

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
Contested Materials Collection
Folder List

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>	<u>Document Date</u>	<u>No Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Document Type</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
1	18	1/11/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Memo	From Harry Dent to Buchanan RE: sensitivity of attached report and unwillingness to discuss it with the S.C. GOP Executive Committee. 1 pg.
1	18	1/12/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>		Memo	From Dent to RN RE: South Carolina GOP Chairmanship. 2 pgs.
1	18	1/11/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Newspaper	Article from South Carolin newspaper "The State" RE: Broader based appeal for GOP urged by Dent. 1 pg.

[Item N2]

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 11, 1971

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: PAT BUCHANAN
FROM: HARRY DENT

file

I had to be very candid in the attached report. As you can see, some of this with regard to housing is so sensitive that I would not even discuss this with the S. C. GOP Executive Committee.

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
E.O. 12065, Section 6-102
By *[Signature]* NARS, Date *11/24/82*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 12, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HARRY S. DENT *HS*

SUBJECT: SOUTH CAROLINA GOP CHAIRMANSHIP

Attached is an article giving the full text of a speech I made to the South Carolina GOP Executive Committee before the election of Ken Powell over Cordes Seabrook as the new State Chairman. I told Bob Haldeman and the Attorney General I was going to have to take some part in this election.

While I was Chairman (1965-1968), we started making some small breakthroughs with the blacks. A wide open invitation was issued to all, and I spoke and debated before black groups. My successor, Ray Harris, refused to do any of this. Thus, this attitude, plus the Watson mistakes, put the racist tag all over our party in 1970. Our own GOP Mayor of Greenville called us racist.

Harris was convinced to resign as the paid Chairman. However, he was dedicated to continuing his policies so he would not be repudiated. So, he quietly lined up the votes for Powell and then announced his resignation.

There were several problems with Powell: too young, no prestige, three times a loser, he managed a race-tainted county campaign in 1970, and he gained a law partner who planned to make a killing out of the FHA 235 housing program now under investigation by Congress.

Seabrook had run winning campaigns in his area, where he put black and white votes together. Also, he had won election himself and would have no potential conflicts of interest as a successful businessman and community leader.

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
E.O. 12065, Section 6-102
By *BAF* NARS, Date *11/24/82*

The new Chairman is to be unpaid again, as it was pre-Harris. Powell had to be subsidized as a County Chairman and now he has taken in a partner who has no law business. Their plan is to attract builders as clients and get for them 235 and 236 allocations (very lucrative). I found Harris already in the housing business and going big when he leaves. The South Carolina Housing Director understands to watch the potential housing conflict very carefully.

A conference was held with Harris and all this was explained. He said he had the votes and would not change to let a moderate be elected. He based his position on fear of repudiation of his leadership and loss of white votes for the party. He was given a post-election poll showing the President (51%) and Thurmond (49%) to be down in approval because of the evolution of more whites into moderates and thus a disdain for the racist party label. The poll showed 88.3% want the party's appeal to be unquestionably to all voters, black and white, and that 93% of the Republicans favor that change. Harris, in November, rammed a resolution through the Committee defending himself and pledging to "seek the votes of all who believe like we do." This position registered 4% approval in the poll.

It was decided that I should make the attached lofty speech to the Committee and give them the poll figures. This I did. However, the pro-race feeling was stronger than expected. So, they voted for Powell. Since then, Powell has said he will try to broaden the party's base. However, he has little credibility among the blacks and the emerging white moderates because he is known as the man who fought election of the first two blacks to get in the Legislature in 100 years.

My statement is receiving good publicity in South Carolina and editorials will be coming from most papers. At least, the President will be free from the taint regardless of what happens to the party and on the side of the 88% who want an open party.

Thurmond was agreeable to either candidate. He is hiring a black staff member and is appointing one to West Point.

Thus, the impression will grow that this fight did get results and removed the President and me from the racist taint in South Carolina.

Broader-Based Appeal For GOP Urged By Dent

Harry S. Dent, former chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party and now adviser to President Richard M. Nixon, Sunday congratulated the newly-elected chairman and called for a broader based S. C. GOP to appeal to all people.

Dent apparently endorsed Anderson businessman Cordes G. Seabrook Jr., who was defeated for chairman Saturday by Columbia attorney C. Kenneth Powell at a meeting of the state executive committee.

