

RELEASE IN PART B6

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From: sbwhoeop [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2010 9:48 AM
To: H
Subject: H: Got this poll done with Brock; Begala helped. Sid

http://www.politico.com/static/PPM170_101005_boehner.html

Our top message--exposing Boehner as beholden to special interests--beat the Republicans' attack by 20 points with swing voters. Our second highest rated message--connecting Karl Rove's secret efforts to hijack our elections to Boehner--beat the Republican attack by 15 points with swing voters and was the top rated message among Democratic likely voters.

Branding Boehner

RAPID RESPONSE MEMO · OCTOBER 6, 2010

ANALYST: DREW WESTEN, PH.D., WESTEN STRATEGIES

Karl Rove is back in business -- directing tens of millions in secret corporate cash to GOP campaigns to hijack our elections and our public discourse. If he's successful, John Boehner will become Speaker of the House. But the last thing Rove wants is for Boehner to be seen as the face of the GOP. That's why he's claiming it's an "inexplicable" mistake for President Obama to put Boehner front and center. Progressives know better than to take advice from Rove.

Our new message testing shows that progressives should not only talk about Boehner but define him and his agenda. Every narrative we tested about Boehner -- from his loyalty to special interests and corporate donors over the interests of the middle class to Karl Rove's efforts to elevate him as Speaker -- beat the Republicans' toughest attack language on Obama, Pelosi and Reid. Currently, Boehner is largely unknown, but when voters are told about him, they don't like what they hear. The following "one-liners" beat GOP attack rhetoric by double digits with both likely and swing voters:

The brief statements above beat this Republican attack:

"Obama, Pelosi and Reid have abused their power to impose an expansive government and destroyed our economy in the process. John Boehner and the Republicans won't let them continue."

Does Not Speak for Us or Our Values

- We need a Speaker who is also a listener, who can hear the voices of ordinary Americans.
- The Speaker of the House is a heartbeat away from the Presidency. Unfortunately, we know where John Boehner's heart is, and it isn't with the middle class.
- We need moderation, not extremism. If John Boehner wants to speak for a party that has vowed to end Social Security, Medicare and public education--and force women who've been raped to bear their rapist's child--that's his business. But he doesn't speak for America or American values.

Cares More about Special Interests

- Ordinary Americans need a Speaker for their interests, not for the interests of billionaires and corporations that are outsourcing our jobs.
- It's not hard to keep a tan like John Boehner's when you're always out on the golf course with some CEO or lobbyist.
- It's time we return to government of, by, and for the people, not government of, bought, and paid for by special interests. But in John Boehner, big business has finally found their man.

Helped Invent the Problems We Face

- John Boehner understands deficits. He's spent nearly 20 years in Washington creating them.
- John Boehner knows the ways of Washington. He helped invent them: Earmarks, deficits, and tax breaks for corporations that outsource our jobs to China.

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KEYS TO CONNECTING

1. Emphasize whose voices matter to Boehner: Voters want a Speaker who listens to the voice of the people, not the big corporations and lobbyists who Boehner represents.

2. Draw a strong contrast between the interests of working Americans and the special interests of powerful corporations: Speak strongly to populist themes that focus on the loyalty of Boehner and the Republicans in Congress to their corporate donors, like the tobacco CEOs whose campaign donations Boehner handed out on the House floor, over the interests and values of ordinary Americans.

3. Focus on realities that are hard for Boehner to defend: the social and economic extremism of his party and his long history in Washington helping to create the problems we face today.

NARRATIVES THAT BEAT THE GOP ATTACK

Longer narratives against Boehner beat a similar, but more in-depth Republican message, based on language drawn directly from Boehner and other conservative leaders:

Our top message--exposing Boehner as beholden to special interests--beat the Republicans' attack by 20 points with swing voters. Our second highest rated message--connecting Karl Rove's secret efforts to hijack our elections to Boehner--beat the Republican attack by 15 points with swing voters and was the top rated message among Democratic likely voters.

i We surveyed a national sample of 1,013 adults matching the demographics of registered voters from October 2-3, 2010 using online dial testing. We

analyzed their responses as they listened to narratives to understand what they found compelling, as well as their overall ratings of each narrative and

additional "one-liners." The numbers reported here are likely underestimates of the strength of the narratives, as the statistics refer to the original narratives

tested prior to revising them based on analysis of online dial tests.

ii Swing voters are defined as those who described themselves as anywhere from weak/moderate Republicans through Independents to weak/moderate

Democrats.

THE REPUBLICAN ATTACK ON OBAMA, PELOSI AND REID

Obama, Pelosi and Reid have abused their power to impose an expansive and intrusive government and destroyed our economy in the process. Democrats think they can get away with their job-killing agenda by ramming it down people's throats, excluding opposing viewpoints and eliminating fair debate. They are turning their backs on American families and businesses as they continue to tax, borrow and spend into oblivion. John Boehner and the Republicans believe government should reflect the priorities of the American people--priorities that have been ignored, even mocked by the powers-that-be in Washington. Obama, Pelosi and Reid must be stopped from raising taxes on any American during a recession and spending money we don't have on big government programs no one wants. John Boehner and the Republicans are listening to the American people and understand that government is not the answer, it's the problem.

"Boehner and Rove"- After the Iraq War went south and the economy went under, most of us thought we'd never hear again from Karl Rove, the architect of the Bush revolution. But Rove is back in business, directing tens of millions in secret corporate cash to hijack our elections, running ads against Members of Congress who want to put the public interest over the special interests. He and John Boehner aren't working for ordinary Americans. They're working for the big corporations that outsource our jobs and get tax breaks for doing it. Boehner's voted down the line for big bonuses for bankers, big tax breaks for big oil, and big loopholes for insurance companies that discriminate against people with "pre-existing conditions"---which is all of us if we just live long enough. We should be restoring the American Dream for all Americans, not just for the few, and we need a Speaker who stands with the middle class.

"They found their man"- We need to return to government of, by, and for the people, not government of, bought, and paid for by special interests. It's time billionaires and big businesses paid their fair share of taxes rather than paying politicians to give them special tax breaks and loopholes. They're putting a lot of money into John Boehner, and for good reason: they know as Speaker, he'd speak for them, not for ordinary Americans. Just ask the tobacco company CEOs whose campaign donations he handed out on the floor of the House of Representatives---which is supposed to be the People's House, not the smokers' lounge. Or ask the bankers who played Russian roulette with our homes and jobs, who got out their checkbooks as he and his fellow Republicans held a special meeting with them this summer promising to block any efforts to hold Wall Street accountable. We need a Speaker whose voice is our voice, who'll spend less time working on his tan and more time working on the problems of middle class Americans.

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