

Rick Nolan

September 23-24, 1974

A couple of brief notes--from the strategy meeting of September 23 and the trip to Jackson with Bob W. on the 24th.

In a campaign, things are done to please the candidate, the hard core and other "constituencies." Example: The debate in the office over whether Rick should debate Grunseth . The Press Secretary wants him to because he has to face the media and media wants debates. Mark Johnson the pollster is violently opposed because the vote intention poll shows Rick at 49.5 and Grunseth at 16.5 and debates can only help Grunseth. Weber wants selected debates, but generally is on Mark's side. Rick wants to debate because of "a confidence factor". He thinks he can debate well. Sees self as an issue-oriented candidate who should debate. And to have his advisors tell him he shouldn't is interpreted by him as indicating that they don't think he can do it well. So he's beginning to lose confidence in himself and in his image of himself--as running an (1) open (2) issue oriented campaign. "If it makes it any easier for you Mark, sometimes you do things that are not practical--for personal reasons, reasons of principle, reasons of politics." Morale of candidate is important and pushing him in ways that contradict his self image may have that affect. Also, whole business of billboards, bumper stickers, etc. may affect candidates morale.

On other hand, morale of hard core is also important. Things are done for this reason that might please the candidate particularly. That is billboards and other things that give visibility to the campaign

may have special effect on hard core people. Or, Rick sitting around for a couple of hours talking issues with the 4 women and Nels Nelson (old DFLer) was waste of his time in a sense, but was cementing them to his cause in another sense. Issue-oriented candidate holds his hard core via issues and must alk issues with them. Studds and Nolan have lots of parallels here (and other ways--3 year campaign, young, organization-minded, ambitious).

A candidate building his coalition operates under constraints that do not affect man who is consolidating coalition. This refers to campaigning. For example: Rick does not go onto main street for fear he'll stir up Republican opposition to work harder. But a sitting congressman can go anywhere. Rick feels if he breaks in on Rotary Club, it hurts. But Dave Obey can go to Rotary Club, even though they differ with him, and can legitimately look for votes there. The cachet of "Congressman" counts for a lot in gaining access to people.

The problem of finding "the people" was evident in case of both BF and Nolan. Candidates are thrown into small groups--mostly elites. It's awfully hard to find "people" and they spend a lot of time milling around with their friends and supporters--or with nobody.

The other interesting tension in the strategy meeting--related to the one over the debates--was also between Rick and the "managers". The managers had decided--on the basis of certain "objective" measures of persuadability (no. of independents) and performance (% Democratic vote in selected elections in the past) that they should "target" certain

counties. This meant, particularly, radio and newspaper ads. Rick was concerned that this meant cutting out stations and papers in certain counties where the owners were supporters of his and were close to him. There's a conflict, again, between candidate and his view of the campaign (which runs to his personal contacts and strong supporters) and the manager's view of the campaign (which runs to impersonal forces and mass of voters). Rick kept returning to ask if they wouldn't put some money into Redwood Falls--which had been targeted out by the managers. Finally, he said that they would continue to "target" but that he didn't want it "to get out of this room" that they were doing so. The idea of emphasizing some areas over others would demoralize the "left-out" areas he felt.