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Wyche Fowler - April 25-27, 1992

C. J. Jackson, Mike Brandford, Harriet Muldower, Frank Weis, Dennis _____, Derryl _____.

- At the evening preview party at Ansley Park (Leon Eplan-city planner) WF talked about the hearing with DP, and it started a train of comments about the local media.
- WF said, "Two weeks ago, Senator David Pryor and I held a four-hour long hearing in Atlanta on the very important problem of the very high and rising cost of pharmaceutical drugs--up 280% in a year. We had five panels of experts. I begged and begged and begged Channels 2, 5, and 11 to come, but they wouldn't. Two United States senators and a horrendous problem and they wouldn't come. They have turned their back on policy."
- A young woman from Channel 2 spoke up and said, "I never heard of it." Wyche said, "I'll just let it go at that. I begged Channels 2, 5, 11."
- After his talk (mostly about the need for campaign finance reform) she went up to him and they had an animated conversation.
- When we got into the car to go back to the hotel he said, "That reporter was all upset." Donna said, "Why didn't she just let it go. I don't understand why she interrupted to make such a big case out of it right there." Wyche said, "She's only been at the station for four months! How would she know any way what we had said to them."
- That "four months" comment reminded me of my own feeling that local reporters aren't any good because they rotate in and out and never learn anything about the politics of the place they are in. So I asked Wyche: "Are there any good local political reporters in Atlanta, on TV or newspapers?"
- He answered, "None, not one. Well, there is one local reporter who went to school with me. He's pretty good, but the station won't let him do any reporting on policy or politics. Bill Nigut of Channel 2 knows Atlanta politics, but the people who run these stations have given up on policy and politics. I suppose if I blasted (Newt) Gingrich, I might get a minute on the evening news. But otherwise, they go by the slogan: 'If it bleeds, it leads.' Everything is about fires and accidents and killings now. I used to call them and try to convince them to cover policy. And I think Bill Nigut did the same from inside. But I've just about given up. And so has he. Why should he knock himself out going to the editorial board meeting every morning and get turned down every time. They have written off policy. I'm going to go after them on that starting in November; but I can't say anything till after the election." The next morning's paper began a series on that very subject! (I have it.)
- Fran Weis answered my question about campaign stages this way--"It's embryonic right now. I came over from the office staff only five weeks ago, to organize these parties. That's when we moved into the campaign

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office. In the next couple of weeks, we will get the returns from them. They have been great for identifying key people for the campaign--volunteers. I'm not so interested in the critiques. I'm most interested in the sign-up sheets. That's where we get volunteers. People who will open up their homes like this are committed. We have nearly 300 parties going all over the state. In two weeks, we're going to start calling people--our strongest supporters--in Fulton and Dekalb counties. Last time we had 28 phone banks going throughout the state, all coordinated through Atlanta. We're going to do the same thing this time. That was my job. I'm not a strategist. All that is in Bill's head. I just do what they tell me."

- They've been getting numbers ready for phone bank work since 1986 really.
- Harriet: "Five years ago, the campaign began in my closet. Then it moved to the bedroom; then to two rooms, then to the campaign office--the nicest campaign office I've ever seen."
- There was intermittent talk about Bill Shipp. As we walked out of "Mr. C's" where Wyche had teased him a little, Wyche said, "Shipp will probably see that scene where I'm with a bunch of soldiers and say I'm doing that because of my war vote. He won't tell people that that's the exact same footage we used in 1986."
- At another point in the car, triggered I think by some anti-Shipp comments, he said, "There's not one single newspaper columnist in the state of Georgia that has been writing anything good about me."
- Early in my visit, he told the story about how he was at a meeting in South Georgia when a person in the audience asked him why he voted for Bork for Supreme Court. "I answered that I talked with Bork for an hour and when I asked him about his religion, he said he was an agnostic. And I decided I could not vote to put an agnostic on the Supreme Court. A week or so later, a reporter called me and asked if I had called Bork a 'Godnostic!' I said no, an 'agnostic.' Well, two weeks ago, Shipp wrote a column saying that all politicians lie to us, the first case in point being Wyche Fowler's denial that he called Robert Bork a 'Godnostic.'" I called him up and I said to him, 'you lied about me. You called me a liar! I think you should retract that!' Of course, he won't. But his behavior bothers me. He'll write anything to promote a contest." (*I have that article*)
- "Last week I was on an Albany TV station as my three opponents had been before me. The only thing they all said was 'we've got to get rid of Fowler'--no policies, no programs. The reporter never asked them, 'why?' Maybe next time. I had several good minutes in the studio to answer them. As of now, it's just 'Fowler is bad.' No one of them has developed any positive thrust. Pretty soon, I would think, one of them will start talking policy and try to break out of the pack heading into the primary."
- "We were happy to see Coverdell's financial report. He has raised

