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BUILDING BRIDGES TO LABOR  
SUGGESTIONS FOR RNC ACTIVITY

1. The RNC needs to do some symbolic things -
  - a) Host a reception, luncheon for labor leaders - discuss ways the party can work with organized labor, seek their ideas and suggestions.
  - b) Make a widely publicized speech to a labor audience "opening the doors" to labor.
  - c) Go out and meet with selected labor leaders.
  - d) Establish <sup>an RNC</sup> Labor Advisory Committee.
  - d) Appoint a visible Assistant to the Chairman to be an emissary to organized labor.
  - f) Take the initiative.
2. Set up a regularized program to bring labor leaders and key Republicans together (luncheon, or meeting). Give it a name like DIALOGUE.
3. Begin educating State and Local leaders on the need to work with labor and to take the initiative. <sup>Republicans</sup> Try to replicate the Wisconsin Republican
4. Provide leadership and <sup>consideration</sup> ~~consideration~~ to the House and Senate Campaign Committees in opening doors to labor. <sup>John Cornette in each state.</sup>
5. As a starting point, develop a list of unions who contributed to GOP candidates in 1980, develop a list of those unions who contributed to the recent fund raising dinner.
6. Recognize and reward those unions who contributed to the recent fund raising dinner.
7. Include a wide ranging list of labor leaders on the RNC mailing list.

8. Conduct seminars for GOP officeholders on working with and understanding labor.
9. Compile recent polling data on labor rank and file support for President Reagan and identification with GOP.
10. Do some research on rank and file union member voting behavior.
11. Identify for your use and for the White House, friendly union leaders at the state and local level.
12. Try to avoid anti-union rhetoric in fund raising letters. While it is useful in raising money, it drives further wedges between Republicans and labor.

~~13. Do 7. like info - Hunt, but~~

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*for file*

## A SUGGESTED LABOR STRATEGY

This paper is intended to provide background information and strategy recommendations to achieve four basic objectives for the Reagan Administration.

- A) To hold, and to attempt to expand for 1984, the 44% of the union vote received by President Reagan in 1980.
- B) To expand the group of national labor leaders supporting the President by building alliances with selected labor groups.
- C) To develop a group of state, local and regional labor leaders who will be supportive of the President and his policies.
- D) To move organized labor closer to a policy of bipartisanship.

To achieve these objectives it will be necessary to implement a strategy that considers the impact of the President and his policies on the total labor force and on the elected labor officials of the national unions and employee associations in the country.

## LABOR UNREST AND REASSESSMENT

As the Administration begins to shape a strategy for working with the political activities of organized labor, the following comments and observations must be considered:

1. There is a growing unrest among rank and file members of labor unions. This unrest stems from a number of factors:
  - a) Rank and file union members are beginning to question the traditional alliance with the Democratic Party. This questioning of the Labor/Democratic alliance comes from both ends of the labor spectrum: The liberally-oriented union members are beginning to believe that the Democratic Party has shifted to the right, that the Democratic officeholders are no longer as responsive to them as in the past. The middle-of-the-road and more conservative union members tend to be disillusioned with the Labor/Democratic alliance because they believe that the Democratic Party has become the party of big-spending, softness on defense and foreign policy issues,

and has espoused too many liberal social causes. (The middle-of-the-road and more conservative union members are increasing in numbers as their incomes rise. Basically these union members are beginning to question whether the Democratic Party is still the "party of the working man".)

- b) A growing feeling that many of the elected union leaders have "lost touch" with the rank and file and that their leaders no longer speak for them on economic, social and political issues. This attitude becomes more pronounced as union members rise in the economic structure and their wage levels increase. The 1979 California referendum on Proposition 13 is a good case in point; nearly all of the labor leaders were opposed to Proposition 13, while polls showed strong support for its passage from the rank and file.
- c) A perception by growing numbers of rank and file union members that their elected union leaders have become too closely aligned with the Democratic Party and that they should be more "independent" in their political outlook. This was made quite evident in the 1980 Presidential campaign where the endorsement of Jimmy Carter met strong resistance and opposition at the local union level.

- 2. While there is growing unrest in the rank and file, one should not assume that these attitudes dominate the labor movement. They don't! But there are clear signs that the numbers of union members holding these views is increasing.
- 3. The growing unrest in the rank and file and the results of the 1980 election is prompting many national labor leaders to reassess their political activities and operations. Some are merely disenchanted with the Democratic Party and what they perceive to be Democratic officeholders' lack of "responsiveness". Others have become sensitive to the changing economic status of their members and the growing restiveness of the rank and file, while others have decided that the political climate of the country is changing and that they need to be more pragmatic if they are to be politically effective.

To varying degrees, elected national union leaders are examining the following questions:

- a) Should they seek ties with both Democrats and Republicans.

- b) How do they relate to a Republican Administration (and a popular Republican President) and a Republican/conservative-oriented Congress. This is the first time they've had to face that question since 1954.
- c) Should labor begin to narrow its political agenda. (Many leaders feel that organized labor needs to concentrate more on "gut" labor issues and deemphasize social issues - civil rights, welfare, women's right, etc.)
- d) How can labor have a greater impact on the Presidential nominating process - so they don't get stuck with candidates like Jimmy Carter.

The first stage of this reassessment by labor leaders would have to be characterized as the "wait and see period". Many labor leaders are watching the early days of the Reagan Administration to see what its basic attitudes and policies are toward labor unions. They are also carefully watching the Republicans on Capitol Hill to see if legislation they perceive as anti-union begins to move and how much influence their perceived enemies (Sen. Hatch, Sen. Thurmond and others) actually exert.

These labor leaders are also exploring ways to better their communications with the rank and file in the hope that if members are better-educated on issues and candidates, they will be more responsive to the recommendations of the national union.

It should be noted that the more liberal-oriented labor leaders (such as Jerry Wurf, Bill Winpingsinger and Glenn Watts) are concentrating their reassessment efforts on ways to strengthen discipline in the Democratic Party and to wrest control of the Party apparatus so that labor can have a stronger impact on the nominating process. Some of these labor leaders feel that a major reason for labor defections to Republican candidates in recent years is the shift to the right by the Democratic Party.

#### SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON LABOR

1. While any number of labor leaders might show signs of pragmatism, there is still a strong identification with the Democratic Party. In general, labor leaders feel that Democrats have usually championed their causes and Republicans have fought them.

2. There is general suspicion and skepticism about the Reagan Administration. Campaign statements advocating repeal of Davis-Bacon and the application of anti-trust laws to unions scared the daylights out of many union leaders. Subsequent clarification of those views relaxed some of their fears but has led many labor leaders to wonder whether this was done to merely "win votes" in a close campaign.
3. While there are more than 60,000 union locals and many thousands of individuals involved in the local, state and regional leadership structure of unions, almost all unions are personally run and dominated by the national union president. They control the staff and the communications, and they usually set the policy, especially when it comes to political activities and positions on issues. Except for the occasional maverick local or state leader, most people in the leadership structure of a union usually "go along" with the elected national union leaders. It should also be pointed out that the leader of a large or powerful local union can often be a strong influence on the national union president if he is well-informed and decides to flex his political muscle. The endorsement of President Reagan by the Teamsters is a case in point.
4. The AFL-CIO is still the dominant force in labor's political actions. While none of the 108 unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO is bound by its policies on issues and candidates, the unwritten rule is that you don't "buck" AFL-CIO Headquarters. If an individual union wants to depart from the AFL-CIO policy, it is usually done in a relatively quiet or low-key manner. Discipline was much stronger during the Meany reign, but shows signs of weakness under the newly-elected Kirkland.
5. Many union leaders have expressed covert support for the President and several have indicated a desire to develop a friendly relationship with the Administration. At this point, they are reluctant to publicly voice their support because of the negative signals emanating from AFL-CIO Headquarters and their fear that the Reagan economic plan may turn out to be a failure. It is unclear whether some new realignment is in the making or whether these leaders are merely being very pragmatic.
6. Symbolism is very important in the labor movement. The handshake and the promise are the stock in trade. One's word sometimes seems to have more impact than one's deed. Positive moves by an Administration in terms of public posture and public relations always have great impact on the total labor community. Reasonable appointments to the NLRB, labor leaders being included in visible new events, labor leaders conferring with the President and Administration officials "reaching out" to labor will be interpreted positively.

7. The leadership of the labor movement starts out with very low expectations of a Republican/Reagan Administration. They don't expect to be consulted, they don't expect to be "included", so whatever positive steps are taken will have disproportionate impact.
8. Union leaders are accustomed to dealing on a "quid pro quo" basis. If the Administration does something for a union, they will fully expect to be called upon to reciprocate.
9. In previous Administrations, relations with organized labor were usually channelled through the AFL-CIO and the Washington labor establishment. The labor establishment consists of about 25 unions of varying sizes that have high visibility in terms of political, lobbying and public relations activities. Few efforts have been made to reach out to labor organizations which didn't have a Washington presence or to deal with powerful state and local union officials.
10. All labor leaders are politicians within their own union. They have to stand for reelection and tend to be receptive to the usual activities that enhance their elected positions with their members. All of them like to portray themselves as being important enough (in the eyes of their members) to be consulted by the White House, invited by the White House and appointed to key advisory commissions, boards, etc.
11. Like all politicians, labor leaders don't like surprises. If a policy affecting them, their industry, or their members is announced and they are caught off guard, the reaction is likely to be negative. Even if the policy pronouncement might adversely affect their members, being forewarned of such an announcement can help to soften the blow and makes the union leader appear to his membership to be more knowledgeable about what's going on in Washington.
12. Most unions do not have very extensive research or policy analysis units within their organizations. They are frequently not well-equipped to analyze issues and will follow the lead provided by either the AFL-CIO, another union in their industry, or the management position in their industry if the issue directly affects that industry. Currently one will find the building and construction unions relying on the nuclear power industry for nuclear power issue analysis, and the maritime unions on the shipping industry for programs to improve their economic health.

