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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>
1	33	11/7/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Khachigian to Buchanan RE: an analysis of why McGovern lost the 1972 election. Handwritten note added by Buchanan. 1 pg.
1	33	11/7/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Report	Khachigian's in-depth analysis of why McGovern was defeated by RN in the 1972 presidential election. Handwritten notes added by Buchanan. 13 pgs.
1	33	10/4/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Khachigian to Haldeman RE: campaign strategies for the last three weeks before the election. Handwritten notes added by unknown. 6 pgs.
1	33	6/9/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Khachigian to Buchanan RE: referring to McGovern as an extremist, rather than a radical. Handwritten notes added by Buchanan. 1 pg.

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1	33	9/12/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Khachigian to Buchanan RE: recovering from McGovern's recent polling victories and finding strategies to use against him. Handwritten notes added by unknown. 4 pgs.



POLITICAL MEMORANDUM  
WHY MCGOVERN LOST

A massive effort must be taken after the election to head off the liberal establishment effort to detract from RN's election victory. That effort will take many tacks -- such as RN didn't bring in a Congress; people voted against McGovern not for Nixon, etc. However, the liberal apologists will push one line extra hard: the defeat was not for the ideas of left-liberal movement but rather for the bearer of those ideas.

They will argue that liberalism is still viable -- that we still need busing, and all the other liberal schemes, and that they need only wait until they get a standard bearer who won't make the same mistakes McGovern did. The following analysis serves to debunk that viewpoint, and, it seems to me, should be put out as much as possible to counter all the opinion contra. This memorandum focuses on why McGovern lost -- any analysis of the high points of the RN victory should be taken up in a separate memorandum.

THE CENTRAL POINT TO MAKE

To those who argue that McGovern had bad strategy and bad tactics and that he made too many mistakes to run a good campaign, we have one basic response: the tactics of the liberal movement are the logical outgrowth of the liberal ideology. That is, don't blame McGovern per se, blame the philosophy. Elitism, close-mindedness, moral righteousness, viewing things as good versus evil and the penchant for overstatement are all

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fundamentals of the liberal-left political ideology. If McGovern ran a bad campaign -- don't blame his strategy because the strategy is the ideology. The personal flaws of McGovern were bred of the flaws of his political philosophy.

Thus, McGovern could change his mind on central issues, and then with a straight face defend his credibility. This hurt his standing with the voters, but being trained in the narrow view as he has, he sees his position only in moralistic terms, or, as PJB put it, as the true believers.

People rejected the McGovern philosophy pure and simple. If the questions of his credibility and wishy-washyness arose, it was only because of his approach to public policy -- one in which he could cut aircraft carriers back from 16 to 6 and still maintain with a straight face that this would not affect the strength of the sixth fleet. That is the underlying problem with the left radicals, i. e., that the wild things they propose really won't disjoint things important to citizens or voter blocs.

But there are other things to look at in terms of what McGovern did wrong, and I'll take them in sequence.

#### THE PARTY REFORM

It is not for nothing that the Democratic Party reform was promulgated under the "McGovern Commission." This is where we underestimated McGovern. Immediately, he saw the potential of these guidelines -- they

*Contempt  
Mideast  
America  
Dominate  
Sports  
Mind*

*CBS  
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served his purposes perfectly. The reforms brought precisely those people into the process who would directly further his candidacy. Moreover, it was only McGovern at that point who saw that the complexity of the rules would be baffling to those who did not know them, and he hired the fellow who knew the rules best to be his delegate counter -- Rick Stearns.

His opponents did not see soon enough the potential of having a tight solid base which could bring victory in a field of many candidates. Therefore, McGovern moved quickly to pre-empt the party's left wing, and knowing that and with tight organization and his left flank protected, he could conceivably get the nomination. To that extent the liberal-left issues were winners for McGovern in the early stages of the game.

*Note*

#### PRIMARIES

McGovern made it through the primaries with skill, luck, and, later, with a little help from his friends in the media. New Hampshire was a Muskie disaster, and McGovern was clever in making his loss out to be a victory. McGovern's first score. McGovern was wiped out in Florida in what should have been the first test of the McGovern political philosophy -- but it was not reported that way. It was said that McGovern never expected to win Florida. Nevertheless, his views on gutting the space program, support for massive busing, and a few other positions surely were important in the Florida defeat.

