

POWER

by David Himmelstein

FADE IN:

(TITLE and CREDITS FADE IN AND OUT during the following sequence.)

1 EXT: MAIN SQUARE - LIMA, PERU - DAY

1

An oppressively hot, humid day. We are in the midst of a political rally for the Social Progressive Party and its presidential candidate, ROBERTO CEPEDA. The square is jammed with people, campaign posters and banners with the name "Cepeda" prominently displayed. The CAMERA PANS over the crowd until WE SEE a film crew shooting the scene.

They are: PETE ST. JOHN, 39, the U.S. political consultant -- driven, charming, magnetic -- hired by Cepeda to oversee the campaign. He is directing his three-man crew: JAN de KOONING, his Dutch cinematographer; AL LATTIMER, 33, the black lighting man; and ARTHUR ANGELONE, the 28-year-old sound man.

ANGLE - PETE

as he points out the shots he wants.

MONTAGE - CROWD SCENES

QUICK CUTS of the film crew shooting various scenes of the rally to be used later in TV commercials, as they work their way toward the stage.

ANGLE - PETE

as he spots a group of teenagers wearing tee-shirts with Roberto's name and picture. They have linked arms and are energetically waving Peruvian flags as they sing and perform a folk dance. Pete excitedly motions to the crew to get close for a shot.

ANGLE - CREW

as they maneuver close to the dancers. Arthur, leaning over their shoulders to maneuver his overhead mike, gets accidentally poked in the eye. He CRIES OUT IN PAIN, and grabs his eye with one hand while still holding the mike with the other. The students, startled by his cry, stop dancing and singing to look at him.

ANGLE - PETE

as he appears angry at losing the shot.

1 CONTD

2

1

PETE
(shouting and motion-
ing to the students)
It's OK, it's OK! Forget it!
Keep goin'!

ANGLE - FILM CREW ON STAGE

shooting from behind a BAND playing campaign songs, looking
out onto the excited crowd.

ANGLE - PETE

as he brusquely pushes his way through the party
dignitaries jammed on the stage until he reaches Jan.

PETE
(shouting)
He's here!

They rush into action.

2 ANGLE - STATION WAGON

2

as it stops at the far side of the stage. The front
passenger door opens and Roberto Capeda emerges and is
immediately engulfed by the enthusiastic crowd.

Capeda, 44, is a Latin JFK -- handsome, intellectual,
charismatic. He and his WIFE, behind a phalanx of body-
guards, push their way through the crowd toward the
stage.

CUT TO:

3 ANGLE - ROBERTO

3

as he stands on the stage looking out at the crowd,
feeding off its ENTHUSIASTIC ROAR. His speech is
translated by English subtitles.

ROBERTO
(smiling)
We don't have a chance of winning,
so why are all of you here? .

It is a powerful, calculated opening line and triggers
what he was counting on: LAUGHTER, ROARS AND CHANTS.
Roberto lets it resonate for a while, then raises his
hands to quiet the crowd.

ROBERTO (contd)
(stabbing with his
finger to different
parts of the crowd)
Don't you people read our leading
newspaper?

This triggers another BURST OF CROWD LAUGHTER.

ROBERTO (contd)
You must not, because if you did
you would know that we're only
popular with fifty Lima
intellectuals.
(pauses and shrugs)
Well, maybe a hundred.

This triggers another BURST OF LAUGHTER.

ROBERTO (contd)
Because you must be intellectuals
if you say: No! The new fields
belong to us -- all Peruvians --
and we alone will decide their
future!

(voice rises)
No! We will not be bought off
by foreign interests, no matter
how many millions of sols they
dangle like meat in front of
hungry mouths.

This touches off the BIGGEST REACTION YET.

ROBERTO (contd)
So then, tell me: Why are you
here from Nazca?

He begins pointing to different sections of the crowd, as
he calls out their locales. Each time he names a
different city, it is greeted with a ROAR.

ROBERTO (contd)
And why are you here from Cuzco?
(pause)
And you? Why are you here from --

4 A HUGE ROAR from the crowd interrupts Roberto. At 4
first we're not sure what it is, but then after a few
seconds, when we hear the CRIES AND SCREAMS OF THE CROWD
we realize it was an explosion.

ROBERTO
(yelling into mike to
be heard over the
screams)
Everyone get down! Stay on the
ground! Don't -- ..

AN EXPLOSION FROM A DIFFERENT PART OF THE CROWD GOES OFF
TRIGGERING MORE SCREAMS AND PANIC. In an instant, Roberto
leaps off the stage and plunges into the crowd toward
the area where the explosion went off. Only a second
behind, Pete and the crew, still filming, have plunged in
after him, just ahead of the bodyguards.

ANGLE - ROBERTO

as he and the film crew step over people lying and kneeling
on the ground, crying in shock and fright, until he stops
beside a young woman lying bleeding from a head wound.
He kneels and cradles her head, smearing his shirt with
her blood, and talks gently to her, trying to calm her.

ANGLE - PETE

as he brusquely pushes people away, trying to clear a
space around Roberto and the girl.

PETE
(yelling to be heard
over the yells and
screams)
Over here, over here!

Jan crouches and films the scene of Roberto, blood-
smeared, cradling the girl; Pete, excited is still yelling
in his ear.

ANGLE - ROBERTO AND THE GIRL

as for a few seconds they seem to be isolated from the
CHAOS AND NOISE boiling around them. Then, suddenly, it
engulfs them as security people swarm over them. Pete
and the crew start to push their way back to the stage.

5 ANGLE - PETE'S RENTED VAN

It is parked behind the stage. The bodyguards surround
the van, as the crew quickly slides open both side
panels, throws in their equipment and piles in. Pete,
Roberto, ROBERTO'S INTERPRETER, and MIGUEL OBREGON, 48,
Pete's local contact in the campaign, follow. Then the

5 CONTD

5

bodyguards jump in: one driving, one in the right passenger seat, the rest standing in the open side doors, hanging onto the overhead luggage rack, or facing backwards through the opened rear hatch door, all their Uzis trained outside. Meanwhile, two black Mercedes, each bristling with armed guards have pulled up -- one in front of the van, the other in the rear, and the small convoy peels away.

6 INT: VAN - DAY

6

as it is barreling down the highway. Pete, Roberto, Miguel and the interpreter are sitting on chairs and equipment in the center. Pete has next to him thick black looseleaf folders containing the critical data and strategy for the campaign. He has them for each campaign he runs, and they are nearly always by his side. (NOTE: Pete pauses every few sentences to allow the translation, followed by Roberto looking at him almost quizzically and occasionally nodding.)

PETE

Who did it? The guerrillas?

ROBERTO

(matter-of-fact)

Perhaps.

PETE

(excited)

Christ, you were terrific -- that was an incredible moment! I'm gonna cut the film tonight in New York and have it flown down tomorrow! Starting Sunday, the search for a macho leader is over! It's you! We're gonna take this thing!

ANGLE - ROBERTO

as his eyes narrow at the last sentence. He is clearly a cool, intelligent politician, taking Pete's enthusiasm with rational reserve.

ROBERTO

When will you be returning?

PETE

I don't know yet ... but I've gone over everything with Miguel.

(MORE)

PETE (contd)
(nods toward Miguel)
He'll be doin' all the print
contracts -- billboards, posters.
He's also gonna be handlin' the
payroll -- including the reporters.
I gave him the list.

ANGLE - PETE

as he lights up with a new idea, and leans over and
touches Roberto's bloodstained shirt.

PETE
(excited)
From now 'til the election --
every speech, every appearance
-- you wear this shirt!

Pete, his excitement mounting, stands and starts moving
around, gesturing in a crouch, pantomiming what he's
describing. He is speaking rapidly without pause, the
interpreter is breathlessly struggling to keep up.

PETE (contd)
You keep your jacket on 'til
just before your finish -- then
you slowly pull it off! And then
you just stand there, and let the
whole country see it! "They want
to hurt us, destroy us, but we'll
spill our blood before they defeat
us!" Blah ... blah ... blah ...

7 EXT: LIMA AIRPORT

The convoy screeches to a halt in front of the airport.
The crew immediately jumps out, pulls out their luggage
and equipment and direct porters who carry the load
inside the terminal as Roberto speaks to the interpreter.

INTERPRETER
I have one question, Peter:
Was it you who planted the bombs?

ANGLE - PETE AND ROBERTO

as Pete, startled for a moment, looks at Roberto, who
is staring at him. Suddenly, Roberto breaks into a grin.

8 INT: LIMA AIRPORT - DAY

Pete hurries through the crowded terminal then spots the crew talking to two other consultants working the election, who are waiting for their plane back to the U.S. They are: JOHN DIETRICH, 44, smart, tough and about 120 pounds overweight; and WALTER COSTELLO, 40, with a heavy Boston accent.

WALTER
(yelling out as
Pete approaches)
Helluva shot you got! Helluva
shot!

Pete walks up, smiling.

JOHN
Only way could have topped it
... just a personal opinion ...
have Cepeda blown to shit and
the girl holding him.

PETE
(nodding greetings)
Ladies ...

WALTER
You on this flight?

PETE
I'm charterin' this year.

JOHN
(shaking head)
Shit!

Pete starts to leave and the crew, and the porters hauling their equipment, also begin heading toward the gates.

PETE
(looking back)
You two big time consultants
stickin' with the tourists?
Come on.

John and Walter look at each other, then reach down for their baggage and join him. As they talk, they walk briskly through the crowded terminal.

JOHN
(to Pete)
You got any idea who set the
bombs?

8 CONTD

8

8

WALTER
(breaking in)
Nixon -- the sonovabitch's still
pissed at 'em for spittin' on his
car in '58!

Everyone LAUGHS.

9 ANGLE - PETE, JOHN AND WALTER

9

as they pass through customs and start to exit onto the
tarmac.

WALTER
John's got some new numbers.

JOHN
(bragging)
I flew O'Leary down -- three-day
poll, twelve-hundred interviews.

PETE
(deadpan)
And you're only tellin' me about
it 'cause my guy did so good.

JOHN
(wicked grin)
Sorry, Senor. My man's holding
at 38 percent -- no erosion.
Your guy, Cepeda, is movin', but
Walter's guy's up to 14 and is
about to take a bite of your ass
-- ain't that right, Walter? The
other three got "nada," but your
man's running outa time.

10 EXT: AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY

10

Pete is walking briskly toward his plane with John and
Walter. The crew is trailing behind, overseeing the
airport porters hauling their equipment. As they walk,
they pass dozens of heavily-armed soldiers, and, in the
middle of all the military hardware -- WE SEE a frail,
older woman picking up loose papers and trash.

PETE
(deadpan)
John, I'm sorry -- honest --
but you're gonna have to fly
him down for another poll.

10 CONTD

10

JOHN

(startled)

What for?

PETE

The race changed this afternoon.

(winks at John with

a killer grin)

You can trust me on that ... or

else you can wait next week

for the new numbers.

John is clearly shaken, and does not reply. Pete turns back to face across the runway as they continue to walk toward his plane. After a few seconds, still facing ahead ...

PETE (contd)

When you talk to O'Leary why don't you ask him whether if your guy gets in, or mine, or Walter's, it'll mean a rat's ass worth of difference to that lady back there?

JOHN

(uncomprehending)

What lady?

11 INT: PETE'S CHARTERED JET - DAY

11

Al and Arthur are nodding off in the rear of the plane. Jan is reading a magazine. Pete, John and Walter are in the front, drinking, eating, unwinding.

JOHN

(pause)

That was my first job outside the States. In '61. Wilfred recommended me. I had just helped turn around Kennedy's direct mail operation. So I step off the plane, and find out half the streets don't have numbers, and people livin' in the other half can't read.

Everyone LAUGHS.

JOHN (contd)

Then it got worse. I couldn't get my candidate on national TV. All our billboards were getting
(MORE)

JOHN (contd)
 torn down. I called Wilfred,
 I didn't know what the hell
 was comin' off. He makes some
 calls -- this was February --
 two weeks later the White Sox
 come down for two exhibition
 games. Luis Aparacio played
 short for 'em, remember? He
 was the country's national hero.
 I put my candidate in his fucking
 lap the whole time he's down
 there. Now they gotta run his
 picture.

He pauses, shakes his head as the others CHUCKLE appreciatively.

JOHN (contd)
 Saved my butt.

WALTER
 Wilfred's a sweetheart -- ya
 know, he's how I got connected
 with The Democratic National
 Committee. He put me in charge
 of the Midwest operation ...
 right after you and he split up.

CLOSE UP - PETE

His mouth tightens.

MORE LAUGHTER.

JOHN
 (probing, to Pete)
 You do anything with him anymore?

PETE
 (almost a whisper)
 No.

JOHN
 How long's it been -- I mean
 since you were partners?

Pete is clearly uncomfortable, before he can answer ...

PETE
 Nine years.

WALTER

Damn, it's been a while!

Recalling the painful breakup of Pete's and Wilfred's partnership produces a momentary and awkward silence.

JOHN

(almost to himself)

Been a lotta changes.

PETE

(clearly tense)

You know what the problem is now? The campaigns don't stop anymore. It's like pro football -- the season never ends!

WALTER

(pause; to Pete)

Then tell me somethin'. Why the hell's Wilfred Buckley still out there humpin'? He's done it all -- Christ, he invented whatever the hell it is we do. What's the point?

PETE

(voice rising)

Because with him it never changes -- every election ... the last choice between Darkness and Light.

(shakes his head

wonderingly)

Still out for the power and the glory -- God!

