

Richard Nixon Presidential Library  
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3	38	7/28/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From unknown for "The File" RE: Harris's opinions on various campaign topics, such as Vietnam and the economy. 2 pgs.
3	38	7/12/1971	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Colson to Haldeman RE: polling data on various regions of the U.S. and advice from Lou Harris. 2 pgs.



July 28, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

SUBJECT: Lou Harris' comments on the President's China Initiative

Harris said that, "politically the President has totally destroyed the entire dove movement. He is immune now from criticism on Vietnam, he has taken the issue over". Harris likened the President's China announcement to Eisenhower's announcement that he would go to Korea. He said it was the single most significant and dramatic foreign policy initiative since 1952.

He went on to make the point that only Richard Nixon could do this. No Democrat could have ever pulled it off. He has more latitude now than any time since he has been President.

Lou recommended that we buy off the conservatives with something else, give them a sop in the domestic area and they will quiet down on the China issue.

Harris indicated that he would start a major field survey during the week of July 26 and would measure the President personally (Harris feels he will be up, will run trial heats, will examine the China question in depth and will do a very detailed political analysis).

We also talked about why the Gallup Poll seemed to show no change. Lou's feeling is that it doesn't have the sensitivity that his does, that his four categories of response tend to measure shifts in public opinion more readily than Gallup is able to do. He also believes that Gallup does not discount the young and the blacks. Harris, for example, puts a 20 percent discount on young voters which he now feels that Gallup is not doing.

Harris also believes that there is a domestic payoff on the China issue, that we should now start building domestic initiatives, show progress on the domestic front. He mentioned the environment par

particularly because he feels that we need to strengthen ourselves with upper middle class, suburban voters, particularly if we are in a race with Muskie. He thinks that the public is now in a mood to believe us and that if we talk about our domestic goals they will register much more effectively than before.

He cautioned, however, that we have a continuing serious problem on the economy, that our credibility is in bad shape on the economic issue and that the public attitudes are in bad shape. Therefore, even though we must talk up the economy, we must do it in such a way that we don't destroy our credibility.

During the same conversation, Harris reported to me on Steve Smith's call to him. Harris had refused to talk to Kennedy but ran into Smith at a social function. Smith's comment to Harris was that you have "wiped up the floor with Edward. You have set us back six months." Smith said that Kennedy's major effort would be made in California, that he would campaign on the theme of redeeming Bobby Kennedy's assassination, that Bobby had won the California primary and now California Democrats should give the nomination to Teddy as a way of redeeming Bobby's death.

Harris said that the Kennedy people were talking openly in social circles in New York about Kennedy running. They make no bones about it.

Harris feels that Muskie could "back in", that Kennedy may recognize that he doesn't have the strength. He considered the indications that Gilligan was joining forces with Muskie to be very significant and an obvious play for second spot on the ticket.

He went on to point out that Muskie has shown no courage, no guts; Nixon on the other hand has shown it all here. That the China thing establishes a strength of character that probably couldn't have been achieved in any other way. That people have been hungering for something this dramatic, something bold. We cannot overestimate its impact. It puts the President in total command of the international issue and the peace issue. It was a masterstroke of leadership.

DETERMINED TO BE  
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July 12, 1971  
By *fw*  
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6-102  
HARRIS, Date 7/30/82

MEMORANDUM FOR: H. R. HALDEMAN  
FROM: CHARLES COLSON  
SUBJECT: Harris Polls

You have copies of the Harris polls on Kennedy for this week. Next week will be the Muskie trial heats, based on the same field survey of June 9-15. The figures are identical to May. In a 3-way race, the President trails Muskie, 42-40, Wallace gets 13, 5 undecided. But in a 2-way race, it's 46-46, 8 undecided. Harris intends to play this as "the President has closed the gap on Muskie's earlier lead" -- at least that's the way he's described it to me.

Harris points out that there is an enormous contrast between Muskie and Kennedy. The President still does well in the South, 40% to Wallace's 27 to Muskie's 26. But, in the West, Muskie beats us 51-43, in the Mid-West 49-41 and in the East 48-35.

Harris believes that the difference turns on the vote in suburbs and among independents. Interestingly, we do better against Muskie on the raw data than when the unlikely voters are eliminated (the opposite is true with Kennedy). This again illustrates that Muskie does best with high income, better educated suburbanites. In the \$15,000 per year and over category, the President beats Kennedy 52-36, but loses to Muskie 54-41. With the independent vote, however, the President beats Muskie 44-37 (on the last poll in May, Muskie won the independent vote 45-36 but he has offset this loss by increasing his lead in the suburbs.

Harris attributes Muskie's strength to the fact that he is bland, has a neutral image and does not really come across as a partisan Democrat. The lack of controversy with respect to Muskie is at this time his great strength, but will in due course tend to wear thin. The risk to him is that he will become boring and uninspiring.

Lou's close friend, Howard Stein, tells him that there is at least a 50/50 chance that McCarthy will enter the Presidential race as a fourth party candidate. As a result, Harris has done a 4-way poll showing the President at 37, Muskie 35, Wallace 12 and McCarthy 10.

By way of incidental intelligence, Lou says that the Kennedy people believe that Humphrey is absolutely dead as a result of the Kennedy/Johnson papers, that Muskie has been badly hurt but, that Kennedy has not been affected. I have to assume from this that they feel there is no ruboff from JFK to Teddy.

On the subject of the New York Times controversy, Harris believes we should layoff the issue as far as the press issue is concerned; as he puts it we have come out very well, that the real thrust has been against the Democrats and Kennedy and Johnson. He is in the field right now determining what the partisan fallout has been. Based on what he said I can pretty well surmise what he will come up with.

He advises that we should be careful not to appear to gloat over the Democrats' problems, especially LBJ, nor should we on the other hand appear overly concerned about the recent revelations. We should stay above the battle; he believes that the Pentagon Papers controversy will continue while the press issue fades and that our job is to keep the focus on the Democrats. Harris does not believe that the press issue is a gut issue, that it doesn't really affect people or motivate them. The feeling that they have been duped and deceived, however, is a strong emotional point that will endure.