

Gerry Studds

January 30, 1973

(1 hour)

"I feel pretty good about things this time. If we do all the things we're supposed to do--send out the baby books, the farmer's bulletins. We're going to flood the district with those things--use the frank. And anyway, if Weeks ran again, what would he say! All he said last time were three things: Studds has no experience, Studds is a carpetbagger and Studds doesn't give a shit about the district. He can't call an incumbent congressman a carpetbagger, he can't say I don't have experience and I picked the two committees most important to our district. I'm sure he thought I was going to come here and talk about Zambia all the time. So he must be pretty frustrated. I'm not going to worry about it. What I am going to worry about is my image down here. I wish I knew how the old guys judge you, ~~down~~ here. I wonder if I've begun to lose my credibility by standing up to ask for every chairman's vote."

"I can see where you would tear yourself apart ~~here~~ trying to balance representation of your district against your effectiveness down here. On the one hand you owe it to your constituents to voice their views; on the other hand you owe it to them to be effective within the institution. So far I've tried, by everything I've done, to keep from being labelled a screamer. People like Drinan and Bella are totally ineffective down here, yet they are right in expressing their constituents'

views. I think it's more how you say a thing than what you say. In the briefing by Kissinger, I was the only freshman to ask a question and I'm sure the older heads were shocked to hear a freshman ask a question. The Speaker called on me as "The Freshman" representative from Massachusetts." I hope I said what I said articulately and carefully and nicely enough so that I didn't offend anyone. But I sure as hell said what I wanted. Father Drinan got up and started shouting, 'I've been against the war for such and such a length of time.' Now who wants to hear that for Christ's sake. It was wrong--all wrong. So I notice this tendency to moderate my actions all the time."

Re Committees. "I got my two first choices. We took the parochial view and went for public works instead of foreign affairs. And it turns out to be a more diversified committee than I thought--it has an energy subcommittee this time and one on water resources. It has everything for the district--economic development for New Bedford, the environmental concerns of the Cape and transportation for the South Shore communities. I called Jim Howard about it. He said when he came down he was torn between Foreign Affairs and Public Works, that he got public works and now he wouldn't trade it for appropriations. So maybe we lucked out."

He said NE had no one on Public Works so Burke could make good case. And that he had harder time getting on MMF. Six vacancies and only 3 went to freshmen.

On campaign I asked whether issues, style or party meant more. "I

couldn't say. They were all in there." The point was that everything was so close that anything could have tipped the balance.

"The miracle is that we won. If he hadn't been so stupid it would have been hard to win. He had all that money and sent letters into every home, categorized by community and occupation. That's hard to beat. But he poured most of his money, his time, and his shit in New Bedford. And he didn't get around to the rest of the district. His New Bedford Ads were very dirty--the three A's stuff. If Studds is elected, your son will be on drugs, that sort of thing. But with all the effort, he only cut us from 64% to 62 1/2% in New Bedford and we increased our vote on the Cape, Barnstable County from 30(?)% to 40(?)%. He took it for granted. And we carried Weymouth by 4,000 votes, same as last time. We were very worried there and in Hull. But he didn't campaign in those places like we thought he would. Only in five South Shore communities did the vote drop off from last time. They reverted to their normal Republicanism after giving me a home town vote last time--Cohasset, Scituate, Hingham, Hanover and Norwell."

Talked about hiring staff. "We have 8 in the district and six here. That's a first--at least we're saying it's a first. We've three district offices. And all the casework is being done in the district, none of it here. Some oldtimers say this is a problem, but most of the cases can be done in regional offices. And they have private telephones. Keith

had one person in one office. People are going bananas. They've never seen anything like it. We're answering every letter or call the day it comes in."

He has an AA in district. McCarthy of MTA, who is district coordinator, took \$5,000 cut. Four in New Bedford (Marty and 2 Portuguese), 2 in Hyannis and 2 in Hanover (Mary Lou Butler).

He got his secretary from Bill Anderson, and another secretary whom she recommended, Rich ~~Notling~~ who came from Yale grad school, Common Cause and was coordinator in campaign. Former Herald-Traveler's newspaperman who was in Washington and who knows newsmen in Massachusetts. Of course, Bob Francis and a girl from Scituate who walked in door and speaks Portugese. Very happy about his staff all around.

But he said "I can't afford to be a congressman without taking money out of my own pocket." Salary OK but the perquisites are not adequate--for staff and mailing (Newsletter - one per month at 1,200). Mileage for district Rep., travel, etc. etc.

Pointing to FTS line. "Here's a symbol of congressional ^{importance} ~~importance~~. We can talk before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m., but they shout it off between 9 and 5. I'll bet the Secretary of Defense doesn't have to wait until 5 p.m. to make his calls. I'ts ridiculous, absurd. Eighty per cent of the staff allowances are inadequate and 20% are overly adequate. So we kowtow to Wayne Hays--an ugly man."

Said talent in the place gave him hope--but "I've been reenforced in

my belief that the place is unrepresentative. It is. I've heard things said here that don't represent anyone."

"I'll go home every weekend. This weekend we had a Thank-you dinner in New Bedford for 60 people on Saturday. And yesterday morning at 6:00 I was at the Quincy shipyards saying thank you. Were they ever^{er} pleased and surprised. 'We didn't think you'd be back.' People get very impressed with *themselves* around here. I can't wait to get home every weekend." *P.T.*
He's tired--took one week off in Portugal. "I'm tired. If I spent 8 days at home and 8 days here, I still couldn't begin to do the job in either place. I'm swamped with work. And Congress hasn't even begun. They may never pass any legislation at the rate ^{*they're*} ~~is~~ going. I have an apartment, but I might as well live in the closet there. I'm never at home. I get so I resent people with private lives. I keep saying we'll have to blast free a day on a regular basis, but there is no 'regular basis' down here. I guess I'll just have to disappear under a pile of dirty laundry some day."

He spent \$205,000 (He thought it was \$175,000--Bob said no.) "If I spent \$205,000 I'll bet he spent over 300,000." Weeks took TV in Boston and New Bedford. Studds took radio and says he has a good voice for radio. But that he couldn't compete with Weeks' TV expenditures.

We discussed possible primary opponents next time and he didn't see anyone on horizon. He ticked off a few, "State Senator from Barnstable,"

another young guy from Cape, "some student body president somewhere" (I laughed) and net of it was that no one was better than Weeks. "No one can put up the kind of money he can. But he was shattered when he lost. He's not used to losing. And he's already put up about 500,000 in the last two campaigns." He didn't really think he'd be a possibility--but sense was that he'd be ready for him.

I asked if his tiny margin would affect his voting behavior. "People know my positions on most everything. If we had to vote on amnesty it would be hot as hell. But to tell you the truth, I haven't thought much about it. The way we're going, I probably won't have to vote this session." Not very sensitive to the problem yet--kept going back to what he would do in constituency. Clearly, he's constituency-oriented.

He said a little group of freshmen had decided to meet regularly and perhaps even on bipartisan basis--people he sees--he mentioned Mezvinsky, Stark ('he's the swinger of our group') Young, Schroeder, Owens--sometimes Holzman. "We're wondering about Ray Thornton of Ark.," "Barbara Jordan is very cautious," "Yvonne Burke hasn't been here." "We've been a lot more active on reform and in the DSG than Barbara Jordan and those cats."