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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

JUN 11 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 11, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH
FROM: DAVE GERGEN *DP*
SUBJECT: Reasons for Ford Candidacy

The attached material was written with the thought that the President might review it on the way to Missouri. I hope you find it of value.

Attachment

cc: Terry O'Donnell
Ron Nessen

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 11, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY

FROM: DAVE GERGEN *DX*

SUBJECT: Arguments for Ford Candidacy

I am giving these to Jack to take on the trip to show to the President. I recommend -- if you concur -- that these be scrubbed by Spencer, and Slight, and then sent out to our spokesmen and to delegates, as appropriate.

PRESIDENT FORD

10 REASONS WHY HE SHOULD CARRY THE GOP BANNER IN NOVEMBER

1. Ford has a strong record as President.

-- Under his leadership, the U.S. is now in the full surge of economic recovery. Inflation has been cut from 12% to less than 6%. Over 1.3 million new jobs have been created since early 1975, erasing the losses of the recession.

-- Ford is the first President since Eisenhower who can campaign with America at peace.

-- President Ford is also building new faith and trust in the Presidency itself.

2. Ford runs ahead of Reagan on all key issues.

-- Polls consistently show that the economy is the number one concern of the American people. Among independents and Republicans, pollster Lou Harris finds that Ford is rated as better able than Reagan to handle inflation (47-26), to handle unemployment (44-24), and to control Federal spending (51-31).

-- Integrity in government is the second most important issue to voters, and here Ford beats Reagan by 44 to 26.

-- Only in some areas of foreign policy does Reagan beat Ford, and foreign policy is a distant fourth among voter concerns this year.

3. Ford runs better against Carter.

-- In every single major poll (Gallup, Harris), Ford runs consistently better than Reagan against Jimmy Carter. Both Republicans are now running behind, but President Ford has a much better chance of overcoming Carter's early lead. In December of 1975, when Reagan was in the first flush of his candidacy, he was the choice of the Independents over Ford by 47 to 32 and was tied among Republicans at 45-45, (Gallup, 12/15/76). By June, the President had clearly overcome the Reagan lead and was the preferred choice over Reagan by a 60 to 30 margin, (Harris, 6/6/76).

4. Ford has shown national appeal; Reagan has not.

-- President Ford is the only candidate in either party who has demonstrated broad, national support. He has beaten Reagan in the Northeast (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, etc.), in the big industrial states of the North (Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey), in the South (Florida), in the border states (Kentucky, Tennessee), in the Midwest (Michigan, Illinois), and even in the Far West (Oregon).

-- With the exception of Indiana, Reagan has never demonstrated an ability to win outside the Sunbelt.

5. Ford has a much more credible electoral strategy than Reagan.

-- Ford has a natural, strong base in the big states of the Midwest where Carter has not shown great strength. Those states represent over 140 electoral votes. Ford would also be able to draw upon traditional Republican strength in the Great Plains and Mountain States, could make inroads in the South and border states, and would have as good a crack at the West as Reagan. Because of Carter's weaknesses in the Northeast, Ford would have a better-than-even chance there.

-- Reagan, on the other hand, is a candidate whose strength is confined to the South and the West. In the South, Carter's total votes in the primaries have been higher than Reagan's by about a 3-1 margin, raising serious questions about Reagan's ability to win there.

-- Reagan's chances would be improved in the West, but the Western States alone are far less than needed for victory. It is important to recognize that in California, Ford runs better against Carter than does Reagan. A Field poll conducted May 31-June 5, 1976 shows Carter holding a slim 41-40 lead over Ford, but Carter leads Reagan 46-38.

-- To win, a Republican candidate must be able to sweep some of the bigger, most populated states. The primary states where Reagan has won have often been the ones with the fewest primary votes; altogether, Reagan's primary states represent 153 electoral votes. Ford, on the other hand, has won primaries in states which represent 258 electoral votes. Needed to win in November: 270 electoral votes.

6. Ford is better able to run against Carter's weaknesses.

-- Two of Carter's greatest weaknesses are his fuzziness on the issues and his total lack of experience on the national and international levels.

-- In more than a quarter of a century of public life, Ford has taken positions on thousands of issues and has a concrete program for the future. Moreover, for those voters who want a man of experience in the most powerful office on earth -- and the number of such voters will grow as the election draws closer -- Ford represents a clear choice.

