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## I - BACKGROUND

### OVERVIEW

This book presents an analysis of the problems facing the President in his efforts to win the 1976 election. It concludes that there is a "best chance" strategy to win. This strategy is analyzed and developed in detail.

The book consists of this -page introductory memorandum, followed by tabs broken into two parts. Part I contains the details of how the strategy will be implemented, its impact on Carter and his attempt to counter it, and other operating analyses. Part II contains background materials, such as analysis of constituency groups and historical analysis.

This memorandum is broken into the following chapters:

#### I - BACKGROUND

- Overview
- Major constraints
- Definition of problem
- Elements of perception problem
- Targets of opportunity

#### II - OBJECTIVES

- Conclusions
- Goals for campaign



## III - DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

- The strategy
- Analysis of the recommended strategy and alternatives
- Campaign themes
- Synopsis of implementation plan
- Pre-nomination implementation plan
- ~~Risks~~<sup>Attack</sup> and Carter's reactions

As the following analysis shows, the President faces a unique challenge. No President has overcome the obstacles to election which President Ford will face following our Convention this August. Even President Truman, in 1948, had an approval rating of 55% going into the election, compared to President Ford's projected approval rate for this August of about 42%. It is likely that the President will have to make up a 15 to 25-point deficit in the seventy-three days from the end of the Republican Convention until the election.

Of course, the Ford-Carter gap will begin to close (perhaps even before our Convention) on its own almost irrespective of what we do. \* However, although the point

*head  
to  
head*




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\* There are two important caveats -- the gap could widen if (1) the President makes a highly visible mistake or (2) the Convention turns sour and the TV viewers see the President portrayed unfavorably. (3) *F. L. Carter improves*

spread may close fairly easily down to a point where Carter is 5 to 10 points ahead, the remaining distance to victory will be ~~extremely~~ difficult.

Because the President must come from ~~so far~~ behind, and is subject to ~~so~~ many constraints, no strategy can be developed which allows for any substantial error. To be successful, the recommended strategy must be implemented with exceptional discipline.

We firmly believe that <sup>we</sup> ~~President Ford~~ can win in November. During times when the President and his Administration pulled together and projected a positive image of accomplishments, the President's standing in the national polls rose accordingly. Furthermore, the President has solidified some of his national support. Although the President, by his actions, can positively influence the voters, efforts to do this have resulted in very limited and temporary success.



4

Graph

won  
Some  
Primaries

While much of the erosion in the President's national popularity can be attributed to his campaign swing, it nevertheless can be justified to the extent it has provided campaign experience and a better understanding of our strengths and weaknesses.

There is no question that ~~many serious~~ mistakes have been made during the pre-Convention campaign. The magnitude of these mistakes should lead to the conclusion that they would be fatal if made during the general election campaign. Thus, if we avoid past errors and learn from our mistakes, the current campaign will have made a very positive contribution to the President's election chances.

It is very possible that Jimmy Carter will go through much the same phenomenon as Ford did: his rapid rise in national popularity will be followed by a steady, but pronounced decline. Notwithstanding Carter's enormous (media) popularity at the present, it must never be forgotten that he never got more than 54% of the vote in any of the contested primaries, and never won in a head-to-head race. Furthermore, Carter was beaten in eight out of the last eleven contested primary fights. There is ample historical precedent for the proposition that such a rapid rise in national popularity (from \_\_\_\_\_ in the national polls to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ months) is generally followed by a <sup>Some</sup> rapid decline.

winner

\* examples

Therefore, while the obstacles we ~~will~~ face ~~by the~~  
~~end of August~~ <sup>mean</sup> may make the race <sup>will be difficult</sup> appear to be insurmountable,  
we believe that the President will have an even chance of  
victory if the recommended strategy is properly implemented.

#### MAJOR CONSTRAINTS

The purpose of this section is to outline the major constraints facing the President's campaign. We believe that the campaign strategy must accept these constraints as givens, and not attempt to attack them as solvable problems. With the very limited resources available to the President, it is crucial that all our efforts and funds be directed at achieving clearly defined objectives which can be accomplished and which are selected solely on the basis of their contribution to the election effort.

By way of providing perspective, President Ford faces almost the reverse situation that Richard Nixon confronted in '68 and '72. In both cases, Nixon had a substantial margin over his challenger (12% points in '68 and 25% in '72) going into the general election. Thus, the Nixon strategy of holding onto his lead or, more accurately, managing the inevitable erosion, simply is not applicable to today's problem.

Even the 1948 election does not provide a credible analogue to the problems now confronting President Ford.

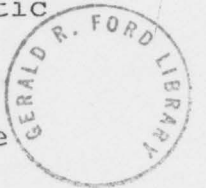


By the end of August in '48, Truman was trailing Dewey by 14 percentage points. But the Democratic Party was preferred by 56% of the respondents to the Gallup poll. Also, we certainly cannot plan on Carter repeating Dewey's errors. Many Republicans did not vote because of Dewey's errors. Many Republicans did not vote because of Dewey's overconfidence, and this undoubtedly led to Truman's victory in the key States of Illinois, California and Ohio. In those States, Truman won by 33,000; 18,000; and 7,000 votes respectively.

See Tab 2- for an historical analysis including excerpts from Clark Clifford's memorandum to Truman in 1947, in which he presented the successful campaign strategy.

The President's strategy must recognize and deal with the following constraints:

1. The Democratic Party enjoys a 43% to 20% registration advantage. A GOP candidate will always have difficulty closing a large gap on a Democratic opponent.
2. Campaign expenditures for ~~Ford and Carter~~ <sup>both candidates</sup> will be the same. ~~Thus~~ <sup>We</sup> no longer have the previous advantage of being able to outspend the Democratic opponent. This is a particular handicap when we are behind. Also, <sup>Given</sup> the dollar limitation, any dollar wasted cannot be recouped. <sup>Limited resources</sup>





3. Independent expenditures by volunteer-intensive labor unions to turn out the vote in Carter's behalf will be hard to match and will likely nullify our usual turnout advantage.
4. The GOP Convention is late; the Party will be divided after the nomination fight and will have little time to bind its wounds. ~~This is particularly troublesome since conservative workers are the majority of the GOP's campaign workers.~~
5. A campaign designed to woo various voter blocs through extensive government programs and patronage is not in the cards in 1976.
  - a. Budget dollars are not available to fund extensive new program initiatives.
  - b. The broken promises of 1972 have made the buyable voter blocs wary of promises.
  - c. The President's most basic philosophy has been to ask the people to sacrifice short-term benefits in return for long-term gains. Changing this philosophy now is too late:
    - to be credible to the recipients.
    - to escape a media storm.
6. The reporting press will probably be biased for Carter -- a Democrat and the new face.

DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

As a basic approach, it is helpful to view our electorate in two parts:

1. The base of <sup>our</sup> ~~Ford's~~ support, which is made up of Republicans and Republican-type Independents.
2. The "swing vote" which can be attracted from a position of neutrality or pro-Carter into the Ford column.

In the following section, we analyze the specific elements of the problem we face. Although we have organized this section by dividing the elements among the two general classes of voters identified above, it's important to remember that there are substantial interrelationships and trade-offs between the two groups.

<sup>Our</sup> ~~The President's~~ election goal must be to win enough popular votes in enough States to get over 270 electoral votes. In broad terms, ~~we~~ has to close a nearly 3-to-2 gap in seventy-three days from the base of a minority Party.

On the other hand, Carter's popularity is based almost exclusively on his awareness factor. His support is very thin and clearly vulnerable to deterioration. See Tab 2- for analysis of Carter's current popularity and weaknesses.



Accordingly, a major shift in the national polls is possible. In all likelihood, Carter will have reached his peak of popularity the week following the Democratic Convention and will show signs of erosion following that point. If the Republican Convention is positive for the President (or at least neutral), we should expect to see a closing of the gap, and thus the building up of momentum in favor of the President.

President Ford's perception must change and Carter's perception must change. In order to win, we must add people to the Ford column. At least 15% (or \_\_\_\_\_ million people) must be persuaded to change their opinions. This will require very aggressive -- media-oriented efforts.

#### ELEMENTS OF THE PERCEPTION PROBLEM

Any campaign strategy, to be successful, must deal with perceptions. Voters do not make up their minds on an understanding of the actual strengths and weaknesses of candidates; rather, their choice is made on the basis of their perception of the candidates.

Personal perception is several times more important to voting than the perceived position on issues. But, particularly for an incumbent, the determinants of perception



are (1) the candidate's agenda or issues -- which one he chooses to talk about, and (2) how he handles them. The selection of the issues may well be of equal importance to his position on the issues selected.

### Carter's Perception

#### POSITIVE

- A winner who has "it". A man with real personal appeal, "I like him".
- A man with strong spiritual and moral values, an honest man of character.
- A family man.
- A man who cares about the common man and his problems.
- A new kind of politician who is against the corrupt Washington system and will not lie.
- A man concerned about government efficiency and dedicated to making the government work better.
- A man who seems to deal with and resolve issues in a non-controversial way.
- He is seen as an economic liberal and a social conservative.
- He is a man with quiet strength; he will not let the politicians run over him. He is in control and will run the country with authority.
- Seen as responsible Democrat -- not a maverick; not extreme.

## NEGATIVE

- An arrogant man.
- A man who wears his religion on his sleeve; he is very self-righteous, *but lacks humility.*
- A man who tries to be all things to all men; we don't know where he stands on issues.
- A man whom we don't know enough about; we really don't know who he is as a person.
- A Southerner.

