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Atlanta Trip - October 17-21, 1992

Norm Kurz, Marty Smith, Tricia (Chris' girlfriend), Chris Schepis, Mark Wetherhorn

- I flew to Atlanta, met Donna Fowler and flew to Savannah for Wyche's 5:00 schoolhouse debate with Coverdell. Wyche met us in Savannah. We went back to Atlanta after the debate and Norm and I went to the World's Series (3 rows behind home plate - Braves 3/Toronto 1). I went to Penta Hotel by cab with Norm, who went on to Buckhead. I shifted to Wyndham the next day. Wyche and Coverdell had second debate on Sunday at WSB-TV, Channel 2, Atlanta at 1:30.
- For most of the first day, with his mind on the debate, WF fretted about the media and Mark Sherman, the Atlanta Constitution reporter.
- When I got in car, Wyche talked about how inappropriately Coverdell was dressed for a meeting in the country that AM, mimicked him with his "docksiders and his madras shirt and cotton tie." Then he launched into criticism of the paper.
- "After Coverdell had spent \$500,000 on a two-week barrage of negative ads, the paper blasted me for finally going negative. No more warm and fuzzy Fowler." Our ad quoted from the Inspector General's report on the mismanagement of the Peace Corps, the relatives he put on the payroll at twice their previous salaries--to show that he's not the great manager he claims to be. Sherman called Johnstone and says, "If you're 20 points ahead, how come you are putting on this negative ad?" Johnstone told him that "our 'internals' tell us we're only 10 points ahead. That's pretty close to the truth. We went down eight points last week under that barrage of negative ads."
- Marty said, "I was surprised the Senator went negative. He must think he needs to."
- Later, Norm told me, "There are so many things we can use against Coverdell. The problem is timing. When do you use them. For some of them, the time is not yet. We have ads ready to go that we haven't used --and may not use."
- In the car, WF showed me the morning's endorsement of the Savannah paper. "How's this for timing. It's a right wing newspaper, but its under new ownership and someone there likes me." It was ^{OK} based on constituency service. As Marty said, "There was this feeling that a senator from Atlanta would not pay attention to us down here. But Wyche has done everything a person could do to help us."
- As we rode from the airport, the high and rather majestic-looking Talmadge Bridge connecting Georgia and South Carolina loomed over the horizon and WF said, "I got them the money to build that bridge. They had a Senator from this very area, Mark Mattingly, on the Appropriations Committee and he couldn't get them the money for this bridge. The only promise I made to the people in this area in 1986 was that I would get

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that new bridge built. And I did."

- It was interesting that in the debate, which was heard mostly in Savannah, he did not mention either his constituency service or his endorsement by the paper. Why not? His baseball question to PC was the highlight of the debate. I can describe it later, but Norm said, when we reminisced about it at the ball game that, "WF is a risk-taker." My reflection was that the question showed utter disdain and contempt for his opponent and his ability. You would never ask that of someone you respected for his ability or his human qualities. It was a psychological slam dunk.
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- Norm also stressed that WF is "lucky." He mentioned the passage of the beach replenishment referendum at ~~St. Simons~~ ^{St. Simons} by the environmentalists. ^{They} ~~who~~ would have kept harassing WF if it had been defeated, ^{and the whole thing} would have hung over them as a conflict of interest problem, since Wyche had gotten money for pumping new sand onto the eroded beach--before he bought a condo there. "That issue would have hung over us and the perception of a conflict of interest would have been in the air. Now it's a dead issue. It's gone away. When we awoke and learned the result of the referendum--which was totally unexpected--we couldn't believe our good fortune."
- He also noted that the World's Series was a good break--keeping politics off page one. That assumes, I guess, that WF is ahead. During the second debate, when I noted that the camera angle made it look like Wyche was looking down on PC, and that PC never looked at WF and seemed to shrink into his shirt collar, Norm said, "Wyche didn't know it would look like that when he picked that podium. It's another example of luck." There are other instances, too. But WF makes his luck, too, by seizing opportunities.
- In the parking lot after the second debate, Wyche said in response to my comment that the media seemed to be taking no interest in this debate (no mention of it in morning paper), "As far as the media is concerned, not much is happening. I feel good about it except that our poll numbers are still not as good as they should be. We're having a lot of trouble getting above 50%. His negative ads knocked down five points in one week. I'm going to have to make a decision as to how hard we hit back at him. We'll have new poll results on Tuesday. Bill will tell you about them."
- "I can't for the life of me understand a man who campaigns without any program of any sort, who does absolutely nothing except call his opponent a liar and engage in character assassination. I was saying to Donna last night, I don't understand why he doesn't talk about his record. There is so much he could talk about: 'I was only part-time and I helped put through the best education reform bill, I sponsored the drunk driving bill, I kept spending down, I worked very well across party lines. Just look at all I accomplished for the people of Georgia.' He has a lot to be proud of. But he never mentions his public service. He just attacks me."