13. Coalitions are often formed within the labor movement on an industry-by-industry basis. It is not uncommon to find high degrees of cooperation today between labor and management on political issues that directly affect their members such as trade policy, tax policy and regulatory matters. These ad hoc coalitions usually operate outside the AFL-CIO structure and are usually initiated by management operatives who try to enlist the support of employees for the "good of the industry."

#### IMPACTING THE RANK AND FILE

While the proposition of seizing upon the restiveness in the rank and file of union members may be tempting, directly communicating with an organized work force of approximately 24 million is a difficult proposition unless we build a vast communications network to deal with them. In addition, labor union members do not vote merely as labor union members unless they feel their rights as union members are threatened or under attack. Recent internal AFL-CIO studies show that union members (in general) are affected by issues and candidates much like any other group of citizens except that there has been a long identification with the Democratic Party as the party of the "working man."

In dealing with the rank and file union members, the Administration should accept the premise that the union members' attitudes about President Reagan, the Administration and the Republican Party are shaped by the news media, by other pressure groups, and by the communication (meetings, publications) he receives from his union. The more a union member identifies with his union, the more susceptible he will be to his union communications. In recent years, labor leaders have just begun to recognize that the rank and file member is losing his identification with his union and has become more susceptible to other social, economic and political pressures that may be exerted upon him. This is especially true of the middle income union member.

In general our efforts to impact the rank and file must be geared to dispelling the notion that the President and/or the Administration is anti-labor, and that the President's policies are in the best interests of working men and women.

This can probably be best accomplished through the news media, through symbolism, through direct communications with union leadership below the national level, and by successfully governing the nation.

In trying to directly affect the rank and file union members, the following suggestions are offered:

1. The Administration and its key spokesmen (in particular the Dept. of Labor) should appear in the news media to be friendly to unions and their leaders. Much of this can be accomplished in symbolic ways by appearances and meetings with union members and leaders, visits to work sites and an interest in the problems of workers. Well publicized visits and meetings with workers in troubled industries can deliver a strong message to union members.
2. The Administration and its key spokesmen (in particular the Dept. of Labor) should be publicly portrayed as being "open and accessible" to organized labor and desirous of labor support and participation in the development of policy.
3. Emphasis should be given to the job-producing/economic growth aspects of the economic package. President Reagan's pledge "to put America back to work again" was a strong selling point to workers during the 1980 campaign and needs to be reinforced as the program is implemented.
4. The Administration should try to avoid the public impression of being locked in combat with the AFL-CIO and other major union spokesmen on labor issues (job protection, workers rights, job safety standards). In particular it would be wise to avoid situations where it appears that the Administration is helping big business at the expense of the workers.
5. A major effort to get Administration spokesmen to address large state and local labor meetings where a positive reaction can be reasonably forecast. For too many years, Republicans have passed up opportunities to address labor audiences.
7. The Administration should develop a program to systematically communicate with selected rank and file union members through its own newsletter-style publication. Such a publication (A Report From the President) wouldn't be identified as labor-targetted but in actuality it would be mailed to a list composed primarily of labor union members. Such a publication could get the Administration message out to union members and help to counter some of the union house organs who tend to rewrite AFL-CIO press releases.
8. A special effort should be made by our media liaison office to impact the house organs of labor unions. There are thousands of local, state and national publications that are mailed to union members' homes each week and month that the Administration should be impacting in a positive way.

9. An effort must be made to identify supportive local and state union leaders and bring them to the White House for briefings, meetings and special treatment.
10. Our communications efforts need to be expanded from the normal pattern of only communicating with the elected national leaders of unions to state, local and regional union officials. At a minimum, these local, state and regional officials should receive regular direct communications through the mail so they do not have to depend on their national unions for information concerning the Administration and its policies.
11. Public opinion surveys that depict rank and file union sentiments at variance with the views of the national elected union leadership need to be widely disseminated and publicized by sources outside the Administration.
12. A special effort must be made by the Republican National Committee to "open the doors" to labor. The RNC should be portrayed as seeking labor input and support. This "invitation" to labor must be carried through at the state and local level.
13. Special efforts should be made by the White House and by the Departments and Agencies to bring together leaders of labor and management to solve industry problems and to promote a spirit of labor-management co-operation.

#### IMPACTING THE AFL-CIO

Like it or not, the AFL-CIO continues to be the focal point for championing the causes of organized labor. Like many institutions, it is run by the professional staff who have strong liberal/Democratic/anti-business biases. The principal spokesmen for the AFL-CIO, Lane Kirkland and Tom Donahue (the Secretary-Treasurer) can usually be expected to use whatever materials are placed in front of them by the professional staff. The AFL-CIO does little actual union organizing and collective bargaining but does consider its principal mission to be impacting public policy.

Ostensibly the AFL-CIO is governed by a 33-member Executive Council of union presidents which meets quarterly to shape policy of the Federation, but in actuality this group usually rubberstamps what the professional staff produces and Kirkland and Donahue advance.

In recent years (especially since Lane Kirkland became President) some members of the Executive Council have become disenchanted with the quality and direction of the staff work and have begun to question the lobbying and campaign operations of the Federation as well as the issues being emphasized. Most of this stems from the basic restiveness in the labor movement. While there is increasing dissent in the Executive Council, most of their actions are by unanimous vote. This stems from the perceived need for unity in the labor movement.

While some doubts about the AFL-CIO political agenda exist, it is difficult to conceive of any immediate major shift in the outlook of the AFL-CIO leadership toward Republicans or President Reagan. At the same time though, both Kirkland and Donahue have expressed interest in developing a "working" relationship with the Administration. What form or structure they might have in mind is unclear. Both of them sincerely believe that they have been reasonable, dignified and moderate in their criticism of the Administration and the President. That notion clearly is a matter of some conjecture by the media, by political observers and by many union leaders within the AFL-CIO.

The most likely assessment is that these two leaders of the AFL-CIO don't "know how" to establish a "working relationship" with the Reagan Administration. Because of the traditional orientation of the institution, the campaign rhetoric portraying Reagan as anti-labor, and the radical nature of the Economic Renewal package (which severely impacts programs they have fought for), the institution has been forced to react instinctively -- by lashing out.

Nonetheless, the AFL-CIO and its presence in our national political life and the attention it receives from the news media is a fact of life and must be dealt with.

Recognizing that the AFL-CIO is not likely to ever offer eventual political support to President Reagan, our basic objectives in dealing with the AFL-CIO leadership (Kirkland, Donahue and key staff) should be:

1. To provide few, if any, opportunities for critics to claim the Administration isn't listening to or working with organized labor.
2. To lessen the current atmosphere of hostility, so that individual unions will not feel constrained to "work with" or support the Administration.

3. To minimize their public criticisms of the Administration.
4. To emphasize and publicize those areas of policy agreement (national defense, foreign policy, trade) that potentially exist so that the AFL-CIO is portrayed as supporting parts of the Administration's program.

The following suggestions are offered in hopes of implementing these objectives.

1. At this stage of the Administration, no attempt should be made to "write off" or to "shut them out". Any effort to ignore Kirkland, Donahue and the institution of the AFL-CIO will only serve as a rallying point to those who want to believe that the Administration is anti-labor and will make it more difficult to work with individual unions.
2. For the first year, the Administration and its key figures should be open and accessible to the leadership of the AFL-CIO and willing to discuss their problems and issues. This openness and accessibility should be reassessed in early 1982 to see if it has had any impact on decreasing the current hostility emanating from the AFL-CIO Headquarters.
3. The Administration, in a quiet informal way, must communicate to the AFL-CIO leadership directly and indirectly that continued hostility and confrontation makes the Administration's efforts to develop a relationship with organized labor increasingly difficult.
4. Key figures in the AFL-CIO hierarchy should be invited to the White House for social events, briefings, meetings, etc. and an effort should be made to have the President, Vice President and key Administration officials pictured with AFL-CIO leaders in the news media.
5. The Administration should try to avoid confrontation on highly emotional labor issues or appointments (like Davis-Bacon, NLRB appointments, sub-minimum wage, the Hobbs Act) that can be used as a rallying point by the AFL-CIO to unify its affiliate unions against us.
6. A conscientious effort should be made to educate AFL-CIO leaders on Administration programs and objectives and to win their support on selected issues. Trade issues, national defense and foreign policy issues are likely prospects for agreement.

7. Key figures in the Administration should seize the initiative in reaching out to the AFL-CIO leaders for advice and consultations. Such behavior is not expected of a Republican Administration and will serve to throw everyone off balance. Basically, the Administration should be perceived by the media and by the member unions of the AFL-CIO as trying diligently to build a working relationship with the AFL-CIO. If it fails, they must take the blame.
8. In developing some form of relationship with Kirkland and Donahue, the Administration must be cautious about strengthening them in their positions. While we should work with them, we do not want to bestow any new power on them. We must be able to be sensitive to the needs of the Teamsters who will be most unhappy if the Administration does not share its visible labor relationship with them.

#### IMPACTING NATIONAL LABOR LEADERS

In trying to expand the group of labor unions supporting the President, our first priority must be to see that our friends (those four unions who supported the President) are treated well and that their good treatment is communicated to the rest of the labor community. Taking care of your friends is a well-established concept among labor politicians, and most are currently watching to see if the Teamsters, MEBA, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers and the National Maritime Union receive special treatment from the Administration. If other labor leaders see it is worthwhile to align with the Administration they will begin to follow suit.

A second priority must be to clearly send the message that the Administration wants to communicate with the leaders of organized labor, that we want to work with them and that we want their political support. In these early days, the Administration should also send a clear message that we don't believe communication is facilitated by street marches, shouting and inflammatory rhetoric.

