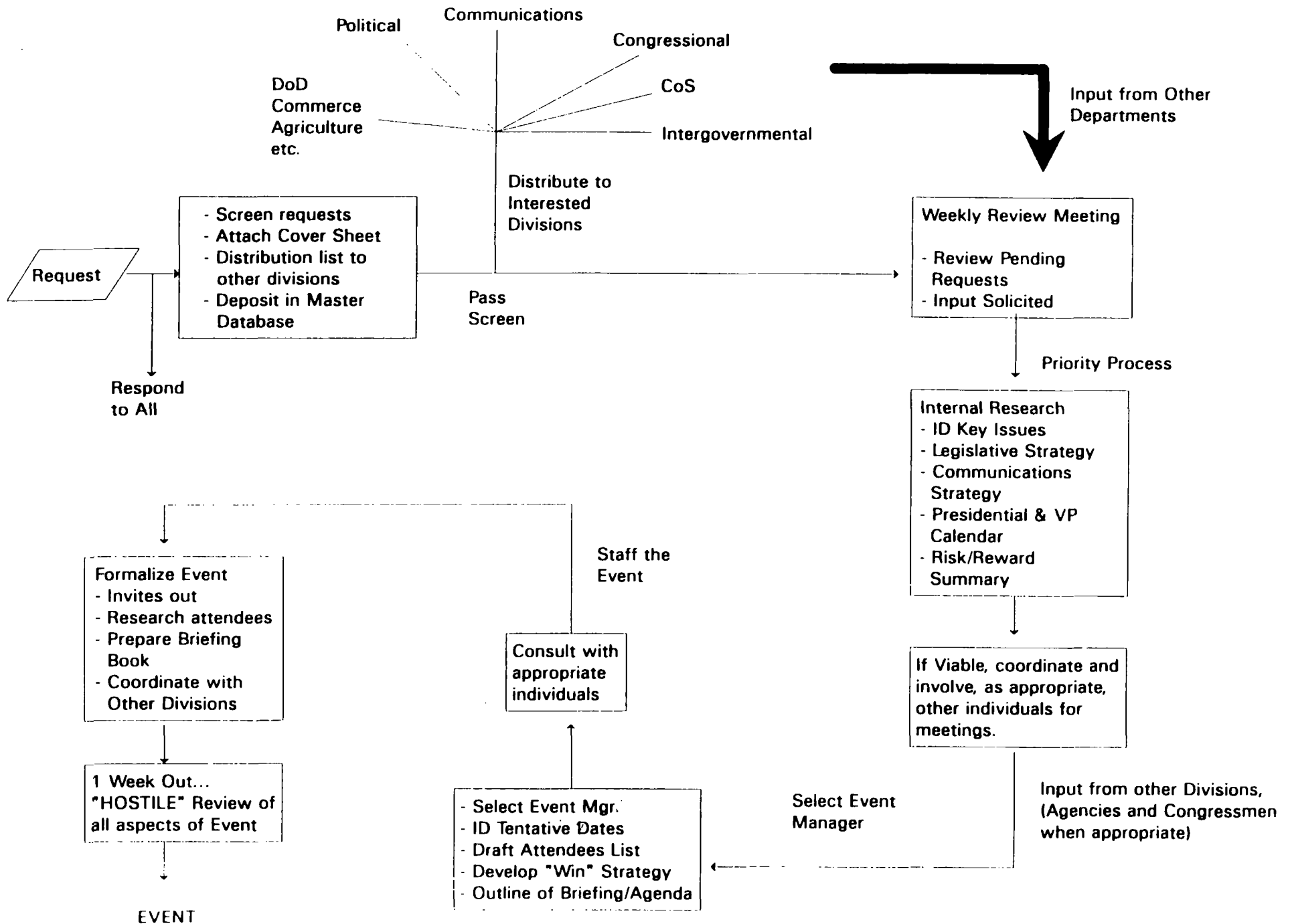
Recommendation:

Option A is recommended. Although the OPL should be consulted prior to agreeing or responding to a routine interest group request, it is not essential that the OPL actually implement that request. Indeed, it may be to the advantage of the Congressional Liaison Office to carry out the response to a Member's request. The same is true for requests through the political side of the White House or from the Vice President. Prior coordination should be required in order to make sure that the handling of the request does not conflict with other activities or with the politics of various interest groups which may be directly or indirectly affected. For example, a meeting with one interest group can require a meeting with another interest group which may or may not be desirable.