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\$400,000 and he's spent half of it. He's built up a huge staff, as he always does. He's trying to organize in all 154 counties. I'm glad that he's spending his money that way and not concentrating it on pockets of strength or on television. If he wins the primary--and I expect he will--he'll have \$2 million dollars waiting for him. The (Republican Senatorial Campaign) Committee will give him \$550,000 and he'll pick up the rest by working the Republican network of groups. Then we'll have a knock down drag out campaign. I'd rather run against Coverdell than either of the others because he has a record. If he attacks me, I can attack him back. We have already researched his record and ~~he~~ knows its' weaknesses. My staff won't tell me what's there because they're afraid I'll get too anxious to start using it before I'm even attacked. But I know he's voted for a Willy Horton type furlough program. And I know he had only a 70% attendance record in the legislature."

- In a way, he's spoiling for a fight, even as he says he wants to conduct a totally positive campaign. I said I thought that there was an enormous amount of free floating anger out there and that any incumbent who under estimates its force is making a big mistake. He agreed. I said "and isn't it the case with you that that's you biggest worry--the anti-incumbent, throw all the bums out attitude?" He said "yes it is." Later that evening, Fran and Harriet said they were still worried about the possibility that someone might file in the Democratic primary against him; that they had heard rumors that some 'kook' might get in the race. The window for nominations opens next week Monday a.m. and ends Friday noon, so they will keep fingers crossed. The problem is, of course, that given the public mood, almost any one can get a 25% protest vote; and that would not help Fowler any. And Harriet said, "we don't want to have to spend the money." Bill had programmed some TV money for before the primary and, I think, is not now planning a pre-primary TV buy. (I was wrong at this point. WF talked about this later.)
- On Saturday morning, we went to the VFW Loyalty Parade in Conyers, Rockdale County. The questions in the group (CJ, Donna, WF, Mike Brandford) all had to do with the kind of reception they would get at that kind of an event in a strong Republican county--because of Wyche's war vote. Wyche was Grand Marshall at the parade, in enemy territory.
- When Wyche called my room in the morning to make sure I'd gotten his message the night before, he said "you've picked a good day. They will be throwing things at me." After the preview party, he went up stairs to work on his post-parade speech, and when he came down he rehearsed one line in it for CJ, Mike and Donna--a line to the effect that freedom was freedom "to say foolish things and even pass foolish resolutions." They said they liked that because, said one of them (Mike, I think, whose home town is Conyers) "people will expect you to say something about that." (Meaning the war vote.) Then they speculated about the parade possibilities--naming names of right wing Republicans to the right of Pat Buchanan that meant nothing to me. When it was over, both Wyche and Donna--who rode near the front of the parade and then went to the reviewing stand--said there had been no problems at all. WF "No problems--not one person yelled at me, no insults, nobody threw

anything. When I started, there were about six cops that wanted to surround me, lest there be any trouble. I had to shake them, so I got out and walked the route. There were no problems. In fact, I thought the reception was very polite, very courteous--maybe even a little warm." When he came by me, near the viewing stand, he turned to the crowd and jumped up and down. "I'm trying to keep warm." One of the two women in front of me looked at each other and grinned. "There's your friend, Wyche Fowler," said one. I got no vibes from it, but it wasn't warmth. Anyhow, the big subject afterward was that the enemy had not shown his face and the expected trouble had not materialized.

