

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
Contested Materials Collection
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3	2	1/6/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Memo	From Colson to RN RE: Hallett's commentary on the Broder-Johnson series run in the "Washington Post." 2 pgs.
3	2	1/3/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Hallett to Colson RE: an analysis of the recent "The Politicians and the People" series of articles written by Broder and Johnson, which focused on the 1972 election. 8 pgs.
3	2	1/19/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Colson to RN RE: PN and Julie's successful visit to Africa and the role of the First Family in the campaign. 2 pgs.
3	2	7/24/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	White House Staff	Memo	From Colson to RN RE: Connally's antagonism toward Stans in a recent meeting. 2 pgs.

January 6, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: CHARLES COLSON
SUBJECT: Broder-Johnson Series

You asked that I have Doug Hallett analyze the Broder-Johnson series that was run last month in the Washington Post. His analysis is attached. While I have succeeded I think in making Doug much less abrasive in the last few months as you will see from the attached, however, I have not in any way restrained his candor; probably that is all to the good.

In transmitting this to you I hasten to point out that I strongly disagree with a number of Hallett's observations and with some of his conclusions. As you know, I argued strongly for the day care bill veto. I also believe that you have established in the last six months a very strong, clear image with the American people as a forceful, activist, tough President who will do whatever has to be done for the public interest.

Moreover, in my opinion, we have done extremely well this year. Hallett argues that after all of our bombshells we are only two or three points above where we were a year ago; he overlooks the fact that presidents normally hit low points during their third year (whereas we have greatly strengthened our position) and that we had many problems to contend with, some quite unusual like the Pentagon Papers, Calley, the UN vote, a sluggish economy and Laos. Yet in the face of all this you greatly strengthened your hold on the country. What also cannot be measured in the polls is the intensity of support. I believe this has increased very significantly this year; that the support has strengthened and deepened even if the overall numbers have not risen more than a few points.

You perhaps also know from reading previous Hallett memos that he is not particularly given to understatement.

Having said all that, I do think, however, that he makes some good points, particularly the need for a more consistent theme in our domestic approach (not that our issues aren't good; we simply need to tie them together better), the fact that we often reach for superlatives which is beginning to be criticized widely, that we tend to underestimate Muskie and finally, perhaps the most important point of all in Hallett's memo, we try to appeal to the right with rhetoric and the left with substance while in fact the left is more impressed with words and the right with substance.

In an effort to conserve your time I have taken the liberty of underlining Hallett's memo since it is excessively long.

I should also point out that I think his conclusions are overly simplistic. Some may have validity, but they by no means represent the magic for a winning campaign. One of the keys next year in my mind is the cultivation of important voting blocs (along with, of course, all of the other major national initiatives that you are planning); in short, exploiting the advantages of incumbency. While his memo makes some interesting points and perhaps some which have validity, it doesn't address the key strategy issues of 1972.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 3, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHARLES W. COLSON

FROM: DOUG HALLETT

Broder's and Johnson's basic points in their series "The Politicians and the People" are the following:

- (1) People are less angry, less passionate, less pessimistic about the future than they were a year ago. What was analyzed last year as fear about the future has now turned to apprehension. While two-thirds of the people surveyed still feel the country is no better off than it was in 1968, there is less immediate concern about short-run disintegration and collapse.
- (2) The President's strength has increased considerably as a by-product of the China trip, the new economic policy, etc. On the other hand, the President's initiatives have also made him seem more unpredictable, more mysterious, more inconsistent than he did before to many Americans. He is the first choice of a minority of the electorate. At a time when people are looking for direction and purpose in their leaders, the President remains a remote and uncertain figure.
- (3) There is considerable confusion and indecision about 1972. Never have political loyalties and allegiances been weaker. Party structures are almost meaningless in most areas of the country. People want to vote for the man, not the party. With the possible exception of the economy, no clear-cut issues are likely to stand out this election year.
- (4) The real issue is the psychological issue of trust and confidence. People are alienated from their government; they feel powerless; they question whether their leaders can respond to their fundamental concerns. 60 percent do not believe their leaders tell them the truth.
- (5) The youth vote is likely to be smaller than the vote of the electorate-at-large and young people are not likely to participate in large numbers in the political process. While young people are hostile to the President, they will not have a significant effect on the election.

