

Mark Andrews

November 19, 1986

I went to see Mark about 2:30 and came out about 3:45. It was a long, difficult, rambling interview in which he began by talking about the near term, got a cigar after a while and then moved into the long term--ending with a discussion of his grandmother the doctor. He covered both the 6 week campaign and the 6 year campaign. Nothing he said changed my view that it was the 6 year campaign that did it. After nearly every segment of the conversation, he'd look at me and say "Who knows" or "I don't know" or "I don't know. Who knows." He's hurt, bewildered and bearing up.

I started by saying that this wasn't the conversation I wanted to have. "These things happen. It's a disappointment but you can't cry over it. Trying to figure out what happened is about like looking a dead horse in the ass."

Then he started to ramble. "Who knows what happened. Our polls showed us 4 or 5 points ahead till the last weekend. We were 12 points up in our polls the week before the President came and 9 points up in the North Dakota poll just before the President came. Maybe that was a mistake. Maybe I would have been better off not having the President come. But maybe people just wanted a change. I don't know. Who knows."

I asked him something to the effect that if he had had to look for 1500 votes to switch, where would he have gone looking for them? He answered in terms of two things. "There were two things that hurt us. One was the farm bill. I thought that we explained that the best we could, that it meant 1000 for every man, woman and child in ND. I don't know how else we could have done it. Maybe I should have said 4.87 instead of 3.85. Nobody ever fought harder for the farmers than I did. Bill Moyers said on election night I was the best friend the family farmer ever had. I was the best. But their exit

polls showed people concerned about the farm issue going 60-40 against Andrews. That's tough to take. What happened? Who knows. Then I lost Fargo by 1,000 votes. That was the law suit. I'll never understand that. I just don't understand what gets into people, how they think. I had the F-4 contact coming into Fargo. That meant 400 million and a lot of jobs for the area. They won't get it now. They want me to help them, stand up for them, but when I help my family, stand up for my family they turn agasint me. (mentioned Inouye) If I had not fought for my wife, it wouldn't have been me. You have to be who you are. If people dont' like that so be it. But you ask yourself. Are these the people I've worked so hard for for 23 years? If that's so, maybe I'm better off out of here."

He came back to this several times later. At one point, near the end he said, "They want me to work to protect them for 23 years but they don't want me to work to protect my family. Danny Inouye came in here the other day and we cried together. He said it didn't make any sense to him. He said in Hawaii people would expect him to stand up for his wife. If he fought for his wife it would be worth 10 points and if he didn't, he'd lose 10 points. What gets into people? You've been with Mary. you know how she is--still the same old Mary with people. But she's in a wheelchair and has trouble getting around. She goes where I go. I've had Republicans sit here in this office and tell me I shouldn't take her with me, that people don't like to look at someone in a wheel chair. If I left her at home, that wouldn't be me. You do what you have to do."

"I never regretted suing those bastards. The jury found them guilty, but the judge handed down an outrageous ruling."

"I didn't lose it in the cities. ( I carried every city except for Fargo. Well, I lost Jamestown. I lost the Republican precincts there, but won the Democratic precincts. ) I lost it in all the little towns I always carried 2-1.

That was the farm thing, I guess. There was that ugly feeling out there that things are bad, so we'll beat up on Mark Andrews. Why? Who knows?"

I began to ask questions designed to get him to think a little bit more about the longer run.

He talked about staff. "I had a lot of trouble with my staff in the early days. One was a drunk. One was a right winger. My press people were not very good. And I wasn't watching them as closely as I should have. I was learning my Senate duties and spending a lot of my time worrying about Mary. Finally I had to clean them out a couple of times. Gradually I built up a good staff. And the irony of it is that just when I've got the best staff on Capitol Hill, I won't need them anymore." Deanna said later "In the last two years, he really hit his stride."

"When the law suit began, people on my staff, Bill Wright, Ed Doherty, Jim Austin, began talking to others and calling others saying "Mark Andrews is getting greedy, who does he think he is." It only takes 100 calls like that and pretty soon everyone knows about it."

he talked about his trouble with his press aides -had trouble getting a good one - they talked against him. Then Andrews doesn't treat his staff well came from the staff. I noticed that when I was around him, that he really didn't understand press--and Dorgan did and that bothered him.

