

The original documents are located in Box 64, folder “March 21, 1972 - Van Shumway - Suggested Press Events” of the Robert Teeter Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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COMMITTEE FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

March 21, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. VAN SHUMWAY
FROM: ROBERT M. TEETER
SUBJECT: Suggested Press Events

Garrison

As requested, this memo will outline those issues, areas and demographic groups where some special emphasis would aid in improving the President's voting strength.

Our research in several states indicates there is a substantial number of undecided voters who can be turned into committed (Nixon) voters if given some attention before the actual campaign period begins. Moreover, those voters who can be moved from being undecided to the committed column early appear to remain there for the duration of the campaign. Attention to these problems by the press group will be very helpful in our overall campaign.

Several criteria were used in selecting the priority areas. First, we limited our choices to those states where the President is running behind, or in the case of larger states, where he and Muskie are very close. Second, we only considered situations which appear to require immediate action and would benefit from some attention. Of course, the priorities may change as the campaign progresses and further memoranda will be forthcoming as changes become evident in the data.

ISSUES

The leading national issues in order of importance are:

- Vietnam
- Economy/Inflation
- Crime
- Unemployment
- Drugs

We expect this issue structure to continue through the election. Data from our surveys and elsewhere has shown that the importance of Vietnam will decline very slowly and the war will still be a viable issue during the campaign.

Determined to be an Administrative Marking

By SO NARA, Date 12/30/09



The President is perceived very well on his ability to handle Vietnam and inflation. On the other hand, he is received very poorly on his ability to handle drugs, crime and unemployment. Those issues where there is no constant or significant difference between the two candidates are race, environment and health care.

The level of awareness on the President's ability to handle issues ranges from 85% to 98% compared to approximately 48% for Muskie, and 75% for Kennedy.

Considering only those who were able to rate the candidates, Muskie is seen as much better able to handle crime, drugs and unemployment than the President.

SPECIAL AREAS FOR EMPHASIS

Our analysis of the campaign polls has shown several areas in the country, and certain voters groups and issues which should require our attention on a priority basis. Your input with the press, and the "surrogate" program would be extremely helpful in improving these weak points. The following is a list of these priority areas in order of importance:

New York

It would be to the President's advantage if he were to receive added press coverage in New York City and Buffalo. In New York City, drugs, crime and unemployment would be important issues. The voters we need to reach live outside Manhattan and are primarily in middle and lower income brackets. Some emphasis on pollution with young voters would also be helpful.

In Buffalo, taxes and pollution are the leading issues and we are primarily concerned about middle income voters especially Catholics.

Texas

An effort to cover mid-Texas, principally Austin is needed. Bussing is the major concern to Austin area voters. Other important issues are unemployment, crime and drugs. Also, Mexican-Americans in San Antonio will be important.

California

Separate approaches will be required in northern and southern California. In southern California there should be an emphasis on the economy/inflation, taxes and unemployment. These issues should be directed at the traditional blocs of Republican strength--upper and middle income, higher educated, and older persons. It may be appropriate here to have the surrogate program involved with business oriented functions on these issues. In northern California, primarily San Francisco, pollution would be an appropriate issue.



Pennsylvania

A press campaign in Philadelphia would be helpful on the issues of crime and drugs, and other "problems of the cities."

It will be important for this program to be handled in a positive way avoiding "law and order" or other repressive themes; otherwise, we could seriously jeopardize the fragile level of support by ticket-splitters and blacks.

Maryland

The President could use some press emphasis of his record on crime and drugs in the Baltimore suburbs and in Montgomery County. For the Montgomery County effort, it would be especially appropriate for emphasis to be made on the recent improvements in the District of Columbia crime rate.

Missouri

In this state we need a campaign directed at older voters living in rural areas who are traditional Democrats. Taxes (particularly property taxes) and inflation are the principal issues.

Wisconsin

Racine and Kenosha are the areas needing the greatest emphasis. The primary issues are unemployment, taxes, inflation and the economy.

Michigan

Some recent polls have indicated that our position in Michigan has improved and additional press events in this state would be helpful.

