

Phone Call from

Dan Quayle - January 4, 1989

--I was working at home when Dan called - at about 11:15. Cynthia first called Nancy, had a bad connection and called back. So Dan began by asking "We found you. Where are you?" I said I was working at home and that it was snowing. "Oh yes Rochester, it snows there all the time."

--Then he said "I read your book. It's a fair picture. You captured me fairly well I think, warts and all." I said "I tried" or something like that. Then he said "I liked the Epilogue, with the ideas of growth and accomplishment in the future." I said "Thanks" or something like that.

--"What do you hear," he asked. And I said "I've been talking around quite a bit--CBS, CNN, C-SPAN and a lot of radio talk shows--Los Angeles, Melbourne, Australia, Salt Lake City.... He laughed and said "Well as you say in the book, Hatch was very important at the end and got a lot of credit then." I said "I told them that there was a lot of frustration at the beginning on the part of someone who wanted to get something done when the other guy was dragging his feet, but that you ended up allies in the end." I said "Anyway people seem to be interested." He said "good".

--Then he said "I read both books, your book and the one on Thinking in Time by Neustadt and May. That book was great! Do you have any more books like that?" I said "Sure I do" and he said "They list a whole lot of books at the back, but I don't know much about them. I was not prepared for the question, and was about to mention A Heartbeat Away when he started waxing enthusiastic about the book. "The case studies were fascinating. The one that caught me especially was the 100 days issue.

I had been thinking about that issue myself. I was talking with a reporter from the Los Angeles Times the other day and I said to him 'Why should we be worrying about the 100 days business. There is no emergency now.' Why does everyone think in terms of 100 days. Roosevelt had to. And to some extent Reagan did too. There was a kind of emergency then. But why should we hurry? We have longer than that to do what we want. We've been discussing this in our own circles. And I've been saying, We don't have to do everything in 100 days like Roosevelt did. What's the emergency?" He was really captured by the idea and was fitting it into his thinking.

--Then he said "Another one I found very interesting was Truman and China in the Korean War. I hadn't realized how political his judgments were. It was the politics of the decision that was most important for him."

--As he went along like this, I was saying, "yes", "sure", "of course", "absolutely" and similar punctuating utterances. I kept waiting to speak; but he kept right on: "On the other hand, you don't want to get too bogged down taking all these things into account. It leads to indecision. That's the other side of this."

--I said something like "Well you don't have to follow these decisions. It just helps to be able to talk about them back and forth while you are making a decision. I know you like to think about history, that you used to be interested in what early elections, 1928, 1932, were like. As I told you the other day, I think you need to get a reputation as a serious person. And I think a lot of what it means to be serious is to know history and be able to fit it in. I think you ought to read

history. It will help offset the idea people have that you are unseasoned."

--When I said "unseasoned", he jumped in. "The problem is that I had no independent stature when we were picked. I had stature with my peers in the Senate, as a good legislator and a rising star, but I had no independent stature outside the Senate. I had independent stature in Indiana but no independent stature outside Indiana. I didn't want it. I didn't seek it. I could have sought outside identification and picked up causes. But I didn't. It was a matter of time allocation. I deliberately decided not to do all these other things because of my family. My stature was oriented to peer type stature. I had no national stature. But I had never sought it. We all like the limelight and attention and all that. But I never figured I had to go after it. I told myself 'people know me.'"

--I said "I know. I was amazed--as you know from the book--at how little you were interested in taking credit. I always thought you should have gone after more credit than you did." He said "In the book you say how we moved JTPA from the eighth paragraph of my biography up to the first paragraph. Peter Lincoln did that. He was the one who caught on to that."

--I said "Well, now you are in a position to get some national stature. But you've got to take it slow--slow and serious." And he picked up on that. "Slow and serious" he repeated.

--Then there was a pause--the first. And he began "On that matter we talked about before, going up to the Hill. I'm getting closer to your point of view. If there are meetings up there where I can pick up

critical intelligence, I'll go. But I don't want to look like I'm wandering around up there with nothing to do." I said "You know how independent those Senators are. They will use you when it suits them and throw you out when it suits them." He said "I can do a lot from down here. They like to come down here to the White House office. But the other side of it is that I want to be able to give George Bush critical intelligence. If we're sitting around in meetings, and he says to me "Dan, what do you think?" ² ~~X~~ "I want to be able to help him." I said "Well maybe the key is to keep it very informal and not to get hung up on the idea of presiding more, of taking more of a ^{formal role} ~~favorable vote~~." He said "There isn't much opportunity to preside anyway. I may go up a couple of days a week and open the session and then meet with people afterwards in the office ^{up} of there. Maybe not. All I've decided is that I'll attend the Tuesday luncheons. Whether I do anything else will depend on my schedule. And it will depend on how the White House congressional liaison works out. But I can find out a lot more than they can. I never used those guys unless I wanted something. But I know the Senators and they will talk to me in ways they won't talk to other people." I said "Well, it all depends, too, what Dole thinks." And Dan laughed, "He's thinking it over. He's ambivalent." I said "He's a son of a bitch. You'll have to watch him. He was not one of the nicest people when you were picked. He'd be happy to hand you your head on a platter if it suited him." "I know," said Dan. "I didn't used to be any threat to Dole. But just think of all the people we passed when we were picked. It's human nature." I said, "Well, I think the important thing is to just do it informally, don't announce anything, and in that way you'll give yourself

an easy exit. If it doesn't work you can just stop it without having people say you flopped, that you tried something new and it didn't work." He agreed. "Yes, keep the back door open."

--I said "I thank you for calling. I think of you a lot. And I want you to do well. I think the book will help. It will make people stop."

--He said, "I know people are asking 'Why didn't we know about this?' Ann Devroy of the Washington Post, a sophisticated reporter, was talking to Marilyn and she said she didn't know anything about my work in the Senate."

--I said, "people ask me if the person in the campaign was the person I knew in the campaign and I say no. I tell them that the media got stuck on your personal, pre-congressional career and never paid any attention to your Senate career."

--He said "My campaign was strictly a defensive operation from day one. Any offense there was was supplied by George Bush. The fact that they were handing out Mike Barone's write-up at the convention shows they didn't know anything about me."

--I said, "I haven't attacked the media--not yet anyway. But my book is a standing rebuke to them for what they missed. And I think from what I hear that it will make people think."

--"Operation purity" he laughed.

--I laughed "All the attention that fell on you has fallen on me too!"

--He laughed "Welcome to the club."

--I thanked him again for calling.

--"When you're down here, give Cynthia a call and we'll have a cup of coffee or maybe some lunch."

--"I'll probably take you up on that. Enjoy yourself next week."

--That was it. We talked about 20 minutes. He did not "thank" me for the book, but he wanted me to know that he had read it. His enthusiasm for Neustadt and May was welcome news and seemed to take the place of enthusiasm or obviate the need to wax enthusiastic about my book, about its effects. I could not really expect him to do that. But the call was a nice gesture. I appreciated it and I enjoyed it.