

Philip Hayes

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When your colleagues ask you what kind of district you have, what do you tell them? "My description always has political connotations. They don't want a sociological description. They want to know are the attitudes conservative or not conservative, liberal or not liberal--things like that. I always describe it as a mainstream Democratic district, in the sense that Scammon and Wattenburg use it. The only sociological connotation I give it is that it is more or less rural and dominated by one metropolitan area. It is far flung and culturally rural--not blue collar like Dayton or Akron or Gary. It has very few blacks.

Is it an easy constituency to understand and keep happy? "Yes, it does not have the complexities of conflicting interests within it. You don't find large conflicting industries. It is easy because the voting patterns are consistent with national patterns. Evansville votes for the winner in presidential elections. When I've done attitude sampling and compared it with Gallup and other polls this is true without exception."

What groups do you understand best and what groups not so well? "The best are groups who are union members--somehow or other--industrial, building trades, mining. I seemed to understand them better and understand their wants. Farmers were another peak for me. I was rapidly getting recognition among farmers. I was promoting my views on agriculture and it was reflecting back in terms of my name."

Were there any valleys? "No, none. I had good relations with the business

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community--no problems there in terms of bad mail or anything else. I answered my mail from businessmen and addressed their groups."

"Things go on in one area that are absolutely and totally no concern of the others. All the problems at Crane got virtually no notice in Evansville in the opposite corner of the district. Yet it was highly visible in one section of the district. In that sense, you run into difficulty. You devote your energies here and do a good job and people wonder where the hell you've been. And there is a traditional resentment over the attention which Vanderberg gets. People call it "down there". There is an undertow, a little regionalism that doesn't show up in the polls."

I asked him if he were called upon to describe it as homogeneous or heterogeneous, which would he use. "Homogeneous. That relates back to its cultural homogeneity. It is an older area that has not had a lot move ins and move outs."

Would any district be easier--in Indiana--for you to run in than the one you do? "None would be any easier. Hamilton's district is the closest to mine in characteristics. But it would be more difficult for me in that some of the attitudes there make it harder to express liberal attitudes over there which I am irrepressably expressing, apparently. I say apparently because the ADA tells me so."

Are your constituents interested in the same subjects you are? "Yes. You take the Intelligence Committee. That's not your everyday man in the street kind of issue. The attitude I had was that congressional power ought to be extended in directing the intelligence community. I doubt if that was their attitude. But given more time, I could have turned them around. My interest was more intense than theirs. Things they are interested in are the budget, defense, water resources, and energy--they were of great interest to me. The

renegotiation act on which I spend a lot of time is of no interest to anyone in America."

"And of the special interest mail I got a lot of it was on abortion and gun control. They were a hell of lot more interested in these than I was. I wasn't at all interested in either of them, on a day-to-day basis. I couldn't pick up my mail without running into them."

What were your hardest votes? He said the Hyde Amendment providing for no abortions under medicaid program was the most difficult one for him. He said Dave Obey had a motion to recommit which he voted for and then he voted against the bill on final passage. That was a difficult vote to gorge down. He said he voted final vote against the language. "That was a difficult bill to gorge down. It was difficult on a personal basis and on a political basis. Generally, I never agonize a hell of a lot. My attitude is that you can overcome voting problems by being absolutely frank about it if you change your mind, tell them. You can compensate for your voting record with service or with press flurries. By providing leadership, by getting up front and standing on your position and by being honest and by appearing to be honest--that you did what your conscience dictated and you are not thwarting the majority will. I have built up a record opposite to Zion and I have flip-flopped this district. Belden Bell never criticized my name or criticized my voting record. There was some reflection of this in the Senate primary. ^{always to be blank} my district 2 to 1."

Could you give me an example of when you explained a vote? "The business groups are typical. One of my most difficult votes, because it was a politically motivated vote that could have taken a lot of compensating around, was situs picketing. I don't like it as a concept and I didn't like it as a lobbying activity. It was purely a union political issue. My God, I was called upon to explain that one--by contractors and by businessmen. It was bad policy. They knew it and I knew it. I spent a lot of time beating my hat on that one."

What do you like best about the job of congressman and what do you like the least? "I like best the floor work, the amending process, buttonholing for votes, the job of finding out what was going on, when the next important legislative event is going on, participating in debate, feeding into the debate, by going directly or through others. That was a thrill and an excitement on a personal basis. It was exhilarating, finding yourself with different allies on votes. That's the essence of the job--being over there on the floor, sitting down, finding out the parliamentary situation, seeking contacts to keep your information sources strong. I knew the cloak room; I knew the pages; I knew who was running for what. I could use the Republican cloak room and the Republican members. I beat down two motions by one vote. Once I saw Van Deerlin hiding over in a corner of a cloak room, getting ready to peel off. I knew his situation. I knew somebody had flaked him. And so I got Frank Thompson to keep him in line. You can understand things like that so quickly. Sometimes you are surprised--by Jim Collins' voting against his buddies. That is where the fun of it is and that is the best part of the job."

"The worst part of the job is running the public relations office you have to run. You are forced to do it, to waste your time with tourists--giving the appearance of accessibility when it's a strain to be accessible to people who just want to see a ^{single} ~~site~~--the Congressman. It is a waste of a parliamentarian's time. It's draining on your energies to leave the debate and run in here to the office and fool around with that. Everything I do to pump up the position--the time spent laying out two newsletters. They have the same information that could be picked up in the newspapers. People build a trap and get themselves into it and make themselves timewasters. I quit doing newsletters."

