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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
October 1, 1976



MEMORANDUM FOR: MIKE DUVAL
FROM: FOSTER CHANOCK
SUBJECT: Polling Information on Foreign Policy/
National Defense

Teeter Polls from Market Opinion Research

1. Foreign Policy and National Defense are low priority issues.
2. The President enjoys a 5:3 advantage over Carter on the ability to handle foreign policy and defense matters.
3. The President's advantage is due to incumbency and experience. People do not offer a positive reason for preferring the President. Therefore, it is to our advantage to make this area an issue if we can articulate accomplishments which give people a reason to support the President.
4. Republicans traditionally receive higher ratings in this area.
5. By a 5:3 margin, people are against defense cuts. But, if asked to cut the budget, people agree that about 8% could be cut without jeopardizing our security. Forty percent cannot place the President on the defense spending issue. Sixty percent cannot place Carter on the defense spending issue.
6. The public disapproves of the general foreign policy by a slight plurality. Those who approve have no reason. Disapprovers cite :

Kissinger.....	10%
Isolationist reasons.....	25%
Interventionist reasons.....	10%

7. In the priority states, we are doing below our normal vote with people in the Midwest and West who cite foreign policy as an important issue. Those same people do not like Kissinger.
8. The public wants us to be number one and wants to see evidence that detente benefits us.
9. Those who disapprove of Kissinger are on the ideological extremes. The public wants to see evidence of the President's running foreign policy, not Kissinger.
10. The President should not be an apologist for our international situation -- Congress is responsible for our defense cuts; the Russians are responsible for inflaming the trouble spots in the world.



National Yankelovich Poll on Foreign Policy

1. Half of the public see detente benefiting the Russians more.
Half of the public see detente benefiting both parties equally.
2. The public strongly agrees that:
 - A) We should not get involved in a country's internal affairs.
 - B) We should not aid countries just because they are anti-Communist.
 - C) We should withhold aid from countries supporting our enemies.
 - D) We should not aid corrupt regimes where aid does not reach the people.
 - E) Our domestic needs should take priority over the needs of people in foreign countries.
 - F) We need more cooperation on food, energy, and economic problems.
3. The public less strongly agrees that:
 - A) We should work more closely with our allies.
 - B) Our foreign policy should be more moral (consistent with American values).
 - C) The United Nations is ineffective.
 - D) We should work more closely with Peking without abandoning Taiwan.
 - E) We must end our dependence on foreign countries for raw materials.
 - F) We must learn to "get along" better with countries different than our own.

4. The public is strongly divided on the subject of arms sales:
 - A) They favor sales because of job creation and increased international influence.
 - B) But, they fear sales which might get us involved in another Vietnam and which encourage military governments.
 - C) Vietnam is viewed as a dark moment in American history and we should never have been there (by 70%).
5. Seventy percent of the people are worried because the U. S. is losing power and respect in the world.
6. The public will compromise morality for self-interest but they don't want to.
7. The public classifies themselves as:

Interventionists	44%
Moderates	33%
Isolationists	23%

Potomac Associates National Poll

1. The general public sees the world situation facing the country and the prospects for peace as slightly worsening.
2. Confidence in our armed forces has risen as has a willingness to maintain the U.S. in a dominant military position.
3. The public sentiment for defense spending and military bases abroad has increased while military aid, economic aid and UN support are decreasing. Those against military spending and bases tend not to be our constituents (liberals, blacks, union members, and under 30). Our constituents do fear that the Russians are getting stronger at a faster rate than we are.
4. Although a large majority agree we should improve relations with Russia (trade, SALT, other cooperative agreements), few people trust them.
5. More people think that our alliances are improving in the last two years, but they find that they could be stronger.

Conclusions

The average voter is best described as a cautious internationalist. He is uneasy about the present and the future, and therefore, supportive of being as strong as possible militarily. Vietnam left a bad taste which on the one hand encourages a desire to be strong and respected while on the other hand a reticence to become involved. There is no cause in the world which Americans would lay down their lives at present.

The electorate favors more cooperation in the areas of food, energy, and economic planning. They want to see us once again standing for what's right in the area of human values. But, they want us to be more selfish in our decision-making.