-- Reagan, on the other hand, has not been forced to deal with issues in great detail, and more importantly, he has no experience on the national level. Just as he is stronger where Carter is strong among the anti-Washington voters, he is weaker where Carter is weak.

7. Ford does not have Reagan's liabilities.

-- Fairly or not, if Reagan were the GOP nominee, the Democrats would use his statements on the \$90 billion plan, Social Security and the TVA to depict Reagan as an extremist. No one who has ever been successfully branded as an extremist has ever won the Presidency.

-- Fairly or not, the Democrats would use Reagan's statements on Angola, Panama and Rhodesia to brand him as a dangerous, trigger-happy candidate.

-- Fairly or not, the Democrats would seek to exploit Reagan's background as an actor.

-- Fairly or not, the Democrats would try to portray Reagan as a man who would lead the country into nuclear war. We might even see the daisy ads again.

-- Fairly or not, Democrats will try to rip holes in Reagan's record as Governor of California, arguing that he increased taxes, that his welfare program failed, etc. Ford's record as President has always been subjected to close scrutiny by the opposition and the national press; Reagan's record as Governor has not.

-- Fairly or not, Democrats will also seek to exploit Reagan's personal tax records. For instance, a recent commentator on 60 Minutes blasted Reagan for accepting public funds to run his campaign but paying only minimal taxes to the Government.

8. Reagan presents the risk of another 1964.

-- In one of his most recent national surveys (May, 1976), Lou Harris found Carter beating Reagan 53-34 while holding a narrower 47-43 lead over Ford. Reagan could beat Carter only among conservatives (46-43). Concluded Harris: "The pattern now being run by Reagan against Carter is highly reminiscent of that of Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election, when he lost by a landslide to Lyndon Johnson. This pattern thus indicates that in 1976 the electorate is highly unlikely to vote for an all-out conservative for President."

-- In 1964, the GOP lost 20% of its seats in the House, 6% of its seats in the Senate, and 500 seats in State Legislatures.

-- A repeat of that performance this year, combined with retirements that have already been announced, could reduce GOP membership in the House to just over 100 members -- the lowest ebb for the Republican Party since 1934.

-- With better than a 3-1 majority of Democrats in the House, a 2-1 lead majority in the Senate, and a Democrat in the White House, the liberal Democrats could run roughshod over every Republican position.

-- State House losses could be even more devastating. As of today, Republicans control only a third of the Governors' chairs. Another 1964 would reduce that still further.

-- Who would suffer most from a debacle? In 1964, conservative Republicans suffered the greatest losses while their more liberal colleagues remained unscathed.

9. Only Ford can unite the Republican Party.

-- The latest polls indicate that the potential rate of defection to Carter among Reagan and Ford backers could be as high as 35% -- enough to devastate either Republican candidate. For a Republican to win, it is essential to keep these voters in the fold and then reach out to Independents and Democrats dissatisfied with Carter.

-- A Reagan nomination -- representing, as it would, a repudiation of Republican leadership -- would split the party so badly that it is very questionable whether the GOP could be put back together again.

-- President Ford, on the other hand, has demonstrated that he can work with Republicans of every political belief, from one end of the spectrum to the other. His allies include not only conservatives such as Senator Tower but liberals such as Senator Percy. That sort of broad appeal will be essential to a Republican victory in the fall.

10. President Ford deserves the Republican nomination.

-- Gerald Ford never sought the Presidency. He was asked to come forward at a time when his party -- and his Nation -- were in deep trouble. He has served both as well as any man could.

-- For his party, Gerald Ford has traveled from one end of the country to the other, helping other Republican candidates, raising money for State parties that were in need, and reviving Republican hopes. In the fall of 1975, even when the polls showed that his political trips were hurting his standing with the public, he went to GOP fund-raisers in order to put many State parties back in the black.

-- For his country, Gerald Ford has guided us gently, but firmly, out of one of the deepest troughs in recent history. He has put the nightmares of the past behind us. He has put the economy back on an upward path. And he has kept America strong and at peace.

-- Above anyone else in either party, Gerald Ford now deserves a chance to finish the job he has set out to do.

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