Next came Illinois where McGovern wisely worked more on getting a foothold while avoiding a direct test with Muskie. This strategy -- a good one -- brought him to Wisconsin which he targeted from the beginning as his strongest state with the youth-lust and an excellent organization. There the tight-knit support for his radicalism and an excellent youth turnout gave him a victory. Moreover, the Republicans helped by crossing over for McGovern and Wallace. If only Democrats had voted, HHH would have won. Yet Wisconsin was the key for McGovern and most importantly it knocked Lindsay out and gave McG an unexposed left flank.

From Wisconsin on, it was not very difficult for McG. He took Rhode Island because there was only about a 10% Democrat turnout -- and the tight organization, getting the liberals and doves out, did it again. Then came Massachusetts and Pennsylvania with Muskie mercilessly caught in between HHH and McG. By this time the press was necking in the back seat with McGovern, and Massachusetts was a cinch while HHH kept Muskie at bay in Pa. Again, the organization also went to work in Pa. to pick up some delegates -- what proved to be a good strategy for McG; he nickel-dimed his opposition. Throughout, McGovern was assisted by low voter turnouts coupled with his zealots going to the polls in droves. April 25th served to put Muskie over the side -- a hapless victim on a fast track.

Through Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, and North Carolina, in my judgment, the press effectively protected McGovern. He didn't do real well in any of these states -- except Ohio -- yet they only said it was because he didn't try. Yet, by then they should have known that the McGovern ideology was like death in those states. Moreover, in Ohio he was basking in the media glow which did not mention his radical positions at all, but rather how he represented "the alienated and discontented." That left McG free to use his excellent TV spots to bilk the voters of their support. They only saw a nice guy on the tube, not a radical.

Nebraska was the beginning of the end for McGovern. For the first time, his opposition began to hammer effectively at the McGovern leftism. Abortion, amnesty, pot, welfare and defense all became problems. It was too late for HHH to have much of an impact, but the seeds were planted. The threat that Offutt Air Base in Omaha would be closed by McGovern was the first big hit.

By this time in Oregon and California, McG had the only effective organization and a huge public relations advantage. The media was busy explaining why they were wrong about the early primaries, and in deference to McG were giving him every break possible. Michigan and Maryland were in between, but McG avoided media setbacks because the Wallace shooting knocked everything else off the front page. Yet those two states were another hint that McGovern represented the wrong side of the political spectrum. That story was lost in the Wallace tragedy.

By the time McGovern got out to the West Coast, the regular Democrats found out that they were in the process of being had by McGovern. But it was too late. The Dem party had been infiltrated by the McGovern guerillas, and there was no time for pacification. (Maybe the fact that McGovern seemed to think more of the Communists in Vietnam than their opponents colored his political strategy: he was the Viet Cong of the Democratic party).

Thus, McGovern won the California, South Dakota, New Mexico and New Jersey primaries all on the same day -- a tribute to irreversible momentum. (As McGovern said that night: "I can't believe I won the whole thing" -- neither could his fellow Democrats who probably swore that night that they would do anything to try to stop him.) But California was the true turning point in the 1972 presidential campaign and it turned on issues, not on McGovern's personality or bad tactics.

McGovern saw a 20 point lead in the polls drop to 4%. In short, he was devastated by the HHH one-man shredding machine. The issues caught up with him, and HHH was able to articulate them in his hammering staccato fashion as no other figure in American politics could do. Those three national debates -- which could not be filtered by the writing press or Frank Reynolds and his gang -- were the real Waterloo for McGovern. Vast attention was given to the welfare plan, the defense plan, the Vietnam bug-out, the fact that McGovern had voted against Jewish interests. HHH

was vicious and relentless and he did for us what we could have never done for ourselves. Moreover, he did to McG what Rockefeller did to Goldwater: he labelled McGovern.

Luckily for McG the next primary was New York, and he couldn't lose it because there was no preferential vote -- only delegate selection. Thus, the small left-wing delegate machine moved on, aided and abetted by only a little over a 10% voter turnout.

