

DAN QUAYLE

Washington, D.C.

December 13, 1988

--When I was at Carnegie Mellon on December 1st, Tom Duesterberg called and said "We've got to get you together with Dan. When are you coming to Washington?" I said that I would be there on the 13th (since my Brookings meeting with Tom, Ray and Gary was the 14th). I added that "With a little luck I may have a book to bring with me." Tom said "I thought it would be about that time." He turned me over to Ceci Kramer, and we made a date for 4:30 on the 13th. It was later changed to 11:00AM; so I went down to D.C. the night before.

--Went to Bob Guttman's for dinner on the 12th. He says big problem is Dan's loss of self-confidence during the campaign; and he says Bush's behavior has done more than anything to bring it back. Bush is consulting Dan a lot, keeping him in the loop, letting him do whatever he wishes, and acts as if he really likes Dan--which, says Bob, he does. Bob and I also discussed the National Journal article. He showed it to me for the first time. Dan was upset about the Hatch quote. (More about that later) Bob thought the spin was very negative and, after reading it, I agreed.

--I got there (716 Jackson Place--the interim office of the Vice President-Elect) a little early, chatted a little with the photographer (Ken Heinen) that CQ had hired to take pictures. Tom came in and I thanked him for what he had done. "That's the least we could do." (I had asked Tom to see if he could get me on the campaign trail; he had tried and failed. I had also told Bob Guttman after the election that if

Dan wanted to see me, I'd like to see him; Bob had put the idea to Dan, had gotten no expression of interest--"I hope he makes lots of money"--and had advised me to drop it. Bob was surprised when I told him at his house that I was going to see Dan). Tom told me that Dan's new press secretary, David Beckwith formerly of Time would be sitting in on the session.

--Both Bob (in May) and Tom (in September) had read the manuscript. But Dan had not. Nor, had he read it when we met. He had read only the National Journal excerpts. But I think, from what they said, that both Tom and Bob had told him that the book was positive in its overall impact.

--I had brought 2 copies of the book--one for Cynthia and one for Dan. When I came into the outer office (led by a grim-faced little twerp who called himself "the aide to the Vice President-Elect") Cynthia spied me, called out, got up from her desk, threw open her arms and we had a big hug. In the excitement of seeing Cynthia and then seeing the door to Dan's office open and Dan coming out, I tipped the book bag and the two books went flying onto the floor. It was a perfect Gerald Ford-Chevy Chase entrance. But while the aide picked up the books, I waved at Dan and said "You'll just have to wait while I talk to the most important person in the office." I showed Cynthia my inscription and I explained it by showing her what I had said about her in the Preface.

--Then I walked over and said "Congratulations" to Dan. We exchanged greetings, and I gave him a copy of the book. After he looked at the cover, I turned it over and said "I want you to read what's on the back. That will give you a quick idea of my perspective on all this." While he

read the first paragraph of the preface, and I watched, the photographer took pictures. Then Dan said, it's hot in here, I guess I'll take my coat off." And I said, "If it's OK with you, I think I'll take my coat off too." Which I did. Dan put the book on the coffee table and we sat in two adjacent chairs, while the photographer took more pictures. Dan introduced me to Beckwith, and we started talking--in a very good humored fashion.

--I spoke up first. "I want you to read that book. It will make you proud of your career."

--"Have you seen the National Journal article," he asked. "Yes, I have. I went to Bob Guttman's for dinner last night and he showed it to me. They put the most negative spin possible on everything. Even where they were positive, they took the least positive quotation they could find. For every quote of theirs, I could find you half a dozen better ones." He said "That's what we're up against."

--"When I saw the quote about Hatch, I said 'Oh my God, what's Fenno done to me.' (He puts hands up to his head portraying horror.) Then he kicks me on the foot--like old times--"You rascal!" I showed it to Marilyn. I said to her "What's Fenno done to me now?" She said, 'Maybe it will hurt. But it's the truth.'" He laughed. I broke in and said I'd never met Marilyn and would like to do so sometime. "You've never met Marilyn?" he said, and seemed surprised. And he said something about getting me to meet her, but I don't recall what.

"I called Hatch," he said. I said, "You called him?" (I knew he had, because Bob told me how upset he was. Bob told me that Dan had asked him to call the Hatch people to see if he Dan, should call Hatch. "Maybe he

won't see it" Dan suggested to Bob. "Oh, he'll see it all right" Bob had said. Anyway Bob called the Hatch people and they said that Dan should call Hatch, that Hatch had seen it and was upset). "Yes, he's a very big person up there. I told him that I was pretty frustrated at the time. I told him that I was really mad at Pritts (Hatch's staff chief). Hatch said he knew that, but he said 'and you were pretty mad at me too.' And I told him 'Yes, I was!'" All this was said in good humor, laughing as he went, but clearly unhappy about this particular effect of the article. The photographer, having snapped some more pictures, left.

