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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 3, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD G. DARMAN

FM: Frank A. Ursomarso
RE: Assassination Attempt

At 2:25 p.m., I was in a meeting with David Gergen, Ed Harper, Dick Darman, Craig Fuller, Larry Speakes and Linda Gosden in the Roosevelt Room to discuss the auto package. Someone from the Press Office ran into the room and said, "There's been a shooting." Gergen, Speakes and I immediately got up and ran into the Press Office and looked at the teletypes. Nothing was coming over.

David Gergen said, "Go outside and see if the motorcade is coming." I ran out the door to the South Lawn driveway to the Guard House. The Guard had two phones up to his ear and was checking his identification.

I went to Jim Baker's office and when I arrived, David Gergen, Jim Baker, Larry Speakes, Lyn Nofziger, Ed Rollins and Secretary Regan, among others, were present. Phone calls were coming in from Michael Deaver and we were in contact with the Vice President. It was decided that Ed Meese, Jim Baker, Lyn Nofziger and Larry Speakes would go to the hospital. At this point we already knew that the President was injured, along with Jim Brady and several other security persons.

At first it was believed that the President's ribs were bruised. As Jim Baker, Ed Meese, Lyn Nofziger and Larry Speakes walked down the hall to go to the hospital, David Gergen told me to tell the Press they were en route to the hospital. I did so. Then I went into Baker's office.

By this time the Secretary of State had arrived. David Gergen said, "The Secretary and I are going to the Situation Room. You go to the Press Office and make sure things are covered there."

I went to the Press Office, which was completely filled -- wall-to-wall -- with screaming reporters. Connie Gerard saw me standing there and told me Larry Speakes was on the phone. I went to Connie's desk, picked up the phone and Larry told me, "Lyn Nofziger has put out a statement that the President has been shot in the left chest and his condition is stable. I want you to put out the same information." I asked him if he wanted me to do it, "Right here, right now." He said yes.

By now the reporters were in a state of hysteria. I thought that I should check this out with David Gergen first. However, since Speakes was at the hospital, and because Nofziger had announced from the hospital that the President had been shot, I put it out. I decided that it would be much calmer to do it off camera in the Press Office, instead of standing in front of the cameras. I stepped up on Connie Gerard's chair and said, "I am confirming what Lyn Nofziger has just said at the hospital. The President has been shot in the left chest. His condition is stable." I was asked to repeat this three times -- and I did so.

At this point, Fred Fielding appeared at the back of the crowd and motioned me toward him. He took me into the Situation Room. From this point on, I moved back and forth between the Situation Room and the Press Office, giving out the details of what happened. In the Situation Room, I will give some of the details here and the rest in a separate memo.

While in the Situation Room, David Gergen, Secretary Haig, Secretary Regan, Attorney General Smith, Dick Allen, Martin Anderson, Fred Fielding and myself, among others, were present.

As we were receiving and placing calls, and discussing the matters at hand, Larry Speakes suddenly appeared on TV in the White House Briefing Room. David Gergen said, "What's he doing up there?" I said, "I don't know, I thought he was at the hospital." Gergen said to go up

there and pull him off. I left the Situation Room and ran to the Press Office Briefing Room. I gave Larry Speakes a note that said to please leave the podium. Speakes read the note, concluded his remarks and left the podium. As I turned to leave with Speakes, I saw Secretary Haig, Dick Allen and David Gergen coming down the hall to the Briefing Room. I said to David, "What's Haig doing in there? Should I stop him?" David said, "No- let him go." I stood aside and let him go in.

As the briefing got underway, I said to Gergen, "I'm not sure I like this, should we pull him off?" Gergen said, "No," so we let him stay at the podium. I said, "OK -- it's your call."

When Secretary Haig had finished, he stepped down from the podium and into the hallway where I said to him, "That's not bad for a Lower Merion graduate, but I bet Upper Darby can still beat you at football." He laughed as he left the Briefing Room and walked down the hall to the Situation Room. We continued working there as before.

I continued to monitor the events in the Situation Room, Press Office and Jim Brady's office, during which time I funneled reports into the Situation Room, making sure that the Press Office staff operated properly.

During this time, I noticed Herb Klien in Jim Brady's office. Sometime between 5:00 and 6:00. Larry Speakes and I had a short meeting with the Press Office staff and told them to stay calm and to continue to do their job as they had in the past. David Gergen, Larry Speakes and I had a meeting with the Press Office staff in the Roosevelt Room about thirty minutes later. David Gergen spoke to them. This greatly improved their morale and understanding of the situation. We cautioned the staff not to put out new information, but only to repeat what had been said.

Early in the afternoon, Secretary Regan said that he had just learned of the news about Jim Brady. Later he announced Brady was dead. Dick Allen said we should observe a moment of silence for our fallen colleague. We all bowed our heads and prayed. I remember standing in the corner and praying that no one else would die. Karna Small, who was in the Situation Room, was visibly shaken. I put my arms around her in an attempt to comfort her. Later we got the report Jim Brady was not dead.

