III - DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

1. Introduction

There are other campaign strategies, but we have not presented them as alternatives because, in our judgment, they will inevitably lead to the President's defeat in November.

The chapter following this one will show how the recommended strategy can result in achieving each identified goal.

2. The Targets

The State lists on the preceeding pages are our best estimate of the State breakdown at the present time. But there is a great deal of flexibility into our key State decisions. First, the Vice Presidential nominee will impact on the State strategy, especially the unknowns. Second, five days after the convention we will poll in the following States: California, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Washington, Maryland, Virginia, Florida,

and New York. Thus, by the second week in September we will be able to make our operating decision on key States for travel and resource allocation.

In the meantime, we will not cede Carter any major States or region until we have scientific evidence. We can use the five priority categories for our preliminary resource allocation since it is based on electoral strength and historical voting data.

Once the key State list is finalized, it must not be changed unless justified by hard data such as polls. If "gut" opinions or "informal" samplings of advisors are allowed to change our plan the campaign will quickly become chaotic.

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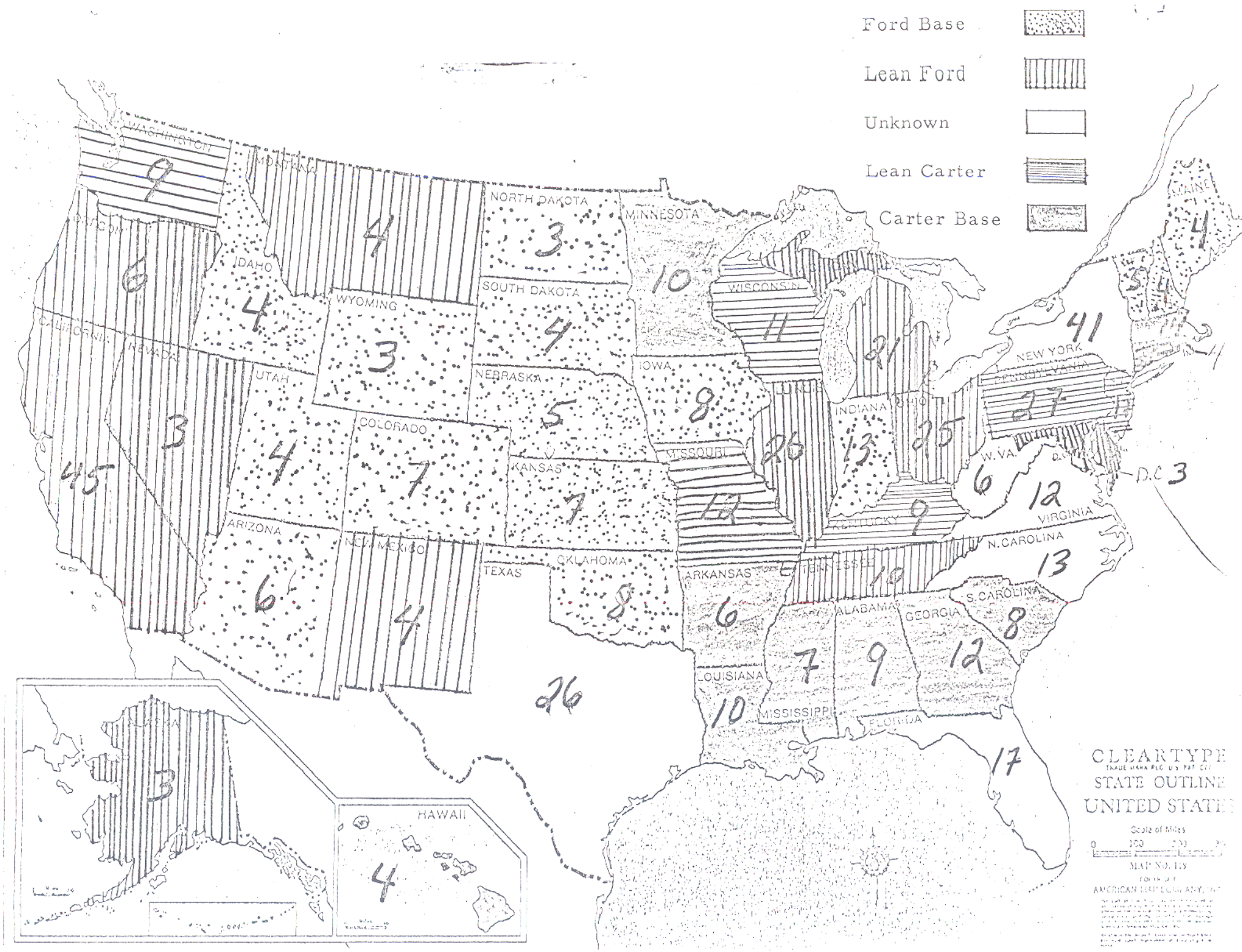
Ford Base
Lean Ford
Unknown
Lean Carter
Carter Base
WASHINGTON
OREGON
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
IDAHO
MONTANA
WYOMING
UTAH
ARIZONA
COLORADO
NEW MEXICO
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
MINNESOTA
IOWA
MISSOURI
ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
WISCONSIN
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MISSISSIPPI
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S. CAROLINA
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MAINE
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UNITED STATES
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3. Strategy Basics (Cross-Cutting Concepts)

A. The President's campaign must be highly disciplined.

- The President must establish iron-clad control over Administration and campaign officials. For the period from the time of implementation of this plan until the election, every higher visibility action of Administration and campaign officials must be cleared at the White House. Administration prima donnas must subvert their personal ambitions to the objective of getting the President elected.
- The President must take specific actions to demonstrate that he is a capable and competent leader.

B. The President's campaign must be television oriented. We must change the perception of literally millions* of voters, and this can only be done through the mass media with the principal

*Although not statistically meaningful, the following will give some perspective to the magnitude of the challenge. If the President trails Carter by 20 points after our Convention, we will have to make about 10 million voters switch from Carter to the President. This is about 150,000 per day.

