Specter-Quayle Talk

For the past few years, I have been studying the activities of some United States Senators—mostly by watching them and talking with them as they have gone about their business. I have followed them around in their home states and in Washington. And I have kept an eye on each one throughout a complete electoral cycle—that is, for six years from one election to the next. Let me begin with a brief comment on the way this adventure came about. I began the research with an interest only in what Senators did when they were back home. I had hoped to make a tidy, one-shot comparison between their home activity and the home activity of another group of legislators I had previously studied—members of the U.S. House of Representatives. In the course of my early travels with Senators, however, two changes occurred to lengthen and broaden the research focus.

First, I discovered that while the home styles of Senators did differ somewhat from those of Representatives, the difference was not large enough to sustain my interest. But, second, I found that the Senators as a species were of interest; and so I expanded the research focus to include their behavior in Washington as well as at home. Thus, the whole Senator, so to speak, became...
the object of study. I am still exploring the implication of this change in focus; and I have not yet found my bearings. But I welcome this opportunity to discuss some aspects of these continuing and not-so-tidy explorations with you.

The enlargement of the research focus brought with it the need to examine two very different contexts—home and Washington—and, therefore, two very different kinds of political activity. In the home state context, the distinctive activity is campaigning. In the Washington context, the distinctive activity is governing. These two activities—campaigning and governing, running for office and running the country—are the basic processes of legislative politics. Each engages a goal common to all legislative politicians. In campaigning, their goal is to get elected and reelected. In governing, their goal is to get something done of a substantive, policy nature.

Taken together the two activities and the pursuit of the two goals consume most of their time for most politicians.

In practice, the two activities intertwine. But, because they engage different goals and because they are indigenous to different contexts, they are analytically and observationally separable. In addition, they occur at different points in time. Campaigning dominates at the beginning and the end...
of the electoral cycle. Governing dominates during the period in between. This temporal separation is easier to observe in the case of Senators, whose six year term allows sufficient time for concentration on governing activity, than in the case of Representatives, whose two year term keeps them campaigning almost constantly.

Since campaigning activities and governing activities are distributed unequally across contexts and across time, we would expect research into those activities to be especially sensitive to both context and time. And I have tried to retain a special sensitivity to each. But as the research proceeded, time emerged as the more dominant idea. And that happened because of my decision, early on, to follow, as best I could, each Senator as he (and they were all "he") moved through one complete six year cycle. This decision steered the research emphasis away from the cross sectional comparison of senatorial behavior in the home context with senatorial behavior in the Washington context. And it steered the emphasis, instead, toward a longitudinal tracing of senatorial behavior as it appeared first in one context and then in another context over time. The guiding assumption here is that campaigning at home and governing in Washington occur sequentially and can be
studied that way. For each senator, that is, the six year cycle begins with a campaign at home, after which comes a period of legislative activity in Washington, followed in turn by another campaign at home. Again, these activities surely intertwine. But the assumption is that they are sufficiently separable in time to be studied sequentially. This rhythmic relationship—from campaigning to governing to campaigning—is the core sequence, the master sequence of every Senator's life.

The relationship is not only sequential; it is also developmental. Activity at one point in the sequence affects activity at later points in the sequence. As senators pursue their goals from context to context and from one kind of activity to the next, they win, they lose, they learn, they grow, they adjust. They interpret changing situations and act on their fresh interpretation. They accumulate experiences; and those experiences reenforce old patterns of behavior or stimulate new ones. To observe behavior over time is to observe changes, to observe developments in the lives of the legislators being studied.

I need to stress, at the outset, however, that this observational approach
has given me a very partial, very episodic and perhaps a very astigmatic
glimpse of changes in the lives of senators. For I did not watch them
continuously—only off and on, now and then, as circumstances permitted—
sometimes with years between visits. But my hope is that I have watched long
enough and carefully enough to provide some idea of the usefulness of observing
politicians over time.

At the least, such observation may produce helpful descriptions of campaign
activity and governing activity within the scope of a single study. Beyond
that, it may produce ideas about the relationship of campaigning to governing
at one point in the sequence and governing to campaigning at another point in
the sequence. And for the senators who are the subjects of the study,
observations over time may yield ideas about the development of their careers.
That, in the final analysis, is what I think the study has come to be—a study
of the accumulated experiences that we label a career. Or better, perhaps, a
study of one time slice in the development of a senatorial career. The
unanswered question I suppose, is this: can a small, six year slice of some
senatorial activity, when placed under a low powered microscope, add to our
understanding of legislative life, in general and senatorial careers in
particular?

At this point, answers lie only in some exploratory stories. And I should like to tell a couple here today—one about Senator Arlen Specter Republican of Pennsylvania and one about Senator Dan Quayle Republican of Indiana. I travelled with both for the first time in September of 1980 when they were campaigning for the Senate. Both of them won; and a year later I went to Washington to watch each of them pass his first priority piece of legislation—Arlen Specter's career criminal bill and Dan Quayle's job training bill. Twice during their first term, I went back to their home states with them. And I travelled with them again, in their successful reelection campaigns in the fall of 1986.

At the end of 1982, shortly after Dan Quayle's job training legislation had been signed into law, and shortly before Arlen Specter's career criminal bill was passed out of a House-Senate conference committee, I went to talk with one of the top staff aides to Republican majority leader Howard Baker. I asked him to tell me about the adjustment problems of the 16 freshman Republican Senators. His answer, in part, went like this.

First, you have to divide the new Senators up into two groups.
The first group are those who will let the process run them. They will go along with whatever happens, do what the process asks them to do, take whatever comes along. They let the system take them and run their lives for them. The second group are those who come here and want to do something. They want to make the process work for them. No matter what it is, they want to accomplish something. There are three or four real good ones in the second group—Rudman, Specter, Quayle and, some say, Gorton. They are going to be good senators.

