

**The original documents are located in Box 13, folder “Campaign Strategy - Truncated Campaign Strategy: Drafts” of the Michael Raoul-Duval Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Michael Raoul-Duval donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

SENSITIVE/NO DISTRIBUTION

*historical analysis - precedents  
cost factors - other campaign elements,  
such as commercials - can we assess  
the impact of our campaigning & what  
if anything June 11 1976? - Carter vs Ford  
as debaters & as campaigners - How  
would Carter react - contrast w/  
Truman '48. Press conf. - every other  
week meet. - + alternate w/  
regional sessions -  
citizen conf. - R. + A.  
w/ randomly selected people -*

MEMORANDUM FOR:

DICK CHENEY

FROM:

MIKE DUVAL/FOSTER CHANOCK

SUBJECT:

"NO CAMPAIGN" STRATEGY

OVERVIEW

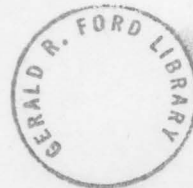
The best strategy for the President to win in November -- given the circumstances laid out below -- may be for him to announce after the Republican Convention that he will not actively campaign for the Presidency. He would "turn back" Federal matching funds to the Treasury, offer to debate Carter on a series of substantive issues, and go back to work as President with no campaign activities whatsoever.

An alternative is to announce a highly truncated campaign schedule.

REASONS FOR ADOPTING THIS STRATEGY

This high-risk strategy would be adopted only if it appeared to be the best way of winning the November election. This might be the appropriate judgment if the following conditions obtain after the President's nomination in August:

- The President is trailing Carter in the national polls by 15 points or more.
- The national polls show that Ford is closing the Carter lead, but the projection is that this will reverse later in the fall, with Carter again widening his lead.
- It is likely that there will be a major defection of Republican voters (primarily disenchanted Reagan supporters) to Carter. This condition would be met if the current New York Times survey (which shows a Republican defection of 35% to Carter) continues to hold.
- The Democratic Party and organized labor have pulled together strongly behind Carter, thereby giving him an extensive "grass roots" organization in all States.



- The polls continue to show that issues are not a decisive campaign factor. The voters continue to react to personality traits and themes.

If such a situation exists, and if the President can realistically calculate his odds as less than 40% chance of winning, then the "no campaign" strategy should be considered.

#### THE STRATEGY

Under this strategy, the President would announce, sometime in late August or early September, that he will not actively campaign for the Presidency. (See attached very rough draft announcement which is included to give an example of how this would be explained publicly.) The President would state that (all or most of) his matching funds will be "turned back" to the Treasury, and that he will spend his time working as President.

The White House Press Office would put out a carefully reasoned set of "ground rules" which would cover the Vice Presidential campaigning and other technical problems. The President would make it clear that, to the extent he would travel around the country on "official" business, the cost of this travel would be well under what he would be spending anyway under the election campaign law. This kind of analysis is necessary to avoid the charge that the President is using this simply as a ploy to get around the campaign financing law.

All Presidential activities, trips, etc., would have to be carefully worked out to be official and not raise any question of campaigning. Obviously, there would be some travel and, in the case of crowd situations, we would have to be careful that we took no action to raise crowds or otherwise exploit him politically, that would not be taken in an off-election year.

The President would announce that he will hold one (or more) press conferences a week with local/State press augmenting the White House Press Corps. This will enable the press to get the President's views on campaign issues.

The President would offer to meet Carter for a series of four nationally televised debates on foreign policy, national defense, economic policy and domestic policy.

#### THE RESULT OF THE STRATEGY

Although it's difficult, of course, to quantify what this strategy could produce, I think it's fair to assume that at least the following would occur:



- The President would show a marked increase in the polls (some of which would be natural anyway at that time of the year) and this would be generally characterized by the press as public endorsement of his decision.
- There would spring up throughout the country hundreds of independently run and financed "Ford for President" organizations by citizens who want to help the campaign but have no national organization to turn to. This should not be underestimated, because it could be a truly remarkable phenomena of individual efforts to help elect the President. *Why?*
- The Republican National Committee would initially complain about this on the grounds that the President would not be available to campaign for other GOP candidates but, in the end, I think they would support the decision. To the extent that the President did increase in the polls as a result of this decision, it will help all Republican candidates. Also, the RNC could devote all resources to the other candidates.
- The President would have a great deal of time to devote to Presidential duties, which could have a very beneficial impact on his election chances. Presidential appearances could be strategically targeted to highlight desired themes through Administration action. *AND this is the heart of the campaign anyway*
- Although the press would be initially confused and very skeptical and distrusting of this decision, they would nevertheless have to report the President's actions as being Presidential. This could result in a very favorable contrast between Ford as President and his rival as a campaigner.
- This is likely to produce serious problems for Carter. His entire strategy will be predicated on a Ford campaign, and I suspect he would not know how to react to such an announcement. To the extent the polls do shift in favor of Ford, he would really have no alternative strategy available to him. This might well result in cracks in his organization, and mistakes.
- This strategy will recast the campaign away from personality and theme to issues and substance.

Carter has successfully campaigned for over five months without being pinned down on most issues. The press has





tended to treat him as a phenomenon rather than as a candidate under scrutiny. There is no reason to believe that we will be substantially more successful at pinning him down than his opponents have been.

*But we have to try + this strategy might do it.*

This leaves us in a personality contest. Both Carter and the President are perceived as honest and sincere men of integrity. Carter's advantage is in his campaign style, anti-Washington stance, and being the nominee of a larger, grass-roots party. Given the constraints on time and spending, we cannot defeat Carter in a beauty contest. Therefore, we must steer the campaign back to the issues, even though the American public does not really care about them at a substantive level of detail.

We can steer the campaign onto the issues and prove the President's desire and superior ability to be President by challenging Carter to a series of four debates in the month of October. One debate is risky and less likely to really focus on issues. Thus, the President can challenge Carter to debates on domestic affairs, the economy, national defense and foreign policy. In this situation, we can maximize the advantage of incumbency, since the President is far more knowledgeable, experienced and balanced than Carter. To be fair, we can make the challenge September 1 and offer any briefings or information over the month that Carter would like to have. If he accepts, he acknowledges ignorance; if he declines, arrogance.

If he declines, the President can schedule four, fifteen minute unilateral policy speeches, thereby re-packaging his policy positions and underscoring Carter's fuzziness.

- This is likely to go a long way towards neutralizing the anti-government attack on the President. This strategy is so unconventional that the "establishment" based attack just will not work.

#### DOWNSIDE

The key problem with this strategy is the potential for the charge that the President has written off his election chances. The press will be tempted to say that he didn't really think he could win anyway, and this is simply a ploy to gracefully lose.

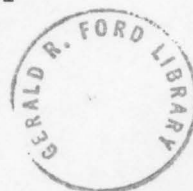
*What about comparisons w/ the '72 Nixon effort?*



This is a serious risk which must, of course, be avoided at all costs. However, this problem can be dealt with by the way the announcement is made and the arguments which are used to support the position. In essence, the President and his aides would have to draw a sharp distinction between an incumbent and a challenger. They would have to point out that the reasons for giving back some or all of the funds is to bring fairness and balance into the campaign. The argument will be that the President will continue to put his record before the American people so they can make their choice, but in a way that best plays to the President's strengths, i.e., by being President and dealing with the issues. We would point out that Carter can't match this, obviously, because he's not an incumbent. Therefore, in order to inject fairness into the campaign, the President's decision would allow Carter to continue to campaign as a candidate, the President to continue to act as President, and the voters therefore can make a reasoned choice. It should be emphasized that the entire strategy is geared toward shifting the campaign from a personality/theme oriented contest to the issues. In doing this, it's important that we not take out the element of fairness (where the President has \$20 million plus the incumbency versus Carter's \$20 million) because the press would crucify us if they perceive that we're acting in an unfair manner.

Another potential downside is the "breaking face with the GOP" argument. The charge here would be that the President had misled the Convention into thinking that he would actively campaign for the Presidency. Obviously, this strategy is not adopted unless it's the best way to win. This is the point that has to be made to the Republican faithful, and I think a reasoned assessment of the facts would support the validity of the argument. Essentially, the way the problem has to be handled is by convincing the Party that it is in the best interest of all Republican candidates to have the President rising in the polls and acting as President. In addition, criticism by elected Republicans and party officials will have considerable beneficial impact. This will tend to undercut the Carter attack of tying Ford to the Washington establishment.

