

DON HARRELL

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"I get my greatest security from knowing that I have the trust and confidence of David Pryor. Sometimes when I don't hear from him for 48 hours, two days, I begin to hear little voices in the back of my head saying 'you screwed up, you've done something wrong, he's unhappy with your work.' And then I catch myself and I say 'You don't need to talk with him every day to know you're doing a good job.' But I need that reassurance; and so do all the others. And it's because I know I need it that I realize they need it... They need to hear it from me. That's why I tell Jackie that just because she's over in the Immigration Building with the CMS operators that doesn't mean she's not an important part of the operation, just as important as anyone else. And sometimes I forget about the people in the back room. So I make an effort to praise them when I can... when I worked for Wharton, there was none of that. He never said a nice word to the people in his operation. Morale was very low. And one small bit of praise would have had those people producing at a great rate. I said if I ever got into a position where I could make a difference, I sure would do everything I could to boost morale. Maybe it shouldn't matter. But it does matter... Did you see the article about Robert Byrd's staff in the Post. People in that office aren't allowed to talk about personal matters in the office--only business. They have to check out of the office even for ten minutes." It was nasty article" I said "But it got to him to be leader". He said "Yes, but at what price?" Pryor is a personable person, as you know. And that reflects itself in the atmosphere in the office. We don't want people taking naps on the couches; but there's a medium ground somewhere."

"David Pryor has a fetish about cleanliness, about orderliness, about cleaning things up. He will get up in a meeting and straighten out a picture. He should have been an interior decorator. He reacts to color and design. He wants the chair placed just so in the room. That's the kind of tight office operation he wants, too. People look at him and see that he's a nice guy and that he's laid back and they can't imagine that he wants a tight, efficient office. He does; but he does not want to enforce it. And he won't. If he sees something is wrong, he will tell me and I will enforce it. But he won't even mention the problem to the person involved."

"Ray Scott told me that when he told Pryor he was leaving, Bruce Lindsay was in the room too. Ray turned to Bruce and said 'You owe the Senator a decision on your plans soon. He's got to know if you are going to leave--for reelection reasons. That's why it was so important to get the legislative assistants job settled. The primary is two years and 6 months away. And it would be hard to get anyone else that could do the job much later than this.'" Went on to say how Knox had begun to speak faster and work faster and how politically savvy he is and how well it has all worked out.

"Knox worked well with Pryor on the subcommittee, but not closely. David would get impatient with Knox sometimes because he took so long to explain things. Pryor wants it bang bang; and Knox knew things in such detail. Pryor did n't know how he would work out. But I have not seen any impatience since Knox has been on the job. He has seemed determined not to let it happen. He's pseeded up his speech if nothing else."

"We interviewed 4 or 5 people for the job (LA). They all knew the Hill, they know the issues. But they didn't know El Dorado from Fayetteville.

And that's so important--knowing Arkansas. Knox knows Arkansas. And he'll have to know so much about the state in the time ahead... I think knowledge of the state is crucial." All the top people are from Arkansas. (Knox father is from Arkansas; he grew up around the rim of Arkansas). He talked about Nancy Darr who "won't try" to learn the political side. He had to call up a furniture dealer Nancy didn't respect to a hurry-up basis, and apologized. "a bold faced lie". told guy that Pryor was carrying letter around in his brief case because he wanted to reply personally and that "that's the worst place for a letter; we do it faster." and guy laughs.

Says Annie is best on politics. Theresa in between. Those 3 are only ones not from Arkansas.

Talked about staff meeting. 15 minutes every Tuesday (said I could come) Pryor never comes - a morale booster and information exchange they go around table. He wants 'em tightening up now--no watts line during day, a new sick leave policy. "I have the old-fashioned Calvinist idea that people should be at their desks working a full 8 hour day. I don't believe in going to meetings or seminars. I think people should do their work for a full 8 hours, at their desks."

helps morale - "lets them know we are arell pulling on the same rope."

Bruce dealt more protectively with Pryor - he took all legis shift in himself. Dan disagrees. "I think they need to tell him what they are doing. After all they work for him. And I think he needs to hear what they have to tell him. Sometimes I think I should be more protective of him. But then I say to myself, 'That's just what I am being--protective.' He should know what they are doing for him.' There are times when I could have saved him a few minutes; but I never have regretted not doing it... They come to me to

me to ask for time with him. I may ask them to wait; but I never say no."

Says "DP doesn't read. He takes things in through briefings or through conversations with other Senators. He's a verbal person--a politician not a scholar." I'm contrast with Fullbright who read, didn't know staff, wouldn't let them know when he was in the office, even. "He never walked through the office, never."

Story re guy who went to Korean War for 2 years after having worked for Fullbright for 15 years. Comes back and gets on elevator. Fullbright is there. 'Hello, Norval, where have you been? I haven't seen you for a while."

"I think background is most important. Coming from Arkansas is next. Everything else being equal, we will take someone from Arkansas. I think that's very important. All the key people in the office are from Arkansas. Knox's father is a minister in the state. He grew up in Mississippi and he lived in Memphis; and he understands the eastern and northeastern part of the state. So he qualifies."

He's been around a long time. "I used to run the elevator--right over there." He was on McClellan's patronage list. He was an English Ph.D. from Vanderbilt, teaching at Houston, where he got tenure, then went to work for Pryor as soon as Pryor became governor.