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PENDING REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH E.O. 13233
Ronald Reagan Library

Collection: Cooksey, Sherrie M.: Files:
 Office of the Counsel to the President

Archivist: kdb

OA/Box: 11720

FOIA ID: F97-098/5, Phelan

File Folder: SMC/Antenucci, Alfred [Assassination Attempt on
 President Reagan] (1)

Date: 3/16/07

DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
A. memo	Cooksey to Linas Kojelis re draft scheduling proposal for President to meet with Antenucci family, 1p	5/1/85	1 <i>OPENED 05/08/2008</i>
B. note	Cooksey to Richard Hauser re scheduling proposal, 2p	4/30/85	4 1
C. memo	Hauser to Larry Speakes re Antenucci, 1p	3/1/85	1 1
D. memo	Cooksey to Hauser re Antenucci, 1p	2/28/85	1 1
E. memo	draft of item C, 1p	2/28/85	1 1

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 1, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR LINAS KOJELIS
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON

FROM: SHERRIE M. COOKSEY *SMC*
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Draft Scheduling Proposal for the
President to Meet the Antenucci Family

This office has reviewed the above-referenced draft scheduling proposal and, for the reasons stated below, recommends against approval of such proposal.

First, any meeting between the President and the family of Alfred Antenucci would undoubtedly raise questions about compensation to the Antenuccis for Mr. Antenucci's medical bills. As we have stated previously, there simply are no Federal funds available for reimbursement of such expenses; however, we have been advised by the Brady Foundation that, based on its informal review of the situation, there is a good possibility that the Foundation may assist in the payment of those bills.

Second, as indicated in the attached chronology, we believe that the President has, on several occasions, appropriately recognized Alfred Antenucci's heroic act. Indeed, Antenucci was most recently praised by the President in a nationally broadcast radio address. In 1981, the President called Antenucci to thank him for his heroic act and followed that telephone call with a handwritten note to Antenucci; later, he met with Antenucci in Chicago. Additionally, the President sent several messages of praise for Antenucci to be read at events honoring Antenucci.

Finally, we are not convinced that the question of Presidential recognition of Alfred Antenucci continues to be a "live" issue. Indeed, we are unaware of any continuing press interest in this matter.

In view of the above, we must recommend against a Presidential photo opportunity meeting with the Antenucci family.

Attachment

cc: Frederick J. Ryan

CHRONOLOGY

March 30, 1981 Alfred Antenucci wrestles John Hinckley to ground following assassination attempt.

Antenucci subsequently complains of chest pains and is taken to Georgetown University Hospital.

April 1-8, 1981 (Tab A) Antenucci stays in Georgetown Coronary Unit where he is visited by Secretary Donovan and a White House staff member.

April 8, 1981 (Tab A) Antenucci is released from the hospital and taken to the airport by a White House car. He is met at the airport and taken to United Airlines Red Carpet Lounge to await his flight home.

April 29, 1981 (Tab B) Mrs. Antenucci writes the President to thank him for the thoughtfulness of his staff toward her husband.

News articles appear in Ohio press that Antenucci is being ignored.

May 2, 1981 (Tab C) President calls Antenucci to thank him for his heroic act.

May 4, 1981 (Tab D) President writes Antenucci and includes a handwritten note referencing telephone call.

June 19, 1981 (Tab E) President sends message to special tribute to Antenucci.

Sept. 17, 1981 (Tab F) President sends message to be read at Sept. 24, 1984 tribute to Antenucci and Cleveland Labor Leaders.

Sept., 1981 Antenucci meets the President in Chicago.

April, 1982 Antenucci has lunch in White House mess with White House staff member.

May 2, 1984 (Tab G) President sends get well message to Antenucci in hospital.

May 10, 1984 (Tab H) Another Presidential letter sent to Antenucci in hospital.

May 14, 1984 (Tab I) President sends condolences to Antenucci Family.

June 14, 1984
(Tab J) Antenucci daughter writes President complaining about lack of recognition and \$28,000 medical bill.