--I said, laughingly, "When I showed the manuscript to Bob, he said it was fine 'except for that quote about Hatch. But you know Dan, he'll probably say let it go.' Then Tom read the manuscript. And he said it was fine 'except for that quote about Hatch. But you know Dan, he'll probably say let it go.'" This was all said with laughter and head shaking by me and by him. "If I had shown it to you," I asked, "what would you have done." "Cut it out, cut it out" he fairly shouted. (I was a little surprised when he said that as vehemently as he did. I expected him to take a 'what the hell' attitude .)

--"If I did it again, I would say 'off the record, off the record.' I was very open with you, as you know." (Bob told me that Dan had told him that he, Dan, had asked me at the time not to publish that quote until after Hatch's reelection campaign in 1982 campaign. But I had held off till after his 1986 reelection campaign. So I felt no twinges about it. But Dan did not mention this negotiating wrinkle in our conversation.)

--I asked him "Do you think anyone else will ever get to know you as well as I did, or that you will be able to talk with anyone as frankly as

you talked to me?" "I doubt it," he said. "No, if I'm promoting something, I'll talk to people about that particular thing. But we went to all those places together, in the car, in the planes, and we'd have a beer when the day was over. That won't happen with anyone again."

--At this point I got it in my head to "freeze" the press secretary. He had sat there and nodded when we first mentioned the NJ article. But I did not like the idea that he was there. (Though it is not uncommon for senators to do this during an interview. I recall Lugar, for example, had done that with me.) Dan and I had been laughing and joking in a bit of an "old times" mood, and I got the notion suddenly that I wanted the press secretary to know, in no uncertain terms, that I had a very special relationship with Dan and that he should take me especially seriously--that I just was not another interview passing through. So I said, looking at Dan and then Beckwith and laughing "Hell, I've got a whole bunch of stuff in my notes that I haven't even used yet." I don't know who it sunk in with, if anyone; but I felt a bit impish at that point--which reflected the good mood of the conversation to that point. And during this exchange, Dan once or twice reached over to the coffee table, picked up the book and fingered it. I guess the larger problem here was that Dan knew me, Beckwith did not and since Beckwith was there --intruding on our relationship--I wanted to give myself some identity in his eyes. As if the laughing and joking were not enough, I wanted to produce a little future credibility, too--just to keep Beckwith from forgetting me. Perhaps, subconsciously, I don't want my relationship with Dan to end yet--even though I believe that it has ended now, with this session.

--The session with Dan started 20 minutes late and ran 40 minutes late. In all, it consumed almost an hour, having been scheduled for only 1/2 hour. It was 12:20 when I left. It had three parts: the first part centered on the conversation I have described and had an "old times, renewing the relationship" kind of mood to it; the second was the longest and consisted of my "advice" about the future; the third continued the subject of the second, but took place without Beckwith in the room and ended when I met Marilyn.

--The transition from the first part to the second was a set of reflections on the media and the campaign. I don't recall how it began-- maybe he swung it from NJ article to media generally. Maybe I recalled how, when he was chosen, nobody but me knew much about him. "When I was chosen, the Bush campaign had only 90 minutes to get ready for the announcement. They went to the Almanac of American Politics and started copying it. They made 150 copies to hand out to the reporters who were at the river. That's all they knew about me." I said "And they started focusing on how rich you are." "And I'm not rich," he said, "we gave them our net worth--\$800,000. But once the pack gets going, they won't change their views no matter what. That's what we were up against. When you're under attack, your natural base--the conservatives--rally around and try to protect you. Sometimes that helps, sometimes not. But it helps keep you from breaking."

--Soon after this, (maybe right after) I said, "You went through a hell of a lot of adversity in the campaign. People said you led a privileged life, that you had never known real problems. Well, they



don't say that now. And you didn't break. But you need to get your self-confidence back."

--At some point, here, I said "I'm going to be on C-SPAN tonight and one of the lines I want to use is that 'the media thinks the key to Dan Quayle lies in the registrar's office at DePauw University and not in the committee rooms and the floor of Congress.' They've never touched what I've written about." Beckwith nods and says "That's a good line." (I never did get it off.)

--At another point here, I said "The media said you hurt Bush. But there's no way that anyone can prove that you were a drag on the ticket." He said "When I went on the ticket, Bush was 17 points down in the polls. After I went on the ticket, he went 12 points ahead in the polls. And we won by 8 points. That's all I know."

