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PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC OPINION: POLLING IN THE FORD AND CARTER ADMINISTRATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Presidential Leadership and Public Opinion: Polling in the Ford and Carter Administrations

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This paper analyzes the general use of public opinion polls by President Ford and President Carter during their terms in office. By tracking the flow, direction, and content of polling memos within these administrations, I determine the extent to which not only polls affect policy outcomes, but also how this information illuminates various leadership characteristics of these different administrations. In the post-Watergate era that defines these two administrations, I find two different approaches to incorporating polls into the presidential decision-making process. Whereas Ford maintains a trustee-styled presidency by largely ignoring poll information in this process, Carter more frequently consults the advice of polling and thereby engenders a more "politico-styled" presidency. These conclusions are primarily based on extensive archival data gathered from the Ford and Carter Presidential Libraries. Ultimately, I argue that based upon this evidence, our academic understanding of these two presidencies as well as our greater understanding of their leadership legacies is greatly enhanced by the analysis of poll use within these administrations. Furthermore, by exploring the greater complexities of the relationship between modern presidents and the advent of polling, I uncover a more dynamic model of presidential leadership – one that challenges traditional modes of representation or leadership styles.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult tasks a modern president faces is in determining to what extent and how to effectively respond to public opinion. During the process of campaigning for office, presidential candidates are conditioned to become highly sensitive to the opinions of voters. In order to win, they must court voters, making promises to support public preferences and to defend public interests before their own. Once in office, however, presidents are often expected to do what is "right" for the country rather than what is popular. Suddenly caught between the roles of "trustee" and "delegate", presidents must learn how to re-position themselves with respect to these conflicting public demands.[1] That is, they must learn when it is strategically and substantively favorable to ignore, lead or follow public opinion. How and when presidents come to make these decisions is both a function of their individual leadership and personal styles and the way in which their administrations are organized to maneuver in each direction.

Richard Neustadt convincingly argues that successful modern presidents are those who strategically capitalize on their political prestige to gain the necessary power to influence public policy.[2] Two such power-building strategies within the president's arsenal are his ability to respond to or effectively lead public opinion. Notable historical examples of these strategies date back as early as Theodore Roosevelt's "bully pulpit" and Woodrow Wilson's "rhetorical-styled" presidency, where presidents gained valuable political prestige by forging a strong relationship with the mass public. Technological

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[1] John C. Wahlke et. al., The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962, pp. 272-280.

advances, first in radio and then in television, have allowed succeeding presidents greater direct access to the public and vice versa, creating an even stronger relationship between these two entities in the modern era. Specifically, as Samuel Kernell illustrates, "going public" or the "strategy whereby a president promotes himself and his policies in Washington by appealing to the American public for support", has become a formidable modern political tactic.[3] The more public support the president has for his proposed policies, the more pressure can be exerted on Congress to support the president's agenda. Consequentially, the presidency has become a political institution increasingly dependent on courting both the mass media and public opinion.

Historical records of a specific relationship forged between presidents and pollsters can be traced back as early as the FDR administration.[4] The art of public opinion polling practiced in the 1930s and 1940s quickly became a fixture of the campaign process. Specifically, polls conducted by the *Literary Digest* and Gallup gained political significance through their ability to predict presidential election outcomes, despite the methodological problems that plagued these early surveys. As polling became a popular tool in the election process, its usefulness for the business of governing became evermore apparent. That is, polling afforded presidents a vehicle for measuring the public pulse that could be used as a barometer for when and how to "go public" on particular issues of public policy. Moreover, information gathered

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2 Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan, New York: The Free Press, 1990, p. 30.

3 Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership (2nd edition), Washington, D.C., Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993, p. 2.

4 Robert M.Eisinger and Jeremy Brown, "Polling as a Means Toward Presidential Autonomy: Emil Hurja, Hadley Cantril and the Roosevelt Administration", *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, vol. 10, no. 3 (1998), p. 237.

consistently through privately commissioned polling sources would prove to be a tremendous asset to presidents seeking to increase their political control of public policy matters. In the public policy bargaining game, presidents armed with detailed information concerning public preferences could tailor their rhetoric as well as policy directives to maximize public acceptance of their policies and in turn pressure Washington to follow their lead. While FDR, Truman and Eisenhower were novice users of this technological advantage; subsequent presidents have become increasingly reliant on polling as a means to building presidential power and prestige levels.[5]

Academic research, however, has only just begun to scratch the surface in exploring the complexities and implications of presidential reliance on public opinion polling. In particular, little evidence concerning the institutional development of the presidential public opinion polling apparatus has been examined fully after the Nixon administration. Therefore, I continue this analysis further into what I believe is an important juncture -- the post-Watergate era under the Ford and Carter Administrations. This historical period is critical insofar as it represents a fundamental break with the political environment experienced by previous administrations. Vietnam and Watergate changed the nature of "politics-as-usual", calling for a revitalized and potentially more profound connection between politicians and public interests. Faced with the tremendous task of rebuilding public confidence in the presidency both Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter pledged to reconstruct government to act as the voice of the people. Consequentially, the post-Watergate presidencies encouraged the idea of major changes

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[5] John G. Geer, From Tea Leaves to Opinion Polls: A Theory of Democratic Leadership, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, pp. 83-87.

and improvements in the political processes. However, Stephen Skowronek has also identified this era as a period of "disjunction" in political time, where the original liberal coalition established by FDR had begun to disintegrate.[6] Skowronek specifically identifies the Carter administration in these terms, citing the administration's inability to reach policy consensus with Democratic Congressional leaders as chiefly responsible for dismantling FDR's liberal regime. Skowronek's historical assessment can also be supported by the fact that both Ford and Carter were ultimately incapable of mobilizing strong party or public support for their re-election efforts. Given these variables of public distrust and ideological turmoil, the presidencies of the 1970s are uniquely situated to test the precedents set by previous administrations in poll usage. Detailed analysis of these administrations provides us with the next chapter in the historical development of the presidential "public opinion apparatus"[7], and allows us to test the assumptions and conclusions we have already made with respect to the legacy of these administrations.

In analyzing how these administrations used polling information in the public policy decision-making process, this study delves into two areas of interest in American politics. First, its basic research questions fall under the larger rubric of determining how public opinion affects public policy. It furthers our understanding of how extensively public attitudes are filtered through political elites to develop and enact policies. Second, it gives us a greater understanding of the changing dimensions of the modern American

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[6] Stephen Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 39.

[7] Lawrence Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of Polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies." Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994; Diane J. Heith, "Staffing the White House Public Opinion Apparatus, 1969-88", Paper prepared for delivery at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA, August 28 - September 1, 1996.

presidency. How presidents uniquely respond to public opinion defines various styles of presidential leadership. Today, it is quite commonplace now for us to assume the importance of polling in the presidential affairs. However, political scientists have only just begun to examine how such an assumption evolved in the first place. More important, the results of this research provide the opportunity to ask and offer answers to critical questions about the consequences of this new visible emphasis on public opinion in the governing process.

Specifically, I address the following questions: (1) How and why did the public opinion apparatuses within each administration operate? How did these operations fit within the context of previous scholarly studies concerning the "institutionalization of polling"? (2) For what purposes was polling information used? Did Ford and Carter ignore public opinion or did they engage in efforts to follow or lead public opinion? (3) Which leadership roles best define Ford and Carter? How does the polling evidence challenge previous historical analysis of these administrations? (4) Finally, what kind of conclusions can we draw from this evidence? Is there a distinctive leadership style that defines the post-Watergate presidencies as it relates to public opinion usage? This study contributes significantly to understanding and answering these and related questions.

I originally hypothesized that the Ford and Carter presidencies would illustrate responsive leadership models as related to their use of public opinion. Based upon the trend of increasing centralization of public opinion polling operations within the White House set by previous administrations, I expected to find the Ford and Carter White Houses sufficiently organized to monitor public opinion on a similarly sophisticated level. Furthermore, acting in the shadow of Watergate, I believed that both of these

presidents would be highly sensitive to public opinion and would incorporate public opinion into their decision-making processes. Given these basic hypotheses, I set out to define the full extent of public opinion polling within the Ford and Carter White Houses. My original intention, however, was not only to find out how public opinion was integrated into the operations of these presidencies, but more importantly to challenge previous assumptions concerning presidential leadership roles. More importantly, I sought to challenge the traditional way in which the classic trustee-delegate-politico leadership roles operate when modern presidents relate to public opinion.

Leadership Styles & Presidential Legacies

At the heart of a representative democracy is the relationship between the public and its leaders. It is a system of government in which the people indirectly participate in the decision-making process by electing political officials to represent their collective interests. Here, accountability to public opinion is maintained through electoral threats. Those representatives who do not temper their actions to the public's favor run the risk of losing votes in the next election. As illustrated by Miller and Stokes classic study of congressional representation in 1958, the representative's perception of public opinion can significantly influence his political decisions.[8] In this system, the deliberative process is a matter of addressing public versus individual convictions. Therefore, basic representation models that operate in a system of democracy must address this dichotomy.

There are three primary representation models or leadership styles that have been identified within the American politics literature. "Delegates" are representatives who

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[8] Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, "Constituency Influence in Congress", *American Political Science Review*, vol. 57 (March 1963), p.50.

support political actions that are in accordance with the majority will of their constituencies. "Trustees" are representatives who maintain that it is their duty to support policies that they believe are right for their constituency, not simply popular. Whereas delegates subjugate their own opinions to the collective views of the public, trustees hold their own judgments above all others. Generally, these two leadership styles can suggest two distinct types of political leaders -- those who ignore and those who follow public opinion. However, there is an alternative role that can be adopted by representatives. A "politico" has been described in the literature as a representative who swings between the two extremes, sometimes acting as a trustee on particular issues and as a delegate on others. [9] Politicos must weigh their own opinions against public opinion rather than consistently resort to one over the other based upon a strict representation philosophy. Ultimately, delegates and politicos are portrayed as open and responsive to the public, whereas trustees primarily remain closed off from public influences. While the delegate simply follows trends, the politico determines how to use public opinion given a wide array of possible actions.

Public opinion can be used in a variety of different ways. Following or responding to public opinion includes all efforts to use public opinion as one guide in political decision-making. Those representatives who actively respond to public opinion specifically use polling information to set political agendas and determine their positions on particular public policies. Efforts to lead or direct public opinion include all actions that seek to generate public support for the representative's point of view. Here, representatives often attempt to persuade the public by launching all-out public relations

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[9] Wahlke et. al. pp. 277-280.

"education" campaigns to shift either the public's attention to or their position on particular political issues. Placing their "spin" on an issue is a common education tactic for politicians attempting to direct public opinion. Using all the available media outlets to reach the public, representatives can seek to justify or explain their own positions to the public. All representatives to some degree engage in these kinds of "explaining" activities, as Richard Fenno's study of representative behavior indicates.[10] Likewise, all representatives are capable of manipulating public opinion. Here, a representative can seek to affect the direction of public opinion by controlling the information that may influence public preferences. Such instances of manipulation have been documented for the Nixon White House, indicating that manipulative action is most certainly not out of the realm of possible uses of public opinion.[11] Finally, representatives can dismiss or ignore public opinion by refusing to engage in any of these other actions.

When considering how different kinds of public opinion usage correspond with the classic representation definitions offered by the trustee-delegate-politico model, a more complex model of leadership style emerges. That is, whereas trustees under the classic definition primarily ignore public opinion, little emphasis has been placed on the trustee's ability to also engage in explaining, manipulating, or even leading public opinion. In all of these instances, the trustee places his/her own convictions above those of the general public. The trustee can and often does remain closed off to public opinion's influence, but does not always completely dismiss the necessity of addressing

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[10] Richard Fenno, Jr., Home Style: House Members in Their Districts, Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1978, pp. 136-169.

[11] Lawrence Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Presidential Manipulation of Polls and Public Opinion: The Nixon Administration and the Pollsters", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 110, no. 4, Winter 1995-96, p. 524.

public opinion in political processes. By explaining, manipulating, or leading public opinion, trustees can still acknowledge public opinion without having to surrender their own agendas. Delegates by their traditional definition primarily follow public opinion, but they can also engage in explaining or manipulating actions. What truly distinguishes delegates from trustees is their desire to uphold the direction of public opinion above their own opinions; delegates would not ignore or lead public opinion like trustees. In their explaining activities, delegates would place their opinions within the context of public opinion trends, seeking not to move public opinion but to advertise their desire to champion the general public interest. Politicos, however, are uniquely situated so as to synthesize the full range of possible uses of public opinion – following, leading, explaining, manipulating, or ignoring public opinion.

To determine which representation model best describes a particular representative's leadership style, several other different methods have been employed. Personal surveys or more detailed interviews have been conducted to get a subjective indication of individual leadership styles. This approach, however, may not adequately explain political behavior; subjective accounts are inherently biased. Studies concerning Congress have looked to roll call votes and compared them against representatives' activities to direct public opinion in their constituencies. Likewise for presidents, the structure of the White House decision-making process and its policy outcomes has provided researchers behavioral indicators of leadership styles. There are two different White House organizational models that have typically defined modern presidential

administrations.[12] A hierarchical or pyramid-shaped White House operates with the president and his chief of staff at the top, and all other advisors and staff members must filter through the chief of staff to reach the president. A circular organization, or what Ford called the "spokes of the wheel" White House, positions the president at the epicenter and all staff members have direct access to him from the circumference. The hierarchical model theoretically supports a leadership style that is closed off to outside influences. Studies of the Nixon administration, the most notorious example of a hierarchical White House, demonstrate power concentrated in the hands of a select few administrators and thereby favoring narrower rather than broader interests. Without the filtering process, the spokes-of-the-wheel model theoretically allows for greater outside input into the presidential decision-making process.

While both Ford and Carter initially subscribed to the spokes-of-the-wheel model, each one modified it to fit their own brand of governing. The Ford White House initially functioned with a skeleton crew of previous Nixon White House operatives. Breaking with the Nixon model, however, was of highest priority given the political ramifications surrounding the Watergate scandal. Consequentially, implementation of a spokes-of-the-wheel model fostered the perception of a White House "more open and accessible" to political interests than previous administrations.[13] Indeed, this perception remains at the heart of the long-term historical legacy of the Ford years – the return of a public presidency. However, the Ford White House altered its original design in the latter part

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[12] Stephen Hess, Organizing The Presidency (2nd edition). Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1988, p. 133 & 254.; and see Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days (1965) for original definition of the "spokes-of-the-wheel" model.

[13] Roger B. Porter, "Gerald R. Ford: The Healing Presidency", in Fred I. Greenstein (ed.), Leadership in the Modern Presidency, Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 226.

of its term, allowing chief of staff Dick Cheney greater control over presidential functions. As Ford began to seriously engage himself in his 1976 election campaign, it became much more expedient to allow his chief of staff to organize both governing and campaigning strategies. Like Ford, Jimmy Carter entered office in 1976 determined to alter "politics as usual" in Washington. President Carter was a subscriber to what Erwin C. Hargrove calls "the politics of public goods", for Carter believed that "the proper responsibility of the elected official was to be the voice of the unorganized citizen and all the citizens who made up the general public".[14] He was strongly committed to the public policy decision-making process, searching for "comprehensive solutions" to the nation's most urgent problems. The spokes-of-the-wheel model well suited this philosophy. His "cabinet government" allowed him direct access to numerous advisors and kept him in control of the decision-making process, not a chief of staff.[15] By the second half of his term, however, Carter had scaled back on the number of individual staff members who would have direct access to him and appointed Hamilton Jordan his chief of staff. Both Ford and Carter found that the business of governing required tighter organizational control than their original models could supply.

While Ford's legacy of "healing" the nation by providing for "open and accessible" avenues to the president was not compromised by these structural changes, Carter's legacy would remain linked to an inability to provide this kind of leadership. Charles O. Jones believes that Carter's "public goods" philosophy was structurally enhanced by the "trusteeship" nature of the Carter White House. Here, the president's

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[14] Erwin C. Hargrove, "Jimmy Carter: The Politics of Public Goods" in Fred I. Greenstein (ed.), Leadership in the Modern Presidency, Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 230.

[15] Hess, p. 141.

authority stems from the outside public and not from inside Washington, but in a special capacity. That is, in the search for comprehensive solutions to public policy problems, Carter and his top administrative officials often isolated themselves from considering what was politically feasible in Washington or popular with the American public. Jones argues that the Carter approach fostered "an institutional separation of policy functions", where "agenda setting and program development were regarded as the practically exclusive province of the executive" and legislative-executive bargaining was downplayed.[16] Furthermore, if we couple this approach with Carter's image as an outsider in Washington, Jones' assessment of Carter illustrates an administration seriously lacking the skill and the desire to lead, educate, or persuade the public and in turn Washington to support his programs.

Herein lies the dilemma: if Hargrove and Jones are correct in their interpretations, then the administration would have spent very little energy tracking and analyzing public opinion trends. That is, if the goal was to support what was "right" before what was "popular", it could logically follow that public opinion polling played an insignificant role in the administration's decision-making process. And yet, an equally strong argument can be made that as a champion of public interest, Carter did not ignore public opinion but was actually concerned about and frequently responded to public attitudes. His glaring policy mistakes may have been a product of difficulties his administration experienced in leading or interpreting public opinion. Therefore, a great deal of emphasis in this research is placed not only on discovering how frequently polls were used, but also how effectively this information was used by the Carter administration to mobilize

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[16] Jones, pp. 97-8.

support for specific policy objectives. Likewise, an in-depth analysis of the extent to which the Ford administration was responsive to public interests and attitudes through its public opinion apparatus can examine the validity of the Ford administration's legacy of providing for a renewed sense of openness and accessibility.

By looking at the flow of information as further evidence of leadership styles, this study extends the criterion under which presidential leadership must be evaluated. Personal philosophies and the general structure of the White House alone do not determine trustee or delegate behavior. The examination of the White House polling apparatus, and specifically the role presidents play within this system, must also be considered. If presidents remain closed off from information about public opinion, then this is a clear indicator of trustee behavior. If presidents are actively involved in the giving and receiving of polling information, then trustee, delegate, or politico behavior can be demonstrated; a closer look at the particular ways in which public opinion is used by each highly-involved president will indicate their leadership style. Naturally, instances of leading or following public opinion must be identified in order to distinguish between trustee, politico and delegate roles. Therefore, depending upon the outcome of this kind of investigation, the explanatory value of president leadership styles established under other criterion is suspect. Presidents operating in a closed, hierarchical White House or an open, spokes-of-the-wheel White House can both prove to be either highly involved or isolated from the polling apparatus. One operating system does not necessarily precipitate a specific kind of presidential behavior. A closer examination of the combination of representation philosophies, White House organization, public

opinion polling apparatus functions, and public opinion usage will better clarify these leadership style differences among presidents.

Analysis of Strategic Poll Usage

If all representatives were strictly trustees, then a discussion of poll use in American politics would be trivial. However, because of the pressures placed on our government officials to act responsively to the public, leadership is often chartered with sophisticated attention to public opinion polls. Governmental responsiveness, wherein public opinion affects public policy, has been well documented. Specifically, Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro demonstrate a strong congruency between public opinion and public policy on highly salient issues, where significant shifts in opinion create policy shifts in the same direction.[17] Various incentives that exist for representatives to respond to public opinion help to maintain this congruent relationship between public opinion and public policy. Richard Fenno reminds us that representatives have three basic personal goals to meet, "re-election, power inside Congress, and good public policy".[18] To actualize these goals, representatives therefore seek to use those tools that are available to them which will increase their ability to exert power and control over the governing process. Public opinion polls have come to service representatives in this capacity.

The strong relationship between politicians and polls is most apparent in the campaign process. When campaigning for office, candidates seek to strategically place themselves in a position of greatest possible favor with their electoral constituencies. As the logic behind Anthony Downs' Median Voter Theorem dictates, candidates naturally

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[17] Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Effects of Public Opinion on Policy", American Political Science Review, vol. 77 (1983), p. 186.

[18] Fenno, p. 137.

position themselves in the middle of the political spectrum to appeal to the largest percentage of voters possible.[19] Identifying the median voter, however, requires accurate information and specifically sophisticated analysis of electorate opinions and behavior. Public opinion polls allow a candidate to track this position over time with a large degree of accuracy. By responding to the needs of the median voter, candidates are able to court the votes necessary to win office. The equation for electoral victory is clear -- strategic responsiveness equals political power. As polling has assumed this role in the campaign process, it has found its way into the governing process under the same pretenses.

Richard Neustadt did not specifically consider the use of polling information as a source of presidential power in his original estimations, but the logic inherent to his argument sets the grounds upon which poll use can be evaluated. In identifying strategies for presidential influence in government, Neustadt's model of presidential power focuses on a president's ability to bargain within the Washington establishment. Presidents who have the power to persuade the establishment, who are able "to convince such men that what the White House wants of them is what they ought to do for their sake and on their authority," are able to exert a great deal of influence over the public policy outcomes.[20] The power to persuade is derived from the president's ability to protect his professional reputation, for "out of what others think of him emerge his opportunities for influence" in such matters.[21] Therefore, the president's ability to shape his political reputation, to show others what he wants to show them, directly relates to the amount of power that he is able

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[19] Anthony Downs. An Economic Theory of Democracy, New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 1957. pp. 114-118.

[20] Neustadt, p. 30.

[21] Ibid., p. 52.

to exert over political processes. Performance flaws over time negatively affect his professional reputation and diminish his "power stakes" in Washington. Ultimately, the protection of presidential power stakes is a matter of controlling image and information, requiring constant attention to how presidential actions are being interpreted by those inside and outside of Washington.

Maintaining favor with the public, however, is not always easy for modern presidents. While presidents may enter office on the tide of public approval, high public expectations and media scrutiny make it difficult for presidents to maintain this level of approval. Paul Light argues that there are natural cycles within the presidential term of office of "decreasing influence" and "increasing effectiveness" in public policy; the navigational trick is to take advantage of the times when the president's political capital is the strongest, usually at the very beginning of the term.[22] Therefore, it is crucial that presidents immediately capitalize on their high approval ratings in order to bolster their reputations and build up the political power necessary to see them through their more controversial or tough political battles. The regular monitoring of public opinion polls for approval rating shifts is a natural by-product of the need for presidents to know where they are in the cyclical patterns of presidential power experienced during their term of office.

The use of poll information for monitoring approval ratings, however, is only one example of how modern presidents have incorporated public opinion polling into the governing process. Knowledge of a public consensus on public policy, or lack thereof,

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[22] Paul Charles Light, The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Carter, Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982, pp. 36-40.

can affect the strategic considerations presidents make concerning creation and promotion of their own policy agendas. Highly salient issues with strong public consensus on particular policy directives may pressure presidents to respond by following public opinion trends. In the absence of a strong public consensus on an issue, presidents can find greater latitude for injecting their priorities into the political process. Ultimately, the strategic decision to lead or follow public opinion is derived from a process of weighing public preferences against presidential preferences. In practice, presidents who choose either to follow or lead public opinion base that decision not only on the intensity of public consensus, but on the political power to be won or lost by either strategy as well as individual assessments of the role public opinion ought to play in presidential deliberations. Ultimately, those presidents who choose to follow public opinion do so to avoid detrimental political consequences, such as low approval ratings, and because they fundamentally believe in the importance of supporting public consensus above other considerations. However, weighing individual presidential priorities and convictions against the political prestige they may sacrifice in pursuit of an unpopular or low salience policy directive, presidents who seek to lead public opinion do so because they believe they are capable of mobilizing the public support they deem necessary for political success. Once again, with either strategy, the extent of public opinion's influence on public policy remains strongly dependent on individual assessments of political power as well as leadership philosophies.

Consistent with Neustadt's arguments, presidential efforts to either lead or follow public opinion can ultimately be viewed as strategic maneuvers to try to shape political reputations and guard presidential power stakes in Washington. Efforts to "go public", as

identified by Samuel Kernell, add an additional angle of strategic consideration for the use of public opinion. That is, in choosing to lead or follow public opinion, presidents also assess the value of these strategies within the larger legislative bargaining process. The act of going public is simply an attempt by the president to use public support to gain leverage over Congress. Through televised public addresses to the nation, presidents seek to encourage public support for their administration and its agenda. With the public squarely behind them, presidents gain more power necessary to bargain with Congress. Here, going public presupposes that the president knows the policy preferences of both the public and Congress. If the president's policy preferences are consistent with that of the public but not with Congress, he can use the public's support to pressure Congress to adopt his policies. If the president's policy preferences differ with that of both the public and Congress, he can directly appeal to the public and try to persuade them to change their preferences, or he can alter his position to achieve public acceptance and in turn persuade Congress. Therefore, in order to achieve legislative successes, presidents must be able to calculate strategically the best bargaining position that simultaneously suits their own political interests. Tailoring their public messages to either lead or follow public opinion gives presidents greater bargaining leverage to boost their prestige levels and control public policy outcomes.

Just how strongly public opinion polls affect the direction of public policy is difficult to determine given the myriad of intervening variables that influence the decision-making process. However, when the timing of polling memos is measured against the timing of administrative efforts to "go public" on particular policies, presidential poll usage becomes more clearly defined. That is, the congruency between

policy development timelines and public opinion poll consultation must be established. Evidence of poll consultation and the development of strategies based upon this information dated *before* going public initiatives would illustrate a White House determined to either lead or follow public opinion trends. Evidence of poll analysis conducted *only after* going public initiatives would illustrate a White House engaged in "explaining" policy rather than leading or following public preferences. Both of these scenarios can be used to highlight differences in leadership styles among presidents, as I have previously argued. But more importantly, a fuller analysis of the evidence presented by comparing polling and policy development timelines provides for a fuller understanding of the scope and complexity of the modern relationship between presidents and the public.

Methodology: Data Collection and Policy Case Selection

Isolating the actual variables found in presidential decision-making is a puzzle in itself. Unless one is intimately involved in the White House decision-making process, the psychological dimensions of individual decisions are difficult to define. Despite these limitations, there are a variety of ways that such a process can be evaluated from outside the Oval office. Personal interviews and memoirs of the president and key White House aides can give the researcher insight into the decision-making process. Time and budget restraints on the research process do not always allow for personal interviews to be effectively conducted. Moreover, because selective memory biases naturally taint personal recounts of the past, the use of additional evidence is essential for establishing valid results. White House artifacts, or any written or recorded evidence of administration operations, serve as measures that can substantiate or contradict the claims

of the principal actors involved in these processes. The national archives provide a wealth of such evidence open for academic consumption after each successive administration has retired from Washington. By housing all the formal documentation of White House operations in their walls, the presidential archives are a significant source for outside evaluation of presidential processes.

Entering into archival research, the researcher has to strike a balance between his or her own expectations for the research project and the meandering nature of archival discovery. While the archivists have organized presidential collections in neat time sequences and file categories, sometimes the evidence sought for analysis does not fit these categorizations. Modern computer categorizing methods fortunately have established "key word" or topic searches of your choosing. For my research purposes here, my strategy was to keep the search wide enough so as not to overlook any key information, but narrowed so as to be expedient. More importantly, at the onset I had to establish good definitions for the kind of evidence I was seeking in order to minimize any data collection errors I could make in this process. Throughout the hundreds of thousands of documents attributed to each administration, I had to determine which documents would serve as measurement of my original research hypotheses. Ultimately, I had to construct an operational definition of what a polling-related document looked like before I could identify such evidence within the archives.

Given the fact that I was interested in determining the extent to which White House members responded to (or where otherwise attentive to) public opinion information, I was naturally interested in discovering documents that contained reference to polling or poll analysis from both public and private poll sources. The variety of

polling information found within the archive collections, however, required a more discerning approach to data collection. There are hundreds of published polling reports from Harris, Gallup, Roper, etc. that are strewn throughout both the Ford and Carter archives. Sometimes these reports are found under obvious file headings like "Roper Polls", but they can also be thrown into folders simply marked "Inflation". If the archivists categorizing file information have not cross-referenced these files against the key words of "polls", "public opinion", and the like, this makes the data collection process extremely difficult. Given the incredible size of the entire archive collections and their organizational limitations, one has to acknowledge and expect that such reports can be found anywhere, making the task of accurately tallying these reports problematic. Only a complete examination of every folder in every collection would solve this problem. Moreover, while evidence of these polls in staff files indicates that many staff members consulted polls, there isn't any concrete evidence attached to these reports to illustrate the flow of polling information within the administration. Therefore, an attempt to compile these as documents of study is impractical both from a theoretical and a methodological standpoint.

White House memoranda found within the archival collections are an excellent source for researching presidential actions. In the business of governing, White House staff members formally communicate with one another through the use of internal written memos. These inter-office documents are distinctive in form, with clearly drafted headings that list the date, the names of both the author(s) and the recipient(s) of the document, and the general topic of discussion. Because of this uniform format, such documents are easy to locate among the various notes, letters, reports, and other

information found within the archival collections. More importantly, their value for the researcher extends from the messages they record between staff members. This evidence will never be able to account for the verbal exchanges between staff members that happened on a daily basis. However, without the benefit of direct involvement in such situations, these memoranda serve as a means of entering the presidency from the outside. That is, analysis of the principal actors involved in the giving and receiving of information, the specific advice given, as well as the timing of these dialogues can be supplied through these documents. In studying the use of polling information in the White House decision-making process, memoranda that address polling information provide for detailed research analysis of an administration's polling apparatus on all of these levels.

Therefore, a "polling memo", as I defined it, is a formal message received and sent internally between White House staff members and/or polling agents that includes specific references to polling information.[23] Polling memoranda have specific origins and destinations -- we know who sent them, who received them, when and for what purpose they were sent. Usually, memorandum are on White House letter-head, but sometimes informal handwritten or typed notes between staff members accompany polling information and these have also been counted as a polling memos. Often, polling memos include detailed analysis of polling information, but sometimes they are just simply notes "forwarded for your information", with handwritten comments or references to specific polls, etc. More importantly, polling memos are often sent or received by

[23] For a complete list of these polling memoranda found see Appendix A

more than one individual staff member. Ultimately, I account for these multiple actors in order to access the internal extensiveness of the polling apparatuses.

Despite the usefulness of these documents in the research process, the limitations inherent to this kind of research must be identified before any observations or generalizations can be constructed from this data. Specifically, the tally of polling memos I collected cannot be consulted as a *definitive* list due once again to the organizational problems archival research presents. It is entirely possible that some memoranda could not be located. However, because most polling memos have at least two individuals involved in the giving and receiving of information, the likelihood of locating such a memo in at least one staff member's collection is magnified. Several of the memos gathered from my research had duplicate copies scattered throughout the archives due to the fact that more than one individual was privy to such information. Furthermore, both the Ford and Carter libraries have benefited from several decades of researchers paging through its documents. Detailed guides have been compiled on general topics of interest to aid subsequent researchers. Both libraries provided lists of files specifically flagged as containing polling and public opinion information within the archives. Additionally, career archivists who have organized whole sectors of the archives are on hand to help you wade through the archives, providing helpful hints and guidelines throughout the data collection process. Therefore, using all the research aides available to me and a good working definition of a poll memo, I am confident that my data set represents a significant amount of information necessary for proper research analysis. Through my archival research I was able to obtain original White House documentation that can be used to determine not only who used polling information in

the Ford and Carter Administrations, but also how and when written polling information was circulated and consulted.

Having outlined the fundamental components of the research and documentary evidence, I turn to how particular case studies were chosen for detailed analysis. I have already discussed the decision to look at the Ford and Carter administrations. This study focuses on particular policy issues in an effort to define poll usage within each White House model. I chose economic policy and foreign policy as general issue areas from which to analyze presidential responsiveness to public opinion. My selection of these issue areas is based on theoretical considerations and the characteristics and properties of the evidence I assembled. In the first instance, economic and foreign issues were important issues that the White House dealt with visibly. While governing issues, or issues concerning presidential popularity, are the most frequently discussed issues in the poll memoranda, economic and foreign policy issues fall second and third followed only by social policy issues. The wealth of information available in these areas provides ample evidence to examine my original hypotheses concerning the use of polls. Moreover, each administration dealt with a similar set of sub-issue topics found under these large policy areas. Specifically, the issue of inflation is significantly discussed within both administrations' poll memos. Therefore, the similarity between topics addressed by the polling apparatus strongly supports a comparative analysis of these administrations. More importantly, the historical transformation of presidential power in both of these issue areas has contributed considerably to the level of responsiveness to public opinion witnessed in modern administrations. How the Ford and Carter

administrations handled increasing public pressure to perform on these issues speaks to their general level of consideration of public opinion in the policy process.

To summarize the transformation in presidential power within these issue areas, we have to start at the constitutional level from which presidential power originated. Article II of the U.S. Constitution is perhaps the most highly scrutinized and criticized section of this historical document due to its vague delineation of presidential power and to the conflicting interpretations that presidents have assigned to its provisions over time. According to speculation as to the founding fathers' logic concerning the boundaries of presidential power, the presidency was structured with clear intention toward making this institution a strong diplomatic center of power with a modicum of control over legislative affairs. In the early years of the republic, the relatively small size of government as well as the unique demands placed on it to perform in a policymaking sense required strong congressional action. That is, most policy deliberation centered on disputes between and among states rather than on lofty issues of national interest. Therefore, most nineteenth century presidents believed that they should rely solely on Congress, the natural arbitrator of state and local interests, to address successfully legislative concerns. However, twentieth century presidents have increasingly found themselves subject to a wider variety of public expectations with respect to public policy innovation.

Executive leadership on economic issues grew out of organizational necessities generated from an overburdened and highly fragmented modern bureaucracy. At the pinnacle of the executive branch, the president interacts on a frequent basis with cabinet secretaries and other agency leaders in the process of executing the law. Due to this institutional arrangement, presidents became the natural depositories for agencies to input

their policy concerns and national agenda suggestions, making them a primary source of information in the legislative process. Furthermore, as a result of the Depression era, the presidency has become a publicly acknowledged center of economic policy-making. Franklin D. Roosevelt won office in 1932 on his public pledge to tackle depression forces decisively and aggressively. By capitalizing on his strong national political base and his ability to act unilaterally in choosing a direct course of policy action, Roosevelt's presidency ultimately demonstrates that in economic matters as in international affairs the presidency is better equipped than Congress to deal with the initial complexities of policy planning and coordination. Consequentially, the American public primarily judges presidential performance on these new economic policy-making levels. Those presidents who are perceived as aiding the national economy through their policy initiatives generally receive high approval ratings, and in turn, are capable of exerting greater political power in other presidential activities.[24] Therefore, economic issues naturally serve at the heart of modern presidential considerations.

Both the Ford and Carter administrations were confronted with serious hurdles in economic policy development. The '70s decade ushered in a new economic problem – stagflation. Stagflation is an economic condition that is characterized by both high inflation and high unemployment rates. Keynesian economic theories traditionally argue that inflation and unemployment indicators relate to one another conversely – when one rate is high, the other is low. Defying these economic assumptions, the economic environment of the 1970s offered both Ford and Carter economic policy challenges of unprecedented importance. Furthermore, problems caused by an energy-deficit in the

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[24] Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin, American Public Opinion: Its Origins, Content, and Impact (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995, p. 112-114.

1970s seriously threatened the economic well being of the country. Ford and Carter were forced to deal with increases in oil prices as a result of ongoing diplomatic struggles between OPEC nations and the United States government. Except for a few unique issues of importance within each administration, stagflation and the energy crisis were indeed the most important domestic policy issues the Ford and Carter presidencies had to deal with on a regular basis. Therefore, how they individually dealt with these particular issues defines to a large extent the parameters within which the American public evaluated each presidency.

Pressures on the modern presidency to perform well in matters of foreign policy can also affect public approval ratings of a president. As chief diplomat and commander-in-chief, the president is uniquely situated as the leading government agent of foreign policy. Primarily precipitated by our involvement in WWII and the demands of the Cold War, presidential attention to foreign policy naturally increased. However, given the tremendous power surrounding these roles, modern presidents have often turned to foreign policy as a way of gaining the political power stakes necessary to govern in other policy areas. Richard Rose is credited with the phrase "going international" long before pop-culture "wag the dog" scenarios were born. Like Kernell's argument that modern presidents routinely use televised public addresses to court public opinion and ultimately stimulate Washington support for their policies, Rose argues that presidents have learned to turn to foreign policy for policy successes that will bolster approval ratings at home.[25] Successes in diplomacy allow a president to act "presidential", thereby increasing the

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[25] Richard Rose, The Postmodern President: George Bush Meets the World (2nd ed.), Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, Inc., 1991, pp. 37-40.

likelihood of public approval for their actions. In times of diplomatic crisis, however, foreign policy can either make or break public perceptions for a president. The good news for presidents is that the public at such times is willing to give the president more latitude in leading them, creating a "rally around the flag" phenomenon that can initially spike approval ratings.[26] If prolonged diplomatic efforts prove ineffective in solving the crisis, however, a president's ratings as well as his long-term power stakes in Washington can be severely compromised. Therefore, efforts to "go international" must be weighed with an eye towards a president's ability to deliver on his policies and carry the public along behind him.

Given this political reality, modern presidents must be keenly aware of how their policy efforts in both international and economic affairs will affect the public and in turn their long-term ability to govern. I do not argue, however, that social policies do not matter in presidential politics. Clearly all modern presidents focus their legislative agendas on major matters of social policy as well. Yet, I am arguing that economic and foreign policy have become the primary areas in which presidents are increasingly more capable of building their political power stakes. Consequentially, if they do well in these areas, they may gain the power necessary to govern on other domestic issues as well.

Organization of Chapters

The next chapter serves to introduce the reader to the full extent of the existing literature and research that relates to the study of public opinion polling, specifically the development of polling and the use of polling information by presidential administrations. The prevalence of public opinion research within everyday White House

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[26] Erikson and Tedin, pp. 111-112.

operations exemplifies just how strong this relationship between the presidency and public opinion has become. Jacobs and Shapiro have documented the growth of this public opinion apparatus throughout the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations.[27] With each successive administration, the authors illustrate significant increases in the number, distribution, staffing, financing, and politicization of privately commissioned polls. Additional sources also address these and other significant trends: Roll & Cantril, Polls: Their Use and Misuse (1972); Susan Herbst, Numbered Voices (1993); Diane Heith, "Staffing the White House Public Opinion Apparatus, 1969-88" and "Presidential Polling and the Leadership of Public Thought" (1996); John Geer, From Tea Leaves to Opinion Polls (1996); and Douglas Foyle, Counting the Public In (1999). I address the context of my work in relation to these scholarly arguments and findings.

Chapter 3 introduces the reader to the overall structure of the Ford White House polling operation. Based on my research, I identify the individuals principally responsible for circulating and receiving the polling memos I have documented for this administration. Specifically, I identify Ford's indirect role as a polling recipient as well as Chief of Staff Dick Cheney and White House Advisor Robert Hartmann's unique roles. The evidence suggests that while Ford publicly sought to distance himself from the previous operations of the Nixon White House, the structure of the polling operation was generally parallel to that of Nixon, with Cheney in complete control. Robert Hartmann was a strong advocate and early participant in the White House public opinion polling apparatus, but, he generally remained off-center and his overall influence was short-lived due to the strong central position of Cheney in the administration. More

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[27] Jacobs and Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of Polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies," pp. 3-4.

importantly, I find the Ford White House polling operations to be focused prominently on matters of re-election rather than central to the policymaking process. The evidence in this chapter ultimately illustrates that Ford, contrary to my early hypotheses, was not highly responsive to public opinion and operated more generally in a trustee-styled manner.

Chapter 4 introduces the reader to the overall structure of the Carter White House polling operation. Following up on the themes outlined in the previous chapter, this chapter seeks to identify the key members of the White House involved in the circulation of internal polling memos. I have found the shape of the Carter polling organization to be quite extensive -- consistent with previous models of Carter's White House organization that illustrate a "spokes-of-the-wheel" patterning. Carter and pollster Patrick Caddell are situated at the center of the wheel. I discuss extensively the unique relationship that existed between Carter and Caddell. Ultimately, my general examination of the Carter White House public opinion apparatus suggests that the Carter White House was responsive to public opinion in ways that indicate politico-styled leadership. Unlike Ford, Carter's use of polls extended far beyond simple readings of approval ratings, and I use the circumstances surrounding his "Crisis of Confidence" speech to provide the first illustration of these differences.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 compare and contrast the specific use of polling information by each White House in the policy making process. The first two chapters analyze the use of polling in economic affairs. Anti-Inflation policy is the primary policy case from which to draw comparisons between these administrations because this is the one prominent issue in which both administrations overlap in the scope of their agendas. The

polling evidence I gathered suggests that both Carter and Ford were interested in conducting campaigns to build public support for their legislative agendas concerning anti-inflation policies, but by different means and for different purposes.

Whereas Ford's WIN campaign was designed to generate public attention to the issue, Carter's public outreach campaign on anti-inflation policy provisions was designed with an eye toward responding to and educating the public. The strategic use of polling information by Carter, as opposed to Ford, on this issue serves to illustrate the stark differences between the two administrations in their use of polls. While Ford primarily acted as a trustee, putting his own views ahead of public trends, Carter acted as a leader and follower of public opinion on economic issues and therefore demonstrated politico-styled leadership. Ford superficially showed interest in public concerns and in practice ignored their voice almost entirely. Both of their political failures, however, are illustrated in Ford's underestimation of the importance of public opinion as a tool to successfully present his legislative agenda and Carter's underestimation of the stability or strength of public opinion -- the public could not always be easily swayed.