"My wife says my problem was that I spent too much of my time doing it and not enough of my time talking about it. I'm not good at grandstanding. And I think the people of North Dakota are getting used to people who put a lot of effort into press releases. They have been Dorganized. Dorgan has brought about a change and there has been a slow erosion in that direction. My relations with the press aren't as good as they once were. Maybe there's a new generation of press people. Maybe I've gone beyond my time. Who knows?"

"The press wrote some outrageous stories about how I berated my staff and about how hard I was on my staff. They wrote that I had a candy box on my desk and that when they snatched candy I screamed at them. You've been in my office many times. Have you ever seen a candy box in my office. ('No, only a teddy bear.' 'He's over there now; he's there to discombooboolate the generals'). People believe those stories. Since when can the press print stories like that with impunity? They can and did and even when I had the best staff around, they still kept writing stories about how lousy my staff was."

"I got more things for North Dakota than anyone in the history of North Dakota. (he ticked some off). That's part of the hurt. I don't know what will happen to the state now. Milt Young carried Quent Burdick for years. I carried Quent Burdick for six years. Dorgan never got anything, never did anything except issue press releases. I'm afraid Conrad will do the same. They are out of the same shed.... At our luncheon today, Bob Dole said 'Now that Mark Andrews is gone, some of the rest of us may get some of the money--especially Kansas.'"

One reporter (CSM) came to North Dakota during the campaign. She said "I've just been in South Dakota. Everybody in Washington knows Jim Abdnor is a clutz but in that state they love him. Everybody in Washington knows you are one of the best legislators on Capitol Hill and back here everyone is mad at you. I don't understand it.' I told her, I don't either."

When he said that, I said, "Did you think people were mad at you" He answered, "I'd be the last person to know that. Everyone around you is always - says nice things."

He said, in some connection "along about that time" 3 years out such and such happened and I jumped in and said yes, that's what I thought, that "along about that time" things changed. I think it was the idea that he had

gotten out of touch. "Along about that time, articles started appearing that I had gotten out of touch with North Dakota, that I hadn't been home as much as I used to be. We checked and found it was not true. Buy my press people had not done a job of publicizing it. And the criticism took on a life of its own." Like the idea that he abused staff. This, of course, is his view of things. But it ties in with my idea that he did lose his invulnerability somewhere during the 6 years.

I think the law suit is the foot print on the sand dune; or, maybe Dorgan comparison is it.

*Back of what made  
Gerald a strong  
challenge vs his  
law of a record*

I said that the first Dorgan poll showed something had happened. His first response "Well, Dorgan had run two times since I had run and was much more familiar to people. We went on the air early, and got most of it back and chased Dorgan out of the race. If he had stayed in the race, I think we would have won. We had soem better issues against him than Conrad."

I came back and said yes but that Dorgan lead must have meant some erosion of credibility. He said "That was about the time of the law suit." I think it was then that he said he had no regrest suing "those bastards."

Another story on the credibility thing. "The story about the private detective was played up by the press. When it was proved that Rand was working for a law firm he had worked with for 30 eyars and which had timber interests, it all made perfect sense. But nobody believed it. So that story stayed around."

"\*You're the political scientist. Perhaps you, in your analysis, can tell me when the love affair with the people of North Dakota stopped."

→ "I could have got up and criticized the farm bill. But I didn't think I had to distance myself that much from the administration. And I think it was a good farm bill."

"I might have been even more effective in the minority, because I have so many friends on both sides of the aisle. At our transportation guy's

farewell luncheon today, Dan Inouye was there, Jamie Whitten was there, Lowell Weicker, Ted Stevens--There were as many people from the Democratic side as the Republican side. I can screw something up or put something together as well as anyone in the Senate. I could have done it in the minority almost as well as I could in the majority. I know what I'm doing. I know how to legislate. I can do that as a consultant too. I may even be more effective from the outside. Who knows?"

He used the words "disappointment," "hurt" and he said "the kids were pissed."

"It was a disappointment. But the sun came up in the east this morning."

