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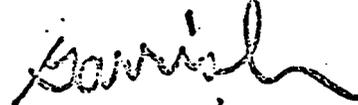
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

SUBJECT: Surveys on Race and Bussing

Attached is my analysis of the campaign polls as it relates to questions on bussing and race relations. A recommendation on these subjects is also included.

ROBERT M. TEETER



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By JD NARA, Date 12/30/09



SUMMARY OF SURVEYS  
ON RACE AND BUSSING

In conducting our campaign polls during December and January, considerable data was collected on school desegregation, bussing and race relations. This memorandum will summarize and analyze the important political aspects of the data obtained.

Favor School Desegregation

Americans overwhelmingly support the principle of school desegregation.

School Desegregation

	<u>Nat'l</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Midwest</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>N.C.</u>	<u>Va.</u>	<u>Tex.</u>	<u>N.Y.</u>	<u>Calif.</u>
Favor	75	80	75	65	84	60	70	79	78	87
Oppose	20	14	19	30	14	37	25	37	15	9
No Response	5	6	6	5	2	3	5	3	7	4

Racially integrated public schools are favored by over two-thirds of every political and demographic group in the country except Wallace voters. Nixon voters and Muskie voters favor integration by 78% and 80% respectively. 51% of the Wallace voters are opposed to school integration, compared to 43% in favor. Both white and black voters favor desegregation to approximately the same degree. Young voters, especially ages 25 to 34, who are parents of elementary age children, approve of school integration by 83%.

Oppose Bussing

There is no doubt that the American public is opposed to bussing to achieve a racial balance in schools.

Bussing to Achieve School Integration

	<u>Nat'l</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Midwest</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>N.C.</u>	<u>Va.</u>	<u>Tex.</u>	<u>N.Y.</u>	<u>Calif.</u>
Favor	20	21	19	18	22	33	23	18	24	25
Oppose	76	75	77	78	73	59	73	61	55	61
No Response	4	4	4	4	5	8	4	20	21	14



All political, geographic, and demographic groups except blacks are opposed to bussing by large margins. Those persons who vote for Nixon and Wallace are somewhat more opposed to bussing than Muskie voters.

Black voters hold a different view on bussing than their white counterparts.

Bussing to Achieve School Integration

	<u>White Voters</u>	<u>Black Voters</u>
Favor	17%	60%
Oppose	79	38
No Response	4	2

Other studies, however, have found a majority of blacks opposed to bussing but the opposition is not as strong as among whites. Black opposition also declines when bussing is perceived to be the only alternative for blacks to achieve equal educational opportunity. The key to black attitudes on bussing appears to be whether or not they believe they can get equal education in their own neighborhood schools now.

Those blacks who believe they now have good schools in their areas tend to oppose bussing, but those who believe their schools are educationally inferior to others in the area are in favor of bussing as a means of securing equal education for their children. Whites also fully support equal education for blacks.

On the question of federal funds being used to provide for bussing, 78% were opposed to funds being used in this manner.

As expected, the acceptability of bussing depends partially on the length of ride.

Percentage Willing-Unwilling  
to Accept Length of Ride

	<u>10 Minutes</u>	<u>20 Minutes</u>	<u>30 Minutes</u>	<u>45 Minutes</u>
All Voters	37-56%	26-66%	16-76%	9-83%
Ages 18-24	52-43	39-56	24-73	13-84
Ages 25-34	48-47	32-63	19-75	11-84

Younger voters (ages 18 to 34) are the most likely to be affected by bussing in that they are the families with young children; and they are not as opposed to short bus rides as older voters.



### Bussing Not Vote Determining Issue

Bussing is not perceived as a particularly important national problem. Nationally, less than 1% voluntarily mention it as an important national problem. In fact, only 3% mention racial problems as an important national issue. However, local studies have shown that where bussing has been a problem or the subject of a court order, the large majority of voters are strongly and intensely opposed. The highest mention of bussing as a national problem is 8% in North Carolina.

On our recent surveys, voters were asked to rate 13 issues in terms of their importance to them personally, and bussing received the lowest average rating of all issues tested--nationally and in all regions. In comparison, education was classified as important by twice the number of voters as bussing, especially those aged 18 to 35 years. The respondents were also asked which of these 13 issues would be most important to them in deciding how to vote for President and bussing was mentioned as the most important factor by only 1% nationally.

### President Lacking Credibility on Bussing

Among those who are able to rate the candidates, the President receives a less favorable rating on his ability to handle bussing than Muskie or Kennedy. This is true nationally and in the south.

When voters were asked to select the greatest failure of the President from an issue list (including bussing), 22% selected the bussing answer. The same question was asked regarding the voter's expectation of the issue on which Muskie would do the poorest job. Of those who were able to answer, 3% indicated bussing. With Kennedy, bussing received a 1% mention.

### Potential Negative Impact

There may be some risk in the President taking a very strong anti-bussing stand.

In the south where the problem is for the most part history, the President enjoys a comfortable margin.