In Chapter 7, I compare the general use of polls by Ford and Carter in the area of foreign policy. We tend to assume that in foreign policy areas, involving delicate international relations policies, public opinion serves little purpose. Poll memo evidence from the Ford administration generally supports this assertion. Ford once again illustrates his lack of concern for integrating public opinion into the development of public policy. Yet, polling memo evidence suggests that this generalization does not characterize the Carter Administration. Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was uncharacteristically a prominent recipient of polling information. More

importantly, the Carter administration actively sought to integrate public opinion into the development of its foreign policies. Ultimately, I argue that Carter's strategic use of foreign policy polling information on three cases – the Panama Canal Treaties, SALT II, and the Camp David peace accords -- illustrates that his administration indeed operated in a manner quite distinct from his predecessor, defying commonplace assumptions about this administration altogether.

Finally, Chapter 8 presents a summation of the lessons learned from my investigation into the Ford and Carter Administration's use of public opinion polling information as it relates to identifying their individual leadership styles. It serves not only to review past arguments concerning presidential leadership, but also to suggest future ones. I conclude by engaging in a final analysis of the "post-Watergate" legacy. I suggest the subsequent contributions of President's Reagan, Bush, and Clinton to this era and place the Ford and Carter evidence within this larger evaluative context.

CHAPTER 2: PRESIDENTS AND POLLING

> Polling is a tool, not magic; and political pollsters at their best are inspired mechanics, like the guys who without saying an articulate word in English, can get your old Ford Mustang or your old musty refrigerator working again. They are not – certainly they are not yet – our masters.[1]

Technological advances are all at once embraced and abhorred for the changes they create within our American society. For every argument that has been given in defense of polling as a credible democratic tool in the political process, there are others that claim that polls are manipulative devices that undercut basic democratic principles. Two primary fears emanate from the rise of poll-centered politics: (a) the fear that politicians will use this information primarily to promote their own self interests over public interests, and (b) the fear that politicians saddled to the public are incapable of providing sound directive leadership when it is necessary. In both instances, critics don't want politicians to pander to the public arguing that following popular opinion may win elections, but may not create optimum public policy outcomes. Policies that may be in the best public interest may not be popular and therefore left unattempted. Ultimately, our greater understanding of the consequences of polling for American democracy rests, however, on our ability to define its use in particular historical circumstances.

An additional fear of "public manipulation" was born in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal. The Nixon administration became the standard public manipulation model against which future presidencies would be judged. In terms of the contribution of poll use to this legacy, Lawrence Jacobs and Robert Shapiro found archival evidence that

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[1] Michael Barone, "The Power of the President's Pollsters", *Public Opinion*, Sept/Oct 1988, p. 57.

illustrates manipulative actions within Nixon's White House polling operations.[2] In looking at the details surrounding this presidential case study and others, this chapter seeks to highlight not only scholarly evidence concerning poll use within particular historical cases, but also the larger evidence surrounding the rise of public opinion polling in the political process and related arguments assessing its consequences for democratic leadership. While some evidence in the Nixon administration confirms the polling critic's greatest fear – that polling can service the self-interests of presidents – several modern presidencies, including Nixon's, demonstrate that the strategic use of polling in the governing process does not always pose a direct threat to democracy. The validity of our second fear – that modern poll-reliant presidents are incapable of directive leadership – is explored by recent scholarly evidence. Ideally, Americans want presidents to act responsively to their collective interests but also take inspirational and innovative actions to further these interests. Some have argued that the current political environment does not sustain both responsive and directive leadership, but reinforces only responsive leadership. However, others have found evidence to suggest that under particular circumstances presidents can choose to lead or follow public opinion and are less constrained in their actions than critics have commonly feared.

Full discussions of the evidence found within formal investigations of the White House public opinion apparatus operating in the Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nixon White Houses as well as the general implications of these presidential leadership models and

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[2] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Presidential Manipulation of Polls and Public Opinion: The Nixon Administration and the Pollsters", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 110, no. 4, 1995-96, p. 524.

others will be examined in this chapter. Ultimately, I seek to place my research within the context of the contributions of these works.

The Rise of Public Opinion Polling

Public opinion polls are generally associated with the electoral process, where "horserace" monitoring of public support for one party candidate over another is conducted. The emphasis placed on public opinion in the American electoral process is truly a modern twentieth century phenomenon. Susan Herbst provides a detailed history of the evolution of opinion expression and various measurement techniques from earlier centuries through the present. Herbst demonstrates that democratic societies dating from the age of the Enlightenment to the present cultivated unique methods for gathering public opinion. The birth of the printing press in the fifteenth century, public demonstrations and petitions in the seventeenth century, and the open forums of the French salons of the eighteenth century all paved the way for an American system of government structured to absorb public opinion.[3] In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Herbst credits the creation of the American general election system as the "turning point in the history of opinion expression", arguing that "America's system of secret balloting in colonial elections was the first large-scale program for recording opinion."[4] The general election enabled the voice of citizens to affect the scope of political institutions and policies. The notion "that public opinion might be construed as the sum of many atomized individual opinions or actions was not a new idea", Herbst argues, but it led to the modern techniques of aggregation which define public opinion in

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[3] Susan Herbst, Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993, pp. 50-57.

[4] Herbst, p. 57.

the twentieth century.[5] Our common association of polls with the election process, therefore, is derived from our earliest political conceptualizations of American democracy.

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century models of opinion aggregation became known as "straw polls", the first techniques developed to predict the results of a general election. Early straw polls were opinion surveys conducted through either personal interviews or written responses to questionnaires by various news sources intent on discovering popular opinion concerning electoral candidates and their party's policies. Herbst finds that straw polls were popular with the press and political parties and their candidates not only for their predictive qualities, but because they could be "used to denigrate opposing candidates or boost the morale of the rank and file in one's own party."[6] The most celebrated straw polls were those published by the *Literary Digest* throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Through extensive mailings to the public, the *Digest's* surveys were able to successfully predict electoral outcomes, making its reports a hot political commodity. However, in 1936, the *Digest* incorrectly predicted Alf Landon would win over Franklin Roosevelt and sent the whole political establishment reeling over its mistake. The Digest's failure to accurately predict the Roosevelt's victory in 1936 ushered in George Gallup as new authority in public opinion polling. Gallup's ability to successfully predict the winner of the 1936 election brought him and his polling organization tremendous political prestige. However, in 1948, he experienced the same embarrassing fate as the *Digest* in 1936 by inaccurately predicting a win for Thomas

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[5] Herbst, p. 57.

[6] Herbst, p. 69.

Dewey over Harry Truman. Both of these early mistakes in public opinion polling ultimately created a new emphasis on better methods of opinion evaluation that in turn allowed for the greater proliferation of poll use in all aspects of the political process.

The very public nature of the inaccurate predictions made by the *Digest* in 1936 and Gallup in 1948 threatened the very future of polling in the mid-twentieth century. While the public, politicians, and political parties had become increasingly reliant upon the information supplied by polls, these glaring mistakes called into question the validity of earlier poll techniques and threatened future investment in poll use. Subsequent examinations of the different techniques employed by the *Digest* and Gallup polls uncovered glaring methodological mistakes. While the Digest polled an estimated 10 million people and received 2.2 million responses from their mass mailings, their sampling methods were inherently biased.[7] Generating participant lists from telephone directories and automobile owners, the Digest unknowingly sampled from individuals who were overwhelmingly upper-class; those who owned a telephone and a car in the Depression were decidedly better off than most and therefore more likely to be Republicans. Furthermore, the very nature of the straw poll format posed serious methodological problems for *Digest* poll results. By allowing respondents to self-select themselves into a sample, as their mail survey methods required, the *Digest* could not guarantee a sample that was representative of the overall population. The survey methods employed by Gallup that both successfully predicted Roosevelt's victory in 1936 and unsuccessfully predicted Dewey's victory in 1948 were also tainted by methodological

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[7] Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin, American Public Opinion, 5th ed., Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995, p. 30.

problems that created biased samples. "Quota sampling" techniques created by Gallup attempted to gain a representative sample by using census data to mirror various social group classifications as reflected in the overall population. While the logic of weighting the sample to reflect population demographics was sound, the practice of collecting the data gave the interviewer too much control over who was selected to represent these weighted categories. Like the *Digest*, the survey methods employed by Gallup tended "to underrepresent the poor, the less educated, and racial minorities" thereby underestimating support for Truman.[8] Establishing the "representativeness" of a survey sample, therefore, became the ultimate goal for polling research if it was going to continue to be used to predict elections in the future.

To solve the problems of respondent and interviewer selection biases, modern polling operations adopted new random sampling methods that were capable of generating stronger, more reliable predictions of political behavior. In addition to eliminating sampling biases, random sampling provided for greater efficiency in data collection and analysis, where smaller samples could be gathered for quicker turnout of poll information for publication. As the telephone became fully integrated into late-twentieth century households, randomly sampled telephone surveys allowed for fast, easy, and reliable poll results; polls could be conducted overnight and its results fed back to the public the next day. Ultimately, these new sampling methods coupled with modern technological advancements have allowed polling to hold a prominent place within our American political culture. These advancements made it possible for a variety of private and public entities to conduct polling on social, economic, and political matters of

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[8] Erikson and Tedin, p. 31.

interest. Political parties, interest groups, political leaders, corporations, and various mass media sources all have either their own in-house or contracted survey research organizations from which they frequently generate and receive polling information, creating an explosion in the volume of polling in recent history.

These advancements in polling, however, did not completely displace the use of straw polling techniques. Modern straw poll examples include mail-in, phone-in, and now on-line opinion polls. While most reputable polling organizations do not engage in these activities, straw polls are frequently conducted and are often reported without emphasis on sampling error and the subsequent inability to generalize results to the population at large. Therefore, within the wealth of polling information that exists today a discerning eye is required for one who wishes to study accurate assessments of public opinion. However, making the distinction between accurate and inaccurate assessments of public opinion is not always so cut and dry in politics. Politicians are often asked to respond to trend reports regardless of their statistical accuracy. Furthermore, in servicing their constituents, representatives must respond to many unscientific opinion resources, such as letters, phone calls, and e-mails from concerned constituents. It is tempting to use these as sources for tallying support for particular policies or for evaluating personal performance levels. The temptation is further magnified by the fact that most volunteered opinions of this sort tend to be disproportionately supportive of representative actions and positions.[9] Despite the fact that straw polls are basically meaningless as a credible measurement of public attitudes, they continue to function as a legitimate source of public opinion made easily available to modern politicians.

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[9] Erikson and Tedin, p. 40.

The pervasiveness of both accurate and inaccurate poll information within our modern American society cannot be refuted. Given this phenomenon, the large question that needs to be answered is *should* politicians be monitoring public opinion? By their very philosophical nature, democracies must seek to preserve the public interest. However, *is it rational* for us to place so much emphasis on poll results to achieve this goal? These questions delve into serious, long-term academic arguments within the field of American public opinion research. Philip Converse concluded that most Americans offer meaningless opinions or "nonattitudes" in surveys. In the absence of a strong sense of "ideological constraint" within the majority of Americans' individual belief systems, Converse argued that people often respond randomly to survey questions.[10] If Converse's arguments were correct, then our contemporary polling efforts would be irrational – it would be difficult to interpret the fluctuating, meaningless opinions offered by a largely unsophisticated public. Subsequent studies have confirmed that on a purely factual level the American public can be largely unsophisticated.[11] However, an overwhelming lack of ideological constraint within individual belief systems has not been seriously demonstrated. Several studies challenge Converse by showing that there are indeed stable core attitudes held by individuals that shape their opinions. Recently, John Zaller concludes that the psychological construction of individual opinion is based on the synthesis of informational cues and "predispositions" or political values.[12] Moreover,

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[10] Philip Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics", in Ideology and Discontent, ed. David Apter. New York: Free Press, 1964, p. 245.

[11] Michael X. Delli-Carpini and Scott Keeter, "The Public's Knowledge of Politics" in Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy, ed. by J. David Kennamer, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994, pp. 22-28.

[12] John Zaller, The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 6.

when aggregate opinion trends have been tracked and further evaluated, it has been determined that public opinion moves in a rational, explainable fashion. Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro find public opinion in the aggregate over time remains on the whole quite stable, with most cases of change occurring gradually and responsively to explainable social, economic, or political influences.[13] Ultimately, the value of public opinion trends extends from the ability to use polls to make strong predictions from one point in time to the next. Certainly good methodological changes have boosted the predictive strength of polls, but the stable and responsive nature of public opinion over time legitimates our use of polls for determining the public interest.

The White House Public Opinion Apparatus: Roosevelt through Nixon

Given the predictive strength of polling information, it has become a valuable resource for presidents seeking to connect with the public. Therefore, the president's ability to gather, interpret, and respond to public opinion rests on his ability to understand the intricate nature of public opinion data. Ultimately, the demand for poll analysis has given birth to a new class of political advisors, who are dubbed "pollsters". As the introductory quote to this chapter suggests, the increasing reliance on pollsters for political advice is as natural as the need for "mechanics" in other areas of our lives that require professional expertise. That is, pollsters specialize in the discipline of opinion data analysis, navigating presidents through the wealth of polling information that pervades society. This unique relationship between pollsters and presidents has undergone its own historical evolution within the latter half of the twentieth century.

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[13] Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 14, 322.

Specifically, pollsters have extended their professional influence from presidential campaign advisors to White House policy strategists. Pollsters supplied the tools necessary for securing political power within the campaign process. Their ability to take the public's pulse and diagnose campaign strategies accordingly afforded them a central position on the presidential candidate's campaign team. Successful candidates making the transition to public office have sought to actualize campaign promises and capitalize early on the momentum created by the campaign process. The campaign experts with whom they had surrounded themselves naturally extended into continued advisory networks for the business of governing. Therefore, in achieving a prominent campaign status, the pollster often secured a long-term role as political advisor within the modern White House.

Despite this status, pollsters operate in an entirely different fashion than traditional presidential advisors. Namely, the president's pollster does not hold a formal position within the White House staff. There is no "Office of Polling" or "Polling Director" that occupies space in the West Wing, although the intimacy fostered between the White House and its pollster in several historical instances comes very close to approximating this kind of arrangement. With the exception of the Kennedy administration, the political parties over the past four decades have employed private pollsters. The Republican National Committee and the Democratic National Committee "allow candidates to buy polls at very low cost, so that aspirants can organize strategy around survey results."[14] Once in office, poll information continues to be supplied to

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[14] Herbst, p. 118.

presidents through their respective party organizations. Pollsters are directly contracted by the party to serve presidents with their own private sources of polling information.

Unlike poll reports that are published and marketed to several clients, poll information contracted through party pollsters is for the exclusive "private" consumption of specified party members. While presidents have had access to various "public" sources of polling information, published by mainstay organizations such as Gallup and Louis Harris and Associates as well as polls conducted now regularly by the news media and other organizations, their party's private polling resources offer an attractive alternative to traditional outlets. That is, a private contract between presidents and a survey research organization is arranged through the party to service the specific needs of individual presidents. Private polls that are gathered under this contract are immensely valuable for presidents. When stored as "political intelligence", a president's own informational arsenal can be used at their discretion to shape policies or the debate among themselves and opposing candidates, mass media messages, and other government agents.[15] The partisan nature of these sources suggests that private pollsters hired to work for a particular party be personally invested in the same goals and interests of party members. While their reports are intended to produce unbiased accounts of public opinion trends, it is the value of their partisan, subjective analysis of this information that separates the privately contracted reports from those published for large public consumption.

While private pollsters officially reside outside the White House, their influence within various aspects of White House operations can be far reaching. Historical

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[15] Charles W. Roll and Albert H. Cantril, Polls: Their Use and Misuse in Politics, Cabin John: Md., Seven Locks Press, 1980, p. 17.

examples of this relationship are as diverse as the presidents themselves, where some pollsters are elevated to the president's "inner circle" while others remain restricted to primarily re-election campaign activities. Their role depends on the emphasis placed on polling by each president as well as the depth of the personal relationships forged between pollsters, the president, and his staff. The extent to which polling information and private pollsters are incorporated into the modern White House defines what Jacobs and Shapiro have identified as the White House "public opinion apparatus."[16] That is, in the absence of a formal office constructed to handle polling operations, each White House devised its own system for receiving and disseminating poll information among its principle staff. The public opinion apparatus, therefore, is an amalgam of various White House staff members or offices charged with the business of "assembling public opinion data and conducting extensive public relations activities."[17] By examining the structure and functions of this apparatus with each successive president, our fullest understanding of the effects of privately commissioned polls on the modern presidency are revealed.

Earliest records indicate that Franklin Roosevelt was the first president to privately monitor public opinion in office. Hadley Cantril, a psychology professor at Princeton University, conducted polling research specifically for Roosevelt initially through the Gallup organization and later through the Office of Public Opinion Research

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[16] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies." Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994, p. 3.

[17] Ibid., p. 3.

he later established in Princeton.[18] Scholarly accounts of the Roosevelt administration's use of polls indicate that FDR consulted poll information in developing New Deal and WWII policies.[19] In the case of WWII policies, FDR's reliance on public opinion concerning support for allied involvement before 1941 has been well documented. Incremental policy shifts toward active involvement in the war, like the Land-Lease Act with Great Britain in 1940, were not taken by the administration until the isolationist tenor of the American public was deemed weak enough to allow them to proceed in this direction.[20] However, studies of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations offer little evidence to support the kind of public opinion apparatus that operated under FDR. John Geer and other scholars have identified this time period, situated in the aftermath of the highly publicized problems with both the Literary Digest and Gallup polls, as one in which presidents have been accused of being highly skeptical of the usefulness of polls.[21] Ultimately, FDR stands out as the strongest of the first three modern presidents to test the parameters of poll use in the governing process.

Presidential public opinion apparatuses operating in the 1940s and 1950s were underdeveloped in comparison to later models. Polling acquired a more central position in the campaign and governing processes during the 1960s. Specifically, the Kennedy administration, using pollster Louis Harris, has been credited with raising private public opinion polling to an entirely new level. Kennedy was the first president who can be

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[18] Roll and Cantril, p. 10; and also see Betty Winfield, "The New Deal Publicity Operation: Foundation for the Modern Presidency," Journalism Quarterly, vol. 61, Spring 1984, pp. 40-48.

[19] John Geer, A Theory of Democratic Leadership: From Tea Leaves to Opinion Polls, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, p. 83.

[20] Ibid., pp. 83 & 87.

[21] Ibid., pp. 83-84.

described as having a close relationship with his private pollster, Harris, who conducted polling for Kennedy during the 1960 election and throughout his term of office. Of the 93 Harris polls commissioned for Kennedy, 77 polls were commissioned during the campaign and 16 polls were commissioned during the course of the Kennedy administration.[22] Harris's involvement in the 1960 campaign illustrates Kennedy's strong dependence on this kind of information. Jacobs and Shapiro document Kennedy's responsiveness to public opinion during the campaign:

> ...the issues that were raised in Louis Harris's polls were persistently mentioned by Kennedy in his subsequent public statements. What is significant is not just that Kennedy cited issues identified by the public but that the frequency and strength of his stance was congruent or consistent with the public's preferred *direction* for policy.[23]

In contrast to the actions taken during the campaign, the Kennedy administration was far less systematically structured to respond to public opinion. In terms of building a White House public opinion apparatus, Jacobs and Shapiro find that "organizational arrangements for assembling polling and analyzing public opinion remained informal and comparatively unstructured."[24] Subsequent White House models found it much more expedient to designate staff offices and advisors who would run the polling apparatus. While the Kennedy administration attempted to integrate public opinion into the governing process, comparative analysis of this administration against those that

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[22] Jacobs and Shapiro , p. 6 & Table 1.

[23] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Issues, Candidate Image, and Priming: The Use of Private Polls in Kennedy's 1960 Presidential Campaign", *American Political Science Review*, vol.88, no.3, September 1994, p. 532.

[24] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies." Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994, p. 19.

followed illustrates that Kennedy on the whole engaged in a low level of polling activity by modern standards.

The Johnson administration's public opinion apparatus demonstrates Johnson's greater sense of responsiveness and attentiveness to public opinion for the purposes of governing rather than campaigning. His pollster, Oliver Quayle conducted 130 polls for the administration, 48 commissioned during the 1964 presidential election and 82 while governing from the White House.[25] By almost 2 to 1, Johnson's use of polls in the White House outranks his use of polls on the campaign trail. Furthermore, because Johnson was predicted to win by a large margin, his campaign staff often concentrated on developing strategies based on polling information with an eye towards what would happen *after* the election. Jacobs and Shapiro find that "the objective was to create political momentum behind programs that already enjoyed popular support in order to propel the White House's policy agenda after election day."[26] After the 1964 election, the Johnson administration repositioned itself to lead rather than follow public opinion, specifically on Vietnam policies. Jacobs and Shapiro identify two strategic actions initiated by the public opinion apparatus on the leadership dimension:

> The White House pursued two leadership strategies: it sought to refocus public attention away from Vietnam by raising the salience of other policies and to change public preferences toward its Vietnam policy...
>
> The White House realized, though, that attempts to refocus public attention would not be sufficient; they would launch a public relations campaign to shape American perceptions of Vietnam and head off a 'national mob psychology'.[27]

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[25] Ibid., p. 6 & Table 1.

[26] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "The Public Presidency, Private Polls, and Policymaking: Lyndon Johnson", Prepared for delivery at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington D.C., September 2-5, 1993, p. 17.

[27] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

Like FDR's sensitivity to the pre-war isolationist tendencies of the American public, the Johnson administration took careful steps with the public to build support for their foreign policy initiatives. Jacobs and Shapiro conclude, however, that insofar as the Johnson administration was successful in directing public attention to the issue of Vietnam, they were unsuccessful in building popular support for their policies.[28] Ultimately, the Johnson public opinion apparatus is the first to illustrate the limits of presidential efforts to orchestrate public opinion. While presidents can successfully affect the salience of issues, their ability to shape public opinion is much more problematic. Regardless of this lesson, Johnson's presidency serves as an additional step towards the full integration of public opinion into the governing process, in which the public opinion apparatus takes on a more centralized role in White House functions.

Richard Nixon's public opinion apparatus far exceeded its predecessors in the magnitude of polling it generated and the various ways in which poll information permeated White House operations. Nixon spent an estimated $1.13 million on 223 private polls commissioned over the course of his campaigns for office and his term in the White House, with 153 conducted for the campaigns and 80 for governing.[29] While these numbers by themselves demonstrate an impressive increase in private polling from previous administrations, Jacobs and Shapiro found that "Nixon outstripped his predecessors not only in terms of sheer quantity but also in terms of superior control and

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[28] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[29] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies." Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994, p. 6 & Table 1.

specialization."[30] All polling operations were overseen by Nixon's chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman and several other top aides were actively involved. The Nixon public opinion apparatus was centralized and authorized frequent surveys to meet their particular demands. One of the most impressive findings concerning Nixon's polling operations was their unprecedented attention to the highly technical aspects of poll analysis. Jacobs and Shapiro discovered that "the Nixon team insisted on receiving the entire survey with a complete printout and regularly requested additional information on such topics as regional or demographic breakdowns."[31] The Nixon White House, therefore, interacted with public opinion data on a highly sophisticated level. Their in-house capabilities of controlling and interpreting poll data illustrate a level of attentiveness to public opinion unlike any other White House found to that date.

The Nixon White House's control over confidential public opinion information, however, in many instances went well beyond the bounds of fair play. On a wider scale than previous administrations, the Nixon White House frequently influenced the question wording, timing, and location of his private polls.[32]. Jacobs and Shapiro discovered that the Nixon's control extended beyond their private pollster, Robert Teeter, who worked for the administration and the 1972 campaign. Secret polling was conducted by the Committee to Re-Elect the President and funded outside the RNC's financial sources to poll issues that Nixon wanted to keep under wraps, such as how to handle Vice President Spiro Agnew.[33] Nixon and Haldeman completely controlled the flow of all private

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30 Ibid., p. 7.

31 Ibid., p. 14.

32 Ibid., pp. 7-12.

33 Ibid., pp. 13, 18, & 23.

polling information for these various sources, determining who would have access and when and how it would be used. Furthermore, the administration also sought to covertly influence published poll results, namely Gallup and Harris. By seeking out close relationships with these two reputable and powerful centers of public opinion information, the Nixon administration sought to extend their polling spin-control operations beyond private boundaries. Jacobs and Shapiro determined that the Nixon administration "reaped three advantages from their contacts with Harris and Gallup: the White House received advance information, affected the preparation of survey questions, and influenced the pollsters' results".[34] While Gallup and Harris in previous and subsequent administrations operated on familiar terms with the White House, their relationships with Nixon crossed several important ethical grounds. Jacobs and Shapiro find instances of poll results that appear to be altered to favor the president, although these accusations remain disputed by the Gallup and Harris organizations. However, their access to information prior to publication and their influence over poll questions, gave the Nixon administration the tools necessary to head off reports they deemed harmful for the presidency and allowed it control over the very process by which their public approval ratings would be established.

These discoveries give us cause for alarm with respect to the effects of presidential polling within the governing process. The power gained through polling information is subject to misuse and manipulation, a phenomenon that further exacerbates claims that poll-centered politics is harmful for democracy. Jacobs and Shapiro argue,

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[34] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Presidential Manipulation of Polls and Public Opinion: The Nixon Administration and the Pollsters", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 110, no. 4, 1995-96, p. 524.

however, that the likeliness that the kind of public opinion manipulation witnessed in the Nixon White House would be found in subsequent presidencies is quite low. The authors stress that we live in a different polling environment altogether in the last two decades, where "the sheer number of polls has created a competitive dynamic that has led the different polling firms to keep an eye on each other and thereby regulate themselves."[35] They do caution, however, that close contacts that continue to be maintained between public polling sources and the White House run the risk of compromising the poll's credibility for providing accurate measurements and assessments of public attitudes. I would additionally argue that the reputation of the presidency is also at stake if such actions were made public, striking one more blow against public trust in modern government and its officials.

Based upon what we know about the White House public opinion apparatus from these initial cases, research on subsequent administrations is ultimately challenged to look for evidence of two different developmental trends. First, how and to what degree do subsequent administrations attempt to further integrate polling into various White House operations? Has White House polling continued to increase in the manner witnessed from Kennedy to Nixon? Second, how have other presidencies defined the boundaries of poll usage in the political process? Have subsequent presidents become more actively involved in leading, following, or manipulating public opinion as once again witnessed from Kennedy to Nixon? My research on Ford and Carter addresses both of these possible trends, with larger emphasis placed on discovering the parameters

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[35] Ibid., p. 535.

of public opinion leadership based on the development of the White House public opinion apparatus.

The Lessons and Limitations of Public Opinion Leadership

Recent scholarship concerning the analysis of public opinion leadership offers arguments to suggest that the newfound relationship between presidents and public opinion has constrained presidential leadership on several dimensions. In the abstract, we can conceive of leadership options along the lines I have already identified; presidents can chose to ignore, explain, lead, manipulate, or follow public opinion depending on their personal philosophies or the nature of the issue at hand. In turn, we can classify their leadership style as conforming to trustee-, delegate-, or politico-styled roles. In practice, however, Diane Heith and John Geer offer similar arguments in each of their work to suggest that modern presidential leadership is confined to specific practices and styles by virtue of the emerging relationship between presidents and public opinion polls. In discussing the arguments of these two authors, as well as evidence presented in other works, I preview the direction of my work in addressing these contemporary leadership theories.

Heith has studied the development of the White House public opinion apparatus from the Nixon administration through the Reagan administration. Heith's findings concerning private poll usage within these four presidencies illustrate that presidents after Nixon have indeed been actively engaged in activities that further integrate public opinion into the political process. Heith identifies the specific ways in which polling information has integrated itself into the White House. As others have argued, all presidents consult the polls to assess their public approval ratings. Heith illustrates,

however, that in most instances public approval ratings are specifically assessed to identify coalitions of support within the public.[36] Once those coalitions are identified, the president's agenda is modified or promoted with an eye towards mobilizing pockets of support within the public. Beyond merely tracking public support, presidents then use polls "to build, monitor and expand their presidential coalition."[37] To expedite this process, Heith argues that presidents use their rhetorical power to solidify necessary coalitional support. Therefore, polls are also used to gauge the timing and messages of presidential addresses to the public.[38] Finally, presidents increasingly have become more reliant on the use of public opinion to assess trend in support for particular policies, rather than simple popularity ratings. Once again, Heith couches this development in the larger activity of coalition building:

> Presidents turned to policy-based responses precisely because presidency-centered coalitions must produce majorities in Congress or implement policies in the bureaucracy. Presidents cannot govern or lead without understanding the policy environment in which they function. Without the parties to provide the common ideology, presidents rely on polls for building and rebuilding coalitions across the presidential agenda.[39]

In the absence of other coalition building sources, modern presidential power is forged through responsive actions to the public.

Given her findings, Heith concludes however that presidential reliance on public opinion polls limits the leadership options available to modern presidents. Specifically,

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[36] Diane Heith, "Presidential Polling and the Leadership of Public Thought", Paper prepared for presentation at "Presidential Power: Forging the Presidency for the 21st Century", Columbia University, New York, November 15-16, 1996, p. 7-14.

[37] Ibid., p. 19.

[38] Ibid., pp. 20–24.

[39] Ibid., p. 29.

she argues that while responsive leadership is possible and indeed pursued by many presidents, real "transformative leadership" is unlikely in the current political environment.[40] Because poll information is so highly integrated into the presidential decision-making process, Heith argues that presidential actions reflect the small "incremental portraits of public opinion", which are generally stable and only support gradual change. Here, she writes:

> ...significant change of the political environment or political institutions requires vision and goals beyond the scope of public opinion poll data. As long as presidents and their staffs rely on public opinion polling to relate to their constituents and respond to their wants and needs, the likelihood of great, inspirational, presidential leadership remains remote.[41]

Ultimately, Heith suggests that modern poll-reliant presidents cannot operate as both leaders and follows of public opinion – they are regulated to responsive leadership roles only. Based on these arguments, we would conclude that modern presidents would more likely style their presidencies as delegates rather than politicos or trustees. Furthermore, trustees or politicos who seek to lead public opinion, through public education methods, would find themselves frustrated if not outright stymied by the political reality Heith describes.

John Geer does not outright dismiss the idea that poll-driven presidents are incapable of strong directive leadership. Geer argues that by studying trends in public opinion, presidents not only can choose to react to changes in public preferences, but potentially "they are also better able to identify issues that provide opportunities for

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[40] Ibid., p. 38.

[41] Ibid., p. 39.

leadership".[42] What is problematic for Geer is the modern president's ability to make accurate assessments of such opportunities in practice. According to Geer, two different circumstances support presidential leadership of public opinion. Leadership in the "Wilsonian" tradition defines all successful attempts by the president to persuade the public to accept their position on particular issues. Geer argues that this kind of leadership is only possible, however, when presidents have complete information and the public preferences on these issues are not fully developed.[43] However, Geer argues that leadership can also occur in the absence of complete information in a scenario entitled "leadership by mistake":

> Politicians, not knowing the true median position of the electorate, may pursue a policy that is out of step with the public's views...But this mistake in judging the electorate's thinking provides politicians, ironically, with an opportunity to 'lead' public opinion. Politicians may believe they are explaining their position to an electorate already in agreement with them, when they are actually convincing the public to alter its position...an effective set of speeches could lead citizens to alter their attitudes...As a result, this *mistake* need not cost the politicians the support of the public.[44]

Geer suggests that on issues of high salience presidents either act responsively to public opinion or they stumble into leadership by accident. Therefore, deliberate efforts to lead opinion on matters of high salience are irrational when presidents have full information about public preferences and highly risky when they don't consult public opinion, making responsive leadership the more likely and safe path. However, on matters of low salience presidents can attempt to lead opinion, but they must be fully informed about public preferences.

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42 Geer. p. 96.

43 Ibid., pp. 44–45.

Ultimately, Geer warns that deliberate attempts at leading public opinion must be calculated by a highly sophisticated polling apparatus, lest presidents miss their window of opportunity to direct public opinion. The problem modern presidents ultimately face lies in the fact that "transformative leadership" as Heith describes is sustained by directing the public on issues of high salience. Because public opinion on such measures is already deeply established, successful leadership on these issues according to both Heith and Geer is highly unlikely. However, on issues of low salience, there is room for presidents to shape public opinion. But even here Geer cautions that the greatest mistake a president can make is an attempt at Wilsonian leadership when they "incorrectly judge a salient issue to be nonsalient".[45] Because the political stakes are so high when attempting to lead public opinion, presidents therefore have to be either highly skilled or highly lucky to be successful in their leadership endeavors.

According to these arguments, we should find very little evidence of public opinion leadership by modern presidents, and furthermore, those few cases we do find will result in successful leadership mistakes or more likely unsuccessful attempts at opinion leadership. In chapter 1, I discussed in detail how the historical transformation of the presidency has increasingly pressured presidents to actively lead and respond to public opinion, especially in the general issue areas of economic and foreign policy. While leadership is possible in the political environment identified by Heith and Geer, presidents must traverse the gap between public expectations for directive leadership and a political reality that limits this kind of leadership. By focusing my analysis in a

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[44] Ibid., p. 42.

[45] Ibid., p. 100.

comparative sense between two different presidents on two different sets of policy issues, I have the ability to test these arguments. First, by isolating particular policy case studies within the Ford and Carter administrations, I will be able to identify possible political successes or failures to lead public opinion found in these cases that can ultimately test the limits of presidential leadership. Second, these theories suggest that delegate behavior has increasingly become a more rational and prevalent leadership style given the dynamics of the relationship between presidents and the public. The determination of whether Ford and Carter support or reject this kind of responsive leadership will serve to test this assumption within the post-Watergate chapter of presidential history.

The comparisons I will make between attention to public opinion on economic and foreign policy issues will be helpful in addressing these theoretical arguments. In terms of issue salience, both of these general issue areas contain major nerve centers for hot button issues that can dominate the public's political agenda. However, on issues of foreign policy, the public may be more likely to allow presidents greater latitude in directive leadership. Thomas Graham, in studying the congruency between public opinion trends and policy directives concerning nuclear arms control issues between 1945-1980, has concluded that there is an issue salience threshold that defines the extent to which public opinion affects foreign policy decisions. He finds that "public opinion can have a powerful and direct impact on decisions, but for this impact to take place, opinions have to be substantially larger than a majority."[46] Graham defines "substantially larger" as public opinion that reaches a consensus level at 60 percent or higher on foreign policy matters. When a strong consensus in the public is reached on a particular issue,

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[46] Thomas W. Graham, "Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy Decision Making", in The New Politics of American Foreign Policy, ed. By D. Deese. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 196.

Graham argues, "there is an increased chance that this fact will reach decision makers and will be explicitly discussed when issues are decided at the highest level within the administration."[47] Consistent with Geer's argument, Graham argues that lower levels of public consensus on foreign policy issues may allow for greater avenues in directive leadership on foreign policy issues whereas high levels of public consensus require presidential responsiveness. In discovering how the Ford and Carter White House public opinion apparatuses addressed specific foreign policy issues, I attempt to determine to what extent, if any, directive leadership was derived from the circumstances these authors have identified.

Finally, with Ford and Carter's leadership styles as my primary emphasis in this study, the conclusions I reach based on the archival evidence of White House public opinion apparatus operations can be used to challenge or support recent leadership theories. Douglas Foyle has offered evidence to suggest that in terms of presidential use of public opinion in foreign policy, presidential leadership roles are historically less confined to the "delegate" model that Heith and Geer's theories would predict. Foyle defines four different leadership styles that classify modern presidential behavior in foreign policy: delegates, executors, pragmatists, and guardians. These categories of behavior are derived from varied individual belief systems that Foyle defines in terms of two dimensions -- "the desirability of input from public opinion affecting foreign policy choices" and "the necessity of public support of a foreign policy for it to be successful."[48] Whereas delegates and guardians are defined in the same manner I have defined delegate

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[47] Ibid., p. 196.

and trustee behavior, executors and pragmatists are derived from politico-styled leadership. Foyle's executors and pragmatists are defined as follow:

> ...executors feel that the public's input into policy formulation is desirable but believe that its support is not necessary for a successful policy. For executors, public opinion should be one of the initial factors considered in foreign policy formulations, and it might limit the options under consideration or suggest possible alternatives. If executors do not have information on public opinion or disagree with it, they will likely rely on their own best judgment because they do not believe in the need for public opinion actively supporting each policy. Executors will probably not pay much attention to leading the public. If they do consider leading it, they will likely only think about it instrumentally, with the goal of affecting other actors, such as Congress, rather than as an end in itself.
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> Pragmatists believe that even though public input affecting foreign policy choices is not desirable, public support of the chosen policy is necessary...Pragmatists should attempt to lead the public to gain support for their preferred option and to use their own best judgment as the 'first cut' in determining a sound foreign policy. In contrast to delegates, who seek to demonstrate how policy aligns with public preferences, pragmatists will likely approach explanatory efforts with the sole purpose of creating public support.[49]

I have highlighted these definitions fully because Foyle defines Carter and Ford as assuming each of these roles – with Carter labeled as an executor and Ford a pragmatist in Foyle's estimation. That is, while neither of these presidents viewed public support for foreign policy a necessity for successful policy, Carter unlike Ford found it a desirable informational source in the foreign policy decision-making process. The archival evidence that I will ultimately offer in following chapters will challenge these assessments. However, in terms of theoretical challenges to other recent studies, Foyle's conclusions strongly bear on the leadership theories offered by Heith and Geer. Foyle has ultimately discovered a set of complex leadership responses that is "varied across

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[48] Douglas C. Foyle, Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 10.

[49] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

presidents and decision contexts, suggesting that public opinion has no single pattern of influence on policy."[50] Foyle links guardian behavior to Truman, Johnson, and Reagan, pragmatist behavior to Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, Ford, and Bush, executor behavior to Carter, and delegate behavior to Clinton.[51] Therefore, as public opinion poll usage progressed through the decades, each president, except the guardians, chose unique approaches to integrating public opinion into their decision making processes – with successes and failures in foreign policy opinion leadership experienced by all. Foyle's discovery fuels further examination of such leadership tendencies in other policy areas to test the fullest parameters of modern presidential leadership styles.

To advance academic research in the examination of the relationship that exists between modern presidents and public opinion, I build upon the lessons and theories concerning the development of the White House public opinion apparatus and presidential leadership styles established by the arguments of these previous scholarly works. Through my archival evidence, I identify not only the structure of White House polling operations in the post-Watergate era, but also the implications presented by this evidence for the practice of presidential responsiveness and leadership in modern times. The combination of these two objectives will either support or challenge the arguments presented by these authors, as well as those I have identified in chapter 1 concerning Ford and Carter's leadership personas. In terms of methodological comparison, this research will augment the evidence previously presented on these subjects. Geer bases his arguments on the game theoretical constructs of previous evidence and theories well

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[50] Ibid., p. 258.

[51] Ibid., p. 197.

established by the literature on these subjects. While Heith has also used original archival evidence to assess presidential leadership, she has limited her assessments thus far to an analysis of the general use of polls to examine domestic issues or the governing process. Likewise, Foyle's assessments are focused only on foreign policy cases, but without drawing on research after the Nixon years.

I present a challenge to the prevailing fears that surround the rise of public opinion polls and the modern presidency's increasing dependence in this newfound technology. In turning now to the evidence I present on these matters, I address these fears with an increasing understanding of the internal operations of the Ford and Carter White Houses. I revisit the arguments presented here at the end of each chapter and in the conclusion.

CHAPTER 3: THE FORD WHITE HOUSE

Introduction

There are two conflicting images of the Ford White House with respect to the influence of public opinion on White House operations. In the first instance, Gerald Ford is credited with instituting a "Healing Presidency" in the wake of Watergate. Ford was given the formidable task of restoring the public's trust in government and its officials. Not having the opportunity to campaign for the presidency and enter office with the momentum of public support, Ford was forced to engage in a transition into the White House under unusual circumstances. To meet these obstacles and to forge a new trusting relationship with the public, Ford restructured the White House to rid of the hierarchical trappings of the Nixon era. As Roger Porter writes, he also used symbolic gestures that sought to return the presidency to a place of openness and accessibility to the public:

> Many of the trappings of the so-called Imperial Presidency were removed. For certain occasions the Marine Band was instructed to replace "Hail to the Chief" or "Ruffles and Flourishes" with the Michigan fight song. Within days the number of White House staff on the A Transportation List, providing officials with portal-to-portal service, was reduced from 26 to 13. Within weeks the size of the White House staff was reduced by 10 percent, from 540 to 485. Ford directed Haig 'to make sure that the Oval Office was swept clean of all electronic listening devices...Taken individually, the changes were modest. Viewed in the aggregate, they demonstrated to a symbol-conscious Washington the reality of a new openness.[1]

But symbolic gestures do not necessarily define the leadership orientation of a president. While the Ford White House may have been determined to distance itself from the shadow

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[1] Roger B. Porter, "A Healing Presidency", In Leadership in the Modern Presidency, (ed) Fred I. Greenstein, Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1988, pp. 206-7.

of its predecessor, stronger evidence has been found to illustrate that this distance swung the White House further behind closed doors, rather than opening them up to the public.