It was flattering judgment on the governing activity of two Senators I had chanced to observe—two Senators I had found to have very different governing styles. My observational stance, I believed, had given me some ability to explain their successful governing activity and their differing governing styles. For I was in a position to think of their governing performances in terms of the career sequence that interested me. And that is what I should like to try here.

I began my observation of the two men in Philadelphia and its environs with Arlen Specter. There I got the strong sense that I was observing one segment...
of a political career—a segment which was embedded in a much longer career.

If I had not known it before, it became quickly obvious that I could not make sense out of the campaigning activity I was watching unless I knew something about the lengthy career that preceded it. That is, before I even got into the 6 year electoral cycle I had come to study, there was much preliminary material to digest—however little of it might be available to me. This became obvious because Arlen Specter talked constantly and selectively about his past experience and related it to what he was going through in the campaign.

He was, at the time, 50 years old, a Philadelphia lawyer, Jewish, and running for election for the seventh time—with a prior record of two wins and four losses. His two wins were a pair of four-year terms as the District Attorney of Philadelphia in the 1960's. These startling victories—for a Republican in a Democratic city—had come first in his political career. And they had clearly left an indelible imprint. From his conversation, as we rode around eastern Pennsylvania, there emerged a self-portrait of an energetic, independent, media-oriented District Attorney. And there emerged, too, the sense that his experience as DA had become, for him, the measure of all things.
Of his independence, for example. "The Philadelphia Inquirer has been opposed to me," he said, "ever since I put one of their reporters in jail when I was DA." Or, of his accomplishments, the proudest of which was his successful effort as DA to reform the city's criminal justice system. "When I was DA," he said, "I created the record I'm running on now—tougher sentencing, longer court hours, open house." He framed his most difficult campaign issue—abortion—by comparing it with his toughest issue as DA, the Miranda case. "I was in violent opposition to that Supreme Court decision," he said, "but I would not support a constitutional amendment to overturn it."

He was, he recalled, a media-oriented DA. "I held press conferences almost every day, in the morning for the Bulletin and in the afternoon for the Inquirer...I was always generating news." "My experience as DA," he went on, "convinced me of the tremendous power of the media in communicating directly with people." Media advertising, he said, was now the essence of his Senatorial campaign. "The story of this campaign," he said, "is the media. The battle is being fought in the media...What other way is there?" When I asked him where his very strongest campaign support was coming from, he answered in terms of the media. "From people across the board, black and
white, rich and poor," he said, "who are within the reach of the television stations in the area where I was DA and who know the job I did there."

Continuities with his DA experience seemed to be everywhere.

His presentation of self, to the electorate, emphasized the prosecutorial qualities of hard work, aggressiveness, intelligence, independence. He pressed for a maximum number of debates--televised of course--confident that his prosecutorial talents would show to good advantage. He was running--in the political center--against a man, Pete Flaherty, with whom he had few differences on policy issues. So he tried to make the issue one of style. To the editorial board of the Harrisburg newspaper he said

Before I get to the issue differences, let me tell you what I think the most important difference is. It's the intensity of my campaign and the evidence it gives of my willingness to work hard. I've campaigned in all 67 counties. Flaherty has not. I've produced a sheaf of position papers three inches think and Flaherty hasn't. I've put together an organization. Flaherty has not.

His TV ads, he said, were designed to show that "I'm a serious, substantive
candidate, that I know my material; that Flaherty is more flighty and does not work as hard." In short, he campaigned for the Senate very much in terms of his pre-campaign, DA experience, and his pre-campaign prosecutor's style.

Arlen Specter's pre-campaign experience as DA had been a positive one, and it was providing positive guidance substantively and stylistically. But what about the effect of his four electoral losses? In his second term as DA, he had lost a campaign for mayor; then he lost his bid for a third term as DA; in 1976 he lost a primary election for the Republican nomination for the Senate; in 1978, he lost a primary election for the Republican nomination for governor. Not surprisingly, he did not talk much about those experiences. But the media scorekeepers would not let him forget. As the Philadelphia Inquirer chronicled at the beginning of the campaign:

Yes, Arlen Specter is on the campaign trail...again. He's been there before: The boy wonder of the Republican party in the '60s--flashy district attorney, politician of the future--then the stumbles and the falls of the 1970's--the bitter campaigns, the narrow defeats--from "can't miss" to "sure loser."

He began the Senate campaign 10-15 points behind in the polls. And he
campaigned with a loser's image, with a once-promising career that seemed broken by failure and without a great deal of encouragement from the sidelines.

That this man should be campaigning at all in the 1980 general election, in the face of such a string of rejections and disappointments, is testimony to the one personal characteristic that had superintended his entire career to that point—his persistence, his tenacity, his absolute refusal to quit. "I've had a lifelong ambition to be in the U.S. Senate," he would say. And, as he told a group of black ministers, "I'm not easily discouraged; in fact, I don't discourage at all."

The story of his two most recent statewide defeats was the story of his long running difficulty with Pennsylvania's Republican leaders. In each case, Specter had run in the primary against the anointed candidate of his party's establishment. Early in life he had been a Democrat. That fact, plus his personal base of support in the city—among Democrats, Jews, blacks, liberals—had bred suspicion statewide. He was a Philadelphian in a party whose electoral base lay elsewhere; he was an aggressive and independent outsider in a party that valued team play.

