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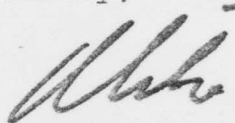
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
September 2, 1976

Dear Dave:

The President has asked me to coordinate White House activity concerning the proposed debates between the President and Jimmy Carter. Accordingly, Jack Marsh sent me your letter of August 25. I look forward to receiving your additional thoughts on the debates.

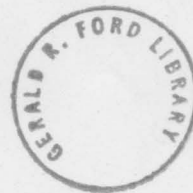
I enjoyed working with you in Kansas City. Again, thanks very much for all your help and counsel.

Sincerely,



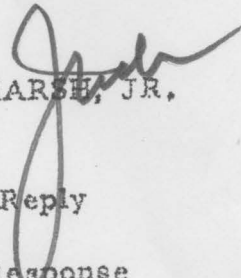
Michael Raoul-Duval
Special Counsel
to the President

The Honorable David W. Belin
Herrick, Langdon, Belin,
Harris, Langdon & Helmick
2000 Financial Center
Seventh and Walnut
Des Moines, Iowa 50309



August 30
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: MIKE DUVAL
FROM: JOHN O. MARSH, JR.



For Direct Reply
 For Draft Response
 For Your Information
 Please Advise



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

file

August 30, 1976

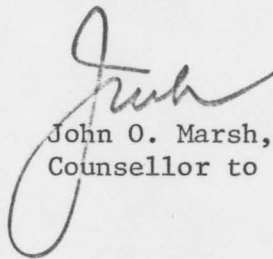
Dear Dave:

Many thanks for sending me a copy of your recent letter to the President concerning the Debates.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy to others here working on this matter.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. David W. Belin
Herrick, Langdon, Belin,
Harris, Langdon & Helmick
2000 Financial Center
Seventh and Walnut
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

LAW OFFICES

HERRICK, LANGDON, BELIN, HARRIS, LANGDON & HELMICK

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AUG 30 1976

ALLAN A. HERRICK
HERSCHEL G. LANGDON
DAVID W. BELIN
CHARLES E. HARRIS
RICHARD G. LANGDON
ROBERT H. HELMICK
PHILIP C. LOVRIEN
JOEL D. NOVAK
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EDGAR H. BITTLE
FREDERICK C. BLACKLEDGE
CURT L. SYTSMAN
DAVID L. CLAYPOOL

TELEPHONE
(515) 244-1116
COUNSEL
DWIGHT BROOKE
LAWRENCE E. POPE

August 25, 1976

COPY

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

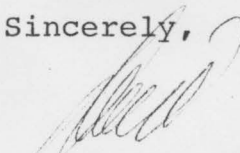
Dear Mr. President:

The August 19 acceptance speech at the Convention was superb--and your delivery was the best I have ever seen.

I agree with the challenge to Jimmy Carter in televised debates. This offers a major opportunity, but it also entails some great risks. I will discuss part of these in my September strategy paper No. 11. In addition, I would like the opportunity to visit with you briefly in Washington to express to you personally some of the areas of greatest risk that I see and offer my suggestions as to how these can not only be refuted but, even more, how these can be thrown back right into the face of Carter.

Best regards.

Sincerely,


David W. Belin

DWB:cs

C.C. Richard Cheney
c.c. Robert Hartmann
c.c. Jack Marsh
c.c. Ron Nessen

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Mr. Jack March
Counselor to the President
The White House
Washington DC 20500

69

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 7, 1976

Dear Dave:

Thanks very much for your April strategy paper that you prepared for Dick Cheney.

Look forward to seeing you when you come to Washington this week.

Sincerely,



Michael Raoul-Duval
Special Counsel
to the President



The Honorable David W. Belin
Herrick, Langdon, Belin,
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TELEPHONE
(515) 244-1116
COUNSEL
DWIGHT BROOKE
LAWRENCE E. POPE

April 30, 1976

David



Mr. Richard Chaney
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Dick:

Enclosed is a copy of my April strategy paper. I will be calling you next week to try and set up an appointment in Washington.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

The Hon.
David W. Belin

DWB:cs
Encl.

LAW OFFICES
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April 30, 1976

TELEPHONE
(515) 244-1116
COUNSEL
DWIGHT BROOKE
LAWRENCE E. POPE

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Enclosed is a copy of my April strategy paper, "Key Highlights from a Conversation with David Broder." I would like to have the opportunity to meet with you again sometime in May concerning some specifics on the Platform and also to discuss the Bicentennial speech.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

David W. Belin

DWB:cs
Encl.

c.c. Richard Chaney ✓
c.c. Robert Hartmann
c.c. Rogers Morton
c.c. Ron Nessen



THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD

BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 6 - APRIL, 1976

David W. Belin

Key Highlights from a Conversation with David Broder

Last month, after the Illinois primary victory of President Ford, I met David Broder at O'Hare International Airport. We flew together to Washington and spent approximately two hours discussing the current political scene.

There were a number of key comments that he made which are particularly important to consider in light of the emergence of Jimmy Carter as the Democratic frontrunner. Therefore, in this April paper, I will not discuss the selection of a Republican Vice Presidential candidate, as I was requested to do, but rather I will save that for the May or June paper, except for some observations on what Broder had to say.

The three most important comments of Broder can be summarized as follows:

1. If Hubert Humphrey or Morris Udall is the Presidential nominee, the sympathies of the working press will be with the Democratic Presidential candidate. On the other hand, if Carter

or Jackson is the Democratic Presidential nominee, then the sympathies of the working press will be for the President--unless he stumbles by trying to "out-Reagan" Reagan or unless he picks someone as his running mate whom the working press does not trust (such as Governor Reagan or John Connally).

2. As the economy continues to improve, President Ford will become a stronger and stronger candidate and tougher to beat in November.

3. If President Ford is to win in November, he must preempt the middle of the road and his Vice Presidential running mate should be someone from the "moderate" wing of the Party.

The primary thrust of this April paper will address itself to the issue of the sympathies of the working press, for I believe it is a crucial area for consideration.

The nuances of the working press can make a tremendous impact through the mass media. There is the question of selectivity--which comments of the President and which comments of the opposition are used; how the lead paragraphs are written; how the headlines are selected; which television clip is used; when one of the candidates stumbles, how and the extent to which that is highlighted.



In a hundred different ways, the working press can make or break the candidate.

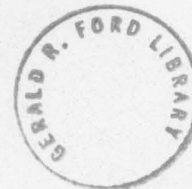
One of the most vivid examples in recent years is what happened to Muskie in New Hampshire in 1972.

President Ford must be sensitive to the views and perceptions of the working press. Often, these views agree with the positions taken by the President.

For instance, in meeting the challenge of Reagan, the working press basically agrees with the observations of the President that the views of Governor Reagan are too simplistic. Comments on Panama are a perfect example of this. And the President met these well.

The working press also agrees with the President that in no sense has he relegated the United States to a secondary position to Russia. The President has a 25 year record to show that he believes in a strong national defense.

On the other hand, the working press does not necessarily agree with the fact that we need a fleet of B-1 bombers or large nuclear-powered surface vessels in the Navy. However, I am not suggesting that the President make pronouncements based upon what the working press does or does not believe. Rather, what I am



suggesting is that in selecting issues and presenting views, the President be sensitive to how the working press feels about various issues and the President should emphasize those issues with which the working press agrees. Where there is strong disagreement, I am suggesting that unless the President feels that it is of crucial import to discuss that issue or point of view with the public, or unless he feels the public is in great support on this particular issue--regardless of how the working press feels--then the presentation of such a view should be relegated to a secondary position.

In other words, there is a whole range of points and issues that the President can discuss. If Jimmy Carter is the Presidential nominee, or if it looks as if he might be the Presidential nominee, the President should be particularly sensitive to the fact that at the present time the sympathies of the working press are with him. He should seek to emphasize those important issues where the sympathies of the working press are not violently opposed.

There is another aspect of this which is also very important. One of the problems of Jimmy Carter is that he is thought to be "shifty" on issues for the sake of expediency. The press does not generally trust Carter. The President should avoid undermining the trust and confidence that he enjoys with the press. The

President in responding to Governor Reagan should be aware of this factor.

Now let me turn briefly to the comments of Broder on a Vice Presidential running mate for President Ford. Obviously, in part this will depend on the national ticket of the Democrats. However, if Carter is on the ticket either as the Presidential nominee or as the Vice Presidential nominee, it will be very difficult for a Republican ticket to carry the South. This underscores the importance of the President himself preempting the middle-of-the-road and also selecting as a running mate someone who philosophically will not be to the right of the President.

Broder also commented on the very successful approach of Carter of campaigning "against Washington." If Carter is on the national Democratic ticket, this could compel the President to select as a running mate someone who is not now connected with either the Executive or Legislative branches of the federal government.

Finally, I would like to return to the other major point mentioned by Broder: The improving national economic scene. More and more emphasis should be placed on this in the campaign

for both the nomination and the general election. The President has an opportunity to go on the attack by undertaking research on the "gloom and doom" comments that were made by Democratic political leaders and Democratic-oriented economists last year who sought to assure the American public that the program of President Ford would never work.

The programs of President Ford are working and there is a lot of political hay that can be made on the continuing improvement in the national economy, while we still recognize we have a substantial way to go to reduce unemployment.

"Don't change horses in the middle of the stream" is sound political advice to the American public--particularly when that stream is a steadily-improving national economy and a steadily-improving confidence on the part of the people in the ability of President Ford to help lead the country to greater prosperity at home.

"Peace and prosperity" in the past has proven to be a very successful political issue. There is no reason to believe it can't succeed again, particularly if the challenger is someone who is inexperienced in national government and particularly if



the President is conscious of the need for the preemption of
the middle of the road.

David W. Belin
2000 Financial Center
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

April 28, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 24, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH
RON NESSEN

FROM: MIKE DUVAL *Mike*

SUBJECT: WARREN COMMISSION REPORT

I talked this morning with Dave Belin about a Platform Committee matter.

I told Dave that the Senate Intelligence Subcommittee Report concerning the Warren Commission was a front page story of the New York Times. Dave advised me that he has not seen the Senate Report nor press stories about it.

Dave is still sticking with the position that he took publicly on Face the Nation last fall, which is, that Congress should reopen an investigation of the Kennedy assassination in light of revelations that the CIA and other agencies of government did not fully cooperate with the Commission. However, Belin remains convinced that any reinvestigation will simply reaffirm the findings of the Warren Commission.



THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 7 - MAY, 1976

David W. Belin



Winning Electoral Votes:
The Marginal Percentage Differential Analysis

I was tempted in writing this paper to quote excerpts from previous papers going back to November, 1975, because I believe that a substantial part of the problems which the President Ford campaign faces arises from a failure to adopt the strategy discussed in these earlier papers. For instance, I am attaching to this May paper a copy of the November, 1975, strategy paper No. 1, which I believe to be just as valid today as it was when written six months ago.

However, rather than repeating what I have said over the past six months, no matter how relevant it may be today, I want to turn to a matter which has been largely lost in the heat of the primary campaign: A state-by-state electoral vote analysis to see how victory can best be achieved in November.

In analyzing election results, I categorize states into categories, depending upon the margin percentage differential (MPD)--that is, the difference in percentage points between the candidate who won the state and the candidate who lost the state. For instance, in 1968 in Oregon, Nixon got 53% of the vote and Humphrey received 47% of the vote, a margin percentage differential of six percentage points. The switch differential was 3%--in other words, if 3% of the voters had voted Democratic, instead of Republican, there would have been a virtual tie.