CUT TO:

Four hours later. Everyone else is sleeping in their chairs. But Pete, unable to unwind, is sitting up listening to Benny Goodman's "Sing, Sing, Sing" on his Walkman while he tries to play along with Krupa by passionately -- but not proficiently -- rapping his drumsticks on a practice pad.

CUT TO:

12

13 ANGLE

13

Three hours later. It is late afternoon and they have just landed at Kennedy. Suddenly, the plane door opens and a CUSTOMS OFFICER steps inside.

OFFICER

Welcome to the United States, gentlemen. Do you have anything to declare?

ANGLE - OFFICER'S POV

as he looks at everyone; turning in a semi-circle from left to right. He catches various expressions -- from bored impatience to (on Arthur) nervous guilt. Finally, he stops at Pete.

ANGLE - PETE

as he looks straight at him.

PETE

Yeah -- God bless America!

The plane erupts in CHEERS.

14 INT: PETE'S OFFICE SUITE - LATE AFTERNOON

14

Pete, weary and bedraggled, still carrying his luggage, walks into his expansive and plush offices, followed by the crew pushing their equipment on dollies. He walks quickly through the reception area, nodding and smiling at the young RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

(enthusiastic)

Good trip, Mr. St. John?

PETE

(sarcastic)

Good weather, but a lotta crowds.

15 ANGLE - INTERIOR CORRIDOR

15

Pete, still followed by the crew, starts walking down a long corridor toward his private office. Suddenly, he is joined by SYDNEY "SID" BETTERMAN, 29, his chief assistant, a hard-charging, Ivy League-educated political junkie -- much like himself -- who steps out of a side office. Along the walls WE CAN SEE autographed pictures of politicians, etc., and through the open doors WE CATCH GLIMPSES of other staffers, old political posters, video screening rooms, etc.

SID

(taking look at Pete)
Tired?

PETE

Can't tell yet.

SID

(rapidly)
We booked the mixing room for
the rest of the night. You've
got the film?

Pete reaches back and grabs a cannister from the top of
some of the equipment being wheeled in, and hands it to
her.

PETE

I'm gonna clean up a little, but
I want you to stay around when
we do the cuts.

(pause)

I'm assuming you found some decent
talent for the voice-over.

SID

No -- I found some great talent.
He's an actor, does Spanish
soaps up here, but get this:
he used to be a radio announcer
in Lima. I had him talk to my
friend Patricia. According to
her, he's got a very sexy Peruvian
accent.

(pause)

I advise you try to wrap this
early -- Wallace Furman's coming
in the morning.

PETE

(wincing)
For how long?

SID

(deadpan)
Definitely no longer than all day.

16 INT: PETE'S PRIVATE OFFICE SUITE - LATE AFTERNOON 16

Pete's personal secretary, HELEN CONNORS, 52, outwardly
prim, is typing correspondence as Pete and Sid walk in.
As she turns toward them, Pete picks up her carefully
placed pile of phone messages and begins rummaging through
them.

PETE

Hope you didn't wait up, Mom.

HELEN

(looking him up
and down)

God, you look like shit.

(dressing him
down)

This is only March! What will
you look like in November?

Pete merely grimaces -- he's heard this before. As he starts to walk away, while still going through the phone slips, he notices a message.

PETE

What did Ellen want?

HELEN

(calling after him)

Some decent information for
a change.

Pete shows no expression to the last comment as he enters

17 INT: PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

17

Sid is walking next to him. His office is full of cannistars, cassettes, TV monitors, state-of-the-art equipment, etc. As he walks he drops off papers and folders on his desk, tables, etc., while kicking off his shoes, socks, yanking off his jacket, undoing his shirt, etc.

PETE

No offense -- the water was
out in the hotel since Thursday.

SID

(taking no notice)

Tomorrow night you're having
dinner with Senator Hastings
and his wife.

PETE

In Washington?

SID

(nodding)

The plane will be at LaGuardia
by six. Even with traffic, that
should get you to their house
by eight-thirty.

15

18 INT: KITCHENETTE - DAY

18

As they pass through, Pete is now barechested and barefoot.

PETE

Did you pull all the stuff from the last campaign?

SID

Yeah. Also the Jackson files. Garber called last week ...

19 INT: BATHROOM - DAY

19

Pete enters and turns on the shower as he removes his pants and shorts. We can't see Sid and assume she is standing in the kitchenette, talking through the open door.

SID

We pushed the meeting up to the 12th. You'll fly to Seattle straight out of D.C. I'll go there tomorrow night to brief them on the new numbers.

PETE

(as he is about to step into the shower)
You did good. I think we got this thing up an' runnin' like a Jap watch.

SID

No problem -- you're my kind of guy.

Pete grins as he steps into the stall shower and shuts the door.

PETE

(shouting over the noise of the water)
What kind's that?

The steamed-up stall door opens, and Sid, naked, casually steps inside and shuts it behind her.

SID

(smiling)
Temporary.

CUT TO:

20 INT: FIVE-STAR OIL CORP. - NEXT MORNING
INSERT - TV SCREEN

20

WE SEE a tape of Roberto speaking at an enthusiastic rally while wearing the bloodstained shirt. The SOUND IS MUTED.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO where WE SEE that the screen is set in a recessed teak cabinet in a large, luxurious executive office. It PULLS BACK TO

ANGLE - DESK

where WE SEE EDGAR CULLINAN, 59, the firm's tough, mercurial president. He is talking to ARNOLD BAUER, 47, head of Bauer Associates, an international public relations and influence-peddling firm.

ANNOUNCER (VO)

... before the largest crowd of the campaign. It now appears the bloody terrorist attack succeeded only in adding momentum and conferring legitimacy on the one-time underdog, Cepeda.

CULLINAN

(turning the set off)
Cepeda wasn't going to be a factor -- that was your expert analysis, wasn't it?

BAUER

(pause)
There is still no reason to believe this will be anything more than a temporary --

CULLINAN

(interrupting, angry)
I got a call from my operations manager -- he's down there! He says all bets are off -- Cepeda could get in!

BAUER

(pause)
With all due respect to your manager, I'm not sure he has the political expertise to --

CULLINAN

(exploding)
Whose fucking expertise was it to set off bombs that blow away kids and make him a hero?

BAUER

(abashed)

At this point, all we know is there was no authorization for tactical disruptions of --

CULLINAN

(apoplectic)

Shit! Shit! You come here and waste my time with shit!

(sneers)

At this point, this is what I know: You lost control of what was going on down there. This company is out 2½ million bucks in that election, and now we'll probably end up losing the fucking country! That's what I know!

(pauses to regain his breath, then explodes again as he recalls something)

And Capeda's got St. John! We spend 2½ million bucks, and a goddamn socialist is gonna get in because he's got Pete St. John.

BAUER

(braced for the next explosion)

My advice on St. John stands.

I've watched him: he's good ...

(pause)

... very good -- but he's unreliable.

CULLINAN

I read his file! He's also put in people that make me look left-wing! He doesn't give a shit. He goes where the money is. That makes him completely reliable. You get him for Pennsylvania -- period!

BAUER

(conciliatory)

I urge you -- in the strongest possible terms -- not to get him involved in that campaign. He has personal ties with Sam Hastings that raise -- in my

(MORE)

BAUER (contd)
 opinion -- unacceptable risks.
 Hastings was his first big client,
 and for years, has been the
 closest thing he's got to a
 friend. My instinct tells me --

CULLINAN
 (shouting)
 Fuck your instinct! Pay St. John
 whatever he wants! That's my
 instinct!

21 INSERT - CLOSE UP - WALLACE FURMAN

21

WALLACE FURMAN, the only heir to an old family fortune,
 is soft and pasty and looks like 33 going on 53. He is
 wearing a white shirt, tie and blue blazer with the
 family crest. He is reading into a closed-circuit
 camera.

WALLACE
 ... so let us move ahead -- with
 energy, compassion and united by
 the, uh, vision of what New
 Mexico can be if only we dare
 to make it so.

Wallace, finished with the reading, relaxes noticeably.
 He lets out his breath and grins like a happy kid. We
 can hear a CHAIR SCRAPING THE FLOOR as it is pushed back,
 and SOMEONE WALKING ON A HARDWOOD FLOOR, as an unseen
 woman starts to talk.

WOMAN (VO)
 (affected finishing
 school inflection)
 You were so ... so ... Powerful!
 Your strength, darling! It
 just flowed ... right out of
 the screen. I'm not just saying
 that, you --

IRENE FURMAN, 29, suddenly joins her husband on the
 screen. We realize that she is the woman who has been
 talking. She is wearing the same blue blazer and crest,
 but other than that, is his physical opposite. While he
 is soft and indistinct, she is all sharp edges and angles
 and exudes a visceral intensity.

21 CONTD

21

IRENE (contd)
 (grabbing his arm
 proudly)
 -- are so strong ... in a nice,
 understated way.

She turns TO THE CAMERA, and Wallace, without saying a thing, clearly defers to her. She is in charge now.

IRENE (contd)
 Granted, I may be a bit biased,
 Mr. St. John, but you've got to
 admit that Wallace has just got
 that certain, you know ...

There is a pause. She and Wallace, suddenly looking hopeful, are still staring TOWARD THE CAMERA.

22 INT: CONTROL ROOM - DAY

22

Pete is sitting between TWO TECHNICIANS at the control panel overlooking the studio. He flips a switch and speaks into a studio mike.

PETE
 Mrs. Furman, Wallace, I'll be
 right down.

He gets up and starts to walk out the door at the rear of the room. He passes by Sid who has been standing in the back watching the taping.

SID
 You sure you want to handle
 this campaign?

PETE
 Why?

SID
 (incredulous)
 Why? -- If this guy were out
 there masturbating, his hand'd
 fall asleep.

The two technicians CRACK UP.

PETE
 We've got nothing to lose.
 Anything he gets over 35% makes
 us look good ... and it pays
 the overhead.

He exits.

23 INT: STUDIO - DAY

23

Pete walks briskly up to Wallace and Irene.

ANGLE - WALLACE AND IRENE

as they stare, stunned, at Pete. Studio lights are being shut off and the room darkens as we hear THE STUDIO CREW EXIT. Pete pauses as he decides how to frame his next comments.

PETE

Wallace, you're running for governor. It's not going to be easy. What we're aiming for -- the ideal -- is that you personify the themes in the campaign. That you make a statement just by standin' up. Our themes are new ideas, new directions, change, vigor. No offense, but, uh ...

(pauses, then plunges ahead)

... right now, you look too soft to change a tire, much less a state.

IRENE

(furious)

That's ridiculous!

WALLACE

(hurt)

What are you saying?

IRENE

He's saying you're a wimp.

PETE

What I'm saying is we gotta align the perception with the reality. I want you to go on a high protein diet, and start working out on a Nautilus -- three times a week, minimum.

WALLACE

(downcast)

Yeah.

PETE

We're also gonna work on punchin' up your delivery. Energize it, make it track with the message.

(MORE)

PETE (contd)
(pause, stares at
Wallace)

OK?

WALLACE
(beaten down)

OK.

PETE
Let's talk a little about color.
Sid'll take you to this guy we
use on 57th Street for a couple
of dozen shirts once we get set
on the shades. I don't want you
in blue or grey. It's too cold
for you. You're running in New
Mexico you look a little ...
washed out. Don't you get
outside at all?

Wallace, clearly embarrassed, starts to STAMMER for an
answer. Finally,

IRENE
(put out)
I've asked him to stay out of
the sun because his entire family
has a history of skin cancer.

PETE
(pause)
But you've never gotten it?

WALLACE
(softly)
No.

PETE
But that's long-term exposure,
right? This'd only be the next
six months.
(pauses, looks hard
at Wallace)
I don't see anything to worry
about.

WALLACE
I'm paying you. You work for me.
You're trying to run my life!

PETE

You're paying me to make you a new life -- politics. And in order for me to do that -- to create you this exciting new life -- I gotta be in charge of all the elements that go into it. It's the only way I work. That means framing the overall strategy and deciding all the specifics: the look of the campaign -- the look of the billboards and bumper stickers, and what colors they'll be. That means the polling, that means the ads: TV, radio, and newspaper. That means coordinating every public statement out of this office to make sure it fits into what our polling tells us the folks out there are worried about -- or what they're feelin' good about. Don't make a joke that I haven't laughed at first. What it means, Wallace, is that you don't go to the bathroom without first walkin' over to the phone and tellin' me or Sid you gotta go Number One.

Wallace and Irene seem stunned, Finally,

WALLACE

Besides the campaign themes, I'd like to address some of my long-range plans for state government.

PETE

I'm sure they're all great, but they aren't important right now. My job is to get you in. Once you're there, Wallace, you do whatever your conscience tells you.

Pete is flying to keep his dinner appointment in Washington.

24 CONTD

24

PILOT (VO)
 Washington Approach Control.
 Lear 804, 20 miles NE, level
 5,000. Inbound with latest
 information.

25 INT: HASTINGS' DINING ROOM - NIGHT

25

Pete is having dinner with his first major client and friend, SENATOR SAM HASTINGS, 43, handsome, craggy, ambitious; and his wife, CLAIRE HASTINGS, 37, chic and bright. By a glance between them, WE CAN SEE that something is bothering them.

SAM
 (trying to affect
 nonchalance)
 I don't know if we can afford
 you any more, Pete.

PETE
 (smiling)
 You won't have to, Senator.
 I'm like Mother Theresa -- my
 work's only for the truly needy.

ANGLE - SAM AND CLAIRE

as, unnoticed by Pete, they exchange a troubled look
 across the table.

PETE (contd)
 I ran into Phil Keelson. Said
 he saw you at the Aspen Conference
 last month.

