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December 20, 1981.

Honorable Vic Atiyeh
Governor
State of Oregon
State Capital
Salem, Oregon 97310

Dear Vic:

I want to express some concerns about the campaign. Let me begin by outlining what I believe should be your basic strategy.

The election of 1982 is not the same as 1978 for one fundamental reason - You are the incumbent. Voters judge incumbents on their past performance, whereas a challenger is judged on new promises and programs, and whether he is a viable alternative. Voter psychology favors the incumbent if the perception is that the incumbent is (1) honest, (2) that he cares and (3) that he is reasonably competent. A challenger can't win unless there is a voter perception that at least one of these factors do not exist. Lets look at your case.

Honesty: there is a strong public perception that you are honest, sincere and humane. Any attack on your character by your opponent will inure to your benefit.

You Care? We are talking about perceptions, not realities. The voters did not reject Al Ulmann because he was perceived to be dishonest or incompetent, or because of the value added tax. He lost because there was a perception that he had become a national figure and no longer cared about Eastern Oregon. He had neglected his district and could no longer speak their language. The advertisement that he did not even have a residence in Oregon may have appeared superficial to some, but it was damn effective.

You have done a good job of indicating that you care. I believe much of your present strength in the polls is the result of your intensive efforts to be seen and heard all over the state. I doubt, however, that the perception is as strong in the Protland Metro area because you are not a headline seeker and, thus, have not reached as many voters in this area.

Competence: Your campaign committee is concerned about the charge that you are a "do nothing" Governor. First, we should recognize the origin of this criticism. The reason is that your adversaries can't point to any mistakes you have made. Bob Straub was vulnerable in 1978 because his administration was repeatedly embroiled

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in some "flap." You have by good management avoided flaps. As a result and because you have not won World War II, critics must resort to the charge that you have done nothing.

How can it be portrayed that you have done something? Some supporters urge that you must project "a stronger image," or "more leadership." What they are saying - is that you should be sensational. Forget it. You are philosophically and psychologically a non-sensationalist. Some perceive that as a weakness. To the contrary, it is your charisma.

You should go on being Vic Atiyeh - the nice guy who cares, who governs with an even hand and doesn't seek headlines. That is why voters like you. Ofcourse, your style does not place you in the media limelight. The only way your campaign can reach the media is through advertising. The entire campaign should be dedicated to broadcasting a single message as follows:

Remind voters that:

When Vic Atiyeh took office, govt. expenditures were rising 20% a year - he cut them ~~is half~~ to ~~40%~~ 10%.

Vic Atiyeh reformed welfare and got the cheaters off the roles.

Vic Atiyeh reduced taxes and utlity rates.

Vic Atiyeh implemented the most comprehensive energy plan in the nation.

Vic Atiyeh brought integrity and decency to government.

Vic Atiyeh by quiet effective leadership kept the ship of state on even keel during the worst economic times in our history.

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Vic Atiey's opponents promise magic - Oregonians know there are no magic solutions - and there is no substitute for getting the job done.

Any good advertising man can dramatise that message.

Vic, this is an obvious strategy. I submit it is the only strategy. You don't need polls, consultants or staff to tell you this. Your own political instincts tell you this.

My concern is that we have not adopted such a strategy. Instead, we are spending money on polls, consultants and staff. Your committee has adopted a \$300,000 primary budget - an ambitious fund raising goal. Less than half the money is dedicated to advertising. If we don't raise all our goal, then the advertising budget will have to be cut. What do we need polls for? To tell us that you are ahead - that voters are concerned about the economy - or that you might be perceived by some as a weak Governor. So what! The whole strategy is to remind voters that you have been an effective governor - don't get rid of good thing. You will never win by trying to out promise your opponents. Incumbents win on past performance - not promises.

I ask why ^{we} are spending so much money in the primary. You are unopposed. Why buy advertising during a period when we have to compete with other candidates? Why leave yourself open to criticism for being a big spender in an unopposed primary. I say lets raise the money now, and spend it in late summer and early fall when the other candidates are all broke.

Specifically, I reccomend we not hire any more staff, cut back on consultant's fees and generally trim expenditures. For example, we do not need a campaign press aide during an unopposed primary campaign. Lets save our money and then launch a heavy advertising campaign after the primary.

As Always, (A pain in the Ass)

Lee
Lee Johnson

P.S. This letter was typed by an incompetent.

CC: Jerry Thompson, Blake Herring, Denny Miles and Jack Fau st.