#### THE MEDIA IN THIS PERIOD

McGovern got more than his share of breaks from the press in the early days. They covered for his radical positions by writing tons of essays on populism and anti-politicians and alienated voters. Moreover, McGovern's staff was being given the kid-glove treatment. Stories followed on the McG "wunderkinder." Caddell (whose poll information has been so spectacularly bad, yet universally praised) was made out to be Gallup and Harris rolled into one. Stearns, Grandmaison and Pokorny (who Sidey eulogized with the prairie sod in his ears) were "master strategists" -- and oh so young! Mankiewicz was quoted from coast to coast -- the man with the quick wit and fast repartee (in my opinion Mankiewicz is an absolute political lightweight who covered up with a quick wit -- he gave monumentally bad advice).

These "kids" began to believe their press clippings and probably thought it was a good time to screw the old-liners. I would guess that the boys in

the clubhouse didn't appreciate either their treatment or the stories they read about the "kids." Their duty was to win elections and not worry about ideology. The McG people believed that winning elections was a part of the ideology -- that the two were intertwined, and that their radicalism was the wave of the future. But give the devil his due -- the organization worked well and played the delegates and the convention states like violins.

#### THE CONVENTION

The Convention also had to be quite harmful to McGovern. By this time McGovern was tarred on the issues, but it was too late to stop him -- he really had it wrapped up after California. Nevertheless, the leftism was fully exposed on national television, and the shock for some probably has not yet worn off. The spectacle of the abortion people, the libbers and the homosexuals was too much. McGovern was seen, finally, to be the radical that his positions made him out to be, and this hurt.

Then came the compromises -- putting the abortion, women's lib, and other minority planks over the side -- along with George Wiley and Gloria Steinem. It was time to kiss and make up with Daley, though Daley would resist. But the sum total was a picture of just another politician, one who would make deals to win and compromise his principles -- or at least certain principles.

But McGovern walked out of that convention a radical. For all intents and purposes he could not escape that label through November. It was not because of mistakes in his strategy or flaws in his tactics and it was not George McGovern the man or personality. It was his position on the political spectrum -- he was on the left, and he believed in his ways.

#### EAGLETON

I think the death blow was already delivered before the Eagleton affair. It only confirmed everything which had already been building up against McGovern. Those who argue that Eagleton was the turning point don't know what they're talking about. Eagleton was extremely important in terms of harming McGovern's credibility and trust. But even before Eagleton the seeds were planted -- Eagleton merely made it harder for McGovern. Without the Eagleton affair, McGovern would have still been weighted by his positions.

Blaming the Eagleton affair will be a liberal cop-out and a McGovern staff cop-out. Eagleton did not make McGovern lose a 20 point lead in the California balloting. We have got to stop the myth of the Eagleton thing before history writes that it was this and only this which cost McG his crack at the Presidency. It just ain't true. There was a Gallup after the Dem convention and before Eagleton which saw RN gaining three points. McGovern was already on the way down.

RADICALISM -- THE FATAL FLAW

Hubert Humphrey was always thought to be a radical. He had radical ideas, like McGovern. But the people around HHH were not radical. He had pols all around him -- cigar-chomping boys who prowled the back rooms. McGovern was surrounded by radicals -- all those damn hippy kids and free love adherents, etc. McGovern's politics were caught up in the culture of the "movement" and only made his radicalism seem worse.

These were not flaws of the man or his tactics -- again, they were basic defects of the radical liberal movement. McGovern thought that the kooky people around him were logical extensions of his new politics, of the coming home of America, and of the revolutionary basis of his candidacy. I would think that McGovern never did see what was wrong in saying that Henry Wallace was still "right," that the Soviets would treat him as a "friend" and not test him; or question why the Rubin and Hoffman endorsements were bad.

