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Folder: "Image," /1977

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"Image," /1977, Container 34b

Gerald M. Rafshoon
President

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DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
DATE 12-8-82

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

cc: Jody & Ham
Good advice
J

TO: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: GERALD M. RAFSHOON
DATE: June 14, 1977

I am concerned with the recent pattern of events relating to your image.

Although you are still personally popular, your performance is perceived as inconsistent. The media talks about your flip-flops again; e.g. B-1 Bomber, the statement that the energy package would be a hardship and then that it wouldn't, the \$50 rebate retreat, the water projects. Individually, these mean little (and I assume there were good reasons for all) but cumulatively they add up and can affect you politically.

I did not worry about the public perception that you were at odds with Congress; I think you were damaged slightly when you started to placate them (this didn't seem to do you much good).

Specifically, I want to point out that there is a perception that the White House is more concerned with style than substance. This comes not so much from Pat's leaked memo but more from the pre-occupation on the part of some people to constantly do something on T.V. Truthfully, you are being overexposed in an area that is very dangerous. An occasional fireside chat is O.K.; bi-weekly press conferences, necessary; a town meeting, perhaps. But it is not necessary to have a T.V. event every few weeks just to show that you are close to the American people. And this is happening.

In case you haven't heard, your California call-in did not do well in the ratings: the daytime show ran behind soap operas; the evening re-broadcast ran behind Hollywood Squares.

This show was not well planned. Should not have been done, perhaps.

MEMORANDUM

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You are running the risk of boring the people and you have 3 1/2 years to go.

*Jody
Comment*

I think the practice of having an informal session with the press after each press conference is a mistake. It detracts from your stature as President and looks like a campaign gimmick. If you want to be open and straight-forward, you can be so during the regular press conference.

Good

I think it is time to utilize your media "experts" to get exposure for (1) others in your administration; (2) but more importantly, to get T.V. programs and attention for substantive issues like Energy, SALT, Panama, Reorganization. There should be less catering to you by putting you in front of the camera and even here you should pick and choose; don't be all over the map with too many subjects.

*DNC
should
move -*

Furthermore, it is appalling to see the Republicans outdo the administration by running a documentary filled with production values as a counter to your energy program. This was on NBC prime time. This is the kind of thing I envisioned the DNC doing periodically. Unfortunately, the DNC is virtually a foreign power to the White House.

If you don't start shifting emphasis here, you run the risk of having something happen similar to what occurred in the campaign: a personally popular, populist Jimmy Carter, thought of as a good guy, but with support that is not deep. We can't let this happen.

I want to help.

Gerald M. Rafshoon
President

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Jimmy -

It was the \$19,800 TV
buy in No. Va. that was
it for Henry Newell -
not the Carter identification.
I can produce "figures"
to prove it.

(Henry up, Pat)

It was undoubtedly
the Carter identification.
If Pat can't prove this
we'll get another
pollster. J