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P 2009

February 7, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE STAFF SECRETARY
FROM: CHARLES COLSON
SUBJECT: Action Memo #P-2009
Plesser Poll

Request

It was requested in Action Memo #P-2009, taken from the February 1 News Summary to prepare a brief analysis of a recent Plesser poll and of his organization and techniques.

Response

I talked to Nelson Rockefeller's office with regard to Tully Plesser. They have had a lot of experience with him and regard his work as totally unreliable. He is apparently for sale to the highest bidder. His most recent poll was done for Lindsay and Rockefeller's people suspect very strongly that this really was a Lindsay plant. The theory makes some sense. It shows Nixon beating Muskie which is to Lindsay's advantage. It also shows strong anti-Nixon sentiment which is also to Lindsay's advantage.

It has been reported that Plesser has just taken a Florida poll for Lindsay so he apparently is still doing Lindsay's work.

John Becker has a similar report about Plesser. He feels he is very unreliable and that there is no way to measure so-called "leverage issues". The Attorney General tells me that Plesser is totally untrustworthy. Scammon also discounts his poll.

Sindlinger is the harshest of all. He has been asking since 1969 the question, "Would you vote today for the reelection of President Nixon?"

Since September the "no" answers have averaged 15 percent. During that period of time Sindlinger has run 5 polls surveys. Each sample base has been 2000; hence there is a 10,000 total sample base. In each poll the "no" answers have ranged between 14 and 16 percent. Plesser reports that he used a similar technique and gets a 33 percent "no". In view of the very large sample base of Sindlinger, the Plesser results would seem to be demonstrably in error.

I further understand that Plesser wanted to work for the Campaign Committee and was turned down. He may well be bitter.