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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 3, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JEC*

SUBJECT:

Congressman Pritchard's Debate  
Suggestion

The attached memorandum from Jim Cannon was returned in the President's outbox with the following notation:

"Thanks"

Please prepare an appropriate response to Congressman Pritchard and return to this office.

cc: Dick Cheney  
Jim Cannon  
Mike Duval

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 2, 1976

MR PRESIDENT:

Max Friedersdorf has reviewed  
the attached memorandum from  
Jim Cannon.

Jim Connor  
*JRC*  
*thanks*

Mr. President:

I would like to offer you a few thoughts on the coming campaign.

1. Ignore the pleas of members of Congress who want you to travel all over the country campaigning for them.
2. Concentrate on the TV debates -- and primarily the first debate.

As one who has prepared four candidates for TV debates, I would make the following suggestions:

a) Candidate and staff should determine amount of preparation time needed for first debate, and then double it.

b) Practice runs should be made against at least two different people imitating the opponent but using different tactics.

c) Candidate must appear as if he hasn't spent all his time preparing for the first debate -- but, in fact, he should have spent most of his time in preparation.

d) A task force should be working right now on the first debate, and must have complete access to the candidate over the next weeks.

e) Physical image of the candidate is very important. Candidate should be well rested, properly made up, dressed and positioned.

f) First debate should be rehearsed many times.

g) One theme or major point should be stressed throughout debate, regardless of debate topic. This should be the key point, theme, of campaign.

h) Keep in mind mental level of TV audience and rehearse to such an audience. Candidate must speak to TV audience, not to news media.

i) Candidate should not be too structured -- completely prepared but not up-tight or inflexible. He who is best prepared is most relaxed.

j) Candidate's answers should be short and responsive. Each answer should be followed by an attack or a positive statement.

k) Staff work should be completed as far in advance of first debate as possible in order to avoid any sense of urgency or pressure on the candidate.

Rested

Preparation Time

Short ANSWERS -

Followed by ATTACK!

Theme

Whenever your eyes are not  
on the camera look at the other  
guy -

Put a copy of Ken - Dix debate

Date: September 2, 1976

Time:

FOR ACTION:

cc (for information):

Max Friedersdorf

*M.B.*

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date:

Quick Turnaround Pls.

Time:

SUBJECT:

Jim Cannon memo 9/2/76 re:  
Congressman Pritchard's Debate Suggestions

ACTION REQUESTED:

For Necessary Action

For Your Recommendations

Prepare Agenda and Brief

Draft Reply

For Your Comments

Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

No indication you have seen this - thought you should.

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

Jim Connor  
For the President