

Richard Nixon Presidential Library  
Contested Materials Collection  
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>
6	85	12/12/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Colson to Haldeman RE: senior citizens in the 1972 election. 5 pgs.
6	85	2/24/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Memo	From Kehrlri to Haldeman RE: meeting with Bob Dole and theAttorney General. 1 pg.
6	85	2/11/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Memo	Copy of a memo from Colson to Haldeman RE: shaping the public image of Muskie. Handwritten note on original added by unknown. 2 pgs.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 12, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: H. R. HALDEMAN  
FROM: CHARLES W. COLSON *WC*  
SUBJECT: Senior Citizens and 1972

Sometime ago you asked for a memorandum outlining steps that might be taken to improve our relationship with senior citizens.

The political importance of this is clear. There are approximately 30 million people over 60, 70% of whom generally vote in Presidential elections. This compares with roughly the same number under 30, of which 37% typically vote. (this percentage will be even lower with the addition of 18-20 year olds).

On every sampling we do badly with the under 30 category but reasonably well with the over 60 category. The Republican share of the over 60 vote, however, has steadily declined in the last five Presidential elections (up in 1968 over 1964, however). This trend continued in 1970. Based on a sampling of voting patterns in 1970 in selected precincts and districts, it appears that large numbers of retired citizens deserted the Republican ranks (especially evident in Florida and California).

The judgment of those with whom we have discussed this seems to confirm that this group, very much like the farmers, is highly emotional and enormously affected by rhetoric and outward demonstrations of concern. It is just as bad not to say the right things as it is not to do the right things. (the classic example is Goldwater's comment about Social Security in 1964; he got 41% of the over 60 vote).

It is obvious that one thing we must do is publicize the President, his concern for senior citizens and our accomplishments in this area much more effectively than we have. Substantively we have not done badly for this group (Social Security increases, etc.) - PR-wise we have done very poorly because the prevailing thought is that we have ignored them.

The following specifics should be considered:

1. Presidential meetings with senior citizen organizations.  
The five major groups are shown at Tab A. The officers of 1, 2, and 5 should be brought in for meetings.
  
2. Need for fulfilling the President's campaign pledge on Recomputation of Retired Military Pay. During the 1968 campaign (also during the 1960 campaign), the President unequivocally pledged his support for Recomputation of Retired Military Pay. We have subsequently come out in opposition to Recomputation because of the budget cost involved. Defense is now undertaking a study at our request to determine whether a moderate-cost compromise can be proposed before the 1972 election. The retired groups are particularly angry over the fact that we promised to do something and haven't. We know that large numbers of them voted Democratic last fall as a protest. Clark MacGregor said it hurt him severely in Minnesota. Cramer feels it might have made the difference in Florida (where there are 60,000 retired military). Apparently it also hurt seriously in California where there are 140,000 retired military. This is a highly organized lobby group and we are in serious trouble over this issue.
  
3. Demonstration of Presidential concern with problems of Aging. We should consider:
  - a) Publication of a statement outlining the accomplishments of the first two years of the Nixon Administration involving programs of concern to senior citizens.
  - b) Consider a special Presidential Message covering all of the legislation which we have proposed in this area that has not been acted upon.
  - c) Schedule a Presidential speech concerning the problems of senior citizens before a senior citizens group.
  - d) Consider a Presidential visit to a senior citizens project in California or Florida.

4. White House Conference on the Aging. This Conference, established as one of the recommendations of the Report of the President's Task Force on the Aging, April 1970, is headed by John B. Martin, a nominal Republican, who was at one time at the University of Michigan and was Romney's Commissioner on Aging. He seems to have no political instincts whatsoever, and has turned over the operation to staff people mostly recruited from the University of Michigan who are either apolitical or Democrats. He wears three hats as Special Assistant to the President for Aging, Director of the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, and Commissioner, Administration on Aging, HEW.

Martin's publication "Aging" is distributed to about 15,000 people throughout the field. I am told that the President's picture has never appeared in "Aging" and that he is seldom referred to, either in the publication or in Martin's speeches.

To get this under more effective control we might consider the following:

- a) White House liaison should be maintained with this operation with particular attention to its political aspects. It has been most recently under the overview of Ed Morgan, but he is now occupied with other things, is phasing out of it, and at the present time no one is giving it attention.
- b) Arrangements should be made through Herb Klein for someone to maintain close liaison with the public information activities of the Conference and generate a continuing flow of publicity useful to the President.

- c) There should be judicious inclusion in "Aging" of pictures of the President and his statements on issues affecting senior citizens. There should be human interest stories on his activities, such as his visit to the Home for Incurables, his visit in California, and his last year's invitation to senior citizens for Thanksgiving Dinner (I am told these were not mentioned in the magazine).
  - d) John Martin should always refer appropriately to the President in his speeches throughout the country.
  - e) Martin should get messages from the President to read at significant conferences and technical committee meetings he addresses.
5. Republican National Committee Activities. We need to build up Van Rensselaer's efforts at the RNC. We should discuss with Dole the importance of this operation and the need to enhance Van Rensselaer's stature. Unlike a lot of other National Committee activities, this is one where it will benefit us to build our political apparatus in the Party name. There is little danger of frightening off Democrats. What we want to do here is to keep the traditional loyalties of Republicans, which are in the majority. We should consider the following:
- a) Open Hour meeting with Van Rensselaer and Dole with the President for a picture opportunity.
  - b) Get publicity in "Monday" of all pictures of Van Rensselaer with the President and others of significance, along with statements.
  - c) Mailings by the RNC to all interested groups on current topics of interest to aged.
  - d) Encourage attention to senior citizens in workshop meetings and other programs which may be held by the RNC.