I ran upstairs to determine where the erroneous confirmation to the press had originated. I believe that CBS put out the statement that Brady was dead. I learned from Connie Gerard that David Prospero had mistakenly nodded while talking on two phones at the same time, and a reporter interpreted his nod to mean that Brady was dead.

I sent Connie Gerard and Kim Hoggard to find Prospero and bring him down. Prospero appeared. Gergen and I talked with him. He stated the mistake on his part and on the reporters part. David Gergen and I told Prospero to go back to work.

When word was received that the Vice President was en route to the White House, I walked out to the West Executive driveway and met Pete Teeley. Pete and I stood waiting for the motorcade to arrive. I suggested that Ken Khachigian help him with the Vice President's remarks.

The Vice President's car arrived and Ed Meese was also in the car. Before the Vice President arrived, Jim Baker came into the Situation Room. I escorted the Vice President into the Situation Room and he took the position at the head of the table.

It was decided that the Vice President would go to the Briefing Room and give the report to the people. The activity decreased and I stayed in the press area, attempting to help the Press Office and staff and reporters with their stories.

I have prepared a copy of a report of all the events that happened during this confusing time. I have attempted to provide you with the highlights. I will give you a more detailed explanation of some significant events which occurred.

Additionally, I have prepared a critique for Dick Allen. I will send you a copy.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR JIM BAKER

MICHAEL DEEVER

ED MEESE

THRU: RICH WILLIAMSON *RW*

FROM: JIM MEDAS

SUBJECT: Governor Brown, California - joint legislative session speech on the attempted assassination, Friday, April 2, 1981.

Governor Brown had originally planned to make a presentation concerning the attempted assassination and the need for gun control.

He ended up making a very short (two minutes) statement of concern. His change of plan was caused by the reluctance of some legislative leaders, both Democrat and Republican, to participate in what they considered to be an ill-advised public event.

The Governor's comments touched on the nature of the tragedy, violence in our society, and the need for vigilance.

cc: Dave Gergen
Frank Ursomarso ✓

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1981

file

MEMORANDUM FOR JIM BAKER
MICHAEL DEEVER
ED MEESE

THRU: RICH WILLIAMSON

FROM: JIM MEDAS *JM*

SUBJECT: Governor Brown of California - Speech on the
attempted assassination.

Governor Jerry Brown has called a Joint Session of the California Legislature for today, Friday, April 2, 1981, at 1:15 p.m., EST. At this Joint Session, he plans to make a speech about the recent assassination attempt on the President.

Lyn Nofziger is aware of this and has advised the Republicans in the State Assembly and State Senate to attend rather than boycott. It is Lyn Nofziger's opinion that to boycott could possibly affect the President's economic package. We support Lyn's position on this.

cc: Dave Gergen
Frank Ursomarso ✓

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 1, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR DAVE GERGEN

FROM: RED CAVANEY 

This morning Bob Bonitati called on Alfred Antenucci at Georgetown University Hospital to inquire about his condition and to express concern. Antenucci, who apparently will be under care in the hospital for at least a week, was overjoyed at the special attention. Bob's visit went unreported by the press.

Mr. Antenucci is a registered Democrat, however, a very big supporter of the President. If you are soon considering telephone calls by the President, this might be a very appropriate one.

 cc: Frank Ursomarso

CLEVELAND LABOR LEADER ILL AFTER GRABBING REAGAN'S ATTACKER
CLEVELAND (UPI) -- ALFRED ANTENUCCI, HEAD OF THE OHIO BUILDING
TRADES UNION, IS HOSPITALIZED IN WASHINGTON WITH AN IRREGULAR
HEARTBEAT HE SUFFERED A FEW HOURS AFTER HE HELPED TACKLE THE MAN
ACCUSED OF SHOOTING PRESIDENT REAGAN; LABOR OFFICIALS IN CLEVELAND
SAID TODAY.

ANTENUCCI, 68, OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS, OHIO, WAS IN FAIR CONDITION IN
THE CORONARY CARE UNIT AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.

ANTENUCCI, HEAD OF THE OHIO AFL-CIO BUILDING TRADES UNION, AND
ANOTHER CLEVELAND-AREA LABOR OFFICIAL, FRANK J. MCNAMARA, 62, WERE
STANDING OUTSIDE THE WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL MONDAY AFTERNOON, HOPING
TO SEE THE PRESIDENT WHEN REAGAN WAS SHOT.

ANTENUCCI AND MCNAMARA, PRESIDENT OF THE OHIO STATE BUILDING AND
CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL, HAD JUST ATTENDED THE AFL-CIO TRADE
CONFERENCE THAT REAGAN ADDRESSED BEFORE HE WAS SHOT.

THEY ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO GO GOLFING, BUT STAYED AT THE HOTEL
BECAUSE OF RAIN. THEY TRIED TO GET INSIDE THE HOTEL TO HEAR REAGAN'S
SPEECH, BUT THE DOOR WAS LOCKED.

"WE KNEW THE SPEECH WAS GOING TO BE FINISHED SOON, SO WE STOOD
OUTSIDE, WAITING TO GLIMPSE REAGAN," MCNAMARA SAID.