The second image that defines the Ford White House provides a more accurate assessment of its internal operations. The pardoning of Nixon within the first month of Ford's term of office presented him with his first battle with public opinion. Ford has strongly contended that his decision to pardon Nixon was based upon his personal decision to follow what he believed was the right course of action – to end the Watergate "nightmare" and avoid the national pain and embarrassment of a public trial. Prior to his decision to issue the pardon, close staff members Jack Marsh and Robert Hartmann pressed him to hold off on making a decision and to consider the negative public impact a possible pardon would have on his future ability to govern with the popular consent of the people. Dialogue from the meeting between Ford and Hartmann on the Nixon pardon is recounted within Ford's memoirs:

> Mentioning a recent survey which showed that 56 percent of people interviewed thought Nixon ought to be tried, he [Hartmann] warned that the pardon would damage me politically. 'Your popularity in the opinion polls will suffer because the public won't understand. I know why you want to do it, but you should be cognizant of the down side.'
> 'I'm aware of that,' I said. 'It could easily cost me the next election if I run again. But damn it, I don't need the polls to tell me whether I'm right or wrong.'[2]

This passage suggests that at his philosophical core Ford is a strong trustee, allowing little room for public opinion to affect his political deliberations. While further evidence needs to be gathered to support this position, the strength of Ford's trustee convictions, as he wishes to express in his memoirs, should not be lightly dismissed.

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[2] Gerald R. Ford, A Time to Heal, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979, pp. 161-162.

This trustee position is reiterated within two White House Press Office memoranda that attempt to define the Ford administration's general position vis-à-vis public opinion polls. In an internal memo to Press Secretary Ron Neesen on October 7, 1974, the press secretary was instructed to publicly respond to a Harris poll indicating that 60% of the American public disapproved of the Nixon pardon with the following statements: "I think the President has made it clear that he is aware of the public reaction to the pardon" and "He continues to believe strongly that his action was the right one for the country".[3] In a subsequent memo from Neesen to Chief of staff Richard Cheney on February 1, 1975, Neesen counsels:

> Here is a first cut at a standard Presidential answer to questions about polls: 'Of course, I read the newspapers and watch television and so I am aware of most of the polls. I guess I am only human and so I enjoy it when the polls show that the people questioned support me or my policies. But when I make a policy or take an action, I am not governed by what the polls show. I do what I think is best for the country and for the American people. I believe that if I do what I think is right the people of America will understand and eventually this will be reflected in the polls.'[4]

Both of these statements are designed to project a strong trustee-styled leadership persona to the public. When viewed in addition to Ford's statement, these public and private messages concerning presidential poll use support a White House that was closed off to the influences of public opinion.

To properly reconcile the differences between the two leadership images that define the Ford White House, an internal examination of the organization of the Ford

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[3] Memo, Bill Roberts to Ron Neesen, October 7, 1974, "Harris Poll – Nixon Pardon", box 119, Ron Nessen Papers, Gerald Ford Library.

[4] Memo, Ron Nessen to Richard Cheney, 1 February 1975, PR 15 Executive, box 141, Gerald Ford Library.

White House and the scope of their private polling operations is required. In this chapter, I discuss both of these topics and address the larger implications of my findings in evaluating Ford's true leadership legacy.

Transition

Thrust twice into office under the umbrella of political scandal, perhaps Gerald Ford's greatest challenges were experienced during those early periods of transition. More specifically, he faced huge difficulties in assembling a staff to handle the extreme demands of the times. Robert Hartmann, a long-time friend and congressional aide for Ford was brought in during the early months of Ford's vice-presidency to serve as his chief of staff to coordinate all White House operations activities. However, as Ford himself would later admit, while Hartmann understood how to work the legislature, he knew very little about how to manage an office staff.[5] Hartmann's memoirs recount his difficulties in bridging the gap between staff members newly brought into the fold by Ford and the Nixon hold-overs, or "praetorians" as Hartmann recounts:

> The ghost of Richard Nixon would not go west. His Praetorians dug in to defend their past, their positions, their prerogatives and their power. To them the inexperienced new President was primarily a hostage, and his circle of inexperienced new aides were natural enemies to be quickly disarmed.[6]

This battle would rage for Hartmann long after the early transitional stage, its evidence ultimately presenting itself in terms of the shape and scope of the Ford public opinion apparatus. However, strictly in terms of transitional consequences, the rocky marriage of

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[5] Ford, p.118.

[6] Robert Hartmann, Palace Politics: An Inside Account of the Ford Years, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980, p. 197.

old and new advisors initially created a chasm in advisory networks making it very difficult for Ford to hit the ground running.

After the first five months, Ford and staff member Philip Buchen insisted that William Seidman be brought in to replace Hartmann at the helm. Seidman had been actively involved in various political activities in Ford's home state of Michigan and came highly recommended for the job. Immediately, Seidman set out to reorganize Ford's staff into a "spokes of the wheel" system, with Ford at the center and key staff members situated at different posts with equal influence and access to the vice-president. Viewed as successful during Ford's vice-presidency, Seidman's model was used as standard operating procedure in the Ford White House. Several members served as White House spokes, but the most prominent actors were Robert Hartmann as director of Editorial and Speechwriting Staff, Philip Buchen as Counselor to the President, John Marsh as director of Congressional Relations and Public Liaison, William Seidman as assistant to the President on Economic Affairs, James Cannon as director of Domestic Council staff, Jerald terHorst and later Ron Nessen as Press Secretary, Henry Kissinger and later Brent Scowcroft as National Security Advisor, and finally Alexander Haig, Donald Rumsfeld and later Richard Cheney who served in succession as directors of the White House Operations Office.

Despite the administration's efforts to achieve an internal balance of power, Haig, Rumsfeld and Cheney essentially functioned as pseudo chiefs-of-staff. Cabinet and Staff Secretaries as well as the heads of Presidential Personnel and Scheduling/Advance Offices reported directly to them. More importantly, few advisors had greater access to Ford than Rumsfeld and Cheney, a situation that did not always make for smooth White House

operations. As historian John Robert Greene argues, the problem with the spokes of the wheel model in practice is "if anyone in Ford's office did not accept an egalitarian distribution of power, the plan was doomed to failure."[7] That is, while Seidman's system sought to circumvent the need for a chief of staff, in practice all of the spokes on the wheel were seeking such a position simultaneously. Specifically, Greene cites early instances of power play between Hartmann and key members of the staff like Seidman, Buchen, and Alexander Haig. While on the surface the Ford administration functioned on a collegial basis, competition between high-ranking staff members frequently plagued White House operations. Essentially, the "openness" of the system to various staff perspectives was restricted on serious levels. Ultimately, with respect to the organization of the Ford White House's public opinion polling apparatus, the effects of the changing dynamics of the spokes of the wheel system become ever more apparent.

The Public Opinion Apparatus

On September 12, 1974, one month after Ford entered the White House, Robert Teeter of Market Opinion Research in Detroit, Michigan, met with Hartmann, Marsh, Buchen, Seidman and their assistants for a briefing on current public opinion trends. Additionally, they discussed the current status of research projects sponsored by the Republican National Committee (RNC). Despite the demise of the Nixon administration, the RNC polling machine continued to function, commissioning Teeter to perform a follow-up study to a major national study of 1200 interviews conducted in June of 1974. The results of the June poll had previously been made available to the minority leadership

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[7] John Robert Green, The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford, Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1995, p. 23.

in the House and Senate, to then Vice-President Ford, and to senior Nixon White House aides.[8] Without prior presidential campaign ties to one pollster above all others, President Ford and his staff naturally accepted the RNC's polling sources. The only initial decision that had to be made by the Ford White House was to determine how they were going to internally structure future relations with the RNC's pollster.

A series of January 1975 memos between Assistant Press Secretary Fred Slight, Staff Secretary Jerry Jones, Hartmann's Executive Assistant John Calkins, and Donald Rumsfeld debated the guidelines for the White House polling apparatus. Slight gave these staff members background information on the structure of Nixon's polling operations and offered three polling models for their consideration. The models he suggests were: (1) centralize all polling within one staff office which will have sole control over private poll results (the Nixon model), (2) decentralized all polling and surrender White House control over public opinion research to the RNC (current status), or (3) support a compromise between the first and second options, where "the coordination of public polling data would be centralized in a designated White House office, but the actual mechanics of indexing and analyzing would be the responsibility of the Republican National Committee".[9] In a memo to Calkins and Rumsfeld, Jones expressed his initial preference for option 3, but no written confirmation of its formal acceptance is indicated. This information can be ascertained, however, by analyzing the polling memos I have since uncovered. Generally, the initial intent was to design a polling apparatus along the lines

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[8] Memo, Dick Thaxton to Chuck Lichenstein, 6 September 1974, Public Opinion Polling - General (1), box 63, Robert Hartmann papers, Gerald Ford Library.

[9] Memo, Fred Slight to Jerry Jones, 6 January 1975, Polling - General (1), box 2, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

on the third option, which presented a system that dispersed power between two different authorities, consistent with the spokes of the wheel model philosophy.

Option three in Slight's memo, a centralized polling operation in one staff office that required RNC coordination for housing and analyzing information, came to define the polling operations within the Ford White House, but the "designated White House office" that could be set up to handle public opinion polling operations is not expressly clarified within the Slight memos. From the archival evidence as a whole, however, its identity can be established. I tracked the frequency of polling memos received and generated by various Ford White House offices and staff members over the entire course of their term of office. Of the 51 polling memos that my research identified in the Ford archives, the following tables represent the breakdown and distribution of polling memos handled by the various offices and staff members within the Ford White House[10]:

Table 3.1 Ford Polling Memos, by office	
White House Operations Staff	**26**
Market Opinion Research	**15**
President Ford Committee	**14**
Editorial/Speechwriting	**11**
White House Counsel/Advisors	**11**
Press Secretary	9
Staff Secretary	9
Domestic Council	9
President	6
Congressional Relations/Public Liaison	5
Vice President	4
Cabinet Officials	3
Other Pollsters	3
Other Staff (5)	1 each

Table 3.2 Most Frequent Handlers	
Richard Cheney	**16**
Robert Teeter	**16**
Bo Callaway	**11**
Jerry Jones	8
Robert Hartmann	6
Gerald Ford	6
Fred Slight	5
James Cannon	5

[10] These frequencies account for the total number of memos *both sent and received* by various White House offices and staff members. Table 3.1 combines the total number of polling memos both sent and received by various members within this sector of the White House. Table 3.2 indicates the total number of memos both sent and received by individual staff members. Because there are 43 staff members involved in the giving and receiving of all 51 polling memos, with many of them only handling 1 or 2 memos, this table lists those who handled more than 5 memos in the entire collection.

Polling information circulated among 11 White House offices, MOR and other private pollsters. Furthermore, in addition to Teeter, 39 staff members within the Ford White House are cited as involved in the giving and receiving of poll information.[11] Aside from the obvious involvement of Market Opinion Research (MOR), when all polling memos are tallied the most active groups committed to the giving and receiving of polling information can be identified as White House Operations, the President Ford Committee (PFC), Editorial/Speechwriting Office, and the collective involvement of White House Counsel and special advisors. However, the White House Operations office's involvement far surpasses the others in terms of overall handling of public opinion information. The evidence suggests, then, that this was indeed the "designated White House office" that coordinated polling operations with the RNC. The offices of Press Secretary, Staff Secretary, Domestic Council, The President, Congressional Relations/Public Liaison, the Vice President, and Cabinet officials and were also involved, but to a much lesser degree. When individual staff member involvement is assessed and tallied, the representation of these offices in the larger public opinion apparatus establishes them at the heart of its operations. Specifically, Ford's chief of staff Richard Cheney and head of the PFC Bo Callaway are the most active members in the polling apparatus, operating almost exclusively with the RNC's private pollster Teeter.

The PFC and The White House Operations office shared their connection to Teeter, primarily because these two departments were charged with the business of conducting Ford's 1976 re-election campaign. Teeter and MOR conducted 75 surveys for

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[11] See Appendix A for full listing.

the Ford White House with only 3 national surveys conducted before 1976, as estimated from archival documents.[12] The 16 Teeter memos found within the Ford archives strongly illustrate this '76 campaign connection, with PFC members Bo Callaway and Stu Spencer, Cheney, and Ford acting as Teeter's only poll memo recipients. Table 3.3 lists Teeter's memoranda in chronological order with reference to the subject matter that they contain:

Table 3.3 Teeter Polling Memos (n=16)	
October 14, 1975	To Callaway: "Campaign Polling From Present to National Convention"
November 12, 1975	To Cheney: "Analysis of Early Research"
November 24, 1975	To Cannon: (no title) Public Opinion on Health Care (general)
December 5, 1975	To Callaway: (no title) Discusses "building a theme" for the administration
December 8, 1975	To Callaway: (no title) Identifies the shape of the "Ford constituency"
December 9, 1975	To Callaway: (no title) Gallup trend data discrepancies
December 11, 1975	To Callaway: "Conclusions Drawn from National Trends in the President's Approval Rating"
December 11, 1975	To Callaway: "Momentum"
December 12, 1975	To Spencer: "Baroody State of the Union Proposal"
December 12, 1975	To Callaway: "Illinois"
December 12, 1975	To Callaway: "Bill Signing/Vetoes"
December 24, 1975	To Cheney: "National Poll"
March 18, 1976	To Spencer: (no title) Confirmation of consulting arrangement with PFC
August 1, 1976	To Ford: (no title) Campaign briefing
August 13, 1976	To Spencer: (no title) Fall campaign polling schedule for PFC
August 16, 1976	To Ford: (no title) National telephone approval ratings poll results

Robert Teeter credited his late involvement in the administration with the fact that Ford did not decide to run for re-election until late in the electoral process.[13] In Teeter's October 1975 memo to the PFC, he details the arrangement he and the MOR polling organization would provide for the 1976 election. Prior to this official campaign arrangement, the archival evidence does not support Teeter's direct connection to White

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[12] Estimated using full information provided in Robert Teeter Papers, boxes 50-62, Gerald Ford Library.

[13] Robert Shapiro, "Presidents and Their Pollsters", December 13, 1996, from NYAAPOR talk, Tennessee Mountain restaurant, New York, draft notes p. 6.

House operations. The flurry of memos that follow in December to the PFC primarily address issues directly relevant to the campaign, such as addressing Ford's approval ratings and demographic breakdowns of Ford's support for the Republican nomination and beyond. Teeter's only direct memos to Ford occur late in the '76 campaign, with Teeter's concern over weak approval ratings as the primary impetus for formal contact. The August 1st memo to Ford reads like a friendly pep talk to rally morale, imploring Ford not to be disheartened by the increasing gap between Carter and Ford's public approval, but offering little detailed advice as to how to turn around the numbers. Clearly Teeter's primary role as campaign operative is well established by the data, but very little evidence is offered to indicate that he served in a central advisory role to Ford and other members of his White House staff.

Three of the Teeter memos do address more substantive policy and governing issues. In the December 5, 1975 memo to Callaway, Teeter advises the President to rethink his economic policies. Teeter writes:

> It is becoming apparent to me that while the idea of the President's 28 billion dollar tax and budget cut is popular and will help him politically, it will not win the election. The major reason for this is, it like several of the President's recent programs don't do anything for anybody even though there is majority agreement with them. They all cut back and take something away from people rather than given them anything or do anything positively for them. As Lloyd Free pointed out Monday, there is a lot of evidence that successful politicians get that way by talking conservatively and acting liberally.[14]

Beyond the usual number crunching and approval ratings data, Teeter offered the PFC his own opinions concerning White House policy and the strategies they should employ to

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[14] Memo, Robert Teeter to Bo Callaway, December 5, 1975, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", box 4, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

mobilize voters for the 1976 campaign. Likewise, in two detailed memos to Cheney on November 12th and December 24th, Teeter offered advice on how to shape future electoral strategies for 1976 as well as tips on formulating the president's next State of the Union address. He identifies the issues of inflation, unemployment, crime, energy, health care, aid to the elderly, and education as areas the president needs to publicly address in order to mobilize electoral support.[15] Expressing some of the same concerns to Cheney as he did to Callaway, Teeter made a considerable effort to urge the administration to attempt to repair public perceptions of the president, but his advice did not offer *specific* public policy solutions that could direct the administration on these matters.

While Teeter's memos and poll information filtered through both the PFC and the White House Operations office, Richard Cheney's central role in the Ford White House public opinion apparatus is well established through other poll memo sources. Cheney ultimately oversaw all operations conducted through the White House public opinion apparatus, but in a highly passive manner. Cheney received 15 of 16 polling memos that define his involvement in the public opinion apparatus, leaving him only responsible for originating one polling memo. The 15 memos that were sent to him originated primarily from his supporting White House Operations Staff. Many of the other offices identified in the giving and receiving of polling memos also sent memos to Cheney, except for the President, Vice-President, Cabinet officials, and other pollsters. The one memo that Cheney originated passed on observations concerning public perceptions of the economy suggested by White House Operations staff member Foster Chanock to Ford's top staff

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[15] Memo, Robert Teeter to Richard Cheney, December 24, 1975, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data", box 4, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

advisors. Cheney's central position in the polling apparatus is most prominently illustrated through a series of memos that document his oversight of the construction of MOR poll questions. Like Haldeman during the Nixon administration, Cheney approved suggested revisions to draft MOR questionnaires and authorized proposed MOR national surveys by the PFC members.[16] Regardless of Cheney's extensive involvement, the archival evidence does not support Cheney's personal use of poll information for any strategic purpose; other White House Operations staff members, like Foster Chanock and Robert Goldwin originated memos that used polling information to substantiate governing and campaign strategies, not Cheney.

Finally, while Cheney and his office obviously orchestrated White House private poll operations, there is little evidence that polling information was formally communicated to Ford on a regular basis. Cheney's oversight, while lacking evidence of direct communication to Ford, does indicate that Ford was aware of White House polling operations to a limited degree – his involvement was cited in 5 out of 50 polling memos. On Cheney's copy of a draft questionnaire for the November 1975 U.S. National Survey conducted by MOR and prepared for the PFC, "The President Has Seen" stamp of approval appears – a small bit of evidence within the entire polling memo collection that Ford was in the polling loop.[17] Ultimately, evidence of Ford's involvement in the polling apparatus is confined to receiving information concerning either approval ratings or

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[16] Memos, Bo Callaway to Richard Cheney, 29 October 1975; Jim Cannon to Richard Cheney, 30 October 1975; William Baroody to Richard Cheney 31 October 1975; James Lynn to Richard Cheney, 3 November 1975; Teeter, Robert - Memoranda & Polling Data, box 4, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

[17] U.S. National Survey Prepared for the President Ford Committee, November/December 1975, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda and Polling Data (2)", Foster Chanock files, box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

campaign related issues. The only polling memo to originate from Ford, a memo to Cheney, passes on without comment or analysis presidential approval ratings information provided by Sindlinger & Company, a polling group not formally associated with the White House public opinion apparatus. Similarly, the four other polling memos handled by Ford dealt almost exclusively with information concerning his public approval ratings. This archival evidence concerning Ford's involvement indicates that he remained far off center from Cheney's White House polling operations.

Robert Hartmann and Additional Private Polling Sources

Robert Hartmann was the only advisor to directly offer Ford a polling memo that addressed public opinion trend data on public policy matters. Moreover, Hartmann's unique role within the White House public opinion apparatus needs to be clarified. The Editorial and Speechwriting staff headed by Hartmann initially challenged the White House Operations office's position as leading authority within the White House public opinion apparatus. As an advisor to President Ford, Hartmann primarily played an important role in image making and speechwriting. He was highly concerned with how the president's policy positions and actions resonated with the public. Based on the conversation between Hartmann and Ford on the Nixon pardon, their views with respect to public opinion polls contrasted sharply. Faced with a difficult decision, Ford argued that as president, he believed that his first duty was to do what is right for the country before what is popular. Hartmann, however, took the opposite point of view. Ford's account of Hartmann's concern that *the public won't understand* suggests that beyond the president's judgment of right or wrong, Hartmann believed that Ford should not ignore the political context surrounding important decisions.

Hartmann's advocacy for the strategic use of opinion polls can be found in a February 1975 memo Hartmann drafted to Ford. In the memo he advises, "I think you should not make any direct reference to a private poll (like LBJ), but simply use these things to strengthen your own personal convictions that the American people support you (when they do) in your policy positions."[18] He subsequently identified several public policy areas that demonstrated strong congruence between public opinion and administrative positions on specific economic policy matters. Again, Hartmann suggested that the president could not afford to simply ignore public opinion trends. While he did not instruct Ford to go so far as to follow public opinion, he did suggest that polls could be used for Ford's own political advantage. If Ford could capitalize on positive public opinion polls, he could bolster his political power in Washington. His veiled reference to LBJ's public display of private poll information demonstrated sensitivity to Ford's own brand of leadership. While Ford did not have to pander to the public, he did have to be constantly mindful of how the public perceived him and he could use public support to strategically position himself to govern effectively.

Hartmann's emphasis on the use of polling is evident not only in this Ford memo, but in the extent to which he collected and disseminated polling information. Hartmann's early role in the White House public opinion apparatus paralleled that of Cheney in later developmental phases. Hartmann served as the primary administrative contact for Republican pollster, Richard Wirthlin. While Robert Teeter served as the primary pollster

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[18] Memo, Robert Hartmann to Gerald Ford, February 1975, Public Opinion Polling - General (2), Box 163, Robert Hartmann papers, Gerald Ford Library. (* It is important to note that this is not a formal memorandum, but a typewritten note, which was clearly meant for Ford. There is no evidence that Ford actually received this memo.)

for the RNC, they occasionally used Richard Wirthlin of Decision Making Information (DMI) in Santa Ana, California, to provide them with additional reports or selected regional polls. Wirthlin was first and foremost a client of Ronald Reagan during the 1970s and when Reagan made a run against Ford in the primaries, he exclusively conducted polls for Reagan. But before the summer of 1975, Wirthlin was in close contact with the Ford White House and more specifically with Robert Hartmann.

Between October 1974 and April 1975, Wirthlin conducted at least 8 polls for the Ford White House, as supported by archival evidence.[19] These polls addressed specific issues rather than broad national statistics, often tracking public reactions to specific White House events. That is, Wirthlin's "listening post" or "brush fire" reports were often customized to the particular needs of the administration with respect to subject matter and location.[20] Two polls were conducted with respect to the president's anti-inflation program (WIN) and public perceptions of economic issues in general. The rest were conducted before and after presidential addresses in Miami, Topeka, South Bend, Houston, and California. Robert Hartmann supervised all of these projects. The final results were put together by Wirthlin and his associates and were communicated either in person or by phone directly to Hartmann without "middlemen" or "outsiders".[21] Hartmann's close relationship with Wirthlin illustrates that to some extent the Ford

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[19] Estimated using information provided by R .T. Hartmann files, boxes 30-35, Gerald Ford Library.

[20] Proposal, Decision Making Information, 23 January 1975, Presidential Survey Research Proposal, box 34, Robert Hartmann files, Gerald Ford Library.

[21] Proposal, Decision Making Information, 23 January 1975, Presidential Survey Research Proposal, box 34, Robert Hartmann files, Gerald Ford Library.

administration's public opinion polling apparatus incorporated more than one central office.

However, Hartmann's position of power within the overall White House structure had seriously diminished by the end of the administration's first year in office. Hartmann continued to retain the ear of his close friend Ford, but his relations with the other staff advisors became increasingly strained. Cheney et.al, or the 'praetorian' guard as Hartmann was so fond of calling them, soon earned a central position in the White House and the spokes-of-the-wheel model finally collapsed. Hartmann's influence, therefore, remains a function of the early Ford White House. His plea for the strategic use of polling in early 1975 was not echoed in later memos, as the tenor of his and other poll memo reports shifted towards primarily campaign rhetoric and emphasis on approval ratings. Indeed, archival evidence suggests that Hartmann and the Editorial and Speechwriting staff initially functioned as an important vehicle through which private polling information flowed into the White House only *before* the 1976 campaign was up and running. Given the fact that Teeter's documented involvement is quite low until mid-1975, Wirthlin's polls therefore served as a transitional private polling resource in the early Ford White House.

The Ford White House public opinion apparatus was not restricted to only Teeter and MOR poll data analysis. In addition to private polling sources, like previous administrations, they also maintained a steady diet of public poll information, receiving and circulating Harris and Gallup polls regularly. As commonly practiced in previous administrations, the Ford White House did receive early Harris poll results before

publication, but there is minimal evidence of this practice.[22] Louis Harris's personal contact with the administration is documented in two White House polling memos. In June 1975, economic advisor William Seidman organized an "off-the-record" meeting between himself, Ford and Harris, at Harris's request, to brief the president on his recent poll results.[23] In December of 1975, Harris sent Seidman a "personal and confidential" letter lobbying the administration to privately contract out his services for the 1976 presidential campaign.[24] The administration received similar requests from other outside polling sources, but no evidence of contracts outside of MOR and DMI can be found within the archival evidence.

Finally, public and private polling organizations were not the only resources from which information about public opinion circulated within the White House public opinion apparatus. White House Operations staff assistant Robert Goldwin made a brief contact with academic scholar Norman Nie and the National Opinion Research Center in September 1975. Goldwin submitted a detailed memo to Cheney and Rumsfeld with advanced excerpts from Nie's soon to be published book, The Changing American Voter as well as private advice from Nie for the 1976 campaign.[25] Nie's co-authors for the book, John Petrocik and Sidney Verba, are not cited in the memo, but Nie is identified

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[22] Memo, Hartmann to Ford, April 19, 1976, "Polls – Harris (2)", box 2, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

[23] Memo, Seidman to Ford, June 9, 1975, "Louis Harris", box 186, L. William Seidman files, Gerald Ford Library.

[24] Letter, Louis Harris to William Seidman, December 8, 1975, "Louis Harris", box 186, L. William Seidman files, Gerald Ford Library.

[25] Memo, Goldwin to Rumsfeld and Cheney, September 30, 1975, "Nie, Norman", box 26, Robert Goldwin Papers, Gerald Ford Library.

with supplying Goldwin directly with information concerning the demographic components of Republican electorate support as well as Nie's predictions supporting Ford's strong chances for re-election. This evidence combined with the administration's attention to outside public and private poll data ultimately demonstrates that the Ford White House public opinion apparatus utilized a wide variety of informational resources.

Ford's Leadership Style

To a large extent, activity generated by the Ford White House public opinion apparatus centered around Richard Cheney and the White House Operations staff throughout the entire course of the administration. Initially, the Editorial/Speechwriting staff also played an important role in generating polling information through its principle contact, Richard Wirthlin and DMI reports. When this relationship ended and the spokes of the wheel organizational model collapsed, the White House Operations staff was left as the principle agent to oversee private polling production. The Ford White House did entertain a variety of private, public, and academic information. However, this polling information was circulated through only a handful of the White House staff, with frequency rates often at very minimal levels for several top advisors. Furthermore, as the polling apparatus evolved, the White House became increasingly involved in efforts to control polling operations and there is little evidence to suggest that they shared responsibilities with the RNC. They collected a wide variety of polling data, prepared questions to be used in private polls commissioned for their purposes, and they compiled analysis reports of private and public poll data for their exclusive use. All of these activities suggest that polling was organized in tight, hierarchical fashion unlike the open model they may have originally intended.

Within that tight arrangement, those in control established the parameters of poll usage. The White House Operations unit and the PFC, the primary handlers of public opinion information, were charged with the task of organizing Ford's 1976 campaign. By the time the White House public opinion apparatus was up and running with Teeter and MOR in mid-1975, this campaign focus was well established, permeating all poll functions. This is evidenced by the large amount of polling memos dealing directly with campaign issues – approval ratings, national demographic breakdowns, etc. – rather than analysis for public policy development. While the 1974-1975 DMI reports that were conducted for the Ford administration do address matters of public policy, this information filtered through Robert Hartmann. His precarious position with dominant White House figures such as Richard Cheney places this early information at a position well removed from the emerging central forces controlling the Ford White House. Therefore, as the White House public opinion apparatus functioned as an extension of the larger 1976 re-election operation, it seriously restricted the role of public opinion in the overall policymaking function of the Ford White House.

In addition to these conclusions, Ford's extremely limited role in the White House public opinion apparatus does little to support the integration of public opinion into his policymaking as well as political considerations. The archival evidence records Ford only receiving and sending a total of 6 staff opinion polling memos, and his signature and stamp only indicate his receiving of one MOR poll commissioned for the President Ford Committee in November and December 1975.[26] Only issues concerning the Arab-Israel

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[26] U.S. National Survey, November/December 1975, "Robert Teeter - Memoranda & Polling Data", box 4, Foster Chanock files, Gerald Ford Library.

conflict, the Mayaguez incident, support for a vice-presidential running mate and general public approval ratings are addressed in the 6 staff polling memos directly involving Ford. Aside from receiving these polls and polling memos, the only other source of public opinion to reach Ford was through his mailbag, not his advisors. That is, on a weekly basis, President Ford received memos directly from Staff Secretary Assistant Roland Elliot that analyzed the content of White House mail. His signature appears on these archival documents as a sign of his attentiveness to their contents. Elliot would report to Ford a tally of current opinion in the mail to the extent that it was either pro or con specific administrative policies and actions. Many of these mail memos were sent through the Editorial and Speechwriting staff by Elliot and occasionally by Ford's direct request. Aside from Ford's signature, there is no evidence of how Ford may have incorporated this information into his decision-making. If seriously considered, these informal measurements of public opinion, fraught with methodological problems, unfortunately offered Ford only skewed images of public support for his programs.

Scientific polls and analysis could have been made just as readily available to him as his mailbag, and yet, Ford continued to maintain his distance from the White House public opinion apparatus. Therefore, consistent with his biographical statement defining his position towards the polls in the Nixon pardon scenario, I conclude that Ford operated independently of indicators of public opinion. The poll information that reached Ford primarily served to keep him abreast of his approval ratings within the larger campaign process, rather than supply him with the tools to inspire responsive or directive leadership initiatives. Essentially, the structure of the Ford White House public opinion apparatus strongly supported trustee-styled leadership. While a fuller examination of economic and

foreign policy case studies are to follow, as well as a comparative analysis of this administration to the Carter White House, the evidence presented within this chapter does not support, with respect to public opinion at least, the "open and accessible" image that has been used to define the Ford legacy.

In terms of positioning the Ford White House within in the larger historical context of the development of the White House Public Opinion apparatus, the archival evidence illustrates a strong break with the trends established by previous administrations. Specifically from Kennedy through Nixon, the Jacobs and Shapiro findings illustrate public opinion's increasing influence over time in terms of its central role in White House operations. The Ford White House, however, does not support this trend on several levels. First, the Ford White House does not follow the trend of increasing volume of private polls with each previous successive administration. The Ford administration conducted 83 polls (MOR and DMI combined) as compared to Kennedy (93), Johnson (130), and Nixon (233).[27] With the large majority of these polls being commissioned for Ford's re-election campaign, previous administrations additionally surpass the Ford administration in terms of non-electoral commissions – Kennedy (16), Johnson (82), Nixon (80), and Ford (11).[28] Second, a strong relationship between the president and his private pollster is not established by archival evidence. While Teeter was involved with the White House for campaign purposes, there is little evidence that his advisory position affected the internal policymaking process. Finally, the sophistication of polling

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[27] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of Polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies." Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994, p. 6.

operations paled in comparison to preceding administrations. There is little evidence of detailed poll analysis conducted by or for the Ford White House, and once again, the evidence that exists primarily addresses electoral issues.

Given these findings, the Ford administration maintained a polling apparatus far less integrated into central White House operations. In the chapters specifically devoted to policy analysis, a closer search for signs of responsive action to public opinion will be addressed. But, in terms of the overall scope of polling and it's role in this administrative study, I have found little substantive evidence to suggest the Ford White House served as a proponent of responsiveness to public opinion.

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[28] Ibid., p. 40 (Table 1).

CHAPTER 4: THE CARTER WHITE HOUSE

Introduction

In Jimmy Carter's 1980 memoir reflections of this life in the White House, he expresses his views with respect to the relationship that he sought to preserve between himself as a politicians and public opinion. Two prominent examples of these remarks are as follows:

> Some of these leaders [Congress] had been counting on a free-spending policy now that a Democrat was back in the White House, and would not acknowledge that one of the reasons I had been elected was to bring fiscal responsibility to the federal government. Partly because of my campaign statements, public opinion polls now showed, for the first time, that our party was considered more fiscally responsible than the Republicans. I intended for us to live up to our new reputation.[1]

> Citizens have the right to inform elected officials of their opinions on the issues of government. In fact, it can be a public duty...But, ultimately, public officials have to decide what action to take for the public good.[2]

The first quote by Carter supports the idea that politicians, especially, the president, need to be responsive to public opinion, while the second maintains that the president needs to operate in the end as a leader of public opinion. Erwin Hargrove and Charles O. Jones' separate accounts of the Carter presidency both suggest that Carter more often than not operated in the latter sense -- as a leader or trustee of the public. However, Carter's feelings concerning his responsive duty to the public are also clearly stated and should not be ignored. In fact, Carter's support of a dual approach to attempting to serve public opinion in both responsive and leadership capacities may indeed be a legitimate response to the unique demands of the modern presidency which all presidents must acknowledge.

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1 Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President, New York: Bantam Books, 1982, p. 77.

2 Ibid., p. 80.

That is, our public image of effective presidential leadership encompasses both actions – the public wants political leaders to listen, but also make the tough decisions the public ultimately is not qualified to make. Carter's seemingly conflicting attitudes toward his public role may indeed represent the complexity within which leadership operates as the modern presidency evolves.

In order to get a more accurate assessment of Carter's position vis-à-vis public opinion, we need to evaluate fully the context within which the Carter White House internally evaluated public opinion. While Hargrove and Jones' arguments are chiefly based on an evaluation of Carter's policy outcomes and loose assessments of his "personality", a close examination of the internal decision-making process will give us further evidence from which to evaluate the philosophies of Carter and his top staff advisors. That is, if Carter indeed operated as a trustee president, by the strict definition of that role, we would expect to see little involvement or interest in following periodic public opinion trends. Ford operated to a great extent in this fashion. However, the archival evidence suggests that indeed Carter's role with respect to public opinion was far more complex than that of Ford, and more important, much more expressive of his desire to perform as a delegate as well as a trustee under different circumstances. As the structure and dynamics of the public opinion polling apparatus illustrates, the initial assessments of Carter have severely overlooked the extent to which he greatly immersed himself in the business of tracking and relating to public opinion.

Transition

When Jimmy Carter entered office, he faced the same kind of political pressures that Ford had experienced in assembling a new administration. Having successfully campaigned as a political outsider, Carter sought to distance himself from politics-as-usual in the White House. Symbolic gestures initially were used to cue the public that the Carter Administration would indeed operate differently. After his inauguration, Carter bucked tradition by openly walking with Rosalynn down Pennsylvania Avenue, an act which Carter would later recall in his memoirs as "a valid demonstration of my confidence in the people" as well as a "tangible indication of some reduction in the imperial status of the President and his family".[3] Similarly, he restricted the ceremonial playing of "Hail to the Chief", issued frugal cutbacks on staff perks like chauffeured limousines, sent his daughter Amy to public school, and instructed the Secret Service to provide him with less extravagant modes of transportation -- legendary stories depicted Carter even carrying his own suitcase on business trips. Carter writes, "a simpler lifestyle, more frugality, less ostentation, more accessibility to the press and public -- all suited the way I had always lived" and were therefore natural extensions of his personality.[4] Ultimately, a closer look at the internal operations of his White House as well as his use of opinion polling illustrate that Carter remained true to this philosophy well beyond these initial gestures.

Riding on the crest of change, Carter sought to build his administration in his own image, surrounding himself with fresh, like-minded individuals whose presence in the White House would rid of the ghost of Watergate once and for all. Carter loyalists, most

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[3] Ibid., p. 18.

[4] Ibid., p. 26.

of whom were outsiders themselves, filled top staff positions in the administration. The most prominent members of Carter's staff were Georgians with whom he had worked with as Governor as well as during his 1976 presidential campaign. Specifically, Hamilton Jordan and Jody Powell served as Carter's closest advisors throughout the entire course of his administration. Jordan served as the director of both the 1976 and 1980 campaigns as well as White House Chief of Staff. Powell served as press secretary for Governor Carter between 1971-1975, transitioning to White House Press Secretary in 1977 and remaining there through the entire term of office. Because of their longstanding advisor relationships with Carter, each of these staff members were intricately involved in all aspects of White House operations and were not confined to traditional office roles. Similarly, Gerald Rafshoon and Patrick Caddell transitioned into the Carter White House from their pivotal roles in Carter's 1976 campaign. While Caddell served as Carter's private pollster and advised him from his DNC position outside of the White House, Rafshoon was appointed to head a newly created Office of Communications in 1978. Both of these men, like Jordan and Powell serviced various arteries of the administration beyond Carter, supplying the administration with detailed information and strategies concerning press/public relations and public opinion trends.

Like Ford, Carter was initially hesitant to organize his staff within a chief-of-staff-centered model, and subsequently he instituted a system similar to the spokes-of-the-wheel model that the Ford White House eventually abandoned. Again, inspired as a move to put the practices of the Nixon White House behind the country, Carter recalls that he was compelled to reassure the public that "our leaders did not have to be isolated, immune

from accountability to the pubic, and devious in their actions and statements."[5] Like other changes instituted by Carter, White House reorganization, therefore, served as a symbolic illustration of the dawn of a new era. The spokes of the wheel model, ultimately, served a dual purpose; it could be used as a vehicle to open up the Oval Office to a variety of outlets as well as function in a way to accommodate the personal needs of the president. That is, Carter operated as his image suggests -- in a hands on, high informational capacity. On this point Stephen Hess found that "Carter wanted to be his own chief of staff, and he organized the White House to identify and create options and then leave final decisions to him".[6] This observation can be confirmed by Carter's own admission:

> A President gets the tough questions, and the more difficult an issue is to resolve, the more likely his advisors are to be equally divided about it and the less eager they are to go on record with an answer that might later be criticized. I tried never to duck the more controversial issues nor to put an onerous responsibility on others when it was rightfully mine. After the laborious staff work and study were completed, I usually made decisions without delay. Options papers describing the choices I had to make rarely stayed on my desk overnight, unless it was necessary for me to consult a few more people.[7]

The "options papers" that Carter received indeed served as the glue that kept the spokes of the administration together and the wheel from spinning out of control. Inter-office memoranda functioned as the primary means by which Carter communicated with his staff. Often, these memos were extremely complex, dealing with a variety of different policy options. Carter insisted upon consulting several sources of informed opinion on the subject matter before making a final decision and delegating authority to various key

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5 Ibid., p. 125.

6 Hess, p. 142.

7 Carter, p. 62.

individuals for policy implementation. Instead of filtering material through Jordan, Carter admits that he responded to staff member requests directly through written responses, writing notes in the margins and often directing the information to other offices for further input and review.[8]

Carter created a system that allowed him to exert a great deal of personal control over the decision-making process, while encouraging teams of experts to address issues on an ad-hoc basis. While this kind of system may have more closely suited Carter's personality, it often made the everyday business of office management quite difficult, a situation that similarly plagued the Ford administration during its earliest stages. Moreover, members of the Carter administration found themselves caught in the same dilemma -- trying to find a way to reconcile their desires to encourage a more accessible and open system of governing with the need for organizational efficiency. As the structure of the public opinion polling apparatus indicates, the business of collecting and dispersing poll information was conducted in a very highly centralized manner. Essentially, there were only two consistent actors involved in this process: the President and his pollster, Patrick Caddell.

Pollster Patrick Caddell

Carter was very close on both a personal and professional level with Caddell, a much stronger relationship than that which existed between Ford and Teeter. The 26-year old "whiz kid" from Harvard and his research group, Cambridge Survey Research, had served as Carter's private pollster during his 1976 campaign. After Carter's successful

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[8] Ibid., p. 57.

run in 1976, the Democratic National Committee hired Caddell and Cambridge Survey Research (CSR) as the party's private polling group that would tangentially work for the party's leader -- the president. He would serve as Carter's primary polling source throughout the entire term of the administration and up through his re-election campaign in 1980. While Caddell never held an official staff position in the Carter White House, his extensive involvement in White House activities earned him the reputation of being a key member of Carter's inner-circle of advisors. Between 1977 and 1979, Caddell directly communicated with Carter either by phone or within direct meetings on at least 40 occasions for approximately 60 hours worth of conversation, as documented by the archival accounts within the president's daily diary.[9] Meetings during this time frame ranged from various social invitations (movies, walks on the grounds, luncheons, dinners) to formal tête-à-têtes with Carter, Hamilton Jordan, Jody Powell, Rosalynn, and other top staff officials (private briefings, in-flight meetings, summits). In 1980, during the re-election campaign, Caddell's personal contacts with Carter more than doubled that of the preceding 3 years of work (7 in 1977, 10 in 1978, 33 in 1979, and 93 in 1980). And yet, such a stark contrast should not diminish the extent to which Caddell was intricately involved in the actions of governing.

