

Dennis Kanin & Rich Aronkey.
Paul Tsongas

January 1979

Talk with Dennis Kanin.

In the campaign, said Dennis, "there were 30 hard core staffers with responsibilities, 200 hard core volunteers whom you could call on at any time and about 2000 more volunteers. If we ran for reelection we might not need that number. But if I were to manage this last campaign over again--God forbid-- I would want the same number. Having an organizational base is very important-- not just because it means people but because it means money. A lot of people don't understand that. Direct mail, for example, is very costly in postage. I don't believe in direct mail. We only did a very little of that for special occasions. Both Brooke and Guzzi conducted extensive, direct mail campaigns. You spend money, you generate more money. That's what happened with us. We felt Guzzi's support was soft, that he was ahead because he was known and that if Paul became known, we would have a fight. It would be close, 3 or 4 points we thought. But Paul's recognition was low, very low. Everything we did was to raise his recognition."

Talking about staff. "From what I heard, we had the best staff picks of any of the new Senators. That's because Paul was one of the few of those elected ~~who~~ ^{by} was a liberal."

Re general election campaign - "We were in a very different position. From the beginning we were even. The basic thrust, in terms of the image we were trying to project was the same. We emphasized what Paul Tsongas had done. We emphasized accessibility more than in the primary. Everyone knew who Brooke was; but we continued to raise Paul's recognition. If Brooke and Paul had started

with the same level of recognition, I think we might have lost. For weeks the campaign revolved around Ed Brooke and his fight with the ethics committee. The media treated it as the Brooke campaign. The major thing we had going for us was Paul's low recognition in some areas. We figured we could get lots of people whom we hadn't hit in the primary ^A to raise their consciouness, really-- in places like South east and Central Massachusetts. That basically dictated our strategy. We put more TV and more organization into places like Fall River and New Bedford and Worcester than before. And it worked, beyond anything we expected. We did poorly in all those places in the primary, but we did very well in the general."

"In the primary, we knew we had the 5th district as a base. Even if Guzzi was ahead, we felt he had no strong base. We were a little concerned about the Italian vote. But our polls showed that their commitment to Guzzi was not that strong. Some would slip to Alioto, some to him and some to us. If you take the 5th district out of the primary, we would have lost--it would have been close, but we would have lost. Of course, we might have used a different strategy. We weren't as sure of the 5th district in the general election. So that was another difference between the primary and the general."

I asked him about strongest supporters. "I can't get away from our congressional experience. Our strong base is the 5th district. I doubt we have any outside the 5th district. By the time of the election we had a pretty strong support among the liberal voters of Massachusetts--based on our issue positions. We lost pockets like Brookline and Newton, but we have strength among the liberals. What it means is that we will have to concentrate in some of the cities and on ecomomic development. ^{contin. r.} That's what Paul wants to do, too. That's what made him so popular in Lawrence and Lowell."

Dennis gave me his staff memo outlining all staff jobs, "not for publication" he said. They have 22 in Washington and 22 in D.C. and we're finding office space restrictions very tough. We're going to move into Metzenbaum's office which had 300 sq. feet less space--a whole room less than what they were enjoying in Brookes old suite.

Dennis said that they had turned down about 20 people for jobs who had campaigned with them. That it was hard, but that they had tried to find everyone jobs.

Paul, I learned by listening to Chris, had been invited to address National Democratic Women's Organization in March and had accepted.

Talk with Rich Arenberg, 1/10/79

Three classes of polls:

- (1) polls re decision to run
- (2) benchmark poll at beginning of primary
- (3) rest of polls were 99% confirmation

"Campaign ran in a straight line from May 17 to Nov. 7." "Put forward qualifications of our candidate."

Brooke - vulnerable to qualified candidate who could focus the vague dissatisfaction and give people a reason to vote vs. him. People could continue to swallow Ed Brooke - there was inertia--what you had to do was present a clear choice - in terms of the Massachusetts voter profile."

Brooke's weakness turned up in 1975 - Rich was using TK & EB as base lines for Paul and for Harrington. Rich always thought that Brooke would be vulnerable in 1978.

Paul, I learned by listening to Chris, had been invited to address Nat

February - Hyperbole - "I'm so pissed off I even talked about running against him." "Want to push & come back looking for harder evidence - catalytic effect. "By playing off of each other, we were ratcheting it up." i.e. Dennis & Rich

Rich
Dennis ~~Rich~~
 Spent Weekend w/ty memo - best opportunity for him to run -- if it

was a better opportunity, more would see it and if it was less attractive it wouldn't be attractive at all. A small ^{window} wonder that we thought we could go through. He was at peak of exposure and popularity as a congressman. To get more exposure, he would lose popularity--as Harrington *had done*. Hard to get visibility in Massachusetts without engaging in controversy. *Lowell*

Lowell Park situation cut it off.

Mid-April - standard pre-election poll--again took look at Brooke. Saw dramatically demonstrated the kind of vulnerabilities we talked about in February memo. Seemed to be deteriorating in southern part of our district.