His friends -- Galbraith, Schlesinger, Steinem, et al. -- all came from the closed club of liberal intelligentsia which saw the historical movement through its own narrow vision. These were not casual campaign mistakes, they were the most profound of judgmental errors. McGovern misread the mood of the country and refused to admit it because liberal intellectuals always think they have a monopoly on wisdom. (I'm quite serious about this -- I never knew a liberal college professor who was otherwise, and McG is a former college professor)

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## THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign itself was marred by the same fundamental flaws of ideology. I don't believe at all that it was a tactical error for McGovern to campaign in the early days on Vietnam and some of the most leftish positions. I think he believed that his surrender policy in Vietnam (he was actually to the left of the Viet Cong in his proposals) was the right position and probably the politically expedient position. The income redistribution plan and some of the other way-out ideas were still in his speeches in early September, although not explicitly. And throughout, there was Vietnam, where McGovern grew to higher reaches of sell-out. He dumped his \$1000-per-person plan for a \$4000-per-four-persons plan and gave out detailed explanations of how this would work.

Basically, I don't think that McGovern forsaked his radicalism. He simply tried to make it sound not all that bad in the campaign. Sure, he made some stupid mistakes, but the singular mistake was the belief that he could sell to the steelworker in the fall what he spoonfed to the students in the winter -- a disrespected political philosophy.

Finally, the McGovern campaign tactics and language were classics in New Left politics. The pure smear, the overstatement, the disruption, the Hitler analogy, the fostering of discord and the planting of fears -- all permeate the liberal ideology. When liberals disagree, the first charge

they make is "fascist" or "Hitler." It is reflexive. It is the formbook liberal tactic -- to many liberal politicians, the ideology imbues the form -- the substance is the form. And in the end you cannot fault McGovern for his tactics without really faulting his ideological base.

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It might be said that McGovern lost the election because of the way he won the nomination. He sold his soul to the left and had little inclination to seek salvation. That massive political error cannot be laid alone to ineptitude -- it is no less than a major misreading of American values and the cultural ethos of our country.

The polls showed over and over again that the public resented McGovern "running down America." And while Haynes Johnson traveled the country talking about alienation, he missed the fact that Americans are basically at peace with themselves, satisfied with their lives, and optimistic about the future. What he saw was good old American skepticism -- the "show me" attitude -- and he mistook it for a penetrating anomie and social listlessness,

Not only did the polls show McGovern misreading the country's mood, they also showed that McGovern misread the public's perception of the correct position on the issues. Harris found out in the summer that the President had the preferable position on 15 out of 16 issues. This shows an unusually high perception of McGovern's radical views -- moreover, this was

a huge jump over the period in the primaries where McGovern was viewed as benign. This confirms that McGovern was hurt deeply by HHH's efforts in California and that that was the most harmful point in the McGovern candidacy.

It was not that McGovern played the wrong strings -- he was playing the tuba in a string orchestra. He was out of syncopation; out of tune; and blaring fortissimo while the public wanted pianissimo.

In a nutshell, McGovern was wrong from the start. His radical politics took a good shellacking from the American public -- a deserved repudiation of alien ideas. Let's not blame it on his political amateur standing -- after all, he did some quite intelligent politicking at times -- let's put the blame where it belongs: on the elitist, leftward movement in America which was born of Kennedy, raised in the Great Society and cut down by the grocer's son who saw the excesses and called 'em like he saw 'em.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 4, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. HALDEMAN  
FROM: KEN KHACHIGIAN   
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNING

From the vantage point of having tracked the opposition activities more closely than most observers, I am submitting these thoughts as to what's ahead for us when the President takes to the hustings.

I am convinced that the extent of the victory on November 7 -- or even whether that victory will be of historic landslide proportions -- will be determined almost solely by the Presidential tone in the last three weeks of the campaign. If the returns coming in from the New York/California swing mean anything, it is that the anti-McGovern line, coming from the President, may be counterproductive.

*note //*  
We all know that there exists in the media a great deal more tolerance for the rhetorical excesses coming out of the Democrats. There is nothing approaching a groundswell of editorial comment and subtle television reportage which attaches the labels "divisive" or "polarizing" on the opposition ticket. It comes out more like "hard-hitting" and "spirited."

I regret to say that we must live with this double standard for the remainder of the campaign. I do not think there is anything we can do to prevent it. The question is how to deal with it in terms of Presidential tone.

The wonder of television is that it can belie any editorial comment or criticism. For example, if, on the tube, the President is lofty, spirited, and uplifting, it is difficult for the commentators to make the public think differently. If Dan Rather says RN was "harsh" or "strident" and the television image is objectively not harsh, then Rather has been effectively rebutted. The voters are not damn fools in this respect.