Causes for Perception of Carter

The principal reason Carter appears so favorably (and this is reflected in the polls) is because all others in the field are perceived so badly. It is Carter's "newness" that has carried him to the heights he has reached thus far. Virtually all other national political figures-- including President Ford -- are not perceived positively by the voters, and this accounts for Carter's high rating. This is a very important point, because it suggests that there is nothing intrinsically strong about Carter -- either in terms of personality or substance -- but rather, he comes across favorably only relative to the alternatives.

- He is a winner; winners are admired and respected.
- He has a strategy and he lets it guide his campaign and uses it to help him achieve the correct public perception. He is consistent in his campaign and behavior; he consistently projects the same image.

- ° He has built up those characteristics that he thinks the public wants.
  - Acts Presidential; handles himself with coolness, with dignity.
  - Is confident and in charge -- can make things happen.
  - Makes few errors in public and (so far) his team is tight and doesn't leak damaging information.
  - Is perceived to be a moral man, will make government work better, has a vision of the future, and will be open with the people.
- ° In terms of the few negative indicators concerning Carter, these appear to be related to some extent to his "trust me" approach to issues. His unwillingness to be specific is a form of arrogance.
- ° His religiosity raises suspicions among Catholics\* and Jews.

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\*Events at the Democratic Convention probably aggravated the anti-Carter potential among Catholics (e.g., the dispute with Cardinal Cooke, their abortion controversy and the rejection of Muskie for V.P.)

Ford's Perception

## POSITIVE

- I like him; he is a good man who tries hard. I hope he succeeds.
- He is safe and will do the right thing.
- He came in under horrible circumstances and the situation in the country has gotten better under him.
- An honest man who will try to do the right thing, he has restored honesty in government.
- He will keep the activists from taking over and springing another Great Society on us.

## NEGATIVE

- Not decisive.
- Not really on top of the job.
- Doesn't seem to have a clear view of where he is going and why; doesn't seem to understand our problems or have solutions for them.
- Spends too much time on politics, too worried about election, doesn't seem to spend enough time on the people's business, too much of an old politician.
- Seen as part of the old-time, do-nothing Washington establishment.
- He is politically expedient; he seems inconsistent -- swings one way and then another.

- Not strong enough to lay Reagan away; does this reflect on his abilities?
- Not in control of government. HAK and others seem to be able to control him; he is their puppet. He doesn't seem to want to use his power and authority.
- Makes errors, may not be smart enough to do the job.
- Fights with Congress while problems remain unsolved.
- Boring; not exciting.

*negative bad times* *Republican* *The President's*  
Conclusions on Ford's Perception

*like him need reason to support him*  
*The President*  
 The major conclusion on the voter perception of ~~Ford~~ is that it is essentially neutral. The perceptual maps prepared by Bob Teeter show that President Ford is seen as a Republican partisan, ~~and~~ as one who is very representative of all that is perceived to be wrong with the federal government.

~~The only positive thing that shows is that we are not working against a hard, negative Ford problem. Even the disapproval in the Gallup (although high) is not firm. There is not a hard, negative feeling about Ford; it is just that <sup>not enough</sup> the voters do not have a strong, positive feeling about the Ford personality and character.~~





Reiter?  
↓

There is one possible exception that the polls are beginning to raise the question of whether the President is perceived to be smart enough for the job.

Also, he apparently has lost a great deal of his perception of being open <sup>by being seen as a campaigner.</sup> This is a cause of the President's decline. This is linked to the President being perceived as becoming more political (especially when he goes on the attack in a partisan, strident manner). This is where the primary campaigns have really hurt the President's national standings.

relative  
Continuum

Also, there is a clear public perception that no one is in control of this Administration -- no one at the White House, in the campaign, or anywhere. This is a major negative. The following are some specific conclusions on the perception problem:

- ° The President is not seen as a leader.
  1. No vision
  2. No will
  3. No control
  4. No compassion
- ° He looks like a loser.
  1. Can't lay Reagan away.
  2. Many errors, embarrassing problems.
  3. Seems befuddled.
  4. Doesn't seem to be able to get anything done.



- After a promising start, he is coming to be seen as just another politician.
- He doesn't seem good enough to be President.
  1. Indecisive; befuddled.
  2. Reactive
  3. Not smart
- His record is being discounted because of the public's perception of him as a leader.

#### Causes for Poor Perception

- The struggle with Reagan-~~President~~ is seen as just another candidate who is not in control -- Reagan dominates. *rewrite*
- Overexposure on political matters, transparent campaigning techniques.
- Lack of a vision of what life in America should be, and a well-articulated, logical program to get us there.
- Inability to articulate his goals and programs effectively.
- Serious White House, Administration and PFC organization and personnel problems.
  1. Not bringing strength of incumbency to battle.
  2. Press considers speeches too poor to report seriously.
  3. Error rate is high; poor execution by campaign and government officials.

4. Lack of team play. No control over prima donnas.
5. No strategy for running government and campaign.

It is important to consider the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, along with their perceived reasons in the context of what is real. The following is an attempt to briefly identify the key actual strengths and weaknesses of President Ford and Jimmy Carter.

\* \* \*

#### Carter's Actual Strengths and Weaknesses

##### STRENGTHS

- ° He is bright, intelligent and disciplined.
- ° His strategy is on target with the mood of the electorate, and he plays the strategy effectively (vision, character, morality, spirituality).
- ° A good political mind, good instincts. He's "new" -- not from Washington.
- ° A good, well-knit organization, which executes effectively. So far, does not leak. Low error rate.
- ° A favorable public perception, on characteristics and issues important to the voters. Conservative on social issues and liberal on economic issues.

MAK

- He has united the Democratic Party, which will work on his behalf.
- He promises change, that he has solutions to the problems.
- He is subtle; he can send political signals with a light touch. These signals don't seem political.
- His religious background.

## WEAKNESSES

- Overly ambitious.
- Personal makeup is not in tune with public perception. He appears to be vindictive, arrogant, egotistical, bull-headed.
- Position on issues is to the left of a rightward moving electorate -- Humphrey-Hawkins, and many others.
- He has the support of the Democratic Party which brought us our current problem of a big, unresponsive federal government; he will either have to defend the Congress, or Party, or reject it--either of which will give him problems.
- He is inexperienced.
- He is a "winner" only because he has had weak opponents thus far.



Ford's Actual Strengths and Weaknesses

## STRENGTHS

- ° His record; the country is in good shape.
- ° His experience and understanding of the issues -- he has done the job and handled the Office.
- ° The power of the incumbency; he is the President. People will have to want to kick him out.
- ° His decency and honesty.
- ° People have empathy with him.
- ° His family.
- ° His personal makeup; he isn't vindictive, mean or an egomaniac. He can listen to others, take advice. In short, he is human.

## WEAKNESSES

- ° Does not think in terms of vision and quality of life, and articulate these.
- ° Seems unwilling to take charge and discipline his Administration and campaign, even when it is in his interest; is a poor organizer.
- ° Is a poor communicator.
- ~~° Does not bring dignity to the Presidency.~~
- ° Decisions often lack political subtlety -- both sides are angered.
- ° The <sup>Administration</sup> Ford decision process is <sup>often</sup> incapable of bold, rapid action; in seeking the "safe" course through every event/problem we <sup>sometimes</sup> inevitably miss opportunities when timing is critical.

Currently, the President's positions on issues have not helped him in terms of electability. We believe this is a problem for two reasons:

First, voters are far more influenced by the perceived personal traits of the candidates than their substantive position on even that issue which a given voter considers most important. Thus, because the President's perception as a leader is so poor, any potential benefit due to the objective "correctness" of his substantive position on an issue gets no recognition.

Second, we have been communicating the President's position on issues with political incompetency. For example, many issues are presented as legislative proposals or in veto messages, in which case the substance is overshadowed by the strong perception of the President as a part of the old Washington establishment. Also, substantive positions are presented in speeches which are so poor the press simply does not report them. We have not been able to repeat (advertise) the President's positive programs.

This problem is, however, correctable.\* Issues can be a potent weapon in this year's Presidential campaign. Indeed, a fundamental element of the recommended strategy will be to break with traditional campaign wisdom and attempt to rely heavily on the use of issues as a fundamental element in our attack.

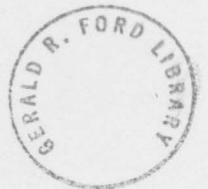
We believe that President Ford is in far better position on the issues than Jimmy Carter, for the following reasons:

- The <sup>Admin</sup> Ford position has far greater substantive integrity. On many issues Carter is either overly vague, or has taken positions based on a weak analytical base.
- For the most part, ~~Ford~~ <sup>the Pres</sup> has "discounted" the negative political response which necessarily results in taking a firm position on controversial issues.
- Although undercut somewhat by the anti-Washington mood of the country, the President nevertheless has a clear advantage in discussing issues by virtue of the office he holds.

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\*

We must improve our communications effort by (1) choosing our message, simplifying it and repeating it; and, (2) improving the speeches and tying them to the overall strategy instead of continuing to develop speeches in an organizational vacuum.



We believe that the substance of President Ford's position on the issues is far closer to the political center of gravity of the Nation than is the position taken by Jimmy Carter. This is particularly true if we are successful in tagging Carter with the record and Platform of the Democratic majority. Nevertheless, Carter is now perceived to be conservative on the issues.

[insert graphs from national polls]



For the most part, the President has already taken positions on the most controversial issues. Thus his national standing in the polls already reflects the displeasure of the various groups opposed to his positions. Therefore, to a large extent, he has already "discounted" the downside of being specific on the issues.