AS THEY WAITED, ANTENUCCI TOLD HIS SON, DOMINIC, BY TELEPHONE
MONDAY NIGHT, "I SAW A YOUNG MAN STANDING IN FRONT OF ME WITH HIS
HANDS IN HIS POCKETS.

"THE NEXT THING I KNEW, HE HAD PULLED A GUN OUT OF HIS POCKET,"
ANTENUCCI SAID. "I SAW THE GUN FIRE TWO SHOTS. MY FIRST REACTION WAS
TO PUNCH HIM. I PUNCHED HIM A COUPLE TIMES."

ANTENUCCI TOLD HIS SON HE JUMPED ON THE ALLEGED GUNMAN, JOHN W.
HINCKLEY, 25, OF EVERGREEN, COLO. IN THE FRACAS THAT FOLLOWED, HE
SAID, HE WAS STRUCK BY ONE OF THE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS TRYING TO
DISARM THE MAN.

MCNAMARA SAID HE WAS STANDING NEAR ANTENUCCI WHEN "THE PRESIDENT
CAME OUT (AND) THIS PUNK STARTED SHOOTING."

"THAT'S WHEN WE WENT AFTER THE GUY," MCNAMARA SAID. "AL GRABBED
HIM FIRST. AL HAS MORE GUTS THAN ANYBODY ELSE.

"THEN I STARTED PUNCHING HIM (THE GUNMAN). I HIT HIM SO HARD IN
THE HEAD I WAS LEFT WITH BLOOD ON MY KNUCKLES," HE SAID.

MCNAMARA SAID HE WASN'T AFRAID DURING THE INCIDENT BECAUSE "THINGS
WERE HAPPENING TOO FAST FOR ME TO BE FRIGHTENED."

BOTH MEN WERE QUESTIONED BY THE FBI, AND ANTENUCCI BECAME
EMOTIONALLY UPSET, COMPLAINING OF AN IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT, HIS SON
SAID.

HE WAS TAKEN TO GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL BY A SECRET SERVICE
AGENT AND ADMITTED IN THE CORONARY CARE UNIT.

THE TWO MEN HEADED A GROUP OF ABOUT 350 OHIO BUILDING TRADES
PEOPLE ATTENDING THE THREE-DAY CONFERENCE.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 7, 1981

Dear Dr. O'Leary:

It was a pleasure joining you in lunch
last Thursday afternoon.

Your assistance to the White House staff
during the past week has been invaluable,
and very much appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you again soon.

Kind personal regards,

Frank A. Ursomarso
Deputy Assistant to the
President

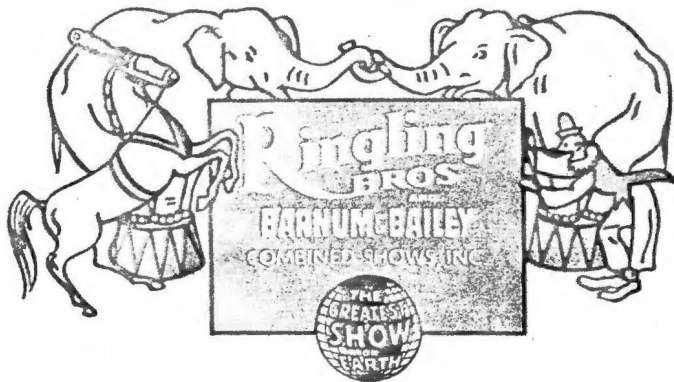
Dr. Dennis O'Leary
Acting Medical Director
George Washington University
Medical Center
2300 I St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: JOE CANZERI

FROM: FRANK URSOMARSO *fu*

What do you think of this???



April 7, 1981

Frank Ursomarso
Director of Communications
The White House
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Ursomarso:

On Tuesday, April 14, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus would like to make a special stop at the White House during the Circus Animal Walk, which traditionally heralds the arrival of The Greatest Show on Earth to the Nation's Capital and will begin at the Eckington Train Yards at 12:00 noon.

This year, our parade of ponderous pachyderms, crafty camels and high-stepping steeds request your permission to proceed up Pennsylvania Avenue to the Presidential Residence, stop, and while our herd of 18 mighty mammoths perform a spectacular long-mount, (photo enclosed) unroll and display a very special elephant-sized scroll extending our best wishes and hopes for a speedy recovery to the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

We are hoping that his special Animal Walk stop and message will prove a healthy contribution to brightening the day for our President, and, on a larger scale, toward lightening the mood of the nation.

Estimated arrival time for our imposing aggregation of animal performers at the White House is 12:30 p.m. If President Reagan will be in residence on April 14, we hope he will be able to watch the proceedings from a comfortable position in the White House. If not, we hope that the spirit of the gesture will be conveyed to him by his staff onlookers and the members of the press.

If you require any further information at this time, please call me at 363-0201.