*Note* What will hurt is when the President takes to the attack -- say, per the Cassie Mackin report of last week -- and gets a label hung around him by the Rathers and Jarriels. If the image confirms the commentary, I fear we lose points.

Consequently, if the label is effectively pinned on RN that he is divisive and polarizing, we will have handed George McGovern one of his most potent campaign issues. I believe this will be as central an issue as anything else in the campaign. The fact that McGovern has picked up his personal attacks more decisively this week is proof positive that the Democrats think they have the right combination.

*Note* The one thing that we cannot afford to do in the last three weeks of the campaign is to allow McGovern to make RN the campaign issue. He is desperately trying to do this and will probe for an opening. One of the basic components of the landslide margin in the current polls is, of course, the overwhelming support from Democrats. About a third of this is "soft" support, and many of these Democrats will be searching for a reason not to vote for RN. McGovern will try to give them as many reasons as possible -- the basic one which will be "you cannot trust him; he is tricky, political," etc. Let's not give them the opening.

*Note* It is interesting that we have come full circle from the time of the primaries. McGovern was the white Knight, anti-politician. RN was the quintessential politician. Now, according to all polls, McGovern skidded because he turns out to be just another politician while RN is perceived as statesmanlike and Presidential -- a man you could trust. But it is important to remember that if the public was volatile enough to switch quickly from McGovern to RN on the "politician" issue, it can just as quickly switch back in a pendulum swing.

That will be McGovern's secret weapon -- try to rehabilitate himself as an anti-politician (he began that Monday) and when RN comes out on the stump, put the politician label on him as rapidly as possible. With the media's help, that could be done in a matter of days.

*Note* We are not inevitably locked into this scenario. Again, it is my opinion that the public will not buy the politician label for RN if, in fact, there is little in his image and tone which projects "politics." We can frustrate the media on this account. And let us remember, too, that once RN is out campaigning, the press may complain about his lack of discussion of the issues, but that charge is one which won't make a damn bit of difference. If RN is talking about what we perceive to be important to the voting public, then we should not be bound by what the gurus of the press think should be said.

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This brings me to the more crucial part of the analysis. If there are certain things the President should not do, what, in fact, should be the tone and content of his campaign effort?

First, I don't believe that the President should move out any of the attack material, and if so, only by strong, positive RN counter-positions. If we are doing our job right on the staff level, we can get the attack stuff out. So far, I think, without a doubt, we have succeeded in hanging some uncomfortable labels on McGovern. His efforts to wiggle off the fishhook are proof that we have hit a nerve. Moreover, the polls confirm that McGovern is tarred with the radical label. The job from the Vice-Presidential level on down is to keep that record of radicalism out front. I don't doubt our ability to do that.

But the Presidential level should be altogether different. I frankly think the President need not even concern himself with pointing out the radicalism in the opposition camp. I say this, not because I think it is unfair for a President to do this, but because RN gets unfair treatment when he does it. If RN did so, the focus then comes back to RN's tactics" rather than to the record we want to surface to the public.

Instead, there are a number of things the President can do as he campaigns to keep Republican spirits high, prevent too much Democratic party slippage, and, in general, go into election eve with the feeling that a posture has been presented to the American public which maintains its confidence in the stewardship of RN.

(1) In my judgment, one of the central issues of this campaign is the "good" America of RN versus the "corrupt" America of McGovern. I think McGovern has been absolutely stupid in the way he has been seen to side with those who tear America down. The best way to exploit this is from the positive side of RN's belief in a good country. I know this has been a thematic favorite of the President's, but I think it needs to be developed as a more comprehensive slice of the pie we are presenting this year.

You saw the Yankelovich results in TIME which said that McGovern's biggest miscalculation was on the depth of bitterness and dissatisfaction among the voters. And 75% of those sampled said that they were sick and tired of hearing people attack American values. I don't mean here simply a few paragraphs on America being a good country, but a full speech should be developed on this subject, and I would think that it be one of the first delivered.