SAM
 (guarded)
 How's Phil doing?

PETE
 OK. He said he was impressed
 by the paper you gave on solar
 generation.

SAM
 (exploring)
 He showed it to you?

Pete nods affirmatively.

SAM (contd)
 (suddenly tense)
 What did you think?

PETE
 What else? That new design works, the shakeout would be incredible! I mean if the thing got funded and actually worked -- Christ, by 1995, 2000 you're talkin' about just in the Sun-belt alone -- what? ... 30, 40 percent of the population. So that's the utilities -- electric, gas, fuel oil all takin' a dive.
 (pause)
 This has got to have leaked by now. You and the committee must be gettin' squeezed like hell.

SAM
 (thin smile)
 The usual.

CUT TO:

PETE
 (upbeat)
 I got a call from Ron Levenson about handling the radio-TV buys again. I don't have any problems -- his agency's OK, and they've done us some favors.

Pete glances at Sam, who doesn't reply.

PETE (contd)
 Just to set a kind of general baseline I brought down the 1980 numbers to --

SAM
 (interrupting,
 uncomfortable)
 Pete, this was, uh, my mistake.

ANGLE - PETE

as he looks at Sam uncomprehendingly.

SAM (contd)

(halting)

When I spoke to Sid ... naturally,
given the timing ... she assumed --

Sam is interrupted by a CHOKED GASP from Claire, who bows her head and starts to tremble at the table.

CLAIRE

God ...

Pete looks aghast as Claire, murmuring "Excuse me," suddenly gets up and half-walks, half-runs out of the room. Sam, who is also fighting emotion, turns back to him.

SAM

(in a rush)

I'm not running again ... I've
made the decision -- it's done.
I'm not feeling well, I'm ill --
that's what will come out.

Sam, by now ashen, is almost out of breath as he sits and faces Pete across the table.

PETE

(gently)

Sam, listen, I --

SAM

(more panicked)

It's over, Pete! I'm sorry
about the campaign, but it's
over!

PETE

(forceful)

Fuck the campaign -- just tell
me how you're going to be.

Pete's question seems to throw Sam. He stares at Pete for a few seconds while he tries to think of the answer.

SAM

I'll be all right.

Sam forces a smile.

PETE

It's not ... terminal?

SAM

No ... it's, uh ...

(pause)

Pete, a little later, when we have some time, we'll talk ...

(pause)

I asked you down here ... first, to tell you, but also to ask you to help me with a statement. I don't want to get into specifics -- but I want it unequivocal.

(weak smile)

I thought you'd be the guy to write it.

PETE

When do you want this?

SAM

I had my press secretary call a news conference for ten in the morning.

PETE

(incredulous)

Tomorrow?

Sam nods. Pete studies him as if trying to look inside his skull and find the real story.

PETE (contd)

You know you can postpone this for a couple of days, and --

SAM

(passionate)

NO!

Pete is clearly taken aback by Sam's vehemence. He looks at him for a few seconds, then starts to clear the table for space to write. Suddenly, he looks up.

PETE

Then you're gonna have to call some people tonight and let 'em know before they hear it on the news.

SAM
(shaking his head in
embarrassment that he
forgot such an obvious
political move)
Of course ... you're right.

PETE
(starting to write)
OK — there's the Majority
Leader, Pennsylvania Party
Chairman, the ...
(stops, looks up
at Sam)
I'm really sorry, Sam. You're
one of the three or four guys
who have made a difference up
there.

CLOSE UP - SAM

as he seems moved by Pete's comment.

DISSOLVE TO:

27 INT: PETE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

27

Pete, obviously distraught, is sitting on his bed with his
headphones on, pounding out Krupa on his practice pad.
The PHONE RINGS. Pete throws down his sticks and leans
over to pick it up.

PETE
(eager, hoping
it's Sam)
Yeah?

INTERCUT - PETE AND CALLER

CALLER
Mr. St. John?

PETE
(disappointed)
Who are you?

CALLER
My name is Arnold Bauer. I'm
calling in behalf of Jerome
Cade.

PETE

(annoyed)

Never heard of him.

BAUER

Yes, I know. I'm calling to see if we can arrange an introduction. Mr. Cade will be running for Senator Hastings' seat.

PETE

How'd you find out?

BAUER

(pause)

We just heard ...

PETE

He's gonna enter the primary?

BAUER

Yes, but I expect he'll be unopposed.

PETE

I seriously doubt that.

BAUER

Nonetheless, that is the opinion here. The filing deadline's the first. We're already organized to collect signatures ... He's well-known within Pennsylvania, and the Senate is something he's given a lot of thought to.

The room is filled with the usual mix of politicians, journalists, bureaucrats, and Administration types. Pete's former partner and mentor, WILFRED BUCKLEY, 62, is walking to his table. Wilfred, slightly overweight, dressed in an expensive but vaguely ill-fitting business suit, is moving through the crowded room like a rumpiled barge, being greeted as he passes each table, and stopping to chat. From the snatches of conversation, we're able to pick up ("Yeah, it was outa the damn blue ... Nope, haven't heard a thing.") we can tell that news of Sam's resignation has already spread like wildfire.

28 CONTD.

28 CONTD.

ANGLE-WILFRED

as he reaches a table at the far end of the room where, waiting for him is ELLEN FREEMAN, 35, Pete's ex-wife and a political writer for the Washington Post.

WILFRED

(as he sits down,
West Virginia Drawl)
I hear you're finally gonna resign
from the paper and do some good in
the world.

ELLEN

Good morning, Wilfred. I was worried
for a while I was going to break our
string.

WILFRED

I got your message that you were in
London last week.

ELLEN

Yes, Leonard and I were summoned again by
our news editor for some "in depth pre-planning
of our American election coverage."

(pause)

What have you heard about Sam Hastings?

WILFRED

Nothin' — just that he's supposed to
be sick.

ELLEN

No ideas?

WILFRED

You writin' this down, Ellen, honey?

ELLEN

Just curious.

WILFRED

All I know is —

Wilfred is interrupted by a waiter who has walked up.

WAITER

Have you decided?

ELLEN

Do you have fresh-squeezed orange juice? You didn't have it the last time.

WAITRESS

We have it.

ELLEN

OK, I'll have a glass of that -- large, an English muffin and coffee.

WILFRED

I'll have that juice, too, but why don't ya have 'em throw some ice and vodka into mine?

WAITRESS

Anything else?

WILFRED

A doughnut -- plain.

The waitress leaves.

WILFRED (contd)

All I know is, I ran into him three weeks ago at the Gridiron thing, an' everything's great. He looks great -- like usual -- feels good, just had his physical at Walter Reed. Everything checked out, an' uh ...

(looks quizzically at Ellen)

all of a sudden he's takin' a walk from the U.S. Senate 'cause he ain't feelin' good?

ELLEN

It happens sometimes -- you're flying high and ... look at Zerner. All these years, he finally gets the committee chair, and they find a tumor the size of a grapefruit. If you haven't heard, they took it out yesterday -- it was benign.

WILFRED

Gotta be the only part of that sonovabitch ain't malignant.

Ellen starts laughing and choking on her coffee.

ELLEN

(pause)

Among other things ...

(pause)

This leaves Mr. St. John without
one of his "A" clients.

WILFRED

(pensive)

How's the boy doin' lately?
Have you heard?

ELLEN

I called last week, he was in
South America. He's doing the
Peruvian Presidential Campaign.

WILFRED

(teasing)

You two gettin' back together?

ELLEN

(reddening)

No more than you are.

(pause)

As a matter of fact, we've
finally got it all ironed out.
He's worked out his problems
about making a lifetime commit-
ment by becoming a permanent
source.

(pause)

Have you seen him?

Wilfred shakes his head negatively.

ELLEN (contd)

You're in the New Mexico guber-
natorial race -- Frank McKuster,
right?

WILFRED

Yeah.

ELLEN

Then you'll be seeing him real
soon.

WILFRED

(startled)

He's got Wallace Furman?

ELLEN

I heard he signed on this week.

WILFRED

(bitter)

Why not? -- Get the best money
can buy.

ELLEN

He is the best -- he's really
good! I don't know, it's --

(stops, smiles rue-
fully at Wilfred)

How come when you and I get
together, we always end up
sounding like a couple of
ladies bitching about their
ex-husbands?

WILFRED

(faint smile back)

Yeah, let's really get into it.
Did he screw you as good as he
did me?

(suddenly emotional)

Sometimes I look at him and he
seems the same! You really were
married to him -- so tell me:
when did it happen? I keep
thinking back and I can't figure
it out. When did he start think-
ing it didn't matter anymore?

29 INT: PETE'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

29

Pete is sitting half-dressed at a table with a half-
eaten breakfast. Sam, who has just entered, is standing
uncomfortably near the door.

PETE

I never heard of the guy, and
he's got me on the phone an
hour -- fifty-five minutes --
after you made the calls.

SAM (VO)

(slow, deliberate)

I'm not surprised. We knew
it would get around.

PETE

Who is he?

SAM

Bauer or Cade?

PETE

Either.

SAM

I met Bauer once. He's in Washington. I believe he has a public relations firm, I'm not exactly sure.

(pause)

Cade owns a number of businesses — trucking, something with pipelines, bottling — most in the midwest. He's made some large contributions to the state party. He got a lot of publicity last year — headed by some blue-ribbon commission on governmental waste.

PETE

Whaddaya think?

SAM

About what?

PETE

(impatient)

Cade — should I take him on?

SAM

(pause)

I'd give it some serious thought.

(quickly nods toward
a paper lying on the
coffee table)

That's the new draft?

PETE

(picks it up and
hands it to him)

Yeah ... that's it.

CUT TO:

Wilfred and Ellen are finished with breakfast. They get up from the table and start to walk out toward the lobby.

WILFRED

Ya know, I had a chance to work
in Pennsylvania.

(chuckling)

Sheeit -- I got a call from
Professor Philip Aarons, teaches
history at Penn State. Bright
as hell. He's gonna run as an
independent. Can't pay nothin',
but it's been some fun. Only
thing is ...

(pause)

This ol' fart's gotta start
thinkin' of his battin' average.

He winks at Ellen as they enter

31 INT: HOTEL LOBBY - MORNING

31

where Pete is standing at the cashier's window checking
out. Pete turns to pick up his luggage and they simul-
taneously spot each other.

PETE

As I live and breathe ...

(turns to Wilfred)

Hello, darling.

This sets the usual tone for their conversations -- a
rough, personal humor to try to mask their bittersweet
past. They smile at each other and say hello.

WILFRED

Sorry to hear about Sam.

PETE

(suddenly guarded)

Yeah.

ELLEN

How's Claire taking it?

PETE

She's doing all right ... so
is he.

ELLEN

(gently probing)

Is it cancer? I know his
physical last month was good,
and --

31 CONTD

31

PETE

(abrupt)

His press conference's at 10.

Ellen makes an expression indicating she gave it a shot
and accepts his putdown.

ELLEN

Going back to New York?

PETE

Seattle.

Pete picks up his luggage and starts to walk to the door,
indicating that they walk with him.

ELLEN

(sneer)

It's encouraging you can take
time off from Furman -- one
would think that'd be a full-
time job.

PETE

(weary, shaking head)

Christ ... ever read our decree?
It says no harassment.

They walk out the main entrance to

32 EXT: HOTEL - DAY

32

The doorman takes Pete's bags and deposits them into a
waiting taxi.

WILFRED

(trying to change
subject)

I hear we'll be runnin' into
each other 'round New Mexico.

PETE

(brightening)

How about we keep it close 'til
the last week, then flip a coin?

Wilfred doesn't react as Pete starts to get into the taxi.

ELLEN

(still smarting)

I saw you on Brinkley -- it's
incredible but I think you're

(MORE)

32 CONTD

32

ELLEN (contd)
actually more arrogant since
we got divorced.

Pete stops half-in, half-out of the taxi and turns to Ellen.

PETE
Hey, look -- don't go blamin'
yourself.

Before she can reply, he gets in, shuts the door, and the taxi peels away.

33 INT: PETE'S PLANE - DAY

33

Pete, carrying his luggage and briefcase, steps inside. Sid is waiting for him.

PETE
(surprised)
I thought you were supposed to
be seein' 'em now.

SID
(clipped)
Governor Jackson is paying for
Mr. St. John. The governor
prefers getting the entire
briefing from Mr. St. John.

Pete looks at Sid, then shrugs (as if to indicate that's understandable) as he takes his seat.

SID (contd)
You're meeting with Jerome Cade
at nine-thirty.

PETE
(startled)
Tomorrow?

SID
His people called. You'll be
going flat-out the rest of the
week, and they wanted it as
soon as possible.
(pause)
I can call back and postpone.
You know you don't have to take
him on. Besides Jackson in
Seattle, we've still got Capeda,
and Furman in New Mexico's going
to take a lot of time.

33 CONTD.

33 CONTD.

PETE

It's all right.

(pause)

You take care of the background
on Cade?

SID

It'll be done tonight.

PILOT (VO)

We'll be landing in Seattle in
fifteen minutes. I called ahead
and confirmed your transportation.
It's waiting there now.

CUT TO:

34 EXT: SEATTLE SPACE NEEDLE - DAY
ESTABLISHING SHOT

34A INT: SPACE NEEDLE ELEVATOR - DAY

Pete and Andrea are riding up in the elevator crowded with Andrea's people.

PETE

It boils down to this, Governor ...

START SLOW PAN toward still unseen governor.

