

This 1980 memo from Larry McCarthy, a top Republican consultant -- he was known as the “master of the attack ad” -- and aide to then-Sen. John Heinz, detailed the results of the GOP Senate primary won by Arlen Specter that year. It also showed Specter’s precarious financial situation at the time (a campaign debt of \$41,000) and how relatively inexpensive political campaigns were then compared to the multi-million dollar affairs of today. Specter went on to win the November general election and his first term in the Senate over popular former Pittsburgh Mayor Pete Flaherty by 50.5 to 48 percent, or by some 108,000 votes.

April 25, 1980

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MEMORANDUM

TO: JOHN HEINZ
FROM: LARRY MCCARTHY
COPY: MOORE, COTTINGTON, GANNON, FRUMKIN
RE: PENNSYLVANIA/SPECTER

Today I met with four of Specter's people: campaign manager Gordon Woodrow, finance director Dan McKenna, Specter confidante Bob Moss, and Specter's 21 year old son, Shanin.

The final margin in the primary was 39,000 votes.

SPECTER	36.1%
HAABESTAD	32.7%
HOWARD	12.9%
OTHERS	18.3%

The relatively high vote for "others" was due to the fringe candidates carrying their home counties -- "Stormin' Norman Bertasavage carried Schuylkill, Warren Williams carried three northern tier counties, Francis Worley carried Franklin and Adams counties. (The final county votes should be available by Monday. An analysis will follow.)

FINANCIAL SITUATION

Specter is \$41,000 in debt. \$7,000 of that total is owed to their media consultant Bob Sann for production costs which exceeded the budgeted amount. This bill is currently "under discussion."

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An additional \$26,000 of the total debt is owed to their political consultant, Mike Harkins, for printing and similar services. Part of that amount is also under contention.

Specter wound up raising approximately \$160,000. Roughly \$115,000 was spent on media. Woodrow will provide a complete fundraising and expenditure analysis next week.

Specter has all his previous contributors on a card file system. Specter himself called all the \$1,000+ contributors, while some direct mail and events brought in the rest. They mailed a total of 20,000 pieces, but do not yet have the breakdown of which was strictly fundraising and which political. The fundraising copy was done in-house.

There were two \$100 cocktail parties with the Philadelphia event netting \$7,500 and a Wilkes-Barre/Scranton event netting \$9,000. There were a half-dozen other cocktail parties which netted \$3-4,000 on average. In addition, a Jewish fundraiser in New York City brought in \$6,000.

For the general election, Specter's staff was very interested in trying to stage fundraisers in the Jewish communities in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles et al.

To pay off their debt, Specter's staff envisions going back to their heavy hitters, house file, and a letter from Thornburgh and Heinz to their lists.

Woodrow raised the idea of using the People for Heinz list in a conversation with Dick Marshall. Marshall replied that he did not feel in the position to approach Heinz on this subject. The Specter people want me to obtain some indication

on the availability of the Heinz list.

Specter had estimated that they would need \$1.5 million for the general election. They do not have any fundraising consultants. Rod Smith will meet with Specter and Woodrow on Wednesday, April 30 in D.C. to begin financial planning for the campaign.

CONSULTANTS

In the primary Specter had Bob Sann for media and Mike Harkins for general political consulting. He did not do any polling or have any fundraising consultants.

In my brief conversation with the candidate himself, he voiced satisfaction with Sann and said he would probably use him in the general. This feeling was not shared by his staff, however. Both Woodrow and Specter's son voiced some unhappiness with Sann's work.

Sann was hired on the recommendation of young Bill Scranton who had used Sann in his primary for lieutenant governor. Sann cut eight 30 second TV spots and eight 30 second radio spots. All the TV spots and most of the radio spots were shot in single day when Specter had meetings with four different interest groups consisting of businessmen, housewives, senior citizens, and college students. Sann taped the question and answer sessions and edited them into the spots. (Video and audio cassettes of the Specter spots will be sent to the NRSC next week.)

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The production costs were \$26,000 which is \$7,000 more than originally agreed upon. Of the eight TV spots which were shot only four were used. Apparently, there were some disagreement over the quality of the last four spots. Specter believes that Sann is the best media consultant he has ever worked with, including Garth. Specter's staff thought that Sann's stuff was good, but not great.

Per Heinz instructions, I told Woodrow that in my opinion Garth was a far better choice for media consultant and that their choice could make a major difference in the amount of financial support they could expect from the NRSC.

There was more of a consensus on Mike Harkins. Both Specter and his staff thought that Harkins was a nice guy with good ideas, but that he had trouble delivering. There was also some question as to whether Harkins was quite ethical in his billing procedures. Harkins was not on direct retainer to Specter. He made his money off the 15% agency commission on buying the TV/radio time.

On pollsters, Specter expressed interest in Peter Hart. Hart, however, said he was not interested in working with Specter. Teeter has already submitted a proposal to Specter and will be talking with Specter on Tuesday of next week.

STAFF

Specter had a paid staff of four for the primary: Gordon Woodrow - campaign manager - early 30's, worked in real estate for 11 years, first political experience as Specter's phone bank director in '78. Very inexperienced, but appears

to have generally good instincts. He would like to manage the general, but has not discussed it with Specter yet. In my conversation with the candidate, Specter appeared inclined to keep Woodrow. Woodrow wants to attend the next Campaign Management College in mid-May.

Dan McKenna - was the finance director in the primary, will probably become the press secretary for the general - 14 years as a Bulletin reporter, later served as Hillel Levinson's deputy in the Rizzo Administration.

There was also a scheduler who they are looking to replace and a receptionist. Their treasurer (Steve Popilarski), counsel, and bookkeeper were all volunteers.

They envision a staff of 8-9 through mid-August and then expand for the general.

Specter did comparatively little free press in the primary and what he did do was concentrated in the Pittsburgh market. If McKenna does in fact become the press secretary, he will need a crash course in campaign flacking.

NRSC ACTION

1. Specter will attend the press breakfast and PAC reception on April 30. He would also like to meet with Javits (to discuss Jewish fundraising), Schweiker (courtesy call), and Kassebaum (to discuss Bob Sann).
2. McCarthy is setting up a brief issues meeting with Specter & staff and people from Heinz, Schweiker, McDade, and Thornburgh's DC office.
3. Specter will meet with Rod Smith on April 30 to begin financial planning.
4. Per Heinz instruction, McCarthy told Woodrow that \$50,000 would be available immediately, but that it is applicable only to general election expenses.

5. Specter and staff will look at video cassettes of commercials on April 30. The Garth cassette is from the Heinz general election.
6. NRSC will send Woodrow or designee to CMC.
7. McCarthy will arrange at least two days of meetings for Specter with individual PACs which would have a special interest in Specter.