Mr. Ursomarso, I thank you for your interest and enthusiasm and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Cindy Bandle

Cindy Bandle
for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus
3701 Macomb St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016
(202) 363-0201

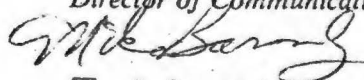
CAB/me

cc: Greg Newell

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 23, 1981

TO: JOANNA BISTANY
FROM: FRANK A. URSOMARSO
Director of Communications



Information

Action

The attached is the one-page cover sheet summarizing the "100 Days" you already have received. Would you please obtain Dave's sign-off as soon as possible. Once you have, we will circulate it from here (via Gergen) to those individuals you designate.

There seems to me at least the theoretical possibility that the document could go out tomorrow, provided sign-off were required by 9:00 a.m. Is this reasonable? Do you agree?

Also attached is Barbara Gleason's research project of Presidential Recovery Periods.

Presidential Recovery Periods

In relatively recent history, three Presidents were disabled for brief periods during their terms, yet recovered and resumed the full responsibilities of the position:

- Lyndon Johnson underwent gall bladder surgery on October 8, 1965 and surgery to repair a hernia and remove a polyp on his vocal cords on November 16, 1966.
- Dwight D. Eisenhower suffered three major illnesses during his two terms in office; a heart attack on September 23, 1955; an operation for ileitis on June, 1956 and a stroke on November 25, 1956.
- In 1893, President Grover Cleveland was smuggled aboard a yacht in New York Harbor for a cancer operation on his jaw which was kept secret for 25 years. This, 1956 and a stroke on November 25, considered a precedent enough to warrant research.

Lyndon Johnson

On October 8, 1965, Johnson underwent gall bladder surgery at Bethesda Naval Hospital. By mutual agreement between himself and the Vice President, Humphrey was to step in as temporary acting President if the operation left Johnson unable, for any considerable period, to perform effectively as President. By midday, however, Johnson was reported once again to be able to "make decisions." In the meantime, no need for such decisions had arisen.

During the first week of his hospital stay, two measures he strongly supported suffered setbacks in Congress -- nullification of states' "right to work" laws and a homerule bill for D.C.

Johnson remained in the hospital until October 21 when he returned to the White House. Two days later, October 23, he flew to Texas to continue his recuperation -- a period lasting until November 14.

While in Bethesda Naval Hospital, Johnson generally kept in touch with government affairs through written reports rather than personal conferences. Special Assistant to the President Bill Moyers served as his spokesman meeting with him daily and holding periodic news conferences and issuing Presidential statements on Johnson's behalf. A scan of the Johnson diary indicates that his close personal staff during the convalescent period consisted of Moyers, Legislative Counsel Jake Jacobson, Special Assistant Jack Valenti, Appointments Secretary Watson, and two secretaries. Cabinet meetings with him daily, and meetings with cabinet officials, members of Congress or foreign diplomats took place until October 11.

Following in a chronological outline of the President's activities during his period of convalescence:

October 8 -- Gall bladder surgery

October 9 -- Issued two press releases one of which concerned his signing of a bill regarding concession rights in national parks. Held photo session with AP photographer as he signed bills.

October 10 -- Issued three Executive Orders. Humphrey visited him. Held photo session and news availability (Johnson and Humphrey).

October 11 -- President discontinued pain relieving drugs. He met with Humphrey, Clark Clifford and Dean Rusk.

-- Issued four press releases

- October 12 -- Met with personal staff and Attorney General Katzenbach
- October 13 -- Sent message to Congress regarding report on the trade agreements program. In the addition to personal staff and friends, met with Legislative Liaison Larry O'Brien.
- October 14 -- Issued two press releases
- October 15 -- Humphrey met with Consumer Advisory Council on behalf of Johnson. Issued two press releases. Met with Califano, Clifford, Stewart Udall, Abe Fortas.
- October 19 -- Issued one Executive Order
- October 20 -- Issued three press releases one of which was the signing of the Clean Air Act Amendment and solid waste disposal bill. Present at signing were Humphrey and key Congressional leaders. Issued one Executive Order.
- October 21 -- Spoke before fellow patients at the hospital then returned to the White House. Issued three press releases. Issued Executive Order establishing the Automotive Agreement Adjustment Board
- October 22 -- Congress Adjourned. Johnson issued 9 Presidential statements most of which concerned the signing of bills (i.e., Highway Beautification Act, National Vocational Student Loan Insurance Act, U.S. Canadian agreement on automotive products)
- October 23 -- Flew to Texas to continue recuperation. At the airport, held a press briefing on the Dominican Republic. Traveled to Texas with his secretaries and Jake Jacobson. Bill Moyers met them in Texas. Issued 5 press releases (one of which announced a bill signing and two messages to Congress -- on NASA and the Housing and Home Finance Agency)
- Note: During his stay in Texas, he frequently met with his personal staff, in particular: Bill Moyers, Jake Jacobson, and Marvin Watson (his appointments secretary)
- October 26 -- Issued two press releases
- October 27 -- Dean Rusk visited him at the ranch. Mike Mansfield called