PETE (contd)

We don't wait for Murdoch to
bust our balls -- we jump his.
You saw Howie's breakdown:
You're gettin' killed on the
death penalty veto. Ever wonder
why the Eastwood movies make
so much dough up here? And then
there's the ... uh ... divorce.
Not so much that you split up,
but

(starts to chuckle)

We had been pushing the family
image during the first campaign.

Pete's last comment triggers NERVOUS LAUGHTER

CUT TO:

34B INT: SPACE NEEDLE RESTAURANT - DAY

and WE SEE GOVERNOR ANDREA STANNARD, 44, exuding a clear, commanding
presence. She is intelligent, stylish, hard-driving.

34B CONTD.

34B CONTD.

ANDREA

(cool)

I read the report this morning,
Pete. Not unexpected ... though
the fact that the resentment
has lasted this long was ...
surprising.

PETE

Yeah, well, if you go through
the focus group interviews, you
see they keep bringing up how
you married your campaign manager,
and then, uh ...

(suddenly enthusiastic)
they also keep mentioning the
campfire spot — Harry cooking
eggs over the fire for the kids
while you're splittin' wood.
Almost four years ago! Helluva
spot!

Andrea starts to laugh which triggers, like a polite
echo, the NERVOUS LAUGHTER of her aides who were anxiously
awaiting her reaction. Andrea, still CHUCKLING, turns to
DAVID GARBER, 37, her handsome — and younger — husband —
campaign manager. David, sitting in a smaller chair to
her immediate left, is the only one in the room who isn't
laughing.

ANDREA

The election's this fall! I've
got to teach you how to cook!

This prompts RENEWED LAUGHTER from everyone except her
husband, who forces a strained smile.

PETE

This is my recommendation: We
advance the media buys three
weeks, shift the money from the
fall schedule if we have to, and
blow him away now — back him off
before he nails you for motherin'
killers and dumpin' Harry and the
kids.

ANGLE - DAVID

as, his face red, he slams his hand on the table.

DAVID

She didn't dump them!

34B CONTD.

34B CONTD.

David's outburst is followed by a tense silence.

ANGLE ON ANDREA

as she coolly considers her options. She raises her head and her eyes lock with Pete standing across the room. They are on instant synch — she nods her head "Yes."

35 INT: JET - DAY

35

Pete and Sid are flying to Santa Fe. Sid is on the phone, eating a sandwich. Pete is asleep on the couch.

SID

Yes Helen. Right. What else?

36 INT: HOTEL BAR - SANTA FE - LATE AFTERNOON

36

Pete and Sid are seated in a corner table of the near-deserted lounge with Wallace, Irene and CHARLES WHITING, 53, a prominent Santa Fe lawyer who handles Wallace's financial affairs and is serving as his campaign manager. Wallace looks much different — and much better — from when we last saw him. He looks trimmer, tighter, tanned, is better dressed and has a more flattering haircut.

PETE

Voting — stripped of the bullshit — is an act of emotion. On November fourth we're gonna be askin' about 250,000 folks here to say "I love you" — or at least like you ... and you know how hard it is just to get your wife to do that.

Wallace and Whiting chuckle while Irene fumes.

CONTD.

37 INT: PETE'S HOTEL SUITE - SANTA FE - DAY 37

The door opens and Pete and Sid walk in followed by the others. By their expressions, they don't know exactly what to expect.

38 ANGLE - VIDEO SCREEN 38

A large video screen has been installed on a corner table. A portable speaker and a microphone sit next to it.

39 ANGLE - CHARLES, IRENE AND WALLACE 39

as they look at each other incredulously while Pete walks around pulling the drapes to darken the room. Sid is on the phone talking to the operator to get things ready for transmission.

PETE

(checking his watch)

We leased 30 minutes of satellite time. They'll be beaming him in about 90 seconds. Just pull your chairs close to the mike so he can hear you.

Though not sure what is going on, they start arranging their chairs in a half-circle around the screen and speaker.

CHARLES

Who is this guy? Captain Video?

PETE

No -- the best numbers cruncher in the free world.

(pause)

I'm gonna have to head back to New York in about ten minutes, but Sid'll be stayin' here the next couple of days to make sure everything's on line.

IRENE

(annoyed)

I thought you were going to be in charge.

PETE

I am, Mrs. Furman. I'm in over-all charge. Fortunately, Sid's consented to make sure I don't screw up on the details.

Pete flashes a shiteating grin at Irene, just as

40 ANGLE - SCREEN

40

It is suddenly filled with random colors and test patterns. STATIC starts to come out of one speaker. Suddenly, it comes into SHARP FOCUS and WE SEE a bank of mainframe computers humming industriously in an otherwise empty room. Pete walks up to the mike.

PETE

St. John to Ralph ... St. John
to Ralph.

Suddenly, we hear WHEELS ROLLING ON A FLOOR, and a few seconds later WE SEE RALPH ANDROPOWICZ, 33, a plump, pleasant Orthodox Jew roll INTO VIEW in a wheelchair, clutching sheafs of printouts.

RALPH

(shrugging apologetically into the camera)
Sorry, Pete.

PETE

No problem ... you're lookin' good, Ralph.

RALPH

(smiles)
I try.

PETE

Ralph, I've got Mr. and Mrs. Furman here, and Charles Whiting, their campaign manager. They're real excited to hear what you can do for them. Why don't you just go ahead and lay out the program, and if they have any questions, they can cut in.

RALPH

The sound level is all right?

PETE

Great.

Pete walks back to the wall where Sid is standing, leans against it and watches the screen.

RALPH

The principle is simple enough. What we do is take 1980 census data and match it against all the New Mexico ZIP codes, then
(MORE)

40 CONTD

40

RALPH (contd)

we combine that with what the field research has determined should be the targeted population clusters. In your case, we've isolated 18 neutral or favorable clusters. For example, we've concluded a high-favorable is ...

(he starts flipping

through his printouts)

"Pools and Patios" -- suburban, white-collar married 25-49 years old. We tailor the mail and phone pitches to each group based on what we already know is bothering them.

(voice mutes)

But the really exciting stuff comes when I work out a simulation model. Then you tell me what you're thinking of saying -- and I'll tell you how they're going to react! Even then, the short-range ...

AS WE SEE:

41 PETE TURN TO SID.

41

PETE

When's the focus group?

SID

Nine.

PETE

You've gone over the stuff with the psychologist? See ya on the block ...

SID

(wry smile)

See you ...

Pete smiles and then leans over and they kiss in the darkness -- then he walks over to Wallace, Irene, and Charles and leans over that he's leaving.

42 EXT: SANTA FE AIRPORT - DAY

42

Wilfred -- who has just landed after drinking for the entire trip -- is being helped down the gangway by two

42 CONTD

42

stewardesses. When they reach the tarmac, he thanks them profusely, then lurches over to a parked baggage truck which he leans against as the other passengers from his plane stream past him.

ANGLE - PETE

as he walks on the tarmac toward the plane. Wilfred spots him and walks up behind him without Pete noticing him.

WILFRED

You got a real piece of work this time. But what happens when you go home and your boy, Furman's got to stand all by himself and let folks in on whatever it is he could possibly have on his mind?

They eye each other for a few seconds without saying anything.

WILFRED (contd)

(anguished)

Goddammit ... how in hell can you sell this guy?

Pete shakes his head. He doesn't want to get into another argument with Wilfred about his clients -- especially in public.

PETE

(half-smile)

It's just for governor -- he doesn't have to be perfect.

Wilfred does not appear amused.

WILFRED

There's more than just winning. That's what I told you first time you came through the door. You used to believe in it, you used --

PETE

(on edge)

I used to believe in the tooth fairy.

42 CONTD

42

WILFRED

(shouting)

You wanta talk about fairies,
what about Willette! The man
fucks chickens!

The handlers glance at Wilfred and Pete in stunned disbelief. Wilfred, his face red, his veins bulging in his neck and forehead, stands two inches away from Pete, all of his pent-up disappointment fired by alcohol.

WILFRED (contd)

The guy goes to Haiti and gets
his rocks off drinkin' blood
and ballin' chickens. We had
pictures, for Chrissakes, but
we couldn't even use 'em! You
put a pervert in the U.S.
Congress who fucks chickens!

By now, all of the handlers are standing with their mouths open. Wilfred glares at Pete, then grabs his briefcase, whirls and half-charges, half-stumbles toward the terminal. Pete watches him for a few seconds, then turns to a handler standing next to him.

PETE

I wouldn't be concerned --
he's always exaggerating.

43 INT: JET - NIGHT

43

Pete is sleeping on the couch on his way to New York.

PILOT (VO)

LaGuardia Tower, Lear eight-
oh-four is with you over outer
marker.

CONTROLLER (VO)

Lear eight-oh-four, Roger.
Continue. Winds one-eight-
zero degrees at one-five. Lear
eight-oh-four clear to land --
Runway two-six.

44 INT: PETE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

44

Pete, in the final leg of a day and a half that has wound over the country, is sitting back, his feet on the desk, fingers pressed against the bridge of nose, staring out

44 CONTD

44

the windows at the expensive view of midtown Manhattan, trying to sort out the last 36 hours. His intercom BUZZES.

HELEN (VO)

Mr. Cade and his people are here.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he shuts his eyes, and thinks of his next move.

45 JEROME CADE AND THREE AIDES

45

entering Pete's office. Cade, 47, is surprisingly short -- about five-four -- and dressed in a conservative suit. The aides, all in their 30's are similarly dressed. Cade walks up to Pete and shakes hands.

CADE

I've been looking forward to meeting you, Mr. St. John.

PETE

(trying to lighten the atmosphere)
I hope you're going into this thing prepared to be the official hydrant for the State of Pennsylvania.

Cade responds with just a thin smile. His aides, who started to chuckle, quickly shut up.

CADE

I think you'll find, Mr. St. John, that I'm prepared for anything it takes.

PETE

That goes in the commodities market, too?

CADE

You've been making inquiries -- I'd have been concerned if you hadn't.

(leans toward Pete)

Let's expedite this -- what is it that you haven't found out yet that you want to know?

PETE
 (studies him for
 a moment)
 What's your biggest weakness?

ANGLE - CADE

as he studies Pete to make sure he understands exactly
 what Pete is asking.

CADE
 You mean in running for the
 Senate?

Pete nods.

CADE (contd)
 Probably the fact that I haven't
 held public office -- though I
 personally consider that a plus.

PETE
 It's not critical -- I mean
 you've done some public service
 stuff, and, uh ...

Pete's voice trails off as, suddenly energized by a new
 challenge, he runs over strategies in his head. Cade
 and his aides know better than to interrupt.

PETE (contd)
 ... even as far as issues, we
 could get you into a Kennedy
 School seminar, get your paper
 into the Times' op-ed page, and,
 uh --
 (looks hard at Cade)
 I take it money isn't a problem.

CADE
 No.

PETE
 (resuming thinking
 aloud)
 So you start -- I haven't done
 any polls -- but I'd guess
 about 17, 18 points down ...
 then, just by gettin' the
 nomination, that'll jump.

Pete stops talking. He and Cade look at each other a few
 seconds.

45 CONTD

45

CADE

Mr. St. John, you're with me
then?

Pete considers him silently, then abruptly stands up.
Cade and his aides also rise.

PETE

(noncommittal)

If you've got a few minutes,
there's something I want to
show you down in the basement.

CUT TO:

46 EXT: PRIVATE GEORGETOWN TENNIS COURT - NIGHT

46

Two middle-aged couples are playing a fairly proficient
game of mixed doubles on the lighted court. The game
ends, and they walk off the court.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW Ellen leaning against the fence
watching them.

CUT TO:

47 ANGLE - ELLEN AND EDITOR

47

Ellen crosses to HARRY THOMPSON, her paper's national
editor, who is toweling off. The three other players
are standing in the BG, toweling off and drinking Cokes.
She kisses him on the cheek.

ELLEN

I want to cancel the West Coast
trip. Lou can do it over the
phone from L.A. if you really
need it.

HARRY

(pause)

OK ...

ELLEN

I want to take a look into Sam
Hastings.

HARRY

(excited)

That's right! You're friendly
with him! His wife, too, right?

Ellen nods.

47 CONTD

47

HARRY (contd)
 (voice lowered)
 Have you heard anything?

ELLEN
 So far, nothing special.

HARRY
 Coordinate it with Manny --
 he's pulled a couple of people
 from Metro just to chase down
 the rumors ... Heard the
 latest?

Ellen shakes her head.

HARRY (contd)
 He's got AIDS.

ELLEN
 (mordant)
 Jesus, I love Washington.

DISSOLVE TO:

48 INT: EMPTY BASEMENT - DAY

48

We can hear a DOOR CLOSE AND THEN FOOTSTEPS in what sounds
 like a large, empty basement. After a few more seconds
 we hear --

PETE (VO)
 The Senate put in new chairs
 right before Sam's last campaign,
 so I talked him into letting me
 keep his old one -- we used it
 in four or five of his spots.

We hear Pete walk off for a few seconds, then we hear a
 CLICK as he switches on a light and WE SUDDENLY SEE Pete,
 Cade and his aides standing in the huge basement of
 Pete's office building which he uses as his warehouse.
 WE ALSO SEE the object Pete has been talking about: Sam's
 old highback Senate chair sitting amidst a hodgepodge of
 files, cartons, old lighting and sound equipment, etc.
 They all look at it for a few seconds.

PETE
 Sit in it.

Cade sits.

PETE (contd)

From here it looks a little big for you.

CADE

You're wrong, Mr. St. John. It feels quite comfortable. And please don't play games with me. I've known what I wanted for a very long time.

PETE

If you want one like it, it'll run you about ... ten, eleven million bucks.

