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TARGETING, SCHEDULING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES
FOR THE 1982 CAMPAIGN

July 28, 1982

I. OBJECTIVES

The President can positively impact the fall campaign if the use of his time is carefully allocated to targeting, scheduling and communication needs that are ordered against the following electoral objectives.

As we cannot do all that we would want to do because of the limitations of time, the objectives below rank from the most important to the less important objective. For example, it is absolutely imperative that we maintain a Republican majority in the U.S. Senate. It is important, but less important politically for us to hold or gain key governorships.

1. Hold all Republican seats in the U.S. Senate.
2. Gain seats in the U.S. Senate.
3. Hold all Republican seats in the U.S. House.
4. Hold or gain key governorships.
5. Gain maximum number of open seats in the U.S. House.

These objectives will most likely stay the same throughout the campaign; however, the lists for the various categories should be reviewed periodically and agreed upon by the White House, the RNC, the NRSC and the NRCC. The updated lists should be circulated to a minimum number of people and at least bi-weekly by our group from now through Labor Day and weekly thereafter. Those who have the responsibility for the White House response to requests from campaigns should be closely advised as to the specific priorities.

There also should be a White House policy for each particular race. Such a designation might include the following:

- A. Races that are important to us and are marginally winable deserve our maximum effort.

- Consider visits by President Reagan
- V.P. visits
- Maximum responsiveness from surrogate program
- Fund raising assistance
- President sign approved direct mail
- President consider doing commercials
- White House political office maintain regular contact with campaign

*send WH
Speechwriters
will him
Bill
Gavin?*

B. Races that are slightly less important to us or ones where we have less of a chance to win but not currently in trouble need close watching (a number of Republican Senators qualify for this).

- V.P. visits
- Responsiveness from surrogate program
- President consider signing approved direct mail
- President consider doing commercials
- Fund raising assistance
- Periodic contact from White House political office

C. Other races -- either sure wins or medium loss potential.

- Possible presidential (radio) ads
- Some surrogate assistance
- Direct mail where justified politically

II. TARGETING STRATEGY

There are three target groups that must be given high priority in our national and regional use of the President this fall. There will also be individual target groups that are particularly important to individual candidates in particular states that we must be sensitive to when scheduling. Nevertheless, these three groups below should be considered first and foremost.

Soft Republican Constituencies

Both scheduling and communication activities should take into account that the following Republican support groups have softened over the past 18 months and need bolstering this fall:

- . both owners and employees of small businesses,
- . farmers,
- . southern conservatives (especially in key states like Texas, Tennessee, etc.) and
- . westerners (California, Mountain States).

Swing Constituencies

A second key target this year should be those ticket-splitters and Democrats who voted for President Reagan in 1980 but are now undecided or intend to vote Democratic in 1982. They resemble our 1980 targets but are slightly older. Specifically, they are more likely than the electorate as a whole to:

- . be married,
- . belong to a union,
- . be between the ages of 40 and 64,
- . earn between \$15,000 and \$30,000 annually,
- . be Catholic,
- . be male,
- . be white.

Those who voted for Reagan in 1980 but are now intending to vote Democratic tend to be more:

- . educated,
- . Democratic,
- . employed,
- . reside in border states and South.

Those who voted for Reagan in 1980 but are not undecided tend to be:

- . older,
- . Republican
- . retired,
- . reside in Midwest.

In sum, our "swing" target is low-end white collar and upper-end blue collar working class voters with family incomes between \$15,000 and \$30,000.

Many of these people in the North and East are Catholic and ethnic. However, we also find many of the same socio-economic class voters in the South, Midwest and West who are attitudinally and politically very similar but are not Catholic or ethnic. The reason this group tends to be slightly older is that they are the ones who have had the longest tradition of voting for mostly Democrats and as our support has softened over the last year, they are the ones who are most likely to swing back into the Democratic column.