A relatively safe margin percentage differential (MPD) is where the difference in percentage is at least 14 points--57-43, or better. A safe/marginal MPD is where the MPD is between 7 and 14 points; a marginal state is where the MPD is less than 7 points where a state can switch from one party to another by a switch of less than 3.5% of the vote.

The most relevant electoral vote analysis is to take a look at the most recent close presidential election, which, of course, was in 1968 where President Nixon had 302 electoral votes, Hubert Humphrey had 191 electoral votes, and George Wallace garnered 45 electoral votes.

When you categorize the results of the 1968 election and put the same states that voted Republican in 1968 into either relatively safe Republican states, marginal/safe, or marginal Republican states, and adjust for changes in the electoral vote because of reapportionment after the 1970 census, and do the same thing with the states that Hubert Humphrey won in 1968, here is what you find, as shown on the following detailed analysis:

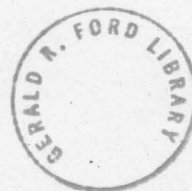
David Belin President Ford Strategy Paper No. 7 May, 1976	1968 Election Electoral Votes			1968 MPD (Marginal Percent Age Dif- ferential)	Rela- tively safe Rep.	1976 Electoral Vote Analysis Based on 1968 MPD					1968 Geo. Walla stat
	Rep.	Demo.	Wallace			Margi- nally safe Rep.	Margi- nal Rep.	Margi- nal Demo.	Margi- nally safe Demo.	Rela- tively safe Demo.	
ALABAMA			10	47.2							9
ALASKA	3			2.7			3				
ARIZONA	5			19.8	6						
ARKANSAS			6	8.1							6
CALIFORNIA	40			3.1			45				
COLORADO	6			9.2							
CONNECTICUT		8		5.2		7		9			
DELAWARE	3			3.5			3				
FLORIDA	14			9.6		17					
GEORGIA			12	12.4							12
HAWAII		4		21.1						4	
IDAHO	4			26.1	4						
ILLINOIS	26			2.9			26				
INDIANA	13			12.3		13					
IOWA	9			12.2		8					
KANSAS	7			20.1	7						
KENTUCKY	9			6.2			9				
LOUISIANA			10	20.1							10
MAINE		4		12.2					4		
MARYLAND		10		1.7				10			
MASS.		14		30.1						14	
MICHIGAN		21		6.7				21			
MINNESOTA		10		12.5					10		
MISS.			7	40.5							7
MISSOURI	12			1.2			12				
MONTANA	4			19	4						
NEBRASKA	5			28	5						
NEVADA	3			8.2		3					
NEW HAMPSHIRE	4			8.2		4					
NEW JERSEY	17			2.1			17				
NEW MEXICO	4			12.1		4					
NEW YORK		43		5.4				41			
N. CAROLINA	13			8.2		13					
N. DAKOTA	4			17.7	3						
OHIO	26			2.3			25				
OKLAHOMA	8			15.7	7						
OREGON	6			6.0			6				
P.A.		29		3.6				27			
RHODE IS.		4		32.2						4	
S. CAROLINA	8			5.8			8				
S. DAKOTA	4			11.3		4					
PENN.	11			3.8			10				
TEXAS		25		1.3				26			
UTAH	4			19.4	4						
VERMONT	3			19.3	3						
VIRGINIA	12			10.9		12					
WASHINGTON		9		2.1				9			
WEST VA		7		8.8					6		
WISCONSIN	12			3.6			11				
WYOMING	3			20.3	3						
DIST. OF COL.		3		63.6						3	
TOTAL:	302	191	45		46	85	175	143	20	25	44



Relatively Safe: MPD is at least 14 pts.; Marginal/Safe: MPD is between 7 and 14 pts.; Marginal: MPD is less than 7 pts. A Marginal state can be changed by a

One hundred seventy-five electoral votes are from states that are marginally Republican, and 143 electoral votes are from states that are marginally Democratic. Even more important is the fact that of the marginal Republican states, the overwhelming majority lie out of the South. Of the 175 electoral votes, only 27 come from South or border-South states: Kentucky (9), South Carolina (8) and Tennessee (10). On the other hand, there are states such as California (45), Illinois (26), Missouri (12), New Jersey (17), Ohio (25), Oregon (6), and Wisconsin (11), plus Alaska (3) and Delaware (3) where a switch in less than 2% of the voters would have changed the vote in these states.

Toward which bloc of states should the Republican Party in 1976 concentrate its attack: The Southern bloc of 27 or the rest of the country with 148?



What about the states that were marginally Democratic that give the Republicans the best opportunities for 1976? Once again, the MPD analysis shows which road the Republican Party must take, for only one of these states (Texas, with 26 electoral votes) could be deemed subject to a Southern strategy and the remaining states, with 117 electoral votes lie outside of the South: Colorado (9); Maryland (10); Michigan (21); New York (41); Pennsylvania (27); and Washington (9).

Of course, assuming that President Ford is the Republican nominee, he will probably carry Michigan, with its 21 electoral votes. If you take those 21 votes as a starting point, add the 46 electoral votes from the relatively safe Republican states, you have a total of 67 of the 270 electoral votes needed for election. Where will the additional 203 electoral votes come from? Of the safe/marginal Republican states, 43 electoral votes are from outside the South and 42 lie in the southern part of the country. If those 43 votes outside of the South are garnered, that leaves a net remaining goal of 160 electoral votes.

Turning to the marginal Republican states, of those 175 electoral votes, only 8 lie in the South (South Carolina) and

19 lie in the border-South states of Kentucky and Tennessee, leaving a net of 148 outside of the South.

If President Ford got all of the marginal Republican states except those from the South or near-South, he would receive 148 additional electoral votes, putting him up to 258, which is just twelve votes shy of the needed 270.

Where can those extra twelve votes come from? Either from those Southern or border-Southern states that are marginal Republican or safe/marginal Republican--and all he needs is one or two of those states--or in the alternative only one or two of the states that are marginally Democratic--such as Pennsylvania.

The facts speak for themselves. The greatest opportunities for Republican victory in 1976 lie in a national strategy, and not in a Southern strategy.

This is particularly true if Jimmy Carter is either a Democratic Presidential or Vice Presidential candidate. Regardless of who the Republican Presidential nominee will be, Jimmy Carter will effectively claim a majority of the Southern electoral votes. Republicans have to recognize this fact as they look toward November. It would be folly for the GOP to

try and attack the heart of Carter's strength. Rather, the GOP should concentrate on the heart of its potential, and that heart is shown on the marginal vote percentage electoral vote analysis: Basically the Midwest, the Northeast, the Rocky Mountain States, and the West.

Furthermore, in looking toward November, the GOP must recognize what has not been recognized enough thus far by the President Ford Committee that it is absolutely essential for victory to preempt the middle of the road.

In poll after poll, the major portion of the electorate--over 80%--categorizes itself either in the middle-of-the-road category or under the categorization of fairly liberal or fairly conservative with the remaining balance (less than 20%) categorizing itself as very liberal or very conservative.



Clearly, the emphasis for rebuilding a political party must be directed toward the pre-emption of the middle-of-the-road electorate. This will act as an umbrella to attract those voters in the center of the political spectrum as well as those somewhat to the left who call themselves fairly liberal and those somewhat to the right who call themselves fairly conservative.

One of the main problems confronting George McGovern in the 1972 presidential race was the fact that his campaign moved away from middle-of-the-road and enabled Republicans to step into the vacuum. The net result was a Republican landslide at the national level.

Unfortunately for the GOP, the landslide did not trickle down to the Senate and the House of Representatives. The basic reason is illustrated by what happened in California in 1968 and 1970 and what happened in South Dakota in 1972.

Before the 1968 elections, California was represented by two senators: Thomas Kuchel, a liberal Republican, and George Murphy, a conservative Republican. Thomas Kuchel had risen to the position of minority whip, the No. 2 position behind the minority floor leader, Senator Dirksen of Illinois.

Despite the fact that Senator Kuchel was an incumbent Republican senator who had risen to a position of power in the United States Senate, the Republican Party in 1968 failed to



renominate Senator Kuchel. There was an intraparty fight with the conservative candidate, Max Rafferty, winning the nomination. In the fall general election, even though Richard Nixon carried California by over 200,000 votes, Max Rafferty lost to Alan Cranston by over 300,000 votes--a spread of better than half a million votes.

Why did the Republican Party of California fail to renominate a proven winner and a national Republican leader? The basic reason was that Republicans in California failed to recognize the necessity of preempting the middle of the road. Instead, they followed the philosophy of nominating someone with the greatest appeal to voters in a Republican primary instead of someone with the greatest appeal to voters in the general election.

The Republican California blunder of 1968 was compounded in 1970 when George Murphy was up for re-election. The middle-of-the-road was pre-empted by John V. Tunney, and in the space of two years two Republican senate seats were converted into two Democratic senate seats.

The problem has been repeated time and time again. For instance, in 1972 the seat of Republican Karl Mundt of South Dakota was at stake. There was one candidate within the Republican primary who sought to pre-empt the middle-of-the-

road: Tom Reardon. He was ignored by Republican leaders primarily because Reardon had been a "dove" on the issue of Vietnam. Thousands of Independent voters shared Reardon's views, but instead of nominating the Republican with the greatest appeal to the total electorate, the Republicans nominated the candidate with the greatest appeal to Republicans. The result was that Democrat James Abourezk won the Senate race in November.

Rebuilding a viable Republican Party after Watergate will be far more difficult than the attempted rebirth after the Democratic landslide of 1964. The major reason for this is that the Republican Party--the Party associated with American business and free enterprise--has consistently violated the most elementary concepts of business success. This fundamental failure is not a new course of action for the GOP to take. On the contrary, it is consistent with the course of action taken by Republican Party leadership over the past 30 years.

Every knowledgeable marketing student, every astute business executive, knows that when a business organization wants to increase its penetration of the market, it looks to areas of potential growth.



In the 1940's and 1950's, it was obvious to any reasonably intelligent political scientist that the areas of population growth in our country were in the urban areas. The areas of population decline were in the rural areas. Yet, consistently throughout the United States, the Republican leadership fought against fair representation for urban areas in state legislatures.

More and more people living in cities and suburban areas became frustrated with the unfairness of their lack of representation in government. These citizens turned against the party in power that was denying them an equal voice in government and went with the opposition, which in almost every two-party state turned out to be the Democratic Party.

The net result is typified by what took place in the Midwest-- the place of birth of the Republican Party and its traditional heartland. The statistics are overwhelming and are vividly illustrated in the contrast between the Eisenhower landslide of 1952 and the Nixon landslide of 1972.

Here are the facts: In 1953 there were 9 Republican and 3 Democratic governors in the Midwest. In 1973, these statistics were reversed: 4 Republican and 8 Democratic governors.

In 1953, there were 19 Republican and 5 Democratic senators from the Midwest. In 1973, after the 1972 elections, these statistics were again reversed: 9 Republican and 15 Democratic senators.

In the House of Representatives, there was a similar trend: 85 Republican and 44 Democratic representatives from the Midwest in 1953 after the 1952 Eisenhower landslide; 71 Republican and 51 Democratic representatives in 1973 after the 1972 Nixon landslide. (The difference in total arises because of reapportionment changes.)

The lack of foresight on the part of the Republican Party continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Perhaps the most vivid illustration of this occurred after the Nixon-Agnew victory in 1968, when there were increasing pressures to bring youth into the political system. It was not a question of whether or not the voting age would be reduced to 18--rather, the question was when this would take place--1970 or 1972.

It is a basic doctrine of business to look to potential expanding markets. Any businessman looking at the electorate would have readily seen that youth, and in particular high school and college youth approaching their first election, was the most obvious area of political party growth. This fact was compounded by the disenchantment of youth with the Vietnam policies of the Johnson administration.