CADE

An absurd sum, Mr. St. John ... but the real absurdity is to spend that much and not get it. So tell me: if I pay you what you want, will you be able to give me the time I require, or will you be spread too thin among your other candidates?

PETE

(somewhat taken
aback)

You'll get all the time you need, Mr. Cade.

(pause)

You know that if I sign on, it means I take control. Just so we're clear -- I'm talkin' strategy, budget, polling, media, the works.

CADE

(waving him off)

The process doesn't interest me. What does is that you have an eighty-five percent success rate, and I'm telling you now that I'll pay you to play those percentages. My sole concern, Mr. St. John, is my work after I'm elected.

PETE

Why you? Because your friend got my phone number and got to me first?

CADE

(icy)

No, Mr. St. John. Because once I get in -- and I will -- with your help or with someone else's, I can accomplish what has to be done ... change the policies that are strangling this country.

(pause, almost
patronizing)

I'm ready to begin ... are you with me?

PETE

You do know my price?

CADE

(slight smile)

Yes, I know it.

PETE

Where is Bauer?

Cade stops abruptly. For the first time, he appears slightly ruffled.

CADE

Mr. Bauer is a business acquaintance. He handles public relations work for some of my companies. He has no official position in my campaign.

PETE

(challenging)

He told me you're gonna line up with Sam on the issues -- did he get it right?

CADE

(snapping straight
up in his seat)

That's correct ...

(pause)

Except for the solar energy bill. I don't believe that approach is sound.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he shows surprise.

48 CONTD

48

PETE

I'll give you my answer tomorrow.

CUT TO:

49 INT: CONFERENCE ROOM - SANTA FE - DAY

49

DR. HOWARD BERNHARDT, 34, the behavioral psychologist whom Pete uses to run focus group interviews, is sitting with a group representing a cross-section of the New Mexico electorate: AN ELDERLY INDIAN WOMAN, AN ELDERLY WHITE MAN, A MIDDLE-AGED WHITE EXECUTIVE, A WHITE HOUSE-WIFE, AN HISPANIC BLUE-COLLAR WORKER, A WHITE COLLEGE STUDENT, A BLACK IRONWORKER, A HISPANIC STOCKBROKER.

HOWARD

(tossing out question)

What do you think of someone of great wealth?

IRONWORKER

I think it must be awful sweet.

The rest of the group starts laughing.

HOWARD

All right, we've got this hypothetical millionaire. Knowing that he's rich, would you trust him more or less. Or would it make any difference?

There is silence for a few seconds, as the group mulls over the question.

ELDERLY WHITE MAN

You can't say just like that. You'd have to know him.

Howard glances around to see if there are any other responses forthcoming.

HOWARD

OK. Same hypothetical millionaire, except now he's holding political office. Would you trust him more or less as a politician, or would it make no difference?

ELDERLY BLACK WOMAN

(tentative)

More.

49 CONTD

49

 HOWARD
 (probing)
 Why more?

 WOMAN
 Well ... he's already rich.

 HISPANIC
 (emphatic, seizing
 the woman's point)
 That's right. He already made
 the money. He's too smart to
 risk goin' to the can for
 stealin'.

The rest of the group, also seized by the logic of the
argument, LOUDLY CONCUR.

CAMERA PULLS BACK through a mirror on one wall TO REVEAL
that it is a one-way glass and WE SEE

ANGLE - SID, WALLACE, IRENE AND CHARLES

as they stand on the other side intently studying the
session.

50 INT: JET - DAY

50

Pete is flying to Washington.

 PILOT (VO)
 Sorry about the coffee. I'll
 get some fresh ground in
 Washington.

 PETE
 (clearly in a bad
 mood)
 Terrific.

50A EXT: PROMENADE BY WASHINGTON MONUMENT REFLECTING
 POOL - DAY

50A

Pete is walking with Sam.

 PETE
 (agitated)
 No, you explain it to me: He's
 with you except on solar! That's
 like sayin' he's with Steinem
 except on women!

50A CONTD

50A

SAM
I don't understand, Pete.
We've been friends, but, uh ...
you were never much interested
in how your clients stood on
the issues, anyway.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he is struck by Sam's last remark.

PETE
I am now.

SAM
Why?

PETE
Because he'll be replacing you.

SAM
(very uncomfortable)
Look, what's the big problem?
Take him on!

Pete looks at him strangely.

CUT TO:

51 INT: HASTINGS' HOUSE - DAY

51

Ellen is sitting with Claire in her living room.

CLAIRE
Thanks for your note, Ellen.
It meant a lot to us -- it
really did.

ELLEN
I meant what I wrote in it.
It's a huge loss for the country
-- Sam is what the Senate is all
about.

CLAIRE
(moved)
Thank you.

ELLEN
(looking around)
Your new house is absolutely
beautiful.

CLAIRE

(startled)

You haven't been here before?

ELLEN

(softly)

No.

CLAIRE

(embarrassed)

I feel terrible! I can't believe it.

ELLEN

(consoling)

It's my fault. It's crazy -- but when people get divorced they just seem to lose track of their old friends. I think it's because we think you'll feel awkward, that you'll feel forced to take sides.

(pause, softly)

At least, that's how I felt. Sam is so close to Pete, that I ...

Ellen's voice trails off as she and Claire look intently at each other and share what seems to be a moment of closeness.

ELLEN (contd)

I really support your decision to keep the details of the illness a family matter.

CLAIRE

Thanks -- it's been very hard.

ELLEN

I can understand.

(pause)

Will Sam be getting treatments here or in Pennsylvania?

CLAIRE

(guarded)

That hasn't been determined yet.

ELLEN

How are the kids taking it?

51 CONTD

51

CLAIRE

I'm so proud of them! They've
been great! So strong!

(starts to get
emotional)

I wouldn't have made it without
those guys.

ELLEN

How's your mother doing?

CLAIRE

(softly)

The last week's been pretty
tough on her. We speak every
night on the phone, I try to tell
her that she shouldn't worry,
but she feels frustrated because
she isn't strong enough to fly
up here.

ELLEN

She's in Miami?

CLAIRE

No, she moved back to New
Orleans a couple of years ago.

CLOSE UP - ELLEN

as she digests the last piece of information.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 INT: RALPH'S COMPUTER ROOM - DAY
ANGLE - RALPH

52

Ralph, completely at ease in his self-made environment,
is in the midst of a computer run -- frenetically rolling
from one terminal to another in his wheelchair (with a
"Caution. I brake for small animals" bumper sticker
pasted on the back). Pete brings Ralph a cup of coffee
and pours one for himself.

RALPH

Congratulations, Mr. Big Shot.
I saw you in People.

PETE

Damn thing's like the phone book.
You gotta make a special effort
to keep yourself out.

RALPH

(waiving him off)

I got nothing more here than yellow pages.

PETE

Ralph, I can't give you anything specific to look for -- maybe his client list -- if you could just take a pass by all the probable data banks, I'd appreciate it.

RALPH

If they're international, we could try for wire transfers. But don't hold your breath -- ever since those kids started breaking into everything, everyone's gone meshuggeh on access codes.

PETE

I'm not expectin' much -- even tryin' a run through the standard industry stuff -- like that trade lobby job we did.

RALPH

Billings Associates is a privately held corporation, so that don't help. Billings is the only listed officer.

(pause)

You need this by when?

PETE

As soon as possible. I'm flyin' down to Bogota -- but it'll just be for 24 hours. I'll be in New Mexico the next couple of days and then Ohio the rest of the week.

(pause)

Ralph, I know you're busy as hell.

Ralph waves his hand to indicate it's nothing, then reaches out and shakes Pete's hand.

RALPH

Have a safe trip.

Pete starts to walk out.

52 CONTD

52

RALPH (contd)
(calling out)

Pete!

Pete stops and turns.

RALPH (contd)
How's the Peru guy doing?

Pete lights up.

PETE
He's gonna take it.

CUT TO:

53 EXT: MAIN SQUARE - LIMA - DAY

53

Thousands of cheering, festive supporters fill the same square where weeks earlier Roberto's rally was bombed. Roberto is speaking from the same platform at the far end of the square -- only now he is giving his victory speech for the election he won the day before. (His speech is translated by English subtitles.)

ANGLE - PETE AND JOHN DIETRICH

as they stand beneath a Colonial colonnade at one side of the square watching Roberto.

ROBERTO
... we celebrate not my personal
victory, but our victory!

The crowd breaks into LOUD CHEERS AND APPLAUSE.

ROBERTO (contd)
Your votes yesterday proclaimed
OUR independence -- OUR declara-
tion that we shall decide our own
economic future, our --

Roberto is again interrupted by LOUD CHEERS AND APPLAUSE as the CAMERA PANS across the huge crowd noise and ROBERTO'S VOICE MUTES. WE PASS OVER the blocks of commercial and apartment buildings on the other side of the square until WE COME TO a large, modern glass skyscraper looming over the city. On the top of the building is a large "Five-Star Oil" sign.

CUT TO:

54 INT. NEW YORK STUDIO - NIGHT

54

It is a state-of-the-art film tape and sound mixing studio.

Sid is seated at the control board between two technicians, each commanding different dials. As the mechanic continues to talk, they look up at the bank of monitors.

55 CLOSE UP - AUTO MECHANIC - DAY

55

He appears to be in his late 30's or early 40's. His face is brown, weathered and, above all, honest. He's wearing a tee-shirt.

MECHANIC

I don't know much about millionaires, but I do know this...

ANGLE - SID

as she turns to TECHNICIAN 1 on her left.

SID

He looks a little pale. Give me some more chroma.

TECHNICIAN 1

You got it.

He hits a couple of knobs and the color changes. The tape continues.

MECHANIC

They're not in politics for the money. They already got that...

SID

A little bit more.

TECHNICIAN 1

How's that?

SID

OK, from the top, and bump up the audio -- we're going to be mixing it with music.

CONTINUED

55 CONTD

55 CONTD

THE MECHANIC TAPE - SID now likes him as he begins TALKING again...

MECHANIC

I don't know much about millionaires, but I do know this: They're not in politics for the money. They already got that. So when it comes time to leave, an' they still have all those millions of dollars, you don't have to wonder where it come from. It's the new millionaires leavin' Santa Fe that makes ya wonder. The way I see it, I'd rather have a rich one goin' in than a rich one comin' out.

CUT TO:

BLUE AND WHITE CAMPAIGN LOGO: "FURMAN FOR GOVERNOR" as we hear

THE VOICE

Wallace Furman, a governor we can trust.

56 INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN - DAY

56

where WE SEE the advisory "entry not found" flashing on the screen.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW a clearly discouraged Ralph at the terminal. After a few seconds, he launches a new plan of attack and types: "Advert., Pub. Rel. Firms, U.S."

WE SEE typed: "search -- Billings Associates." WE SEE the

CONTINUED.....

61

56

56 CONTD

advisory "searching" flashing on the screen for about ten seconds, until it is suddenly replaced by "entry not found." In frustration, WE SEE Ralph's hands slam against the sides of the screen.

JUMP CUT TO:

57

57 ANGLE - RALPH

Three hours later. It is late afternoon and he is putting on his jacket and getting ready to leave. He is wheeling out of the room, when he passes the terminal he had been working on. He stops, stares at it, then moves to the keyboard to give it one more shot.

58

58 INSERT - SCREEN

WE SEE Ralph accessing into a file headed "Annual Reports, U.S., Corps." He then types: "search: 'contracts -- consulting, 'Bauer Associates" and hits the "execute" command. WE THEN SEE the advisory "searching" flash on the screen.

59

59 ANGLE - RALPH

as he waits impatiently for the result. He looks toward the door then back to the screen. Finally, he wheels out of the room and turns off the lights, as CAMERA PANS BACK TO:

INSERT - SCREEN

and WE SEE the pale green advisory "searching" still flashing.

CUT TO:

60

60 INT: JET - NIGHT

Pete is flying to New Mexico. He has computer printouts and thick looseleaf campaign research manuals spread out on a desk in front of him. While he is reading them, he is unconsciously tapping two pens to the Krupa beat.

CUT TO:

61

61 INT: RALPH'S COMPUTER ROOM

As the CAMERA PANS across the room to the screen, WE SEE that in the space of several hours, about ten companies have been found which have listed Bauer Associates as a

61 CONTD

61

contracted consultant. Suddenly, another company name flashes onto the list, as the advisory "searching" is still flashing on the screen.

As the CAMERA ZOOMS IN WE CAN SEE that all of the companies are in the energy field. The last one is "Five-Star Oil."

62 EXT: NEW MEXICO PRAIRIE - DAY
ANGLE - PETE

62

as he is standing next to a helicopter talking to Jan who is strapped into a jerry-built rig so he can hang outside the chopper and shoot film. Pete, wearing a stopwatch around his neck, suddenly turns toward the pilot, gives a "thumbs-up" signal, and the chopper rises, with Jan hanging outside, stirring up a huge cloud of dust. Pete runs back toward his command center -- a group of trucks and vans parked 30 yards away. He jumps on the back of a flatbed truck which has the radio equipment hooking him up with the chopper pilot, and his production assistants scattered across the prairie. He grabs a handset from his ASSISTANT, a 22-year-old woman, and starts talking to the chopper pilot as he follows its flight toward the horizon where it stops and starts to hover.

PETE

That looks good from here. Can you see 'em?

PILOT (VO)

(amidst static)

Affirmative. We can see the whole thing.

PETE

You're at 50 feet?

PILOT (VO)

Affirmative.

PETE

OK, stand by.

Pete turns towards the radio console and switches to another channel.

PETE (contd)

Eddie, can you read me?

