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From: walter walker <wf.walker@yahoo.com>
To: John Stanton <John.Stanton@trilogy-partners.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2007 8:13:34 AM
Subject: RE: FW: Chris Vance column on Crosscut.com

They seem to think that Chopp will do whatever is politically expedient...that he will respond to pressure, despite his biases.

They sound equally frustrated with Licata....that he refuses to understand the consequences to Seattle Center without an anchor at Key...that he's perfectly capable of being negative on any deal, no matter how positive for the city. Their frustration was explicit and palpable.

I see Sarkozy on Mon.

John Stanton <John.Stanton@trilogy-partners.net> wrote:

Typical 4 am wake up based on body clock not alarm clock. Wanted to check in on the world.

Agree completely that it should be excruciating for Clay to consider early departure. At some point, they will need Patty and Maria's help if this becomes a real fight.

What is your sense from the city of the views of Licata and Chopp?

From: walter walker [mailto:wf.walker@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2007 10:19 PM
To: John Stanton
Subject: Re: FW: Chris Vance column on Crosscut.com

thanks...but this doesn't feel like a vacation article! i met with the city today and felt better about my message of fighting Clay's attempt to leave. Make it too expensive and too litigious for him. I get the impression that they were in total agreement and that they (administration) understand the value of buying more time.

John Stanton <John.Stanton@trilogy-partners.net> wrote:
interesting

Why Washington Republicans got creamed in 2006 and what

they can do about it

A former chair of the state GOP looks at the plight of the party from the perspective of life in the slow lane. First of two parts.

By Chris Vance

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Editor's note: The author was chair of the Washington state Republican Party from 2001-06. This is the first of two parts. The second will be posted on Thursday, July 26.

I still feel guilty being at home in the middle of the day. After 22 years of working in the intensity of politics and government - staff person, candidate, state legislator, King County Council member, state party chairman - 17 months ago I became a public affairs consultant, first with a big firm, and now on my own. Twenty-two years commuting to an office; now, after breakfast I commute upstairs to my computer and cell phone. My life used to be scheduled in 15-minute increments; now I find myself alone with my wife in our quiet house in the middle of the day. I wonder if this will always feel strange.

Not that I'm complaining. The work is interesting, and so far it has been profitable. Most importantly I no longer feel like I am missing out on the best years of our family's life. Being available to drive your son to high school every morning and coach your daughter's soccer team is not a bad lifestyle. I don't know if I will do this forever, but for now I am getting used to life on the sidelines.

Well, not really the sidelines. Reporters still call, and my clients, of course, all have political issues. I'm not working on a campaign, but I still seem to spend a lot of time thinking about and talking about Washington state politics, and one reality constantly looms: the Republican collapse of 2006.

What happened? What does it mean? Can Republicans recover, and if so, how long will it take? This is obviously a subject of some personal interest to me but should also concern anyone who values a competitive two-party system. What follows, then, are thoughts on how Washington suddenly became a one-party state and how the Republicans can come back.

First, some history and context. Washington was an overwhelmingly Republican state before the Depression and FDR realigned American politics. Since then, Democrats have won more often than not, but Republicans have rarely been completely shut out of power. Republicans won six of nine gubernatorial elections between 1940 and 1976, sent Dan Evans and Slade Gorton to the U.S. Senate, and have often controlled one or both houses of the Legislature. Only during the Gov. Al Rosellini years (1957-65) and the first two years of the Carter administration has the GOP found itself where it is today: without a governor or U.S. senator, and facing huge Democratic majorities in both houses of the Legislature.

Republicans had seen a steady erosion of power since their dominant 1994 victory, but that seemed like a regression to the mean — Washington returning to normal competitive balance. In 2002, Republicans won a one-seat majority in the state Senate. In 2004 they won two open congressional seats, elected Rob McKenna attorney general, re-elected Sam Reed as secretary of state and Doug Sutherland as commissioner of public lands, and gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi — well, let's just not go there.

The point is, Republicans had been competitive in recent years. But Mike McGavick's overwhelming 2006 defeat by incumbent Sen. Maria Cantwell and a plummet to 36 GOP seats in the House and 17 (!) seats in the Senate - the lowest total since 1965 - was a shock to the system. What happened? One factor, national megatrends, is obvious. The other, superior Democratic political skill at the state legislative level, requires more attention.

Republicans in Washington are on the wrong side of the major long-term megatrend affecting American politics. At some point in the 1970s, politics became less about economics and more about values. Church attendance, not income, has become the primary driver of party allegiance and voting behavior, and that trend has accelerated since the election of George W. Bush in 2000. The president's evangelical faith has been front and center, and the religious overtones of the increasingly unpopular war we find ourselves in cannot be avoided. Atheists like Christopher Hitchens have re-opened the old line of attack on religion as a destructive force in human history, seeming to blame religion for motivating both sides of the war on terror. The faithful fire back, and the divide intensifies.

In 2004, according to CNN's polling, Americans who attended church at least once a week voted overwhelmingly

for President Bush; those who attended rarely, or never, voted in equally overwhelming numbers for John Kerry. It is not a coincidence that the South, where church attendance is highest, has become the most-Republican region in the country.

