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Last Updated: 12/08/2023

#### THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

## April 27, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR HOWARD BAKER

FROM:

RHETT DAWSON

SUBJECT:

White House Participation in Civil War Veterans of the Confederacy Ceremony

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## BACKGROUND

Each year the Confederate Memorial Committee commemorates the birth of Jefferson Davis and honors the memory of Confederate veterans on the first Sunday of June at the Confederate Monument in Arlington National Cemetery. It has been customary for the President to send a wreath and Presidential representative since 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson dedicated the monument.

Jim McKinney recommends that this year he advise by suitable letter the Confederate Memorial Committee that the White House will no longer participate in Confederate Memorial Day ceremonies, but will instead honor Confederate veterans in the same manner and on the same day as all other American war dead. McKinney's recommendation is based on a long history of serious reservations concerning the conduct of the Confederate Memorial Day ceremonies, particularly:

- -- primary emphasis is on honoring Jefferson Davis, with coincidental recognition of the Confederacy;
- -- ceremony has involved dipping the American Flag for the playing of "Dixie";
- -- the Committee in the past has requested that the President's representative be of a particular race; and
- -- a serious feud is ongoing between opposing Confedera factions involved with the ceremony.

### DISCUSSION

Views are split among White House senior staff on Jim's recommendation to decline this year's invitation. The Offices of Domestic Affairs (Cribb noting that there is indeed a feud), Public Liaison (Range), and Communications (Griscom) all concur in McKinney's recommendation to discontinue White House participation, for the reasons outlined above.

The Offices of Legislative Affairs (Addington) and Political and Intergovernmental Affairs (Donatelli) recommend that the White House continue the practice of sending a representative, under certain conditions stipulated by White House Counsel. Legislative Affairs points out that there is the likelihood of a

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backlash from Members of Congress supportive of this group (e.g., Trent Lott). Political and Intergovernmental Affairs observes that although there has been virtually no news coverage of this event for several years, a radical departure from long-standing precedent in an election year could be misunderstood and costly.

Counsel's Office has no legal objection, but emphasizes that this is primarily a political, rather than legal, matter. They stress, however, that continued White House participation in this event <u>must</u> be conditioned on reliable assurances that the problems that have occurred in the past have been corrected. For instance:

- -- the ceremony must be <u>solely</u> in honor of the Confederate war dead;
- -- <u>no</u> restrictions, conditions, or preferences may be placed on who the White House chooses as its representative; and
- -- appropriate rules, regulations, and formalities for ceremonial occasions must be observed (e.g., proper respect for the American flag).

The Offices of Legislative Affairs and Political and Intergovernmental Affairs strongly endorse these conditions for continued White House participation in the event.

#### RECOMMENDATION

While a close call politically, I believe that Jim McKinney's recommendation is the better and more enlightened view. His recommendation is strengthened by Ken Cribb's reaffirmation that there is an ongoing turf battle between the organizations that purport to represent the Confederate War Memorial.

## DECISION

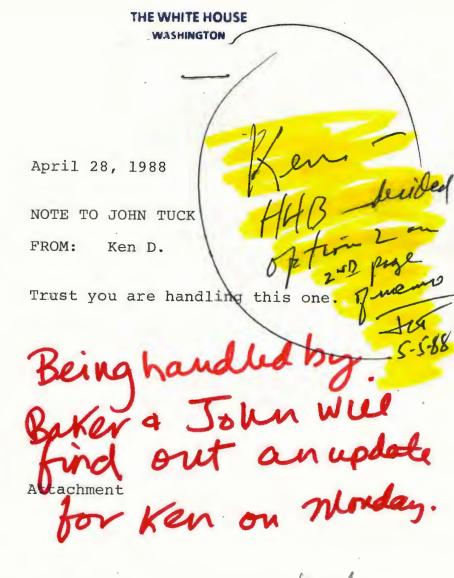
Discontinue White House participation in Confederate Memorial Day Ceremonies



Continue White House participation, with the conditions outlined by Counsel's Office

Let's discuss

cc: Kenneth Duberstein James McKinney A. B. Culvahouse Alan Kranowitz



Perken'' breat, but plo Keepme posted "

KENNETH M. DUBERSTEIN DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF



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## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 7, 1988

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Dear General Woods:

On behalf of the President, it gives me great pleasure to designate you as his Personal Representative at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the birth of President Benjamin Harrison. The President is deeply grateful for your willingness to undertake this special assignment, and he has asked me to extend you any assistance you may require.