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- My view of the two debates is that in the first debate, he killed PC, and in the second debate, he buried him. The first was a debate, but today's second debate was a rout, a blowout. Wyche beat him on every score, I thought--demeanor ("smiling vs. grin") and substance. PC asked some questions today as he asked yesterday--the space station savings figures, the minority farmers registration act and its costs. Chris says Dick Williams has written about this bill in his column. I think the ^{overtones} ~~overtones~~ of this one are strictly anti-black, an effort to inject race into the campaign. Also, the deficit. PC even looked poorly as I mentioned earlier.
- Wyche said yesterday, "They are trying to get me to blow up at these charges." In the Atlanta airport after the flight from Savannah he said, "Sherman will write about my testiness. The Constitution has been on me throughout the campaign for my testiness."
- In the second debate, Wyche was positively benign. When the debate was over, and they shook hands (and after Coverdell had mentioned his phone number several times) Wyche grinned and said, "Paul go home and answer your phone. It's probably ringing." And PC said, "Yes, it's probably ringing." Again, Wyche was making fun of him. PC sped away so that the Augusta reporter had to run after him.
- Wyche lingered to take questions from Sherman and two other reporters. Sherman was in the studio and I sat beside him. Three other reporters were upstairs. Coverdell had five seats allotted to him, but only two were filled. On our side, Donna, Norm, Dennis and I were there.
- It was a little like yesterday in Savannah, very little interest. They had 11 chairs at the press table there and only two reporters showed up. At one point, the ~~WV~~ woman who was the timer turned around and said out loud, "Where are the news people?" So the moderator asked the reporters "out there" to come down and sit at the "front row reserved seats." One guy did, joining Sherman. I asked Sherman at the second debate if it was true that only two reporters came and he said yes. After, at Savannah, one of the organizers told me "We were talking about 200 folks, but it doesn't look like we'll get them." There were 100 at the very most. There were at least as many empty seats as filled ones.
- The Channel 2 debate was not announced anywhere in the Sunday paper. And in the TV week supplement, the regular daily schedule for 1:30 said only "debate"--no indication of who. Judging by the two debates, there is a deafening lack of interest in the race. Chris says there is a lot going on and that everyone thinks Wyche will win. But that's not what Wyche says or what the polls show. Bush is pushing hard in Georgia (we heard a radio ad this morning blasting Clinton, by an independent group) and that may help.
- Before the debate started, Bill Nigut said he was going to interview Bush on Tuesday here in Atlanta. Wyche said, "I hope you'll ask him to attack me again. I went up five points in the polls when he did it before."