(6) Muskie is the only Democratic contender both known to a majority of the electorate and known positively. Kennedy and Humphrey are better known, but less liked. While he has potential, however, Muskie has not yet developed the broad base of support and respect he would need to defeat the President.

(7) Wallace and Agnew are too controversial to be accepted as leaders. While many people agree with their statements, they sense they are not tolerant enough to be President. Wallace and Agnew are too sure of themselves.

It is important to note that Broder's and Johnson's conclusions are based on a distorted sampling of the electorate. They interviewed only 300 people. All pollsters agree that in-depth interviews with only a small sampling permits the interviewers to reinforce their own preconceived notions. Broder's and Johnson's sample does break down parallel to the 1968 election results, but it is far from representative. Only one Southern state was included in the survey. 26 percent of the sample were new voters -- and half of these were college students. These and other distortions have led to conclusions at variance with more scientific polls. Whereas polls indicate that blacks have gained confidence in the system in recent years, for example, Broder and Johnson assert they are more alienated.

On the other hand, I think the basic theme of the articles -- the alienation issue is accurately portrayed. Nothing else could account for the wide variation between popular support for the President's basic stands and support for his leadership. Nothing else could account for the President's dominance of the issues and his relatively weak showing, both in the trial heats and in the confidence polls.

The following is my point-by-point analysis:

(1) People are less pessimistic about the future -- This is true. The campuses have calmed. The doomsday rhetoric has quieted. People are beginning to believe, for the first time, that the war is ending and that the economy will not fall apart. Such events as the Moscow and Peking trips even show promise of leading the way to a better future.

Unfortunately, however, the President's success in the areas listed above is not necessarily translateable into votes at the polls. The President's support is based on professionalism, not on any personal or psychic or intellectual loyalty. People expect the President to be an effective tactician. Inversely, if he is not -- if his professionalism shows any weakness -- his base of support is likely to decline. While it will be hard for the Democrats to

counter if everything is going alright next fall, if one or more of the above issues have gone bad the President may not receive credit for anything he has done. One weakness in the chain will cast into doubt the long-run viability of every link, leading the way to such questions as: "Why couldn't we have gotten out of Vietnam faster? Why didn't the President impose wage-price controls earlier?"

Indeed, the President's successes may even work against him in a curious sense. In 1968, the President was acceptable to many people to whom he would not normally be acceptable. People such as Walter Lippman were for him because they thought we needed a tough, flexible operator to deal with the kind of problems we had then. Now that the immediate technical problems have been solved, now that the wounds have been healed to some degree, we can afford -- we may need -- other kinds of leadership. The same people who wanted an operational President in 1968 may be looking for a philosophical one in 1972. They are no longer scared about the present; they are concerned about the future -- and they want someone who can help define it for them. As it stands, the President does not fill the bill.

(2) The President's strength has increased as a result of dramatic new initiatives, but these same initiatives have made him a more remote figure to many Americans. I don't think there is any question but that the President has gained as a result of his initiatives and is much better positioned for the campaign than he was six months ago. What is remarkable is that he has gained so little, standing now only 2 or 3 points above where he was six months ago.

In my view, this is our fault. Given the President's public personality when he entered office, given the over-inflated rhetoric of the sixties, it is not surprising that people were suspicious of promise and waiting for performance when the President took office. We recognized this in the first six months to a year of the administration. In the last two years, however, we have done virtually everything imaginable to undermine our own credibility and consistency.

In 1969, we were going "forward together." In 1970, we had a "New Federalism." By 1971, we had hyped it up to a "New American Revolution." Who knows what it will be this year? The Second Coming, perhaps?

We show no consistency of effort and commitment. The welfare program is pronounced the greatest domestic program since the New Deal, but we expend far more effort trying to place G. Harrold Carswell on the Supreme Court. We start off with a very exciting and challenging commitment to

the first five years of life, but denounce day-care (no, middle-class day-care) as committing the government to communal living.

