

Subject: The 2024 Election

On Dec 19, 2023, at 10:42 AM, Stanley Greenberg wrote:

To: Anita Dunn, Steve Ricchetti, Michael Donilon, John Anzalone, Celinda Lake

To the Biden team,

Steve assures me you read my notes, and I hope you will share this with the President, if you think appropriate.

The President has an historic domestic legacy and could have an international one as well -- if he uses this year to defeat Putin and win a Palestinian state against Netanyahu, while prioritizing your family's needs in a very challenging period.

If Trump wins re-election -- and I believe it will be very difficult for your campaign to stop him -- his sole mission will be the destruction of your legacy. And any other Democrat will make your legacy their main rationale to put Democrats in the White House and defeat Trump.

On the best scenario from your team, you get re-elected in a brutal, ugly campaign that gets you to a close Electoral College majority that further polarizes the country. But in our survey for Democracy Corps, Soros and Gardner, fear of Democrats on the border and crime and violence in the cities were far stronger than worries about chaos and democracy. His current rhetoric will help, not hurt him.

The President could announce a decision during the holidays -- and then put his efforts into winning a supplemental package with aid for Ukraine and border reforms that your own party won't like. And then, put yourself into a yearlong effort that isolates Bibi, creates a Palestinian state and new agreement with the moderate Arab states.

Think how difficult all this will be if leaders see polls showing Trump is likely to follow you in office. Think of the consequences for the globe.

I hope you'll consider that having a low approval rating in this period is a badge of honor. Every incumbent leader has dismal approval rating or has lost re-election (except Greece). But I believe your approval will continue to weaken, despite producing an economy that is the envy of the world.

Voters just don't care that the trend line is downward, or the US has the best performance in the world. Prices are still 3 points higher than when you came into office and those at the bottom half of the income range have the most difficulties. What matter is how many months your family is struggling to pay the bills. That is why the % rating the economy as poor hit the highest level now and will continue to grow, not go down.

We start with Trump having huge double-digit advantages on wages keeping up with prices, crime and the border — the top problems for voters. He leads on many of these with our base. This is a huge head wind for the foreseeable future.

While these are early polls, I give them importance because the problems are in our base, and they are worsening before our eyes, particularly with the young and Hispanics. Gaza may be impacting the former and the border, the latter.

Many of the uncertainties could make the race harder. The dual haters break for Trump, 3rd parties are mostly helping Trump, short-term low ratings on handling Israel-Gaza war, Hunter's trial, and a Democratic convention that could be fractious.

Look, if the President Biden continues to run, I will do everything possible to provide help with strategy and message that makes this race as close as possible.

But I hope you will consider a path that creates the greatest legacy for this President.

All the best, Stan