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- The Savannah moderator lost control of the debate--a man named Doug Weatherford. "He's for Coverdell," said Wyche. I thought he scolded the two men about evenly for violating the "no rebuttal" rule. But he screwed up royally--after WF had delivered a very strong closing statement--by saying "we've still got three minutes left" and asked them about term limits. Wyche did check on that--by saying he'd abide by whatever Georgians wanted, but he couldn't imagine they'd want to give up Sam Nunn.
- He uses Sam Nunn for cover. It's worth noting that on the war vote and the Thomas vote, he voted with Nunn. His closing statement in both debates speaks of his "partnership" with Sam Nunn in the Senate. And next week, they'll do a fly-around in Georgia.
- Norm said that while Nunn does give WF "cover," he thinks WF has every reason to "resent" Sam a little, since Sam gets away with a lot that Wyche can't get away with and that Wyche will always play second fiddle to Sam and work in his shadow. I said that it was natural given Nunn's huge importance to Georgia because of his position in the Senate, but that WF would, in time, get his own reputation. I said--and Norm agreed--that WF is a partisan and an inside player and will make his mark as a party leader. Norm says he likes the Senate, that he works well across party lines, twisting arms, negotiating, bringing people along, and wonders if Wyche wouldn't like to be campaign committee chairman. But he noted that you don't get mileage back home for inside, institutional work. I said that he'll get some chance sometime if he is close to power and that, in the meantime, he'll be seen coming out of the White House a lot during the Clinton administration.
- When I first met Donna and we were waiting for our bags, she hit on Sherman. "He's going through our tax records. He called me up to ask me what my job was. Then he asked if he could call me back, that he was writing a profile of Wyche. I told him 'yes,' but I don't think I'll consent to an interview." She told Wyche that later.
- She also mentioned the Constitution "sending him down to Houston to look at the hearing records."
- In the second debate, PC did bring up the House bank connection and said Fowler had lied three times in his statements about the bank. Wyche replied that all his records were open and asked PC again, when he was going to open his financial records from his 19 years in the state senate. PC did not answer directly. He said he'd been questioned when he was confirmed as head of the Peace Corps.
- Incidentally, Donna and Wyche both said that the reason he never bragged on his Peace Corps experience was that people in Corps "hated" him for politicizing it.
- Before the Thomasville debate, Donna said she worried about him. "You know that Wyche can sleep anywhere at any time. But the night before the first debate, he tossed all night long. I worried about him."

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- After the Savannah debate, Wyche had another set-to with Sherman. Wyche was shaking hands with supporters when Sherman muscled his way in and insisted on asking a question. Wyche said something to the effect that "you always have to be first, don't you." Sherman asked Wyche if he was accusing PC of using his position as a state senator to help his insurance business and what Wyche knew about it. Wyche kept saying that he had only told Coverdell to open up his tax returns for the time he was in the senate. He told Sherman repeatedly that he was making the accusation, but that he was not going to do Sherman's job for him, that if Sherman wanted to investigate those returns to see what was there, he should go to Coverdell and get him to open them up and then see what they revealed. When the two go head-to-head, there is a lot of tension. Wyche gets riled and Sherman looks grim. Sherman is humorless, which makes it tough on Wyche, who reaches people--all people--with his sense of humor. And it leaves him totally when he confronts Sherman, who is just plain grim and unsmiling. (Donna said, again at some point, "He's writing for his Pulitzer.")
- As we left their set-to and Wyche was explaining to Donna what the "discussion" was all about ("he wants me to do his work for him") Wyche said, "whatever story Sherman writes about the debate, he'll mess it up."
- After we got off the airplane, he said, "I've been telling Donna what Sherman's story will be. First, he'll say that Fowler did not get his figures right on the cost of the space station. Then he'll say that I asked a frivolous question about baseball. Then he'll talk about it. And he'll comment about my testiness." Again, he blasted the article in today's paper "no more warm and fuzzy Fowler."
- When Sherman's article came out on Sunday, the insurance accusation came first, there was mention of baseball, nothing about space station, nothing about testiness. Donna said to me, "That story wasn't too bad." I DK what Wyche thought. The accusation story was that W said "yes" when asked if he was accusing PC of unethical behavior.
- On the space station numbers, after the Savannah debate, WF fretted about it because he had said he saved \$200 billion by opposing the station and Coverfell had far, far smaller numbers. "He had a point. My figure was over five years; I don't think I made that clear." PC came back to it in the second debate and W made it clear then. My thought was that if PC thinks his big issue--on which he spent time the second time around--is space station costs, he has almost no ammunition to shoot."
- On the matter of his relation with staff, Chris says, "No one briefs Wyche on the debates except Bill." And Norm says, "I wouldn't presume to brief him. And he would not want to be briefed. He would go out of his way to make sure it did not appear that anybody briefed him. If you did make a suggestion, you would worry that he would say just the opposite. The only thing I said to him was 'keep your cool.' I wanted to say one other thing, but I did not dare say it: 'Don't be condescending.'"