Even our major efforts have a tinsely glow to them. The China trip and the economic policy may be admirable in themselves -- they are certainly incredible as they were ballyhooed by us. And all the time we are doing this, we tell the American people it was the previous administration which is responsible for overheated rhetoric and expectations -- and that we are the ones who are calming things down.

In the short run, of course, there have been benefits from our dodges and turns and from our Junior Chamber of Commerce boosterism. Maybe Agnew has even scored once or twice. But in the long run, I think, we have undermined the seriousness of the President and his Presidency. It is no wonder that today we find the public doubting anything we do, seeing in us instability, when their greatest want -- greater than any special-interest need -- is for just the opposite.

(3) 1972 is uncertain. With the possible exception of the economy, no issue -- concern, no political allegiance, no party-loyalty seems likely to dominate. There is opportunity in the disintegration of the nation's institutions -- church, family, town, university, union. There is opportunity to reach and win over large numbers of newly-independent voters. It is not opportunity of which we have taken the fullest advantage. We have not allowed ourselves to restructure public dialogue, provide new direction and new loyalties. While we have solved short-term problems and may benefit from having done so, we have not added new certainty or direction to the public mood.

Just the reverse, in fact. We have remained committed to all the folderol of the past -- superficial "Presidentialism," Billy Graham home-town religion, We're no. 1, partisanship excess -- at the same time we do everything possible to undermine the past's core. Substantively, we have been by-and-large on track (although we are not dealing seriously with the economy, a problem which is structural not cosmetic). P. R. -- wise, we have behaved as village burghers, testing the wind, dragged into every reform, declining to identify ourselves with our own concerns, failing to recognize the coherency and broader meaning of our own programs.

Take our non-fiscal justification for vetoing day-care, for instance. In the days of farms and small villages, having mothers bring children up at home made sense. Women were intimately involved in the production process of the farm. Children were able to roam and learn in a broadly educational environment. But now? Homes are isolated from places of work; staying

home means staying uninvolved. As for children, staying home means remaining in a sterile, homogenous suburban neighborhood or an even more confining urban apartment. Of course we need day-care -- massive day-care. Far from committing government to communal living, day-care means, instead, committing government to preserving some semblance of the community bringing-up process which we have enjoyed for most of our national history and giving women the same opportunity to feel productive and useful that their grandmothers had.

On many other issues, we exhibit the same kind of narrow provincialism -- even when we are on the right side of the issue. I don't believe people buy it anymore. Even when it is the best they can articulate, I think they expect more from their leaders. We have failed to give it to them -- and are, I think, paying the price.

(4) The real issue is the psychological issue of trust and confidence. I don't think it is quite as dominant as Broder and Johnson do, but I think it is much more important that we generally acknowledge. People don't "feel" the President's leadership -- except for a few brief moments such as the China announcements. The strongest, most memorable statements the President has made while in office have been statements of anger or know-nothingism or blatant politics; i. e. Carswell defeat, Calley conviction, Cambodia, vetoing day-care, pornography, abortion. They have not been devoted to explaining what the President is and what he is trying to do.

This is more than charisma -- at least charisma in the John Lindsay sense. It involves finding words and mediums which express the core of the President's character. Lyndon Johnson is not a superficially charismatic man, yet in his early years, before the war wore him down, his speech and his actions reflected a personal force that we never get from the President. Eisenhower could garble every other sentence, but, when you watched him on television, you knew he was a leader. Even Truman, haberdasher that he is, was able to express to his constituency a raw cussedness which was central to his leadership.

Richard Nixon? Man on the make; ashamed of and constantly running away from his past; manipulator; unsure of his convictions; tactician instead of strategist; Grand Vizier of all Rotarians, substituting pomposity for eloquence. That is the public impression. And that is why he is weak today. By 50 percent to 40 percent, the American people do not think he has any broad conceptual framework, any sense of direction or purpose.