The best contrast of the campaign will be the bitchy George McGovern with his whining, whimpering, crybaby attitude matched against the strong confidence of RN. The people of America are not basically mean-minded and sour, but are, instead, people who respond to lift and optimism. McGovern erred in trying to harvest the bitter fruit when in fact there is, as the polls universally show, an almost serene satisfaction with the way things are. The desire is for change, sure, but, damn-it-all, change which plays on the goodness of America, not that which craps all over its institutions.

(2) The President should develop, or ask to have developed for him, some basic lines which respond with calculated indignation to some of the pure bull that McGovern is throwing around. This is a chance for RN to take the extremely important underdog role -- an effective role I believe. I am referring to such things as the Hitler quotes, the "barbarism" in Vietnam, the charge that he's lied about POWs, etc.

A healthy dose of modulated anger would be good for the electorate and good for RN. For example, he might say: "My friends, I have served as your President for nearly four years, and I am not about to sit back and be compared to Adolph Hitler. It is a tribute to free speech that candidates can make such charges, but it is not a tribute to the political process to have the world watch the President of the United States equated with the most hated dictator of our time." A number of lines roughly like that would be effective, I believe.

Note: if any more anti-war hecklers become a visible problem and can be seen and heard on television, the President might effectively say: "I think the American people are tired of being called murderous and war-mongers. You have the right to question our policy, but don't you for one minute try to impugn the motives or the morality of the citizens of our country." Here, RN defends the public.

(3) One effective point is to rebut the moralism of George McGovern. This should be done by pointing out that no one has a monopoly on morality, and that it doesn't help the political process for the opposition candidate to suggest that only what he thinks is right and what everybody else thinks is wrong. RN might say that he may not agree with some-one, but that he doesn't try to act morally superior or hide behind a shield of rectitude.

"pattern of  
oppression"  
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This point has turned up in a number of columns -- namely, reporters confessing chagrin at McGovern's pious morality. RN needs to make the point as well.

NOTE (4) It may sound incongruous, but I believe that RN must address an all-black audience during the campaign. Charles Bartlett had an excellent column pointing out that McGovern has taken the blacks for granted in a subtle attempt to get white working class Democrats back into the fold. RN addressing a black audience will have several effects. It will get excellent play and emphasize he is the President of all the people. If tuned to the black middle class -- rather than the "We Shall Overcome" overblown rhetoric of LBJ -- it can get votes, especially if RN goes right to the heart of the matter of those who denigrate blacks by lumping them together as all poor, ignorant, etc. It would also probably send McGovern scurrying to patch up things with the blacks and cause him, perhaps, to overreact and line himself up with a political posture which won't help him. Finally, it would exploit the frustration in the black leadership at being taken for granted by the Democrats and promote the emphasis that RN has done more for minority advancement than any other President.

(5) One of the things that keeps turning up in voter surveys in terms of dissatisfaction with McGovern is the fact that he is changing his tune on everything and promising something for everybody. It looks like -- and is -- crass expediency. It also confirms that McGovern is not anti-politician, but pure politician. RN can advance his cause by making a virtue of the fact that promises have not been wildly bandied about in his administration, and the reason for the turbulent 60's (a subtle reminder of what we had in those years) was the overblown rhetoric which could not be delivered in programs. This will posture RN as the one who is not the expedient politician who promises all things to all men. "We did not make promises we could not keep." In the Haynes Johnson survey, here is what an ethnic Democrat, who retired early because he was unemployed, and voted for McGovern in the primary, said: "Now I think he's (McG) more two-faced, like trying to tell people he's going to help them get jobs. They all like to do the promises, but he's gone beyond most of them, whereas Nixon knows what we've got to do."

(6) Hold the hands of Democrat defectors by telling audiences that what we have done in foreign policy is the same thing JFK et al. would have done.

(7) Emphasize domestic stability and the sense of pride and respect America now has for itself. McGoo is on the wrong side of the issue if he continues to think Americans hate themselves.

(8) When emphasizing the international turnaround -- cite things like: who would think that not only America, but Japan would be talking to China; East Germany with West Germany; North Korea with South Korea. The great sense of quietude and stability is like calamine lotion on chickenpox. Who was ever ashamed of serenity and goodwill?

