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001. paper	State of the Union (5 pages)	12/20/99	P5
002. paper	Strategy Session (2 pages)	12/07/99	P5
003. fax	From Donald Baer To Eric Liu (6 pages)	01/19/00	P5

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FOLDER TITLE:

State of the Union 2000 Policy Memos, Rollout, Drafts [binder] [3]

Rich Sheridan
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RESTRICTION CODES

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—EYES ONLY—

State of the Union Polling
Monday, December 20, 1999
Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates

This is perhaps the last opportunity to address 80 million people at once and communicate what your vision was for the country and what your vision is for the next century. It is an opportunity to put together that pointillist painting of your accomplishments into a coherent picture that underscores the need for the country to keep moving forward with that vision.

Because it is an election year, the underlying purpose of the speech must also be to lay out the Democratic agenda in contrast to the Republican agenda and to drive home the successes of the presidency and the party, especially the economy. We can neither let prosperity be taken for granted nor allow your accomplishments be telescoped to just fixing the economy.

There have been few changes in public opinion in the last year. The public keeps getting wealthier, more suburban, more satisfied with their own lives, more confident about technology and the economy. They are both compassionate and activist in outlook. They continue to worry about the global economy, terrorists, loose nukes, privacy, drugs and anything that does not preserve Social Security and Medicare. And they think that healthcare and education need major overhauls to work in the next century. But without doubt, Columbine was the searing national event that made the public even more values oriented than in 1996. It changed attitudes on guns, and raised new concerns about children, family, violence in the old and new forms of media and entertainment; it shattered the belief that violence was the province of inner city schools and brought these concerns right into the suburbs. No family, rich or poor, suburban or city, could escape the problem of youth violence.

The swing voters in the upcoming elections are almost all middle class women voters. While seniors continue to trend against us, and we have a great many important programs that appeal to them in a close race, it is these women who make up most of the voters in the polls who, after read a few issue differences, typically switch back to the Democrats in huge numbers. They should be the central targets of the first new policy section of the speech.

These women in their thirties and forties with children are cross-pressured between the sterner moral message of responsibility that the Republicans preach and the activist message of the Democrats that offers them the tools to be better parents and that will unlock a better future for their children. The goal is to convince those of moderately conservative values that an activist government is consistent with those values and is perhaps

the only kind of government that can function effectively in the modern world.

Attached is the annual polling on the policy proposals. Some additional theme and message polling will be done as this takes more shape, and the use of family themes vs. opportunity themes, as well as some polling on the specific accomplishment statistics will all be done right after the New Year.

1. Where we are. It is clearly important to underscore the progress that has been made. A key sentence could be:

Today, this is a nation prepared for the 21st Century.

Strongest economy in its history...20 million jobs...real wages rising...home ownership at all time high...interest rates and inflation low... Turned around from a 300 billion deficit to a surplus and an opportunity to make America debt free.

But it is important to convince the public that this progress has not been limited to the economy. (We should hit this hard to counter the Bush message of Prosperity with a purpose – it has had a purpose). Along with economic progress, society itself has made progress. Crime down nationally XX%...2 million off of welfare...teen pregnancy down...America is not just better off – it is better today.

And Americans are learning to master the new technologies that threatened to create unemployment and that have instead led to record job growth. PC growth, Internet growth...one out of every three new jobs is related to technology ...whole new industries being created...more people than ever before living the American dream of being their own boss and having their own business.

2. But now is the moment that we have to decide whether we will prepare the next generation to succeed in the new century. This is the moment in which we will press either forward or fall backward – and their futures will be at stake.

Then usual philosophy of government section – but maybe this time rather than rejecting big government as the central point, we should reject the idea of a return to conservative government in times that demand a responsive government.

Just seven years ago, America was adrift...and we began off with an idea about how to reverse that drift. It started with three simple values, opportunity, responsibility and community...It wasn't about one bill or one vote – it was a complete change in how this government should serve its people...and three years ago I declared the era of big government as over. But the era of conservative government is also over. The modern times demand a modern government that lives within its means, but reaches out to the stars to solve the great new challenges of the day. Our success should not be a call to do less in the future; it should be a call to keep right on going.

