

Price
Garment -
Buckham -
Lipshutz -

all should read this

July 13, 1968

Handwritten signatures and initials: "H. H. Ellsworth", "Moore", "no to"

MEMO FROM BELLI

Direction of page 5

Handwritten note: "Giffelman read pages 8 & 9"

In 1948, Thomas E. Dewey proved that an Out party can't win an election by playing it safe.

Even when the Out party has most of the issues--including a massive split in the In party--going its way.

The last three Gallups have been remarkably stable in the spread between Humphrey and RN: between 40 and 42 for Humphrey, between 35 and 37 for RN. An RN deficit of 5 or 6 every time. The chief variable has been significant gains by George Wallace--to the point where RN is now running third in the 13-state area of the South.

Clearly, nothing catastrophic has occurred. No significant errors have been made by RN or his campaign--as everyone, including the press, has acknowledged.

Equally, though, it is clear that a campaign which doesn't make mistakes is not enough. The RN campaign has been run on a strategy of not taking chances--and it has failed to catch fire.

On those occasions when a controversial issue has been seized, the initial flurry of protests from the liberal press has often caused it to be modified--if not dropped. Examples: Columbia, the Supreme Court, crime itself.

It is my feeling that we will win this election, if we do, by a strong appeal to the heart of the middle class: Americans who make \$6000 to \$15,000 a year. The "group" that Richard Seamon has called the "unblack, the unyoung, and unpoor."

This is what Democrats call the Gut vote; it is a group which Hubert Humphrey has so far held remarkably well.

Unfortunately, Gallup has not been breaking his polls down according to income. But there are ways of guessing.

Among clerical and sales people, Humphrey leads, 43 to 37.

Among people between the ages of 30 and 49, Humphrey leads, 45 to 35.

Among Catholics, he leads, 53 to 27.

Among those who have finished high school but not college, he leads 43 to 35.

All of these represent bigger Humphrey leads than he enjoys nationwide.

Wallace is averaging about 12 per cent among these groups.

The Gut vote, then, is leaning toward Humphrey. But this group is not happy. It is concerned, in particular, about the following things:

1. Crime. They are worried about the safety of their families. They are sick of permissiveness in the courts, the city halls, and the Administration.

2. Riots. They do not subscribe to the theory that stealing and killing become more tolerable when carried out by large numbers of people. They also reject the idea that their own racism, real or not, is the primary reason for crimes committed by groups with which they are seldom in contact.

3. The decline of U.S. prestige abroad. They are upset that third-rate military powers can keep the most powerful nation in history in a stalemate. They react particularly strongly

anything else, the War on Poverty and the constant and visible scandals that have accompanied it from its inception have turned these voters against Johnson's reform coalition. It just doesn't take much sophistication to see that subsidizing gangs is not going to help the ghettos.

It is intolerable to the RN campaign that Hubert Humphrey-- the chief enthusiast and publicist of every one of the most extreme Great Society programs, and a man who, it develops, falls considerably short of Johnson's resoluteness in foreign affairs--should be in possession of this gut vote. It is intolerable that he should now be running first not only in the South but in the Midwest--the two areas which voted most strongly against the Great Society in 1966.

I think a number of shifts in emphasis are required.

1. Less emphasis on lofty, general "think" speeches.

I don't think that the staunchest admirers of the "New Coalition" and "New Democracy" speeches would argue that these did us the slightest good with the Gut vote. I do not think this would have changed significantly had these two speeches been broadcast in full on TV network prime time. The main argument for them is that they keep Establishment commentators off our back. That is true. But I would argue that the solons lay off primarily because they realize we are not hitting the chords of the electorate--"If Nixon keeps up with this kind of thing, we don't have to worry."

2. More specificity. The obverse of the above is that

Have Bill
get R.N. 10 or 15
good examples in
con. use in
speeches

the more specific we get, the more the solons hit us. When Clayton Fritchey takes us to task for our "flying Pueblo" statement, we may be sure we have drawn blood. The only criterion of a Clayton Fritchey is what will hurt Richard Nixon in November. If we are delivering speeches that do us little or no good, the Clayton Fritchey will lay off in the hope that we stick to bland generalities. The moment that we throw out something on a real issue which the Gut Voters can understand and respond to--such as the "flying Pueblo" or Columbia statements--that is when they pounce on us in the hope that we will drop it. Because to the Gut vote, what is important and understandable is that which is specific: this American ship held by North Korea, that poverty grant that subsidized a gang, this college being disrupted by the sons and daughters of their bosses, that trade agreement which helped Poland to make the ball bearings which kill our men in Vietnam, that American embassy that was burned. A candidate can be very specific about events and issues without getting into personalities. A speech or a statement is demagogic not because it is appealing, but because it is wrong or distorted. Liberal commentators will accuse us of demagogy whenever we do something that is appealing. I think we must steel ourselves to that fact.