A third priority is to identify "targets of opportunity" in the labor movement. Certain unions and their leaders are more susceptible to President Reagan and Republican philosophies and they should be singled out for cultivation and special treatment. The maritime unions, transportation unions and the building and construction unions appear to be a logical starting point.

In trying to expand our group of labor supporters, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Cabinet members and key Administration officials should be open and accessible to labor union leaders. No one should feel they are not being heard or consulted.
2. Key Administration figures need to make some symbolic outreach gestures to convey the message that we seek labor input and support. Speeches at union conventions, visits to union headquarters, and taking the initiative to reach out to labor leaders will not go unnoticed. Cabinet members should try to develop a personal relationship with those union presidents directly impacted by their Departments or Agencies and mechanisms should be established for regular communication.
3. National labor leaders should regularly be included on invitation lists for White House social events, important news events, bill-signing ceremonies, and high-level briefings. These officials should also be appointed to boards, commissions and advisory bodies. Special attention must first be devoted to our supporters and more friendly union leaders. Those who are inclined to excessive negative rhetoric and those who are publicly fighting the Administration should receive little or no attention.
4. While it is important to establish good communications and to practice all of the normal stroking operations available to the White House, the Administration must be prepared to "deliver" on substantive issues that concern individual unions. Establishing friendly relations with a union leader will normally not be enough to sustain a relationship. Eventually, we must be prepared to negotiate or make concessions on policy if we are to achieve continued support.
5. Special emphasis should be given throughout the Administration to keeping selected union leaders aware of possible policy changes affecting their union membership. None of them like surprises and advance consultation can often blunt criticism and sometimes win support. The transfer of the Maritime Administration from the Commerce Department to DOT is a case in point. Upon learning of the proposal, the maritime unions were initially opposed. Given some time and adequate discussion about the ramifications of such a move, the unions are now accepting and supportive of such a move.

6. The White House should develop a device for regular high level consultations with selected groups of national union leaders. This will assure them of having input into the White House on a regular basis and can serve to blunt any criticism that we aren't consulting with them.
7. The Republican National Committee needs to begin reaching out to the leaders of organized labor and should begin serving as a focal point for bringing together labor leaders and Congressional Republicans to listen to each other. The Chairman of the RNC can make some symbolic speeches, appoint a Special Assistant to "communicate" with labor and can begin to serve as a contact point for labor leaders' political concerns and requests.
8. The White House Legislative Liaison Office and the Legislative Liaison Offices of the Departments and Agencies should develop a relationship with the political legislative operatives of some of the unions with strong political operations so that issue-by-issue coalitions can be developed to assist the Administration in achieving its legislative objectives. These political operatives are key players in the structure of a national union and continued contact can eventually develop into long-term relationships.
9. The Administration must try to reach beyond the Washington labor establishment and begin to work with labor union leaders who do not have a strong Washington presence. These unions could be more responsive to Administration overtures and tend to be more susceptible to the traditional stroking operations.
10. A special effort should be made to work with unions on an industry-by-industry basis, bringing together labor and management leaders to work on problems unique to their industry. Such a system provides an opportunity to avoid the AFL-CIO framework, develop better labor/management relationships, and lends itself to developing industry coalitions to support Administration policies.

### LABOR DEMOGRAPHICS

The most authoritative source of information on union membership is the Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations published by the Department of Labor. The most recent Directory was issued in September 1980. It is based on data for the year ending 1978.

Membership in the nation's 208 labor unions and professional and state employee associations totaled 24.4 million in 1978. Included in this count are 1.7 million union members outside the United States (all but 120,000 are in Canada). Not included in these totals are members of single firm or local unaffiliated unions in the United States and members of municipal employee associations.

Of this total, 108 unions are affiliated with the AFL-CIO. These unions have a membership of approximately 17 million.

Union membership accounts for 19.7 of the total labor force. When employee associations are included, this percentage of the total labor force is increased to 22.2%. Approximately 56% of union and employee association members are blue collar, 34% white collar, and 10% service workers.

State membership data for all unions in the United States show that three states account for nearly 1 out of every 3 members - New York, California and Pennsylvania. These three states, coupled with Illinois, Ohio and Michigan, account for 52 percent of the total.

The states listed below have at least 30% of the non-agricultural workforce holding membership in unions or employee associations:

<u>State</u>	<u>Percent of Work Force in unions</u>
New York	41.0
West Virginia	40.4
Michigan	38.5
Pennsylvania	37.3
Washington	36.5
Hawaii	35.9
Ohio	33.6
Illinois	33.4
Alaska	32.3
Indiana	32.0
Missouri	31.0
Wisconsin	30.5

Historically, union membership has been concentrated in a small number of unions. Sixteen unions represent 61% of the total union membership. Over 64% of all employee association members belong to one organization, the National Education Association. Twenty-five associations, or 74% of the total, have fewer than 25,000 members. Most employee associations are state organizations and limited in potential membership.

#### LABOR VOTING BEHAVIOR

The sources of information for study and analysis of union member voting patterns is extremely limited and not recent. Little research has been done in analyzing the union vote in elections other than Presidential races.

The research does show that persons from labor union households are more likely to turn out at the polls than persons from non-union households. The research also indicates that labor union members do not vote as a cohesive bloc in support of either party, despite the near unanimous effort on the part of labor union leaders in support of Democratic presidential candidates. The actual Democratic presidential vote since 1952 by persons living in a union household varies from a high of 73% in 1964 to a low of 46% in 1972. Available data on voting behavior of union members in congressional races yields similar patterns.

The following table presents the percentage of the union vote received by the major Presidential candidates for 1952 through 1980. The source of this information is the Gallup index.

	1952	
	<u>Stevenson (D)</u>	<u>Ike (R)</u>
Union household	61.0%	39.0%
National total	44.6%	55.4%
	1956	
	<u>Stevenson (D)</u>	<u>Ike (R)</u>
Union household	57.0%	43.0%
National total	42.2%	57.8%
	1960	
	<u>John Kennedy (D)</u>	<u>Nixon (R)</u>
Union household	65.0%	35.0%
National total	50.1%	49.9%
	1964	
	<u>Johnson (D)</u>	<u>Goldwater (R)</u>
Union household	73.0%	27.0%
National total	61.3%	38.7%

1968			
	<u>Humphrey (D)</u>	<u>Nixon (R)</u>	<u>Wallace (I)</u>
Union household	56.0%	29.0%	15.0%
National total	43.0%	43.4%	3.6%

1972		
	<u>McGovern (D)</u>	<u>Nixon (R)</u>
Union household	46.0%	54.0%
National total	38.0%	62.0%

1976		
	<u>Carter (D)</u>	<u>Ford (R)</u>
Union household	63.0%	36.0%
National total	51.0%	48.0%

1980			
	<u>Carter (D)</u>	<u>Reagan (R)</u>	<u>Anderson (I)</u>
Union household	50.0%	43.0%	5.0%
National total	41.0%	51.0%	7.0%

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Almost all of the available research shows that union membership does seem to make a significant difference in the electoral decisions of union members. Data available from the University of Michigan Survey Research Center (1948-1968) shows that union members were from 82% to 34% more likely to vote for the Democratic presidential candidates than non-union voters.

In the mid-sixties, though, the research begins to show a significant decline in the Democratic preference of union voters. Although the basic partisan leanings of union voters have not changed greatly since 1952 (2 to 1 Democratic), union members have become more affluent, less working-class conscious, and less closely attached to their unions.

While political scientists will debate the relative value of a labor endorsement, there is little disagreement that the actions taken by organized labor can fundamentally affect the size of urban pluralities for Democratic candidates and that their activity or inactivity is an important factor in determining who wins statewide elections.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III  
EDWIN MEESE III  
MICHAEL K. DEAVER

FROM: ELIZABETH H. DOLE

SUBJECT: Developing a Blue Collar Strategy

In developing a strategy to impact blue collar workers, we have begun to reach the opinion that treating blue collar workers as a homogenous bloc may be something of a political anachronism.

While blue collar workers were once at the lower levels of the economic ladder, and might be expected to view issues from such a perspective, there is strong evidence that blue collar workers have been assimilated into the mainstream of the population and now view public issues and political questions in much the same manner as the rest of the population.

Some of the attached data (Tab I) from DMI's profile of blue collar/union voters lends some substantiation to the contention that there is little variance between the attitudes of the general public and the attitudes of blue collar workers. In particular, I would call your attention to the DMI data on ideology and the perception of the President's economic program. While there are some differences between the attitudes of the general public and blue collar workers (usually no more than a 5-6% variance) much of this can be attributed to the fact that blue collar workers have historically identified with the Democratic Party. Approximately twice as many blue collars identify as Democrats rather than as Republicans. This identification with the Democratic Party is also reflected in traditional voting patterns. Although research shows a significant decline in the Democratic preference of blue collar voters beginning in the mid-sixties, blue collar voters are still more likely to vote for Democratic candidates.

Our research on the attitudes of union members also shows striking similarities between the attitudes of union members (less than 50% of union members are now blue collar) and the general public. The attached DMI graphs (Tab II) indicate the strong parallels. In fact, our research of all available polling data shows that despite the strong criticism and opposition of the AFL-CIO and other union leaders, it is difficult to detect a negative impact on union members. While the President's approval rating has declined with union members

and blue collar workers, that decline corresponds to the lowered approval ratings by the general public. We can find no evidence to indicate that the President is losing either blue collar or union voters in any greater proportion than the rest of the population.

This fact in itself raises an interesting dimension to the blue collar question. Conventional political wisdom suggests that you try to reach blue collar workers through union leadership. There is strong evidence that today's workers don't rely very much on union leadership for political guidance. In fact, recent polling data suggest that union endorsement of a political candidate can be a negative factor in the minds of many union voters.