- October 28 -- Issued two press releases (a report from the NASA Administrator regarding Geminis 6 and 7 and an announcement of plans for the White House Conference on Health).
- October 29 -- Talked with Larry O'Brien by phone.
- October 30 -- Talked with Joe Califano by phone. Issued three press releases (on national economy, Federal Employee Salary Act, and new silverless 25¢ piece)
- November 1 -- Issued four press releases. Issued Executive Order regarding Air Force mailing privileges in Vietnam
- November 2 -- Issued message to White House Conference on Health
- November 3 -- Ambassador to Poland sworn in at the ranch. Johnson attended swearing in of Postmaster General at Hye, Texas.
- November 4 -- Issued three statements included in which were signing of the Food and Agriculture Act
- November 5 -- Signed bill authorizing sale or loan of warships to friendly powers and bill regarding zinc and nickel
- November 6 -- Issued 6 press releases -- three of which concerned the aluminum war
- November 8 -- Issued 4 press releases (one of which was the signing of the Higher Education Act in San Marcos, Texas)
- November 9 -- Issued two press releases (one of which concerned the power failure in the Northeastern U.S.)
- November 10 -- Won aluminum war
- November 11 -- Issued two press releases. Held first major foreign affairs briefing since operation, LBJ Ranch (in attendance: Rusk, McNamara, Ball, Bundy)
- November 13 -- Announced new program for the economic development of qualified distressed areas
- November 14 -- Returned to White House. Personal staff including speechwriters, secretaries, appointments secretary and press assistants traveled with him.

Note: According to U.S. News & World Report, November 22, 1965, after more than a month of recuperation, President Johnson still was operating on a curtailed schedule although his pace was picking up. According to U.S. News, Johnson had a busy schedule in Texas during the week before he returned to Washington. In addition to signing the Higher Education Act and holding the foreign affairs review, he:

- Authorized the Pentagon to provide all the servicemen that U.S. military commanders request to bolster the 160,000 American already in South Vietnam.
- Branded the Rhodesian Government of Prime Minister Ian Smith a "rebel regime" for declaring its independence from Great Britain, ordered the recall of American diplomats in the African country and the shutting down of the U.S. Information Agency there.
- Went over reports cataloguing the shutdowns or mergers of military installations in the United States and overseas.
- Visited a Job Corps center and shook hands with hundreds of young men training there.

On November 16, 1966, President Johnson underwent surgery to remove scar tissue which resulted from his earlier operation and to remove a polyp from his vocal cord. The surgery took place at 6:01 a.m. and at 8 a.m. he was wheeled back into his room, fully conscious. Three days later, on November 19, he left the hospital and departed for the LBJ ranch to recuperate. As during his previous recuperation period, he utilized on a frequent and regular basis the services of Bill Moyers who acted as his spokesman; Jack Jacobson, his legislative counsel; Marvin Watson, his appointments secretary and his personal secretaries.

Johnson returned to the White House on December 9. Following is a chronological outline of the President's schedule during his recuperation from surgery:

- November 16 -- Surgery. During the day he met with friends and his personal staff, including Paul Glynn, his military aide. In the evening, he dined with his family and close friends including Clark Clifford. After dinner, Johnson and Clifford returned to the President's room for a meeting.
- November 17 -- Met with members of the press in the morning. Eisenhower visited him and together they held an informal press and photo availability. During the day he met with Carl Albert, and later with the "big four" on fiscal and budgetary matters (so dubbed by Mrs. Johnson): Secretary Fowler, Budget Director Charles Schultze, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors Arthur Okum, and Federal Reserve Board Chairman Bill Martin. Later in the afternoon Johnson and his wife held another press and photo availability to cover their 32nd wedding anniversary festivities. He and his wife were joined for dinner by the Vice President, his wife, personal staff and friends. During the day, he (through Moyers) issued two press releases (established executive assignment system for high-level civil servants and released memorandum on government operations).
- November 18 -- Issued one press release
- November 19 -- Met with the press as he departed from the hospital
- November 21 -- Issued two minor press releases
- November 22 -- Issued one minor press release
- November 23 -- Held an awards ceremony at the LBJ ranch to mark the conclusion of the Gemini space program. Held press briefing with Secretaries Rusk and McNamara and John J. McCloy.
- November 25 -- Released letter regarding preparation for International Conference on Education. Allocated more than \$1 billion to states for school aid programs in low-income areas.

- November 26 -- Minor memorandum released to the press
- November 27 -- According to the New York Times (Nov. 27), Johnson was doing more work than relaxing at the end of nearly two weeks of post-operative work and relaxation in Texas. In addition to announcing budget cuts, he announced that the Administration was leveling off overall defense needs as a result of a decision to increase more slowly the size of the U.S. expeditionary forces in Vietnam. He also announced that the U.S. and Saigon were discussing the possibilities of 48-hour respites in the fighting at Christmas and again on New Years. Finally, he summoned the Congressional leadership of both Parties to his ranch to promote passage of his programs in the upcoming new Congress. According to the Times, he was experiencing pain and was hoarse.
- November 28 -- Announced agreement for the establishment of a European Space Research Organization station in Alaska. Issued an Executive Order regarding the Federal Executive Salary Schedule.
- November 29 -- Formally announced spending cutbacks. Announced his upcoming meeting with the President of Mexico.
- November 30 -- Released letter in response to a report on federally-assisted summer school programs for disadvantaged children. Announced reorganization of the Bureau of Prisons.
- December 1 -- Announced report on the Cuban refugee airlift.
- December 2 -- Issued two press releases (releasing copper from the national stockpile and a report on the President's Commission on the Patent system).
- December 3 -- Held press conference at Laughlin Air Force Base before leaving for Mexico. Brief remarks on his arrival in Mexico during his inspection of the Amistad Dam. Joint statement with the President of Mexico after the inspection.
- December 5 -- Issued four press releases (general Presidential functions).
- December 6 -- Issued one press release.
- December 7 -- Issued two press releases (one regarding mail fraud, the other concerning Vietnam Christmas mail).
- December 8 -- Issued statement regarding the reaching on an agreement on an outer space treaty.
- December 9 -- Returned to the White House. Met with most of the Cabinet members upon his return.

