

General Program Ideas

August 28, 1956

#1

To Mr. Harding
Mr. Zaghi
Mr. Levathes
Mr. Rauch
Mr. Lapham
Mr. Dana

Re: Citizens TV



On the following pages are a few thoughts and ideas in connection with our assignment to provide television programming for Citizens for Eisenhower-Nixon. We should probably be prepared at our next meeting to weigh these ideas, and others, and to schedule our first and second choices for each date.

David Levy

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Y+K, Box 6, Folder, TV scripts

INTRODUCTION

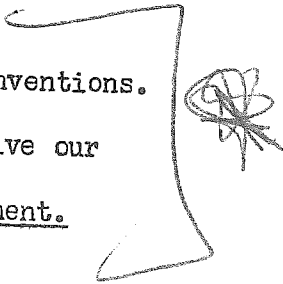
This report has been put together in order to organize some of our ideas, to develop specific TV program plans, to suggest a working organization to supervise and produce the programs.



Nothing in this report is final as of this date, for the availability of certain talent to participate has not been ascertained - and no approach will be made until our group has set our course of action. But whatever we do - we know should be done with some degree of urgency if we are to make our contribution effective.

From this point on we should also be certain that our ideas and plans are carefully guarded and made known at a time of our own choosing. In developing these ideas certain premises have been assumed:

- 1) Whatever we do should be within the reasonable limits of TV performance and technical know-how. Therefore, to insure our performance our productions should be kept reasonably simple.
- 2) The Democrats have already shot a lot of film with Stevenson. BBD&O is planning a heavy use of film in its campaign. Not just for the sake of being different - but of being spontaneous and flexible, we should, for the most part, go "live."
- 3) Politics proved how deadly it can be at the Conventions. We should avoid speeches and politicians and give our programs an atmosphere of action and entertainment.



- 4) We should make the principles and the President's promises the meat of most of our efforts. (Let BBD&O handle the past and the GOP record).
- 5) What we do should make sense with the GOP. Wherever we can we should use people whose appearance will be worthy of publicity - and others who come from areas where the GOP needs help or from walks of life which reflect the President's appeal that the Republican Party is the party with the future. Hence the appeal to all segments of the population.
- 6) Wherever it is advantageous and feasible it would seem desirable to "integrate" the five-minute shows with the shows preceding them. Our number one job is to hold the circulation these shows deliver so that we can get our shot in.
- 7) We should not put all our eggs into one kind of show - for we want to appeal to all kinds of people - the more we can hit them with our theme (Principles and Promises) through a variety of forms, the better.

The President's Participation

Before going into program details I would like to propose that we find out just how the President has been presented live in the past (assuming we are responsible for him):

- 1) Why does he use a room in Washington which, as reported to us, fails to provide ample ceiling space for proper lighting? If no White House room fulfills TV's needs, then we should recommend the use of the best TV studio in Washington, duplicating the Presidential setting.

Technical questions

- 2) Who is the top lighting expert employed? One individual who understands this problem should be assigned to the President throughout the campaign.
- 3) Who rehearses him? How much time does he give to proper rehearsal - to permit topflight lighting, makeup etc?
- 4) Who handles makeup?
- 5) To improve the President's TV appearance - which has never reflected his own healthy and vigorous look - we should find a "stand in" - a man whose skin texture is like the President's and test him under various conditions as Hollywood does for its stars.



The "I Go For I-K-E" Song

The "I Go For I-K-E" song was enthusiastically approved by Citizens and Y & R in New York. The fact that the Bandwagons don't want it does not lessen its value. We commissioned it for TV use primarily.

At this writing we are researching the reactions of 150 people to this song and the two being carried by the Bandwagon.

While we have no assignment to prepare TV spots - a spot using music can be entertaining, and one that has a message (as the original lyrics of "I Go For I-K-E" has) that induces action can be effective. We have prepared storyboards for spots of 10", 20", and 60" duration based on the song. To produce these would cost approximately \$11,000 gross. We are asking the media department to give us their recommendations and estimates in the use of such spots during the last four weeks of the campaign.

Five-Minute Show Ideas (each of these would not necessarily be a series - some are one shots)

1) Integrated spots (using talent of the preceding show)

Oct. 23 - Kaiser Hour. Only if the star is prominent.

Oct. 24 - Kraft Theatre. Only if the star is prominent.

Oct. 25 - Tennessee Ernie. Use him if he is pro-Ike.

(Many entertainers will be for Ike, but will still decline to get involved politically)

Oct. 27 - Perry Como. Obviously Como himself.

Oct. 29 - Montgomery Presents. We should be able to get Robert Montgomery. We can use him alone - or with others; some of the ideas described below would suit him. Or he could present a number of other actors and artists who are pro-Ike.