Overall, the downside of this strategy isn't as great as one might think. The traditional manner of overcoming the Democrat's 2-1 plurality -- big spending and the South -- is not available under the assumptions of this paper in any case. Thus, spending \$20 million probably won't help much in any case (certainly not 15 points). The key will be to force Carter to make a mistake and this strategy may be the very best way to do just that.



Also, what the President is really giving up is his crowd situation campaign stops. I think the value of these are highly questionable, in any event. By and large, these stops do have an impact on the specific locale involved -- which may be important in the primaries, but takes on considerably less importance in the general election. The fact is, that unless you have a great deal of money to spend and can in essence blitz the country (which, obviously, we cannot in 1976), the benefit of these stops must be measured by their impact on the national television audience. This is absolutely the key point: campaign stops in 1976 have value in terms of their impact on the television audience.

*it also avoids the  
necessity of giving  
speeches!*

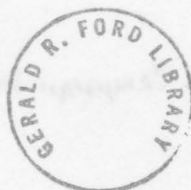
It should be obvious that it is highly dubious whether or not this helps or harms the President. We should get some Teeter information on this, but it would appear from the experience of the primaries that the President's national standing tends to go down in proportion to his national media exposure as a campaigner. In any event, I think measured against Carter, he clearly would come out second best in this mode.

Therefore, while campaigning provides an important ego benefit to the candidate and a morale booster to his staff and workers, it may be very destructive in terms of the ultimate outcome for President Ford in 1976.

THE ALTERNATIVE

An alternative to this extremely high-risk strategy is a scaled-down and truncated campaign plan. All the elements of the above plan would be utilized (including the debate challenge and turn-back of some campaign funds in order to maintain fairness), but the President would campaign in the normal way during the one or two-week period before the election. Obviously, this plan loses a great deal of the impact of the previously discussed no-campaign strategy. This is a crucial difference in terms of the overall impact of our plan.

Essentially, the truncated campaign strategy should be used if there is legitimate question as to the viability of a normal campaign succeeding. If, for example, we conclude at the end of August that the President has a realistic chance of winning by normal campaigning, but the odds are against him, then the minimum-risk truncated strategy should be considered.



*Can you make a T.V.  
radio spot out of the  
announcement & run it  
as a commercial?*

TCS

Draft #1, June 11, 1976

Duval, Cheney, Chanock

Draft #2, June 21, 1976

Duval, Chanock, Jones, Teeter

Draft #3, June 28, 1976

Duval, Jones, Chanock





June 11, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY  
FROM: MIKE DUVAL/FOSTER CHANOCK  
SUBJECT: "NO CAMPAIGN" STRATEGY

OVERVIEW

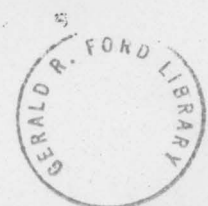
The best strategy for the President to win in November -- given the circumstances laid out below -- may be for him to announce after the Republican Convention that he will not actively campaign for the Presidency. He would "turn back" Federal matching funds to the Treasury, offer to debate Carter on a series of substantive issues, and go back to work as President with no campaign activities whatsoever.

An alternative is to announce a highly truncated campaign schedule.

REASONS FOR ADOPTING THIS STRATEGY

This high-risk strategy would be adopted only if it appeared to be the best way of winning the November election. This might be the appropriate judgment if the following conditions obtain after the President's nomination in August:

- The President is trailing Carter in the national polls by 15 points or more.
- The national polls show that Ford is closing the Carter lead, but the projection is that this will reverse later in the fall, with Carter again widening his lead.
- It is likely that there will be a major defection of Republican voters (primarily disenchanted Reagan supporters) to Carter. This condition would be met if the current New York Times survey (which shows a Republican defection of 35% to Carter) continues to hold.
- The Democratic Party and organized labor have pulled together strongly behind Carter, thereby giving him an extensive "grass roots" organization in all States.



- The polls continue to show that issues are not a decisive campaign factor. The voters continue to react to personality traits and themes.

If such a situation exists, and if the President can realistically calculate his odds as less than 40% chance of winning, then the "no campaign" strategy should be considered.

#### THE STRATEGY

Under this strategy, the President would announce, sometime in late August or early September, that he will not actively campaign for the Presidency. (See attached very rough draft announcement which is included to give an example of how this would be explained publicly.) The President would state that (all or most of) his matching funds will be "turned back" to the Treasury, and that he will spend his time working as President.

The White House Press Office would put out a carefully reasoned set of "ground rules" which would cover the Vice Presidential campaigning and other technical problems. The President would make it clear that, to the extent he would travel around the country on "official" business, the cost of this travel would be well under what he would be spending anyway under the election campaign law. This kind of analysis is necessary to avoid the charge that the President is using this simply as a ploy to get around the campaign financing law.

All Presidential activities, trips, etc., would have to be carefully worked out to be official and not raise any question of campaigning. Obviously, there would be some travel and, in the case of crowd situations, we would have to be careful that we took no action to raise crowds or otherwise exploit him politically, that would not be taken in an off-election year.

The President would announce that he will hold one (or more) press conferences a week with local/State press augmenting the White House Press Corps. This will enable the press to get the President's views on campaign issues.

The President would offer to meet Carter for a series of four nationally televised debates on foreign policy, national defense, economic policy and domestic policy.

#### THE RESULT OF THE STRATEGY

Although it's difficult, of course, to quantify what this strategy could produce, I think it's fair to assume that at least the following would occur:



- The President would show a marked increase in the polls (some of which would be natural anyway at that time of the year) and this would be generally characterized by the press as public endorsement of his decision.
- There would spring up throughout the country hundreds of independently run and financed "Ford for President" organizations by citizens who want to help the campaign but have no national organization to turn to. This should not be underestimated, because it could be a truly remarkable phenomena of individual efforts to help elect the President.
- The Republican National Committee would initially complain about this on the grounds that the President would not be available to campaign for other GOP candidates but, in the end, I think they would support the decision. To the extent that the President did increase in the polls as a result of this decision, it will help all Republican candidates. Also, the RNC could devote all resources to the other candidates.
- The President would have a great deal of time to devote to Presidential duties, which could have a very beneficial impact on his election chances. Presidential appearances could be strategically targeted to highlight desired themes through Administration action.
- Although the press would be initially confused and very skeptical and distrusting of this decision, they would nevertheless have to report the President's actions as being Presidential. This could result in a very favorable contrast between Ford as President and his rival as a campaigner.
- This is likely to produce serious problems for Carter. His entire strategy will be predicated on a Ford campaign, and I suspect he would not know how to react to such an announcement. To the extent the polls do shift in favor of Ford, he would really have no alternative strategy available to him. This might well result in cracks in his organization, and mistakes.
- This strategy will recast the campaign away from personality and theme to issues and substance.

Carter has successfully campaigned for over five months without being pinned down on most issues. The press has





tended to treat him as a phenomenon rather than as a candidate under scrutiny. There is no reason to believe that we will substantially more successful at pinning him down than his opponents have been.

This leaves us in a personality contest. Both Carter and the President are perceived as honest and sincere men of integrity. Carter's advantage is in his campaign style, anti-Washington stance, and being the nominee of a larger, grass-roots party. Given the constraints on time and spending, we cannot defeat Carter in a beauty contest. Therefore, we must steer the campaign back to the issues, even though the American public does not really care about them at a substantive level of detail.

We can steer the campaign onto the issues and prove the President's desire and superior ability to be President by challenging Carter to a series of four debates in the month of October. One debate is risky and less likely to really focus on issues. Thus, the President can challenge Carter to debates on domestic affairs, the economy, national defense and foreign policy. In this situation, we can maximize the advantage of incumbency, since the President is far more knowledgeable, experienced and balanced than Carter. To be fair, we can make the challenge September 1 and offer any briefings or information over the month that Carter would like to have. If he accepts, he acknowledges ignorance; if he declines, arrogance.

If he declines, the President can schedule four, fifteen minute unilateral policy speeches, thereby re-packaging his policy positions and underscoring Carter's fuzziness.

