

Runnin': how a junior associate became a congressional candidate

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Just over 40 years ago on June 23, 1970, New York City primary election day, someone drove Sue and I around to the various polling places of the U.S. 14th Congressional District where we dropped off pastries to the poll workers as was the custom for candidates in those days. I felt pretty good about the campaign we had run in the Democratic primary against 28-year incumbent U.S. Congressman John Rooney until I saw long lines of voters outside the polling places in Greenpoint.

In 1970, the district stretched out 12 miles along the Brooklyn waterfront (facing Manhattan) from the Queens border to 74th Street in Bay Ridge. The neighborhoods were not only bound together like beads on a string along the waterfront, but by the Brooklyn Queens Expressway, which stretched through the district like a zipper on a high boot. The north end contained the vibrant and well organized community of Greenpoint with its Polish butchers only stone's throws away from its Puerto Rican restaurants and social clubs. Just south of Greenpoint, Williamsburg, which bordered the north end of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, was even heavier populated with the new Puerto Rican immigrants-- but here were also the apartment houses and synagogues of the Hasidic community with bearded rabbis, long sleeved women and boys with the bouncing locks of hair below their ears of their elders.

The Polish community of Greenpoint and the Hasidic community of Williamsburg were difficult communities for the campaign to crack. The Hasidim historically had a 99 percent or better turn out and always bargained their votes for

concrete benefits, *e.g.*, apartment houses built with public assistance in the Hasidic area of Williamsburg stopped automatically on each floor so that the members of the community did not have to press a button on the Sabbath. The Polish community of Greenpoint and the Italian community of South Brooklyn were the beneficiaries of Congressman John Rooney's decades of influence with the U.S. immigration service which paved the way for thousands of relatives to have smooth sailing in securing residence or citizenship in the U.S.

Growing up, I had always been interested in elective politics. Yet, after I graduated from Ohio State Law School, I gave up all thought of being an actual candidate. I accepted White & Case's employment opportunity- as opposed to accepting a job in Ohio with an eye on possible political opportunities. After I returned from being a civil rights lawyer in Mississippi to answering interrogatories for Montgomery Ward in the fall of 1966- I was restless. Martha Wood, the first woman associate at White & Case (who had recently been hired) suggested that I write U.S. Senator Bobby Kennedy's office to volunteer.

I did so and became the Senator's unofficial "man in Brooklyn" reporting to the young Earl Graves on Kennedy's staff. (After Bobby was killed, Earl received a foundation grant and started *Black Enterprise* magazine.) Earl suggested I speak with Jim Gallagher, a young former schoolteacher, who had managed a nearly successful insurgent's race against Congressman Mulder in Brooklyn. Jim was on the staff of Fred Richmond who was seeking to identify a congressional seat where he could mount an insurgent's challenge. Fred Richmond had established residence in the apartment building in which I lived at 175 Willoughby Street and arranged for the Richmond

Foundation to give grants to community organizations throughout the 14th. Gallagher and I hit a lot of meetings and events together and at some point he expressed to me his own ambition to be a congressional candidate. I said, “why not?” and introduced him to some of my friends in Brooklyn Heights and Fort Greene. My friends, however, were not enthusiastic, and, in fact, two of them suggested that I run myself.

The June 23, 1970, primary date on which I distributed pastries to election officials was preceded by almost three years of struggle to secure credibility and funding for an effective campaign. In the fall of 1967, New York was mandated by federal court order to redistrict its congressional districts into ones which were compact and contiguous. Although my White & Case boss, Orison Marden, was the nominal head of the non-partisan commission which formulated the redistricting, the new districts were purely the product of a deal between the Democrats and the Republicans. The commission was happy, the parties were happy and the federal court accepted the new district lines.

Once the lines were drawn, I quietly determined that I had opportunity to win a congressional seat and started making plans to get backing to run. The new district had taken in Brooklyn Heights, the cornerstone of any effective insurgent effort. Previously the district was shaped like two banana halves bound together by a narrow steel rod stretched between. The “steel rod” was Furman Street, which ran under the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. There were no voters on the west side of Furman Street by the water- the portion of the area in the district. Brooklyn Heights was on the east side of Furman Street and was excluded from being in the district with the areas to the north and south of it.