In a sense, the nature of leadership is not nearly so important as its fact. That has been our mistake. We have adopted a pacification strategy, this

for that group, that for this, with deliberable avoidance of controversial intellectual and social stands, trying to reassure the left, which cares everything about words, with substance, trying to reassure the right, which cares everything about substance, with words. We have ended up alienating everyone -- and we will not be able to correct that until we start realizing that tomorrow's headline is not nearly so important as next fall's "impression"; that next week's tactical advantage may come at the expense of next November's strategic victory.

(5) The youth vote is likely to be relatively unimportant in 1972. Broder and Johnson confirm two of our own opinions: young people are going to vote less frequently than the rest of the population and they are not going to work in significant numbers for political candidates. Broder and Johnson are victims of their own distorted sample on their third point. Their analysis that young people are far more hostile to the President than the population-at-large is not born out by the polls. Kennedy has a substantial lead over the President in the trial heats, but he is the only Democrat who has any lead among the youth vote.

On the other hand, once the Democrats nominate one man and he has achieved a visible, stylish identity, he could take the same kind of lead among youth Kennedy now has. The President's support in this group is thin because of Vietnam, unemployment, etc.

(6) Muskie is the only Democrat both known to a majority of the electorate and known positively to it, but does not yet have the strategic advantage over the President. One of the most disturbing factors in our approach as we enter the campaign year is our gross underestimation of Muskie. He has been brilliant, as good as the President was in 1968, and he shows promise of being far more effective than the President has ever been in the public phase of his campaign. If he has not yet emerged as the President's equal, he also does not yet approximate the President's stature as he will as a nominated candidate for President.

People around here counting on a significant fourth party are, I think, crazy. Muskie is going to do so well in the primaries that no one will join McCarthy even if he does do it. Without irreparably damaging his right flank, Muskie has moved far enough left to have the tacit support of somebody like Al Lowenstein. Establishment reformers like Gilligan are already in his corner publicly. The Democrats want to win this year -- I don't think they're going to allow themselves to destroy their chances with suicidal splintering.

Most important of all, Muskie's public image is everything the President's is not: strong, reflective, prudent, even wise. The President could not maintain early leads against Pat Brown and Hubert Humphrey. How in the hell we think he's going to do better against an Ed Muskie with his usual plastic statesman, say-nothing strategy is beyond me.

(7) Wallace and Agnew are too controversial to be accepted as leaders. More evidence for the alienation theory. It is not just that Wallace and Agnew are too strident -- it is also that they are somehow too facile, too quick, too simplistic. People know that what they have traditionally believed -- and what Agnew and Wallace preach -- is not right anymore; that it needs replacement; that the society has changed and that their public leaders must deal with those changes even if they can't.

The lesson of Wallace and Agnew is that people want to be led -- they don't want to see their leaders mouth the same idiocies they do over a Saturday night beer. Yet that is exactly what we try to do -- elevating the idiocies into wordy, billowy speeches, to be sure -- practically every time the President makes a prepared, public statement.

I would caution, however, that Agnew's unsuitability for the Presidency does not mean he should be replaced as Vice-President. This should be decided on the basis of comprehensive polling this spring. There are too many people who say they would vote for the President, but "not that Agnew." On the other hand, I would regret very much having Governor Connally on the ticket, not just because I would hate to seem him close to the White House, but, more importantly, because he would overshadow -- and thus undermine -- the President. The President was right in his original intent with Agnew -- he runs better with nobody.

Conclusion: The same as usual: Not all the foreign trips to all the foreign capitals in the world are going to help the President unless they are coupled with a far more serious effort to deal with his very weak relationship with the American people.

The following steps should be taken:

(1) Get new speechwriters -- this is the most important. This President has the least experienced, least able group of speechwriters in recent history. We need guys with clout, who are involved and know a lot about substance, and who can put stuff together which is coherent, purposeful, and comprehensive -- which will have the same effect as the President's masterful desegregation statement.

Ideally, we would have guys like Daniel Boorstin, Irving Kristol, Edward Banfield, and Nathan Glazer. We probably can't get them, but the President ought to speak to Moynihan about it. We need and want people from that Public Interest -Commentary School and Moynihan would know where to locate good people whom we could get.

