

The 'Assault Book'

12/6/73

W. Post

Buchanan/Khachigian Memo (Assault Strategy):

We need to shed the "in bed with big business" image. PJB believes we should seek out the opportunity to "take out" some egregious, giant, preferably, but not necessarily Democratic, corporation publicly—as Kennedy did with big steel in 1962. Business will be with us in 1972—but one of our problems is a too close identification in the public mind with corporate power. ITT reinforced that. Public presidential anger at the price-gouging of some big business firm would be, in my judgment, a good thing.

If we have abandoned the idea of introducing or supporting "tax reform"—I trust we have not—I would recommend RN publicly veto one, two or three huge spending bills—on national television. Two minutes would be sufficient . . .

. . . As the campaign progresses, we should increasingly portray McGovern as the pet radical of Eastern Liberalism, the darling of the New York Times, the hero of the Berkeley Hill Jet Set; Mr. Radical Chic. . .

My recommendation is that PJB—using our Radical Chic materials, as well as the Assault Book materials—write, not a full-length book, but a 5,000-word piece, using full color, good paper, like *First Monday* with pictures of Hiss and Hoffman and other endorsees, and that this be printed and distributed by the millions. A quality, brightly written, colorful, picture biography of McGovern of 5,000 words would be infinitely superior to those old full-length hatchet biographies that are never read.

Further, though a bit outrageous, McGovern can be charged, among Democrats, with "packing" caucuses,

with "stealing" the nomination from the more popular candidate, with not representing the average man in the Democratic Party—but rather the left-wing organizers . . .

To reverse the "underdog" image of Mr. McGovern—we should, upon his nomination, cease speaking of an easy win. We should, in public, both to rally our troops and to remove this "underdog George" label—argue that the Democrats have the largest party. We should leak polls showing us worse off than we are . . .

Impressions of McGovern may be favorable, but they are not fixed. They can be changed. And we should be moving this material into the public record. How? Not bitterly or stridently. To do so gives the appearance of arrogance and power which we want desperately to avoid. Thus, when our "heavies," if you will—the Vice President, Bob Dole, etc.—use this material they should for the present be scrupulously exact and precise, and avoid for the present—the blistering attack. There will be "time enough . . ."

When McGovern backs off some of these Black radical schemes, as back off he must—we should continue to hang them around his neck—and then mail his recantation to the black media.

Some on the media are slobbering all over George; they may have to be charged publicly with being pro-McGovern—to force them to back off a bit. (Incidentally, given his performance the other night, (Sander) Vanocur (PBS) is a positive disaster for us—and McGovern's most effective campaigner. He may have to be fired or discredited—if we are to get anything approaching an even shake out of that left-wing taxpayer subsidized network.)