

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
Contested Materials Collection
Folder List

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>	<u>Document Date</u>	<u>No Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Document Type</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
46	7	9/29/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Teeter to MacGregor RE: conclusions on the campaign and suggestions for moving forward resulting from the third wave of campaign polling. Duplicate attached. 12 pgs.
46	7	7/27/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Strachan to Haldeman RE: Higby and Strachan's meeting with Tom Benham on using him for independent polling. Handwritten note added by Higby. Duplicate attached. 4 pgs.



COMMITTEE FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

September 29, 1972

~~CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY~~

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
E.O. 12065, Section 6-102
By amp NARS, Date 6-17-80

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE HONORABLE CLARK MacGREGOR
FROM: ROBERT M. TEETER *RMT*
SUBJECT: Wave III Polling Summary

This memorandum summarizes our conclusions and recommendations from the Wave III polls.

BALLOT DATA

The President increased his margin over McGovern nationally and in all of the priority states during the late summer and early fall. This was due both to an increase in support for the President and to a sharp decline in support for McGovern. The President enjoys close to a 2-1 lead in all of the major states. He also has a 2-1 lead over McGovern with those who have definitely made up their mind.

The largest share of the increase has come from a decrease in McGovern strength and an increase in Nixon support with Democrats and ticket-splitters. The President's margin increased with most demographic groups. There was not any particular pattern to the increase other than is explained by the shift in voting behavior groups.

Although we now have substantial leads in all of the priority states we can divide them into Priority I and Priority II states on the basis of the relative size of our lead, past voting behavior, and potential volatility.

I

New York
California
Michigan
Wisconsin
Missouri
Pennsylvania

II

Illinois
Ohio
Texas
Maryland
Connecticut
New Jersey

With the President's large lead nationally and in the priority states we obviously have the opportunity to win by a very large margin nationally and to carry those states which we had previously written off. They are:

Minnesota
Washington
Oregon

West Virginia
Rhode Island
Massachusetts

ISSUES

Vietnam

Vietnam continues to be the single most important issue and is the issue on which the President has a considerable advantage over McGovern. We should continue to use this advantage.

Inflation

Inflation is the one issue that has increased significantly in terms of importance to voting. This was one of our major weaknesses in Wave II and while the President's ratings are up, it is still a soft spot and one which we should continue to try and harden up. Apparently some action and a lot of jawboning is working, and it should be continued particularly by Rumsfeld. Food prices are still the key with 56% naming them as the major element of inflation, 71% not believing the rise of food prices has been slowed and 65% supporting a freeze.

Unemployment

As long as the rate of unemployment declines, this issue should not be a problem. Our third wave data did show that we may be able to improve our position on this issue and firm up some of our blue collar support, by talking about jobs. The word "jobs" is apparently synonymous with prosperity and good times.

Taxes

Tax reform is our greatest potential vulnerability. As expected, the great majority of voters think the tax structure is unfair to the average voter and most think federal taxes are the least fair. Voters are equally divided as to whether the major problem is the tax structure itself or loopholes. However, both of these groups think the major problem is that business and wealthy individuals are not paying their share.

Although more people think the President would do the most to reform taxes over the next four years than think McGovern would, the President is still seen to be a long way from the people on this issue. The only reason this issue is not costing us votes now is McGovern's lack of credibility on any issue whatsoever. We may be able to reduce the possibility of a problem on taxes by attacking the McGovern welfare program as sure to increase taxes and raise prices.

A further aspect of the tax issue is our perceived failure to actively pursue tax reform. This reinforces McGovern's claim that the President is beholden to special interests.

If I were advising McGovern from our data, I would advise him to hammer us directly on inflation and tax reform, and very little else. These are the only issues he has a hope of pulling back some of our blue-collar Democratic support.

Crime and Drugs

These issues have increased slightly in importance on this poll. The most important element of them is personal safety. People seem to feel that crime is closing in on them regardless of where they live and are becoming increasingly afraid that they will become a victim. There is very high believability that the rise in crime is drug related.

National Defense

I think the President is spending too large a proportion of his time talking about national defense. It continues to be rated 7th or 8th in terms of importance to voting and a large majority think we should cut defense spending. It is also an issue that voters have a hard time relating to their daily lives.

I am not advocating we abandon talking about defense only that we put more emphasis on domestic issues, especially those where we can translate administration programs into how we did something for the average citizen.

Amnesty

We are in perfect position on amnesty right now. We should be careful not to say or do anything that would change our position but I do think we should stay away from it altogether for a while. Virtually all of the drop in the Harris poll was with 18-24 year olds and they are on the opposite side of this issue. We now appear to have everyone we are going to get on this issue and only risk losing some people, particularly youngsters, if we continue to emphasize it and take harder and harder positions.

CANDIDATE PERCEPTION

Nixon

There has not been any significant change in the personal perception of the President. However, the data does support the hypothesis that the President's personal credibility is higher than that of the federal governments' and that it would be possible to separate him from the bureaucracy and attack the credibility of it. His ratings on credibility are also somewhat higher than McGovern's.

	<u>Federal Government</u>	<u>Nixon</u>	<u>McGovern</u>
Always frank and truthful	13	23	18
Tries to make things more favorable than they are	41	42	34
Holds back and slants	38	28	28
Don't know/No opinion	8	7	21

The President's ratings on his handling of all issues have increased on all of the major issues except crime and drugs and they have fallen off only slightly (3-5%). His greatest increase in positive ratings has been on inflation where 6% more people rate the President's performance positively than did in June. This was one of his weaknesses in June and he has now recovered about half of the drop he suffered between January and June.