July 13, 1984
(Tab K) Senator Glenn forwards daughter's letter to White House.

July-Nov., 1984 WH Counsel's Office talks with daughter, advises no Federal funds available and that the Brady Foundation is considering making such funds available.

Nov. 5, 1984
(Tab L) Peter Rusthoven writes daughter advising that Brady Foundation may be able to assist family. Rusthoven also responds to Senator Glenn.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

4/30/85

TO: Richard A. Hauser

FROM: Sherrie M. Cooksey
Associate Counsel
to the President

FYI

COMMENT

ACTION

I think we should oppose this.

SMC

1. As discussed, no legal issues are presented. ~~however~~, any meeting would undoubtedly raise the question of compensation.
2. I believe the President did more than indicated in the scheduling memo
add (w/)

3. I don't believe this is a
new issue anymore.

^{RSB}
He is a master for people
above

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 4/29/85

TO: *Sherrie Cooksey*

FROM: LINAS KOJELIS
Associate Director
Office of Public Liaison
Room 438 OEOB, Ext. 2741

SUBJECT: *Antenucci Photo Op*

The attached is for your:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review & Comment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Response | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Signature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> File | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please Return By COB 5/1/85

Comments:

DRAFT

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 26, 1985

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

TO: FREDERICK J. RYAN, DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENTS AND SCHEDULING

FROM: PAT BUCHANAN, ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNICATIONS

REQUEST: For the President to receive the family of Alfred Antenucci (photo op).

PURPOSE: For the President to personally thank, recognize and pay respects to the family of Mr. Antenucci, who helped tackle John Hinckley after the March 30 shooting incident at the Washington Hilton.

BACKGROUND: Alfred Antenucci was responsible for tackling John Hinckley following his assassination attempt on the President. Subsequently, he began having health problems which required hospitalization soon after the incident. His family claims that the White House made promises in regards to a WH luncheon and would handle his medical expenses, none of which were kept. Mr. Antenucci was lauded by local organizations in his home state of Ohio, but died last May, without receiving the Presidential recognition his family believes he deserved.

Although a series of gestures were made toward Mr. Antenucci, neither he nor his family have ever had the opportunity to receive the President's gratitude in person. This omission has resulted in the continued festering of this issue in the press, Congress and in the Italian-American community. We have assurances from the Antenucci family that such a meeting would be proper final due recognition for Mr. Antenucci's actions.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION: The President sent a congratulatory telegram to Mr. Antenucci at a dinner in his honor; several messages while he was ill in the hospital, one of which was received the day after he died; and a telegram to his widow expressing condolences.

DATE: May DURATION: 5 minutes

LOCATION: Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS: 5 members of the Antenucci family

DRAFT

DRAFT

OUTLINE OF EVENTS: The President would greet the participants, make brief remarks, pose for photos, and the participants would depart from the room.

REMARKS REQUIRED: Talking points

MEDIA COVERAGE: WH Photographer

RECOMMENDED BY: Pat Buchanan

PROJECT OFFICER: Linas Kojelis, x2741

DRAFT

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 1, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR LARRY M. SPEAKES
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY
FROM: RICHARD A. HAUSER Original signed by RAH
DEPUTY COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT
SUBJECT: Alfred Antenucci

This will respond to your request for our views on the appropriate response to the rising number of media inquiries you are receiving on Alfred Antenucci.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the overriding issue here is not a legal one; there are, however, two subsidiary legal questions which I will address. First, questions may be raised whether Federal funds are available to cover Mr. Antenucci's medical expenses. As discussed in Peter Rusthoven's November 5, 1984 letter to Antenucci's daughter (Tab L), there simply are no Federal funds that would be available for reimbursement of those medical expenses. We have, however, discussed this matter with James A. Wilderotter, attorney for the Brady Foundation and been advised that, based on an informal review of the Antenucci situation, there is a good possibility that the Foundation may assist in the payment of those medical bills.