Washington Republicans, therefore, are at a structural disadvantage, for, as everyone knows, Washington is one of the most "unchurched" states in the nation. According to a 2006 Gallup survey, statewide only 32 percent of us attended church weekly, the seventh-lowest total in America. I would wager that the number is even lower in the Puget Sound area. It's simple math: the Republican base is comprised largely of cultural conservatives, and that base is smaller in the Puget Sound area – where the battles are being fought and lost – than in almost any other state. Add to that the collapse of support for the war in Iraq and the president, and the debacle of 2006 seems in hindsight to have been inevitable. The Republican base in the suburban battleground is simply not big enough to allow GOP candidates to survive when national trends are driving independent voters away.

It took a while, but most Republicans in a leadership position here understand this. The GOP understands that messages that work in Mississippi and Oklahoma don't sell in Redmond and Federal Way. Name for me a Republican since Ellen Craswell in 1996 who has based their campaign on an aggressive, culturally conservative message.

Washington Republicans get it now, but in 2006 it didn't matter. McGavick didn't run a perfect campaign, but he was an impressive candidate, and in most years he would have done better than 40 percent of the vote. Republican legislators like Dave Schmidt, Toby Nixon, Luke Esser, Bev Woods, and Jan Shabro, all of whom had won multiple elections in the suburbs previously, were tossed out in 2006. In Washington, at least, the anti-Bush, anti-Iraq tide swept away all in its path.

At the same time, there is a troubling pattern emerging for the GOP at specifically the legislative level. In 2004, Sutherland, Reed, McKenna, and, most significantly, Rossi won in every Puget Sound suburban legislative district. Dave Reichert won the open 8th congressional district. In 2006, Reichert survived the Democratic tidal wave. Yet in 2004 and 2006, Republicans lost a net of 13 suburban legislative seats. There have been scattered losses elsewhere too, but it has been the collapse in the suburbs that has taken the Rs from being competitive to being marginalized in Olympia.

Why do candidates like Rossi and Reichert survive in the suburbs, despite the national trends, while GOP legislative candidates fail? Two things: money and resume.

At the top of the ticket, candidates like Rossi, McKenna, McGavick, and George Nethercutt have matched their opponents' fundraising, or at least raised enough to run competitive campaigns. At the legislative level, however, it's no contest. Democrats today can count on massive support from public and private sector unions, trial lawyers, wealthy environmental activists, and, now, a significant share of the donations flowing from the business community. They are burying the GOP under a mountain of money.

Amazingly, Republican legislative incumbents are routinely *outspent* – unheard of at the congressional level. Republican legislators like Brad Benson, Jim Buck, Jan Shabro, and Bev Woods were heavily outspent by their Democratic challengers, and all were ousted.

A comparison: The House Republicans' campaign committee raised and spent \$765,000 in 2006; their Democratic counterpart committee more than doubled that total, raising and spending \$1.8 million. Today, the House Republicans have \$40,000 in the bank. The House Democrats, \$453,000. Money isn't everything in politics, but when the other guy has more than twice as much as you do, you're in trouble.

This huge advantage allows the Democrats to target more races across the state, forcing the Republicans to spend most of their funds defending incumbents.

The second big problem is candidate recruitment. Reed, Sutherland, Reichert, McKenna, Nethercutt, and Rossi were all outstanding candidates with previous elective experience. They were all clearly qualified for the jobs they were pursuing. Unfortunately for Republicans, this hasn't been the case at the legislative level.

For the past several elections, Democratic Speaker Frank Chopp has been extremely successful recruiting candidates who appeal to suburban independents. Independent voters, by definition, are not motivated by ideology. Instead, they often see an election as a job interview. Resume matters, and the Ds have done a masterful job of convincing community leaders, firefighters, and, especially, suburban city council members to run for the legislature as Democrats.

John Lovick, Larry Springer, Pat Sullivan, Deb Eddy, Judy Clibborn, and Geoff Simpson are all Democrats who have

taken over suburban House seats previously held by Republicans. All of them are former council members and mayors.

The Ds are recruiting candidates who are qualified, experienced, and, without fail, portray themselves as fiscally conservative and small-business-friendly. They get elected to the House, and then often move up to the Senate or other offices.

The GOP has fielded a few impressive candidates in recent elections, but far too often Republican candidates have little on their resume other than the fact that they are Republican activists. Running a small business and attending Republican district meetings is not seen by independents - or editorial boards - as sufficient training to serve in Washington's quasi-professional Legislature. When you have an unknown person running against the mayor, it's not really a fair fight. Elections are about candidates, and the Republicans are being outperformed by Speaker Chopp's candidate recruitment machine.

So how do Washington State Republicans come back? There is a long road, and a shortcut, but either way they need some help at the national level. More on that in part 2.

Thursday, July 26: What Washington Republicans must do to be relevant again.

- Chris Vance is a political consultant who lives in Auburn, Wash. He was chair of the Republican Party in Washington from 2001-06, a King County Council member from 1994-2001, and a state representative from 1991-93. He can be reached at cvapv@comcast.net.