

The original documents are located in Box 65, folder “July 15, 1972 - Clark MacGregor - Second Wave Campaign Polls” 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

July 15, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE HONORABLE CLARK Mac GREGOR

FROM: ROBERT M. TEETER

SUBJECT: Second Wave Campaign Polls

Summary

Attached are the complete summary tables for the second wave of polling. (With the exception of New York and Indiana which were purposely delayed to start after the Primary in New York and the State Convention in Indiana). This memorandum outlines some preliminary findings from this data. We will be doing a more detailed analysis during the next week.

Based on our second wave of polls, the states can be divided into the following groups:

<u>Ahead</u>		<u>Close</u>		<u>Behind</u>	
Alabama	(+ 40)	California	(+ 6)	Oregon	(- 8)
Connecticut	(+ 17)	Michigan	0	Washington	(- 4)
Illinois	(+ 21)	New Jersey	(+ 7)	Wisconsin	(- 8)
Maryland	(+ 10)	Pennsylvania	(+ 7)		
Ohio	(+ 18)	Missouri	(- 2)		
Texas	(+ 19)				

The President is losing almost no Republicans, has good leads with ticket-splitters and is cutting into the Democratic strength at the rate of 25-30% in most of the states. While his vote with the Democrats will undoubtedly decline, if we can maintain the present lead with the ticket-splitters in the priority states, we should continue to be in very good shape.

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By CRG NARA, Date 2/8/2010



The President's support with most of the individual demographic groups is related to traditional party voting patterns and is similar to that observed in the first wave. His support is lowest with young voters, those of low incomes and low levels of education and increases as age, income and education level increase. Generally, the President is trailing McGovern by 10-15% with the 18-24 age group, running fairly close with the 25-34 age group and leading him by increasing margins with the other age groups. While he trails McGovern with union members in most states the margin is small. The President is receiving the support of 35-45% of union members.

The President continues to run very well with Catholics, leading McGovern in those states where we are ahead- Illinois, Maryland, Ohio, and New Jersey.

Our black support ranges from 4% in California to 26% in Pennsylvania. Generally it is in the 9-12% range.

Vietnam continues to be the single most important problem facing the country. It has increased in importance by approximately 10% from the first wave polls. The President's handling of the Vietnam situation remains at the same relatively high level as experienced on our initial polls. It should be pointed out, however, that the majority of voters believe the correct course in Vietnam is between the positions advocated by Nixon and McGovern. Generally, it is my opinion that a majority of the voters' support of the President is directly related to their perception of his performance on Vietnam.

Inflation is the second most important issue and the one where the President's ratings have declined the most. In January the President's ratings on his handling of inflation were relatively good but have decreased approximately 20% in most of the states since then. At the same time, the number of voters rating him negatively on this issue has increased markedly. Not only has his overall rating on handling inflation declined during the last six months but also very few voters think his policies have slowed inflation. Approximately 75% do not think food price/inflation has sufficiently slowed. Over 60% favor more drastic steps to prevent any further rise in food prices.

The only other issue where the President's ratings have declined significantly is taxes which is related to the other pocketbook issue- inflation.



The one issue where the President's rating has significantly improved is drugs. The rating on his handling of the drug problem is up about 15% since January. Apparently this increase results from a good deal of positive action taken during the spring.

The President's ratings on all of the other issues have held relatively steady. He continues to be rated most positively on national defense and foreign affairs, followed by health care, racial problems, the environment, bussing, general unrest, and welfare. His ratings on crime and unemployment continue to be quite poor.

McGovern's awareness has increased with 70-75% being able to rate him on his ability to handle the issues and on his personality. While almost all of the President's ratings are higher than McGovern's, the margin over McGovern has slipped from that which existed over Muskie in January.

On national defense and Vietnam withdrawal, the voters placed themselves about mid-way between the President and McGovern. Relative to amnesty and legalization of marijuana, the voters were significantly closer to the President than McGovern. When asked about the need for basic change in our country, the need for tax reform, and the liberalization of abortion laws, voters perceived McGovern's position as closer to their own than the President's.

On his perceived personality, McGovern does best on trust and does poorest on strength variables. The President's strongest attributes are experience and training, followed by trust and strength.

In light of the shooting of Governor Wallace, a question was asked on whether the respondents thought Presidential candidates should limit their appearances because of the danger of assassination and approximately 60% think that the candidates should limit their appearances compared compared to about 30% who think they should not.

Preliminary Conclusions and Recommendations

While the President has very substantial leads over McGovern in some states, we have to assume that with his nomination many Democrats will be returning to the fold and the margin will decrease. Our campaign should be directed at inhibiting this trend among Democrats to the maximum degree possible and persuading those who are not now committed to vote for the President. As I have emphasized in the past, every point we can add to the President's committed vote now will come much easier than those we have to add later in October.



