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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 25, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR DICK CHENEY
FROM JIM REICHLEY
SUBJECT CONSTITUENCY ANALYSIS



At Mike's request, I am setting forth here an analysis of constituencies whose support the President will need to attract in order to win in November, with some suggestions on the kinds of appeals that might be directed to these constituencies to put together a winning coalition.

Mike has suggested that I might describe four constituencies as examples, selected from the categories of ethnic groups, religious groups, states, and age groups, and then give detailed suggestions on what is needed to win the support of each of these groups. After mulling it over for awhile, however, this exact approach did not seem to work, as the kind of appeal that you make to any one group is heavily conditioned by the other groups that you are trying to attract. I have therefore attempted a somewhat broader analysis, which I think nevertheless accomplishes Mike's objective.

First, let me make a few general points about constituency groups. The first thing to keep in mind about constituency groups is that they do not exist. Voters exist -- constituency groups are generalizing labels that help us think about how and why voters behave, but the groups have no objective reality of their own. All so-called blocs have many divisions within themselves. Most differ only in emphasis from the general population. It is worth recalling that 41 percent of Catholics favor the Supreme Court ruling on abortion, and a narrow majority of blacks oppose busing -- or at least did until the controversy heated up. (Such gross figures do not of course measure the intensity which either side brings to their feelings on the subject -- an issue that strongly motivates a relatively small group, such as opposition to gun control or aid to parochial schools, may be politically more important than an issue which attracts moderate or passive support from the great majority.)



Most people belong to a number of constituency groups, and the most that can be said is that their voting is to some extent influenced through their identification with some of these. There is no "Catholic vote". There are Catholic voters who are to varying degrees influenced by identification with the values and attitudes of their church. This should always be kept in mind when we speak of the Catholic vote^s, etc. as a shorthand.

Constituency identification is generally most influential when members of a group feel that a candidate is hostile to their group's interests. Few Jewish voters, for instance, would be likely to vote for a candidate perceived as anti-Israel. Labor unions have been able to exert considerable control over their members in state elections where right-to-work was a burning issue. But if all candidates are perceived as more or less friendly to Israel, or if right-to-work is not a clear and present issue, voters identifying with the groups aroused by these issues make their choices on other grounds.

The closest thing we now have to constituency groups that are actual electoral forces, rather than helpful generalizations, are voting blocs that are simply voted by their leaders. But these are now few and far between, particularly in general elections. Remember, Charles Percy came close to carrying Chicago four years ago against a loyal adherent of the Daley machine. And even blacks -- the most cohesive voting bloc -- are increasingly selective about which candidates they will support.

The second thing to remember is that President Ford's greatest single advantage is his appeal to the American people as a whole. The most important thing that the President has going for him is that he has been a good President -- his foreign policies have improved chances for peace, his economic policies have worked, he has acted -- and promises to continue to act -- in the best interest of all the people. If he should be perceived as deviating from this course to favor a particular group or groups, his chances for reelection would be greatly reduced. Our most important political, as well as governmental, objective, therefore, is that the President should continue to be regarded as the representative of the national interest, in contrast to our opposition's tendency to speak for particular, special interests.



We particularly should avoid the temptation to cast ourselves in the role of spokesmen for special interests that appear to be antagonistic to special interests that are pushed by the Democrats. If the Democrats, that is, claim to be the party of the blacks, we should not counter by trying to become the party of the whites; if the Democrats claim to promote women's rights, we should not aim a contrasting appeal to male chauvinists; if the Democrats claim to represent labor, we should not agree to become the party of business. The President, again and again, should stress that he acts for the good of all.