Bringing these figures into sharper focus, to pick up 10 million voters, the President will have to:

- "Win" over six Congressional District per day for 73 days (from being behind 60-40%);
- Operate in a media market of 1.5 million voters a day.

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emphasis on television.* This is true for coverage of the President and media advertising.

C. We must establish a major credibility to attack Carter.

D. We must carefully allocate our resources. See Tab I-A for a proposed budget prepared by Stu Spencer.

4. Strategy Specifics (Actions Aimed at Specific Objectives)

A. Establish leadership qualities:

- Avoid self-deprecating remarks (Ford not a Lincoln) and acts (being photographed with a cowboy hat).
- Carefully plan, prepare and execute all on-camera appearances. The President should be seen on television as in control, decisive, open and candid. Prep time (15-30 minutes) should be built into the President's schedule (with Bill Carruthers) immediately preceeding on-camera events. For example, the President should rehearse his Acceptance Speech (before departing for Kansas City), using a teleprompter and video tape.

*For the reasons discussed infra, we discount the conclusion of Patterson and McClure that TV has no impact on voters choices. See their recent book analyzing the impact of TV on the 1972 election (The Unseeing Eye).

- Use ads and advocates to compare the President's personal characteristics and experience with Carter's.
- The President must not go on the attack personally (not only because it results in a negative voter reaction) because the country does not want strident, divisive tactics. The country is coming together (as we saw over the 4th of July weekend) and part of this healing process is a rejection of politicians who are perceived to be aggressive attackers.

B. Show that the President has taken control of his Administration and campaign and is on the road to victory.

- Instill a new discipline in the President's White House and campaign staff.
- Control prima donnas in Administration.
- Announce that the President will not campaign by relying on hoopla for TV, but rather will use this Bicentennial election year to improve the Presidential electoral process by focusing on issues (See next chapter for specifics)

NOTE: We should plan for a major campaign swing for the last two weeks, possibly including the use of a train.

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- Develop and implement Issue Cycle Plan. (See next chapter for specifics.)
- Hold open the option of challenging Carter to a series of debates. (See next chapter for specifics.)

C. Actions to hold base:

- In order to demonstrate that the President is the Party's leader, in control and the unifier,* he should consider addressing the Convention immediately after being nominated. Once the President goes over 1,130 votes, the following sequence could be considered:
  - suspend the rules
  - Reagan moves to make the nomination unanimous and introduces the President
  - brief remarks by the President on the need for Party unity.

*We cannot dwell on the unification problem nor spend resources working on Republicans. The fact is that if we're 15 or 20 points behind, Party unity will be a function of Ford's perceived winnability. If Republicans think he's going to win, they'll pull behind him; if they think he's going to lose (as they perceived -- correctly -- Goldwater in 1964), the Party will remain divided no matter what we do.

In taking steps after we have the nomination to be perceived as moving towards the center, we must (1) avoid alienating our "base" to the point of reducing Republican turnout and volunteer efforts and (2) never be perceived as abandoning basic principles.

- In his remarks to the Convention, the President can stress party unity, but ask the Convention to face facts; we are a minority party, but we are the conscience of the Nation. Therefore, he can ask each and every Republican across the land to find one Independent and one Democrat, convince each of them to support the President, and make sure they go to the polls. This will put our 73-day task in perspective for the Convention and the Nation. It demonstrates that the President is a loyal GOP member, but reaching out to the entire Nation for support.
- Develop a half-hour paid television address by Reagan or Connally, aimed at conservatives, which would be used in our base States. This would be designed to underscore the President's conservative record on the issues and the need for Republican support because of the Carter threat.
- Develop and implement a special rural development/farm program.

- The President must continue to project an image of openness, inner tranquility and family-oriented. His campaign activities should not detract from this perception.

  His campaign organization must be disciplined but open and honest. The voter should associate Carter with the Nixon image of arrogance and thirst for power.

D. Actions to get target swing voters:

- Select Vice Presidential running mate with following characteristics:
  - Able to carry a key State or region.
  - Aggressive campaigner who can take the lead implementing the Attack Carter Plan.
  - A man who is perceived as an Independent, or at least moderate Republican, without a strong party identification. Must have a strong image of freshness and non-Washington establishment. Honest.
  - A man who has good credibility with the press.

- Develop and implement a major "Attack Carter" plan.
- In order to break the President out of the Washington establishment mold, he should launch an attack on the Democratic majority which has governed Washington for forty out the past forty-four years. We should avoid symbolic acts such as bill signings, submitting legislation, vetoes, and the like, which simply reinforce the perception of the President as part of the Washington establishment. These events very rarely leave an impression on the substance of what was done.
- The President must refrain from appearing highly partisan. He must never personally attack his opponent.
- The President must not campaign for GOP candidates. This will seriously erode his support among Independents and ticket splitters. The President should not attend any Party fund raisers. Any support given to a GOP candidate must be done in a manner to avoid national media attention. For example, the President can make telephone calls, sign mailers, do video tape endorsements for fund raisers, etc.

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- Develop a TV documentary targeted towards the Independents and "Group 2" of swing voters.
- Establish a program targeted specifically at Catholics. (See following chapter and Tab II-C for details.)
- Implement new campaign themes aimed at the Independent and ticket splitter. Strive to create the perception of the President as a conservative on social issues and moderate on economic issues.
- Implement a major First Family media blitz aimed particularly at the swing voter (Group 1).

E. Actions to get target constituency groups:

- Our efforts in this area should be rifle shots aimed at the specific group involved. These efforts should <u>not</u> be undertaken with the objective of getting national press coverage (although we must keep in mind that this will happen if any mistakes are made).
- The following are <u>examples</u> of key constituency groups:
  - Farmers
  - "Anti" groups such as gun control, abortion, busing
  - Religious groups
  - Italians, Irish and Mexican Americans

- See Tab I-B for a constituency group plan prepared by Stu Spencer.