McGovern

The number of people who rate McGovern's ability to handle the issues positively has decreased on every issue and the number who rate his handling negatively has increased by approximately 15% on every issue.

McGovern's greatest problem is his inconsistency and flip-flops on the important issues. This has cost him his credibility and any perception of competence he ever had. Words most often used to describe McGovern are confused, mixed-up and not qualified. Our attack should be directed primarily at this weakness, particularly the confused element. Sixty-six percent of the comments about McGovern on our open end question were negative compared to only 31% positive. This is probably an indication that the perception of him personally and of his ability to handle the Presidency are so negative and well set he can't recover.

Generally speaking McGovern is perceived as handling all of the issues equally poorly. As we have discussed in other memos, McGovern's general issue handling is similar to a personality dimension and on on which he scores very poorly.

CAMPAIGN IMPLICATIONS

During the past few months the President's committed vote has increased from 43-44% to 60-64%. Undoubtedly a portion of the new support is anti-McGovern and people who are not particularly for Nixon. Many of these people are Democratic leaning ticket-splitters and Democrats who are now being cross-pressured as they don't particularly want to be for either McGovern or Nixon. Past research has shown that when people are in this situation with regard to a decision there is a point at which they can easily be moved either way. I suspect we have past this point with some but are at it with a larger number as we come into the period where the elation becomes the major topic of public interest. It is at this time when those who have recently switched or are on the edge are the greatest consumers of facts and reasons to justify their decision. This means we should make sure our public pronouncements and advertising are a fairly even mix of anti-McGovern and pro-Nixon. We need to keep the reasons people are against McGovern before them, but at the same time give them some positive reinforcement to make them more sure and feel better about their decision to vote for the President.

Our anti-McGovern promotions should emphasize the following aspects:

- 1) His positions are confusing and contradictory. We should continue to point out that he is apparently unable to think through a problem and come up with a workable solution.
- 2) In discussing the McGovern welfare proposal we have much more to gain by indicating that it will require higher taxes. The welfare chislers argument is not as effective as the pocketbook approach.
- 3) We should emphasize the inflationary and tax increasing aspects of each of McGovern's proposals. There should be several well researched effective surrogate attack speeches in this area.

Our pro-Nixon efforts should emphasize:

- 1) How the President's programs and policies help the average citizen particularly with regard to economic issues. This can be done with respect to all "average people" and with specific groups such as older people.
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The pro-Nixon and anti-McGovern promotions should continue in high ticket-splitting areas and in those areas where we have substantial Democratic support.

We have experienced some slippage with young voters and to minimize our loss, we should avoid amnesty, marijuana and abortion. We should continue to be careful in handling demonstrators and re-emphasize that the President is the one who is ending the draft and that he is the one that enfranchized young voters.

Because we can expect McGovern to pick up a few points in the national polls as undecided Democrats drift back to him, we should capitalize on it. This might be done by having a campaign spokesman, such as yourself, make some "off-the-cuff" remarks that he would expect McGovern to gain some ground as no candidate has yet finished with 30% and then we can interpret whatever McGovern gain that occurs as normal and expected.

The key to a large share of voter decision has been a comparison of the qualifications and competence of the two men rather than because of specific issue positions taken by the two candidates. We should do everything we can to emphasize these differences and to use the issues to prove it.

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[Item N-2]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MS
Teeter's hold on
Benham -
L.

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

July 27, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR:

H. R. HALDEMAN

FROM:

GORDON STRACHAN **G**

SUBJECT:

Independent Polling Capability

Higby and I met with Tom Benham on July 21 to discuss his proposal for an independent polling capability for key state and national surveys for exclusive use here at the White House. Benham's proposal, attached at Tab A, offers a day-by-day polling capability similar to one of the three systems 1701 is considering. Teeter's description of the current plans by 1701 for daily polling is attached at Tab B.

Benham's proposal would cover more than the requirements you anticipate. He offers a daily, continuous interviewing of set questions for trend purposes with the capability to substitute any group of questions immediately. Benham's most balanced alternative with capability in each of the key states as well as nationally would cost 183,000. This capability is probably what 1701 should establish, though Teeter has a resistance to ORC, which he claims is based on their excessive costs. ORC is, by the way, more expensive than Chilton, which has offered to conduct a national telephone survey of 1,000 interviews for 7,500 instead of the 8,000 ORC charges. However, ORC's reliability, confidentiality, and trend information has precluded serious consideration of Chilton.

To prevent the waste and duplication of establishing two systems, I propose the following solution:

- 1) Direct Teeter to establish the 1701 daily polling capability at ORC. The cost may be slightly higher and Teeter may resist this intrusion on his authority to make campaign polling decisions, but the advantages of reliability and security outweigh the negatives;

2) Arrange privately with Benham (without Teeter's knowledge) to have the additional capacity to accommodate the White House requirements of 10-12 national (sample based either on 50 states or on the 10 key states) and individual key state polls. Benham estimates the cost of this additional capability would be 12,000 to install lines and then 8,500 per survey. The per survey cost is 500 higher because of additional overtime and staff costs of producing results in one day;

3) The only duplication of White House and 1701 equipment would be a Xerox Telecopier (commercial alternative to Dex). ORC and the other vendors have this capability. This would cost 50 per month to rent, but would permit the quick transmission of written materials. Kehrlis confirms the 150 is available;

4) Payment for the 1701 capability would be made in accordance within the approved budget system. Payment of the 100,000 cost of the ORC independent polling capability could be delayed until after November 7. This would prevent disclosure to anyone at 1701 as well as the general public due to the campaign spending legislation.

_____ Approve general idea; Strachan work out details with Teeter and Benham.

_____ Disapprove.

_____ Other.

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

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GS/jb