

PETE DAVIS

March 30, 1982

Dropped in to see whether markup would be held. "Small chance"--even tho announced in the paper. Shows you how long it takes to get ducks in a row.

Pete's point is that the committee is in disagreement and that it would be bad politics to reveal disagreement, fail to get a resolution and then go home for Easter in public disarray. Pete talked about need for exquisite timing. Budget res. gives little time for Dole to step in and create momentum. You just can't pass a budget resolution and let it sit there and wait around for something to happen. Need for some orchestration.

Pete generalizes about process. (1) Budget committee has no goodies to distribute. (2) Politicians given out a lot of carrots before they get around to using any sticks. (3) But there comes a time when you have to break some legs. "Those are the stories that get around." he talks about how Rostenkowski's reputation gets established. (4) After talking about all the current uncertainty --continuing resolution, President's press conference "I'm amazed at how long these guys procrastinate--or just how far they'll put their head in the lion's mouth hoping that someone will shoot the lion--and as if it mattered what color the lion's tonsils are." (5) Politicians won't move till they feel it in their bones. You can do all the analysis you want, but politicians won't move till their instinct tells them things are right. And, when in doubt, they won't move.

*I told Pete I thought PD had sense that a committee chairman had to, at some point, take the bull by the horns and move. I said I sensed Pete felt that way last Friday--that he was afraid that other committees would foreclose his options pretty soon. That while Baker wanted to wait, Pete didn't want other people to dictate his cause for him, i.e., Baker, other committees, the House. That's the main thing I think I saw Friday.

It turned out that the Budget Committee met this morning--after Pete had said "very slim chance" and I missed the whole thing!