Second, you have asked whether it is possible for a medal to be awarded posthumously to Mr. Antenucci for his act of bravery. We have been advised by the Executive Clerk that, as a matter of longstanding historical tradition, no Presidential medal has been awarded to a civilian adult American citizen for individual acts of bravery or heroism. The "exceptions" to this have been awards of the Presidential Citizen's Medal (which is for exemplary deeds of service to the country or fellow citizens) to Joe Delaney (the football player who drowned last year rescuing two children) and to two Foreign Service officers who died in the line of duty in the Middle East. Those situations, however, are distinguishable from the one at hand, as Mr. Antenucci did not die during his act of bravery. In view of the foregoing, we doubt that the award of a Presidential medal to Mr. Antenucci would be appropriate.

Attached for your information and use in evaluating the appropriate response to this situation is a chronology of all the actions taken by the President and his staff to thank and recognize Mr. Antenucci. As you will see from that file, Antenucci was thanked personally by the President on several occasions.

Attachment

RAH:SMC:ph 3/1/85 ✓
cc: RAHauser/SMCooksey/Subject/Chron.

CHRONOLOGY

- March 30, 1981 Alfred Antenucci wrestles John Hinckley to ground following assassination attempt. Antenucci subsequently complains of chest pains and is taken to Georgetown University Hospital.
- April 1-8, 1981 (Tab A) Antenucci stays in Georgetown Coronary Unit where he is visited by Secretary Donovan and a White House staff member.
- April 8, 1981 (Tab A) Antenucci is released from the hospital and taken to the airport by a White House car. He is met at the airport and taken to United Airlines Red Carpet Lounge to await his flight home.
- April 29, 1981 (Tab B) Mrs. Antenucci writes the President to thank him for the thoughtfulness of his staff toward her husband. News articles appear in Ohio press that Antenucci is being ignored.
- May 2, 1981 (Tab C) President calls Antenucci to thank him for his heroic act.
- May 4, 1981 (Tab D) President writes Antenucci and includes a handwritten note referencing telephone call.
- June 19, 1981 (Tab E) President sends message for special tribute to Antenucci.
- Sept. 17, 1981 (Tab F) President sends message to be read at Sept. 24, 1984 tribute to Antenucci and Cleveland Labor Leaders.
- Sept., 1981 Antenucci meets the President in Chicago.
- April, 1982 Antenucci has lunch in White House mess with White House staff member.
- May 2, 1984 (Tab G) President sends get well message to Antenucci in hospital.
- May 10, 1984 (Tab H) Another Presidential letter sent to Antenucci in hospital. (Mr. Antenucci died on May 9, 1984.)
- May 14, 1984 (Tab I) President sends condolences to Antenucci Family.

June 14, 1984
(Tab J) Antenucci daughter writes President
complaining about lack of recognition and
\$28,000 medical bill.

July 13, 1984
(Tab K) Senator Glenn forwards daughter's letter
to White House.

July-Nov., 1984 WH Counsel's Office talks with daughter,
advises no Federal funds available and
that the Brady Foundation is considering
making such funds available.

Nov. 5, 1984
(Tab L) Peter Rusthoven writes daughter advising
that Brady Foundation may be able to
assist family. Rusthoven also responds to
Senator Glenn.

SMC

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 28, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD A. HAUSER

FROM: SHERRIE M. COOKSEY *SMC*

SUBJECT: Alfred Antenucci

Attached for your review and comment is a memorandum responding to Larry Speakes' request for your views on how to proceed in response to the media inquiries on Alfred Antenucci.

The proposed memorandum explains that this does not appear to be a "legal" problem as there are no apparent Federal remedies (e.g., payment of medical services or award of a medal) available for Antenucci. In response to earlier inquiries on this matter, Peter Rusthoven concluded that no Federal funds were available for payment of Antenucci's medical expenses; and according to the Executive Clerk's office, historically the President has not awarded medals to civilian adult citizens for individual acts of bravery or heroism. The only "exceptions" to this historical tradition have been awards of the Presidential Citizen's Medal (which is given to an adult citizen in recognition of his or her exemplary deeds of service to the country or fellow citizens) to Joe Delaney (the football player who drowned saving two children) and to two Foreign Service officers who died in the Middle East. As those exceptions were for people who died "in the act," it does not appear that Antenucci would fall into that category. (Although you raised the question of the medal awarded to the girl who was severely burned rescuing her sister and brother from a fire, that award is not available for Antenucci as it is limited to Americans under the age of 18.)