Once again in 1980, the party establishment had anointed its preferred
candidate and once again—for the third time in 6 years—Specter had entered the primary to do battle against his party leadership's choice. And finally, he had prevailed. As he put it,

I felt I had been given short shrift by the Republican party...They were willing to let me run for mayor, to pull all the (urban) groups in. But when it came to the choice plums, the governorship and the Senate seat, they reserved them for (others). In every respect...I was as good as the others, but I didn't get the nod. Every year I campaigned my heart out for the ticket...Dick Schweiker said it best in 1978. He said I ought to be promoted...to the governorship. But the party put up Broderick. Then this year, they put up Haberstad. I'm not one to shrink from a battle or a fight. I thought I could beat Haberstad. So I entered the primary and I beat him.

The lesson that persistence would pay off in the face of obstacles was doubtless one that continued to motivate his Senate campaign. But there was a corollary to this lesson, too—the feeling that his political success thus far had depended very heavily on his own independent, "long shot" efforts, far more
than on the efforts of his party's leaders. He had become the nominee in spite of them, not because of them. Both aspects of his pre-campaign experience—his electoral victories and his electoral defeats, therefore, had contributed a strong sense of personal independence to his Senate campaign—and, we might guess, beyond.

When I travelled from Philadelphia to Indianapolis in mid-September 1980 for my first meeting with Dan Quayle, the importance of the pre-campaign career for understanding the campaign was confirmed. Not because Quayle, like Specter, talked a great deal about it but because he almost never did. The silence was deafening—and diagnostic. The reason, I soon concluded, was that Arlen Specter had had a great deal of experience and it had been difficult whereas Dan Quayle had had very little experience and it had been easy.

When I met him, Dan Quayle was 33 years old, and a second term member of the House of Representatives—nearly a generation younger than Specter and light years removed from him in terms of accumulated experience. Quayle had a law degree, but had not practiced law. His one and only brief fulltime job had been inherited from his well known Indiana family—a managerial job on a newspaper run by his father and owned, as part of a chain, by his grandfather.
He was a handsome young man, whose looks reminded observers of Robert Redford. He had been victorious in his only tries at public office. He had never known a political or any other setback. A campaign staffer described him as "a spoiled kid...born with a silver spoon in his mouth." And the overwhelming first impression was that he was, indeed, a kid. The governor joked that "Most voters didn't know whether they were sending him to congress or to camp." Yet there he was running for the Senate in 1980. Like Specter, he was obviously ambitious. But the campaign I joined was not testimony to any long term persistence but rather it was testimony to a different personal characteristic—one which had evidently superintended Dan Quayle's short political life—a buoyant self-confidence, an optimistic, "whatever the task let's go" enthusiasm.

In 1976, Quayle had taken on a congressional race no one thought he could win—against an entrenched nine-term incumbent. He was recruited by the party establishment as a last-ditch choice, just before filing time, after every prominent Republican had declined to run. He was a total unknown and totally inexperienced. A political reporter recalled, "He came out of nowhere to run against Ed Roush...I had been around politicians in Fort Wayne for years, and I
had never heard of him." He was, however, no maverick. Unlike Specter, he ran with the party's blessing, and only after they guaranteed him an unopposed primary and money. He won what the papers called "a stunning upset;" but as he put it later, "I surprised everyone but myself."

Encouraged by his record-breaking reelection victory two years later in 1978, and filled with his "anything-is-possible", "can do" spirit, he decided that if Governor Otis Bowen did not run for the Senate in 1980, he would. And he immediately started campaigning as if the Governor would not run. He didn't. So here was this kid—bright-eyed and bushytailed—once again taking on an entrenched incumbent—three term Senator Democratic Birch Bayh—in a race few, besides himself, believed he could win. Once again, he was running with the full support of his party's establishment. But once again, he was an unknown in the constituency he sought to represent. And once again he had begun the race far behind in the polls—this time by 20 points. The continuities here, in terms of his unbroken self-confidence in the face of long odds were evident.

But on the substance of Quayle's previous experience there was no continuity. In his four years in Congress, he had left no public mark. And I
never heard him refer to his work in the House while I was with him during the campaign. He was, on his voting record, a staunch Republican and a staunch conservative. But, as a junior member of the minority party, he stood out more for his athletic pursuits than for his public policy prowess. He earned the nickname "wet head", because he was so frequently called out of the gym to vote on the House floor. But he had earned no legislative accomplishments.

In his 1980 campaign, he did not present himself as a person of accomplishment, but as an agent of the conservative philosophy, as an agent of what he called "a new generation of leadership," and, hence, most generally as an agent of change. The very first thing he said when we met was: "You've come to an interesting race, between a liberal and a conservative, between the old and the new... It's a classic confrontation. I disagree with Birch Bayh on almost everything. We'll have a campaign and then we'll see what the people want." So Dan Quayle campaigned as a conservative—as an upbeat, but unformed conservative. Unlike Arlen Specter, who was somewhere in the middle of a deeply textured, lifelong political career, Dan Quayle was barely at the beginning of one. If, as I have assumed, activity at one point in time affects activity at another point in time, we would expect that Specter's pre-campaign
experience would have a more recognizable, and altogether, more measurable, more constraining impact on his subsequent political activity than we would expect to find in the case of Dan Quayle. And I will argue that such is the case.

Both men won their races and went to the Senate to begin the governing phase of the electoral cycle. But newly elected legislators do not move from one activity to another abruptly. There are linkages and transition-periods that intervene. One crucial linkage between campaigning and governing is the interpretation that a winning candidate places on his or her electoral victory. Research tells us that campaign victories serve as powerful reinforcements for established ways of doing things. And thinking about things. Electoral winners construct explanations for their victories and those explanations become part of their operating capital once they are in office. So before we move to examine governing activity we need to take a look at the interpretations that link campaigning to governing.