Issue Constituencies

Three other specific groups that can be tagged by specific issues deserve attention. These are:

- . women (progress on inflation, nuclear reduction, compassion),
- . those affected by the social security issue (the 55-64 age group, the 65 and over age group),
- . supporters impacted hard by the recession, because of high interest rates (homebuilders, automotive dealers, etc.).

III. SCHEDULING STRATEGIES

By establishing some specific scheduling criteria we can greatly simplify the decision process dealing with the question, "Where should the President go?" and, more importantly, use the President's time most effectively to reach our campaign objectives. Two major assumptions underpin these criteria:

First, the most direct route to maximizing the President's political impact on elections across the board this year will be through the improvement of his own job rating. It should be noted that the kinds of political events in which the President could participate might, in fact, bruise his job rating if he is perceived as a political huckster. The most potent political asset we now carry with the majority of the voters is the belief that President Reagan and the Republicans and not Tip O'Neill and the Democrats "have the best interests of the country at heart," To put the President too many times on the political stump, or in too many "black tie" posh fund-raisers clearly places that perceptual asset in severe jeopardy.

Second, as indicated above, to keep our majority in the U.S. Senate -- if not expand it -- must be our supreme strategic political imperative this year. It is recognized that the President can and should do a number of things to help the marginal congressional districts but that is a second order priority. Hence, scheduling specifically to accomodate those needs would seriously misallocate the time of the President. The White House can be extremely helpful, however, in the key congressional races this fall by doing the following:

- . Have the President meet, beginning in August, regularly with the Republican leadership to discuss our fall political challenge. This will send a signal to those young congressmen who feel somewhat exposed that the President is interested and actively involved in their best political welfare.
- . Arrange for select Republican congressmen who face tough elections to visit with the President in groups.
- . Provide a system that will generate electronic endorsements for congressmen who desire to use the political influence of the President in their districts.

Given this focus, how then do we distribute the time the President can make available to impact politically the senatorial and gubernatorial races this fall? We suggest that five criteria be applied to simplify the scheduling decisions and maximize the President's political leverage.

This criteria are:

- . The President's influence should be used where his marginal impact is the greatest; that is in Democratic-held seats that are within the range of winability for Republican challengers. Conversely, he should spend his time in Republican-held seats where the incumbent is vulnerable.
- . The President should be used only in those states where there abides a strong positive base of personal support. This assures us that his visits will have positive political spin-offs. We should keep clearly in mind that presidential visits in and of themselves do not necessarily help local candidates; they can hurt.
- . The President should be used in states where he can generate maximum media impact. It is very evident from the studies conducted for President Ford in 1975 that a presidential visit has three or four times the impact in smaller states than in the larger states. Note that in spite of some very positive presidential events in large states, such as Pennsylvania, the newspaper and local TV coverage of the visit was minimal. In smaller states, the visibility of a presidential visit is much higher and play longer, starting two or three days before the visit and lasting as many days after the visit.
- . The candidates and their campaigns must be credible and the association between the candidate and Ronald Reagan must be established a priori as compatible. Candidates who have demonstrated strong potential and have put together good organizations should be given priority for presidential visits.
- . As a general rule, states where the President can highlight positive and national news should also be given weight.

In addition to the above criteria, there are four general principles of presidential scheduling that should be followed. These are:

- "Shuttle?"
- . Avoid "PR" gimmicks. While it is important that we continue our people-related events, those must be put together with great care so they do not smack of "hype."
 - . The glamour and glitter of Republican black-tie fund raisers should be avoided like the plague.
 - . "Political trips" should, wherever possible, be run in conjunction with other non-political events.

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- . Between October 10 and November 8, at least six campaign days should be blocked out. However, under no circumstances should any commitments be given as to where the President will go until the first week of October. The President can be most helpful in the closing days of the campaign in several senatorial and gubernatorial races; however, we can determine where those razor-edged races are in the closing weeks of the election.