(9) Do not underestimate how McGovern so effectively uses attacks on himself. It's not for nothing he gets elected in South Dakota. Here is what one of his close friends says: "There's nothing George likes better than to have them attack him as disloyal. Then he can get out his American Legion cap and dust off his Distinguished Flying Cross and really take them on." George has already done this, and you can be sure he's lusting for RN to even hint at his loyalty. This is why I believe RN must leave the attack to others.

(10) For God sake, let the word go out to all staff that the smallest mistake of judgment could foul everything. In 1968 the media played the innocuous mutual fund letter to a fair-thee-well. Let's not get nervous about things. Our opponents will desperately search for anything by which they can pin all the clichéd labels on us -- for once, let's protect RN from his friends. Let's also maintain our cool about McGovern's crowds. Goldwater had much better crowds than LBJ, and in 1960, JFK was mobbed in Ohio and RN was mobbed in Atlanta -- neither carried the state in which he was mobbed. Crowds are not determinative of momentum.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1972

*"Extremism"*

MEMORANDUM FOR: PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

FROM: KEN KHACHIGIAN *Kh*

*file.*

At the risk of being repetitive, let me be a bit more explicit concerning my thinking that the word to tar McGovern is "extremist" and not "radical."

"Radical" seems to be losing its connotation. It didn't help us a whole lot in 1970, and it has become somewhat fashionable to be "radical." Look at it this way; McGovern is asked if he is radical. He responds: "If it's radical to get poor people a fair share of the enormous economic wealth in America, then I plead guilty to being a radical."

McGovern doesn't look like a radical -- with his \$200 suits, his modish styling, his Gucci ties, sideburns no longer than most, relatively short hair -- this coupled with the fact that his tone is rarely anarchic but more like the New York Life agent. He looks like a Paul Harvey without the silver tongue.

Finally, the "extremist" label is much better because it can't be turned around to his advantage. "If cutting bloated defense budgets is extremism, I plead guilty." That wouldn't fly at all. Barry tried to reverse the extremism thing, but it got him further into the quicksand. The same will happen to McGovern -- to deny the "extremist" label is to give it credibility. Moreover, one doesn't have to look like an extremist to be one. Goldwater was the most solid-looking guy you could think of -- a square-jawed all-American -- yet it stuck with him; the same for George. And with apologies to Barry, the extremist tag is not cold to the memory of 1964 and giving it to McGovern as good as he gave it to Barry is going to have somewhat the same effect -- though perhaps not as well.

In short, can we eventually get the word to higher ups that "radical is thru in '72" and that "extremism has clout to keep George out?"

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 12, 1972

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:           PATRICK J. BUCHANAN  
FROM:                       KENNETH L. KHACHIGIAN  
SUBJECT:                   ATTACK STRATEGY

If we seem to be flailing about while George McGovern appears to score political points against us, it's true. While we shouldn't overestimate the amount of political bulls-eyes McGovern has scored in the past 10 days, we should consider just what we need to do in the next eight weeks to prevent him from scoring too many more.

The first problem is that we are generally on the counterattack against issues which McGovern raises first, and he has raised those issues because they are his issues. There are two approaches here: (1) There are some things we have to answer -- I think by and large, the Butz response on the grain deal has been o.k. We can't let McGovern get away with totally irresponsible charges and to put McGovern into a spitting contest with Butz is o.k. by me. That gets him off other issues. (2) However, there are some issues we just don't need to answer, and we shouldn't. We should never counterattack unless we can turn the counterattack into an offensive plus for us.

TIMING

We are presently spreading ourselves too thin. We have shoved out statements over the last few days like they were going out of style. On occasion, we get in the way of our own stories. This is bad precedent and should be stopped. We need to focus on big issues or big stories. One story per day is sufficient.

Our sense of timing goes right along with spreading ourselves too thin. For example, the Chayes thing has gotten us nowhere in 8 days. One of the most remarkable stories to come down, and we can't do anything with it. Here is also where the problem of doing too much comes in. We moved on the Chayes story, and then the next day we picked up with something else -- losing the urgency of the Chayes story and thus losing the story. I am not sure we can resurrect it.

