

NATIONAL CITIZENS FOR EISENHOWER CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

FROM: Mrs. J. Ramsay Harris

DATE: January 29, 1954

TO: Mr. James L. Murphy

COPY

SUBJECT: A Program Directed at Women to be Used Following the President's State of the Union Message.

Statistics show that women in 32 states have over 50% of the vote. (See the attached report prepared by the Research Department of the Citizens for Eisenhower Congressional Committee at my request.)

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An analysis of the women voting for Eisenhower is contained in the following:

"The best clue to the voting behavior of women lies in a report of May 9, 1953 by the American Heritage Foundation, this being a summary of a portion of an unpublished study of the 1952 election by Dr. Gallup. According to this, about 30,900,000 men and 30,300,000 women actually voted, the percentage of women voting being 49.5. Of the women who voted, about 17,600,000 supported Eisenhower and 12,700,000 supported Stevenson as compared with 16,300,000 men who voted for Eisenhower, and 14,600,000 who voted for Stevenson.

"In other words, only 52.7% of the male voters cast their ballots for Eisenhower, as against 58.1% of women voters. As his percentage of the total vote was 55.4%, these figures show the greatest support accorded to him was by the women voters and what a major factor they were in a Republican victory."

(Taken from the 1952 Elections Statistical Analysis published by the Republican National Committee, pages 30 and 31.)

In my opinion, women by and large are still fearful of actual political alliance and yet they are increasingly and intensely interested in good government. They do not necessarily vote with their husbands, and a study of their voting trends would show, I believe, that they have tended to support all social welfare, security, public health, and education bills. In other words, they support bills which appear to them to be directed to the home. Generally these measures are progressive and reform - or "liberal" measures.

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Some specific instances as to women's interest would be noted in the following:

There are some 19 million women members in the Labor force (U. S. Department of Labor). They form a great core of certain industries - for example, the telephone company. It follows that women will be interested in labor legislation. One million women work in agriculture, and eight million live on farms--so the Congressional Farm Program will interest them.

The number of women's clubs is astonishing. For instance there are some 2,200 in Denver, Colorado alone, and the majority of these are study groups (on National affairs) showing that women recognize that a homemaker today is also a citizen. Women certainly played a great part in the election of President Eisenhower. It would therefore seem only proper that somewhere after the presentation of his congressional program the President should address himself to the women of America in a telecast explaining that, since the women have had such a large part in putting him in office, he now needs their support on his proposed legislative program. He should explain that a Republican Congress is needed because that gives him committee control and hence Congressional control. The telecast should be aimed at a morning hour cross-country audience. The President should speak frankly and earnestly in his usual manner - in no way talking down but yet explaining why in simple terms his program is so vital and must be passed by Congress.

As far as I know no President has ever addressed himself exclusively to women. I believe that it would be a subtle recognition of their power and, since not many of them can be appointed to government jobs, would also serve to make each woman feel that she had been given a job. It is just another way of plugging his congressional program again. It would unquestionably be a terrific publicity stunt. Following this perhaps the Women's Division of Citizens for Eisenhower could write to a select list of women citizens of each state asking their support of the Congressional Program and suggesting that they make their views known to their Congressman.

We might also ask twelve or fourteen regional women from across the country, outstanding leaders and speakers, brought in here for a briefing on the Congressional Program so that they could give vocal support at every opportunity. I realize that the Republican National Committee women will be so prepared but I want what I call civic leaders - housewives who are women volunteers in their local communities - briefed as well.

Women do not think as men do. The approach to women should be quite different as evidenced by the "Women's Page" in every newspaper, women's telecasts and what women's newscasters report to their audiences, the new

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program the stock market directs specifically to women in recognition of the fact that women own 45% of all stocks. Note, too, that women (perhaps because they marry younger and live longer) have 70% of the wealth. A column on political matters written by a woman for women should be started. It should appear on the woman's page.

It was well known to women throughout the country that India Edwards and Anna Rosenberg went to bat for them almost daily with President Truman. Many feel they made great progress under the Democratic regime. I wish the fact that President Eisenhower has made 31 appointments to women were more generally known.

The Ladies Home Journal has for years had a slogan that should be put on political desks along with the motto "Think" - it is, "Never Underestimate the Power of a Woman." If I were a Congressman I would have a group of women in my state to whom I wrote regularly for their opinions on legislations. Women do not overestimate themselves. They are aware that they are 150 years behind men in political education. They want to learn - they do not seek to compete with men but only to be equal to them. I never met a woman who wanted a woman as President or any other high officer, but I think the Republicans would be astute to have some woman attached to the White House to advise daily on the woman's angle in politics.

In the end, government comes right in the home. The women personally have to deal with the changes in the cost of living. They are not just dreamers but practical realists. Women are considered by some to be a minority group. Remember if all the women who could vote did vote they would constitute the majority.