

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	19	9/20/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	White House Staff	Memo	From Kehrli to Buchanan RE: an attached document with Haldeman's comments. 1 pg.
1	19	9/17/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	White House Staff	Memo	From Buchanan to RN RE: planning for presidential television appearances in 1971. Handwritten notes added by Haldeman. 2 pgs.
1	19	11/30/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Buchanan to Haldeman RE: organizing the 1972 campaign around RN's accomplishments. 4 pgs.
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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

EYES ONLY

Date 9/20/71

TO: PAT BUCHANAN  
FROM: BRUCE KEHRLI

The attached is forwarded FYI  
with Bob's comments.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 17, 1971

TELEVISION

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Patrick J. Buchanan

Understand thought is being given to televising nationally the RN appearance before the Detroit Economic Club. Don't think we should do that -- for the following reasons:

1. An hour's show with Richard Nixon answering the concerns of some Detroit Fat Cats does not seem to me particularly good television; it will lack the adversary setting of a press conference, and the sharpness of questions, RN can expect from editors and writers. *Beloney?*
2. An hour is simply too long -- to sustain the interest of Middle America.
3. We have nothing really new to say, from my knowledge; the President has already covered the "news" in Thursday's conference.
4. The President's greatest political asset is the Presidency -- part of the power of that asset adheres in the distance between the Presidency and the people. Harry Truman as Harry Truman is a clown -- as President, he fills the shoes of Lincoln, Wilson, etc. The more we show of RN the individual in front of a camera, the more in my judgment we diminish some of the mystery, aloofness that surrounds the office. We make the President too "familiar" a figure -- and not in the best sense of that word.
5. What makes China such an interesting, important country and De Gaulle such an interesting man -- is the aloofness, the distance, from the hoi polloi. Every time we put the President on the camera in a conventional setting -- answering Q and A -- we tend, I think, to bring him down closer to the average man -- and I don't believe that is to our political advantage -- partly for the next reason.

*... or that LBJ-Kennedy really covered all the news? Harves; / look at your profile*

*Fake evaluation*

*Let's see*

*But the world will have turned 7 times by next Thurs - do you really believe nothing will happen -*

*How aloof can you get?*

*Every time we do this we show him doing what he does best - and better than virtually anyone else.*

Who's trying to  
phony hypothesis?

6. I have never been convinced that Richard Nixon, Good Guy, is our long suit; to me we are simply not going to charm the American people; we are not going to win it on "style" and we ought to forget playing ball in the Kennedy's Court.

hardly  
new?

This new emphasis of running the President on the tube at more and more opportunities is a corollary of the theorem that the more people who see the President, the more who will become enthusiastic about him. We are selling personality; but we know from our experience with television shows, how even the most attractive and energetic and charming personalities don't last very long.

But RN  
isnt Rocky -  
our press  
isnt Rocky's  
press

7. As I wrote the President long ago, in 1967, we watched Rocky rise twenty points in the national polls in a year in which he was probably not once on national television. When Rocky took to the airwaves in 1968, running around the country -- he dropped in the polls as he did in 1964. In short, what is said and written around Nelson Rockefeller's accomplishments -- compared with the accomplishments of others -- is invariably better received than the presence of Rocky himself in a competitive situation.

Who  
will  
say &  
write it  
?

No he  
isnt

8. The President is going to be on with Phase II in October, and with the Vietnam announcements in November. My judgment is that we ought not to put him on the air, without serious thought, and usually only in context with some significant pronouncement.

9. Finally, am not at all against some of the more imaginative ideas for presenting the President -- but they should come out of a Media Strategy, which I don't know we have right now -- or I don't see how this fits into it.

Buchanan

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 30, 1971

MEMORANDUM TO: H. R. HALDEMAN

FROM: PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

Within the Campaign Strategy sessions, we have begun the discussion of theme and form, media and approach. One has a sense of *deja vu*, as the old dichotomy is there again between those of us who would emphasize the achievement of President Nixon and those who would focus upon the personality traits.

In the 1972 campaign, and for 1972, it seems to me imperative that the Achievement School win out over the Personality School -- in terms of advertising and campaign emphasis.

These are the reasons, simply:

a) Our likely opposition -- McCloskey and Muskie -- will make the personality of the President, the need for a new kind of leader their battleground. And why not? If one is asked which is the more attractive personality, Pete McCloskey or Richard Nixon, McCloskey will come off infinitely better than if one posed the question -- which of these two men is best qualified to be President of the United States in 1972. The area of statesmanship, competence, ability, these are the long suits for the President as they have been throughout the career.

b) Secondly, in times of domestic calm and international peace, the argument for the election of Richard Nixon is simply not to me a convincing one to the majority of the American people. In such times, millions will want to "dare" a little bit, to take a flyer with a "New Frontier," to turn to a fresh, exciting new face. Though some of the finest political minds in the nation have labored thousands of hours in the process, they have not succeeded, in candor, in making Richard Nixon a stylistic exciting "figure" in the Kennedy sense of the word.

However, what are the President's truly strong suits. As source material I give you the confidential report on the Democratic National Committee -- based on in-depth research and polls provided by Louis Harris, via Charles Colson.

Eighty-five percent of the American people, and eighty percent of the Democratic Party believe that:

"There is no doubt that sympathy works to the President's advantage. Seventeen out of twenty people (85%) believe he (the President) is doing his best in a difficult situation. As shown in this table, there is not too great a difference of opinion along partisan lines. Four out of five Democrats (80%) agreed with the statement.