We are on the right side of the major issues in foreign policy and defense but people need a reason to be proud of their country and their President's leadership. We must be strong and we must be right. Our policy must first protect ourselves and then strive to achieve goals for other people which we set for ourselves, which ultimately benefits ourselves as well.

Carter's thematic approach restores a moral tone which people are longing for; to be friendlier with our allies, to stand up for what's right, to be tougher on our enemies, and not to get involved where it's unnecessary.

We must level with the people in the debate:

1. We must be strong enough to keep the peace.
2. We must cooperate with other countries where it benefits the United States.
3. We must stand up for human rights wherever we can so people can be proud again.
4. We must face the fact that it is a hostile and difficult world where we must often settle for less than perfection to protect the safety of our nation.

Sources:

Most of the material is taken from three papers in the Policy Perspectives series, Potomac Associates (William Watts, Lloyd Free, et. al.) These are based on a national sampling of 1,071 Americans conducted in May 1976. The sampling procedure and technical facilities were those of the Gallup Organisation. Details of the earlier samples are not presented, but are presumably equivalent - they are presented in two books, The State of the Nation 1972 and 1974. Where multiple answers were available a "composite rating" was calculated weighting responses by intensity, i.e. a rating of 50 signifies neutrality. Demographic breakdowns were conducted exhaustively but breakdowns were conducted exhaustively but only sketchily reported.

The remainder of the data is taken from a survey paper, U.S. Foreign Policy, by the Public Agenda Foundation.

Many of the Potomac Associates tables have not yet been published and are embargoed until October 1.

I. FOREIGN POLICY AS A MATTER OF PUBLIC CONCERN.

Only 5% of the sample cited international problems as the most important problem facing the nation. This lack of interest, coupled with reluctance to give "don't know" answers, renders the data technically "unstable."

On the other hand, from '74 to '76 there was a significant increase in concern over 4 out of 8 international issues, cf. only 2 out of 20 domestic issues. All related to protection of U.S. national security. Figures in parentheses give composite ratings for 1972, 1974 and 1976.

-- "keeping our military and defense forces strong"	(83,	74,	81)
-- "maintaining respect for the U.S. in other countries"	(81,	73,	78)
-- "the threat of communism"	(86,	69,	74)
-- "the danger of the U.S. becoming involved in a major war within the next few years"	(90,	66,	74)

II. GENERAL PERCEPTIONS.

1/. Assessment of the general international situation

(a) Rating the situation the U.S. faces in general at present

	1972	1974	1976
Excellent	2%	3%	1%
Good	33	32	31
Only fair	48	50	52
Poor	9	10	9
<u>Rating</u>	43	43	42

(b) Progress made over the last year or so

	1972	1974	1976
Much progress	8%	13%	4%
Some progress	56	56	43
Stood still	17	13	23
Lost some gnd	9	10	19
Lost much gnd	2	3	2
<u>Rating</u>	66	67	58

(c) Prospects for world peace

	1974	1976
<u>Rating</u>	67	53



(d) The U.S. should maintain its dominant position as the world's most powerful nation at all costs, going to the brink of war if necessary.

	1972	1974	1976
Agree	39%	42%	52%
Disagree	50	43	41

2/. Assessment of the Present Administration and Armed Forces.

(a) Confidence in the ability to handle international problems of Fed. government.