In late 1966 or early 1967, through my involvement in community activities, including being elected to the community board of the Fort Greene Community Corporation and becoming president of a community day care facility, I was invited to join a group being formed known as Brooklyn Democratic Renewal or “BDR.” All of its members agreed that someone should run for Congress against the sitting congressman John Rooney. There were other groups with a political agenda against Rooney. One was the West Brooklyn Independent Democrats, “WBID,” and another was Brooklyn Heights SANE, an anti war chapter of the national organization.

WBID was viewed by the community leaders of BDR as a small ineffective reform club narrowly based only in Brooklyn Heights. We community leader types were also somewhat patronizing of SANE and other anti war groups as being issue groups even more narrowly based than WBID. We were interested in community development to benefit the impoverished citizens of Fort Greene, Williamsburg and South Brooklyn and had not yet focused on the Vietnam War. It was not until December 1967, that I awoke to the reality of the Vietnam War in a conversation with Don McKinney, the Brooklyn Heights Unitarian minister. After that, the war was a central issue for me.

After Livingston Francis, the acknowledged leader of BDR, declined our call for him to run against Rooney, the group agreed to back me. This was very exciting, but I knew I could never stay at White & Case and run for office. A fellow associate, Tom Butler, had run for mayor of Rye and White & Case partner David Hartfield had made Tom’s life miserable in David’s disfavor of Tom seeking political office. I, too, was working for David whom I respected as a very fine lawyer. He was also a very tough

task master whom I knew would make it impossible for me to engage in almost any activity related to a political campaign. After all, my candidacy would not be a secret.

Meanwhile, White & Case had assigned me out of the office to assist a lawyer in defending former New York State Supreme Court Justice James Vincent Keogh in an ongoing disbarment proceeding over which Cravath senior partner Bruce Bromley was presiding. Being out of the office with my own telephone and office in another firm helped me have some time to get politically involved- but the assignment was coming to an end. Through the introduction of Art Greenbaum, a former White & Case associate, I secured an offer of employment with the trademark firm of Von Maltitz, Derenberg, Kunin & Janssen.

I told my prospective new employers that as a condition of going to work for them that I would have to be granted permission to run for congress. They acceded to my request, gave me a \$5,000 raise and my own secretary. (The “Cravath raise” came along shortly thereafter- leading all major firms to match Cravath and give raises higher than the one I had received for leaving White & Case.) Thus, I left White & Case without the damage to my reputation which would have been inevitable, if I had tried to run for office and work as an associate for David Hartfield.

Now I had an endorsement from BDR and a job where I could run. I called upon the BDR members for help but little was forthcoming. Community leaders, I learned, are not reliable campaign workers. A group of a dozen or so of my friends coalesced into an organization. In one department, I had superior talent, lawyers Ed Kiernan, later General Counsel of Interpublic, Dick Hulbert of Cleary Gottlieb and Joe Broadwin of Wilkie Farr. They scrutinized the voter petitions we were securing to file to be on the ballot. We

needed 750 good signatures and all petitions of insurgents are well vetted by the adversary campaign. Objections are made in an arcane procedure commencing before the Board of Elections and proceeding to the courts with expedited appeals etc.

My petitions were only circulated by volunteers to people in their homes- no street signatures which are of notoriously poor quality. My lawyers compared the signatures to the names and addresses on voter roles and used rulers to redact any signatures which were not in every way perfectly aligned with the listings on the voter rolls. Of course, Rooney was not interested in keeping me off the ballot, since Richmond looked like the more formidable candidate. We were later told that our petition for nomination contained the “cleanest” set of signatures ever seen in Brooklyn.