6. White House liaison. As with Agriculture and Youth, we need someone in the White House to assume responsibility for our activities in this area. It need not be a full-time job, but someone should have the responsibility of paying attention to the problems, coming up with the ideas, and covering liaison with Martin's office and Van Rensselaer. One of our biggest problems, as I see it, is that no one has had the responsibility of focusing on this specific category and hence we do, in fact, forget the politics of older citizens. This is a matter of assigning responsibility. It can be done out of this office but, once again, we would probably need some help to do a half-way decent job.

The foregoing is a very limited program. If we do these things, however, it will at least show Presidential concern and interest. Reviewing the statements, messages and speeches of the last two years show quite clearly that we have not done enough, nor have we taken advantage of our opportunities.

Getting control of Martin's operation may be the single most important thing to do. He is totally apolitical, feels that the Administration should take no major initiative until the completion of the Conference on Aging and the publication of its recommendations. This would, of course, put us off until the Spring of 1972, which is too late from a political standpoint. If Martin is not willing to cooperate in this effort, we should consider replacing him.

7.11  
February 24, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR H. R. HALDEMAN

FROM : BRUCE KEHRLI  
SUBJECT : Your Meeting with Dole  
and the Attorney General

As you know Chuck Colson is working on a project to nail the "Muskie Moderate" myth. This is something that will be master-minded here but will be implemented at the RNC. Bob Dole is to be our big gun on this and Muskie is to be his principal assignment. Colson has responsibility for this project and to lay some ground work, you might tell Dole of Chuck's responsibility and that the two of them should get together in the very near future.

Also, Lyn Nofziger called to ask you to re-emphasize the point that Dole is to be tougher and less "statesmanlike".

BK:pm

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

**EYES ONLY**

February 11, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: H. R. HALDEMAN  
FROM: CHARLES W. COLSON  
SUBJECT: Muskie Moderate Myth

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In response to your memo of the 9th regarding our efforts to keep Muskie out on the left fringe, the first most important thing is get Bob Dole lined up. I have had a very close relationship with Bob and he is very, very friendly to me; I don't believe, however, he will take on the assignment of attacking Muskie from anyone except you or the President. Lyn tells me that he is having no success and that becoming Chairman has made him a "statesman". He has also expressed to others some disdain for "the White House crowd". I guess every Chairman goes through this syndrome.

We can do some things here. Lasky has taken three shots at Muskie so far, as you know. I got Riesel worked up about a piece. What we can do here is very limited, however, because of the risk of getting caught. We can mastermind it, but Dole/Nofziger have got to execute. I have asked for a meeting with Bob and I will take a first crack at it; if it doesn't work I think you are going to have to see him.

Some things that should be done, most of them from the Committee, are:

1. Complete research - we should be reading every Maine newspaper and should be following his press clips wherever he travels.
2. We should be trying to force his hand on positions. A Civics teacher in Maine should ask his views on forced integration; a citizen of Maine should ask him why he believes the POW's can't be released until the war is over. We should be actively trying to pin him down on every tough issue.

3. Leaking information to columnists - Muskie is opening himself wide to the charge that he is indecisive, excessively cautious, and not a real leader with real convictions. It may be easier to make this stick than the charge that he is a way-out liberal, first because it is true and, secondly, it is easier to sell this impression to the public. Muskie doesn't look like a left-winger so it is hard to make him appear as one. He looks cautious, sometimes to the point of being confused, and that is a tag that I think we can hang on him. Obviously, we should continue to try to do both. Once again, we have to be careful and can only deal with columnists that we are especially sure of. Nofziger and Dole can talk to anyone and everyone.
4. We should make extensive use of selected mailings. We sent the Lasky piece to every Southern and Border state Governor, State Legislator, Committeeman, publisher, editor and delegate to the 1968 Democratic convention, etc. This was done under the auspices of the American Conservative Union. We need similar groups to be mailing to liberals when Muskie vacillates on an issue important to them, and conservatives when he goes off to the left. We also should be able to get conservative Democrats, who are with us, or at least anti-Muskie, speaking out against Muskie (McCarthy is already cutting him up from the left, but this doesn't help us).
5. We need to do more to encourage the Kennedy/Muskie rivalry. Because of certain events in recent weeks, their respective staffs are quite unhappy with each other. This fire needs to be continually stoked. We should also, with friendly columnists, build up McGovern (I just did this with the Chicago Tribune) and Scoop Jackson (I just did this with Riesel).

I will go over all of this with Dole and let you know what comes of it.