EDDIE (VO)

(amidst static)

Yeah -- go ahead.

PETE
Everything lined up?

EDDIE (VO)
Yeah, we finally got it, but you better hurry up.

PETE
OK, give 'em the signal ... NOW!
(starts the stopwatch
and quickly switches
back to other channel
to speak to pilot)
Get ready, they're comin'!

PILOT (VO)
Roger!

PETE
(to assistant)
As soon as you see him, start
readin' the script, I want to
rough time this.

The assistant reaches over and grabs a clipboard with the script and joins Pete in staring toward the horizon. Suddenly WE SEE just a cowboy hat, and then the torso of what appears to be a cowboy, and finally the figure of a man on horseback riding over the horizon. As soon as WE SEE the hat,

PETE (contd)
Go!

ASSISTANT
New Mexico is a special land,
blessed with mountains, deserts,
clean air and pure waters. But
besides her natural resources,
our state has been blessed with
its human resources -- from the
proud Apache and Navajo tribes
who first hunted and planted
here to --

63 WE NOW SEE following Wallace over the horizon is a 63
wagon train with men, women and children in western
dress, along with other horseback riders riding
alongside. Wallace is heading directly toward us.
The chopper, ITS NOISE GETTING LOUDER, is also getting
closer as it stays just above and in front of Wallace.

ASSISTANT (contd)

... to our long history of people who have journeyed here. Whether they came from Mexico or England or Europe or Asia or from other parts of the country, they all shared a common dream: to live in a land where their opportunities were limited only by their own vision, and to make this special place even better for their own children and other generations. We are surely blessed by that heritage. Wallace Furman believes that pioneer spirit is still alive, and remembering our past can help us find our future.

Wallace is now just twenty yards away. Pete suddenly holds up his hand, and Wallace stops. The chopper is now just overhead, the ROTOR NOISE is tremendous, and Wallace's horse is clearly skittish. As the assistant winds up with the tag line ...

ASSISTANT (contd)

Wallace Furman, a governor we can trust.

Suddenly, the horse, by now terrified by the chopper, starts to rear. Wallace, taken by surprise, holds on to the reins with one hand, and instinctively grabs his cowboy hat with the other to keep it from falling to the ground. Wallace comes tumbling off the horse.

PETE (VO)

Shit!

CUT TO:

64 People are running to Wallace who seems unhurt.

64

PETE

Damn it ... Let's set it up again.

A.D.

It'll be close to an hour, Pete. I don't know if we'll have enough light left.

PETE

It's \$50,000 to come back and redo it.

65

64 CONTD

64

A.D.
Also the weather prediction is
bad for tomorrow.

PETE
Wait a minute.

Pete goes dashing into the TV truck.

65 INT: TV TRUCK

65

PETE
(to technician)
Let me see it from the top.

The technician rewinds the tape and WE NOW SEE THE SHOT on
the TV monitors as it was shot from the chopper.

PETE (contd)
Run it back just a little.

The technician does.

PETE (contd)
Now forward.

The image moves.

PETE
Freeze it!

The image freezes. WE SEE Wallace's horse on its rear
legs, its front legs pawing the air. Wallace, his hat
held high above his head is looking at us, with mouth
open. It looks like John Wayne on a movie poster.

PETE
Let's go home!

66 OMIT
thru
69

66
thru
69

70. EXTREME CLOSE UP - WHITE-HAIRED WOMAN

70

LUCILLE DEWITT, 73, Claire's mother. She has a
pronounced New Orleans accent.

LUCILLE
When I first met Sam -- this
now was right after they'd run
off to Maryland to get married
(MORE)

LUCILLE (contd)
 -- they walked into this room,
 and I'll tell you the truth --
 it's shameful -- I fell in love
 with him myself. I promise I
 did. I loved him to death.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW her, handsome in a pale yellow dress, sitting in a modest apartment filled with old family pictures. We can't see to whom she is talking.

LUCILLE (contd)
 I still do. I told Sam that
 if he ever decided to leave
 Claire -- if she wasn't taking
 care of him right -- then he
 should come to me, and I'd take
 care of him, yes I would ...
 Their children, they are so ...
 (nods toward picture
 of the three Hastings'
 kids)
 ... so precious. Bobbie, he's
 the oldest, that boy is the ...

Her voice trails off. She starts to become emotional.

LUCILLE (contd)
 They called and said not to
 worry, but ...
 (starts to weep and
 turns her face)

Suddenly, Ellen walks INTO VIEW and puts her arm around Lucille.

JUMP CUT TO:

71 ANGLE - ELLEN AND LUCILLE

71

An hour later. They are sitting next to each other on the couch having tea. Family pictures are spread out on a coffee table in front of them.

LUCILLE
 My husband had felt such shame,
 you see -- and no one in his
 family -- not one -- with all
 of their money offered to help
 us. They washed their hands,
 all of them -- except once --
 (MORE)

71 CONTD

71

LUCILLE (contd)

when Claire was getting ready to go to college I got a call from her grandfather. He asked if Claire needed any money for her education. I told him what to do with his money -- that Claire was valedictorian and that we'd manage somehow.

(pause)

He passed away -- oh, I can't remember -- several years later. I didn't go to the funeral -- but I did say a prayer for his soul.

72 EXT: PITTSBURGH AIRPORT - DAY

72

Pete's jet is landing.

73 INT: CADE HEADQUARTERS - LATE AFTERNOON

73

Painters are putting on final touches as copying machines and typewriters are being moved in and secretaries and volunteers are working amidst a maze of electrical wires and phone cables, as the headquarters is being readied to open. Besides the Cade posters on the walls, WE SEE a poster: "Join The Winning Team. Vote the Pennsylvania Democratic Ticket."

CAMERA PANS toward the rear of the building until WE SEE Pete, one foot resting on a desk, talking to Cade, his campaign manager, HUGH SWENSON, Bauer, and his campaign press secretary, MARSHALL ALBERTS. Sid is standing in the BG. The evening news is playing on a small portable TV set on a bookcase behind Pete. THE SOUND IS MUTED so we can't hear the program, but WE CAN SEE a rapid cutting from fire to car accident to fire, interspersed with cuts back to the Ken and Barbie Doll anchor team. Pete is gesturing at the show to illustrate a point he is making.

PETE

... but what's overriding is that we pinpoint the audience -- so we run the anti-crime spots on the bang-bang news, the foreign policy on ...

ANGLE - PETE

as he hits a remote control button switching to a more sedate news program, where WE SEE an Eric Severeid-type

73

CONTD

73

anchor talking for a long time next to a superimposed chart.

PETE (contd)

...the Volvo and brie show.

(to Marshall)

Tomorrow morning I want to go over TV news coverage. But every time we hit a new media market, you're gonna have live remotes set up for the noon or six o'clock. The anchors don't know shit -- even less than the reporters -- and we'll be able to give our message straight through, no interruption.

The three laugh. Suddenly the chart behind the anchor switches to a still picture of a man in his 30's beneath the headline "Independent Enters Senate Race".

SWENSON

What the hell...?

Pete hits the volume switch on the remote control.

ANCHOR

...seat being vacated by Senator Sam Hastings. Philip Aarons, an Oberlin College history professor known for his involvement in anti-nuclear and state environmental groups, called a news conference this morning to announce his candidacy as an independent.

CUT TO:

videotape of Aarons standing on the steps of the Ohio State Capitol in Columbus. He is 37 years old, dressed in a turtleneck sweater, tweed jacket and corduroys.

AARONS

I'm announcing my candidacy as an answer and an alternative to the regressive, short-sighted positions offered by Mr. Symington and Mr. Cade. I, along with many other citizens of Ohio, am particularly disappointed by Mr. Cade's decision not to follow Senator Hasting's example of national leadership in the development of renewable, non-polluting energy offered by solar generation...

73 CONTD

73

ALBERTS (VO)

Asshole!

AARONS (contd)

I intend to use this campaign as
a sounding board, to educate the --

Pete hits the volume switch again turning off the sound
as Aarons continues to make his statement.

ANGLE - CADE

CADE

(angry)

What the hell does that mean?

PETE

(authoritative)

Nothing - not a damn thing. He'll
make a little noise, feel real good,
then get his 4% from the veggies and
save-the-whalers.

(winks at Cade)

So he wouldn't be hurting us -- they
all hate your guts, anyway.

(turns serious)

But there is something...

He reaches into his open attache case, pulls out some of
his ubiquitous printout sheets and turns toward Cade.

PETE (contd)

...the first poll's showing up a
problem with college-educated women,
21 to 35. They're saying there's some-
thing about you they don't trust, so I
want to shoot some quick-hitters with you
and your wife talking family issues. And
you're gonna smile on 'em -- they say
you never smile.

CLOSE-UP - CADE

as he scowls on receiving the information.

74 CAMERA PANS

74

and Pete's voice becomes gradually muted...

74 CONTD

74

PETE (contd)

I went ahead and made a heavy
buy on the afternoon soaps, so
we're going to have to adjust
the budget slightly. But that's
still not ...

... while it crosses the main floor and reaches Bauer,
looking through a pile of mail and documents on the desk.

75 CLOSE UP - BAUER'S HANDS

75

as they flip through the papers until they reach a Federal
Express envelope with Pete's name and address on it, along
with "Computech, Inc." listed as the sender. Bauer
pauses, then opens the envelope and finds a plain large
manila envelope with Pete's name on it. He rips that
open and pulls out a sheet of computer paper with the
heading: "Bauer Associates Clients" followed by the list of
energy companies. WE SEE Bauer's grip tighten as he
reads it.

76 INT: JET - DAY

76

Pete and Sid are flying to Seattle. Pete is studying
his looseleaf strategy books and computer printouts while
Sid is opening the pile of mail they took with them from
Cade Headquarters. Sid comes to the Federal Express
envelope, opens it and removes the Bauer Associates
Clients list — except now it looks like confetti — it
has been sliced with surgical precision into thin strips
connected at the top.

SID

What the hell ... ?

Pete looks up and sees the paper. Sid, shrugging, hands
it across the desk to him. He sees it is the Bauer
Associates list he had asked Ralph to prepare. He stares
at it for a few seconds.

PETE

(looking up at Sid)

It must've gotten caught in the
printer.

77 EXT: JET LANDING IN SEATTLE

77

78 EXT: SEATTLE SUMMER FESTIVAL PARADE - DAY

78

David Garber, and WILSON JACOBS, 35, Andrea's administra-
tive assistant, are standing on the corner of a sidewalk,

amidst a crush of spectators watching the parade go by. Both sporadically turn their heads back over the crowd, apparently looking for someone. Suddenly, Pete appears out of nowhere, pushing his way through kids and angry parents.

PETE

'Scuse me, sorry ...

DAVID

(obviously annoyed)

Have you seen the weekend poll?

PETE

Me? I'm up here to see Paul Bunyan and his big blue cow.

David scowls at Pete. A 10-YEAR-OLD BOY standing next to Pete looks up at him.

BOY

It's an ox.

PETE

Thanks.

as they suddenly run off the curb and jog down the street until they fall into place a couple of paces behind Andrea who is walking in front of a float of the state capitol, smiling and waving to the onlookers. Pete, David and Wilson begin to talk loudly so she can hear over the BAND MUSIC. Without breaking a smile, Andrea turns quickly and talks to them, and then turns back and continues to wave to both sides of the street.

ANDREA

Hello, Pete.

PETE

Governor ...

(pauses and looks around)

I think we have to talk about the death penalty thing --

ANDREA

(firmly)

Absolutely not. That is not negotiable.

PETE

(conciliatory)

I'm not talking about backing down -- but tell me: Where's it say that just because you follow your conscience we've gotta stand still and get the shit kicked out of us?

ANDREA

(without turning back)

You have some thoughts on the subject?

PETE

Just one: Frank Kelliko.

DAVID

(disgusted)

For Chrissakes, the man's a Neanderthal.

PETE

So what? He's a Republican Neanderthal, ain't he? He's speakin' for a constituency out there that we could use at the moment.

(reaches into his jacket pocket for a folded-up computer printout)

Or do you want to argue that?

ANDREA

Have you ever actually heard him? In the Statehouse -- on the floor -- he said he'd pull the switch, then drive home and eat a pizza.

PETE

It's this simple: He crosses the line and endorses the opposition we start to bleed.

(turns to David and Wilson)

You got any guarantees he won't?

Neither replies. Pete turns on Wilson.

PETE (contd)

I put out some wires and what do I hear? Seems next to fryin' convicts, the Senator's next greatest passion is high school football -- specifically Eagle Lake High where Frank Jr. is startin' left tackle. In fact, the Senator's so proud he goes out and buys the kid a new Dodge pickup and then -- to really make it special -- he calls the Governor's administrative assistant for a little help in getting plate #76 -- Frank Jr.'s football number.

WILSON

(breaking in)

This is going way out of --

PETE

(cutting him off)

Kelliko calls once -- he can't get through. Leaves a message and calls back -- The Governor's assistant is still in conference. The Governor's assistant has his secretary call him -- two days later -- and says his request for Frank Jr.'s plate will be considered.

(pause)

What's the thought there? Just tryin' to turn a philosophical disagreement into a vendetta?

WILSON

(red-faced)

Our office has never --

Pete cuts him off by suddenly stepping to the side and stopping, watching them (Wilson and David) looking back at him, continue to march down the street.

PETE

(shouting at them)

Let's just get the damn license plate, OK?

CUT TO:

80

INT: SANTA FE SHOPPING MALL - DAY

80

FRANK MCKUSKER, 47, lean and angular, is wrapping up a TV interview in the main concourse. He is surrounded by campaign workers, holding posters, handing out leaflets as well as shoppers who have stopped to watch the interview. Wilfred is standing off to the side.