Oct. 30 - Herb Shriner. Shriner in a special routine

Oct. 31.- Godfrey. (Wednesday night show) He could handle it alone - or with music.

Nov. 1 - Climax. Depends on star.

Nov. 2 - Person to Person. We might use the idea - using Nixon and a New York cab driver in his Bronx apartment.

Nov. 3 - Sid Caesar. Caesar if willing or Janet Blair. If unavailable we could do a production number from that theatre based on all of the campaign songs for Ike.



Egghead Spot

2) Voice of the People

This show would open with the Citizens' seal. The inner portion of the ellipse would fall back revealing a great many people - Ike supporters - framed within the outer rims of the Seal. Thus the words "Citizens for" - on top, and "Eisenhower-Nixon" below - would be on the screen throughout. We are told we are at an Eisenhower-Nixon Citizens rally - and the audience present is invited to step up and identify themselves and give their reasons for supporting Ike-Nixon.

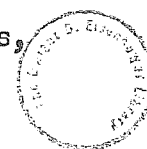


We would shoot for 6 to 8 guests in the time allotted - some speaking very briefly. These guests would be carefully screened and balanced so as to provide great variety and interest. Many of them would be Democrats and Independents, though we do not want to ignore the Republicans either. They would include:

- 1) Name personalities - such as Wendell Corey, Dennis Morgan, Irene Dunne, Ethel Merman, Nat "King" Cole, Rosalind Russell, Jane Powell, Lowell Thomas, etc.
- 2) Other personalities - John Roosevelt, Joseph Welch, James Devereux (hero of Wake Island), Lucius Clay, Oveta Hobby, etc.
- 3) First voters
- 4) Negroes
- 5) Farmers - from the important corn-hog and dairy states.
- 6) Union labor

Egg heads

- 7) Small business men
- 8) Teenagers (who can't vote - but know Ike is for lowering the voting age)
- 9) Minority groups
- 10) Women
- 11) Colorful characters, such as one of the three surviving confederate soldiers, ball players, etc.



All of these groups would be carefully investigated so that we use people with color and vivid personalities.

The selection of these guests could have great publicity value in their local areas - and each group could visit the President for a follow up picture. He is giving more time now than ever before to receiving civic groups and ceremonial presentations.

3) "Visit With Ike"

This is carrying the previous idea further - these people would actually be seen with the President. Presumably they would have had dinner at the White House (not necessarily with the President) and this is the wind up of their visit - as each tells Ike why he's for him.

4) "Talk With Ike"

DICK

Another variation. The group is at a rally - and they talk with him - he in Washington, they in New York or elsewhere.

OR DIRECT

Or, citizens could be invited to talk directly with the President. He is at a phone, chats with those who call in. (We could arrange the calls).

5) "I Go For I-K-E"

A musical production number featuring singers dancers and a setting involving the campaign. Done in the Hit Parade style. Paid off with a one minute talk by a Welch; a John Roosevelt, etc.



OR superband
people in their
homes - in film

6) "Person to Person"

Using Nixon, or a Joseph Welch as host talking to all kinds of people - in all parts of the country.

7) "Man in the Street"

Pickups from two places in each program - from different parts of the country. One show could be from a town meeting and from the side of a pool in California. Next show from a super market in Philadelphia and a cattle center in Texas, etc.

8) "Manie"

Comes on to tell some human interest items about Ike that demonstrate how his principles were with him from the days of her first knowing him to this very night.

9) Eisenhower and the Principles

If we could get Ike himself - particularly for the final week of the campaign - we are on 6 times starting Monday, October 29 daily through Saturday November 3 - it could

have real impact. This will be the homestretch of the campaign. There will have been a lot of oratory - pledges - promises - attacks, etc.

If Ike quietly reminded his viewers of his Principles this week - culminating in an hour show doing the same it could be very dramatic and effective.

Further, it would give the TV audience the opportunity to see him as he strode into the studio and informally chatted. In even two five minute shows - the November 2 and 3 shows - he could cover all eight principles.



10) Film

Principles on film
Showing Ike as a hero to Democrats - the man FDR selected for North Africa and Europe, the man Truman called back to duty for NATO. A search of footage would provide interesting and colorful film. This could appeal to many Democrats - seeing Ike with the two last Democratic Presidents.

11) Question - Answer

Using visual devices, personalities, we can raise the kind of questions which the public is asking - and answer them. In some cases a Hile-Damroth Board would be effective, in other questions the answer can be delivered by a "fact" - or by a personality who is an authority. We could develop (as we did in '48) a lot of colorful gadgets to keep the spot interesting as well as informative.