

The original documents are located in Box 64, folder “January 31, 1972 - Rob Odle - February Budget” of the Robert Teeter Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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COMMITTEE FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

January 31, 1972

MEMORANDUM

TO: ROB ODLE
 FROM: BOB TEETER
 SUBJECT: February Budget

The approximate cash flow requirements for polling for February will be:

First payment of first wave polling contracts
 (due approximately February 15)

ORC	\$70,100
DMI	52,426.40
MOR	<u>55,167.50</u>

\$177,693.90

Primary state follow-up polls: \$15,300

Computer programs/consulting: 1,200

\$16,5000

TOTAL: \$194,223.90



COMMITTEE FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

February 2, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. H. R. HALDEMAN
FROM: ROBERT M. TEETER
SUBJECT: Louis Harris Issue Poll Analysis

Attached is my analysis of the issue poll conducted by Louis Harris in October, 1971. Accompanying this analysis is the report and tables which may be useful as reference material.

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Determined to be an
Administrative Marking

By ① NARA, Date 12/30/09



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HARRIS POLL

We have reviewed the nationwide poll conducted by Louis Harris in October, 1971. The analysis and statistics appear to be accurate. Several of the observations deserve additional comment and emphasis because of their importance for the campaign. It should be noted that some of the very early returns on our polls indicate that the ratings of the President's handling of issues may have improved over the results of this poll.

Harris lists the following as the "biggest issues" facing the nation:

<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>PERCENT MENTIONING ISSUE</u>
Economy	53%
Vietnam	47%
Race	28%
Drugs	25%
Pollution	21%
Crime	19%

Harris correctly observes that the Vietnam War is of urgent concern to the American people. Its relative importance was evident when those interviewed were asked what they would personally like the President to do. Thirty-six percent responded, "stop the war, bring the boys home," while 15% said "reduce the cost of living" and 12% requested that the President "curb drug abuse." Almost twice as many people mentioned the war as mentioned the economy. Therefore, we can expect that Vietnam will be a viable issue throughout the campaign; however, its importance may decrease somewhat as American involvement declines. Overall, the data on Vietnam shows a net plus for the President.

On secondary issues, independent voters display a greater concern about race (34%) and pollution (28%) than do straight party voters. Young voters are especially concerned about pollution — 51% of 18 to 20 year olds, and 42% of 21 to 24 year olds. These and other issues are discussed in more detail below.

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SPECIFIC ISSUES

Economy. Harris states that the charges by labor spokesmen that the wage-price controls are pro-business has taken hold. This, however, overlooks the complete picture. Specifically, 38% mention that unions and their wage increases are pushing too fast, while business is blamed by 32% for inflation. The government was blamed by 13%. In other words, it appears that the blame for inflation as indicated in this study is mixed, with a slightly greater number blaming labor over business.

The President's economic program has improved the public's confidence in the prospects for economic recovery. Sixty-three percent indicate that they feel more confident about the future as a result of the President's new economic policies. Seventy-three percent favor tight wage and price controls; however, a majority want temporary controls. Other aspects of the President's program have been well received as shown below:

- 68 to 17% Favor 10% surcharge on imports
- 59 to 22% Favor 10% business tax credit
- 40 to 31% Favor dollar devaluation

Updating on the basis of our early campaign polls shows that the public believes Phase II was a necessary step. Of those who disagree with the President's action, most feel that Phase II is not strict enough. As between increased prices and jobs, there is a deep division of opinion.

Forty-eight percent would be willing to accept increased prices if it would reduce unemployment.

Race. Of those indicating race as a problem 78% defined the problem in terms of "easing racial tensions." Forty-seven percent classified the problem as "taking steps to achieve racial balance in housing."

With regard to bussing, 77 to 17% are opposed. Among blacks the figure is 51 to 39% against bussing. Because of the complexities of this issue, the figures may not totally reflect the kind of options and problems confronting the average American family on school desegregation. Furthermore this issue is only of concern



in those areas where bussing has been a problem.

Regardless of the data on bussing, the great majority of Americans hold the U. S. Supreme Court (36%) and local school officials (28%) responsible. Only seven percent feel that the President is accountable on this issue.

In other areas of race relations, the position taken by the President is the one favorably received by the public.

78 to 13% Opposed forced racial neighborhood quotas

72 to 22% Opposed use of public funds for transportation to desegregate schools

Drugs. As between penalties and treatment, 73 to 11% prefer treatment. However, a crack down on drug pushers, as the President has recently proposed, would also be well received. In the Harris study, forty-three percent favored this approach, and early returns from our campaign polls add further confirmation.

Environment. The Harris study clearly indicated that the public would be willing (71 to 21%) to pay to have air and water pollution cleaned up. Forty-eight percent would be willing to pay even if it meant a 10% reduction in jobs.

