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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 23, 1971

MEMORANDUM TO: John Ehrlichman  
H. R. Haldeman  
Charles Colson

FROM: Pat Buchanan

While this memorandum, for stylistic and obvious reasons, is not sent to the President -- would hope that the dissenting views herein expressed, would be gotten to him -- before he makes any decision upon the rather remarkable document I have in hand entitled, "The Catholic Vote and 1972." For if we are making scheduling, budget and political decisions on the basis of this remorseless nonsense, then we are going to have to count upon a Chicago repeat to be back in 1972.

Points that come up after only a rapid reading of the Morey memorandum:

1. Nowhere does one see proper recognition of the hard political fact that while there are six million Jews in this country, 22,000,000 blacks -- there are some 46,000,000 Catholic. Not only are the Catholic by far the hugest bloc of available Democratic votes to win for us -- they are, even by Mr. Morey's statistics, the easiest to convert.
2. Here is another hard political fact that does not emerge: If the President could raise himself from say 25 percent of the Catholic vote to 40 percent of the Catholic vote -- that would be worth more in terms of absolute votes than if the President went from 0 percent of the Jewish vote to 100 percent.

Since Catholic Democrats are more numerous and easier to win over than black Democrats and Jewish Democrats, clearly this is where our emphasis should be placed.

3. Morey contends that "Catholicism" is no longer so binding a factor as it once was in 1960 -- with JFK. That is precisely our point. We are not asking that the President throw in with the mackerel snappers, convert and become a daily communicant. We are saying that since "Catholicism," per se, "religious affiliation," is less important than it was in 1960, RN has a far better chance in 1972 of taking away Catholic voters from a Catholic candidate, i.e., (Muskie). Indeed, much of Morey's analysis, analyzed properly, makes a strong case for going after that Catholic vote.

4. Says Morey, things other than Catholicism are more important to Catholics. He mentions ethnicity; we don't disagree with that. We endorse it one hundred percent. The President should go after the Catholic vote in a multi-faceted approach. By endorsing the aspirations of ethnics (Italians, Poles, Irish, Slovaks); by appointing conspicuous ethnics to top visible federal posts, by his Middle America appeal, in addition to aiding the schools in which so many of them believe and in which millions upon millions of Catholics and ethnics have placed their children.

My recommendation is now and has been that the Administration -- in placing minority members in visible jobs -- stop concentrating on the "media's minorities" (Blacks, Mexican Americans, Spanish-speaking) which are tough to crack, almost solid Democratic -- and begin focusing on the larger ethnic minorities (Irish, Italians, Poles, Slovaks, etc.), the big minorities where the President's name is not a dirty word, where the President's personal beliefs and political actions are more consistent with their own.

When we begin to recognize and act on the idea that there are as many Italian-Americans in the Bronx as there are Black Americans in Harlem, we will better begin to serve the President's interests.

As noted in previous memoranda, and proved by Senator Buckley in New York, there are more "Queens Democrats" than there are "Harlem Democrats" and they are a hell of a lot easier for a Republican to get.

5. Morey contends that Blacks and Jews and Catholics won for JFK -- but that is like comparing tangerines to grapefruits to watermelons. One can say that the "Maltese-Americans" won it for Kennedy. The crucial points are a) the size of the bloc and b) the winnability of the bloc. On both counts any politician will tell you the Catholics are where the ducks are.

6. Morey contends there is a trade-off, that aid to Catholic schools will alienate some Protestants. No one denies this. We may lose some votes. But where is there recognition of these points. Just as 1) pro-Catholicism on the part of voters diminished since 1960 -- so, too, has anti-Catholicism. 2) Aid to Catholic schools will no longer kill a candidate in Protestant areas -- as is clearly evident from the fact that perhaps a dozen states in the last decade moved that route. 3) Look closely at the trade-off. Are Protestants, traditionally anti-Catholic, going to vote against Richard Nixon for some indirect assistance to parochial schools -- and then turn around and vote for a Catholic Ed Muskie. Hardly. Many of them will not like it. But very few will go the full route. Morey mentions Milliken gaining votes among Michigan Catholics, and losing them among upstate Protestants for coming out for parochial aid. Without any statistics I question that. For this reason. I can't believe that a reactionary Protestant will vote against

Milliken for aiding Catholic schools -- when the choice is to turn around and vote for a long-haired Jewish liberal Democrat, which Milliken ran against.

In short, our Protestant supporters will be angry, many of them, with this kind of aid, but fewer than every before, and the overwhelming majority not so angry as to desert a middle-of-the-road Republican for a Catholic liberal Democrat.

A phrase used around here recently is appropriate. The WASPS have "nowhere else to go."