Yet, this fundamental practical business concept was not only totally ignored, but Spiro Agnew took exactly the opposite course. He attacked the very group that offered the greatest opportunity for increasing Republican votes, and succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of any Democratic politician. Agnew succeeded in alienating the next generation of voters, so far as the Republican Party was concerned.

Statistics now show that the Republican Party comprises less than 25% of the total electorate. And when these statistics are broken down into age groups, the penetration of the Republican Party with the younger voter is less than 15%. From a long-range standpoint, nothing could have been worse for the Republican Party.

More important, from a long-range standpoint, nothing could have been worse for the future of our political system in America, for that system is predicated on the concept of a strong two-party system.

1976 is a crossroads year for the Republican Party. A Democratic victory in the Presidential election could spell the end of the GOP as an effective national party. On the other hand, a Republican victory could spell the beginning for a

true Republican revival, with strong and capable leadership from the top as the starting point. Hand in hand with this must be an overall open, pragmatic and sensitive approach to the many problems facing our country today--a modern political philosophy which has as its frame of reference the preemption of the middle-of-the-road in American politics.

How long will Republican Party workers continue to ignore the fact that the crucial issue is who can win in November--not who is philosophically the closest to the relatively small percentage of voters who cast their ballots in a Republican primary battle?

Once again, we can analogize to what a sound businessman would do when his company wanted to expand its penetration of market acceptance. One approach would be for the president of the company to turn to the sales force and ask the sales force what it thinks the market needs or wants. A far better approach, however, would be for the sales force to actually go into the market, test it, and find out what the potential customers need and want.

Unfortunately, the Republican Party traditionally seems to ignore the business approach to political problems--while at the same time relying on business for a major portion of financial and other support.

Perhaps the Republicans could follow this course if they had the luxury of being the majority party. However, the irrefutable trend has been the other way. As a matter of fact, the Republican Party is now not even number two-- really, it is number three behind the Democrats and Independents.

The January 7, 1974, of U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT quoted a recent Sindlinger survey giving the following breakdown "of how people of voting age regard themselves politically: Independents - 36.1%; Democrats - 34.5%; Republicans - 18.9%; No interest - 10.5%."

In the face of statistics such as these, the Republicans who want to win must look beyond the confines of Republican voters. In order to do this, they must support and encourage attractive Republicans of high capability to campaign for national office. These candidates must be individuals who will be able to pre-empt the middle-of-the-road--the umbrella which is the key to political success in this country.

No one is more aware of this than President Ford. In 1974, he campaigned for Paul McCloskey--one of the most out-spoken critics of the Nixon administration. McCloskey was in a battle for survival in a Republican primary in his Congressional district in California. Most political experts agree that it was the help of the then Vice President Ford which led to McCloskey's primary victory.



Just as President Ford has recognized the need for Republicans to nominate candidates who can win in November, regular Party leaders and workers must also adopt this same philosophy.

There has to be room in the GOP for both the Barry Goldwaters and the Paul McCloskeys. And above all, if the Republican Party is to survive, there has to be the kind of leadership in the GOP that President Ford has shown in his willingness to support candidates in different areas of the Republican political spectrum.

1976 is the crossroads for the Republican Party. One of the roads leads to a Southern strategy. The other road leads to a national strategy.

An analysis of electoral votes on the basis of marginal percentage differential shows clearly which of the two roads the GOP should take, if it wants to win in November. However, the Republican Party has not been noted in recent years for its ability to understand and exercise sound practical political judgment.

Hopefully, for those Americans interested in the revitalization of the GOP, and for those Americans interested in a strong two-

party system, Republican leadership will demonstrate better judgment in 1976 than it has in recent years.

Finally, there must be one added ingredient which has thus far been absent in the President Ford Campaign: The ingredient of confidence and idealism and hope and vision that an outstanding national leader can give.

The primary campaign has been talking about defense and Panama and detente. What about the hopes and aspirations of human beings for peace?

There is a lot that can be said--and a lot that must be said if President Ford is to win the nomination and win in November. He will have one last major opportunity to come forward as an outstanding national leader with breadth and vision: The Bicentennial speech on July 4, 1976.

I have discussed this in recent strategy papers, and I will go into greater detail in the strategy paper for June.

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May 5, 1976

THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 6 - APRIL, 1976

David W. Belin



Key Highlights from a Conversation with David Broder

Last month, after the Illinois primary victory of President Ford, I met David Broder at O'Hare International Airport. We flew together to Washington and spent approximately two hours discussing the current political scene.

There were a number of key comments that he made which are particularly important to consider in light of the emergence of Jimmy Carter as the Democratic frontrunner. Therefore, in this April paper, I will not discuss the selection of a Republican Vice Presidential candidate, as I was requested to do, but rather I will save that for the May or June paper, except for some observations on what Broder had to say.

The three most important comments of Broder can be summarized as follows:

1. If Hubert Humphrey or Morris Udall is the Presidential nominee, the sympathies of the working press will be with the Democratic Presidential candidate. On the other hand, if Carter

or Jackson is the Democratic Presidential nominee, then the sympathies of the working press will be for the President--unless he stumbles by trying to "out-Reagan" Reagan or unless he picks someone as his running mate whom the working press does not trust (such as Governor Reagan or John Connally).

2. As the economy continues to improve, President Ford will become a stronger and stronger candidate and tougher to beat in November.

3. If President Ford is to win in November, he must preempt the middle of the road and his Vice Presidential running mate should be someone from the "moderate" wing of the Party.

The primary thrust of this April paper will address itself to the issue of the sympathies of the working press, for I believe it is a crucial area for consideration.

The nuances of the working press can make a tremendous impact through the mass media. There is the question of selectivity--which comments of the President and which comments of the opposition are used; how the lead paragraphs are written; how the headlines are selected; which television clip is used; when one of the candidates stumbles, how and the extent to which that is highlighted.

In a hundred different ways, the working press can make or break the candidate.

One of the most vivid examples in recent years is what happened to Muskie in New Hampshire in 1972.

President Ford must be sensitive to the views and perceptions of the working press. Often, these views agree with the positions taken by the President.

For instance, in meeting the challenge of Reagan, the working press basically agrees with the observations of the President that the views of Governor Reagan are too simplistic. Comments on Panama are a perfect example of this. And the President met these well.

The working press also agrees with the President that in no sense has he relegated the United States to a secondary position to Russia. The President has a 25 year record to show that he believes in a strong national defense.

On the other hand, the working press does not necessarily agree with the fact that we need a fleet of B-1 bombers or large nuclear-powered surface vessels in the Navy. However, I am not suggesting that the President make pronouncements based upon what the working press does or does not believe. Rather, what I am

suggesting is that in selecting issues and presenting views, the President be sensitive to how the working press feels about various issues and the President should emphasize those issues with which the working press agrees. Where there is strong disagreement, I am suggesting that unless the President feels that it is of crucial import to discuss that issue or point of view with the public, or unless he feels the public is in great support on this particular issue--regardless of how the working press feels--then the presentation of such a view should be relegated to a secondary position.

In other words, there is a whole range of points and issues that the President can discuss. If Jimmy Carter is the Presidential nominee, or if it looks as if he might be the Presidential nominee, the President should be particularly sensitive to the fact that at the present time the sympathies of the working press are with him. He should seek to emphasize those important issues where the sympathies of the working press are not violently opposed.

There is another aspect of this which is also very important. One of the problems of Jimmy Carter is that he is thought to be "shifty" on issues for the sake of expediency. The press does not generally trust Carter. The President should avoid undermining the trust and confidence that he enjoys with the press. The

President in responding to Governor Reagan should be aware of this factor.

Now let me turn briefly to the comments of Broder on a Vice Presidential running mate for President Ford. Obviously, in part this will depend on the national ticket of the Democrats. However, if Carter is on the ticket either as the Presidential nominee or as the Vice Presidential nominee, it will be very difficult for a Republican ticket to carry the South. This underscores the importance of the President himself preempting the middle-of-the-road and also selecting as a running mate someone who philosophically will not be to the right of the President.

Broder also commented on the very successful approach of Carter of campaigning "against Washington." If Carter is on the national Democratic ticket, this could compel the President to select as a running mate someone who is not now connected with either the Executive or Legislative branches of the federal government.

Finally, I would like to return to the other major point mentioned by Broder: The improving national economic scene. More and more emphasis should be placed on this in the campaign



for both the nomination and the general election. The President has an opportunity to go on the attack by undertaking research on the "gloom and doom" comments that were made by Democratic political leaders and Democratic-oriented economists last year who sought to assure the American public that the program of President Ford would never work.

The programs of President Ford are working and there is a lot of political hay that can be made on the continuing improvement in the national economy, while we still recognize we have a substantial way to go to reduce unemployment.

"Don't change horses in the middle of the stream" is sound political advice to the American public--particularly when that stream is a steadily-improving national economy and a steadily-improving confidence on the part of the people in the ability of President Ford to help lead the country to greater prosperity at home.

"Peace and prosperity" in the past has proven to be a very successful political issue. There is no reason to believe it can't succeed again, particularly if the challenger is someone who is inexperienced in national government and particularly if

the President is conscious of the need for the preemption of
the middle of the road.

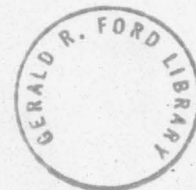


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April 28, 1976

THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 5 - MARCH, 1976

David W. Belin



The Withdrawal of Reagan?

During a March 17 meeting with Ron Nessen, I was asked to prepare papers on three questions:

1. What would be the best way to encourage Governor Reagan to withdraw?
2. What are the most important criteria to consider in selecting a Vice Presidential running mate, what person or persons might be best considered, and what is the best way to have the person picked?
3. What specific suggestions do I have for the "Bicentennial Speech", which I discussed in the January and February papers?

I will discuss the Reagan withdrawal question in this March paper, and I will turn to the Vice Presidential and Bicentennial speech questions in the April and May papers, respectively.

I think the President made an absolutely correct observation this past weekend when he said that he did not care whether Governor Reagan did or did not withdraw.

Furthermore, I think any talks of withdrawal of Governor Reagan are premature. Governor Reagan could still win some primaries, but as I wrote in my November strategy paper, our goal is not to win all of the primaries but rather to win a majority of the votes of the delegates. I disagree with a strategy whereby ahead of any particular primary the President predicts he is going to win. Rather, I still stand by my November strategy paper when I wrote (pages 3 and 4):

"However, in contrast to Governor Reagan, who is a full-time candidate, President Ford should point out that the President must first and foremost discharge the responsibilities of the Presidency. Accordingly, President Ford will state that he will not be able to devote a lot of time to primary campaigning, and there undoubtedly will be some states where he does no campaigning at all.

"The President should then further state that because Governor Reagan will be campaigning full time and because the President will be campaigning on a very part-time basis, Governor Reagan might very well win primary elections in some states and that as a practical matter the President should say that he is going



to win some primaries, he is going to lose some primaries, but that ultimately he will win a majority of the votes of the delegates to the Republican National Convention.

. . .

"In addition, the President should publicly state what most pragmatic political experts believe: Regardless of whether or not Governor Reagan wins any primaries, President Ford will be by far the stronger candidate for the Republican Party in a general election, and to nominate Governor Reagan would be a repetition of 1964."