Arlen Specter interpreted his victory as reenforcing the relevance of his DA experiences, the importance of his prosecutorial style and the payoff for persistence in the pursuit of one's ambition. On the matter of style, his
post-campaign comments were reminiscent of his campaign comment to the Scranton newspaper editors. Said Specter,

"He cares, he's energetic, he works hard", that's the issue I beat Flaherty with. It was the only issue between us. I went to all 67 counties. He didn't. There was not any difference between us on the issues. I had a beautiful wife; he had a beautiful wife. I drove a foreign car, he drove a foreign car. I hadn't won anything in 1000 years; he hadn't won anything in 1000 years. We were twins. No one cared how we sliced up the issues—except for abortion, but it never became consequential.

The winning issue, he believed had been his style—DA style. Further echoing his DA experience and his campaign strategy, he credited the media with selling his style to the voters.

Beyond that, he interpreted his victory as reenforcing his long-standing political independence. With respect to the new President—who had led the ticket in Pennsylvania and outpolled him slightly—he took the view that:

I feel a lot more freedom than a lot of the guys do. I didn't come in on Ronald Reagan's coattails. Our election patterns
were completely different. I carried Philadelphia; he lost Philadelphia. He carried Pittsburgh; I lost Pittsburgh. In the strong southeastern counties, I ran ahead of Reagan. In Lancaster County, the most conservative county in the United States in 1972, I ran ahead of Reagan. I was proud of that. Those people knew me from my time as District Attorney. It's interesting how that affects your idea of the team. I don't feel I owe Reagan anything.

His comments here about his DA experience as the basis of some special support is in Lancaster County another echo of his remarks during the campaign.

Given, then, the continuities and reenforcements displayed in Arlen Specter's pre-campaign experience, his campaign commentary and his post-campaign interpretations, we should not be surprised to find that they exerted a strong influence on his governing activity in Washington. We should not be surprised to find his governing behavior reflecting his crime fighting interests, his prosecutorial style, his media orientation and his independence and his persistence in the pursuit of his goals. That is what happened. His first choice for committees was the Judiciary Committee. The highest priority
legislative goal of his first years was to pass a tough anti-crime bill dealing
with the sentencing of career criminals. And he pursued that goal in the style
to which he had become accustomed—aggressively and independently. More about
that in a moment.

Dan Quayle's interpretation of his electoral victory was also reenforcing of
his earlier experiences. But, as befit the paucity of those experiences, it
was far less complex or diagnostic than the electoral interpretation of Arlen
Specter. First, Quayle's victory added strong reenforcement to the immense
self-confidence that had undergirded his political career from the beginning.
And we should not be surprised a carryover of this attitude to his governing
activity in the Senate. Beyond that, he interpreted the election results in the
same terms as he had campaigned—as a victory for his conservative beliefs.
When we talked afterward, he explained simply "You had a classic contest
between philosophies, and people want the conservative philosophy." One could
infer that, unlike Specter, he felt perfectly comfortable with the conservative
new President and thought of himself as a member of the Republican team.

That was about the extent of the interpretive linkage between campaigning
and governing. Unlike the case of the Pennsylvania Senator, neither Quayle's
past experience nor his interpretations contained many clues to his governing activity—not to his committee choice, not to his substantive policy goals, not to his governing style. He was greeted by an early Washington Post profile entitled "The Charmed Life of Indiana's Golden Boy", which said among other things that while "as a candidate he was a dream", he had been "a lazy and ineffectual congressman." Almost anything he did of a substantive nature would be a surprise.

When we next talked in March of 1981, he explained how he had obtained his committee assignments. "You literally sit around in a room with a sheet of paper in front of you and pick committees in order of seniority," he recalled, Foreign Relations had no vacancies. It would have been my first choice. My next choice was Finance. Three others took it before me so I missed it. I said 'Armed Services'... On the second round, I wanted Governmental Affairs. But I sat there watching; and I saw I could be third ranking on Labor and Human Resources. Nobody wanted it. I noticed everybody was shying away from it. I didn't have any interest in it, to tell
you the truth. I hadn't even thought of it. But if I were third ranking, and Bob Stafford retired next year I could be second—assuming Orrin Hatch is reelected. So I said to myself right there, 'Why not take it?' There are a lot of important policies there—education, unemployment, labor. So I took it on the spot.

That is how Dan Quayle literally fell into a policy agenda—without interest, without background, without forethought. Arlen Specter's top priority legislation had been twenty years in the making; Quayle's came about in twenty minutes.

The way he chose the Labor Committee, however, showed a desire to gain power and make policy. In an instant, he had overcome long-standing Republican fears—evident among his colleagues—that the Labor committee is the single most disadvantageous committee for Republicans electorally. Shortly thereafter, he chose to become chairman of the Subcommittee on Employment. And within the jurisdiction of that subcommittee lay the pending expiration of the CETA public jobs-job training legislation.

Toward the end of our March 1981 interview I asked him what subjects he
expected to be working on. "The problems I talked about in the campaign are the problems I'm still interested in—the auto industry," he said, "but on a larger scale than before. Now I'm worried about the auto industry statewide...

And the scale of problems in Gary is so much greater than it is in my district in Fort Wayne...I get more people coming in here from the northwest part of the state than from any other part. They want to tell me their problems. And boy, do they have problems." His statewide campaign followed by his assumptions of statewide responsibilities had widened his horizons, and the transition from House member to Senator was underway. "The administration is going to cut the youth employment program," Quayle continued, "OK. I agree. We've got to cut these programs. But what are they going to put in its place? That's what they've got to decide. But they are so preoccupied with the budget that they aren't thinking about it. I hope this doesn't put me at odds with the administration. But there's an unemployment problem and the question is: what are they going to do about it?"

His short term answer to that question of March 1981 was to reauthorize the youth training program for one year. His long term answer turned out to be the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) signed by the President in November of
1982. The saga of that legislation—which replaced the CETA program—is another story, to be told in another place. But the story I wish to tell is that the unformed kid, unencumbered by any established governing patterns and brimming with self confidence became the key player in its passage, and developed a distinctive governing style in the process.