	1974	1976
<u>Rating</u>	67	53

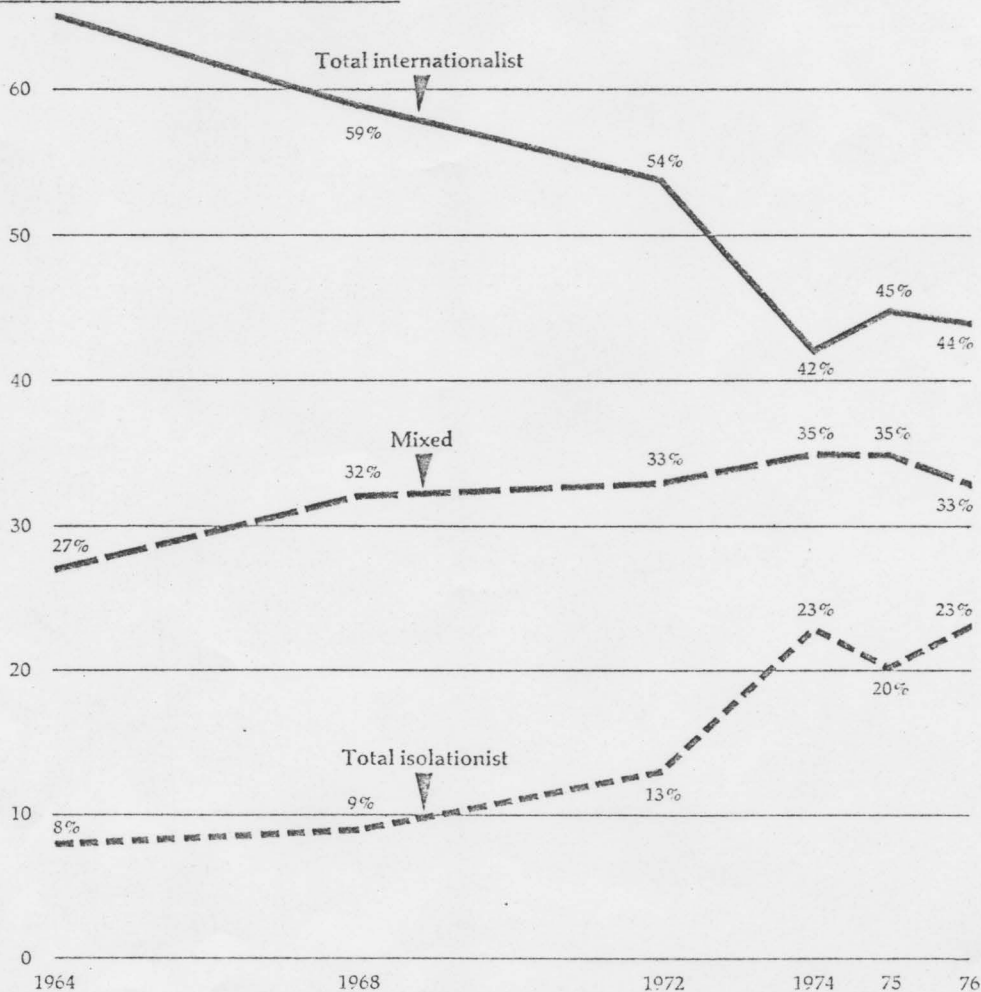
(This was a bigger drop than any other institution or group, and can be compared with a rise in executive branch's overall rating of 10 pts.)

(b) Trust and confidence in the leadership of our armed forces

	1976
<u>Rating</u>	68

(Highest rating of all 18 groups and institutions except for "the American people as a whole.")
 (Demographic note: Southerners and grade-school leavers rated esp. high.)

3/. Isolationism vs Interventionism



*The figures for 1964 and 1968 are derived from responses to five statements concerning the general posture the United States should assume in world affairs. The figures for 1972, 1974, 1975, and 1976 reflect responses to the same set of five statements, as well as two new statements regarding possible U.S. military intervention in defense of allies.

III. INTERNATIONAL SPENDING.1/. Defense Spending

	1972	1974	1976
Increase	9%	17%	28%
Keep the same	40	40	43
Reduce	37	33	20
End altogether	5	4	4
<u>Rating</u>	32	39	52

(By far the largest increase of 23 spending areas for which there is data for both '74 and '76. This and maintaining U.S. bases abroad are the only significant (statistically) increases in support for spending.)

2/. Military bases abroad and military forces stationed there.

	1972	1974	1976
Increase	5%	5%	10%
Keep the same	45	37	44
Reduce	38	42	33
End altogether	8	11	8
<u>Rating</u>	28	25	33

3/. Military Aid "the U.S. is now furnishing to some of our allies, such as South Korea, Turkey and Israel."

	1972	1974	1976
Increase	3%	3%	4%
Keep the same	32	32	34
Reduce	42	42	41
End altogether	16	15	16
<u>Rating</u>	21	20	23

4/. Economic Aid and loans to less developed countries.

