

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
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3	36		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	Fourth and fifth pages of a memo laying out general strategies for the 1972 presidential campaign. 2 pgs.

The alienated voter is the most politically volatile, the most negative and, hence, the most likely to vote against the "ins" or not vote at all. These are not the radical students who believe that our society is degenerate and our system of Government unresponsive; these are middle Americans who simply feel that Government cannot do anything about the problems of our society.

We must, therefore, restore people's faith in our ability to manage Government and Government's ability to solve problems. We should emphasize over and over the "reform" theme, dramatize how we have gotten Government and the bureaucracy under control, and push very hard for revenue sharing and return of power to the states and communities. We have a better record in this area than any of our predecessors but we need to do a better job of selling it. We also must do more to tighten up management (getting rid of programs that people know are ineffective and wasteful.)

3. Leadership vacuum. The so-called leadership vacuum or the "tentative, negative approval" of you is simply a consequence of the alienated voter's frustration, and his fear over the economy and lawlessness. My point is that this attitude prevails only in this particular group. The proof of this is that in his interviews Broder discovers that this same group, which is indifferent to you, is equally indifferent towards any other national leader. Therefore, it is not your leadership that they reject; their frustration causes them to lose faith in anyone's leadership. It is perfectly obvious from the crowds you have turned out across the country and their reaction that there is real enthusiasm for you and your Presidency. I believe that the majority of the people do identify you as a strong, forceful leader, one who doesn't promise things that can't be done, one who has calmly and quietly tried to cope with the very serious problems our nation faces.

In a meeting with Pete Brennan last week, he explained the reason for the "hard hat" support of you more perceptively than I think we have analyzed it. He said that the "hard hats" wave the flag and cheer the President but that, in and of itself, does not translate into votes. Moreover, most of the "hard hats" don't like our economic policies and feel that we are pushing them too hard in the civil rights area. What is winning their political loyalty is their admiration for your masculinity. The "hard hats", who are a tough breed, have come to respect you as a tough, courageous man's man. Brennan's thesis is that this image of you will win their votes more than the patriotism theme. The image of being

strong, forceful and decisive will have a powerful personal appeal with the alienated voter.

4. Indecision about 1972; diminishing party loyalties. The alienated voter, by definition, has lost his party loyalty. Ideologically he is pulled towards us on the law and order issue and away from us on the economic issue. By definition, he is disenchanted with Government; therefore, disenchanted with politicians and political parties. To the extent that traditional party loyalties have been broken, we have an opportunity to win over large blocks of voters (like Wallace Democrats). We should not be trying to make them Republicans, rather we should be trying to win their confidence and allay their fears.

5. Agnew, Kennedy and Wallace are too controversial to be President. This is also a logical extension of Broder's other points. People who are frustrated and concerned and who have lost faith are least likely to turn to a leader who frightens them. It is significant that Kennedy's Chappaquiddic incident is still very much in the public mind, at least in this group (this reinforces Brennan's point that people want a firm leader with strong character.) The Agnew point is important. People identify with Agnew because he says the things they are thinking but they are afraid that a man who speaks out and says the things they are thinking is not responsible enough to be a good President. It is a paradox that because they identify with him, they believe that their own faults and weaknesses are reflected in him.

The most significant point is the erosion of the Wallace strength. The alienated voter can express his frustrations by voting for Wallace -- and did in 1968. Broder points out, however, that significant numbers of former Wallace voters have now concluded either that he is too dangerous to be President or that a vote for Wallace is a wasted one. This should be an opportunity for us.

6. People want leadership and a unifying influence. This is really another restatement of the frustrations of this segment of the population. Restoring their confidence in the future in the ways described above is the key.