--I had no intention and no wish to rehash the campaign--how did it feel, etc. I did have the intention and the wish to give him some advice. My feeling was that this was my one shot, that I wanted him to succeed and that I knew him well enough to presume a little in the matter. So, after some back and forth of the sort I just recorded--but without any confidence that I have recalled all of it--I abruptly began.

--"Do you mind if I give you a little advice?" I asked. And he nodded or said 'no' or OK or something. And I added "I know you're getting a lot of advice, but I think I know you pretty well--better than most of the people who will come through that door--and I've got a few thoughts of my own." He just waited. He could have agreed that 'yes' he was getting a lot of advice, (which would have been slightly off-putting) but he didn't. So I started in. I cannot be absolutely certain of the order

in which I made my early points. They tumbled out pretty fast, and blended in--or rolled over--one another.

--"I think the most important thing is to convince people that you are a serious person, that you are qualified to be President. People aren't convinced of that yet. It's like Indiana--40% of the people think you are qualified to be President, 40% think you are not qualified to be President and you've got 20% in the middle that you've got to convince. Of course, there's an exception. The one person you must convince is George Bush, or nothing else matters. I think you've got two years to do it in before people start thinking about the ticket. And some people are thinking about that already. (He smiled and nodded at that.) People asked me, after the debate, what I thought and I told them that the Dan Quayle I had seen in the campaign was not the Dan Quayle I knew--that the Dan Quayle I saw lacked his old self-confidence. I think you've got to get your self-confidence back. And I think one way to do it is to set aside each day or each week some time for yourself--to think, to read some history, to talk quietly to people who are thinking seriously about the problems that interest you." (He chimed in "not just special interest groups." And I agreed. "And only about a few problems, not everything" he said. And I agreed.) The way to make people think you are serious is to be serious. Going from Senator from Indiana to President is a huge jump--it's like jumping to the moon. You've got an awful lot of catching up to do. And you shouldn't be ashamed to admit that you've got a lot of learning to do; that you need a lot of time to do it. There's a story I like about Harry Truman when he became President--and I see that you have Harry's picture in the room



downstairs. When he became President, the Budget Director was a man named Harold Smith. And Smith put a huge book together which listed all of Truman's votes while he was Senator. He thought Truman would want to know just what his record had been. So he took the book into the President's office one day soon after Truman became president and laid it on the desk--a huge book, all the votes. Truman opened it, flipped through the pages for about 15-20 seconds, closed it, pushed it back across the desk to Smith and said "Thank you, but I wasn't the President then." (Smiles) You will be making a huge jump, Dan, and you need time to do it in. You need to get the media off your back and get them to give you some breathing room."

--Dan said, "We are going very slowly. We aren't going to rush into anything. I'll be Chairman of the Space Council. I'm familiar with the military side of that, but not the NASA side. So I'll have to learn about that. But the Regulatory Commission--Bush asked me if I want to do that. I'm not sure. People keep asking me what assignments I'll have. I'm not looking for assignments. I don't want a lot of assignments. My main job is to be a good adviser to the President, to be ready to do what he wants done. Right now George Bush is letting me decide what I want to do or don't want to do. I don't want to take on too many things. I'm thinking of taking on more of a role in the Senate."

--I had seen this in the papers, and I jumped in. "Dan, in my opinion, that idea is an absolute, total, 100% loser." He was taken aback a little, smiled, and said, "Interesting that you would say that. Why?" It was the first real spark I had gotten with my "advice". "The Vice Presidency is a funny office. It's a very weak office

legislatively. Senators think you are part of the executive branch. Remember when Lyndon Johnson--master of the Senate--wanted to sit in on the Democratic caucus and they wouldn't let him. Senators are very protective of their prerogatives. And half of them are jealous of you and want your job. (He said "yes, right now". Beckwith smiled). If George Bush sends you on a special mission to convey a message or get information, fine. But if you start spending more time on your own down there, getting involved in Senate politicking, you could get into trouble, and anyway, you'll only separate yourself from George Bush. It will take you away from what you should be doing--proving to people that you are a serious person."

--He let it drop (for the moment, as it turned out). And so I kept right on with the seriousness theme. "And another thing," I said "don't ever go into another high school gym with pom pom girls." ("Everybody had to do that," he said. But I kept on.) "And no more cheerleading. You can go to every party function George Bush sends you to, but you must talk seriously about some serious problem. No pom poms, no cheerleading. The only thing people really want to know about you now is whether you are qualified to be President."

--He picked up quickly on this "I agree. You know me. I like to get all the information and then plunge into a problem. That's just what I want to do. I want to go into the inner cities and talk about jobs. I want to talk to people there; I want to do something about dropouts. I want to work out from JTPA, to go to factories. I'm comfortable going to factories, as you know. I think I should pick one or two things like that--things that are related to JTPA and dig into them."