5. Implementation Steps

A. As a critical part of breaking the current mold which constrains and limits the perception voters have of the President, there will have to be some announcement of our campaign plans.* This announcement, which probably should occur within a week after the Convention, perhaps in Grand Rapids, should contain the following key elements:

- Presidential campaigning has become a circus which no longer fully serves the needs of the American people and the political process established by the Constitution. The President can appropriately use this Bicentennial year to demonstrate how the process can be improved. He can contribute by campaigning on the issues and thus assisting the people in making one of the most serious choices they must to preserve democracy and freedom.

*In addition, the PFC will "leak" stories concerning the campaign "strategy". These stories will indicate that a national campaign has been adopted.

- 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 records, is a campaign that favors the President.
- The President will announce certain ground rules for his campaign, including a schedule of press conferences, a timetable for his presenting the issues to the American people, and other specifics including the possibility of a debate*. There will be some crowd events such as en route to a substantive meeting during the campaign period. Also, we should plan on a major campaign swing during the final two weeks.

*The "debate" challenge can be very flexible. For example, the President could state that he will appear before a panel of newsmen and experts five times on different subjects (e.g., foreign/defense, economy, domestic affairs) and a sixth time for follow-up questions. We could challenge Carter to do the same.

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NOTE: The President's announcement must convince the country that his "campaign" will be very aggressive. He must appear as the man fighting an uphill fight, but confident of ultimate victory. He must never appear defensive or defeated.

Our campaign strategy has been developed around the President's actual strengths and aimed at Carter's actual weaknesses. We are not trying to change the President (style and substance); we are trying to change the voter's perception of the President and Carter.

B. To command and control the campaign, the following key elements are necessary:

- At the White House:
  - A Review Group -- see infra.
  - Absolute control over Presidential activities and Administration officials and actions.
- At the President Ford Committee:
  - Control over advertising, political press relations, campaign budget, RNC activities, etc.

- Control over advocates.
- Execution of Carter Attack Plan
- Polling
- Campaign control over Vice President Rockefeller and the Vice Presidential nominee

• At the RNC:

- Voter identification and turnout
- Carter attack capability

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C. In order to ensure that every single action by the President between the time the strategy is adopted and the election is reviewed to determine its impact on the strategy, a Review Group should be established.

This group will have three functions:

First, to assess every proposed Presidential action (from scheduling to positions on issues) along with the actions of every key Administration and campaign officials, to determine how that action impacts on the strategy objectives. Each target group will be indexed and given a specific weight so that all actions can be judged in terms of how they impact each target group/State and a "net assessment" can be rendered.

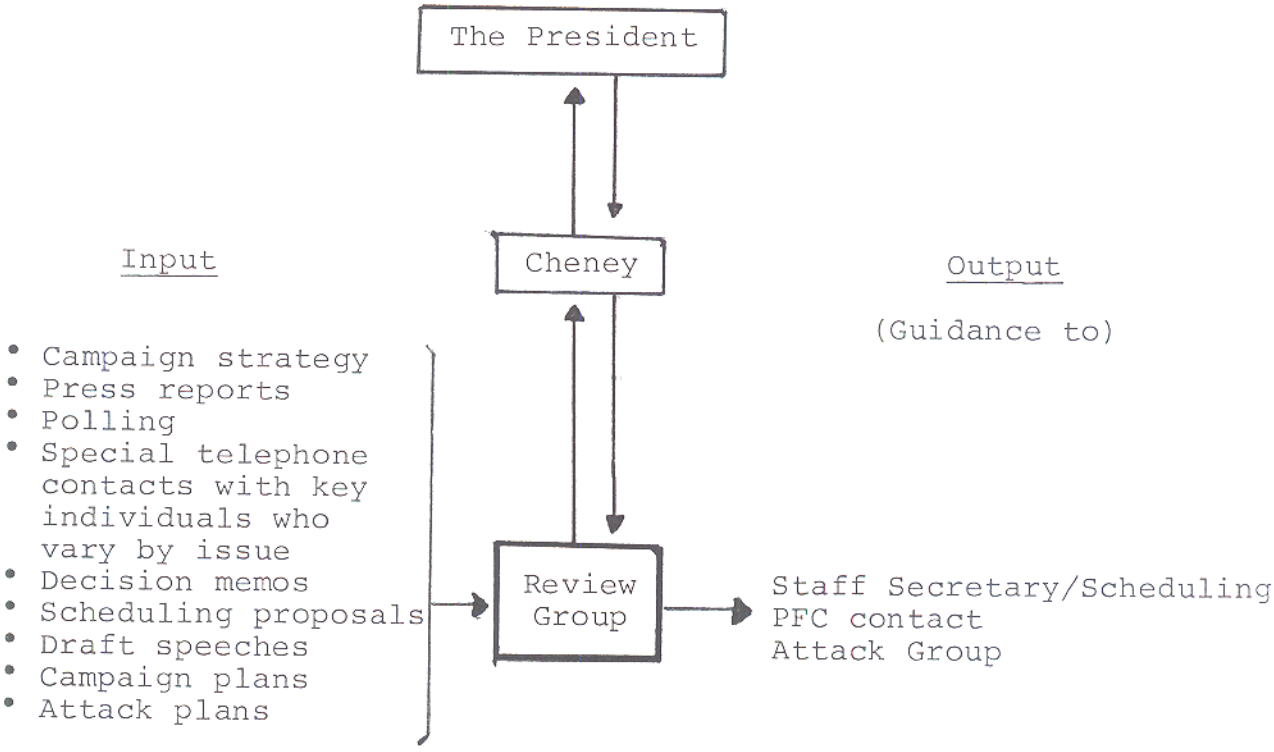
Second, the group should act as a political crisis management group which can meet on less than an hour's notice, at any time, to advise the President on how to react to opportunities or attacks as they develop.

Third, synchronize Presidential activity, campaign advertising, press plans, the Issue Cycle Plan (discussed in the following pages) and the Attack Plan.