3. Unfinished business

Preserving Social Security, Medicare, creating a prescription drug benefit, passing a strong patient's bill of rights, raising the minimum wage, campaign finance.

4. Bruce and Gene would now want the speech to move to how we close the opportunity gap in America. And there is a lot of appeal to that notion, especially for elites. However, as the polling shows, closing the opportunity gap is not very effective as rhetoric because it is clearly seen as a more liberal help the poor agenda. So if we were to go in this direction, then calling this a new opportunity agenda makes more sense, and that agenda can be about the things that need to be done to provide opportunity for all in the 21st Century. 100 years ago opportunity meant a 9th grade education. Today we have to expand educational opportunity to cover pre-school and open again even wider the doors to college. 100 years ago, opportunity might have meant enough schoolbooks, today it means that every classroom must be connected to the Internet...And this could be done as a new definition of what opportunity for all means in the 21st century. Doing it this way has some power, and we will test it.

5. But if you want to tap directly into the swing electorate, then the best section to have up front would be a section on strengthening America's families – giving the next generation the tools they need to succeed. This is consistently what works to move votes and increase favorable ratings if a solid agenda is put together.

This section would then focus on the help parents need to raise their children:

- Expanded Child-care, pre-school, and after-school initiatives
- Schools with standards – taking the next steps in standards, ensuring quality trained teachers, turning around failing schools
- Expanded Hope Scholarship or Schumer College Tuition tax cut
- Expanding the healthcare coverage of poor/working class children
- Helping parents keep violence out of the lives of their children – passing the administration's gun proposals and consider pushing the envelope to call for every state to have a program of gun licensing once and for all.
- Having strengthened proposals for dealing with the marketing of violence to children – the v chip works only if every network cooperates in the ratings (NBC doesn't), if the ratings are understandable, and if parents take the responsibility to use them. And we also need an internet-related proposal does the same thing.
- Responsible fatherhood policy
- Expanding the FMLA to smaller businesses, parent-teacher conferences, and paid leave

Then I think that speech can turn to the other challenges that we face in the beginning of the 21st Century:

- Aging of America
(SS/Medicare, prescription drugs, long-term care)
- Assuring Economic Opportunity for all
- New Markets initiatives
- Digital Divide/teacher training in technology
- Minimum wage
- Equal Pay (need a stronger initiative here)

- Protecting our Basic American Values in the face of change
(This can be a mix of areas in which we are asserting our values in the face of great changes taking place)
- Protecting the planet (environmental initiatives including land trusts, global warming)
- Protecting our privacy (Internet, credit cards, medical records)
- Investing in science and technology, but with safeguards (human genome, nanotechnology, but outlawing genetic discrimination, labeling gmos)
- Rewarding service (Americorps, service initiatives)
- Allowing limited Faith-based initiatives

Then Foreign Policy and trade together, and close on One America
(put hate crimes and immigration issues here).

Starting Point for the State of the Union....

I. How far America has come as it crossed the bridge to the 21st Century

Economic/Education/Welfare/Crime/Teen pregnancy – all of the changes that have taken place in the last years that spell out the great progress that Americans have made.

But also America has changed – it has adapted to the Information Revolution – perhaps better than any nation on earth. Productivity up. Leadership in the world's new industries. Internet is creating yet another new way of communicating and living.

II. Philosophy of Government

Started with a simple set of values: Opportunity, Responsibility and Community

Fiscal responsibility and securing Social Security, Medicare, Education and the Environment.

Making government smaller, yet doing more to help people have the tools they needed to succeed in these changing times.

Continuing the formula for economic growth – fiscal discipline, investing in people, opening new markets

III. Unfinished business of Congress

Social Security, Medicare reform, Prescription drugs, Patient's Bill of Rights.

IV. The need to make the first steps of the new century the right steps.

This means that government not just this year, but for many years to come, must stand up to the challenges of the new age.

