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PRESIDENTIAL BRIEFING PAPER

August 17, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: John Calhoun

SUBJECT: Caucus with Black Delegates and Alternates

LOCATION: Centennial Room B, Crown Center

TIME: 5:00 p.m. (4:30 - 6:00 p.m.)

PURPOSE: To strengthen the commitment and support of the Black delegates and alternates, and to dispell rumors that their votes are being taken for granted.

FORMAT: Five to ten minute speech, followed by mingling to answer personal questions. You will be preceded by Brooke (15 minutes) and Vice President Rockefeller (15 minutes).

TALKING POINTS: 1. Thanks for their support during the primaries and emphasize that you are depending on them on Wednesday night. You have met most of the delegates at strategy sessions conducted by John Calhoun at the White House, and had your photo taken with them.

2. Give your commitment to go after the Black vote and to campaign among all communities. There are an estimated 7 million Blacks registered to vote, with another 7 1/2 million that are unregistered.

3. Address the issues presented to the Platform Committee by the National Black Republican Council:

Equal Opportunity: Emphasize your commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Jobs: It would be best to acknowledge an awareness of the high unemployment rate among Blacks, especially teenagers. The Administration's job program, the need for more jobs, the growth of the job market, and the need to keep inflation down, the veto of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill should be explained.

Education: Emphasize a commitment to quality education for all Americans to enforce the laws of the land regarding equal educational opportunity. Support for adequate funding for all public schools should be emphasized.

Housing: Emphasis should be placed on support for individual ownership of a home by all Americans.

Health: Discuss health programs and the Administration's position on National Health Insurance.

Welfare: Support for a need to improve the present system and to weed out abuse.

Foreign Policy: Point out support for majority rule in Africa, and measures being taken to improve the relationship between the continent and the U.S.

Minority Economic Development: Support for the Office of Minority Business Enterprise and for Administration's efforts to move minorities into the free enterprise system.

POSSIBLE
PROBLEM
AREAS:

1. Delegates will resent that more time will not be spent with them. It is therefore important to invite them to a strategy session/meeting at the White House after the convention when more time will be available for an open exchange.
2. Demands for specific commitments on some of the areas covered may be echoed. It is therefore important to touch upon each. In addition, more appointments, political clearance of appointments, Blacks in your campaign organization, release of impounded housing funds, jobs and busing may also surface as issues.

I appreciate this opportunity to meet with the Black Republican delegate caucus.

Let me thank you, first of all, for giving me such overwhelming support during the primaries and for standing with me now at the Convention. I promise I won't let you down in the next four years.

During the past two weeks, I have met with almost 200 Black Republicans and fraternal and civic leaders, and I'm glad to see many of the same faces in this caucus today.

Congratulations are in order for Jim Cummings, who won a very hotly-contested race for chairman of the National Black Republican Council. I know something about close campaigns, but with your help, we'll come out on top, just like Jim did.

I am still in the process of studying the position paper which you presented to the Platform Committee. I was particularly impressed by the way you addressed in a straightforward, affirmative way such important issues as jobs, equal opportunity, education, housing, health, welfare, foreign policy and minority business enterprise.

Without addressing all of these issues specifically today, I am well aware that they present special problems -- and they are of special concern -- to the Black community.

I can assure you that your voice will be heard in the next four years of the Ford Administration, as it has been in the past two years.

Wherever possible, I will incorporate your suggestions and your positions on the issues -- both in the campaign this fall and in the policies of my Administration.

Secretary Bill Coleman, Senator Ed Brooke, my special assistant John Calhoun and a great many more Blacks on my staff and in my Administration will make your influence felt.

I recognize that Black appointments to key government positions are a top priority with you. We are moving forward with this effort -- not because we are trying to fill quotas but because we need your help.

During last month's Bicentennial celebration, I went to Thomas Jefferson's home at Monticello to attend the naturalization ceremonies for our newest American citizens. As always, these new citizens represented a broad spectrum of races, religions and national origin.

I told that audience that they were what America is all about. We are a Nation of many roots, a nation of nations. We draw strength from our diversity.

I told them that the phrase "Black is beautiful" is an expression of genius, and I urged them to retain their own special identity, because as my Sunday school teacher once taught me, the beauty of Joseph's coat is its many colors.

I will be proud to bear the standard of Lincoln's party in 1976, to build a better America we can all be proud of.

I value your support, and I want you to be closely involved in this campaign. Therefore, I am inviting you today to meet with me at the White House shortly after the Convention to help us plan the campaign effort.

Once again, I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you today.

Now, I will be glad to respond to your questions.