Caddell's services frequently provided Carter with more than the obvious number-crunching. In an interview given to the *National Journal* in May of 1977, Caddell downplayed his role in the Administration, stating, "basically, I'm an expert in public

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[9] Presidential Diary, folder "C-Carter, Marc", box 1, Appointments/ Scheduling/ Advance/ Presidential Diary Office files, Jimmy Carter Library.

opinion and, to some extent, I'm a political person as well."[10] Within the same interview, however, Caddell defined the parameters within which public opinion polling was useful for Jimmy Carter. His account suggests that his role as polling expert was far more important than he openly admitted to:

> In a way, he [Carter] has a more sophisticated understanding of public opinion than most people. During the campaign, it was like working with a graduate student, someone who really understood it and had a sense of it. He knew what to dismiss, what was important and what was changeable. He really had an academic interest in it.
>
> He really views it as a tool to help lead. That's because he has his own strong convictions. It helps him get a sense of what is out there. I'd much rather have a President who was concerned about whether the people understood what he was trying to do and how they felt about what he was doing and knew the nature of the problems -- particularly in view of Presidents who have been isolated and refused to believe what the public was thinking and feeling...
>
> The job of President involves not only getting things done but also leading the country in wanting to do things...Anything that can help you lead and help you understand the problems and the process is a plus. But the thing that makes it work is that it really requires a sophisticated understanding -- one that a lot of politicians don't have.[11]

Caddell's account of Carter's use of public opinion polls describes Carter as an individual with more than a passive appreciation for opinion trends, someone who instinctively relies upon the flow of opinion information for the daily practice of governing. Essentially, Caddell's role in the White House was to act as a leadership guide -- providing Carter with the tools to help direct his administration toward achieving its political goals.

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[10] Dom Bonafede, "Rafshoon and Caddell -- When the President is the Client", National Journal, May 28, 1977, p. 813.

[11] Ibid., p. 816.

Throughout the course of the administration, Caddell wrote 28 highly detailed memos and 2 extensive research papers advising the president and his top advisors on pending public policy decisions and offering tips for improving the administration's status with the American public. He was frequently consulted by key staff members for advice on Carter's fireside chats, State of the Union addresses, as well as political strategy. Of the 30 polling documents Caddell sent to the White House, 22 (73%) were submitted to the President directly. The following table records the timeline and main topics of discussion for these Caddell-Carter polling memos:

Table 4.1 Caddell Polling Memos to President Carter	
Dec. 10, 1976	"Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy" -- Transition advice
Dec. 20, 1976	Consumer Confidence & Inflation
Dec. 21, 1976	Inflation & Transition Advice
Jan. 10, 1977	Transition Advice -- Inauguration and Fireside Chats
Mar. 23, 1977	Presidential Approval Ratings
May 19, 1977	Survey Results from Israel
Jul. 15, 1977	US Attitudes Toward Israel & Jewish Attitudes Toward Carter
Oct. 21, 1977	Attitudes concerning the Department of Education
Oct. 21, 1977	Foreign Policy Questions -- Middle East
Nov. 2, 1977	Aftermath of the Bert Lance Resignation -- Approval Ratings
Dec. 13, 1978	Public Attitudes toward Defense vs. Domestic Spending
Dec. 14, 1978	State of the Union Talking Points
Jan. 16, 1979	Inflation & Ratings
Jan. 16, 1979	Government Reorganization & Approval Ratings
Jan. 17, 1979	The State of America -- Public Attitudes toward Government
Apr. 23, 1979	"Of Crisis and Opportunity" -- Trends in Public Pessimism
June 11, 1979	Yesterday's New York Times/CBS Poll – Approval Ratings
June 11, 1979	Field Research on Attitudes toward President, Inflation, Reorganization
Jul. 12, 1979	Talking Points on "Crisis of Confidence" Speech
Nov. 6, 1979	Approval Ratings & Re-election Strategy
Mar. 1, 1980	Inflation - Policy Proposals
Aug. 18, 1980	"How to Win" - Re-election Strategies

As the archival evidence indicates, roughly equal emphasis was placed on the traditional reporting of presidential approval ratings and other "political" issues as well as reporting public attitudinal trends within specific policy areas. What is unique about Caddell's memos, however, is the extensive analysis he attached to polling information. In Chapters

6 and 7, I discuss the analysis given to each specific policy area by Caddell, but here it is important that we discuss the legacy of the extensive political advice that was generated by Carter's pollster. Specifically, Caddell's two extensive research papers would prove to be very influential and controversial pieces of political advice.

Caddell's first research paper, entitled "Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy", was submitted to Carter in mid-December 1976 on the brink of Carter's inauguration. This 62-page memorandum served a dual-purpose: to give Carter a detailed post-mortem analysis of the electoral factors that contributed to his victory, and in light of this information, outline the steps the Carter Administration should be taking during their first 100 days. The most startling aspect of Caddell's early advice is how closely his provisions resemble those that Carter eventually adopted. While I would not go so far as to assume that Caddell was the only influence on Carter in these areas, Caddell's influence, however it is defined, should not be ignored.[12]

The premise of Caddell's arguments is centered on the idea that "governing with public approval requires a continuing political campaign", essentially recommending that the President adopt the practices that worked in his campaign during his term in office.[13] Offering advice for the future in this context, Caddell set the parameters within which he believes the Administration needed to operate. He outlined several basic thematic goals for the Carter Administration, principally advocating the "restoration of trust in

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[12] This document contains a handwritten note from Carter to Mondale that reads, "Fritz, Excellent - See me re this". There are also passages that are underlined and circled, although it can not be determined for certain that Carter made those marks. His signature and message, however, do indicate that he read Caddell's work and thought it worthy enough to pass on to the Vice President for review.

[13] Memo, Patrick Caddell to Jimmy Carter, 10 December 1976, folder "Memoranda -- President Carter -- 12/10/76-12/21/76, box #4, Jody Powell files, p. 1.

government". Caddell argued that this is achieved through efforts on the part of Carter to keep his distance from "the traditional political establishment", encouraging Carter to create a new governing style that cut back on the "imperial frills and perks".[14] This new style should also "involve lots of contact with the people" through programs like fireside chats, town meetings, press conferences and popular reform policies like government reorganization.[15] Additionally, Caddell predicts that the greatest opposition Carter would face would not be from the public, but from the leadership of his own party, especially within Congress. The "liberal establishment", Caddell warned, was "anxious to be independent" given the previous years of opposition that came from the Executive Branch which they were forced to endure.[16] Outreach programs were advised to extend not only directly to oppositional groups, but also indirectly to the public in order to combat these forces. Caddell would reiterate all of these points in several other memos to Carter as further justification for Carter's immediate and constant attention to public opinion trends.

This initial memo from Caddell to Carter was important for an additional reason: it became the first private document openly leaked during Carter's honeymoon to the press. Subsequently, controversies over Caddell made him the first publicly visible presidential pollster and his role in the White House was debated publicly and prominently in *the New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.[17] The damage caused by the leak, its source undocumented, was concentrated in Caddell's overall message to Carter advising him to

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[14] Ibid., pp. 37 & 39.

[15] Ibid., pp. 40 & 42.

[16] Ibid., p. 24.

[17] Bonafede, p. 817.

build popular support through style, not substance. Carter's symbolic gestures were publicly questionable in motive, and Caddell and other operatives like Jordan, Powell, and Rafshoon had to backpedal to cover the mistake. While in the long run relatively harmless, it propelled Caddell on to center stage -- new public attention now was being paid to the role of the president's pollster. However, Caddell's newfound attention did little to quell his influence internally in the White House. Despite the year gap that exists in the Caddell memos to Carter between November 1977 and December 1978, for which there is no documented explanation, Caddell remains in constant contact with the White House. Furthermore, while his verbal advice to Carter and various staff members cannot be accurately assessed in my research, his polls and polling memos serve as *the* primary source from which polling information was circulated throughout the White House. According to the memos I have documented, roughly 1/3 of all polling memos were originated by Caddell (30 out of 95). While the majority of his memos went directly to Carter, they were often widely dispersed at Carter's request. Furthermore, other polling memos frequently use only Caddell's poll results as the basis for their policy analysis.

The second controversy surrounding Caddell's role in the White House is perhaps the most famously documented illustration of Caddell's influence in administrative affairs. In a series of polling memos and private discussions with Jimmy and Rosalynn in 1979, Caddell urged Carter to publicly address a critical political problem facing the nation identified by his polls -- a crisis in confidence in American governmental officials and institutions. Caddell warned that if left unattended to, public cynicism would single-handedly destroy not only Carter's chances for re-election but would eat away at the fabric of the modern presidency. After the two Kennedy's and Martin Luther King, Jr.

assassinations, Vietnam, Watergate, and recent inflationary troubles and energy shortages, Caddell argued that the American public had apparently lost all faith in the political system. By directly addressing their concerns, Caddell believed that Carter could not only increase his own popularity and political strength needed to propel him through the upcoming election, but he could establish a place in history for himself as the President who in essence restored the Presidency once again to its former position of exerting tremendous power and respect. In his first memo in January 1979, "The State of America", Caddell's alarm is double underscored within his introductory remarks:

> Rather on a broad front of social, political, and economic issues we find deep, significant, and accelerating decline. When one explores consumer attitudes, expectations, and plans, long term structural attitudes, general issue attitudes, political views, inflation, questions of efficacy and confidence, we find a unison of negative movement at a velocity that raises doubts not of political survival but of national cohesion....If this process continues at the current rate and direction, your place in history may not be determined by your success at moving domestic issues or bringing peace but rather, you inadvertently run the risk of being identified as the President who presided over the dissolution of the American political society. [18]

Clearly, this kind of analysis, while somewhat over-the-top, goes well beyond giving simple assessments of public opinion trends -- acting more like a preacher than a pollster, Caddell sought to single-handedly reinvent the Carter Presidency.

When the President did not immediately act upon Caddell's advice, Carter turned to Rosalynn for assistance. She in turn arranged a meeting for Caddell to address these concerns to the President's key staff members. Caddell's second extensive research paper, entitled "Of Crisis and Opportunity", was drafted at Rosalynn's request for this specific

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[18] Memo, Patrick Caddell to Jimmy Carter, 17 January 1979, folder Pat Caddell 7/77- 3/80, box 1, o/a #743 White House Central files, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

audience. Within the 75-page document, Caddell reiterated his fears and articulated a new agenda for the White House:

> The most critical strategy implied here is the altering of the country's agenda from the transactional, incremental, and detached goals and interests that occupy the energies of the government and the various institutions of Washington, to an agenda of more intangible vision. That agenda must be directed toward establishing (1) goals of large national purpose, social as well as political, (2) a process of consensus formation that permits actualization of national interest which overrides special interest and (3) a process of citizen involvement at all levels which permits a restoration of the public as the supreme and ultimate shapers and rulers of the Democracy.[19]

Again, although Caddell's rhetoric is quite grandiose, his major message of advocating a completely new approach to leadership and governing can be found. Essentially, Caddell's strongest criticism of the Carter Administration was its lack of an overarching theme or guiding vision. According to Caddell, as is the case in the campaign process, strong thematic consistency is necessary in order to maintain a sense of political prowess. This criticism came at a time when many other top staff members were debating the current state of the Carter presidency. As a result, Caddell's work created two separate camps of leadership advisors offering conflicting advice while equally vying for the President's attention in mid-1979 -- pro-Caddell and anti-Caddell movements sprung up in the White House virtually overnight.

Going back to their days on the '76 campaign trail, Rafshoon, Jordan, Hamilton, and Caddell were close confidants, and therefore, they naturally banded together on the crisis of confidence issue. The Office of Communications, the Press Secretary, and Chief of Staff all assumed highly specified but complementary roles to keep the administration's

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[19] Paper. Patrick Caddell, "Of Crisis and Opportunity", folder "Memoranda: President Carter 1/10/79-4/23/79", box 40, Jody Powell files, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 65-66.

public image and message controlled. Michael Grossman and Martha Kumar have characterized this unique relationship as Carter's well organized "publicity triumvirate":

> Carter staffers share a clear understanding of who was in charge of what. Powell, as press secretary, was responsible for handling reporters. Gerald Rafshoon dealt with long-range planning and coordination of publicity between the White House and external organizations such as the Democratic National Committee. Hamilton Jordan, however, had more loosely defined responsibilities...Jordan was responsible for developing the line of approach the White House took in response to short- and long-term problems he has identified...according to Rafshoon, the publicity triumvirate usually met or spoke with each other every day.[20]

Having close connections with this triumvirate gave Caddell several avenues into the administration, rather than only directly through Carter. However, whereas Caddell's messages would echo through some of the advice given by these three advisors, especially on the crisis of confidence message, Caddell would experience greater difficulty reaching key public policy staff leaders; on these matters he only had Carter's ear.

Jerry Rafshoon, sharing some of Caddell's concerns, had also privately addressed the president on leadership issues early in 1979. In a confidential February memo to Carter, Rafshoon did not use Caddell's exact rhetoric of "crisis of confidence" to identify the leadership problems facing the Presidency, but he emphasized the growing "doubts" and "cynicism" emanating from the press and the public concerning his ability to handle the challenges of the office. Unlike Caddell, however, Rafshoon believed that Carter's public problems could be remedied by an entirely new option -- through the radical reconstruction of White House operations. Rafshoon writes:

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[20] Michael Baruch Grossman and Martha Joynt Kumar, Portraying the President: The White House and the News Media, Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981, p. 96.

> Structure and Process -- This is a major area of failure for the Administration. There is no hierarchy. No one seems to be in charge. We still seem at a time to have two or more foreign policies. Cabinet members contradict one another on major policy and it is never made clear who is speaking for the Administration. People get reprimanded from time to time but no one ever gets fired....There is a feeling that you can not provide strong leadership to the country because you don't yet have control of your own Administration.[21]

Whereas Caddell advocated a sweeping thematic change to the Administration, Rafshoon took a more practical approach and suggested that Carter's public perception problems could be solved through a series of internal organizational and staff adjustments. In the anti-Caddell camp, however, Stuart Eizenstat, Carter's chief domestic policy advisor, and Vice President Walter Mondale remained poised against any hasty changes to Carter's leadership style. For Eizenstat and Mondale, current problems could be solved if the Administration could finally get a proper handling on dealing with such plaguing issues like inflation and the emerging energy shortages.[22] Both of these points of view would be played out for Carter's greater consideration in the summer of 1979 at a Camp David Summit that in essence, changed everything and nothing for Carter's image, policies, and leadership skills.

Tensions between the two groups mounted in July of 1979, as the staff debated the shape of the President's address to the nation in response to the emerging energy crisis. In a July 3 memo from Hamilton Jordan to Carter, Jordan writes:

> I thought that I would be doing you a disservice if I did not alert you to the fact that there is some soul-searching and second-guessing about the

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[21] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to Jimmy Carter, February 1979, folder "Leadership Memoranda 2/79", box 27, Gerald Rafshoon files, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 4.

[22] Notes, Handwritten Notes from Jimmy Carter, 7/5/79, folder "Camp David Domestic Summit: President's Notes, 7/79", box 19, Plains File, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 3-4.

> wisdom of your Thursday night speech. Pat Caddell is the "ring-leader" of those who think it might be a mistake....Without presuming to speak for Pat Caddell, let me attempt to state his concerns. Pat continues to argue that we need first to make our "America is going to hell speech" to grab the attention of the American people and then to focus their attention on the energy problems. Pat argues that in the present atmosphere people are so alienated from you and turned off that we will have great difficulty getting their attention. He thinks that your attacking the larger and more abstract problem should come before you address the country on energy.[23]

Poised to make yet another detailed speech on the energy crisis on July 5, 1979, President Carter suddenly pulled back, canceled the speech, and called for a summit to regroup and hammer-out the ever-apparent conflicts of interest between his key staff advisors. Recalling his experiences at Camp David, Carter writes:

> Their criticisms of me were the most severe, questioning my ability to deal with the existing problems of the nation without bringing about some change in public perceptions....Consensus was that the public acknowledged my intelligence and integrity, my ability to articulate problems and to devise good solutions to them, but doubted my capacity to follow through with a strong enough thrust to succeed.[24]

Ultimately, agreeing with the pro-Caddell faction that was calling for radical leadership changes, Carter returned to Washington resolved to institute two new strategies -- he would attack the problem of public cynicism head-on in a grand public address to the nation and he would also restructure the Executive Branch, appointing Jordan as chief-of-staff and firing controversial cabinet members. Essentially, Caddell and Rafshoon had won.

Many in the public and the press judged the Crisis of Confidence speech as perhaps the most persuasive and meaningful speech given by Carter throughout the whole of his

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[23] Memo, Hamilton Jordan to Jimmy Carter, 7/3/79, folder "Speech, Presidential 7/15/79", box 37, Hamilton Jordan files, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 1-3.

[24] Carter, p. 117.

term in office. Memoranda from the White House Administration Office submitted to Caddell one month after Carter delivered this televised speech to the nation indicated that mail and telephone responses were indeed overwhelmingly positive. Nine prior televised speeches had received a combined estimated total of 29,053 public mail and telephone responses that fluctuated greatly in their support; the Crisis of Confidence speech alone elicited 31,720 mail and telephone responses whose expressed opinions averaged 75% in favor of the President's overall message.[25] Carter's momentum after the Crisis of Confidence speech, however, was short-lived. By November 1979, Caddell's poll analysis indicated that Carter had indeed slipped back down significantly in the polls, with Edward Kennedy's threat for the Democratic Party nomination becoming ever stronger.[26] Some blamed the awkward cabinet shake-up for breaking the momentum generated by the malaise speech, while others argued that his public efforts were simply too little too late. Nevertheless, the greater lesson learned from the Crisis of Confidence speech is the noticeable influence Caddell exerted not only on Carter, but also on the White House in general. Certainly Robert Teeter never had the chance, maybe not even the inclination, to pursue such a role in the Ford White House.

Furthermore, the Crisis of Confidence speech serves as evidence to suggest that Carter indeed made substantial efforts to be both responsive to and a leader of public opinion. It is equally important to note that this incident illustrates extensive attention

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[25] Memo, Dan Chew to Dan Malachuk, 9/13/79, folder "Correspondence Office -- Caddell Data", box 2, Staff Offices Administration -- Malachuk files, Jimmy Carter Library, p.2.

[26] Memo, Patrick Caddell to Jimmy Carter, 11/6/79, folder "Caddell, [Patrick]", box 33, Hamilton Jordan Files, Jimmy Carter Library.

paid to public opinion by other key staff members as well. That is, while Caddell and Carter were at the epicenter of the polling apparatus, White House poll use and consultation of public attitudes extended far beyond the boundaries of these principle actors.

The Carter Public Opinion Apparatus

Although Caddell's polls were naturally at the heart of many of these memos, staff members also frequently circulated Gallup, Harris, and other published poll results which they had access to. The exchange of polling information between and within White House offices was indeed more widespread than that witnessed in the Ford Administration. Some 13 offices and over 60 advisors in addition to the President and Cambridge Survey Research (CSR) were involved in the exchange of 95 polling memos.[27] The following tables present a breakdown of the overall frequency with which polling information traversed within each office and identify the specific individuals primarily involved [28]:

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[27] See Appendix B for full bibliographical listing of this information.

[28] These frequencies account for the total number of memos *both sent and received* by various White House offices and staff members. Table 4.2 combines the total number of polling memos both sent and received by various members within this sector of the White House. Table 4.3 indicates the total number of memos both sent and received by individual staff members. Because there are over 60 individuals involved in the giving and receiving of all 95 polling memos, with many of them only handling 1 or 2 memos, this table lists Carter's top advisors who handled 5 or more polling memos in the entire collection. The only lower level staff member who handled 5 or more polling memos and is omitted from Table 4.3 because of her lower status within the administration was Patricia Bario in the Press Secretary office – she sent 7 polling memos within the department to Press Secretary Jody Powell.

Table 4.2 Carter Polling Memos, by office	
Office of the President	**47**
Domestic Affairs	**40**
Cambridge Survey Research	**36**
Press Secretary	**30**
Chief of Staff	11
Communications	10
Office of the Vice President	9
National Security Advisor	8
Special Assistants	7
Re-election campaign	5
Administration Office	5
Congressional Liasion	4
The Cabinet	3
Office of First Lady	2
White House Counsel	1
Others (17 unknown)	1 each

Table 4.3 Most Frequent Handlers (Carter)	
Jimmy Carter[29]	**45**
Patrick Caddell	**33**
Jody Powell	**20**
Stuart Eizenstat	**20**
Hamilton Jordan	11
Zbigniew Brzezinski	8
Walter Mondale	7
Jerry Rafshoon	6
Anne Wexler	5

Two offices, Domestic Affairs and the Press Office, were also strongly involved in the polling apparatus -- Stuart Eizenstat and Jody Powell were the primary spokes in the Carter-Caddell controlled polling apparatus. Like Caddell, Jody Powell's high use of polls can be attributed to his unique role in the White House. That is, Powell served Carter in a larger capacity than just as his official Press Secretary. A close confident, both Powell and Hamilton Jordan served as Carter's de facto Chiefs-of-Staff for the first half of Carter's term. Later, after much encouragement on Jordan's part, Jordan assumed the official role of Chief-of-Staff, but Powell still remained heavily involved in the day-to-day business of governing. More often than not, Powell's heavy involvement in the polling apparatus is a reflection of his ability to serve as a liaison for Caddell to Carter when these two were not in direct communication with one another about polls. In one instance he passed on information from Caddell to Carter with a recommendation for comment

[29] This number represents the total number of memos Carter received and sent directly and through his Staff Secretary, Rick Hutcheson. Hutcheson sent 10 memos, however in eight cases he sent memos directly on Carter's behalf. In the other two cases, he originated his own polling memos and sent them directly to Carter, not acting in these cases as a go-between for Carter or any other staff member.

(concerning the "Of Crisis and Opportunity" memo), but for the most part he strictly received information from Carter for review and comment. Therefore, there are no instances of extensive memos originated by Powell that would give us further evidence to determine how he personally viewed the role of public opinion or how he used polling information in his decision-making capacities.

Stuart Eizenstat, however, does give us some insight into his position with respect to the usefulness of polling information. Despite his disagreement with Pat Caddell concerning the need to address public malaise in conjunction with energy policy, Eizenstat did find Caddell a useful advisor on other economic and political matters. In February 1978, Eizenstat drafted an "administratively confidential" memo not for circulation to Carter addressing his and Pat Caddell's assessment of Carter's low public approval ratings. Eizenstat particularly identified Carter's public image problems as directly linked to the problems he was experiencing with Congress. He writes:

> After conversations with Pat Caddell and a number of other people, I am convinced that your rating in the public opinion polls is increasingly a function of your relations with Congress and their capacity to pass legislation...I think that it is therefore critical that we attempt, to define as much as possible your success as President in non-legislative terms while, of course, continuing to pursue our legislative program with all our resources.[30]

Here, Eizenstat strongly encouraged Carter to aggressively court public opinion by going public with popular non-legislative actions that would in turn give him a stronger arm to persuade Congress to pass his legislative agenda. Specifically, he suggested that in the areas of foreign affairs and governmental reform, with the latter issue speaking to the

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[30] Memo, Stuart Eizenstat to Jimmy Carter, 2/21/78, folder "2/21/78", box 73, Staff Secretary files, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

"country's anti-government mood", executive initiatives can be enacted without Congressional approval and in turn will allow the president to restore his public image as a successful leader. Signing off on the memo, Carter gave his written approval for Eizenstat to "work with others on a plan of action" consistent with Eizenstat's original suggestions.[31] Both Carter and Eizenstat recognized the need not simply to respond to public opinion in order to boost presidential approval ratings, but to use the public strategically as a means to gaining political leverage in Washington.

Like Powell, Eizenstat was primarily the recipient of polling information; he received 14 polling memos from staff sources and originated 6 memos himself. He often received information from Carter and Caddell on a wide range of domestic policy issues, as well as other staff members who eagerly wanted to keep him up to date on the latest economic statistics and public opinion trends concerning attitudes toward government spending, inflation, and energy issues principally. In the 6 instances he originated polling memos, aside from the one instance previously discussed, Eizenstat himself circulated the latest Harris polls results on economic issues to staff members, especially to those within his own policy group. Early in the administration, at Eizenstat's request, a Domestic Policy Staff assistant researched the possibility of subscribing directly to the *Roper Report*, instead of receiving this information second hand. However, in a memo to Eizenstat in April 1977, his assistant argued that this was ultimately "a waste of money -- Caddell already provides us with as much detail as we need; no one will really read these in

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[31] Ibid., p.2.

detail."[32] This memo leaves us with a few impressions: first, that Eizenstat was so very much interested in receiving polling information that he requested his staff to consider their options for private collection within their department; second, Pat Caddell's polls ultimately served as the primary source of polling information in their office; and third, the comment that "no one will really read these in detail" suggests that only on matters of utmost importance that require extensive research was polling most likely consulted -- in the day-to-day policy operations this was of lesser importance. While this is only just one person's comment and should not be taken to represent all views, it provides at least some sense of how polls were viewed by staff members further removed from the main spokes of the polling apparatus.

Perhaps to a somewhat more moderate extent than Powell and Eizenstat, Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan was also a prime collector of polling information; he was not responsible for originating polling memos, but received 11. Like Powell, Jordan often served as a third party in Carter - Caddell communications, receiving polling information on a second-hand basis -- with one significant exception. In a very extensive polling memo to Carter after he assumed the position of Chief of Staff, Jordan outlined the direction in which the Administration and Carter specifically needed to move after Camp David and the Crisis of Confidence speech. Having promised the American people that the Administration would remain committed to championing the public interest, Jordan's memo was an attempt to reiterate and organize this vision into a cohesive set of attainable goals for the future. Jordan strongly credited Caddell as the prime inspiration behind the

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[32] Memo, Steve Travis to Stu Eizenstat, 5/15/77, folder "Public Communications, Relations, Appearances and Pollster Reports", box 264, Stuart Eizenstat files, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

leadership directives he had the newfound job of implementing, with the prime directive being to alter the public image of Carter as simply "the manager of the government" and promote the perception of Carter as the "leader of the people".[33] However, although the Administration was committed to this goal on paper, in reality it would not be easy to accomplish.

Jordan suggested three different approaches toward changing Carter's public image -- (1) the creation of a "Goals for America Program" (Goals Program) to provide citizen participation and involvement in the policy decision-making process, (2) the implementation of internal White House reorganization, and (3) the revision of the president's schedule so as to allow for more travel time and public interaction outside of Washington.[34] To implement the first provision, Jordan advised using the model of town hall meetings to successfully forge a more open relationship between the President, his staff, and public opinion. Town hall forums were not a new idea for the Administration to consider. In fact, starting early in the term Carter's staff actively pursued this line of public communication in two different public policy areas specifically -- anti-inflation policy and energy crisis policy. The unique approach of Jordan's Goals Program however, was to provide an open forum to discuss a wide range of policy or political concerns, rather than constraining debate to an administratively pre-determined topic. Additionally, the program was to be organized and funded primarily from the private sector and with

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[33] Memo, Hamilton Jordan to Jimmy Carter, folder "Image Analysis & Changes 7/16/79", box 34. Hamilton Jordan Files, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 43.

[34] Ibid., pp. 45-60.

White House staff oversight coming from only the Planning Office.[35] To augment the Goals Program, Jordan argued that Carter would be briefed on the public debate within these forums, and in his traveling to present public addresses, would then incorporate and respond to these opinions and recommendations in kind.

All three provisions serve as illustrations of the greater goal of the Administration -- to paint Carter in a new light, to have him appear as a public leader or in Jordan's words "a teaching president". Ultimately, Carter was quite supportive not only of the overall goal to change the direction of his Administration, but he authorized all the directives in Jordan's memo. However, there is no historical or archival evidence to suggest that the Goals Program was ever fully instituted. As for White House reorganization and increased public appearances for the President, these two goals were strongly met. Samuel Kernell illustrates that Carter was indeed the first President to increase his travel time during the latter half of his administration, far exceeding the level of travel of previous leaders.[36] According to Jordan, these provisions were designed to illustrate "real change for symbolic value"; that is, they were designed to project the image of a newer, stronger, leader in Carter for the greater success of his administration's efforts inside Washington. And yet, as the 1980 election drew near, an equally strong argument could be made that these provisions were followed for electoral gain as well. Carter's increased public appearances were perhaps equally motivated by the need to set the groundwork for delivering early campaign messages and mobilizing voters. Again, it is difficult to

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35 Ibid., p.49.

36 Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership (2nd ed.), Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1993, p. 105.

determine where the campaign starts and where governing ends. That is, administration attention to public opinion served both purposes for the same reason -- self-preservation. Unfortunately for Carter, these last hour efforts to change his public image by actively pursuing an extensive public relations campaign were not enough to guarantee his political survival.

Carter's Leadership Style

The evidence collected from top staff member polling memos, as well as those generated from Caddell, suggest that Carter's White House operated quite differently than the Ford White House in its treatment of public opinion polls. While Ford rarely handled poll material, Carter served at the center of polling operations. Furthermore, while key staff members like Dick Cheney primarily consulted polling results for Ford's electoral purposes, Carter's staff members frequently sought out polling information as a basis for making decisions in a wide variety of governing capacities. Carter's reliance on polling information grew out of his experiences on the '76 campaign trail -- lessons that he would then incorporate into the internal structure of the White House. In contrast, Ford sought to insulate himself from the public in order to get on with the business of governing the nation after the shame of Watergate, Carter, more often than he has been given credit for, sought the external input from the public on such matters. While both Presidents closely guarded their role in serving as final decision-maker within the White House, the process by which they derived some of their final decisions was quite different.

The structure of Carter's polling organization, although distinctly different from Ford's apparatus on several levels, operated on some levels that were much more consistent with the practices of the previous administration. Firstly, Cambridge Survey

Research's relationship with the White House was close not only because of Carter and Caddell's friendship, but because of the interaction that occurred between other White House staff members and the CSR staff during the general procedures for devising survey research. That is, like the Ford Administration, there is evidence that members of the Carter Administration had direct input in the organization, timing, and content of CSR commissioned polls. In an internal memo within the Domestic Policy Staff office, one staff member writes:

> As you know, in our meeting the other week on civil service reform, Stu [Eizenstat] urged us to include questions in a Pat Caddell survey that could help us evaluate how civil service reform implementation is faring...I have talked to Pat and to Dotty Lynch, his Vice President, who is working on the next major survey....Dotty said that "generally it is helpful to give us a list of topics (in order of priority) and let us write the questions. However, if you have some specific question in mind, we will try to incorporate them."[37]

While Lynch's comments as reported in this memo do not suggest that the White House was given free reign in areas of directing polling processes at CSR, it also does not suggest that the needs and desires of the White House were completely ignored.

Secondly, the White House Administration Office was in charge of tallying phone and mail records on a weekly basis at President Carter's direct request. As was the protocol in the Ford Administration, these correspondence reports offered the President detailed breakdowns and descriptions of the issue concerns expressed by the public. The Ford archives contained 20 mail memos reported to Ford over the entire span of his administration – December 1974 to November 1976. The Carter archives have preserved 46 mail memos sent to Carter within only two years of his administrative term – June 1977

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[37] Memo, Steve Simmons to Scotty Campbell and Wayne Granquist, 11/27/78, folder "6/1/78-12/31/78", WHCF PR-15, Jimmy Carter Library.

through April 1979. Given the organizational complexity of the Carter archives as compared to the Ford archives, it is quite possible that this does not represent a definitive list of mail memos for Carter. However, even over a two-year span, roughly equivalent to Ford's term in office, Carter received considerably more reports than Ford. In Ford's case, these reports served as the only consistent source of public opinion received by his Office -- his signature on each report indicates that they received his personal consideration. However, there is no signature response to suggest that Carter did or did not consult these records. His direct and frequent responses to other polling sources, chiefly Caddell's memos, indicate that Carter may not have thought such an informal reading of public opinion of great importance. He did, however, often respond in writing to public mail that was brought to his attention for a specific political purpose.

Despite these similarities, however, the distinctions between these two administrations are still hard to overlook. On the surface, Carter's spokes-of-the-wheel operation appeared to function in such a way as to afford Carter an isolated sense of complete control over governmental processes. And yet, the archival evidence that defines the administration's relationship with the public does not suggest that Carter operated in an "ivory tower" far removed from external influences. The spokes operated in a sense to keep him informed of these external opinions, which offered advice he indeed did not take lightly. His heavy reliance on advisors like Patrick Caddell indicates that Carter was much more willing to respond to public opinion than he has been given credit for in previous academic assessments of his administration. The Crisis of Confidence speech serves as a prime example of Carter's willingness to be responsive.

Within the context of overall historical trends in the development of the White House public opinion apparatus, the Carter White House demonstrated a return in some aspects to the increasing centralization trends of the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. Unlike the Ford administration, Carter's strong involvement in the polling apparatus as well as his close relationship with Caddell are reminiscent of earlier public opinion apparatus models. With Carter and Caddell at its core, the White House public opinion apparatus widely dispersed polling information with analysis of a highly detailed, and sophisticated nature. While the Carter archives provided insufficient information to tally the definitive number of polls conducted throughout the entire term of office, comparisons based on poll financing can be drawn.[38] Kennedy's poll financing tallies remain unknown, however, Johnson is credited with spending $25,000 on polling and Nixon $1.13 million. The trend in increasing financing dips with Ford, on record he spent $521,537 on polling for the 1976 campaign, but other fees for polls conducted during the administration remain undetermined.[39] Carter's combined use of polls during the 1976 and 1980 elections accounts for $2.1 million in polling fees, spending $706,000 in 1976[40] and $1.4 million in 1980.[41] Given the fact that we know Caddell and CSR

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[38] Unlike the Ford archives, there are no systematic compilations of poll data or Caddell/CSR files. All the polls/poll memos uncovered are copies found in individual staff member files. Additionally, 1980 campaign polls conducted by CSR were not donated to the archives and are not found in staff member files. I did, however, uncovered parts of national polls conducted by Cambridge Survey Research on an annual basis. However, Diane Heith researching in the same archives determined that CSR "provided the Carter White House with detailed poll data a minimum of four times a year for four years"; see Diane Heith, "Staffing the White House Public Opinion Apparatus, 1969-88", Paper prepared for delivery at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA, August 28 - September 1, 1996, p. 23.

[39] Herbert E. Alexander, Financing the 1976 Election, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1979, p. 417.

[40] Ibid., p. 382.

served the administration consistently throughout his term in office, it can be assumed that Carter's polling fees well exceeded these electoral totals. Regardless, the $2.1 million spent on his elections alone represents a considerable jump from previous administrations.

Ultimately, Carter's legacy of trusteeship is justified insofar as it stems from his strong belief that as president, he must act first and foremost as a "guardian" of the American People. As a trustee of public interest, however, Carter sought to be principled *and* responsive -- careful not to abandon one role for the sake of another. Consistent with the Jacksonian ideal of a president who serves as a "tribune" of the common people, Carter was motivated to action through the collective voice of the American public. Furthermore, his general use of public opinion was as highly sensitive as much as it was strategic -- carefully using public opinion to his best advantage by often going public when his power stakes were threatened by Congress or the various political, economic, and international crises that arose during his term. A fuller evaluation of specific policy cases in chapters 6 and 7 will test the validity of these initial indications of Carter's politico-styled leadership. However, based upon general analysis of the White House public opinion apparatus operations, we must be careful not to evaluate Carter's performance on the basis of one representative role alone. The complex internal operation of his White House gives us an additional framework of evaluation that truly serves to distinguish on many significant levels the differences between the Carter and Ford presidencies.

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[41] Herbert E. Alexander, Financing the 1980 Election, Lexington, Ma.: Lexington Books, 1983, p.332.

CHAPTER 5: ECONOMIC POLICY – THE FORD WHITE HOUSE

Introduction

The salience and complexity of economic policy serves as a good test to the value of public opinion in the governing process. The high priority nature of economic policy from the general public's perspective urges a strong emphasis on White House responsiveness to such interests. Lack of attention to public opinion trends within this policy area would diminish the role of the polling apparatus within the internal policymaking process. Therefore, a fuller evaluation of the role of public opinion within the economic policy-development processes yields valuable insight into the overall strategic nature of the Ford presidency. If the Ford administration frequently used public opinion as a guide for developing economic policy, internal polling memoranda would provide us with evidence of such responsiveness. That is, there would be evidence that the White House sought to court public approval for its economic policies, using various methods to either direct or follow public opinion trends on such matters. Failure to demonstrate such responsiveness to public opinion would illustrate a White House model keen on generating economic policy in a "top-down" fashion, relying primarily upon the direction of the economic policy staff rather than aggregate public opinion. Knowing already the overall minimal involvement of Ford in these operations, this chapter will primarily concentrate on the actions of other key administrative members in order to make these assessments.

This chapter identifies specific White House memoranda that address public opinion on economic issues. Of particular interest is not only the content of these memos, but also the juxtaposition of them against the larger blueprint of Ford's economic

policies. To determine the extent to which public opinion was used in the economic policy-making process, I compare the timing of these economic issue memos against the larger timeline of policy development. While a direct relationship between these memos and policy development cannot be fully established given the complexity of the decision-making process, patterns of administrative behavior can be identified. From these patterns, larger generalizations concerning leadership are discussed.

Policy

In addition to the political problems Gerald Ford inherited when he entered office in the summer of 1974, the state of the national economy was declining on several levels. By August 1974, the combined effect of the year's 1.3 percent rise in the Consumer Price Index, a 3.7 percent rise in the Wholesale Price Index, a 5.4 percent unemployment rate, a US trade deficit of $1.1 billion, and a 99 point drop of the Dow Jones created an alarming situation for the Ford presidency right out of the starting gate.[1] Additionally, the administration was confronted with critical energy-deficit problems due particularly to rising oil prices. While American demand for crude oil continued to increase in the early 1970s, the United States was unable to meet these demands in the shadow of previous and ongoing strained relations with OPEC sources. The intersection of all of these trends placed the Ford administration in a position that could either ignite or diminish the perceived strength of their leadership.

Recognizing the need to respond early to these conditions, President Ford immediately took several steps upon entering office to assure the public of his commitment to reversing current economic trends. Specifically, Ford made

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[1] John Robert Greene, The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995, pp. 67-68.

organizational changes in the White House to accommodate these issues. On September 30, 1974, Ford issued an Executive Order creating the Economic Policy Board (EPB), headed by William Seidman and including a prominent advisor on economic affairs, Alan Greenspan, chair of the CEA. A separate committee uniquely designed to construct economic policy; the EPB had frequent and regular access to the president and acted in essence as leading operatives in this area of policy development. Upon closer examination of EPB actions, author Roger Porter observed that this committee operated in a variety of important White House functions. Porter writes:

> While the EPB's primary function was organizing the flow of information and advice to the President for his decisions on economic policy issues, the Executive Committee also produced and cleared presidential speeches and messages, exchanged information among the administration's leading economic officials, coordinated administration presentations to congressional committees, resolved disputes between member departments and agencies, coordinated the activities of several statutory councils and committees, and served as a place where the major White House policy-making entities responsible for advising the President met and coordinated their activities.[2]

The extensiveness of EPB functions suggests that economic policy concerns were indeed central to the administration's operations as a whole. That is, the EPB served as a dominant advisory group in the administration's spokes-of-the-wheel organization model. The various actions of the EPB, therefore, become an important source from which to evaluate the degree to which economic policy functioned through the Ford public opinion apparatus.

Ford's strong commitment to an economic policy agenda is also evident in the examination of the administration's initial public activities. In his first public address to

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[2] Roger B. Porter, Presidential Decision-Making: The Economic Policy Board, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, pp. 99-100.

Congress on August 12, Ford identified the issue of inflation as 'domestic enemy number one' and pledged to tackle this issue immediately. Furthermore, the administration held 11 regional economic summits in September to generate policy ideas and direction from prominent businessmen, labor leaders, and economists. Using the input from these informational conferences, the Ford White House prepared detailed policy guidelines that were announced in early October. In a speech before a joint session of Congress, Ford called for a combination of tax increases and federal spending cuts to thwart inflationary pressures. He specifically proposed a one-year 5 percent income tax surcharge on corporate and upper-level individual incomes and a cut of $4.4 billion from Nixon's previously proposed budget.[3] But perhaps the most memorable component of Ford's initial inflation policy plans was the birth of the WIN campaign ("Whip Inflation Now"), a national public volunteer organization designed to generate public commitment to combating inflation on an individual level. The WIN campaign asked American citizens to enlist in the campaign to fight inflation by cutting back on their own spending levels at home.

In an October 15th address before the Future Farmers of America, Ford outlined 12 WIN recommendations for fighting inflation and conserving energy. Solutions were offered in common sense terms that the public could understand easily:

> (1) Bring budgeting back in style...(2) Learn how to use credit wisely...(3) Save as much as you can ...(4) Save on fuel and take the pressure off scarce supplies...(5) Call upon business and labor not to raise prices or wages more than costs or services absolutely require...(6) To help offset pay increases, insist on productivity improvements where you work from the boss on down the line... (7) Shop wisely, look for bargains...(8) Work with others to eliminate outmoded regulations that keep the cost of goods and services high ...(9) Plant WIN gardens

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[3] Ibid., p. 72.

