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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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February 19, 1971

E.O. 12065, Section 6-102

By \_\_\_\_\_ MARS, Date \_\_\_\_\_

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MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. MAGRUDER  
FROM: KEN KHACHIGIAN   
SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL  
BEHAVIOR: PROSPECTS FOR '72

The attached analysis does not lend itself to any easy answers. I'll approach it on two fronts. First, assuming the theory is correct, what should we do to implement this suggestion? Second, is the theory correct?

If party alignment will control this election as well as major elections to follow, then we should embark immediately on the survey work which will tell us just how that party realignment could take place; i. e., what can we do to encourage people to change from Democrat or Independent to Republican registration?

If survey research and analysis can give us the way to achieve party realignment, I suggest we go in that direction. Given a good, sound analysis of how to go about the realignment, it would not be difficult to gear our political operation in that direction.

But! I don't think party alignment will determine the election of 1972. Moreover, our first concern is not party realignment or making the party strong, but to re-elect Richard Nixon. Winning that election will come through the conventional appeal to current Republicans; an appeal on the record to Independents; and an appeal to the disillusioned Democrats who feel their party has deserted them.

It is only after elections that major changes in party alignment take place. A case in point is FDR's victory in 1932. It was after the election that so many Americans turned away from the Republicans to the Democrats. And they turned away largely because of what they perceived Roosevelt doing for them. Hence, the huge realignment of Black voters who before had been Republican.

Thus, if any realignment is going to take place, it will take place only after Richard Nixon is re-elected and not before. It will take place only if there are factors which encourage that type of re-alignment; that is to say, if Republicans can demonstrate that they offer more to the Nation than do the Democrats. That will depend on issue-presentation and issue-resolution -- two processes which are just beginning.

So, what I am suggesting is that we keep our eye on the doughnut and not on the hole. There is going to be no great party realignment before the decade is over. It will be a slow process, barring historical aberrations. What we can do is communicate to the public, via the President, that his reforms and policies amount to the kind of fundamental change on which realignments are built. If we can communicate this, then we might be able to start the slow process of party realignment.

But the process is slow, and if we gear up an election based on the thesis of party alignment, we're going to lose sight of the real goal of 1972; that is, winning an election.