

JOHN FREW

November 27, 1984

I called Harkin's office and got a summary from John Frew.

*The end game
Seems to work*

"We were eleven points up in the Iowa poll on the last weekend. What really did it for us was the last week. Jepsen took the strategy of going underground, of staying out of trouble. He didn't campaign where there were TV stations. The reporters were complaining about it. He cancelled out of the last scheduled debate--the traditional debate at the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. For the last few weeks all he did was campaign with the President, trying to ride on his coattails. We surmised they must have thought it was close. And we know, now, that Jepsen's polls showed it to be very close. Ours showed it to be close too. On the last Monday, we put on a series of ads--heavy on both radio and TV... I don't say they were determinative, but they went along with what was happening and helped make it happen. They were the "scrapbook ads". They open up with a scrapbook and then the pages turn. "Remember Roger Jepsen and all those incidents--the automobile incident, AWACS and it ends up "Isn't it time to close the book on Roger Jepsen and elect someone Iowa can be proud of? Elect Tom Harkin." We also went heavy on newspaper ads the last week--signature ads in all the papers from Women for Harkin, ads that we'd had prepared for a long time. We had Sunday ads and even Tuesday.

"Seven or eight days out, Jepsen's polls and our polls showed it very even. In the last 5 or 6 days, it changed. On Wednesday, we showed it even, on Sunday, we were 8 points up. People began making up their minds: It's Time for Roger Jepsen to Go." It came on like an avalanche. Our polls, Jepsen's polls, and the Iowa Poll all tracked the same way."

I said that in Clark's race and Culver's race, there had been a lot of last minute movements, too.

"In exactly the same way... On Oct. 15, Grassley knew that Culver was ^{winnin} wrong by 17 points. That was when Culver made the decision: 'no negative ads.' Grassley knew his only chance was to turn up the heat and make Culver the issue. That's what he did. And that's what we did. We made Jepsen the issue. In 1972 Jepsen made Dick Clark the issue... We talked to Culver and Clark on election night. They were beaming all over."

How about your rural strategy. Did it work? "No question about it. We carried 25 counties, and we didn't lose a congressional district. We did better in the cities than Democrats usually do; so, in a normal year, that might have been enough to just pull us in. But we won it out in the rural reas. We won one town by 2 votes. We split even with him in the rural areas. Traditionally Democrats don't come anywhere near even. The rural vote came through for Tom. No question about it. It was worth all that time."

Only Tom Waters picked for staff so far. He'll be AA.