This being said, it must be conceded that the President's overall record, plus the solid Republican vote, brings us up to only about 40 percent. The extra 10 percent -- or 10.1 percent -- must be won by motivating people to vote for Ford because they believe that he will advance concerns that are of special interest to them. The most important group to which we have to appeal is of course the loose group that is concerned by the effects of Democratic liberalism. (This is not the same as hard core conservatives -- a group that comprises no more than 30 percent of all voters.) Polls consistently show inflation to be the number one concern of the nation's voters. Taxes are a somewhat less urgent concern just now, but there is no doubt that many middle-class and working-class voters are strongly resistant toward any further rise in taxes. The implications of the liberal Democratic program are not lost on most voters. To take only three major items, the combined costs of Humphrey-Hawkins, Kennedy-Corman health insurance, and federalization of welfare would be astronomical. (We should have -- if we do not have -- exact figures.) These costs can be paid only through inflation or higher taxes or both. If Humphrey or one of the liberals had been the Democratic candidate, I think the President could have won on voter rejection of the liberal program almost alone. With Carter, the problem is more difficult. Carter has edged toward the left, but he is still perceived as significantly more moderate than Humphrey, Kennedy, and friends. We should hang the liberal program on him to the extent that we can. We should nail him with Humphrey-Hawkins, which he privately opposes but publicly endorsed after "ethnic purity". Humphrey-Hawkins, as the Democrats have begun to realize, is a political loser -- I understand they are now afraid to bring it to a vote on the House floor. Carter has publicly stopped short of endorsing Kennedy-Corman, but Leonard Woodcock is circulating a letter to liberals saying that the Democratic platform, which Carter accepts, endorses it.

Carter is also ambiguous on welfare, but the Democratic platform promises that welfare will be "substantially financed" by the Federal government. We should tie all of this to Carter, and ask how he plans to pay for it. (I think the attack role, at least in the early stages of the campaign, should be carried out by somebody other than the President.) The fact is, however, that Carter is more moderate than Humphrey, et al. We should not lose credibility by becoming too strident in attempting to portray him as an extreme liberal.



Against Carter, we will have to present positive reasons why it would be a good thing to have Gerald Ford President for another four years. Again, the chief answer to this need is that the President's policies are good for the entire country. But to win, we will also need some additional specialized appeals. This is where the constituency groups come in.

There are several ways to divide the country into constituencies: states, income groups, age groups, religious groups, ethnic groups, sexes, issue groups, etc. Let's begin within the states, as these are the actual counters in Presidential electoral politics.

STATES

The New Majority strategy was to build a coalition based on the so-called Sun Belt, stretching from Florida to California, adding the basic Republican strength in the Mountain States and the Plains States and Upper New England, picking up most of the Border States, and counting on the conservative, mainly Catholic blue-collar vote to tip a few of the industrial states such as Illinois and Ohio Republican. This is still Reagan's strategy today. Against Carter, it will not work. I think Carter is almost assured of carrying the Deep South -- Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and South Carolina, and probably North Carolina as well. We must fight for Texas, Florida, Virginia, and the Border States -- but all will be tough. Carter appears weak in California, but the state is bound to be a battleground. Ford will have a better than usual chance, for a Republican; of carrying Lower New England against Carter (Reagan would have no chance), but realistically it will be a long-shot proposition, except perhaps Connecticut. This means that the key to the election will lie in the belt of industrial states that stretches from New Jersey to Minnesota.

If either candidate carries most of these states, he will win the election. Logic therefore suggests that these industrial states, plus California, should be primary targets. Texas, Florida, the Border States, and the Northwest should be secondary targets. Upper New England, Lower New England, the Mountain States, the Plains States, and the Deep South, for various reasons, should be tertiary targets. New York City, whether or not the state is winnable, will be important to the campaign as the media capital of the nation.



Concentrating then, for the moment, on the industrial states -- how can they be won? Consider the kind of Republicans who in recent years have won elections in these states: Ogilvie, Percy, Bill Scott, Milliken, Romney, Griffin, Knowles, Taft, Scranton, Shafer, Scott, Schweiker, Case, Cahill. These individuals differ in many ways (some, of course, eventually lost), but they share in common the quality of projecting an essentially progressive image -- not of runaway spending, or of extending government controls, but of holding out a positive vision for their constituencies' future. The New Majority strategy has almost never worked in these states. Jim Buckley doesn't count, since he represents New York -- a state with characteristics and problems that set it off from the rest of the industrial states of the East and Middlewest. (Anyhow, Buckley won with less than a majority in a three-way race.) Jim Rhodes is perhaps an exception, but his particular formula is too highly individualistic to have general application. Nixon's victory in 1972 is the only real exception -- but the nation's rejection of McGovern was too universal to tell us much about any particular region; anyhow, Carter does not arouse the kind of fears that McGovern caused.