What appears to have happened is that blue collar workers have lost their identity as poor people, become better-educated, earn more, have moved to the suburbs, and have become a part of middle America. In the process they have become more conservative, less willing to surrender a growing percentage of their wages to the federal government, and less willing to accept the traditional economic bromides of the Democratic Party. In many respects, blue collar workers might more appropriately be categorized as part of that "silent majority" so often referred to by a previous President.

Based on the above, I would offer the following suggestions and recommendations regarding blue collar workers:

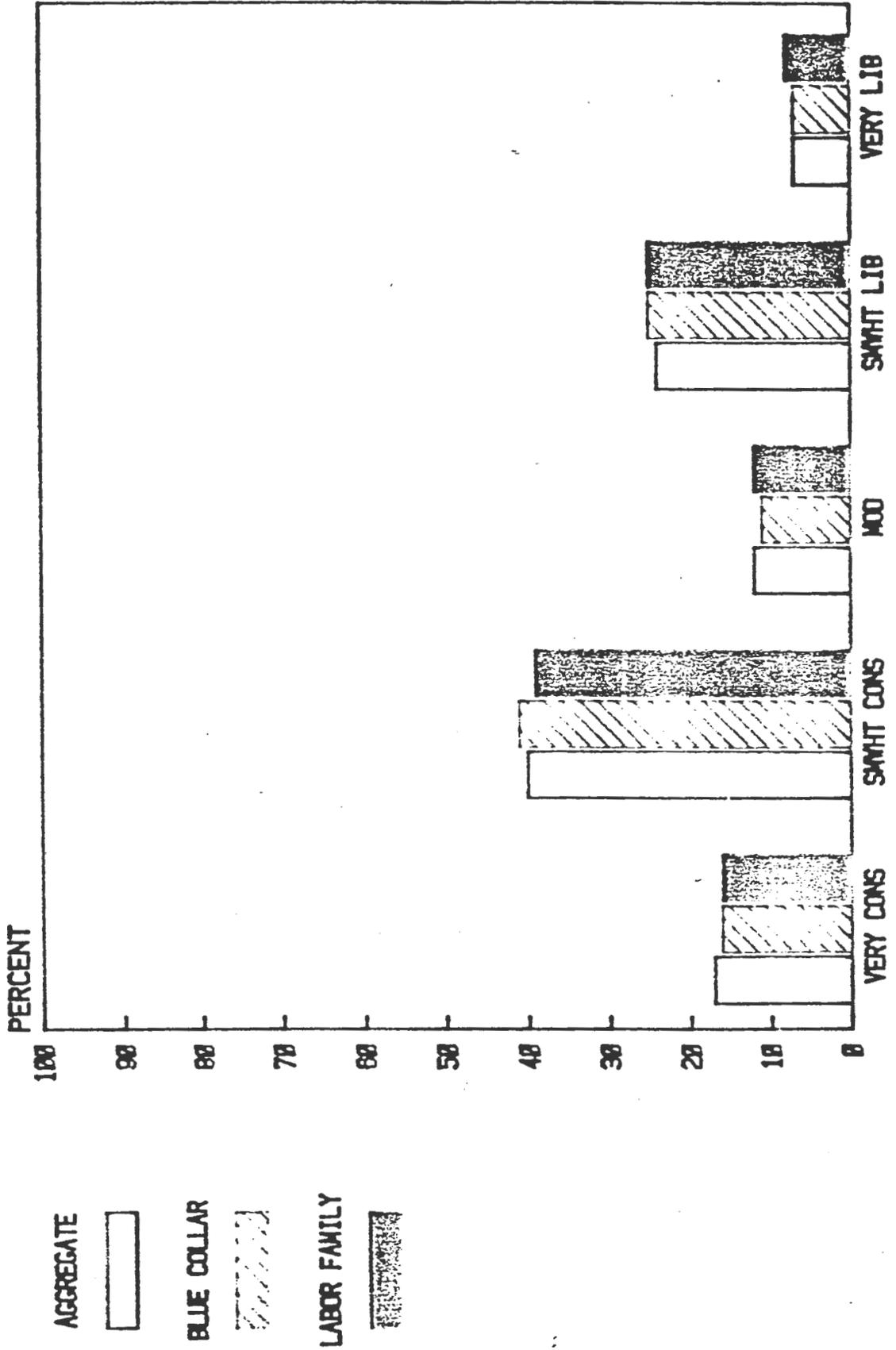
1. We should accept the premise that blue collar workers do not appear to hold "class" views, and that their basic attitudes about the President/Administration are generally shaped by mass media information and by normal social and economic pressures.
2. While there are serious questions about the political impact union leaders have on their members, we should be mindful that blue collar workers (and the general public) have a positive view of labor unions. The one public issue where we found a sharper differentiation in attitudes among blue collar workers was on the handling of the PATCO strike.
3. Recent polling data seems to indicate that blue collar workers are more concerned with rising unemployment than the rest of the public. This seems to be consistent with blue collar sensitivity to "pocketbook" issues and suggests that blue collar workers would be responsive to messages about economic growth, jobs, and prosperity.

Recommendations

1. We should consider making a special effort to emphasize the job stimulation aspects of federal government activities and expenditures. Whether the issue is revision of the Clean Air Act, our defense buildup, or federal highway projects, the job creation inherent in each of these presents us with an opportunity to send a politically appealing message to working people.
2. We should continue to guard against the President/Administration being portrayed as anti-labor. This requires our attempting to avoid major media confrontations with organized labor on gut labor legislation such as the Hobbs Act, Davis-Bacon, sub-minimum wage, and Right to Work, for the cumulative effect of such legislative battles will be a perception by rank and file workers as the President/Administration being "against labor."
3. We should redouble our efforts to publicly display a sensitivity to workers by recognizing their contributions, mentioning them in public statements, celebrating Labor Day, and meeting with their representatives -- all of these devices send a subtle message to blue collar workers that the President has them in mind as he governs the nation.
4. We need to do a better job in making Presidential statements more relevant to working people. Discussions of tax cuts, deficits and interest rates often seem to be tailored more to corporate boardrooms and economists than to the average worker and his pocketbook.

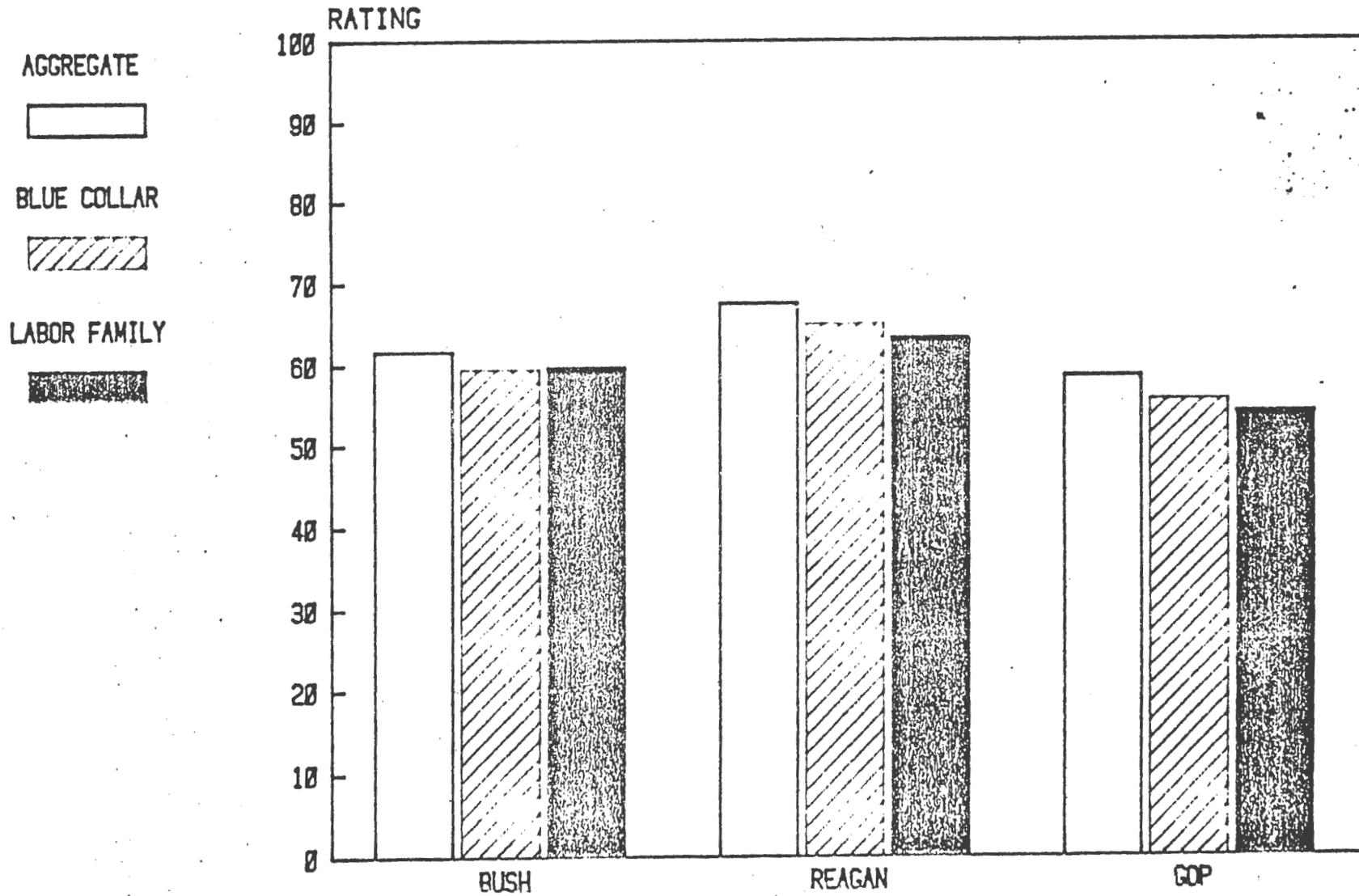
Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