(2) Calm the P. R., stop getting overexcited about each new issue, and instill some consistency and follow-through in our P. R. -- political operation. We should not be aiming at taking advantage of each new issue by itself, but at taking advantage of each new issue as it relates to the President's over-all approach. Above all, avoid the cheap-shot, the head-line hunt, the simple slogan.

(3) Realize that what is important about the President is that he is the first President to realize that the hyper-individualistic -- "We're No. 1" -- frontier American philosophy is bankrupt and outdated. The President is the first President to comprehend that internally and externally this country and its people are part of a community structure -- as such, the President is the first real conservative President the country has ever had. He has readjusted both foreign and domestic policy away from twentieth century liberalism, realizing that an unbridled commitment to individualism in the modern world is enslaving and destructive; that both Vietnam and the war on poverty are symbols of its bankruptcy; that real freedom and real individualism cannot be conferred from above, but must be worked out organically within a community structure by community norms -- hence an incomes-decentralization strategy instead of a services strategy in domestic policy, hence the Nixon Doctrine instead of Wilsonian zealotry in foreign affairs. This should be the basic theme in every utterance made by this Administration.

(4) Stop displaying the President as if he had a stick up his ass. Put him in gutsy, colorful, photographic situations with people. Take him out of airplanes, hotels, and military reservations and put him in hospitals, police cars, outdoors, in urban areas, at local union meetings, on tough university campuses, at Indian reservations, etc. Use the White House more imaginatively.

(5) A more imaginative use of media -- we shouldn't be afraid to put the President in conflict situations -- the Rather thing was good insofar as it went (by far the best of conversations), but we can go farther. Show that the President can handle both his enemies and the people by putting him in situations with them. We should also be hitting much more the prestige mags with prestige pieces. Personally, I thought the President's 1967 Foreign Affairs article was more a travelog than an analysis, but even it has had impact far beyond its immediate readership.

January 19, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: CHARLES COLSON
SUBJECT: Mrs. Nixon's Africa Trip

The image of the First Family as it has recently emerged -- warm and appealing -- may well be one of the most important political developments of your Presidency. Both Mrs. Nixon and Julie have "caught on" big; I don't think we have yet realized the full political implications.

It began with Mrs. Nixon's trip for the Legacy of Parks, gained momentum with some of Julie's appearances in November and with the outstanding family TV at Christmas; the high point was Mrs. Nixon's tremendously successful African trip.

To confirm my own impressions about the trip, I asked Mort Allin to prepare an analysis of Mrs. Nixon's coverage; a copy is attached. As you will see, Mort's report fully bears out my feeling about the enormously positive impact.

As you know we have tried hard for 3 years to project "color" about you, to portray the human side of the President, the personal warmth, the compassionate, considerate qualities you have. Because of the hostility of the media it has been an exceedingly difficult, frustrating and not especially successful undertaking. Mrs. Nixon has now broken through where we had failed. She has come across as a warm, charming, graceful, concerned, articulate and most importantly, a very human person. People, men and women -- identify with her -- and turn with you. In many cases, these are the people we have found it the hardest to reach. It would be hard to overestimate the political impact of this.

Not only have women begun to be very interested in the family side of the Nixon Administration (something we had also not achieved with the same success as some of our predecessors), but most significantly we are getting through to the men as well. Men often judge other men by the character of their wives. Mrs. Nixon's character has come through magnificently.

As you know, my office hears from assorted people -- political and otherwise -- from all over the country. It is very clear based on comments of recent weeks that Mrs. Nixon has had a very significant and very positive impact on the country. Even some of our strongest supporters have observed that they feel now that they know the Nixons better than they ever did before.

One of our harshest critics is right here on our own staff -- Doug Hallett. To quote from his rare positive memo: "The African trip exceeded all my expectations. Her quotes were genuine. The photo of her in the African garb was great. She seemed to, as they say, 'get into' what she was doing. She relaxed; she enjoyed herself; she accepted (or at least seemed to accept) the people she was with as human beings rather than mannequins with a hand that needs shaking. Most important of all, she did it on her own -- for once she wasn't the object that appears on the other side of the Presidential photo from the American flag. She was credible as a liberated woman." He concludes his memo by impertinently suggesting that Mrs. Nixon be on the ticket this year.