The answer then seems to be that the best way for the President to carry the industrial states is to hold out a progressive image of the nation's future. This does not mean contradicting the basic conservatism of his economic approach, but showing ways in which this approach can lead to economic and social progress in the future. The primaries show that this goal can be achieved. These are all states (except Indiana, the least typical among them) in which the President ran well -- and progressive and moderate Republicans were the mainstays of his support in each of these states. Characteristics that most of these states have in common are: above average proportions of Catholics, Jews, blacks (for the north), second generation Americans, persons over 65, and political independents. It should be noted, however, that the largest single ethnic or religious group in all of

these states, except New Jersey, is composed of white Protestants. Special thought, therefore, should be given to the interests of these constituency groups. Obviously, there is something to be gained through attention to the direct economic interests of these states, wherever this can be done consistent with the genuine priorities of the government and the overall national interest. More fundamentally, however, the Ford effort in these states can be aided by programs and appeals shaped to attract their internal constituency groups.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS



Ethnic and religious groups are among the most important constituency groups in the U. S. Their internal structures and attitudes are, however, much more complex and subtle than is sometimes imagined. The groups split on economic and social issues on the basis of income, education, and age, though often in different proportions from group to group. Among politically independent Catholics, for instance, 39 percent of non-college graduates over 35 regard themselves as conservatives on economic issues, compared to 27 percent economic conservatives among non-college graduates under 35. (Among Northern white Protestant non-college graduates, the figures in these two categories are 51 percent economic conservatives over 35 and 30 percent economic conservatives under 35.) Prominent "leaders" of ethnic and religious groups are often quite unpopular with large parts of the groups they are supposed to represent.

This being said, the following generalizations may be applied:

WHITE PROTESTANTS remain, of course, not only the largest single ethnic-religious group in the United States, but also a majority of the total -- roughly 55 percent. They are the largest group in most of the key industrial states. They are also the most diverse, dividing not only on lines of economic interest and age but also of denomination. Roughly the denominations divide among the doctrinally more conservative, though politically more liberal, so-called "main line" groups, such as Episcopalians and Presbyterians; and the more evangelical fundamentalists, such as Baptists; with Methodists and Lutherans, two very important groups, falling somewhere in between. The main-line groups are more common in metropolitan areas and small cities, while the fundamentalists are more common in rural areas and small towns; but both are found in both geographic areas.

Republicans, to win, must carry the Protestant vote by very large majorities -- Nixon received 70 percent in 1972. What polling evidence we have shows Ford and Carter now running about even among Protestants. Some of this is due to Carter's disproportionate strength among Southern Protestants, but we must substantially improve Ford's standing with Northern Protestants. Carter appears relatively weak among suburban, main-line type Protestants, who recently have shown the greater tendency to swing Democratic. But he has special appeal, because of his Baptist religion, for the rural fundamentalists, who have generally been the most staunchly Republican. In the primaries, he swept the rural counties and small towns - without this vote he would have been soundly beaten in Michigan and Wisconsin. This vote must be denied him in the general election -- without large majorities in the "upstate" counties, Republicans have no chance of carrying Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, or Wisconsin.

Protestants have a tendency to be moralistic in their political attitudes -- they like to believe that they support a cause because it is "right." This is particularly true of rural fundamentalists, but also of Methodists and Presbyterians. It will be well for the President to stress the moral objectives of his policies -- not only that they enhance the individual voters self-interest, but also that they will help to make a better world. This should not be leaned on to the point of becoming sanctimonious, obviously.

Rural and smalltown Protestants, in particular, feel that they are being shut out by the current trend of national politics. Remember, this group virtually dominated the first 150 years of our national history. It was not until the twentieth century that the Episcopalian Roosevelts and the Catholic Kennedys were able to break their near monopoly on political power. Recently, they have felt that Republicans in particular, in their efforts to reach out to other groups, are passing them by. This is particularly true in the northern industrial states which are among our primary targets. The President can achieve much with this group simply by showing that he values their support -- that his origins are close to theirs, and that his attitudes are shaped by the same basic beliefs that they hold.



