The original documents are located in Box 64, folder "May 23, 1972 - Myles J. Ambrose - Priority Areas for Drug Programs" of the Robert Teeter Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Committee for the Re-election of the President

MEMORANDUM

May 23, 1972

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~/EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE HONORABLE MYLES J. AMBROSE

FROM: TED J. GARRISH

SUBJECT: Priority Areas for Drug Programs

As we discussed by telephone, this memorandum will outline those areas of the country where some special emphasis of the administration's drug programs would aid in improving public perception of the President in handling this problem, and eventually will help the President's voting strength.

Regardless of the record, the President is seen as significantly less able to handle drug problems than his opponents by those who are able to rate the candidates:

Ratings of Candidates
Handling of Drug Problems

	Positive	Negative	No Opinion
Nixon	38%	55%	7%
Muskie 1/	33	13	54
Kennedy	49	26	25

As you can see, the above table shows a higher percentage of negative rating than positive for the President's handling of drug problems. On the other hand, the Democratic opponents receive considerably more favorable ratings than negative. This identical finding was also evident in a Louis Harris issue poll conducted in October, 1971.

1/ At the time our studies were conducted, Muskie was the President's strongest opponent. The issue data changes very slowly and although Muskie's position has eroded significantly since this study, the data is still useful to provide comparisons against the President on issues. Up-to-date information on the top contenders will be collected in our second wave of research. Other research leads us to conclude there has been very little change in the President's ratings on the handling of drug problems over the past several months.

The President's rating varies considerably by geographical area and I have attached a priority list (see Attachment A) of those areas we would suggest where special emphasis would be most productive. Several criteria were used in selecting the priority areas. First, we considered those areas where the President's ratings were significantly worse than the national average. Second, we limited our list to those areas where we felt additional effort would improve the President's voting strength, giving special weight to those states with large electoral votes. Areas of the country where the President was far ahead or behind in the trial heats were not included in the priority list. I have also included two lists of those cities in your 35 target areas where the program will be less beneficial. (See Attachment A.)

The following three areas require special attention.

New York City (and suburbs)
Philadelphia
Baltimore Metropolitan Area

In each of these above areas, two-thirds or more of the voters give the President a negative rating on his handling of drugs. In Baltimore it appears that the drug problem also contributes to the President's low rating on the handling of crime and may partially account for the high mention of crime problems in the Baltimore area.

Each of the priority areas would benefit from any promotions which explain the existing drug programs, especially those which tie the President to these programs. For your reference I have included this type of pamphlet from H.E.W. which has been very effective in this regard. Personal appearances in the priority areas by surrogate speakers would also be beneficial. Van Shumway of our press section and Bill Novelli associated with the Committee and the November Group could provide assistance in developing your programs and obtaining additional publicity.

Generally, the public should be responsive to federal government programs. 46% of the voters view the federal government as the one most responsible for solving drug problems.

Those Most Responsible
to Solve Drug Problems

Federal Government	46%
State Government	18
Local Government	20
Schools	15
Parents	43
No Opinion	8

The analysis from a Louis Harris poll regarding drug abuse is also attached for your reference. (See Attachment B).

Following our second wave of polls to be completed July 15, 1972, I will provide an update of the findings outlined in this memorandum.

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ATTACHMENT A

Special Area Priorities To Improve Perception of the President in Handling Drug Problems	Cities Where Drug Program Will have Some Effect But Less than Priority Areas	Cities Where Drug Abuse Program Has Only Small Effect on President's Overall Voting Strength
1. New York City and suburbs	Indianapolis, Indiana	Atlanta, Georgia
2. Philadelphia Metro	Buffalo, New York	Miami, Florida
3. Baltimore Metro	Chicago, Illinois	Washington, D.C.
4. San Francisco/Los Angeles Metro 1/	Cincinnati, Ohio	Albuquerque, New Mexico
5. Portland Metro	Columbus, Ohio	Boston, Massachusetts
6. Newark Metro 2/	Detroit, Michigan	Denver, Colorado
7. Austin Metro and Mid-Texas	Houston, Texas	New Orleans, Louisiana
8. St. Louis Metro	Kansas City, Missouri	Phoenix, Arizona
9. San Diego Metro	San Antonio, Texas	
10. Milwaukee Metro 3/	Seattle, Washington	
11. Dallas/Fort Worth Metro	Rochester, New York	
12. Cleveland Metro	Toledo, Ohio	
13. Pittsburgh Metro		

1/ Secondarily Monterey, Santa Barbara, Sacramento and Stockton.

2/ Secondarily rest of New Jersey.

3/ Secondarily Racine/Kenosha.

ATTACHMENT B

The Fourth Most Important Problem: Drug Abuse

Drug abuse problems were volunteered by 25% of the public as being among the two or three biggest problems confronting the country today. The survey probed for the specifics.

Q.7a Q.7b

One key area dealt with the way users of illegal drugs should be handled. By a lopsided 73 to 11% margin, a heavy majority of the people opted for "giving medical and mental treatment" to drug users rather than "stiff prison terms". The minority of 11% were asked whether they would still feel the same way if sending drug users to prison might make hardened criminals out of many young people. A substantial 67% said they would not change their views. But when the 73% majority were asked if, by "giving medical and mental treatment to drug users, it meant encouraging young people to violate the law by using illegal drugs", 49% of them stuck by their views, and 39% said they would then not oppose stiff prison terms. The remaining 12% were undecided.