In the 1968 campaign, no one expected me to win, but my allies and I looked upon it as a building campaign. Along the way there were some peaks and valleys- mostly valleys. Such as

- a) My friends and I packed dozens of new members into WBID to attempt to take over the reform club and get its endorsement over Richmond. We lost by four votes.
- b) I never debated Congressman Rooney, but I did have a joint appearance with Fred Richmond scheduled for the evening of April 4. Upon our respective arrivals at a community center in the Clinton Hill section of Fort Greene (a predominantly African-American neighborhood) the world learned that Martin Luther King had been assassinated. Nevertheless, Fred was first and got up and started his standard stump speech about the district being shaped like a banana. After a few minutes, I stood up and said I did not see how we could go forward as if nothing happened. I said that I had just worked with Dr. King’s SCLC colleagues in Mississippi three years before and I did not want to have a political agenda that night. After thanking the hosts, I left.
- c) The only other scheduled joint appearance by Fred and me was for June 5, which was cancelled after Bobby Kennedy was assassinated in the early morning hours.
- d) Once in 1968, I was driving through South Brooklyn and I passed Richmond’s headquarters where I could see a group of young Hispanic people in a meeting. I walked in and introduced myself and recruited the whole group to my campaign. (In 1970, Pedro Cordero, one of the leaders, collected 500 one

dollar bills and gave them to me to put an ad in *El Diaro*, with the condition that I could not take a position on the Vietnam War-- which was largely supported by the Hispanic community.)

- e) In 1968, I raised \$3,500, printed a nice campaign brochure and got almost 3,000 votes (or 13%.)
- f) Fred spent about \$250,000 and lost by about 1,600 votes to Rooney, the 26-year incumbent.

In 1968, I had tried to recruit John Doar to buy a house on our block in Fort Greene, but he declined; he did tell me to call him after the campaign to discuss a job. Once the campaign was over, I reached out to him. He had left his position as head of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department to come to Brooklyn to become head of the Bedford Stuyvesant D&S Corporation, established by Robert Kennedy. Heads of major corporations such as Tom Watson of IBM, Bill Paley of CBS and George Moore of Citibank were members of the board of directors. Frank Thomas had been recruited to head a companion black owned corporation, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration. The two corporations were engaged in community development activities in BedStuy. I negotiated for a couple of months to try to get more than the \$18,000 salary John was offering me and I got him up to \$18,500.

I accepted the job to start after Labor Day. For the next year and one half, I was privileged to work in Brooklyn and to try to get organized to run in 1970. There were interesting episodes. One day on the street I ran into Jack Newfield, a prominent reporter for the *Daily News*. He told me that there was a meeting that night in Gloria Steinem's apartment. The meeting was to afford some black community leaders the opportunity to make a pitch that Norman Mailer should step aside in his candidacy for mayor of NYC in favor of a black candidate. Gloria had given Norman the idea of running for mayor. Jack invited me to come with him and I took Sue. Sue and I sat on a hammock in Gloria's tiny

book lined and poster lined apartment and listened to the black leaders, Jim Greenidge and Carlos Russell, both of whom I knew, make their case. After a while, Gloria said, “Norman will never drop out. His ego is too big.” She invited us all to leave and we did.

Between the 68 and 70 primary campaigns, we tried to line support for 1970 by operating a campaign storefront for Paul O’Dwyer’s campaign for U.S. Senate in the fall of 1968 along with a storefront to support Mayor Lindsay’s bid for reelection in 1969. I took no political stances because of my job, but my supporters staffed the storefronts.

In 1970, Fred Richmond removed himself from contention for a congressional seat by becoming John Rooney’s campaign manager. Nevertheless, I had competition for the reform club endorsement, *i.e.*, Joe Mann, a black hospital official, “Buddy” Scotto, an undertaker and a community leader in South Brooklyn and Pastor Richard John Neuhaus who was then a protestant minister and peace activist in Williamsburg. My friends and I lobbied successfully for a reform club procedure to select one candidate and avoid splitting the reform vote. In addition to WBID, there were three or four small newly formed Democratic reform clubs in the 14th Congressional District. Joe Mann and Buddy Scotto did not choose to enter the reform club procedure, and I debated Dick Neuhaus before all of the various clubs.