This group can also be reached through an economic appeal. Though population is now moving as a result of natural forces back to small cities and small towns, many of these areas still have serious economic problems. Helpful farm policies have political importance here, but a declining proportion of the rural and smalltown populations are tied to the farm economy. Most of these areas are now seeking other forms of economic development. A Ford "rural development" program would be most helpful. But most of all, the President should show, without slighting the cities, that he regards the small cities and shall towns as the areas where much of the nation's future growth lies. (Remember, polls show that a majority of city-dwellers and suburbanites would prefer to live in small towns.)

CATHOLICS, while still leaning Democratic, have been increasingly open to Republican appeals. Nixon carried 52 percent in 1972 -- the first time in this century that a Republican candidate for President had a majority of Catholics. Polling evidence now shows Carter about ten percentage points ahead of Ford, Catholics, generally, did not vote for Carter in the primaries, but they do not seem to view him with the same hostility as they regarded McGovern four years ago. They are a key element in most of the industrial states, and we must cut substantially into Carter's current margin.

Any attempt to appeal to supposed anti-Baptist feelings among Catholics would of course be most ill-advised. Religious differences among Catholics and Protestants have not disappeared, but they are now much less pronounced than they were even ten years ago. Catholics who are not particularly religious probably have little feeling about Baptists one way or another. Religious Catholics, like religious Protestants -- and to some extent religious Jews -- are tending to draw together in a common "religious front", to combat what is viewed as an increasingly secular society. Carter's religion is a plus with most religious Catholics. We should aim to make the President's basically religious outlook a plus for us as well.

Catholics have some special concerns -- particularly abortion and parochial schools. (Abortion, incidentally, is not exclusively a Catholic issue. Many Protestants, particularly of the older generation, view abortion with horror -- though not in so uncompromising a way as the official Catholic position. On the other hand, it is a mistake to think that Republicans have nothing to lose by taking a strong stand against abortion. Many middle-class Republicans and independents, particularly among women, are strong pro-abortionists, and some will vote on this issue alone.)



The President's position on abortion does not satisfy the extremes on either side, but I think it seems basically right to most people who take some kind of religious view of the subject. He can go a long way toward satisfying Catholic opinion by indicating that he believes the unborn baby -- I would not say fetus -- has some kind of "rights."

Aid to parochial schools, to the extent that Supreme Court rulings leave it still an issue, is a difficult subject. It still arouses strong opposition among many Protestants, Jews and public school teachers of all denominations. On balance, I think there is more politically to be gained than lost through favoring some kind of aid, if a constitutional means can be found. The possible corruption that might be introduced by a voucher system bothers me, but it certainly deserves study.

Catholics are located predominantly in metropolitan areas -- though there are many rural Catholics in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan -- and are therefore particularly concerned about city issues. We should push the crime package much more strongly than we have so far done. More fundamentally, some kind of coordinated program to "save our cities" is most desirable, politically as well as governmentally. Our approach is that this must be done basically at the state and local levels, but we should set forth a program on how it is to be done -- telling how much of the cost can be borne by the federal government, how much locally. We should claim more credit for this year's housing initiative. The busing issue is important to many Catholics, though some are insulated against it by the parochial schools. My feeling is that the President's position on the busing issue is essentially right, is shared by the great majority of Americans -- but we should not proceed as though we viewed it as the major domestic issue in the campaign. It should be one element in an overall array of Ford legislative initiatives.

Most of all, Catholics -- as well as Protestants and Jews -- can be reached through appeals to family values. Much of this is a matter of setting limits beyond which government should not intrude, but also government should contribute to a moral atmosphere in which cohesive families can flourish. Bill Baroody has written with great insight on this subject.



Some comments on particular predominately Catholic ethnic groups:

IRISH, despite their long ties to the Democratic party, are now most tending toward the Republican Party. The Irish are basically conservative, very patriotic -- concerned about maintaining a strong defense; angry over pornography, other manifestations of "permissive" society. We can appeal to them on some of these issues. For foreign policy reasons, if for no other, the less said about Northern Ireland, the better.