This group should be viewed as "personal to the President", that is, it should not appear in any organization chart, and it should receive no publicity. Its membership should be kept very small (five or six) and the campaign and Administration "superstars" should not be part of it on a permanent basis because of their lack of availability. Obviously, the President will often want to consult with one or more of his top officials, but he should also have the advice of the Review Group separately.

The Review Group should be one step removed from the pressures of <u>running</u> the day-to-day White House/campaign activities. This should enable them to maintain perspective, thus avoiding such errors as the "Schweiker blunder".

The Review Group should function as indicated:



ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDED STRATEGY AND ALTERNATIVES

1. Goals/Strategy Analysis

Goals	Strategy Element
A) Change perception to show President as being: - in control - experienced - educated - leader	• Control Administration/ campaign officials. • Ads and advocates hit President's background and experience. • All Presidential actions planned for TV impact -- show him in command.
B) Develop understanding of President's position on issues -- that he is conservative and has compassion.	• Set up "issue cycle" • Get good speeches and plan for TV. • Use new campaign themes
C) Hold base	• Address Convention after nomination. • Project "winner" image • Implement rural development and farm plan
D) Establish disciplined campaign	• Get new people into campaign • Establish firm control in White House over all media events of all Administration campaign officials. • Get good TV advisor • Adopt and rigidly implement this strategy. • Set up Review Group • Get top advertising group

E) Change perception Independents and ticket splitters have of the President.	• Announce new campaign ground rules • [Challenge Carter to debates] • "Issue cycle"
F) Change Carter's perception	• Implement Attack Plan • Use TV specials with Connally, Rockefeller and Reagan
G) Develop positions that appeal to Independents	• Campaign on the issues • Never attack personally • Select proper V.P. • Attack Democratic majority in Congress. • Avoid identification as a partisan Republican. Do not campaign for other Republicans.
H) Develop positions that appeal to ticket splitters	• Implement Catholics program • Implement new campaign themes • Stress family ties -- implement First Family plan • Show President as social conservative and economic moderate.

2. Alternative Strategies

There are three basic campaign strategies available to the President:

- Continue the same type of campaign utilized in the primaries.
- Develop a more structured, yet conventional, campaign effort (similar to Truman in '48 or Nixon in '68).
- Adopt The Recommended Strategy, an unconventional strategy which is highly targeted on specific swing constituencies in swing States, and which is designed to improve the voters perception of Ford relative to Carter.

The following is an analysis of the alternatives:

Extend Current "Strategy"

Currently, the President's campaign can be characterized as utilizing traditional campaign tactics with directions and decisions coming in response to events. The strengths of the current "strategy" are:

- There are a variety of inputs from advisory groups, the PFC, Congressional leaders, Party officials, etc.
- The strategy entails a great deal of Presidential travel, thus beneficially impacting those who see the President, and local media markets.

- This strategy causes the least problems among Party officials, Congressional leaders, and the like.

However, this current method of operation is deficient in several respects.

- It's not likely to work. The President was slightly behind Reagan in both the NBC poll (43-40) and MOR poll (48-45) among Republican primary voters last December. The net effect of the Presidential activities of January and February and the primary campaigns was to raise Republican support of the President to our present 60-30 margin over Reagan. But this was accompanied by a drop in support by the rest of the electorate measured by the head-to-head races with Democrats and the approval rating.

  In every primary State where we could afford to poll, we were leading before the campaign began (with the exception of California). Although Presidential travel caused momentary increases in popular support, our lead was always eroded by the active campaign and media blitz of our opponent. This was, of course, due in part to the higher rate of turnout of

Reagan's supporters. But to campaign more extensively in the general election is not an option because:

1. We are not protecting a lead but trying to cause millions of voters to change their minds and must do so through effective use of mass media.

2. We cannot hope to cover the relevant States with Presidential travel. It took a large chunk of our resources just to cover twelve States in the three months of primaries. Further, this travel had a negative effect on the electorate at large. If we travel extensively, or all out, the President will be seen as another partisan politician and charged with neglecting the people's business.

- There's 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 lines of authority, and there does not exist a capability to produce really good campaign speeches, issue papers, etc.

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- It has forced the President into a reactive mode -- defending his position on emotional but relatively insignificant issues.

Rather than correct the perception of deficiencies noted above, continuation of this strategy will, in all likelihood, lead to an increase in the negative gap between Carter and the President.

Structured, "Truman" Campaign

The principal advantage of a structured campaign would be better allocation of scarce resources. There could be a substantial improvement in the decision-making process, with deliberate attempt to coordinate the various spheres of influence, including the RNC, a President Ford committee, the White House, an independent "attack" group, etc. It is possible that a conventional campaign waged by a minority party could make up a 15-25 point gap in the seventy-three days available. However, it is not reasonable to assume that this can happen, given equality of financial resources. Not only will the Republicans not be able to outspend the Democrats, but in terms of non-financial resources (principally a unified majority Party and union help), the Democrats will actually have far greater resources than we will. For example, in 1968 Humphrey trailed

Nixon after the Convention by 12 points (43 to 31) with 19% of the vote going to Wallace and 7% undecided. By election day, Nixon still retained his 43%, but Humphrey had picked up slightly over 11 points.

It should be remembered that Nixon was able to hold his position in the polls, notwithstanding the fact that he faced a majority party. This is largely due, of course, to "external forces" such as LBJ's position on the Vietnam war.

One important point must be kept in mind when considering a "Truman" campaign: if Truman had to implement his '48 campaign today, he would probably LOSE BECAUSE OF TV. Truman was not that good on the stump (his speeches were awful!) and, while his "Give them Hell, Harry" style was pleasing to relatively small crowds -- who would only see it once -- it probably would have quickly worn thin if seen nightly by millions in living color.

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THEMES

Although we have developed several "themes" for use in speeches, etc., the President's campaign really must only have one theme. This theme must be repeated and repeated and repeated. We must drive it home incessantly. One possible campaign theme is: Trust and Accomplishment

The theme should be developed by the President's and advocates' speeches, campaign ads and the Attack Plan.