Carter has not done this. Even to the extent he has taken positions on the issues, he has done so with regional selectivity and in a manner that has not fully been communicated to those who disagree with his positions. Accordingly, we must develop a campaign strategy which includes as a major objective the dissemination of Carter's positions to the groups adversely affected.

Of course, the President also brings to his substantive position on the issues the full force and power of the Presidency. Especially in the areas of foreign policy and national defense, there is generally a presumption that the President's position is at least correct factually. Although this "presumption of Presidential accuracy" is still a potent force, it has been substantially diminished as a result of Vietnam and Watergate.

Notwithstanding the apparent advantage the President has on the issues, it is obvious that this is not reflected in the national head-to-head Ford-Carter polls. We believe this is due largely to the fact that issues have not played an important part in the campaign thus far (as a matter of

fact, in the Ford-Carter contest, they have played almost  
no role at all), and because the electorate does not  
perceive ~~the President~~ Ford to be strong on the issues, and does  
perceive Carter to be very near the center.

position  
leadership traits

## FORD - CARTER PERCEPTIONS

*Format* Summary Chart  
*By Scales*

F O R D

C A R T E R

Perception	Actual	Perception	Actual
Not intelligent	Intelligent	Intelligent	Very intelligent
Honest	Honest	Honest	Insincere
Incompetent	Competent	Competent	Competent
Somewhat experienced	Experienced	Somewhat inexperienced	Inexperienced
Not arrogant	Not arrogant	Not arrogant	Arrogant
Indecisive	Seeks compromise	Decisive	Decisive
Safe (not extreme)	Safe	Not extreme	Politically expedient
Religious	Religious	Deeply religious	Religious
Not ambitious	Not ambitious	Ambitious	Extremely ambitious
Not in control of own staff	Not in control	In control of own staff	In control
Open (personally)	Open	Open	Withdrawn
Insensitive	Compassionate	Compassionate	Probably not compassionate
Takes positions on issues	Takes positions on issues	Avoids positions on issues	Avoids positions on issues



## F O R D

## C A R T E R

Perception	Actual	Perception	Actual
Family man	Family man	Family man	Family man
Inarticulate	Relatively inarticulate	Articulate	Relatively inarticulate
Bad speeches	Bad speeches	Good speeches	Fair speeches
Lost small town roots/ part of Washington establishment	Washington establishment	Has small town roots	Has small town roots
Moderate on social issues	Conservative	Conservative on social issues	Moderate
Conservative on economic issues	Very conservative	Moderate liberal on economic issues	Liberal

As a last element of our perception analysis, we will look at Presidential travel.

It is true that some of the President's primary campaigning did result in an increase in his local popularity in the area campaigned in (and this shows up on election day), but these examples would be very misleading if applied to the general election. There is no question that people who actually see the President are influenced by that event, and local press has its beneficial impact. However, for the general election, Presidential campaign events are not significant in terms of their impact on the people who attend. These people are only important as backdrops for the television viewer. During the general election, all Presidential travel must be planned for its impact on those who learn about it through the media. Thus it is important to keep in mind that while selected campaign stops by the President during the primaries helped him in those locations, cumulatively, they had a negative impact on his overall popularity rating throughout the country. (Refer to chart on Page .)

Indiana	13
Colorado	7
New Hampshire	4
Maine	4
Iowa	8

Total	93	(Electoral votes)
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To this group, three western States and five leaning Republican States must be added:

Nevada	3
New Mexico	4
Montana	4
Ohio	25
Oregon	6
Maryland	10
Michigan	21
Deleware	3

Total	76
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#### Key Swing States

To these 159 electoral votes, 111 of the swing States' 198 electoral votes must be won.

We must add California (45) and Alaska (3) to our "base" of 159, giving the President 207. Thus the remaining can be broken into two target groups:

#### Northern Industrial

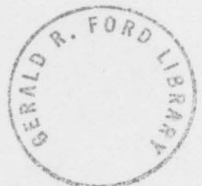
Wisconsin	11
New Jersey	17
Illinois	26
Pennsylvania	27
Minnesota	10

Total	81
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#### Peripheral South

Florida (?)	17
Tennessee	10
Kentucky	9
Missouri	12

Total	48
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At the present time, the President runs much stronger in the northern industrial States than he does in the peripheral South against Carter. Even if he chooses the peripheral South, he must pick up two northern industrial States to win. Pennsylvania is the weakest of these States at the moment. If the Vice Presidential nominee is not an effective asset in this State, then we must turn to the peripheral South and pick up one State.

The President leads Carter by a plurality in ~~Minnesota~~<sup>Minnesota, and Connecticut</sup>, Michigan and Iowa; he is somewhat behind in Missouri, and in a dead heat in California. ~~Virginia and Florida are unknowns at this moment.~~

#### Successful Republicans in Swing States

Most of the key swing States, with the exception of California, lie in the industrial belt between Minnesota and New Jersey. The Republicans who have been successful in this area have won by building up wide margins in the rural areas and small towns and winning the suburbs. They have won the suburbs by carrying a majority of the Independents and ticket splitters, not by attracting the disgruntled conservative Democrats (the New Majority strategy).

Since 1960, these Republicans have won statewide office:

*out*

Delaware:

Senator Boggs  
 Senator Williams  
 Governor Peterson  
 Senator Roth

Illinois:

Senator Dirksen  
 Senator Percy  
 Governor Ogilvie

<u>Indiana:</u>	Governor Whitcomb Governor Bowen
<u>Maryland:</u>	Governor Agnew * Senator Mathias Senator Beall
<u>Michigan:</u>	Governor Romney Senator Griffin * Governor Milliken
<u>Minnesota:</u>	Governor Anderson Governor Levander
<u>New Jersey:</u>	Senator Case Governor Cahill
<u>New York:</u>	* Senator Javits Governor Rockefeller
<u>Ohio:</u>	Governor Rhodes * Senator Saxbe Senator Taft
<u>Pennsylvania:</u>	Governor Scranton Senator Scott Governor Schafer * Senator Schweiker
<u>Wisconsin:</u>	Governor Knowles

\* Since Watergate

In the southern periphery, a different kind of Republican has been successful. In Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee, victory was achieved by moderate candidates who were able to reach over into the rural, less educated Democratic voters for support. In Florida and Texas, the Republicans who have won statewide offices were hard-core conservatives.



At the present, the possibility of winning Texas is dependent on the Vice Presidential nomination.

These Republicans have been successful in the South:

<u>Kentucky:</u>	Senator Cooper Senator Morton Senator Cook Governor Nunn	<u>Florida:</u>	Governor Kirk Senator Gurney
<u>Missouri:</u>	Governor Bond	<u>Texas:</u>	Senator Tower
<u>Tennessee:</u>	Senator Baker Governor Dunn Senator Brock		

#### Swing Constituency in Key States

To build a winning coalition in the swing States, the President must build on his base of rural and small town majorities with suburban Independents and ticket splitters. All successful Republican candidates in these States have won with the same constituency with the exceptions of Texas and Florida. In very general terms, the target constituency in the suburbs for the President is the upper blue collar and white collar workers, often from a family which has risen in mobility in the last generation. These are independent minded voters, many of whom are Catholic. In addition, there is a weakness in Carter's support among Catholics and also among Jews. The upwardly mobile Catholics are a group becoming more independent and conservative, and they represent the key to victory in the northern industrial States where they are from 25-45% of the voters. (See Tab I- for analysis of Catholic strategy.) Jewish skepticism of

Carter as a southern fundamentalist provides an opportunity to strip away part of the traditional Democratic coalition.

The following is a more detailed analysis.

In our swing States, there are essentially two groups of ticket splitters:

1. Original ticket splitters - They have traditionally split their ticket; they are upper middle-class suburban from middle-sized cities. They are people who are a little more affluent, educated, little higher incomes than the average voter. Many of them came from the Republican side originally, and they are typically upper middle-class suburbanites. They are good government people who used to be strong on civil rights and fair housing, and are now anti-busing and strong against crime. They consider themselves moderate, and they consider themselves issue voters but, in fact, they are more candidate oriented than issue oriented. Style of a candidate is very important to them. Even though they wouldn't admit it, the Ford family would have an impact on them. These people were probably squeezed in the recession.



2. Recent ticket splitters - This group has split their ticket since '66 or '68. They are upper ~~middle-class~~ blue collar who have just moved to the suburbs and people from the northern States who have come from the Democratic side into the ticket splitter column. In the East they are largely Catholic, and many of them are ethnic. In the West it's the same basic social class, but they are no longer ethnic or Catholic. These are people who have just barely made it out of the working class. Most of their wives work, and they are really threatened. They are afraid of social change, which is one reason why they moved to the suburbs. They are much closer to the New Majority people. As to those who are fairly hard Democratic, we probably won't do very well except to the extent we're able to cut the Catholics out.

Similarities  
+  
Differences

These two groups have in common the fact that they are younger than the average voter (in their thirties and forties) and they are the people who are socially mobile.

All of them have moved up either half or a full social class in their own time. These people are parents and therefore very concerned with anything that has to do with children, schools, and the like.

The New Majority group (second group above) tends to be socially very conservative, but still quite liberal economically.

Both groups of ticket splitters feel strongly about quality of life issues, and neither foresee that there's any tradeoff between environmental quality and the economy. This quality of life issue combines many separate issues such as consumerism, home ownership, leisure time, environment, etc.

Also, an important point is that these voters want their individual lives and the lives of their children to get better, e.g., more income, good health, trip to Hawaii.

Just because these voters want a smaller government and one not involved in everything, we cannot jump to the conclusion that they don't want government to do things. They see government as the legitimate instrument to solve problems.

On the other hand, the hard-core Republican really does want government out of everything, and the hard-core Democrat just isn't concerned about the too much government issue.