In addition, specificity demands that we nail down Humphrey on his own rhetoric. When he calls for new ties with the Chinese Government, we must ask him what Chinese government he is talking about--the Maoists or the rebels. When

Just get our attack group to follow up -

he says that the United States should no longer contain communism, we must first remind him of Rusk's statement late last year that the United States is legally committed to come to the defense of more than 40 nations, and then ask him which of those nations he is still willing to help, and which he proposes to abandon. When he endorses a Marshall Plan for the cities and the Urban Coalition's multi-billion-dollar job plan--programs that even Johnson opposes--we must ask him where he is going to get the money, and how much larger than \$25 billion the Humphrey budget deficit is going to be.

4. More chance-taking. I realize that should, for instance, the Pueblo be made a major campaign issue, there is always the danger that Pyongyang will release it in order to embarrass RN (some have argued that this kind of thing has already been done by the Russians to RN, in two instances that come fairly readily to mind). Despite the seeming intransigence of the Kim Il-Sung regime, I believe this is a real possibility. However, I would be inclined to accept that risk. An issue which so fulfills the Get-vote criterion of specificity, and which, as I have said, so typifies the lack of will of this Administration, more than makes up for the negative possibilities. I would even argue that an emphasis on this issue might help us on balance, even assuming the ship is released. (This, of course, would depend on the circumstances in which the ship is released. If the Administration is forced into a humiliating apology or indemnity, as seems likely, the issue would be more alive than ever). The Pueblo issue could be made even more graphic by reciting the exact circumstances in which the ship was captured-- why no resistance

was authorized, why no air support was nearby, etc.

In any event, to draw blood we must take chances. If we take chances, we are going to make more "mistakes", and the hostile press will show us no mercy when we do. But in my view the biggest mistake of all would be to run a campaign whose central goal is to avoid all mistakes.

5. More personal appearances. The primaries showed that RN is probably the most effective campaigner on the American political scene at this moment. Aside from the remarkable returns, the most striking proof of this is that RN is generally regarded as leading Humphrey in every state in which he has campaigned extensively. Even Humphrey's strategists ("As Humphrey Backers Size Up Election Now," U.S. News) give us all five of the RN primary states--New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Indiana, Nebraska, Oregon--among a grudging total of eleven states that they give us altogether. If these visits are accompanied by the kind of newspaper and media advertising characteristic of a primary, we can move ahead in selected states with a two- or three-day semi-saturation effort.

6. The New Candor. This, I think, is the central criterion. At the Hudson Institute briefing Thursday, Kahn said that what the majority of voters are looking for is someone who tells them the truth, even if the truth is unpleasant. He said that the candidate who begins to do this is going to win the election in a landslide because the people have had four years of lying, they know it, and want a change. If large handouts to the Negroes are

not only not possible, but may worsen the problem if they were possible, they want to know about it. That is what RN told them in the Black Capitalism speech--the one moment so far in which the RN campaign caught fire. The New Candor of that speech should be the model for the rest of the campaign. That, above all else, is what the Gut voters crave.

In Vietnam, this involves saying, in a time of national pessimism, that the United States has a commitment to the South Vietnamese government that cannot be renounced, except at the cost of a worldwide decline in American credibility and prestige. We support an honorable settlement, if that is possible. But we must ask Humphrey what he plans to do if Hanoi rejects the "political settlement" that he describes as the "only way" to end the war. It is not enough for a great nation to keep its easy commitments. If we default whenever the going gets rough, all our commitments will be called into question.

If Hanoi does not accept reasonable settlement, then there is no alternative to the continuation of the war. But RN cannot just promise the Gut vote what Kahn calls "more of the same"--that would be fatal. This time, should the talks collapse, we must do what the Democrats have never done: proclaim a comprehensive war plan that promises victory over aggression without escalation, whether or not the enemy's morale is broken. The surest way to keep an enemy's morale alive is to proclaim, as your only objective, the breaking

of that morale. This time, we must institute a police program that will bring security to every hamlet. The only sure way to end violence in South Vietnam is to separate the VC from their victims, and this may be a painstaking process. We must admit it. But for the first time, there would be a war plan that is realistic, checkable, and credible--not only to the enemy but to the electorate that will have to support it.