On the night of September 23, 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower suffered a moderate heart attack while in Denver, Colorado. During his stay in the hospital, his most frequent visitor was Sherman Adams, who, after October 1, came in almost daily and often more than once a day. Press Secretary Jim Hagarty and Assistant Press Secretary Murray Snyder acted as spokesmen during this period. Every member of the Cabinet visited him, as did the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, Admiral Radford, his brother Milton, Presidential special assistants, President Castillo Armas of Guatemala and many personal friends. He discussed the new defense budget with his defense advisors, the backlog of decisions piling up in federal courts with his attorney general, special help for depressed areas with his economic advisors, and farm questions with his agriculture secretary. In all, he saw 66 official visitors between October 1 and his departure from the hospital on November 11.

Vice President Nixon played an active role in the early hours after the heart attack and throughout the President's recuperation period. Within hours after Eisenhower's attack, Nixon, Bill Rogers and Wilton Persons, deputy assistant to the President, met to assure that the President received the best medical care in the country and to determine how the day-to-day operations of government were to be conducted during the President's incapacity. Sherman Adams was in Scotland. According to Nixon, Eisenhower himself had established the concept of a "staff system" for conducting White House business. The "team," consisting of the Cabinet members would carry on Eisenhower policies in an atmosphere of "business as usual." When conflicts or overlap occurred, an "ad hoc" group would be formed to solve them. At the request of Eisenhower, Nixon presided over meetings of the Cabinet and Security Council.

According to Eisenhower, he could not have picked a better time to have a heart attack. The economy was booming, Congress was not in session, there were no new world crises pending, and he was able to handle major foreign-policy problems with the help of Secretary of State Foster Dulles.

Following is a chronological outline of the President's schedule during his recuperation from surgery:

September 23 -- moderate heart attack in Denver

September 24 -- When his condition stabilized, press spokesman Jim Hagarty asked him how much information regarding his illness should be released to the public. Eisenhower instructed Hagarty to give full details. Nixon, Rogers and Persons met to discuss immediate administrative problems arising from the illness.

-- Nixon had a casual meeting with a few members of the press regarding the President's condition and its political implications.

- September 25 -- Eisenhower remained in an oxygen tent, visited only by his wife and son John. Immediately upon removal of the tent, he asked his secretary to call Acting Attorney General regarding several legal matters. Note: During the first few days of the attack, his doctors kept the newspapers from him, a decision to which he agreed. His personal staff kept him fully informed about world events except for those few days. White House statement released regarding U.S. and Argentine relations. White House postponed President's Conference on Fitness of American Youth.
- September 26 -- Cabinet Members Dulles and George Humphrey left for Canada to attend a joint economic conference between the U.S. and Canada. Spokesman Jim Hagerty announced in a news conference that the Attorney General would be asked of an opinion on the possibility of Eisenhower delegating his Constitutional powers and duties during his illness. (an opinion proved to be not needed and was never developed). Sherman Adams returned from Scotland. Nixon met with senior White House personnel, then stayed for a private luncheon with Adams. That evening, Nixon again met with Adams along with RNC Chairman Len Hall to discuss political implications of the illness and how it might affect the President's renomination. The White House released a statement concerning scheduled meetings of the National Security Council and Cabinet.
- September 27 -- An Executive Order was issued calling for a study of the possible delegation of non-Constitutional powers, but it was also never instituted.
- September 29 -- Vice President Nixon presided over a previously scheduled National Security meeting.
- September 30 -- Nixon presided over a Cabinet meeting during which they worked out administrative procedures during the President's recuperation period: 1) On actions which Cabinet members normally would take without Cabinet or Presidential consultation, there would be no change on the normal procedure; 2) Questions which would normally be brought before the Cabinet for discussion before decision should continue to be discussed there; 3) Decisions which would involve consultation with the President should go first to the Cabinet or the NSC for thorough discussion and possible recommendation and then go to the President in Denver; 4) The proper channel for submission to the President of matters requiring Presidential decision should be to "General Persons in the White House" and then through Governor Adams to the President in Denver.

The White House issued a statement following the Cabinet meeting on the conduct of foreign and domestic affairs during the President's absence. The President instituted his first official act following the onset of his illness -- initialing two lists of recess appointments of foreign service officers.