At the end of his first year, a couple of months before he introduced JTPA, he said "I want to be known as an effective Senator. It's hard to tell whether I'll be known as someone who initiates legislation or as someone who takes issues and moves them through the Senate...My advisers back home ask me 'When people hear the name Dan Quayle, what will they immediately think of?' It's a good question. But it's too early to tell. I haven't developed any themes yet. If they are still asking that question four years from now, then I'm in big trouble." As it turned out, JTPA gave him his theme; and he never did get into trouble.

The first thing he did, in recognition of his lack of experience or knowledge in the field, was to hire a specialist in manpower legislation from the Congressional Research Service, a person who knew all the non-elected players in the job training policy network. The staffer became, in his own
words, "a travelling salesman" consulting and circulating draft ideas to interested parties. He and Quayle held their first hearings in Indiana because, said Quayle, "I can't have the people in Indiana shooting at my back."

And they paid special attention to interested staffers on Capitol Hill. "I'd much rather have the thing work through their staffs and up that way," said Quayle, "than my lobbying other Senators." He never thought of himself as the specialist nor the one-on-one salesman. He thought of himself as the coalition builder—the catalyst, the strategist, and the protector of broad principles.

In September 1981 he made a speech promising a job training bill by January. In it, he enunciated a set of broad principles: that the program would not be an income maintenance program and that it would give a primary role to the states and to private business as opposed to the preeminence of local governments and organized labor which characterized the existing CETA program. They were not Quayle's ideas, but rather the ideas of all conservatives who had thought about the problem and were opposed to the public jobs aspect of CETA.

On February 2nd, Quayle held a press conference to introduce his bill. And there, he revealed his central strategic decision—that his bill would be introduced as a bipartisan bill. And that his chief co-sponsor would be the
senior Committee Democrat Ted Kennedy—a man I had heard Dan Quayle gleefully lambasting on the campaign trail in Indiana.

The press conference was a joint press conference, featured by lavish praise between the two unlikely partners and the introduction of the Quayle-Kennedy job training bill. Quayle explained later,

It's been a bipartisan bill from the beginning. I never thought of it any other way. It's my first piece of major legislation and it should be bipartisan. That's the way I think. That's what my instincts are. After all it is a national problem. So I've worked with Kennedy. I was perfectly happy to compromise so long as I didn't have to give up my basic principles.

At the time of the press conference, he had also picked up two other original co-sponsors from his subcommittee, one on each side of the aisle, a move which assured him already of a bipartisan majority in his subcommittee.

I asked him later whether this instinct for bipartisanship was the product of his prior experience in the House. He answered "Hell no, the House is completely partisan, it's the worst training ground in the world for
bipartisanship. If anything, you come out of the House filled with hate—with venom. But when you get to the Senate you realize that things are different...

If you want to get results you have to be bipartisan. And I'm a results-oriented person." The unformed kid was adapting to a new environment and revealing some basic coalition-building instincts in the process.

The wide and early interest group and staff consultations, plus the strong bipartisan support allowed him to introduce legislation before the administration organized itself to do so. The Labor Department was at work on its own more partisan, more conservative replacement for CETA. And they asked Dan Quayle to wait. But he decided, instead, to seize the policy initiative and to keep it. It was his second strategic decision—one in keeping with his "can do, let's go" spirit. His unwillingness to wait for the Administration, together with his choice of Kennedy as co-sponsor, put him in hot water with the Administration. It also put him in hot water with his Committee Chairman, Orrin Hatch, who remained solicitous of the administration's wishes. But he had made it clear that on the crucial matters of support and timing, the decisions were his, not theirs.

From there on, the story of the bill is largely the story of the
subcommittee chairman's ability to steer a middle course between the Democrats and the administration, to compromise enough to win administration support while not compromising so much as to lose the liberal Democratic wing of his bipartisan coalition. And he adhered throughout to the characteristically optimistic view that, of course, all sides wanted some legislation to "do something" about a national problem. That he was able to pull this off was testimony to his considerable legislative skill in the face of frequent veto threats by the administration, threatened walkouts by the Democrats and erratic behavior on the part of his full committee chairman.

He continued to set the pace and kept the negotiating upper hand—first making a key concession to the Democrats and next making a key concession to the administration. And, when the chips were down, he personally lobbied the one undecided, swing voter on the full committee to win a cliff-hanging 9–8 vote in committee to support the key concession he had made to the administration. The bill passed the subcommittee, the committee and the Senate unanimously—and emerged from conference with the House with Quayle's four basic principles recognizably intact.

When it had become law, the staff aide whom I quoted earlier fleshed out his
judgment on the Senator from Indiana.

(Quayle) did one hell of a job to get that training bill passed. He took on the administration. He took on a wild committee chairman. He took on some tough interest groups. He had to work things out with the other party (and)...with the other House...Right now he's a rough cut diamond. But he's got a lot of fire in his belly. He wants to do things. He can become one very fine Senator.

That judgment was not, however, universally shared. The administration scheduled its bill signing ceremony at a time when Quayle could not be present to share in the prime-time, credit-claiming television extravaganza. And he had to slip in the side door days later, without his family, to get a photo opportunity with the President signing another piece of paper. In the end, he had to pay a price for "the fire in his belly."

