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[Memo re: Cabinet State of the Union Address Roll-out] [1996] [loose]

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 2, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR KITTY HIGGINS

FROM: STEVE SILVERMAN *SS*

SUBJECT: Cabinet State of the Union Address Roll-Out

In past years, Members of the Cabinet have played a key role in promoting (and to some extent developing) the themes set forth in the State of the Union Address. Last year, in particular, Members of the Cabinet traveled extensively after the State of the Union to educate Americans about the Middle Class Bill of Rights, a key theme of the address. They traveled to universities and high schools (often their alma mater or home town) to highlight the proposed education tax credit and other aspects of the Middle Class Bill of Rights. In addition, for the first time, an effort was made to include Members of the Sub-Cabinet to further amplify the message by utilizing a key resource, our appointees. In fact, over 100 Administration officials traveled to targeted markets to communicate the President's themes in events and media interviews.

In addition to this roll-out after the fact, Members of the Cabinet prepared memos laying out their vision of possible themes (already undertaken this year). Moreover, the Cabinet and Sub-Cabinet undertook an aggressive regional media outreach in the week before the State of the Union to help set the stage for the speech. Key opinion leaders around the country could be added to this lead-up. Finally, Members of the Cabinet attend the State of the Union address, sitting in the first row of the House Chamber.

This formula of utilizing the Cabinet to amplify the President's main message and themes has been developed this year through a series of roll-outs, including Rural Day, Back-to-School Week, Children's Day and others. There are several keys to successful roll-outs:

- 1) lead-time to plan;
- 2) good targeting information;
- 3) good theme development and briefing of Cabinet, Chiefs of Staff, Communication Directors, Press Secretaries, Schedulers and Special Assistants;
- 4) good talking points and other material, including stump speeches;
- 5) good events with nexus to the stated themes;
- 6) good media announcement of entire roll-out;
- 7) media coordination and
- 8) early interaction with Cabinet and staff for maximum input and buy-in.

Thus, for this years State of the Union Address, January 23, we should consider pursuing the following plan of action:

Plan of Action

- 1) Clearly establish targets (work with Doug's shop) and provide to Cabinet
- 2) Cabinet staff reviews targets and volunteers for travel
- 3) Cabinet staff reviews targets and volunteers for markets for regional media during lead up (including radio, newspaper, op-eds)
- 4) Establish themes for Cabinet and Sub-Cabinet Amplification
- 5) Brief Cabinet and staff soon on themes
- 6) Paper preparation (including stump, talking points, other material) and distribution
- 7) Develop with Agencies and WH staff good event ideas with nexus to themes
- 8) Develop list of opinion leaders for pre/post SOTU calls (coordinate with OPL)
- 9) Gather and assess Cabinet Schedules for mid-late January
- 10) Work with Media Affairs to coordinate media
- 11) Work with WH Communications and WH Press to develop national media list Cabinet should call (includes columnists and major papers). WH staff handles a good deal of this, but Cabinet can support.

Time Frame

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| Week of January 1 | Develop themes; heads-up to Cabinet (at Cabinet meeting); targets; Cabinet schedules |
| Week of January 8 | Brief on themes and strategy (COS breakfast, schedule meetings with Schedulers, Special Assistants, Communications Directors, Outreach staff); tentative travel assignments; regional media assignments; preparation of opinion leader list for calls |
| Week of January 15 | Op-Eds; Opinion Leader calls; Regional Media build-up |
| Week of January 22 | National and Regional Media; Travel for events and media; Opinion leader calls |

Please let me know your thoughts.