

TO: SENATOR BENTSEN

DATE: 8-29-88

FROM: Tim Richardson

RE: CAMPAIGN REPORT - TEXAS SENATE & NATIONAL

"VOTE THE TEXAS TICKET, BUSH & BENTSEN"

The Texas GOP is reportedly going to throw Boulter overboard and try to neutralize the Bentsen effect in Texas by embracing you for Senate. Ranking Republicans continue to praise you to the press (Jack Rains - "Bentsen's a great Senator and I expect he'll be reelected" N.O. convention on TV, and Rob Mosbacher - "Why give up two producers, Bush & Bentsen, for a dry hole, Dukakis"). And top GOP strategist Karl Rove told George Shipley that he can expect a Texas ticket theme, Bush & Bentsen.

Shipley's latest poll in Texas for the Texas Medical Association shows why the GOP is anxious to do this. While the presidential horse race numbers have reversed in Texas the same way national polls have, Bentsen-for-Senate remains very strong, with you running 15% ahead of the Dem ticket and 4% ahead of Bush-Quayle. Boulter is just now cresting to GOP base strength levels, trailing you by 22% and the Bush-Quayle ticket by 18%. Poll was conducted 8/20 - 8/23. 652 sample.

STATEWIDE TOTALS If election held today, who would you vote for?

	TMA POLL 8/23			PETER HART 8/11
	Solid	Lean	Total	Total
BUSH/QUAYLE	46	5	51	40
DUKAKIS/BENTSEN	36	4	40	50
UNDECIDED			9	10

STATEWIDE TOTALS: TEXAS SENATE If election held today, who would you vote for?

	TMA POLL 8/23		
	Solid	Lean	Total
BENTSEN	50	5	55
BOULTER	29	4	33
UNDECIDED			12

OBSERVATIONS

I spoke with George Christian, Horace Busby, the Peter Hart Organization and several Texas sources about the campaign:

CHRISTIAN - "The Senator is playing well. I'm concerned that Bush is setting the agenda. Dukakis cannot continue to generalize the way he is now and expect to win.

"Bentsen's in good shape vs Boulter. He is far more specific than Dukakis has been. He looks like a million bucks and B.A. looks great, and it doesn't hurt that Dukakis keeps building him up."

BUSBY

"The campaign needs a jump start. Bentsen might be campaigning too much and should be concerned with over exposure. He doesn't want to pick up too much Dukakis baggage."

GALE VAN HOY - President Houston Gulf Coast Building Trades.

"Bentsen gave the speech of his life in Kentucky to the Southern legislators. I've been watching him for 20 years and didn't know he had it in him. About 10 minutes into the speech he took off his glasses and never looked back down at his notes and he touched every base. Best I've ever heard. Somebody ought to put a bomb under Dukakis' ass. He is dead.

"Tell Lloyd we'd love to have him at our Labor Day breakfast, we'll have 600 people at the IBEW hall and they'll tear the building down for him." (NOTE: You are in Houston that day).

PETER HART ORGANIZATION

"Dukakis has been passive in the face of symbolic patriotism attacks and therefore he's appearing to concede the points. He's drifted to about 42% which is what your average Democratic candidate has received in the last 5 presidential elections. You are at bottom right now."

"Bentsen should hit the social issues -- health care, family, education, fairness (plant closing) -- while Dukakis has to win the ethnics and Reagan Democrats. Because Bentsen is credible on the economy he should hit that, but he is uniquely able to hit social issues where Dukakis would look like your average Democrat, a la Mondale, Carter, McGovern.

SUGGESTION FOR YOUR RUNNING MATE

Dukakis needs to endorse STATES RIGHTS to blunt the gun control and regional cultural issues that are hurting him in the South & West.

"As Governor of Massachusettts, I didn't want Washington dictating our approach to solutions, and as President I will respect the autonomy of the states.

"The genius of our Founding Fathers was that they forged a union of United STATES, that recognized the power of local authority and knew that the nation would be strengthened by the experimentation and autonomy of local governments across the country."

TV COVERAGE

The irony of the decline in the polls was that you had a very strong week on the network news coverage. Every time you did something off the cuff or out of script, the media covered it, from using one-liners like "Sweat" (in reference to Quayle's predicament) to walking across the tarmac in Kentucky to greet Quayle, to interrupting your speech to personally address the abortion hecklers.

DEBATE PREP: INCLUSION VS. PRIVILEGE

Quayle will likely show deference to you (following the GOP script) in the debate, "Lloyd, you and George Bush agree on so much, it is your running mate that is the odd man out."

You've already laid out your best comeback, "Dan, the difference between you and me is not fiscal conservatism, it's that I believe government policy should be inclusive, not just for the privileged. Policies of inclusion that reach out to the elderly with catastrophic health care, that extends a hand to laid off workers with plant closing notification, that gives working mothers a real day care option.

"And Dan, I'll never understand why you wanted to deny American veterans the benefits of the Job Training Partnership Act. Dan, the difference between you and me and Governor Dukakis is that we think ordinary Americans deserve...

... (last page)

as good a treatment as the privileged. The White House should care as much about Main Street as it does Wall Street. We've got to stop whistling past the problems of average Americans."

good

good