Dent said Sunday, "I made a statement of principle to the committee and avoided any discussion of individuals or personalities. I set forth the ideal traits of a good chairman.

My prime concern was to see a man elected whose leadership would convince everyone that this party welcomes and seeks the support of all without any question. I am hopeful this image will be reflected by the new chairman. He has my congratulations."

Dent made it clear in his statement Saturday that he was speaking as an individual and not as a spokesman for the administration.

"A responsible political party," he said, "is one that is viewed by the voters as being broad enough in its philosophical base to embrace a variety of ideas and ideals. It



HARRY S. DENT
Speaking As Individual

reaches out to all the people.

The complete Dent statement to the committee follows:

I welcome this opportunity to be able to share with you today my deep convictions on a vital matter at a critical time in the history of our state party.

I am especially delighted to be here with the people who have meant the most to me during my years of service to the party. You have been my trusted friends and allies in numerous political campaigns.

I have unbounded personal appreciation for what you have done in behalf of responsible government. I hope I have demonstrated this gratitude to you.

What I will relate to you today are my own personal views as a party member and contributor—not as a government employe, although I realize this may be difficult to differentiate.

The reason we are facing such a crucial time is because the decision you will be making here will determine for many years to come the future of the Republican Party in this state. We are indeed standing at a crossroad.

You are in the process of choosing a new chairman for our state party. The choice you make will, in my judgment, determine for a decade whether most of the people will believe we have a responsible and realistic Republican Party as an effective force in this state.

A responsible political party is one that is viewed by the voters as being broad enough in its philosophical base to embrace a variety of ideas and ideals. It reaches out to all the people. It does not feel threatened or frightened by those who are innovative or those who are different. It knows that when demands for conformity become absolute

they are fatal.

My friends, the voters must view us as being capable of encompassing the needs and aspirations of all of the people of our state. This is true whether all or only part choose to join our cause.

You see, my friends, a political party, like government itself, must be broad enough to serve all the people.

We must continually re-assess to make sure that we are that kind of party and that citizens know it to be true.

Perhaps what we are talking about is having a broader-based image of political capability.

Failure to project such an image will result in our being forced into narrow ruts which leave little room for growth or the development of bright new leaders.

Conservative Republicanism should never mean inflexibility. On the contrary, intelligent flexibility is our hope. For only in this way will we be able to discover the changing needs of our people, be responsive to their demands and provide effective leadership.

We must not allow ourselves to become known as the party of going back any more than we can allow an

(See DENT, 5-B, Col. 1)

Dent Says

(Continued From 1-B)

opposing party to be known as the party that goes forward.

A party cannot long exist without sufficient support from voters. Many citizens in this state want to be Republicans and have indicated that they will join with us if they are sure of a welcome.

Many others, nominal participants in our party now, have told me that they will become more involved in this party as long as they believe it is open, responsive and forward-looking.

Let us refute the image given us by opponents that to be a Republican is to be reactionary. Let us show in word and deed that we South Carolina Republicans are conservative in our political tone but the music we play is in harmony with the times in which we are called to live and to lead.

With this in mind, I come before you today to portray the kind of man we need to be our chairman in the coming months. What the voting public thinks of us as Republicans will largely hinge on whether we have this kind of man as our state leader.

1. A man who has won by his achievements a certain recognition and acceptance among all the citizens of his community and/or state. Our party and its candidates will derive benefit from the prestige of such a man. This is the kind of prestige this party deserves!

2. A man who comes to the position as a sacrifice of personal gain—that is, he has much to give the party and does not serve as a means of personal gain.

3. A man who brings with him a record of success in his profession, community leadership, political life—in short, a

4. A man big enough to accept the entire state and its population.

5. A man who is sought by the office and not necessarily one seeking the office.

6. A man untainted by the image of a political posture of the past, thereby making our candidates' appeals for broad voter support more difficult to attain.

7. A man of maturity and strength of purpose whose leadership can create a new day for competitive two-party politics in South Carolina.

In closing, let me add this: In this game of life and in politics, we must live by our principles and our ability to perceive—that is, our knowledge and vision of what is right and best under the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

A wise political leader once advised me that in politics timing is everything. I have never forgotten the message, so I recall it here today because now is a time to look ahead and not back, now is a time to summon our finest to leadership and then follow them to victory.

I have devoted considerable time and study to what I have said to you today. I believe it to be what is right and realistic.