L. HOWARD McGRATH
Memorandum

Nearly talk to
Mrs. O'Conor.

Christchurch
Sept. 1966
Re: Development
or a situation.
call him to see if?

J. F.
YESTERDAY & CONFIDENTIAL

Senator:

Fully agree with your colleague, Senator Myer, that Alexander’s suggestions here re colored vote are worth while. In fact, I think Alexander’s letter is important enough for you to read from beginning to end. The direction of this vote to the ballot box on November 2nd is, as we know, terribly important this year; and I think that some sort of indirect liaison with this powerful minority toward this end should be established at an early date. The Republicans are doubtless trying every effort to lure these people back into the fold. Of course, they made their greatest progress under us and should be grateful; but you know, and I know, how easily they are snared. Alexander appears to have wide and influential connections among this group throughout the country and might help to keep them in line. Bill Houston, Sr., Washington lawyer, who used to work for me at Justice, did some such work here at the Committee in 1942 or 1944. We might get some ideas from him also. In any event, I think this matter should be diligently pursued.

Joe
Honorable J. Howard McGrath,  
Democratic National Committee,  
The New Building,  
1200 12th Street, N.W.,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Howard:

The enclosed letter was written by Raymond Pace Alexander, who is a fine gentleman and an outstanding lawyer. He makes several suggestions on Pages 3, 4 and 5 which I believe are worthwhile and I would, therefore, ask that you give them your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Frank

[Handwritten note: $25/week]

[Handwritten note: enclosure]
Honorable Frank Myers
U. S. Senator from Pennsylvania
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

May 11, 1948

Dear Frank:

Convention time is not too far away for us to begin to lay plans on a national scale to interest the Negro voters in — and to hold his support for the democratic ticket this fall.

There have been all sorts of methods used by the republican party leaders, both colored and white, in various sections of the country to make friends with and to influence the Negro voters, many of whom have definitely aligned themselves with the republican party, although they were with us during the last four presidential elections. Their methods and strategy differed in various sections of the country, but only in degree, the main purpose being the same, to wean away from the democratic party the almost overwhelming support given our party by the Negroes during the last four presidential elections. The results, I am sorry to say, have shown that the republicans have made some real progress and it appears at this writing that in many respects we have permitted them to carry the ball and take the play completely away from us, to our very severe loss. This loss, however, is not irretrievable, but we must act at once and take steps to mitigate this loss and begin an offensive on our own part.

Several weeks ago I was in consultation with our mutual friend, Bill Watt, Jr., Director of Research for the Democratic National Committee, at his Washington office and since that time I have been in communication with him on several occasions. At his request I sent certain suggestions of campaign strategy that I thought would be of importance and real interest in obtaining the support of the Negro voters. I assume these are now being studied by the planning division of the DN Committee. At least I hope so because so much is being reported in the Republican Daily Press and particularly in the Negro press of the so-called support that the republican members of Congress are giving to the Negro's plans for implementing the excellent report of President Truman's Committee that I am afraid the country at large, and the Negro in particular, will lose sight of the fact that it
was President Truman, himself, who first recognized that such a study should be made, and it was the President who appointed this committee and it was again President Truman who urged Congress at his own great sacrifice and, as it appears more recently, his almost losing the support of many factions of his party, to pass these laws.

We must set up some kind of a national committee of outstanding Negroes, men and women, whose purpose is to stand by our President and let the world know the person responsible for awakening America to the need of the study of the basic and fundamental civil rights of all people and particularly to our minority. It makes me particularly glad to see our President attacked by demagogues in each party for his courage and stand, and it makes me even more than sad to see the Republicans capitalize on this remarkably unscrupulous act on the part of our President.

May I comment on one or two matters from a purely constructive point of view and make a few suggestions — more or less summarizing briefly a few points which I earlier passed on to Bill Balk.

First let me say I attended the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner in Philadelphia on April 11. I was very glad to see you there and I want to say very positively that Senator Denny made one of the most brilliant addresses that I have ever heard. He is truly a remarkable man and a real liberal, and I am glad to say this for a southerner. He is a very great man, I was, however, very disappointed at the small turn out of colored workers at this dinner.

