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GEORGE S. WILLS

Vice President

August 14, 1974

The Honorable
William Scranton
Presidential Transition Task Force
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Governor Scranton:

I am writing you in your capacity as a member of the Presidential Transition Task Force on personnel matters about the White House Fellows Program. Enclosed is a general Statement of Purpose of the Program.

The heart of the White House Fellows program is the actual job assignment in the Executive Branch, for this is what enables the Fellow to come away with a sense of what active participation in the governmental process really means.

Fellows are assigned to White House staff members, the Vice President, and to members of the Cabinet. Other top level assignments may also be with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I worked in the Program, 1969-70, as Special Assistant to the U.S. Budget Director and Chairman of the President's Environmental Quality Council. This was preceded by a year as Special Assistant to Milton Eisenhower when he was Chairman of the President's Violence Prevention Commission.

The transition from the Nixon to the Ford Administration marks the second transition since the White House Fellows Program began in 1964, and the third President in whose Administration participants in the Program serve.

The Honorable William Scranton

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August 14, 1974

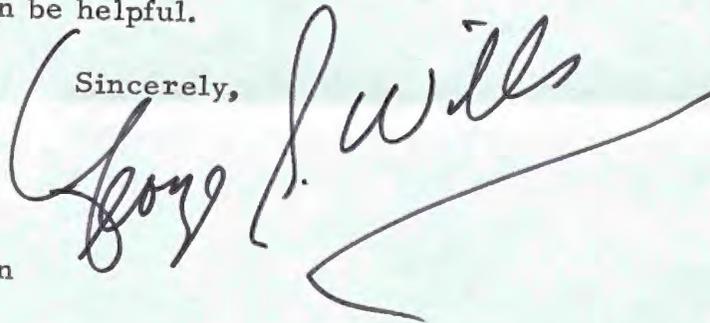
The circumstances under which President Ford has taken office in 1974 are quite different from those in 1969 during the Johnson-Nixon transition. The White House Fellows Program has functioned productively for the Executive Branch through two Administrations and will, no doubt, continue to do so for a third.

But, what about former White House Fellows who have participated in the Program and who owe much to our Government for the experience? These individuals have a contribution to make and an obligation to help. Whether it be full-time government work or volunteer service at the Federal level, the approximately 150 former Fellows are a resource that should be used.

I would recommend that serious consideration be given to involving some of these people in the Government during this important transition period. Either on a full-time or volunteer basis, former participants in this Program would be helpful in the new Administration. Their assignment experience - whether it was in the Executive Office of the President or as a Special Assistant to a Cabinet Officer - is invaluable experience that would enable them to "hit the deck running".

I am sending a copy of this letter to other members of the Task Force, and to Dr. Peter Krogh, Dean of the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. Dean Krogh is President of the White House Fellows Association. I hope that we can be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George J. Willis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed word "Sincerely,". A long, sweeping horizontal line extends from the bottom of the signature across the page.

cc: The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
The Honorable Rogers C. B. Morton

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the White House Fellows program is to provide gifted and highly motivated young Americans with some firsthand experience in the process of governing the Nation and a sense of personal involvement in the leadership of the society.

It is essential to the healthy functioning of our system that we have in the nongovernmental sector a generous supply of leaders who have an understanding—gained at firsthand—of the problems of national government. In a day when the individual feels increasingly remote from the centers of power and decision, such leaders can help their fellow citizens comprehend the process by which the Nation is governed.

In this country today, we produce great numbers of skilled professionals. But too few of this intellectual elite provide the society with statesmanlike leadership and guidance in public affairs. If the sparsely settled American colonies of the late 18th century could produce Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Monroe, Madison, Hamilton, Franklin, and others of superlative talent, breadth and statesmanship, should we not be able to produce, in this generation, ten times that number? We are not doing so.

Surely the raw material is still there. And just as surely more must be done in the development of our ablest young people to inspire and facilitate the emergence of such leaders and statesmen. Their horizons and experience must be broadened to give them a sense of personal involvement in the leadership of the society, a vision of greatness for the society, and a sense of responsibility for bringing that greatness to reality.

The White House Fellows program is designed to give superbly qualified young Americans precisely those experiences.