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Foreign Policy: Style and Language



Overview:

The objective of this set of talking points is twofold:

- Carter's
- A. To outline style of approaching the electorate on foreign policy
 - B. With the above as background, to suggest style and language that brings out Carter's inexperience while highlighting Pres. Ford's responsible leadership.

A. Carter's approach:

Carter's approach is rooted in ³~~four~~ techniques. Understanding the nature of his rhetoric gives clues to the nature of his appeal.

1. Carter seeks to personify foreign policy by identifying desirable behavior between individuals with similar behavior between nations. That is, he personalizes the conduct and the problems of foreign policy, wrapping his speech around desirable psychological attitudes.

Eg. "Our policies should be as open and honest and decent and compassionate as the American people themselves are."

(Chicago Council on Foreign Rel.
(March 15, 1976)

"Our foreign policy ought not to be based on military might, nor political power, nor economic pressure. It ought to be based on the fact that we are right and decent and honest and truthful and predicatable and respectful; in other words, that our foreign policy itself accurately represents the character and the ideals of the American people."

(Nat. Demo. Issues Conf., Louisville
Ky. Nov. 23, 1975)

(Carter also characterizes our policies as "racist")

"We've done a lot in this country in the last 20 years to end racial discrimination within our own borders; but we still have a gross, I think unconscionable, attitude of racial discrimination in international affairs." (Nat. Demo. Issues Conf. Louisville, Ky. Nov. 23, 1975)

2. Carter's second technique is to imply that Pres. Ford is not a strong leader by saying Dr. Kissinger is the real foreign policy spokesman.

Eg. "He (Ford) has turned over foreign affairs to Mr. Kissinger and has very little role to play in the evolution or consumation of those affairs. "
(New York Times, May 1, 1976)

"I believe that the foreign policy spokesman for our country should be the President and not the Secretary of State" (Newark, N.J.-Star Leader 3/16/76)

"I said I would touch on the kind of people we need to administer our foreign policy. I believe that the foreign policy spokesman should be the President, and not the Secretary of State. The conduct of foreign policy should be a sustained process of decision and action, and not a series of television spectacles. " (Chicago Council on For. Rel. 3/15/76)

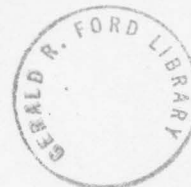
Yet, Carter has on numerous occasions praised Dr. Kissinger.

"I think Dr. Kissinger deserves the gratitude of the American people for having concluded these very difficult negotiations and I want to congratulate them for a wonderful achievement." (Atlantic Journal 1/24/73)

3. Carter uses 'general action' words to describe his positions on a variety of specific foreign policy matters. By general I mean words that would appropriately cover any specific action. It is this technique that gives people the illusion of specificity.

Eg. "Our relations with China are important to world peace and they directly affect the world balance. The United States has a great stake in a nationally independent, secure, and friendly China. The present turmoil in Chinese domestic politics could be exploited by the Soviets to promote reconciliation which might be inimical to international stability and to American interests. I believe that we should explore more actively the possibility of widening American-Chinese trade relations and further consolidating our political relationships." (Chicago Council on For. Rel. 3/15/76)

Thus, these three techniques or approaches form the core of Carter's strategy for persuading the electorate to vote for him. What follows are some ideas for discounting Carter's credibility while at the same time promoting Pres. Ford's leadership.



B. Style and Language:

Carter says our foreign policy ought to be based on compassion and dignity; that balance of power politics have become obsolete after 1945. Well, anyone who fought in those World Wars knows that we didn't win them with compassion and dignity-- we won it with sweat, and with blood, and with mother's and father's tears.. We didn't win by loving, we won by dying.



Any person who says he doesn't think our foreign policy ought to be based on military might, economic strength, and political power--I would think twice about his judgement.

I don't know if I'd trust him with my life, or my family, or my country.

I think its worth thinking about when a Presidential candidate wants to protect me by loving everybody, I'd give him a second thought.