- This is likely to go a long way towards neutralizing the anti-government attack on the President. This strategy is so unconventional that the "establishment" based attack just will not work.

#### DOWNSIDE

The key problem with this strategy is the potential for the charge that the President has written off his election chances. The press will be tempted to say that he didn't really think he could win anyway, and this is simply a ploy to gracefully lose.





This is a serious risk which must, of course, be avoided at all costs. However, this problem can be dealt with by the way the announcement is made and the arguments which are used to support the position. In essence, the President and his aides would have to draw a sharp distinction between an incumbent and a challenger. They would have to point out that the reasons for giving back some or all of the funds is to bring fairness and balance into the campaign. The argument will be that the President will continue to put his record before the American people so they can make their choice, but in a way that best plays to the President's strengths, i.e., by being President and dealing with the issues. We would point out that Carter can't match this, obviously, because he's not an incumbent. Therefore, in order to inject fairness into the campaign, the President's decision would allow Carter to continue to campaign as a candidate, the President to continue to act as President, and the voters therefore can make a reasoned choice. It should be emphasized that the entire strategy is geared toward shifting the campaign from a personality/theme oriented contest to the issues. In doing this, it's important that we not take out the element of fairness (where the President has \$20 million plus the incumbency versus Carter's \$20 million) because the press would crucify us if they perceive that we're acting in an unfair manner.

Another potential downside is the "breaking face with the GOP" argument. The charge here would be that the President had misled the Convention into thinking that he would actively campaign for the Presidency. Obviously, this strategy is not adopted unless it's the best way to win. This is the point that has to be made to the Republican faithful, and I think a reasoned assessment of the facts would support the validity of the argument. Essentially, the way the problem has to be handled is by convincing the Party that it is in the best interest of all Republican candidates to have the President rising in the polls and acting as President. In addition, criticism by elected Republicans and party officials will have considerable beneficial impact. This will tend to undercut the Carter attack of tying Ford to the Washington establishment.

Overall, the downside of this strategy isn't as great as one might think. The traditional manner of overcoming the Democrat's 2-1 plurality -- big spending and the South -- is not available under the assumptions of this paper in any case. Thus, spending \$20 million probably won't help much in any case (certainly not 15 points). The key will be to force Carter to make a mistake and this strategy may be the very best way to do just that.



Also, what the President is really giving up is his crowd situation campaign stops. I think the value of these are highly questionable, in any event. By and large, these stops do have an impact on the specific locale involved -- which may be important in the primaries, but takes on considerably less importance in the general election. The fact is, that unless you have a great deal of money to spend and can in essence blitz the country (which, obviously, we cannot in 1976), the benefit of these stops must be measured by their impact on the national television audience. This is absolutely the key point: campaign stops in 1976 have value in terms of their impact on the television audience.

It should be obvious that it is highly dubious whether or not this helps or harms the President. We should get some Teeter information on this, but it would appear from the experience of the primaries that the President's national standing tends to go down in proportion to his national media exposure as a campaigner. In any event, I think measured against Carter, he clearly would come out second best in this mode.

Therefore, while campaigning provides an important ego benefit to the candidate and a morale booster to his staff and workers, it may be very destructive in terms of the ultimate outcome for President Ford in 1976.

#### THE ALTERNATIVE

An alternative to this extremely high-risk strategy is a scaled-down and truncated campaign plan. All the elements of the above plan would be utilized (including the debate challenge and turn-back of some campaign funds in order to maintain fairness), but the President would campaign in the normal way during the one or two-week period before the election. Obviously, this plan loses a great deal of the impact of the previously discussed no-campaign strategy. This is a crucial difference in terms of the overall impact of our plan.

Essentially, the truncated campaign strategy should be used if there is legitimate question as to the viability of a normal campaign succeeding. If, for example, we conclude at the end of August that the President has a realistic chance of winning by normal campaigning, but the odds are against him, then the minimum-risk truncated strategy should be considered.



ANNOUNCEMENT - "NO CAMPAIGN" STRATEGY

[One scenario for making this announcement would be for the President to go to Grand Rapids for a very brief rest with Mrs. Ford. After a day or two in Grand Rapids, he could appear before the press in relatively humble surroundings for his announcement. It is essential that the announcement be characterized as the President's personal decision, against the advice of his campaign managers. In fact, his campaign people probably should not be given advance notice.]

When I took office on August 9, 1974, I promised you, the American people, straight talk.

I have kept that promise and will continue to do so.

I am proud and gratified that the Republican Party chose me as their nominee as President. As I said in Kansas City, I accept the challenge and will do everything in my power to win in November and serve this country as best as I can until the end of my term.

I want to continue as President for the next four years. I believe I can win and will win in November. And I believe that the continuation of my Presidency best serves the interest of this Nation.

I have decided that the best way for me to fulfil my current obligations as President, and at the same time present to the American people the best possible case for them to support me in November, is by refraining from active campaigning.

Accordingly, I will not partake in active campaigning between now and the November elections.





Instead, the American people can judge my candidacy on the basis of my performance as President. They can judge the actions I have taken over the past                      months and the coming weeks between now and the election.

I have reached this decision because I believe Americans want performance from their elected leaders. As President, I have an obligation and an opportunity to act, and not simply speak. I would prefer to be judged on the basis of my actions and proven leadership rather than on the empty rhetoric of promise.

I have found in the campaigning I did for the nomination that the national press, and indeed most Americans, have a hard time distinguishing between the actions I take as President and as a campaigner. The business of this Nation cannot be neglected. Nor can it be so intermingled with politics as to dilute the effectiveness of Presidential actions.

I have seen the national polls which suggested that issues are not important this year among the electorate. I will not compete with my opponent on the basis of personality alone. I understand that he should and must take his message to the American people by traveling down the campaign trail.

But my message is one of proven performance. It is my past and current record as President... [insert]





It is not too surprising that after two hundred successful years of building the most powerful and <sup>most free</sup> ~~freest~~ nation on earth, we find ourselves today at a crossroads. We face a simple, but excruciatingly difficult choice:

- We can adopt a national policy which permits America to continue growing strong as a Nation, while each individual citizen remains free and independent. This is a policy which recognizes that we do not have to abrogate our right to be left alone in order to find strength through unity.
- The alternative is a policy which emphasizes the need to turn towards institutions to solve our national problems. This policy would accentuate the growth of government, and other institutions, as we seek to resolve social, economic and international problems.

back  
to  
margin

The Nation is making this choice. The ability and integrity of our President for the next four years will be a crucial factor in determining the course of action we choose and our ability to accomplish results. Each voter must not only know what the Presidential candidates want to accomplish but, most importantly, how they will do it. It makes no sense to plot a brilliant course across the ocean, if there is no boat in which to make the trip. Just like an individual, a nation needs two things in order to reach an objective: the right direction and the means to get there.



In order to assist each American in making a decision between my candidacy and that of my opponent, I have decided to present my views, subject to the questioning by the national press, on the four major issues facing this Nation. I will agree to a series of four discussions on the subjects of foreign affairs, national defense, economic and domestic policy. I invite Jimmy Carter to appear with me at these sessions to explain his position in these crucial areas.

If Mr. Carter does not wish to join me in explaining his position to the American people, I will nevertheless fulfill my obligation as a candidate for the President of the United States, by stating my position and answering questions on these subjects.

I believe deeply that the election of the President must be done in a scrupulously fair and balanced way. No one candidate should be given an unfair advantage over the other. In a campaign which is balanced and fair, I am confident I will win.

I recognize that in focusing this campaign on the issues, I have an inherent advantage over my opponent because of the fact that I am President, and in this capacity must make decisions on the issues everyday which are reported to the American people by the press. Obviously, my challenger must present his views on the campaign trail.



In order to avoid any possibility of unfairness, I have decided to return to the Treasury of the United States a portion of the Federal funds which have been given to my campaign committee. I will turn back \$            million which represents the money I would have spent on campaign traveling throughout the country.