Said in March

→ Texas is a state that has substantial risks to the President.
I have also predicted that Governor Reagan will run much better in North Carolina than what the pollsters have recently predicted.
Therefore, I question whether or not there should be any talk about the withdrawal of Reagan stemming from the White House or the President Ford Committee, and I underscore again the President's recent statement that he does not care whether Governor Reagan does or does not withdraw. In addition, if the withdrawal of Governor Reagan is a desired goal (and I question whether it is at this time), the best way to get Governor Reagan to



withdraw is for the President to keep doing what he is already doing. Neither the President nor his campaign committee should put a lot of pressure on Governor Reagan to withdraw, thereby embarrassing him and also painting Governor Reagan into a corner. There is even the risk that too much withdrawal pressure could arise public sympathy for Governor Reagan. I believe there is the possibility of the "underdog" psychology, and we must be very careful not to let ourselves get in this kind of a position.

Finally, I would urge that it may not be in the long-run interests of President Ford to have Governor Reagan withdraw at the present time. I think a strong case can be made that is in the best interests of victory in November if Governor Reagan stays in the race at least through April and possibly through May or June.

At the outset, let us consider the position of the President on the American political scene today after the first series of primaries, and compare this with the "gloom and doom" of political pundits in January, after Governor Reagan announced his candidacy. It is obvious that there have been many substantial benefits which President Ford has achieved in winning the first series of primary victories. The people love a winning team. The more President Ford wins in the first series of primaries in February and March, the more likelihood there is that he will win in the second series of primaries in April and May. Why change the scenario now?

There is also the issue of "momentum". In addition, there is experience gained for the President and his team in a primary campaign and all of the other tangible benefits that arise from a contest. Every week of primary campaigning puts the Presidential team in a stronger position.

There are many other advantages that stem from a Republican contest, not the least of which is that there will be equal television time given to Republicans while the Democratic primaries are being covered. The main disadvantage--"divisiveness" of the Party, is one with which Republicans are far too concerned. No Party has been more divisive than the Democratic Party-- and yet they control both Houses of Congress and came within a narrow margin of beating Richard Nixon in 1968, despite the vulnerability of the Johnson administration.

We have a winning candidate and a tremendous amount of momentum and experience that have been gained through the first series of primary battles. Why break up a winning combination? The advantages to a primary contest, in light of what has happened to the President's national standing over the past two months, far outweigh whatever divisiveness might be caused within the Republican Party--as long as President Ford and his campaign organization do not adopt a policy of "overkill" so far as the Reagan campaign is concerned.

The day after the Illinois primary, I met David Broder at O'Hare Airport and we flew together to Washington. We discussed

a number of issues (one of which related to the Vice Presidency, which I will incorporate in the April strategy paper), and we both agreed that the primary contest of Governor Reagan had turned out to be of great benefit to the President. We also both agreed that it would be to the President's great advantage if Reagan did not drop out right away.

One of the most analogous political situations in recent years occurred in Iowa in 1972. Robert Ray decided to run for a third term as Governor--an unprecedented decision. The then Lieutenant Governor, Roger Jepsen, was a popular conservative from the Davenport area--good speaker, energetic, relatively young, and very popular among the Party regulars. He decided that he would run against Governor Ray in the primary.

There were immediate cries of "splitting the Party", "you can't do this against an incumbent Governor", etc. Governor

Ray and his closest advisors were not among those making these outcries.

During the course of the primary campaign, the more Roger Jepsen attacked Governor Ray, the lower Jepsen's standings sank in public opinion polls. There was increasing talk of putting pressure on Roger Jepsen to withdraw. But Governor Ray and his closest advisors stood firm and went about their own campaign, in a manner similar to that enunciated by President Ford this past week while campaigning in North Carolina.

The net result was that Roger Jepsen's support sank so low that he, himself, elected to throw in the cards approximately three weeks before the June, 1972, primary. In the meantime, Governor Ray was the beneficiary of the state-wide interest in a primary challenge and was also beneficiary of ever-increasing momentum. The attacks that Jepsen made against Governor Ray had little influence on the November election, where Governor Ray won a smashing victory (the only Republican Governor to run ahead of President Nixon. At the same time Jack Miller, the incumbent Republican senator, lost to Dick Clark.)

There is a lesson to be learned from what happened in Iowa in 1972. The same strategy that Governor Ray adopted in 1972

should be followed by the President: Stick to his case, perform the duties of the Presidency, with a limited amount of weekend campaigning, and let the Reagan campaign start crumbling as the President gains in delegate strength to an almost insurmountable lead. New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin should do a lot toward attaining this goal.

Meanwhile, take advantage of all of the media coverage of the primary campaigns, take advantage of all of the media victories, win graciously, and above all do not over-estimate the anticipated percentage of victory or discount the possibility of loss in a primary campaign.

(Some of the spokesmen for the President Ford Committee have not been very gracious in their victory statements. I think this is unwise for a number of reasons, including the question of divisiveness and also the possibility of giving Governor Reagan the opportunity to capitalize on the sympathies of the public for the underdog.)

Under the present course, there is little likelihood that Governor Reagan can win the nomination. But his continued campaign against the Presidency, with the continued momentum of Presidential victories (even assuming the possibility of one or two defeats) can make a major contribution toward victory in November. I think this far outweighs the risks of possible

divisiveness--at least through the month of April, where we can take another look at the situation.

However, if there is still the belief that it is important to have an early withdrawal of Governor Reagan, the best way to reach that goal is to follow the example of the President this past weekend and not get involved in the question of whether or not Governor Reagan should withdraw. Let's keep on doing what we are doing well and let's not paint Governor Reagan into a corner. His string of losses is bound to hurt his ability to raise campaign funds. It is also bound to hurt his ability to attract support from within the Party, and in the meantime, we can capitalize on the momentum we already have.

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March 22, 1976



THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 4 - FEBRUARY, 1976

David W. Belin

Projecting Leadership and Statesmanship -
Some Major Opportunities

I believe the time has come for the campaign of the President to go on the offensive. Reacting to the charges of the Democrats on the one hand and Governor Reagan on the other is not enough. Moreover, I believe that there are some major opportunities where the President can project dynamic leadership and statesmanship, which are vital ingredients for him to win the Republican nomination and the general election in November.

Before turning to some specific suggestions, it might be appropriate to list some of the major criticisms that have been leveled against President Ford in recent months. My purpose is not to determine whether or not the criticism is valid or not valid. Rather, my purpose is to pinpoint how President Ford is perceived by some people and then offer some constructive suggestions for not just meeting this criticism but rather going forward in a positive fashion which will make a major contribution toward winning both the Republican nomination and the general election in November.

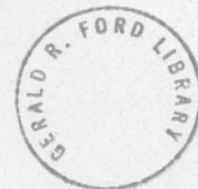


There is a feeling on the part of many people that President Ford has not shown sufficient "leadership." Other people maintain that the President is not acting like a President should act (whatever that is) and instead is acting like a Congressman or like the Republican Minority Leader.

Other major criticisms have been made, including one which was discussed in the December paper: Perception of the Republican Party as the Party without compassion.

If President Ford is to win the nomination and the general election, then he must be cognizant of such criticisms and must consider possible courses of action to overcome these problems.

As a combination program to project imaginative and dynamic leadership and statesmanship and also at the same time meet some of the criticism that has been leveled against the President, I would like to suggest four specific programs which can be integrated with key anniversaries providing speaking opportunities that the President can use as a take-off point. These programs and speaking opportunities can be used as major keystones in the campaign for both the nomination and the general election. Furthermore, they can be all pulled together in the climax, which I call the "Bicentennial Speech"--the speech that the President



will give on July 4, 1976--an address that could be and should be one of the most important of this century.

There should be a theme which should tie these major speaking opportunities together and which should also be used to help project Presidential leadership and statesmanship. One theme that I would suggest for consideration is the need to rebuild confidence in ourselves, recognize the greatness of this country, recognize unsolved problems that we have, partial solutions that we have already attained, and opportunities for the future. There is nothing that is impossible--as long we have confidence in ourselves and our ability to recongize our problems and work together to solve them.

With the foregoing as a frame of reference, let us examine in summary form four specific proposals and key anniversaries for the presentation of these proposals:

1. The first speaking opportunity that I would like to pinpoint occurs on the 111th anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1976. "With malice toward none, and charity toward all." This nation is still divided against itself. The aftermath of Vietnam, the aftermath of racial clashes, the aftermath of Watergate have left the national purpose of this country unsettled.

This has been compounded by the investigations of the CIA. To say the least, divisiveness is the order of the day.

Not only is this bad from the viewpoint of moving forward toward our national goals and aspirations, but it is also bad from the viewpoint of a strong national defense. When one reads basic communist political doctrine, he finds that there are often references to the fall of capitalism as a result of disarray and crumbling from within the capitalistic system as opposed to exterior force from outside the country.

Therefore, I believe that a major national goal from the viewpoint of both domestic progress as well as strong national defense must be getting people pulling together again. Within this context, I think we can turn to the leadership of Abraham Lincoln who was faced with the problem of uniting a very disunited country after the Civil War.

But the words of Lincoln, alone, are not enough. There must be specific action to demonstrate Presidential leadership and compassion. A wide number of possibilities should be considered--even though at first blush some of these may not appear appropriate at this stage of the campaign. For instance, one possibility which I believe should be considered (but which I am not yet ready to recommend) concerns Presidential amnesty or

pardon for people who fled the United States during the Vietnamese war. It is not a particularly major issue now, but could it offer a major opportunity for President Ford on the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln? As a frame of reference, I am going to point to the pardon of President Nixon by President Ford. I did not agree with this at the time it was done. Yet, many people feel in retrospect that this was a sound decision because it avoided a continuation of national disarray as an outgrowth of Watergate.

Another aspect of national disarray concerns the issue of amnesty for those who fled this country instead of being drafted to fight in Vietnam. Heretofore, I have wholeheartedly supported the concept of requiring some sort of obligatory service as a substitute for the Armed Forces service that was avoided by those people who fled the United States during the Vietnamese War. Yet, as I gain perspective, I wonder whether or not we can get this whole issue behind us by having President Ford not only use the words of Lincoln but also undertake a specific action of having a blanket amnesty or Presidential pardon for all Americans to return to the country, with no conditions attached. The more I think about it, the more I believe that in the long range, this could be in the best interests of our country.

In addition, this could act as an insulating factor against what will have a major political impact this summer and fall: The release of the movie about Watergate starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman and featuring the re-creation of President Nixon, Mitchell, Haldeman, etc. Previews of coming attractions are already featuring scenes from this movie, and Watergate will be very much in the mass media this summer and fall. Necessarily, this will bring back into the public eye the pardon of President Nixon. A Presidential pardon or amnesty of Vietnam draft evaders might materially offset the adverse effect that this movie is bound to have.

Furthermore, in the campaign for the Republican nomination, there could be some very tangible political benefits, particularly if Governor Reagan should win some early victories in the Presidential primaries. (I will discuss in the March paper some specific course of action which I believe must be taken in the event Reagan does very well in New Hampshire and Illinois.)

There is another tangible political benefit and that is the possibility that Governor Reagan will disagree with this decision. This is the kind of an issue that after the first few days has to work to the benefit of the President. In the

first place, most of the press will be in favor of the decision. Moreover, the American public by and large is a public that is willing to forgive, and if the public has to vote on the side of compassion or non-compassion, the public generally is going to favor compassion.

Finally, I believe such a stand would help meet the problem that was discussed in the December paper: Perception of the Republican Party as the Party without compassion.

On the other hand, there are obvious disadvantages for the President to offer blanket amnesty or Presidential pardon. But regardless of whether or not amnesty is the right decision to make at this time, the fact remains that the nation is still not together again, and the anniversary of the assassination of President Lincoln affords a great opportunity for President Ford to make a major national address steeped in the vision and idealism of Abraham Lincoln. The country is moving again. You can feel it as you crisscross the country. We must look toward the future as we recognize the crises we have recently gone through.

