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Folder Title:
Tip O'Neill Anniversary Video 6/4/91 [OA 8324]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
G	26	21	4	5

*This was answered in
John's I sent you reply on
5/27/91*

Rose
per our conversation

THE PRESIDENT HAS ^{SEEN}

Patty
5/23/91

• 1307 New Hampshire Avenue, NW • Washington, DC 20036-1507 •
(202) 296-4480 • (202) 331-1022-Fax

*RZ
Yes CB*

May 16, 1991

Director of Communications
Cassidy and Associates
700 13th St., N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Shelia:

On June 15th, my parents will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Their children are hosting a party for them and their friends to celebrate this very special occasion. The centerpiece of the party will be a video highlighting their courtship, wedding, family and friendships through the years. Hopefully, it will be a fun and touching way to reminisce. Included in the video will be a rendition of "their" song, Apple Blossom Time performed by a group of Members of Congress. The O'Neill siblings were discussing what a great honor it would be to include the President and Mrs. Bush on the video wishing Millie and Tip "their best" on this occasion.

I am writing to ask you if you thought that this would be possible. If so, would you be willing to help us make the necessary arrangements to add this special cameo appearance. Our parents have enjoyed the friendship and company of the President and Mrs. Bush throughout the years and I believe that they would be very moved by their participation.

Heidi Berenson is producing the video for us. She will be doing the final editing in the first week of June. If you need any additional information from Heidi or me, please call.

Thank you for your help in this request. It is greatly appreciated.

✓ 546-2020

Sincerely,
Susan O'Neill
Susan O'Neill

*the me
a girl*

5/30/91

Phil:

The President is enthusiastic about doing the video taping requested in the attached letter from Susan O'Neill. Will you discuss with Kathy Super to schedule a taping session and then staff out for necessary script. Susan O'Neill has been notified, as has Sheila Tate. Many thanks.

Patty Presock

(The President's secretary)

gress, I sat behind him in the Speaker's chair, just as I had done under Carter.

This time, however, sitting next to me was George Bush, the new vice president. As the president spelled out his new economic program, I couldn't resist the opportunity to tease Bush by whispering in his ear during the interruptions for applause, "Voodoo economics, George. You understand that, don't you?" (Only a year earlier, in the New Hampshire primary, Bush had been using that same taunt to attack Reagan.)

"Quiet, Tip," he kept saying.

"Quiet?" I replied. "You've got to be kidding. You don't actually believe this bullshit, do you?"

During the entire speech, we both kept a smile on our faces. A few days later, George began to get letters: "Why are you so friendly with that nasty-looking son of a bitch?"

In 1981, Ronald Reagan enjoyed a truly remarkable rookie year. He pushed through the greatest increase in defense spending in American history, together with the greatest cutbacks in domestic programs and the largest tax cuts this country had ever seen.

Reagan's success didn't happen by accident. As soon as he came into the White House, his staff imposed strict party discipline in Congress. In the past, there were two or three dozen Republicans, mostly from the Northeast, whom we could always count on. But after 1980 we lost them—along with the southern Democrats. As a result, the huge majority we had enjoyed during the Carter years disappeared, a situation that wasn't helped by the loss of thirty-three seats in the 1980 elections. (We did so badly in that campaign that only three Republican incumbents were defeated in the House.)

The new president jumped in with both feet. Some House members said they saw more of him during his first four months in office than they saw of Jimmy Carter during his entire four years. Despite the attitude he displayed during our first meeting, Reagan took Congress very seriously and was always coming over to the Capitol for meetings. According to what I heard, he instructed his people, "Tell me who you want me to call and I'll take care of it." I would have given my right arm to hear those words from Jimmy Carter.

Reagan had tremendous powers of friendly persuasion. He once

was right: I had received a tremendous vote in the other sections of the city, but I hadn't worked hard enough in my own backyard. "Let me tell you something I learned years ago," he said. "All politics is local."

It was good advice, and I've always adhered to it. My father wasn't referring to Congress, of course, but the lesson applies there, too. You can be the most important congressman in the country, but you had better not forget the people back home. I wish I had a dime for every politician I've known who had to learn that lesson the hard way. I've seen so many good people come to Washington, where they get so worked up over important national issues that they lose the connection to their own constituents. Before they know it, some new guy comes along and sends them packing.

The second political lesson I learned from my first campaign came from Mrs. O'Brien, our elocution-and-drama teacher in high school, who lived across the street. The night before the election, she said to me, "Tom, I'm going to vote for you tomorrow even though you didn't ask me to."

I was shocked. "Why, Mrs. O'Brien," I said, "I've lived across from you for eighteen years. I cut your grass in the summer. I shovel your walk in the winter. I didn't think I had to ask for your vote."