[insert conclusion]



June 21, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY  
FROM: MIKE DUVAL/FOSTER CHANOCK  
SUBJECT: "NO CAMPAIGN" STRATEGY (2nd Draft)

OVERVIEW

The "no campaign" strategy is a plan to win in November based on an absolute minimum of conventional campaigning and a major effort to turn the contest into a debate on the issues. Very shortly after the Republican Convention, the President would announce that:

- He was rejecting conventional campaigning because of his responsibility to conduct the business of the Presidency and, frankly, because it would not be a productive way for him to get elected.
- He ~~would~~<sup>will</sup> conduct a series of four or five regional discussion sessions of substantive issues, and Carter ~~was~~<sup>would be</sup> invited to join him.
- He ~~would~~<sup>will</sup> make a major speech to the Nation towards the end of October, in which he would set forth an agenda for the next four years of his Presidency. He would make it clear that this agenda would be drawn from the record of his Administration thus far, the Republican





Platform and the views of people throughout the country he <sup>has met and</sup> would be meeting with at the White House during the campaign months. This latter series of meetings would be with various national interest groups, including religious, ethnic, labor/management, etc.

THE STRATEGY

*Goal*

*1) to minimize the President's candidate image  
2) to maximize public attention on issues*

The heart of the strategy is <sup>the</sup> minimization of the President in the standard campaign mode and <sup>the</sup> maximization of our efforts to focus public attention on the issues. Our operating premise is that Carter will remain more "popular" in the charismatic sense, and that Ford has already substantially "discounted" the potential adverse reaction to his positions on specific

*This year, we have seen that issues (Carter's) are not that important.*

issues. *By focusing on the issues, the President's strengths come to the forefront: experience, ability, and —.* It also forces Carter to take

It is important that this strategy be announced candidly to the American people very soon after the Republican Convention. It is intended as much to maximize the Ford strengths as to cause Carter to make mistakes. (See attached rough draft announcement which is included to give example of how this strategy can be explained publicly.)

*positions causing erosion of his support.*

Under this strategy the principal objectives to be achieved by the campaign are:



The principal constraints which must be adhered to are:

- ° The President must not campaign for other Republican candidates. (This is necessary to capture Democratic and Independent voters and avoid the charge that the President is part of the Washington establishment.)
- ° The President's travels must be extremely disciplined and limited in accordance with our recommended schedule. (See Tab B for a proposed traveling schedule.) There will be great temptation to extend the travel schedule at the last minute to "cover certain bases". This must be ~~avoided~~ <sup>resisted</sup> or the overall image that the strategy is intended to build will be lost at the last minute and this could cause serious erosion in the President's strength with the voters vis-a-vis Carter.
- ° [insert more]

*\* Republican Perception Problem*

The following steps would be taken to focus public attention on issues:

- ° The President would challenge Carter to a series of discussions (debates) on four or five issues including: foreign policy, national defense, domestic policy and economic policy. These discussions would be held in the four regions of the country and structured along the following lines: [insert] This would be announced in a manner to make it clear that the discussions would be held, even if Carter refused to show up. These



discussion events would become the anchor for Presidential trips.

- The President will have a series of meetings at the White House with leaders of the various groups which he must have in order to build a winning coalition. ~~Although there may be some base covering,~~ these groups and the particular people who participate will be selected for purely political advantage. Although the national press will cover it as essentially a political act (which it is) there will be a maximum effort on our part to impact the specialty press, depending on which group is involved. For the most part, these meetings would take place at the White House, but there could be an exception for a particularly prestigious <sup>event</sup> outside Washington involving a key group.
- An extremely effective attack group must be established, made up of the most forceful and effective Presidential advocates we can find to attack the Carter position, both in terms of the policy statements he puts out and the areas that he refuses to cover with specifics.
- The President would announce that he will hold one press conference a week with local/state press augmenting the <sup>White House</sup> press corps. We should give serious thought to restricting the press conferences to broad subject areas such as foreign policy/national defense, domestic/economic, future problems, etc.



Campaign Targets  
- States  
- groups 5

The following plan would be used for the Vice President's campaign activities:

[insert]

#### REASONS FOR ADOPTING THIS STRATEGY

This high-risk strategy would be adopted only if it appeared to be the best way of winning the November election. This might be the appropriate judgment if the following conditions obtain after the President's nomination in August:

- The President is trailing Carter in the national polls by 15 points or more.
- The national polls show that Ford is closing the Carter lead, but the projection is that this will reverse later in the fall, with Carter again widening his lead.
- It is likely that there will be a major defection of Republican voters (primarily disenchanted Reagan supporters) to Carter. This condition would be met if the current New York Times survey (which shows a Republican defection of 35% to Carter) continues to hold.
- The Democratic Party and organized labor have pulled together strongly behind Carter, thereby giving him an extensive "grass roots" organization in all States.
- The polls continue to show that issues are not a decisive campaign factor. The voters continue to react to personality traits and themes.





If such a situation exists, and if the President can realistically calculate his odds as less than 40% chance of winning, then the "no campaign" strategy should be considered.

#### DOWNSIDE

The following are the key problems which could result if this strategy is adopted:

- ° [insert]

#### THE RESULT OF THE STRATEGY

[insert]



MIKE HAS  
ORIGINAL

June 21, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY  
FROM: MIKE DUVAL/FOSTER CHANOCK  
SUBJECT: "NO CAMPAIGN" STRATEGY (2nd Draft)

OVERVIEW

The "no campaign" strategy is a plan to win in November based on an absolute minimum of conventional campaigning and a major effort to turn the contest into a debate on the issues. Very shortly after the Republican Convention, the President would announce that:

- He was rejecting conventional campaigning because of his responsibility to conduct the business of the Presidency and, frankly, because it would not be a productive way for him to get elected.
- He ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> conduct a series of four or five regional discussion sessions of substantive issues, and Carter <sup>would be</sup> ~~was~~ invited to join him.
- He ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> make a major speech to the Nation towards the end of October, in which he would set forth an agenda for the next four years of his Presidency. He would make it clear that this agenda would be drawn from the record of his Administration thus far, the Republican



Platform and the views of people throughout the country he <sup>has met and</sup> would be meeting with at the White House during the campaign months. This latter series of meetings would be with various national interest groups, including religious, ethnic, labor/management, etc.

THE STRATEGY

Goal

The heart of the strategy is, <sup>1) to minimize the President's candidate image</sup> minimization of the President in the standard campaign mode and <sup>2) to maximize public attention on issues</sup> maximization of our efforts to focus public attention on the issues. Our operating premise is that Carter will remain more "popular" in the charismatic sense, and that Ford has already substantially "discounted" the potential adverse reaction to his positions on specific issues. <sup>This year, we have seen that issues cause not that important</sup>

<sup>By focusing on the issues, the President's strengths come to the forefront: experience, ability, and — . It also forces Carter to take positions causing an erosion of his support</sup>

It is important that this strategy be announced candidly to the American people very soon after the Republican Convention. It is intended as much to maximize the Ford strengths as to cause Carter to make mistakes. (See attached rough draft announcement which is included to give example of how this strategy can be explained publicly.)

Under this strategy the principal objectives to be achieved by the campaign are:



The principal constraints which must be adhered to are:

- The President must not campaign for other Republican candidates. (This is necessary to capture Democratic and Independent voters and avoid the charge that the President is part of the Washington establishment.)
- The President's travels must be extremely disciplined and limited in accordance with our recommended schedule. (See Tab B for a proposed traveling schedule.) There will be great temptation to extend the travel schedule at the last minute to "cover certain bases". This must be ~~avoided~~ <sup>resisted</sup> or the overall image that the strategy is intended to build will be lost at the last minute and this could cause serious erosion in the President's strength with the voters vis-a-vis Carter.
- [insert more]

*\* Republican Perception Problem*

The following steps would be taken to focus public attention on issues:

- The President would challenge Carter to a series of discussions (debates) on four or five issues including: foreign policy, national defense, domestic policy and economic policy. These discussions would be held in the four regions of the country and structured along the following lines: [insert] This would be announced in a manner to make it clear that the discussions would be held, even if Carter refused to show up. These





discussion events would become the anchor for Presidential trips.