# IDEOLOGY



Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

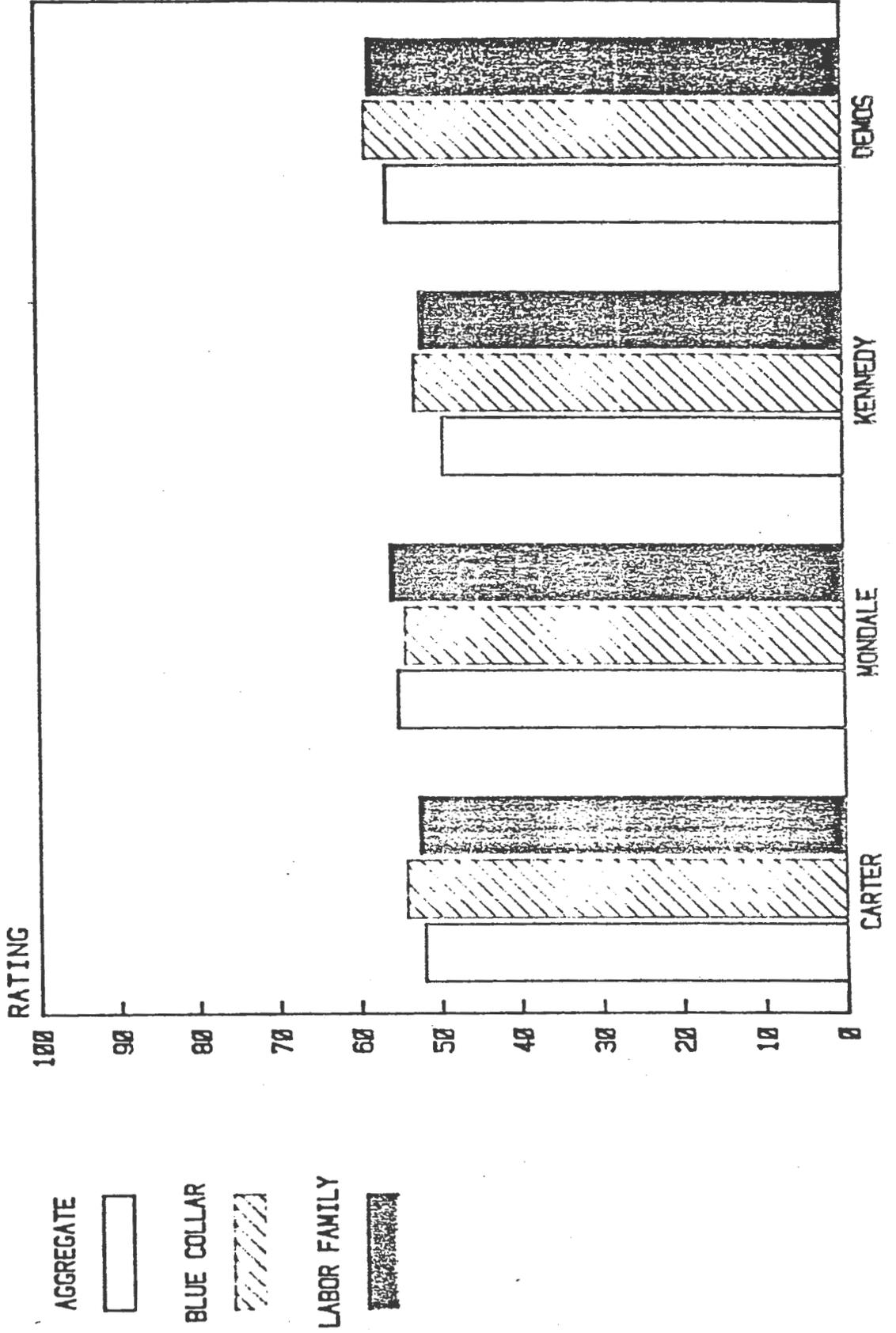
# THERMOMETERS REPUBLICANS



Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

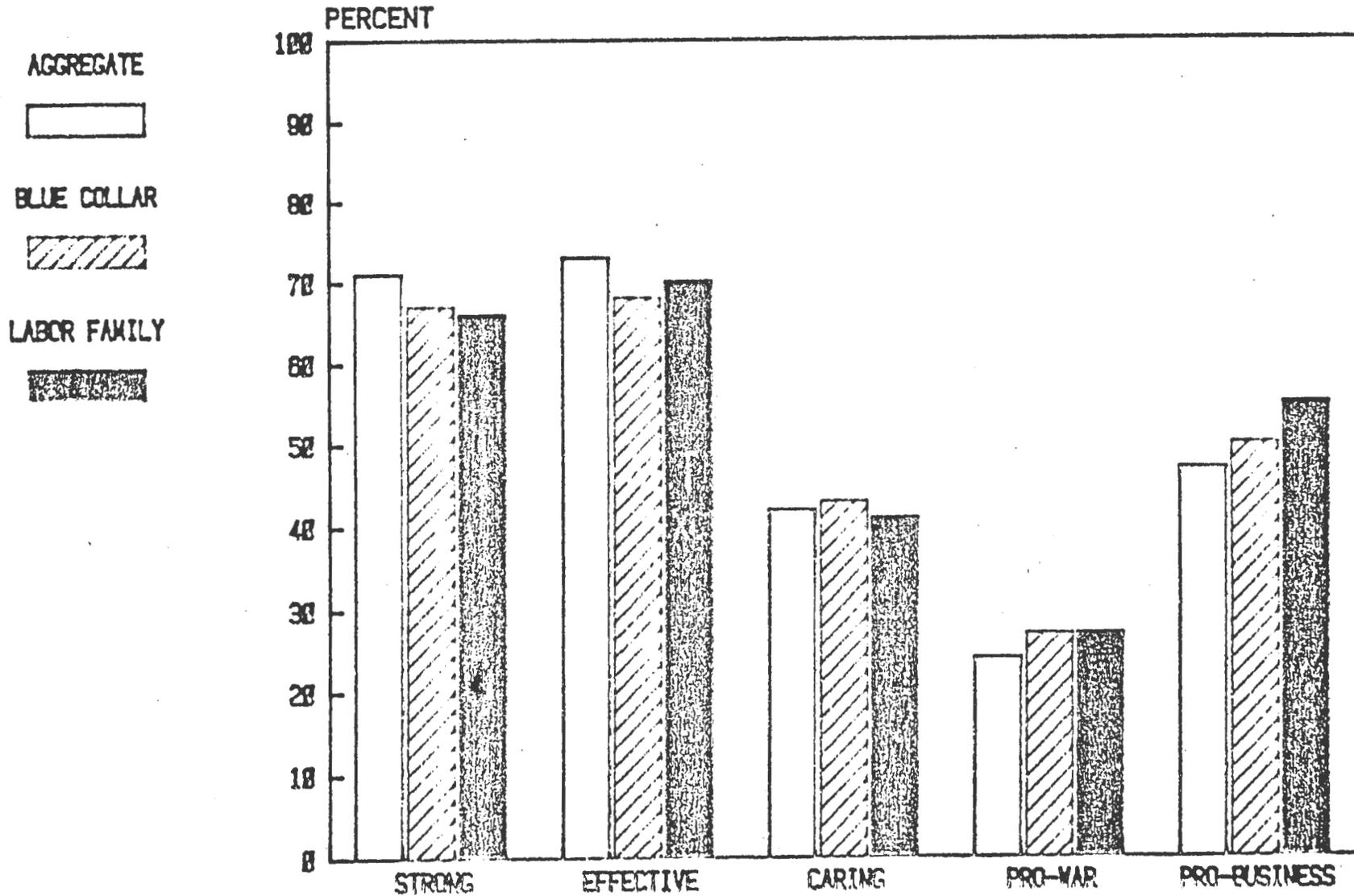
# THERMOMETERS

## DEMOCRATS



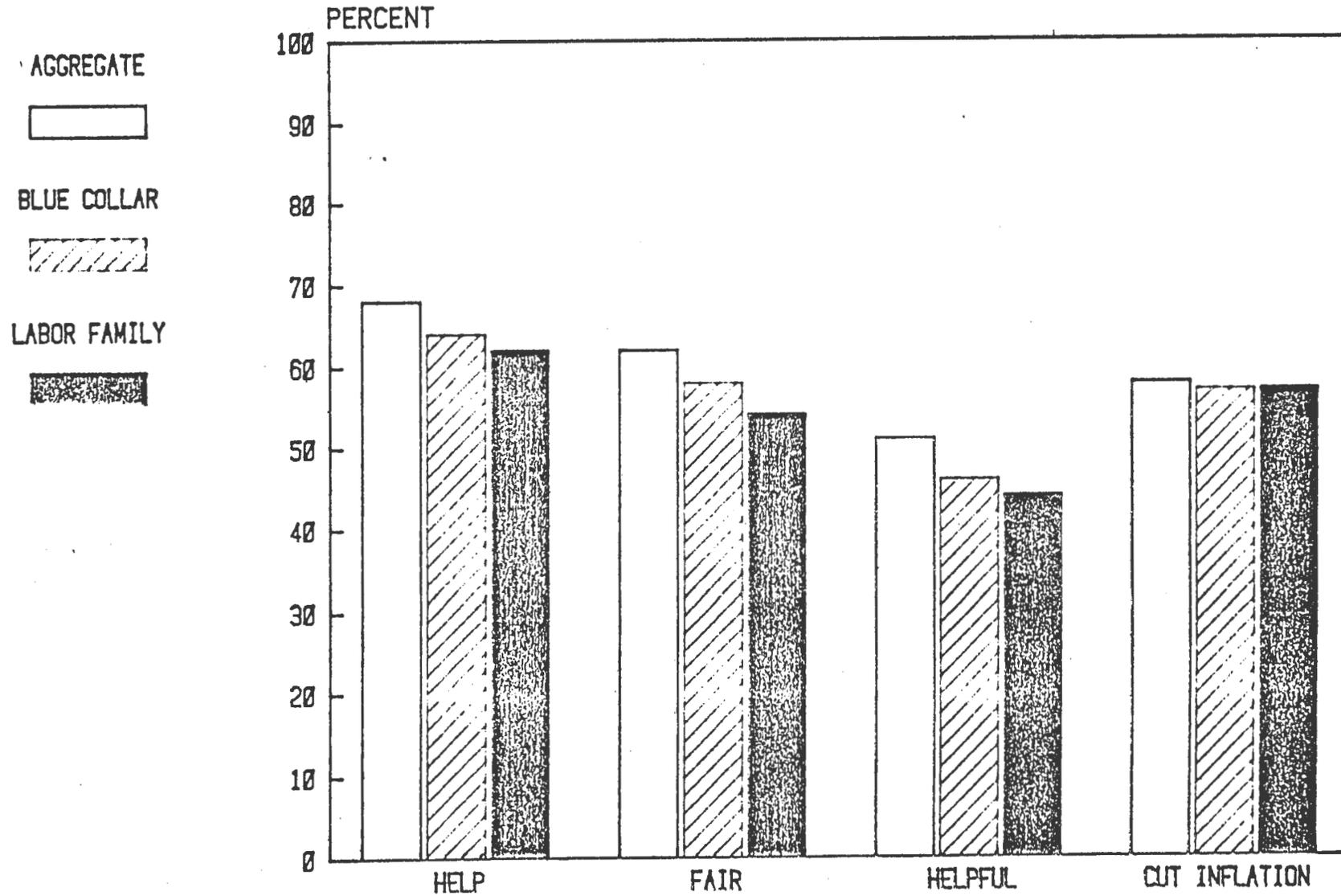
Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