I would like to borrow another page from Lincoln and make a specific suggestion for an April 14, 1976, speech (and this same suggestion applies to the other specific speeches I am recommending): President Ford should strive to make his public speeches shorter: A target of ten to twelve minutes with a maximum of fifteen. The Lincoln Gettysburg Address was less than five minutes. A masterpiece does not have to be long. There are very few people who do not appreciate a short speech.

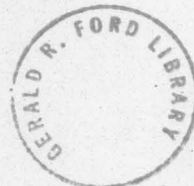
2. The next major address I suggest is on May 8, 1976, coinciding with the 31st anniversary of V-E Day in Europe. I believe that there has been great Presidential leadership in the search for world peace, and I think President Ford should come forward and "tell it like it is." We do not have any American troops engaged in war operations abroad. We opened the doors to China. We are seeking to make agreements with Russia which will cut down on the horrible waste of human effort toward building instruments of destruction.

The specific content of this speech should emphasize the stupidity of the nations of the world in spending so much money for instruments of destruction when so much needs to be done and so much can be done. At the same time, the speech can discuss the need for national defense as long as there are totalitarian

nations in this world that do not recognize the rights and freedoms that American citizens enjoy.

I think there is a fantastic opportunity for President Ford to go through the budgets that various foreign nations spend for their armed forces and for instruments of war and compare these with the expenditures that are made to help relieve poverty throughout the world. The President can express great concern for the huge defense budgets that this country has, while explaining to America that we cannot afford to be second-best. I would also suggest that the President with particular reference to the campaign for the nomination can point out how ill-advised it can be to grandstand and "talk tough." Here, I believe there is a page of Republican history that can be borrowed--the 1948 campaign for the nomination between Dewey and Stassen, where Stassen was on the verge of victory until he met Dewey in Oregon and took the "hard line" position against communism.

Ronald Reagan has an Achilles heel when it comes to foreign policy. The President can exploit this while at the same time coming forward as a statesman and as a leader who is leading the way in the search for world peace.



There are other possibilities which I would like to discuss in detail in the near future. The key is that President Ford has a story to tell. I want him to tell the story as a statesman, as a leader, and as a man with a passionate concern for the need to preserve our freedoms on one hand and compassionate understanding of the havoc that has been caused by both war and the expenditure of huge sums throughout the world for weapons and armies.

3. The Flag Day-Commencement speech.

The month of June offers a double opportunity of Flag Day (June 14) and a major address at a college or university. This talk can be the prelude to the Bicentennial speech on the Fourth of July.

As I envision this address, it would be appropriate at a college or university to scan the past 200 years of American history to show what we have accomplished from the idealistic point of view as well as from the practical point of view. At the same time, since the talk would be before younger people, we can look with a vision toward the future to see what can be accomplished in the years ahead. We can review perspectives of how far we have gone in relations between races and how far we can still go. We can take a look at perspectives of the freedoms



we have and compare this with the freedoms that most of the rest of the world does not have.

There are some great quotations going back to the Founding Fathers and including quotations from great leaders of Western Europe which could be sprinkled in this kind of a talk.

The talk in part can also be adapted to the course of the primary challenge by Governor Reagan. I will have some specific comments on this in the April or May strategy paper.

4. July 4, 1976, is literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The Bicentennial speech in many respects may be the most important address that President Ford will ever make. It can make a major contribution toward winning the nomination. It can make a major contribution toward winning the election. And it can make a major contribution in the course of this country's progress for the rest of this century, and beyond.

Perhaps in this talk more than any other place, President Ford will have an opportunity to demonstrate that he is a "big" President--a President that deserves to go down in history as one of the best--a President who has the vision and the leadership to guide this country as it enters its third century.

I have some specific thoughts and suggestions on this address. In part, these relate to what I have previously discussed in this strategy paper. In part, they do not.

Either the April or the May strategy paper will be primarily devoted to this tremendously important event. However, before I prepare that strategy paper, I would like to have the benefit of meeting directly with President Ford and listening to his thoughts in this area, his disagreements or criticism with the overall strategy that I have proposed in these strategy papers to date, and sharing with him some specific suggestions and observations.

In closing, let me reiterate a comment made in the November strategy paper: The most important advantage that President Ford has is that he is the President. Over the past few months, he has concentrated on performing his job in Washington and not going out on the campaign trails. I believe this is very sound strategy. But I also believe that it is now time to take the next step and go forward with a positive, affirmative, imaginative program which will emphasize his leadership and statesmanship as the President of this country.

There is a story to be told. A story of world peace. A story of return to domestic prosperity. A story of how much better off we are than we were a year and a half ago. A story that it is not fair for the Republican Party to turn its back on a President who has literally led this country from the brink of internal disaster, both economically and politically.

There are other aspects of this story such as the fact that the economy has turned around in barely more than a year-- as compared with an economy that after the 1929 Depression did not turn around until the advent of a World War.

But the most important aspect is the frame of reference-- a frame of reference that includes vision, idealism, compassion, and recognition of what we have accomplished, what remains to be accomplished, and what can be accomplished if we have confidence in ourselves and work together, looking toward the future.

I have made some specific proposals. There may be disagreement with some or all of these proposals. But if there is disagreement, then I would respectfully suggest that there should be alternative specific positive programs for projecting



imaginative leadership and statesmanship--qualities that the President does have--qualities that are essential in winning the nomination and the general election in November.

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February 13, 1976

THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 3 - JANUARY, 1976

David W. Belin

Winning Independent Votes -
Major Organizational Considerations



In past Presidential campaigns, candidates have often had separate organizations directed at persons who were not of the candidate's own party. For instance, "Citizens for Kennedy", or "Democrats for Nixon".

For the 1976 Presidential campaign, instead of a "Citizens for President Ford" or "Democrats for President Ford", I believe there should be a political organization specifically directed at the Independent voter and called, "INDEPENDENTS FOR PRESIDENT FORD".

The word is particularly appropriate because of the emphasis on the Bicentennial celebration of our country's "independence". Before getting into specific details concerning the overall political organization, there is one overriding consideration of which we must at all times be aware: If the major thrust toward the Independent voter is purely from an organizational standpoint, it will fail; policy and issue strategy, where the Independent voter's views are given major consideration, are absolutely essential elements of any successful strategy directed toward the Independent voter.



The December, 1975, strategy paper, "Winning Independent Votes--Major Strategy Considerations", discussed public dissatisfaction with Congress, which was a major Presidential advantage, and also discussed a major Republican weakness: Perception as the Party without compassion, the Party that is more concerned with balancing the budget than it is concerned about caring for the needs and problems of the average American.

In structuring an organization directed toward the Independent voter, these as well as other basic strategy considerations must be kept in mind. There will be a number of key opportunities to develop issues which are appealing to both Republican and Independent voters. For instance, in the poll attached to the December paper, the Independent voter expressed almost as strong disapproval of the way Congress was handling its job in Washington as did the Republican voter.

Ideally speaking, there should be at least two co-chairmen, one of whom should be a woman and at least one of whom has in times past supported Democratic candidates for elective office, as well as Republican candidates.

At least one of the co-chairmen should have national stature

so far as the press is concerned (but this does not necessarily mean national name recognition). In addition, at least one of the national co-chairmen should have a lot of political "savvy" from the perspective of both the Republican Party as well as the Independent voter. Other qualities could be mentioned including the ability to handle public relations, the ability to organize, and the ability to cooperate and work with others.

The framework for such an organization should be developed well before the Republican National Convention. Contact should be made in each of the fifty states for people to head statewide organizations of "Independents for President Ford."

The exact timing of a public announcement of the forming of an organization will depend in part upon the course of the primary campaigns and may be integrated in some way to tie in with at least one of a series of four major speeches directed toward both the Republican and the Independent voter that President Ford should consider giving in April, May, June and July.

These four speeches will be further discussed in the February strategy paper. The tentative timing and areas of concentration in the speeches might be along these lines:

1. A speech on April 14, 1976, on the 111th anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. This talk would concentrate on the need to bind up the divisions within the country, the way Abraham Lincoln sought to bind up our country after the Civil War. One could even envision a dramatic announcement by President Ford leading the way. Or, perhaps the speech should concentrate on what this nation has accomplished in the way of people of all races and creeds working together, what it has accomplished specifically for the Black minorities, and what yet remains to be accomplished.

2. A speech on May 8, 1976, coinciding with the 31st anniversary of V-E Day in Europe, which would concentrate on world peace and would emphasize what has been accomplished in recent years in the search for peace, ranging from the rapprochement with China to the fact that for the first time since 1961, no American troops are engaged in war operations abroad. Further specifics and alternatives will be discussed in the February strategy paper.

3. The June speech could coincide with Flag Day or might be a speech given at a college convocation. If given on Flag

Day, the speech might concentrate on the need for national defense, including some historical perspectives of the expansion of dictatorships. This could also be incorporated in a college speech, where history would be emphasized as well as opportunities for the future, bringing into focus material discussed in the May speech. These and other alternatives will be further developed in the February strategy paper.

4. Finally, what should be the most important speech of all-- probably the most important speech that will ever be given by President Ford, and what could be one of the most important speeches of the century--THE BICENTENNIAL SPEECH. This is a once in a century opportunity, and I would like to further discuss this in the February paper. The Bicentennial Speech will be given on July 4, 1976--it should be a speech grounded in the greatness of American history, with a visionary outlook toward the future, and could include some dramatic announcements which could have a major effect not only on the nomination and the election this Fall but also on the future of our country in the next several decades.

I have some specific ideas which I would like to outline in the February paper and then which I would like to discuss in Washington in late February or early March.



Each of these speeches will be directed not only toward the Republican voter but also toward the Independent voter. They should afford opportunities for a well-organized "Independents for President Ford" organization to reach out and help gain Independent support for the President.

The "Independents for President Ford" organization should also undertake a review of Presidential appointees who are not Republicans and who might be available for direct or indirect campaign help.

The November, 1975, strategy paper, "Defusing the Reagan Challenge", referred to the need for a strong Republican organization in each of the fifty states together with a "parallel organization primarily directed to the Independent voter." The importance of an effective organization, which I believe should be called "Independents for President Ford", cannot be over-emphasized. Plans should be immediately undertaken to lay out the framework for this organization.

Finally, if this organization proves to be effective, it could form the fountainhead for broadening the base of the Republican Party in future years, perhaps culminating in an

amalgamation of Republicans in a large body of Independent voters. However, discussion of these opportunities can wait until after the November election.

In the meantime, as the organizational structure of "Independents for President Ford" gets underway, President Ford and his campaign organization must go to the offensive from the position of the Presidency. There is a story to be told to the Republican voters and to the general electorate: Our country today is in far better shape than it was 18 months ago when President Ford took office. Inflation has been brought under control, and no American soldiers are fighting abroad.

"Peace and prosperity" must form a major part of the appeal toward the Independent voter, just as it must form a major part of President Ford's campaign for the Republican nomination.



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January 16, 1976

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THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 2 - DECEMBER, 1975

David W. Belin

Winning Independent Votes - Major Strategy Considerations

Almost every Republican leader agrees that in order for Republicans to win elections, they must gain the support of Independent voters as well as discerning Democrats.

This strategy paper discusses two aspects of this question, one of which involves what I believe to be a major strength which already exists for the President and the other of which involves what I believe to be an existing weakness--a weakness that has also been a major Republican weakness through the years.

A. Public dissatisfaction with Congress--a major Presidential advantage.

In 1948, President Truman won re-election in large part because of the campaign against the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress. He even carried the State of Iowa--at that time a rock-ribbed Republican state with a Republican Governor, two Republican Senators, and a solid Republican Congressional delegation.