7. Where in this entire memo is recognition of the problem this creates for the other side -- the Democrats. That party is divided between Establishment liberals and increasingly militant blacks on the one hand -- and Roman Catholics on the other, for a simple view. The Jim Buckley Democrats versus the New York Times Democrats if you will.

When RN comes out for aid to parochial schools, this will drive a wedge right down the Middle of the Democratic Party. The same is true of abortion; the same is true of hard-line anti-pornography laws. For those most against aid to Catholic schools, most for abortion, and an end to all censorship are the New York Times Democrats. And those most violently for aid to Catholic schools and against abortion and dirty books, are the Jim Buckley Catholic Democrats.

Rockefeller, in coming out for parochial aid, has recognized this. In 1970 he won over Catholic Democrats in greater numbers than ever -- while his upstate Protestants grumbled about aid to Catholic schools, but they "had no place else to go."

8. Morey mentions that "a Gallup Poll conducted in July 1968 indicates that the voter's choice between McCarthy and Humphrey was not guided by religious affiliation of the candidate. In fact it was slightly reversed."

This shows an utter lack of understanding of the Catholic Community and the Catholic issue -- as we see it.

Of course, rank-and-file Catholics did not go for McCarthy. The reason has nothing to do with his religion -- everything to do with his style. McCarthy is an upper middle class liberal, who hobnobs with radical kids, who writes poetry, a post-Vatican II peacenik, snobbish, ecumaniac who apes the Harvard Wasps. Your average lower middle and middle income

Catholic cannot identify with McCarthy and the Beautiful People; they are not Gene McCarthy men, they are Dick Daley men. The fellows who join the K. of C., who make mass and communion every morning, who go on retreats, who join the Holy Name Society, who fight against abortion in their legislatures, who send their kids to Catholic schools, who work on assembly lines and live in Polish, Irish, Italian and Catholic communities or who have headed to the suburbs -- these are the majority of Catholics; they are where our votes are.

Morey's statistics on Catholic clergy uninterested in Catholic schools repeats the same error. The one-third of priests who are not interested in Catholic schools probably contain the one hundred percent of Catholic clergy who either endorse or "understand" what the Berrigan boys were trying to do. What I am saying is that there is a deep division in the Catholic community. We should be working the Catholic social conservatives -- the clear majority.

As for the Catholic liberals, who ape the Wasp upper East Side liberals -- like Southern liberals, they are the worst kind. Converts to liberalism, and to "right thinking", they outdo the New York Times in their fanaticism for their "New faith."

9. Morey contends that Catholic schools do not seem a really strong issue among Catholics. How can one say that? Surely, among some Catholics who have "made it" the importance of Catholic schools has diminished. But among those Catholics who deeply believe in their schools, among those who send 5,000,000 of their children to Catholic schools, a "religious education" is a burning issue, and in an age of "permissiveness" bound to stay a burning issue. Why do I say this? Common sense I think tells us that when Catholic pressure in the 1960s can bring Protestant legislatures in state after state to vote aid for their schools that shows interest, concern and power. Secondly, running the Catholic school system in an "extra tax" upon Catholics of -- one estimates runs -- five billion dollars a year. Any group willing to pony up an extra five billion in taxes, to educate its children a different way from the free public schools is a group whose interests ought to be reckoned with.

10. Catholic schools as an issue can be compared with "gun control" and "aid to Israel." It is an issue on which a minority of Americans, i.e. conservative Catholics, are so deeply concerned that their votes can be switched on that issue along. For the majority who may disagree, it is not a "voting issue."

Thus, while eighty percent of the people favor gun control, if you come out too strong for it, you win next to nothing, but you have ten or fifteen percent of the electorate working night and day to see you defeated. (See: Joe Tydings, circa 1970, and Joe Clark, circa 1968)

11. In 1960 because he could not lose the Catholic vote; it was in his pocket, it had "no place else to go," JFK could come out against aid to Catholic schools -- working the Protestant side of the street. That was where the ducks were for him. Quite naturally, ours are over there, in the Catholic community.

12. Just look at Muskie himself, and his tergiversations over the Catholic issue. He waffles on abortion; he has refused to speak out on Catholic schools; he has a split party; and the more we force these "splitting" issues the better for the President.

13. The final argument against aid to Catholic schools is that it drew "extremely negative responses" from the NEA, and "others involved in public education", that could "well alienate 1.8 million public school teachers." For Christ sake, anti-Catholic public schools teachers are not the President's constituent; as for the NEA, and its lobby they have made an avocation of cutting the President's throat. We are Never going to get people like that -- why should we be solicitous about offending them if it can get us votes elsewhere.