IV. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

We must now set in place a series of communication options that will satisfy three communication needs:

- . First increase Ronald Reagan's opportunities to speak directly to the people on the subject of his choosing, timed at his discretion, and through the media best designed to give us maximum impact with the groups with whom we want to communicate.
- . Second expand the number of surrogates speaking in a coordinated and focused fashion for the administration.
- . Third, impact more strongly regional and local communication networks.

why? (Remember that, as a rule, the most unreliable and ineffective communication vehicle for us or any president is the "press conference."

We should:

- . distribute directly to local TV stations messages from the President with mini video tape cassettes. They could slot these into their own news programs. Topic matter should relate to specific regional interests and be distributed in those particular areas to 400 or so major television stations;
- . re-institute the five-minute bi-weekly radio speeches, in September. Run them through mid-October;
- . craft "op-ed" pieces for the major newspapers designed to drive home our positions among the opinion leaders;
- . look at the press not as a monolithic mass but as composed of a variety of individuals and segments that we can deal with more effectively in smaller, more homogeneous blocs by the way we disseminate information through the President and others;
- . prepare to address the nation with at least one major "political" talk between now and the fall election;
- . launch two or three "presidential forums" in September and October. These would consist of a series of meetings with key constituent groups at geographically dispersed locations. The

*no impact -
opposite
equal
exposure*

*little
impact*

forums will have specific labels reflecting their purpose to avoid association with President Carter's Town Meetings. For example:

- . President's Agri Forum
- . President's Small Businessman Forum
- . President's Steel Worker (or other blue collar) Forum
- . President's Retiree Forum

The time, place and type of forum would be directly contingent on the message we want to communicate (see Action Plan March 17, 1982 for more detail).

In sum, we need not be concerned about "over-exposure." Our concern should focus on what we must do to get the right kind of exposure.

We should also accept the fact that the Washington media are what they are. They are not going to be supportive no matter how hard we try to woo them. Therefore, we must concentrate on the strengths of Ronald Reagan himself and on the non-Washington-based media.

Voices other than Ronald Reagan's should be consciously used to:

- . expand both the reach and frequency of the President's messages,
- . frame the media discussion of the major issues, and
- . test major initiatives we may be considering and prepare the political-media environments prior to major announcements.

Once the President goes out in front with a position, then surrogate support should be significantly heightened. Some of the resources that can provide this kind of support for the President are: friendly governors, members of the cabinet, the Vice President, and other private but well-known individuals who through experience or position are in a unique position to comment favorably on our policies. Clearly our surrogate resource base should extend beyond the cabinet.

Additionally, a good surrogate program can:

- . increase the credibility of our individual candidates,
- . give candidates some direct political help in their districts, and

We should remember that in addition to our surrogates going out and speaking, it is often just as useful for candidates to come to Washington to meet with cabinet officials, subcabinet officials and White House staff members on specific problems and issues facing their

state or district. This helps them get coverage in their individual states by providing opportunities for television clips, radio actualities, exchanges of letters on specific problems and related media activities.

All of the above takes planning and coordination. A start has been made, but we feel the following questions should be carefully considered to insure that we will generate a broad range of voices, covering a wide spectrum of the media, giving precisely the message we want to communicate:

1. Who is available?

- . Who are our best, proven performers?
- . Whose appearances should we try to minimize?

2. What about the mechanics?

- . Who has the responsibility to decide on and respond to requests from candidates?
- . Who is in charge of looking for proactive scheduling opportunities and targeting it to the markets and groups we are interested in?
- . Who should try to affect acceptances on the part of surrogates who are specifically requested?
 - Bush, cabinet officers, senior staff
 - Subcabinet officials, White House staff
 - Non-administration officials, e.g., Senator Baker, Laxalt, Kemp, Governors
- . Who has responsibility for the briefing papers?
- . Who is responsible for advance?

