

MARY JANE VENO

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I told MJ I'd love to ask Annie how she felt sitting there while her husband was treated like a piece of meat. I said I saw no emotional bond between them and John, no ideological bond, just cold calculations of self interest. "He can't communicate. He doesn't create any emotional bond. In those meetings he went around the room asking people, what's it like in your state, in your state, but never giving them the feeling that eh would dig in to their problems. It was a flat resource^{pmse}. The only time he seemed touched by what he heard was when Jesse Jackson talked about the plight of the Haitian refugees. They really have a problem... When he gives a speech, he never makes eye contact with the audience. He doesn't look up much. When he does he looks to one side or the other side, but not directly at anyone in the audience."

He is not the great communicator. Perhaps, if as we usually do, we want to rebel against the style of the last president in picking the next one, we will want some non-great communicator. Then we'll take John Glenn. He's a very nice man; but the meeting I sat in on had no emotional warmth.

Quite irrelevantly, I was struck in retrospect, how little political-emotional-ideological camaraderie there was among the staff. After the champagne party they told dirty jokes. They did not reminisce about their past common experiences. They had had none. Nor did they tell affectionate stories about "John." They had none of that emotional bond to play off of. Nor were they ideological in conversation.

Mary Jane was not euphoric about Philadelphia. She saw what the staff did as very much a "fun" thing. "There were no delegations to woo, no votes to count, nothing serious to do. People had fun. But it wasn't a campaign."

"I'm convinced we're in a campaign now. And we have almost no professional help. You cannot run a presidential campaign with a senate staff. We are all a bunch of amateurs and we desperately need to hire some real professionals to run the campaign--somebody for the rest of us to lean on. Do you know we don't even have a press secretary! We aren't even interviewing for a press secretary. How can you think about a campaign without a press secretary that knows the national press. They are talking about someone from Ohio. (She wants Marianee Means) ^{Mr. Knicker} John knows he should move, but he hasn't.

Mary Jane has the coolest eye of all. She understands the transition problems better than any of them, I think; or at least she's the only one that will talk about it. "The idea of advising groups is that each one will have about 30 people, and the executive secretary of each advisory group will be a member of the Senate staff. That will be an absolute disaster. Can you imagine Craig Wack dealing with ~~Him~~ Schlesinger on energy? What John needs are some people who will pick up the phone like Schlesinger does and call John and say 'here are some ideas I had for your speech.'

Much of the conversation was to effect that Bill will not let go. He's talented, smart, but, still, an amateur, as she sees it. She's afraid Bill will become the campaign manager, almost willy nilly, because he's closest to John, and that Bill won't be up to it. And John will make tough decisions on personal matters. Partly, it seems, that's because Bill has a certain insecurity about his position and, therefore, keeps himself in control more than he should. "He doesn't ask anyone for input. Several people, close to John, have resigned because they felt they didn't have any influence or input--Steve Avakian, (someone whose name begins with K.)" I think it was here that she said things were tightly held in the executive suite, the inner sanctum."

Another example she cited was Bill Connell. He was their media adviser in 1980. He was invited to come to Philly, but was not consulted or asked to advise. "He was our media adviser, but he was not consulted about Philadelphia. He was just asked to come. I would have refused.

She says Len Weiss is isolated and is regarded as too liberal. He was once asked to travel with John when John was to give a speech in an area Len knew about. But Len hadn't seen the speech.

"In the cold light of dawn Monday morning, I started thinking of all the people who didn't come to our meetings."

"I'm coming to a decision point pretty soon. Bill White wants me to make a decision. And he's right. I can't be on the road with the Glenn's and be the scheduler, too. We can probably limp along as we are till September. But in October, he'll be on the road all the time. Then I'll have to decide." An effect of the campaign on the staff. She thinks that being a scheduler will keep her influential and make her an independent political force. She feels that her career will suffer if she is just the travelling companion. I called her the Mike Deaver of the Glenn campaign and reminded her that he's one of top 3. I think the real problem is that she and Bill clash, that Bill shuts her out and that she feels more powerless than she wants to be. But if Bill wants to shut her out, he will. She will never beat Bill on a one-on-one confrontation. She will lose. She should take what she's given, go where she's needed and appreciated and see what kind of influence she can build off that base instead of knocking heads with Bill all the time. She is probably so bruised by her confrontation and isolation "I shot my mouth off too much last year" that she underestimates herself. She thinks she needs a title and a real job in the flow of things to be influential. She doesn't--not necessarily.

She thought John was overscheduled on the day of the speech. "Friday was to be his speech day. But he was scheduled into five receptions. He spoke

to the DNC Business Council at breakfast. And Bill was determined that he would stop by the Labor Council's breakfast, too, to say hello. He was convinced that was a bad idea, that it would be an insult. But we only had 40 minutes here and twenty minutes there to work on his speech... On the way down in the car, he read his speech and I taped it. When he listened to himself on tape, he realized that he needed to work on it. I'm tired of people beating on him about his speaking. So I thought if I taped it and let him hear himself, that would be the best way to let him see for himself."

She's pleased about Ted Rogers. "We hired Ted Rogers to do some advancing. He worked for Humbert Humphrey. It's been a very good move. Ted sends a signal that we are serious. People come up to me and say "I see you hired Ted Rogers. I guess you're serious about this campaign. "You heard through state chairmen. They won't wait forever. They want to know if we are serious."

She was not happy about his Meet the Press performance. "I did not think we should accept the Meet the Press invitation. It's not as if these chances don't come along all the time. But not the last day of the convention. The only reason we take it--the only reason--was that we had turned down 2 Face the Nations. He got home at 3:30 Sunday morning after advice from Philadelphia, after standing in a receiving line for 5 hours. I didn't think he did very well. When he said, I don't have to campaign, I'm already well known. "I nearly died."

She talked about how John and she talked about fear and nervousness and confidence. She said John never worries for long, is not fearful and has lots of confidence. She says if he finds himself worrying he thinks how much he has been through and how relatively unimportant whatever is worrying him is. "I go to the drawer and look at the shrapnel they took out of my plane."