

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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TAB F

MEMORANDUM FOR: DWIGHT CHAPIN

FROM: RON ZIEGLER
JOHN SCALI
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SUBJECT: Press Requirements for trip to Mainland China

After exhaustive conversations with network pool members today, we believe we have devised a plan to provide, with a total of 178 persons:

- (1) Live television coverage
- (2) Film television coverage
- (3) Full radio reporting
- (4) Adequate still photography coverage
- (5) Select written reporting

This could all be accomplished under this revised plan with only 115 news personnel, arriving with the President in Peking aboard the press plane. The additional 63 could be television production personnel headquartered at Peking Airport in a specially configured 747 which would be full-time network television-radio news headquarters during the President's China trip.

This plan represents a substantial reduction of previous requirements but would provide the President with the option of allowing some limited, selective live coverage of news-worthy events.

In our various other plans we have submitted and discussed, we recommended a total of 251 to accomplish these same objectives. By rigorous screening, plus the imaginative use of the 747 network production center, we have been able to trim the total to manageable proportions.

This would appear to meet the tentative goal of limiting the number of news personnel to around 150, the figure mentioned by Mr. Kissinger to the Chinese. Indeed, as the technical personnel, which are necessary because of the huge communications problems, are subtracted from the 178, we would wind up with a figure far smaller than has accompanied the President on previous overseas travels.

The extra ingredient, namely the 747 network pool headquarters, offers unprecedented advantages. It reduces from three weeks to seven days the amount of time that would be necessary to set up such a facility. It headquarters all personnel in a central location without the necessity to build such facilities from scratch in Peking without the use of Chinese labor. In addition, it would provide on the same aircraft the method of transportation for the 63 persons manning the center as well as all the equipment that would be required.

Network representatives report that this aircraft, which is about the size of the Russian Aerofloat Turbo-Prop now in commercial use, would be a self-contained, fully operating unit with its own power. It is important to remember that whether the necessary technicians are headquartered in a 747 or not, the number -- 63 -- is a bare bones minimum. The more we have discussed and investigated every conceivable option for meeting the President's minimum requirements, the more we have concluded that the location of a temporary ground station in Peking is vital. It is indispensable not only to adequate news coverage, but crucial to provide an instant, secure, and necessary communication for the President and his party.

The enormous nature of the unprecedented communications problems to be encountered in Peking make this a reasonable, not an extraordinary step. Without it, investigation shows far more personnel will be needed in advance to beef up, perhaps even to originate, minimum cable and phone circuits which are essential even for delayed coverage by the written press, radio, television, and even the President's party. Indeed, these problems are so formidable that even now communications companys can offer nothing except outdated estimates of the amount of work and peronnel necessary for the task.

It is our view also that establishing a ground station which will provide phone, teletype, and telex communications as well as radio-television capability, will also help insure a more dignified, more easily controlled coverage of the President's stay than otherwise would be the case. The alternative would be for television, for example, film camera coverage rushing back and forth to the airport for specially arranged courier flights to a production center in Tokyo and accentuating competition among cameramen for the unusual shot. With the assurance of a pool television picture, cameramen, both TV and still, would be under far less pressure to race around, breaking whatever discipline we might seek to exert.

Under this plan, it is fully recognized that television coverage of the President's activities outside Peking would be by film only, with shipment to the Peking production center for processing and satellite bases. This would also be true for radio reports as well as filing by the written press. This should present no insurmountable problem.

The existence of the limited "live" facilities in Peking would give the President the option of dramatizing as much as he wished the final sessions, the wind-up communique, and the farewell.

The following is a breakdown of the 178 people which would be required to carry out adequate coverage of the President's visit to China:

Technical personnel operations from the pool..... 63
production center

- a. Video tape recorders 10

These 10 men would be required to operate, maintain, add video tape, and feed the output to the satellite through four video tape recorders.

- b. Film editors 4

These men would edit all film taken by all network film crews in Mainland China.

- c. Film processing technicians 5

Minimum required to process all film taken by all network camera crews in Mainland China.

- d. Telecene 4

These men would process film, convert to video tape for transmittal to the satellite.

e. Control unit 8

This unit consists of a technical director, an audio engineer, 3 video technicians and 3 cameramen which are responsible for switching all output to the satellite at pre-arranged times. Also any video tape stand-up reporters by network correspondents at the production center would be handled by this 8-man unit.

f. Remote unit 16

They would man 4 cameras which would be activated and maintained; and transmit at pre-arranged, approved locations, during limited periods when it was desirable to have film coverage of specific Presidential activity.

g. Radio engineers 4

They would handle all voice reports relayed via satellite, including international pool output.

h. Pool production headquarters staff 12

Satellite coordinators, COMSAT feeders, long line feeders, engineers, personnel for scheduling and coordinating

News gathering contingent traveling on press plane 115

Wire service reporters 8

Daily news reporters 40

Magazine correspondents 8

Independent radio correspondents 10

Still photographers / Lab personnel 12

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T. V. network correspondents	12
T. V. network producers, directors,	12
writers	
Four camera crews	12
White House pool coordinator	1

This figure of 115 compares with an average of 175 news gathering personnel who have accompanied the President on his three trips overseas. On most stops, the past totals have far exceeded these figures because the networks and news organizations, both foreign and domestic, always send an average of 250 to 300 other newsmen to compliment those accompanying the President. Thus the total of 115 should actually be compared to 475 newsmen who are normally on the scene in any important foreign city the President visits on his travels.

In view of the important multipurpose use of the ground station, we believe that the 12 men required to set up and operate it should not be included in a press category. This personnel would be partly technicians supplied by the contractor, and WHCA for essential government communications, as well as for use by phone lines and telex - teletype facilities.

Because of this we believe the U. S. Government should contract for the ground station and share costs with all using it. We have covered in previous memos and conversations the highly desirable multiple use. Our investigation shows it can be transported on a single aircraft and installed within three weeks, provided a 60-day notice is given.