Rockefeller claims to be the only candidate with a viable peace plan. RN must become the only candidate with a viable war plan. In addition, he must assert still another hard truth: that a viable peace plan depends on a viable war plan. That Hanoi is not the sort of adversary that agrees to reasonable terms unless it faces, as its only alternative, a grinding process of attrition that will lead to defeat. This is a hard course for RN to take. On the other hand--given his own position and his future credibility--it is also the only position he can take. I believe it is the kind of honest, hard talk that will be greeted with visible relief on the part of the Gut voter--a voter who doesn't want this country to lose its national honor any more than he wants to be lied to.

To summarize: the Gut vote--Americans in families making between \$6000 and \$15,000 a year--make up a majority of the voters. Humphrey is doing better with this group than with

the electorate as a whole, and far better than he has a right to be doing. New approaches are needed to win interest and commitment among these voters. These include: more specificity, more visibility, more controversy, more chance-taking, and above all a New Candor that--in the words of Robert Kennedy-- "tells it like it is," the hard answers as well as the easy ones, the bad with the good. To do this, to use Buchanan's phrase, we may have to "cut the umbilical cord" between us and an establishment which wishes us ill in any event, and subject ourselves to a significantly higher level of printed and broadcast abuse. I think it is worth it. I think that by going after the Gut voter with honesty and realism, we can not only break out of the Gallup Poll rut but win this election going away.

I. INTRODUCTION

CAMPAIGNING

The time has come for political campaigning - its techniques and strategies - to move out of the dark ages and into the brave new world of the omnipresent "eye."

A candidate for any city-wide, state-wide or national office can't afford the old "tried and true" methods of campaigning: six speeches a day, plus several handshaking receptions, a few hours at factory gates and a soul-crushing travel schedule. Just because it has always been this way doesn't mean it always has to be.

Let's look at the whole thing from the viewpoint of just basic logic. If a national candidate actually does six speeches a day, six days a week, for the full eight-week campaign period, he'll make 288 speeches. If he has a spectacular crowd-gathering ability (or staff), he might average 5,000 per speech (but no one ever has). So he will have spoken in the flesh to a total of 1,440,000 people. A reasonable estimate is that at least 75% of those people are his loyal adherents. So he's had the opportunity to convert only 380,000. True, most elections, except national, are won by less than that. But then, will he really convert this 25% - and is it really 25%? Probably more likely 10%.

What happens to the candidate in this process? He becomes punchy, mauled by his admirers, jeered and deflated by his

opponent's supporters (and paid troublemakers), misled by the super-stimulation of one frenzied rally after another. He has no time to think, to study his opponent's strategy and statements, to develop his own strategy and statements. No wonder the almost inevitable campaign dialogue borders so near the idiot level.

Yes, but think of the great value it has in "firing up the troops." Baloney! Analyze carefully the actual number of troops that count in a campaign, and you'll find they are very few, can be fired up much more effectively and efficiently by small "private" sessions on an informal basis with the candidate, and are themselves being worn to a frazzle and constantly diverted from important activity (precinct work and telephoning) to crank up a crowd for the next rally or airport arrival.

True, maybe, but the real importance is the effect on news media and thus indirectly on their vast audiences. That's the worst argument of all. How many stories per day will any newspaper or radio or television station carry about a single candidate? Answer: one - if he's really lucky, important or controversial. So what's the use of roaring around making six, eight or ten stories every day?

Obviously it's to get localized coverage in each area of the constituency. But isn't the wire story, the commentator or the syndicated columnist what really counts? It sure is!

So what do you do - quit campaign travels and sit on the front porch? Not at all. You plan a campaign that is designed

to cover the important localities, provide excitement and stimulation for your supporters, generate major news every day, generate intensive coverage in depth by commentators and columnists, develop a meaningful dialogue (even if one-sided), and still offer a reasonable chance of the candidate's survival.

II. GENERAL APPROACH

How, then, does a candidate plan his campaign schedule (and build his campaign organization) to accomplish these objectives?

First - the whole approach and the basis for all planning and structuring must be directed to the same concept: that the candidate's time, energy and thinking will be programmed for maximum possible benefit. And maximum benefit is defined as reaching the most people most effectively. And this does not necessarily mean in the flesh.

He has to take maximum advantage of the media of mass communications, with emphasis on that or those which reach the most people and present him most favorably and believably. Television will undoubtedly be pre-eminent - but radio, newspapers and magazines should not be overlooked.

One news lead per day

The first consideration is development of one major news lead per day. (Herb Klein argues strongly for two leads per day - one timed for AM newspapers and another for PM's and TV/radio news. This should be carefully analyzed, because he's probably right. On the other hand, one per day is obviously more desirable from our point of view, and in a presidential campaign the AM's and PM's both have to cover a candidate's news, so there may be a way to work satisfactorily with just one lead per day - I hope so.) This can result from a speech made at a rally, a statement at a formal news conference, a remark made apparently offhandedly

at an airport or on the sidewalk, a television or radio address, a "confidential" interview with a columnist, a reaction to a planted position or question by a prominent supporter, an answer to the opponent's attack or position, release of a white paper, a statement by a prominent supporter expert in some field, reaction to a major external news break, or just a formal news release.

