

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 4/18

TO: H.R. HALDEMAN

FROM: GORDON STRACHAN

Bob Teeter had planned on discussing this memorandum with you and John Mitchell on April 17. Teeter may be back in D.C. on April 24-25 and we will try to reschedule the meeting then.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 11, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR BOB HALDEMAN
FROM THE PRESIDENT

1. Mtg of Political
Newsp - Hold
until you get Ehrlichman
out of issue.

2. Redo this memo &
pass out day before
Presidential mtg.

As a general outline for some of the matters you will want to consider in developing with Ehrlichman et al the program on the PR side for the next several months, I would like for you to have in mind the following considerations:

1. Players -- here I would like for three or four of you to sit down and make up a list of the 10 best players we have. Obviously, the Vice President, some members of the Cabinet, a few members of Congress, a couple of Governors, some members of the White House staff including, of course, people like Finch and Klein, political people like Dole and perhaps truth squad people who may be developed.

In another category you have, of course, the members of the family for the so-called soft news and then, of course, at a secondary level you have the sub-Cabinet and non-political types in labor, veterans and other organizations which are on file in the Colson office.

By having this list in front of you it will serve two purposes -- one, when a story has to be told you will be able to look over the list and pick the ideal man or woman to tell it. Two, you will have the small group who can be pulled together for briefing when the story is important enough to require that kind of treatment.

2. Tactics -- there should obviously be one major story a day including particular emphasis on a major Sunday story. Have in mind the fact that our plans should be built around the assumption that I will have one hard news story each week in which television will be involved.

What is most important about the tactics, however, is not the number of stories but repetition and follow up. Once I start on a line, for example, in a news conference or a speech there should be sustained follow up day after day until we finally hammer the point home. Don't be concerned about the fact that each story is not carried. The important thing is to follow up and not to scatter our shots so that we get some sustained themes through one way or another.

In this discussion of tactics I am referring only to our positive stories. Obviously, the counter attack or answer desk operation should be supplemental to these positive stories and on some occasions they will naturally override the positive stories, because we may feel that it is more important to get out answers to an opposition attack than simply our own positive story. But on many days both should run because we never can tell how the media will play them.

3. Theme -- here, getting across the basics about the man -- strong, courageous, intelligent, patriotic, country first politics second particularly in view of the recent Vietnam development.

4. Issues -- I have already discussed this matter on several occasions but will list the issues in order of priority as I see them at this time.

1. Peace and foreign policy generally still have to be at the top of the list. Temporarily, the emphasis will not be on the generation of peace -- that will come back when we go to Moscow and when we return -- temporarily the issue must obviously be the strong, experienced foreign policy leader who is at his best in a crisis.

2. Cost of living with particular emphasis on the cost of food.

3. Crime with particular emphasis on drugs.

4. Property tax -- of course, in those areas where people are interested hit hard on tax relief for non-public schools.

5. Jobs

6. Busing -- where our major effort should be to put our Democratic friends strongly on record in favor of busing and us on record against it and getting this across in areas where it is an issue.

7. "for all of the people" -- this is a tough one to handle but it is the only way that we can answer the charges that we are solely interested in big business, etc. This will require some real PR effort.

8. Reform -- here I have mixed feelings as to which direction we should follow. We have an excellent program of reform -- welfare, revenue sharing, reorganization, health, environment, etc. -- on the other hand, the question is whether it is wise to stir up the voters on the basis of reform and change and excitement or to use that theme as a subsidiary issue before audiences of special interest and emphasize more of the stability and a return to some kind of confidence in government after so many years of crises and upheaval. Of course, both themes can be played at the same time, but at least this should be a matter for discussion within the political group to see which way we should move. If we decide to go all out on the reform issue this means going all out on an attack on the Congress. The latter, incidentally, is probably a good idea in any event, and should occur immediately after the Democratic Convention with the groundwork being laid before. This will tend to deflect some of the fire which is directed against the Administration to the Congress for failing to carry out the recommendations the Administration has made.

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I am not suggesting that this list of issues is exclusive or that it will not change as time goes on. For example, we may want to hit the environment and other issues if they appear to be lively. Connally, of course, feels strongly we should hit foreign competition and the need to build America's competitive position, but in any event this memorandum will give you an idea as to my own thinking, and I would like for you to use it as a framework at least for discussion with the political group.