

The Re-election Team: 'We Are Organized'

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 7 — Some weeks ago, at one of the periodic news conferences held here by officials of the Nixon campaign, Clark MacGregor contrasted the Republic effort with that of the Democrats—whose slogan, he said, “seems to be ‘This week we’ve got to get organized . . .’”

Well, said Mr. MacGregor, the director of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, “We are organized . . .” He came down hard on the first two words.

If this was boasting, it was not idle. They are indeed organized, from their own “in-house” advertising agency (The November Group) on Manhattan’s Third Avenue to their own paper shredders in the offices scattered through two Pennsylvania Avenue office buildings that house the committee’s national headquarters and its—at last count—337 staff members.

By mid-November, most of this machinery and its operators will have vanished, but now there is an air of permanence to it all. Except for a certain repetitiveness in the subject matter of the pictures on the walls, and the piles of Xerox paper and corrugated cartons that line the carpeted

corridors, the committee headquarters could easily be any business office—a one-client advertising agency, perhaps, and a prosperous one.

Some staff members use jargon appropriate to this image: Angela Harirs of the young voters division, for instance, describes herself as the “account executive” for young voters.

As for the prosperity, that is no illusion, either. The budget is acknowledged to be about \$40-million and said by others to be as high as \$47-million.

The committee’s spending reports, filed with the Office of Federal Elections, provide some insight into the operations of this multi-million-dollar business. Its monthly payroll is measured in hundreds of thousands of dollars, with many of the top specialists in the \$30,000-a-year bracket. Its expenses, aside from rent, telephone bills, \$140 for felt tip pens and other staples, include such oddities as the salaries of security guards and \$383, in June, for “closed-circuit TV purchased” to keep watch in the corridors.

There are names out of Mr. Nixon’s past, such as that of Murray Chotiner, not on the committee’s payroll but listed frequently as having received reimbursement for enormous telephone bills, for “survey expense,” for traveling. Mr. Chotiner, whose law office is situated at 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue, as is the larger part of the committee’s space and the Washington branch of John N. Mitchell’s law firm, was described by a high-level staffer as the campaign’s “honest-ballot” man, in charge of preventing vote-stealing at the polls.

There are, in the earlier reports, names linked to the Watergate bugging incident—Hugh W. Sloan, G. Gordon Liddy, James W. McCord Jr. and others. There are White House names—travel expenses for Harry S. Dent and William E. Timmons, for instance, both Presidential aides or aides to aides who are concentrating now on the campaign.

There are other familiar White House surnames listed—Ehrlichman and Haldeman—but these are Jan C. Ehflichman, listed as a secretary; Peter Scott Ehrlichman and Harry Haldeman, listed as assistants. They are the children of two of Mr. Nixon’s top aides. The President’s brother, Edward C. Nixon, is also on the payroll.

There are disbursements for

all the raw materials of a campaign, computerized lists of registered voters, “second wave polling” and shipping campaign materials. There are transfers of funds to state re-election finance committees—\$2,000 to Montana in August, for example, and \$165,000 to California.

At the top of the corporate pyramid is Mr. MacGregor, bluff and fluent, who was the President’s man on Capitol Hill until he was tapped to succeed Mr. Mitchell as head of the campaign. No one doubts that he is in charge, just as no one doubts or denies that Mr. Mitchell, if only by virtue of his status as one of Mr. Nixon’s closest personal associates, is still frequently consulted by the committee. He is, as one top staff member said, “very much involved—one of the key persons in terms of input.”

Despite the obvious efficiency of the operation now, there have been and perhaps still are a few weeds in Mr. MacGregor’s garden. During the pre-MacGregor period, for example, Mr. Mitchell—who remained at the Justice Department until early this year—tried to run the committee by remote control through two trusted associates, Harry Flemming and Jeb S. Magruder.

During that period, according to some critics, many people were hired who understood little or nothing about practical politics. Press relations languished. A list of 50 state chairmen was not finally compiled until July 1, when Mr. MacGregor and Frederic V. Malek—now one of the two deputy directors—arrived. A few major state budgets—including New York’s—remained unsettled.

