

The original documents are located in Box 65, folder “June 10, 1972 - Jeb S. Magruder - Public Perception of the President's Ability to Handle Crime” of the Robert Teeter Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Committee for the Re-election of the President

MEMORANDUM

~~CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY~~

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THROUGH:

JEB S. MAGRUDER

FROM:

TED J. GARRISH

SUBJECT:

Public Perception of the President's
Ability to Handle Crime

Our analysis of the campaign polls has indicated certain areas of the country where some special emphasis of the administration's record on crime would aid in improving the public perception of the President in handling crime, and eventually will help the President's voting strength. The crime issue is especially important to us, because regardless of the record, the President is seen as significantly less able to handle crime problems than his Democratic opponents.

The President's rating varies considerably by city and I have attached a list in order of priority of those areas we would suggest where special emphasis would be most productive. Various 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.

The State of Maryland deserves special attention. 16% mention crime as a leading national problem in this state compared to 6% nationally. In Baltimore, it is even more important with 20% of the voters mentioning it as the single most important national problem.

Each of the priority areas and especially Baltimore would benefit greatly from whatever efforts and programs your government agency could produce for each geographic area. This effort would not necessarily require any new programs. Personal appearances in the priority areas by surrogate speakers would also be beneficial. To assist you in obtaining additional publicity we would suggest that you contact Van Shumway of our press section and Bill Novelli associated with the November Group, our in-house advertising agency.

Determined to be an
Administrative Marking

By CCG NARA, Date 2/8/2010



Actual voter perception that crime has been reduced will not be reached easily. A recent Louis Harris poll has shown that regardless of any reduction in crime a majority of voters feel "more afraid and uneasy on the streets today" than they did a year ago. The programs will be most effective in improving perceptions on crime if the emphasis is on improving personal safety. Generally the public feels the federal government should play a greater role in solving crime problems. The only believable solutions may be "more police" and "stricter law enforcement." It is important, however, that the crime programs do not have a "repression" or "law and order" theme. These are perceived as negative symbols, especially to independent and swing voters.

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

If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

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**SPECIAL AREA PRIORITIES
TO IMPROVE PERCEPTION
OF THE PRESIDENT IN
HANDLING CRIME**

1. Philadelphia Metro
2. New York City and Suburbs
3. Newark Metro
4. Chicago Metro
5. Monterey/Santa Barbara/Sacramento, Calif.
6. St. Louis Metro
7. Baltimore Metro
8. Los Angeles Metro
9. Portland Metro
10. Cleveland Metro
11. Gary, Indiana Metro
12. Kansas City Metro
13. Montgomery County, Maryland
14. Indianapolis Metro
15. Pittsburgh Metro
16. Milwaukee Metro