Dick was a brilliant speaker and one of my friends recruited Donna Glenn as a speech coach for me. It was her “day job” to coach Chase Manhattan executives. I went to Chase Manhattan Plaza and practiced with her using closed circuit TV. The get out the vote efforts, probably rather than my oratory, were rewarded, and I won the reform club procedure by three votes. I personally dragged three people out of their homes in the last hour of the voting.

With Pastor Neuhaus out, my next problem was Joe Mann, who had gathered enough signatures to be on the primary ballot. I first tried to pressure. We learned that Joe was being supported by an official of the municipal workers union headed by Victor Gotbaum. I arranged a meeting with Victor in his office and tried to persuade him to withdraw the union's support. The conversation was inconclusive on that issue, but interesting because of the call Victor took when I was present. Howard Samuels called him to try to get his support in the Democratic primary in which he was running for governor against Arthur Goldberg. Victor was obviously supporting Goldberg. Gotbaum tried very hard but unsuccessfully to get Samuels to drop out of the race- telling him, "You're a young man, Howie. You'll have other chances."

My friends learned that Joe was speaking at a church in Brooklyn Heights the last night that he could legally withdraw from the primary. My campaign manager Mike Armstrong salted the meeting with people in different parts of the room in which Joe was speaking. After he talked, the planted people got up and asked questions like "Why did he not join in the reform club procedure?" And, "Why is he continuing to run when he will be splitting the reform vote against Rooney?" I was later informed that Joe took some time thinking it out but after walking around with a friend in the fog that evening, he decided to withdraw. He just met the 12:00 midnight deadline. I later learned that some one of my supporters (whose identity I never learned) had reset the postage meter at his law office to render a pre midnight cancellation (probably a felony for him and maybe for me) and Joe was out of the race. Since Buddy Scotto never followed through on his intention to run, I had a clear field against Rooney.

We lined up a group of other candidates to run, each of whom who had a local following in some corner of the district. *Inter alia*, we had Walter Seda, from the Puerto Rican group that I had recruited in South Brooklyn, and Nancy Gooding, a black welfare recipient leader from the Red Hook projects, as district leader candidates in one area. I was not willing to back engineer LeRoy Bowser, a black candidate from Brooklyn Heights for NY State Senate. He had gone to a meeting with me once, and when I took some heat at the meeting, he attacked me too. In retrospect, I regretted my pique when he lost by 800 votes; we could have helped him. Another potential slate person, Brooks Clay, defected once my adversary offered him a lot more than I could.

I resigned my job under John Doar on April 1, after taking out a \$5,000 home improvement loan on our new brownstone in Fort Greene to live on. My time was spent in coffee klatches, fund raising events, meetings with prospective backers, street campaigning and TV interviews. My first fundraiser was in Washington DC with ex U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark as the draw. I circulated among the guests and met one who was the proprietor of a bar in Washington by the name of "Tammany Hall." Eventually, the man sheepishly admitted to me that he was a plant-- being the stepson of Congressman Rooney. While I was in Washington, I interviewed with syndicated columnists Jack Anderson and Mary McGrory who each did columns on me.

I had fundraisers where the draws were respectively Arthur Schlesinger, John Kenneth Galbraith and Dustin Hoffman. I don't recall much about the Schlesinger fundraiser, but I do recall the conversation with Galbraith. He told me that when he had been U.S. Ambassador to India, that he had wanted a swimming pool for the staff at the embassy. The embassy employees were sweltering in 100 plus degree heat and besides

the Russian embassy had a swimming pool. Galbraith approached Bobby Kennedy about getting one for the U.S. Bobby told Galbraith “I think I can get Congressman Rooney to loosen the purse strings so you can get it.”

Rooney was head of the House Appropriations subcommittee which controlled the budgets for State, Commerce and the Judiciary and was notoriously parsimonious with the State Department. My buddy Charley Brower, a former White & Case associate with me and, in 1970, Legal Advisor to the State Department, called me during the campaign. He told me that when Rooney traveled abroad, he required the State Department to send a man with a bag of cash to pay Rooney’s expenses on the trips. Yet, Charley told me I could not use the information. Anyway, Bobby Kennedy told Galbraith that Rooney had a potential primary opponent that year and that Kennedy thought he could get the congressman’s challenger a judgeship. That would take him out of the race against Rooney, if he agreed to give Galbraith a swimming pool. Galbraith said he got his pool.