Responsibility Divided

Mr. Malek, who came with a reputation for cold-eyed efficiency, and Mr. Magruder, also a deputy director and one of the top-level survivors of the change of command, now divide between them general responsibility for and authority over virtually every aspect of the committee’s activities. Mr. Flemming is now a special assistant to Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Magruder’s jurisdiction, broadly, includes public relations and media, advertising and the massive direct-mail effort. Mr. Malek is in charge of making sure that the state re-election committees perform as expected. There are others, perhaps just a step below them, with very precise areas of concern.

The campaign is structured around a “people-to-people” concept, replacing the impersonality of the television ad or the letter addressed to “occupant” with individual contact—in person, by telephone or through the computerized individuality of a letter addressed to a particular voter and designed to reflect his particular concerns or characteristics.

Everyone a Target

As a result, the committee has divisions and subdivisions with specific target groups—young voters, labor, athletes, lawyers, doctors and, reportedly, motorcyclists. There are also ethnic or “heritage groups,” and no one is overlooked. The formation of a “Committee of Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos for President Nixon” was announced this week.

The committee does its own polling, either directly through Robert Teeter, a professional public opinion analyst, or by contracting it out to other firms. What their polls show, they will not disclose. “We think it’s more helpful to have the benefit of our polls for our own analysts,” said Mr. Malek. But, in response to a question, he acknowledged that “issue” polling, rather than the straight popularity-contest type, was the most important part of the committee’s opinion-sampling effort.

Blitz Coming Up

The committee uses the services of seven computer centers, four distribution or mailing centers and eight printing houses, all independent contractors.

There are telephone centers, 250 of them, in the 11 “battle-ground” states. It is from these that volunteer canvassers will start, eight days before Elec-

tion Day, a telephone blitz, an effort to call every Republican voter in those 23 states where voters are registered by party and every voter who has given a canvasser some indication that he is favorably inclined toward President Nixon.

How many voters will this add up to by the end of October? “More (calls) than we can probably make,” says Mr. Malek, using 30 million as an estimate.

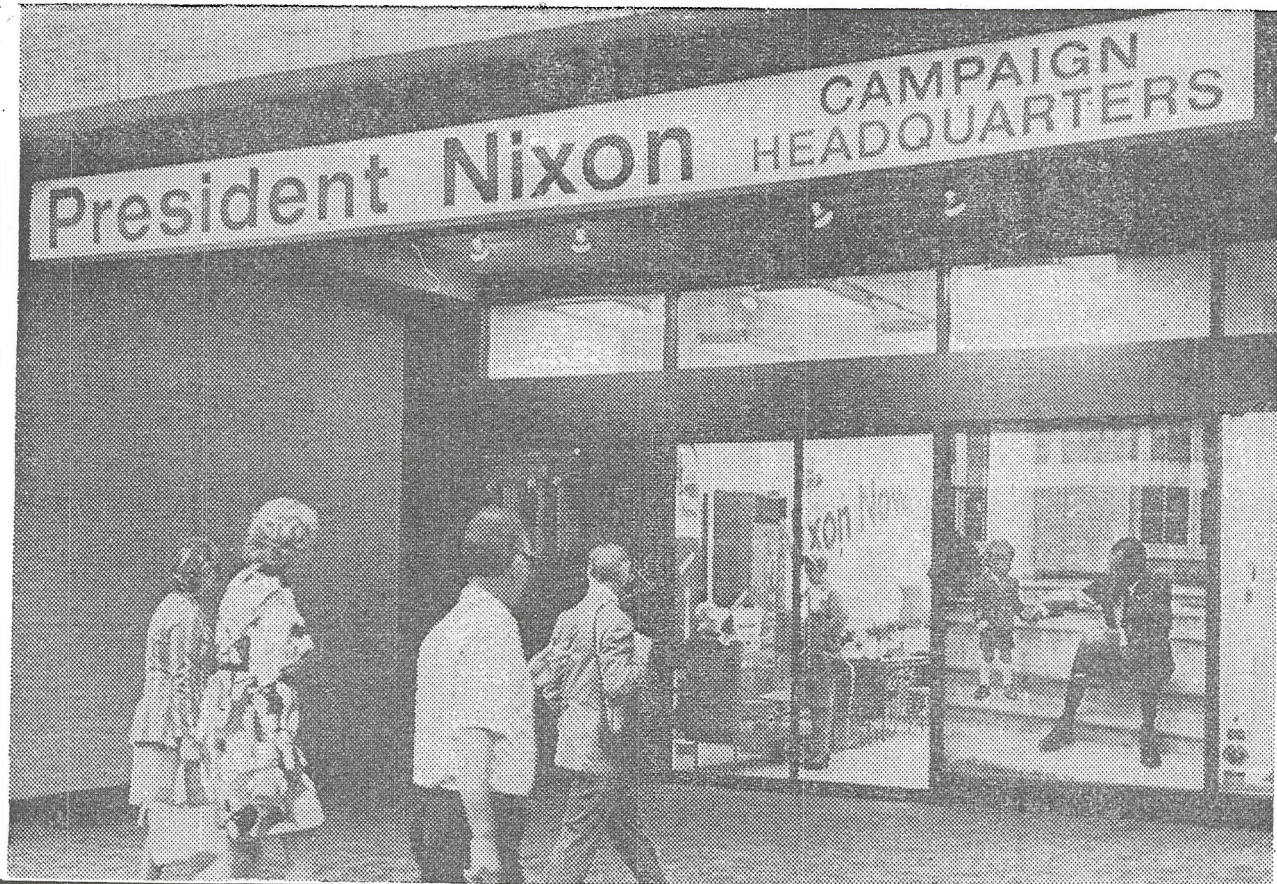
This massive effort is aimed at making sure that no one who is likely to vote for Mr. Nixon will stay home on Election Day, particularly in such states as Ohio, Illinois, Texas, California or New York.