MCKUSKER

... and I have a lot of confidence in the plain horse sense of the voters of New Mexico, that they'll be able to see the real issues of this campaign -- who has the experience and proven ability to lead, and that we simply cannot afford a governor who needs on-the-job training.

TV REPORTER

(turning from McKusker
to camera)

That was Frank McKusker, Democratic candidate for governor. This is Dan Ghriskey reporting from the New Mesa Mall for "Eyewitness News." Back to you, Gene.

The reporter stands staring at the camera for a few seconds until he gets the cue that he is off the air. He puts down the mike, the TV lights turn off, and McKusker starts to walk down the concourse joined by Wilfred. McKusker, followed by his entourage, works the crowd -- waving, shaking hands.

MCKUSKER

I'm worried, Will.

WILFRED

Nothin' to worry about.

MCKUSKER

He's startin' to move.

WILFRED

'Course he is. He's startin' so far down, he can't go backwards.

MCKUSKER

Still, he's --

80 CONTD

80

WILFRED

(interrupting,
annoyed)

Look -- if we can't beat some
geek who thinks he can walk in
and buy this thing, then maybe
we don't deserve to win.

McKusker looks more distressed. Wilfred winks and claps
him on the shoulders to bolster his spirits.

WILFRED (contd)

You're gonna ice him, Frank.

CUT TO:

81 INT: PETE'S OFFICE SUITE - DAY

81

Pete and Sid sit down at the video machine. The noon
news is playing on a small TV set on a side bookcase.

SID

You want me to put him on?

Pete merely motions to hold off and hits the play button.
WE SEE on the monitor the latest McKusker TV ad engineered
by Wilfred. It is a series of "man-in-the-street"
interviews shot in New York, Wallace's hometown.

82 The questioning is conducted in a prototypical New 82
York setting -- Rockefeller Center, Empire State Building,
Wall Street, etc.

INTERVIEWER

Excuse me, what do you think
of someone coming from New
Mexico to be governor of New
York?

BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

Is this a joke? You're not
serious, are you?

WEALTHY MATRON

(walking her poodle)

Utterly preposterous, young man
... not worthy of discussion.

COLLEGE STUDENT

From New Mexico? Is this some
kind of affirmative action thing?

82 CONTD

82

COP ON PATROL
A cowboy governor of New York?
(starts to crack up)
What do I think of a cowboy
governor?

OLD MAN PLAYING CHESS
(waves hand, shooing
away interviewer)
Crazy ... stupid ...

83 ANGLE - PETE

83

as he hits the stop button and turns to Sid.

PETE
(glancing at watch)
You don't have a date or anything
tonight, do you?

ANGLE - SID

Her expression reveals she doesn't have to be told:
they're in for another frantic session to create an
antidote. Without a word, she gets up and exits the
office.

ANGLE - PETE

as he hesitates, then resignedly hits the flashing button
on his phone console as he picks up the receiver.

PETE
(forced cheeriness)
Wallace, how're you doin'?
(pause)
Yeah ... I just saw it ... yeah.

While Pete is trying to calm Wallace he glances repeatedly
over to the small TV, and by occasionally asking: "Say
that again?" we can tell that sound from the TV is
bothering him. Finally, Pete stands, still holding the
receiver to his ear, and walks over to the set. As he
bends to turn it off, bringing the receiver within about
a foot of the set, the screen suddenly dissolves into NOISY
STATIC. He stops short, puzzled by what just happened;
then steps back, and the screen returns to normal. He
steps forward again, this time holding the phone in front
of him, and as he brings it close to the TV, again it
dissolves into static.

83 CONTD

83

PETE

(agitated)

I'm sorry ... Could I call you
back?

(pause)

That's right ... thanks.

Pete walks back to his desk, unscrews the mouthpiece and
pulls out the unit.

CLOSE UP - MOUTHPIECE UNIT

as he examines it under the light of a desk lamp he's
turned on. He revolves it and suddenly stops as he spots
a small orange-colored device wired to a diode. He
unhooks it and examines it -- It's a bug.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he angrily stares at it, then he hits his intercom
button.

PETE (contd)

Get hold of Jack Russo. Tell
him I want a sweep of the office,
the studios -- everything.

HELEN (VO)

Right away?

PETE

Yeah, right away.

Pete leans back and, his mind racing, tries to analyze
what he's uncovered. Suddenly, he leans forward and hits
the intercom switch again.

PETE (contd)

Tell him to do my apartment,
too.

84 INT: VIDEO SERVICES EDITING ROOM

84

It is close to midnight, and Pete and Sid have just
completed the final cut for their response to the new ad
after working flat-out for ten straight hours. Sid is
lying on the floor in front of the control board. Pete
is sprawled half-sitting, half-lying in the chair in
front of the board. Both are totally exhausted. Suddenly,
we hear over the intercom from the adjacent studio:

84 CONTD

84

THE VOICE

That's the last cut?

Pete rouses himself and leans over the microphone.

PETE

That's it.

THE VOICE

I can go home now?

85 INT: MCKUSKER HEADQUARTERS - DAY

85

Wilfred is seated in a chair, tilted up against the wall of a private office in the headquarters. The walls are covered with campaign posters, and other campaign paraphernalia such as a huge scheduling calendar showing McKusker's rallies, speaking appearances, etc. McKusker, the only other person in the room, is standing with his arms crossed, next to Wilfred. Through the open office door WE CAN SEE the typical frenetic activity of the headquarters' main room. Wilfred and McKusker are watching the Furman response ad on a small TV propped on a filing cabinet across the room.

86 INSERT - TV SCREEN

86

There is a picture of a chic five-story Manhattan townhouse. It is the opening of Pete's response to his last ad. The pictures on the screen change about every five seconds to other, equally fabulous mansions and estates. The Voice, as usual, supplies the narration.

THE VOICE

This is the Upper East Side of New York ... this is Monte Carlo ... this is Beverly Hills, California. Wallace Furman could have lived at any of these places. Instead, he chose to live in New Mexico -- not because it was more exciting or more luxurious, but because -- unlike Monte Carlo or Beverly Hills -- it was a place that needed help -- needed the energy and the new leadership that Wallace Furman can give our state. He didn't have to come here, he wanted to. Wallace Furman for governor -- a new vision for New Mexico.

86 CONTD

86

The spot ends with the familiar blue-and-white "Furman For Governor" campaign logo.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO:

87 CLOSE UP - MCKUSKER

87

as his expression tightens. Without saying a word, he turns and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

88 INT: CADE CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - PITTSBURGH - DAY 88

Pete, sitting at a desk at the now-finished headquarters, is on the phone with Sid. In the BG, Cade, Bauer, and Swanson are standing reviewing some files.

INTERCUT - PETE AND SID IN THE NEW YORK OFFICE

SID

(excited)

I thought you'd want to hear this -- we just got the over-nights. We stopped the erosion: The carpetbagger thing's a dead issue. That mansion spot was -- I know you don't need to hear this -- but it was brilliant.

PETE

(no display of emotion)

That's great ... Look, I'll be here one, maybe two more days, then I'm back in New York. I want to go over the stuff Mitch sent up, then we've got to talk about settin' up a rehearsal for the debate.

SID

OK, so I'll collect --

(stops short)

Oh yeah, I almost forgot the best part: the story going around down here is that McKusker saw the new numbers and panicked. I have it from two places that he's fired Wilfred Buckley and hired John Dietrich ... incredible, huh?

88 CONTD

88 CONTD

EXTREME CLOSE UP - PETE

as he digests the news of Wilfred's firing with obvious concern. He hangs up and leaves the room.

89 O M IT

89

90 INT. CADE'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

90

Cade and Billings are in the room

BILLINGS

(pressing)

He's doing everything he should?

Cade nods.

BILLINGS

(contd)

And the quality?

CADE

You've seen it -- the polling, the ads. They're first-rate.

Billings rises and starts to pace around the room.

BILLINGS

I don't know ...

91 EXT: CLEVELAND AIRPORT -- DAY

91

Ellen is arriving. Pete approaches, sees her from a distance.

ELLEN

Thanks for meeting me, Pete.

PETE

I thought this year you were supposed to get out of all the traveling.

ELLEN

(cautiously)

So did I.

(pause)

Have you spoken to Sam recently?

CONTINUED.....

91 CONTD

91 CONTD

Pete stops eating and looks hard at her -- sensing that this is not just a casual inquiry.

PETE

Last week.

ELLEN

Did he talk about his illness?

(quickly)

Off the record.

PETE

Not much -- talked mostly about whether he was going to stay in Washington and practice law or go back to Ohio.

ELLEN

I don't think he's ill -- physically, any way.

PETE

(on guard)

That's right?

Ellen looks at him. She tries to decide how to proceed.

CUT TO:

91A INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM CAROUSEL

91A

Pete and Ellen are waiting for her luggage.

ELLEN

I'm curious: How much do you know about Sam? Financially, I mean.

PETE

He's never had that much -- just his salary.

ELLEN

(pressing)

What about Claire?

CONTINUED.....

PETE

Her family's got a lot of dough.

ELLEN

But she never got any. Her father blew all of his share. She needed scholarships to get through college.

PETE

(sarcastic)

We've been busy.

ELLEN

How many times have you been in their house? Ever wonder how they carry the note on that place?

Pete doesn't reply.

ELLEN (contd)

It's got to be worth at least three hundred thousand -- they bought it last year -- but their mortgage is under a hundred thou. They didn't clear anywhere near that when they sold their other house in Virginia. Ever notice those paintings and antiques? She paid for them in cash.

PETE

(angry, standing up)

So what are you telling me -- Sam's on the take?

Ellen does not reply.

PETE (contd)

(anger unabated)

If that's the line, if that's what you're riding to the Pulitzer this year, then you still got a small hole: Why is he takin' a walk?

ELLEN

(trying to calm him down)

I don't have the story, yet ... I don't know why he's leaving.

(MORE)

91 CONTD

91

ELLEN (contd)
 (gently pressing)
 He's your friend ... If there
 were some sort of ... bad judgment
 ... you'd want to contain it,
 wouldn't you?

PETE
 (exploding)
 "Who are you talking to? This is
me, remember? You're prayin' so
 hard he's fucked up, your neck's
 startin' to twitch.

Pete starts to walk away, then stops and turns around.

PETE (contd)
 (emotional)
 You're the one who's fucked up!
 You're the one!

He whirls around and walks quickly away.

92 EXT: PAY PHONE ON STREET - DAY

92

PETE
 (arguing)
 'Cause this time, I really wanta
 do it.
 (pause)
 I'm bein' straight -- it's on a
 list I made when I was eleven.

93 EXT: LAKE - DAY

93

Pete and Sam, drinking cans of beer, are sitting in a rowboat. Sam, clearly a veteran fisherman, is dressed in an old fly-fishing hat, vest, etc. Pete is as equally out of his element -- he is wearing a pinstriped shirt, pants and street shoes. WE CAN SEE fishing rods, nets and a tackle box in the boat, along with a cooler. For a few moments they do not speak. Pete is preoccupied with slapping himself to fend off mosquitos. Sam looks at him, amused, then offers him a small bottle of repellent.

SAM
 Try some of this.

PETE
 Just the smell of that shit
 makes me gag.

SAM

(deadpan)

In that case, you'd better
continue beating yourself to
death.

Pete scowls as he slaps the side of his face. He stops
a moment and looks directly at Sam. He is obviously
wrestling with what he is about to say.

PETE

(awkward)

There's been some shit flyin'
around Washington about why
you're leavin'.

(pause)

Stuff about how you could afford
all those paintings and antiques
right after buyin' your new house.

Sam looks at him for a moment without replying. Finally,

SAM

(measured)

As a friend, I appreciate your
telling me that, Pete. But
I've loved my job. A man
couldn't ask for a better one.
It's precisely because of crap
like that I'm glad I'm getting
out. Those things are Claire's
-- she collects them.

(pause)

The money's from her inheritance.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he reacts to the last statement -- one he now knows
is false.

Pete, obviously distraught, is driving back to Pittsburgh
on a narrow two-lane road. He's nervously rapping out a
beat on the steering wheel. Suddenly, he notices in the
rear-view mirror a pair of bright headlights closing fast
behind him. It is a large truck, barreling about two
feet behind him. Pete's face is eerily illuminated by the
bright headlights bouncing off the rear-view mirror.
He tries to speed up, but the truck speeds up also.
There is no breakdown lane so he can't stop, and traffic
is speeding past in the opposite direction.

94 CONTD

94

ANGLE - PETE

as he gets increasingly nervous, until, finally the truck pulls out into the left lane and passes him at 85 miles an hour.

95 OMIT

95

thru
102thru
102

103 INT: HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

103

Pete is walking toward the elevators when the HOTEL DESK CLERK notices him.

DESK CLERK

Mr. St. John.

Pete stops and walks over. The clerk hands him a note. Pete reads it, hesitates, then crosses the lobby and enters the lounge.

104 INT: LOUNGE - NIGHT

104

It is dark, and Pete stops just inside the entrance and scans the booths and tables. The room has a lot of red crushed velvet, and waitresses in fishnet stockings. At the moment, a SINGER, trying his best to replicate Barry Manilow, is holding forth at the piano-bar. Pete walks to the far corner where WE SEE

105 - ANGLE - ELLEN

105

waiting for him. Pete walks up to her. There is a tense silence as they stare at each other for a few seconds.

