

The original documents are located in Box 36, folder “Ford Americans, The” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 3, 1976

*Carolyn
file*

MEMORANDUM TO: BF STAFF
FROM: SUSAN PORTER

Attached is the overview statement about "The Ford Americans," an umbrella organization developed by Jack Ford and others. The First Family will serve as Honorary National Chairmen, Elly Peterson as the Executive Director. David Sands will be the staff person and Jack Ford will also have a desk at the Committee and will be involved when he is in town. The group will be an umbrella organization encompassing all of the special support groups: young people, women, ethnic Americans, etc.

The Program will encompass a variety of efforts, as described in the attachment, and rallies attended by First Family members will be held essentially every ten days. The press conference announcing this will probably be held on Tuesday, September 7th.

Thank you.

Later: Aspects of this entire program are in flux at the present time, however, this basic information may be of interest or help.



M E M O R A N D U M

To: James Baker

From: Jack Ford, George Gorton, David Sands

Date: August 31, 1976

Re: "The Ford Americans"

If we are going to win on November 2, 1976, we must have an effective volunteer organization! The need for this recruitment program is based on the shortage of time and money that we have to work with. Only with large numbers of dedicated volunteers can we hope to achieve our objective.

In order to recruit these large numbers of people, we have to make these activities more glamorous and appealing to people of all ages. In other words, welcoming everyone into the Ford Campaign.

Enclosure



The Ford Americans

To sell our umbrella organization, we would like to use the "Presidentials" program as an example. This was a semi-autonomous program that utilized all aspects of the PFC, and offered a valuable learning experience to 1,100 young people at the convention. The primary difference between our program and the "Presidential's" is that we will be encompassing all of the special voter groups.

The First Family will serve as Honorary National Chairmen and Ellie Peterson serving as its Executive Director with full control of it and the special voter group.

FORMAT

The volunteer program is a combination of the traditional volunteer activities of every campaign: phone, banks, rallies, ✓ door to door canvassing, registration drives, and literature drops.

The cornerstone of this program, however, is through the effective use of each member of the First Family. By recognizing each of their unique strengths and diverse voter appeal, we can maximize their impact, thus drawing wide media attention. These events should excite the voters and create a snowball effect that would draw the large number of people into the campaign.

If the volunteer program is to be effective, the First Family has to be used immediately to generate this much needed resource.



Series of Events

A Press Conference hosted by the President at which all members of the First Family involved in the "Ford Americans" program are introduced and national goals are outlined and explained.

- A. A series of Press Conferences in key states will be set up, hosted by a member of the First Family. The format will include introducing the "Ford Americans" state chairman and the goals each is pledged to work towards. These state chairmen will issue weekly press releases announcing what has been accomplished during the week and use of visual aids will be stressed as a daily reminder of what is expected. Competition among state chairmen is encouraged to reach our goals.
- B. Door-to-door Canvassing. We have tentatively scheduled four National Canvassing days during the two-month period. All members of the First Family will participate in each event in different key areas of the nation. Our goal here is to attract national media attention on these days.
- C. Phone Banks. We plan to stress the importance of the phone banks and the need for volunteer operators to assist in making phone calls. We will call this "National Phone Bank Nights." Family members will be located in phone bank areas that need special help.
- D. Literature Drops. A series of national literature drops using Family members as hosts will be employed.



- E. Volunteer Rallies. Every ten days, a rally will be held in key states under the title of the "Ford Americans Night." They will be used as a tool to recruit volunteers and to generate high visability of the campaign. The direct mail and phone banks will be our primary source in drawing large crouds out to meet the member or members of the First Family.

Procedures

- A. Direct mail. We view the use of direct mail as serving two functions: 1) to reach people informing them about the President's stand on the issues and about his endorsement of the "Ford Americans" program and 2) as a vehicle for recruitment of volunteers. We would like to have some of the direct mail service for our use. It would be sent into those targeted regional areas that will be selected for our special recruitment rallies and PFC efforts. Each letter will contain a message from the member of the First Family hosting the event. These lists will then be turned over to the phone bank operations in the field for follow-up calls prior to each rally.
- B. Media. The generation of nationwide press coverage will deterine th success of our program. The President, we feel should hold a press conference within the next two weeks formally endorsing the "Ford Americans" concept thus helping to get the ball rolling.

With a good Press Secretary geared into the use of



media as a means of selling our program to the American people, our momentum will be unstoppable.

Summary

Each special voter group will have responsibility to turn out the maximum number of their people to these rallies and recruitment drives. Their field people or state coordinators will work with the special event site advancement to recruit those people for use in the registration drives, canvassing and telephone bank efforts during that week and for the remainder of the campaign.

We feel it is imperative that these special event rallies initially be held in those key states (as determined by the early polling data) that will have large phone bank operators. The most essential ingredient to any phone bank operation is a large talent bank of volunteers. Without them, campaigns are lost causes.

