

DICK LEONE

December 18, 1978

Maybe wife for
media → money
business & her
means it
means.

In a visit to the house Dick talked a little about the campaign.

"The only other way I could have done it was to go cross ^{gain}--not to have tried for Byrnes help, run without organization support and run right at Bradley on the ground that he was not qualified for the Senate. But that would have been tough against Bradley."

He says Garth believes "furiously" that "with enough money, we could have turned it around in the last two weeks. He calls it the classic example of the double cross in politics. He even lectured about it at Harvard."

When I asked about the "double cross," he launched into what was his major theme--that he didn't have enough money and that his friends let him down. "They could have raised the money for me, and they didn't. If ever there were three people who, according to the conventional wisdom, were obligated to me politically, it was they. I got Byrne elected Governor, but maybe you could argue that. But ^I persuaded Byrne to appoint Coffee party chairman and Stegner chairman of the Port Authority. Byrne didn't want to appoint either of them. [Never have I misjudged any people in politics as I did those people. I should have known they would not help, but I can't believe that about human nature. [And I won't give up my optimism either."]

When I first asked if he could have put it together he said "If Byrne had acted differently and had moved in December and January to put things together, he could have almost forced Bradley out of the race. But, being the kind of person he is I guess that's no real option. But I hoped he would. I was optimistic about him, when I should have known better. [You misjudge lots of people in life--you have, I have. But this was one that meant more to my life than any other one, and I was wrong. Now, I don't want

to be associated with him anymore. People told me he shouldn't have been reelected. I went against them--because of the tax thing--but I was wrong."

"If I had known that I would have to run without the resources, I might have behaved differently--I'd never run again without the resources in hand."

He raised 260,000 and spent 300,000. Bradley spent 700,000. He spent 100,000 on TV. Bradley spent 200,000 on TV. Dick spent 30,000 TV in early April and 30,000 in weeks before primary--in between he was off the air. Bradley clobbered him in blue collar area and among blacks. Bradley wants to be President; has not hired anyone from campaign--all hired guns "They are the presidential staff." Bradley had trouble getting Leone supporters to work for him. Ran conservative anti tax, pro nuclear carrier campaign--not for anything.

"One thing I've learned that's true in all of politics. The person who singlemindedly wants a particular office has a big advantage over everyone else. He can bend everything he does in that direction. Once in a while an accident may come along and get it, but it's the people who plan way ahead who get it. My biggest mistake of all was not deciding early enough that I wanted it. If I had decided, right after the election in 1973--when I could do no wrong--that there was a Senate seat up in 1978 and that I wanted it more than anything else, there are a thousand things I would have done differently. I would have been in a much different position than I was in December of 1977. Anybody in politics thinks about the Senate now and then; but I didn't think seriously about it. When my name came up I told people I wasn't interested. In August 1977 I told Bill Bradley and Andy Maguire that that I wasn't going to run. They asked me. I talked to Dave Garth about it in September and we decided not to do it, no money etc. In December I decided to do it--for three reasons."

Bradley had been running for the
Senate since 1974. I knew
that. He told me.

First it solved a lot of my own personal problems as to what to do--that's a major reason. Second, I wasn't doing anything at the time. Third, Bradley's candidacy offended me. I didn't think he was qualified to be a Senator. He had been running for the Senate since 1974. I knew that. He told me. But I never thought much about it. In fact, I told him he ought to get into state government and work his way up."

"Bradley's polls showed him a lot further ahead in December and January than I thought he was at the time. If I had known that, I would have made sure I had the resources I needed before I started."

*Bradley
had what
P.H. had
(newspapers)
and more
celebrity!*

"Until April when all the bad news came in and everything went sour, and we ran out of money, I had the best time I ever had in my life. When you were there, we were pretty frantic. We knew we were losing and there was nothing we could do about it. The last 3 weeks, the media was playing it that Bradley was going to win big. That's an awfully hard thing to turn around--especially when you are out of money."

"We never got above 50% visibility"--he repeated the fact that he jumped "from 14% to about 35% in the polls in early April. Then I guess we gained some more at the end." He's talking about visibility.

His main themes:

- 1) He didn't decide early enough.
- 2) Byrne, Coffee and Stegner (esp. Byrne) let him down by not raising money. He put too much faith in them.
- 3) He never raised enough money to stay on TV - had no other way to raise money.

He admitted--when I prodded that his 3 "friends" probably came to realize somewhere along the line that he couldn't win and didn't want to back a loser. Maybe Bradley's polls showed strength that kept Byrne neutral.

Andy Maguire "He's miserable. He hates the House. He has a Ph.D. from Harvard, so you can imagine what he thinks of the House. He wants to be a Senator so badly he can't hide it. He says things like "It's my destiny to be a Senator." "This is my time in history to go to the Senate."

"If I did it over again maybe I would do more stunts."