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Can then group much of the speech around these challenges, probably not putting seniors first this year. (This is just a first cut with some that are not yet in the right bins)

Assuring Equal Opportunity in the New Age
(heavily education, new markets initiative)

Meeting the Demands of an Aging Society with soaring life expectancy
(Social Security, Medicare, Prescription drugs, Healthcare)

Challenging Americans to Assume Personal Responsibility
(Volunteerism and Service)
(Child support, absentee fathers, anti-drug initiatives)
(and possibly – stemming the culture of violence)

Making Science and Technology Work for Us
(overcoming digital divide, human genome, research in tech, health, GM foods, Privacy)

Right balance between work and family
(Child care, after school, FLMA, Paid Leave, Telecommuting)

Continuing and Spreading our prosperity to every corner
(This could be in equal opportunity above or be its own section defending against those who would upset fiscal responsibility, and then could also discuss the challenge of maintaining economic growth while protecting the environment)

Using growing interdependence to foster America's leadership
(Trade, use of alliances to keep the peace, dealing with concerns about nuclear weapons, terrorism)

Diversity as our strength



FAX

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PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING **5** PAGES TO:

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Eric Liu

FAX NUMBER:

202-456-2878

FROM:

Linda Byrnes

DATE:

11/9/00

CONFIRMING PHONE:

301.771.5849

RE:

Age of Eric Liu

COPY

January 10, 2000
Memorandum for the President
From: Don Baer
CC: Terry Edmonds

This is already a late note, but I've talked with Terry about it and decided to send in my ideas anyway.

This year's State of the Union, following on your Millennium Night speech, is obviously a crucial moment. It is the next step among your last opportunities to speak to the entire nation about the progress made because of your leadership and your clear vision for America in the 21st Century. It is useful to view this speech in tandem with your only remaining major opportunity before the election to speak to the entire nation – and indeed the world: your speech next summer at the Democratic National Convention. The two together (with anything you say after the election) will be viewed as something of a coda for your Presidency.

But rather than being about the past, you should make them about the future, about the hopes, dreams and aspirations of Americans – and America – to achieve our best in the new century. Rather than backward looking, you should relentlessly – and, at times in your rhetoric, quite openly – insist that we focus together on building upon the foundation we have worked so hard to put in place.

In all of these speeches, it is very important to find a way to show that under you, America seems for the first time in 25 years to have a bright future again, not just for some, but for most of our people. That is a huge achievement in attitude and reality that is under-appreciated. The title of Fred Siegel's book about New York, "The Future Once Happened Here," might well have applied to American aspirations until your Presidency. Now, however, Americans are believing more than at any time since Vietnam, the 70s economic downturn and Watergate that the future is happening here -- not just for a few, but for the many. Much of your work has been, by force, about undoing the mistakes of your predecessors from the right and the left. But under your Presidency, we are poised to appreciate that our spirit has been renewed. It is renewed not because we are fighting against a foreign threat and because those at the very top of the ladder are the only ones moving higher (as was the Reagan impact); rather, it's true because we have begun to have confidence in ourselves again to work together towards common aims in a time of vast change. People still have concerns about government and politics as forces for good, but they are seeing that we can have an impact of the direction of change for the good.

To that end, I thought much of what you said on New Year's was perfect for the SOTU setting. Since you won't now have to share the stage with countless celebrations around the globe, there is no reason not to import large portions of that address straight into this speech. Your line really does sum it all up: "When our memories outweigh our dreams, we grow old. And it is the eternal destiny of America to remain forever young." Keep the country focused on its dreams of future success, not its memories of past glories, but use a fundamental sense of our enduring values, along with concrete policy proposals as the bridge to connect the two.

This approach calls for underscoring several key points:

- Tap into, while also inspiring, the extraordinary optimism of the American people about this vital moment. People feel the tremendous potential of this "age of possibility," as you have branded it. They are not dour or even particularly anxious. Yes, they recognize, even deplore, the fact that there are obstacles to progress. But they are increasingly eager to seize the

opportunity, and they are open to helping others make the changes and leaps that are necessary for our entire society to succeed, perhaps as never before. The right tone is a positive, upbeat, yet realistic approach that builds on and helps to propel optimism.