- The President will have a series of meetings at the White House with leaders of the various groups which he must have in order to build a winning coalition. ~~Although there may be some base covering,~~ these groups and the particular people who participate will be selected for purely political advantage. Although the national press will cover it as essentially a political act (which it is) there will be a maximum effort on our part to impact the specialty press, depending on which group is involved. For the most part, these meetings would take place at the White House, but there could be an exception for a particularly prestigious <sup>event</sup> outside Washington involving a key group.
- An extremely effective attack group must be established, made up of the most forceful and effective Presidential advocates we can find to attack the Carter position, both in terms of the policy statements he puts out and the areas that he refuses to cover with specifics.
- The President would announce that he will hold one press conference a week with local/state press augmenting the <sup>White House</sup> press corps. We should give serious thought to restricting the press conferences to broad subject areas such as foreign policy/national defense, domestic/economic, future problems, etc.

*Campaign Targets*  
*- Goals*  
*- groups*

5

The following plan would be used for the Vice President's campaign activities:

[insert]

#### REASONS FOR ADOPTING THIS STRATEGY

This high-risk strategy would be adopted only if it appeared to be the best way of winning the November election. This might be the appropriate judgment if the following conditions obtain after the President's nomination in August:

- ° The President is trailing Carter in the national polls by 15 points or more.
- ° The national polls show that Ford is closing the Carter lead, but the projection is that this will reverse later in the fall, with Carter again widening his lead.
- ° It is likely that there will be a major defection of Republican voters (primarily disenchanted Reagan supporters) to Carter. This condition would be met if the current New York Times survey (which shows a Republican defection of 35% to Carter) continues to hold.
- ° The Democratic Party and organized labor have pulled together strongly behind Carter, thereby giving him an extensive "grass roots" organization in all States.
- ° The polls continue to show that issues are not a decisive campaign factor. The voters continue to react to personality traits and themes.



If such a situation exists, and if the President can realistically calculate his odds as less than 40% chance of winning, then the "no campaign" strategy should be considered.

#### DOWNSIDE

The following are the key problems which could result if this strategy is adopted:

- ° [insert]

#### THE RESULT OF THE STRATEGY

[insert]



TCS (3RD DRAFT)

OVERVIEW

This book presents a strategy for President Ford to win the general election. The recommended strategy is referred to as the "truncated campaign strategy).

This book consists of this page introductory memorandum followed by tabs broken into two parts. Part 1 contains the details of how the strategy will be implemented, its impact on Carter and his attempts to counter it, and other operating analyses. Part 2 contains background materials such as analysis of constituency groups, historical analysis, polling information and the like.

The "truncated campaign strategy" (TCS) is a high-risk plan to win in November. As the following analysis demonstrates, the operating assumption is that any "normal Republican campaign", no matter how brilliantly conceived and managed, will not work for President Ford in 1976.

The TCS plan is a highly disciplined campaign which consists of almost no conventional campaigning trips, and a maximum effort to focus attention on substantive issues. It is a dynamic strategy -- that is, the plan itself changes throughout its implementation.





The plan is completely comprehensive, i.e., it encompasses the activities of the President, Vice President Rockefeller, the Vice Presidential nominee, Presidential advocates, [insert all other elements].

It is intentionally flexible, allowing for changes to be made <sup>such as</sup> in identifying target States. However, the plan was developed by considering the States listed in Chart 1 as priority.

[insert priority States chart]

As a means of illustrating the shape this strategy will take, the following are some highlights which would occur between the end of the Convention and the election:

[list key items, such as debate announcement, trips anchored on regional debate plus issue events, "Agenda for the Nation" speech, etc.]

One of the key weaknesses in this strategy is that, to be successful, it must be implemented with exceptional discipline. It allows for a remarkably small margin of error. It must be emphasized that, to the extent the strategy becomes known -- even by the closest Presidential advisers -- it is rendered useless. Paradoxically, it will help the President a great deal if it is generally believed that an overall strategy has been adopted by the President and is being implemented. This



will counter the persistent criticism that the President's reelection effort is drifting without direction and without control. Nevertheless, if existence of the strategy is known, pressures will be intense (even from friends and supporters) to be informed as to its content. The price which will be paid for exceeding to these requests is simple -- the strategy will fail.

#### PROBLEMS

The President will come out of the August Convention with the nomination and further behind his Democratic challenger than <sup>any</sup> Republican Presidential candidate since .

In all likelihood, the President will be points behind Carter in the national polls. By way of comparison, no President since has won facing such odds.

(See Tab 2- .)

President Ford's position will be the reverse of the situation facing Richard Nixon in 1968 and again in '72. In both cases, Nixon had a substantial margin over his challenger ( percentage points in '68 and in '72) going into the general election. Thus, <sup>the</sup> a Nixon strategy of holding onto his lead or, probably more accurately, managing the inevitable erosion, simply is not applicable to the situation in 1976.



More significantly, "normal" GOP methods of winning Presidential elections are of no use to us this year. We cannot outspend our opponents, we cannot rely on the South, the Democrats are not divided, and there is no major issue favoring our cause (such as the war in '68 and the social issues of 1972).

Not only have we lost our normal strength, but our traditional weaknesses still exist in force. We are ~~the~~ a two-to-one minority party, we have the image of being the party of big business [insert additional items].

Furthermore, the simple fact is that history would indicate that it's a time for change. Republicans have held the Presidency for eight years, and [insert historical facts on turnovers between the parties].

The traditional elements which propel an incumbent to victory, prosperity and peace, are not as potent today. [insert reasons]

An analysis of the past two years shows that the Ford White House is able to impact the President's popularity (and thus his electability) but, as the following chart shows, active campaigning by the President coincides with a drop in his national standing.

[insert chart which Foster is preparing]



As this chart shows, during those periods when the White House made an attempt to develop high visibility Presidential programs on the issues (such as during the State of the Union), there was a rise in the President's national popularity. [describe briefly other conclusions shown by the chart]

The critical point to keep in mind is that the President's active campaigning does not result in an increase in his national popularity.

It is true that some of the President's primary campaigning did result in an increase in his local popularity in the area campaigned in (and this showed up on election day), but ~~this~~ these examples would be very misleading if applied to the general election. There is no question that people who actually see the President are influenced by that event, and local press does have its beneficial impact. However, for the general election, Presidential campaign events are not significant in terms of their impact on the people who attend. These people are only important as backdrops for <sup>the</sup> a television <sup>viewer</sup> event.

During the general election, all Presidential travel must be planned for its impact on those who learn about it through the media. Thus it is important to keep in mind that while selected campaign stops by the President during the primaries helped him in those locations, cumulatively, they had a negative impact on his overall popularity rating throughout the country.

[insert arguments/facts demonstrating that there's a correlation





between a drop in the national polls and television exposure in the campaign mode.]

We should anticipate that Jimmy Carter will take the following steps to maintain his lead over the President:

[insert]

[to be supplied: analysis from other potential press and problems such as third party candidacies, attacks from the right wing on the President, defection of conservative Republicans, etc.]

It is important to note from this analysis of the problems faced by the President that we are not facing a normal Republican campaign challenge. 1976 presents a unique situation -- made so in part by the new campaign law and the fact that our incumbent President was not elected, and, of course, Watergate; but, more importantly, there <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ a new mood in the country which must be dealt with. [insert information on "mood of the country"]

#### GOALS AND THEMES

The essential weakness of the Ford candidacy thus far has been the lack of aiming stakes. The campaign has wandered aimlessly from one problem to the next and, as a result, it has been accurately characterized by the press (and our opponents) as being reactive. The key to successfully completing any



journey is knowing where you are going.

Accordingly, we think it is essential to establish basic goals (we do not distinguish between objectives and goals for the purpose of this paper) and campaign themes.

The following objectives have been identified as essential if we are to win in November:

[to be supplied: should break down by States which must be won, constituencies we must have, as precise articulation of how we maintain the critical Ford strength, which is his overall standing throughout the country. This is one of the most important sections of the memorandum and, accordingly, our ~~xxxxx~~ weak point: ~~xxxxx~~ in terms of the work done thus far]

Another way of stating objectives (especially when trying to lay out advertising and media plans) is to articulate key themes. One of the President's key weaknesses is that he is perceived to lack moral and philosophical direction.

One way to overcome this problem is by having carefully defined major campaign themes which guide the preparation of speeches and all other campaign activities. We recommend the following themes:



1. Honesty - This theme will be designed to demonstrate that the President's speeches and actions are morally based. It will reflect principles in terms of the President's life style and the position he takes on issues. A key ingredient of this theme will be the role Mrs. Ford and the family plays in the election.  
[insert ]

2. Experienced at the Essentials of Government. This theme will demonstrate that the President recognizes that there are certain essentials which government must provide its people, and in these areas, the President, by virtue of his experience, can best govern the Nation.