#### SPOKESMEN

While McGovern is making news every day because he is on the road, we have, in the last week or so, tried to counterattack using low-level spokesmen. This is not to criticize Dole, MacGregor and some of the Cabinet types; it is a simple matter of who gets news space in the media. Some do and some don't. Dole is spread so thin he is not likely to make national news very often. MacGregor can make national news, but they seem to call press conferences only to harp on the Watergate thing.

Fundamentally, the problem with our attack is a problem of using newsmakers to make news on some of our best and biggest issues.

For example, while we have been piddling around with a number of things, we aren't moving out such lines as the quote on J. Edgar Hoover's death. We are not moving out his irresponsible and smear rhetoric. We aren't moving out some of the more egregious examples of how McGovern is flim-flamming the voters and the Democratic party. There are no limits on these.

Thus, we need, in the next three weeks and before, to have our national spokesmen, every three or four days, move with a new major speech knocking hell out of McGovern, and just as he begins to get one charge answered, we come at him again with another charge. Connally, Laird, Rockefeller, Reagan, Rogers and the Veep are those who come to mind. We should use Rogers and Laird sparingly but they should be used -- so what if partisanship is charged? It was charged three weeks ago and we jumped like hell in the polls. It is a meaningless charge in political Washington. The only reason they should be used sparingly on a national level is to maintain their newsworthiness.

ISSUES

The issues we use are wrapped right into everything else I have mentioned above. Now, it is my understanding that 1701 wants to focus on four big issues. That's a lot of nonsense. There are probably about 50 issues in this campaign. For the President there are only about three or four issues, but for surrogates and attack spokesmen, there are dozens of issues. McGovern's record is rife with the wreckage of wild and irresponsible statements. Why should we limit ourselves on what we want to tie around his neck? Sure, we can focus on some gut issues the purpose of which is to coincide with voter attitudes. But we have another purpose as well: to engender the general opinion that this guy is a far-out, out-of-the-mainstream candidate whose elevation to the Presidency would be at worst a disaster and at best an embarrassment. We can do this without being strident.

If we don't start on some of these issues as soon as possible, we are going to be out of time and open to the charge of last-minute desperation tactics. For example, I have been urging for six weeks that a major figure in the Republican ranks has got to pick a good forum and lay out, point by point, the McGovern rhetoric, the appeal to fear, the smear tactics, the divisiveness, etc. I would guess that within ten days, McGovern will be touring the country saying he is going to heal the nation while Nixon divides. He is just dying to set the stage for another tricky-Dick campaign. It seems to me that we need to beat him to the punch, and one way of doing it is to move out the McGovern rhetoric.

One other thing we need to start doing in the same vein. As of now, we write something up, such as, "McGovern's not credible," and expect people to swallow it. What needs to be done is to launch this issue with a major speech, given all the P.R. support of 1701, laying out in agonizing detail just why McGovern isn't credible. Then we can follow up in the next four to five days with all kinds of short statements. We have to lay the foundation for an issue before we can make any headway with it.

This is why I emphasize the need to move out issues with big name speakers and a lot of fanfare. Then it becomes easy to have the other spokesmen just keep hammering away after the stage has been set.

Frankly, I feel my time is wasted producing so-called "talking points" which have about as much impact as a raindrop in a sandstorm. We should direct our efforts and direct them wisely. As of now we are using the blunderbuss in preference to the rifle shot, and it doesn't seem to be working.

#### PLANNING FOR THE NEXT EIGHT WEEKS

First of all, if we are to follow Eisenhower's advice, let's not even listen to anybody who puts out a set plan which is to be followed for one week and then the next. Let's use our political senses to see how the winds are going and then engage in planning. We should not get locked into anything. Things will change as time goes and we want to keep our own strategy updated according to changing events.

Nevertheless, we still want to be able to control the political events as much as possible. That is why we should begin thinking about who is going to say what for the next few days and when we are going to unleash some of our big guns. Remember, when RN gets on the stump in four weeks, everything else will be submerged, so if we want to make certain points now that we don't think RN can make later, we have to get started.

These are just some general thoughts. I can provide specifics along some of these lines if necessary. Why don't we get together to talk out some of this stuff before we submit a final memo for decision by higher-ups.