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<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	20	12/9/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Colson to Magruder and Harry Fleming RE: inside information on Illinois politics. 4 pgs.

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December 9, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: JEB MAGRUDER
HARRY FLEMMING

FROM: CHARLES COLSON

SUBJECT: Illinois Political Situation

I have just had an interesting report from a Democrat in Illinois who I regard very highly. He tells me the following with respect to the Illinois state ticket. He prefaced his remarks by saying that he has known all candidates except one, the new position of Comptroller, for 15 to 20 years so has had relatively good exposure to the situation.

Doesn't think Roman Pucinski who is on the Democratic ticket can beat Percy, but that he will probably give him a better race than anybody else. They are each going to be eating into the other and they're going to cause a lot of crossing back and forth. Obviously Percy is going to be able to eat in to certain liberal elements over on the Democratic side; on the other hand, Pucinski, both in his voting record and in a lot of things he's done back here, is going to get over and eat into the Republican side, on the conservative, because that's about where he's been. Pucinski's been kind of somewhat of a Percy to the Democratic side of the fence, but he's doing a very low key job as far as remarks go so far as television, playing it very smart. First keep in mind that he's a former newspaper man, having worked at one time with the Chicago Sun Times, so he's probably going to get all the newspapers, even possibly the Tribune, because he's been in very good shape with them. But secondly, he knows how to handle the press and he's been getting good press lately and coming on television with a very subdued, underdog approach which is coming over very well out here.

Paul Simon, who's the Lt. Gov, is the guy that will probably beat Ogilvie badly. The Sun Times poll in Chicago, taken about a month ago, shows Ogilvie way under him everywhere, including the 30 townships which are so important in Cook County. He is a very strong candidate.

Neil Hardlan, who's the candidate for Lt. Gov. is a very youthful guy. He used to be AA to Daly, he is now the ward committeeman in the 49th Ward on the Northside of Chicago. He's a very affable guy, young, he handles himself well. He's on the ticket because obviously Simon is not really a Daly man and Daly has put Hardigan in Paul's back pocket to watch the store down in Springfield and, keep him advised of the premises. Hardigan is a good candidate.

The Attorney General slot went to a guy by the name of Tommy Lyons. Lyons is a State Senator. He was first elected in about '64 out in the Northwest side, was defeated the next time out, came back again and was reelected. He's done a good job in the Senate, is the son of a former well-known police captain in Chicago and is an affable guy and a reasonably good lawyer. It is doubted very much that he can beat Bill Scott. Assuming that Scott is told to run for Attorney General, and doesn't go up and run for Congress in the new 10th District. But, Scott is strong, he's got the ecology issue, he's used it well, hasn't made any mistakes and Scott's strong point is that he knows he's not a good lawyer and he's hired in good talent. As it stands now, Scott would certainly beat him.

At the Secretary of State level is Mike Howlett. Howlett is in his 50s, he's been 3 terms auditor of Illinois on the Democratic side, he is probably one of the best known politicians this state has ever had. The day he was first elected in 1960, the next day he started out downstate making speeches and he's never stopped. He wanted to be Governor, he knew he wasn't going to get it and he's a very, very strong candidate. It is doubted whether any Republican could beat him for Secretary of State. Now they are talking about putting Kohorski up which is probably a bad mistake, but that's the way Ogilvie's going; Howlett ought to take him easy. Allen Dixon and Kohorski ran against each other for Illinois State Treasurer and Dixon beat him, but by a small margin. Howlett is very well known in Cook County because he's originally from Chicago, but after a term and a half or two terms he moved to Springfield, so he's got both the upstate and downstate side covered very well and Howlett has probably talked in every Veterans of Foreign Wars, gymnasium and YMCA in the state of Illinois. Very strong candidate.

The guy for the new Comptroller position was put on for Illinois strictly to give some downstate balance because they are heavy top-side in Cook County. It is a very heavy Catholic ticket and the balance probably won't really mean much one way or the other.

I would say that Percy and Scott would survive. I would think the rest of the ticket would go down the drain. But, I think Tom Houser who is Nixon's campaign manager, is a very bad mistake. He's a nice guy but definitely not heavy enough to pull all of the strings together. Others were pushing John Aldorfer who is assistant to Secretary Stans, for the Secretary of State spot. Ogilvie wouldn't go for him. Aldorfer would definitely have helped Nixon, helped the ticket. Aldorfer withdrew and they then turned around and immediately named him downstate chairman for Nixon which was a mistake because Bob Blair, who was the Speaker of the House of Representatives out there and Henry Hyde who is the majority leader in the House, would have taken a co-chairmanship with Houser and would have run the downstate campaign. Bob Blair would have because he's from downstate, Henry Hyde is from Chicago and we would then have them lead in to all of the House and Senate districts which would have been the way to go. Blair now feels he wants to sit on his hands out here and I don't blame him.

All of the candidates on the ticket are well liked. There's going to be a good deal of harmony in there. No pluses at all. Hopefully the economy will be in such a condition that Nixon in no way has to tie himself to Ogilvie. It will be a disaster if he does. Hopefully also, Percy will need him and he won't need Percy. If that happens it will be a utopia for everybody and, of course, it indicates what his strength will be in other states. The ticket is a strong one. There hasn't been a stronger one put together in a long time.

We must remember, on ticket splitting, that Paul Simon is a Democratic Lt. Gov. He's the only one who survived in the Ogilvie race and strangely enough he's the first time they have ever had a Republican Governor and a Democratic Lt. Gov, so obviously he had one helluva lot of cross-over votes to him. I think there will be a lot of people that will vote for Nixon who will then cross over and vote for Simon and I don't know whether if they vote for Simon they will cross over and vote for Nixon. It used to be a state where they didn't split; it splits very heavy now; the machines are prone for that, they're constructed for that and this time there is going to be a helluva lot of ticket splitting.

For instance, that's why people who vote for Paul Simon for Governor will cross over and vote for Bill Scott for Attorney General. They will then cross over and vote for Mike Howlett for Secretary of State over a guy like Kohorski and anybody else that the Republicans would pick up.

One of the big things the President's got going for him is that Daly likes him and Daly doesn't take any pop shots at him. He likes him and that's a plus.

Pucinski on the other hand will be interesting. Apparently he swears up and down that he doesn't want to lose his seniority from his district and probably what they've told him is that they will put somebody in to hold it and he can get the district back if he loses, but then he's lost his seniority. But it will depend on who the Democratic Presidential candidate is as to how he picks what tact he will use and it may very well be a plus for Nixon because Pucinski is very, has been very, conservative out in the district.