128 *belt*--the non Republican Brooke constituencies-- *the Lexington, the Newtons.*

Congre expands legislative ~~the Lexington, the~~
~~Newton's.~~

Dennis and Rich - "Do we dare bring it up again."

Paul says "Let's do another poll." PT vs. EB in 5th district. 59-24.

3rd and 4th polls. "dipstick approach" took 4 or 5 ^{communities} ~~committees~~ - a cross section of kinds of *communities*. Wanted to see whether things we saw in 5th district were there. Found (1) PT recognition was 12% (2) He had good profile among those who knew him (3) same response to EB's vulnerabilities--ran him vs. incumbent congressmen.

Brooke Ran poorly vs. all incumbent congressmen.

P. 14 This lead to further *consideration* want to see Tip. *Tommy* ^(O'Neill) was going to run.

We went through a week - what it would be like to decide to jump off cliff and have someone snatch me off at last minute - a sense of disappointment and relief. Also the grass looked greener now that O'Neill was running. We felt we could have done it. Paul and I were saying it's going to be a nice summer for our families. Sunday - ON, says not running. It was clear in our minds we were

running, knowing what it felt like to have the opp. taken away from him, he wanted it all the more. Question of our running never came up again. Paul would announce in a couple of days.

2 Penn ^{Schoen} ~~Shore~~ polls - one at beginning of primary, one at beginning of general. "For fund raising capability."

7 polls during campaign and 1 post election.

June: Poll 39-14. Guzzi "horse race question."

Softness of Guzzi - "was important to read them right since we were so far behind them. Obvious instinct was to attack. But our interpretation was that there was no need to attack. "Guzzi's support was soft and would melt away if we could increase Paul's visibility." ^{TP Rich's moment of truth at end of campaign.} "It told my wife we might lose. But it's a campaign I can be proud of in terms of its high level and its professionalism. I'll list it among my accomplishments in life. We fought well and we fought hard and if that's the way it will be, I'm ready to lose. And I stopped worrying about it. But I was glad I had that scare, that moment when I found out how I really felt about the campaign.

Last poll. "Dennis and I sat down and asked ourselves if there was anything we could do about it. It was 4 days till the election. We thought hard about it and decided there was absolutely nothing we could do about it. So we lied to him. We told him there was a 4 point gap." Then they (DK & RA and wives) went to movies."

Rich and I spent a long time down on the bottom floor near the door on the way out discussing, basically, the virtues of the in-house poll or, really, the in-house campaign over the professional ones, in the light of the troubles Caddell and others had this yet. How the Garths and Caddells and Schwartz have to package every candidate their way, how they get sloppy, only worry about batting average and have no feel for candidate.

"The idea of a campaign is to get out of the way and let the candidate communicate with the public. In order to do that you have to know your candidate well. And if the media tends to color or distort the candidate you know, you have to make sure the true picture comes through. If Paul were to do a TV spot all by himself it should be the same as what Fred and Fred did. And it was."

"The amazing thing about the campaign was not that there were four or five or seven or however many people who were very good at what they do. It was the organic quality of the effort--the batting back and forth, the constant interaction among us--that was the secret of it as far as I was concerned."

"The most important strategic decision was the decision to go on television early. It was in line with our decision to go for visibility and to get on before Guzzi. We knew he was having trouble raising money. But it is axiomatic that if you don't save some money for the end you don't win. So everybody saves something to use for TV at the end. We put all our chips on two weeks of early TV and gambled that the increase in visibility would produce enough momentum so that we would raise more money for the last couple of weeks. It worked and we narrowed the gap to 2 points."

I'm not sure Rich said anything new, but we had a long conversation, 2 1/2 hours or more in his cubicle and then downstairs.

At first in his cubicle he talked about Paul. I can't recreate it all. But maybe the most relevant points he made were that (1) He doesn't have a long concentration span." "First piece of advice I give everyone is to say what you have to say in first few sentences." He doesn't like to have someone go on and on. Yet Rich says that he (Rich) tends to ramble and Paul won't seem to be listening. "He'll get up and walk around, or make a telephone call or leave the

room while you are talking to him. Yet three weeks later in a debate on the floor he'll bring in something you said."

"He has the best instinct for getting to the heart of the issue. To look at his episodic way of doing things you'd think he was someone who couldn't see the forest for the trees. But he runs through the forest without ever bumping into the trees. He doesn't by instinct."

He's almost ^{the} perfect legislative personality. He's slow to anger. He's a quick study. He instinctively knows what the central issue is, goes to it and then works for compromise. He always goes to the person most opposed to him, tries to find a point of agreement and then goes from there. Most people in politics want to find out who is the ^{the} we and the ^{the} they and then start constructing brick walls. Paul never does this. And he also deals episodically with things. Once something gets his attention, it gets all his attention and he sees it through. He worries about his credibility and would never think of speaking on something he wasn't sure about in his own mind."