WF was, I think, just a little disappointed! "I was hoping there might be some opposition. I love a fight. One time during a parade in Savannah, a guy threw an egg at me. I saw it coming, caught it without breaking it, threw it back at him and hit him right in the chest. It made the front page of the paper."

- (M) - The Monday morning Constitution had a very favorable story about his recognition by the VFW, and the reporter offered the opinion that the reception indicated that the war vote would not work. Mike told me later, in Wyche's office, that he had talked to the reporter (~~Mike~~ Sherman) after the parade and Sherman had told him that he was "very impressed with the recognition Wyche had received from the veterans." Everyone was very pleased--in the office, at the campaign headquarters. Fran said, "Maybe Sherman has decided to say something nice about us for a change."
- When Wyche talked to people at the qualifying session, he would say "the Republicans have collected \$2 million dollars which they can't release until the Republicans have a candidate. Then they'll start attacking me and we'll just slug it out."
- Re the later part of the campaign, he said early in my visit, "I'm going to keep on doing what I'm doing. I'm not complacent. I know that my staff will want me to hit only the media markets. But I think I should go everywhere in the state and shake 1,000 hands a day."
- Harriet and Fran see "a very tough campaign ahead." A measure of the campaign is that half the rooms are empty at headquarters. Harriet, Fran and Phil have offices. Dennis and John sit out front. The telephones are idle, but they are in place on the tables. The press room is empty. Bill's office and Wyche's office are empty. The storeroom is mostly empty. Next time I see it, the place will be buzzing. Wyche says his next big Georgia push will be just before the convention, and he suggests I come then.
- "I'm going to the convention to try and get some money from people who said they would, but haven't. I want to be where the big money givers are. I'll give two or three parties there. Except for that, I wouldn't go."
- The money worry is constant. He was concerned about next week's New York fund-raiser, that the money was coming in slowly. Called the

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office a couple of times to inquire about it. They are doing 'Streetcar Named Desire' this time. He calls it "our last big effort at raising money."

- On the way to the ball game, "The Atlanta Braves have been good to me. They have brought me support I wouldn't have gotten in any other way-- people with high school educations, in the work force, and white."
- At the ball park, "When the Indian groups protested the Atlanta Braves chop, Jane Fonda and Ted Turner stopped. But I was sitting right next to them in their box, and I kept right on chopping. I was the only person in the box doing the chop. I got a lot of points with the fans for that."
- We sat in Ted Turner's box--Wyche, Mike Hurley (his campaign treasurer) and I. Conversation between MH and WF:

WF: "We had a good quarter (fund-raising) didn't we?"

MH: "Yes. I see where Coverdell is spending all his on staff."

WF: "He always does that. I hear he's got 50 people on his staff."

MH: "I don't see how he could have that many. You have six."

WF: "Yes, and they're spending money like a drunken sailor. I wouldn't have hired four of them. Every time I look, they've hired another flunky without any consultation. That ticks me off. If we're going to hire interns, at least we ought to hire friends of our supporters."

- This comment, along with a number of others, helped me to see a side of Wyche that I had thought might be there, but hadn't really seen before this trip. It has to do with his relations with staff. I knew, before, that the staff was very hierarchical and tightly held at the top by Bill Johnstone--e.g. my difficulty in reaching them. But now I see a little more of the dynamics involved. He is very quick to criticize them, and even to denigrate them. Whether or not they stay permanently anxious about their relationship with him or not, or whether he stays permanently upset with them or not I cannot tell. But on a moment-to-moment basis he can be hard on them and at least make them nervous. He got angry at CJ when he had to ride in a crowded car from Columbus to Atlanta the day before he got there; he grumped to me about Derryl committing him to go to a certain black church (to gain "status" among his peers that she "delivered" the senator) when he wanted flexibility; he got sarcastic when Ellen had trouble with the satellite ("she used to be my intern, now she's my employer"); when CJ drives him, he's continually riding him about where to turn, what route to take (CJ said to me a couple of times, "I'll get blasted for that" or "put that in your book" when Wyche gets sarcastic.) And he can get very sarcastic about them in their absence (Fran and Harriet are "unsophisticated," "have nothing to do," "hire flunkys"). When CJ had trouble taking pictures outside Mr. C's, he barked "let Dick do it." CJ handed me the

