

October 5, 1948.

Honorable Clark Clifford,  
Special Counsel to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.



Dear Clark:

In response to your request of yesterday, I suggest that the following points be increasingly emphasized in the campaign, particularly in New York State and other populous areas, especially where there is a general radio audience:

(1) The widespread propaganda, through the press, the radio and independent commentators, to the effect that the result of the election is a foregone conclusion is part of a highly organized and richly financed campaign against the President. This campaign is under-handed, vicious and effective. It seeks to undermine the American principle that elections should be decided by everybody voting secretly at the same time on election day, under a publicly supervised election machinery; elections should not be decided by a lot of spurious private elections held at random in advance by those who want to influence the result. All this propaganda reflects where the money is flowing in this campaign no less clearly than the division of radio time. The people should be warned against being influenced by this, which tends to deprive them of their most precious right as citizens by leading them to believe that the exercise of that right is a futility. The people should be aroused by such tactics to show on election day that they and not the poll takers and propangandists for special interests are going to determine in whose hands their Government will be placed.

(2) The "hands-off policy" on the Republican candidates is fatal. The case against the 80th Republican Congress has been made, and should be repeated, but it is meaningless until it is accompanied by a demonstration (a) that Mr. Dewey could not depart from the programs and principles of the Republican Party and its leadership even if he wanted to, and (b) that his whole record shows that he would not want to depart from these principles and programs even if he could. There is plenty of proof of this in his behavior during the Special Session, and in what he has said in his talks since then. Another source of weakness in Mr. Dewey is the fact that he has always been wrong in advance of the event, has shown no foresight, and has adopted principles and programs only after the event. Before the war, he was an isolationist; and many of the things that he said in his 1944 speeches as a candidate sound ludicrous today. Much can

be made of the extent to which Mr. Dewey has extended himself in aid of those senatorial candidates who have the most reactionary records, and - particularly in New York State - much can be made of the bad record of his own Senator Ives in voting for the Taft-Hartley Bill, against the housing bill, and against strong anti-inflation measures.

(3) More and more needs to be said to tear down the "unity" theme. This theme is making headway, although it is highly vulnerable to a sustained attack. The only kind of unity that is worthwhile is the unity which results from the people's overwhelming approval of programs and principles which have been clearly defined. A unity based upon hiding the issues behind a screen of platitudes can result only in the unification of the executive and legislative branches of the Government into the most powerful striking force for reaction that we have ever had. There are innumerable ways of developing this theme, and I think that it should be treated significantly in every speech.

(4) The speech of Senator Vandenberg yesterday on the bipartisan foreign policy demonstrates beyond any question, if it were not abundantly clear before, that the President cannot afford to throw away the vital asset contained in the fact that when all is said and done the initiative in formulating a foreign policy which has the overwhelming approval of the American people came from a Democratic President and a Democratic Administration. Senator Vandenberg does not hesitate to blame the Administration for all kinds of mistakes in foreign policy, and to enumerate a large number of fine acts of foreign policy in which the initiative was taken by the Republicans. Without abandoning or jeopardizing the bipartisan foreign policy, the President can and should emphasize (a) that our unity in foreign policy would have been impossible without leadership and initiative, which were provided by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan; (b) that our unity in foreign policy did not come until the people showed that they overwhelmingly approved a specific course of action which had been made clear to them through definition and debate, and not hidden from them by platitudes about "unity"; (c) that the Republican leadership demonstrated no unity in foreign policy during the 1920's, or the 1930's, or in 1940, or in 1944, but only came to accept the program advanced by the Administration after the Administration has won assent to it by the people. And by the same token, there can be no unity in domestic policy for any worthwhile program until that program is sharply and clearly defined in nationwide debate and until the people approve it so overwhelmingly that no one will dare to oppose it. That is the real issue in this campaign.