Carter has been in the service on a submarine assignment, I'm sure he served well. Senator Dole also served, and in so doing lost the use of his left arm. But a President must have experience that is broader than that. He must be a man with years and years of experience, and of trust. I'd want a man who knows his way around the neighborhood, and I'd want people behind him who know the whole world, not just one state in America. Because a President, and the nation, cannot afford to give on-the-job training. Those that only smile at our adversaries, do so at the nation's peril.

We have a President who is mature, & responsible; who is cool and calm; who is gentle yet forceful: who is confident and dynamic.

We are not, and have not, been at war since President Ford took office.

The Soviets have been rejected in the Middle East in favor of the United States.

American influence and prestige is growing due to our diplomatic ingenuity.

Africa is responding to America's initiative for peace.

We have regained our confidence and have reached a new level of world maturity.

And the Soviets agree with us. Two of their top fighter pilots just defected to

U.S.; bringing along with them not only their own knowledge of the Soviet defense system, but also their most sophisticated aircraft, the MIG-25, Foxbat.

I believe the President has the courage, the intelligence, and the manifest strength to insure the future safety, and future prestige of this nation.

In short, the question comes down to this; should you put the welfare of your family and your self in the hands of someone you know so little about, who is so little experienced, who is so little tested? I think you know the answer.

Thank-you.

(Should you like a few words on Dr. Kissinger, I'd be happy to ^{supply} ~~supply~~ some.)



F. J. MERLINO

THERE'S A NEW NATIONAL DEFENSE CONSENSUS COMING
AND/or CARTER'S OUT OF IT

Post-Vietnam, a more dispassionate debate on U.S. Defense policy, has been possible than perhaps at any time in the previous dozen years or more.

Congressional passage this year, of a \$104.3 billion defense appropriations bill, reflects the wide-spread and growing agreement, in the words of President Ford, that "we can no longer short-change our national defense." Characterizing the bill as one that "after eight years of decline...(provides) for real growth in our national defense efforts," the President said he was "convinced that this new pattern must and will be sustained in future years, and I am personally committed to it."

The President is hardly alone in identifying a new national mood of firmness and resolve on defense policy. The respected Washington-based policy research organization, the Brookings Institution has concluded that a "new consensus in Defense Policy" could be formed around commonly held perceptions such as the belief that "the retrenchment of American military power has gone too far."

"It must be recognized," a Brookings Publication titled Setting National Priorities asserts, "that the process of reducing the share of U.S. resources devoted to defense has more or less run its course."

The report concludes:

"Additional savings are possible in some areas, but other sectors of the defense budget should receive more emphasis. In general, this means that defense spending will have to increase in real terms, for at least the next five years, but probably more slowly than the expected growth in national output. This outlook may be disheartening to some Americans, but the alternative is worse."

The evidence is widespread that a new consensus on national defense is emerging and the evidence that Mr. Carter excludes himself from it is just as strong. Carter's persistence in calling for large cuts in the defense budget runs directly counter to this widespread mood in the country that we have already cut back too far.

If nothing else, Carter is sensitive to such national moods, especially if they are shared by AFL-CIO President, George Meany, whose support for Democratic candidates had been considered automatic until 1972 when the Democrats nominated another man who proposed meat-ax cuts in defense spending. Perhaps it was his anxiety about Meany's predictable reaction, which prompted Carter to drop an earlier, even more radical, posture in which reportedly he favored a \$15 billion defense budget cut. His current position, favoring a cut of from 5 to 7 billion in military spending, is enshrined in his platform.

Just how widespread the new consensus seems to be, and just how far out of it Mr. Carter's position puts him is underscored by the following:

--A Library of Congress Congressional Research Service report prepared last winter states that "DOD's baseline budget has been cut by 20 percent since 1964. Expenditures continue to decline in terms of purchasing power, percent of the total federal budget, and U.S. GNP." Also citing high manpower cuts, the report asserts tht "Comparatively little will be left over for expansion and modernization" and that "such trends sap quality as well as quantity..."

Only President Ford's leadership, fully in tune with the new national consensus, has successfully reversed these trends. Carter would re-establish them.

--Public opinion polls conducted by

° Opinion Research Corporation that indicates a greater than 2/3 majority of Americans would support as much as a \$20 billion annual increase in defense spending if necessary.