--I picked up on that. "I think that's what you should do. But you need to find a way to do it quietly. Otherwise it will be passed off as a big publicity stunt. (He nodded in agreement.) You need to talk to the people who have thought most deeply about these problems, quietly in your office or wherever. And you ought to go to places in the country where people are in difficulty. It would help to offset the idea that someone of your privileged background doesn't understand the serious problems of ordinary people."

--About this time, Beckwith got up to leave. We all stood up. And Quayle said "Roger Ailes went up to Harvard for that conference about the campaigns and when he heard that kind of criticism he said 'Tell me, just what is the rap on Quayle? What is the rap on him? And no one answered.'" Dan shook his head. Beckwith left and the "aide" came to the door to say that someone was waiting. "Five more minutes" Quayle said, and the door shut.

As soon as we were alone, I picked up another theme. "I've been around a lot of politicians," I said, "and one thing I believe is that you need to have some people around you who know you, who care for you, who know your strengths and weaknesses." "Your own people," he chimed in. And I added, "people whose only interest is your interest." He chimed in again. "All these people who surround the President and the Vice President, they are looking to use this job to go somewhere else. (he thrust his hands upward) They do a good job for you, but they are looking to go somewhere else." I said, "You don't need your own people very often, but there a few important decisions when you need people who have only your interest at heart--people on the staff or in your family."

--About that time the "aide" reappeared. "Five more minutes" Quayle told him. And he added "Will you ask Marilyn to come down in five minutes." The aide shut the door.

--Dan said "You know who suggested that idea about the Senate--Howard Baker. He said that there were many times when the President didn't have the right information, that it would have helped if there was someone there who knew what was going on and could tell him. I said "If George Bush sends you on a specific mission, fine. But if you go down there on your own, there are a lot of chances for mischief--and you will not be accepted by senators. "Of course, I could get a lot of the information right here just by telephoning," he said. I said "The office is so weak. Why the framers expected that the Vice President would only be acting President until an election could be held. But John Tyler, when William Henry Harrison died simply asserted that he was the President, not the acting president. Up until then, you didn't even have the idea that the Vice President would ever become President." "Let's see, was Tyler before Lincoln? Oh yes" he said. I said "I know you want to do something, to get in and do something, have an impact. But that's not your problem. Your problem is that people don't think you are qualified to be President. And you aren't. Not yet. No one in your position would be. Your job is to prove that you are a serious person."

--"How did JFK do it?" he asked. (Still seized of that comparison.) And I said "Kennedy never got more credit for being a serious person than he did when he went to West Virginia in the primary and put himself in the middle of poverty the likes of which he had never seen. That visit had a huge effect on him and on what people thought of him." "Well,"

said Quayle, "As I told you, I want to build on my work on JTPA, to go to the inner cities, to see what can be done about jobs, education. It's what I've been doing all along. It's what I know. It's where I want to start." And I said again, "I think that would be just right--go to places in the country where people are hurting."

I pulled out the piece of paper I had with Dick Neustadt's book written on it and gave it to him. "Here's a good book you ought to read," I said and explained that "it is a set of case studies about decisions like the missile crisis, the swine flu crisis where a knowledge of history would have made for better decisions." He took the paper and stuck it on a pen sticking up out of the holder on his desk.

--Marilyn came in. Said Dan "Here is the famous or infamous Professor Fereno." She says hello. "I hope you'll read this book" I said. "The picture it paints is a little different from National Journal." She smiled, nodded and said, "One thing people don't notice about biased media coverage are cases where there is no coverage. There was one whole week in the campaign where there were stories every day in the paper (New York Times I think she said) about Bush, Dukakis, Bentsen, but not one story about Quayle. It was right after Dan had put his foot in his mouth a few times--and he did--the implication being that Dan had been taken off the campaign trail. But we had just as full a schedule that week as we ever had. So what the media does not report can be just as important and just as biasing as what they do report."

--That was about it. Dan went to the closet to get his coat. I left, and called back to him "Thanks very much, Dan. And good luck. If you

are ever driving from South Bend to Elkhart with one staff member and want company, let me know."

--Dave Beckwith came up to me. "You are right about his being serious. The problem is that he has to be serious not about one thing but about everything." I nodded, but I disagreed with him. I thought he was thinking in terms of press releases--on every subject. And I believe that will be fatal to Dan. But, later, as I reflected on it, I changed my view a little. Beckwith may be afraid that Dan--in his present state of insecurity--may cling too much or too long to JTPA. And that, in its own way, would be damaging. As always, the solution probably lies in the achievement of balance.

--I went upstairs to thank Tom, said goodbye to Cynthia, and left.

*He said "That's the least we could do."*