The proposed memorandum also contains a chronology of the efforts made by the President and his staff to thank and recognize Antenucci and notes that there is a good possibility that the Brady Foundation will pay Antenucci's medical expenses.

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 28, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR LARRY M. SPEAKES
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY

FROM: RICHARD A. HAUSER
DEPUTY COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Alfred Antenucci

This will respond to your request for our views on the appropriate response to the rising number of media inquiries you are receiving on Alfred Antenucci.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the overriding issue here is not a legal one; there are, however, two subsidiary legal questions which I will address. First, questions may be raised whether Federal funds are available to cover Mr. Antenucci's medical expenses. As discussed in Peter Rusthoven's November 5, 1984 letter to Antenucci's daughter (Tab L), there simply are no Federal funds that would be available for reimbursement of those medical expenses. We have, however, discussed this matter with James A. Wilderotter of the Brady Foundation and been advised that, based on an informal review of the Antenucci situation, there is a good possibility that the Foundation may assist in the payment of those medical bills.

Second, you have asked whether it is possible for a medal to be awarded posthumously to Mr. Antenucci for his act of bravery. We have been advised by the Executive Clerk that, as a matter of longstanding historical tradition, no Presidential medal has been awarded to a civilian adult American citizen for individual acts of bravery or heroism. The "exceptions" to this have been the award of the Presidential Citizen's Medal to Joe Delaney (the football player who drowned last year rescuing two children) and to two Foreign Service officers who died in the line of duty in the Middle East. Those situations, however, are distinguishable from the one at hand, as Mr. Antenucci did not die during his act of bravery. In view of the foregoing, we doubt that the award of a Presidential medal to Mr. Antenucci would be appropriate.

Attached for your information and use in evaluating the appropriate response to this situation is a chronology of all the actions taken by the President and his staff to thank and recognize Mr. Antenucci. As you will see from that file, Antenucci was thanked personally by the President on several occasions.

Attachment

CHRONOLOGY

- March 30, 1981 Alfred Antenucci wrestles John Hinckley to ground following assassination attempt.
- Antenucci subsequently complains of chest pains and is taken to Georgetown University Hospital.
- April 1-8, 1981 Antenucci stays in Georgetown Coronary Unit where he is visited by Secretary (Tab A) Donovan and a White House staff member.
- April 8, 1981 Antenucci is released from the hospital (Tab A) and taken to the airport by a White House car. He is met at the airport and taken to United Airlines Red Carpet Lounge to await his flight home.
- April 29, 1981 Mrs. Antenucci writes the President to (Tab B) thank him for the thoughtfulness of his staff toward her husband.
- News articles appear in Ohio press that Antenucci is being ignored.
- May 2, 1981 President calls Antenucci to thank him for (Tab C) his heroic act.
- May 4, 1981 President writes Antenucci and includes a (Tab D) handwritten note referencing telephone call.
- June 19, 1981 President sends message to special tribute (Tab E) to Antenucci.
- Sept. 17, 1981 President sends message to be read at (Tab F) Sept. 24, 1984 tribute to Antenucci and Cleveland Labor Leaders.
- Sept., 1981 Antenucci meets the President in Chicago.
- April, 1982 Antenucci has lunch in White House mess with White House staff member.
- May 2, 1984 President sends get well message to (Tab C) Antenucci in hospital.
- May 10, 1984 Another Presidential letter sent to (Tab H) Antenucci in hospital.
- May 14, 1984 President sends condolences to Antenucci (Tab I) Family.