° The Gallup organization which in the words of Potomac Associates analysts indicate "a mood in the United States that reverses a long-term trend--there is a new desire to put an end to what is seen as a weakening U.S. role in the world, and to resume the position of being 'number one.'"

CARTER ON FOREIGN POLICY

For Elliot Richardson, et al

The President's single most important responsibility is the conduct of foreign affairs. Under modern conditions, we rely on the President to maintain peace and to protect our national interest in our relations with other nations.

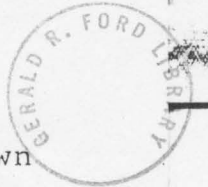
President Ford is well prepared, by both experience and temperament, to carry out this responsibility. During the two years that he has been in office, President Ford has made real progress at relaxing international tensions, strengthening our security, improving relations with our allies, and advancing the cause of human rights.

Jimmy Carter, in contrast, has little in his background or experience that would prepare him for this awesome responsibility. As a result, he has been driven to rely on the familiar Democratic foreign policy establishment -- the very same people who got us heavily involved in Vietnam in the 1960s, and who formulated the series of foreign policy blunders that helped lead to the series of foreign and domestic crises in which the United States seemed trapped in 1968.

Our Presidents since World War II have all been men with broad foreign policy experience before they reached the White House. Indeed, one must go back to the time of Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison to find Presidents with no exposure to the problems and responsibilities of foreign policy before their election to the nation's highest office.

In the nineteenth century, the United States was primarily a continental power. It did not matter too much if a new President had no experience beyond dealing with the problems faced by the Governor of a single state. But now we have responsibilities all over the world. The President must respond quickly and expertly to emergencies that arise in distant reaches of the globe. He must understand the thought processes of foreign leaders who have grown up under political and social systems that are far different from ours. He must have a reputation for strength, wisdom, and coolness under fire, so that when he speaks, both our enemies and our friends know that he means business.

Beyond that, our President must have the kind of background and knowledge that give him confidence in his own judgment. I can tell you that when a major international problem arises, the man who sits in the Oval Office at the White House receives all kinds of conflicting pleas and advice from high-ranking individuals and groups -- most of whom see the problem from their particular vantage point, be it military, diplomatic, or economic. In the end, the President must decide. If the President cannot draw on personal knowledge and experience with similar problems, he is likely to base his decision on irrelevant factors such as his personal relationships with particular advisors, or who makes the most belligerent argument, or even who talks to him last.



The President cannot be an expert in all phases of defense or foreign policy. But he must have the experience and knowledge that enable him to judge and choose among the experts.

Jimmy Carter simply does not meet that description. Is it safe -- under today's conditions -- to take a man in one jump from the political backwoods to the pinnacles of world diplomacy? Jimmy Carter may know how to raise a campaign war chest in Georgia -- but does he understand the intricate details of diplomatic relations in Eastern Europe -- in Africa -- in the Middle East? When confronted with a crisis, would he know where to fix with precision the exact level of response that was neither too little nor too much?

Carter's behavior and pronouncements during the course of this year's campaign suggest sobering answers to these questions.

At the beginning of the campaign, Carter said that he would cut the defense budget by \$15 billion. More recently, he has been saying that he would make cuts of from five to seven billion. But he does not say where or how these cuts would be made. If he does not know where he would make cuts, how does he know how much he would make? The answer seems to be that he begins with a figure that meets his political needs, rather than one that will meet the nation's defense needs.

Then he has said that he would withdraw American troops from South Korea. Of course we would all like to bring our troops home from Korea. But the small force that we maintain there is a vital link in maintaining the overall peace and balance of influence in the Far East. If we leave Korea now, we will undermine our relations with Japan, reduce our credibility with China, and provide a tempting target for intervention by the Soviet Union. We are in Korea to help keep the peace in Asia. When an American leader suggests pulling out, we run the risk of a repetition of the mistake made by Dean Acheson when he said in 1950 that South Korea was outside our defense perimeter - thereby bringing on the attack by North Korea on South Korea later that year.