- October 1 -- Sherman Adams flew to Denver to meet with the President. At Eisenhower's request, Adams helped him devise a method for carrying out necessary work. Adams also gave him the notes from the NSC meeting. White House issued statement regarding forthcoming visit of Guatemalan President.
- October 3 -- Eisenhower sent the following note to Nixon, expressing formally the President's request for him to preside over all "appropriate meetings."
Note: Adams returned to Washington some time between October 3 and 7. Eisenhower sent with him a request that Nixon travel to Denver on October 8. Adams also relayed the message -- with the doctors' agreement -- that Eisenhower could begin meeting with government officials on October 11.
- October 8 -- Eisenhower met with Nixon. They discussed the plans by which Adams would bring to the President all matters for action and a plan for scheduling meetings with Cabinet members and White House staff. These plans eliminated the need for Eisenhower to surrender any of his Presidential powers.
- October 11 -- Eisenhower met with Secretary Dulles who was preparing for the late October Foreign Ministers' meeting in Geneva. Dulles showed him a draft of a paper for the conference and Eisenhower made changes. The President wrote Premier Nikolai Bulganin regarding inspections for control of armaments in both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. Bulganin accepted preliminary plan on October 23.
- October 15 -- Accepted resignation of Commissioner of IRS
- October 18 -- Released letters to Rhode Island Governor on the recommendations of the New England Governor's Conference and the establishment of nuclear reactors in New England.
- October 21 -- White House issued statement regarding the President's report to Congress on lend-lease operations
- October 22 -- Letter to the Vice President concerning the Conference on Equal Job Opportunity

- October 23 -- Letter to the Vice President and the Cabinet regarding the task of Secretary Dulles at Geneva.
- October 25 -- Eisenhower was allowed to take a few steps.
- October 26 -- Issued statement on the Foreign Minister's meeting in Geneva.
- October 27 -- Issued statement on tung oil imports. Sent message to the National Industrial Conference Board on the peaceful uses of atomic energy.
- October 28 -- Sent letter to President of Mexico on the hurricane-flood disaster in Tampico
- October 29 -- Endorsed Secretary Benson's farm bill
- November 9 -- Issued statement following outbreak of hostilities in the Near East
- November 11 -- Departed Denver for Washington, D.C. where he was greeted by the Vice President, the Cabinet, members of the Diplomatic Corps, a number of Congressmen and Senators, and former President Hoover -- in all, 5,000 people.
"I am happy that the doctors have given me a parole, if not a pardon, and I expect to be back to my accustomed duties although they say I must ease and not bulldoze my way into them."
- November 12 -- Stayed in the White House personal quarters. Met with Jim Hagerty and Sherman Adams.
- November 13 -- Made several trips to his office
- November 14 -- Left the White House and drove to Gettysburg with Mamie.
- November 22 -- Held his first post-illness Cabinet meeting (at Camp David). The meeting was largely concerned with the legislative and budgetary program for the next year.
- November 28 -- Addressed the White House Conference on Education -- filed at Gettysburg
- December 12 -- Issued statement following meetings with Republican leaders of the Senate and House.
- December 20 -- Returned to D.C.
- December 28 -- Flew to Key West, Florida for a two-week vacation

On June 7, President Eisenhower suffered an attack of ileitis and underwent an emergency operation on June 9. Although the doctors were optimistic about a quick recovery, the press tended to exaggerate the negative consequences, and many people were concerned about the soundness of his decision to run for re-election. (Note: This was his second serious illness in less than a year). The surgery was performed at Walter Reed Hospital, and he left the hospital on June 30 for Gettysburg Farm. He returned to Washington on July 15.

Day-to-day delegation of duties followed in a pattern similar to that which occurred during his previous illness.

Following is a chronological outline of the President's activities during the period of recuperation:

June 9 -- Emergency surgery

June 14 -- Chancellor Adenauer visited the President accompanied by Secretary of State Foster Dulles. They discussed promoting the liberation of 17 million Germans who were under Communist rule and their re-unification with Germany

June 17 -- Issued message to the President of Germany on the anniversary of the demonstrations for freedom on the Soviet Zone.

June 18 -- Vetoed a minor bill concerning an individual's claim against the government.

June 19 -- Signed the Library Services Bill. Sent message through the Vice President to the President's Conference on the Fitness of American Youth

June 20 -- Visited by the Foreign Minister of France

June 22 -- Exchanged messages with the Chancellor of Germany

June 25 -- Cancelled meeting with Prime Minister Nehru of India which was scheduled for July 7. Eisenhower indicated that he could not be sure that his recuperation would be far enough along for "the kind of talks which we both had in mind." He indicated, however, that he still planned a trip to Panama in late July.

June 27 -- Notified the Senate and House of his intention to propose a new Presidential Commission on office space. Approved a new program for fundraising within the Federal establishment. Issued a statement regarding the Vice President's forthcoming visit to Vietnam.