Crime. Out of the one-fifth indicating that crime was an important issue to them, a variety of solutions were tested, none of which were overwhelmingly received. 75 to 16% favored more federal money for rehabilitation. Sixty-nine percent of the public believed that "unless the federal government steps in, the country will be unsafe." We have collected other data which indicates that "more police" and "stiffer law enforcement" are the only believable solutions which the public realistically accepts.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE PRESIDENT

At the time the study was conducted, the President did not receive a majority of favorable responses on his handling of any issues. The complete response to this question is shown in attachment A. The President receives the most favorable rating on Improving relations with China (47%), Ending the Vietnam War (44%),



Improving relations with Russia (43%), Negotiating a limit on nuclear weapons (42%), and Checking inflation (42%). However, in each of these areas there was substantial unfavorable response. On the Vietnam war and inflation, the unfavorable response is greater than the favorable one. This may have improved slightly since this poll was taken as a result of the President's action on Vietnam and Phase II; however, the negative response is still expected to be large.

On 19 out of 23 issues tested, the President received a negative rating from more than half of the public. His poorest ratings are on the following:

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Percent Rating-President's Handling</u>		
	Negative	Positive	Not Sure
Reducing crime	65%	29%	6%
Keeping taxes in line	65%	29%	6%
Easing racial tension	65%	30%	5%
Reducing unemployment	64%	30%	6%
Keeping spending in line	64%	31%	5%
Handling protests and unrest	63%	31%	6%
Improving welfare system	62%	33%	5%

On taxes and keeping spending in line, 30% of the public believes that the President is "not trying his best." This may become more serious following the President's recent request to raise the debt ceiling. As indicated earlier, our recent campaign polls have shown that ratings on the President's handling of issues may be somewhat improved since this poll was taken.

The wage-price freeze was mentioned by 35% as one of the most impressive things accomplished by the President. On the other hand, 10% said the President took too long to freeze wages and prices.



CONCLUSIONS

- The economy and Vietnam should be two major issues on the minds of the American public throughout the campaign.
- Secondary issues during the campaign will be race, drugs, pollution and crime. Independent voters display special concern for race and pollution issues and young voters are highly concerned about pollution. These two issues will clearly be important to many independent voters, especially those who are undecided.
- Both labor and business are blamed for inflation with slightly more blame given to labor. About one person in eight blames the government.
- The President's economic plans have increased confidence for an economic recovery and his programs on the import surcharge, business tax credit and devaluation are well received.
- The American public would prefer to have unemployment decreased even if it means higher prices. On race, three out of four persons would like to see steps taken to decrease interracial tensions. Bussing is consistently opposed by all significant groups of the electorate; however, campaign polling indicates that it is an intense concern only in those areas where bussing has been a problem.
- On drugs, the emphasis is on treatment and education, and for a crack down on pushers and the source of supply.
- On environment, at least half of the public wants a clean environment even if it means increased prices, and many would be willing to sacrifice a high employment rate to achieve clean air and water. This is particularly true of independent voters who will be influential in the election.
- On crime, a sense of frustration is evident. The public feels the federal government should play a greater role. The only believable solutions may be "more police" and "stricter law enforcement."
- The President's handling of issues is very poorly perceived. The only issue which nets the President much support is his position on China. The ratings are especially harsh on crime, taxes, spending, unemployment, race, handling protests and the welfare system.



CAMPAIGN IMPLICATIONS

The public perception of the President deals almost entirely with foreign affairs. On domestic issues, the administration is perceived as not trying to improve or continue programs begun by the prior democratic administration and not offering programs to replace them. This may be due to the President's personal involvement in foreign policy while domestic programs are largely carried out by the cabinet members.

To alleviate the unfavorable ratings on domestic issues, there are several important things to keep in mind. First, the public fully expects the federal government to take action on domestic problems. The Harris data clearly indicates this.

Second, many of these domestic problems are of particular importance to independent and swing voters.

Third, the President may have to become personally involved with these issues in order to make an impact and overcome his negative ratings.

Finally, the President must look as if he is vigorously attempting to solve these domestic problems. This may require new programs or a reemphasis of past accomplishments.

An approach of this type is urgently needed, but we must understand that we may never be able to completely solve this dilemma. Democrats can always come up with another domestic program while in foreign affairs the President is able to act more independently.



ATTACHMENT A
NIXON RATINGS ON KEY PROBLEMS

	<u>Positive</u> %	<u>Negative</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
Improving relations with Mainland China	49	35	16
Bringing Vietnam war to an end	44	53	3
Improving relations with Russia	43	40	17
Negotiating a limit on nuclear weapons in the world	42	40	18
Checking inflation	42	53	5
Helping older people	41	53	6
Improving public education	40	53	7
Providing better health care for everyone	35	56	9
Providing more low income housing	35	51	14
Curbing drug abuse	34	59	7
More help for poverty stricken people	34	58	8
Cutting down air and water pollution	33	58	9
Improving welfare system	33	62	5
Taking steps to achieve racial balance in housing	32	52	16
Keeping spending in line	31	64	5
Handling protests and unrest	31	63	6
Reducing unemployment	30	64	6
Easing racial tensions	30	65	5
Keeping taxes in line	29	65	6
Reducing crime	29	65	6
Sharing more revenues with states and cities	28	48	24
Providing more middle income housing	28	52	20
Improving public transportation	22	54	24

