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September 2, 1980

To: Ed Meese

From: Anthony R. Dolan

Re: Ku Klux Klan remark.

1. This can easily be turned into a opportunity instead of a disadvantage.
2. It is important to stop any controversy before the nightly news about Ronald Reagan and start it about Carter.
3. Ronald REagan making the following statement will be perceived as the much bigger man -- the reaction of the American people, (we should trust them on this) will be Carter could never be that big towards REagan.
4. Turn it back on Carter -- by the end of the day let Carter be explaining Patricia Harris' smear.
5. Proposed statement:

"Yesterday, I made an off-the-cuff remark that can be taken to mean something that was never intended and I want to apologize for that. None of the major candidates in this race has any use for the Ku Klux Klan and I regret any other interpretation of my remarks.

That having been said, it is my hope that we can get this campaign back to a high level. For that reason, I would hope that Mr. Carter will disavow Mrs. Harris' recent remarks and ask her to apologize for comparing my candidacy to "the specter of white sheets".

McClary

KLAN STATEMENT

Yesterday I observed that President Carter had opened his campaign at the home of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama. Now I know that President Carter opposes the principles and actions of the Klan and that he would agree completely with my August 22 statement rejecting the support of Klan organizations.

But I confess I was angered when he remained silent while his Secretary of health and Human Services, Mrs. Harris, made an obvious/public attempt to associate me and the Republican Party with the Klan.

I have instructed my organization and all Republican State organizations to strictly refrain from any attempt, however indirect, to link President Carter with the Klan, and I will insist that those instructions be followed to the letter. I expect President Carter to do the same with his staff, his Cabinet, and the Democratic Party organizations across the country.

9/2 JMc