This ceremony will be held at the grave site on August 20 at Indianapolis, Indiana. Should any local officials wish to join in the ceremonies, we would, of course, welcome their participation as it befits the occasion. Arrangements have been made with the White House Florist for the delivery of the wreath to you by a florist in your area. That florist will contact your office to finalize arrangements.

Should you desire any further assistance or guidance concerning this ceremony, please do not hesitate to call or write.

With the President's appreciation and warm best wishes,

Sincerely,

## SIGNED

JAMES C. MCKINNEY Director White House Military Office

Major General Stephen R. Woods, Jr. Commanding General United States Army Soldier Support Center Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana 46216-5040



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#### THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 7, 1988

FE001-02 FG001-02 FG002-30 ST015

Dear General Lawson:

E.G.

On behalf of the President, it gives me great pleasure to designate you as his Personal Representative at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the birth of President Herbert Hoover. The President is deeply grateful for your willingness to undertake this special assignment, and he has asked me to extend you any assistance you may require.

This ceremony will be held at the grave site on August 10 at West Branch, Iowa. Should any local officials wish to join in the ceremonies, we would, of course, welcome their participation as it befits the occasion. Arrangements have been made with the White House Florist for the delivery of the wreath to you by a florist in your area. That florist will contact your office to finalize arrangements.

Should you desire any further assistance or guidance concerning this ceremony, please do not hesitate to call or write.

With the President's appreciation and warm best wishes,

Sincerely,

# SIGNED

JAMES C. MCKINNEY Director White House Military Office

Major General Warren G. Lawson The Adjutant General, Iowa Camp Dodge 7700 Northwest Beaver Drive Johnston, Iowa 50131-1902

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### THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 3, 1988



Dear Major General Wallace:

On behalf of the President, it gives me great pleasure to designate you as his Personal Representative at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the birth of President Andrew Johnson. The President is deeply grateful for your willingness to undertake this special assignment, and he has asked me to extend you any assistance you may require.

This ceremony will be held at the grave site on December 29 at Greenville, Tennessee. Should any local officials wish to join in the ceremonies, we would, of course, welcome their participation as it befits the occasion. Arrangements have been made with the White House Florist for the delivery of the wreath to you by a florist in your area. That florist will contact your office to finalize arrangements.