- Explain that we have regained our confidence (a key word) to face our challenges together in this decade. I agree with the assessment I have heard Taylor Branch discuss that your greatest legacy is to restore the crucial belief that, after decades of declining confidence, we as Americans now believe again that we can confront our social problems and deal with them together. One view of your story-line is: First, the man from Hope as a spark for renewal; eventually, bit by bit, hope was transformed into confidence, built on the stepping stones of solid, concrete methods that worked to grapple with our most intractable challenges. We have cracked many problems. We have not always done so using the traditional New Deal, government-centered model. We haven't figured out solutions to all our issues (education, especially in the digital age, is, to my mind, top of this list). But we do believe we can solve those problems if – together – we put our minds and our wills to the task. Given where we were coming from in 1992, that is an amazing legacy, which deserves recognition.
- Re-enforce your approach to government and the vital center that you have helped to create. Your ideas are based on an activist/progressive approach to the nation's challenges; your solutions are not about more government, but about the determination of our people to face our challenges responsibly and to deal with them directly. Under you, we have, indeed, begun to reinforce the social contract that says we have responsibilities as well as rights. To this end, I believe it is important that you take this critical time to restate the basic commitment of your approach to those three essential ideas: Opportunity for all. Responsibility from all. And a sense of community applied to all our challenges.
- The future is not necessarily futuristic. In focusing on the great potential of the new century, it is crucial that you as President, in particular, provide anchors about how we view and seek our destinies as individuals and a nation. The things we seek – our dreams and hopes for ourselves, our children, our nation and the world – need to be framed as part of our enduring values and aspirations, not some far-off, exotic unknowns. You have done this for a long time, as you have categorized the fundamental purposes of your Presidency along the lines of enduring American objectives:
 - To keep the American Dream alive for all who are willing to work for it.
 - To maintain America's place as the leading force in the world for peace and freedom and democracy.
 - And to make sure that we are always coming together as a community, as One America in our constant striving to fulfill the dream of our founders to be a "more perfect union."

You could use these three goals as the main categories or baskets of this major speech, framing the larger purposes of your Presidency and your hopes for the nation after you are out of office. They focus us on the long-term hopes of the 21st century. But they are familiar and rooted in basic aspirations, especially from the 20th century.

[I know that the speech is now framed by Opportunity, Responsibility, Community, which, as you know, I have always loved. In some ways, the three principles above do, in fact, meld into Opportunity (American Dream alive), Responsibility (each has to work to reap opportunity; each has obligation to whole, and America as nation has responsibility in the world) and Community (One America). Either way, you are, in fact, anchoring future hopes to enduring values, which is what matters.]

- Our work is not done. When he interviewed you last month, Larry Kind had a throwaway line that I thought was perfect for you. He called you “the working President,” following on your talking about getting up every day and thinking about what you should do to work for the American people. I’d say “the working President” wouldn’t be a bad way to be remembered – as the man who never gave in, who showed how to use the job as a relentless tool to get things done for people and who, quite frankly, made the Presidency work for a whole new age. It is hard, of course, to talk about these things yourself in your speech. I do think that trying to get some columnist to do something with “the working President” idea would be great around the time of the speech. But you still might be able to put some aspects of the idea into play with a blunt opening to the speech, as follows:

“On the night that I was re-elected to the honor of serving as your President, I said to the American people: ‘We have work to do.’ [that was, after all, the core of your election night speech]. In the time since then, and, indeed, in the years I have been privileged to serve as President, we have, indeed, worked hard to take many of the crucial steps necessary for our progress as a nation.”

[Then you can provide the key list of those things, starting with your economic/budget policy. It becomes crucial, here, to show that so much that you have done was, by force, about clearing away the left-over obstacles to progress, such as deficits, a decaying welfare system, ineffective ways to fight crime, an uncertain aim in our foreign responsibilities, and, most important, a debilitating sense that, working together, we could not meet our challenges. Your work has overcome all of this and more. It’s important, too, to remember the new productivity – spurred by the intelligence of our people, the boldness of our businesses and the revolution in technology – that has made this decade possible. But following all that, you can say we still have to move ahead to build upon this new, sturdier foundation – a foundation fit for a new century; we have to build with policies and ideas that will now provide the means for our people to make the most of their own lives. Thus:]

“But, despite our progress, tonight I say to all of you, my fellow Americans: Our work is not done.” [The virtue of a line like this as a pivot to your policy sections is, at least, twofold: First, you are defining the future agenda; second, you are making it clear that your last year is intended as an activist year, not a trip down memory lane. Or, to put it another way, you will never stop being “the working President” until the last day.]