Government must provide for: equality among its people. Not equality of result, which is the of the position ~~the~~ Democrats and Carter, but equality of opportunity. It must also provide for a stable economy. Not by imposing government controls, which is the Democrats and Carter position, but by building up the strength of the private sector with the government imposing minimum ground rules. The federal government must provide for world peace. Not by taking this country into war, which every Democratic administration has done in recent history, but by building a structure of world peace, such as Ford has done. And, finally, government has a moral obligation to help the helpless. Not by providing for the wants of people, which is the



Democrats ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ program, but rather by providing the essential needs for people who cannot help themselves.

3. Opposed to the Arrogance of Bigness - For the most part, opposition to bigness means opposition to bigness of institutions. At the head of the list, of course, is the federal government. Our opposition should be aimed at the Democratic majority in Congress and not Congress as an institution. We must build the case that the Democrats are a party which relies on the government to solve problems we face as a nation. Jimmy Carter is a part of the Democratic establishment by virtue of his activities from the time he was assured of the nomination until the beginning of the campaign. He is linked with big labor and with the Democratic leadership of Congress. Carter in the White House and the Democrats in Congress will ensure a continuation of the ever-increasing power of government over the lives of individuals and the private economic sector. On the positive side, we must stress the fact ~~that~~ the President has consistently (over a twenty-five year period) sought to reduce the power of the federal government and protect the rights of individual and businesses to govern their own destiny. As a *practical* matter, the negative attack on Carter (linking him





~~xxxxxxx~~ with the Democratic and a majority party that seeks to impose greater domination over this country) will be more effective than the positive thrust of stressing the President's record.

We must also develop our theme of opposing bigness wherever we find it. [insert specifics of theme based on the fact that in America we are institutionalizing individual responsibility]

#### ALTERNATIVES

Although there are an infinite number of possible campaign strategies, it is possible to narrow down the options by focusing on the process of campaign decision-making, the objectives and themes adhered to, and the discipline with which the plan is implemented. With this in mind, we have identified three possible alternatives which the President can choose in launching his fall campaign.

1. Extend current "strategy". Currently, the President's campaign ~~xxxxxxx~~ can be characterized as utilizing traditional campaign tactics with direction and decisions coming in response to events. Unquestionably, this is <sup>the</sup> a campaign strategy which will result if no hard decisions are made to force through changes. The strengths of the current "strategy" are:

- ° There are a variety of inputs ~~from~~ advisory



groups, the PFC, Congressional leaders, Party officials, etc..

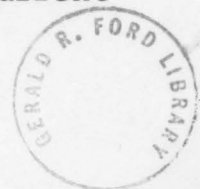
- ° [include other strengths]

However, our current method of operation is weak in several respects:

- ° There is no "base line" against which we can measure options for changes as we go through the campaign. We do not have a clear understanding of campaign objectives which are based on a careful analysis and a solid data base.
- ° Decision-making is haphazard with no clear line authority.
- ° There is little, if any, capability to produce good campaign speeches, issue papers, etc.

[insert additional description of current campaign and projected through the fall]

This basic strategy approach could be fine-tuned into a disciplined, but highly decentralized campaign strategy. That is, there could be greater definition of decision-making responsibility with a deliberate attempt made to set up several spheres of influence including the RNC, <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ President Ford committee, the White House, state organizations, an independent "attack" group, etc. In essence, this would be an attempt to organize the current process.



2. Disciplined Conventional Campaign Strategy. The President could pull together a highly disciplined campaign organization similar to the Nixon efforts of '68 and '72. Such a strategy would attempt (within the limitations forced by reduced resources, standing in the polls, the new law, etc.) to duplicate the positive aspects of the Nixon '72 effort.

[insert description of campaign objectives based on the New Majority concept, massive voter turnout, etc.]

[describe campaign organization under this theory]

3. Truncated Campaign Strategy. This recommended strategy, which is described in greater detail in the next section, is essentially an attempt to create a highly disciplined, but unconventional, campaign.

#### THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

From this point on in the memorandum, we assume that the President has made the decision to adopt the truncated campaign strategy alternative.

Conceptually, the strategy is extremely simple. It is an attempt to ~~impose~~ superimpose the discipline found in Nixon's '72 effort on a totally unconventional approach to Presidential campaigning.



The objective of this strategy is to (1) minimize the Presidents' candidate image, and (2) maximize the public's attention to substantive issues. Our operating premise is that Carter will remain more "popular" in a charismatic sense, and that President Ford has already substantially "discounted" the potential adverse reaction to his position on specific issues. By focusing on issues, the President's strengths come to the forefront: experience, ability [insert] . This also forces Carter to take public positions on the issues, which will result in a erosion of his support.

The objective of this strategy is to change the image of the President in the voters minds by the use of issues. We are not laboring under the clearly false premise that the election will be decided on the substance of issues.

[insert section on role of issues in campaign with backup polling data in the tabs.]

[insert description of "discount theory"]

At the threshold, it is important that this strategy never be publicly disclosed. On the other hand, it should be (paradoxically) "announced" to the American people very soon after the Republican Convention. The President should announce his campaign intentions in a major speech, which makes the following points:





- ° Presidential campaigning has become a circus which no longer fully serves the needs of the American people and the political process established by our Constitution. The President can appropriately use this Bicentennial year to demonstrate how the process can be improved. Indeed, one of the great contributions that President Ford can make to the American people is to demonstrate how the Presidential election campaign can be improved by returning to a focus on the issues.
- ° Candidly, a campaign which focuses on the issues helps the President get elected. His strength is in his proven ability to lead this Nation. Thus, a campaign which results in the voters intelligently judging the candidates on the basis of their proven record, is a campaign that will favor the President.
- ° The President will announce certain ground rules for his campaign, including a challenge to engage Carter in a face-to-face discussion of the issues, [include other specific elements as appropriate]

Under the TCS plan, the principal objectives to be achieved during the campaign are:

[insert ]



The following constraints must be adhered to:

- There must be centralized decision-making covering all Presidential activities (campaign and Presidential) from the time the strategy is implemented through the election. This centralized decision-making process should be itself flexible enough to allow for input from all sources, but there can be no separate tracks to the President.
  
- The President must not openly campaign for other Republican candidates. This is necessary to capture Democratic and Independent voters and avoid the charge that the President is part of the Washington establishment. It also will help avoid the negative perception that voters have of Republicans.
  
- The President's travels must be extremely disciplined and limited in accordance with the recommendations that follow this section. There will be great temptation to extend the travel schedule at the last minute to "cover certain bases". This must be resisted, or the overall image that the strategy is intended to build will be lost at the last minute, and this could cause serious erosion in the President's strengths with the voters vis-a-vis Carter. In addition, when the President does travel, there must be an entirely new image created which reflects seriousness of purpose,



orientation towards substance, and a lack of  
of the haphazard and sloppy image which the President's  
current travels present.

- must have very good "ATTACK" group. No ATTACKS  
from the President, W.H., PFC, etc.

[insert brief description of additional constraints]

~~If the TCS plan (which is described in far greater detail  
below) is implemented, we anticipate that it will have the  
following impact on, and reaction from, Jimmy Carter.~~

~~[insert Carter reaction section]~~

An integral part of this strategy concerns the/roles of  
campaign  
Vice President Rockefeller and the President's Vice Presidential  
running mate.

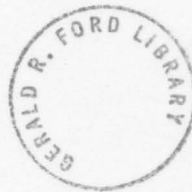
[insert Vice President analysis.]



SYNOPSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following is a very brief summary of the specific implementation steps which would be required. Part 1 of the tabs contains specific sections detailing each implementation phase.

1. Command and Control  
[to be supplied]
2. Vice President  
[to be supplied]
3. Budget  
[to be supplied]
4. Schedule of Presidential Activities  
[to be supplied]
5. Campaign Organization
  - a. Advertising
  - b. Research
  - c. Vote mechanics
  - d. Advocates
  - e.
  - f.
6. Advertising Plan  
[to be supplied]
7. Media Plan  
[to be supplied]
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.