Canvassing priority is assigned to those precincts “where most Nixon votes lie.” Asked to use New York City as a hypothetical model, Mr. Malek said, “We’d canvass Queens before we’d canvass Harlem . . .”

Emphasis Can Shift

This is the strategic heart of the campaign, this state-by-state effort. But it is closely monitored by the committee, which allocates the money, in part on the basis of the state’s electoral-vote strength and expectations of success, although this can change. One state that the committee is “taking much more seriously” now, for example, is Massachusetts, where more money than planned is likely to be used now that a Nixon victory is seen as possible.

The states are given “a fair amount of discretion,” Mr. Malek says, but the “over-all direction” comes from the committee. The supervision is possible because of a precise system of reporting that includes a five-hour weekly meeting at committee headquarters of all the 10 regional directors, Mr. Malek, Mr. Magruder and the directors of committee divisions.



Entrance to one of the two Pennsylvania Avenue office buildings with Republican campaign centers

The New York Times

Charts Prepared

These meetings are supplemented by frequent field visits by Mr. Malek and others, plus a weekly reporting routine from each telephone center and local re-election headquarters. Using a flat-rate leased telephone line, each office on Monday calls in the previous week's canvassing results, which are recorded on a special form so that only the figures—the number of volunteers, the number of voters canvassed, the number of pro-Nixon voters—have to be dictated.

These results, in chart form, are posted in what Mr. Malek called "our war room" so it is possible for the headquarters staff at any given moment to see how matters stand in any state.

These techniques are the sole concern of the committee, its executives say. "We do not concern ourselves with substantive policy," said one. Policy is made at the White House, where Presidential aide H. R. Halde- man is the "key contact."

"We're not going to do anything in a major sense . . . without giving Bob Haldeman every option," said the top committee staffer.

Disputes Acknowledged

Others deeply involved in campaign policy—too deeply, it is said by some members of the campaign group—include Charles W. Colson and Ken Clawson, both White House aides. In response to questions about the nature of the relationship between the White House and the committee, Mr. Clawson said recently, "Let's just say that we consult with . . . [there are] at least 15 meetings of one kind or another going on every day."

He conceded that, "Hell, yes, we have disagreements . . ." But he added that they were mostly about "how best to go about it . . ." In common with everyone else, he denies the indications and rumors of serious troubles.

Stories about such hassles, appearing in print, prompted Mr. MacGregor to issue an order that no one at committee headquarters was to speak to the press without clearance. It is obeyed meticulously. Even with permission, many members of the staff will not allow themselves to be quoted.