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- The baseball question was condescending.
- The baseball question came in the middle of the Savannah debate when they had been asking each other questions on "the issues" or on each other's problems when Wyche asked, "If you were manager Billy Cox, what pitching rotation would you use for the World's Series?" PC could only say, "You can't be serious. You may think this is a joke, Senator, but this is about the future of our country." (I have it exactly on tape) Then he asked W, "You aren't serious, are you?" And Wyche said, "I certainly am." He was poker faced. Coverdell sputtered and Wyche asked him to name some pitchers. He couldn't. W said, "See, he can't. I rest my case." I could hardly keep from laughing and every time I think of it now, I laugh. It was the damndest change of pace I ever saw. I kept thinking that after PC recovered his equilibrium with his "You can't be serious" reply, that he would name a couple of pitchers and dig into it. But he didn't. He changed the subject and went off into some other charge.
- In the car afterward, he said "That little son of a bitch is running around pretending he knows something about baseball--like picking the Braves in six in the morning paper. I asked him to name two pitchers, didn't I? (yes) He couldn't name them."
- I said it was the greatest put down I ever saw, though I couldn't say how the voters would react. Wyche turned around in the front seat, laughed and said, "I know how the Braves fans will react!" It was the highlight for me. It was risky, but W knows his man. Of course, all Atlanta is goo-ga over the Braves.
- After Savannah, Wyche asked me if I thought he handled term limits right--emphasizing Nunn, plus his willingness to leave public service.
- I think he is willing to take some risks to stay in public service; but I also think he loves public service and could not be happy--or content--if he was forced to leave via term limits. He says he can find plenty to do after Congress--and he can--but I think he would be very unhappy if that happened. And may be he'd be confused!
- Norm thought that the only surprise question at Savannah was about Iraq. "There's nothing there, but I thought he was surprised by that question."
- Heflin was with him in south Georgia the day before I arrived and the AM I arrived. "He gave three rousing speeches for me. They helped save my voice for the debates." HH talked re WF's importance to peanuts--I recall that in his little talk in November, he spoke of peanuts.
- WF noted that the people pressure had increased recently; they follow me to the bathroom, etc.
- Chris told me something I had never heard before--that if a Senate candidate does not hit 50%, there will be a runoff three weeks later.

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He thinks WF's trip to NY to raise money is partly to make sure he has some if there's a runoff! "We can't talk about this to anyone. We don't think Coverdell knows about it; we don't think Sherman knows about it." This came up because Dennis and I were there when WF worried about getting more than 50%. I thought it was just a poll matter. But it's more serious than that!!!

- Chris also says that the field work is virtually non-existent. "People are calling into headquarters from places like Macon and Columbus asking for a yard sign. There is no organization out in the field. It's nothing like 1986. In that campaign when people were called, they worked; they did anything they were asked. We had a mission. This time, there is no mission. I get around the state, and I see it. Everybody seems to think it's over, I guess." This started when Chris asked me--on the way to the campaign office after breakfast at Wyndham--whether I thought WF was overconfident or not."
- At headquarters, Fran and Harriet said they disagreed with us re the two debates. They thought he looked "stronger" at Savannah. They called the baseball question "weird." They thought Coverdell's answer was on target. "He demeaned the process," said Fran. So I guess it was (as I thought) risky for WF. But showed his willingness to do just that.

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Johns~~on~~ at headquarters

- "We're having a terrible time getting volunteers. When I started, I imagined it would be the easiest thing in the world, but it's been a nightmare. I'll never again take a job having anything to do with volunteers." 500 names in file.
- Dennis says that on evening of Atlanta debate, Sherman calls and wants an interview with WF on subject of his "temperament!"
- After the Savannah debate, Wyche asked me, "Did I control my anger? Did my anger come through?"