Arlen Specter, unlike Dan Quayle, brought his top priority policy agenda with him to the Senate—to get on the Judiciary Committee and, once there, to push ahead with a career criminal bill. The idea of the bill was to make "the third violation for robbery or burglary while armed with a gun a federal
offense punishable by life imprisonment." It represented an expansion of federal jurisdiction into the area of violent street crime by prescribing sentencing for crimes traditionally handled by local officials. The bill grew directly out of Specter's DA experience with erratic sentencing standards set by local judges. The importance of the bill was measured by his DA experience. One of the staffers in charge of it commented "This was his idea. It was not the case of some smart young staff man coming up with something. He came to us and said, 'How can we make state judges give stiffer sentences? I know they aren't doing it.' He knew the problem he wanted to solve from his own experience." A second staffer said of the bill, "Arlen puts it on the same level as his reform of the corrupt magistrate system when he was DA. And that's quite a comparison, because he always believed that the magistrate reform was the most important thing he did as DA." Obviously, his pre-Senate experiences continued to have a major impact on his Senate performance.

The saga of his career criminal bill is another long story. Three years almost to the day after Specter introduced it, it was signed into law as a very small and drastically watered down part of a very large omnibus anti-crime package. It had followed a tortuous path, including a presidential veto; and
its ultimate passage—in whatever form—would have to be called yet another triumph of determination for the persistent prosecutor. Its difficulties were in part the difficulties of any bill—especially an original idea—moving through the legislative mill. But—and this would be my main point—its difficulties were also attributable to Arlen Specter's governing style and to the pre-Senate experience which helped mightily to produce that style.

Some legislators, it seems, think of governing as a collective enterprise, while others think of governing in more individualistic terms. If Dan Quayle fell into the first group, then Arlen Specter fell into the second. In the Senate of the 1980's, both governing styles are encouraged; and both can lead to success. What the Pennsylvania Senator had learned most from his previous political experiences was the importance of hard work and independence, rather than the importance of negotiation and coalition building. He had a strong faith that one person—especially a person of determination and intellect—could accomplish a great deal all by himself. It was a view born of the success and the limelight he had enjoyed as a hard charging prosecutor, mixed with the bruising failures he had endured when he had placed his fate in the hands of other politicians.
Both experiences had led him to resist, or at least devalue, working relationships that emphasized reliance upon, or obligation to, others. There was no equivalent of Ted Kennedy in the Specter story. Two days before he introduced his career criminal bill, a top staffer commented.

I think the part of the Senate Arlen likes best are the hearings...That's the part of the process he is most comfortable with, the part that fits with his experience as a prosecutor...What he doesn't like is the clubby part of the Senate..he's not a hail fellow, well met type...He's very direct. If he likes you, he likes you. If he doesn't, he doesn't. He won't get into a room with someone he doesn't like. That's fine. But it's not the clubby, old boy style that predominates here. The trouble is, he doesn't know who he can trust.

This reluctance to tender trust is surely a residue of his career-long difficulty with the Republican establishment at home.

At the moment he introduced his bill, therefore, all his prior experience led him toward a loner's strategy of pushing his legislative baby through all
by himself—to adapt the hard working, independent, persistent prosecutor style to the U.S. Senate. And that was, in truth, the only strategy he had to bull the legislation through by personal determination, backed by his strong conviction that his idea was important and right. Quayle's first instinct was to look for allies. Specter's first instinct was to go it alone. He never did develop a set of strategic decisions to maximize support, cope with disagreement, identify swing voters, control procedure or superintend the matter of timing.

To begin with, unlike Quayle, Specter saw himself as the expert in the criminal law field and, therefore, the primary salesman for his bill. Shortly before his October 1981 press conference announcing the bill, the legislative assistant who would shepherd it for three years and who had been an assistant to Specter in the DA's office in Philadelphia, described the Senator's staff as "a miniature law firm". "Specter's experience is complemented by mine and others," he said. "We are not dependent on outsiders. We can be creative and do much better than, say CRS....we don't need them. Crime is one area where other Senators will take Arlen's word. He knows more about robbers and burglars than anyone in the United States." Doubtless, this assessment of
their expertise and their prowess was the Senator's view as well.

Five months later, when the bill had not yet gotten out of Chairman Specter's Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice, the same assistant repeated, "In the end two things will decide the issue. Is the bill considered good politics?...And more important than that will be Arlen's reputation as a man who knows this field up and down, backwards and forwards. That's the decisive thing." The Specter law firm was obviously relying on its founding partner to carry the day.

Two months later, following Specter's decision to bypass his subcommittee altogether, and take the bill straight to the full committee, the same staffer was working on a 200-page explanation of the bill. But he was less certain that Arlen and the firm could pull it off. "Arlen is counting on a spellbinding report to carry the day in the Judiciary Committee," he said...

The Senators will not read it. So everything will depend on their staffs. They will most likely read it and hesitate. If they do, the bill will bog down in committee...He wants me to finish the report above all else. He is completely determined to go ahead. You've heard of Pickett's charge. After being
decimated for two days, the southerners rallied and made a third a charge...without knowing what they were doing or why, and they were wiped out. I'm beginning to think we're on a Pickett's charge. Arlen won't make any face-saving maneuvers on the side. He's determined to go straight ahead and all the way.

It was the hard charging prosecutor all over again. He had not built support in the subcommittee as an aid to support in the full committee. And he did not yet have the staffs of his colleagues behind him either.

Two months after that, with the bill now languishing on the full committee docket, the same assistant was coming to grips with the difference in contexts past and present. "Arlen is a person of very great energy, willfullness and force," he said.

When he was District Attorney of Philadelphia, he could dominate almost any situation by virtue of those qualities. But those same qualities count for very little in the Senate. That infuriates me...I am very pessimistic. But Arlen still thinks he can persuade the others on the spot in the committee.
A week later the staffer said to me, "I talked to Arlen the other day...and I
got the sense for the first time that Arlen thought it wasn't going
anywhere...Up to that conversation, he'd always...(said) 'I've talked to the
members. They're for it. Well get it done'...I've told him he needed a push
from the administration, that he couldn't do it all by himself. I think he
sees that now." But that same day Specter was saying, "I don't have a position
of strength...The administration is not going to do anything special for me.
I'm a little too independent in their eyes." It was an echo of his post-
campaign interpretation that "I don't owe Reagan anything." I recite this
sequence because I think it reflects Specter's preference for lonerism. It
also suggests the problems that may well have been the price of excessive
lonerism.