> for yourself or within your community...(10) Assist in recycling programs...(11) Waste less in every way...(12) Guard your health...[4]

By filling out a form in their daily newspaper and sending it to the White House, average citizens could become members of this governmental club and would receive a WIN button to publicly display their commitment to the administration's inflation battle. While the press dismissed the program as merely a publicity stunt that shifted the debate away from real policy prescriptions, there was an initial public response to the campaign. Three months after its publication the White House received over 200,000 requests for WIN buttons – still considerably low involvement by original White House projections.[5]

By February 1975 the WIN campaign dissipated due to several important factors. In the first instance, new economic indicators shifted administrative priorities toward attacking signs of a recession – a critical economic condition requiring a new plan of attack by the administration. That is, Ford could no longer ignore the growing unemployment problem as a factor of equal importance to inflation figures in economic policy development. By January 1975, the administration was forced to reverse completely the direction of their policy prescriptions, as stagflation became an ever-apparent economic foe. Ford's new plan called for tax cuts rather than tax hikes for business and upper-level individual income taxes. Amidst recession trends, the WIN campaign ultimately became an early economic policy casualty. In the second instance, the link between energy and economic policy could no longer be ignored by the administration. Whereas the WIN campaign sought to encourage energy conservation

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[4] Memo, 11/6/74, "Profile: The Citizens' Action Committee to Fight Inflation (WIN)", James E. Falk files, "WIN Committee" folder, box 14, Gerald Ford Library, pp. 2-3.

[5] Memo, 1/23/75, From David Hoopes to Jerry Jones, "Win Mail", David Hoopes files, "Win Committee" folder, box 37, Gerald Ford Library, p. 1.

methods, fully-developed energy policies were not offered by the administration in conjunction with these public awareness efforts. By 1975, the administration was forced to respond to congressional pressure to pass an Omnibus Energy bill that would reduce domestic oil prices. As Congress reined in the administration on this issue, it made the WIN campaign in retrospect appear as incomplete policy that was not strong enough to tackle the full complexity of the economic/energy issues combined.

Additionally, the internal controversy the WIN program created among high-ranking White House staff officials contributed to its demise. Robert Hartmann and his assistant Paul Theis, a separate advisory source from the inner-circle of the EPB, created the WIN campaign component of Ford's anti-inflation policy. As previously noted, Hartmann served as an influential political advisor for Ford whose keen sense of courting public opinion is well documented. The WIN campaign was one such example of Hartmann's emphasis on building public support for administration policies. Ford wrote of the development of the WIN strategy:

> Hartmann thought it was a great idea, and it didn't take him long to convince me. Once you had 213 million Americans recognizing that inflation was a problem and joining in the effort to do something about it, positive results would have to follow. If both the government and the people tightened their belts voluntarily and spent less than they had before, that would reduce demand, and the inflation rate would start going down. Some of my advisors were skeptical about the program, but most agreed WIN was worth a try.[6]

Despite Ford's enthusiasm for the program, however, the initial skepticism of advisors such as Seidman and Greenspan was based on personality differences between themselves and advisors like Hartmann that caused internal friction within the White

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[6] Gerald Ford, A Time to Heal, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979, p.194.

House. As Hartmann recalls, "we had not counted on the resistance and subtle sabotage of the entrenched Praetorians" found on the EPB and in other positions of high influence in the development of economic policy.[7] That is, The pooling together of different advisory groups – members of the Nixon administration (Hartmann's "Praetorians"), members of Ford's previous congressional and vice-presidential staffs, and new members – was not always a smooth process. Lack of support and integration of the various spokes-of-the-wheel members often made the business of policymaking quite difficult. With respect to inflation, Hartmann's WIN campaign was viewed as a weak policy by the EPB, and likewise, the EPB's tax and spending policies was viewed by Hartmann as ideologically out of touch with the electorate.[8] Hartmann's sabotage accusations against the EPB and other Nixon holdovers are extremely strong, arguing that EPB Praetorians like Secretary of the Treasury William Simon were responsible for negative press leaks concerning the WIN campaign and Staff Secretary Jerry Jones "pigeonholed 25,000 Presidential form letters promised to new WIN volunteers".[9] Furthermore, Hartmann argues that the internal battle over the WIN campaign disturbed Ford -- incapable of settling incessant infighting, he tacitly allowed the program to be sabotaged.[10] Ultimately, the combined effect of the lack of consistency in economic indicators, staff

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[7] Robert T. Hartmann, Palace Politics: An Inside Account of the Ford Years, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980, p. 297.

[8] John W. Sloan, "Groping toward a Macrotheme: Economic Policymaking in the Ford Presidency" in Bernard J. Firestone and Alexej Ugrinsky (eds.), Gerald R. Ford and the Politics of Post-Watergate America, vol. 1, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993, pp. 286-287.

[9] Hartmann, p. 300.

[10] Ibid., p. 300.

advice and subsequent policy plans severely damaged the administration's ability to gain control of the economy.

In October 1975, the administration fought to restore Ford's public credibility as an effective economic leader by proposing an additional series of tax and spending reductions. Taking the issue exclusively to task would be Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld and Alan Greenspan who hoped that by demonstrating the administration's commitment to the tenor of their January 1975 stagflation policies, their consistency would outweigh the damage initially generated from the "flip-flop". With the '76 election on the horizon, the political ramifications of their economic policy record naturally became a central concern in re-election efforts. Yet, while Congress approved Ford's tax cut of $28 billion, his spending cuts were denied. Ford subsequently held firm to his original position, and through a veto forced Congress to further negotiate with him. In the second bill, however, Congress authorized some of Ford's spending cuts but at the expense of a significantly reduced tax cut, now at a low of $9 billion. Ford ultimately signed the bill, but the compromise left him incapable of claiming a legislative victory. Publicly, Congress appeared to be the institution strongly in control of setting economic policy. In fact, the process of dealing with the economic crisis throughout the Ford's term of office was very "Congress-centered". In addition to his initial policy reversals, Ford suffered greatly from his inability to pass his proposals first-hand through a Democrat-controlled Congress.

Generally, the problems Ford faced in building his economic policy agenda can be characterized as "strategic" in nature. As James Pfiffner has convincingly argued,

"serious planning is necessary if an administration is to hit the ground running".[11] Ford's lack of campaign experience coupled with his spokes-of-the-wheel organization created an internal environment ill equipped to transition into a position of considerable political power. In its earliest stages, Ford's patchwork of White House operators struggled to commit to a well-defined economic policy agenda, one that for most new presidents is well tested by the campaign waters. The scope of these difficulties, therefore, gives us a good framework within which to evaluate the administration's use of public opinion polls in economic matters. That is, given the high priority placed on inflation/stagflation policies by the Ford administration, as well as the natural tendency for the public to evaluate the president based on the administration's performance on these issues, we would expect to see a frequent use of polls in this area. Furthermore, the extent to which the strategic problems in developing economic policy were assisted, thwarted, or simply ignored by the public opinion apparatus will give us an even greater understanding of the administration's economic policy blunders and a fuller evaluation of the "strategic" nature of the Ford presidency itself.

Commissioned Polls and Issue Memos

The polling memos generated by the Ford White House polling apparatus can be evaluated not only in terms of their general frequencies, but also for their specific issue content. Of the fifty-one memos generated by the Ford polling apparatus, fifty-five percent specifically address political issues. In contrast, the remaining polling memos address such topics as the organization of the polling apparatus, the process of conducting White House polls, as well as general demographic statistics or electoral strategies

[11] James P. Pfiffner, The Strategic Presidency: Hitting the Ground Running (2nd ed.), Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996, p. 4.

offered from pollsters. To distinguish between memos that do and do not discuss issues, I have defined the subset of memos that contain issue information as "issue memos" and the subset of memos that do not contain issue information as "non-issue memos". For the purposes of this chapter as well as those policy chapters to follow, issue memos will be evaluated. The following chart illustrates the general breakdown of issue topics presented in these particular memos:

Table 5.1: Issue Memo General Topics (N =28)	
Topic	Frequency[12]
Governing Issues Only	9
Economic and Governing Issues	5
Foreign Policy Issues Only	4
Social Policy Issues Only	3
All Issues Combined	2
Governing and Foreign Policy Issues	2
Economic Issues Only	1
Economic, Governing, and Social Issues	1
Economic, Governing, and Foreign Issues	1

Here, we see that "governing issues" or issues concerning such matters as presidential approval ratings, confidence in government, or any other administrative/leadership matters in general, dominate the issue memo tally. Furthermore, if we take into consideration the combined tally of topics mentioned singularly in memos and in combination with other issues, we find that 20/28 (71%) of the issue memos discuss governing issues, 10/28 (36%) address economic issues, 9/28 (32%) address foreign policy issues, and 6/28 (21%) address social policy issues.

The following chart illustrates a full comparison of the range of economic and governing issues covered within these issue memos[13]:

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[12] This measure indicates the number of issue memos that discussed these general topics either *alone* or in *combination* with other issues within a single memo.

[13] See Appendix A for comparative breakdown of social and foreign policy issues.

Table 5.2: Economic and Governing Issues Discussed	
Economic Issues	**# of issue memos[14]**
Economy -- General	8
Energy Crisis	7
Unemployment	7
Inflation	5
Taxes	4
Federal Spending	2
Wage & Price Controls	2
Role of Big Business	1
Revenue Sharing	1
Economic Regulations - general	1
Gasoline Rationing	1
Governing Issues	**# of issue memos**
Presidential Performance	15
Confidence in government	4
Nixon Pardon	1
Vice-Presidential Running-mate	1
Role of Federal Government - general	1

Whereas presidential performance which is often discussed through the reporting of presidential approval ratings receives considerable attention within these issue memos, the extent to which economic issues are cited -- specifically issues concerning the general state of the economy, the energy crisis, unemployment, and inflation -- should not be ignored. Specifically, the large range of economic issues discussed in these issue memos is noteworthy.

In addition to the range of economic policy issues discussed within the Ford issue memos, it is also important to identify the individuals who created and received them. The principle players involved in this process come from the White House Operations Office, the Staff Secretary Office, the Press Secretary Office, the Market Opinion Research (MOR) pollsters, and Re-election Committees. Four staff members in addition to private pollster Robert Teeter originated issue polling memos that addressed economic

[14] This measure indicates the number of issue memos that cite particular issues within the general parameters of economic and governing policy. Furthermore, these measures reflect the fact that within each of the 28 issue memos, several different issues are often cited within each document.

issues – Fred Slight (Press Secretary), Foster Chanock and Robert Goldwin (White House Operations), and Robert Hartmann (Editorial/Speechwriting). While twelve staff members are documented as receiving this type of information, only three individuals received memos more than once – Dick Cheney (White House Operations), Jerry Jones (Staff Secretary), and Bo Calloway (President Ford Committee – Reelection). As this information indicates, those involved intimately in the day-to-day administrative work of the White House as well as those individuals uniquely positioned to give both electoral and image-oriented advice were the prime actors involved in this informational model. Furthermore, key players in drafting policy like Greenspan and Seidman were not excluded from receiving this kind of information, although their involvement is minimal at best. Therefore, the archival issue memo evidence at least in an organizational sense suggests that those individuals responsible for crafting the strategic elements of economic policy as a whole were involved in consulting public opinion polls.

Before evaluating these issue memos for their advice and content, it is also important to discuss the role of the various commissioned polls in the giving and receiving of economic policy advice throughout this network of actors. Unlike issue memos, commissioned poll reports found in presidential archives rarely provide full information as to who received them or as to what kind of realpolitik generated from this information. However, we do know with both the Market Opinion Research (MOR) and Decision Making Information (DMI) polls that Richard Cheney, Robert Hartmann, and various re-election advisors were intimately involved in the receiving of information from Teeter (MOR) and pollster Richard Wirthlin (DMI). Furthermore, as argued in Chapter 3, in some cases these individuals had significant input in the process of

conducting the polls themselves. All three of the MOR polls conducted by Teeter primarily for governing rather than re-electoral purposes between 1974 and 1975 contained public opinion information concerning economic policy. However, in the context of these large national poll, economic issues were not the main focus. And yet, analyses of public attitudes toward economic issues were mentioned within the context of governing strategies. Within the December 1974 and December 1975 polls there were two such examples that illustrate well this phenomenon:

> December 1974: The present set of issue concerns of the American people is obviously more favorable to the Democrats than to the Republicans. Of the eight basic issues tested in a rank-order fashion in this survey, 63% of the voters placed inflation first and 56% ranked unemployment in their top three issues of importance. ...With the present recession forecasted to extend well into 1975, the national issue structure definitely will be cutting against the Republicans' media campaign. On the other hand, the existence of a recession – the Republican bugaboo – could afford the setting to meet this crucial issue negative head-on, and along with it the Party's perceived indifference to the problems of the common man.[15]
>
> December 1975: Clearly the number one issue concern is the economy. Inflation and/or unemployment are mentioned by 86% of the voters. The data supports the President's position on government spending, and trying tax cuts to economic spending. There is no data to suggest he should change position on this issue.[16]

In the first example, we see the parallel philosophy of that of the EPB members and White House Operations Office members as they sought to create an initial focus on the development of anti-inflation policy in 1974 and 1975. Teeter's advice confirms their position insomuch as it encourages an aggressive attack on the old paradigm of "democrats know best". In the second instance, Teeter's findings and analysis once again

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[15] Poll data, Robert Teeter Papers, box 50, "U.S. National Survey, Dec. 1974 Analysis (1) & (2)", Gerald Ford Library, p. 36.

[16] Poll data, Robert Teeter Papers, box 52, "U.S. National Study, Nov./Dec. 1975 – Analysis (1) & (3), Gerald Ford Library, p. 88.

backs up the position of the administration in late 1975 with respect to stagflation policy – a position that was subsequently maintained just as Teeter foretells in 1976. While, again, we cannot assume that Teeter's polls exhibited a direct affect on economic policy, we can at least conclude that as far as the archival evidence suggests, commissioned polling information concerned itself with economic issues and strategically addressed these issues for the greater benefit of party and administrative leaders.

Similarly, all eight DMI polls conducted during the same time frame tracked public attitudes toward the President's anti-inflation policies. Whereas Teeter's polls touched upon these issues briefly, Wirthlin devoted a considerable amount of time to this set of issues alone. The first two opinion reports conducted by Wirthlin for Hartmann in October 1974 and February 1975 were exclusively devoted to these issues. The October report, entitled "President Ford's Anti-Inflation Program: The Public Reaction", is a 54-page document that measured the impact of the proposed tax surcharges. Here, Wirthlin concluded that the initial public response to Ford's anti-inflation policy was on the whole positive, but warned that "people want to believe that inflation can be licked, but they remain cynical" and "almost half indicate they are not confident that the program itself would stop inflation".[17] The February report, focusing on the administration's flip-flop from inflation to recession policy solutions, indicated that initial positive support for the president's programs had begun to wane. Wirthlin, however, argued that despite this downward trend, new agenda features like cuts in federal spending strongly resonated with the public, leaving the door open for the administration's new policy commitments

[17] Poll data, Robert T. Hartmann Papers, box 33, "President Ford's Anti-Inflation Program: The Public Reaction, October 1974", Gerald Ford Library, p. 54.

to take root more positively in the public consciousness.[18] Therefore, while DMI's polls documented the decline in public support for the president's economic policies between October 1974 and February 1975, they also served to confirm the direction pursued by the administration in its new fight against stagflation.

Both the MOR and DMI polls directly addressed public opinion trends concerning the Ford administration's economic policies. Moreover, the polling evidence suggests that both sources made available detailed analysis of these policies for the benefit of key administrative officials. However, the polls themselves do not illustrate the full extent to which this information was utilized by the polling apparatus. Internal polling memoranda serve as the ultimate source for determining the administrative dialogue surrounding these issues. An analysis of the messages provided by these memoranda, therefore, provide a better view from which to judge administrative reliance on this kind of information in the policy-making process. Ten out of the twenty-eight issue memos addressed economic issues either exclusively within one memo or in conjunction with other types of political issues. A chronological evaluation of these specific issue memos, generated between February 1975 and January 1976, offers some indication as to the position of the White House with respect to public opinion and economic policy development. That is, we can identify not only the key individuals who engaged in an internal discussion about the affects of public attitudes on economic policy, but we also can examine the specific context within which this information was consulted.

The first issue memo to address public opinion and economic policy was drafted in February 1975 by Robert Hartmann to Gerald Ford. It is important to note that while

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[18] Poll data, Robert T. Hartmann Papers, box 30, "DMI: The Public Perceptions of Economic Issues", Gerald Ford Library, p. 38.

there is no written evidence to confirm that Ford received this memo for comment, this is the only issue memo drafted for Ford's consultation on these matters. Furthermore, it is the only economic policy issue memo in which Hartmann was involved. True to form, Hartmann quite candidly addressed the political impact of public opinion on White House economic policy and offered his policy advice vis-à-vis this information. For example, Hartmann wrote:

> Contrary to recent public polls, which run 2-3 weeks behind, people rate you positively (48% to 42%) on the overall job you are doing as President and rate the Congress almost the reverse, (42% to 47% unfavorably) on the job they are doing. When it comes to the specific areas of economy and energy, however, there appear to be a rough three-way split. One third for you, one-third against you, and one third up for grabs. If we can grab those don't knows and undecideds, we have won the game.[19]

Here and throughout the entire document, Hartmann emphasized the need to target various sectors of the population in order to garner future success in economic policy matters. While not specifically identifying his "private sources", Hartmann identified several specific public opinion trends for the President's consideration, ranging from broad themes on inflation and unemployment to more specific policy issues of gasoline rationing, tax rebates, and wage and price controls. He argued that while the administration refocused its attention on economic policy matters, the public had not readily followed in accepting a change in policy direction. That is, the majority of Americans, according to his sources, still viewed inflation as the more urgent problem facing the country rather than unemployment and energy, or for that matter all three forces combined within current recession figures. Furthermore, the administration's tax

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[19] Memo, Robert Hartmann to Gerald Ford, Feb. 1975, Robert Hartmann Papers, box 163, "P.O. Polling – General (2)", Gerald Ford Library, p. 1.

rebate and gasoline rationing plans as well as efforts to dismantle wage and price controls had not resonated with the public as the administration might had hoped. Hartmann counseled, however, that in all these areas there was "a lot of room for work" if the administration targets the "proper audiences" that he identifies.[20] Ultimately, Hartmann's memo was a call for the administration to read the writing on the wall – in order to successfully sell its new economic policy positions it would have to be strategically responsive not only to public opinion in general but to specific publics as well.

The "Praetorians" whom Hartmann had so adamantly accused of insensitivity to public affairs dominated the remainder of the economic policy issue memos. In August 1975, Deputy Press Secretary Fred Slight sent Staff Secretary Jerry Jones two memos outlining the current state of public opinion with respect to economic affairs in conjunction with other pressing issues. Jones, a holdover from the Nixon administration, was briefed by Slight about the increasing public concern over unemployment as illustrated by recent Gallup poll results. Moreover, Slight cautioned Jones about the political ramifications of current public opinion on these matters:

> The economy, however, is an altogether different matter in which the public is looking for specific and clearly tangible evidence that Presidential actions are bringing positive results. The complexity of the issues involved and the variance of opinions (even within the Administration) in dealing with the problems only add to greater public confusion and cynicism in evaluating the President's economic program. In short, we appear to be doing a lousy job in convincing the public that our efforts are well-founded and that progress is being made.[21]

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[20] Ibid., p. 2.

[21] Memo, Fred Slight to Jerry Jones, 8/26/75, Foster Chanock files, box 2, "Polls – Gallup (2)", Gerald Ford Library, p. 2.

Similar survey results highlighting the public's lack of confidence in the ability of the president to manage the economy circulated among top advisors surrounding Cheney, et.al through the latter months of 1975. In three memos to Bo Calloway and Cheney Teeter warned the administration about the growing cynicism which defines the American public's perception of the economy and more importantly the president's leadership abilities as a whole. He advised the administration not to take these trends lightly, and to look to the development of energy policy as a way out of the quagmire which has become economic policy altogether.[22] Therefore, despite Hartmann's allegations levied against this group of advisors, I have found evidence to suggest that public opinion trend information was introduced into their policymaking considerations. How they used this information is quite another matter, however, which raises questions that clearly cut to the heart of the strategic motivations that defined the Ford White House Operations Office.

Two memoranda illustrate the fullest extent to which polling information was incorporated into economic policy deliberations. Sent from White House Operations officer Foster Chanock to Dick Cheney in November 1975 and January 1976, these memos requested a general reevaluation of the "status of the presidency" in light of public and private polling information Chanock had consulted from 1974 to the present.[23] Given the trends that reported low approval ratings of the president in handling the nation's economic problems, Chanock suggested a new political or philosophical

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[22] Memo, Robert Teeter to Bo Callaway, 12/5/75; Memo, Robert Teeter to Bo Callaway, 12/12/75; Memo, Robert Teeter to Richard Cheney, 12/24/75, all found in Foster Chanock files, box 4, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", Gerald Ford Library.

[23] Memo, Foster Chanock to Dick Cheney, 11/26/75, Foster Chanock files, box 2, "Polls – General (2)", Gerald Ford Library; Memo, Foster Chanock to Dick Cheney, Jerry Jones, and Dave Gergen, 1/12/76, L. William Seidman files, box 57, "Economic Statistics (1)", Gerald Ford Library.

approach to current policy development in this area of the agenda. The new plan of attack that would reestablish the president's political power and win back public support involved a turn toward stopping the growth of government programs and focusing on policy that would halt the escalation of unemployment rates. It was Chanock's contention that previous economic policy eluded public understanding, citing 1975 Gallup and MOR poll results that indicated that over "55 percent of the public cannot name anything the President is doing about the economy".[24] To solve this problem, Chanock argued that "we must strive to use language which is directed at the sensitivities of the public" – he believed that terms like "self-help" and "job opportunities" resonated more strongly with the public than the technical economic solutions which had dominated past public communication efforts by the administration.[25] Therefore, based upon his analysis of public opinion data, Chanock lobbied the administration to proceed with a new plan of action in economic policy, not only because of its ability to pull the nation out of a recession, but for its ability to strategically enhance the president's position with the public.

Lessons in Using Polls

What is found within these economic policy issue memos is significant evidence to suggest that in several particular instances various Ford advisors were engaged in linking public opinion trends to the policy development process. In the first year of the Ford White House I found no archival evidence concerning this kind of activity. No polling memos discussed the development of Ford's initial inflation policies -- the

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[24] Memo, Foster Chanock to Dick Cheney, Jerry Jones, and Dave Gergen, 1/12/76, L. William Seidman files, box 57, "Economic Statistics (1)", Gerald Ford Library, p. 3.

combination of both tax increases and the WIN campaign -- in conjunction with the consultation of public opinion polling. Short of Ford's enthusiasm for the public relations advantages to be gained by the creation of the WIN campaign, there is little evidence to suggest that the Ford White House initially valued the strategic use of public opinion in building its economic policy agenda. Within the second year, however, we see both sects of the White House advisory group – Hartmann and the White House Operations Office – using public opinion as an informational source for economic policy consultation. In fact, both of these advisory sects used public opinion polling as a basis for justifying their different positions vis-à-vis economic policy. In the wake of the administration's economic policy flip-flop in early 1975, Hartmann used polling information to justify the administration's continued fight against inflation and warned Ford that any change in policy at this point should not ignore these and other emerging trends in public attitudes toward the economic and energy crisis. Chanock encouraged Cheney and other White House Operations advisors on the eve of the '76 election to use polling trends to emphasize the various elements of their economic policy which most effectively stimulated public support in terms of building the president's popularity and political power. Therefore, despite their documented differences, both groups were motivated to consult public opinion polls in specific instances for strategic political purposes.

Analysis of the time frame within which the Ford issue memos address economic policy is telling insofar as it gives us great insight into the administration's views concerning the general usefulness of polling information in the policymaking process. That is, in the first year of the administration there is no evidence the administration

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[25] Ibid., p.3.

behaved as either a leader or follower of public opinion poll trends in economic policymaking. However, in the last year, there were significant attempts made to accommodate the public in this manner. Speculation as to why this pattern occurred can be difficult. However, as I have argued, the lack of presidential campaign experience may have left Ford devoid of a strong connection between himself and the public. As the archival evidence indicates, Ford was not an active participant in the polling apparatus. Two separate spokes in the administration, Hartmann and Cheney, who served at the heart of the polling apparatus, were actively involved in the polling apparatus and each advised the President on political matters. However, only when the political stakes mounted after skyrocketing stagflation, policy flip-flops, and low approval ratings, did these advisors turn to the polls for guidance.

Hindsight may determine that this strategic move was "too little too late" to help pull the administration out of the economic problems that plagued them in the '76 election debate. The greater lesson of this case, however, rests in our ability to determine to a fuller extent the behavior of the administration's polling apparatus in response to those issues deemed of the highest policy priority. In the economic realm, inflation initially received no polling attention despite its status as "public enemy number one". Only after high inflation coupled with high unemployment forces threatened a new kind of economic battle for the administration did public opinion affect the policymaking process. However, the change in emphasis from negligible to significant use of polls was fueled primarily by low public approval ratings of the president concerning his handling of the economic crisis, not because of any elevation in priority status. That is, polls became an important tool in the economic policymaking process when the political

ramifications of their policies threatened the strategic power of the Ford presidency – without public support the president was at a loss in controlling the economic policy agenda. Ultimately, the Ford public opinion apparatus operated in economic policymaking as an emergency lifeboat to help keep the administration afloat as it headed toward its re-election bid. In a strict economic policy-building sense, public opinion played a very insignificant role in the Ford White House. But in a politically strategic sense, public opinion did ultimately find its voice.

The evidence in this chapter presents an interesting twist to the conclusions initially reached in Chapter 3. That is, while Ford personally maintained his trustee position in economic affairs by remaining relatively disconnected to the polling apparatus, several staff members in charge of leading administrative economic policy sought a more responsive position. Recognizing the necessity of courting public opinion primarily for re-election purposes, Hartmann, Slight, and Chanock urged the administration to follow public opinion trends. However, it is important to note that while these individuals clamored for the administration to be responsive to public opinion, there is no evidence of actual economic policies developed to express this responsiveness. Rather, Chanock and Hartmann talked in terms of altering messages and images to demonstrate Ford's ability to handle economic policy. Responsiveness to public opinion in this sense, in the business of selling the administration to the public, is noteworthy, but speaks once again to the lack of genuine interest Ford or the administration as a whole had in incorporating public opinion into actual public policy outcomes.

CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC POLICY – THE CARTER WHITE HOUSE

Introduction

Having defined the nature of the relationship between public opinion and economic policy making within the Ford administration, in this chapter I examine the Carter administration for the purpose of comparative analysis. Evidence concerning the extent to which the Carter administration monitored public opinion on economic issues and incorporated this information into their decision-making processes is provided by memos found in the archival data. As in chapter 5, these economic issue memos will be evaluated on the basis of their origin, content, as well as their timing in the larger policymaking process. Given the comparative conclusions previously reached in chapter 4, specifically that the Carter White House acted more responsively to public opinion trends than the Ford White House, I expected to find additional evidence to support these findings.

Policy

In January 1977, Jimmy Carter entered office having benefited from the economic policy disasters of the Ford administration. Campaigning on the message that the most serious problem facing the nation was the high rate of unemployment, the Carter campaign sought to distinguish itself as offering the candidate billed as more capable of developing an efficient economic policy agenda. Once in office, however, the Carter administration chose to concentrate its efforts on fighting rising inflation and the economic repercussions of the energy crisis rather than unemployment. These two issues remained at the core of Carter's agenda throughout the whole of his term in office. Of the eleven nationally televised public addresses conducted by President Carter between

1977 and 1980, five were devoted to addressing the energy crisis, inflation and the state of the economy in general.[1] Furthermore, over the course of four years the administration drafted three different policy approaches for improving the economy. With the high priority paid to these issues, Carter like Ford risked his reputation on the fate of his economic policies. Moreover, the scope and complexity of its economic policies proved to be a source of great frustration within the Carter administration as it was for Ford, ultimately jeopardizing his ability to govern with the popular approval of the American public.

To handle economic policy, Carter initially assigned Charles Schultze to serve as chief counselor on such matters. Schultze was quick to organize an Economic Policy Group (EPG) headed by himself and Michael Blumenthal to handle efficiently the tremendous task of generating the administration's economic policy. Like the Ford administration's Economic Policy Board, Carter's EPG was designed to serve as a direct link between the president and his economic advisors. However, the structure of the Carter EPG was more far complex than that of the Ford EPB, with membership including Vice-president Mondale, domestic policy advisor Stuart Eizenstadt, cabinet secretaries of Commerce, Labor, and Housing and Urban Development, in addition to the various undersecretaries and staff members who served these individuals. The size and complexity of the group quickly became a source of conflict and weakness insofar as producing economic policy. With so many fingers in the pie, it was difficult for the administration to develop a consistent approach to economic problem solving. This organizational quagmire within the EPG, like the tensions that existed between the Ford

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[1] Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership (2nd edition), CQ Press, 1993, pp. 95-96.

EPB advisors, ultimately created several problems from which Carter's economic policy would not be able to untangle itself.

High expectations and pressures that were placed on the administration to improve the state of the national economy immediately after the election generated "quick fix" policies rather than long-term economic strategies. Concerned initially with only rising unemployment figures, Schultze advised Carter during his transition to office to jumpstart the economy early with a strong economic stimulus package. This package would demand from Congress the passage of a $50 taxpayer rebate, corporate tax cuts of up to $900 million, and additional funding for various government job-creating programs aimed to protect the nation from a recession.[2] The rebate, however, caused many internal and external political controversies and was ultimately rescinded by the administration. While the stimulus package passed smoothly through the House, the rebate's necessity was hotly contested within the Senate. Furthermore, the rebate became a source of policy dissention between key White House economic advisors. Initially supported strongly by Schultze, Mondale, and Eizenstadt, the rebate was added to the package despite the protestations of Lance, Blumenthal, and even Carter himself. When congressional criticism set in, Carter ignored his advisors and cut the rebate altogether. Carter admitted in retrospect that while it was the best policy decision economically, it hurt him politically:

> From then on [after rebate withdrawal], the basic course was set, but my advisers were right about the political damage. The obvious inconsistency

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[2] Burton I. Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr., Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993, p. 28.

> in my policy during this rapid transition from stimulating the economy to on overall battle against inflation was to plague me for a long time.[3]

This early flip-flop on economic policy, like those taken by the Ford administration, only served to frustrate the public and hinder future support for the Carter administration's economic policy agenda.

By 1978, the administration had abandoned its early stimulus philosophies altogether and shifted its attention from improving unemployment rates toward curbing rising inflation rates. The Carter administration drafted an anti-inflation policy program that included measures to trim the budget deficit and propose voluntary wage and price controls. The president, the EPG leadership, and newly appointed inflation advisors Robert Strauss and Alfred Kahn agreed to proposing guidelines to maintain a 7% limit for wage increases and hold corporate price increases to below .5% of their 1976-1977 rates.[4] Despite these efforts, however, inflation continued to rise between 1978-1979, hitting new heights in the wake of the Iranian revolution. OPEC nations responded to stoppages in Iranian oil production by instituting staggering oil price increases, forcing the Carter administration to once again abandon its current strategies for improving the state of the economy. New efforts to conserve oil conflicted with the administration's initial anti-inflation policy. Ultimately, these emergency energy policies placed an even greater strain on the U.S. economy. The administration's plan to eliminate oil price controls and impose heavy taxes on oil company profits appeared to fan rather than squelch the inflationary flames that it had previously sought to extinguish.

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[3] Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President. New York: Bantam Books, 1982, p. 77.

[4] Kaufman, p.113.

In 1980, on the eve of Carter's re-election bid, the administration proposed a third policy approach to improve the state of the economy for the American people. On March 14, President Carter addressed the nation arguing that the inflation which continued to threaten the "nation's security" could be controlled through his balanced budget proposals for 1981 and energy saving measures such as a $.10 "gasoline conservative fee" on imported oil.[5] In essence, the administration intended to keep the marriage of energy and economic policy alive, with new attention being paid to controlling government spending rather than the intricacies of wage and price controls. However, the political difficulties the administration experienced in selling this approach to Congress and the public made the art of economic policy making the third time around even more problematic for Carter. In his bid for the Democratic ticket against Carter, Senator Ted Kennedy painted the president as incapable of handling economic issues, causing chaotic dissention within the Democratic majority of Congress. Additionally, dizzy from all of the different approaches the Carter administration had proposed as well as from a decade's worth of publicly-perceived failed economic policies offered by Nixon, Ford and Carter, the American public gave the administration very little room to gain its confidence.

Issue Memos

The Carter administration's economic policy timeline provides only a surface blueprint for understanding the full scope of their policy decisions. A deeper understanding can be gained through a closer examination of their responsiveness to public opinion on particular economic issues. Here it is necessary to evaluate the

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[5] Ibid., p. 169.

economic issue memoranda among the Carter poll memos. Of the 95 Carter polling memos, 70 (74%) contained information that directly addressed specific governing, economic, social, and foreign policy issues either singularly or in various combinations.[6] The following chart illustrates to the fullest extent the issue breakdown of these memos:

Table 6.1: Issue Memo General Topics (N = 70)	
Topic	**Frequency**
Governing Issues Only	22
Economic Policy Issues Only	15
Foreign Policy Issues Only	11
Economic and Governing Issues	7
Social Policy Issues Only	5
Economic and Foreign Issues	4
Governing and Foreign Issues	2
All Issues Combined	2
Governing and Social Issues	1
Economic, Governing, and Foreign Issues	1

In sum, 35/70 (50%) issue memos discuss governing issues, 29/70 (41%) discuss economic issues, 20/70 (29%) discuss foreign policy issues, and 8/70 (11%) discuss social policy issues. Comparing this evidence with that for Ford, I find noteworthy similarities and differences. First, the same sequence of issue dominance shown here for Carter was found for Ford as well. That is, the greatest attention to public opinion in both the Carter and Ford issue memos was paid to governing issues, with economic, foreign policy, and social issues considered thereafter in that exact priority order. Once again, I use the term "governing issues" to characterize various political image considerations that the administration addresses, such as measures of presidential approval, confidence in government, or any other measures of general government performance. Carter like Ford tended to use its polling apparatus more frequently for issues of political concern rather than in specific policy areas. However, the overall abundance of issue memos

[6] See Appendix B for full detail.

among the Carter polling memos, 74% for Carter as compared to 50% for Ford's total memos, may be an indication of a general higher priority placed on polling in general within the Carter White House.

Like the Ford administration, economic issues were granted higher priority compared to other key issue areas in the Carter administration. However, a larger gap between the number of governing issues and other issue categories existed for Ford. While governing issues served as the dominant focus of Carter's issue memos, economic issues ran a close second. More importantly, the combination of economic and governing issues within a single memo occurred more frequently than all other combined-issue memos combined. A more detailed breakdown of these two issue categories pinpoints the specific economic and governing topics frequently examined and described by the Carter polling apparatus[7]:

Table 6.2: Economic and Governing Issues Discussed	
Economic Issues	**# of issue memos**
Inflation	13
Energy Crisis	13
Federal Spending	7
Unemployment	6
Taxes	5
Government regulations	2
Economy -- General	1
Wage/Price Controls	1
Business Stimulation	1
Role of Unions	1
Proposition 13	1
Governing Issues	**# of issue memos**
Presidential Performance	25
Confidence in government	11
Reorganization of Government	3
Vice-Presidential Performance	1
First Lady's Performance	1
Bert Lance Affair	1

[7] See Appendix B for breakdown of issues discussed in foreign and social policy.

Here we see that the four topics of presidential performance, inflation, the energy crisis and confidence in government receive the greatest attention in these issue memos. By far, presidential performance outranked them all – exceeding the combined attention paid to the top economic issues of inflation and the energy crisis. However, just as witnessed in the Ford issue memos, the Carter polling apparatus addressed a larger range of economic issues than governing issues. Given the full range of economic issues, the significant attention paid specifically to inflation and the energy crisis, and the combined attention paid to both economic and governing issues, there is ample evidence to suggest that public opinion concerning economic issues was a frequent source of information for the Carter White House. Although performance monitoring outweighed policy input, the Carter polling apparatus' attention to economic matters is well established. In order to fully characterize the prominence and importance of this information in its fullest comparative analysis, the interpretation of such information and its specific use in policy decision-making process, however, must be established as well by the contents of these issue memos.

Caddell and Economic Policy

The twenty-nine issue memos that discussed economic policy can be divided roughly into two separate advisory networks -- internal memos between EPG members and memos sent by Caddell exclusively to Carter. The EPG members were the primary sources and recipients of economic polling information. They initiated 18 economic issue memos, the majority of which addressed two main topics – inflation and the economic impact of the energy crisis. The EPG memos exclusively cited polling information from sources like Harris and Gallup rather than those provided privately

from Caddell's Cambridge Survey Research reports. Caddell provided 9 economic issue memos that also focused on the topics of inflation and energy policy. Outside of these two advisory networks, however, two additional economic issue memos were drafted by National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski as they related foreign policy matters to domestic economic concerns. These memos, while important, will be evaluated more fully in the context of foreign policymaking that is examined in the next chapter.

The Caddell memos are an impressive secondary source of information that in many instances offer detailed analyses and advisory directives concerning the direction of economic policy. This is not at all surprising, given the unique quality of Caddell's memos described in chapter 4. While the EPG members circulated more polling information, the authors of EPG memos like the EPG itself are almost far too many to count. This makes the process of identifying the central voice of EPG economic policy vis-à-vis their analysis of polling information much more problematic. The memos authored by Caddell provide a singular voice from which subsequent economic policy and the advice offered by the EPG memos can be easily compared and evaluated. More important, unlike the EPG memos, Caddell's are the only memos that engage directly in a dialogue with President Carter. Caddell, therefore, serves as Carter's most direct source for invoking public opinion in the economic policy development process.

In his December 1976 paper entitled, "Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy", Caddell submitted to Carter his detailed analysis of public opinion on a wide range of issues facing the administration in its transition into office. On economic issues specifically, Caddell commented on the administration's radical shift from the campaign issue of easing unemployment rates to a new economic stimulus package. He cautioned

against this policy redirection at the expense of the issue of inflation that was a major concern for the public:

> The economy is an area where government has lost credibility with the public. They don't follow government suggestions or believe reports or analysis of the economic situation. The bitter experience of double-digit inflation has changed the way the consumers behave and has left them fearful of another round of inflation. We need an economic policy that can successfully stimulate the economy, with consumers participating but which does not scare consumers by increasing the inflation rate. We know that perceptions of inflation have a direct bearing to how consumers react to economic stimulus.[8]

Caddell chose to couch his discussion of economic policy in the larger context of public confidence in government. His advice to Carter took into consideration the political environment within which his policies must operate, paying close attention to public perceptions of the economy rather than economic theories or factual indicators. In fact, Caddell argued that symbolic gestures on the part of the administration could go a long way in improving public attitudes toward the economy. For example, on the issue of tax cuts offered by the stimulus package, Caddell cautioned:

> Simply providing a one-shot tax cut for the public will not necessarily result in spending that will help the economic recovery. The public has come to view government expenditures as one of the principle causes of serious economic trouble...The public wants to feel the government is doing its bit to help the economy but their view of what helps the economy does not necessarily accord well with economic theory, however, we can cut expenditure in areas that don't involve jobs – eliminating limousines, for example.[9]

Carter followed this advice, removing many of these kinds of government "extras" on his part in order to appeal to the public's growing uneasiness with

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[8] Paper, "Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy", December 10, 1976, Jody Powell Files, Box 4, "Memoranda – President Carter – 12/10/76-12/21/76", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 44.

[9] Ibid., p.45.

Washington. The most interesting aspect of this advice, however, was the strategic link Caddell placed between such actions and improving the state of the national economy. For Caddell, success in economic policy was dependent on the president's ability to raise public confidence in his ability to govern. That is, instead of creating policy and then responding to public approval/disapproval, Caddell suggested that the Administrative's responsiveness to these public perceptions within the policy creation process would help the administration gain the public approval it seeks. Public opinion, therefore, acted as a means *and* as an end to policy development.

In addition to his strategic advice, Caddell offered up a policy addendum to the pending stimulus package. He asked Carter to consider the need for an "inflation offensive" to increase consumer confidence levels. Building on his request to construct a more public-centered economic policy, Caddell in two separate December 1976 memos asked Carter to consider attacking inflation head-on before enacting his economic program in order to give him the support he needed to carry out such an ambitious task. While his inflation offensive plan lacked specifics, Caddell sought to generally improve the average family budget by controlling health, food, housing and energy costs:

> ...it is not the general rate of inflation that disturbs the consumer as much as the inflation in his or her household budget – the money that goes for food, gasoline, health care, housing, and taxes. The economic signal to which the consumer responds most is food costs, followed by gasoline costs, price increases for health, housing, taxes, and finally unemployment and interest rates. And for three-quarters of the population 70% of their purchases are in these four areas. If consumer confidence is to rise – thus increasing consumer spending – then fears of inflation must be eliminated.[10]

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[10] Memo, Caddell to Carter, December 21, 1976, "Additions to December 10 Working Paper", Jody Powell Files, Box 4, "Memoranda – President Carter – 12/10/76-12/21/76", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 57.