In addition to the problems already outlined concerning the perception of the President relative to Carter, it must be remembered that this swing vote is most heavily influenced by issues of all voting blocs. This swing constituency is concerned about the following specific issues:

1. National Defense - This group favors a strong national defense (which is seen as a traditional American value), but is very suspicious of making deals with our adversaries. They would like more visible cooperation with our armies and a little tougher approach to the Communists. The President is well positioned on these issues, but the articulation of his policies has been insufficient. By stressing defense (but not to the extent of committing troops, Ford will be perceived as being identified closer to "traditional American values".
2. *Separate* Morality and Movement - This constituency has a strong commitment to government working better and doing what's right. The President's policies are appealing to this group, but they need to be characterized as doing what's right and good for the country rather than what is politically expedient in an election year. This group also wants to feel that the country is moving again, after Vietnam, Watergate

and the recession. They are cautious and will be suspicious of Carter's uncertain direction. But they need to feel that the President has the country moving again and is leading them in the right direction.

- 3) Economy and Taxes - These issues are of major concern and the President's record is excellent. But public awareness of the President's policy on tax reduction and the effect on the taxpayer of the Democrat's economic policy need more effective communication. This group was strained by the recession and fears any possibility of slipping back. The vast majority are homeowners and will react negatively to Carter's proposal to eliminate mortgage interest as a tax deduction.
- 4) Crime - This is a major concern of these people and the President must come down hard on the issue. His programs will work and they make sense. He ought to bang the Congress and blame them for letting the situation fester while doing nothing.
- 5) Education - Many of these voters are upwardly mobile and owe some of their success to education. They fear that their children will not get the quality of education they deserve. The President must show awareness and concern on this issue above and beyond the busing question. Favoring more local control will be well received.

run against  
CROOKS, not  
Congress

DC  
CROOKS



- 6) Quality of Life - The vast majority of this constituency are conservationist and strongly supportive of a responsible environmental policy. In this issue area, the President is perceived as a pro-business, anti-environment candidate. To correct this situation, the President must become actively involved in conservationist activities, especially in the energy and recreation areas. Further, he must make some policy pronouncements in this direction. Above and beyond this, quality of life is a catch phrase which connotes a healthy community environment for individuals, housing, transportation, low crime rate, and quality education. There are sound Republican methods to achieve these goals and the President's blueprint for the future must clearly communication a commitment to "quality of life" for the individual. The words evoke a more favorable response than liberal, conservative, moderate, or any other denotation of policy.

← separate two swings

## II - CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

CONCLUSIONS

From the foregoing analysis of the problem of perception and the swing States and voters, we have reached the following conclusions:

Voter Perception

1. Although President Ford has demonstrated an ability to cause an increase in his approval rating by the national voters (based on Harris, Gallup and other polls), such a rise has always been relatively modest and temporary. The President has not shown the capability of causing a sharp increase in his approval rating for a sustained period of time.\*
2. By actively campaigning in the traditional sense (i.e., rallies, stump speeches, and the like) the President impacts his national standing negatively.\*\*

---

\*

As shown in the chart on Page , the Mayaguez affair produced a unique and very soft increase in the President's national polls.

\*\*Besides the analysis presented previously on the President's traditional campaigning, the following reasons exist for sharply curtailing future campaign travel: (a) The President is perceived as unpresidential compared to Carter in the campaign mode; (b) when on the stump, the President is very susceptible to errors such as launching into a personal attack on his opponent; (c) for the general election, we can get far greater benefits by allocating our very scarce resources elsewhere, e.g., advertising and TV buys for major speeches; and, (d) we need a dramatic change (e.g., to issues, away from conventional campaigning) in order to capture the initiative and put Carter on the defensive.





3. In general, the voters do not have a firm perception of any specific positive trait of the President. There are, however, some general "feelings" which contribute to the President's approval rating:

- He is basically non-arrogant and honest.
- He is safe -- will not make major errors as President.

However, the voters have the following negative perceptions of the President:

- He is weak -- not decisive or in control.
- ? ◦ He is not well educated or wise.
- ? ◦ He represents the status quo of big, unresponsive government.

4. In general, the voters have the following positive perceptions of Carter, based almost entirely on a very soft "awareness" factor:

- He is new -- represents a fresh approach and change.
- He is honest and religious.
- He is a conservative Democrat -- just to the right of center.

In general, the voters do not have a negative impression of Carter, but he has the following weaknesses which could result in a negative opinion by the voters:

- He is vague -- almost arrogant.



- ° He is almost mystical, evangelical.
- ° He may be joining the Democratic establishment.

5. The President's current White House and campaign organization is incapable of changing his negative voter perception and, in fact, continuation of the present staff operation will likely result in an increased negative perception of the President by the voters. *improve perception by better set-up*

*more delicate*

6. There does not appear to be any alternative way of substantially increasing the President's approval rating, other than by fundamentally changing the voters' perception of him. Until the voters perceive that President Ford has the personal characteristics as a President should have, no strategy can be expected to close the Ford-Carter gap. \*

\*

President Ford has overcome one of the most serious challenges any 1976 Presidential candidate must deal with, which is, the perception of arrogance. There is probably nothing President Ford can do between now and the election which would result in the voters perceiving him as arrogant. Of course, the difficulty is that, in striving to appear the opposite of arrogant, the President has also managed to appear undignified, uninspired and mediocre. This "price" which has been paid to avoid the "imperial Presidency" charge has been enormous and, tragically, probably totally unnecessary. There is no way that President Ford (especially in comparison with Nixon or, for that matter, Carter) will ever appear arrogant. Therefore, self-deprecating comments, such as "I am a Ford, not a Lincoln", rather than having any beneficial impact, have, in fact, resulted in a substantial negative result.

moving  
at the margin  
versus philosophy  
Basis for decision

### Swing States/Voters

- A. The Ford campaign should assume the following States will vote Democratic (for Carter):\*

✓ Georgia	12	? North Carolina	13	Virginia	12
✓ D. C.	3	✓ South Carolina	8	New York	41
Alabama	9	? West Virginia	6	Connecticut	8
Arkansas	6	Massachusetts	14	Washington	9
Louisiana	10	Rhode Island	4		
Mississippi	7	Hawaii	4		

Total: 166  
89  
77

- B. We should assume the following States are our "base" of support (listed in order of most likely to vote Republican):

Nebraska	5	Utah	4	Indiana	13
Kansas	7	Wyoming	3	Colorado	7
Vermont	3	Arizona	6	New Hampshire	4
Idaho	4	South Dakota	4	Maine	4
North Dakota	3	Oklahoma	8	Iowa	8

Total: 93

- C. We should consider the following as our "core" swing States:

Wisconsin	11	Michigan	21	Montana	4
New Jersey	17	New Mexico	4	Nevada	3
Illinois	26	Maryland	10	Delaware	3
Minnesota	10	Ohio	25	Alaska	3
California	45	Oregon	6		

Total: 179

\*

The Wall Street Journal article (See Tab II- ) on the Carter strategy identified

- D. We should consider the following additional swing States, depending on the Vice Presidential selection and other over-arching factors:

Florida	17	Pennsylvania	27
Tennessee	10	Texas	26
Kentucky	9	Missouri	12
		Virginia	11

Total: 112

- E. Within the "base" States, the following voter profile applies:

Rural and small town  
 Small businessmen  
 Farmers

- F. Within the swing States, the following swing voter profile applies:

Middle and upper middle income  
 Suburban  
 Upper blue collar and white collar  
 Catholic  
 Independents and ticket splitters  
 Social conservatives, slightly liberal  
 on the economy

CAMPAIGN GOALS

From the foregoing analysis, we have identified the following goals (objectives) for the President's campaign.

These goals are broken into two basic parts: first, those necessary to solidify and maintain the President's "base" of strength, and, second, those necessary to accomplish the incremental swing votes necessary to achieve 270 electoral votes. *Third goal, undermine Carter's base*

General Goals for Base of Support

*Talk Leadership*  
*1*  
*Convey decisive intelligence competent composure perceptiveness*

1. Change voter perception of the President as being uneducated and unimaginative.
2. Establish a perception of the President as a man of experience. Carve out those qualities which demonstrate experience from the general perception of the President as a man of the Washington establishment committed to the status quo. Identify the President's record as minority leader.
3. Create an impression of the President as a man in control. Show the President's decisiveness, ability to command the respect and obedience of those in his Administration, and as a world leader who can influence and direct the course of events.
4. Develop voter understanding of the President's position on issues. Develop an understanding among the electorate

*A Experience*  
*B Slow Action*  
*To improve*  
*Gott. - make*  
*Work Setter*

*Part of 1*

*Use POTUS issues to undermine Carter's vagueness*



that the President is substantively a pragmatic conservative whose programs are comprehensive and contain an element of compassion.

5. ~~Reverse~~ <sup>Lay out</sup> the President's current perception as the man without vision. Show the President as leading the Nation away from the philosophy of governing which has dominated Washington for the past forty years under the Democratic majority.

6. We must unify the GOP after the Convention. This should be a secondary objective -- one which results from implementing primary objectives -- as will be indicated by the strategy section which follows.

Adopt a specific campaign strategy and create a control and management capability in the White House and campaign organization which will enable the President to conduct a highly disciplined, error-free campaign.

unity in winning

make #1  
Decide + stick to it  
Make certain capability in WH and PFC to implement it

The President and his staff must focus on the campaign. We must have a "mind set" which is focused on the election -- on winning.