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- CJ and Mike were not happy about Wyche's Sunday performance--looked tired, coat bunched up, nothing new, no issues, no vision for the country--and said that only reason it worked is because PC is so weak. "He wasn't strong because he didn't think he had to be strong. The only reason he looked good was that Coverdell is so weak." CJ said some friend of his saw a tape of the Savannah debate and was very critical. Said WF was weak, condescending and that he could not understand the baseball question. So my view of Sunday was at odds with all his aides--CJ, Mike, Fran and Harriet. Mike says that they see him in all his moods and knew when he is at his best and that was not it. I can't quarrel. I agree it was not statesman-like and visionary and striking, and he did not start out attacking PC. In Savannah, he started with education and, in Atlanta, he began with the economy. Maybe these guys have seen him so much that they want to hear some new, invigorating note. But people in Atlanta have not heard any of that. It's all news to them. Mike: "You're in a hot bed of cynicism here."
- At lunch, I asked Norm and Chris for a theme for my study. Norm: "All politics is not local." Chris: "It's being drowned out." Some idea, but the problem is that it takes the attention away from everything I know about WF--his local attachments.
- Chris stressed how much he has done for Georgia "outside the doughnut." And mostly from the App. Committee. (Sanford Bishop wanted Chris for his staff.)
- We talked about timber industry and how 85-90% of it is on privately-owned land. So he can blast Forest Service and not really touch the private timber interests. He can have it both ways. The guys from the western states, however, don't like Wyche because his proposals send the price of western timber up! He gets it both ways--an environmentalist who doesn't hurt 85% of Georgia timber industry and who, by helping to drive up the price of western timber interests--who use public land--actually help the Georgia timber people. (Though, they don't understand that.)
- I asked them what they thought WF was most passionate about. He said foreign relations mostly, "but he's trapped there by Sam Nunn. He can't specialize in it." Next, he said, was environment and third, education. Not health. He concluded that, since WF couldn't do foreign affairs, the environment was probably his biggest interest.
- Re WF's committee assignments.
- WF to Voters Guild in big home in the evening - downstairs: "I have spent my time as a freshman United States Senator keeping promises mainly of accessibility over our state. I've been in all 150 counties holding meetings, where I don't make any prefatory remarks because the only thing I really know you can represent people unless you come home and find out which policies were getting right, and which one we're getting wrong." This favorite formulation admits mistakes in general.

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- Excerpts from WF story of how he got on Ways and Means Committee. "Tip O'Neil was very good to me. He knew me from the time I worked for Weltner. I got into my head that I wanted to be on the Ways and Means Committee. I knew tax law. There were five vacancies on the committee; and that's what got my attention. I went to talk to Danny Rostenkowski first. He told me there was already one Georgian--Ed Jenkins--on the committee and there was no room for another. I told him that there were three Texans on the committee. He said something to the effect that they were a bigger delegation. Furthermore, he told me the slate had already been chosen and that's the way it was going to be. He gave me the back of his hand. Well, that got my nose out of joint. So I read the rules. And the rules said that the Steering Committee proposed a slate to be ratified by the caucus; but the rules also said that any person not on the slate could present himself to the caucus for a vote. So I went to Tip O'Neil and told him that--under the rules, I was going to present myself to the caucus. I told him that if told me not to do it, I wouldn't. He said that I had a right to do it under the rules and he would not stop me. He told me I would make some people mad, and that I would not win. I sat down by the telephone for 15 hours straight and called every Democrat in the House to ask them to vote for me. I tracked them down wherever they were. My argument was that I was trying to beat the system and that the system was too rigid. You know how the House works--people love to buck the system. They also like to be asked. And I was the only one who called to ask them for a vote. What I didn't realize until the day of the vote was that in order for me to be elected, I had to beat the entire slate! I beat the slate by 15 votes--not by much. That gave me quite a cachet, because I got elected without the help of a single lobbyist, a single special interest, or a single campaign contribution. All the others on the slate had been put there to protect some industry or special interest. Tip O'Neil said to me, "Jesus Christ, Fowler, if I had known you were such a racehorse, I'd have put you at the head of the ticket." And he put me on the Steering and Policy Committee--the one that made committee assignments."
- Of course, since Fowler won, one of the slated candidates would lose. It turned out to be Sam Hall of Texas. "When Jim Wright heard what I was going to do, he nosed around and found out that the weakest one of the original five was Sam Hall, his candidate from Texas. He called me and said, "Fowler, what makes you think you are so smart that you can substitute your judgment for the wisdom and the experience of the leadership?" I told him I was simply abiding by the rules. I never got quite right with Jim after that. Of course, his home town paper jumped all over him for his lack of influence. I had to write a letter to his home town paper explaining that it was not a loss of clout. His staff asked me to do that."
- Relations with Danny R. not great either since then.
- I asked Chris how many reporters had travelled with Wyche during the campaign so far. He said one--the guy from the Morris paper. LaMonte--he's Knight-Rider. Dennis says he's the only one beside Sherman to take any interest at all in the campaign. Sherman never rides in the car.