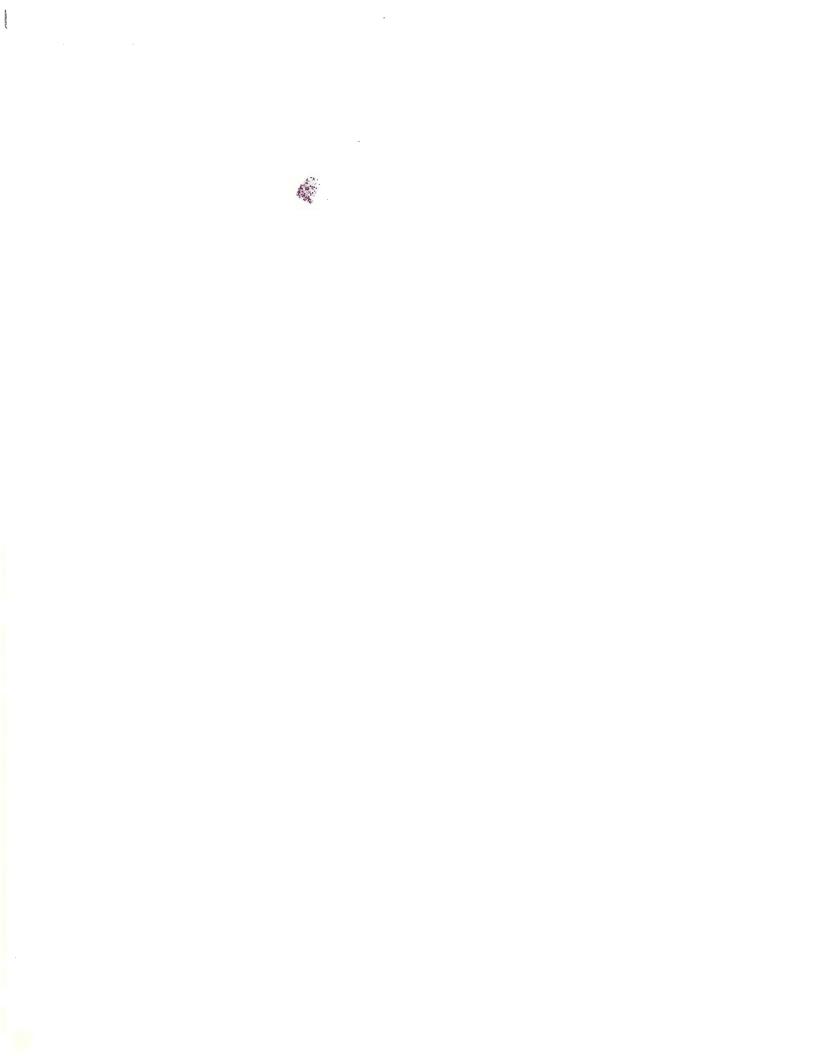
Should you desire any further assistance or guidance concerning this ceremony, please do not hesitate to call or write.

With the President's appreciation and warm best wishes,



JAMES C. MCKINNEY Director White House Military Office

Major General Carl D. Wallace The Adjutant General, Tennessee Houston Barracks P.O. Box 41502 Nashville, Tennessee 37204-1501



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#### THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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November 3, 1988

Dear Major General Flynn:

On behalf of the President, it gives me great pleasure to designate you as his Personal Representative at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the birth of President Martin Van Buren. The President is deeply grateful for your willingness to undertake this special assignment, and he has asked me to extend you any assistance you may require.

This ceremony will be held at the grave site on December 5 at Kinderhook, New York. Should any local officials wish to join in the ceremonies, we would, of course, welcome their participation as it befits the occasion. Arrangements have been made with the White House Florist for the delivery of the wreath to you by a florist in your area. That florist will contact your office to finalize arrangements.

Should you desire any further assistance or guidance concerning this ceremony, please do not hesitate to call or write.

With the President's appreciation and warm best wishes,

SIGNED

JAMES C. MCKINNEY Director White House Military Office

Major General Lawrence P. Flynn

Chief of Staff 330 Old Nishayuna Road Latham, New York 12110-2224

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WASHINGTON

November 3, 1988

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Dear Major General Hilbert:

On behalf of the President, it gives me great pleasure to designate you as his Personal Representative at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the birth of President Woodrow Wilson. The President is deeply grateful for your willingness to undertake this special assignment, and he has asked me to extend you any assistance you may require.

This ceremony will be held at the grave site on December 28 at the Washington Cathedral and will not be in connection with any other ceremony. The White House Florist will prepare an appropriate wreath for use on this occasion. It will be delivered to the security office, north side of the Cathedral by 8:30 a.m..

Should you desire any further assistance or guidance concerning this ceremony, please do not hesitate to call or write.

With the President's appreciation and warm best wishes,

Sincerely,

JAMES C. MCKINNEY Director White House Military Office

## Major General Donald C. Hilbert

Commanding General U. S. Army Military District of Washington Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, DC 20319-5000 THE WHITE HOUSE MARNING TON NOVEMONT 3, 1988

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Dear Major General Bilnerti

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