

THE WHITE HOUSE

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FOR JOHN D. EHRLICHMAN

May I support Secretary Stans' position on the Regional Planning Commission. His five points struck me as administratively sound, politically perceptive, and singularly unimperial for an old line department.

I have only a few supporting comments.

(1) Regional development is new to the Federal government, but it is rather an old idea among industrial countries, all of which begin to experience declining agricultural and similar centers of rudimentary industries such as textiles. Most efforts to halt the decline fail to do so.

I accept that Commerce has some favorable evaluations, and it has been made clear to all of us that the Appalachian governors do dearly love that cash. However, I note that during the 1960's, a decade during which Federal money poured into West Virginia, its population declined 8.5%.

(2) Unified Regional Councils are a Nixon achievement. A National Growth Policy is a Nixon idea. By following the Stans formula, we can build on what we have done, or proposed to do, instead of simply following the uncertain directions of the preceding administration. (Recall Stans' remark that none of the regions did regional planning. The Governors just divvy up. Believe me, this is a hard subject.)

Our Regional Councils need a marked infusion of purpose. If they were made the Federal counterpart of the Governors' group, and perhaps the organization through which EDA funds would flow for the purposes specified by Stans, then EDA would primarily concentrate on underdeveloped areas. While Urban Renewal et al.

would concentrate on the bigger to big cities, we would have a certain Governor-Mayor balance worked in through the Council mechanism.

It may be we might go further to designate a Presidential-appointed Chairman of the Regional Councils; he being the equivalent of the Federal Co-Chairman in the present Title V councils. He could report to the Domestic Affairs Council or the OMB. It would be a real step in the direction of certain kinds of decentralization.

Daniel P. Moynihan

**bcc: Secretary Stans**

**DPM/crm**