In contrast, today Iowa is no longer a "rock-ribbed Republican state" although it does have a Republican Governor who has been elected four successive times by the people. (In response to the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way Robert Ray is handling his job as Governor of Iowa?", the most recent state-wide Iowa poll shows 78% approve, only 10% disapprove and 12% have no opinion.) Today five out of the six Congressmen are Democrats and both Senators are Democrats.

Nevertheless, there exists in Iowa, as I believe there exists across the country, great dissatisfaction with Congress. For instance, attached as Exhibit 1 to this paper are the results of the Iowa Poll conducted by the state-wide newspaper, The Des Moines Sunday Register, and published on November 30, 1975.

When Iowans were asked, "Who do you think is more to blame for lack of a definite energy policy in the United States today-- President Ford or Congress?", only 10% said President Ford, 51% said the United States Congress, and the balance were undecided.

When asked, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mr. Ford is handling the job as President?", 60% approved, 21% disapproved, and 19% had no opinion. In contrast, when asked, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way the U. S. Congress is handling its job in Washington?", only 26% approved, 54% disapproved, and 20% had no opinion.

With particular reference to the Independent voter, on this last question, only 23% approved of the way Congress was handling its job, 57% disapproved, and 20% had no opinion.

This offers a fertile field for the 1976 campaign if cultivated properly. Furthermore, it is probable that at least one and perhaps both of the Democratic nominees for President and Vice President will themselves be members of Congress. If this should happen, it will make the particular issue of public dissatisfaction with Congress an even better one for President Ford, unless his running mate is also a member of Congress.

However, President Ford cannot just attack Congress without offering positive proposals of his own. He should continue to make positive recommendations to Congress for legislation. The energy program is a good example: The President has come forth with a specific plan and has told Congress in substance, "If you have a better plan, let's enact it, but at least let's get some specific legislation for the people."

As the 1976 campaign progresses, President Ford should adapt part of what Harry Truman did with the Republican Eightieth Congress, except that it should be on a much "softer" basis.

There are two basic reasons that I recommend a "softer" approach. First, I believe the public is getting tired of all of the bickering that is going on in Washington. Governor Ray, who I believe is one of the most astute political leaders in the country, wholeheartedly agrees with this. An attack against Congress that is too "hard sell" could result in the public saying, "A plague on both your houses." Therefore, I would recommend a more indirect approach which would emphasize what President Ford has done in positive accomplishments and in positive recommendations to Congress and contrast this with Congressional performance or lack of Congressional performance or inconsistencies on the part of Congress.

The second reason why I believe a "soft" approach is necessary in handling public dissatisfaction with Congress is that when Harry Truman started a hard-hitting campaign against the Republican-dominated Congress, he had one major asset which the Republican Party has not had through these past few decades. This involves exploitation of what I believe to be one of the major Republican weaknesses through the years: The failure of the Republican Party to be identified in the minds of the average citizen as a Party that cares for people.

B. A major Republican weakness: Perception as the Party without compassion.

In discussing the failure of the Republican Party to be identified in the minds of the average citizen as a Party that cares for people, the issue is not whether a particular Republican candidate--such as President Ford--actually has compassion for his fellow citizens. Rather, the issue is how that candidate, and the Republican Party as a whole, is perceived.

I believe that relatively few Americans perceive the Republican Party as a political organization that has compassion and concern for the lives of the average citizen--particularly people of below-average economic status. I believe this perception extends to how President Ford is viewed by a great many Americans. To be sure, they do not know him as an individual. Nevertheless, I believe he is perceived by far too many people as someone who is far more concerned with balancing the budget than he is concerned about caring for the needs and problems of the average American.

There is another basic problem which permeates our American society today: An overall lack of optimism for the future.



Twenty or thirty years ago, an overall frame of optimism permeated our entire country. In contrast, today we have almost a fatalistic sense of resignation--in large part caused by a multitude of problems ranging from Vietnam and Watergate to the energy crisis, inflation and unemployment.

If these assumptions are at least in part correct, the next question to ask is whether or not there is an issue which would afford the President an opportunity to meet both of these problems head-on: To kill the proverbial two birds with one stone.

I submit that there is an opportunity to meet these two problems which confront America today--and that opportunity lies in one of the most important basic economic assets of our country--our natural resources and technological capabilities to produce food.

First, a few facts: In 1974, American had a net trade deficit of nonagricultural products of approximately \$10 billion. On the other hand, the net trade surplus of agricultural products was approximately \$12 billion. Were it not for the ability to produce food in abundance, this nation would have been in dire economic straits.

The agricultural trade surplus in 1974 is a harbinger of the future. To be sure, today we have an energy crisis. But that energy crisis will be solved--it may be ten years from now, twenty years from now, or thirty years from now; it may be energy from the sun, from the wind, from coal, from nuclear power; but regardless of how the problem will be solved, we can be confident that technologically America will be able to solve its energy problems through substitutes for oil.

On the other hand, there is no substitute for food. And as world population continues to grow, this ability of America to produce food will become progressively more and more important through the years.

This fact alone is of tremendous long range economic consequence and also constitutes a ground for basic long range economic optimism for the future of our country.

There are a number of specific opportunities arising out of our food capabilities. First, food can make a major contribution in getting this country economically healthy. Second, our food capabilities can be of tremendous benefit in helping us meet potential challenges from international cartels and in particular the oil cartel. Third, food can be of tremendous

benefit in overall American foreign policy in American relations with our adversaries and in particular Russia. Fourth, food can be of major import in our relationships with friendly countries of the world as well as the uncommitted countries of the world and can also have great import in the overall image and standing of America in world affairs, if properly handled. There are also other direct benefits that relate to America's food productivity, all of which go to the question that many Americans are asking today, "What does it do for us?" This directly relates to the problem of regenerating confidence in ourselves and rebuilding an overall outlook of optimism for the future.

There is another aspect of food which relates to the problem of how President Ford and the Republican Party as a whole are perceived by the American people. There are tremendous opportunities from the humanitarian standpoint of being able to provide food for others. The starting point has to be food deficiencies that exist in the United States today. Thus far, the major role of the government to help America's needy has been through food stamps. It is a program which is capable of gross abuse.



Certainly, we want to help poor people buy food. But surely, there must be a better way than food stamps. Can we make food available to economically-disadvantaged Americans in ways that are better than current programs?

Another possible alternative pertains to school-age children. Many schools have hot lunch programs, although questions have been raised concerning the overall administration of those programs. On the other hand, many schools do not have any hot lunch programs at all. Furthermore, even in those schools with hot lunch programs, children often go to school without adequate breakfast and leave school without provisions for an adequate supper. Is there a better way to make food available to America's children--particularly those of school age?

What about food as an instrument of humanitarian foreign policy? On the one hand, Americans do not want to continue to spend billions of dollars of foreign aid annually--aid which all too often has been unappreciated by the recipients. Yet, basic American traditions of compassion and charity surely would not preclude some aid in the form of food given to alleviate starvation in some of the poorer countries in the world today.

One of the things that stands out most in the administration of Harry Truman was the Marshall Plan. It took place at a time when America could better afford to give away the billions of dollars annually that it gave. The money not only helped others, but also in the long run helped this country by maintaining the freedom of the independent nations of Western Europe.

Although today we cannot afford to give away money in the staggering amounts given after World War II, I submit that there is a place for American leadership in helping alleviate starvation in the world today.

A specific program might include a major portion of technology aid to foreign countries--perhaps particularly stressing Latin America--to help these countries help themselves. Some people believe that from a long-range standpoint it is more important to give this technological assistance than it is to merely provide food.

At the same time, there could be government programs to encourage better food technology production methods in this country and better educational programs and research programs on the overall aspects of food and nutrition.

Henry Kissinger in a September speech before the United Nations brought forward some of the long-range foreign policy benefits that this country could gain. Secretary Butz in recent speeches has also come forward with some aspects of this problem (although I happen to have some substantial differences with some of the programs of Secretary Butz).

For President Ford to undertake leadership in this area with particular reference to American citizens and also with reference to world food problems could have a major effect on how President Ford is perceived by the American people. At the present time, most Americans do not know the President, and they do not fully appreciate the fact that he is, indeed, a compassionate human being. This inaccurate perception is perhaps the greatest single weakness facing President Ford in the 1976 campaign. There must be a way to correct this.

I believe that the best possible way is through food. As an Iowan, I have vividly seen how Herbert Hoover gained the affection of America and the world after World War I because he helped save Western Europe from starvation. There is no doubt that this played a major role in his road to the Presidency, although his accomplishments in the area of food have been unfortunately overshadowed by the 1929 Depression.

If President Ford were to undertake some major national and international leadership in the area of food, this would have an effect on actions that he has already taken. Perhaps he would have to change his course in several areas. But surely the fact that a man changes his mind on a major issue is something that can be admired and will be admired by Americans if handled in the right way.

I believe that America's preeminence in food offers President Ford a tremendous opportunity to meet head-on the problems of how the Republican Party in general and how the President in particular has been perceived by the great majority of the people in this country and also the problem of lack of optimism for America's future.

If there is disagreement about the particular solution I proposed, surely there can be no disagreement about the fact that the two major problems that I have outlined do exist. And if food is not the vehicle to help overcome these problems, then some other vehicle must be found.

The key conclusion I wish to emphasize is that the demonstration of caring for people and compassion for the underprivileged in this country and throughout the world can make

a major contribution toward election victory in 1976. There are a number of collateral benefits ranging from the positive effect it will have on how the press perceives the President to the positive effect it will have on the Independent voter himself in the November election.

In addition, I believe that Presidential leadership in this area could make a major contribution toward securing the Republican Presidential nomination.

Finally, and most important of all, there is one additional element that I believe is crucial: The element of what is best for the people of this country. It is my firm conviction that good government is good politics. And to me, I cannot think of anything that is more important to the government of this country than to make sure that its citizens, and in particular its children, are adequately fed.

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December 12, 1975



Results of Iowa Poll

Iowans were asked the following October 1-4.

Question: Who do you think is more to blame for the lack of a definite energy policy in the United States today—President Ford or Congress?

	Total		Oct. '75		
	Oct. '75	June '75	Rep.	Dem.	Ind.
President Ford	10%	11%	19%	5%	7%
U.S. Congress	51	57	39	64	50
Undecided	39	32	42	31	43

The 10 per cent who said President Ford is more to blame gave these reasons:

	Total
Ford has had poor energy proposals	25%
Ford hasn't done anything	17

IOWANS CITE CONGRESS FOR ENERGY WOES

By BRUCE NYGREN
Iowa Poll Staff

Iowans blame the U.S. Congress more than President Gerald Ford for the lack of a definite energy plan in the U.S.

An October Iowa Poll found that 51 per cent blame Con-

An early November Gallup Poll reported that in the country as a whole, 44 per cent approve of his job performance, 44 per cent disapprove and 12 per cent have no opinion.

The low regard shown by Iowans for congressional efforts in the area of energy may be related to the low rating the legislators receive for general job performance.

In the latest poll, only 26 per cent approve of the job Congress is doing. This compares with 45 per cent who approved in September, 1974.

THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 1 - NOVEMBER, 1975

David W. Belin

Defusing the Reagan Challenge

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Strategy
Paper

From the viewpoint of securing the Republican nomination, the major risk to the President in meeting the challenge of Governor Reagan is not the risk of loss in a particular Republican primary. Rather, the major risk is the ramifications of such a loss.

From the standpoint of winning the November election, the major risk to the President in meeting the Reagan challenge is the risk of losing the Independent vote that is absolutely essential for victory in November.