* * *

In order to maintain our "base" constituency, 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 play in the elction.
2. Intelligent and In Command. This theme will be used in an attempt to establish a perception of the President as intelligent and in control. The President should be portrayed as possessing knowledge and wisdom, tempered by over a quarter of

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a century of experience. As with the honesty theme, this will involve an intensive look at the President as a man and, accordingly, much of the burden of presenting this theme will have to be borne by advertising and advocates. We should seize every opportunity to directly compare Ford and Carter in terms of experience, education and family characteristics. While the President's intelligence can be developed by emphasizing his past, it is clear that to demonstrate control, the voter must perceive that changes have occurred. Control will inevitably be measured in highly personal terms, such as the relationship between the President and Kissinger, Simon, et al.

3. Experienced at the Essentials of Governing. 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.

4. Opposed to 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 econom c 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 individuals and businesses to govern their own destiny. As a practical matter, the negative attack on Carter (linking him 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.

In addition to coming up with specific reforms which will be perceived as meaningful progress, the President must also come to grips with the big business problem. Politically, opposition to big business is the real litmus test for any Republican. Thus far, the President is perceived as clearly in bed with big business (particularly because of his position vis-a-vis the oil companies), and as opposed to stronger anti-trust laws.

5. Growing Prosperity. This theme should be developed by showing how the economy is improving -- and will continue to improve -- because of President Ford's steady-handed leadership.

Carter will be linked to traditional Democratic economics. A "Carter" budget will be presented. We will make the point that by minimizing government management of the Nation's economy, the President has revitalized the private sector and America's can-do spirit.

This theme should also stress the importance of the Ford-Carter choice for the future of the country. At issue is who will control our lives -- ourselves or our government.

In order to attract the swing voters (which are primarily pragmatic -- as opposed to ideological -- conservatives who are upwardly mobile) we recommend the following additional themes:

6. Vision of a Better Life. This theme must demonstrate that the President is a man of change. It must establish the point that if he is elected President, the next four years will result in a better life for our target voters.

   This theme should be developed around programs which demonstrate vision for the future based on caution and a healthy respect for the existing governmental system. It is the articulation of the President's willingness to incur near-term costs for long-term benefits, and his ability to avoid the "big play".

7. Stability of Opportunity. This theme must drive home the point that the President will not allow those who have moved upward during their life to slip backwards, either because of external pressures such as inflation and the like, or due to positive government action such as quotas.

8. Quality Goverment as a Means to Improve the Quality of Life. This theme will develop the President's basic approach to improving the quality of life of those who have been helping themselves. At the core of this theme will be the concept of increased knowledge.

Using the idea of self-betterment as a way to overcome obstacles and achieve a better life, this theme will deal with the following specific subjects:

- Education
- Housing
- Crime
- Environment
- Transportation
- Etc.

In terms of form, this should reflect social conservatism with moderate to slightly left of moderate positions on other issues.

One possible approach to the environmental (and big business issues would be to attack the "hidden subsidy" business has been getting by being allowed to dispose their waste in our air and water. The

President could approach this as a moral issue -- do not give anyone free use of the national assets of air and water. Our program would be aimed at internalizing these costs -- not EPA regulations.

9. Americans Together. Counter the basic attack by Democrats (need for change because Americans are disillusioned) by stressing that Americans have come together after Watergate and Vietnam because of Ford's leadership. Cite the 4th of July phenomena.

* * *

Although we've been cautious about over-promising, we must drive home in our themes the idea that President Ford is going to improve people's lives. In some cases, we may have to go out on a limb in terms of a promise, but we've got to let people know that this President is going to make a change for the better in their lives. We've got to stop talking about such things as whether or not it's improvement to go from 7.3 to 6.9 unemployment, and talk about how we're going to end this problem and really help people.

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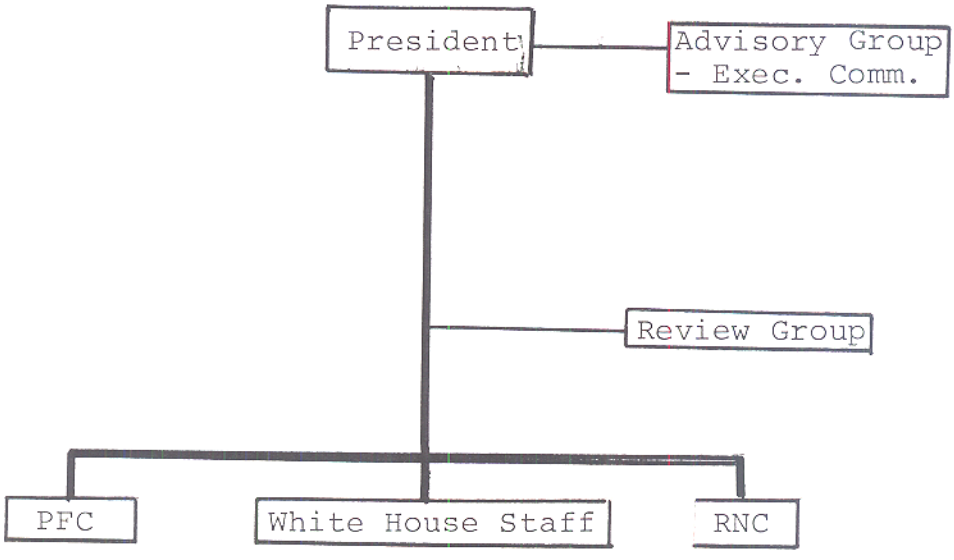
SYNOPSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Command and Control

There must be a clear definition of responsibilities between the White House, PFC and RNC. Control of the campaign must be centralized. The following command and control mechanism is recommended:



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Advisory Group: Made up of the President's Senior campaign advisors/officials. Acts as "Board of Directors" of campaign. Small Executive Committee meets with the President twice a week.