We should determine the course of action and communicate it to our staffs.

Attached please find suggested flow charts/drafts for handling interest group requests and staging of meetings or events.

CC: Mark Middleton
Mark Gearan
David Dreyer



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON STAFF
FROM: ALEXIS M. HERMAN
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC LIAISON
RE: Overview of the Office of Public Liaison
DATE: January 26, 1993

I. INTRODUCTION

The new Administration's ability to work with a wide-range of interest groups (whether or not they support each initiative of the Administration) will be an important factor in the President's ability to implement his public policy agenda and in the public's perception of the effectiveness of his actions. The perception of these groups - that they have been listened to and had their opportunity to participate and their understanding of the purposes of the President - will be crucial to their support of (or to minimize their opposition to) Presidential priorities and, thus, to the President's ability to exercise leadership and implement his public policy agenda.

The White House Office of Public Liaison (OPL) has historically served as the President's interface with interest groups. Its first priority is to organize (generally, through interest groups) public involvement in and support of Presidential public policy priorities. Subsidiary to that, it serves as the mechanism by which interest groups interface with The White House, either directly through the OPL or by coordination with other White House staff members. As a consequence, it provides political advice to the President and The White House staff on the President's relations with various interest groups.

II. PUBLIC LIAISON FUNCTIONS

The OPL has traditionally performed two functions, the second of which is subordinate to the first.

A. Develop and Coordinate Interest Group Involvement in and Support for High Presidential Policy Priorities.

This activity starts with the beginning of the policy process and continues through policy implementation. The OPL works with other White House staffs (domestic policy, national security, economic security, political and OMB -- depending on how The White House is

structured) and relevant agencies in shaping the highest Presidential priorities by obtaining the views of a broad variety of interest groups on those policies (including coordination of agency interaction with interest groups). The OPL then participates internally in policy decisions by providing the views of various interest groups. The Office serves both as a buffer for policy makers and a conduit for information.

The OPL then works with White House and agency staffs in announcing the President's proposals to the public, including briefings of interest groups and citizens from around the country. The next step involves regular interaction between the OPL and relevant interest groups to build support for the President's position while solving disagreements where possible. One key function is to involve interest groups which might not otherwise actively support a particular issue. The goal is to create broad-based coalitions actively supporting the President's position. This work requires careful coordination with the Congressional Liaison Office and the relevant policy staffs.

B. Interaction with Interest Groups.

The second function of the OPL is to serve as a bridge between the President and the wide range of interest groups seeking to have a voice at The White House or with whom the President desires to maintain relationships. These liaison activities include organizing meetings with interest group representatives to receive their views or to communicate the President's views, assuring appropriate Presidential or high level administration representation or greetings at meetings and assuring appropriate interest group representation at White House and Presidential functions.