While Caddell's suggestions are eerily reminiscent of the Ford WIN program approach to inflation policy, he did view his offensive in light of real economic policy solutions. Specifically, Caddell supported the tax rebate plan rather than tax cuts, arguing that this approach lends itself toward fighting inflation without exploding the federal deficit – two primary economic concerns of the majority of American citizens. [11] In a subsequent poll Caddell conducted for the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in January 1977, he reiterated this argument and took it one step further by demonstrating strong public support for the implementation of government price controls and federal spending cuts. [12] Once again, he found that public "fear exists that stimulation to end unemployment may result in greater inflation" and therefore administration policy attentive to both of these concerns was much more likely to succeed.[13] However, the Carter administration did not pay close attention to these inflation fears until after its stimulus plan failed by the first year's end.

After delivering three economic issue memos to Carter in December 1976, Caddell did not address these issues again until the later half of the presidential term. In January 1979, Caddell submitted to Carter a memo entitled "Inflation Rating" which reported public concern for rising inflation rates at an all-time high: nine out of ten Americans identified inflation or the economy as the most important issues facing the

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[11] Memo, Caddell to Carter and Lance, December 20, 1976, "Consumer Confidence", Stuart Eizenstadt Files, Box 119, "12/6/76-12/30/76", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 25.

[12] Poll, Caddell to DNC, "Issues Summary: January 1977", WHCF – PR 15, O/A #318, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 32–4.

[13] Ibid., pp. 17 & 22.

nation.[14] Furthermore, Cambridge Survey Research reports found that while the public generally supported Carter's call for voluntary wage and price controls, Americans were wary of this policy's future success. Despite the public's lukewarm reception of this economic policy, Caddell argued that the administration could improve support levels by leading public opinion in this policy area:

> It appears to me that these data contain the seeds of a real public acceptance program. Regardless of their expectations of ultimate success, if we can convince the public that most of business is adhering to the guidelines then we can get greater acceptance of wage restraints even from a public that expects double digit inflation this year.[15]

By advocating a fuller public campaign to rally support for the president's anti-inflation campaign, Caddell once more counseled Carter to be responsive to average American economic fears. He described a public hungry for leadership in economic affairs and pleads the administration not to ignore these trends.

By March 1980, however, Caddell was noticeably fed up with the administration's mishandling of anti-inflation policy. His final memo on the subject was lengthy and utterly belligerent – the words of a frustrated man who believed that his consistent economic advice was barely heard. Paragraphs condemning administration actions were no stranger to Caddell, as we have seen in other memos he sent to Carter. And yet, what was so compelling about this "Inflation" memo was the fact that it revealed not only the position of Caddell in the economic policy decision making process, but also the position of the administration vis-à-vis responsiveness to public opinion. While Caddell's observations may be one-sided, there are reasonable

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[14] Memo, Caddell to Carter, January 16, 1979, "Inflation Rating", WHCF – PR 75, "1/1/79 – 12/31/79", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

[15] Ibid., p.3.

conclusions that can be drawn from his commentary. Here are some heated, but revealing excerpts from the March 1980 "Inflation" memo:

> I have been reluctant to delve into substantive matters recently, both because of the campaign demands and a solid sense of avoiding intrusion into uninvited areas...
>
> Before we plunge into a new inflation effort I think it relevant to review our last major effort in the Fall of 1978. That effort was, I believe, a setback for a variety of reasons...While trying to avoid 'I told you so" breast beating, it is clear that several things happened...
>
> Frankly, two of the problems inherent in the formulation of the 1978 effort had to do with (a) a misreading of the outside pressures for a program at that moment, and (b) a misplaced hubris on the part of some of your advisors following Camp David...[16]

On the issue of "misreading" public pressures, Caddell specifically accused the administration of trying to push an anti-inflation plan through at a time when consumer confidence levels were recovering. The administration, in his opinion, was forced into action at that time because it felt it had to make good on earlier promises to compose a comprehensive plan. For Caddell, however, the October plan was too little too late. The plan drew public attention back to the administration's inability to improve successfully the state of the economy and away from the progress it was making in winning back public approval after Camp David. It was on this point that Caddell justified his "misplaced hubris" statement, arguing that the administration had never been able to successfully capitalize on its popularity:

> In retrospect, one of the factors that has injured your first term has been the inability to hold your popularity – not for popularity's sake but in order to have enough power and respect to get needed things done. It is wrong to act only out of concern for popularity. However, to always act

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[16] Memo, Caddell to Carter, March 1, 1980, "Inflation", WHCF- 1, O/A #743, "Caddell, Pat 7/77-3/80", Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 1-2.

> without regard to political capital is dangerous. How dearly we have learned that lesson – I think.[17]

These strong words indicate that Caddell was an advisor very keen on perfecting the art of political strategizing in the White House. As a pollster, public opinion became the natural vehicle for such strategizing. However, by Caddell's account, the administration did not share in his approach to policy development.

Ultimately, Caddell's economic issue memos offer a great deal of information about the use of public opinion in the economic policy development process. First, we find that Carter's pollster did not play a strong role in economic policy decision-making. While he dared to voice his economic policy opinions and pass on his poll information to Carter at the beginning and end of his term, his advice was rarely followed up on. Caddell wanted the administration to formulate a strong anti-inflation policy in conjunction with its early stimulus models, but this did not happen. Furthermore, efforts to cut government spending which Caddell advocated early on as a means of alleviating the inflation fears of the public were not instituted until 1980. When he later counseled the administration that voluntary wage and price controls would work only in conjunction with a strong public relations campaign, his voice again got lost in the process as the administration abandoned course in the face of the energy crisis. This is not to say that if the administration had followed Caddell's advice to the letter, it would not have suffered the blowing defeats it received in economic policy areas. Caddell did originally support the rebate plan – the policy that kicked off the administration's downward spiral in public opinion ratings in the first place. However, what Caddell actions do tell us is that Carter's economic policy, in all its many forms, struggled to capture public acceptance.

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[17] Ibid., p. 10.

Whether or not this was attributable to a lack of responsiveness or mishandling of public opinion on the part of other key advisors, can be evaluated through a closer look at their issue memos concerning these issues.

EPG's Use of Polling

The economic issue memos that circulated among Carter's EPG members differed drastically from those authored by Caddell. There were 38 White House members, including Carter, who were responsible for either generating or receiving EPG polling memos. Here the largess of the EPG was fully demonstrated – memoranda extend to such prominent staffers as Jordan, Powell, Mondale, Eizenstat, Rafshoon, Brzezinski, in addition to several others who served in various offices throughout the White House. Jordan, Powell, Mondale, Eisenstat, Carter, and Public Outreach director Anne Wexler were the most frequent participants within these polling memos, with Eisenstat leading the entire group by his involvement in 7 out of the 19 EPG polling memos. In most instances, the EPG polling memos passed on survey information, mainly Harris poll results, with respect to two economic issues – inflation and the energy crisis. Without offering analysis of the data, most of these memos only supplied polling information with short notes attached that read, "thought this was interesting", "I want to share this with you", or simply "here are the latest poll results". While the Caddell memos offered endless strategic policy suggestions, the EPG polling memos were lacking in this regard by comparison. And yet, analysis of the EPG polling memos as a whole yields some fascinating findings with respect to the Carter White House's use of public opinion in the economic policy development process. That is, despite the lack of detail within individual EPG polling memoranda, the juxtaposition of this body of evidence with the

administration's economic policy timeline reveals a White House that was actively responsive to public opinion in economic policy matters.

The following chart represents a chronology of 16 EPG polling memos, listing the dates, general topics, and in parentheses, the quantity of memos within each category.[18]

Table 6.3: Chronology of EPG Polling Memos	
Dates	**Topics**
May 1977	Energy Crisis (1)
June 1977	Energy Crisis (2)
July 1977	Inflation (2)
May 1978	Energy Crisis (1)
July 1978	Inflation & Unemployment (1)
Sept. 1978	Inflation (1)
Nov. 1978	Federal Spending (1)
Dec. 1978	Federal Spending (1) Federal Spending w/Inflation (1)
March 1979	Inflation & Energy Crisis (1)
June 1979	Energy (1)
August 1979	Regulatory Reform (1) Energy Crisis (1)
July 1980	Tax Cuts (1)

The distribution of cases of EPG polling memos was evenly dispersed throughout the first three years of the administration – 5 memos in 1977, 6 memos in 1978, and 4 memos in 1979. Once again, inflation and the energy crisis clearly stand out as primary policy concerns, with evidence in each calendar year of internal EPG dialogue concerning public opinion on both of these issues. These initial observations aside, this chronology can be used to provide a closer examination of EPG public opinion usage in the policy development process on both of these issues. If measured against the larger process of modern policy development – that is, the process of deliberating, drafting, and "going public" to influence the passage of public policy – the EPG polling memos serve as a tool of investigation into the possible influence of public opinion in these processes.

[18] There are only 16 of the 18 EPG polling memos listed in this chronology – two of the EPG polling memos were found without dates and therefore do not lend themselves to this kind of analysis.

Therefore, evidence of where public opinion concerns have been interjected into this decision-making process provides us with a model of public opinion usage that ultimately defines this administration.

The Carter administration opened its economic policymaking timeline in the first 100 days of 1977 with the creation of a comprehensive economic stimulus package. Here, the archival evidence does not demonstrate any internal dialogue by EPG members occurring either before or after the policy was created and passed by Congress concerning public opinion for the taxpayer rebate or any other aspect of the stimulus package. Only Caddell's four memos in September and December 1976 serve as early public barometers to address such concerns. Having already established the tangential nature of Caddell's advice to the overall EPG functions, it can be concluded that the EPG debated, created and lobbied for its Economic Stimulus package in 1977 without significant consultation of public opinion data. Following up on his campaign promise to deal with high unemployment rates, Carter and the EPG primarily used his electoral theme and the advice of close counsel to design this particular set of economic policies.

While in 1976 Caddell warned the administration to pay heed to growing public concerns over inflation, the EPG issue memos did not address this issue until July 1977. In two related memos, one internal to the Vice President's Office and one directed from Carter to Jordan, Powell and Eizenstat, poll summaries were circulated from Roper, Harris, Yankelovich, and the Michigan Survey of Consumer Sentiment reports that identified inflation as the "most serious problem facing the country".[19] Not until the

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[19] Memo, Carter to Eizenstat, Jordan, and Powell, July 7, 1977, from original memo, Farmer to Mondale and Carter, July 5, 1977, "Summary of JEC Testimony by Various Pollsters", Staff Secretary Files, Box #36, "7/7/77", Jimmy Carter Library, p.2.

following July of 1978 were additional polling memoranda circulated within the EPG addressing the issue of inflation. In a July 8, 1978 EPG polling memo from Stuart Eizenstat to Jerry Rafshoon, Eizenstat underscored a passage from the latest Harris survey press release report that stated, "On cutting the rate of unemployment, despite steady gains since he came to office, he (Carter) is still given a negative rating of 68-25 percent".[20] Eizenstat's comment in the margin, which is restated in the cover letter of the memorandum to Rafshoon, reads, "This is incredible. Can we do something to correct this?" Stunned by the administration's inability to capitalize on positive economic trends, Eizenstat's growing sense of frustration with the public can be felt within this memo. By directing these comments to the White House Communications director, a call was issued from the top of the EPG for stronger administrative leadership in economic matters. In a September 4, 1978 memo addressed to the entire EPG, Eizenstat circulated Harris poll results specifically addressing the growing public concern about inflation and low ratings of Carter's handling of the economy and inflation.[21] Subsequently, a search ensued within the EPG to construct a new message and related set of anti-inflation policies that would resonate with the public and turn around Carter's negative public image.

While Eizenstat's concerns were circulating amongst the EPG, a special "White House Anti-Inflation Public Information Task Force" was convened in June-July 1978. Chaired by White House Special Counselor on Inflation, Robert Strauss, the Task Force's

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[20] Memo, Eizenstat to Rafshoon, July 8, 1978, Gerald Rafshoon Files, Box 3, "File: Harris Polls", Jimmy Carter Library, p.2.

[21] Memo, Eizenstat to Economic Policy Group, September 4, 1978, Stuart Eizenstat Files, Box 254, "Pollster Reports – Public Opinion [2]", Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 1-6.

goal was to enlist government speakers to "educate the public on the efforts of the administration to combat inflation and to let the public know what it can do as individuals and as groups to join in a partnership with the President to decelerate the rate of inflation."[22] The "Speaker's Bureau" was comprised of EPG and key outside Executive Branch agents who would participate in a series of national forums to debate anti-inflation policy. Additionally, the task force called upon President Carter to be an active participant in these meetings. While the task force had conceptualized and organized the Speaker's Bureau forums before EPG anti-inflation policy was drafted, these events were actually performed after President Carter publicly announced his comprehensive anti-inflation program in October 1978. Each forum was highly controlled by the administration; careful plans were made in choosing geographic location, audience members, themes or messages to be discussed, as well as possible speaker responses to commonly asked questions. Far from the normal give and take of a natural debate, the Speaker's Bureau forums proved to be a highly orchestrated public relations campaign designed to persuade the public and ultimately Congress that the administration was indeed responsive to their concerns and had a strong handle on economic affairs.

Unlike the Ford administration's WIN campaign, the Speaker's Bureau forums were a means to a legislative end, not just an activity to make the public feel good about the economy and its government. The Carter administration chose a two-pronged approach to battle inflation in 1978 -- governmental budget restraints and regulatory reform coupled with strong encouragement of voluntary wage and price controls within

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[22] Memo, Selig and Reiman to Aragon, June 16, 1978, "White House Anti-Inflation Public Information Task Force", Joseph Aragon Files, Box 22, "Speaker's Bureau: Anti-Inflation 6/78-10/78", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

the private sector. This direction loosely initiated by the administration in January 1978 produced a second wave of stricter guidelines by October of that year. Strict wage and price standards were issued in conjunction with closer monitoring and some incentives, namely relaxing trade barriers, to encourage greater cooperation between government, business and labor on anti-inflation matters. The October policy measures proved to be consistent with public sentiments concerning the direction of anti-inflation policy. In Eisenstat's September memo to EPG members, Harris poll results were circulated that illustrated majority support among the general public as well as labor unions for wage and price controls, with strong support demonstrated specifically for tax incentives to encourage voluntary compliance with such measures. While tax incentives would not become a part of the October plan, the public outcry for a stronger governmental lean on the private sector for greater voluntarily compliance was echoed in the scope of these October policy initiatives.

Despite the fact that the 1977 stimulus package produced positive effects on actual economic figures, the negative effects it produced in public opinion hurt Carter's political reputation in handling economic affairs. Sensitive to this lesson, the administration turned to the public in 1978 and adopted their inflation fears as their highest policy priority. Comparing the timing and direction of their anti-inflation policies against the EPG polling memo data and timeline, there is indeed evidence to conclude that public opinion was used as a guide for policy development. During the early policy development stages, they isolated the public's issues of concern, proposed policy, and then initiated public forums to educate the public and *lead* them to accept their economic solutions. That is, their responsiveness to public opinion was significant, but limited to

particular functions. Elite sources of opinion served as primary influences on actual policy solutions; Carter and his top advisors drafted policy solutions without evidence of formal pretests of public opinion on particular solutions. However, public opinion pressures drove the administration's focus on inflation as a policy priority area. More importantly, after policy directives were established, they sought to mobilize the public to use their approval to improve the administration's reputation in order to reestablish the political capital necessary to govern. This finding serves as evidence of a "politico-styled" White House, by virtue of its careful attention to balancing the roles of the public and the administration within the economic policy making process.

The second most popular economic issue addressed in the EPG memos, the energy crisis, serves as a similar example of public opinion usage by the Carter administration. Immediately after Carter assumed office in 1977, energy issues were pushed to the forefront of the administration's economic and domestic policy agendas. Oil and natural gas shortages combined to create a national need for tighter conservation efforts. The battle for Carter would be two-fold: to convince the American public and Congress that a serious energy crisis indeed existed and that the administration was capable of solving these problems. With a comprehensive energy plan slated to be announced in April, the administration plotted a detailed "public participation outreach effort" to be conducted prior to Carter's nationally televised address to a Joint Session of Congress. After gathering input from twenty-one White House conferences, ten national town meetings conducted by the Federal Energy Administration and consultation of thousands of letters from private citizens, the administration submitted a complex energy plan calling most notably for taxes on excessive energy consumption and the creation of a

Department of Energy.[23] Despite their participation outreach efforts, EPG polling memos on energy issues cannot be found prior to the April policy announcement. Therefore, while the Carter administration consulted several elite sources of opinion, there is little evidence that general public opinion data were used in the earliest stage of the energy policy development process.

Public opinion mobilization efforts, however, were conducted over several months following Carter's energy policy announcement in April. In memos between Carter and Hamilton Jordan's office, Carter agreed to Jordan's suggestion that Caddell poll national public reaction to the televised address with special "emphasis on measuring conversion of people" to their perspective.[24] Additionally, three EPG polling memos between May-June 1977 focus attention on approval ratings for the administration and their energy plan. In May 1977, Carter sent to Jordan and Powell a Darden poll, a Georgian polling group, containing information pertaining to Georgian politics and Carter's general approval ratings. The only policy question relayed within the memo asked respondents, "do you think there really is an energy crisis?" With 67 percent responding positively, the success of the administration's campaign to educate the public on the mere existence of a crisis was substantiated.[25] Subsequently, two memos containing poll information and analysis offered by pollster Daniel Yankelovich were

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[23] Memo, Schlesinger to Carter, April 15, 1977, "Report on the Public Participation Outreach Effort", Jim Schlesinger Files, Box 17, "Public Participation Outreach Effort, 4/77-5/77", Jimmy Carter Library, p.1.

[24] Memo, from Siegel/Jordan to Carter; Carter to Mondale, Siegel and Jordan, April 20, 1977, "Public/Political Mobilization – Energy", Staff Secretary Files, Box 19, "4/20/77", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 3.

[25] Memo, Carter to Jordan and Powell, May 16, 1977, "The Darden Poll", Staff Secretary files, Box 24, "5/16/77", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 6.

circulated among White House Assistant Jack Watson, Carter, and Carter's Staff Secretary. Yankelovich warned that while the general public believed there was indeed an energy crisis, it was losing interest in the issue mainly because it was not ready to make the necessary conservation sacrifices called for by the administration. Ultimately, Watson took Yankelovich's warnings to heart. He told Carter that he had circulated the information to Mondale and chief energy policy advisor Jim Schlesinger and reassured him that "we shall try to come up with some ideas as to how we can continue to emphasize the energy issue to the general public".[26] However, between June and November 1977, the date of Carter's second publicly televised address on his national energy plan, no EPG memos or further archival evidence can be found to support these actions.

Not until June of 1978 was the energy issue revisited within the EPG polling memos. Having spent a year and a half arguing with Congress over the wealth of details contained within their energy plan, the frustration felt by both the administration and the public intensified. In a May 30, 1978, memo from Anne Wexler to Deputy Communications advisor Greg Schneiders, Wexler passes on Harris poll results on energy to be released on June 1st, with highlighted passages indicating increasing pressure from the public to solve the energy problem.[27] However, as public and economic pressures to address the problem of inflation increased, administrative attention to public opinion on energy issues temporarily subsided. The administration, however, remained committed to the direction of their original legislative goals. In November

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[26] Memo. Jack Watson to Carter, June 10, 1977, "Letter from Dan Yankelovich", WHCF PR-75, 1/20/77-8/31/77, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

1978, President Carter signed the National Energy Act into law, instituting taxes on domestic production of oil as well as industrial users of oil and gas as energy conservation measures. While scaled back in many areas due to strenuous compromise with Congress, the administration was able to claim several very important victories in terms of energy conservation. However, sharply rising oil prices would severely eclipse their feeling of victory. By 1979, public concern over the energy crisis skyrocketed as the administration scrambled to respond to both inflationary and energy shortage problems.

Three final memos on the energy crisis were circulated between EPG members in 1979. In March, an internal memo within the Office of the Vice President was sent to Mondale disclosing recent poll information given to the White House through a direct phone conversation with pollster Louis Harris. On energy issues specifically, Harris's published survey reports indicated that the majority of the public supported strong government actions such as mandatory gasoline rationing and oil deregulation. Beyond the simple reporting of numbers, however, the memo also relayed Harris' personal analysis concerning these issues. Here, the evidence suggests that Lou Harris privately advised top administrative officials on matters concerning energy policy, although the scope and frequency of Harris' contact with the administration cannot be fully determined. It is noted within the March 1979 memo:

> Harris, who has been working closely with Jim Schlesinger, favors instant deregulation. He believes a phased approach would hurt in an election

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[27] Memo. Wexler to Schneiders, May 30, 1978, Gerald Rafshoon Files, Box 43, "[Energy] – Harris Survey – Energy Plan", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

> year. He believes that Congress is now convinced that we must deregulate.[28]

Despite Harris's published polling results and privately offered advice, in April 1979 Carter announced in another major televised address to the nation that a phased decontrol of oil prices would begin in June. While the President urged Congress to approve a Standby Gasoline Rationing and Energy Conservation Plan, this plan failed early on. However, even though Carter did not follow Harris opinion trends to the letter, subsequent polling on public approval for his energy policies after April 1979 was positive. In a June memo internal to the White House Communications Office, a Texas Monthly poll of public attitudes toward the new energy policies was discussed, with emphasis placed on the respondent's general satisfaction to date.[29] In July 1979, the President once again addressed the nation on energy conservation efforts within the larger context of his "crisis of confidence" theme. The combined force of the rhetoric of malaise and the call to fight the energy crisis rallied the public behind the administration and its policies. In an August memo from Anne Wexler to Stuart Eizenstat, publicly reported Harris survey results were relayed that demonstrated strong support for the July proposals. In a handwritten note sent back to Wexler, Eizenstat responds, "Anne – Frank should send this to every member of Congress".[30] In the wake of Carter's July address, these three memos ultimately depicted a White House contented with their ability to capture public support and eager to capitalize on their high approval ratings.

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[28] Memo, Gail Harrison to Walter Mondale, March 17, 1979, "Harris Poll/Inflation and Energy", WHCF PR-75, "1/1/79-12/31/79", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 6.

[29] Memo, Patricia Bario to Jody Powell, June 7, 1979, "Texas Monthly Energy Poll", Jody Powell Files, Box 44, "Memorandum – Media Liasion 6/4/79-7/29/79", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 1.

[30] Memo, Wexler to Eizenstat, August 16, 1979, WHCF PR-75, "1/1/79-12/31/79", Jimmy Carter Library, p. 2.

Lessons

It is difficult to define with exact certainty the course of administrative decision-making based solely on the archival evidence. Given these methodological limits, however, I have set out to illustrate patterns of behavior that can lend to larger generalizations. At first glance, the lack of strong participation in the polling apparatus by key EPG leaders like Schultze, Blumenthal, Strauss, and Kahn does little to support the integration of public opinion and economic policy. The archival evidence only indicates their involvement in 1 or 2 such memoranda. Aside from Caddell's memos, the lack of lengthy analysis of poll data within most economic issue memos might also suggest limited integration. However, the extensiveness of the network of individuals involved in the giving and receiving polling information, the evidence presented in particular memos, and the timing of these memos against the larger rubric of policy making does support a significant relationship between public opinion and policymaking activity. Specifically, the evidence illustrates specific instances of opinion responsiveness, where the administration allowed public opinion to shape early agenda-setting and sought to harness the force of public opinion to support its policies for political gain.

When Carter entered office in 1977, his economic policies were primarily based upon his previous campaign promises and the advice given by those closest to Carter. Caddell, a member of Carter's inner circle, encouraged Carter to act responsively to public opinion in economic matters, but he ultimately failed to affect the course of EPG policy. Early energy policies as well as the economic stimulus package, therefore, were a product of elite rather than public opinion influences. However, in the face of legislative

battles over the economic stimulus package and declining public approval ratings, the administration became primarily responsive to public opinion pressures. They created anti-inflation policies based upon the public's growing concern over that issue above all other economic issues. Public information forums were instituted to build public support for their policies. While the administration never received the kind of low rating for its handling of the energy crisis as it did with inflation or the economy in general, it also engaged in public education efforts to mobilize support for its energy policies. Therefore, in both cases, the Carter administration responded to public opinion in a highly strategic manner – *following* the public's lead accepting inflation as its highest policy priority in 1978 and *leading* the public to approve of its policy decisions. Ultimately, the administration was more successful in its campaign to lead public support for its energy policies over that of the anti-inflation campaign. And yet, both crises scared the psyche of the American public in the late 1970's; their combined force severely compromised Carter's political reputation, despite the administration's strategic efforts to respond to public pressures on these issues.

A comparison of the Carter and Ford administrations in terms of their strategic responsiveness to public opinion on economic matters leads to familiar results. Chapter 5 found that the Ford administration responded to public opinion on economic matters only when the '76 campaign pressures began to mount. For Carter, early responsiveness to public opinion was also low, but it increased significantly after the administration suffered its first economic policy struggles in its first year. While Ford's responsiveness was limited to efforts to lead public opinion in order to gain the political support necessary to maintain public office, Carter's responsiveness encompassed both efforts to

lead and follow public opinion in order to gain the political support necessary to govern. Furthermore, Carter was an active player in the giving and receiving of economic issue polling memoranda, whereas Ford was far removed from this process. These differences indicate contrasting leadership roles for Ford and Carter with respect to their responsiveness to public opinion in economic affairs. Ford's actions were more consistent with that of a "trustee" than Carter. Ford was by no means a trustee in the strictest sense – there is evidence of his administration's strategic responsiveness to public opinion, albeit limited. However, in comparison to Carter, Ford was more reliant on elite opinion over public opinion in economic affairs. Carter and his two advisory sources, Caddell and the EPG, sought to balance elite opinion with attention to public opinion in both their inflation and energy policies. The overall consistent nature of their consulting polling information, coupled with the strategies taken to respond to this information, suggest a much more "politico"- styled leadership for Carter than for Ford.

CHAPTER 7: FOREIGN POLICY – A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FORD AND CARTER

Introduction

We commonly view foreign policy as a set of complex political issues far removed from the influence of the general public, where the president acting as chief diplomat and commander-in-chief directs international affairs. Unlike Congress, the presidency is uniquely structured to operate in such a manner. Quick decisions are often necessary, especially in terms of military action, which does not easily accommodate the slow, deliberative process of congressional action. Furthermore, presidential access to confidential national security information and his ability to negotiate directly with international leaders allows him greater control over the national foreign policy agenda. However, foreign policy decisions are not made in a vacuum. In particular instances, presidents are interested in using polling information in foreign affairs to lead or respond to mass opinion. As with economic issues, presidential reputations depend on public evaluations of presidential actions in foreign policy. International successes allow presidents greater latitude to persuade Washington to accept their policy directives. The public, therefore, becomes a strategic tool for gauging where international success can be found in order to preserve or magnify presidential power.

Ford and Carter present contrasting cases to illustrate presidential use of public opinion polling in the foreign policy decision-making process. While the Ford administration minimally consulted opinion polls on these matters, the Carter administration consistently utilized polling information in a variety of ways. Specifically, on the issues of ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties, SALT II negotiations, and the Middle East peace accords the Carter administration took

considerable steps to lead and follow general public opinion trends. This chapter, therefore, serves to further highlight the leadership style differences between these two administrations in addition to addressing the general parameters of public opinion's strategic influence in foreign policy.

Ford Foreign Policy

Ford's inheritance of political problems from the Nixon administration was not limited to issues involving the economy or the issuance of a presidential pardon. Indeed several foreign policy dilemmas required immediate administrative attention upon assuming office in August 1974. As was the case in other issue areas, the Ford administration was immediately challenged to define itself on foreign policy matters within the shadow of the Nixon White House. Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Secretary of Defense Arthur Schlesinger maintained their cabinet status within the new Ford White House, promoting the continuation of various policies set by the preceding administration on matters of diplomacy. Indeed, Ford pursued a close advisory relationship with Kissinger that mirrored that of Kissinger and Nixon insofar as these two actors served as the primary agents of foreign policy decision-making. Ford wrote of this relationship:

> ...we met in the Oval Office every day. He'd [Kissinger] come in between nine and ten o'clock and stay for an hour or more. He knew he couldn't function effectively as Secretary of State unless it was known that he had the total backing of the President, and he would never make a move without first talking it through with me in great detail.[1]

In transition to office, the Ford administration immediately attended to top priority issues identified within Nixon's administrative agenda: arms negotiations with the Soviet

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[1] Gerald R. Ford, A Time to Heal, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979, p. 150.

Union, peace accords in the Middle East, and volatility in South Vietnam/Cambodia. These issues remained at the center of the Ford-Kissinger foreign policy agenda.

The Nixon administration had aggressively pursued a US-Soviet foreign policy that would sustain an agreement between the two superpowers to limit future nuclear arsenals. This policy of détente was solidified through the ratification of the 1972 SALT treaty, which significantly froze nuclear arms production on both sides. The terms of this treaty, however, were set to expire in 1977, creating the need for future nuclear arms negotiations in order to sustain the spirit of détente forged between these nations. Nixon had been scheduled for a November 1974 summit to renew talks on these matters, and Ford assimilated this prior obligation into his new diplomatic agenda. Therefore, the issue of détente and its actualization as a policy directive forged between Ford and the Soviets was addressed very early in Ford's term of office.

The political climate in the fall of 1974, however, did not lend to the ease with which Nixon and the Soviets had reached agreement in 1972. Before Nixon resigned, the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status for the USSR was threatened by a proposed Congressional amendment to the terms of the original trade agreement reached within the Nixon administration. The amendment demanded that the Soviets loosen Jewish emigration policies in exchange for maintaining its MFN status with the United States.[2] At the same time, Congressional leaders proposed an additional amendment limiting import-export bank credits for the Soviets in an attempt to take a harder line with the Soviets than previously established by Nixon's original détente policies.[3] While Ford

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[2] John Robert Greene, The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford, Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1995, p. 122.

[3] Ibid., p. 123.

tried to settle the trade bill dispute upon entering office, he was unable to stop the passage of both amendments by the year's end. The Soviets ultimately considered both of these measures to be in violation of their original trade agreements and refusing to meet Congressional demands backed out of the 1972 trade agreement altogether. Therefore, in the midst of a trade-relations meltdown between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Ford conducted his first set of negotiations for the construction of a SALT II treaty between these two nations.

Despite the challenges presented by the defeat of the 1972 trade agreement, Ford and Soviet Premier Brezhnev were able to draft the initial terms for a SALT II treaty. Encouraging equal arms production limitations on both sides, Ford returned from negotiations satisfied that he was able to reach an initial agreement satisfactory to both sides given the political tensions that had surrounded the negotiations process. On this point Ford wrote:

> Vladivostok had been an appropriate ending to a journey designed to strengthen ties with old friends and expand areas of agreement with potential adversaries. The results of the trip had exceeded my expectations. There was, of course, no way for me to know at the time that this would be a high-water mark and that the next five and a half months would be the most difficult of my Presidency – if not my life.[4]

What lay in store for the SALT II accords was the gradual disintegration of the original agreement as old tensions remained and technical weapon per weapon limitations could not be finalized. Furthermore, other foreign policy crises emerged which required administrative action and shifted full diplomatic attention away from these early steps toward accord.

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[4] Ford, p. 219.

Upon entering office, Ford also faced the need to resolve growing tensions in the Middle East. While the Nixon administration was able to negotiate peace accords between Egypt and Israel after the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Israel's relations with Egypt and other Middle Eastern nations remained volatile at the start of the Ford's term of office. Eager to maintain peace within the region, Ford and Kissinger attempted in October 1974 to precipitate formal peace accords between Jordan and Israel, but to no avail. The Ford administration also attempted to renew negotiations once again between Egypt and Israel in early 1975. Strained diplomatic relations between Ford and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, however, made the peace settlement process even more complicated. Frustrated with the slow pace Israel took in settling on exact territorial divisions between themselves and Egypt, Ford authorized his press secretary Ron Nessen to make a public statement in March to indicate that the U.S. was "reassessing" its Middle Eastern policies and that Israel was responsible for stalling the peace process.[5] Angered over the administration's public criticism of Israel, the Ford administration was subsequently criticized not only by Israel, but also by congressmen and various political action groups' sympathetic Israel's position. Ultimately, Israel's move back to the negotiating table was achieved through Ford's agreement to increase aid to Israel, a small concession on Ford's part to help smooth U.S-Israeli relations and get the peace process moving again.[6] Finally, in September 1975 was the Ford administration able to finalize an accord between Egypt and Israel, with both sides agreeing to establish a buffer zone between the two territories.

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[5] Ibid., p. 247.

[6] Greene, p. 155.

The third major holdover foreign policy situation from the Nixon administration that the Ford administration would have to resolve was the final stages of U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam. In the spring of 1975, as both Cambodia and South Vietnam fell to communist forces, the Ford administration was forced to evacuate all remaining Americans in the region with two hasty air lift missions, one in Cambodia on April 11 and one in Saigon on April 28. However, while these actions at the time marked the end of U.S. involvement in the region, an incident loomed on the horizon that would ultimately draw the administration back into strategic military action against the Cambodian Khmer Rouge. On May 12, the Khmer Rouge fired on an American merchant ship carrying U.S. defense supplies, the SS Mayaguez, claiming that she had trespassed upon Cambodian territory. The Ford administration was charged with quickly determining the appropriate response to this attack. Opting to match fire with fire, two days later Ford authorized a recovery mission for the ship and its crew involving special Marine troops and air strikes. While the ship and crew were ultimately retrieved, several marines lost their lives over a mission that critics have documented as based primarily on the Ford administration's desire to punish the Cambodians rather than the necessity of action.[7]

The Mayaguez incident afforded the Ford administration its first and only real foreign policy victory in the eyes of the American public, increasing Ford's political prestige in foreign policy matters. His anti-climatic SALT II agreements with the Soviets and his early mishandling of Israel in seeking peace accords had not gotten Ford off to a strong start on foreign policy matters. The Mayaguez incident offered him a chance at

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[7] Ibid., p. 150.

turning this around in his favor. Chief of staff Dick Cheney, upon recollection, has admitted that outside political motivations to use military force in this instance affected Ford's crisis management decisions:

> Of course, it is always in his actions that a president demonstrates his ability and character...The president believed that the world would view the seizure of the SS Mayaguez by Cambodia as yet another challenge to American power, and that our response or lack of response would have significance far beyond the event itself...[8]

While U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam was inevitable, fear that the U.S. would continue to be seen both internationally and nationally as weak in foreign policy matters dominated Ford White House considerations. Here, the Mayaguez incident serves to illustrate the full force of public opinion in the historical analysis of Ford's foreign policy efforts – its role was confined to consideration under political necessity, rather than from some position of leadership intention. Detailed analyses of polling will either verify or deny this historically based conclusion.

Ford Polling Memos

As was the case with economic policy, the archival evidence that illustrates the Ford White House's use of public opinion polling information in matters of foreign policy is extremely small. This finding in and of itself is the first indication of lesser attention paid to public opinion for these specific decision-making matters. Nine issue memos out of the combined 28 issue memos generated by this administration specifically addressed matters of foreign policy. Five out of these 9 memos addressed only foreign policy issues, while four other issue memos addressed foreign policy as grouped with

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[8] Dick Cheney, "The Ford Presidency in Perspective", in Bernard Firestone and Alexej Ugrinsky, Gerald R. Ford and the Politics of Post-Watergate America, Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 5.

other issue concerns, namely governing, economic or social issues.[9] The following table illustrates the full spectrum of foreign policy issues found within these memos:

Table 7.1: Ford Foreign Policy Issues

Foreign Policy Issue	# Issue Memos
Foreign Policy - General	3
Mayaguez Incident	2
Detente	2
Use of Military Force	2
Foreign Aid	1
Defense Spending	1
United Nations	1
Relations with USSR	1
Relations with China	1
Relations with Middle East	1
Arms Sales	1

While 11 different foreign policy issues are discussed within these memos, no one issue stands out as having been significantly monitored by the Ford administration. The wide dispersion of foreign policy issues is echoed in the diverse nature of the individual authors and recipients of these foreign policy memos. These nine memos involved 22 staff members in addition to private pollster Teeter, spanning 10 offices out of the 12 total offices identified within the White House public opinion polling apparatus. However, most of these staff members were cited in either one or two instances. The White House Operations Staff demonstrated the strongest involvement, with 8 instances of either giving or receiving foreign policy information. Teeter was only involved in one memo, which he originated, and chief foreign policy decision-makers Ford and Kissinger were not involved whatsoever. In two instances, Ford's signature appeared on a memo – one sent to Hartmann and the other to Cheney – but there are no formal memoranda that can verify how or when he might have received this information for review.

[9] See Chapter 5, Table 5.1.

The overwhelming majority of these foreign policy issue memos were circulated in 1975, with only one memo drafted in October 1976. The following table illustrates the timing and subject matter that define each of these foreign policy issue memos:

Table 7.2: Chronology of Foreign Policy Issue Memo Subjects	
Dates	**Topics**
3/5/75	Use of Force
3/12/75	Use of Force
5/1/75	Arab-Israeli Conflict
5/27/75	The SS Mayaguez Crisis
6/23/75	The SS Mayaguez Crisis
8/22/75	Foreign Policy -- General
11/20/75	Detente
12/24/75	Foreign Policy -- General
10/1/76	Campaign Analysis (several foreign policy issues)

In over half of these polling memo exchanges, staff members passed on current polling data without offering individual comment or analysis. Specifically, within the five memos listed in Table 7.2 between May 1, 1975 and November 20, 1975, staff members exchanged Harris, Gallup and other published polling information primarily concerning such general topics as foreign policy issue salience and approval ratings for current policies. White House Operations staff member Robert Goldwin originated two of these memos, sending them extensively to members both within and outside the Operations office. In his May 1 memo, a detailed eight-page analysis of American attitudes towards Israel and the PLO conducted by Louis Harris was provided to these staff members with special attention only given to increased Jewish support for Republicans.[10] Likewise, Goldwin's October 15 memo passes on a recent Yankelovich survey that measured presidential approval as affected by low public confidence levels for current economic

[10] Memo, Goldwin to Rumsfeld, Cheney, Connor, Marsh, Hartmann and Fisher, 5/1/75, "Jewish Issues", Robert Goldwin Files, Box 7, Gerald Ford Library.

and détente policies without analysis.[11] In the May 27 and June 23 memos concerning the Mayaguez Incident, both memos sent public approval ratings for the military action taken by Ford, while the May 27 memo additionally cited increases in presidential public approval ratings.[12] Finally, the August 22 memo sent from Assistant Press Secretary Fred Slight to Staff Secretary Jerry Jones contained current Gallup poll summaries that asked respondents to rank issues in terms of their overall importance. While Slight reacted to several of these results, he did not comment on public opinion concerning foreign policy matters.[13] Ultimately, in all of these instances, Ford staff members acted primarily as passive observers and consumers of foreign policy poll information. What little interest they demonstrated was concentrated on monitoring foreign policy's affect on perceptions of presidential performance rather than policy development.

The four memos that contained detailed analysis concerning foreign policy, however, offer little evidence of departure from the spirit of the other five issue memos. That is, in all four cases, staff responses to public opinion served to either downplay its importance or to couch the results within larger political considerations rather than specific policy outcomes. In the final polling memo within the chronology, White House Operations staff member Foster Chanock sent Mike Raoul-Duval polling information concerning foreign policy and various issues of national defense. Duval, originally a domestic policy staff advisor, joined the White House Operations office for the '76

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[11] Memo, Goldwin to Cheney, Greenspan, Lynn, O'Neill, Cavanaugh, Jones, and Connor, 11/20/75, "Harris & Yankovich Survey", Robert Goldwin Papers, Box 24, Gerald Ford Library.

[12] Memo, Jones to Cheney, 5/27/75, "Polls – General (1)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library; Memo, Philip Buchen to Robert Hartmann, June 23, 1975, "Public Opinion Polling – General (1)", Robert Hartmann Papers, Box 63, Gerald Ford Library.

[13] Memo, Slight to Jones, 8/22/75, "Polls – Gallup (2)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

campaign. Citing MOR polls as well as Yankelovich and Potomac Associates poll data, Chanock highlighted current poll results that could be used to Ford's strategic advantage in upcoming campaign debates with Carter. Seeking to capitalize on Ford's incumbency and slight advantage in the polls over Carter on foreign policy leadership, Chanock advised the campaign to "articulate accomplishments which give people a reason to support the President" over Carter. [14] Focusing on the specific issues of détente, defense cuts, and foreign aid/intervention, Chanock encouraged Ford to represent the average voter position on these issues. In this poll memo example, the value of poll information emanated from its ability to mobilize support for Ford's candidacy, not its ability to direct policy. Given that this memo was created in the heart of the campaign season, poll usage in this capacity is certainly expected.

Responsiveness to public opinion motivated outside these political pressures is not well established by the remaining three polling memos that offer analysis of foreign policy polling information. In the March 5 memo that discussed the general issue of the use of U.S. military force in global hotspots, Jon Howe, assistant to Vice President Nelson Rockefeller discussed the implications of a recent Harris survey on this issue. The March 12 memo that follows directly after in the foreign policy issue memo chronology was the Vice President forwarding Howe's memo to various individuals outside the Office of the Vice President. Howe's memo cited survey results that indicated low public support for military aid to Israel, Western Europe, and South Korea if such a need were to present itself. In response to these results, Howe writes:

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[14] Memo, Chanock to Duval, 10/1/76, "Polling Information – General", Michael Raoul-Duval Papers, Box 30, Gerald Ford Library, p. 1.