Campaign Goals for Swing Vote (Independent and Ticket Splitters)

A. General Goals

1. ~~Force~~ <sup>Conse</sup> the swing voter to reevaluate ~~his per-~~  
~~ception of~~ the President. This will take an

~~attention~~  
~~"shock"~~

so that people will reevaluate their assumptions about the President's personal characteristics and once again begin to listen to what he has to say.

2. Develop a major and highly disciplined attack on the perception of Carter. We must close the gap between Carter's perception and his actual weaknesses. He must be seen as:
  - Inexperienced
  - Arrogant
  - Devious and highly partisan (a function of uncontrolled ambition).
  - As one who uses religion for political purposes; as evangelic.
  - As liberal, well to the left of center and a part of the old-line Democratic majority.
  - An unknown. A man whose thirst for power dominates. Who doesn't know why he wants the Presidency or what he will do with it.
3. Carter's campaign must be linked (in the public's mind) to Nixon's '68 and '72 campaigns -- very slick, media-oriented. A candidate that takes positions based on polls -- not principles.

- B. Independents (Suburban, White Collar, Upper Middle Class from Traditionally Republican Households)
1. Develop positions on specific issues designed to appeal to the voter bloc.
  2. Target special advocates program to this group.
  3. Establish personal recognition by the President of this group.
- C. <sup>clerk</sup> Ticket Splitters (Low Suburb, Upper Blue Collar, Upward Mobility, from Traditionally Democratic Households, Conservative on Social Issues, Liberal on Economic Issues)
1. Position the President as strongly concerned with religious and ethnic groups. Demonstrate his concern for the traditional values of family and moral values.
  2. Demonstrate the President's concern for the fears of people who have recently helped themselves. Show a strong opposition to government programs which equalize people rather than let people help themselves.
  3. Develop an active program of targeting specific issues and programs and attention on ethnic/religious groups (e.g., social issues like crime and education).
  4. Portray the President as Presidential and not as a partisan Republican.
  - 5.





## III - DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGY1. Introduction

*DR*

This strategy is the result of a pragmatic analysis of the foregoing chapters.

There are other campaign strategies, but we have not presented them as alternatives because, in our judgment, they will inevitably lead to the President's defeat in November.

*OK for options*

The chapter following this one will show how the recommended strategy can result in achieving each identified goal.

2. The Targets

*Rechnance*

The President's base of support consists of the States previously identified.\*

This group should receive a high campaign priority.

---

\*

Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Nebraska, North Dakota, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Wyoming.

The swing voters within the swing States\* should receive the highest campaign priority in terms of resources.

The potential target States (listed on Page ) should receive secondary attention.

We should assume that the States listed on Page will vote for Carter, no matter what we do. Without stating it publicly, <sup>we</sup> should make no positive efforts to win these. Also, within our target States, we should make no attempt to appeal directly to the following voter types.\*\*

- Hard Democrats
- Liberal Independents

---

\*

The following States are analyzed on pages

Core (prioritized by electoral vote): California, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, N.J., Wisconsin, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon, Montana, N.M., Alaska, Delaware, Nevada.

Possible (depends somewhat on our V.P.): Pennsylvania, Texas, Florida, Missouri, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky.

\*\* The "Carter" States are: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, D.C., Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, N.Y., N.C., R.I., S.C., Virginia, Washington, W. Virginia.

Our strategy in these States should be to force Carter to devote resources here to keep his base. We should have one PFC official devoted full time to creating "paper" organizations (Hollywood fronts) in these States. A chairman and press spokesman should pump out releases announcing a plethora of news groups (e.g., Georgians for Ford, Baptists for Ford) and examples of Carter weakness. We should devote very little resources to this effort.

1- pg. map



3. Strategy Basics (Cross-Cutting Concepts)

A. The President's campaign must be highly disciplined.

- The President must establish iron-clad control over Administration and campaign officials. For the period from the time of implementation of this plan until the election, every high visibility action of Administration and campaign officials must be cleared at the White House. Administration prima donnas must subvert their personal ambitions to the objective of getting the President elected.
- The President must take specific actions to demonstrate that he is a capable and competent leader.

B. The President must appear as a man committed to making life better for our target voters. Action must be taken to create sufficient "shock" to ensure that swing voters develop a mind-set of listening to the President with a willingness to be convinced that they should vote for him.

C. The President's campaign must be television oriented. We must change the perception of literally millions\* of voters, and this can only be done through the mass media with the principal emphasis on television. This is true for coverage of the President and media advertising.

D. We must establish a major capability to attack Carter.

4. Strategy Specifics (Actions Aimed at Specific Objectives)

A. Establish competence.

- Develop five-minute ads which document the President's education and early leadership experience. Essentially ~~re~~-package the President as one would an unknown candidate.

\*

Although not statistically meaningful, the following will give some perspective to the magnitude of the challenge. If the President trails Carter by 20 points after our Convention, we will have to make about 10 million voters switch from Carter to Ford. This is about 150,000 per day.

Bringing these figures into sharper focus, to pick up 10 million voters, the President will have to:

- "Win" over six Congressional Districts per day (from being behind 60-40%);
- Operate in a media market of 1.5 million voters a day in order to pick up the needed 10%.

Not first one

- Use advocates to compare President's ~~educa-  
tion~~ with Carter, ~~and other national leaders~~  
(~~such as Reagan~~).
- Develop a TV "style" that subtly sends a message of control and competency. Get very good TV advisor (such as Bill Carruthers) who has experience in this area.

B. ~~Create "shock" effect to establish change.~~

- Instill a new discipline in the President's White House and campaign staff. Get a campaign manager who signals -- by his prestige -- that we now have professional leadership.
- Control prima donnas in Administration.
- Announce that the President will not campaign in the normal sense, but rather will use this Bicentennial election year to improve the Presidential electoral process by focusing on issues. (See next chapter for specifics and Tab I- for draft announcement.)
- Develop and implement "issue cycle" plan. (See next chapter for specifics and Tab I- for detailed examples.)
- Challenge Carter to a series of debates. (See next chapter for specifics.)

old base.

to demonstrate that the President is  
 the Party's leader, in control and the unifier,  
 would call a special -- and off-the-record --  
 meeting of all delegates after his nomination  
 to announce the Vice Presidential nomination.  
 This would be unprecedented. The President could  
 go to the Convention Hall without the press. This  
 would not be a part of the regular Convention, but  
 would be a private meeting between the President and  
 the delegates and alternates. He would ask for  
 their support and speak in very strong terms about the  
 need to win in November. Obviously, this would  
 be kept out of the press (in fact, we would encourage  
 this) and it would create a great deal of contro-  
 versy because the press is excluded, which would  
 add to the mystery and drama of the event.\*  
 This would be a half-hour paid television address by  
 the President or Connally, aimed at conservatives, which  
 could be used in our base States. This would be

the unification problem nor spend resources  
 on it. The fact is that if we're 15 or 20  
 percent unity will be a function of Ford's per-  
 centage. If Republicans think he's going to win,  
 they'll support him; if they think he's going to lose  
 they'll support Goldwater (correctly -- Goldwater in 1964), the  
 result is divided no matter what we do.

*Handwritten signature:*  
 [Signature]  
 10/5

designed to underscore the President's conservative record on the issues and the need for Republican support because of the Carter threat.

- Develop and implement a special rural development/farm program. (See Tab I- .)
- The President must refrain from appearing highly partisan. He must never personally attack his opponent.
- The President must continue to project an image of openness, inner tranquility and family-oriented. His campaign activities should not detract from this perception.

His campaign organization must be disciplined but open and honest. The voter should associate Carter with the Nixon image of arrogance and thirst for power. (See pp .)

D. Actions to get target swing voters.

- Select Vice Presidential running mate with the following characteristics:
  1. Able to carry a key State or region, such as Pennsylvania and the industrial Northeast.
  2. Aggressive campaigner who can take the lead implementing the attack Carter plan.
  3. A man who is perceived as an Independent, or at least moderate Republican, without



a strong Party identification. Must have a strong image of freshness and non-Washington establishment.

- Develop and implement a major "attack Carter" plan. (See Chapter for discussion and Tab I- for further details.)
- In order to break the President out of the Washington establishment mold, he should launch an attack on the Democratic majority which has governed Washington for forty out of the past forty-four years. We should avoid symbolic acts such as bill signings, submitting legislation, vetoes, and the like, which simply reinforce the perception of the President as part of the Washington establishment. These events very rarely leave an impression on the substance of what was done. (See Tab I- for details of how this can be accomplished.)
- Develop a TV documentary targeted towards the Independents and Group 2 of swing voters.
- Establish a program targeted specifically at Catholics. (See following chapter and Tab I- for details.)

- Implement new campaign themes aimed at the Independent and ticket splitter. Strive to create the perception of the President as a conservative on social issues and moderate on economic issues. (See Chapter .)
- Implement a major First Family media blitz aimed particularly at the swing voter (Group 1). Orient along the lines of a loyal, supportive family, but avoid highly controversial subjects such as abortion, womens' rights, etc. (See Chapter and Tab I- for details.)
- The President must avoid campaigning for GOP candidates. This will seriously erode his support among Independents and ticket splitters. The President should not attend any Party fund raisers. Any support given a GOP candidate must be done in a manner to avoid national media attention. For example, the President can make telephone calls, sign mailers, do video tape endorsements for fund raisers, etc.

move up

5. Implementation Steps

A. As a critical part of creating the "shock" which is necessary to break the current mold which constrains and limits the perception voters have of the President, there will have to be some announcement, as indicated previously. This announcement,

which probably should occur within a week after the Convention (see Tab I- for draft), should contain the following key elements:

- Presidential campaigning has become a circus which no longer fully serves the needs of the American people and the political process established by the Constitution. The President can appropriately use this Bicentennial year to demonstrate how the process can be improved. He can contribute by campaigning on the issues and thus assisting the people in making one of the most serious choices they must to preserve democracy and freedom.
- Candidly, a campaign which focuses on the issues helps the President get elected. His strength is in his proven ability to lead this Nation. Thus a campaign which results in the voters intelligently judging the candidates on the basis of their proven records, is a campaign that will favor the President.
- The President will announce certain ground rules for his campaign, including a schedule of press conferences, a timetable for his presenting the issues to the American people, and other specifics including the possibility of a debate.