camera, turned, walked away. I tried and couldn't work it. I walked over to CJ, who had his back turned. "Didn't it work?" he asked. "No," I said. "That's Wyche," he said. Throughout our couple of days CJ would say something under his breath to indicate that WF was hard to work for, but that he was used to taking the abuse. At the ball park, Mike said that CJ had told him something and WF said, "You can't believe anything he says." I tried to keep it at the joking level. But when I was with Fran and Harriet and I said kiddingly, "Whew, he's gone, we can relax now." They laughed and chimed in, "Yes, now the Washington office will start to worry. He he comes." That, of course, is natural in every legislative office; it makes a huge difference when the boss is around. But I have the feeling that he is not an easy boss, that he trusts Bill and no one else except perhaps Laura and CJ (who has been with him since 1977!). But I imagine CJ acts as a buffer for the rest of his staff. A couple of times he expressed his displeasure with something the staff had done and told CJ to tell the staffer of his displeasure--usually a scheduling foul-up. CJ would dutifully write it down in his notebook. But I imagine he softened the blow when he reported to the offending staffer. I didn't want to exaggerate this, because I think there's a lot of loyalty to Wyche. But I do not believe he is easy to work for. Fran and Harriet were strong in their praise of Donna as a calm, easy going, natural "good influence" on Wyche. And that is not what you might expect when you see only the genial, joke-telling, laid-back senator at work.

- As we set off for the qualifying session at the Georgia State House, and for what Wyche thought would be a heavy day of interviewing, he said, "I'm going to be relaxed and statesman-like."
- One example of it came when a questioner asked him what he had to say about Coverdell's comment (reported in the Constitution article) that Fowler had voted for \$750 million in taxes. Wyche said that he wasn't campaigning against Coverdell; that Coverdell was campaigning for the Republican nomination and he wasn't going to be drawn into that fight. (I think I have it on tape.) It's another example of how he refuses to bite when the Republicans or the press tries to get him to go one-on-one against a Republican hopeful.
- "I'm completely indifferent about who my opponent might be. No matter who he is, Georgia will be very close. Whoever it is will get an automatic 5% anti-incumbent vote. And then we'll have a tough fight for the rest."
- It was Mike Hurley's theory that: "A run-off will not be good for Wyche. All the press will pay attention to the Republicans during the primary and then the run-off. Whoever wins those two races will look, in the press, like a winner. In 1986, nobody thought Wyche could win and when he did, unexpectedly, everyone said, "he's a winner!" Why people thought Vince Dooley (Georgia football coach) was a greater threat to Ham Jordan than Wyche was. They thought he had all these Bulldog Clubs all over the state. Vince didn't want to campaign; he wanted to be anointed. Wyche came out as "a winner!"