The purpose of this memo is to urge that you encourage Mrs. Nixon to participate frequently in these kinds of highly visible public activities as the political year warms up. She is an enormous asset. She can do things you can't do; her moves will not be instantly labelled political, as yours would; she has the ability to project warmth and to create empathy. In an election year she can do the kind of human interest things that are so vital to us.

Without question, her trip was one of the most successful single activities anyone in the Administration has engaged in since we came into office. It has had a far reaching impact in changing the public impression of you and the Administration. The warmth of the First Family and the public affection for Mrs. Nixon, Julie and Tricia can be, if properly developed through the rest of the year, that "something extra" that makes the critical difference.

July 24, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: CHARLES COLSON
SUBJECT: Connally/Stans

I am sorry to report to you on an unfortunate incident involving Connally as to which you should be advised and perhaps call Connally if you feel it is warranted.

Last week MacGregor asked to meet with Connally and myself to be sure we were thoroughly coordinated -- a necessary thing to do obviously. We decided to include Stans because under the new statute, Connally cannot spend funds without Stans' permission. Obviously fund raising and expenditures have to be closely coordinated because of the inevitable competition for the same sources, the need for initial funding by Stans as well as the strict statutory ceilings.

In the meeting we had this afternoon (after your visit with Connally), Stans became very difficult; he seemed very unhappy over the whole Democrats for Nixon effort. He said that he was already getting money from Democrats and obviously any funds Connally raised would be "in competition" with his efforts. He further said that he had an obligation to raise \$40 million and that anything Connally needed would be in excess of that and he didn't think he could raise it. MacGregor said that he would gladly reduce his budget to make room for Connally's needs. I made the point that Connally would have to be assured of a budget of at least \$3 million (since Connally had told me over the weekend he didn't want to launch an effort unless he was assured of funding of at least that amount).

Connally became visibly angry during the lunch especially when Stans said that if Connally raised more money than his "budgeted" figure, he would have to turn it over to Stans. During the lunch Connally said

he wasn't sure he wanted to embark on the Democrats for Nixon effort at all and Stans allowed as to how he wished the President could find another fund raiser. Despite frequent attempts by MacGregor and me to keep it under control, the atmosphere was distinctly hostile.

After the lunch, I assured Connally that the candidate's views on this would prevail and that I knew exactly how you felt about it and that he shouldn't worry about Stans. I urged him to leave it in my hands. He said that he didn't ask for this job and that while he had no trouble at all dealing with MacGregor or myself, that it was best to find out right from the beginning where he stood. He said attitudes were very important to him, that he thought Stans had a very negative attitude and really acted as if Connally was an "intruder and competitor". I said again that I knew where the President stood and Connally said that isn't good enough. He said, "The President has to let his people know where he stands. Obviously Stans doesn't have the word."

I assured Connally that I would see that Stans did understand the President's views and Connally said, "Well, I will have to see for myself". He said he was unable now to agree to announce Democrats for Nixon on August 1. (Yesterday he had decided that would be the date.)

I think Connally was putting on a little show for everyone involved. He is a very sensitive fellow and Stans can indeed be rather dour when it comes to discussing campaign funds. Also, Maury is very tired and under a lot of pressure.

Connally, unfortunately, will have to work with Stans; under the new statute, complete autonomy is impossible. I assured Connally that he would be spared anything like this in the future and that Jacobson, Connally's counsel, could handle it. He said he didn't want Jacobson "subjected" to this either.

Under the circumstances, MacGregor and I think it may be important for you to tell Connally that we have reported to you on the lunch and that he can be assured that there will be no problem, that the budget matters have been determined by you, that autonomy is to be maintained and that if he can't deal with Stans, he can work through MacGregor and me exclusively. Clark and I will simply have to handle Maury.