Dustin Hoffman spoke at my friends Bob and Marty Rubin’s home in Brooklyn Heights. Without taking his shoes off, he climbed on an easy chair and enthusiastically endorsed me without having any idea on how my name was pronounced. I can still picture Marty grimacing in concern about her chair. Afterwards, I asked Dustin if he would go to the student headquarters a few blocks away and say “hello” to the students. He agreed and we walked through Brooklyn Heights with his overweight manager wheezing from emphysema beside us. Finally, Dustin told the manager to get in the limousine and the limousine followed us through Brooklyn Heights at about 3 miles per hour.

I had breakfast at the Yale Club with Chester Bowles, former ambassador to India as was Galbraith. Since I had read Bowles' book *Ambassador's Report*, I spent most of the breakfast on that. Only recently I have become familiar with his role in the State Department during the Vietnam War. He was fired about three months before John Kennedy's death for having advocated an agreement neutralizing all of Southeast Asia as Kennedy had accomplished in Laos rather than the U.S. getting further involved in Vietnam. I also had a fundraiser hosted on Park Avenue by my co-worker in Bedford Stuyvesant, Ed Goodman and his wife Lorna, and by my ex-boss John Doar's wife Ann in their Brooklyn Heights home.

During the 1970 campaign, on May 4, Ohio National Guard troops fired on and killed war protesting students at Kent State in Ohio after Nixon accelerated the Vietnam War by taking 20,000 U.S. troops into Cambodia on April 30. The two events had the effect of rousing the college student bodies throughout America to leave class by the thousands to work in insurgent political campaigns. I was the beneficiary of about 20,000 student volunteers with the obvious problem of what to do with them. Eventually we had the luxury of being able to canvas practically every eligible voter in the district door to door. As the result of the canvassing, we could mimeograph handouts tailored to the specific issues of the various neighborhoods and use the student volunteers to hand them out as subway stops in different locations depending on the issue. We could also do this fast. If something was coming up about, *e.g.*, the G train or inflation, we could be on the streets in a hour with a position about it.

I was endorsed by the *New York Times* and had some questions from the editorial board. However, the toughest questions I had in the campaign were the ones I opened

myself up for at my own student headquarters. The students continued to support me, even though I favored the draft- a big issue for them. There were some incidents with the students. On one occasion I was scheduled to speak before students at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and I took along three students from the headquarters. On the return, I chose to stop on Myrtle Avenue across from the Fort Greene projects to campaign since I had some unscheduled time. I told the students to stick closely by me and to not stop to get involved with any citizen. I said, "Just pass out the literature and keep moving." At one point, one of the students did stop to talk to someone and we had to walk back to get him before we could get in the campaign car and move on.

At this point I was confronted by Isaiah Lewis, a black community activist with a wooden leg. Isaiah had some beef with me that I did not well understand --something to do with him not getting a Republican nomination to run for N.Y. assembly. He was very angry and started yelling loudly at me. I kept walking away and he followed me but with only one good leg he was no match for me. However, a black policeman came along and asked what this was all about forcing me to stop.

Isaiah kept yelling, and then began to swing his fists at me. We were surrounded by dozens of black onlookers and the status was very dicey. The policeman was doing nothing to protect me. Luckily, because of Isaiah's wooden leg, I was able to duck all the punches. Finally, I said to the policeman, "Look! I am going to call the police!" I then walked away briskly with my back to the policeman and Isaiah, and I found a place to call the police. The police came, I got the students back in the car and we went back to the headquarters.

In recruiting students, *e.g.*, I traveled to Yale, I spoke at Columbia Grammar School and I spoke at a junior high in South Brooklyn. I also marched in every parade, including the Puerto Rican day parade where I received kisses from young women and the Memorial Day parade with members of the American Legion. Unlike Barack Obama, I was quick to wear an American flag pin on my lapel.