V. TIME FRAMES AND STRATEGIES

Below we block out some of the targeting, scheduling and communication strategies for President Reagan's campaign activities in three time frames:

- . Now through Labor Day,
- . Labor Day through October 10,
- . October 10 through November 2.

Now Through Labor Day

There currently are four major appearances planned before the President leaves for California on August 12th -- the corn growers in Iowa, the V.F.W., the Knights of Columbus in Connecticut and the American Legion Auxiliary in Chicago. Speech topics have been assigned and drafts are underway for these appearances.

We recommend that the President talk to the country in a television appearance, either before he leaves for California or just after he returns. There are two options -- a social security speech or a general theme speech. We prefer the general theme speech.

The social security speech should be given to a non-television audience or to a segmented TV audience. If the latter course is taken the speech should be limited to ten minutes. The most recent national surveys done for the NRCC and RNC indicate we have made substantial gains in lessening the social security problem through a combination of the increase itself, the President's press conference, the Postman ad and resulting coverage of the increase. It is our view, nevertheless, that we need to deliver a social security speech so as to give some lead for our candidates to follow on that issue. It would, however, overplay our hand to raise the issue on national television at this time. Once the speech is delivered then the NRCC and the NRSC should get copies to all of our candidates along with cover documents that highlight the important points for them to make when answering Democratic attacks during the campaign. We could also make an audio or video tape available to them. Pieces of the speech might also be used in our direct mail program.

A general theme speech would help us frame the issues for the campaign, set the agenda before Congress goes home on recess, and lead into the first phase of the national advertising campaign. The speech should make these points:

- . The President should show some sensitivity to the victims of the recession and those who are suffering because of it. He should say he understands the difficulties some are having, that our problems have been a long time coming, are taking

put out the info w/ no fanfare

As most labor day people not listening now

longer and are harder to solve than he had hoped but there is no question that we are going in the right direction and have begun to turn the corner.

- . We have made some changes in the way we govern that will open up more opportunities for all Americans, by turning us away from the failed policies of the "Liberal Welfare State" to a new "Opportunity Society."
- . It would be a terrible mistake to go back to those old failed policies. They would not only give us a prolonged period of economic distress but would return us to the days of double digit inflation. The most recent national data also shows an increase in the number of people who are concerned about inflation increasing again.
- . If we stick with our fundamental policies, things will continue to get better -- inflation will stay down, interest rates will continue to fall and unemployment will follow them.

August 12 - August 23. (One or two highly visible events).

August 23 - Labor Day. As soon as the President returns from California, there should be several major policy announcements from the White House, executive actions and possibly some appointments. One of the problems with the extended vacation in the summer of 1981 was the lack of action when the President returned to Washington. His return was followed by two or three weeks of internal debate that signaled some lack of direction as to where to go with our economic policy. It was not until late September that the administration made its first major affirmative news after returning from a long vacation. This year we should consciously generate some news during that period from August 23 to Labor Day, when Congress is still out of town.

The President should make one or two non-political appearances outside of Washington during this period.

An idea developed by Newt Gingrich to launch late August that would run through early October deserves serious consideration. He describes it in these terms:

Operation Bottled Up. Almost every interest group, economic, social and ideological, has legislation bottled up by liberal Democrats in the House. "Bottled Up" should be a two-month project with buttons, meetings, and press conferences which make the point that, if you have a bill you like and it didn't pass this Congress, it's because liberal Democrats bottled it up, and your only answer is to have a chance for a fair vote. It will allow every Republican candidate to put the burden on the incumbent Democrat to deliver a House vote on a particular issue, and to put the blame after we adjourn on the incumbent Democrat for his having failed to get a floor vote. It will allow every Republican incumbent to share in the

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hard*

frustration and build the anger of disappointed groups by focusing responsibility on the liberal Democrats. By election day, the theme that "the liberal Democrats have unfairly bottled up bills and denied the American people a fair vote," should be common in the news media so that in a sense this election becomes a referendum on the inaction of the Democratic House.