	1972	1974	1976
Increase	7%	9%	10%
Keep the same	33	43	34
Reduce	42	33	40
End altogether	13	11	13
<u>Rating</u>	24	32	27

5/. Contributing to the work of the United Nations

	1972	1974	1976
Increase	10%	5%	6%
Keep the same	46	44	37
Reduce	29	33	35
End altogether	9	6	13
<u>Rating</u>	36	31	27

6/. Demographic comments on international spending figures

(a) Military and defense spending

Significantly below 50 rating: Blacks
18-29 year olds
Self-designated liberals

(b) Military aid

Higher than average: Over 65 year-olds
Income under \$5,000

Lower than average: Manual workers
Cities b/n ½ - 1 million
Incomes b/n \$5-10,000

(c) Military bases abroad

Higher than average: Southerners
Cities b/n ½ - 1 million
Incomes below \$5,000

Lower than average: Labor union households
Blacks
Clerical sales group
Incomes b/n \$15-19,000

IV. PROGRESS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES

Has the U.S. made progress, stood still or lost ground in these areas?

	1972	1974	1976	
Handling relns with PRC	72	73	67	(ratings)
Settling conflict in M.E.	n/a	69	62	
Relns with major allies	56	56	59	
Reducing intnat tensions	n/a	67	58	
Handling relns with S.U.	70	66	57	
Intnat economic matters	46	45	51	
Maintaining respect for US	n/a	43	47	

V. RELATIONS WITH ADVERSARIES1/. Relationship with the Soviet Union.

(a) State of the relationship at present

	1974	1976
<u>Rating</u>	43	40

(b) Progress over the last five years

	1976
Gotten better	31%
Stayed the same	48
Gotten worse	14

(c) Prospects for the future

	1974	1976
Get better	27%	23%
Stay the same	50	49
Get worse	10	19

2/. Relations with the Soviet Union

(a) Relative strengths at the present time

	1974	1976
U.S. stronger	24%	26%
About equal	49	46
U.S. weaker	21	23

(b) View of relative strengths five years from now

	1974	1976
U.S. stronger	19%	26%
About equal	45	40
U.S. weaker	27	25

(c) Demographic comments on (a) and (b)

Disproportionately in "equal" or "weaker" categories:

residents of large cities

Republicans

college educated

income of \$20,000 -

professional and business people

Disproportionately in "equal" or "stronger" categories:

Southerners

older people

grade school leavers

income under \$5,000

blacks

3/. Detente

(a) Who is the chief beneficiary of detente? 43% Soviet Union
3% U.S.

(b) Cooperation with the Soviets dangerous? 64% agree

(c) The Russians can be trusted to fulfill their agreements?
22% they can
69% they can't

(d) We have to learn to live with Russia and China?
81% agree

(e) Continue detente with China and Russia? 62% agree
15% disagree

(f) Support for concrete policies towards Russia

-- expand trade	52% agree
	25% disagree
-- technical exchange	50% agree
	28% disagree
-- extend SALT	59% agree
	14% disagree
-- pollution control	77% agree
	9% disagree

4/. Relationships with China.

Trend matches fairly closely that for relations with Russia

VI. RELATIONS WITH ALLIES1/. State of relations

(a) Rating at the present time

	1974	1976
<u>Rating</u>	39	49

2/. Defense of allies with military force

(a) Defend major Eur. allies if attacked by Soviet Union

	1972	1974	1975	1976
Agree	52%	48%	48%	56%
Disagree	32	34	34	27

(b) Defend Japan if attacked by Russia or China

	1972	1974	1975	1976
Agree	43%	37%	42%	45%
Disagree	40	42	39	37

(c) We should honor our commitment to Korea? 43% agree
37% disagree(d) We should continue to supply Israel 62% agree
18% disagreeVII. RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD AND THE UNITED NATIONS.1/. With the third world

(a) Take all necessary steps, incl. use of armed force, to prevent Castro's Cuba from supporting rev. movts. in Latin America and Africa?

	1976
Agree	41%
Disagree	43

(b) Take all necess. steps... to prevent the spread of communism to other parts of the free world?

	1968	1976
Agree	57%	44%
Disagree	29	43

2/. With the United Nations.

The United States should cooperate fully with the U.N.?

	1968	1974	1975	1976
Agree	72%	66%	56%	46%
Disagree	21	20	30	41