Just one more example -- Carter has indicated that we should be prepared to work with Communist parties if they come to power in the countries of Western Europe. Here again, he is intervening -- no doubt inadvertently -- in the internal politics of our allies. What he does not seem to realize that if a candidate for President of the United States says that he will work with Communist parties in friendly countries, this has a disturbing impact on the entire political balance in these nations. The nations of Southern Europe, in particular, are going through periods of sensitive political development. We do not aim to become involved in our allies' internal politics. But we certainly do not want to lend encouragement or comfort to the anti-freedom parties in those countries.

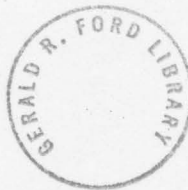


Carter has at least had the sense, as the campaign has gone on, to realize that he is not personally equipped to deal with the problems of foreign policy. But who has he turned to? The same old crowd of foreign policy experts who staffed the State Department and the National Security Council during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. These are the people who brought us Vietnam, who led us to an all-time low in our relations with our European allies, who consistently ignored Africa and most other parts of the developing world. I am afraid that it must be said of these members of the Democratic foreign policy establishment that, like the Bourbons of France, they never forgot anything and they never learned anything. They are all set to refight the battles of the 1960s -- with the additional burden that they would now be trying to prove that they were not wrong from the start.

I say: Don't let them do it again. They had their chance. Their policies failed. We don't want them back.

President Ford is charting a steady, confident, progressive course in foreign policy. We need to keep his experienced hand at the helm.

* * *



The Foreign Policy Debate:

Carter's Approach

Overview:

The objective of this paper is twofold:

- A. To outline Carter's style of approaching the electorate on foreign policy.
- B. With the above as background, to suggest style and language that will counteract Carter and bring out his inexperience while highlighting Pres. Ford's responsible leadership.

A. Carter and the "P.T.Barnum" Effect.

It is clear that Carter's grasp of the international scene has been severely limited by his lack of experience. But it is also clear that the bulk of the electorate is even less experienced, a fact that Carter easily exploits with the use of three techniques, or tactics.

These tactics comprised what can be called the "P.T.Barnum" effect. The trick is to appeal to the person's most immediate feelings, while promoting oneself as the answer by using "action" words that are general enough to include any conceivable specific action that occurs. This approach Carter has translated politically in the following manner.

First. Carter seeks to personify foreign policy by identifying desirable behavior between individuals with similar behavior between nations. That is, he personalizes the conduct and the problems of foreign policy, wrapping his speech around desirable psychological attitudes.

Eg. "Our policies should be as open and honest and decent and compassionate as the American people themselves are."

(Chicago Council on Foreign Rel.
(March 15, 1976)



"Our foreign policy ought not to be based on military might, nor political power, nor economic pressure. It ought to be based on the fact that we are right and decent and honest and truthful and predictable and respectful; in other words, that our foreign policy itself accurately represents the character and the ideals of the American people."

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Second: 2. Carter's second technique is to imply that Pres. Ford is not a strong leader by saying Dr. Kissinger is the real foreign policy spokesman.

Eg. "He (Ford) has turned over foreign affairs to Mr. Kissinger and has very little role to play in the evolution or consummation of those affairs." (New York Times, May 1, 1976)

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Yet, Carter has on numerous occasions praised Dr. Kissinger.

"I think Dr. Kissinger deserves the gratitude of the American people for having concluded these very difficult negotiations and I want to congratulate them for a wonderful achievement." (Atlantic Journal 1/24/73)

Third 3. Carter uses 'general action' words to describe his positions on a variety of specific foreign policy matters. By general, I mean words that would appropriately cover any specific action. It is this technique that gives people the illusion of specificity.

Eg. "Our relations with China are important to world peace and they directly affect the world balance. The United States has a great stake in a nationally independent, secure, and friendly China. The present turmoil in Chinese domestic politics could be exploited by the Soviets to promote reconciliation which might be inimical to international stability and to American interests. I believe that we should explore more actively the possibility of widening American-Chinese trade relations and further consolidating our political relationships." (Chicago Council on For. Rel. 3/15/76)

Indeed, as recently as Friday, Oct. 1, (in a Washington Post piece by Jules Witcover pg. A5) Carter employs these tactics.