At one point, *New York Times* reporter Tom Buckley, informed me that loudspeakers in Greenpoint were broadcasting that I was a fugitive from justice in Ohio. After a fraternity party in about 1955, I had chaperoned three new pledges to a bar where they had caused some trouble. After they ran, I, the responsible older person of twenty-one, stayed behind and was arrested for intoxication. My uncle posted a \$20 bond, and I was released and forfeited the bond by not showing for a hearing. Apparently, the FBI had tracked down the incident and provided Rooney with the details. As I have previously reported, I later sued the FBI and got my file relating that Rooney had me and Sue investigated upon authority of J. Edgar Hoover.

At one point when the campaign was starved for money, seven of my supporters including prominent lawyers and investment bankers borrowed \$7,000 from a bank-guaranteeing payment of \$1,000 a person. In those days, we did not ask people at fundraisers for specific sums and no fundraiser ever raised as much as \$2,000. After the campaign, because of the loan, I was the subject of a *NY Post* exposé for having committed an illegal campaign practice. Although I raised only about \$32,000 during the entire campaign, I was fortunate in the publicity I received. (\$12,000 came a week before the election from “Professors Against the War.”)

When Congressmen Jim Scheuer, Allard Lowenstein and Jonathan Bingham endorsed me in a press conference, I was on the TV evening news, and it made a difference as I shook hands at the subway stops and on the brownstone stoops in the district. Shirley Chisholm told me it would be better for me for her to endorse me in a separate press conference so as to get still more publicity and she did-- resulting in my being on the evening news again. (I met with Congressman Ed Koch to try for his endorsement but he told me he would not endorse against a sitting congressman.)

There were two articles about the campaign in the *Village Voice*, one by Joe Flaherty who with Pete Hamill, was writing at the time on the political importance of the white blue-collar working class. Since as a candidate, I did not fit the profile, the Flaherty article was at best luke warm in its support of my candidacy. Mary Nichols, the *Village Voice* editor, waited until Joe was in the hospital for a minor operation and then had a new article done by Mary Breasted-- which article I will always appreciate. (I was in the Lion's Head in the Village one evening after Pete Hamill had received a call from the Nixon White House on the issue of the white working class vote. Pete kept all of us well entertained on his version of the conversation.)

Late in the campaign (or after it was over) there were big articles about the 1970 campaign, on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal*, in the magazine section of the Sunday *New York Times* and on the AP wire service. There was a picture of me in Williamsburg shaking hands with a young boy as he leaned down from a fire escape, which appeared in the *New York Post*, and was reprinted in *Time Magazine*, which gave the campaign some mention.

As I have previously reported, Rooney used the franking privilege of a congressman to circulate campaign material to the voters of the 14th Congressional District. One of my volunteer chauffeurs of the campaign car, Carol Bellamy, brought a lawsuit for me aided by some friends in which a Second Circuit judge asked Rooney's lawyer on emergency appeal if he intended to use the franking privilege again. He said, "No!" --thus informally ending Rooney's misuse.

Carol was a serious feminist and if I but attempted to open the car door for her, she jerked it out of my hand. Once while campaigning, she fell down a flight of stairs, banged up her knees and broke a tooth, but was back driving for me that evening after getting patched up at the hospital. One of my drivers, Sydelle Pittas, later attended Harvard Law School while my other driver Andy, whose last name I forget, attended Columbia Law School.

I had a stump speech that ended with a couple of phrases, one of which is reminiscent of a recent phrase used by President Obama. I asked for people's support because, "In the 14th Congressional District there are men who can work and who can not find jobs, and children who can learn but who are not being taught." I learned early on at coffee klatches to crisply provide ready solutions for all problems. For instance, after early on trying to answer what I would do about drug addiction by discussing the difficulty of solution, I later evolved to an answer that "first," I would do "X," "second," I would do "Y," and "lastly," I would do "Z." People were reassured and insisted upon this kind of an answer.

There were various embarrassing or unusual moments during the campaigns. Just the day before the election my campaign fundraiser, whose name I omit, came into the

headquarters and said, “You know, I really think Pete has a chance.” Once in 1968 when I was caught pasting up a poster with a couple of my supporters, the police let me off because I was the candidate.

