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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 2, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY
FROM: DAVE GERGEN
SUBJECT: Approval Ratings for the President

Al Sindlinger supplied an update on the President's approval ratings today, as measured by his telephone samples.

You will recall that as of the last measurement, February 5-11, the President's positive rating stood at 44.9%, having dropped considerably since the period shortly after the State of the Union message. That positive rating continued to fall through February, bottoming out at 37.8%, but over the last few days has jumped 10 points to 47.8%.

Sindlinger explains the changes this way:

*During the early part of February, the President continued to be hurt by statements that nearly all of the jobs lost in the recession had been restored. Al says this simply isn't credible.

*Then Meany took a modest offensive on the recovery figures, further driving down the ratings.

*Finally, the Nixon trip had a significant impact on the international side with the public raising hell about money being paid out for Secret Service protection. The lowpoint was reached during the February 22-27 period with approval on the international side dropping to 21%.

*But, the President recovered a great deal of lost ground over the weekend with his attack on Castro. Approval on the international side shot up to 47.8% with people applauding the tough line. "One of the smartest things the President ever did," said Sindlinger.



*Last night there was also widespread public approval that the President seemed to be reassessing detente.

*A widespread comment of late: "The President seems to be getting control of things."

Clearly the polls remain very volatile, but it is equally clear that the President has the capacity to drive them upwards with shrewd moves.

Sindlinger offered these other suggestions:

*Remain tough on the "detente" issue.

*Ignore RN. Avoid all public meetings, but also avoid knocking him. RN is getting some sympathy from the attacks, and a frontal one now could make him something of a martyr.

*Bribery issue is smoldering. Most people now say "So what. That's the way business is done." But it also has earmarks of beginnings of Watergate issue.

*On the economy, keep re-emphasizing theme that things aren't good enough yet. We want them to be better.

Attachments



OVERALL APPROVAL RATINGS FOR THE PRESIDENT

	<u>POSITIVE</u>	<u>NEGATIVE</u>	<u>NO OPINION</u>
February 12-21 (Areas of concern: banks, WT grant, bribes, primaries)	40.3	53.0	6.1
February 22-27 (Meany disputes recovery, RN to China, NH primary)	37.8	52.3	9.0
February 28 - March 1 (Ford brands Castro an outlaw)	47.8	49.9	6.9

(NOTE: Positive Rating is compiled by adding together "Excellent" and "Good" columns.
Negative is gained by adding together "Fair" and "Poor".)



(Sindlinger)

OVERALL APPROVAL RATINGS FOR THE PRESIDENT

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
February 12-21	3.9	36.4	36.5	16.5	6.1
February 22-27	4.2	33.6	38.8	13.5	9.0
February 28 - March 1	7.7	40.1	31.8	13.1	6.9



(Sindlinger)

INTERNATIONAL APPROVAL RATINGS FOR THE PRESIDENT

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
February 12-21	2.0	27.4	37.3	25.5	6.6
February 22-27	1.9	19.1	38.5	27.8	11.4
February 28 - March 1	7.7	40.1	35.0	10.6	5.9

(Sindlinger)

DOMESTIC APPROVAL RATINGS FOR THE PRESIDENT

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
February 12-21	3.5	36.8	37.5	15.6	6.0
February 22-27	4.6	33.6	39.8	13.0	8.3
February 28 - March 1	6.9	37.9	33.4	14.1	7.1

(Sindlinger)