From the viewpoint of Governor Reagan, the major risk is the loss in any primary where the President does not heavily campaign. This arises from the fact that Reagan will be a full-time candidate.

When we search for a basic strategy that will best resolve these three problems, there is an obvious starting point: The major strength of Gerald Ford is that he is a full-time President. The major weakness arises if he spends too much time in campaigning, which in turn undermines that basic strength.



(As a matter of fact, I believe that in the past several months the President may have spent too much time on the campaign trail, even though in part this has been on behalf of other Republican candidates or fund-raising events. In some respects, this has weakened his overall standing and undermines the basic posture that he must maintain if he is to win both the nomination and the election: The fact that he is first and foremost, a full-time President.)

The best possible scenario for Reagan would be to defeat Gerald Ford in a series of primary elections in states where Gerald Ford heavily campaigns.

Therefore, it is obvious that it is not to the benefit of the President to heavily campaign in any state in which the Republican leadership is strongly committed to Governor Reagan.

Yet, the President cannot remain completely aloof from the presidential primaries.

In resolving this conflict, I would like to suggest for consideration the following basic strategy program:

At an appropriate time after the Reagan announcement, and in an appropriate forum, President Ford should candidly state that he will enter every primary.



However, in contrast to Governor Reagan, who is a full-time candidate, President Ford should point out that the President must first and foremost discharge the responsibilities of the Presidency. Accordingly, President Ford will state that he will not be able to devote a lot of time to primary campaigning, and there undoubtedly will be some states where he does no campaigning at all.

The President should then further state that because Governor Reagan will be campaigning full time and because the President will be campaigning on a very part-time basis, Governor Reagan might very well win primary elections in some states and that as a practical matter the President should say that he is going to win some primaries, he is going to lose some primaries, but that ultimately he will win a majority of the votes of the delegates to the Republican National Convention.

Furthermore, the President should declare that if he loses primaries because he is a full-time President and is therefore unable to campaign extensively in a particular state, so be it. And if that, in turn, results in Governor Reagan's securing the Republican nomination, so be it. The President will not set aside the duties of the office of the Presidency in order to win primary elections.

In addition, the President should publicly state what most pragmatic political experts believe: Regardless of whether or not Governor Reagan wins any primaries, President Ford will be by far the stronger candidate for the Republican Party in a general election, and to nominate Governor Reagan would be a repetition of 1964.

This strategy has several key advantages:

a. This strategy emphasizes the major underlying strength of President Ford.

b. This strategy has a basic appeal to the independent voter. This will be further discussed in the December strategy paper.

c. This strategy affords a rationale in the event the President loses a primary and at the same time puts the burden on Governor Reagan to win primary elections in states where he heavily campaigns.

d. This strategy puts Governor Reagan in a position of having not much to gain if he wins a primary election but a lot to lose if he does not win. Thus, if Governor Reagan wins New Hampshire when President Ford campaigns only two or three days in New Hampshire, so what. But if Reagan loses New Hampshire under such circumstances, he has indeed lost a great deal.



The success of McGovern in New Hampshire was not necessarily in winning the election. Rather, it was running stronger than it was anticipated that he would run.

e. This strategy leaves open to the President the option of picking and choosing states in which he can more heavily campaign for the primary elections. Obviously, the states will be in areas where he has a favorable chance to win.

In order to consider adopting the foregoing overall strategy, the President must sharply reduce the number of his political trips. Instead of being seen on television screens waving at crowds, President Ford should be seen with leaders of this country and international leaders in Washington--conducting the business of this country. Furthermore, when he campaigns, it should be in his own behalf and not for others, particularly since President Ford has never run for national office in his own right. The real issue is not how much President Ford campaigns, but rather how he campaigns. And the how must include the candid statement that he does not expect to win the nomination by acclamation, that he expects in some places to run well and in some places not to run well.

At all times, the President must remember that he is the President and Ronald Reagan is not. He must stick more to his case--a candid, thoughtful, hard-working, capable President-- a case which will have several other important elements which I will discuss in the December strategy paper.

The overall strategy I suggest for consideration has an additional benefit to the President of timing. Sooner or later, Governor Reagan is going to put his foot in his mouth. And when he does, the best place to take advantage of this is not Manchester or Tallahassee. Rather, the best place is from the White House in Washington. And when this happens, the President can then adjust his schedule to campaign in the right states at the right time and defeat Governor Reagan in those particular primaries with the added advantages of pouncing on the opportunity of a fumble of the ball by Governor Reagan.

Looking at this strategy from the viewpoint of Governor Reagan, it presents an insurmountable problem: If the Governor wins a particular primary where the President has not heavily campaigned, the President can readily explain that loss, since he did not heavily campaign in that particular state.

On the other hand, if Governor Reagan as a full-time candidate loses a state in which he heavily campaigns, and in which the President did not heavily campaign, how can Governor Reagan explain that loss? The President can seize the opportunity to come forward with one of his basic positions of strength: The Republican Party must nominate a candidate who will have the most appeal to both Republican and Independent voters. If Governor Reagan loses a Republican primary as a full-time candidate, how can he possibly garner the support of the necessary Independent vote that is essential for Republican victory in November?

There is yet an additional overall advantage to the strategy I suggest: It will enable the President to do a better job in office, because he will be devoting more time to that office. As I said at the beginning, the basic strength of Gerald Ford is that he is the President of the United States. Let us never underestimate or undermine that strength in seeking the Republican Presidential nomination in 1976.

Finally, there is one other crucial element in defusing the Reagan challenge: Organization. There is just no substitute for a sound, aggressive, coordinated campaign organization. There are many people who believe that the performance thus far in the

area of campaign organization leaves much to be desired. Time is of the essence.

Initially, the organization must be centered around leading Republicans in each of the fifty states. However, there will have to also be a parallel organization primarily directed for the Independent voter. This will be further developed in the January strategy paper.

In summary, the best way to defuse the Reagan challenge is to combine a sound strategy with first-rate aggressive political organization. The key to the strategy is that Gerald Ford is the President and Ronald Reagan is not the President and that Gerald Ford as President is going to be doing his job and will not be devoting a lot of time to primary campaigning. Therefore, there will be states where he will win and there will be states where he will lose. His goal is not to win the nomination by acclamation, but rather to win a majority of the delegates to the Convention, and that if he wins the nomination he will be far the strongest candidate for the Republican Party in a general election.

The greatest risk to the President is to campaign heavily and fall prey to the so-called Washington political pundits who

would write that a 20% or 30% Reagan showing is a psychological victory for Reagan. This has to be turned so that the burden is placed on Governor Reagan to win primary elections in states where he heavily campaigns, and if he does not win those elections, it is he, the full-time campaigner, who has lost. But even if he wins some, this has to be expected. And if he wins too many, the President can pick and choose his own battleground. It may be Wisconsin, it may be Oregon, it may be in some other state--perhaps even California. But let the President pick his own battleground and not try to campaign on every battleground. And wherever the President picks the battleground, he should be sure that he has a first-rate campaign organization on which he can rely.

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November 4, 1975

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THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT FORD
BASIC STRATEGY PAPER NO. 11 - SEPTEMBER, 1976

David W. Belin

The Ford-Carter Debates: Key Strategy Considerations

The debates between President Ford and Jimmy Carter will be the single most important events of the 1976 campaign.

What is the best basic strategy to follow?

Six elements will be discussed: (1) Basic advantages of the President; (2) basic disadvantages of the President; (3) physical preparation; (4) capitalizing on Democratic control of Congress; (5) capitalizing on other Jimmy Carter weaknesses; (6) capitalizing on psychological factors.

1. Basic Advantages of the President.

The advantage of incumbency, coupled with the record of the President, is the single most important advantage that President Ford had.



As I wrote in my August strategy paper, "The Five Keys to Victory in November", the President in any debate with Jimmy Carter can refer to the basic elements of his record in restoring trust and confidence in government, maintaining peace, cutting inflation in half, and leading the country into an era of ever-increasing prosperity.

What I wrote in my first strategy paper in November, 1975, with reference to the primary campaign is equally applicable to the fall campaign:

"The major strength of Gerald Ford is that he is a full-time President. The major weakness arises if he spends too much time in campaigning, which in turn undermines that basic strength."

I continued:

"Instead of being seen on television screens waving at crowds, President Ford should be seen with leaders of this country and international leaders in Washington--conducting the business of this country...."

"At all times, the President must remember that he is the President and Ronald Reagan (Jimmy Carter) is not. He must stick more to his case--a candid, thoughtful hard-working, capable President...."

Combined with this advantage of incumbency is an additional basic advantage: The President has a far better grasp of the facts than Jimmy Carter. Yet, although this is a basic advantage, if improperly used, it could turn out to be a terrible disadvantage.



The President must be quick to recognize that although he will debate Jimmy Carter, the winner is not the person who can score the most points if the debate were to be judged by normal standards. Rather, this debate is really a jury argument in front of tens of millions of Americans, and the ultimate victor will be the person who best communicates with this jury. Thus, the President must reinforce his delivery of the concrete facts with the seasoning of an emotional appeal to the hopes and aspirations of the American people.

It would be a terrible mistake to drown Jimmy Carter in a mass of facts without offsetting Carter's emotional appeals with some equally visionary language. I previously discussed in earlier strategy papers the general failure of the Republican Party to address itself to the hopes and aspirations of the American people and also to understand how to capitalize on the emotional factors involved in the campaign. President Ford must at all times be aware that the weight of the evidence is not necessarily the sole criteria on how these debates will be judged by the American jury.

In the concluding portion of my January paper, "Winning Independent Votes - Major Organizational Considerations", I wrote:

"There is a story to be told to the Republican voters and to the general electorate: Our country today is in far better shape than it was 18 months ago when President

Ford took office. Inflation has been brought under control, and no American soldiers are fighting abroad.

"'Peace and prosperity' must form a major part of the appeal toward the Independent voter, just as it must form a major part of President Ford's campaign for the Republican nomination."

The theme of peace and ever-increasing prosperity must underlie the position and arguments of President Ford in the presidential debates. This must be combined with facts, the seasoning of ^{or} visionary outlook to the future as we enter America's third century, and recognition of the basic disadvantage that the President faces, which will be discussed in the next section of this paper.

2. Basic Disadvantages of the President.

The basic disadvantage of the President, as I wrote in my December, 1975, strategy paper, is one of the greatest Republican weaknesses: Perception as the Party without compassion.

What I said last December is even more applicable for the November general election campaign:

"In discussing the failure of the Republican Party to be identified in the minds of the average citizen as a Party that cares for people, the issue is not whether a particular Republican candidate--such as President Ford--actually has compassion for his fellow citizens. Rather, the issue is how that candidate, and the Republican Party as a whole, is perceived.

"I believe that relatively few Americans perceive the Republican Party as a political organization that has compassion and concern for the lives of the average citizen--particularly people of below-average economic status.

I believe this perception extends to how President Ford is viewed by a great many Americans. To be sure, they do not know him as an individual. Nevertheless, I believe he is perceived by far too many people as someone who is far more concerned with balancing the budget than he is concerned about caring for the needs and problems of the average American."

John Rhodes makes a similar observation in his new book, "The Futile System". Here is what he writes:

"We Republicans have experienced a rather rude awakening. We have discovered that the image we have of ourselves does not accord with the image other people have of us. The realization was not a complete surprise because, after all, we have heard for some time that we are party comprised mainly of fat cats who curry favor with big business. We have heard others charge that special interests are more important to us than the needs of the average citizen. But we really never believed in our heart of hearts that most people think of us that way. I never did.

