

Colonel Chambers

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April 2, 1953

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Dear Val:

My compliments on your forceful, temperate, and sensible presentation Tuesday to the Council.

I am replying to your letter of March 30, 1953, with its attached copy of a memorandum from Colonel Chambers, relative to the relationship of the Civil Defense Administration to the National Security Council. At the Council Meeting, after you finished speaking, I indicated that I would take up the matter with the President and advise you.

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4/30/53

In the report of recommendations relative to the ESC, which the President approved on March seventeenth, the question of Council membership for your agency and other agencies was considered. The President then decided that the FCDA would be asked to attend Council meetings, when agenda items were of concern to it, on an ad hoc basis. Thus, the FCDA was placed on the same basis as Justice, Commerce, Interior and other departments and agencies.

The President has now approved the following program. In doing so, he expressed his conviction that FCDA would not want to waste time attending a lot of meetings which did not concern it, but should have knowledge of what was going on in order to be present when there were issues of consequence to it up for decision.

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(1) FCDA Administrator to designate to ESC a representative to act as an observer at the Planning Board.

(2) ESC to send to such FCDA observer thrice weekly in advance the agenda for Planning Board Meetings (held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 2:30 o'clock, usually lasting until 5:00 - 6:00 o'clock) and once weekly in advance agenda for Council Meetings.

(3) The FCDA designate to determine whether or not, on the basis of the above, to attend as observer any part of a Planning Board meeting dealing with an agenda item of interest to FCDA. On an agenda item directly concerning FCDA, the FCDA designate should be prepared to state your view.

(4) If there is an item on a Council meeting agenda which you think of particular interest to FCDA, you will arrange with me for your appearance as observer or ad hoc participant for that part of the meeting which will take up the item.

It is thought desirable to try out this program in operation for a while, before considering the pros and cons of a Special Committee of the Council on Civil Defense (or on Continental Defense, of which Civil Defense is a part).

As a matter of policy, it has been deemed inadvisable to enlarge attendance at Council or Planning Board meetings beyond those now regularly in attendance or to appoint Special Committees which tend to compartmentalize Council business.

I shall anticipate hearing from you as to (1) above and to do everything I can to be of assistance to you in working out your program.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT CULLER  
Special Assistant  
to the President

The Honorable Val Peterson  
Director  
Federal Civil Defense Administration  
Washington, D. C.