You know there are now 200 thousand Negro people in the very city of Philadelphia alone, and about 50 thousand in the various counties around Philadelphia, not including Bucks County, but in Delaware, Montgomery and Chester. There are now 500 thousand Negroes in Pennsylvania. In Philadelphia alone, according to the last registration, there are 75 thousand Negro registered voters. This sum is growing yearly. There are about 500 thousand registered Negroes voting in Pennsylvania (an astounding figure, we control the electorate of the democrat) and have the support of 75% of the Negroes in '32 and '36, and perhaps as much as 75% in '40, and perhaps a little less in '44. Today it is going down rapidly. I was surprised not to see at this dinner a prominent Negro democrat, for example, at the guest table. I fear that this is a very great error. The Republicans play up this question of social equality and the recognition of the Negro republican worker for all it is worth, and they go about it in a great big way. I know because I have attended hundreds of their dinners. And whether they mean it or not, it goes over big with the average Negro. They would not have a dinner of any size, not a ward dinner,
a district dinner, or a city dinner, and not even a state-
wide dinner of Pennsylvania without having, for example,
Hooski Haynes, Herbert Riley (now judge), Daddy Wright—
you know all that crew—at the speakers' table. The
speakers' table might contain twenty people, and there
would be two negroes there. If it contained more, there
would possibly be three. Perhaps you would find Assistant
Director of Public Safety, Bob Pelham, among the prominent
guests. At the national Lincoln Day dinner in 1944 in
Washington at one of your leading colleges, the National
Republican Committee had as a guest speaker who made the
second most important speech, Howard Payne of Chicago, son-
in-law of Russell Scott, who was World War I special assistant
to the Secretary of War, a very close friend of mine. Last
year at the Lincoln Day dinner in Washington, the Inc Committee
had Judge Francis Ellis Hovey, a classmate of mine at Columbia
Graduate School, make the second important principal speech.
They go in for it, nationally, state-wide, city-wide and
district-wide. I mentioned this to Austin Morris, and I was
sorry not to see him at the dinner, as he said this is a very
unfortunate thing, the local democratic party and the state
democratic party in Pennsylvania, have failed to recognize them
for years, and for that reason he does not attend the dinners
any more. Nearly if ever do they have a colored man at the
speakers' table. I think once they had Marshall Shappard.
I was surprised not to see Shappard there. Usually they are
ignored according to Morris, put at some side table way in
the back, and usually together, which is a very bad policy.
I think they ought to be passed on to our good friends and
mutual friend, Jim Fitzmaurice. I suggested this to Jim some
weeks ago. This was before the dinner, but of course it is
now too late. This is a slightly small price to pay, political,
social recognition of all groups, frank, for the support of
a large mass of voters who believe in traditionally, the
liberality of the democratic party.

I was sorry I never got a chance to speak to
you because of the lateness of the hour, nor did I meet
Senator Barkley, or other persons at the speakers' table.
Certainly some association of the outstanding negroes in
Philadelphia and Pennsylvanias on the part of our leaders should
have taken place. It was a wonderful opportunity, but we
missed the train on that.

I should like to emphasize that the negroes of
Philadelphia, as well as New York and other large northern
cities, such as Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit,
Indianapolis and Chicago, by a very large and impressive
majority are more favorable in national elections and even
more favorable in state and local elections, except
for the interference of the machine's local craft, etc.
the democratic party than the republican party. The Negro
leans, as a matter of fact, traditionally, toward "the
federal government" for protection. They believe in anything
"federal" and in "federal" elections, see forces gone in to
play even the corrupt political machines which exist in this
city to make the Negro vote other than democratic. But some
effort must be made to emphasize the good virtues of the
democratic party immediately. We believe in "Federal govern-
ment", "Federal protection", "Federal justice", etc., for
instance, that favorable decision just-anounced by the
Supreme Court a few days ago in the restrictive covenants
case and this very day as I dictated this letter to you, in
the case involving the attack of the part of a white church
in Ohio to prevent the sale of this church to a Negro for
use by a Negro congregation, emphasize our belief in an
allegiance to the federal government. Therefore, I always
talk about the presidential campaign and campaign speaking
as a "Federal election", as a protection given to us by the
"Federal government", the "Federal government", etc. I think all of
our speakers addressing Negro groups should emphasize the
"Federal nature" of this election. Not the Republicans nor
this and as a result they are making heavy inroads in various
diverse ways.