SPECIAL NOTE: The President's "campaign" must be very aggressive. He must appear as the man fighting an uphill fight, but confident



of ultimate victory. He must never appear defensive.

Our campaign strategy has been developed around the President's actual strengths and aimed at Carter's actual weaknesses. We are not trying to change the President (style or substance); we are trying to change the voter's perception of the President and Carter.

B. To command and control his campaign, the following key elements are necessary:

- At the White House:
  - 1) A Review Group - see pages .
  - 2) Absolute control over Presidential activities and Administration officials and actions.
- At the President Ford Committee:
  - 1) Control over advertising, political press relations and
  - 2) Control over advocates
  - 3) Carter attack capability (See pp. )
  - 4) Polling
- At the RNC:
  - 1) Voter identification and turnout
  - 2) Carter attack capability (See pp. )
- Use of Vice President Rockefeller and the Vice Presidential nominee:

C. In order to ensure that every single action by the President between the time the strategy is adopted and the election is reviewed to determine its impact on the strategy, a Review Group should be established.

This group will have three functions:

First, to assess every proposed Presidential action (from scheduling to positions on issues) along with the actions of every key Administration and campaign official, to determine how that action impacts on the strategy objectives. Each target group will be indexed and given a specific weight so that all actions can be judged in terms of how they impact each target group/State and a "net assessment" can be rendered.

Second, the group should act as a political crisis management group which can meet on less than an hour's notice, at any time, to advise the President on how to react to opportunities or attacks as they develop.

Third, synchronize Presidential activity, campaign advertising, press plans and the Issue Cycle plan (discussed in following pages).

This group should be viewed as "personal to the President", that is, it should not appear in any organization chart, and it should receive no publicity. Its membership should be kept very small (five or six) and the campaign and Administration "superstars" should not be part of it on a permanent basis because of their lack of availability. Obviously, the President will often want to consult with one or more of his top officials, but he should also have the advice of the Review Group separately.

See Tab I- for an analysis of the manner in which the Review Group can function.

ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDED STRATEGY AND ALTERNATIVES1. Goals/Strategy Analysis

<u>Goals</u>	<u>Strategy Element</u>
A) Change perception to show President as being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in control</li> <li>- experienced</li> <li>- educated</li> <li>- leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control Administration/campaign officials.</li> <li>• Ads and advocates hit President's background and experience.</li> <li>• All Presidential actions packaged for TV impact -- show him in command.</li> </ul>
B) Develop understanding of President's position on issues -- that he is conservative and has compassion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up "issue cycle"</li> <li>• Get good speeches and package for TV.</li> <li>• Use new campaign themes</li> </ul>
C) Hold base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Private" meeting in Kansas City after nomination</li> <li>• Project "winner" image</li> <li>• Implement rural development and farm plan</li> </ul>
D) Establish disciplined campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get new people into campaign</li> <li>• Establish firm control in White House over all media events of all Administration campaign officials.</li> <li>• Get good TV advisor</li> <li>• Adopt and rigidly implement this strategy.</li> <li>• Set up Review Group</li> <li>• Get top advertising group</li> </ul>

- E) ~~Shock~~ Independent and ticket splitters into changing their perception of the President
- Announce new campaign ground rules
  - Challenge Carter to debates
  - "Issue cycle"
- 
- F) Change Carter's perception
- Implement attack plan
  - Use half-hour TV specials with Connally, Rockefeller and Reagan
- 
- G) Develop positions that appeal to Independents
- Do not campaign in normal manner
  - Never attack personally
  - Select proper V.P.
  - Attack Democratic majority Congress
- 
- H) Develop positions that appeal to ticket-splitters
- Implement Catholics program
  - Implement new campaign themes
  - Stress family ties -- implement First Family plan
  - Show President as social conservative and economic moderate.



## 2. Alternative Strategies

There are three basic campaign strategies available to the President:

- Continue the same type of campaign utilized in the primaries.
- Develop a more structured, yet conventional, campaign effort (similar to Truman in '48 or Nixon in '68).
- Adopt The Recommended Strategy, an unconventional strategy which is highly targeted on specific swing constituencies in swing States, and which is designed to radically alter the voters perceptions of Ford and Carter.

The following is an analysis of the alternatives:

### Extend Current "Strategy"

Currently, the President's campaign can be characterized as utilizing traditional campaign tactics with directions and decisions coming in response to events. The strengths of the current "strategy" are:

- There are a variety of inputs from advisory groups, the PFC, Congressional leaders, Party officials, etc.

- The strategy entails a great deal of Presidential travel, thus beneficially impacting those who see the President, and local media markets.
- This strategy causes the least problems among Party officials, Congressional leaders, and the like.

However, this current method of operation is deficient in several respects:

- *Its not likely to work*
- There's no "base line" against which we can measure options for changes as we go through the campaign. We do not have a clear understanding of campaign objectives, which are based on a careful analysis and a solid data base. Decision-making is haphazard with no clear lines of authority, and there does not exist a capability to produce really good campaign speeches, issue papers, etc.
- Such a campaign cannot effectively utilize limited resources, and it has resulted in a percentage drop in the President's national standings from \_\_\_\_\_ to the present. It clearly is not a strategy which will result in making up a 15-25 point deficit.
- *Continues business as usual relies on Carter error*
- It has forced the President into a reactive mode -- defending his position on emotional but relatively insignificant issues.



Rather than correct the perception of deficiencies noted above, continuation of this strategy will, in all likelihood, lead to an increase in the negative gap between Carter and the President.

#### Structured, "Truman" Campaign

The principal advantage of a structured campaign would be better allocation of scarce resources. There could be a substantial improvement in the decision-making process, with deliberate attempt to coordinate the various spheres of influence, including the RNC, a President Ford committee, the White House, an independent "attack" group, etc. It is possible that a conventional campaign waged by a minority party could make up a 15-25 point gap in the seventy-three days available. However, it is not reasonable to assume that this can happen, given equality of financial resources. Not only will the Republicans not be able to outspend the Democrats, but in terms of non-financial resources (principally a unified majority party and union help), the Democrats will actually have ~~far~~ greater resources than we will. For example, in 1968 Humphrey trailed Nixon after the Convention by 12 points (43 to 31) with 19% of the vote going to Wallace and 7% undecided. By election day, Nixon still retained his 43%, but Humphrey had picked up slightly over 11 points.

It should be remembered that Nixon was able to hold his position in the polls, notwithstanding the fact that he faced a majority party. This is largely due, of course, to "external forces" such as LBJ's position on the Vietnam war.

Also, as we have shown previously, the President tends to lose national popularity as he campaigns. This was true in the past and is likely to be even a greater problem when running against Carter.

One important point must be kept in mind when considering a "Truman" campaign: if Truman had to implement his '48 campaign today, he would probably lose BECAUSE OF TV. Truman was not that good on the stump (his speeches were awful!) and, while his "Give them Hell, Harry" style was pleasing to relatively small crowds -- who would only see it once -- it probably would have quickly worn thin if seen nightly by millions in living color.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

In order to maintain our "base" constituency, we recommend the following themes:

1. Honesty - This theme will be designed to demonstrate that the President's speeches and actions are morally based. It will reflect principles in terms of the President's life style and the position he takes on issues. A key ingredient of this theme will be the role Mrs. Ford and the family plays in the election.
2. Intelligent and In Command - This theme will be used in an attempt to change the clear perception voters now have of the President as not intelligent and not in control. The President should be portrayed as possessing knowledge and wisdom, tempered by over a quarter of a century of experience. As with the honesty theme, this will involve an intensive look at the President as a man and, accordingly, much of the burden of presenting this theme will have to be borne by advertising and advocates. We should seize every opportunity to directly compare Ford and Carter in terms of experience, education and family characteristics. While the President's intelligence can be developed by emphasizing his past, it is clear that to demonstrate control, the voter must perceive that ~~radical~~ changes have occurred. Control will inevitably

*Leadership  
Degrees  
Again*

be measured in highly personal terms, such as the relationship between the President and Kissinger, Simon, et al.

3. Experienced at the Essentials of Governing - This theme will demonstrate that the President recognizes that there are certain essentials which government must provide its people, and in these areas, the President, by virtue of his experience, can best govern the Nation.

Government must provide for: equality among its people. Not equality of result, which is the position of the Democrats and Carter, but equality of opportunity. It must also provide for a stable economy. Not by imposing government controls, which is the Democrats and Carter position, but by building up the strength of the private sector with the government imposing minimum ground rules. The federal government must provide for world peace. Not by taking this country into war, which every Democratic administration has done in recent history, but by building a structure of world peace, such as Ford has done. And, finally, government has a moral obligation to help the helpless. Not by providing for the wants of people, which is the Democrats' program, but rather by providing the essential needs for people who cannot help themselves.