Review Group: Its three functions (which were described on Page 76) are: (1) provide a "net assessment" of every proposed Presidential activity/decision in terms of its impact on The Campaign Strategy; (2) continually assess effectiveness of the strategy; and (3) synchronize advertising, media, Presidential activity and Issue Cycle Plan.

This group should meet with Dick Cheney every day (just prior to Dick's evening meeting with the President.) It should meet with the President twice a week just prior to his meeting with the Advisory Group.

This group should consist of the following:

2. Vice President

[To be supplied once nominee is selected.]

3. Budget

The budget should be developed by the PFC, reviewed by the Advisory Group and approved by the President.

The following relative priorities are suggested:

40% - Advertising

25% - Carter/Mondale attack

15% - Presidential events

15% - PFC activities

5% - Vice President (plus funds for "attack")

4. Presidential Activity

The President's campaign activity should be developed around the Issue Cycle Plan.

We have discussed earlier the importance of trying to focus the Fall campaign on the issues. Again, people rarely vote because of the candidate's position on specific issues, but they use issues (particularly how the candidate prioritizes and presents the issues that are important to him) as a means to assess the character and personality of the candidate. Thus, issues are important, not so much because of substance, but what they tell the voter about the candidate as a man.

One reason why Americans in general tend to become confused as to the candidate's position on issues (except a few controversial and key issues which receive a lot of press attention) is because of the haphazard way they tend to be presented during the course of a normal campaign. In general, issues are presented, not in any logical order based on substance, but rather in accordance with the candidate's schedule of events. Also, events external to the particular candidate's campaign, such as attack by his opponents,

etc., tend to become action-forcing in terms of the presentation of the candidate's view on specific issues.

As a result, the electorate is faced with a confusing presentation of a great deal of substance, often deliberately obscurred by the candidates for political purposes, and then further confused by the press reports and his opponents's attack.

We have a plan which has as its objective the presentation of issues in a logical way, so that the presentation itself tends to drive home the President's substantive position in the voter's mind. Also -- and more importantly -- the method of presentation will show the President as a logical, ordered and experienced President who is in control.

Our recommendation is that issues be grouped under logical, generic headings such as:

- A prosperous and free domestic economy
- Improved quality of life for each American family
- A more peaceful world

Each major subject area would be presented over a given period of time (averaging about a week) in the following general manner:

Day 1 - Presentation by the President of his philosophical approach to this subject area. Statement of principles which guide his policy decisions. Basic statement of accomplishments and "core" program and initiatives.

Day 2 & 3 - Presentation of specific "white papers", fact sheets, legislative proposals, admintrative actions, etc. Specific issues are presented with facts, backgrounders and enough detail to fully present the problem being addressed, how the President's action will solve the problem, what the cost will be and who will pay it, and other relevant information.

Day 4 - Presidential press conference with twenty minutes devoted to this subject area and the reamining ten minutes for general questioning. Selected specialty and regional press would be invited to augment the regular White House Press Corps.

Day 5 & 6 - Major speech by principal advocate (probably buy television time) characterizing the President's position on this issue and attacking the opposition.

Our campaign advertising would be geared to sync with this schedule. In addition, all advocates and other spokesmen would do likewise.

In order to provide an increasing tempo for the campaign, this cycle would probably begin scheduled to cover a seven to eight-day period, which would then be slowly telescoped for succeeding subjects covered so that the final issues might be covered in a three to four-day cycle.

One obvious option would be to schedule in debates with Carter keyed to the Issue Cycle. If the President decides to challenge Carter to debate, we should try to get an agreement that there will be a series of four or five by subject area (which would coincide with our Issue Cycle Plan).

The President could close the campaign with a major televised address (time purchased by the campaign) with the presentation organized in accordance with the Issue Cycle used in the campaign. An option to the President presenting this solo would be to have a presentation by someone like John Connally as narrator, presenting the issues by the use of film of the President in action, etc. This could be followed by a brief summation by the President himself.

Although this has the appearance of being overly structured when presented in writing, it will lose this characteristic when implemented. External events (Carter activities, government business, etc.) will inject randomness and spontaneity into the news flow.

The Issue Cycle Plan will nevertheless project an impression of orderliness and control.

Although applicable to our campaign as a whole, our Issue Cycle Plan must be developed for television. In the past, TV has not been a good medium for communicating the candidate's position on issues. For example, Patterson and McClure in their book, The Unseeing Eye, state that the networks nearly ignored the issues during the seven-week 1972 campaign (September 18 through November 6).

NETWORK EVENING NEWS

(Totals for entire seven-week campaign)

	ABC	CBS	NBC
Total coverage for all issues	35 min.	46 min.	26 min.
Average news minutes for each issue (over 7 weeks)	80 sec.	105 sec.	60 sec.
Total for campaign activities such as rallies and motorcades	141 min.	122 min.	130 min.

Probably the major reason for the networks dismissal of the issues is they lack film value.

We are developing a plan to deal with this problem. Here are some of the elements:

- The networks tend to overreact to critism, therefore we will seek to give attention to the Patterson-McClure book (even though we disagree with much of its analysis and conclusions). This should "encourage" the networks to pay more attention to issues.
- We must get our issue message across in our ads.* For example, film of a closed down college could be effective in making the point that inflation may deny higher education to many people.
- We should seek to present issues in terms of conflict situations that can be covered live -- e.g., debates.
- Visuals should be used in Presidential speeches, meetings, etc.

* In the 1972 election, many people learned a great deal more about the candidates positions on issues by watching political ads than the evening news. The key issues received almost five times the air times via advertising than they did on the evening newscasts.

To support our offensive and attack efforts, there must be an Issues Group set up. The PFC should provide all administrative support and political input (analysis of polls and the like) along with information on what Carter, Mondale, et al. are saying. (Perhaps Marty Anderson could be asked to do this.)

The White House will have the responsibility to provide substantive input on the issues.