ITALIANS have always been more politically independent than the Irish, are now more upwardly mobile. Many respond to economic conservatism, are concerned about erosion of family values. I would handle saving Italy from the Communists with care -- again primarily on foreign policy grounds, of course; but many Italians in this country as well as in Italy regard the Christian Democrats as incompetent crooks. But prominent Italian-Americans should of course be brought in on any projected aid program.

POLES are a tough nut for Republicans to crack, except in some areas where the Democratic Party has been dominated by the Irish. Best way to appeal is through arguments for economic, social conservatism -- joined to generally progressive vision of the future.

GREEK ORTHODOX, who are not of course Roman Catholics, are deeply concerned over the Cyprus issue -- which is tough to deal with on foreign policy grounds. I suggest that the President might give the Medal of Freedom for religion to Archbishop Iakobos. It would save us the problem of choosing among the three major faiths, and would be much appreciated among Greeks.

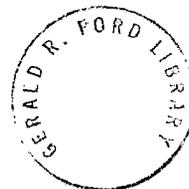
Needless to say, appearances at ethnic festivals, conventions, etc. -- any form of recognition -- will be most helpful.

JEWS edged toward Nixon last time, and are now disturbed over Carter -- but polls show them going for Carter over Ford by about three-to-one. Though relatively few in number, they are articulate and strategically located in such target states as California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Illinois. We should definitely aim to build Ford strength in the Jewish community. Jews are basically concerned about recognition (like all other groups, but particularly those that have traditionally felt insecure), Israel (toward which we should stress



our friendship, within limits set by national policy), and a progressive attitude toward government. Jews tend to be liberals. They will not agree with us on many issues, but I think against Carter we can win a significant number of them to our side.

Let me here express some thoughts about liberals in general. I think we can -- and must -- win a portion of the liberal vote against Carter. To win, a Republican must obviously capture a large share of the independents and also win over a sizable number of Democrats. In the primaries, the Democrats divided, roughly, into a Carter vote, a Jackson-Wallace vote, and a Udall-Brown vote. (I am not sure where Church fits in.) I would argue that the Jackson-Wallace vote is the least budgeable Democratic vote in November. The moderate-to-conservative Democrats most available to a Republican appeal -- those who voted for Nixon in 1972 -- voted predominantly for Carter. We would have had them again against Humphrey. Against Carter, whom some of them supported in the primaries (many did not vote), this group will be hard to crack. We must and will win back some of them, as we point out Carter's leaning toward liberal measures, but Carter will probably keep many of them. We need to get Democrats from one or both of the other two blocs. The Jackson-Wallace vote, outside the South, are the hard core Democrats, who vote Democratic in November, regardless of who the Democrats put up -- a liberal, a conservative, whatever. The South Boston Irish who voted for Wallace in this year's primary voted for even McGovern four years ago. Carter goes down comparatively easy with them. The Democratic liberals, the Udall-Brown voters, on the other hand, are deeply disturbed about Carter. We should aim to get some of them -- not so much on the issues, as on the ground that if Carter wins, they are likely to be frozen out of control of the Democratic Party for eight years. Similar considerations have led liberals in Texas to vote for John Tower in several elections. Our part should be mainly to keep in mind that part of this vote is now available, and not campaign in such a way that Democratic liberals would feel it impossible to cast a vote for Ford. (They would certainly never vote for Reagan.) Getting even a small share of this vote in the industrial states could be critical.



BLACKS are very difficult for any Republican, and appear to have a special affinity for Carter, with whom many of them share a common Baptist background. It is noteworthy, however, that polls show Ford doing a bit better among blacks -- about five percentage points -- against Carter than Nixon did four years ago. Some of the black leadership is suspicious of Carter, and some -- in Philadelphia and Cleveland -- were able to turn substantial blocs of black voters away from him in the primaries. We should do what we can here, again through recognition, and by stressing opportunity for black businessmen. Pushing aid for Africa also probably helps some. The "Clean Up America" proposal would help with the problem of unemployed black teenagers. To hold on to even that five percent gain among blacks would be extremely valuable in almost all the industrial states.

AGE GROUPS

Poll evidence shows the President doing best against Carter among the middle-aged, ages 36-55. The advantage that he enjoyed among young voters against Humphrey disappears against Carter. Ford also does not do well among older age groups.