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*File Public
Liaison -*

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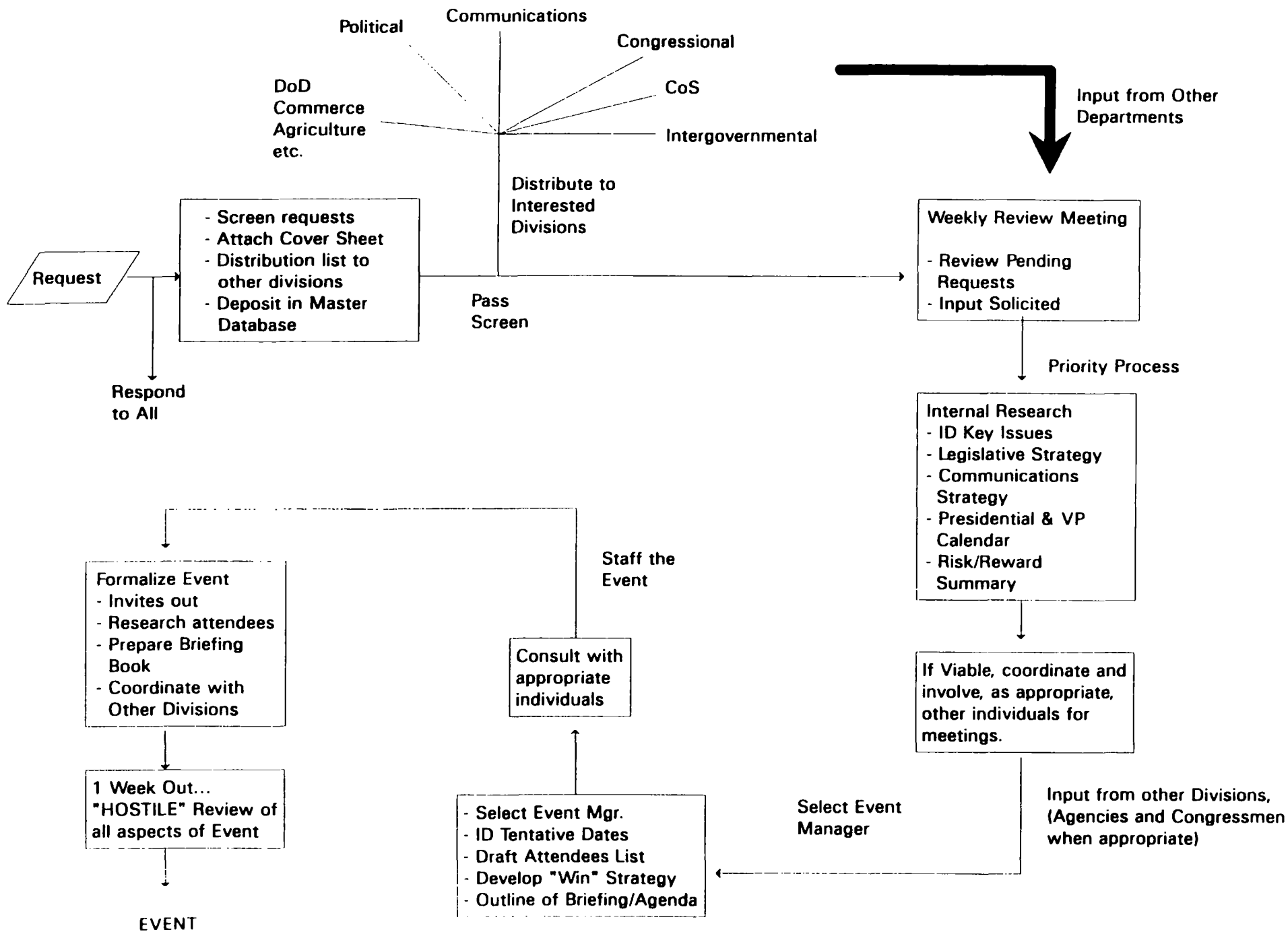
Recommendation:

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Proposal for Service

by Christopher S. Hyland

White House Office for Public Liaison

Christopher S. Hyland, Assistant to the President, Director of the Office of Public Liaison

Deputy Asst. to the President, Deputy Director of the Office of Public Liaison

Deputy Assistant(s) to the President for Public Liaison

Associate Directors

Visiting White House Fellows/Issue Coordinators

Assistant Issues Coordinators

Support staff

The White House and the President ought to have access to the best ideas and widest possible diversity of people. The White House Office of Public Liaison (OPL) exists to ensure that connection between the Presidency and the people. As has been said in no uncertain terms by Bill Clinton, "We don't have a person to waste."