LOUIS HARRIS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

Observation:

When the question is posed in terms of a choice between "encouragement of illegal drug usage" versus "making hardened criminals of drug users", the division narrows although the balance is still in favor of more moderate than tough treatment. The key reason is that the instinct of the majority is to seek out positive approaches in handling drug users rather than simply to "crack down".

Q.5f-2

This observation is reinforced by the answers given by the public to a series of alternatives put to the 95% of the sample who felt that controlling drug abuse was a "serious problem". The top three choices were: "laws on drug pushers are too easy" (43%), "young people should be better educated on drugs" (32%), and "hard drugs from abroad should be cut off by those countries" (30%). Emerging next in line was the option of "laws on drug users are too easy", cited by 29%, but this is balanced off by "more drug rehabilitation programs are needed", mentioned by 24%.

Observation:

Where the American people want to get tough on the subject of drugs is with the pushers and the foreign countries who generate hard drugs used in this country. Steps by the Administration in these directions, coupled with extensive rehabilitation programs, would fit the general desires of the public on this highly tense and emotional but not politically-oriented issue.

The President Speaks to Older Americans

Old Age should not be a time of endings, but a time of new beginnings—not a time for stopping, but a time for new starts.

☆☆☆

What we must build in this country—among all of our people—is a new attitude toward old age; an attitude which insists that there can be no retirement from living, no retirement from citizenship.

☆☆☆

There is one thing I know about the older generation in America. They believe in this country. They have faith in this country. They have the moral strength and character that we need, that all Americans need.

☆☆☆

. . . old age which should be a time of pride and fulfillment—pride and fulfillment looking back and looking forward—is too often a time of isolation and withdrawal. Rather than being a time of dignity, it is often a time of disappointment. And the growing separation of older Americans also means that we are not taking full advantage of a tremendous reservoir of skill and wisdom and moral strength that our Nation desperately needs at this moment in its history.

☆☆☆

. . . we need you. We need your experience. We need your perspective. Above all, we need your sense of values, because you know this can be a strong nation militarily, it is the strongest nation in the world; it can be a strong nation economically. It is. We are the richest nation in the world. And it can be an empty shell if we forget that those moral and spiritual values, to which your generation is so deeply committed, are also there.

☆☆☆

. . . the generation over 65 is a very special group which faces very special problems—it deserves very special attention.

☆☆☆

. . . we are making determined efforts to improve the financial position of our older citizens.

☆☆☆

. . . we have proposed that the Federal Government place a floor under the income of every senior citizen in America. We have proposed that Social Security benefits for widows be raised. We have called for an automatic cost of living increase in Social Security to make certain that monthly payments will keep up with inflation.

The fact that many older people may not be active members of the labor force does not mean that they should be denied a fair share of our growing productivity.

☆☆☆

Only through revenue sharing, where the Federal Government shares its revenues with the States, are we going to stop the rise in local property taxes in this country, which is eating into the budget of every retired person who owns his own home.

We have to stop discrimination in this country against older people who want to work. The time has come to raise the ceiling on how much a person can earn while receiving Social Security. The time has come to increase the amount of Social Security he can keep when his earnings exceed that ceiling.

☆☆☆

. . . if there is any single institution in this country that symbolizes the tragic isolation and shameful neglect of older Americans, . . . it is the substandard nursing home, and there are some. Some are unsanitary. Some are ill-equipped. Some are overcrowded. Some are understaffed . . .

☆☆☆

. . . we should take notice of this problem. . . . I have asked the White House Conference to give particular attention to it. One thing you can be sure, I do not believe that Medicaid and Medicare funds should go to substandard nursing homes in this country and subsidize them.

☆☆☆

I am confident that our Federal, State, and local government, working together with the private sector, can do much to transform the nursing home—for those who need it, and of course, there are those who do not need it or want it—transform it into an inspiring symbol of comfort and hope.

☆☆☆

The time has come for a new attitude toward old age in America. The time has come to close the gap between our older citizens and those who are not old. The way to do this, I believe, is to stop regarding older Americans as a burden and start regarding them as a resource for America.

☆☆☆

. . . I am particularly looking forward to the White House Conference on Aging later this year. . . . This conference promises new and fresh ideas. We want your ideas . . .

All who take part in this conference and in the State conferences . . . can be sure that we will welcome recommendations. We are going to give them our closest consideration.

☆☆☆

The ancient Greeks said that we could count no man's life happy until the end of it. For if any man is to live a good life in the most complete sense, then his later years must also be years of fulfillment. As we pursue this goal and break away the barriers to full participation for those who are old today, we will also break them away for those who will be old tomorrow.

☆☆☆

I call today for a new alliance in this country between Americans who are under 65 and those who are over 65.

The American community will be incomplete without the full participation of every American. For each generation has its unique role to play in the unfolding drama of America.

Let us then put aside the things which would divide us—suspicion, condescension, resentment and indifference. Let us join together across the Nation and make ourselves an even greater America as we move forward together.

Richard Nixon

Excerpts from remarks by the President at the Joint Conference of National Retired Teachers Association and American Association of Retired Persons. Chicago, Illinois—June 25, 1971.

DHEW Publication No. (SRS) 72-20201

GPO: 1971 O—446-219

The President Speaks to Older Americans

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Social and Rehabilitation Service
Administration on Aging