Our first priority should be to recreate those coalitions in the priority states that have allowed Republicans to carry them in past elections. These coalitions for various Republican candidates are very similar in the larger states regardless of the personality or particular ideology of the candidate. Generally, this coalition has consisted of 90-95% of the Republicans, 60-70% of the ticket-splitters, and 15-20% of the Democrats. The implication of this is clear. We have to maintain and increase our lead with ticket-splitters while retaining as much of our Democratic support as possible. While we have greater opportunity to get large shares of the Democratic vote this year than in any other recent election, 1968 proves that we simply cannot count on it for our winning margin.

Our data indicates that there are two basic groups of ticket-splitters with which we need to be concerned. The first group has been splitting their ticket for some time and in recent years have been splitting in favor of winning Republicans. They tend to be in the 25-50 age group, to be somewhat better educated than the average voter, to have slightly higher incomes than the average voter, in general they are from the upper middle class, and are typically suburbanites.

Over the years ticket-splitters have provided the winning margin in most of the priority states, and they are vital to us this year. The President did well with them in 1968 and should do well with them again although some of the primary analyses indicate that McGovern also has some appeal to them. Another important characteristic of this group is that they want to maintain their integrity as ticket splitters and will reject a party appeal.

The second group are those who have only begun to split their ticket in the past few years and who have previously voted straight Democratic. Even though they are now clearly ticket-splitters and are available to us in this campaign, they will still probably vote for a majority of Democrats. Many of them split for Wallace in the last election and many switched from Wallace to Humphrey late in the campaign. This group is lower on the socio-economic scale than the first group and age is somewhat less of a factor. They are often (but not necessarily) Catholic, and in the large cities of the East and Midwest, often have ethnic backgrounds. They are essentially the blue collar working middle class.

This is the group where we have the greatest opportunities to add to the President's vote particularly against McGovern. It appears that the higher the income within this group, the better the chance we have of getting their votes.



The one common characteristic of these two groups, in addition to their propensity to split their ticket, is that they are upwardly socially mobile. Most of them have moved up a half or a full social class in their generation.

Vietnam and the economy, particularly inflation and taxes are the most important issues in the campaign and I think it is to our advantage to keep it that way. These are the issues that will be the most important to the largest number of voters (particularly ticket-splitters). On the whole the foreign affairs/peace issue complex, Vietnam is the single issue where we have the greatest advantage over McGovern. We should use this advantage.

We also had a significant advantage over any Democrats on the inflation issue in January but have lost much of that advantage now. If there is any danger sign in this data it is the decline in the President's rating on inflation and taxes. These will be important issues to many in deciding how to vote and we should move immediately to reestablish our advantage with them. The President should consider further action to deal with inflation and food prices; and I think he should definitely make a statement on taxes, particularly property tax relief, in the Fall. The data indicates that McGovern is not perceived to be as far out as we might think on taxes, and we can not risk losing this issue to him. Certainly more exposure of the extreme elements of McGovern's tax proposals wouldn't hurt. The unemployment facet of this issue does not concern me too much, if the situation continues to improve slowly. Even though the President's ratings on it are low, there simply is not any evidence of large numbers of people voting against the President because of unemployment. I realize, however, that this may not be true in some local areas such as Seattle and Southern California.

The problem of low ratings on the drug problem has apparently been solved. This is particularly significant because it appears to be an indication of what a vigorous program can produce.

Two other issues which we should keep track of and handle with care are the general issue of social change and abortion. A large majority think that we need some fundamental changes in our governmental and economic systems. To some degree they see McGovern in favor of the change and the President against it. We should be perceived as being in favor of responsible change while labeling McGovern as representing radical, irresponsible change.

On abortion the voters split about even in terms of being favor or opposed to the liberalization of those laws. The President has already received a number of votes on this issue but I doubt if there are many more available without beginning to lose some votes. I would recommend that we simply avoid the issue now.



With regard to McGovern, it appears that his perception is being set right now and I think we should introduce some negatives into this process, although it should be done very carefully. If possible, by disenchanted Democrats or the press. It is important that anything we say only emphasize the extremism of his positions and not attack him personally. There are many voters with whom the main issue is a desire for calmness and return to a more peaceful orderly way of life which is what the administration has been doing. If we are strident in attacking McGovern, we are going to be seen as adding to the unrest rather than dissipating it. This, in my judgement, was one of the main problems with the 1970 campaign. Also, if we push McGovern hard on his programs he is going to have to explain and defend them, which in the California primary put him at his worst. He is also going to have to do this before he has a chance to prepare and switch to more palatable positions. Our strategy simply should be the obvious one of monopolizing the center, while pushing him to the extreme left.

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