"I got so much for North Dakota. That's the hurt of it. I guess it's the hurt that makes me want to get a consulting job and say to them, see I can make ten times as much working for 3 people as I can make working for the whole state of North Dakota."

"I have never been a favorite of the Republican party--or what passes for the Republican party. Yet I'm the only one who has survived. They seem to hold that against me. It's been that way for a long time. I remember in 1964 when we went to receive the endorsement of the state convention out in Dickenson. Don Short represented the western part of the state and I represented the eastern part. He voted against the civil rights bill. I voted for it. He voted against the farm bill. I voted for it. We were good friends and we agonized together over our votes even when we differed. But he was a real right winger. I remember when he and his wife walked down the aisle to the stage, everyone at the convention stood up and cheered and clapped and whistled. Then, when Mary and I walked down the aisle, two people belched and one person farted and that was about it. Well, it wasn't that bad, but I'll never forget that cold reception. Don Short got beat--it was the Goldwater years. And I won. The party people never got over that and never forgave me for that

victory. Of course in 1984, every Republican got beaten and I was the only one left standing. The party resented that at least the bitches here, the bellyachers and the right wingers."

"I never have been able to get control of the party machinery. When Milt Young was senator, he wouldn't let anyone touch it. But he didn't do anything with it. Then when I finally got to the Senate the Governor was a Republican. He did nothing with it. He was the only Republican governor to get beaten in 1984. By that time the thing was in a shambles. We spent a lot of money getting phone banks and voter identification organized. They did a terrific job. There was a projection that in order to win we'd need 130,000 votes. We got 140,000. Of course the turnout was greater than expected. But we "would have lost by a lot more if we hadn't had the phone bank operation."

Jacqueline said "We got every vote there was to get. It was so close, I don't think Mark believes that. Sometimes I wish he had lost by 7 points. That would have seemed more final. But it's a tribute to him that he did come so close."

"My grandmother had a saying that we have framed on the wall at the farm and that I have copied for each of the kids...'To escape criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.' Maybe that's my problem." He talked about his grandmother the first woman physician in NY who moved to North Dakota.

"They put an ad on criticizing a statement I made about wheat prices. I couldn't believe it would stick. But it did."

"We ended up with a debt. The papers were full of stories that the Republicans had all this money to spend at the end. We didn't. Conrad outspent us 3-1 in the last week. He had an insert in the paper the last weekend--a good insert. I wish we could have had one, but we couldn't afford it. The Republicans gave Abdnor hundreds of thousands more than they gave us. We did a lot. But we could have done more. Still, we were 4 or 5 points up before the last weekend. Then it just disappeared--pffffut."

"They dumped the Social Security thing on us--that I voted for a 40 billion cut in social security--at the very end so that we had no time to answer it. I never voted against social security in my life."

He talked a lot about what he would do - seems to lean toward consulting - get on boards, Mary to say in ND - came to DC for a couple of weeks at a time. He'll go back weekends and have longer weekends. Less frustration. Talked about how "truckers, railroad people," others came to his party today and I suppose he leans in those directions "energy independence, transportation, farming."

"If they ruin the farm situation, I could go back and buy up a much larger farm than the one I have now. I couldn't do that while I was in office."

"Mary and I went into every election saying that if we win we win, if we lose we win. That's the way we feel now. We'll have a lot more time together and with the kids. Maybe I'll just sit there and shoot tin cans with my grandchildren. I could think of a lot worse things."

He said that again as I left, i.e., the tin cans.

Said that at 60 he had plenty of juice left but would like to wind down a little and surely wouldn't start any "20 year projects".

He voiced the idea early and late in the interview "Maybe people just wanted a change. Maybe my time was over." That's the most comforting idea in some respects, but not to a man who believes he did a good job for 23 years and wants to go out on his own, not at the <sup>hand</sup> hands of his friends.

He said at one point--in talking about Jamestown - "Maybe a lot of Republicans said I'll just send a protest vote against Mark Andrews, teach him a lesson. Well they got more than they wanted. Who knows. I lost Jamestown, even though I saved eastern gear and a lot of jobs in that town."

Again, unrequited love.