> The overall results of the recent survey do appear to reinforce your view that the American public does not understand the current world situation or the objectives of our foreign policy. Part of today's problem is undoubtedly a reaction to Vietnam, the glut of investigations, the independence of our allies and misconceptions about what détente means.[15]

In seeking to justify the incongruency between public opinion and the vice-president's position on these foreign policy matters, Howe's analysis did not offer any responsive solution for the vice-president to consider. That is, he did not suggest that the administration should educate the public in an attempt to alter their position on the issue, but he also did not suggest that the public should be ignored altogether. The survey report findings and Howe's comment, however, do serve to emphasize the administration's early awareness of the distance between the general public and the administration on foreign policy matters.

This gap between administrative and public perceptions of foreign policy leadership is reiterated later that year in Robert Teeter's December 12 memo to Richard Cheney concerning recent national poll results on a variety of issues. Specifically on foreign policy, Teeter reported that the public was clamoring for stronger foreign policy leadership:

> In the foreign affairs area, the country has become more hard-lined toward our adversaries and more significantly, they see the President to the left of themselves on détente. Any actions or statements that would put the President in the position of taking tough stands with our adversaries, would be helpful.[16]

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[15] Memo, Howe to Rockefeller, 3/5/75, "Polls", James Cannon Files, Box 76, Gerald Ford Library.

[16] Memo, Teeter to Cheney, 12/24/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library, p. 3.

By "helpful" Teeter specifically meant that it would make Ford appear more "presidential"; this point is clarified in the succeeding paragraph:

> As I have indicated before, our most important job is to repair the President's perception so that he is seen as a decisive, forceful leader with a plan for the country. In doing this, it is critical that the President not only have a simple, understandable plan of his own but that he avoid any more situations where he is perceived to be indecisive...[17]

Here, Teeter simply called attention to the problem, without having offered specific policy options to help Ford improve public perceptions of his ability to handle foreign policy. His advice, therefore, was confined to only matters of political rather than policy outcome concerns.

Teeter generally discussed foreign policy within the MOR national poll analysis conducted for the Ford administration in February 1975 and November/December 1975. The first national poll Teeter conducted for the administration in December 1974 did not address foreign policy issues, despite the fact that governing, economic, and social issues were extensively analyzed. However, in February 1975, Teeter reported to the Ford administration that foreign affairs "received the lowest ratings in importance" and "45% of the voters ranked it dead last".[18] However, he also found that public confidence in Republican leadership on foreign policy matters held at least a small edge over Democratic leadership. Later that year, Teeter found the same results and offered the following analysis:

> Although the President's issue strategy must focus on domestic problems, opportunities for major Presidential actions in foreign policy should still

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[17] Ibid., p. 3.

[18] Poll, "U.S. National Study – February 1975 (1) & (2)", Robert Teeter Papers, Box 52, Gerald Ford Library, p. 80.

> be sought; but they will have to be major actions before they will register with the voters.[19]

Consistent with his advice to Cheney within the foreign policy issue memo dated at the same time as the poll analysis, Teeter concedes that although foreign policy issues continue to receive lower priority in comparison to other issues, especially economic issues, the advantages that decisive foreign policy objectives can offer to developing political campaign strategies should not be overlooked. However, once again, no specific foreign policy course of action was endorsed by Teeter to create these strategic advantages with the public.

Ford's Foreign Policy Strategies

When all of this evidence is juxtaposed against the larger backdrop of Ford's foreign policy, the extent to which public opinion affected foreign policy decisions is fully revealed. Once again, presidential public addresses to the nation serve as a good instrument from which to gauge the relationship between presidents and the public on public policy matters. Between September 1974 and October 1975, Ford addressed the public on five different issue topics -- the Nixon pardon, tax cut proposals (twice), the Mayaguez incident, and the energy crisis.[20] Only in the case of both the Nixon pardon and the Mayaguez incident, however, is there evidence of public opinion polling memos that address these issues. With the Nixon pardon, Ford dismissed negative public reaction registered in the polls, as I have previously discussed within Chapter 3. With the Mayaguez incident, the evidence suggests that public opinion was minimally considered.

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[19] Poll, "U.S. National Study, November/December 1975 – Analysis (1) & (3)", Robert Teeter Papers, Box 52, Gerald Ford Library, p. 78.

[20] Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership (2nd ed.), Washington, D.C: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1993, p. 95.

In two memos dated after the incident and the public address, positive approval ratings results were circulated among the Ford White House, acting as a "pat-on-the-back" to Ford and his staff members. Richard Cheney has argued that public opinion's influence on Mayaguez policy existed insofar as Ford was concerned that public and international perceptions of his administration would hamper his ability to be viewed as a strong leader. On the decision to pardon Nixon, Ford did not express a desire to please public opinion nor did he view public input in the decision-making process a necessity – he would propose the right course of action regardless of public perceptions. While Ford acted unilaterally on Mayaguez, he ultimately viewed this foreign policy decision as necessary in order to control public perceptions of his ability to govern.

On the issues of SALT II and Sinai accords political considerations served as the only avenue through which public opinion was consulted. In both cases, the administration prioritized these foreign policy objectives based upon previous policy commitments of the Nixon administration as well as Ford's own desire to see these policies maintained. No archival evidence exists to suggest that public opinion was consulted before these policy decisions were made by the administration. The few polling memos that address détente and the Middle East framed these issues within the overall political context of the '76 campaign; they did not consider public opinion's influence in the ratification or negotiating processes. Therefore, the Ford White House utilized a very limited model of public opinion responsiveness on matters of foreign policy.

Carter Foreign Policy

Entering office, Jimmy Carter had not only a very defined foreign policy issue agenda serving as a guide to policy development, but he had very specific ideas about the role he and his advisors would play in developing foreign policy. That is, following through on his campaign promises, Carter sought primarily to fight for international human rights, renewed SALT II negotiations with the Soviets, a resolution of a Panama Canal treaty, and continued negotiations for peace in the Middle East. Leading these foreign policy efforts were Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, who were instructed to work very closely with Carter on these matters. These two foreign policy advisors played separate roles within the daily management of foreign policy matters. Cyrus Vance oversaw the daily management process, while Brzezinski worked closely with Carter on developing foreign policy objectives and strategies. While Carter always maintained the final decision on foreign affairs, Brzezinski's input should not be underestimated; as a former Columbia University professor he was identified as "the idea man" behind Carter White House foreign policy.[21]

Anxious to reach a satisfactory arms reduction agreement with the Soviets, the negotiation of a SALT II treaty became the first foreign policy priority for the Carter administration. SALT I was set to expire in October 1977, leaving the issue of future arms production dangerously hanging in the air. However, Carter's outspoken support for the promotion of human rights initially did very little to coax Moscow back to the negotiating table. On this point, historian Burton Kaufmann writes:

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[21] Burton I. Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr., Lawrence, Ks.: University of Kansas Press, 1993, p.37.

> In its first few weeks in office...the Carter administration had made a muddle of U.S.-Soviet relations. The president and his advisors had tried to impose their values and perspectives on Moscow, and their efforts had backfired. Carter had assumed that the Soviets were just as anxious as he was for arms reduction, but he had miscalculated the effects of his outspoken criticism of the Kremlin and his well-publicized arms proposals on the secretive, paranoid Soviet government.[22]

Not until May 1977 was the administration able to convince the Soviets to join them for formal negotiations in Geneva, Switzerland. At this time, Harris poll results demonstrated strong support within the American public for a new SALT agreement, with 91% in favor of negotiating SALT II.[23] However, while both sides were able to agree on the larger concept of arms reduction, supporting equal downsizing of nuclear weapons on both sides, the finer points of exact weapons of reduction were more difficult to negotiate. What little headway the Carter administration was able to make with the Soviets would prove to be of lesser difficulty than securing ratification of the SALT II treaties at home. In 1978 and 1979, public support for SALT II dropped considerably as the public became increasingly less satisfied with US détente policies.[24] Haggling over the details with the Soviets, and facing strong criticism at home, the fate of SALT II hung in the balance until late into the administrative term. Ultimately, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ended all hope the administration had in seeking ratification.

The Carter administration had greater success in ratifying the Panama Canal Treaties, an agreement to transfer the Panama Canal back to Panama by the end of the twentieth century. The Panamanian government had long campaigned to control the

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[22] Ibid., p. 41.

[23] Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 262.

[24] Ibid., p. 268.

Canal, but the U.S. feared surrender of control over the Canal might threaten U.S. commercial trade and shipping if it were ever to fall under the control of a political adversary. During the campaign, Carter echoed this fear, remaining uncommitted to negotiating a turn over of the Canal to the Panamanian government. However, early in his administration, Carter became firmly commitment to negotiating a settlement. On this decision Carter recalled:

> These were not easy decisions for me to make. I knew that we were sure to face a terrible political fight in Congress...Furthermore, public-opinion polls showed that the American public strongly opposed relinquishing control of the Canal...Nevertheless, I believed that a new treaty was absolutely necessary. I was convinced that we needed to correct an injustice...In addition, though we could not talk about it much in public, the Canal was in serious danger from direct attack and sabotage unless a new and fair treaty arrangement could be forged.[25]

Fueled by his own convictions and national security considerations, Carter embarked upon treaty negotiations with Panama in February 1977. Two treaties were negotiated between the Panamanian government and the United States – the first reestablished Panamanian control over the Canal after 1999 and the second maintained the U.S. ability to defend the neutrality of the Canal against any future threats. In this sense, Panama could regain control of the Canal while the economic and political interests of the U.S. would be protected. The battle for public and Congressional acceptance of these negotiated terms became one of the Carter administration's highest foreign policy objectives throughout the following year. The Carter administration heavily lobbied Congress and the American public to accept the administration's position on the treaty

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[25] Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President, New York: Bantam Books, 1982, p. 155.

agreements and ensure treaty ratification. Carter's memoirs illustrate these efforts in great detail:

> ...the long road of ratification lay ahead of us. During the fall of 1977, I spent a lot of my time planning carefully how to get Senate votes. The task force set up for this purpose developed a somewhat limited objective: not to build up an absolute majority of support among all citizens, but to convince an acceptable number of key political leaders in each important state to give their senators some 'running room'...We also briefed our top administrators at the State Department about the terms of the treaties and how best to present the facts. Altogether they made more than 1500 appearances throughout the nation to explain the treaties directly to the public...Once people really understood the terms of the agreement, most of them supported it.[26]

In April 1978, the Senate successfully ratified the Panama Canal treaties. The Carter administration and treaty supporters attributed successful passage of the treaties to their ability to mobilize public support behind their goal of ratification. Indeed, reports of a noticeable shift in public opinion from negative to positive levels of support for the treaties during the negotiating process were widely reported by several survey and media sources. However, through subsequent evaluation these reports have been discovered to be seriously inaccurate interpretations of public opinion. Specifically, Ted J. Smith and J. Michael Hogan have determined that the reported shift in public opinion towards support for treaty ratification was based upon serious survey research problems caused by inconsistent, biased and invalid survey questions.[27] While a shift in public support for the treaties did not actually occur, the misinterpretation of its occurrence fueled the power of the administration's public relations campaign and pressured Senate ratification. Of course, the successful passage of the Panama Canal treaties did not rest solely on the

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[26] Ibid., p. 162.

[27] Ted J. Smith, III and J. Michael Hogan, "Public Opinion and the Panama Canal Treaties of 1977", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 51 (1987), p. 28.

pulse of public opinion. Smith and Hogan also credit the treaties' ratification with the negotiation of the U.S. right to defend the future neutrality of the Canal, which was popular with conservative Senators.[28] Nevertheless, the administration's effort to strategically place the force of public opinion into the ratification process should not be underestimated.

The third foreign policy issue of highest priority for the Carter administration focused on establishing peace accords in the Middle East. Once again, Carter based his prioritization of this issue on his own personal political views:

> ...moral and religious beliefs made my commitment to the security of Israel unshakable...For the well-being of my country, I wanted the Middle East region stable and at peace; I did not want to see Soviet influence expanded in the area. In its ability to help accomplish these purposes, Israel was a strategic asset to the United States.[29]

Carter established strong diplomatic relations with both Israeli Prime Minister Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, precipitating further negotiations between these two nations. Whereas efforts to reach accord between these two adversaries ultimately fell apart for the Ford administration, the Carter administration would experience much greater success in finalizing an accord agreement. Facilitating negotiations at Camp David, both sides settled territorial disputes in September 1978. Left unsettled from Camp David were specifications concerning the West Bank and Gaza. The Carter administration continued to negotiate with both sides after Camp David, ultimately finalizing the last phase of the peace accords in March 1979. Therefore, throughout the course of Carter's term of office, Carter and his administration remained committed to

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[28] Ibid., p. 6.

[29] Ibid., pp. 274-275.

negotiating peace in the Middle East and in the latter part of his term, were able to actualize this goal. Without the diplomatic problems that plagued Ford early on in the negotiation process, the administration faced very few obstacles to achieving this goal.

Carter Polling Memos

The Carter administration remained consistently attentive to public opinion on foreign policy matters throughout its entire term of office. I have identified 20 foreign policy issue memos within the archival evidence, accounting for 29% (20/70) of the entire issue memo collection. Within these twenty memos, 11 discussed specific foreign policy issues only, while the remaining 9 discussed foreign policy issues in conjunction with various economic, governing, or social policy issues. The following table illustrates the full spectrum of foreign policy issues found within these memos:

Table 7.3 Carter Foreign Policy Issues

Foreign Policy Issues	# Issue Memos
Foreign Policy - General	4
Defense Spending	4
Middle East Peace Accords	4
Relations with Middle East	3
Relations with USSR	3
SALT II	3
Relations with Third World nations	3
Relations w/ African nations	2
Relations with Cuba	2
Nuclear Weapons	2
Panama Canal Treaties	2
Human Rights	2
Draft Registration	2
Relations with Latin America	1
Relations with Korea	1
Relations with China	1
Conflict in Rhodesia	1
Ambassador Young resignation	1
Vietnam Refugees	1
Foreign Aid – general	1
International Terrorism	1
Trade relations – general	1
Use of military force	1

The extensiveness of foreign policy issues monitored by the Carter White House public opinion apparatus is strongly evident from the content analysis of foreign policy issue memos. Like the Ford administration, no single issue received considerably more attention than any other issue. Twenty-three different foreign policy issue topics were addressed within the Carter issue memos; double the amount monitored by the Ford administration. However, a more highly centralized monitoring system existed within the Carter White House; 10 staff members within 9 divisional White House offices in addition to President Carter and private pollster Caddell were involved in the exchange of foreign policy polling information as compared to 22 staff members within 11 divisional offices and Teeter within the Ford White House. Unlike the Ford White House, the primary individuals involved in the exchange of foreign policy poll analysis and data were the key individuals charged with the business of constructing foreign policy objectives – President Carter and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. Additionally, strong players within the overall polling apparatus, Caddell and Powell, remained highly involved in this general issue area.

Public opinion polls on foreign policy consistently circulated within the Carter White House from the time of administrative transition to the end of Carter's term of office. The following table illustrates the timing and subject matter that define each of these foreign policy issue memos generated by the Carter White House public opinion apparatus:

Table 7.4: Chronology of Foreign Policy Issue Memo Subjects	
Dates	**Origin – General Topics**
12/10/76	Caddell – General Foreign policy, SALT, Middle East
4/25/77	Brzezinski – Relations with Cuba
5/3/77	Brzezinski – Foreign Public Opinion on World Economic Issues
5/19/77	Caddell – Survey Results from Israel
5/21/77	Carter through Hutcheson – Survey Results from Israel
7/1/77	Carter through Hutcheson – Public Opinion toward Panama Canal
7/15/77	Caddell – American Attitudes Toward Israel
10/21/77	Caddell – General Foreign Policy, Middle East
11/17/77	Brzezinski – LDC views of the US
4/24/78	Brzezinski – Public Affairs Campaign on Foreign Assistance
5/25/78	Carter through Hutcheson – Détente and SALT
12/13/78	Caddell – Defense vs. Domestic Spending
12/14/78	Caddell – SALT, addressed in State of the Union
12/18/78	Eizenstat – Domestic vs. Defense Spending
6/11/79	Caddell – General Foreign Policy
8/29/79	Bario – Trade Relations with China
9/7/79	Bario – Military Action in Middle East Oil Crisis
9/19/79	Bario – SALT, Middle East, Rhodesia, Vietnam Refugees
2/28/80	Bario – Draft Registration
2/11/80	Bario – Draft Registration

As Table 7.4 illustrates, Caddell, Carter, Brzezinski, and Jody Powell's assistant, Patricia Bario acted as the primary initiators of foreign policy poll memos, with Carter and Powell serving as lead recipients (Carter received 10 memos and Powell received 7). In 9 cases, poll results were sent without detailed analysis, similar to the memos that dominated Ford White House correspondence. Stuart Eizenstat sent one combined foreign and economic policy memo to several staff members that contained Harris survey results showing support for increased defense spending but not at the expense of domestic programs.[30] Patricia Bario sent 5 memos to Powell from August 1979 to February 1980 that passed on poll data from the United States Information Agency (USIA) that illustrated general approval of trade with China, a lack of support for military action to end the Middle East oil crisis, racial differences on support for SALT II, Rhodesia, and Vietnamese refugee immigration policies, as well as general support for

[30] Memo, Eizenstat to Mondale, Jordan, Moore, Powell, Rafshoon, and Wexler, 12/18/78, "6/1/78-12/31/78", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library. pp. 1-2.

allowing women to register for the draft.[31] Carter sent 3 memos to close staff members that passed on poll results concerning Israeli public opinion on Middle East accords as measured by Caddell, a national survey from Opinion Research Corporation that measured public awareness and support for Panama Canal Treaty negotiations, and Harris survey information identifying strong support for détente and SALT II negotiations.[32] However, in 11 of the 20 foreign policy issue memos, two individuals, Brzezinski and Caddell, conveyed individual analysis and comments concerning polling to Carter and top members of his staff. These memos ultimately offer important evidence in detailing the extent to which public opinion was integrated into the Carter White House foreign policy decision-making process.

As National Security Advisor, Brzezinski received and disseminated information directly relevant to matters of foreign policy. Included in this information was a wealth of public opinion polling from government intelligence sources, namely USIA reports. Just as Harris, Gallup, and other published polls would be found in the files of White House staff members, USIA reports detailing public opinion within foreign countries were found within the files of the Office of the National Security Advisor. Brzezinski and his staff aides sent two USIA reports to Carter, one in May 1977 concerning international public perceptions of the state of the world economy and another one in

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31 Memo, Bario to Powell, 8/29/79, "Memorandum – Media Liaison 8/3/79-8/31/79", Jody Powell Files, Box 44, Jimmy Carter Library; Memos, Bario to Powell, 9/7/79 and 9/19/79, "Memorandum – Media Liaison 9/4/79-9/26/79", Jody Powell Files, Box 44, Jimmy Carter Library; Memos, Bario to Powell, 2/11/80 and 2/28/80, "Memorandum – Media Liaison 2/6/80-3/24/80", Jody Powell Files, Box 45, Jimmy Carter Library.

32 Memo, Hutcheson to Eizenstat and Brzezinski, 5/21/77, "Middle East: Israeli Public Opinion", White House Staff Counsel Files, Box 35, Jimmy Carter Library; Memo, Hutcheson to Lipshutz and Moore, 7/1/77, "7/1/77 (2)", Staff Secretary Files, Box 35, Jimmy Carter Library; Memo, Hutcheson to Jordan and Powell, 5/25/78, "Polls – Survey, (1977-78), 1978", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 51, Jimmy Carter Library.

November 1977 citing third-world country perceptions of the U.S.[33] In a third memo to Carter, Brzezinski relayed Gallup poll results demonstrating American support for a renewal of diplomatic relations with Cuba. In all of these instances, Brzezinski generally summarized poll findings, highlighting results that he believed to be the most important for presidential consideration. Outside of these summary considerations, Brzezinski did not offer Carter policy suggestions based on this information within these formal memoranda; he acted as a conduit through which information could be better sorted and prioritized.

There is additional evidence to suggest that Brzezinski sought a far more active role in the process of incorporating public opinion in the foreign policy-making process. In an April 1978 letter to Caddell, Brzezinski requested Caddell's input in the development of a "public affairs campaign on foreign assistance" to increase public support for the president's foreign aid program; he wrote:

> When the President set the direction for U.S. foreign assistance programs he also suggested that we undertake public affairs activities that would inform the Congress and the public of our objectives in this area...these activities must improve understanding of foreign assistance and trade issues in the Congress and contribute to greater public awareness of American interdependence with developing nations as well as our humanitarian interest in their development.[34]

Along with the request, Brzezinski sent Caddell a 15-page document outlining the parameters of a proposed public affairs campaign strategy for Caddell's comment. Specifically, Brzezinski suggested combating general public ambivalence toward foreign assistance with "informed" opinion leadership – attracting corporate executives,

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[33] Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 5/3/77, "1/20/77-1/20/81", WHCF FO-43, Jimmy Carter Library; Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 11/17/77, "7/1/77-12/31/77", WHCF CO-2, Jimmy Carter Library.

public/labor officials, academics, and other high profile individuals such as "sports and entertainment figures" supportive of the president's plan to lobby Congress and the general public on the president's behalf.[35] Caddell's input was requested by Brzezinski in an attempt to verify certain assumptions he and his staff had made concerning the direction of general public opinion, various leadership organizations, and how best to maximize Carter's support levels. Similar to the public outreach programs used by other Carter administration officials on matters of economic policy, the intention presented in this proposal was to move public opinion and ultimately Congress to a position of support for the president on foreign aid issues. This intention coupled with Brzezinski's strong involvement in the giving and receiving of polling information magnifies the role of public opinion on matters of foreign policy far beyond that witnessed in the Ford administration. Here, we find evidence once again of an advocacy of strategic responsiveness to public opinion within the public policy development process.

The foreign policy issue memos Caddell drafted for Carter also support this level of responsiveness. Of the 22 memos Caddell sent to Carter, 7 specifically addressed issues in foreign policy. Once again, Caddell's transition paper on political strategy sent to Carter in December 1976 serves as the first case of Caddell's formal advice to Carter on various political issues. Caddell was not remiss in offering general advice for formulating a foreign policy agenda; he wrote:

> This is an area in which it is hard for a pollster to say what the President ought to do. The country wants peace and stability. Carter can work on problems such as nuclear proliferation, the SALT talks, world economy problems, decreasing arms sales, and the Middle East. Perhaps most

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34 Memo, Brzezinski to Caddell, 4/24/78, "9/1/77-5/31/78", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

35 Ibid., pp. 4-6.

> importantly, what is needed from the Governor is to define America's role and responsibility in the world. Another inaugural theme?[36]

Specifically on the issue of negotiating peace in the Middle East, Caddell spent considerable time in three subsequent memos advising Carter on this matter. In the final three memos, Caddell addressed the issues of defense spending and SALT talks.

In May 1977, Caddell produced his first of three lengthy memos addressing the public opinion concerning the Middle East. This first memo relayed survey results from the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research and Gallup's affiliate, Israpoll measuring Israeli attitudes toward the US and peace accords with Arab nations. Caddell's analysis was also subsequently forwarded from Carter to Brzezinski and Eizenstat for review. Within the memo, Caddell argued that there existed considerable room within which the U.S. could try to lead Israeli public opinion, based upon observations of Israeli political behavior and recent poll results; Caddell wrote:

> In the United States, increasing knowledge and sophistication creates a tendency for intransigence in public opinion on issue positions. In Israel this tendency does not appear as strong and indeed within certain significant constraints, public opinion on these major issues can be influenced markedly.
> ...from the data available, my intuitive analytic sense is that while most Israeli personal preference would be to retain the territories, to ignore the PLO, etc. that in their heart of hearts vast numbers know that such positions are unrealistic...The prospect for American leverage on Israeli public opinion seems good...[37]

Caddell uses his analysis of Israeli public opinion to encourage administrative efforts to seek peace accords despite the fact that on several survey measures Israeli resistance to peace was found.

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[36] Paper, Caddell to Carter, "Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy", "Memoranda – President Carter – 12/10/76 – 12/21/76", Jody Powell Files, Box 4, Jimmy Carter Library.

This theme is reiterated in the second polling memo Caddell issued to Carter on Middle East policy matters in July 1977. Here, Caddell found that Americans were generally supportive of Carter's efforts to seek a peaceful resolution of problems in the Middle East, with support moderately demonstrated for some territorial acquiescence by Israel to Jordan.[38] Special attention was also given to distinguishing Jewish American opinion in the context of survey questions. In Caddell's third memo to Carter on these matters, deviations in Jewish American opinion toward Israeli- Arab peace accords served as the main focus of Caddell's analysis.[39] In both of these memos, Caddell highlighted the results that demonstrated public support for the president's policies in the Middle East. Ultimately, Caddell's concern for the political acceptance of Carter's Middle East policies, both in terms of the overall population and the Jewish American population, remained at the heart of Caddell's analysis in these latter reports. Caddell identified opportunities for leadership of Israeli public opinion and general American support for Carter's policies, providing Carter with statistical evidence of support upon which his foreign policy goals in the Middle East could be promoted.

Turning his attention to other foreign policy issues, Caddell sent to Carter three memos addressing the issues of defense spending and SALT. As indicated in the Eizenstat memo that circulated Harris poll results illustrating support for increased

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[37] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 5/19/77, "Middle East: Israeli Public Opinion", White House Staff Counsel Files, Box 35, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 1-2, 5.

[38] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 7/15/77, "Caddell, Pat 7/77-3/80", WHCF O/A #743, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 12.

[39] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 10/21/77, "Caddell, Patrick (3)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 33, Jimmy Carter Library, pp. 2-4.

defense spending but not at the expense of domestic programs, Caddell argued for caution in exercising Carter's proposed 3% budget increase in military spending:

> As I have reported before, there is a substantial concern over the status of U.S. defense and a willingness to see higher spending...I am genuinely unsure of public reaction to raising the defense budget while cutting domestic programs. I suspect that many will view such an approach as unbalanced...[40]

In referring to the "many" who will find his proposal unbalanced, Caddell specifically cautioned against offending major party elites who strongly opposed defense increases. In Caddell's June 1979 memo to Carter, which offered an extensive supply of poll data recently gathered in February 1979 national report on a variety of issues, public opinion on defense spending is also analyzed. The report once again indicated a close split within the general American public on support for a defense budget increase.[41] However, despite these warnings, Carter maintained his original position of support for a 3% increase in defense spending for the 1980 budget. While he was able to maintain popular support for the increase, as the CSR poll results indicated, he did receive great pressure from inside and outside the White House to change his policy. Here, Caddell's warnings as well as others were ignored.

Finally, Caddell addressed the issue of SALT II within a December 1978 memo to Carter. Within the overall context of advising the president on the development of his State of the Union address, Caddell counseled the president on how to address the nation on this issue. Caddell advised:

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[40] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 12/13/78, "9/1/78-2/28/79", WHCF FI-1, Box 2, Jimmy Carter Library, p.1.

[41] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 6/11/79, "Caddell, (Patrick)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 33, Jimmy Carter Library, Section 4, p. 4.

> In SALT we must answer whether we approach the outside world from a perspective of fear and weakness or from a posture of maturity, strength, and wisdom – a question of fear vs. hope.[42]

The uphill battle in gaining support for SALT, as it was in the Ford administration, remained in convincing the American public that détente measures with the Soviets would not leave the US at a dangerous power disadvantage in the arms race. Early CSR reports in January 1977, demonstrated a split within the electorate on support for continued détente policies.[43] Caddell's counsel to Carter acted as a reminder to the president of this fear, and as a strategic reference for gaining public support for SALT through rhetorical methods of persuasion. That is, using the State of the Union as a vehicle for self-promotion, therefore, Caddell advised Carter to reach out to the public in order to sure up the necessary support to pressure SALT II's ratification. This strategic advice was not new for Caddell – he had already demonstrated his support for such methods by promoting the concept and ideas behind the Crisis of Confidence speech. Here, he emphasized the necessity of using this strategy in matters of foreign policy as well.

Carter's Foreign Policy Strategies

In analyzing the use of polls in the Carter White House foreign policymaking process, the timing of poll consultation as measured against administrative actions illustrates the extent to which public opinion affected foreign policy outcomes. On all three of the major foreign policy issues addressed by the Carter administration – SALT II, Panama Canal Treaties, and Middle East accords – the role of the Carter White House

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[42] Memo, Caddell to Carter, 12/14/78, "State of the Union Message, 1979, Notes – Pat Caddell", Gerald Rafshoon Files, Box 32, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 2.

public opinion apparatus can be evaluated in terms of its overall importance in these issue areas by locating poll memo data within the historical timeline of policy development. The timing and advice given in these memos when placed within this historical context can be used to define specific leadership characteristics of this administration. Additionally, as the evaluation of economic policy uncovered, it can be used as a means of distinguishing Carter from Ford.

In 1977, early poll results indicated that there was generally public opposition to the Panama Canal treaties. By Carter's own admission, the administration pursued negotiations in February 1977 regardless of the policy's general popularity. However, instead of ignoring public opinion, the Carter administration actively set out to swing poll results in their favor. Carter's July 1977 polling memo forwarded to White House Counselor Bob Lipshultz and Congressional Liaison Frank Moore, demonstrates Carter's attention to public opinion on these matters. Specifically forwarded were polling information that identified low levels of public awareness of treaty negotiations and high levels of support for U.S. control over the Canal. Subsequently, a public relations campaign to gain support for ratification of these treaties ensued.[44] In his memoirs, Carter credited outreach efforts with turning the tide for treaty ratification:

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[43] Poll, CSR to DNC, January 1977, "An analysis of political attitudes in the United States of America", WHCF – O/A #318, Jimmy Carter Library, p. 114.

[44] George Moffett, who later became a staff assistant to Carter in 1978, spear-headed a private campaign, the Committee of Americans for the Canal Treaties, to work closely with the White House on achieving treaty ratification. This information can be found within the "Historical Materials in the Jimmy Carter Library, 3rd edition", Jimmy Carter Library, 1995, p. 22; Archival evidence of Moffett's ties to the White House public relations campaign are illustrated through an extensive collection of poll information, notes, and comments concerning the Panama Canal treaties between August 1977 and February 1978. While no formal memoranda exist for Moffet to document communications timelines with various White House operatives, his use of Caddell polls indicates that he was indeed closely connected during this time frame. See "Polling Data", George Moffet Files, Box 9, Jimmy Carter Library.

> Our campaign was paying off; it was becoming more fashionable to support the treaties. A new Gallup Poll in February found 45 percent in favor and only 42 percent opposed. This was the first time we had a plurality on our side. Among those who were "better informed", 57 percent favored the treaties.[45]

In February 1978, one year after the treaties were originally negotiated, Carter took up the campaign by addressing the nation through a nationally televised speech specifically addressing the necessity of treaty ratification. Two months later the Panama Canal Treaties were successfully ratified.

This foreign policy issue case clearly illustrated the Carter administration's desire to lead public opinion on matters of foreign policy. Carter entered into negotiations on the Panama Canal Treaties motivated by his opinions, but did not intend to ignore the overall importance of public opinion in that process of ratification. He believed that the low public salience of the issue gave the administration room to educate the public on the issue and in turn mobilize support in Congress for treaty ratification. Indeed, the administration and Congressional treaty supporters used reports of increasing public support for the treaties during the course of their public campaign to pressure Senate ratification. Once again, subsequent evaluations of the treaty ratification process demonstrated that these reports of shifts in public opinion to support ratification were methodologically unsound. In Smith and Hogan's analysis of polling items on the Panama Canal Treaties, Caddell's polls as well as Gallup, Harris, and other prominent public polling sources are evaluated.[46] While many have been accused of misinterpreting public opinion, it is important to note that I did not find any archival evidence to suggest

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[45] Carter, p. 167.

[46] Smith and Hogan, pp. 8-9.

that Caddell or the Carter administration actively engaged in manipulating public opinion by purposefully promoting inaccurate results. The administration did intend to lead public opinion on this policy matter and use the force of public opinion to impact upon the ratification process. Fortunately for the administration, several public polling organizations verified their faulty results and unintentionally aided their mission – without these critical mistakes in measuring public opinion the administration would not have been able to demonstrate real public support and in turn would have been in a more precarious position for pressuring Senate ratification.

On the SALT II treaty the Carter administration once again attempted to lead public opinion, however unsuccessfully. Singled out by the administration as a high priority issue, Carter was determined to negotiate successful arms limitation agreements with the Soviets where previous administrations had failed. In May 1977, negotiations produced SALT II and once again the fate of the administration's policy rested on treaty ratification. After initial negotiations, Caddell's poll information as well as other poll sources demonstrated marginal support for SALT II and the continuation of détente policies. In the spirit of the Panama Canal Treaties' public relations campaign, the Carter White House developed public outreach strategies to generate greater support for SALT II's ratification. Once again, the administration used State Department officials to lead a public education effort on SALT II, sending speakers out into the field to drum up support among opinion leaders and the public.[47] In June 1979, a full two years after the terms of the treaty were drafted, Carter addressed the nation in an attempt to educate and lobby public support for SALT II's ratification. Subsequently, Anne Wexler, director for

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[47] Memo, Nimetz (Department of State) to Jordan, 10/12/78, "(SALT), Briefing Bood for SALT Speakers", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 53, Jimmy Carter Library.

White House public outreach efforts, was charged with the business of organizing all White House lobbying efforts on SALT II, seeking private endorsements from opinion leaders and influential governmental elites.[48] Despite these efforts, public support for SALT II and détente policies continued to wane and ultimately the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan dissolved any and all chances that the Senate would ratify SALT II.

Both SALT II and the Panama Canal illustrate the limits of a president's ability to lead public opinion. On SALT II, Thomas Graham has argued that the Carter Administration's battle to gain support for a new US-Soviet arms control treaty was poorly timed, making mobilization efforts quite precarious. Not only had this treaty grown unpopular over time, but also Carter's public approval ratings had already significantly declined to well below 50 percent by the time SALT II was signed.[49] Carter's awareness of public opinion trends was evident from the poll memo evidence; he both received and sent memos addressing his position with the public on this foreign policy matter. While Caddell and early CSR reports identified a split within the electorate on support for continued détente policies, no formal advice was offered to direct the administration away from its campaign efforts to build support for SALT II. Over time, it was difficult to gain the momentum necessary to finalize ratification. Furthermore, intervening political factors such as the invasion of Afghanistan combined with low presidential prestige levels severely limited the administration's ability to lead public opinion on this policy matter. On the Panama Canal, the administration benefited from misinterpretations of public opinion, where increases in public support for the

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[48] Memo, Wexler to Cutler, 10/12/79, "SALT,1979", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 53, Jimmy Carter Library.

treaties were erroneous in reality. Accurate public opinion trends maintaining stable public opposition to treaty ratification would have reflected the administration's failure to lead public opinion to support this policy matter as well.

In pursuit of peace accords in the Middle East, however, the Carter administration met no sustained political or public opposition to its foreign policy objectives. Extensive polling by Caddell of Israeli and American public opinion early in the administration indicated that both Israeli and American publics were supportive of Carter's intervention in this policy area. Motivated by his own desires and convictions to mediate peace in the Middle East and backed by public support, Carter was able to successfully preside over an Israeli-Egyptian peace settlement in September 1978 and its finalization in March 1979. Ultimately, Carter's attention to public opinion polling in the early stages of policy development showcased his commitment to incorporating public opinion into his political considerations. When he found himself in a position of like-mindedness with the public, he did not have to engage in the same kind of leadership activities that the Panama Canal and SALT II treaties demanded. He could champion public opinion, rather than attempt to move it in a new direction. The policy success the Carter administration achieved by following rather than leading public opinion in foreign policy matters underscores the difficulties faced in attempting to direct public opinion.

Moreover, all of these cases serve to illustrate the type of relationship fostered between public opinion and the foreign policymaking process in the Ford White House versus the Carter White House. Once again, Carter was much more strongly involved in the giving and receiving of polling information on foreign policy matters than Ford. Top

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[49] Thomas W. Graham, "Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy Decision Making", in The New Politics of American Foreign Policy, ed. By D. Deese. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 207.

foreign policy decision makers in the Carter White House -- Carter, Caddell, Brzezinski, and Powell – actively engaged in the White House polling apparatus. However, Ford and Kissinger remained far outside the Ford White House polling operations. Indeed, the Ford White House developed foreign policy quite independent of public opinion; public opinion was only given consideration in matters of electoral strategy development. Whereas Carter's foreign policy originated from him and his closest advisors, they remained constantly vigilant of the direction of public opinion and its strategic usage in these affairs. Specifically, the Carter administration actively engaged in efforts to follow and lead public opinion when possible and deemed necessary. Based upon these behavior differences, Ford once again maintained a classical trustee leadership style while Carter positioned himself as a politico on matters of foreign policy. These and other conclusions reached in preceding chapters are addressed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Introduction

Political pundits are in the business of speculating about the future based upon their evaluations of past and current political events. Bob Woodward, in his recent evaluation of all five presidencies after Nixon, sought to encapsulate some defining quality that distinguishes "post-Watergate" presidencies from their predecessors. In Woodward's estimation, the definitive characteristic that links all of these presidents together in time is the prevailing culture of scandal, distrust, and presidential paranoia.[1] Whether in agreement with Woodward or not, there is great interest given to political or social theories which seek to categorize phenomena along various comparative dimensions.

Political scientists also are in the business of studying trends and making predictions based upon central tendencies in political norms and practices. In terms of patterns within the overall institutional development of the presidency, Stephen Skowronek has argued that if we want to truly understand the nature of presidencies we must locate their place within "political time" or among larger "coalition changes" that shift throughout history.[2] Additionally, Skowronek argues that presidencies can be categorized in terms of their position within the greater historical development of presidential power, distinguished by changes in institutional resources and relationships

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[1] Bob Woodward, Shadow: Five Presidents and the Legacy of Watergate, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999, p. xii.

[2] Stephen Skowronek, "Presidential Leadership in Political Time", in Michael Nelson, ed., The Presidency and the Political System, 3rd edition, Washington, D.C: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1990, p. 118.

forged within the larger government construct.[3] On this point, Skowronek identifies the current post-Watergate presidencies as supporting a new era of "plebiscitary"-styled politics:

> A plebiscitary politics has taken hold over the last twenty years, a period distinguished by new tools of mass communication, by international interdependence, and by intensified international competition...As presidents have gained their own political apparatuses...Congress has become more insulated from traditional forms of presidential influence. Using mass communications technologies, presidents now cultivate a direct political relationship with the public at large. The plebiscitary presidents routinely appeal over the heads of the elites of the Washington establishment, hoping to use their public standing to compel that establishment into following their lead.[4]

The distinguishing characteristic of post-Watergate presidencies, according to Skowronek's estimation, lies in their ability to foster strong relationships directly with the public. More importantly, they are distinguished by their in-house capabilities of performing these acts. The post-Watergate White House ultimately depends upon its communications and pubic opinion apparatus' ability to generate the presidential power necessary to govern.

Skowronek's description of this post-Watergate era is consistent with the theories and evidence presented by other leading presidency scholars I have previously discussed who address the development of presidential power in the twentieth century, namely Neustadt, Kernell, and Rose. Based upon the arguments offered by these authors, we would expect to find presidents situated within this post-Watergate era operating within the White House in similar fashion, using information and technology to gain political

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[3] Stephen Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 52.

[4] Ibid., pp. 54-55.

power in Washington. As a test to this "post-Watergate" legacy, I offer up the evidence presented by the Ford and Carter archives concerning the organization and functioning of their White House public opinion apparatuses. The larger question that needs to be probed: Is there a prevailing leadership role that defines this era? In identifying the parameters of leadership for both Ford and Carter, our greater understanding of the post-Watergate presidency is demonstrated.

Ford and Carter Revisited

Both the Ford and Carter presidencies have been characterized as promoting a White House open and accessible to public influence. If the post-Watergate era were distinguished by the president's ability to use the public as leverage in Washington, then this openness and accessibility would manifest itself within the overall structure of the White House. In order to mobilize public opinion, president's need to be constantly aware of where the public stands on various political, economic and social issues. The creation of an in-house public opinion apparatus within the White House facilitates this process. Previous studies concerning the development of the White House public opinion apparatus prior to the post-Watergate era illustrate increasing centralization of these functions within daily White House operations.[5] Similarly, presidents have become increasingly reliant on private pollsters for their information and advice. Based on these trends and institutional developments, I expected to find evidence within the Ford and Carter administrations to support this plebiscitary-styled presidency model. However,

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[5] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Disorganized Democracy: The Institutionalization of Polling and Public Opinion Analysis during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon Presidencies", Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, New York, September 1-4, 1994, p. 3.

while the Carter White House largely operated in this manner, the Ford White House did not.

