

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 22, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: RAY PRICE
DICK MOORE
FROM: DAVE GERGEN
SUBJECT: Convention Notes

Random notes after watching the '68 Convention films:

(1) Need for Diversity - We have focused a great deal of attention so far on obtaining diversity at the podium, but the films convince me that at least as much interest should be shown to the types of people in the Convention hall. Far more NBC coverage was given in '68 to delegates and demonstrations than to speeches.

My overwhelming impression from the films was that the GOP in '68 came across as almost entirely white, affluent, suburban, middle class and male. If '72 repeats '68, the contrast with this year's Democrats will be startling -- and damaging. The most obvious examples from '68 were the two men from New Jersey and Virginia who said they were the youngest members of their respective delegations: they both looked 35 and would not appeal to a large segment of today's voters.

Given our interest in shunning the fatcat label and presenting an open party, shouldn't we work toward obtaining greater diversity on the floor? It is no doubt too late to do much about delegate selection at this point, but there is clearly some flexibility in the people selected for demonstrations. I would

hope we could pull in a lot of hard-hats, women, ethnics, chicanos, and blacks -- as much of the melting pot as we can stir up. When the cameras panned in on floor demonstrations in '68, they often concentrated on the area right in front of the podium so that we might pay particular attention to the people seen there.

(2) Opening Prayers - To shorten the invocation, how about the Lord's Prayer one night, a Catholic prayer (in Latin) a second night, and a Jewish prayer (in Hebrew) a third night? The invocations in each afternoon session could be ecumenical and would once again present the GOP as the party of all the people.

(3) Music - We needn't lean over backwards to be "with it," but we might at least stay somewhere near the mainstream with the selection of music to be played. Our present program indicates that opening night from music will be the best from Stephen Foster to Irving Berlin. Can't we throw in a few contemporary number as well -- even in the demonstrations? We still must convince people that the Republicans are the party of the future.

(4) More on Music - Right now we talk of introducing each speaker with a song associated with his native state. On some occasions, we might shift over to music associated with his heritage, e. g., "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," the Polish equivalent, etc. If this is the year of ethnic resurgence, we ought to take advantage of it.

(5) Animation on Screen - Aside from their use in introducing speakers, the three front screens give us an enormous opportunity to add some pizzazz to the floor demonstrations. These demonstrations can rapidly become a bore at home. One way to open them up is to throw some animation on the screen a la Times Square. Psychedelia would be carrying it too far, but with a little imagination, we could have a lot of fun with it -- and pep up the delegates to boot. I also think this might make a difference to the viewers at home.

(6) Demonstration Posters - The cameras zoomed in several times in '68 on posters carried around the floor. The most prominent was a face shot of RN. Perhaps we could capitalize on RN's many achievements as President by constructing posters depicting the highlights, e. g., shaking hands with Mao, surrounded by the men in Vietnam. Ollie has stacks of possibilities.

(7) The Sideshows - Friday's WS Journal reports that for diversion at Miami, the Dems plan a "Nationalities Fair," Latin caucus, black fashion show, country-Western concert, wives, tea, and senior citizens' caucus. I don't think people are taken in by these things, but they do create good copy and a sense of joviality. We might give some thought to constructive alternatives.

(8) Surprise Speakers - An element of drama could easily be introduced by an occasional surprise speaker. For instance, the idea of bringing on Connally for a surprise endorsement speech has recently surfaced, and I personally think it has a lot of merit. There must be some other possibilities.