4. Opposed to Arrogance of Bigness - For the most part, opposition to bigness means opposition to bigness of institutions. At the head of the list, of course, is the federal government. Our opposition should be aimed at the Democratic majority in Congress and not Congress as an institution. We must build the case that the Democrats are a party which relies on the government to solve problems we face as a Nation. Jimmy Carter is a part of the Democratic establishment by virtue of his activities from the time he was assured of the nomination until the beginning of the campaign. He is linked with big labor and with the Democratic leadership of Congress. Carter in the White House and the Democrats in Congress will ensure a continuation of the ever-increasing power of government over the lives of individuals and the private economic sector.

On the positive side, we must stress the fact the President has consistently (over a twenty-five year period) sought to reduce the power of the federal government and protect the rights of individuals and businesses to govern their own destiny. As a practice matter, the negative attack on Carter (linking him with the Democratic and a majority party that seeks to impose greater domination over this country) will be more

effective than the positive thrust of stressing the President's record.

In developing this theme, it will be essential that we cite specific examples of how the President is improving government. These examples (which will be similar to the horror stories which are always released by Proxmire's office) must involve truly outrageous examples of government interference. All too often, we cite examples of government reform which are perceived to involve legitimate services of government designed to help particular groups of people. In general, all the considerable progress that has been made by the Administration in reforming the Executive Branch and the regulatory agencies, has not helped the President one iota with the voters. He is not perceived to have accomplished anything. One exception can be found in the action the President recently took to overturn the HEW regulations concerning father-son meetings at schools.

In addition to coming up with specific reforms which will be perceived as meaningful progress, the President must also come to grips with the big business problem. Politically, opposition to big business is the real litmus test for any Republican. Thus far, the President is perceived as clearly in bed with big



business (particularly because of his position vis-a-vis the oil companies), and is opposed to stronger anti-trust laws.

5. Growing Prosperity - This theme should be developed by showing how the economy is improving -- and will continue to improve -- because of President Ford's steady-handed leadership.

Carter will be linked to traditional Democratic economics. A "Carter" budget will be presented.

We will make the point that by minimizing government management of the Nation's economy, the President has revitalized the private sector and America's can-do spirit.

This theme should also stress the importance of the Ford-Carter choice for the future of the country.

At issue is who will control our lives -- ourselves or our government.

In order to attract the swing voters (which are primarily pragmatically -- as opposed to ideologically -- conservative people who are upwardly mobile) we recommend the following additional themes:

6. Vision of a Better Life - This theme must demonstrate that the President is a man of change. It must establish the point that if he is elected President, the next four years will result in a better life for our target voters.

This theme should be developed around programs which demonstrate vision for the future based on caution and a healthy respect for the existing governmental system. It is the articulation of the President's willingness to incur near-term costs for long-term benefits, and his ability to avoid the "big play".

7. Stability of Opportunity - This theme must drive home the point that the President will not allow those who have moved upward during their life to slip backwards, either because of external pressures such as inflation and the like, or due to positive government action such as quotas.
8. Quality Government as a Means to Improve the Quality of Life - This theme will develop the President's basic approach to improving the quality of life of those who have been helping themselves. At the core of this theme will be the concept of increased knowledge.

Using the idea of self-betterment as a way to overcome obstacles and achieve a better life, this theme will deal with the following specific subjects:

- Education
- Housing
- Crime

- Environment
- Transportation
- Etc.

In terms of form, this should reflect social conservatism with moderate to ~~slightly left of moderate~~ positions on economics. ?   
Gt

One possible approach to the environmental (and big business issues would be to attack the "hidden subsidy" business has been getting by being allowed to dispose their waste in our air and water. The President could approach this as a moral issue -- do not give anyone free use of the national assets of air and water. Our program would be aimed at internalizing these costs -- not EPA regulations.

9. Americans Together - Counter the basic attack by Democrats (need for change because Americans are disillusioned) by stressing that Americans have come together after Watergate and Vietnam because of Ford's leadership. Cite the 4th of July phenomena.

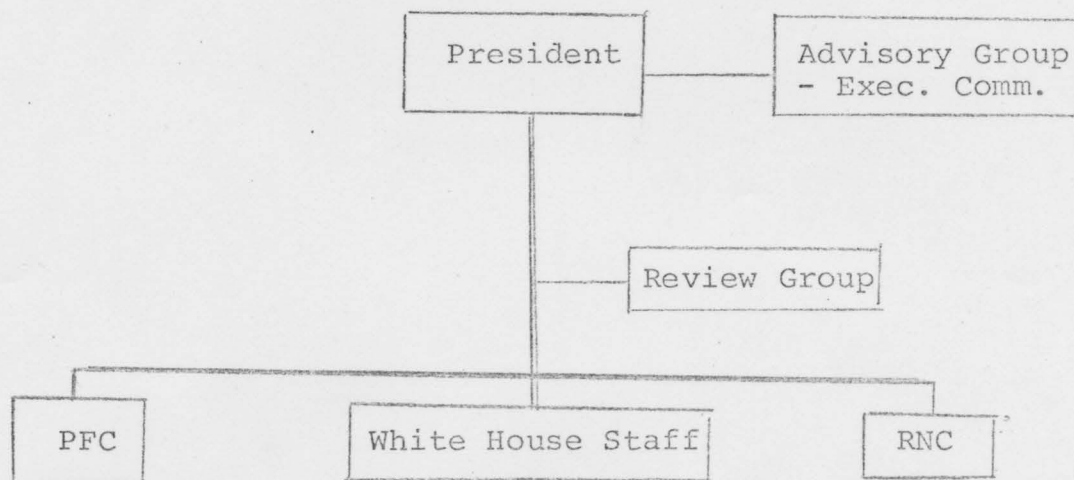
\* \* \*



Although we've been cautious about over-promising, we must drive home in our themes the idea that President Ford is going to improve people's lives. In some cases, we may have to go out on a limb in terms of a promise, but we've got to let people know that this President is going to make a change for the better in their lives. We've got to stop talking about such things as whether or not it's improvement to go from 7.3 to 6.9 unemployment, and talk about how we're going to end this problem and really help people.

SYNOPSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN1. Command and Control

There must be a clear definition of responsibilities between the White House, PFC and RNC. Control of the campaign must be centralized. The following command and control mechanism is recommended:



Advisory Group: Made up of the President's Senior Campaign advisors/officials. Acts as "Board of Directors" of campaign. Small Executive Committee meets with the President twice a week.

Review Group: Its three functions (which were described on Page ) are: (1) provide a "net assessment" of every proposed Presidential activity/decision in terms of its impact on The Campaign Strategy; (2) continually assess effectiveness of the strategy; and (3) synchronize advertising, media, Presidential activity and issue cycle plan.

This group should meet with Dick Cheney every day (just prior to Dick's evening meeting with the President. It should meet with the President twice a week just prior to his meeting with the Advisory Group.

The group should consist of the following:

2. Vice President  
[to be supplied]
3. Budget

The budget should be developed by the PFC, reviewed by the Advisory Group and approved by the President.

The following relative priorities are suggested:

- 40% - Advertising
- 25% - Carter/Mondale attack
- 15% - Presidential events
- 15% - PFC activities
- 5% - Vice President

#### 4. Presidential Activity

The President's campaign activity should be developed around the "Issue Cycle Plan".

We have discussed earlier the importance of trying to focus the Fall campaign on the issues. Again, people rarely vote because of the candidate's position on specific issues, but they use issues (particularly how the candidate prioritizes and presents the issues that are important to him) as a means to assess the character and personality of the candidate. Thus issues are important, not so much because of substance, but what they tell the voter about the candidate as a man.

One reason why Americans in general tend to become confused as to the candidate's position on issues (except a few controversial and key issues which receive a lot of press attention) is because of the haphazard way they tend to be presented during the course of a normal campaign. In general, issues are presented, not in any logical order based on substance, but rather in accordance with the candidate's schedule of events. Also, events external to the particular candidate's campaign, such as attacks by his opponents, etc., tend to become action-focusing in terms of the presentation of the candidate's view on specific issues.

As a result, the electorate is faced with a confusing presentation of a great deal of substance, often deliberately obscured by the candidates for political purposes, and then further confused by the press reports and his opponent's attack.

We have a plan which has as its objective the presentation of issues in a logical way, so that the presentation itself tends to drive home the President's substantive position in the voter's mind. Also -- and more importantly -- the method of presentation will show the President as a logical, ordered and experienced President who is in control.

Our recommendation is that issues be grouped under logical, generic headings such as:

- A prosperous and free domestic economy
- Improved quality of life for each American family
- A more peaceful world

Each major subject area would be presented over a given period of time (averaging about a week) in the following general manner:

Day 1 - Presentation by the President of his basic philosophical approach to this subject area. Statement of principles which guide his policy decisions. Basic statement of





accomplishments and "core" program and initiatives.

Day 2 - Presentation of specific "white papers",  
& 3 fact sheets, legislative proposals, administrative actions, etc. Specific issues are presented with facts, backgrounders and enough detail to fully present the problem being addressed, how the President's action will solve the problem, what the cost will be and who will pay it, and other relevant information.

Day 4 - Presidential press conference with twenty minutes devoted to this subject area and the remaining ten minutes for general questioning. Selected specialty and regional press would be invited to augment the regular White House Press Corps.

Day 5 - Major speech by principal advocate (probably  
& 6 buy television time) characterizing the President's position on this issue and attacking the opposition.

Our campaign advertising would be geared to sync with this schedule. In addition, all advocates and other spokesmen would do likewise.

In order to provide an increasing tempo for the campaign, this cycle would probably begin scheduled to cover a seven to eight-day period, which would then be slowly telescoped for succeeding subjects covered so that the final issues might be covered in a three to four-day cycle.

One obvious option would be to schedule in debates with Carter keyed to the issue cycle. If the President decides to challenge Carter to debate, we should try to get an agreement that there will be a series of four or five by subject area (which would coincide with our issue cycle plan).