One way this could work would be to have Marty Anderson (or whoever fills his role) meet here at the White House every evening from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. as indicated:

Monday and Friday - Issues Steering Group

Tuesday - Domestic Issues Group

Wednesday - Economic Issues Group

Thursday - Foreign/Defense Issues Group

PRE-CAMPAIGN PLAN

The following pre-campaign plan is intended as an integral part of this overall election strategy. It covers the period from now through the Convention.

1. Develop Perception of Strong Fall Campaign Capability

   OBJECTIVE: Demonstrate that the President has firm control of his Fall campaign effort; that a strategy has been developed and adopted; and, that the best talent available has been lined up.

   RECOMMENDED STEPS:

   - The President should adopt a campaign strategy by July 31, after receiving the advice of his closest advisors. He should reveal the entire strategy only to a half-dozen or so very close -- and trusted -- advisors.

     The press guidance (for White House and PFC) should be as follows:

     a. The President has developed a comprehensive campaign strategy, drawing on a broad range of advice and factual input.

     b. He will not reveal the strategy. Only very few senior advisors have been briefed by

the President -- and they aren't talking. Others (who may talk) are just speculating or may only have a part of it.

c. The only characterization given by the President is that the strategy is national, comprehensive and completely realistic. The major variable concerns the identity of the President's running mate.

- Identify additional key campaign aides. Quietly plug in and let that become known -- especially among party leaders.

Make special effort to include Independent and anti-Carter Democrats. Signal should go out that Carter will be a target as well as an opponent. This is important because (a) it will stimulate critical press attention directed at Carter; (b) provide a stimulus for Independents and dissatisfied Democrats to join the President (thereby demonstrating our strength vis-a-vis Reagan); and, (c) as a signal to the delegates that we will run a really tough and aggressive campaign.

2. Announce a Vice President Selection Process

OBJECTIVE: Show the President (not external forces generated by the Reagan challenge) as being firmly in control; head off press criticism and unfavorable comparison to Carter and Reagan.

RECOMMENDED STEPS:

- President adopts a strategy of revealing that he has a specific and disciplined process for selecting his running mate, but he will not reveal names.
- Advisors (Morton-Cheney) will let it be known that only the President knows who is on the list.
- The President could reveal the following about the list:
  - About a dozen names
  - He personally knows everyone
  - Women are included

  No one can add to this because no one else knows.
- The President (or Cheney?) could reveal the following concerning the process:
  - The President alone is in control
  - He is spending a considerable amount of time on the selection.

- He is meeting with some of the people under consideration; with others he is conversing on the telephone, and in several cases he knows the person so well there is no need for specific conversations on the Vice Presidency.
- The President will make his preference known to the Convention after his nomination.
- Views of political leaders and others have been solicited.
- The President is reviewing specific background information concerning the people under consideration. This varies by individual, but generally covers moral, ethical, financial and legal matters. The President has not revealed any further details.
- The President has talked to the Attorney General personally to develop a process of using the FBI to investigate specific

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factual matters, if necessary. No government agency -- including the FBI -- will be used without the individual's consent.

3. Presidential Actions Between Now and Convention

OBJECTIVE: Begin to change negative perceptions of President by events/actions designed to demonstrate that he is:

- in control
- experienced and intelligent
- determined to win

RECOMMENDED STEPS:

[to be supplied]

4. Initial Carter Attack

(See infra)

5. Convention (Impact on Fall Campaign)

OBJECTIVE: Minimize adverse impact on President's national perception; to extent possible, take advantage of positive TV exposure by showing the President as a strong leader in control; get best V.P. nominee; minimize GOP split; and, draw distinction between President Ford/GOP and Carter/Democrats.

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BACKGROUND: The major risk facing the President in Kansas City -- other than getting nominated -- is that events (as seen by the TV viewer) will reinforce the President's image as indecisive and out of control.

RECOMMENDED STEPS:

[Assumption - President has over 1,130 delegates which appear firm -- nomination appears certain.]

- Bring on board a very strong TV advisor.
- About a week before the Convention, move to establish tighter control over Convention program. Include Reagan people in this effort (particularly his TV advisor).
- During Platform hearings in Kansas City, establish firm control by Ford people.
  - President announces certain fundamental principles which should guide Platform drafters.
  - President's men in Kansas City demonstrate their control, preparation and discipline by activities during week of Platform deliberations.

    This should be a demonstration of strength and competence -- not belligerence or arrogance. We should not pick fights.

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- President remain in the White House as long as possible -- unless he is needed in Kansas City to help with delegates.
  - Nothing will be more beneficial for the President's image than TV cut-aways from Kansas City to the White House for reports on his activities.
- When the President arrives in Kansas City, he must immediately -- with high visibility -- dominate the City, the Convention and, most importantly, TV programming.

  This can be accomplished by:

  a. Massive arrival; with major downtown crowd-raising and very upbeat remarks in center of town.

  b. Summoning several key Convention leaders -- including Reagan people -- upon arrival. Set forth one or two specific (symbolic)

changes in Convention designed to improve GOP image and not to secure Ford advantage vis-a-vis Reagan.

c. See separate Convention plan.

ATTACK AND CARTER'S REACTION

1. Background

Carter's popularity is based primarily on his perceived credibility, but it is very soft. The voter's perception of Carter can be substantially changed.

Our basic objective should be to change the perception of Carter:

- move him to the left on social issues and away from traditional American values;
- identify him as a partisan Democrat; and
- show that he is devious and arrogant, driven by personal ambition in ruthless pursuit of power.

We cannot wait much longer before launching the Carter attack -- he is building a very substantial lead and is beginning to look like FDR in the polls.

Carter's success is largely attributable to three factors:

1. A thematic campaign of national renewal avoiding issues.
2. Relative to other candidates, he's terrific and he is perceived as a winner.
3. He is a superb politician and highly intelligent.

Since most people vote on personality, his avoidance of issue positions has not caused any major defection from the Democratic coalition. His theme of restoring honesty and morality to government has struck a responsive chord, not unlike the President did in his first few weeks in Office. But in the course of the campaign, he will have to take positions which will cause some erosion of his support. Mondale and the Democratic Platform will cost him a great deal since both are far too liberal for his base, which is conservative and Southern.

