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By AB NARA Date 1/19/05

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February 1, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR:

~~THE PRESIDENT~~

FROM:

PETER FLAHERTY

I have discussed with Charlie Rhyne the possibility of his taking over Robert Anderson's job as chief Ambassador in the Panama Canal negotiations. After some thought, Rhyne implied that he had determined not to "take a step backward" in accepting a job from the Administration. I pointed out the importance of this position to our national security and to our economy. Nevertheless, Rhyne held the position that he considered this to be a step backward and declined.

Jack Irwin has consistently pressed the argument that Robert Anderson should continue to handle these negotiations, based on his past experience. However, he also has argued that if Anderson holds the post, there must be another lawyer type to act as his second man, with the title of Ambassador, to carry the bulk of the negotiations as Irwin himself has done in the past. Irwin has said that if Anderson is to be replaced, he should be replaced by a man who could do the negotiations himself, and then only one Ambassador would be necessary.

Irwin now tells me that the Administration has been in touch with Anderson and therefore it is "too late" to change the man as the chief negotiator. Consequently, Irwin is now looking for a lawyer negotiator to appoint as the second man with the bulk of the work in these negotiations. State feels this is a pressing need and the appointment of an assistant to Anderson must be made within a short period of time. When we have a recommendation, I will submit it to you.

There had been some thought of taking Bill H. [unclear] for this job, but given the legal requirements, he would appear to have would not be the appropriate choice. State is looking for another honorific job, hopefully with the title of Ambassador, for Harlow.