

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1975



MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES CONNOR

FROM: STEPHEN E. HERBITS

SUBJECT: Some Early Political Staff Functions

A number of staff functions in preparation for any sound Presidential campaign effort are described below. They are presented with certain thoughts in mind:

1. They are technical and require close attention to detail to assure accuracy.

2. They are time-consuming processes because they include the collection of information by phone and mail and many manhours of communication.

3. Because of the above, they should begin at the earliest possible time. Personal experience with these processes has shown that usual time estimates are severely understated.

4. All of the functions described below are really aimed at prioritising available resources. How to spend the President's time and the time of the staff, how to spend a limited number of dollars, how to maximize the effect of political actions, where to concentrate and on whom to concentrate -- all are determined by the information revealed by early analysis. Simply, which states are more important than others and what strategy should be followed in that state.



5. One of the important effects of early analysis is the revelation of who the people are that must be affected by the Presidential campaign. It is essential to keep in mind that one of, if not the, most important asset that the President has is his personal time. The longer the analysis is delayed, the less time the President will have to implement a strategy effectively using his time. In raw terms, by the end of this month, 59 days in 1975 have been missed as opportunities for some political action. Assuming that it were possible for the President to accomplish one personal contact every third day, 20 key political figures (a Governor in one state, a State Legislative leader in another) have gone unattended already this year.

6. Finally, the role of the Vice President cannot be maximized until the state-by-state analysis indicates where he can do the most good.

Early staff analysis would include the following functions:

1. A state-by-state analysis of the delegates selection process.

No two states have identical methods for selecting delegates to the National Convention. In some states, state laws control completely; in some states, Party rules control completely; and in others a combination of the both apply. Each state must be examined carefully to discern both the technical and political requirements for getting the appropriate delegates selected.

Probably the most important effect of this analysis is the determination of the timing of various local, county, district, and state conventions or primaries. Interesting patterns develop which become overriding in a determination of a strategy for anyone seeking the Republican nomination in 1976. Which states must the President enter? Can victory in one be parlayed into another?

One fact of this analysis which stands out more clearly than anything else is the openness of the delegate selection process in the Republican Party. If I remember correctly, only two states retain closed systems, meaning that in all of the others the process begins no earlier than December 1975. A strong challenge to incumbent machinery is viable; some 75-80% of the delegates attending the 1976 Convention will not have attended one before.

The nature of the process in each state, whether state-wide primary or local caucus, becomes an important factor in determining the appropriateness and/or level of a contest in a state or in part of a state. The organizational and financial commitments to the states must be allocated on the basis of the nature of the delegate selection process.

No overall strategy can be determined until limitations and opportunities are revealed by a delegate selection analysis.

2. A state-by-state analysis of the Party machinery.

As important as the process is an understanding of those who are currently in positions of authority to affect that process. Further limitations and opportunities become discernable when an analysis of the state chairman, national committeeman and woman, county chairman, state-wide elected officials, and local office holders is put on paper. Who is available? Who is not? Who will be there in 1976? How much patronage, power and following does that individual have? Is it necessary to go through him, is it a liability to do so? The questions on these individuals are limitless, naturally. But no attempt can be made to determine strategy for a state until this piece of the puzzle is built in.

3. A state-by-state analysis of the available human resources.

While it is a premise that as much of the machinery of the Party will be used as possible to maximize the President's election, that cannot be the case in terms of his nomination. Who among Republicans in the states are available to take on the job of building the Ford organization. The importance of human resources is magnified by the new Election Financing Law where breadth rather than depth is stressed. Manpower is going to be the key -- many, many contributors and many, many workers are essential to any successful effort. Spotting those individuals now, considering them in view of the Party machinery, and in juxtaposition with each other, becomes a time consuming task. While targets need not be contacted for some time, identifying them early is essential.



All the above really spells out one thing: It is necessary at an early date to get the facts in hand so that a state-by-state strategy can be developed which is built into a National strategy. That state-by-state strategy should be spelled out in detail in a calendar for the remaining months of the nomination process. Were these functions to be completed by May 1 (wholly unlikely) there would only be thirteen to fifteen months remaining before the Convention. What is done, what week, for those months should be delineated early in order that the available time and money can be effectively maximized.

This memorandum obviously excludes discussion of national organization, financing and fund raising and a plan for immediate decision making for these subjects. Perhaps we can talk of these soon.