"Tom," she replied, "let me tell you something: people like to be asked."

She gave me the lesson of my life, which is why I've been telling that story for fifty years. But it's true: people *do* like to be asked—and they also like to be thanked.

Poor Millie is sick of hearing me tell that Mrs. O'Brien story, and I can't blame her. But during my long career in Congress, we would always go to the polls together on election day. Before leaving the house, I would say to her, "Honey, I'd like to ask for your vote."

"Tom," she would reply, "I'll give you every consideration."

Tip's
favorite
story
Everyone's
heard it
1000+ times

Tip's
wife

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

*one or 2
tiny change*

Great

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1991
M.
TWO
TIP.TS

PRESIDENTIAL VIDEO: TIP O'NEILL 50TH ANNIVERSARY
ROOM 459
TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1991

Millie, Tip: When I found out from your children that you'd be celebrating your 50th anniversary with all your family and friends, I just had to be a part of it. After all, it's still hard to say "no" to an O'Neill.

A lot of people don't realize how much Tip and I have in common, even though we served on opposite sides of the aisle. We're both from Massachusetts. \\ We both love to fish and golf. (Tip, I'm still waiting for you to join me in a round of speed golf.) And, of course, we both married women who are much too good for us. It's an understatement to say that Barbara and I have great respect for Tip and that we love Millie. We even named our dog after her. \\

You know, early in life, the Speaker made a tragic mistake. If he had become a Republican early on, he really could have amounted to a lot. His innate compassion could have shown up more. His kind and gentle nature would have been received much more warmly in the board rooms of the Fortune 500 and around the ~~Newport~~ *Manchester* or Back Bay cocktail circuit.

As you know, he didn't do that. He went on to rally the Democratic Party. And look at the guy: He only became one of the greatest Speakers in the history of our country.

Most people still associate Tip and ~~me~~ *me* with the times we sat

behind President Reagan during the State of the Union Address. What most people don't realize is how much grief those appearances caused me. Every time, Tip would crack jokes or try to start a conversation, ~~and I'd try to cut him off.~~ Yet after every speech, ~~I'd get bawled out~~ *I'm the one who'd get bawled out.* I'd get a call from my mother, saying, "Stop talking to Tip and listen to the President." \ Thanks a lot, Tip. \

I'd like to close with Tip's favorite story: the one about Mrs. O'Brien -- the high school teacher who taught him the most important political lesson of his life. The night before his first election to Congress, Mrs. O'Brien told Tip, "I'm going to vote for you, even though you didn't ask." Tip was shocked. "I've lived across the street from you for 18 years. I didn't think I had to." \ "Tom," she said, "Let me tell you something about politics. People like to be asked."

I'm sure everyone's heard that story before. But maybe you didn't know that just before going to the polls together, Tip would always ask Millie for her vote. And Millie always gave him the same answer: "Tom, I'll give you every consideration." \ \

Tip may have been the guy in Congress, but Millie is the real speaker of the house. \

To you, Tip and to Millie, we Bushes send our respects, our warmest best wishes, and our love. Congratulations on this very special day. May God bless you both.

#

I pointed out that as a candidate, I was expected to tell voters something about my qualifications. She thought about that a moment, then reluctantly conceded. "Well, I understand that," she said, "but try to restrain yourself."

Even after I became Vice President, Mother called to set me straight on my appearance during one of the President's televised State of the Union messages. She said it didn't look right for me to be reading something while President Reagan was speaking. When I explained that House Speaker "Tip" O'Neill and I were given advance copies of the speech in order to follow the President's remarks, she was less than persuaded. "I really can't see why that's necessary," she said. "Just listen and you'll find out what he has to say."

Sometimes Mother is more subtle in her suggestions about my deportment as Vice President. "George, I've noticed how thoughtful President Reagan is to Nancy," she once called to say. "I've never seen him climb off a plane ahead of her or walk ahead of her. He's so thoughtful!" I got the message.

But Mother's criticism of her children, like Dad's, was always constructive, not negative. They were our biggest boosters, always there when we needed them. They believed in an old-fashioned way of bringing up a family—generous measures of both love and discipline. Religious teaching was also part of our home life. Each morning, as we gathered at the breakfast table, Mother or Dad read a Bible lesson to us. Our family is Episcopalian, and we regularly attended Sunday services at Christ Church in Greenwich.

We were a close, happy family, and never closer or happier than when we crammed into the station wagon each summer—five kids, two dogs, with Mother driving—to visit Walker's Point in Kennebunkport, Maine. It was named after my grandfather, George Herbert Walker, and his father, David, who had bought it

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LOOKING FORWARD

George Bush
with Victor Gold



Doubleday

NEW YORK

1987