THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 20, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Standards of Official Conduct

Everyone who enters into public service for the United States has a duty to the American people to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government. I ask you to ensure that all personnel within your departments and agencies are familiar with, and faithfully observe, applicable ethics laws and regulations, including the following general principles from the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch:

(1) Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

(2) Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

(3) Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

(4) An employee shall not, except as permitted by applicable law or regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

(5) Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

(6) Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

(7) Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

(8) Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

(9) Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

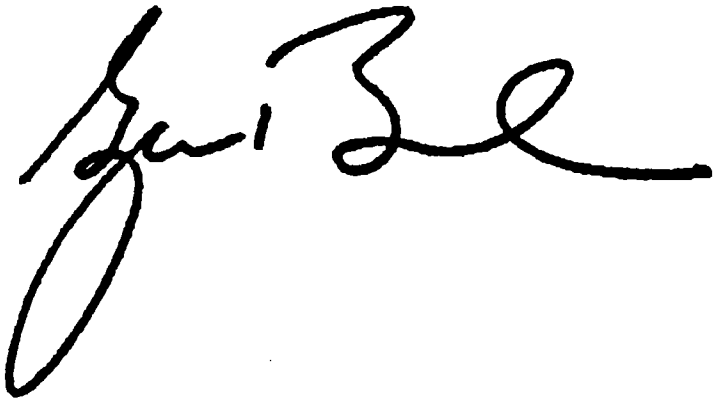
(10) Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those -- such as Federal, State, or local taxes -- that are imposed by law.

(13) Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating applicable law or the ethical standards in applicable regulations.

Executive branch employees should also be fully aware that their post-employment activities with respect to lobbying and other forms of representation will be bound by the restrictions of 18 U.S.C. 207.

Please thank the personnel of your departments and agencies for their commitment to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government as we serve the American people.