- June 29 -- Issued statement regarding exchanges between the U.S. and the countries of Eastern Europe.
- July 1 -- Left Walter Reed hospital for Gettysburg
- July 2 -- Vetoed minor bills. Signed bill making appropriations for certain government agencies.
- July 3 -- Commuted a death sentence
- July 9 -- Signed the Water Pollution Act Amendments
- July 11 -- Sent message to Congress transmitting Fourth Semiannual Report under Public Law. Sent message to Greece following earthquake.
- July 15 -- Returned to the White House
- Received delegation of GOP Congressional leaders, authorized them to announce he was still running for re-election
- July 16 -- Vetoed bill authorizing certain construction at military installations
- July 18 -- Issued special message to Congress, transmitting Lend-Lease Operations
- July 19 -- White House announced a balanced federal budget
- July 20 -- Issued statement concerning requests for supplemental appropriations
- July 21 -- Arrived in Panama for the meeting of the Presidents of the Americas
- August 1 -- Held first news conference in 2 months. When questioned about his health, he said he had "no doubts" about his ability to serve a second term

On November 25, 1957, President Eisenhower suffered a mild stroke -- termed by the doctors as a minor "spasm" of a blood vessel or nerve. His speech was temporarily impaired and he continued to experience very mild difficulty in speaking for the next few weeks. He rested for two days, then assumed light duties. Friends and doctors urged him to cancel a planned visit to a NATO meeting on December 13. Eisenhower, however, considered the trip a test which would determine if he could physically handle Presidential responsibilities. "If I could carry out this program successfully and without noticeable damage to myself, then I would continue in my duties," Eisenhower remarked in his memoirs. "If I felt the results to be less than satisfactory, then I would resign." Eisenhower made the trip, and at one point found himself in front of a microphone. "Ignoring the horrified looks of my staff, I removed my hat and spoke extemporaneously for the first time since my illness," Eisenhower reported in his memoirs. "It was easy to make...but to me, it represented another milestone...I felt my recovery was progressing satisfactorily."

Following is a brief outline of the President's activities immediately following the stroke:

- November 25 -- Suffered stroke. Attempted to attend a dinner for King Mohammed but was ordered back to bed by his doctors. Vice President Nixon attended in his stead
- November 26 -- Remained in his room
- November 27 -- Remained in his room
- November 28 -- Declared fit for light duty by doctors. Went to the hospital for tests.
- December 9 -- Returned to work

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

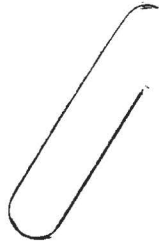
June 11, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: FRANK A. URSOMARSO
FROM: TRICIA HOFFMAN *Tricia*
SUBJECT: Get Well Wishes for Jim Brady

On Friday, June 12 at 11:00A.M., Mayor Vince Whibbs of Pensacola, Florida and his crew, Kevin Evans and Darrell King, will be driving their 18-wheeler truck to the North West entrance of the White House where they will be met by Larry Speakes and Powell Moore. Mayor Whibbs, Kevin and Darrell will present to the two gentlemen a replica of the 18-wheeler filled with jelly beans for the President.

The truck will then proceed to the 22nd Street side of the George Washington Hospital where they will be met by Sarah Brady. They will present Sarah with a scroll signed by 10,000 get well wishers from Pensacola, Florida. Sarah will then take the signed scroll to Jim.

cc: Joe Canzeri
Mark Goode
Jann Mahan



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 22, 1981

Dear Mr. Baker:

Thank you for your letter outlining your interest in compiling a documentation on the events of March 30. I appreciate your request and am sending you a copy of the Washington Post article which describes my activity on that day.

As far as my own personal thoughts are concerned, I have not released them to the public. If I should decide to do so, I will inform you at that time.

In the meantime, I wish you luck on your publication.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frank A. Ursomarso".

Frank A. Ursomarso
Director of Communications
for the Executive Branch

Mr. Mark A. Baker
719 South Manlius Road
Fayetteville, New York 13066

DODIE,
PL PLEASE CALL
THIS FELLOW AS
SEE IF HE IS
LEGITIMATE
ja

Mark A. Baker
719 South Manlius Road
Fayetteville, New York
13066

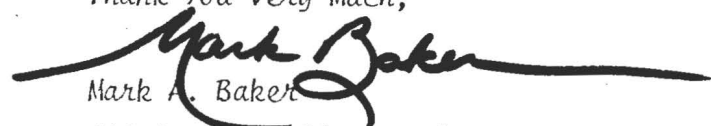
Dear Sir:

I am compiling a total documentation on the events surrounding the recent attempted assassination of the President of the United States, on March 30, 1981.

I know you are a very busy person, but if possible, could you please send me a comment or summerazation of the events or roles you undertook in this incident. It is very important that events surrounding such an event be accurately depicted and documented.

I would also be very interested in any personal comments you have on this event. I have already received a great deal of information, but would like your feelings and accounts to add to this documentation.

I am indeed very grateful for your time and consideration of my request. We are all interested in preventing any such incident from ever happening again under any circumstance.

Thank You Very Much,

Mark A. Baker
719 South Manlius Road
Fayetteville, New York

*Historian, Archivist
and Author.

315/637-8956
315/457-2157
315/456-3601