OPL will continue in its traditional role as liaison to various special constituencies (ethnic communities, business, labor, non-profits, presidential campaign supporters, etc.). It will also be responsible for organizing discussion meetings to enable various constituencies to be actively included in a Clinton coalition. Such a feeling of inclusion is crucial, both to the process of governing and to the process of solidifying the winning 1992 coalition as a solid base for the 1996 election and beyond. Blockage after the raised expectation about inclusion generated in this campaign is more dangerous politically than almost anything else.

In addition to the regular daily liaison with constituents, the meetings that OPL organizes will fall into three broad categories: Roundtables, Conferences, and Town Meetings.

Roundtables and Conferences will bring together the appropriate people to discuss issues of personal interest to the President and other issues of interest to particular constituencies that ought to have a "hearing" in an inclusive White House of ideas.

White House Roundtable meetings will involve between 10-25 people. Roundtable participants would likely include a few appropriate senior White House and/or Departmental heads and staff, private citizen experts on the issues under discussion and/or related issues, as well as other appropriate individuals. Of course, given the purpose of OPL, the President, Vice President, First Lady, and Second Lady would be invited to attend any meetings they so wish.

White House Conferences would occur from time to time for meetings that may require a substantially larger attendance than a Roundtable. Certain Roundtables and/or Conferences might be held in Arkansas, as an aspect of the Arkansas White House.

Presidential Town Meetings would be organized at the request of the President to help build public support for particular legislative initiatives, to get "the pulse" of the public at a given moment in time, to keep the President in touch with "real people", and to hold to the campaign commitment that town meetings and the spirit that animates them shall continue. Town Meetings, of course, would be held at various locations "outside the beltway" in traditionally civic settings.

OPL staff will be responsible, when appropriate, for writing up Reports to the President regarding the ideas discussed during these Roundtables, Conferences, and Town Meetings. Such reports will be circulated, as well, to appropriate White House and Departmental staff. Except, for obvious reasons, in the case of public Town Meetings, these Reports will be for internal purposes only, unless otherwise determined.

Private dinners and/or cocktail parties for the participants in the regular White House OPL Roundtables or the occasional Conferences will be held at Blair House or the White House after the meetings occur. Some of those larger dinners at Blair House or the White House might be organized as "Working Dinners." Otherwise a block of seats will be set aside for OPL guests at official state dinners and other important White House events that occur between OPL Roundtable/Conference meetings.

OPL will be located in the White House and in the Old Executive Office Building, comprising at least 10 offices (each sufficient to house at least 2 staff) and a reception/support staff area. OPL will also have easy access to meeting room(s) in the White House, the Old Executive Office Building, and other locations sufficient to hold the meeting participants, when necessary.

During the Transition Period, the nascent OPL staff will be responsible for working with other appropriate policy and personnel staff and others to bring together the appropriate people to discuss and plan for (A) ethnic diversity and inclusiveness in the administration, (B) the National Service Trust Fund, and (C) the plan for the first series of OPL meetings to take place during the new Administration.

Christopher Hyland, in addition to being one of the most successful and inclusive fundraisers since the Exploratory Committee days of this campaign, has worked for one year to mobilize and organize politically over 35 different ethnic/racial constituencies, representing tens of millions of Americans. He has earned the reputation both within and without the campaign as a person sincerely committed to inclusiveness based upon merit and as a neutral facilitator of people and ideas. In April, he was appointed directly by Bill Clinton as the campaign's Deputy National Political Director for Ethnic Constituencies. Mr. Hyland has organized Roundtables and large events, as well as spoken to people of all backgrounds in many states -- ensuring that people feel part of the Clinton effort to change America. In August 1992, Mr. Hyland moved to the National Campaign Headquarters in Little Rock to continue his previous work. The "Democracy Speech" in Milwaukee and the leaders representing over 35 ethnic groups who attended it represent an example of his political efforts during the campaign. He has spoken recently with Bill Clinton specifically about ensuring the spirit of inclusiveness during the transition period and beyond and Mr. Clinton agreed that such inclusiveness was necessary, that Mr. Hyland should help to ensure it, and that he would speak to Mickey Kantor about it. Mr. Hyland indicated that he would be available to serve in that capacity after his obligations to his political work in the campaign were fulfilled on November 3.