IMPACT ON COVENTION

The TCS plan , if adopted, can complement the President's efforts in Kansas City to get the nomination. As an overall objective, we would seek to leave an impression with the delegates that the President has a general election strategy plan which will work and has been thoroughly thought through. Obviously, the plan itself must be kept secret.

One of the President's most serious weaknesses with the delegates is that he is perceived to be far less competent as a campaigner than Reagan. This "mind set" on the part of the delegates is not just the result of the President's style. The primary campaign effort by the President is perceived to have been rudderless and reactive. If the President can convince the delegates that he has a good, solid plan for the general election, this should help undercut the adverse reaction to the primary effort. It is clear, however, that we will not be able to convince the delegates that we do have a good plan without giving them some specifics.

Accordingly, the following elements of the TCS plan should be revealed in advance of the Convention:

[insert]

It is also of critical importance to note that the President will undoubtedly be asked to give up several key resources during the Convention which could have a major impact on

our ability to implement the TCS. For example, the President must maintain the ability to control the Vice President's campaign. There should be no agreement with the prospective Vice Presidential nominee to give him control over resources, staff, scheduling, etc. [insert additional thoughts here]

RISKS AND CARTER'S REACTIONS

[to be supplied]



TCS (3RD DRAFT)



OVERVIEW

This book presents a strategy for President Ford to win the general election. The recommended strategy is referred to as the "truncated campaign strategy).

This book consists of this page introductory memorandum followed by tabs broken into two parts. Part 1 contains the details of how the strategy will be implemented, its impact on Carter and his attempts to counter it, and other operating analyses. Part 2 contains background materials such as analysis of constituency groups, historical analysis, polling information and the like.

*Outline  
memo -  
1-12  
sections*

The "truncated campaign strategy" (TCS) is a ~~high-risk~~ plan to win <sup>at least 270 electoral votes</sup> in November. <sup>2nd</sup> As the following analysis demonstrates, the operating assumption is that any "normal Republican campaign", no matter how brilliantly conceived and managed, will not work for President Ford in 1976. *The fact is that GF ~~will~~ will likely have 73 days (after the convention) to close a 20 point gap.*

*[add Para. defining problem in terms of perceptions.]*

The TCS plan is a highly disciplined campaign which consists of almost no conventional campaigning trips, and a maximum effort to focus attention on substantive issues. It is a dynamic strategy -- that is, <sup>while</sup> the plan ~~itself~~ <sup>once launched must be rigidly adhered to</sup> changes throughout its implementation, <sup>it has motion and change built</sup>

*into it*

*and internally consultant*

The plan is ~~completely~~ comprehensive, i.e., it encompasses the activities of the President, Vice President Rockefeller, the Vice Presidential nominee, Presidential advocates, [insert *W.H., Pfc.* all other elements].

It is intentionally flexible, allowing for changes to be made *such as* in identifying target States. However, the plan was developed by considering the States listed in Chart 1 as priority.

[insert priority States chart]

As a means of illustrating the shape this strategy will take, the following are some highlights which would occur between the end of the Convention and the election:

[list key items, such as debate announcement, trips anchored on regional debate plus issue events, "Agenda for the Nation" speech, etc.]

One of the key weaknesses in this strategy is that, to be successful, it must be implemented with exceptional discipline. It allows for a remarkably small margin of error. It must be emphasized that, to the extent the strategy becomes known -- even by the closest Presidential advisers -- it is rendered useless. *Refer to experience in primaries.* Paradoxically, it will help the President a great deal if it is generally believed that an overall strategy has been adopted by the President and is being implemented. This



will counter the persistent criticism that the President's ~~re~~election effort is drifting without direction and without control. Nevertheless, if existence of the strategy is known, pressures will be intense (even from friends and supporters) to be informed as to its content. The price which will be paid for exceeding to these requests is simple -- the strategy will fail. *Strategy is aimed at a <sup>perception of</sup> swing voter, therefore must maintain secrecy otherwise you waste confidence.*

#### PROBLEMS

~~The President will come out of the August Convention with the nomination and further behind his Democratic challenger than <sup>any</sup> Republican Presidential candidate since~~

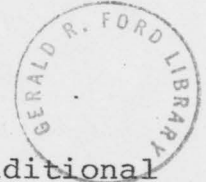
In all likelihood, the President will be \_\_\_\_\_ points behind Carter in the national polls. By way of comparison, no President since \_\_\_\_\_ has won facing such odds.

(See Tab 2- .)

President Ford's position will be the reverse of the situation facing Richard Nixon in 1968 and again in '72. In both cases, Nixon had a substantial margin over his challenger ( \_\_\_\_\_ percentage points in '68 and \_\_\_\_\_ in '72) going into the general election. Thus, <sup>the</sup> a Nixon strategy of holding onto his lead or, probably more accurately, managing the inevitable erosion, simply is not applicable to the situation in 1976.

4

More significantly, "normal" GOP methods of winning Presidential elections are of no use to us this year. We cannot outspend our opponents, we cannot rely on the South, the Democrats are not divided, and there is no major issue favoring our cause (such as the war in '68 and the social issues of 1972).



Not only have we lost our normal strength, but our traditional weaknesses still exist in force. We are ~~xxx~~ a two-to-one minority party, we have the image of being the party of big business [insert additional items].

Furthermore, the simple fact is that history would indicate that it's a time for change. Republicans have held the Presidency for eight years, and [insert historical facts on turnovers between the parties].

The traditional elements which propel an incumbent to victory, prosperity and peace, are not as potent today. [insert reasons]

An analysis of the past two years shows that the Ford White House is able to impact the President's popularity (and thus his electability) but, as the following chart shows, active campaigning by the President coincides with a drop in his national standing.

[insert chart which Foster is preparing]



journey is knowing where you are going.

Accordingly, we think it is essential to establish basic goals (we do not distinguish between objectives and goals for the purpose of this paper) and campaign themes.

The following objectives have been identified as essential if we are to win in November:

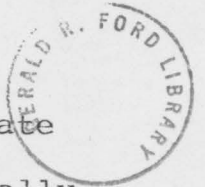
[to be supplied: should break down by States which must be won, constituencies we must have, as precise articulation of how we maintain the critical Ford strength, which is his overall standing throughout the country. This is one of the most important sections of the memorandum and, accordingly, our ~~weak~~ weak point: ~~in~~ in terms of the work done thus far]

Another way of stating objectives (especially when trying to lay out advertising and media plans) is to articulate key themes. One of the President's key weaknesses is that he is perceived to lack moral and philosophical direction.

One way to overcome this problem is by having carefully defined major campaign themes which guide the preparation of speeches and all other campaign activities. We recommend the following themes:

Put in "Targets" section





Indent *Walt* *18*

1. Honesty - This theme will be designed to demonstrate that the President's speeches and actions are morally based. It will reflect principles in terms of the President's life style and the position he takes on issues. A key ingredient of this theme will be the role Mrs. Ford and the family plays in the election.  
[insert ]

*Added  
Cachetell  
Potting  
info.  
Stress  
experience*

2. Experienced at the Essentials of Government. This theme will demonstrate that the President recognizes that there are certain essentials which government must provide its people, and in these areas, the President, by virtue of his experience, can best govern the Nation.  
Government must provide for: equality among its people. Not equality of result, which is the of the position ~~the~~ Democrats and Carter, but equality of opportunity. It must also provide for a stable economy. Not by imposing government controls, which is the Democrats and Carter position, but by building up the strength of the private sector with the government imposing minimum ground rules. The federal government must provide for world peace. Not by taking this country into war, which every Democratic administration has done in recent history, but by building a structure of world peace, such as Ford has done. And, finally, government has a moral obligation to help the helpless. Not by providing for the wants of people, which is the





Democrats ~~and Carter~~ program, but rather by providing the essential needs for people who cannot help themselves.