The President could close the campaign with a major televised address (time purchased by the campaign) with the presentation organized in accordance with the issue cycle used in the campaign. An option to the President presenting this solo would be to have a presentation by someone like John Connally as narrator, presenting the issues by the use of film of the President in action, etc. This could be followed by a brief summation by the President himself.

Although this has the appearance of being overly structured when presented in writing, it will lose this characteristic when implemented. External events (Carter activities, government business, etc.) will create an impression that issues are being raised

randomly. The Issue Cycle Plan will nevertheless project an impression of orderliness and control.



PRE-CAMPAIGN PLAN

The following pre-campaign plan is intended as an integral part of this overall election strategy. It covers the period from now through the Convention.

1) Develop Perception of Strong Fall Campaign Capability

OBJECTIVE: Demonstrate that the President has firm control of his Fall campaign effort; that a strategy has been developed and adopted; and, that the best talent available has been lined up.

RECOMMENDED STEPS:

- The President should adopt a campaign strategy by July 23, after receiving the advice of his closest advisors. He should reveal the entire strategy only to a half-dozen or so very close -- and trusted -- advisors.

The press guidance (for White House and PFC) should be as follows:

- a) The President has developed a comprehensive campaign strategy, drawing on a broad range of advice and factual input.
- b) He will not reveal the strategy. Only very few senior advisors have been briefed by the President -- and they aren't talking. Others (who may talk) are just speculating or may only have a part of it.

c) The only characterization given by the President is that the strategy is national, comprehensive and completely realistic. The major variable concerns the identity of the President's running mate.

- Identify additional key campaign aides. Quietly plug in and let that become known -- especially among party leaders.

Make special effort to include Independent and anti-Carter Democrats. Signal should go out that Carter will be a target as well as an opponent. This is important because (a) it will stimulate critical press attention directed at Carter; (b) provide a stimulus for Independents and dissatisfied Democrats to join Ford (thereby demonstrating our strength vis-a-vis Reagan); and, (c) as a signal to the delegates that we will run a really tough and aggressive campaign.

2) Announce a Vice President Selection Process

OBJECTIVE: Show the President (not external forces generated by the Reagan challenge) as being firmly in control; head off press criticism and unfavorable comparison to Carter; and, put Reagan on the defensive.



## RECOMMENDED STEPS:

- President adopts a strategy of revealing that he has a specific and disciplined process for selecting his running mate, but he will not reveal names.
- Advisors (Morton-Cheney) will let it be known that only the President knows who is on the list.
- The President could reveal the following about the list:
  - About a dozen names
  - He personally knows everyone
  - Women are included

No one can add to this because no one else knows.

- The President (or Cheney?) could reveal the following concerning the process:
  - The President alone is in control
  - He is spending a considerable amount of time on the selection.
  - He is meeting with some of the people under consideration; with others he is conversing on the telephone, and in several cases he knows the person so well there is no need for specific conversations on the Vice Presidency.

- The President will make his preference known to the Convention after his nomination.
- Views of political leaders are being submitted (but not solicited) to the President via Rog Morton -- views of all others are submitted through Dick Cheney.
- The President is reviewing specific background information concerning the people under consideration. This varies by individual, but generally covers moral, ethical, financial and legal matters. The President has not revealed any further details.
- The President has talked to the Attorney General personally to develop a process of using the FBI to investigate specific factual matters if necessary. No government agency -- including the FBI -- will be used without the individual's consent.

NOTE: See Tab II- for President's on-the-record remarks concerning the V.P. selection matter.

3) Presidential Actions Between Now and Convention

OBJECTIVE: Begin to change current negative perceptions of President by events/actions designed to demonstrate that he is:

- in control

- experienced and intelligent
- determined to win

## RECOMMENDED STEPS:

[to be supplied]

4) Initial Carter Attack

[to be supplied]

5) Convention (Impact on Fall Campaign)

OBJECTIVE: Minimize adverse impact on President's national perception; to extent possible, take advantage of positive TV exposure; get best V.P. nominee; minimize GOP split; and, draw distinction between Ford/GOP and Carter/Democrats.

BACKGROUND: The major risk facing the President in Kansas City -- other than getting nominated -- is that events (as seen by the TV viewer) will reinforce the President's image as indecisive and out of control.

[additional points to be added]

## RECOMMENDED STEPS:

[Assumption - President has over 1,130 delegates which appear firm -- nomination appears certain.]





- Bring on board a very strong TV advisor.
- About a week before the Convention, move to establish tighter control over Convention program. Include Reagan people in this effort (particularly his TV advisor).
- During Platform hearings in Kansas City, establish firm control by Ford people.
  - President announces certain fundamental principles which should guide Platform drafters.
  - President's men in Kansas City demonstrate their control, preparation and discipline by [to be supplied].

This should be a demonstration of strength and competence -- not belligerence or arrogance. We should not pick fights.

- President remain in the White House until Wednesday or Thursday of Convention week.
  - Nothing will be more beneficial for the President's image than TV cut-aways from K.C. to the White House for reports on his activities.
  - The President's influence on the delegates can be more powerful if done from the White House (with careful planning) than in K.C.

[separate plan will be drafted.]

- When the President arrives in K.C. he must immediately -- with high visibility -- dominate the City, the Convention and, most importantly, TV programming.

This can be accomplished by:

- a) Massive arrival; with major downtown crowd-raising and very upbeat remarks in center of town.
- b) Summoning several key Convention leaders -- including Reagan people -- upon arrival. Set forth one or two specific (symbolic) changes in Convention designed to improve GOP image and not to secure any Ford advantage vis-a-vis Reagan.
- c) "Private" meeting with delegates/alternates after nomination (described in            ).

[additional steps to be supplied]

ATTACK AND CARTER'S REACTION1. Background

Carter's popularity is based primarily on his perceived credibility, but is very soft. The voter's perception of Carter can be substantially changed.

Our basic objective should be to change the perception of Carter:

- move him to the left on social issues and away from traditional American values;
- identify him as a partisan Democrat; and
- show that he is an arrogant man, driven by personal ambition in ruthless pursuit of power.

We cannot wait much longer before launching the Carter attack -- he is building a very substantial lead and is beginning to look like FDR in the polls.

Carter's success is largely attributable to three factors:

1. A thematic campaign of national renewal avoiding issues.
2. Relative to other candidates, he's terrific.
3. He is a superb politician and highly intelligent.

Since most people vote on personality, his avoidance of issue positions has not caused any major defection from the Democratic coalition. His theme of restoring honesty and morality to government has struck a responsive chord,

not unlike the President did in his first few weeks in Office. But in the course of the campaign, he will have to take positions which will cause some erosion of his support. Mondale and the Democratic Platform will cost him a great deal since both are far too liberal for his base, which is conservative and Southern.

In the recent national poll, people place Carter near themselves on the issues wherever they are. Because of his thematic, personal appeal, they want him to be close to them. But his regional and religious background have developed a conservative base of support while his running mate and platform are basically liberal. We must mount an attack on him on conservative issues, both economic and social. If we can succeed, we can keep him busy holding the South, which at present he takes for granted. By occupying him there, we free the President and his advocates to concentrate on the swing States. But the attack in the South must be on issues. We should not attack him personally there since this would cause a backlash of regional pride. It must be a respectful disagreement on a high plane.\*

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\*

An example of how not to attack Carter is Senator Dole's line on Face the Nation (7/18): "He is Southern-fried McGovern."



\* \* \*

Carter's choice of Mondale can be viewed as a potentially serious mistake which opens his ticket to attack as being liberal, especially on social issues. There are two obvious possible motives for the choice of Mondale and both present interesting attack opportunities:

- 1) Carter could be going for the big mandate by trying to win as many States as possible; or
- 2) He could be very worried about the third party threat by McCarthy.

\* \* \*

In challenging Carter on issues, we are faced with the need to make a threshold choice: do we want to stress that he "flip-flops", or do we want to force him to take specific positions that result in a loss of part of his "constituency"?

Our recommendation is to use this sequence:

- Force Carter to take positions (don't worry too much how he comes out on a particular issue).
- Give high visibility to his positions and target on the groups offended.
- Assume he will react to the inevitable erosion in the polls by "softening" his positions.

- Then begin to make the "flip-flop" case. Point out that he goes from a conservative-moderate position to liberal. Stress that this is a fundamental character flaw -- it's deceitful.

\* \* \*

Finally, we should try to characterize Carter's campaign as a minor image of Nixon's '68 and '72 campaigns. The following similarities should be pointed out:

- A candidate who tries to be all things to all people.
- Avoids specifics on issues (RN - '68 campaign)
- Driven by personal ambition - harsh and manipulative.
- Secretive and surrounded by a protective and fiercely loyal staff.

2. Carter's Campaign Strategy

[to be supplied]

3. Carter - Mondale Weaknesses

[to be supplied]

4. Our "Attack" Resources

The following should be considered as people who can effectively attack Carter/Mondale:

Vice President Rockefeller

Vice Presidential nominee

Cabinet and Members of Congress

Democrats for Ford (or against Carter)

Independents for Ford (or against Carter)

X Constituencies for Ford (or against Carter)

Georgians for Ford (or against Carter)

People who know Carter for Ford

Religious leaders (Catholics, Billy Graham, etc.)

John Connally

Ronald Reagan

George Wallace

5. Our "Attack" Organization

[to be supplied - PFC, RNC, Independents]

6. Attack Strategy Outline

A. Pre-Republican Convention

[to be supplied]

B. Convention to Labor Day

[to be supplied]

C. Labor Day to November

[to be supplied]