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There is a big adversary relationship between Wyche and Sherman.

- ① - One theme of the campaign--low public interest--in the face of great public interest generally! So maybe the campaign is submerged and swamped by greater interest in other things. Is there any distinction between the "low key" race and the "submerged" race? distinction
- When we got back from the juvenile justice hearing with Sen. Kohl and standing in Wyche's folks' driveway, we had a kind of exit interview. I wished him well and he talked a little.
- ② - "I don't think I've done anything would make them turn me out. The only worry I have is the possibility of a runoff. What would I do if it came to a runoff. Would I nuclear bomb him with everything we've got on him. And we have some awful stuff on him. So far, I won't let it be used. Should I use it now. I think I'm getting some credit for staying positive--at least with the public. Not with the newspapers. They're already playing the election me against myself. If I go negative against him, they'll be all over me. I'm going to wait till the end of the week and get one more fresh poll. If my lead drops from 16 to 14 or 13, then I'm going to have to hit back. I won't want to, but I'll have to. So I postponed making that decision for the time being."
- "I'll predict it for you 16 points. Well, maybe 12 points--53-41-6. In times like these, predictions can be very dangerous. How do I know how many votes Hudson will get--the Perot vote? In 1986, Belsky the crazy Libertarian got 6%, when we had predicted 2%. We were shocked when he got 6%, and I can't get that memory out of my mind. I can't see how Coverdell can get anyless than 40 or 42%--the Republican base. That means if Hudson gets 10%, we'll have a runoff. So I have to concentrate on my 53%. Clinton will help. I don't think there will be many Clinton-Coverdell votes. I have to hope that what Hudson gains will come from Coverdell and not from me--that they will trade votes back and forth and I'll keep my 53-52%. It's impossible to know what my strategy should be for the next two weeks."
- Just before that, I asked him, in the car, if anyone had ever asked him: If you had one vote during the six years that you could take back if you could, which one would you take back? He said: "Nobody ever asked me that." (Well, I am!) "I guess I ought to be ready for that one. I'd have to go back and see. Wouldn't be the war vote, or the Clarence Thomas vote, or the tax vote. It would not be a major, highly publicized vote." I chimed in and said, "and not the congressional pay raise vote?" And he said, "you mean that COLA vote?" And I said, "no," and it all got confused, but he continued anyway.
- ③ - "The votes that worry me the most are when we vote ^{to put} for some big new program in place when we haven't the slightest idea as to how it will turnout. The juvenile justice field we've been talking about could be like that. If we don't do it right we could end up with a huge bureaucracy and no results. My worries are forward-looking, not backward-looking. That makes me a lot more conservative than people think I am. The cable vote? I haven't any idea how that will turn out.