May I make the following suggestions: (1) Some
effort should be made to propagate the annual convention
now taking place in leading national Negro organizations.
For example, one of the largest church organizations of Negroes
are now congregating one in Kansas City, Missouri, the quadrennial
convention of The 1, 000, 000 Church. I am counsel for this church
and the Board of Bishop's. I leave tomorrow for Kansas City.
(2) The L. S. V. Zion are now meeting in Louisville, Ky.
(3) Second-rites among are now meeting in Philadelphia.
(4) The national Baptist council of churches meets in St.
Louis May 30 to June 2. (5) June 4 to 11, the colored N.C.
quadrennial convention meets in Dayton, Ohio. (6) June 4 to
11, the southern central jurisdiction conference in Atlanta,
a. (7) June 14 to 23, the National Baptist Convention of
America, the Sunday school and NBFU Convention meet in Kansas
City, Mo. (This is the largest church body in the world of
3 million members). (8) June 21 to 27, the National Baptist
Sunday school and NBFU meet in Cleveland, Ohio. (9) June 23 to
28, the National Negro Insurance Association meets in New
Orleans, La. (10) August 16 - 22, the Lott Carey Baptist
Foreign Mission Convention meets in Columbus, Ohio. (11)
Second week in September the national BAP Association meets in
Atlanta, Ga. I am a former president of the National BAP
and will be there in person to make the principal address and
will do all I can to aid our cause at that time. (12) The
third week in September the National Baptist Convention, Inc.
meets in Texas. The third week in September the National Negro
Bankers Association; the place is yet undesignated.

Some effort to have a representative of your committee, or a representative of President Truman and our party should be present at these meetings, particularly to emphasize the great protection of the civil rights report, originated and supported by President Truman, should be a must; and certainly no convention, particularly those of religious organizations, could turn down a speaker for such an occasion. I should be very glad to volunteer to assist and be present at any of these conventions wherever my services may be needed.

Why not some of the following strategy?  

A special Negro liaison man attached to the publicity section of the Democratic Nationalcommittee to handle all publicity, public relations, etc., during the campaign.

b. Why not draft a summary of the civil rights report and have several hundred thousand, if necessary, a million, or more printed to pass out at the various conventions and to give to the various persons present at the various campaign meetings in the north so they may know first-hand and study the work done by the great committees appointed by our great president? I do not think it ought to be under the imprint of the Democratic National committeec because of the protection against it in the south, but it could be done privately.

c. Enumerate the records of such Republicans as Taft and others who supported in the labor committee the Fair Play in 1945 Congress, after making a special premium and having a special plank in the 1946 presidential platform promising to make this a "must" bill.

d. Expose how the Republicans killed housing and health bills, largely because of pressure from reactionary groups claiming that too much would go to the Negro veterans and to the Negro citizens.  

Why not urge immediately the appointment of some qualified outstanding Negroes, men and women, to high government positions. It is not too much to ask this especially a Negro U. S. District Court Judge. We have 200 or more federal judges from the U. S. Supreme Court down to the District Court and not one Negro. Of course we have a judge in the Virginia Islands, but he is not a Federal U. S. District Judge, it is only for a term of 4 years. We have one or two Negro judges, but you know his status. A U. S. District Court Judge in Philadelphia, or some other large city, is needed. It is long overdue and it is a small price to pay for the support of the millions of Negro people and as a fair, honest, proper recognition of the Negro citizens, now 16 million strong in a country in which he makes up 10% of the population.

I am certain the white bar of Philadelphia would be delighted and pleased, although, of course, the Republicans would not rejoice and I would not expect them to; they never rejoice at any of the democratic appointments. I believe there is a vacancy, or there
is going to be a vacancy if one of our judges goes to the
Court of Appeals and District appeals, which is likely, and also
if the sixth judgeship is allowed and passed by our congress
during the coming year. There are other federal appointments
that should be given in the higher branch to the Negro citizen.
For example, federal Power Commission, Interstate Commerce
Commission, Civil Aeronautics Authority (there were 2 vacancies
that went vacant for a long while), a Negro would be glad to
accept such. There is the Federal Reserve Board, Farm Loan
Board, Import-Export Bank, FDR Commission, V.A., and an
appointment to an ambassadorship, for example, to the Republic
of Haiti; which I now represent, Negroes of color are
now in the high office of president; they have departed
from that racist caste-rule policy in Haiti as you know, and dark
skinned people are in power. They would welcome a Negro from
America as its ambassador.

How this letter I fear has been much too long.
I think of how much there is to be done and I see the other
fellow working every day, day-in and day-out. I see committee
after committee set up by them and indeed being made into
our own democratic strong-hold in Philadelphia, Pennyslvania,
in the north, in the east. I feel therefore as though it might
be some source of satisfaction to you if you knew the names of
your old friends back in Philadelphia who admire you greatly
and who follow your progress and success with real interest,
was interested in the extent of passing one to you and your
committees my letters, my suggestions and recommendations.

I am sending two carbon copies of this to you
which you may want to pass on to the appropriate department.
Perhaps one might be sent to Jim Flanagan, but I leave this
to you for your judgment alone.

I close always with very best of wishes to you
and my prayers for a long life of happiness and good health
to you and your family. I have the honor to remain,

Faithfully yours,

RAYMOND PAGE ALBERTS