I think PT's story of his committee assignment--if he gets it would be very interesting. I overheard him talking about it on the phone and he called it "fascinating" - said he'd worked 7 weeks on it. When the Jewish group came in, he heard from them that Zerinsky was his opposition, because Byrd had promised it to him. Paul said that whenever he mentioned Zerinsky to a Steering Committee member "They went up the wall. One of them carried on for nearly fifteen minutes about how impossible he was. I was surprised they would be vocal about it. One of them said he'd vote for me only if Zerinsky was the opposition. If he's in it, I think I have the votes."

In most every meeting today PT had someone else in the room with him and in most cases designated a staff person to work out later contacts. He seems to be using this as an opportunity to mate each outside group with a specific

staff member; and he often commented how much more specialized he is now. But his delegation techniques seem pretty well developed.

The thing that came through to me about Paul was his sense of priorities. He seems to naturally determine priorities in what he does--the 4 issues, the family comes first, the first bill to be in by January 31st, the committee assignments which he'll "eventually" get.

Rich paints picture of Paul in terms of legislative success: ^{million} 6~~m~~ for Photovoltaic(?) program, bicycle path amendment, studies by Transportation Department on energy conservation. On bicycle path amendment when he got it through ad hoc energy committee, he got a standing ovation. Ashley and Bellington were against it but did not vote their proxies against Paul because they liked him. That's important kind of evidence that he's a legislator.

Re PTs legislative style, Rich said "He's so low key, people underestimate him. There's an advantage to being underestimated. You can jump out of the bushes and be on something before anyone knows you're around." He used that generally and, then, with bicycle path amendment said "there was a case of jumping out of the bushes."

In my conversation with Rich the first day we talked, he said Paul had had a staff meeting that morning (Monday) and had told all staffers that due to tripling of staff size, their accessibility to him would have to be cut in three. And that, due to increased size of his constituency he had 12 times the responsibility he had had before.

He said he had feeling that a Senator was going to be more "independent" than a House member, that in the House you had lots of opportunity to be anonymous and not make mistakes. He said you could go onto the floor, look at the scoreboard and take your bearings from your delegation or your key friends to

make sure you didn't get in trouble. He says he doesn't think you can run around the Senate asking other Senators what the bill is about.

I think the point he was making was that ^{in the House} you can keep your head down and blend into the crowd. In the senate you are a known person, you cannot hide and people will make judgments about you. A "no place to hide" syndrome.

Norm Orstein made a point to me yesterday that is another function of numbers. House members don't know all their colleagues. But they do make a few close friends--to protect themselves against that anonymity. Senators all know each other. (Harry Byrd came around to meet Paul the day I was there and I hear him say he was just coming around to welcome him to the ^{Senate} people. Paul came back and said "That didn't make any sense." "Well, to a House member, it didn't.") But Norm went on to say that Senators, while they all know each other, do not make many personal friends. These social patterns says Norm, must affect way the two branches work.

Rich, sitting there after one week, had sense that each of the office operations would be different and might get shaped in their early period.

"There is so little guidance, so little direction given to us in the organization of our offices. There are 535 independent situations. I've been impressed with how ^{freedom-like} like the offices are here. This is the juncture when basic office decisions get made. If we don't think about it now, it may never be reevaluated again. The direction it takes depends on the direction we give it now--unless we make some terrible mistakes. We started with our congressional office arrangement and just added to it." (But the Economic Development section is a change; as is Bill Cohen's "Maine Room.")

I've been thinking today about my relationship with Paul. I've always had complete access to him. Should I go in to him and say 'we could do it

this way or that way and here are the options. Should I give him a memo on every morning on legislation. If I say nothing, he'll just expect it will get done. If we don't think about these things now, we may never think of them again."

He said that obviously the office would have lots of contact with Kennedy's office. "We all know our counterparts in the Kennedy office." Rich said he had no ties with other AA's yet, however. (Same thing Ray Scott said.)

He talked about reading Asbell and Home Style at same time. He missed the context, "texture" in my book. Thought I should (and with PT, could) use tape recorder. But he suggested that maybe I could hit some happy medium-- use notes, use names and check back with the people before I publish.

I accompanied Dennis and Rich while they walked over to Dirksen to check on office. Dennis: "I don't even like walking down these corridors." They all wanted Russell and Paul several times said how pleased he was that two people ahead of him in seniority took Dirksen. "I don't understand it" said Paul. "The only reason I can see is that the committees meet over there so you have to walk further. That's not a very good reason."

✓ Their problem was that they are in Brooke's old suite and they will lose 300 sq. ft. of office space no matter where they go. When I met Paul in the elevator, he said, "I get depressed when I think of leaving Senator Brooke's luxurious suite and moving into what I'm entitled to."

Rich commented that they were 92nd in seniority "and slipping fast." They started higher, and have been slipping as senators resigned to give their successors a chance for early seniority. "Your room space is the first benefit of your seniority."

As you sit there, the signs of staff newness are all around you. They are trying to figure out the phones, one guy is calling real estate agents, one woman

has just seen TK for 1st time. "He can put his lips ---"

see PT int
1/18/79