3. Opposed to the Arrogance of Bigness - For the most part, opposition to bigness means opposition to bigness of institutions. At the head of the list, of course, is the federal government. Our opposition should be aimed at the Democratic majority in Congress and not Congress as an institution. We must build the case that the Democrats are a party which relies on the government to solve problems we face as a nation. Jimmy Carter is a part of the Democratic establishment by virtue of his activities from the time he was assured of the nomination until the beginning of the campaign. He is linked with big labor and with the Democratic leadership of Congress. Carter in the White House and the Democrats in Congress will ensure a continuation of the ever-increasing power of government over the lives of individuals and the private economic sector. On the positive side, we must stress the fact ~~that~~ the President has consistently (over a twenty-five year period) sought to reduce the power of the federal government and protect the rights of individual and businesses to govern their own destiny. As a practical matter, the negative attack on Carter (linking him



~~xxxxxxxx~~ with the Democratic and a majority party that seeks to impose greater domination over this country) will be more effective than the positive thrust of stressing the President's record.

We must also develop our theme of opposing bigness wherever we find it. [insert specifics of theme based on the fact that in America we are institutionalizing individual responsibility]

*and*

#### ALTERNATIVES

Although there are an infinite number of possible campaign strategies, it is possible to narrow down the options by focusing on the process of campaign decision-making, the objectives and themes adhered to, and the discipline with which the plan is implemented. With this in mind, we have identified three possible alternatives which the President can choose in launching his fall campaign.

1. Extend current "strategy". Currently, the President's campaign ~~xxxxxxx~~ can be characterized as utilizing traditional campaign tactics with direction and decisions coming in response to events. Unquestionably, this is <sup>the</sup> a campaign strategy which will result if no hard decisions are made to force through changes. The strengths of the current "strategy" are:

- ° There are a variety of inputs ~~from~~ advisory

groups, the PFC, Congressional leaders, Party officials, etc..

- ° [include other strengths]



However, our current method of operation is weak in several respects:

- ° There is no "base line" against which we can measure options for changes as we go through the campaign. We do not have a clear understanding of campaign objectives which are based on a careful analysis and a solid data base.
- ° Decision-making is haphazard with no clear line authority.
- ° There is little, if any, capability to produce good campaign speeches, issue papers, etc.

[insert additional description of current campaign and projected through the fall]

This basic strategy approach could be fine-tuned into a disciplined, but highly decentralized campaign strategy. That is, there could be greater definition of decision-making responsibility with a deliberate attempt made to set up several spheres of influence including the RNC, <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ President Ford committee, the White House, state organizations, an independent "attack" group, etc. In essence, this would be an attempt to organize the current process.



2. Disciplined Conventional Campaign Strategy. The President could pull together a highly disciplined campaign organization similar to the Nixon efforts of '68 and '72. Such a strategy would attempt (within the limitations forced by reduced resources, standing in the polls, the new law, etc.) to duplicate the positive aspects of the Nixon '72<sup>168</sup> effort.

[insert description of campaign objectives based on the New Majority concept, massive voter turnout, etc.]

[describe campaign organization under this theory]

3. Truncated Campaign Strategy. This recommended strategy, which is described in greater detail in the next section, is essentially an attempt to create a highly disciplined, but unconventional, campaign.

THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

*(relate to Goals/Themes/Targets)*

From this point on in the memorandum, we assume that the President has made the decision to adopt the truncated campaign strategy alternative.

Conceptually, the strategy is extremely simple. It is an attempt to ~~impose~~ ~~superimpose~~ ~~the~~ discipline found in Nixon's '72 effort on a ~~totally~~ unconventional approach to Presidential campaigning.





The objective of this strategy is to(1) minimize the Presidents' candidate image, and (2) maximize the public's attention to substantive issues. Our operating premise is that Carter will remain more "popular" in a charismatic sense, and that President Ford has already substantially "discounted" the potential adverse reaction to his position on specific issues. By focusing on issues, the President's strengths come to the forefront: experience, ability [insert] . This also forces Carter to take public positions on the issues, which will result in a erosion of his support.

The objective of this strategy is to change the image of the President in the voters minds by the use of issues. We are not laboring under the clearly false premise that the election will be decided on the substance of issues.

[insert section on role of issues in campaign with backup polling data in the tabs.]

[insert description of "discount theory"]

At the threshold, it is important that this strategy never be publicly disclosed. On the other hand, it should be (paradoxically) "announced" to the American people very soon after the Republican Convention. The President should announce his campaign intentions in a major speech, which makes the following points:

- ° Presidential campaigning has become a circus which no longer fully serves the needs of the American people and the political process established by our Constitution. The President can~~y~~ appropriately use this Bicentennial year to demonstrate how the process can be improved. Indeed, one of the great contributions that President Ford can make to the American people is to demonstrate how the Presidential election campaign can be improved by returning to a focus on the issues.
- ° Candidly, a campaign which focuses on the issues helps the President get elected. His strength is in his proven ability to lead this Nation. Thus, a campaign which results in the voters intelligently judging the candidates on the basis of their proven record, is a campaign that will favor the President.
- ° The President will announce certain ground rules for his campaign, including a challenge to engage Carter in a face-tō-face discussion of the issues, [include *hold decision to last moment* other specific elements as appropriate]

Under the TCS plan, the principal objectives to be achieved during the campaign are:

[insert ]



The following constraints must be adhered to:

- There must be centralized decision-making covering all Presidential activities (campaign and Presidential) from the time the strategy is implemented through the election. This centralized decision-making process should be itself flexible enough to allow for input from all sources, but there can be no separate tracks to the President.
  
- The President must not openly campaign for other Republican candidates. This is necessary to capture Democratic and Independent voters and avoid the charge that the President is part of the Washington establishment. It also will help avoid the negative perception that voters have of Republicans.
  
- The President's travels must be extremely disciplined and limited in accordance with the recommendations that follow this section. There will be great temptation to extend the travel schedule at the last minute to "cover certain bases". This must be resisted, or the overall image that the strategy is intended to build will be lost at the last minute, and this could cause serious erosion in the President's strengths with the voters vis-a-vis Carter. In addition, when the President does travel, there must be an entirely new image created which reflects seriousness of purpose,



orientation towards substance, and a lack of  
of the haphazard and sloppy image which the President's  
current travels present.

- must have very good "ATTACK" group. No ATTACKS from the President, W.H., PFC, etc.

[insert brief description of additional constraints]

~~If the TCS plan (which is described in far greater detail below) is implemented, we anticipate that it will have the following impact on, and reaction from, Jimmy Carter.~~

~~[insert Carter reaction section]~~

An integral part of this strategy concerns the <sup>campaign</sup> roles of Vice President Rockefeller and the President's Vice Presidential running mate.

[insert Vice President analysis.]

*(... before should be selected)*

*Outline guidelines needed to meet goals. Who should be selected?*

*need to have Attack group?*





SYNOPSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following is a very brief summary of the specific implementation steps which <sup>will</sup> would be required. Part 1 of the tabs contains specific sections detailing each implementation phase.

1. Command and Control  
[to be supplied]
2. Vice President  
[to be supplied]
3. Budget  
[to be supplied]
4. Schedule of Presidential Activities  
[to be supplied]
5. Campaign Organization
  - a. Advertising
  - b. Research
  - c. Vote mechanics
  - d. Advocates
  - e. -
  - f.
6. Advertising Plan  
[to be supplied]
7. Media Plan  
[to be supplied]
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

IMPACT ON COVENTION

The TCS plan , if adopted, can complement the President's efforts in Kansas City to get the nomination. As an overall objective, we would seek to leave an impression with the delegates that the President has a general election strategy plan which will work and has been thoroughly thought through. Obviously, the plan itself must be kept secret.

One of the President's most serious weaknesses with the delegates is that he is perceived to be far less competent as a campaigner than Reagan. This "mind set" on the part of the delegates is not just the result of the President's style. The primary campaign effort by the President is perceived to have been rudderless and reactive. If the President can convince the delegates that he has a good, solid plan for the general election, this should help undercut the adverse reaction to the primary effort. It is clear, however, that we will not be able to convince the delegates that we do have a good plan without giving them some specifics.

Accordingly, the following elements of the TCS plan should be revealed in advance of the Convention:

[insert]

It is also of critical importance to note that the President will undoubtedly be asked to give up several key resources during the Convention which could have a major impact on

our ability to implement the TCS. For example, the President must maintain the ability to control the Vice President's campaign. There should be no agreement with the prospective Vice Presidential nominee to give him control over resources, staff, scheduling, etc. [insert additional thoughts here]

RISKS AND CARTER'S REACTIONS

[to be supplied]