- Issues: Among the many you will focus on that are crucial this year (China/WTO, hopefully Social Security), I also encourage you to make it clear that one of the important ways you can lead now is by drawing together many forces in society and giving them leadership towards finding the right solutions to our big challenges. In other words, there may not be huge, centralized fixes to some problems. But, in the 21st Century, the President provides the national leadership necessary to move things forward on many levels and to focus us collectively on the new challenges. Here are a few suggestions I am aware of:

Education. You might consider using a line Terry and I worked on in a speech we prepared for Discovery's John Hendricks last year, as an umbrella for how to think about education in the 21st Century: Our goal should be "to transform the Information Age into a New Age of Enlightenment." (I've attached a copy of the speech.) Some ideas to put behind that rhetoric could include:

- Call for a national conference on how to create "Digital Learning Opportunity" in the 21st Century, pulling together educators, policy-makers and business leaders. I am the lead staff person for this year's CEO Forum on Education and Technology, which Hendricks chairs (and which we work on with Tony Podesta). You could use this group and others to pull together major leaders about how to build on the progress you have already led. Our schools are now, by and large, wired for the Internet and random-access video. But the more vexing question is how we use that connectivity to transform the education that is available to every child in America. There is a great deal of uncertainty and bad focus on these issues. Only you can bring it together, with a national summit.
- Support efforts to get colleges of education to upgrade their technology training. The CEO Forum also just issued a new technology assessment tool for colleges of education to see how well they are prepared to train the two million new teachers who will come into the schools in the next decade. Secretary Riley joined us for a press conference last week. You could endorse the challenge we issued for every college of education to use this tool to assess its progress by the end of this school year. That will make it possible to determine what resources are needed to give teachers the training they need to teach our children the skills they need to compete and win.
- Encourage media literacy training across the country. Again, Discovery is providing new media literacy training to every public school in Maryland. After the Littleton shootings, rather than rejecting outright any responsibility as part of the entertainment industry, our approach was to believe we have to give children better tools to judge for themselves what is good and not good about the vast profusion of media they have available. We all want to believe the products of the Information Age will be great boons to our children. But they need to have more understanding of all those things that are thrown at them if they are to make sense of them and use them for their own and society's good. Media literacy training is about helping them to be wise about all of this. (We can discuss this further with the policy people if you want.)

Poverty. I believe it is the right time to talk about that issue, precisely in the way you are addressing it with your "New Markets" efforts. One way to keep the discussion fresh and to draw more attention in the next few months would be to call a national summit or White House conference on the issue. I was recently in a discussion with Andrew Young in which he and some media business leaders said we should consider a National Summit on Poverty, specifically focused on what businesses that are doing so well should do to unleash greater activity in the places that have not yet been touched by the prosperity. You are already doing so much: Welfare-to-Work, New Markets, EITC, etc. But calling all kinds of people together to focus on the next stages will help lift this issue up in a way that will prod everyone to do more (without assuming the answer is big government alone) and help the Clinton Presidency get the credit it deserves for putting this issue front-and-center at this tremendous moment of opportunity. I know a number of business leaders who are ready to help make this happen.

Finally, as I suspect you will be doing, I hope you will end your speech on a great call for community and tolerance, much as you did on New Year's. Some kind of related representation

in the box with the First Lady of the families from Littleton might provide a chance to underscore this. If we as a country can get our renewed sense of responsibility from all and community of all right, it will be our greatest asset as we move into the future. We can only be confident if we do work together. That is what you, better than anyone, bring to the country. And I believe, in the end, it will be what you most want the country to remember about you.

I am also attaching another speech by a friend of mine from Chapel Hill that I thought you would enjoy.

Best of luck in this. It will be a great moment. I am around if there is anything I can do to help.