Clearly this would call for close coordination with the White House, NRCC, NRSC and the RNC.

Labor Day Through October 10th

- . The President should make one or two non-political trips a week in our priority markets during this period. He should focus on the general theme, the economic issue, and peace. He should address the peace issue at least every 10 days. The frequency with which he talks about peace will communicate its importance to him.
- . It should be possible to combine some low-profile fund-raising activity with this travel.
- . Early September is a good time to bring senatorial and gubernatorial candidates into the Oval office and maximize the media coverage in their states of meetings with the President and other senior administration officials.
- . The President could cut television and radio commercials with and for candidates during this period.
- . During this period, we must maximize our efforts to impact the regional media. This must include meetings with local editors and newsmen while traveling and having regional news conferences for local media people in Washington. Some of the President's time will be needed for this activity, but the major thrust will be carried by the surrogates.
- . There should be a major policy initiative that allows us to dominate the news for a week or 10 days in late September or early October, preferably on the foreign policy/peace issue. Calling a special session of Congress should not be ruled out to give as a big bang.
- . Launch our major op-ed activity in this period and run it right through November.
- . It may be wise to have the President meet with the Republican members and possible candidates in late September, about the time they go home to campaign for some type of campaign kick-off. It is important, however, that this not be an overly

Huckster?

?

partisan or political type of appearance but one which seeks to focus them on the central theme and message that he would like them to take to the voters during the campaign.

October 10th Through November 2nd

The key strategic thrust of this period: keep our major resources flexible. We should consider, however, the following:

- . A nationally televised speech (paid for by the RNC) given about two weeks prior to the election. This speech would not be overly partisan or strident but rather one that focuses on the major theme, frames the issues and questions in the voters' minds, stresses the importance of the election for our voters. It would then be used to structure the campaign in the last two weeks.
- . This period also should probably include two or three days of selected campaigning.

VI. SOME "DO'S" AND "DON'TS"

- . The President always should frame what he has to say on any particular subject in terms of what's best for the country, not what's best for the Republican party, for this election or for any individual group.
- . He should continue, unless we pick up significant change, to focus on the central theme previously outlined. One change we must watch carefully is an increasing concern about inflation and a return to double digit inflation. This may present the opportunity for us to raise the specter that if we go back to the failed Democratic policies of the past we return to the policies that caused high inflation and so much suffering that we are now beginning to put behind us.
- . The President should appear as a strong leader and persuader and not as an adversary or strident partisan.
- . We should attempt to raise the importance of this election. We should point out that this is the election that will determine whether or not we can continue in this new direction that will lead to the solution of these long term economic problems or if we will return to those policies that gave us high inflation and the economic distress we have been suffering.
- . The President should, if the economy moves along its present course, to make sure that he continues to show understanding and sensitivity to the victims of the recession and those who are suffering in this period -- the unemployed, the small businessmen, the farmer, and those whose livelihoods are threatened.
- . He should frequently challenge groups, particularly business groups, to better invigorate our economy. This can include challenging business groups to more effectively manage their companies, meet foreign competition, innovate, take risks and increase their productivity. He should challenge educators also to improve the quality of their teaching, bankers to take a more aggressive position in developing new companies.
- . We should be very careful about who the President sees in the White House and where he goes outside the White House. In short, we need more identification with working class people, young people, old people and less association with upper-class business leaders and other elites.
- . We should use some high level appointments to satisfy our objectives between now and the election.

Committee's aggressive

this could sound insulting

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- . We should be conscious that there are two major channels of communication --
 - the Washington/Eastern media establishments and
 - the local and regional media.

The latter we must impact more heavily and effectively.

- . The President should never be cast in the role of a political huckster.
- . He should not be seen as a strident partisan adversary of the Democrats but rather one who wants to lead and is only interested in what is best for the country.
- . Outside of state dinners, he should eliminate black-tie appearances.