Over the period of the campaign, all of these and other devices should be used on a carefully planned but apparently random basis. No regular pattern should be established, and the element of surprise should be skilfully utilized.

Not a single day should pass without such a news lead, planned in advance as to content and method of release and coordinated with the total campaign effort. The whole approach should be one of initiation and attack, rather than reaction and counterattack. The timing and approach should not be dictated by the opposition.

Obviously, it will be necessary at times to react and to counterattack - and to revise strategy to fit the developing situation and the opponent's strategy. But this in no way precludes the necessity for a complete, preconceived plan, even though it be revised daily.

Overall schedule

After an overall skeleton is developed on the basis of the daily news lead, the candidate's schedule can be filled in, using

his time for a balanced program of corollary supporting activities. Major needs will include at least one major public appearance almost every working day, one or two offbeat "color" activities, many short and a few long personal or small group meetings, ample staff time, frequent studio time (TV and radio) and, by a wide margin most important, lots of free time for thinking, rest, recreation, reading and unplanned activity. Also maximum use of programmed phone calls.

Major public appearances

The daily public appearance(s) may, or may not be the base for the news lead as mentioned above. When it is, it should be carefully staged - and when it's not, the speech should be standard so we retain control of what the lead will be. These appearances should not all be rallies. Some should be motorcades, staged visits to plants, hospitals, etc., large worker meetings, headquarters drop-bys. Some should be at night, some in the daytime. All should be designed for maximum coverage - and should not be restricted to the stereotyped kinds of political appearances. They should be dictated by the overall strategy, not by the pressures of local organizations or leaders.

Offbeat activity

The offbeat "color" activity should be planned for particular effects, generally in the "image-building" area. In many cases these would appear to be unscheduled and spontaneous. They would always be an integral part of the overall plan. These

would include frequent use of "drop-bys" at group meetings, human interest individual contacts at all levels (the shoeshine boy, Billy Graham, a kid who has collected campaign funds, spectator or participant sports, etc.). Some leeway for completely opportunistic activity, with staff always on the alert for possibilities.

Meetings

The personal or small group meetings would not be publicized and are used to make points primarily with people who will in turn reach large numbers of other people. Concentration is on TV and radio commentators, columnists, syndicate feature writers, publishers, station owners, major civic leaders, party leaders, specific issue spokesmen.

It will be argued that this approach simply does not cover enough cities - there is inadequate geographic spread. The answer is that the important thing is not the one city where the candidate is, but the coverage of his activities that goes into all cities. Only a minute fraction of the people in a city where the candidate appears actually see him in the flesh. The vast majority just watch on TV or read about it in the newspapers. To these people, what difference does it make if he's in their city, the neighboring one, or one clear across the country?

The geographic pattern should be developed to provide balanced regional coverage, with proper representation of large and small cities, urban and rural, etc. But an appearance in a small farm town in Iowa can be just as effective in its impact on

an Oregon small farm town resident as it is on the Iowans. In other words, people identify with other similar people - so get coverage of whatever group you're with and you'll affect all the similar groups who see the coverage.

Programmed phone calls

Use phone calls to keep troops fired up. During allotted time, two staff men work on placing calls. Get one lined up ahead so candidate sits at one phone - pushes buttons to utilize two lines alternatively - talks for 2 minutes on each call. Can do about 25 calls in an hour. On some can go even faster. Staff have calls programmed ahead with background card on each for candidate's quick briefing.

Use phone calls to maintain ties with key commentators and columnists. Call them two or three times a week for their reactions to campaign. Don't tell them anything - ask for their analysis and ideas. Pick some favorites and work them hard. Build the list as fast as possible and keep adding to it.

Use a phone car for all long drives, and use time for phone calls as per above - or else program car and other travel time for one of specific purposes - i.e., staff, personal meetings, work, rest, etc.

Radio network

Use network radio to keep troops fired up - by buying 5 minutes on national network every day through entire campaign - at 6:30 pm local time. Have a daily report from the candidate

and marching orders from campaign manager. A supply of fill-ins could be pretaped for emergency use, but normally candidate would tape current message each day. This could be delivered to local outlet for network feed - or fed by phone. One staff man would be producer and program would be tied to overall plan.

Mail

Use mail to fire up troops. Draft and start typing a standard but personalized letter to each local chairman. Mail them all two weeks before election day. Just thanks and encouragement. Signed by candidate.