

From here on, every 14 days

Jim Greenwood - Washington - December 6, 1994

- Jim's DC office is on the 5th floor Cannon, which must be reached by special 5th floor elevators. Most of the space up on that level is storage, plus a few offices. They will move to the 4th floor. But he must have been near the end of the lottery. Fingerhut was on the 4th.
- He came out and said, "Do you want to shadow me while I make a reporter call." I said sure.
- Secy refers to him as "Mr. Greenwood."
- He was coatless, tie down, leaning back with feet on desk as he talked with Rob Fernandez of the Inquirer. F. wanted to talk about Jim and welfare reform. He wanted to make the point that Jim was an expert. "Are there any other members of Congress with as much experience in the area as you?" "Not in the Republican party (chuckle). I'm a minority of one. I've found that to be true throughout my career."
- Then Jim went on to describe his chairmanship of a Select Committee in PA Senate to study welfare reform--in 1989-1990. "Not only have I had hands-on experience, but I chaired the Select Committee in the PA Senate, and we held hearings all over Penna. I'm also the only Republican who put in a welfare reform bill in this Congress. So I know how the system works."
- For most of the interview, he told the reporter about the alternatives to "orphanages." He feels that Gingrich's use of the term was unfortunate and could get in the way of reforms that he thinks are necessary. As I went into the office, he told his AA to "get me an appointment with Gingrich within the next 24 hours. I need to speak to him for 15 minutes." He told the reporter that he had done this.
- "I want to inject a little reason into this talk about orphanages. I want to tell Newt that it's not Boys Town. I want to tell him that's not the way the system works and explain to him the alternatives to orphanages--foster care, group living arrangements run by charitable organizations, child support payments for the parents. Newt has the right idea that we should not give money to young girls who are incompetent at parenting. But we left the idea of orphanages a century ago. And the current discussion is not helpful to what we want to accomplish. I turned on Dan Rather last night, and it opened with Spencer Tracy's Boys Town, finished with a Christmas card with a waif and his begging bowl and in between was a group of mothers chanting, 'don't take my baby away.'

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- His press secy and he talked about this and their contact with the reporter. Press secy says "we ought to be able to get good mileage out of this."
- Jim said, "The question is whether my advice will be treated as knowledge or just more of Greenwood's moderate mush."
- Reporter was also interested in whether a task force on welfare would be carried forward (or instituted?) in the 104th Congress. Jim said he didn't know, that he called Gingrich staff and they hadn't decided. If they do, Jim wants to be on it. And the reporter again asked Jim whether he wouldn't be the one voice of hands-on experience and a major player. Jim's view seems to be that yes, he is the most experienced, but he's not sure that it counts for much in an ideological party--a party in which he is a minority.
- I should talk to him more about his life in the party. It is one experience--as is his life in the district--that sensitizes him very much, I think, to left/right, liberal/conservative dimensions. Since he is in "the middle," the extremes are vivid to him. He signed off on the welfare conversation with two relevant comments. One was the business of which his advice would be taken. The other was: "people will read the story in the Inquirer and say, 'There's that liberal Greenwood again. All he wants is to give welfare mothers more money.'"
- His first comment to me was, "The train is moving very fast." I didn't pick up on the metaphor--I should have--but he started talking about the Commerce Committee. "John Dingell had gathered into the committee a large number of programs and that triggered a major attack on our jurisdiction. But Tom Bliley held firm and turned it back. Not much was changed--only seafood inspectors and railroads."
- He said none of that would effect him. "I'll be on the health and environment subcommittee again." He thinks they'll cut out the hazardous waste subcommittee (on which he senses they'll consolidate it with some other subcommittee.) He thinks he'll get on that subcommittee, too, so he can proceed with his interstate trash bill.
- I asked him what had happened to him since election, if he had done any analysis and was he surprised as to outcome. "Not as much analysis as I should have." "I went to Taiwan and Hong Kong right after the election." He said one or two members who were supposed to go said they thought they should go to DC instead to look after there careers. "I figured the first week's maneuvering would not be all that important and I went to Taiwan and Hong Kong." I only note this because it was very different from his first term.