Gerald Ford remained well off-center from the daily operations of his White House public opinion apparatus. Scattered evidence of his signature on archival documents suggests that he did receive poll memoranda for review. Most of these documents monitored changes in Ford's presidential approval ratings. Ford's direct link to the public, however, was maintained primarily through his mailbag rather than through his White House public opinion apparatus. Ford received weekly mail reports summarizing the issues and concerns addressed in letters sent to the White House. Unlike the sophisticated advice a pollster or poll analysis can offer a president, these reports provided Ford with very little valid information from which public opinion could be established. Ford's chief of staff, Richard Cheney, and the White House Operations staff oversaw the formal operations of his White House public opinion apparatus. Using poll results and analyses primarily offered by private pollster, Robert Teeter, and other public sources such as Harris and Gallup, poll information circulated throughout various arteries of the administration.

Evidence concerning the use of polls in the Ford White House, however, suggests that public opinion played a very limited role in the policy decision-making process. Indeed, in most cases, 1976 electoral pressures primarily motivated consideration given to poll results. Presidential approval ratings were circulated between staff members more frequently than poll results concerning economic, social, or foreign policy matters. Furthermore, when attention was given to these specific policy matters, analysis of polling on these issues concentrated on the political ramifications more often than the

policy implications derived from these results. For example, in the early development stages of economic policies in the Ford White House, particularly in developing the WIN campaign, there is no evidence of poll use at this stage. Only after anti-inflation policies were set did staff members such as Robert Hartmann and Foster Chanock advise the White House to respond to increasing public disapproval of the president's economic policies by suggesting a new focus on public concern for rising unemployment levels and other policy issues. Ultimately, both of these advisors were primarily concerned with the effect low public approval levels would have on Ford's political prestige above all else.

On matters of foreign policy, the Ford White House continued to use polls as a means of strategic positioning for re-election rather than for policy development. SALT II negotiations and the Middle East Sinai accords, two of the most important foreign policy objectives sought by the Ford administration, were executed by the administration based primarily upon the prominence of these foreign policy objectives within the Nixon administration rather than on the basis of their overall importance for the general public. Public opinion on these matters was addressed by Teeter late in 1975 only to suggest that the president place greater emphasis on promoting a strong presidential image for his own electoral benefit. With the events surrounding the Mayaguez incident, Ford and his top advisors charted a course primarily based on their own judgments. However, Cheney admitted that Ford was sensitive to low public approval at the time of the incident and took action against the Cambodians with the intent of being perceived as strong and decisive within the US and international communities. Ford's attempt at "going international" on Mayaguez to boost his approval ratings illustrates to the fullest extent the role of public opinion in Ford White House political deliberations; polls were used

primarily as a political necessity, rather than as an integral tool for developing and directing public policy.

Unlike Ford, Jimmy Carter was highly involved in the process of giving and receiving public opinion polls. The Carter White House public opinion apparatus was organized with the intent of maintaining Carter at the center of all operations. Carter sought a close relationship with his private pollster Patrick Caddell. In fact, the majority of poll documents circulated throughout the White House either originate from or extend to Carter and Caddell. Caddell provided Carter with more than just raw number crunching. He frequently provided Carter with extensive poll analysis reports, offering detailed strategic advice on how to interpret and integrate poll information into the policymaking process. More importantly, his advice was taken seriously, with Carter and other staff members often translating his analysis into White House actions. Most notably, his plea for the administration to address rising levels of public cynicism chiefly precipitated Carter's infamous "Crisis of Confidence" speech. Several other individuals participated in the White House public opinion apparatus as well, with circulation of polling memoranda extending to a wide variety of offices and staffers of various rank and position. Among Carter's top advisors, namely Powell, Jordan, Eizenstat, and Brzezinski, polling information was commonly distributed to address various economic, social, and foreign policy issues in addition to public perceptions of presidential performance.

The Carter White House used public opinion polls strategically in two distinct ways, as a means of setting its policy agenda and for mobilizing support for the administration's public policy. That is, unlike the Ford administration, the Carter White

House in some very clear instances used public opinion as a guide for public policy development and a strategic device for influencing policy outcomes. On anti-inflation policies, public opinion's influence along these two dimensions is most prominently displayed. Upon entering office, Carter was committed to developing energy and economic stimulus policies consistent with his campaign promises to easing the energy crisis and unemployment. However, poll reports from Caddell and other polling organizations demonstrated increasing concern within the general public for rising inflation, not unemployment. Responding to public concern, Carter elevated anti-inflation policy to the top of their economic policy agenda. Subsequently, the White House set about a public relations campaign to build support for their policies, to raise Carter's approval ratings presidential approval and ensure a desired policy outcome.

In foreign policy matters, Carter used public opinion polls strictly as a strategic device for achieving policy outcomes. In developing his foreign policy agenda, Carter attached high priority to such issues as SALT II, the Panama Canal treaties, and Middle East peace settlements based primarily upon his own political judgments. While public opinion did not affect Carter's decision to pursue these foreign policy matters, it did play an important role in the bargaining process to achieve Senate consent for the ratification of both the SALT II and Panama Canal treaties. In both instances, the Carter administration launched extensive public relations campaigns to lead public opinion in order to influence Senate consent. Unable to successfully lead public opinion on SALT II, the administration was unsuccessful in securing treaty ratification. The Panama Canal treaties were successfully ratified, yet public opinion did not support this outcome. Misinterpretations of the public's position on the issue during the Carter administration's

campaign for ratification ultimately worked in favor of the administration's objectives. Without this twist in events, the administration would have been hard-pressed to prove its ability to harness public opinion to pressure ratification. Despite these outcomes, however, both cases serve as a testament to the greater extent the Carter administration sought to incorporate public opinion into the policymaking process than the Ford administration.

Ultimately, Ford and Carter contrast greatly in terms of their public opinion leadership roles. The structure and function of White House polling operations illustrate sharp differences in the level of public opinion responsiveness demonstrated within these two presidencies. Ford's historical legacy of healing the nation after Nixon by offering a more open administration to public influences is not supported by a thorough examination of White House operations. There are no clear instances of public opinion exerting influence on public policy development and minimal evidence of the strategic use of public opinion to pressure policy outcomes. Instead, the Ford White House used its public opinion apparatus primarily as a device to better position Ford in the '76 election. Almost all attempts to boost Ford's public approval ratings were motivated for this outcome and not focused singularly on the passage of public policy. With his words and actions Ford presented himself as a trustee president, promoting his own political judgments above popular opinion.

Carter, however, actively sought to integrate public opinion into the policy decision-making process. Historical accounts that depict Carter as isolated from the external influence of public opinion are unsubstantiated by the evidence generated from his White House public opinion apparatus. In several instances Carter acted responsively

to public opinion trends, choosing to follow or lead public opinion on different policy measures. In choosing either response, Carter often weighed the strength of his own convictions against the political necessity of responsive action under specific circumstances. Carter's insistence on leading public opinion on anti-inflation and energy policies as well as the Panama Canal and SALT II treaties was driven by his belief in the necessity of public support to achieve policy outcomes; the force of public opinion was needed as leverage with Congress. However, Carter and his administration also expressed a strong desire to incorporate public opinion into the political process based not just on its strategic properties, but because responsiveness in and of itself was viewed as desirable. Carter's decision to follow public outcries for anti-inflation policies and to allay public cynicism leveled against government, while offering their own strategic benefits, were also motivated by a desire to champion the public's right to be heard in the political process. Given these actions and motivations, Carter promoted a politico-styled presidency, choosing to follow or lead public opinion under different circumstances. The Carter administration's high sensitivity to public opinion suggests that public opinion was rarely ignored.

The Ford and Carter presidencies serve as an interesting chapter within the overall history of the development of the White House public opinion apparatus. That is, the post-Watergate presidencies do not as a cohesive unit support the trend identified by Jacobs and Shapiro in preceding administrations of support for increasing centralization of public opinion within overall White House functions. The Ford administration's limited use of polling deviates strongly from these preceding trends. And yet, the Carter administration demonstrates a strong return to the poll-reliant presidency previously

identified; only the Carter administration strongly supports Skowronek's theory of plebiscitary-styled politics. The Ford administration's departure from previous developmental trends signals the possibility that succeeding presidencies may not always follow the predicted path of public policy integration. Whether or not the Ford administration proves to be "the exception to the rule" remains to be seen.

Reagan, Bush, and Clinton

Recent studies concerning Reagan, Bush and Clinton's handling of public opinion continue to support the full integration of public opinion in the governing process. All three of these presidents incorporated public opinion polling into their daily operations and policy considerations. While archival research in the manner I have tracked has yet to be fully analyzed for the Bush and Clinton presidencies, studies using interviews and mass media reports have uncovered revealing evidence of public opinion use within these most recent presidential cases.

Ronald Reagan's two terms of office demonstrate strong attention to public opinion by both the president and his top advisors. Diane Heith's analysis of polling memoranda within the Reagan archives defines the structure and overall importance of the White House public opinion apparatus within the larger dynamic of the Reagan White House. Heith argues that "the Reagan system ensured a consistent awareness of public opinion if not a consistent usage by the top echelon of White House staffers."[6] Reagan received monthly polling updates and was personally briefed on the latest poll trends.[7]

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[6] Diane Heith, "Staffing the White House Public Opinion Apparatus, 1969-88", Paper prepared for delivery at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA, August 28 - September 1, 1996, p. 14.

[7] Diane Heith, "Presidential Polling and the Leadership of Public Thought", Paper prepared for presentation at "Presidential Power: Forging the Presidency for the 21st Century", Columbia University, New York, November 15-16, 1996, p. 11.

Manned by chief of staff James Baker and his assistant Richard Beal, the Reagan public opinion apparatus dispersed polling information on a variety of topics to several staff members. Beal, a former pollster with the DMI-Wirthlin polling organization, was hired by the Reagan administration to serve as a staff member within the White House after serving Reagan on the campaign trail. While private pollsters for previous presidencies remained outside of the White House, the inside position was not only unprecedented but advantageous; as Heith argues "employing Beal provided the administration with a unique opportunity to truly coordinate polling between the White House and the polling firm."[8]

In deciphering Reagan's use of polling information from Heith's analysis and other accounts, there is conflicting evidence that defines Reagan's position vis-à-vis responsive opinion leadership. Heith argues that the Reagan administration worked diligently to respond to the needs of core constituents, but rarely sought to win over those outside on the "periphery".[9] Richard Beal and Ronald Hinckley authored a published report on Reagan's use of public opinion polling, identifying specific actions taken by the administration to respond to public opinion. Offering as an example of this responsiveness, the authors identify the administration's attempt to soften a "gender gap" of support for Reagan and his policies by highlighting several "women's issues" in its policy agenda. Specifically, they identified various female appointments to cabinet positions as well as presidential support for various family-centered issues that were

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[8] Heith, "Staffing the White House Public Opinion Apparatus, 1969-88", p. 13.

[9] Heith, "Presidential Polling and the Leadership of Public Thought", p. 12 – 13.

motivated by the administrations desire win over this demographic.[10] These observations suggest that Reagan's responsive leadership of public opinion rarely, if ever, took the form of efforts to direct public opinion, but monitored and reacted to the opinion of core conservative opinion holders.

However, Douglas Foyle's evaluation of Reagan's use of public opinion in matters of foreign policy suggests that Reagan did not go to great lengths to incorporate public opinion into the foreign policy decision-making process. According to Foyle, Reagan based his foreign policy on his own personal perceptions of the national interest, rather than on public opinion trends. Foyle illustrates this observation through several foreign policy examples; on Reagan's stewardship of the Lebanon bombings:

> Throughout the Lebanon bombing case, Reagan acted consistently with predictions based on his beliefs that he would rely on the national security requirements for a decision. He focused almost exclusively on what he perceived to be the nation's security interests and largely ignored public opinion, even though many of his key advisers pressed him to act according to these considerations.[11]

While Heith and Beal and Hinckley do not evaluate Reagan's use of polling along the foreign policy dimension, it is quite possible to assume that Reagan maintained a responsive role to public opinion on domestic policy matters but not on foreign policy matters. Future academic studies of this administration will have to clarify these conflicting accounts of Reagan's leadership of public opinion along these different policy dimensions. Based upon our limited knowledge, the Reagan administration supports Skowronek's model of a plebiscitary-styled presidency only insofar as the Reagan White

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[10] Richard S. Beal and Ronald H. Hinckley, "Presidential Decision Making and Opinion Polls", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 472 (March 1984), pp. 72-84, p. 79.

[11] Douglas C. Foyle, Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 211.

House public opinion polling apparatus was highly sophisticated and functional to serve these purposes. Like Ford, the lack of responsive action taken by Reagan, however, does very little to support the argument that post-Watergate presidents rely heavily on this information within the policymaking process.

John Geer and Douglas Foyle's individual analyses of the Bush administration's relationship to public opinion maintain, however, complementary views of White House responsive to public opinion. In the absence of formal archival analysis of the Bush administration's public opinion apparatus, these two studies serve as the most recent estimations of the Bush White House's position in the overall development of the public opinion apparatus. Identifying Bush as a "reactive president", Geer recounts Bush's use of polls with specific attention paid to the issue of health care.[12] In 1991, Harris Wofford ran for a US Senate seat in Pennsylvania on a race successfully centered on the issue of national health care reform. The issue resonated so strongly with voters in Pennsylvania that national media attention to the issue skyrocketed. In turn, the general public elevated the issue to a higher priority level on national opinion polls. According to Geer, only under intense pressure did Bush finally respond, developing a comprehensive health care reform plan in 1992.[13] Geer's recount of these events suggests that Bush remained unresponsive to public opinion until political necessity forced him to respond. This characterization of Bush is consistent with Foyle's description of Bush's handling of foreign policy:

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[12] John G. Geer, From Tea Leaves to Opinion Polls: A Theory of Democratic Leadership. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, p. 77.

[13] Ibid., p. 80.

> While keeping an eye on public support, he directed most of his deliberations to other interests, used diplomacy to achieve his goals, did little to lead the people, but assumed they would support him if he made the correct decisions.[14]

By both Geer and Foyle's estimations, the Bush administration demonstrated little interest in integrating public opinion into the policy decision-making process.

Finally, what little is known about the Clinton administration rests primarily on secondary accounts of White House operations. Some recent memoirs of Clinton staff officials, like George Stephanopoulos, have testified to the extensive use of polling within the Clinton administration. Stephanopoulos attests to Clinton's strong appetite for polling information, going so far in the first term so as to engage multiple private pollsters to provide him with a variety of poll reports.[15] Douglas Foyle's assessment of Clinton's sensitivity to public opinion on foreign policy matters supports Stephanopoulos' assertion. Foyle argues:

> Clinton believes that the public communicates its will and sets policy at election time, and he sees his obligation as acting on his campaign promises in regard to foreign policy...
> Even though he does not face election again, Clinton, in his second term, appears to be applying his concern about public opinion to the Democrats' prospects in the next elections, since he sees these elections as judgments of his policies.[16]

By these estimations, the Clinton White House has been very responsive to public opinion, elevating the relationship forged between the president and the public to entirely new level. That is, the prominence of public opinion within the Clinton White House

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[14] Ibid., p. 246.

[15] George Stephanopoulos, All Too Human: A Political Education, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1999, p. 329.

[16] Foyle, pp. 193-194.

policymaking process has been identified as far exceeding that witnessed in previous administrative models.

In an analysis of Clinton's first year in office, Jacobs and Shapiro have tracked high levels of public opinion responsiveness based upon secondary accounts of White House operations. Within this first year, Jacobs and Shapiro identify more than 10 issues upon which the Clinton administration attempted to provide responsive leadership, creating both policy successes and failures.[17] In many of these early cases, the administration chose to follow public opinion, finding the issues of greatest importance to the American public and enacting policies to meet their demands. However, Jacobs and Shapiro also identify examples of the Clinton administration's attempt to lead public opinion during this time period; the first year held a mixed bag of leadership styles:

> In 1993-94, the public's agenda of pressing problems, found in poll results, had a moderate impact on the president's agenda. The president's early attention to the major campaign issue of health reform corresponded with one of the public's greatest concerns...the president avoided labor, urban and racial issues, which were not major public concerns. The early administration did, however, focus on issues that were not the most prominent on the public's agenda (gays in the military, gun control, and to lesser extent, deficit reduction), and it relatively neglected other issues like welfare reform, which had been a prominent concern during the 1992 campaign.[18]

Moreover, Jacobs and Shapiro find that public opinion was frequently consulted as a marketing tool, where the administration often used public opinion as a means of

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[17] Larry Jacobs and Robert Shapiro, "Public Opinion in President Clinton's First Year: Leadership and Responsiveness." Prepared for presentation at the conference on "The Clinton Presidency: Campaigning, Governing, and the Psychology of Leadership," The Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, November 18-19, 1993, pp. 14-18, 24-29.

[18] Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "The Politicization of Public Opinion: The Right for the Pulpit" in The Social Divide: Political Parties and the Future of Activist Government, ed. by Margaret Weir, Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1998, p. 97.

"fashioning an appealing presentation of decided policy" to the general public.[19] In this sense, public opinion was not always the guiding force in policymaking suggested by both the Stephanopoulos and Foyle assessments. Showing tendencies in his first term toward both leading and following public opinion, Clinton from all these examinations assumes a "politico" style of leadership similar to that found with Carter.

As with Ford and Carter, the evidence presented in recent studies of public opinion polling within the last three presidencies presents serious problems in our attempt to link the post-Watergate presidents together in political time. That is, while the monitoring of public opinion remains a highly centralized White House function within all five administrations, no prevailing opinion leadership patterns are well established by archival and secondary source analysis. The evidence roughly situates Ford, Reagan, and Bush as trustees and Carter and Clinton as politicos. Ultimately, these differences in opinion leadership rest on individual assessments of public opinion's value within the overall political process. We cannot automatically assume, therefore, that future presidents in the post-Watergate era will behave in a responsive fashion.

Leadership of Public Opinion

What is gained from a comparative analysis of all the post-Watergate presidents is a greater understanding of the limitations of presidential leadership of public opinion. Specifically, there are greater limits placed on a president's ability to successfully lead public opinion rather than follow or react to public opinion trends. Diane Heith and John Geer have argued that because of the greater constraints placed on presidential attempts to lead public opinion, such leadership is rarely attempted. In leading public opinion, presidents must exert a great deal of energy mobilizing public support. Their ability to

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[19] Ibid., p. 98.

move public opinion rests on accurate assessments of various measures of public opinion; presidents must accurately determine that the public will respond to directive leadership. The Carter administration certainly illustrates these constraints, where attempts to lead public opinion on foreign policy matters proved unsuccessful. Most notably, the climate of increasing frustrations with détente policies compromised the administration's ability to mobilize support for the ratification of a SALT II – a dimension of public opinion the administration underestimated in its intensity.

However, despite these limitations, presidents are not abandoning the opportunity to attempt "transformative" leadership as Heith and Geer's arguments suggest; the post-Watergate presidents are not card-carrying delegates. Indeed, while presidents can experience obvious difficulties in attempting to lead public opinion, the decision to follow public opinion may not always prove to be the best course of action either. A delegate-styled presidency, for which there is no clearly defined modern presidential example, should not theoretically exist without its own set of limitations. Using public opinion as the primary guide in directing public policy can create chaotic and disjointed political agendas. Therefore, presidents can suffer heavy criticism for appearing to follow public opinion. Likewise, presidents who continue to ignore public opinion also suffer the negative criticism. If and when they may finally react to public opinion, the damage already assailed to their presidential power may be too great from which to recover. Ford's decision to pardon Nixon despite majority public opinion set against this action and the subsequent damage it caused to his approval ratings clearly illustrates this point. Therefore, perhaps no presidential opinion leadership style is without its fair share of limitations.

Ultimately, in this new era of plebiscitary-styled politics, no one presidential leadership style prevails. While all modern presidents are well-organized to receive and disseminate public opinion information, public opinion usage and corresponding leadership styles vary among administrations. What is established by this examination of post-Watergate presidencies is the necessity of analyzing presidential leadership styles among several dimensions to better address the individual differences that exist among presidents. The variance in leadership styles among presidents must be explained by identifying not only differences in personal philosophies and White House structures, but also different approaches presidents use to integrate public opinion into the governing process.

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APPENDIX A : FORD ARCHIVAL DATA

A. FORD POLLING MEMOS (N=51)

Office	Staff Member	Received[1]	Sent	Totals[2]
White House Operations Staff				
	Richard Cheney	15	1	16
	Donald Rumsfeld	2	1	3
	Foster Chanock	--	3	3
	David Gergen	1	--	1
	Robert Goldwin	--	3	3
		18	8	26
Market Opinion Research	Robert Teeter	--	16	16
President Ford Committee				
	Bo Callaway	10	1	11
	Stuart Spencer	3	--	3
		13	1	14
Editorial/Speechwriting Staff				
	Robert Hartmann	4	2	6
	Gwen Anderson	1	1	2
	John Calkins	2	--	2
	Paul Theis	1	--	1
		8	3	11
Other White House Counsellors & Advisors	William Seidman	3	1	4
	Philip Buchen	1	1	2
	Dean Burch	--	1	1
	Rogers C.B. Morton	1	--	1
	James Lynn	2	1	3
		7	4	11
Press Secretary Staff				
	Ron Nessen	2	1	3
	Fred Slight	--	5	5
	Bill Roberts	--	1	1
		2	7	9

[1] Polling memos can be sent to or cc'd to more than one person, therefore this count reflects more than the 51 memos which were sent.

[2] Totals for each office of the White House, as well as other key players in the White House public opinion apparatus reflect the frequency with which offices and individuals were involved in the process of receiving and sending memos. For example, five members of the White House Operations Staff were cited as being involved in 26 out of the total 51 polling memos.

Staff Secretary				
	Jerry Jones	6	2	8
	James Connor	1	--	1
		7	2	9
Domestic Council Staff				
	James Cannon	4	1	5
	James Cavanaugh	1	--	1
	George Humphreys	--	1	1
	Michael Raoul-Duval	1	--	1
	Richard Parsons	1	--	1
		7	2	9
The President				
	Gerald Ford	5	1	6
Congressional Relations Staff & Public Liaison Staff				
	John Marsh	2	--	2
	William Timmons	1	--	1
	William Baroody	1	1	2
		4	1	5
The Vice President				
	Nelson Rockefeller	2	1	3
	Jon Howe	--	1	1
		2	2	4
Cabinet/Government Officials				
	Alan Greenspan	2	--	2
	William Fisher	1	--	1
		3	0	3
Other Pollsters				
	Louis Harris	--	1	1
	Ted Garrish	--	1	1
	Lloyd Free	--	1	1
		0	3	3
Others (positions unknown)				
	Paul O'Neill	1	--	1
	Margaret Earl	--	1	1
	Bob Marik	1	--	1
	Dunham	1	--	1
	Wallinson	1	--	1
		4	1	5

B. FORD ISSUE MEMOS (N=28)

Governing Issues (N=19)[3]	Frequency[4]
Presidential Performance	12
Congressional Performance	3
Nixon Pardon	1
Vice-Presidential Running-mate	1
Role of Fed.Government	1
Confidence in government	2
Economic Issues (N= 10)	
Economy- General	8
Inflation	5
Unemployment	7
Big Business	2
Taxes	5
Revenue Sharing	1
Federal Spending	2
Fed. Regulations	2
Wage & Price Controls	3
Energy Crisis	7
Gasoline Rationing	1
Foreign Policy Issues (N= 9)	
Foreign Policy - General	3
Defense Spending	1
Foreign Aid	1
Mayaguez	2
Use of Military Force	2
Detente	2
United Nations	1
Role of U.S. internationally	1
Relations with USSR	1
Relations with China	1
Relations with Middle East	1
Arms sales	1

[3] The N's associated with the following issue categories – economic issues, governing issues, social issues, and foreign policy issues – represent the number of issue memos that addressed this general issue category. The N's do not total to 28 because multiple issue categories can be addressed within one memo. See Table 5. 1 for a detailed breakdown of Issue Memo General Topic frequencies.

[4] Through content analysis, I coded all memos for issue content. Some memos discussed more than one issue at a time. Each issue addressed within a memo was tallied, but I did not measure how many times within each memo an issue was discussed. For example, if inflation was discussed 5 times, it was coded only once. For example, if inflation was discussed 5 times within a memo, it was coded only once. Keeping with this example, my content analysis totaled 5 out 28 issue memos that addressed the specific issue of inflation at least once within each document. I am more interested in measuring how many different issues were covered within each memo, rather than the extensiveness of each issue in and of itself.

Social Issues (N=6)

Quality of Life	2
Crime	4
Gun Control	1
Education	2
Health Care	3
Welfare	1
Aid to Elderly	2
Public Housing	2
Transportation	1
Environmental Protection	2
Regulate strip mining	1
Auto emissions	1
Drugs	2
Police Protection	1
Aid the Poor	1

C. POLLING MEMO BIBLIOGRAPHY (*Issue Memo)

1 Memo, Burch to Hartmann, Marsh, Buchen, Seidman, Timmons, Anderson, and Theis, 9/9/74, "Public Opinion Polling – General (1)", Robert Hartmann Papers, Box 63, Gerald Ford Library.

2 *Memo, Roberts to Nessen, 10/7/74, "Harris Poll – Nixon Pardon", Ron Nessen Papers, Box 119, Gerald Ford Library.

3 Memo, Slight to Jones, 1/6/75, "Polling – General (1), Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

4 Memo, Jones to Calkins, 1/7/75, "Polling – General (1), Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

5 Memo, Slight to Jones, 1/28/75, "Polling – General (1), Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

6 *Memo, Hartmann to Ford, 2/75, "P.O. Polling – General (2)", Robert Hartmann Papers, Box 163, Gerald Ford Library.

7 Memo, Nessen to Cheney, 2/1/75, "Public Opinion Polls, 2/18/75", WHCF PR-15, Box 141, Gerald Ford Library.

8 Memo, Anderson to Calkins, 2/5/75, "Public Opinion Polling – General (1)" , Robert Hartmann Papers, Box 63, Gerald Ford Library.

9 *Memo, Jon Howe to Rockefeller, 3/5/75, "Polls", James M. Cannon Files, Box 76, Gerald Ford Library.

10 *Memo, Rockefeller to Cannon, Dunham, Parsons, and Wallinson, 3/12/75, "Polls", James M. Cannon Files, Box 76, Gerald Ford Library.

11 *Memo, Goldwin to Rumsfeld, Cheney, Connor, Marsh, Hartmann, and Fisher, 5/1/75, "Jewish Issues (2)", Robert Goldwin Files, Box 7, Gerald Ford Library.

12 *Memo, Jones to Cheney, 5/27/75, "Polls – General (1)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

13 Memo, Garrish to Baroody, 5/29/75, "Robert Hartmann (2)", William J. Baroody, 1974-1977 Files, Box 22, Gerald Ford Library.

14 Memo, Seidman to Ford, 6/9/75, "Louis Harris", William Seidman Files, Box 186, Gerald Ford Library.

15 *Memo, Buchen to Hartmann, 6/23/75, "Public Opinion Polling – General (1)", Robert Hartmann Papers, Box 63, Gerald Ford Library.

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17 *Memo, Slight to Jones, 8/26/75, "Polls – Gallup (2)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

18 *Memo, Humphreys to Cannon, 9/8/75, "Public Opinion Surveys", George Humphreys Files, Box 23, Gerald Ford Library.

19 *Memo, Rumsfeld to Cheney, 9/9/75, "Public Opinion Surveys", George Humphreys Files, Box 23, Gerald Ford Library.

20 Memo, Goldwin to Rumsfeld and Cheney, 9/30/75, "Nie, Norman", Robert Goldwin Papers, Box 26, Gerald Ford Library.

21 Memo, Free to Rockefeller, 10/8/75, "Polling", Richard Cheney Files, Box 17, Gerald Ford Library.

22 Memo, Teeter to Callaway, 10/14/75, "Market Opinion Research Agreements (1) – (3)", PFC Records 1975-76, Box D11, Gerald Ford Library.

23 Memo, Callaway, Spencer, and Slight to Cheney, 10/29/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (1)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

24 Memo, Cannon to Cheney, 10/30/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (2)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

25 Memo, Baroody to Cheney, 10/31/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (2)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

26 Memo, Lynn to Cheney, 11/3/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

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30 *Memo, Goldwin to Cheney, Greenspan, Lynn, O'Neill, Cavanaugh, Jones, and Connor, 11/20/75, "Harris & Yankovich Survey", Robert Goldwin Papers, Box 24, Gerald Ford Library.

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32 *Memo, Chanock to Cheney, 11/26/75, "Polls – General (2)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 2, Gerald Ford Library.

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35 Memo, Teeter to Callaway, 12/8/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

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37 *Memo, Teeter to Callaway, 12/11/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

38 Memo, Teeter to Callaway, 12/11/75, "Teeter, Robert – Memoranda & Polling Data (3)", Foster Chanock Files, Box 4, Gerald Ford Library.

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49 Memo, Teeter to Spencer, 8/13/76, "Market Opinion Research Agreements (1) – (3)", PFC Records 1975-76, Box D11, Gerald Ford Library.

50 *Memo, Teeter to Ford, 8/16/76, "U.S. National Survey Data, Aug. 1976 (1)", Robert Teeter Papers, Box 54, Gerald Ford Library.

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APPENDIX B: CARTER ARCHIVAL DATA

A. CARTER POLLING MEMOS (N=95)

Office	Staff Member	Received[1]	Sent[2]	Totals[3]
Office of the President				
	Jimmy Carter	34	3	37
	Rick Hutcheson	--	10	10
		34	13	47
Domestic Affairs				
(Economic Council)	Stuart Eizenstat	14	6	20
	Steve Travis	--	1	1
	Orin Kramer	--	1	1
	Al Stern	--	1	1
	David Rubenstein	1	--	1
	Mary Schuman	1	--	1
	Bert Carp	2	1	3
	Si Lazarus	1	--	1
	Rick Neustadt	--	3	3
	Charles Schultze	1	--	1
	Dick Pettigrew	--	2	2
	James Schlesinger	1	--	1
	Robert Strauss	1	--	1
	Tim Belford	--	1	1
	Alfred Kahn	1	--	1
	Michael Blumenthal	1	--	1
		24	16	40
Cambridge Survey Research				
	Patrick Caddell	3	30	33
	Others	1	2	3
		4	32	36

[1] Polling memos can be sent to or cc'd to more than one person, therefore this count reflects more than the 95 memos which were sent.

[2] In two cases, memos were sent from two rather than one individual -- a 9/1/78 memo sent from Kraft and Moore to Carter and a 9/27/78 memo sent from Moore and Eizenstat to Carter. Therefore, the total number of memos sent adds up to 97 rather than 95.

[3] Totals for each office of the White House, as well as other key players in the White House public opinion apparatus reflect the frequency with which offices and individuals were involved in the process of receiving and sending memos. For example, two members of the Office of the President, Carter and his assistant Hutcheson, were cited as being involved in 47 out of the total 95 polling memos.

Press Secretary				
	Jody Powell	20	--	20
	Rex Granum	--	2	2
	Patricia Bario	--	7	7
	Walt Wurfel	--	1	1
		20	10	30
Chief of Staff				
	Hamilton Jordan	11	--	11
Communications				
	Gerald Rafshoon	3	3	6
	Greg Schneiders	3	1	4
		6	4	10
The Vice President				
	Walter Mondale	6	1	7
	John Farmer	--	1	1
	Gail Harrison	--	1	1
		6	3	9
National Security Advisor				
	Zbigniew Brzezinski	2	6	8
Special Assistants	Peter Bourne	--	1	1
	Gene Eidenberg	1	--	1
	Anne Wexler	3	2	5
		4	3	7
Re-election campaign				
	Jordan, Kraft, Francis	4	1	5
Adminstration				
	Hugh Carter	1	--	1
	Dan Malachuk	2	--	2
	Dan Chew	--	2	2
		3	2	5
Congressional Liaison				
	Frank Moore	2	2	4
Cabinet/Government Officials				
	Jack Watson	--	1	1
	Bert Lance	1	--	1
	James McIntyre	1	--	1
		2	1	3

The First Lady				
	Rosalynn Carter	2	--	2
White House Counsel				
	Robert Lipshutz	1	--	1
Others (positions unknown)				
	Jane Hartley	--	1	1
	Rick Hernandez	--	1	1
	Steve Simmons	--	1	1
	Scotty Campbell	1	--	1
	Wayne Granquist	1	--	1
	Harrison Wellford	1	--	1
	Richard Cooper	1	--	1
	Kurt Hessler	1	--	1
	Josh Gotbaum	--	1	1
	Dick Moe	1	--	1
	Sue Irving	1	--	1
	Randy Kau	1	--	1
	Van Ooms	1	--	1
	Logan	1	--	1
	George Lowe	1	--	1
	Jack Hershey	1	--	1
	Mansfield Smith	1	--	1
		13	4	17

B. CARTER ISSUE MEMOS (N=70)

Governing Issues (N=35)[4]	Frequency[5]
Presidential Performance	25
Confidence in government	11
Reoganization of bureaucracy	3
Vice Presidential Performance	1
First Lady Performance	1
Bert Lance Affair	1

[4] The N's associated with the following issue categories – economic issues, governing issues, social issues, and foreign policy issues – represent the number of issue memos that addressed this general issue category. The N's do not total to 70 because multiple issue categories can be addressed within one issue memo. See Table 6.1 for a detailed breakdown of Issue Memo General Topic frequencies.

[5] Through content analysis, I coded all memos for issue content. Some memos discussed more than one issue at a time. Each issue addressed within a memo was tallied, but I did not measure how many times within each memo an issue was discussed. For example, if inflation was discussed 5 times within a memo, it was coded only once. Keeping with this example, my content analysis totaled 13 out of 70 issue memos that addressed the specific issue of inflation at least once within each document. I am more interested in measuring how many different issues were covered within each memo, rather than the extensiveness of each issue in and of itself.

Economic Issues (N=29)	
Inflation	13
Energy Crisis	13
Federal spending – general	7
Unemployment	6
Taxes	5
Government Regulations	2
Economy – General	1
Wage/price controls	1
Stimulate businesses	1
Proposition 13	1
Role of Unions	1
Foreign Policy Issues (N=20)	
Foreign policy – general	4
Defense spending	4
Middle East peace agreements	4
Relations in Middle East	3
Relations with Soviets	3
SALT II	3
Relations with Third World (LDC)	3
Relations with African nations	2
Relations with Cuba	2
Nuclear weapons	2
Panama Canal Treaties	2
Human Rights	2
Draft Registration	2
Relations with Latin America	1
Relations with Korea	1
Relations with China	1
Conflict in Rhodesia	1
Ambassador Young resignation	1
Vietnam Refugees	1
Foreign Aid – general	1
International Terrorism	1
Use of military force	1
Trade relations – general	1
Social Issues (N=8)	
Civil Rts./Civil Liberties	5
Welfare	3
Crime	2
Aid to cities	2
Privacy	2
Health Care	2

Environment	1
Drug Abuse	1
Department of Education	1

C. POLLING MEMO BIBLOGRAPHY (*Issue Memo)

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2 *Memo, Caddell to Carter and Lance, 12/20/76, "Memoranda – President Carter 12/10/76-12/21/76", Jody Powell Files, Box 4, Jimmy Carter Library.

3 *Memo, Caddell to Carter, 12/21/76, "Memoranda – President Carter 12/10/76-12/21/76", Jody Powell Files, Box 4, Jimmy Carter Library.

4 Memo, Caddell to Carter, 1/10/77, "Caddell, Patrick, (12/76-1/77)", Staff Secretary Files, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library.

5 Memo, Carter to Caddell, Jordan, and Powell, 1/10/77, "Caddell, Patrick, (12/76-1/77)", Staff Secretary Files, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library.

6 *Memo, Hutcheson to Carter, 1/23/77, "1/24/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 4, Jimmy Carter Library.

7 *Memo, Hutcheson to Powell, 2/24/77, "2/27/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 10, Jimmy Carter Library.

8 *Memo, Caddell to Carter, 3/23/77, "(Analysis of Political Attitudes in the U.S, Volume 1)", Susan Clough Files, Box 34, Jimmy Carter Library.

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10 Memo, Caddell to Jordan, 4/6/77, "Polls", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 79, Jimmy Carter Library.

11 Memo, Travis to Eizenstat, 4/15/77, "Public Communications, Relations, Appearances, and Pollster Reports", Stuart Eizenstat Files, Box 264, Jimmy Carter Library.

12 *Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 4/25/77, "1/20/77-8/31/77", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

13 *Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 5/3/77, "1/20/77-1/20/81", WHCF FO-43, Jimmy Carter Library.

14 *Memo, Hutcheson to Jordan and Powell, 5/16/77, "5/16/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 24, Jimmy Carter Library.

15 *Memo, Caddell to Carter and Brzezinski, 5/19/77, "Middle East: Isreali Public Opinion", White House Staff Counsel Files, Box 35, Jimmy Carter Library.

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17 *Memo, Watson to Carter, Schlesinger, and Mondale, 6/10/77, "1/20/77-8/31/77", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

18 *Memo, Hutcheson to Carter, 6/10/77, "1/20/77-8/31/77", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

19 Memo, Rafshoon to Carter, 6/14/77, "President/Rafshoon/Powell – T.V. Image, 1977", Jody Powell Files, Box 69, Jimmy Carter Library.

20 Memo, Carter to Rafshoon, Powell, and Jordan, 6/14/77, "President/Rafshoon/Powell – T.V. Image, 1977", Jody Powell Files, Box 69, Jimmy Carter Library.

21 *Memo, Hutcheson to Lipshutz and Moore, 7/1/77, "7/1/77 (2)", Staff Secretary Files, Box 35, Jimmy Carter Library.

22 *Memo, Farmer to Mondale, 7/5/77, "7/7/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 36, Jimmy Carter Library.

23 *Memo, Hutcheson to Eizenstat, Jordan, and Powell, 7/7/77, "7/7/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 36, Jimmy Carter Library.

24 *Memo, Caddell to Carter, 7/15/77, "Caddell, Pat 7/77-3/80", WHCF O/A #743, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library.

25 *Memo, Caddell to Eizenstat, 8/9/77, "Caddell, Pat 7/77-3/80", WHCF O/A #743, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library.

26 *Memo, Caddell to Rosalynn, 8/9/77, "Caddell, Pat 7/77-3/80, WHCF O/A #743, Box 1, Jimmy Carter Library.

27 Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 8/15/77, "1/20/77-8/31/77", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

28 Memo, Brzezinski to Powell, 8/19/77, "1/20/77-8/31/77", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

29*Memo, Hutcheson to Mondale and Jordan, 8/26/77, "8/26/77", Staff Secretary Files, Box 46, Jimmy Carter Library.

30 Memo, Pettigrew to Powell, 10/6/77, "9/1/77-5/31/78", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

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32 *Memo, Caddell to Carter, 10/21/77, "Caddell, Patrick (3)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 33, Jimmy Carter Library.

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34 *Memo, Caddell to Carter, 11/2/77, "Caddell, Patrick (3)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 33, Jimmy Carter Library.

35 *Memo, Brzezinski to Carter, 11/17/77, "7/1/77-12/31/77", WHCF CO-2, Jimmy Carter Library.

36 *Memo, Wurfel to Powell, 1/8/78, "Misc. Polls, 1978", Jody Powell Files, Box 66, Jimmy Carter Library.

37 *Memo, Eizenstat to Carter, 2/21/78, "2/21/78", Staff Secretary Files, Box 73, Jimmy Carter Library.

38 Memo, Carter to Eizenstat, 2/21/78, "2/21/78", Staff Secretary Files, Box 73, Jimmy Carter Library.

39 *Memo, Brzezinski to Caddell, 4/24/78, "9/1/77-5/31/78", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

40 *Memo, Hutcheson to Jordan and Powell, 5/25/78, "Polls-Survey, (1977-78)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 51, Jimmy Carter Library.

41 *Memo, Wexler to Schneiders, 5/30/78, "(Energy) – Harris Survey – Energy Plan", Gerald Rafshoon Files, Box 43, Jimmy Carter Library.

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44 *Memo, Rafshoon to Powell, 7/10/78, "Harris Polls", Gerald Rafshoon Files, Box 3, Jimmy Carter Library.

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46 *Memo, Mondale to Eizenstat, 8/14/78, "Pollster Reports – Public Opinion (2)", Stuart Eizenstat Files, Box 254, Jimmy Carter Library.

47 *Memo, CSR to Schneiders, 8/15/78, "(Caddell, Energy Material)", Gerald Rafshoon, Box 24, Jimmy Carter Library.

48 Memo, Moore and Kraft to Carter, 9/1/78, "9/1/78", Staff Secretary Files, Box 101, Jimmy Carter Library.

49 *Memo, Moore and Eizenstat to Carter, Jordan, Powell, Rafshoon, 9/27/78, "6/1/78-12/31/78, WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

50 *Memo, Eizenstat to Strauss, Cooper, Hessler, Schultze, McIntyre, Brzezinski, Mondale, and Blumenthal, 9/4/78, "Pollster Reports – Public Opinion (2)", Stuart Eizenstat Files, Box 254, Jimmy Carter Library.

51 Memo, Caddell to Jordan, 10/28/78, "Caddell (Patrick)", Hamilton Jordan Files, Box 33, Jimmy Carter Library.

52 Memo, Granum to Caddell, 11/17/78, "C", Rex Granum Files, Box 11, Jimmy Carter Library.

53 Memo, Simmons to Campbell, Granquist, Wellford, and Schneiders, 11/27/78, "6/1/78-12/31/78", WHCF PR-75, Jimmy Carter Library.

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