One day in the 1970 campaign Arthur Goldberg and some other primary candidates for statewide office were speaking in a very large synagogue in Williamsburg. I went with a couple of my supporters and sat somewhere in the middle of the synagogue. The women and girls were behind a large screen, and the men were in the dozens of rows in the front. The boys were in the dozens of rows in the rear. Suddenly a few boys started to crawl under the seats to go towards the front and soon there were hundreds of boys crawling under the seats towards the front with a couple of dozen men with beards and hair locks swinging unable to do anything to stem the tide. (The older Hasidic boys often stopped me on the street to talk. They were very gifted in discussing the issues but I knew it was a waste of time since they were too young to vote and would not have voted for me in any event.)

I had Knicks season tickets, which I split among my friends. Although the Knicks were in the finals in 1970, I was strictly restricted by my campaign staff to shaking hands outside the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Clinton Hill during the seventh game of the finals. I told Sue to take one ticket and to offer the other ticket to Spike Lee, a neighbor on our street, who was 12 at the time and was such an ardent Knicks fan that I felt he deserved to go. Sue got Spike’s ticket to him, but graciously gave her ticket to a campaign worker. Spike has ever after rejoiced in his attendance at the game.

On the evening of June 23, 1970, after passing out the pastries to the election officials all day, Sue and I were driven to Pete’s Restaurant on Myrtle Avenue near the

Fort Greene projects to have dinner and await the results. At the time, Pete's was the unlikely gathering place of high church officials, union leaders, mafia bosses and politicians. The only other patron that night was Vito Battista, the perpetual United Tax Payers Party candidate for N.Y. Assembly. I went over to say "hi." He was a short rotund man with a big salt and pepper mustache, and he had a white napkin tied around his neck as he dived into the large sea bass on the plate before him. After I went back to my table with Sue, I was told by telephone at some point that at least one television station had projected me as the winner.

Later when the results were final, I told Vito that I had lost. He said, "Don't worry kid, I lost 17 times already." Of the approximately 250,000 people living in the 14th Congressional District in 1970, 23,000 voted in the 1970 Democratic primary. John Rooney had just over 11,000 or 49% of the vote, I got just over 10,000 or 45% of the vote and a third candidate from the Orthodox Jewish community (not Hasidic) in Williamsburg received 6% of the vote. I was right to have been concerned about the lines outside the polling places in Greenpoint. I lost that area two to one by over 2,000 votes. After winning the rest of the district by over 1,000 votes, I lost the election in Greenpoint. In 1970, now Second Circuit Judge Chester Straub was a N.Y.S. legislator from Greenpoint and a member of the club that got out the vote against me. I used to tell him that but for him, I might have been President.

Postscripts

Mike Armstrong, who took leave from Ruder & Finn (a PR agency) to manage my campaign, never went back. He started the weekly community newspaper the *Phoenix* which he published for over twenty years. We are still close friends.

Carol Hurford, assistant campaign manager, went to law school.

Until his death, volunteer lawyer Bob Schmukler was a well-compensated election lawyer, a talent learned in the campaign.

Married volunteers Rhonda Copelon and David Schoenbrod, who lined up Dustin Hoffman and assisted me immeasurably in 1970, divorced and both became law professors. When Rhonda died in May, her 2010 *New York Times* obituary stated that the work she did as a lawyer established precedents that international victims of human rights abuses could sue in U.S. courts and the recognition in international law that rape was a crime of genocide and torture. As she stated in a 2002 *Times* interview, “[previously] rape was considered a kind of collateral damage” and “seen as part of the fundamental culture of war.”

In 1970, upon our return from a talk at Yale, the student driver skidded on the Brooklyn Queens Expressway-- the car spun heading backwards into traffic-- and Rhonda, also an ardent feminist, wrapped her arms around me to save the candidate. After I lost the election and informed my supporters that I had to find a job and could not campaign for the general election for which I had the Liberal Party line, Rhonda was ready to get a new candidate and a new campaign manager. She was passionate about everything in which she was involved and the world is a better place for it.