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- "If you had put a gun to my head and made me predict, I would have said no, we would not take over the House. But as the campaign went along, I began to think that we had a real chance. I was a member of the incumbent review board to raise and distribute money for incumbents. In deciding how to distribute the money, we talked with incumbents and assessed their need. I realized near the end of the campaign that we had given away \$1 million and there was not one incumbent that I thought was in trouble. Even Ken Calvert who got caught with a prostitute had big numbers. We had incumbents saying they needed the money because they were only 20 points up. I did predict that all the Republicans would win. But I didn't believe that as many Democrats would lose."
- Did you do as well as you expected. "In the beginning we crunched a lot of numbers trying to figure out what we could expect. In the beginning, I set our goal 60%. We got 52% last time and I thought we could go for 60%. When I found out that I had two candidates to the right of me, I revised it to 58%. I didn't enter the office pool, but at the end I wrote down a number on a piece of paper and put it in my wallet. It was 62%. But we got 66%. We checked back to 1938 and found that 66% was the highest margin ever. Kostmayer's best year was his first reelection, 61% and that was the best performance up to now. Usually the margins have been around 55%."
- How did you do in Lower Bucks? "Extremely well, better than anyone expected. That's where we built up our lead. We had set as our goal two townships, nominally Republican, but which we lost in 1992--Middletown and Ben Salem. We carried both of them. Besides that, we carried Bristol and Falls, which was absolutely unheard of for a Republican. We carried 54 of the 56 townships, losing only Tullytown and _____ where Democratic registration is 6-1."
- "Nobody has written that Jim Greenwood won by an historic margin. Since everybody won, I guess, no one stuck out much."
- "We ran a good campaign. The senator who took over my district and the representative who took over the local seat both ran behind me. Our party chair noticed that and said to them, 'Jim Greenwood ran ahead of you. You didn't work and he did.' Usually, the local candidate does better than the national candidate."
- I asked him whether the campaign would have any effect on his behavior in Washington. He answered in terms of his reading of the election results.
- "Almost all of the criticism of me came from the extremes. The extreme liberals, the Kostmayer people say, 'Don't vote

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for Greenwood, he's a right wing Gingrich clone.' The extreme conservatives say 'Don't vote for Greenwood, he's pro-choice, for the Brady Bill, against assault weapons, he's not a real conservative, he's a liberal.' Most politicians get their support from the extreme to the middle. My support came from the middle. My opponents came from the extremes. 66% make up the middle. I think that is where the district is. So the message of the election returns is 'steady as you go.' On the other hand, I tell my conservative friends here that my district elected Kostmayer seven times, and that he taught them a way of thinking that can't be changed over night. The Republican before him was very liberal, too, Pete Buster. I tell them that it will take time for me to bring my district along and make them conservative. There will be votes where I think I can explain to my constituents why I voted conservatively; and in that way, I can bring the district along. But I tell them I can't get out ahead of my district."

- A theme I heard before, I think, as he sees it, the people who give him the hardest time, and to which he must respond most often. He doesn't get much you're too conservative criticism. He told the reporters, "I'm as fiscally conservative as anyone around. But I'm pro-choice and I know something about the environment--so I guess moderate is appropriate." He doesn't seem wild about that label, but he accepts it.
- I asked him if people back home would have changed expectations of him now that he is part of majority. He said they would expect him to help pass the contract. "Haley Barbour spoke to us this morning. He said that usually when he spoke to the first-termers he tells them to make sure they get reelected. This time he said he was telling them to pass the contract. He said that before the election, 18% of the people said they disapproved of what Congress was doing, but that after the election, 55% of the people said that Congress should take the lead."
- The other changes he foresees is that Dems will do to Repubs what Repubs did to Dems--offer amendments that make Republicans take tough votes--cut half their salary, etc. "We have pledged to adopt open rules. That will kill us. We'll be nickel and dimed to death. But we'll have to take the tough votes."
- He thinks the caucus will divide on supply side. Laffer curve stuff and deficit.
- He says Gingrich is too accessible.
- "There's always a gaggle surrounding him--freshman who jab at him saying they want this and that. I think he's too accessible."

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- Tina Greenwood (Christina) is a Bucks County Adult Probation Officer.
- When I asked him if he could help Jon Fox, he said, "I'll tell you a funny story. Change in committee ... NY and PA in same group. Elect one member-NY=14; PA=1080 preliminary wins. McDade says he'll try to help. Four of them gather at back of room with 2 frosh--Fox and English (both very ambitious and want W&M). McDade says when seniority is equal, we flip a coin. Out comes a quarter, 'Is it ok with you two?' They shrug, Jim flips the coin. Fox loses. Jon Fox just stands there, like he didn't know what happened. McDade says, 'OK English, you get W&M.' To Fox it was like saying, 'There goes your entire career in Congress.'"
- At some point, he said, "One conservative says to me, 'This time you just got carried in on the tide. You'd better get with it and get more conservative.'"

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