



INSIDE REPORT

# Philadelphia GOP Trouble

ROWLAND EVANS & ROBERT NOVAK

Philadelphia. The sagging liberal wing of the Republican Party can no longer be certain of getting the nationwide stimulus it once confidently expected from Philadelphia's mayoral election Nov. 7.

The latest confidential poll by John Bucci, pollster for Pennsylvania Republicans, tells the story. District Attorney Arlen Specter, the liberal Republican nominee, still holds a fairly comfortable lead over lackluster two-term Democratic Mayor James Tate. But it is nowhere near the 68 per cent to 32 per cent lead held by Specter according to a Bucci sampling just before the May 16 primary election.

Whether or not Specter keeps slipping is of vital interest far beyond the Philadelphia city line. A victory by Specter, who switched from Democrat to Republican to run for DA in 1965, over old-line Democrat Tate would be used by the party's liberals to show the kind of Republican who best could handle old-line Democrat Lyndon Johnson in 1968. An upset Tate victory, on the contrary, would demoralize the Republican left.

\* \* \*

The immediate cause for Tate's return from the political dead is not hard to find. Just before the May primary, a top Specter lieutenant told us his only real concern was that Tate might come out of his battle for renomination against the machine with enough momentum "to carry him through November."

Whether Tate picked up that much momentum remains to be seen. But when he smothered the decomposing Democratic city machine in a primary victory that surprised even his supporters, he began to menace Specter.

Since then, Tate has played his cards with a skill beyond his own resources. It was a suggestion from Vice President Hubert Humphrey that sent Tate scurrying to Tel Aviv just before the Arab-Israeli war. Humphrey telephoned Tate in Rome on June 2, advising him that a quick trip to Israel could pay fancy dividends. The

resulting headlines in Philadelphia made Tate a hero to this city's 160,000 Jewish voters.

Tate returned to Rome a month later to cash in on the publicity—dear to the hearts of 400,000 Catholic voters here—of Archbishop Joseph Krol's elevation to the College of Cardinals. In between, he managed to visit Ireland.

Moreover, Tate has the most solidly mobilized and financed labor support in Philadelphia's history and is the first incumbent mayor in recent years to seek a second term with the backing of nearly all the city's 30,000 employes (because of salary increases he has pushed through the City Council).

The result: Specter forced into street corner campaigning in midsummer.

\* \* \*

Against Tate's resurgence, Specter must rely more than ever on the Philadelphia chapter of the Americans for Democratic Action, ADA, which in the 1950s helped end a half-century of often corrupt Republican rule in City Hall, now has turned against the Democrats by endorsing Specter (himself an ex-ADA official).

With Specter himself calling the signals, ADA is the heart of a new "Democrats for Specter" organization which will set up headquarters in downtown Philadelphia next door to the Democratic City Committee headquarters.

While spending \$25,000 on its Specter campaign, ADA is Specter's most effective tool to woo Democratic voters. Specter must shave off some 30 per cent of Democratic voters to win.

Two factors, besides his alliance with ADA, bring this seemingly impossible task within reach. First, as the first Jewish mayoral nominee, Specter should win a large majority of normally Democratic Jewish votes.

Second, Specter is the first breath of fresh air in Philadelphia politics since the Joseph Clark-Richardson Dilworth Reform Democratic regime ended five years ago. Indeed, this is the theme of Specter's campaign.