Carol Bellamy was elected to the New York State Senate and then to NYC citywide and NYS statewide offices before becoming head of UNESCO for ten years.

Fred Richmond succeeded Rooney but eventually resigned from office as part of a deal with the U.S. Attorney before going to prison. He recently reappeared in a *N.Y. Post* news item.

Ed Goodman established a successful venture capital fund and Ed and Lorna are still close friends.

John Doar, long honored for his civil rights legacy and now over 80 years of age, practices law in New York City.

After I decided to run in 1968, I never saw or heard from Jim Gallagher again.

The very liberal 1970 Pastor Richard John Neuhaus, became the conservative author and prominent commentator, Roman Catholic Father Neuhaus, and was the advisor of President George W. Bush on bioethical issues. He died recently, but I was privileged to share a cab with him from the airport a few years ago.

One of the student volunteers took the 1970 card file with all the names of the thousands of other student volunteers and worked on John Lindsay's and other national companies before becoming a successful sports lawyer.

Volunteers Don and Jean Morrison are retired and traveling through the U.S. doing good works, *e.g.*, working with Jimmy Carter on *Habitat for Humanity*.

Student volunteer Peter Samuels went to law school and became a partner at Proskaur. His wife, student volunteer Dorothy Samuels, went to law school and became a member of the editorial board of the *New York Times*.

Ben Tenzer, a brilliant MIT graduate who was my speechwriter, successfully sued NYC to eliminate council at large elections in the NYC boroughs. A copycat lawsuit eliminated the Board of Estimate and decimated the power of the NYC borough presidents. Ben lived six years after contracting Lou Gehrig's disease. He knew all of the Knicks draft choices by heart and was an avid baseball fan. He loved a good joke and he knew everything about black holes and almost everything else.

Although he progressively lost almost all of his faculties except his brain and his speech was difficult to understand, my visits to Ben were high points in my life. How often do we ever put aside extensive time periods just to talk with a friend? Ben told me that after he could no longer sign checks, his wife Florence took over and she questioned his annual contribution to the veterans of the Spanish Civil War. Florence gave way to his tearful plea and kept up the annual contribution.

Union leader Lou Gordon, who supported me, did fight in the Spanish Civil War. When I asked him how he happened to do so, he explained that all of the other guys in his part of Brooklyn volunteered, and, thus, he volunteered too.

The gracious, long serving New York State African-American State Senator Velmanette Montgomery always tells me when I encounter her, "Pete, you taught us how to run."

In 1970, a courtly older man, a Polish speaking piano tuner and artist, campaigned with me in Greenpoint. After the campaign, he came to see me with two \$100 bills in his hand. He wanted me to find his two lost sons whom his wife had taken away somewhere when he was drafted in WWII. An investigator friend found the boys for \$200. I saw the piano tuner with the one son who was willing to see him on the street some months

thereafter. A few months after that, the son called me to tell me that his father had died and that I had brought them together “just in time.”

Conclusion

By 1970, my oldest son, David, was ten and ran a campaign headquarters at lunchtime which was on the first floor of his school. Douglas was seven and, walking down the street, he and David tore down Richmond posters in 1968 and Rooney posters in 1970. My daughter Kris was only three in 1970, and does not remember much. Losing in 1970 was very difficult for the boys.

For me, losing was not the problem. It was the reality that I needed to have a job to support my family and that I could not get one unless I promised that I would not run again. There was no John Doar to hire me knowing that I would resign in twenty months to run for office. After the 1970 election, a college professor conducted an independent study which reflected that my name recognition among registered voters in the district was very high. I also knew that since I had come so close, that I would be able to raise several times the amount of money available in 1970. Thus, I was sure that I could win if I ran again, but it was the very painful reality I had to accept that I could not run.

The campaign years were tough on our young family, but Sue and I give great credit to those days and to the people in them for enriching our lives and the lives of our children. Sue also says that for many years--as a result of the campaign-- she and the children enjoyed great cachet in the community. Hopefully, young lawyers will continue to seek elective office.