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Mike Lux-Thoughts on Iowa: OPL's [Office of Public Liaison] Contribution to Election Politics

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June 14, 1994

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JUN 14

MEMORANDUM FOR ALEXIS HERMAN

FROM: Mike Lux

SUBJECT: OPL's Contribution to 1994 Election Politics

There are a number of logical ways that OPL could contribute to helping the White House manage the politics of the 1994 election cycle. They include:

1. Constituency days, patterned after the African-American constituency day planned for June 28. Beyond the hispanic day already being discussed, we could try to get more of these on the schedule. Top candidates for the other days include seniors, religious leaders, women, veterans, and rural activists. Although we already do a lot with them, a day could also be done with local business leaders and/ or local labor leaders in targeted states.
2. Developing constituency games plans in the targeted states. From talking with Minyon and others at the DNC, it is my sense that there is not a great deal of sophistication in terms of state level strategy around key constituencies. The field operatives who run coordinated campaigns get a lot of training and advice on running phone banks, supervising field staff, and operating within the party structure, but in a lot of cases no one is helping them think through a strategic plan on constituency politics. It seems to me that OPL, working together with the White House Political Department and the DNC desk and constituency staff, could play an important role by helping to develop a state by state constituency plan.
3. Non-partisan voter registration. Especially with the enactment of the motor voter law, voter registration work in the lower income communities is an increasingly important tool. By paying attention to the organizations doing effective work in this area, we can make a difference in increasing the work they are able to do.
4. Combating the radical Christian right. As we have discussed, we can play a major role in combating the radical Christian right. We need to employ both national strategies, working with leaders of key organizations like National Council of Churches and People for the American Way, and local recruitment strategies to build a local cadre of informed and active religious leaders.

cc: Steve Hilton
Minyon Moore
Donald Sweitzer
David Wilhelm

November 15, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Mike Lux

SUBJECT: Thoughts on Iowa

One of the few bright spots for us coming out of this last round of elections is that most of the major players in Iowa Democratic politics are feeling very positive about the President. I spent one-on-one time with a range of key people and in virtually every instance -- without me raising the topic -- people volunteered that they were ready to help in the 1996 caucuses. Among those I met with:

Lowell Junkins	(former State Senate Majority Leader, former Governor candidate)
Ed Campbell	(Bonnie's husband, former Party Chair)
Jack Hatch	(Harkin's in-state AA)
Bill Wimmer	(Trial Lawyers lobbyist)
Don Mckee	(AFSCME State President)
Jim Wengert/Mark Smith/Jan Lane/Don Rowen	(Iowa AFL-CIO)
Jerry Addy	(Building Trades chief political guy)
Mike Tramontino	(former State Party Executive Director)
Brad Lint	(Executive Director, Iowa Citizen Action)
John Caccitorre/Greg Nichols/Deb O'Leary	(State Senate political staff)

There are a few key people I didn't get the chance to hook-up with this time, but I think for the most part we are in terrific shape with the key statewide players. That, and the 56% approval rating for the President in recent polls (before his recent trip) is the good news. There are a couple of things we have to be careful about in the coming months:

1. As in many states, many of these key players do not get along. Harkin, Junkins, and Ed Campbell are all (fairly openly) hostile to each other. Don Mckee of AFSCME, who has by far the best political organization in the state and who fortunately gets along with most of the key political players, is not well liked by many others in the Iowa labor movement. There is some very intense in-fighting among Democratic legislators. The list goes on, but the point is important: structuring our campaign organization will be very tricky, at least in terms of the top leadership. I urge that we not make any early commitments to give the leadership of the campaign to any one of these people.

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2. At least some of our potential opposition in a Democratic primary would have a natural base in the state. Being a neighbor, Bob Kerry is well-known, especially in western Iowa, and has a lot of ties to Iowa. Anyone running on our left flank would have a natural base in the "I'll support whoever is the most left wing candidate" constituency, which in the Iowa caucuses is significant. The good news for us is that with a caucus of their own, the potential mischief that Republicans could stir up (anyone over 18 walking in the door is eligible to participate on caucus night) is minimal.

I would advocate that we send someone out there for a few days fairly soon (maybe even in December) to begin some meetings to quietly pull some people together to talk about where we go next.

DISTRIBUTION:

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4:00

15 Apr on 50
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