The reverse side of the independence-lonerism coin was a general slowness to
consult or negotiate. On the day he introduced the bill, Specter had not yet
consulted with any member of the committee. He had no co-sponsors. When asked
at his introductory press conference whether he had any support, he mentioned
Chairman Strom Thurmond and key Committee member Ted Kennedy as likely
supporters, based strictly on inferences drawn from their support of related
bills. They turned out to be anything but supporters—Thurmond delaying its progress, Kennedy helping to emasculate its substance, and the two of them combining three years later to pass the Thurmond-Kennedy amendment to the bill—an amendment which in Specter's words "gutted and emasculated" his bill.

It was one of Specter's weaknesses as a coalition-builder that, assuming the rightness of his arguments and not having tested his ideas in any legislative crucible like a subcommittee, he would translate an expression of interest or a tentative tone of approval into a commitment. "Denton's for it, Hatch is for it" he told me flatly one day in mid-March. But when we went over the roster in July, he commented "Hatch may be a problem," and "Denton may go south on me." Said one top staffer, "I don't know how many times he has slowed up what we were trying to do by not really listening to what people were telling him. He hears what he wants to hear...Then he charges ahead." One day in November he exclaimed "I had a terrific meeting with the President...I had a great meeting. Reagan's for it. We're going to get it passed—if we can solve the prison (over crowding) problem." A year later, Reagan vetoed the bill—on grounds having nothing to do with prison overcrowding. Perhaps Specter sold Reagan like he had been selling his own colleagues. "We've been telling them
what a great bill it is" he said. "We haven't told them the opposing arguments." Not only was he the chief salesman, but he did his selling from the top down instead of building a base of support among committee members and their staffs and moving outward and upward from there. Given the fact that his bill was a new idea and one to which no one else attached any urgency, his top down approach was a liability.

The one group to offer opposing arguments—substantive and political—was the National District Attorney's Association, fearful of federal encroachment on their local jurisdictions. Specter did not consult with them either—even though he had once been one of them. Several DA's did testify in favor of the bill; and he did send his staffers out to try to sell his bill to their Association; but the Association opposed it. When I went with him to a meeting of the group, he did not try to reach an accommodation or ask for their support. He went, he said, only "to show the flag"; and he said to them: "It's hard to structure a federal act without giving the federal government the final say on it...I don't know whether we can get career criminal passed with the attitude of the District Attorney's Association as it is. But we're going to try to steamroller you anyway." The DA's group played a major role in
bringing about Reagan's veto. And, eventually, in the next Congress, they helped draft the emasculating Thurmond-Kennedy amendment which placed severe limits on federal jurisdiction—and which passed the Senate over Specter's passionate objections, 77-12.

Specter's reluctance to negotiate was evident, too, in his relations with Chairman Thurmond. He introduced his bill without consulting the Chairman even on the matter of assigning the bill to the jurisdiction of his subcommittee. Two weeks of turmoil followed, until Thurmond agreed. But the Chairman subsequently kept a very close eye on Specter's Juvenile Justice Subcommittee. Two of Specter's staffers discussed the situation. "He really runs that committee" said Staffer A. "I know, that's what scares me," said Staffer B. "Thurmond has subcommittees, and he tries to control the subcommittees by using hearings, dates and witness expenses and things like that—all negative things." Staffer A came back "Everything in the committee goes through him. But he treats subcommittees different." "I know," said Staffer B, "what bothers me is that we're on the shortest leash of all." "We can't get paper clips without going through the full committee." Thurmond opposed the bill on its merits as an invasion of states rights. He was willing to keep the bill
alive but he used his
control over the committee agenda to move it along very slowly. He made
Specter push every step of the way.

Specter was confident he had developed a good working relationship with
Thurmond. But, like his other coalition-building assumptions, it may have been
faulty. At least, his staffers, by summertime, thought so. Said one, "Arlen
will talk to Strom and Strom will say OK and our staff will do it. Then we'll
call Thurmond's staff and say "My Senator talked with your Senator and they
decided such and such." They say, 'OK'. But nothing happens." Another
staffer felt that "Specter has to cut his bridges to Thurmond." A third said
"Specter's independent and Thurmond just doesn't think new senators should be
so independent." And a fourth one said "I think Strom's upset with Arlen, but
Arlen doesn't see it at all." In August, his topmost assistant generalized,

Career criminal is going no place fast. I'm not sure why.
Arlen gets angry if you say, 'It's just the legislative
process'...I'm not sure he's willing to do the amount of quid
pro quo that you need to do to move the bill along. He thinks
it ought to carry on its own merits or that the press will
recognize the merits and do his work for him. He still thinks
the press is everything...If he wants that bill, he's got to
swallow his pride, go to Strom Thurmond and say, 'Strom, I want
this bill more than anything else. My pants are down.'

But the Senator from Pennsylvania found it hard to reach for his belt buckle.
That move was not part of his senatorial style either. His reluctance to
compromise and to incur debts, we might speculate, was a lasting derivative of
his early experience. That experience, reenforced by his campaign experience
and by his interpretation of his victory, had a major impact on his governing
behavior in the Senate.