(5) Much stronger and more repeated attacks need to be made against the third party, not by attacking individuals, but by attacking the whole idea. This attack can be along two lines: (a) that it is dividing the liberal vote on vital domestic issues, and (b) that it is giving aid and comfort to Russia by saying the very same things about those who will control our

National Government after the election (whether Democrats or Republicans) that the Soviet dictators are telling the Russian people, namely, that the United States is in the control of groups who are utterly bent upon an imperialistic war against Russia and who are utterly incompetent to prevent a depression in America. Consequently, the Russian people are being told by a former American Vice President that the United States now is and will continue to be controlled by those who want to make war for their private profit. What could be more hurtful to the cause of peace than that?

(6) I think that, particularly for addresses reaching the whole public over the radio, or even through the press, without reducing the vigor of the attack, there should be more of a highly moral note illustrated by well known examples from American history.

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It is not enough to make the foregoing points a few times. They all need to be made over and over again so that they reach everybody several times. Toward this end I suggest that every major speech cover these ~~enumerated~~ enumerated points in one way or another. This will not prevent each speech from being different, any more than the fact that so many of the speeches have been about the record of the 80th Republican Congress has prevented them from being different. The differences in the speeches can come in the variety of the factual examples used to illustrate the various points. It is through this variety of factual examples that one speech can place more emphasis upon inflation, another upon housing, etc. The campaign has now settled to the point where the foregoing issues cover 95 percent of what is on everybody's mind, and therefore single-theme speeches are a waste of very limited opportunities to get a message to the public.

I am attaching drafts of three speeches, numbered One, Two, and Three.

The speech numbered One, which might be called "unity" speech, begins on the first three pages by pointing out what we in America have really learned about "unity" with some examples drawn from American history. The next few pages, to the middle of page 6, discusses foreign policy as an illustration of what real "unity" means, and points out how this unity in foreign policy can be achieved and who has taken the initiative and leadership toward this end. The next few pages, running to page 11, shift over to domestic policy and show how hard the President has tried to get unity and cooperation on such matters as inflation control, housing, and labor relations, which incidentally illustrates how hard the President has tried to work with a Republican Congress - but how the Republicans have frustrated all these programs and made unity or cooperation impossible except on terms of selling out the interests of the American people. Beginning with the



middle of page 11, the speech then defines the kind of unity in which the President and the Democratic Party really believe. This phase of the discussion runs through the end of page 13, and poses the question of what kind of unity the Republican candidate wants. That question is answered in the concluding phases of the speech.

The speech numbered Two begins by attacking the idea that the two major parties are really the same, that the Republican candidates are just as liberal as the Democrats, and that it is simply a matter of bringing in new people who will "do the job better". The attack upon this idea, which is really the central theme of the Republican campaign, is introduced in the first three pages of the speech, giving historical illustrations of what happened to the people when they fell for this idea. The next few pages, running through page 10, uses the record on high prices and inflation to illustrate the real nature of the Republican Party and its leadership. Pages 12 and 13 briefly review the contrast between this Republican record and the record made by the Democrats over 14 years. Pages 14, 15, and the beginning of page 16 are devoted to driving home the point that the Republican candidates, Dewey and Warren, are not something separate and apart from the Republican record but must necessarily be a part of it because they could not be effective in the Republican Party or even stay in that Party if they were not a part of it. Pages 16, 17, 18 and 19 move over to the theme of reaction on the left as distinguished from reaction on the right and make two very important arguments against the third party which I think would carry great weight and which have been practically neglected thus far in the campaign. Pages 20 and 21 summarizes the argument.

In the speech numbered Three, the first three pages combine a sharp indictment of the Republican 80th Congress with an explanation of why the Republican candidates want to run away from the record of that Congress and are thus indulging in a campaign of evasion which indicates their true intent. This links the candidates with the Party. The next three pages review in brief the record made by the Democrats over 14 years, and introduce the theme of what happened when the Republicans took over the Congress. The pages from 7 through 11 are designed to illustrate by specific example how ridiculous it is to suppose that a Republican President would follow a different course from that of a Republican Congress, drawing examples not only from what has happened in Congress but also from what the Republican candidate has said. Pages 12 through 16 are a full discussion, from a novel viewpoint, of the significance of the third party movement at this time and the distinction between it and earlier third party movements. This kind of argument, which has not yet been made, is very necessary, particularly in States like New York but also for nationwide consumption.

Very sincerely yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature, likely of the author of the document.