The greatest impact will probably be in the northern states. In those states where the President is ahead, he is obtaining a level of black support, particularly against Muskie, which is higher than a Republican candidate might normally expect or than the President received in 1968. This is shown in tabular form on Attachment A. If the black community perceives the President's position an "anti-Negro," he may seriously jeopardize his winning margin in some very critical northern states, such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio by increasing black opposition to him and increasing black turnout.





### Conclusions

I think that several conclusions can be drawn from the data we have available.

- Bussing is not seen as a major national problem by any significant group of voters except in those local areas where it has become an important local issue by virtue of a court decision or local political campaign. However, once it does become a local issue, the large majority are strongly opposed and their opposition is very intense.
- If asked specifically about the idea of bussing students to achieve integration, a large majority of Americans in every region of the country are opposed by large margins.
- A large majority of Americans are strongly in favor of equal education for all children. Most voters are in favor of integrated public schools but do not believe bussing should be used to achieve them. Blacks are much more concerned with equal education than with integration or bussing. Most whites see education as the primary long-range solution to the racial problems in our country.
- The President currently has a credibility problem on this issue, particularly in those areas where it has become a major local issue. He receives low ratings for his ability to handle the problem, and while most people know he has said that he is against bussing, they also know that he has been unable to stop it. This leads them to the conclusion that he is either not believable or that he is ineffective. Any further statements by the President will have to be accompanied by some definite action in order to be believable. This is particularly true in those areas where bussing is a problem.
- There is a definite danger of "overkill" on this issue.

There is a fine line between being against bussing and being "anti-Negro" and the President needs to treat this subject with great care. As more Democrats take anti-bussing positions, the President should be careful not to go as far in his opposition and be perceived as "anti-Negro" just to keep the lead on the bussing issue..

The President is now in a position to get 15-20% of the black vote in several large northern states against Muskie. Presently, there is no particular intensity in black support for Muskie. Any position which is perceived to be "anti-Negro" could reduce the President's black support to 5-10%, intensify black opposition to him, and increase black turnout for Muskie. These factors would damage the President's chances of carrying several large northern states which he is now likely to win.



A position which is perceived to be anti-black could also give the press the opportunity to move the President's perception too far to the conservative end of the liberal-conservative spectrum. This could hurt the President's chances with significant numbers of white ticket-splitters or swing voters who tend to be moderate on the race question, very pro education, and who are now supporting the President on Vietnam, inflation, and other more important national issues.

- It appears unlikely that this issue could produce any additional voters for the President. Rather, we should primarily be concerned with not losing any votes.

#### Recommendations

As the President has already taken a strong stand against bussing and has some credibility problems with the issue, I think that he should either say nothing more or that he should reaffirm his stand but accompany it with some specific action. If his decision is to further oppose bussing, I would suggest that it contain the following elements:

1. He should not endorse a constitutional amendment.

His endorsement of a constitutional amendment would clearly be perceived as "anti-Negro" and it would seriously damage our chances of carrying several large northern states by intensifying black opposition and costing us the support of significant numbers of swing voters.

2. He should reaffirm his support for the principles of equal educational opportunity and integration.
3. He should recognize that many schools, particularly black schools, are now educationally inferior to others in their same school district or area.
4. He should strongly oppose bussing as a means of remedying this situation.
5. He should propose legislative action which would tie anti-bussing provisions to a program which would give immediate remedial attention to schools which have no realistic prospect of being desegregated and would provide maximum educational opportunity for all school children, white and black.
6. His approach should have the advantage of satisfying the majority who are opposed to bussing, and at the same time, protect us with the blacks and moderate whites who are primarily concerned with high quality education. The data clearly indicates that many blacks would support an anti-bussing stand if they believed they were going to get equally good schools in their own neighborhoods.



ATTACHMENT A

<u>STATE</u>	<u>1968 MARGIN</u>	<u>CURRENT MARGIN (N/M/W)</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE BLK. SUPPORT</u>
National		+ 9%	11%
California	+ 3%	- 6%	11%
Florida	+ 9%	+17%	33%
Illinois	+ 3%	+ 7%	2%
Indiana	+12%	+ 8%	4%
Iowa	+12%	+10%	*
Kentucky	+ 6%	+16%	38%**
Maryland	- 2%	- 1%	17%
Missouri	+ 1%	- 8%	4%
North Carolina	+ 8%	+12%	25%
New Hampshire	+ 8%	+10%	*
New Jersey	+ 2%	+11%	21%
New York	- 5%	- 1%	23%
Ohio	+ 2%	+ 9%	19%
Oregon	+ 6%	+ 3%	*
Pennsylvania	- 4%	- 4%	10%
Tennessee	+ 4%	+11%	20%
Texas	- 1%	- 2%	8%
Virginia	+10%	+15%	15%
Wisconsin	+ 4%	- 8%	3%

\* Sample Size Too Small

\*\* Based on 29 Negroes in Sample