

To: The Democratic National Committee
Re: 2016 GOP presidential candidates
Date: April 7, 2015

Friends,

This memo is intended to outline the strategy and goals a potential Hillary Clinton presidential campaign would have regarding the 2016 Republican presidential field. Clearly most of what is contained in this memo is work the DNC is already doing. This exercise is intended to put those ideas to paper.

Our Goals & Strategy

Our hope is that the goal of a potential HRC campaign and the DNC would be one-in-the-same: to make whomever the Republicans nominate unpalatable to a majority of the electorate. We have outlined three strategies to obtain our goal:

- 1) Force all Republican candidates to lock themselves into extreme conservative positions that will hurt them in a general election;
- 2) Undermine any credibility/trust Republican presidential candidates have to make inroads to our coalition or independents;
- 3) Muddy the waters on any potential attack lodged against HRC.

Operationalizing the Strategy

Pied Piper Candidates

There are two ways to approach the strategies mentioned above. The first is to use the field as a whole to inflict damage on itself similar to what happened to Mitt Romney in 2012. The variety of candidates is a positive here, and many of the lesser known can serve as a cudgel to move the more established candidates further to the right. In this scenario, we don't want to marginalize the more extreme candidates, but make them more "Pied Piper" candidates who actually represent the mainstream of the Republican Party. Pied Piper candidates include, but aren't limited to:

- Ted Cruz
- Donald Trump
- Ben Carson

We need to be elevating the Pied Piper candidates so that they are leaders of the pack and tell the press to them seriously.

Undermining Their Message & Credibility

Most of the more-established candidates will want to focus on building a winning general election coalition. The "Pied Pipers" of the field will mitigate this to a degree, but more will need to be done on certain candidates to undermine their credibility among our coalition (communities of color, millennials, women) and independent voters. In this regard, the goal here would be to show that they are just the same as every other GOP candidate: extremely conservative on these issues. Some examples:

- Jeb Bush
 - What to undermine: the notion he is a "moderate" or concerned about regular Americans; perceived inroads with the Latino population.
- Marco Rubio
 - What to undermine: the idea he has "fresh" ideas; his perceived appeal to Latinos

- Scott Walker
 - What to undermine: the idea he can rally working- and middle class Americans.
- Rand Paul
 - What to undermine: the idea he is a “different” kind of Republican; his stance on the military and his appeal to millennials and communities of color.
- Bobby Jindal
 - What to undermine: his “new” ideas
- Chris Christie
 - What to undermine: he tells it like it is.

Muddying the Waters

As we all know, the right wing attack machine has been building its opposition research on Hillary Clinton for decades. The RNC et al has been telegraphing they are ready to attack and do so with reckless abandon. One way we can respond to these attacks is to show how they boomerang onto the Republican presidential field. The goal, then, is to have a dossier on the GOP candidates on the likely attacks HRC will face. Based on attacks that have already occurred, the areas they are highlighting:

- Transparency & disclosure
- Donors & associations
- Management & business dealings

In this regard, any information on scandals or ethical lapses on the GOP candidates would serve well. We won't be picky.

Again, we think our goals mirror those of the DNC. We look forward to continuing the conversation.