To recapture support of youth, Ford needs to stress the underlying idealism of his program -- also how his economic policies will lead to a more prosperous future. The peace issue is also important among young people.

Among older voters, we must overcome the impression that Ford has slighted the elderly. We can appeal to underlying social conservatism, but we should also push much harder on catastrophic health insurance. The President should make this one of his top priority legislative items, and hold the Democrats' feet to the fire if they fail to pass it. We also should stress the President's proposals to assure the fiscal soundness of the Social Security system.

SEXES

The President receives about the same poll ratings from men and women -- but Carter's rating is almost ten points lower among women than among men! I have noticed among my own acquaintances that many women seem to distrust Carter -- the smile turns them off. Obviously, we will just have to hope that this chemistry continues to work.



Mrs. Ford is very helpful to the President with women -- also the Ford family. The President clearly should not take extreme feminist positions. His support for ERA is well known. I think we should make more of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. The strong presence of women in the Ford Administration should be publicized. Beyond that, the President should stress his support for family values -- still the most important consideration with a majority of women.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

BUSINESS in general supports the President -- or Reagan -- but businessmen are not particularly frightened of Carter, as they were of McGovern. We must hammer home the remarkable job the President has done for the economy. Committees of business groups should be organized in all industries and all over the country, if this is not already under way. The President should always stress that his economic policies are designed to benefit the entire country -- not business alone. But our economic approach, unlike that of the Democrats, rests on encouragement of growth and investment in the private sector.

ORGANIZED LABOR, by the large, will be for Carter -- though in some sectors with considerable suspicion and without marked enthusiasm. Fooling around with the kind of insurgent labor leaders who for their own purposes can sometimes be persuaded to support Republicans has never seemed to me to be very productive. Our main objective should be to appeal to the rank-and-file on the basis of the President's general program, and keep the established union leadership from building too much of a head of steam for Carter. Above all, we should not embark on a "crusade" against "union bosses."

SCHOOL TEACHERS are a key group moving closer to the unions and the Democrats, but with strong ties still at the member level to the Republicans. At least half of the nation's school teachers are Republicans or lean Republican in state and local elections. Endorsement of Carter by the NEA would be a very serious blow, which we should seek strongly to head off. Obviously, the President is not going to meet the NEA's demand that the federal government pay one-third the cost of education - but neither is Carter. The Supreme Court, fortunately, has taken federal regulation of state and local employee relations off our backs -- the President should say as little as possible about strikes by public employees; it is now mainly a state and local issue.



Since the President favors the teachers' position on portability of pensions, we should turn out a proposal on that subject -- unless the Supreme Court ruling prohibits that, too. I think we should consider proposing a separate Department of Education -- I realize it goes against the Administration's position, but I think the need to appeal to teachers, at least symbolically, is exceptionally important.

NURSES are another middle-class group, leaning Republican in the past, now growing increasingly militant, increasingly Democratic. I don't know specifically what they want from the federal government, but we should try to meet their reasonable aims.

FARMERS obviously must be kept heavily Republican to hold the Plains and Mountains States, and also are important in most of the key heavy population states from New Jersey to Minnesota. The politics of agriculture are beyond me -- although some of the farmers in the Middlewest are said to be mad at us.

ENVIRONMENTALISTS are down on the Ford Administration. Some of them need to be won back. There are many middle-class conservationists and working-class sportsmen who lean toward the Republicans on other issues. We must at least avoid allowing the environmental issue to become so aggravated that environmentalists will vote against Ford on that issue alone. A part of this is going strongly on record in support of a clean environment -- with a minimum of modifying conditions. We should make the point that our economic policies provide for the kind of investment that will be needed to pay for environmental protection, accompanying growth. We should make more of the ongoing environmental activity being carried on by the Administration. I am told that the environmentalists' current top priorities are: amendments to the Clean Air Act; the toxic substances control bill; and strip mine regulation. I am not familiar with the policy issues involved, but wherever we can responsibly lean toward them, it would be politically helpful. The "Clean Up America" proposal should also be favorably received by environmentalists.

cc:
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