June 21, 1978

TO: PRESIDENT CARTER
FROM: HAMILTON JORDAN
RE: PUBLIC POSTURE ON CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

It is being reported that you have said in several meet-
ings that the veterans preference issue is central to
civil service reform and that if Congress deletes our
veterans preference provision, they will have "gutted"
our program.

Substantively, the veterans preference issue is a matter
of access to the system. It is a critical issue, but has
nothing to do with the actual management of the government.
Politically, it would be disastrous for us to get every-
thing else we want in civil service reform (which would
give us about 90% of the total package), yet have it said
that we "lost" or have a "weak bill" if the veterans pre-

ference issue is lost. Right now, the odds are against us. We should go all out on the floor to have it rein-stated, but we should avoid characterizing it as "central" or "critical" to our entire civil service reform package. We should say that it is an important provision of the package that relates to the basic fairness and equity of the civil service system.

cc: Stu
    Jody
    Frank