In the recent national poll, people place Carter near themselves on the issues wherever they are. Because of his thematic, personal appeal, they want him to be close to them. But his regional and religious background have developed a conservative base of support while his running mate and platform are basically liberal. We must mount an attack on him on conservative issues, both economic and social. If we can succeed, we can keep him busy holding the South, which at present he takes for granted. By occupying him there, we free the President and his advocates to concentrate on the swing States.

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But the attack in the South must be on issues. We should not attack him personally there since this would cause a backlash of regional pride. It must be a respectful disagreement on a high plane.*

* * *

Carter's choice of Mondale can be viewed as a potentially serious mistake which opens his ticket to attack as being liberal, especially on social issues. There are two obvious possible motives for the choice of Mondale and both present interesting attack opportunities:

1) Carter could be going for the big mandate by trying to win as many States as possible; or
2) He could be very worried about the third party threat by McCarthy.

* * *

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* An example of how not to attack Carter is Senator Dole's line on Face the Nation (7/18): "He is Southern-fried McGovern."

In challenging Carter on issues, we are faced with the need to make a threshold choice: do we want to stress that he "flip-flops", or do we want to force him to take specific positions that result in a loss of part of his "constituency"?

Our recommendation is to use this sequence:

- Force Carter to take positions (don't worry too much how he comes out on a particular issue).
- Give high visibility to his positions and target on the groups offended.
- Assume he will react to the inevitable erosion in the polls by "softening" his positions.
- Then begin to make the "flip-flop" case. Point out that he goes from a conservative-moderate position to liberal. Stress that this is a fundamental character flaw -- it's deceitful. (For example, we can compare Carter's acceptance speech with his remarks at the Businessmen's Lunch at 21 Club.)

* * *

Finally, we should try to characterize Carter's campaign as a mirror image of Nixon's '68 and '72 campaigns. The following similarities should be pointed out:

- A candidate who tries to be all things to all people.
- Avoids specifics on issues (RN - '68 campaign)
- Driven by personal ambition - harsh and manipulative.
- Secretive and surrounded by a protective and fiercely loyal staff. (One problem we face is the fact that in general the press likes the Carter staff. This may well change as he adds people and pressures increase.)

2. Carter's Campaign Strategy

- Carter/Mondale key States analysis
  - Assume solid South
  - Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest will be important.
  - Texas, California, Oregon, Florida will be swing States.
  - Probably will not concentrate on Plains and Mountain States.

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- Carter will project moderate position; Mondale will project liberal position.
- Mondale will lead the attack on the President and the Republicans.
- Attack line will be:
  - President isn't capable.
    . not smart
    . not competent
    . not in control of Administration
    . has no vision
    . can't solve problems
  - President is Washington
    . won't change major problems
    . things won't get better
    . is of Party that gave us Watergate, recession
  - Nixon pardon
  - Time to change, get country moving again
- Carter's personal campaign will:
  - Emphasize mood
    . morality
    . time to change
    . decency of people
    . let's make government decent again
    . government efficiency

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  - . government can do good for people; need action now
  - . determination to be a leader
  - . determination to change
- Involve an extensive voter registration drive
- Project conservative tone on social issue
- Project liberal tone on economic issue
- Project populist tone on bigness issue
- Avoid specifics on issues
- Will have a lot of movement, color, no specifics
- This strategy will be implemented by:
  - . extensive campaign travel (big crowd events)
  - . extensive media
  - . extensive voter turnout efforts
  - . extensive special group efforts targeted at his base and swing support
    - -- labor
    - -- Blacks
    - -- liberals
    - -- farmers

• Carter will mask his weaknesses, e.g., Plains activities fishing, softball, etc, to mask arrogance

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- Carter will try not to react to our strategy.

  What does Carter do:

  - He must travel to show movement and to capitalize on mood themes.
  - This movement lets him dodge getting specific on issues.
  - Contact with people is a plus for him.

3. Carter-Mondale Weaknesses on Issues

Where to attack Carter -

- Right to work
- National health insurance (mandatory)
- Humphrey-Hawkins
- Gun control
- Democratic Platform
- Defense budget cuts
- Capital punishment?
- Busing?
- Affirmative action and quotas
- Scatter-site housing
- End mortgage payments as tax deduction
- Record of increasing size of Georgia government
- Federal guarantee bonds of bankrupt cities
- Decriminalization of marijuana

4. Lines of Attack

The following are examples of potential attack lines:

- Ask voters what do you want --
  - Peace?
  - Prosperity?
  - A leader to trust?

  President Ford has given us these.
- Why trade a known for an unknown? We don't know what Carter is because he won't tell us. But we do know what he is not.
  - not experienced
  - not candid
  - not specific on issues
  - not known by foreign leaders
  - etc.

  Therefore, why take a chance on a stranger?
- The press says the race will be between a liberal and a conservative. We must make it a race between a liberal (Carter/Mondale) and a moderate (the President).
- What will the "Carter Dollar" buy us? (Cost out Carter's program -- predict inflation...)

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5. Our "Attack" Resources

The following should be considered as people who can effectively attack Carter/Mondale:

- Vice President Rockefeller
- Vice Presidential nominee
- Cabinet and Members of Congress
- Democrats for Ford (or against Carter)
- Independents for Ford (or against Carter)
- X Constituencies or groups for Ford (or against Carter)
- Georgians for Ford (or against Carter)
- Religious leaders (Catholics, Billy Graham, etc.)
- John Connally
- Ronald Reagan
- George Wallace

6. Our "Attack" Organization

[to be supplied - PFC, RNC, Independents]

7. Attack Strategy Outline

A. Pre-Republican Convention

[to be supplied]

B. Convention to Labor Day

[to be supplied]

C. Labor Day to November

[to be supplied]

8. Carter/Mondale Response

[to be supplied]

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