Indeed, the fact that it would "frost" the NEA is one of the more appealing arguments for going ahead with aid to parochial schools.

14. When we move on aid to parochial schools, it can be done through the mechanism of vouchers and tax credits, which is the least offensive to everyone, and most acceptable. Which would minimize any losses -- and we could through the Catholic media and Catholic outlets, maximize the gain. If the President can go up 15 percent among Catholics, that would be worth more than getting 100 percent of the Jewish vote, and worth more than going from ten percent to forty percent among blacks.

Any my view is that it is one hell of a lot easier thing to do, because conservative Republicans, i. e., James Buckley, have shown that it is a realistic political alliance. Morey supports this point by indicating Goldwater's gains among Catholics in New York.

15. Finally, there is a potential, latent majority out there -- available for the President which we have failed to put together. It consists of the President's WASP and white-collar conservative base -- added to it Southern Protestants and Northern, Midwestern and Western Catholics. Morey is right in that parochial school aid alone will not win it for us.

When that is put together, not everyone in that coalition will agree on every issue -- but they will agree on enough. Southern Protestants will not like aid to Northern Catholic schools -- but the bonds that hold that coalition together will be stronger than those forcing it apart. (Indeed, Roosevelt's coalition of Southern whites plus Southern blacks had far more inconsistencies than our potential coalition has).

And Morey is right in that we ought not to rely on one appeal -- whether it be aid to parochial schools or what. It should be multi-faceted; it has to be. A mixture of social conservatism, which is a majority view nationally, plus economic assistance and visibility appointments and, for the Democrats who are willing to go half-way with the President, not the Democrats who detest him. Thus, instead of sending the orders out to all our agencies -- hire blacks and women -- the order should go out -- hire ethnic Catholics preferable women, for visible posts. One example: Italian Americans, unlike blacks, have never had a Supreme Court member -- they are deeply concerned with their "criminal" image; they do not dislike the President. Give those fellows the "Jewish seat" or the "black seat" on the Court when it becomes available.

Regrettably, neither our budget or our political emphasis seems to me to reflect these realities.

True, there will be losses from this kind of strategy. Josiah Lee Auspitz will be very angry with us. But the Republican Party is a last-place ball club; living in Washington, one can understand that. To win we have to make "trade-offs." To come out of the cellar we may have to give up Frank Howard. One should recall that recently a poll showed that Independents have passed Republican -- and we are now only 22 percent of the vote. One reason why can be found sitting in the Legislative Leadership meeting -- and looking at all those WASPs.

If the GOP is to become a national majority party it will be because of fellows like Cahill in New Jersey and Volpe in Mass., who hold our base -- and add to it the Catholics who were Democratic from time immemorial.

There is a clear potential majority out there. The President could be the new Roosevelt, who put it together, or he could be the last of the liberal Presidents. But to put it together requires a "leap in the dark," it means "pushing our skiff from the shore alone;" it means telling John Chancellor and the New York Times that, no, we have not done anything for the blacks this week, but we have named a Pole to the Cabinet and an Italian Catholic to the Supreme Court.

In an oversimplified way, the reason the President is at 42 percent of whatever it is that we have not broken out of our minority base. In my heretical view, we are never, never going to do it with public relations. The President is not Eisenhower; he did not lead the armies ashore against Hitler's Europe. We are not going to build any new majorities on the Nixon personality, or the admitted Nixon personal political skill. We need to do it with issues and budget dollars, and we are not.

Let us assume that, for one, RN tubed OEO the day he took office, and had spent the \$5 billion we have wasted on that pit since then -- on providing tax credits for non-public schools. That is just one example. From here it does not appear we have a political "strategy" which is being imposed upon the bureaucrats and budget makers; the latter seem more responsive to media pressure than the imperatives of the President's and the party's long run political interests.

If there must be unemployment to halt inflation, why are Southern California aerospace workers unemployed -- instead of liberal school teachers, social workers and poverty consessionaires. These latter aren't for us anyway. Instead of buying off media hostility, that massive Federal budget should have bought us by now a new majority, should have bought new friends for Richard Nixon, should have bought him a place in the history books as the Republican who got it all together.

Chesterton once wrote in defense of his faith, that "It cannot really be said that Christianity has failed; because it cannot really be said that Christianity has been tried." The quote may be off; but is apposite. The new Republican Majority in this country is not a disproven myth; it has not seriously been tried.

P.S. We are not doing the President any favors by sending in to him, uncriticized, memorandum on politics of the vapidty of the document that came to me. I know the affection for Kevin Phillips is well contained in the West Wing; but he is a genius of sorts; and the White House might well hire him for one week -- his political agency -- on a confidential basis -- to assess the labors of the Morey team.