- Wyche's congressional district had all of Fulton and a piece of DeKalb.
- "There are 2500 churches in Atlanta and I've been in half of them."
- Wyche told (I'd heard part of it before) story about his appearance at 66th anniversary of a black church. Wyche comes to talk and puts a \$66 check in his pocket. The minister introduces him; Wyche thanks congregation for their prayers, praises them for their Xian witness and "whips out my check for \$66 in honor of the church's anniversary." Minister gets so excited he decides to make Wyche "a life member of the church." He takes the mike from Wyche. "I hereby pronounce you a life member of the Xian Church, and I bestow upon you all the rights and privileges thereto. This membership will last unto to death." Wyche is also pleased and he takes the microphone from the minister to thank him for the honor. Minister grabs the mike from him and says, "unto political death." Wyche tells this with great gusto!
- On the way to the dentist's dinner, I asked him about the Mayor of Waycross who entered the race. "He just got in last week. I got off the plane from Turkey and read in the paper that he had entered the race. He's a born-again Xian and has been courted by the Pat Robertson crowd. I was down in Waycross doing a tele-thon a few weeks ago and he came in and talked with me--a very nice man. He came to cut a ribbon when I was there another time. I told him, "don't let those Republicans talk you into running against me." But he's in and I love it. I want a Republican run-off so that they will all run around burning money. If there's a run-off, it will keep the Republicans busy till August 12. Then the campaign will be only eight weeks long; and we can make the best use of our paid television."
- "Bill wants to run against Coverdell because he's ready for Coverdell. The others would be free to take shots without any record to defend. Actually, Barr or Tankley would make better candidates than Coverdell. They are more forceful and presentable. But with Bush people pushing for him, Coverdell should win. I would think Barr would get at least 20%. He's campaigned harder than any of the others. He just gets in his car and goes all over the state. I pick-up his tracks as I go around; and he gets little stories in the newspapers. Of course, the TV stations won't cover him--or any of us."
- "I have a big decision to make soon--a \$750,000 decision. Bill wants to go on the air with three weeks of television right around the Republican primary--two weeks before and one week afterward. One idea is to take some of the play away from the Republicans. But mostly it's to help me establish myself. Nobody knows who I am or what I have done. And my numbers are pretty low. All of us who came in in 1986--Wirth and the others--came in at the very time television stopped covering us. We all have the same problem--of a non-descript profile. I need to tell people who I am. But \$750,000 will take half my damn money! I'll cut it down to two weeks at least. If we do it, we'll use the two commercials you saw yesterday--the one minute biography with the song and the testimonials telling people that I deliver. I have until mid-May to make that decision." *One reason why voter criticisms of the TV spots are not so useful is because they don't know why he has chosen them, -- in this case, to boost name recognition. And I don't think he wants to tell them that.*

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- "We learned this technique from Mattingly in 1986. Immediately after my victory in the primary, he went on TV attacking me. He had it made^{and} in the can waiting for the primary vote. It not only took away all the momentum from my victory, it dropped me back nine or 10 points. We could do this to Coverdell this time if we wanted to. But we won't. We're going to wait for him to attack me first."
- On the way home from the Goldstein dinner, he said, "the only reason I ran against Mattingly was because he was such a sorry senator. The businessmen liked him because he was so malleable. That's just what they want. No one else wanted to run against him because he had all that money. I had been thinking about it for a year in advance--but only in the abstract. I was just watching things develop and finally I realized that none of the powers that be, none of the (congressional) delegation was going to run against him. So I decided, without much serious thought, to do it. Perhaps if I'd have thought about it seriously, I would not have run." (A little disingenuous?)
- He noted that it had appeared in the paper in 1980 that he was thinking of running vs. Talmadge. But he said that it was not true, that he had never thought of it!
- At the Goldstein dinner, I had two interesting reactions from the (mostly Jewish) activist group I was with. One was that Wyche used to be closer than when he was in Congress and now they say "ther's a greater distance. He used to represent us. Now he represents the farmers." Another said, "when he was in Congress, I used to kiss him whenever we met. Southerners kiss a lot. Now, when I see him, we don't kiss." These were two women. Ex-mayor Sam Massell said he understood, however. But they talked, they all agreed. "He came back here and we see him a lot more than we do Sam Nunn." The other reaction was to Coverdell. They called him "a good man," tough competition, "helpful to us in City Hall," "a moderate." The editor of the Jewish Times said, "I'd rather have some one I dislike running vs. Wyche. I support Wyche, but I won't be heart-broken if Wyche loses to Paul. They are both good men." They all agreed. Altogether, it was a more flattering picture of Coverdell than I had heard from Wyche and his people.
- At the Israel Baptist Church the pastor had hinted at the same thing when he introduced Wyche. "He used to be around here so much that he began to get a little black (laughter). Now he's looking pretty white (laughter). The only way he's going to get black again is to go to the beach and get a tan (laughter). We don't see him as much as we used to. But we still love him. Why don't you come up here senator and bring greetings. If you have your holy shoes on, you can come up here to the pulpit." (Wyche said afterwards, "I could see he was deciding whether or not he would invite me up to the pulpit. He did, I think, because we go back along way. I think I'd like to have him and the 30 or so other black ministers I know go down to South Georgia during the campaign and preach on my behalf."
- "I didn't appreciate how much of a change it would be going from House

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to Senate, with seven million people to represent. I can't get around to these churches as often as I used to. And when I go, I can't stay as long. I'm always hurrying to get somewhere else. I used to come home and spend three or four evenings in a row in various hotels at receptions or meetings, without worrying about the time. Now I have to get out of a meeting in Atlanta early so I can catch a plane to Waycross."