Before leaving for Portland, Maine, Carter took sharp issue with administration pressure on Congress to permit sale of 650 Maverick air-to-ground missiles to Saudi Arabia.

"There is no reason to think these missiles will increase security and stability in the Middle East," Carter told a conference of Jewish leaders from the Boston area. "There is no reason to think they can be used only for defense. There are only reasons to fear that we will increase the chance of conflict. No administration which was sensitive to the climate in the Middle East would let the sale go forward."

To administration contentions that refusal to sell missiles might persuade the Saudis to deny oil to the United States, Carter said: "If that is the problem, we should develop a vigorous energy policy, which Mr. Ford has failed to do. We should not simply sell weapons to get oil, and risk peace, by vague threats which the administration itself is perpetuating."

Carter also charged that the administration had reversed its position on legislation aimed at combatting the Arab boycott against Israel and Jews. The administration, Carter said, has "lost the sense of what our nation stands for when they sell missiles to buy oil. They have lost all pretense of morality when they condone discrimination for the sake of short-term gains."

Carter completed his Buffalo and Boston swings without reference to his recent controversies except for an occasional sign in the crowd. At Boston College, some students hung a large banner from the balconies: "Jimmy Carter for Playmate of the Year" —an obvious reference to his troublesome interview with Playboy magazine.

But such signs were only the slightest intrusions in a day in which Carter kept President Ford squarely in his sights and in the focus of the accompanying news media. The Carter strategy of staying on the offensive, rather than allowing himself to be the issue, seemed to be working.

Thus, it seems that Carter has but three choices in his approach to the debate:

- a. He can go toe to toe with the President and slug it out on specific points of foreign policy.
- b. He can go with his most comfortable approach, ala P.T. Barnum, and personalize and generalize his way through.
- c. He can use some combination of a. & b. If he opts for this strategy, the areas where he will be specific are likely to be those areas where foreign policy is already detailed.

The electorate is expecting the President to do well, this has been played as his strongest suit. If Carter keeps even with Ford, trading punches, Carter will win the debate in the minds of the electorate.

The problem is not dealing with Carter if he choses to run directly at Pres. Ford, but dealing with him if he ~~tries~~ an end run. One cannot of course predict what exact option he will chose, but it is prudent to be aware of his tactics. If Carter does go with option 'c', Pres. Ford will likely appear to be alternately snatching the ball, but then turning it over to Carter.

The next question: Knowing what Carter's strategy is likely to be, what should be the shape of the defense formation? The following are some suggestions.

Beating P.T. Barnum.



Carter will likely weave this approach into a framework of issues, such as the sale of arms to Saudia Arabia. The best way to counteract Carter is unclear, but it is clear that the "P.T." question must be addressed. Here are some thoughts.

1. Personalizing foreign policy---

The President must be honest and open and compassionate with the American people, and whenever he can, the same attitude should be promoted throughout the rest of the world.

We have been and we are the very example of what a moral country is. But we have made mistakes, sometimes with great tragedy---- but we have learned from our mistakes--- we have matured and become stronger because of them--- we have put the world on notice that we will not accept deceit, that we will not accept distrust, that we will not accept injustice.

We have not lost our vision, we have matured it.

Public and private morality must go together, but they are not the same. A person treats his own family differently than he treats a stranger. A family to be strong must have trust, and it may look for trust in strangers. A President must first be honest and truthful, but he must be ever vigilant with other nations

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance,-- and those that think otherwise do so at the nations peril.

Gov. Carter has said that he does not think our foreign policy should be based on military might, economic strength, or political power. But is this a truly mature and responsible position? I think not.

2. Kissinger as the real foreign policy leader.

With this ploy Carter will try to paint Pres. Ford as a weak leader, by saying Kissinger is in charge of foreign policy. Carter will likely try to draw the President into a debate on the merits of Dr. Kissinger---this will work to his advantage. Debating the pros and cons of Kissinger is not the real question.

To circumvent Carter's ploy, it is necessary to put across the idea that although Kissinger is the running back, Pres. Ford is still the quarterback. And if he isn't getting performance out of his runners, -- he will replace them. By putting Kissinger in these terms, you've finessed the problem of getting bogged down with personal polemics.

