

FOIA MARKER

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Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Communications

Series/Staff Member: Mark Gearan

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 7548

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Durenberger

Stack:

S

Row:

90

Section:

4

Shelf:

10

Position:

3

cc: Eller } done.
: Paster }

note to Jeff -

Let's discuss.

OK

Eller

MSG -
back to you
for your
discussions.

file ?

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark

FROM: Scoop

RE:

DATE:

Ellen

Tim Keating (2230) stopped by to find out who called the radio station regarding Durenberger. He said you would understand.

OS

United States Senate

DAVE DURENBERGER

June 16, 1993

Mr. David Gergen
The White House
Washington, D.C.

BY TELEFAX

Dear Mr. Gergen:

I would like to call your attention to a situation that arose this week that has some consequences for the success of President Clinton in the coming years.

As you may know, Senator Durenberger has tried to be supportive of the President. Since January Senator Durenberger has supported the President on Family Medical Leave and Motor Voter. He is the lead, and maybe only, Republican author of the direct student loan initiative and the national service initiative. He has met several times with the First Lady to discuss health care reform (his area of greatest expertise) and has always gone out of his way to publicly compliment her efforts. I think those meetings have been constructive. Just this week he issued a statement concerning Judge Ginsburg which went out of its way to compliment not only the nominee, but the President too.

When he has to be a critic, he has tried to be constructive. He has not taken public cheap shots at the President's mistakes or tried to take advantage of the President's perceived weakness with the public or in Congress.

In my opinion, Senator Durenberger has a good excuse for being less supportive of the White House than he has been. He was indicted by the Clinton Justice Department after both Janet Reno and Web Hubbell refused to review the case. In fact, while Mr. Hubbell was defending his decision to meet with Congressman Ford's allies in Congress, Ms. Reno was telling Senator Durenberger's allies that it would be inappropriate to meet with them. Senator Durenberger not only did not make an issue of this partisan double standard, but has gone out of his way to downplay the partisan implications of his case.

In light of this record, imagine my surprise yesterday to learn that the White House media office had made an unsolicited telephone call to the radio station in Senator Durenberger's home

David Gergen
June 16, 1993
Page Two

town in Minnesota to castigate him for his vote against cloture on the Campaign Finance Reform bill. At first I told the radio station that they were the victim of a hoax, since I could not imagine the White House doing such a thing. A follow-up telephone call to the White House confirmed that the call had indeed been made.

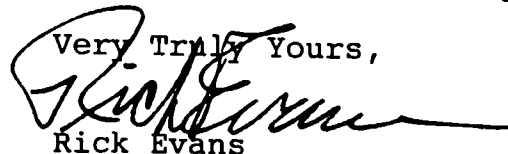
It is ironic that at the same time the White House was making the radio call, Senator Boren and Senator Mitchell were going out of their way on the Senate floor to point out that Senator Durenberger was engaging in constructive and helpful legislating, and not obstructionism. Apparently the strategists in the White House media office were completely unaware of the status of the debate on the floor or the position of their own floor leader.

Your media office told us that they arrived at the decision to call into Minnesota based on a comparison of Senator Durenberger's vote on this bill last year (regarded as a meaningless vote by Republicans and Democrats in light of President Bush's promised veto) and his vote this year (a vote that meant something given the voting strength in the Senate). This betrays less than even superficial understanding of the workings of the Senate. The White House criticism of Durenberger makes a good cheap shot, but it is unfair and misleading all the same.

The result of the telephone call to the radio station is that the station manager feels used, the news personnel believe the White House to be in the hands of idiots, our staff feels that we are nice and bipartisan for nothing, my time was taken calling the radio station and defending a vote that should not have needed defending, the listeners of the radio station got a good five minutes of me ruminating on the fact that some aides in the White House have too much time on their hands and Senator Durenberger's position on the bill was not affected one iota. Not a good day's work for the media office, if I am any judge.

This unfortunate glitch in your media office will not change anything about Senator Durenberger's relationship to the White House, I can assure you. But if it is representative of the White House legislative strategy or communication strategy, I would strongly suggest that you prepare to accomplish everything you can for the next three and a half years with the help of Democrats only.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Evans", written over the typed name.

Rick Evans
Administrative Assistant to
Senator Durenberger

MEMORANDUM FOR HOWARD PASTER

FROM: TIM

DATE: JUNE 29TH

SUBJECT: MEDIA AFFAIRS

Lisa Mortman X-7150 contacted Nestor today to ask for a list of Senator's that can be target on Reconciliation. They asked for a good list and a bad list. Lisa was doing this at the request of Jeff Eller.

United States Senate

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David Gergen
June 16, 1993
Page Two

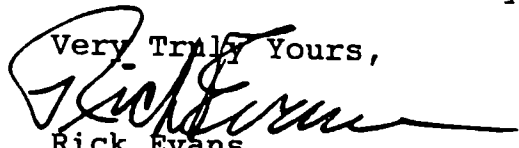
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