## CHARACTERISTICS OF REAGAN "EXCELLENT/GOOD" RATINGS



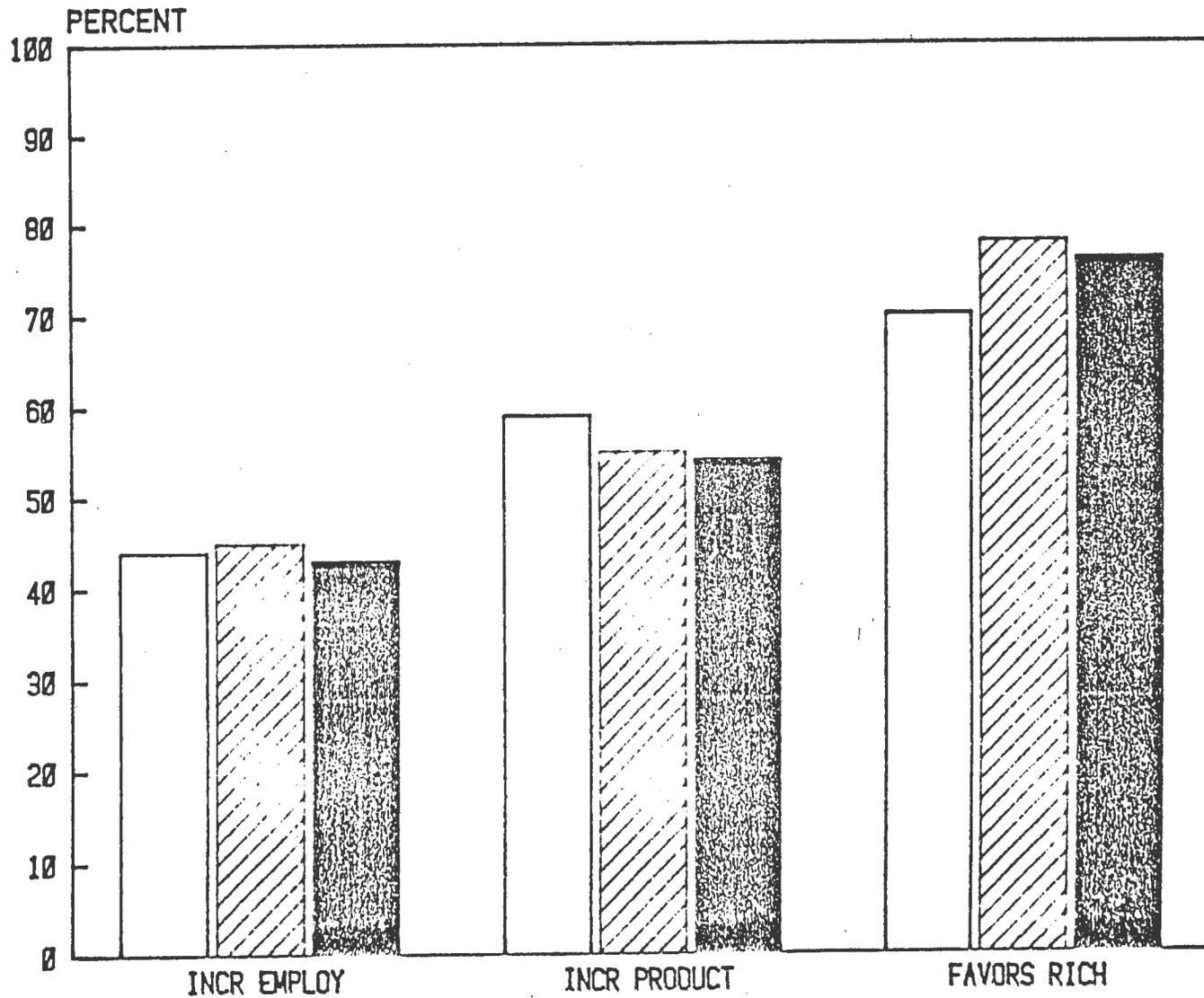
Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

## REAGAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM



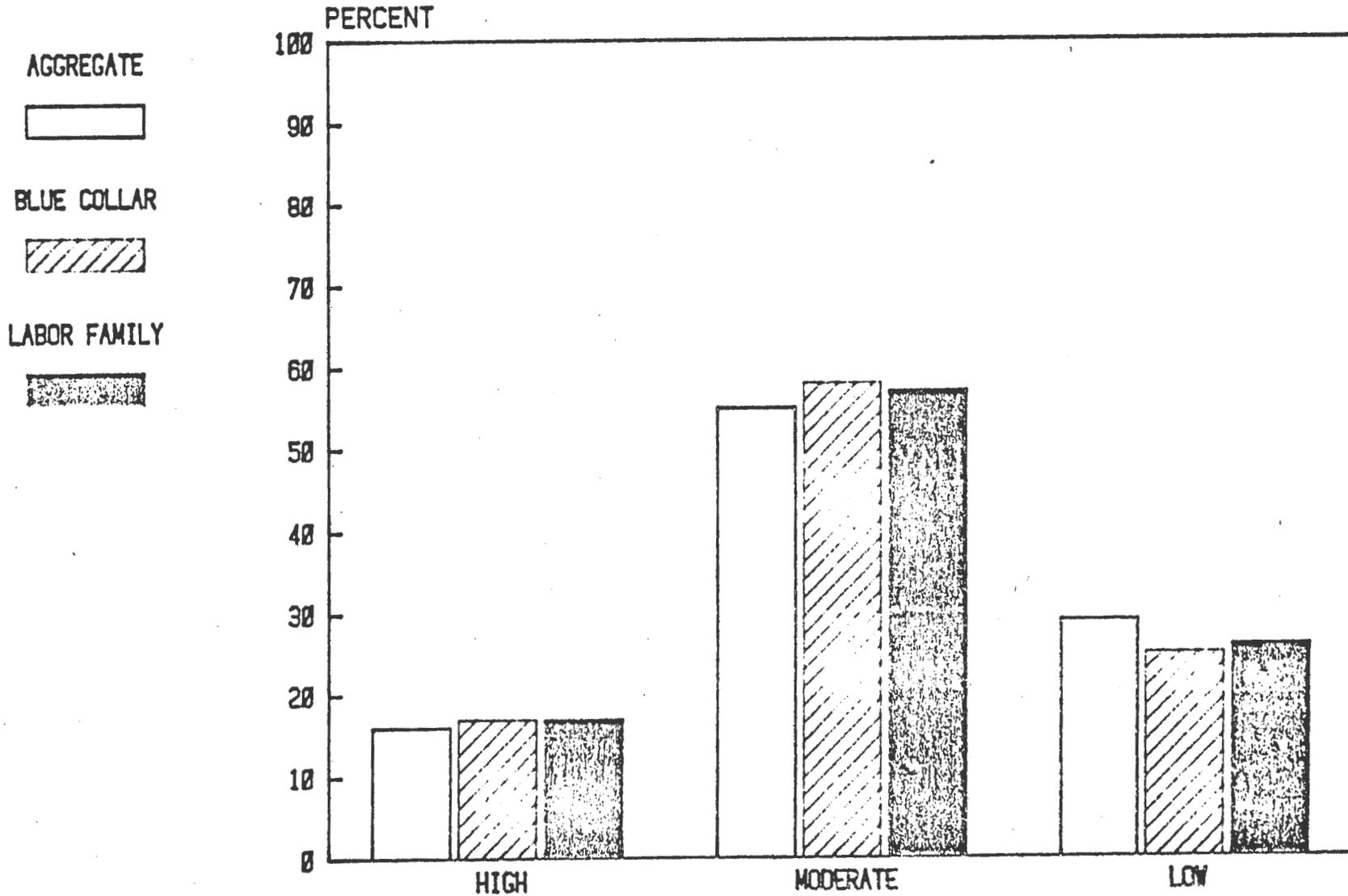
Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

## REAGAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM



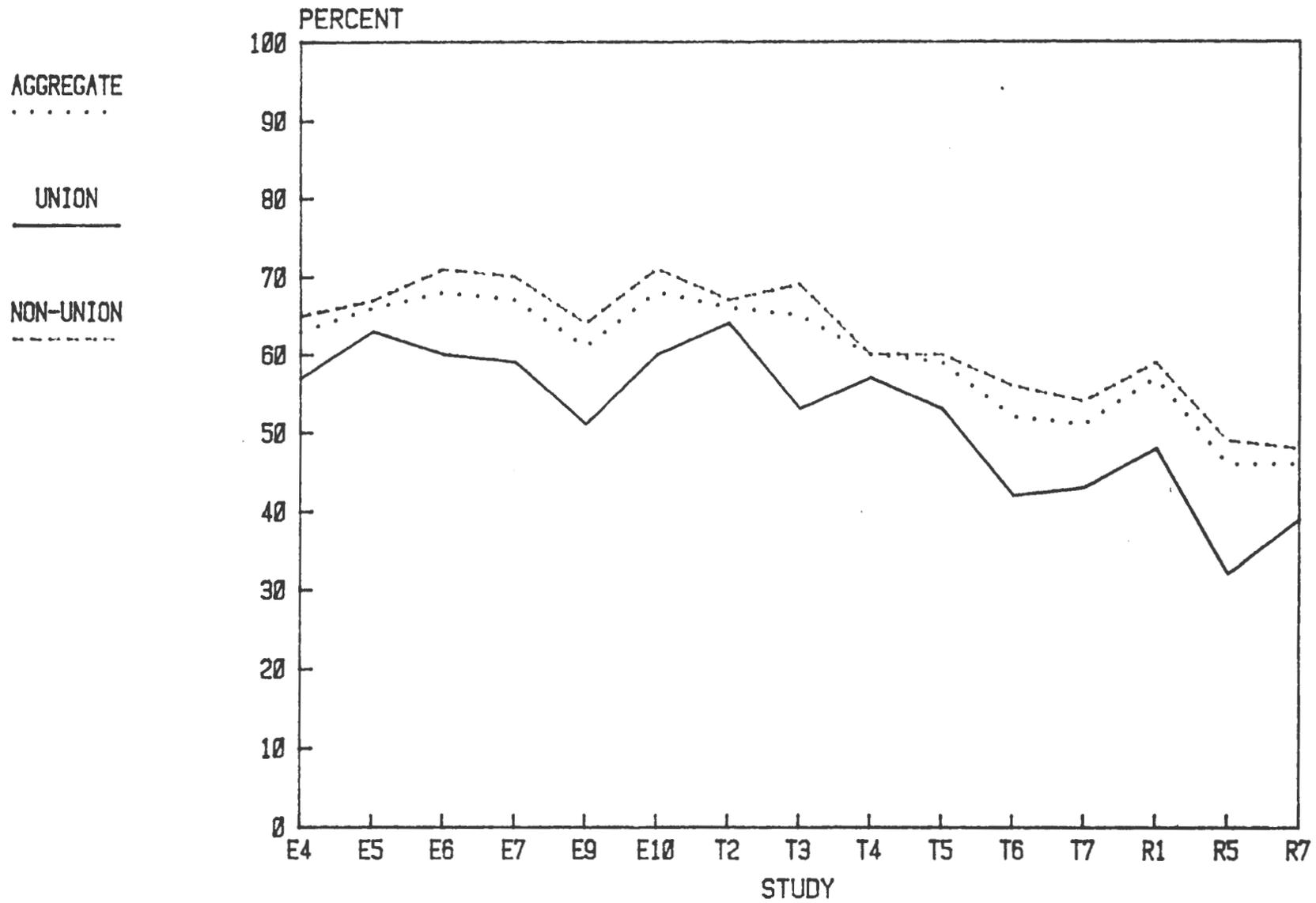
Based on cumulative polling data for 1981