June 14, 1984 (Tab J)	Antenucci daughter writes President complaining about lack of recognition and \$28,000 medical bill.
July 13, 1984 (Tab K)	Senator Glenn forwards daughter's letter to White House.
July-Nov., 1984	WH Counsel's Office talks with daughter, advises no Federal funds available and that the Brady Foundation is considering making such funds available.
Nov. 5, 1984 (Tab L)	Peter Rusthoven writes daughter advising that Brady Foundation may be able to assist family. Rusthoven also responds to Senator Glenn.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 25, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR DICK HAUSER

FROM: Larry Speakes

We continue to receive press inquiries on our response to the Cleveland Plain Dealer story about the Antenucci family, the survivors of the man who jumped on John Hinckley. The stories center on what the family believes they were promised by representatives of the White House and has played prominently in Cleveland, with the latest inquiry from NBC News.

Whether the family's claims are legitimate or not does not matter. We have a PR problem which is making the President look insensitive and ungrateful and we should do something soon as this could figure in a network news story.

As I see it we have several options:

- 1) Invite the Antenucci family to lunch with the President.
- 2) Take action to have an appropriate medal presented posthumously to Mr. Antenucci.
- 3) Have the President write to Mr. Antenucci's family.
- 4) Have the President call the Antenucci family.

We can make the President look good by saying that once he heard of their disappointment, he directed that (whatever) be done.

I'll appreciate your thoughts on how to proceed.

cc: Donald T. Regan
Ed Rollins
Sherrie Cooksey ✓
Mark Weinberg

BACKGROUND

Alfred Antenucci, 69 years old, is the head of the District Council of Carpenters in Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Antenucci helped tackle the man accused of shooting the President on Monday, March 30. He was hospitalized in the Coronary Care Unit at Georgetown University Hospital in the afternoon of March 30 after he complained of an irregular heartbeat. He was visited in the hospital by a White House Staff member, Robert F. Bonitati, and Secretary Donovan.

Mr. Antenucci was released on Wednesday, April 8. A White House car was sent to pick him up at the hospital. On the way to the airport, Mr. Antenucci was taken on a tour of the cherry blossoms. Upon his arrival at the airport, Mr. Antenucci was taken to the United Airlines Red Carpet Lounge where he was able to wait until his flight departed.

Mr. Antenucci can be reached at his home in Garfield Heights, Ohio at (216) 662-0536.

B

April 29, 1981

Dear Mr. President:

It was good to see you feeling well enough to speak on television to the nation last night. We have been praying for you and the other three men that were injured. We are so grateful that no one was killed. We also suffered personally in this traumatic experience. My husband was standing in back of Hinckley. When he realized he was the one shooting he jumped on his back and started hitting him to change his line of fire. He held him down until the S.S. men fell on top of him. Then he got out of the way so the S.S. men could take charge. While he was being questioned his blood pressure



went out of control and he started
having irregular heart beats. He
was rushed to Georgetown Univ.
Hospital. He was hysterical and
cried for three days and nights. He
remained in the hospital for ten
days until they stabilized his
blood pressure and heart beats. He
is much better now but still is
under heavy medication. He will
never forget that afternoon. He is
a Business Representative in the
Carpenter's Union and was at the
Hilton for the convention. We agree
with you that this is not a sick
nation. We have received so

many beautiful cards and
letters from people
praying for my
husband. We have



just been overwhelmed. The nurses
and doctors at the hospital were

just wonderful working with him
and keeping reporters away from
us. Mr. Russo got in touch with
us and had his office staff make
reservations for us to come home
and provided transportation to the
airport and also kept reporters away.
We wish to thank them for being
so nice. Mr. Ray Donovan was
allowed to visit my husband and
presented him with cuff links and
a tie clasp which he will treasure
for the rest of his life. My husband
and the rest of our family loves that
by his quick thinking ^{and actions} he saved
someone from being killed and
most of all the President.
we cannot bear



another John Kennedy
Bobby Kennedy and
Martin Luther King
Sincerely, Alfred Osterlund
Mrs. Osterlund
and family

Tragedy,