This football metaphor might be particularly appropriate if Carter uses his 'lone-ranger' metaphor. For eg. "Dr. Kissinger is one of the best running backs in the league, but before every play there's a huddle, and in every huddle I'm the quarterback, and I call the plays.

3. General action words.

The President can tag Carter whenever he uses one of these all inclusive 'action' words, by simply pointing out whenever Carter uses a particularly general one. The President can say that there are several specific ways to have a "vigorous" energy policy, for eg., and Pres. Ford has done this, this,& this. Point out what it takes in terms of human needs.



F. Joseph Merlino

PFC Press Office

He called Ford's comments in Indiana as proof that the President "has turned our Indochina policy over to his opponent, Mr. Reagan."

Carter said that "in announcing that the administration would refuse to normalize diplomatic relations with Vietnam, even in return for a complete accounting of our missing in action...Mr. Ford has again yielded weakly to pressure from Reagan."

"But that was six weeks before the Texas primary. Now, to deprive Mr. Reagan of an issue in that primary, the administration has deprived the MIA families of their best chance to know the fate of their sons. That policy may possibly gain a few votes for Mr. Ford, which I doubt, but it will gain nothing for our country."

Carter would "leave open the option of normalizing relations with North Vietnam after they have assured me of a full accounting" of the MIAs.

He said the Vietnam incident was "just the latest example of weak, vacillating national leadership on the part of Mr. Ford...we cannot afford to have the foreign policy of the United States determined by a calculation of political expediency in each succeeding Republican primary."

Washington Post
April 25, 1976

"I would strive to normalize relationships with Vietnam after I was convinced that it had made a full accounting for all the American service people who were missing in action. I think it would be to our advantage to normalize relationships. I would not consider the payment of any reparations, and I would not single out the Vietnamese for any special aid."

Newsweek
May 10, 1976

V.G.2. KOREA

"The Soviet Union with the exception of street skirmishes in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, hasn't lost a single soldier in combat since the Second World War. We lost 34,000 in South Korea and 50,000 in South Vietnam, basically trying to tell other people what kind of government they ought to have, what kind of leader they should have--and it doesn't work."

National Demo. Issues Conference
November 23, 1975
Louisville, Kentucky



Globe article quotes a Village Voice article about Carter that says in 1968 Carter wanted Lloyd Bucher court-martialed for surrendering the Pueblo to the North Koreans.

Boston Globe
January 14, 1976

On the subject of requests by Thailand and the Philippines that the U.S. remove or reduce troops in their countries, Carter said: "I would certainly accommodate their requests and, in carefully staged withdrawals, would remove most of our troops from South Korea."

"We still have too many military bases and too many troops overseas."

Common Cause
Edition I
Issue Profile Number 10
February 1976

"I would remove all atomic weapons from Korea."

"I cannot see any circumstances imaginable under which we need or would use atomic weapons in the Korean area."

"But I would not be rash about the withdrawal of troops from South Korea...I'd make sure the Japanese knew what we were doing...I would make sure that in the four or five years when we get our troops in Korea substantially removed that Korea would still be able to defend itself against North Korea."

Washington Post
March 21, 1976

"I think Park is much too autocratic and has very little concern about human freedoms and human rights. Our commitment is not to Park. Our long-standing commitment has been to the people of South Korea. I think that to reduce our land forces in South Korea gradually over a period of years would be an appropriate action to take. The South Koreans would have a competitive force with that of the north."

Newsweek
May 10, 1976

"We have a commitment made by the Congress, the President, the people and the United Nations in South Korea. I would prefer to withdraw all of our troops and land forces from South Korea over a period of years -- three, four years, whatever. But, obviously, we're already committed in Japan. We're committed in Germany."

Los Angeles Times

May 16, 1976

(Moyers interview)

It will be possible to withdraw US forces from South Korea over a time span to be determined after consultation with both South Korea and Japan, but the United States should make clear that "internal oppression" in South Korea is "repugnant to our people."

AP

June 23, 1976