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- "Politically--just politically--I would have been much better off if I had voted for the war and against Clarence Thomas. I pissed off all those supporters of mine."
- He may still have been reacting to the editorial board meeting with the Constitution. His reaction to that was that: "They are upset with me that I'm not as pure a liberal as I used to be--hitting me on gay rights and Clarence Thomas. And they are particularly mad at me because I won't say that I made a mistake on my Thomas vote. I'm not sure what they want on gay rights. So they will give me a very back-handed endorsement--that I've done some good things, but that I've been a disappointment to them."
- "Cynthia Tucker is a TV celebrity now, so she thinks she's an expert on everything--including my character. I don't know how to handle that question, so I just let it go."
- Outside newspaper after editorial board: "We're going to win this thing. The only question is whether I'll get the 50%. We've got a big decision to make: whether to save \$250,000 for the possible runoff or spend it now in the hopes that it will make the difference of 1% or a half percent and pushes us over the 50% mark."
- After the juvenile justice hearing: "At least four people jumped me after the hearing because their group hadn't been invited. That tells you a lot about why things don't get done. There are so many different advocacy groups fighting each other and protecting their turf, that they don't have the time to get together on anything. I'm sure they are right about the current system--that it's just a farm team for the adult system!
- I thought, sitting there, how hard it is to listen to these many community groups--no matter how bright and hard-working and dedicated and knowledgeable they are. People who care about a policy area love to talk and they have things to say. But they are not maximally helpful. They just wear you down. On the other hand, the ability to listen is, or ought to be, a requisite for a legislator. Listening is a major element of representation. We don't always see it because so much is presentation.
- Radio broadcast (WGST): "I'm going to have to be jolly...I used to do this three times a week; but I haven't been over here in five years."
- At end of day, we scrubbed the trip to Macon. He felt lousy all day.
- It seems very hard--not with respect to WF particularly--for someone in public life to say 'I've made a mistake.' You will have it thrown up in your face forever, and most public officials fear it--unless it happened a long time ago. But in most cases, an admission of a mistake is not in a politician's repertoire. Wyche had hard time finding a vote he didn't like. But he admitted he didn't know how to handle character assault.

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- At lunch, as he poured over the schedule asking Mark W. why each one was necessary and who sponsored it also--he said, "If I had it to do over again, I'd change one thing. I know we can't do it now, but I wouldn't have any of these breakfasts. I'd start with the 11:00 radio program each day. Then we wouldn't have to get up so early to get where we're going." Sounded a bit like a relaxing front-runner.
- First question at editorial board meeting was, "How is your campaign going and what are the main issues in the campaign?" WF answered (and this is not on tape), "There are no issues in this campaign." Meaning that PC has no policies or programs, just character attacks.
- He talked about his first campaign for Congress. "You had the candidate of the white establishment, Wade Mitchell, against a well known leader of the black community, Hosea Williams. The business community did not like me. They thought I was too liberal. I opposed most of their zoning deals. They recruited Mitchell, an all-American football player at Georgia Tech, with a 4.0 GPA, but dumb as a post. They called him the 'picture book candidate.' Williams had a following from the Martin Luther King era. While they battled each other, no one paid any attention to me. I was just out there shaking hands and winning votes. I won with 43% of the vote and much to his surprise, Williams came in second."

"In the runoff, we went around together to the various meetings. In fact, I drove him around! That's when I first started driving around with blacks. He didn't have a car, so he asked me if--since we had the same itinerary--I would pick him up and take him with me. Every morning, I picked him up. I knew I was going to win, and I only had to be nice to him. We'd go to the Kiwanis or Rotary Club and he'd have on his business suit and say, 'I am a chemical engineer. I graduated from Savannah State University. I am a small businessman just like you.' Then he'd get back in the car, take off his coat and tie, load up with gold chains around his neck and take out after the white establishment."

- Lots of laughter here and mimicing!
- Talked, too, about Cynthia McKinney's father, who opposed him three times.
- On the matter of WF's instinct: In the 7th inning of the first game, Jeff Blauser hits a foul ball. Gov. Zell Miller, sitting in the front row box with Turner, catches it (or gets it). He holds it up proudly and stands up and shows it to the crowd, waves it around a couple of times and sits down with it. He did not toss it to the crowd. Wyche did, immediately! (Luck says Norm.) Superior instinct, I say. (Plus luck!)

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