As long as the President can maintain this posture he rests upon a springboard that could quickly enhance his popularity."

The specific question asked which got this incredible response was:

"HE INHERITED A LOT OF TOUGH PROBLEMS AND IS TRYING TO SOLVE THEM THE BEST HE CAN." Agree or Disagree?

Thus, any political argument which begins with this as its premise already has eighty-five percent of the American people in agreement, and four of every five Democrats agreeing -- for openers.

How much better to begin our Political Argument for RN's re-election with this wholly credible, nationally believed argument, than with an argument that deals with the President's personality which starts -- according to the same analysis, with only one-half the American people in agreement.

Simply stated then, what I propose is thus -- that the campaign be seen as re-electing the President to continue to take America out of the storm, the nightmares, which we were in -- when he assumed the helm. This means the point of reference for 1972, is not just peace and prosperity but the living hell of 1968.

There in the spring, five hundred Americans were dying a week, we live in a time of assassinations, when cities were burning, and campuses being destroyed by mobs of radical students. If we can create in the public mind "That Wonderful Year, 1968" and then point to today -- the contrast is vivid, the contrast is something that tens of millions of Americans will agree with. The idea is to portray the President as having assumed the helm of the Ship of State, when it appeared that the America we knew was collapsing around us; then to move him through the times of turmoil, de-escalation, demonstration to today, where the seas are choppy, but beyond the storm. And then to point to the port that lies ahead over the horizon.

Film of the horrors of 1968, with the President campaigning in the midst of those terrible days, with something like, "He was the Man for Those Times; He is the Man for These Times. He pulled America back from the brink of disaster; he is the man to lead it now upward into brighter days."

This has roughly stated the idea. As an attack issue against Muskie, for use by others, and in footage -- we can tie him and HH H and Harriman and Clifford, and the whole gang as those responsible. The Democratic candidate is brought to you by the same people who gave you the Vietnam War, etc. etc.

As an emotionally compelling argument, this seems to me infinitely more appealing than, say, running on Revenue Sharing and Reorganization and the Welfare Reform.

We can use peace in Vietnam and prosperity -- but let us be sure to juxtapose them with 1968. Otherwise, it will be us saying we need a little more time in Vietnam and Muskie saying, Bring the Boys Home Now.

One imagines that the kind of footage you can draw on would be outstanding. Again, from the Democratic analysis, the country believes RN inherited difficult problems and is doing his best. Let's show them graphically just how incredible those problems were -- and the present by juxtaposition will seem like Happy Times are Here Again.

Which brings me to the STATE OF THE UNION:

From indirect information, one gathers that the Domestic Council is pregnant and in January plans to give birth to a bouncing New American Revolution -- in terms of programs, to be the basis for the State of the Union. I do not argue against "targeted" political appeals -- which hits groups like the aged, but let us not waste the State of the Union on "Six New Goals," when the six old ones are languishing in the nether regions of the Committee.

Rather, let the State of the Union Address be an address by the President on the State of the Union. In delivering that address, he can deftly turn the clock back three years, and talk a bit about the cooling of America, no more burning cities or destroyed campuses, the boys who have come home, the tasks of peace to which we are turning our minds, the era of confrontation which we are bringing to an end, the possible, hopeful days that lie ahead. "Though three years is short, we have come a long way, you and I." We have come from a time when Americans were calling one

another traitors or warmongers, to a time when our differences are over the proper ways to save our environment. I see the State of the Union in the terms the President saw the Acceptance Speech, his first best chance to make his case to the whole American people.

The domestic proposals can go by message; they are things that come off better in the reading than the saying anyhow.

A comment in Ken Khachigian's memo to me on the SOTU is appropriate:

"If there are policy decisions or programs of political importance, I suggest a simple message to the Hill a day or two after the SOTU address.

As for the SOTU itself, I recommend a speech that discusses the "state" of the Union in almost a literal sense -- a thoughtful analysis of where we stand as a Nation at this point in history. To an extent, this includes an examination of the American culture, morale, and future.

RN could lay the stage for the campaign -- against the chronic carpers who look for the worst in America. On the contrary, RN ought to stake out a position not only for a belief in the richness of the national patrimony but also a belief that the future is challenging not fearsome.

This is a time to lay bare RN as no backslap protector of the Nation and no skeptic of the potential in the last third of the century. Articulation of some key benchmarks of the last three years might be included: a potential for world peace; domestic calm; social problems on the way to recovery (e.g., praise for white and black in South for handling their social transition peacefully.)"

In that strategy session, it was interesting. When it got to specific achievements (someone raised the point that the President had increased spending for civil rights enforcement by a factor of five) there is disagreement as to whether that is something to boast about. When you talk about welfare reform, people divide. When you talk about domestic legislation, my friends start up the South Wall. When you talk about turning the Court around, my friends applaud, and the other fellows are climbing the North Wall.

But when you talk about the terrible times in 1968, and how we as a people have pulled through them, how the residue of bitterness has been diminished, how much better the new times are than those old times of rancor, and bitterness and hatred -- then you have almost the whole nation saying, "Yeah, things are a hell of a lot better today than those days, and maybe, Nixon does deserve a hell of a lot of credit; maybe he is the right guy in these times after all."

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