

*John*

COUNSELOR TO THE  
ATTORNEY GENERAL



9/21/81

NOTE FOR THE AG'S STAFF:

Carolyn's memo will  
likely be of interest to  
everyone.

FYI only.

*[Handwritten signature]*

# Memorandum



Subject

National Republican Congressional  
Committee Opinion Survey

Date

September 16, 1981

To

The Attorney General

From

Carolyn B. Kuhl

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "CBK", written over the typed name "Carolyn B. Kuhl".

This survey of national opinion, which was sent to you by Bill Brock, was designed to assist Republican Members of Congress and Republican congressional challengers. It was conducted between June 5 and June 21, 1981 by Market Opinion Research of Detroit, Michigan. The major conclusions of the survey are summarized below.

## Mood of the Electorate

The survey indicates a significantly increased optimism. A year ago more than 70 percent of those questioned said they felt things generally are off on the wrong track, while at the time of this survey less than 50 percent held that opinion. Of those who stated that they felt things were moving in the right direction, 35 percent said they felt President Reagan was responsible and 29 percent said they perceived solid evidence of change in economic and governmental policy. Of those believing that things are off on the wrong track, 44 percent cited economic problems such as inflation and high interest rates as the cause of their concern, and 11 percent mentioned their disagreement with President Reagan's policies relating to social programs and Social Security.

## President Reagan's Job Performance

As of the time this survey was taken 67 percent approved of the way the President is handling his job and 22 percent disapproved. The President received strongest approval from those in the South and strongest disapproval from Democrats.

## Economic Program

Approximately 62 percent of those questioned approved of President Reagan's spending cuts and income tax cuts. By a margin of 65 percent to 23 percent respondents indicated they believed the President's economic proposals would help the economy rather than hurt it.

### Foreign Policy/National Defense

The public is of the opinion that the risk of the United States going to war is greater than it was a year ago by a margin of 35 percent to 23 percent. Of those saying the risk of war is greater, 35 percent said the President is responsible and 56 percent said he is not. Of those who stated that the risk is less, 61 percent believe that the President is responsible and 35 percent stated he is not.

An increase in defense spending was supported by 64 percent of those questioned, while 73 percent agreed that the United States should take a tougher attitude toward the Soviet Union.

### Social Security

Sixty-six percent of those interviewed think that Social Security benefits should not be reduced in any way.

### ERA

Ratification of the ERA is favored by a margin of 60 percent to 31 percent. The views of men and women on this issue were about the same.

### Stricter Gun Control

Fifty-seven percent favored establishing stricter gun control. Strong support for gun control came from Blacks (66 %), Hispanics (70 %), and women (68 %).

### Voluntary Prayer in Public Schools

Allowing voluntary prayer in public schools was favored by 84 percent of those questioned, with strong support from all geographic areas. Interestingly, only 68 percent of the Republicans questioned were in favor of prayer in public schools as opposed to 84 percent of the Democrats questioned.

### Abortion

Sixty-two percent opposed a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortions, while 29 percent favored such an amendment.

### Republican Party

The study detects some shift from the Democratic to the Republican party among residents of the South and Midwest, upper income non-Irish Catholics from the North, and upper income Protestants from the North and South. It also concludes that the Republican party has a problem with women, particularly those over 40 years of age.