- "I love to come to black churches because it's good politically and because I love the black church. I'm comfortable there. I love its rhythms. The black church is their place of worship, their social club, their country club, their refuge."
- "I haven't decided what I'm going to say tomorrow. (When he files his qualifying papers and goes on a "media tour" in a satellite hook-up.) Maybe I won't get a chance. I'll just answer their questions: 'How come you voted so often with Ted Kennedy?'"
- At the ball game, when I asked Mike Hurley (Wyche's baseball buddy and campaign treasurer) what stage the campaign was in, he said, "It hasn't begun yet. The media isn't paying any attention." For him, the media attention is the key.
- At the game, apropos of nothing that I could connect it with--except that the Mayor of Waycross was mentioned--he leaned over at the ball game and said, "We got only three of every 10 white votes south of Macon last time. I think we ought to get twice that this time. I certainly hope so."
- "I'm in a lay-low syndrome right now. I'll bet the Republicans beat each other up. The newspapers will focus on the Republicans until their primary is over. It will take press attention off me, which I like because all they ask me is 'Why are you a liberal? Why do you vote like Ted K?' If they have a run-off, that will leave eight weeks for our television to kick-in. The papers won't pay any attention to me until I start my paid television. That's the only way I can get on television."
- At the TV station, "One of the reasons I have the trouble I have is because when I talk I say whatever comes into my head and I end up being all over the ballpark. I know the most successful politicians are those who boil everything down to three things and then repeat them over and over again--balance the budget, fix the schools. Elect me and I'll do them one, two, three. People know what you stand for. I've never been able to do that. I talk about environment policy, schools, health. They say you should simplify, simplify, simplify, codify, codify, codify. 'Elect me and I'll balance the federal budget.' Of course, Kent Conrad said that and he had to quit." He said this when he was pouring over his notes getting ready for a morning interview via satellite feed from channel 36. "It sure beats flying around from place to place in those little planes."
- He went to the State House to file his papers to "qualify" for the elections. I stood in the back and watched the candidates line up in

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the House of Representatives chamber, with media everywhere. Wyche got in quite a few interviews.

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- On the way out, walking down the marble stairs he said, "Coverdell's press conference was 'Fowler, Kennedy, Metzenbaum.' You'd think, wouldn't you, that he could find some way to put on a little more positive face than that for the voters?"
 - Then in the car, "I'll say one thing for Coverdell, he's got the media treating him as the nominee. It's the money. He's the only one with money, so that makes him the nominee. The last poll taken by the Constitution had Barr and Coverdell tied at 25% each. I'm not so sure Coverdell will win. But I don't know who, in that crowd, could beat him unless they got some money." Apparently Tanksley has family money.
 - Moments later, "I think I'll call Coverdell a 'Godnostic.' I'll tell him that: 'I may be like Metzenbaum, but you're a Godnostic.'" CJ and I got a big laugh out of that one.
 - We arrived at the TV station WATL-36 and WF looked over his notes. He prepared for nine interviews--a "media tour" they called it. When we got on, Ellen Frawley from the Greer office said that "the 10 o'clock interview has been pushed back till 10:15." Wyche says OK, keeping pretty cool. Then she comes in to say that the 10:15 interview has been cancelled (a Savannah station). A little later, she takes us into the studio, sits Wyche down in the interview chair, the make-up man puts make-up on. Then Ellen comes in and says "We've having a little trouble with the satellite reception on the other end. Savannah and Columbus have cancelled." She goes back to see what she can salvage from the nine TV interviews that had been scheduled. Wyche sits there 'at the ready' looking at a blank TV screen, fussing over whether he needs a hearing thing in his ear, asking the guy who's standing back of the camera what the problem is. "Where's Ellen," he says. "On the phone," says the cameraman. "That figures," he says. Finally Ellen comes back. "We're working on it," she says. "How many interviews do we have?" he says. "Two," she says. Now he's exasperated. "This will make a great first chapter for your book. I'd rather get beat than have to go through this--all this expense, ~~con. mt. ant. t. f.~~ and technology that doesn't work. I've been sitting here for 30 minutes. That Albany station only has three viewers! I knew this would happen. It's absurd."
 - I said just think how much better it is than flying to Albany in one of those little planes. He smiled and said, "That's exactly what I have been thinking."
 - We got talking about the campaign headquarters at one point during the morning.
 - "I haven't seen it and I intend to say away from it for as long as I can. I know that when I go there I'll be upset seeing all those people spending all that money doing nothing."
 - "One of the most difficult things for an incumbent is to get his staff

