

BRIAN USHER

July 17, 1984

I had breakfast with Brian and we talked about the Glenn campaign.

He dwelled some on the early decision not to enter straw polls. "Greg Schneiders was playing a game with Germond. What would be the press reaction if we didn't go into the straw polls?" he'd ask Germond. And when Germond said it wouldn't matter, Schneiders would go and advise Glenn not to do it. Then when Glenn decided not to do it, Germond wrote that it didn't matter, and Glenn believed he had the right thing. It was a defensible decision. The problem was that you lost an opportunity to test your organization. You had to find who could deliver and who couldn't and get rid of people who couldn't do the job. Mondale did that and shook up his Iowa organization as a result. He used the straw polls to test his organization. Because he did not contest the straw polls, Glenn never knew what kind of organization he had. When he found out--in the Iowa caucuses--it was too late. So, in retrospect, that early decision not to enter the straw polls was a mistake."

"They adopted the wrong campaign strategy. They ran it like a general election campaign, not a primary. I kept on Schneiders all the time about this. From October 10th in Melbourne till the Iowa primary, the polls showed Glenn racing downhill against Mondale. He was feared by the nuclear freeze people, but against Reagan he continued to do well. He was not running a good primary campaign. On the night of the Iowa primary I said to Schneiders. Now do you believe me? You've been in a downhill race ever since October. Don't you guys understand John Glenn? He's a great general election candidate. His problem is in the primaries. It always has been. They didn't understand their candidate."

"They spent a lot of money, but they wasted much of it--or people stole it. Joe Grandmaison had this idea of having little political capitols all over the country. They opened up 2 west coast offices for god's sake. They had offices in the state of Washington. They should have spent it buying a few votes!"

"John Glenn was gulled by the polls into thinking he was a strong presidential candidate. But it was only name recognition. I think the polls told him what he was powerfully predisposed to hear--that he could do it. Let's not forget, he had heard presidential talk from the beginning of his career in public life.

"In October and November an argument raged within the Glenn camp as to whether they should get out of Iowa. They resolved it by getting half in and half out. They cut back John's schedule then. But they spent the money."

He stressed the role of Kovacik in 1974. "Steve Kovacik was an ethnic who took John into Northeast Ohio, into the ethnic communities there and got him their support in 1974. John never had problems in southern Ohio. His problems were in Northeast Ohio--esp. Cayahoga County. Kovacik was responsible for teaching the Ohio farm boy how to politick in He did very well in the ethnic (west side of Cleveland). Kovacik got John elected in 1974. He had the idea of making John President of the U.S. But he was dumped from the Glenn staff by Bill White."

"The body has fallen into the hands of the family--Bill White, Kathy Belle, Mary Jane and Dale Butland--I'm not sure that's such a good thing."

His view of John's thinking is that "Politics is over here and government is over there." He slices his hand down at different sides of the table..

Mondale and Iowa boy virtually, which made his attacks even more dangerous.

He says Hamilton's media, by emphasizing Glenn on the rocket put too much

*Ed Finkle
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emphasize on the astronaut side. One eve of the right stuff, the media was all about the rocket trip. Raines and Broder picked it up and then everyone did. It reenforced the astronaut image.

"John never figured out how to attack Mondale without sounding like a Republican. When Hart attacked Mondale, he sounded like a Democrat. Glenn sounded like a Republican. Glenn could not reach the Yuppies."

"Schneiders is a coset Republican; maybe Glenn is, too."

"Celeste pushed Glenn in 1976 for V.P. Sometimes White."

I think Celeste knows what's best for Glenn before Glenn does."

"Bill White is in charge of the money. He's spending it faster than he's taking it in."