After the President's veto, an aide summarized Specter's experience with his
career criminal bill by saying that "it is a success story without a happy
ending. It proved to his colleagues that Arlen is a pusher, that he can get
things done. That was the judgment, too, of Howard Baker's office, where the
top staffer quote earlier elaborated that "All the good ones are
stubborn...Arlen Specter's got a mind of his own. He sticks with
a problem. He's a good Senator." Subsequently, Specter did stick with his
career criminal bill till he saw it passed in 1984.
A year later, I asked him to compare lawyering with legislating, to see whether he had learned anything new from his lengthy battle. "The legal system and the political system are alike in a lot of ways," he replied.

The legal process is a spiderweb. Every rule has its purpose. You try to use each one to give your client a break. The political process is a labyrinth too. But the difference is that you have to do so much consultation and persuasion with your colleagues. So it takes such a long time to get anything done. With the career criminal bill, as you know, we had to be absolutely relentless about it.

He had come to the Senate equipped with all the relentlessness he would ever need. It was consultation and persuasion that he needed to learn. And his experience had clearly taught him something about that. But not, I think, that they were most important.

On the campaign trail in 1986, he summed up what remained his decidedly individualistic view of the Senate: "Jesus Christ," he exclaimed, "There are a lot of sharp elbows in there...It's not a snake pit. It's a rhinoceros pit." And he summed up his political career similarly. "You have to work like hell
to make your case," he said, "I've done it by sheer dint of persistence. It's like digging into the side of a granite mountain with your fingernails." After six years, the persistent prosecutor was alive and well inside the United States Senator from Pennsylvania.

The "armed career criminal bill", as such, played a very minor role at the stage where he turned from governing to reelection. Privately, he called it the second most important accomplishment of his first term. But its importance was greater in Washington than at home. It was one of fifteen issue spots that he played on statewide TV; and crime control was listed 13th out of fourteen areas of accomplishment in his campaign brochure. I never heard him mention it publicly on the campaign trail. But his legislative efforts on the career criminal bill did fit very nicely the legislative image portrayed in his 1986 campaign slogan, "Out Front—Fighting for Pennsylvania." And he won a strong, 57%, better-than-expected victory.

Dan Quayle's Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) yielded a vastly different story at the end of his cycle. It was, of course, a bigger bill. And it became his central, indispensable campaign weapon. Thus his Washington activity had a major effect on his governing activity. His Washington
accomplishment changed his persona at home from kid to Senator; and it gave him a senatorial reputation in the bargain—as a constructive legislator. It gave him a major success to talk about; and it gave others something concrete, positive and senatorial to associate him with.

In a meeting of his closest political advisers in Indianapolis in 1982, one of them said to him,

In the beginning, remember, we worried a lot about whether you had the qualifications to be a Senator. Were you too young to be a Senator? Would people take you seriously as a Senator? Could you gain the respect of your peers in Washington? Were you smart enough to be a Senator? All that is behind us now.

We know you have the qualities to be a good United States Senator. That's been proven. It's the foundation on which we'll build for the next four years.

When I returned, in 1985, to attend the state Republican party kickoff luncheon for the next year's election, the Lieutenant Governor introduced Quayle as "an astoundingly successful legislator" and called JTPA "one of the best legislative success stories in America...(as) crafted by our junior
senator...(who) brought together the most liberal...and the most conservative people." At each table were copies of Quayle's 1986 campaign brochure, with its suggestive slogan "Effective Leadership For Indiana." Its inside centerpiece was the picture of President Reagan "sign(ing) Quayle's JTPA into law." On the back, his brochure featured the judgment of Congressional Quarterly columnist Alan Ehrenhalt that Quayle was one of 12 "effective but unheralded Members of Congress." Ehrenhalt described his choices as "unpretentious, rarely partisan, legislative professionals who are candid, well informed and not prone to self promotion." It was Washington's recognition that he had indeed, "become known as an effective legislator."

When I visited Indiana again in October, 1986, signs of JTPA were everywhere. It was the subject of one of his six TV spots and one of his two issue spots. He mentioned it in every debate, speech and interview. Nearly one-half of the Indiana electorate said they had read or heard about it. "It's the whole campaign," summed up his campaign manager.

It's everything. It's the first thing he talks about almost everywhere he goes. All our opinion polls tell us jobs is still the number one issue in this state. He can talk about
jobs like no one else can. He did something about it. When he
goes someplace, he can tell people exactly how many jobs were
created there, and exactly how many dollars went into the area.
He can name companies that laid off workers and point to
companies that hired trainees. So it's pure gold. And it sews
everything together. He brings home the bacon; he is a
national leader and the program embodies his philosophy of
private-public partnership...JTPA is his suit of armor.

At that point in his campaign he did not need a suit of armor. In the end, his
victory margin of 61% broke an Indiana record. And my conclusion is simply
that his campaigning success in Indiana would not have been possible without
his earlier governing success in Washington.

Assessing his career a few days before the election, Quayle commented,

I have complete confidence that whatever I want to do I can do.
I am confident that things will turn out right for me. And
they always have. I haven't had many failures. So I just keep
going on the theory that when you're hot, you're hot. Now what
will happen when the roof caves in on me, I don't know. It
hasn't yet. And I never think about it doing so.

So, at the end of six years, a great deal of the self-confident, upbeat kid remains inside the Senator from Indiana.

That is where my stories end. I have tried to illuminate behavior at home and behavior in Washington by relating one to the other over time. And I have argued, with examples, that they are, indeed, related—pre-campaign experience to campaigning—campaigning to governing and governing to campaigning. Whether or not this sequential campaigning-governing-campaigning angle of vision is an aid to explanation—of governing styles, for instance—I shall have to leave to others. If these explorations into two senatorial careers strike others as either important or interesting, they will be attracted to the task of elaborating and weighing these career relationships further. It is every researcher’s hope that his or her research will lead to more research. And that is the sentiment with which I had best bring this presentation to a close.

Thank you.