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to go out and meet new people. We have no out-reach. At Epton's party the other night, there were Fran and Harriet drinking with all their old buddies, the same friends they've been going around with for 30 years. CJ, too, he doesn't know anyone outside that neighborhood of a few blocks, where he has lived for so long. I've been beating on them for 15 years, to no avail. I've just about reached the conclusion that it's human nature and the only way to work against that is to hire people who are ambitious and want to ~~fun~~ for office themselves."


- I have the two TV interviews on tape, but not the questions. Anti-incumbency question was asked by both, USA-CNN poll-53% say throw 'em all out. But to the guy who asked about his war vote and whether it would be a problem he said, "No constituent has asked me about that in 15 months." And he repeated that to Nigut.
- Nigut had been looking at Tanksley's commercials--one with picture of Wyche next to a picture of a mule. Under WF's picture, "a liberal," under the mule's picture, "not a liberal." Nigut says he asks Tanksley why he's attacking Fowler instead of his four Republican primary opponents. Tanksley says, "The whole Republican primary is about who can best beat Fowler." Fowler said something like, "I'm delighted that they all think so little of their opponents and so much of me."
- Then he said, "I only hope they'll have a run-off so they will burn their money and cut each other up. But as to who wins, I couldn't care less. That's the absolute truth. But please don't quote me."
- After he paid his \$3,885 to "qualify" he said, "Richard Ray looked calm. I'd hate to be one of those old war horses (like Ray) who has never had competition before. My strength, if I have any, is that I've always had tough races--always in doubt. So I don't get excited...I think I'll call Coverdell and call him a 'Godnostic.' I'll tell him that if I'm like Howard Metzenbaum, then he's a Godnostic." CJ and I laughed!
- The long trip way out to see the Law Corporation president was curious. It took a lot of time; the man treated Wyche like a supplicant; and there was no obvious reason for Wyche to oblige. Except money. The man took Wyche immediately into his office, ordered in lunch, sent CJ and ~~re~~ off with his top staffer (Janice Brown!) for lunch. CJ thought the guy's assistant humiliated Wyche with their arrogance. When Wyche came out, he said "He spoke for 27 minutes before I had a chance to say anything, telling me what a great company it had become since he took over--the 11th largest construction company in the world, doubled their profits since he took over. I guess he just wanted to tell me, again, how sad he was ~~that~~ I didn't come around to see him more often. I told him in no uncertain terms ~~that~~ I wasn't going to do this again, that it took me four hours to come see him and he knew where I was and how to reach me any time he wished." CJ thought it was demeaning for Wyche to go way out there and so did I. Money, I guess.
- Fran asked me later, at the headquarters, what I thought of M^r. Singel. I said, "He's a pain in the ass." She said, "Yes, but he's a rich pain in the ass." I guess that's it. He wasn't the kind of person I liked

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to see jerking Wyche's chain.