# POLITICAL CYNICISM



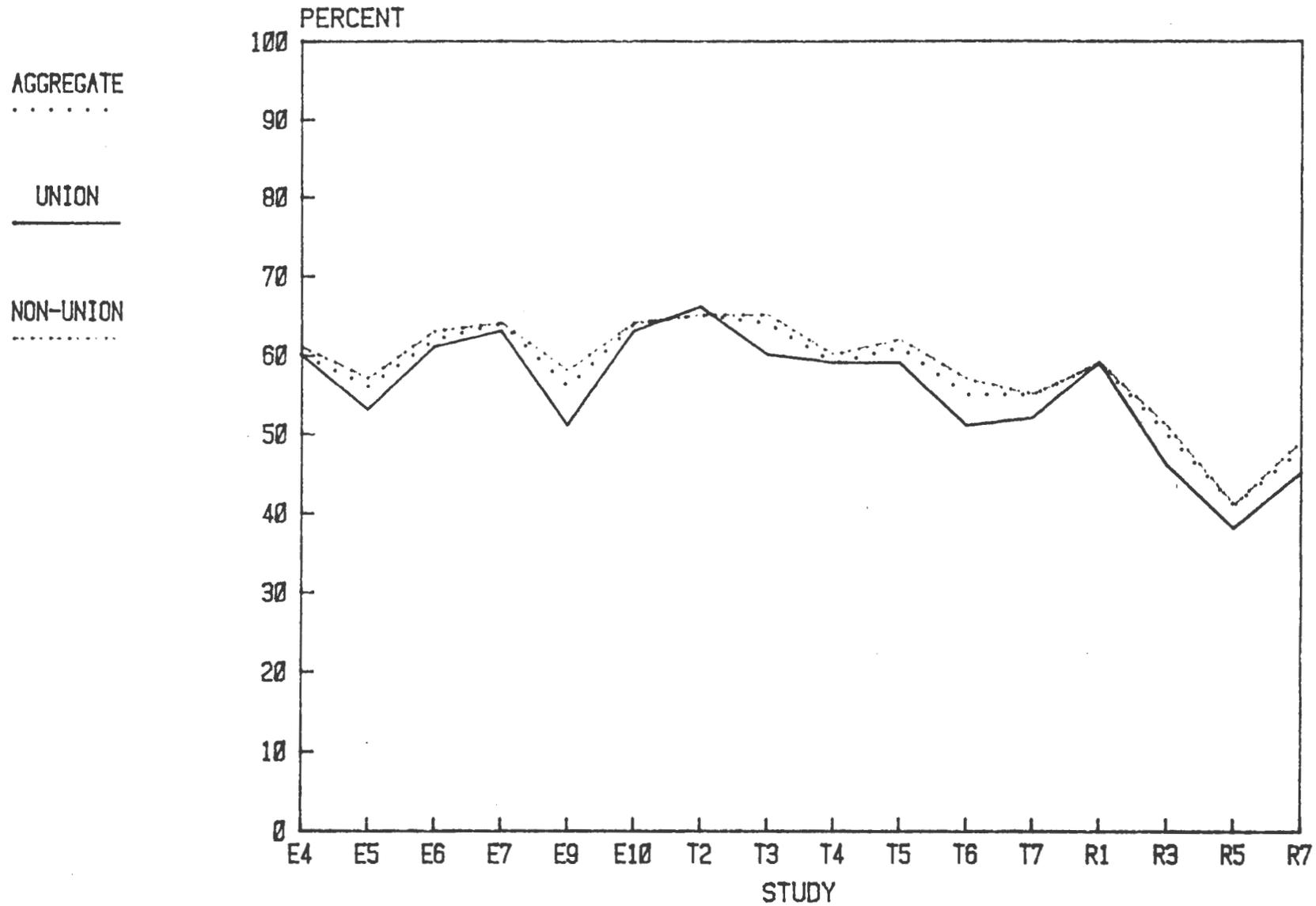
# REAGAN JOB RATING

## ECONOMY



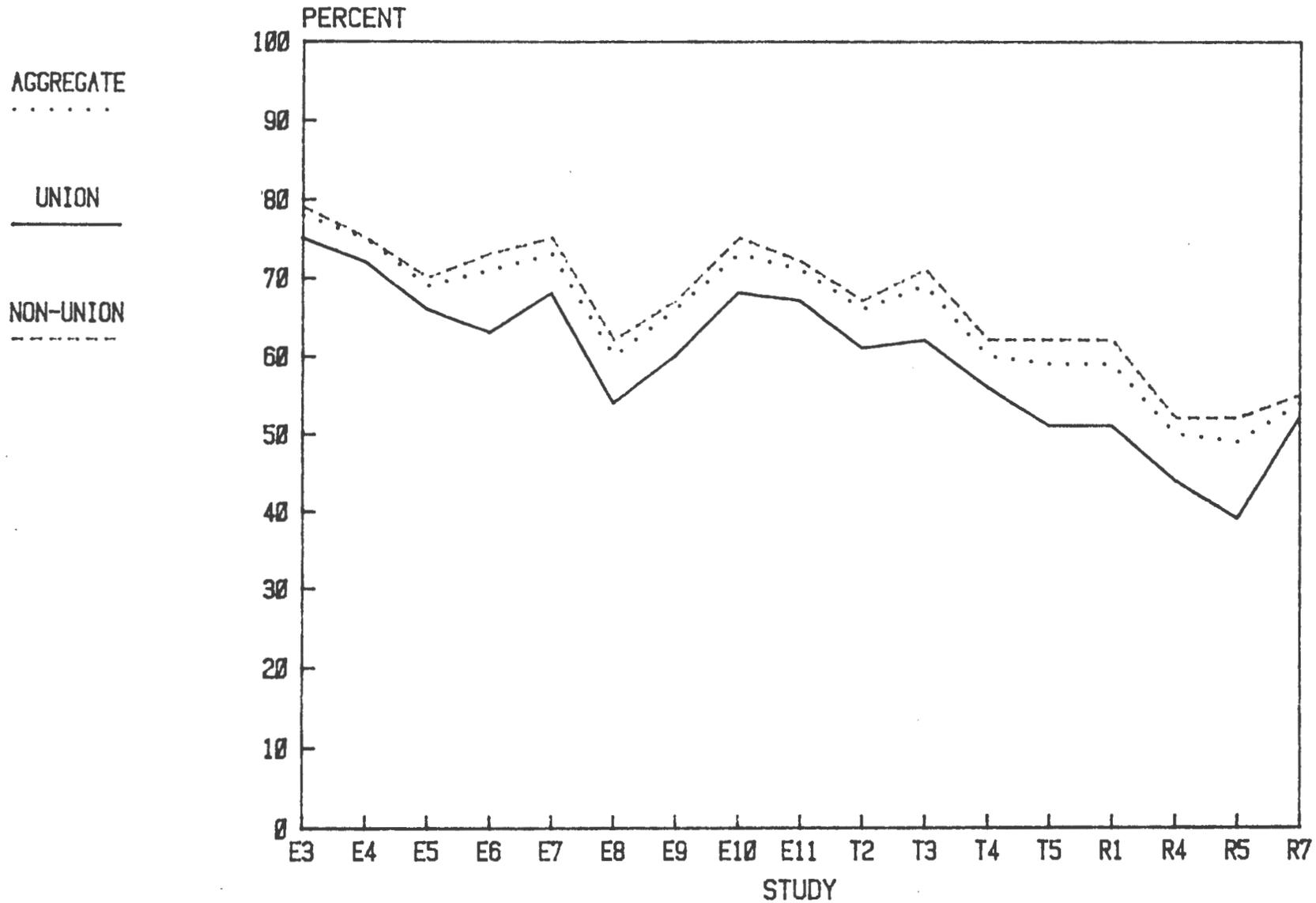
Polling data from 3/9/81 - 4/18/82

## REAGAN JOB RATING FOREIGN AFFAIRS



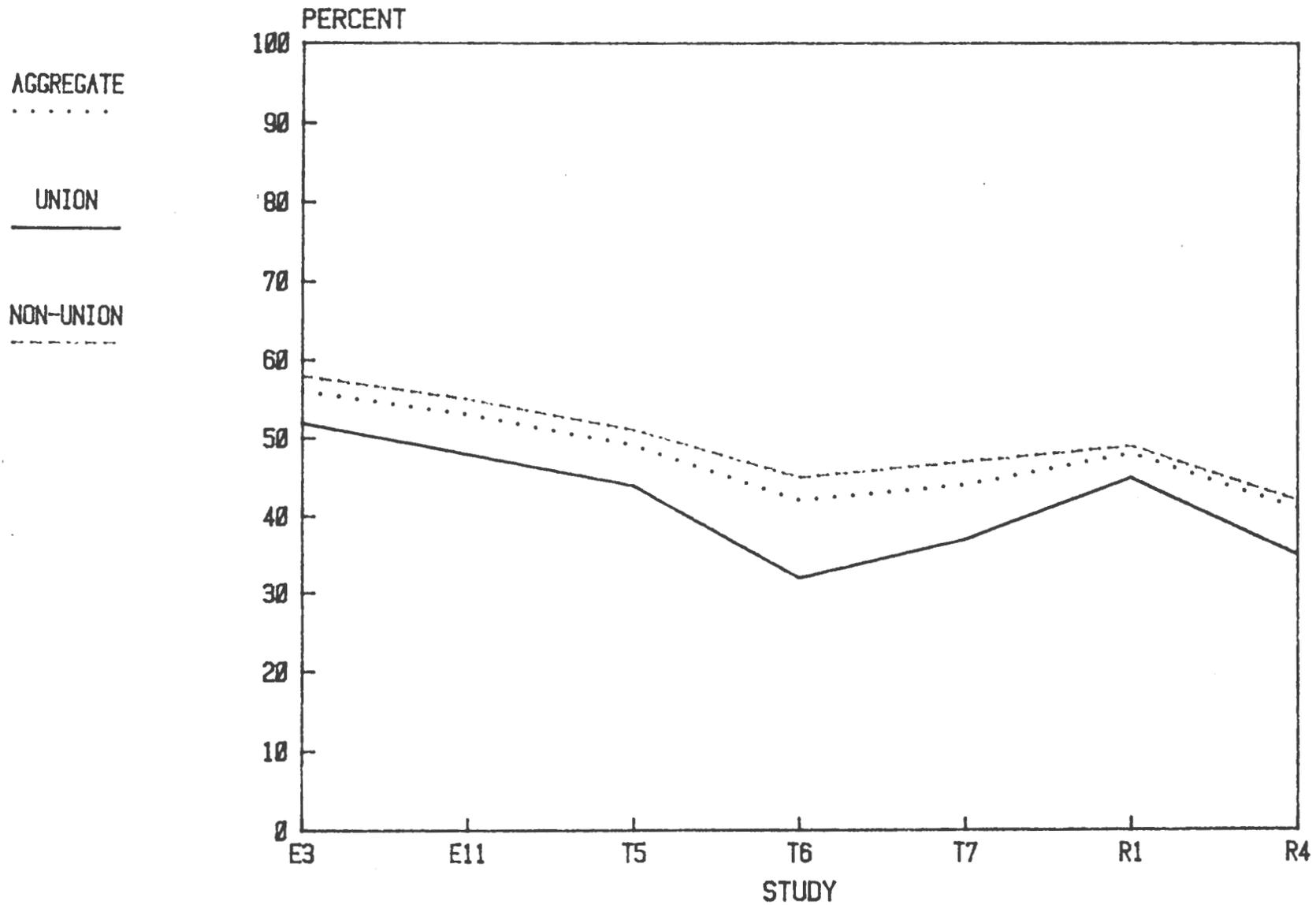
Polling data from 2/22/81 - 4/18/82

# REAGAN ECONOMIC PROGRAM HELP OR HURT?



Polling data from 2/22/82 - 3/6/82

# REAGAN ECONOMIC PROGRAM INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OR NOT?



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 19, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR ELIZABETH H. DOLE

THRU: RED CAVANEY/JACK BURGESS  
FROM: BOB BONITATI *B*  
SUBJECT: Assessing our Labor Relations

An assessment of the current status of our labor relations program should be examined from three perspectives: a) the perception of union members, b) the perception of union leaders, c) the perception of the news media/opinion leaders. All three are, of course, somewhat intertwined.

Union members

While the President's approval ratings have declined with the general public, there has been a corresponding decline with blue collar/union members. Despite some news stories that the President is losing blue collar supporters, there is no evidence that he is losing blue collar voters in any greater proportion than the rest of the public.

What the available data (several polls) indicates is that union members/blue collar voters just don't differ from the rest of the population in the way they view issues or political figures. The only issue that seems to generate a significantly different view from union members is on the handling of the PATCO strike. Union members tend to view the President's actions more negatively than the rest of the populace -- which should tell us something. Of all the public issues that received considerable media attention in the past year, PATCO is the only one where the President might have been perceived as being anti-union or anti-labor.

Union leaders

In general, our open door policy initiatives haven't brought us any new leadership support, but it has lessened the degree of hostility we were experiencing prior to November, 1981. Labor officials know that their opinions are welcome and that they have a high degree of accessibility to Administration officials. What they now complain about is that we don't heed their advice. The net effect of our outreach efforts has been to remove some of the suspicions that we were "out to get" labor, to dispel the notion that labor was being ignored by the Administration, and to dismantle the barrier that had been erected by the AFL-CIO prohibiting union leadership from working with the Administration. Still, the public criticism and opposition continues.

## The Media & Opinion Leaders

Our outreach efforts have succeeded in warding off the criticism that we were receiving from Washington business and political leaders that we were ignoring labor. The unfavorable press reports to that effect were likely to have a damaging effect on the rank and file. Fortunately, they have disappeared. The consensus opinion I have received is that "recognizing labor" was good politics.

## Discussion

While it is difficult to point to positive political gains that have resulted from our labor activities, I believe our policy has had the effect of lessening the degree of labor hostility, it has allowed us to avoid the perception that the President is anti-labor or anti-union, and it has permitted us to avoid some needless confrontations. This is particularly important as we keep our attention focused on the 44% of the union members who voted for the President in 1980.

The real dilemma we face in maintaining a labor program is dealing with a group of national labor leaders who represent a different agenda than the rank and file union member. Ignoring them will merely generate the very negative press reports that "labor views" are not being heard. Unfortunately, as we all know, the news media pays a great deal of attention to the handful of visible national labor leaders and the AFL-CIO in particular.

At this point I see no reason to substantially alter our basic labor strategy which has been in effect since November 1981. The courtesies we have extended to labor and the consultation offered has become an expected part of the national political scene, and to retreat from this posture would cause unnecessary grief.

I do believe, though, that until the economy is in a stronger position we should avoid high visibility labor meetings and events. The current economic state is an area where we are particularly vulnerable and the labor leaders have shown no unwillingness to exploit it.

I further believe that we should begin to expand our activities to the state and local level where we are more likely to find a greater receptivity and potential political support. Unfortunately, such efforts require more resources than we are now able to devote at the White House level.

## Recommendations

1. Continue our current policy of inviting labor leaders to State dinners, including labor leaders in Boards & Commissions, consulting on labor-sensitive personnel appointments, and a willingness to be accommodating on policy considerations.
2. Continue to place special emphasis on looking after the needs and interests of the unions that have been supportive and friendly.

3. Work with the Republican National Committee and the Labor Department's regional representatives in developing a network of supportive state and local labor representatives with the ultimate objective of developing a core of Reagan labor supporters who can be called upon for public support.
4. Avoid for the time being visible labor events that can be turned against us.
5. Adjust our commitment to have the Vice President meet "regularly" with labor leaders so that he meets with individuals rather than as a group.
6. Provide some leadership to the Republican National Committee labor outreach efforts.