Did you mind going home to visit the constituents, that part of the job? "I didn't mind going home. Maybe I spent too much time on it and worked too hard. I thought it was necessary. It would have tapered off. I could halved my time at home if I hadn't been involved with all the banquets and amenities. That is part of staying alive. In time, I could have lessened those demands."

He talked about his future--"It would be absurd to run for Congress--to go back and challenge the new young guy and become the historical footnote." He said he did not want to be governor and he would not run against Doc Bowen for anything. He can't see what he could do that would be useful in the Carter Administration. He has applied for membership in the District of Columbia Bar and will probably go to work for a law firm here. We talked about the desirability of him keeping his base in Indiana since one could not know what would turn up there. He said

he thought he should do that, but he had no great enthusiasm for it. It is clear he can see nothing to run for at the moment or in the near future.

At lunch, when I asked him what his career would have looked like in the House he said that "I could have worked my way into the Whip system. I would have become a proceduralist, useful to the leadership but outside the leadership, like Dick Bolling. His is the role I see for myself. I could be a repository of little known facts--like how to crack the synthetic fuels industry. Twice we did that. I could help on particular issues, one shot issues, in and out. I would be the kind of person the leadership would appoint to Select Committees--as I have already. I would be trusted; I could take the heat; I could help count noses and persuade people. I could have reached into the regional whip system, but no further. But Appropriations, God No, I would have died before I did that. Or Ways and Means. Rules I suppose is best, but just as a base from which to work on the floor." This comment, plus his other one make it very clear that he sees self as a floorman.

A typical weekend he went home Thursday night. "I go home Thursday night so I can have a press conference Friday morning. Then we usually hit a county, with a dinner meeting--a party meeting or civic group--at night. Then the next day we would campaign--hitting other party people and the media. We were spoonfeeding the media, shovelling the stuff to them--from Washington and from the district. I didn't care who came to each event, so long as the media were there." Said his press was not better than Zion's.

"Zion got very good press. He wrote a weekly column for the local

newspapers and he handed out flags all over the district. That was what he did--no issues. Just the girl scouts having their pictures taken with the Congressman on the Capitol steps. Or issue stories like "Is the Government spending too much money?" "Yes" says the Congressman. No content. I wouldn't hand out flags, the whole thing is embarrassing to me. He had a flag fund and he donated the flags. If they send me a check, I'll have it done for them."

When he decided to run for Senate he said he did not consult with anyone. Talked to different people--Brodine, his brother, other Indiana congressmen, some union types, "floated as the idea in newspapers." "But I did not consult with any intimates" (his word--I did not put it in his mouth).

Said he talked with local party people and they were "aghast" because (1) they didn't want intra party fight (2) didn't want to risk losing the seat. "They had a horse and they didn't want to go through the trouble of getting another. I owed them. But they owed me too. Because I pulled them together, taught them how to function as a unit, and defend a role for them. I told them where to raise money and how to raise money. And they haven't done it before or since. And I stayed out of all their local "who gets what position" contests. Which is unusual. So they had no special claim on me."

Why run for the Senate? I can't recall everything he said. "The thrill of being a Senator was a strong motivation. After all, how often does anyone have a good chance to run for the Senate--especially someone like me. In my state--zilch. I thought we could win. And the adventure

of it was thrilling to me." Later, in office, he came back to idea that Senate was going to turn over and he'd be part of something in Senate that would be very exciting.

When I called it a "fling" he said yes, but he resented the word if it meant that he hadn't planned and calculated beforehand.

Said he knew he was "dead" when Reagan won Texas and carried momentum into Indiana and Republicans all came out and voted in Republican primary and were no help to him. Also fact that Bayh was not on Indiana ballot kept Dems at home. Dems voted 500,000; Republicans, 700,000. Usually, Dems much higher. Or, Udall wasn't on the ballot either. "Mo Udall told me that not getting on the Indiana ballot hurt him but that it hurt me much worse. And he was right."

He spent 80,000--between 1-20,000 of it his money. When I asked if he had buttons--"My idea of how to spend 80,000 is to buy radio time." He said if he had a little more money, he might have done better. But he has no sense that he almost made it and that 2 more weeks would have made big difference. Turnout was the big killing factor, as he saw it.

When I asked if Cornwell had same support--he said yes. Said he didn't know what to do with Labor union people. "He didn't know how to make labor work for him. He waited for them to do something. But they don't do anything until you say 'You go here,' 'You do this.'" Said he didn't know how to raise money, but Phil helped him.

Phil didn't go back. "I didn't have the heart to do anything. Ever since May I've been doing nothing. I got divorce a so I've spent a lot of time recovering from that." No clear idea of what he'll do. Has filed for D.C. bar; has not talked with local law firms. But he thinks

he'll keep some Indiana base. No great desire to get back in politics.

"I look at Mikva shovelling shit every two years and spending 200,000, why does he do it? There must be something wrong there. It's a compulsion.

A lot of guys have it. I don't."

When I left him at the office I said "I'll keep in touch" and he said "Are you going to follow us to our graves?" I said, No, it was more likely he could follow me to my grave. (He's 36!)