- At the headquarters, Fran, Harriet and Dennis talked again about someone entering the Dem. primary vs. Wyche. They had the name of some perennial candidate he met, Boyd. The day before, when I mentioned this concern of his campaign staff, Wyche brushed it off. "It's typical of what people who are unsophisticated about politics think about. It's one of those 10 rumors a day the staff worries about because they don't have anything else to do." And he said that same day that he would be "shocked" if any bonafide Dem candidate filed against him." Today, when he and CJ raised the subject, he treated it more whimsically. "I hope Fran Tarkenton or Vince Dooley aren't out there looking for voters."
- During his greetings at Shiloh Baptist, Wyche's quick wit showed to great effect when the microphone fell over and crashed to the floor echoing throughout the church. "It's the Lord saying Amen," he quipped and everyone roared. (I think I have this on tape.) On the way out, as we laughed about this, he said, "I have hundreds of stories like this from my experiences in the black church. I used to think I was the only southern politician who could talk across the races--just as naturally to blacks as to whites. Now there is another one who is just as much at home as I am with both races, Bill Clinton."
- As we sat in the home of the first preview party, just the staff and WF--the family had all gone to the parade--and we talked about all the hatred that had been coming from those opposed to making WF the Grand Marshall, because of his war vote. Wyche told us the story he would like to tell apropos of the right wing leader leading the charge: "There's this big guy sittin' in front of the TV drinking his beer. His wife comes in, having just come from the doctors. The guy sits there without looking at her, guzzling his beer. 'What did the doctor say?' 'He said I had the most beautiful breasts in the whole country.' The guy takes another sip of his beer. 'Well, what did he say about your big ass?' 'Your name never came up!'"
- The critiques of his commercials at this party were interesting in the sense they reflected the socio-economic status of the viewers. They liked the biography, but there were some criticisms of the ombudsman testimonials ad. (X) A couple of others wanted more emphasis "on the issues" and in people thanking WF for his help on policy matters. A third group (the only one I could sympathize with) thought that some were too short and that each person should tell a story that ended with WF doing something. That is, the guy who came in and said, "He's good for senior citizens" should go on to mention social security. I glanced at the four or five critiques that were filled out and they all wanted more on "the issues." I think, and I told WF afterward, that these people misunderstood that these were only the first two of a long series of ads. I think they thought this was all there was and that Wyche, therefore, would never get around to the issues. I also thought that this well-to-do group in this very well manicured, upscale neighborhood simply did not appreciate the constituency ~~social~~ role of their senator--not the way a less affluent group would. *service*

Example didn't like the people thanking him for medicine and Medicaid because it praised a government "give away."

 ** A larger point here is simply that Georgia is the kind of state where it's not naturally easy for one group to understand why and how their representative has to represent people very different from themselves. I saw the same thing with the Jewish group at the Goldstein dinner. So, explaining the representational activity is an important part of the senator's job.

- I asked him about his \$1.8 billion veterans amendment--which he later mentioned in his Loyalty Day talk. "I talked to Dole. He was in favor of it--he's a veteran. Then I had to convince Domenici. He was in favor of it, but he is afraid that if he accepted it, things would open up and a lot of other amendments would be offered. But he was most afraid of a vote. I convinced him that I didn't care about having a vote. We agreed not to have a vote or a lot of prepared statements either. I had it ready 24 hours in advance, we brought it up and passed it quickly. But there was no slight of hand."
- He talked about a constituent who was always talking Wyche's ear off whenever they met. Wyche tried to stop him with this retort. Says the guy one day, "My wife and I were driving along one day and a deer crashed into the car and landed in my lap." Wyche: "Which dear are you talking about." It didn't work!
- At Mr. C's, I talked (at a preview party) with a young lawyer who saw Wyche's place of residence as a drawback. He lives in Buckhead, which is one of the more affluent neighborhoods--though his family home is very modest. "Not only is he a liberal, but he is a Buckhead liberal. They call him a Buckhead boy--meaning that he thinks he's better than the rest of us!"
- Donna told a story on Sam Nunn, whom they see as a very proper person. She and Wyche were riding in a Peach Day parade in the car in back of Sam Nunn. Sam has a white hat with a peach-colored band on it. Wyche yells ahead to him, "SAM, that's a great hat, but I didn't know it was Gay Pride Day." Sam whips the hat off and it was never seen again!