"They do think of us that way, however, at least a great many do. And, frankly, for those of us who thought all along that our battles on behalf of fiscal responsibility and smaller government would eventually be rewarded, the realization that many Americans regard Republicans as the bad guys has come as quite a shock.

"We now know, thanks to a survey conducted by the Republican National Committee, that Republicans are regarded by many people as hard, callous, cruel and insensitive. We give the impression of not caring--and that is the worst possible image a political party can have.

"Republicans, of course, do not believe that this negative image is deserved. But in politics, it's not what you are that counts; it's what people think you are."

To all of this can be added the hurdles which are an outgrowth of the wreckage of Watergate.

I do not think that the President should be defensive about these problems. However, I think that there are ways in which these problems can be very successfully overcome--and they must be overcome if we are to maximize the opportunities offered by these debates.

Furthermore, I think that the solution of this major Republican problem can be combined in looking at another basic problem which permeates American society today: An overall lack of optimism for the future. Twenty or thirty years ago, an overall frame of optimism permeated our entire country. In contrast, today we have almost a fatalistic sense of resignation--in large part caused by a multitude of problems ranging from Vietnam and Watergate to the energy crisis, inflation and unemployment.

Are there issues which would afford the President an opportunity to meet both of these problems head on--to kill the proverbial two birds with one stone? I think there are very important issues which should be taken into consideration in

preparation for the Jimmy Carter debates. I would be happy to give some specific suggestions in this area. However, the key element is for the President to recognize a tremendous disadvantage he has because he is a member of the Republican Party and because there is a great national perception of that Party as the Party without compassion.

3. Physical Preparation.

One of the worst things President Ford can do in preparing for these debates is to spread himself too thin along the campaign trail. For instance, in Senator Dole's first visit into Iowa after the Republican National Convention, eleven specific meetings were originally scheduled within a four or five hour period. Two or three at the most would have done a far better job and would have also left Senator Dole in a far better position to project himself well on those occasions when he spoke.

The President showed top form in his speech before the Republican National Convention when he had adequate time for preparation. Similarly, he should give himself ^{at least} two or three days of adequate preparation, without distractions, to get prepared for ^{each of} the televised debates.

One of the worst mistakes of Richard Nixon was to try and campaign in all fifty states, leaving himself physically weary, which in turn materially adversely affected his television appearances. President Ford should not fall into this same trap.

In addition, President Ford should undertake as a part of his preparation a practice "debate" with a stand-in for Jimmy Carter, the same way a football team scrimmages in advance of the big game and the same way a first-rate trial lawyer will prepare a key witness by going through a practice cross-examination that can be anticipated from the other side.

Finally, President Ford should have some "home run balls" that he can hit out of the park that are adaptable to anticipated questioning in the debates and anticipated responses by Jimmy Carter. For instance, we already know that Jimmy Carter is fuzzy on issues and that the Democratic Party Platform is calling for as much as \$200 billion of additional government spending, which must come from taxes or inflation or a combination of both. It can be anticipated that Jimmy Carter in the first debate on domestic issues may be asked where the money is coming from and may respond with his patented answers on cutting defense



expenditures. This can open the door for a major opportunity for the President to inject a succinct statement on defense and foreign policy even though the debate itself theoretically is on domestic issues. Such a response by the President would have to be carefully phrased to make sure that it is shown as a response to Jimmy Carter and then the President can openly state that he will look forward to discussing this in greater detail in the next debate. Other "home run balls" include such elements as the Democratic control of Congress, which will be discussed in the next section of this paper and which can be a tremendous counter-punch whenever Jimmy Carter talks about "leadership".

4. Capitalizing on Democratic Control of Congress.

Jimmy Carter is going to attack the President alleging that there has been a lack of leadership and also alleging a negative approach through the use of too many vetos. President Ford will offset that saying that he has given leadership to Congress in such matters as energy and other areas, but that Congress has not followed through. He will also say that he has protected the American people from excessive spending of Congress which otherwise would bring about massive inflation.

Who will win the argument? The real crux of the matter could be the issue of leadership, and there are several "aces in the hole" that the President should have ready to be played at the appropriate time.

For instance, on the issue of leadership in Congress, one can look to the whole question of Congressional reform and the inaction of Congress in this vital area. The Democrats have controlled Congress for 39 out of the last 43 years. Congress has an Achilles heel in such areas as the annual automatic pay raise tied to the cost of living. It was tacked on to a bill providing for a job safety program for postal workers. Within the matter of a few days, it cleared the Senate and then the House. Under this automatic formula, a Democratic controlled Congress voted for pay raises of several thousand dollars in 1975, and it is no wonder that they are willing to have excessive spending which will lead to inflation, because they have protected themselves from the consequences of the inflation. That is, so far as their own personal incomes are concerned.

What kind of Congressional leadership is this?



Then there is the question of the chaotic organization of Congress. At the present time, more than 30 committees and more than 60 subcommittees of Congress claim some jurisdiction in the field of energy research and development. Education is involved in more than 70 Congressional subcommittees.

Carter talks about reorganizing and simplifying government. Surely, he cannot be believed when the Democrats cannot even reorganize and simplify the organization of Congress.

The chaos in Congress is symptomatic of the chaos that would result in an unchecked Congress. In the right time, in the right place, in a Ford-Carter debate, the President can use his ace of trumps. And surely no one should know more about how to use such a high card than an individual who himself has gone through the frustrations of living under a Democratic controlled Congressional system.

5. Capitalizing on Other Jimmy Carter Weaknesses.

Perhaps the two biggest weaknesses of Jimmy Carter is the perception of "fuzziness" on issues and the problems Jimmy Carter has so far as the members of the working press are concerned. As I wrote in my April paper, "Key Highlights from a Conversation with David Broder":

"The nuances of the working press can make a tremendous impact through the mass media. There is the question of selectivity--which comments of the President and which comments of the opposition are used; how the lead paragraphs are written; how the headlines are selected; which television clip is used; when one of the candidates stumbles, how and the extent to which that is highlighted.

"In a hundred different ways, the working press can make or break the candidate."

One of these ways will include the questioning that is done of the candidates by the representatives of the working press. At the Republican National Convention, several members of the press commented that there is a basic distrust of Jimmy Carter. This was highlighted as recently as the CBS evening news program on Labor Day where samplings of Carter's comments were brought on the television screen after the CBS commentators stated that the comments underscored Carter's problems with "fuzziness".

Another basic disadvantage of Jimmy Carter is that he is debating the President of the United States--the first time this has ever been done on presidential debates. Jimmy Carter has a very tight rope to walk: If he tries to strike too hard at the office of the Presidency, this can create a very adverse counter-reaction. By the same token, the President has to be very careful that he acts like a President--a big person--and



if Jimmy Carter stumbles in this area, the President should plan in advance the best kind of hard-hitting reply--that would be statesmanlike in approach but yet will drive the point home without in turn creating public sympathy for Jimmy Carter.

I believe that there are effective ways that this can be done and that planning for such contingencies is an essential part of the preparation for the debates.

This leads into the final element that must be included in the televised debates--particularly in the first debate and in the last debate of the series: The recognition of the natural apprehension of the voter about the unknown.

6. Capitalizing on Psychological Factors--the fear of the unknown.

In my August strategy paper, I summarized several elements that must form the backbone of strategy for a successful November campaign. These included the following:

a. The record of President Ford in restoring trust and confidence in government, the maintenance of peace, control of inflation, and ever-increasing prosperity. Together with the

emphasis on the President's performance, there must be an expression of the President's goals, plans, hopes and aspirations for the Nation in his first four-year term.

b. The abysmal performance of the Democratic-controlled 94th Congress.

c. The Democratic Party Platform which promises more taxes, more inflation, and more big government.

d. The tremendous emotional and psychological opportunities in this campaign, which are elements that Republican candidates consistently fail to recognize.

Perhaps the most important--at least in the last few days of the campaign--will be the concern of the voter and the fear of the voter about the unknown. President Ford is a known quantity. He came into the Presidency at a time of great national crisis. There were the seeds of inflation. There was the winding down of a war. There was the whole question of trust and credibility in government.

The President can well run on this record of what he has accomplished: Peace, ever-increasing prosperity, inflation being cut in half.

Somewhere in the concluding portion of the first debate, and also in the last debate--and perhaps also in the middle one--the groundwork must be laid for what will be a key part of the media advertising in the last few days of the campaign--an effort to have the voter think twice before he pulls the lever on the voting machine or places his mark on the ballot.

When he closes the curtain of the voting booth, he knows on the one hand that if he votes for President Ford, he is voting for a person who has proven himself under fire. On the other hand, if he votes for the other candidate, he does not know what to expect--particularly when that other candidate has been inconsistent in some of his statements.

And I think that some of the inconsistencies can be mentioned, although care should be taken so that this does not become a personal attack. The key element is that we have to lay the groundwork to prepare the voter for what we hope to bring across to him in the last week of the campaign--he should vote for a known quantity who has performed well rather than voting for what in substance would be "a pig in a poke".

In other words, "a bird in the hand, is worth two in the bush", and performance is worth more than mere promises.



This can be integrated by factors which I discussed in my April paper, including the following:

"The President has an opportunity to go on the attack by undertaking research on the 'gloom and doom' comments that were made by Democratic political leaders and Democratic-oriented economists last year who sought to assure the American public that the program of President Ford would never work.

"The programs of President Ford are working and there is a lot of political hay that can be made on the continuing improvement in the national economy, while we still recognize we have a substantial way to go to reduce unemployment.

"'Don't change horses in the middle of the stream' is sound political advice to the American public--particularly when that stream is a steadily-improving national economy and a steadily-improving confidence on the part of the people in the ability of President Ford to help lead the country to greater prosperity at home.

"'Peace and prosperity' in the past has proven to be a very successful political issue. There is no reason to believe it can't succeed again, particularly if the challenger is someone who is inexperienced in national government and particularly if the President is conscious of the need for the preemption of the middle of the road."

There are two other basic psychological factors which should be considered in the preparation for the debates with Jimmy Carter. The first of these is the natural sympathy of the American people for the underdog. President Ford should recognize the fact that he is the underdog. And I believe

there are ways of stating this so that it is not overplayed and it is especially appealing to the jury of American people.

Another important psychological factor is the sense of fair play that the average American voter has. Is it fair for the American voter to turn his back on a President who has worked hard and has basically accomplished the major tasks that confronted him at the time he took office: Questions of credibility in government, rampant inflation, and leading the country along the paths of peace with ever-increasing prosperity?

There will be opportunities in any debate in response to an attack by Jimmy Carter alleging lack of leadership whereby the President can reply: "I don't think that the American people believe that would be fair in light of where the country was at the time I became President and in light of where the country is today...etc." The precise words are not what is important--rather, it is the concept. And I believe this is an important psychological factor that should be considered in preparing for these debates.

The foregoing highlights of preparation for the Ford-Carter debates are a few of what I believe to be the key elements of a successful campaign. They involve factors of judgment and common sense--two of the real long suits of President Ford.

I believe that Carter can be beaten--I have long believed he can be beaten. But I also believe that the President will have to perform with the same careful planning that he exercised in the preparation of his acceptance speech at the Kansas City convention.

This includes recognition of the basic advantages of incumbency and the record of the President and the fact that he is the President, recognition of the basic disadvantages and in particular the perception of the Republican Party as the Party without compassion. It also includes careful preparation with some "home run balls" that can be hit out of the park when the opportunity arises--some of which relate to the weaknesses of Jimmy Carter, including Democratic control of Congress and his general fuzziness. Finally, it means being prepared to capitalize on psychological factors and in particular the advantage of being the underdog, the traditional concept of the American people for fairness and the most important factor of all--the fear of the unknown.

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