ELLEN

You were right -- I screwed up.
It was stupid, manipulative ...
I wanted to tell you I do recognize that -- that's all. And
maybe buy you a drink.

Pete doesn't reply, but the tension has lifted. Finally, he sits down.

PETE

How'd you know I'd be here,
tonight?

ELLEN

(pause)

You hadn't checked out yet --
your office said you'd be in
(MORE)

105 CONTD

105

ELLEN (contd)
New York tomorrow ... besides,
I was still in town, and
(nods toward singer)
... you can't expect him to be
around here forever.

The WAITRESS comes to the table.

WAITRESS
(bubbly)
Can I get you something?

Pete, still spinning from the events of the last few hours,
is stuck for an answer.

PETE
Uhhh ... a few minutes.

WAITRESS
(still bubbly)
While you're thinking, do you
have a special song you'd like
Barry to sing?

PETE
(repelled by the
thought)
Jesus!

WAITRESS
(shocked)
This is his last night!

ELLEN
(knowing)
See!

The waitress looks reprovingly at Pete, then leaves.

PETE
(pause)
I saw Sam today.

ELLEN
(softly)
Oh?

PETE
(tired smile)
You knew I would -- that's
why you've been campin' out
all night at the local dump.

105 CONTD

105

Ellen starts to protest, but Pete stops her.

PETE (contd)

It's OK -- You're real good.

I mean ...

(pause, grin)

... we've always agreed on that.

Ellen smiles, acknowledging Pete has figured it all out.

PETE (contd)

(measured)

I'm gonna tell you what he said

... He said the money was from
her inheritance.

(emotional, shaking
his head)

Christ, he lied to ME! For a
politician you'd think he'd be
pretty good ... but he was so
fucking bad!

Ellen, genuinely moved, looks at him, then slowly reaches
across the table and holds his hand.

ELLEN

You've been lied to before.

PETE

(he looks at her)

Oh yeah ... that's right.

ELLEN

You plan to keep beating me
with that forever? Good old
St. Pete who never told The Big
Lie to his wife.

PETE

You never asked.

ELLEN

(wry smile)

OK, I'm asking now: how many?

PETE

Times or women?

ELLEN

Let's keep this to one night --
women.

PETE

Let's start with a little history: toward the end, you and I were close if we were in the same time zone. You have any idea what it's like to spend 10 days massaging some pol, and then wind up at one in the morning in some bar in Cleveland, and happen to notice some lady across the room who doesn't have a lot of hair on her chin?

ELLEN

(keeping a straight face)

I've got an idea -- it's probably something like chasing a story for a week and a half, getting nothing but doors slammed in your face, and ending up in some bar in the Ramada Inn in Akron next to a guy in a clean shirt whose hands don't sweat.

PETE

(deadpan)

Nope -- it's nothin' at all like that.

They both burst out LAUGHING.

106 INT: CADE'S ELECTION HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT
CLOSE UP - BAUER

106

He hangs up as CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW Cade standing in front of the desk.

BAUER

They are now in his room --
fucking.

CADE

(shrugging)

So what? They used to be married.

CADE

What's he done? He went to see Hastings. Hastings's the best friend he's got. We know he ran a check on me. You put him in touch with me, so he ran a check on you. And now he's screwing his ex-wife.

106 CONTD.

106 CONTD.

BILLINGS
(troubled)

She's ... a problem. No matter
how you cut it. Her trip to
New Orleans, her session with
Hastings' wife -- I can't help
but find that troubling.

CADE

All right, so what are you going to
do about it?

Billings doesn't reply.

CUT TO:

107 INT: PETE'S HOTEL ROOM - NEXT MORNING

107

Ellen & Pete are waking up. A waiter brings their breakfast.

WAITER

Your breakfast is here, sir.

PETE

Ellen, didn't you order Canadian Bacon?

ELLEN

Uh uh.

Pete goes to the phone and punches room service. He
detects the distinct "hollow" sound of another open
line. Then we hear a series of CLICKS.

ANGLE - PETE

as his expression turns to cold fury as he slams down
the phone.

107 CONTD

107

PETE
SONSOFBITCHES!

His outburst shocks Ellen who stares at him. For a moment, he stands there, angrily looking around the room as if to spot bugs. Suddenly he reaches over, grabs Ellen's arm, and pulls her out of bed to the corner of the room where the TV is sitting on a stand. Ellen, scared without knowing why, reflexively starts to cover herself as if to shield herself from unseen eyes. Without saying anything, he pulls her down to her knees, then drops to his knees himself and turns on the TV, so that a morning game show is BLARING LOUDLY in order to drown out their conversation.

PETE (contd)
Someone's tappin' this line.
Before that, in my office phone,
there was a bug.

ELLEN
Who?

PETE
Not sure ... someone workin'
the other side ... I don't know.

Pete looks hard at Ellen, as he tries to decide whether to go the next step. Finally,

PETE (contd)
Arnold Bauer -- Ever heard
of him?

Ellen shakes her head.

PETE (contd)
Works out of Washington, does
some kind of corporate P.R.?

ELLEN
(shaking head again)
Why?

PETE
(pause)
I'd check him out.

ELLEN
(pressing)
Is he connected with Sam?

107 CONTD

107

PETE

(pause)

Sam said no.

ANGLE - ELLEN

as she looks at Pete.

108 INT: JET - DAY

108

Pete is flying to New York.

109 INT: PETE'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

109

Sid is walking quickly down the main corridor. As she walks by open doors, WE CAN SEE other staffers engaged in a frenetic swirl of activities. She walks through Pete's office suite, past Helen, through his personal office, and into

110 INT: KITCHENETTE - LATE AFTERNOON

110

where she sees Pete sitting on a windowsill spooning his dinner out of a Campbell soup can. The afternoon shadows have darkened his face, and she is momentarily stopped short by the strangeness of the image.

SID

Andrea's on the line. Today's poll is worse. The shift's starting to build, and all the feedback says it's coming from those family image spots. Garber called just before -- out of control. He said the last couple of days have been total saturation.

Pete is silent for a couple of seconds. Finally, he puts his spoon in the can and places that on the table. He sucks in a breath. A new crisis is getting his adrenalin flowing. He's back in command.

PETE

Get The Voice. Check over on 44th -- I think he's cuttin' a new Pepsi spot. Tell him to be in the studio at 11. Then go through the archives. Jan shot some cover last summer of a day care opening. Somewhere in the middle there's about ten

(MORE)

110 CONTD

PETE (contd)
seconds of a kid who looks like
Ricky Schroeder runnin' up to her.
You'll need some help findin'
it -- get Phil.

111 Pete rises and walks past Sid and through the open 111
door and into the bathroom where he sits on the toilet
and picks up the receiver from an adjacent wall phone
and presses a flashing button on the console.

PETE (contd)
Governor ... the word here is
you've missed the cut for America's
Mother-of-the-Year.

INTERCUT with Andrea sitting at her desk.

ANDREA
(faint smile)
Have you seen the latest? Not
the "sanctity of the family" one.
This one ... is grotesque. They've
got his kids -- who aren't that
cute -- lined up begging for a
governor they can look up to.

PETE
(deadpan)
Remember when I told you in '75:
Teaching -- the pay stinks, lousy
working conditions, but it's
secure.

Andrea smiles again.

PETE (contd)
(softly)
You know you and I have this
fantastic symbiosis -- even more
than with your husband: You want
to stay in office, and I want to
stay in business.
(pause)
I think we'll be able to take
care of it.

ANDREA
(fierce)
I want to destroy him now -- I
swear I do.

111 CONTD

111 CONTD

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he is struck by her unexpected vehemence.

CUT TO:

112/ INT: VIDEO SERVICES STUDIO - NEW YORK - NIGHT
113

112/113

Pete and Sid are sitting in front of a bank of monitors,
hunched down over the final copy of their Andrea
Stannard retaliatory spot.

PETE

(crossing out sentence)

...OK, so we cut the close up --
just leave the freeze and dissolve
with The Voice givin' the tag.

SID

(glancing at stop watch)

That'll take it down to...26
seconds, plus four for the logo.

PETE

OK, hit the tape.

The tape is played with a guide track voice.

Andrea, radiant with a tan and wearing a summer dress,
is walking across a lawn holding hands with a boy and
a girl, each about eight years old. Suddenly she
kneels down, and a tow-haired six-year-old boy comes
running at her and throws himself into her outstretched
arms.

The CAMERA ZOOMS IN as Andrea, laughing, stands up,
holding the boy, who has his arms wrapped around her
neck.

GUIDE VOICE

Throughout her public life,
Andrea Stannard has shown the
courage to fight for what she
believes in, and the compassion
to defend those.....

The tape ends.

CONTINUED....

PETE

OK, take it back to the top.
Now let's animate it with the
paint box.

TECHNICIAN

You want the A.D.O.?

PETE

Everything works this time,
(he hits 'announce' button)
Jackson you too.
OK, hit the tape.
(turns to Sid)
Waddaya think?
(she crosses her fingers)
Me too.
OK, hit the tape.

A few seconds later WE SEE on

INSERT MONITOR

the start of the film clip with Andrea walking with
the boy and girl, as this time we hear:

THE VOICE

Throughout her public life,
Andrea Stannard has shown the
courage to fight for what she
believes in, and the compassion
to defend those who can't
fight for themselves. But
lately, Albert Murdoch has
chosen not to attack her
beliefs...

PETE

OK Milt.

Suddenly we hear a series of SIMULATED CAMERA CLICKS, as
a few seconds later, salves of mud land on the FREEZE
FRAMES.

THE VOICE

(continued)
...Instead he has smeared her
personal life, smeared her
family.

CONTINUED.....

113 CONTD

113

After a few seconds, we hear a SIMULATED CAMERA CLICK, and a second later the final salvo sprays over the little boy and Andrea's right arm which is holding him, as we hear:

THE VOICE

... smeared her name and reputation ... Albert Murdoch thinks that's the way you get elected governor of Washington ... Do you? Andrea Jackson -- courage, compassion ... now more than ever.

Two seconds later we hear a BEEP indicating that the commercial is over. Then we hear an immediate ERUPTION OF CHEERS, YELLS, APPLAUSE.

CUT TO:

114 INT: CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

114

Pete and Sid, both drained, are sprawled on their chairs. The mood is one of celebration and relief as the technicians say goodnight and file out. Suddenly, THE VOICE steps in to say goodbye. He is the complete physical opposite of what one imagined after hearing his rich, resonant voice. He is middle-aged, and, though with a severe weight problem, he is wearing a red knit short-sleeve shirt and Bermuda shorts. When he speaks, we are shocked to hear that voice come out of that body.

THE VOICE

(grinning)

How'd I do?

PETE

Got me so worked up, I nearly went out and registered.

THE VOICE

(laughing)

You want me Tuesday afternoon?

Pete turns to Sid for confirmation.

SID

Right -- for the two new Cade spots.

THE VOICE

Goodnight, people.

114 CONTD

PETE & SID

Goodnight ... thanks.

The Voice exits.

ANGLE - SID

as she looks at Pete apprehensively.

SID

Monday, Keelson's office called.
They said he's reconsidering
running for mayor next year,
that he might take a shot at the
Senate.

(pause)

They want to cancel their contract
... they even want their retainer
back.

PETE

They didn't say anything about
us doing the Senate campaign?

Sid shakes her head.

PETE (contd)

That's all they said?

SID

Yeah.

(pause)

Wednesday, Gazziano called --
pretty much the same thing. He's
reassessing the campaign plans
for next year -- he's out.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he digests the latest news.

DISSOLVE TO:

115 INT: NEW MEXICO TV STUDIO - NIGHT

115

Wallace, perceptibly nervous and dressed in a blue suit
and red tie, is standing behind the podium he will use
for the first debate of the campaign. Pete is standing
next to him, intermittently yelling out instructions to
his lighting man, as he has the key light adjusted so it
will most flatter Wallace.

115 CONTD

PETE

Forget about the debate rules
you learned in school.

(suddenly looks up and
yells)

Charlie, keep movin' the key
light!

(back to Wallace)

You can turn any question into
what you want to say. If their
questions hit our key points,
great. If they don't -- ignore
'em! Just slice off and keep
poundin' on our themes:
integrity, new ideas, no IOU's,
no special interests. OK?

Wallace nods.

PETE (contd)

You'll probably find yourself
very nervous. That's OK. Their
guy'll be nervous, too. If
your hands shake, just rest
them gently on the podium.

(smiles)

And when he gives you the "rich
boy" shot, when you make the
response, don't look at him --
he's history -- look at the
camera.

(looks up again)

Charlie, let me see it again
-- high and directly center!

The light shifts slightly on Wallace's face.

WALLACE

(hesitant)

What about the road tax? If
we came out with a limited
increase tied to --

PETE

(vehement)

No! If you want to win the
uncommitteds, you gotta stay
uncommitted!

(looks up)

OK, that's it!

(MORE)

115 CONTD

115

PETE (contd)

(back to Wallace)

This is important: when you and McKusker come out for the light and sound check, if the key light isn't high and hitting you dead on, walk off until they fix it -- OK? Lemme see your opening statement again.

116 He heads for the control room where Sid is waiting. 116

PETE

He's coming along.

Sid responds with a derisive laugh.

PETE (contd)

(measured)

You know, darlin', if some day politics ever goes on the merit system, then these guys'd be takin' a test for governor -- like civil service.

(pause)

And then I'd have to learn how to play the drums, and you'd have to go to law school.

117 INT: SANTA FE AIRPORT - NIGHT

117

Pete is talking to Ellen on a pay phone. Sid is standing out of earshot in the BG.

PETE

... OK ... it was all right.

(pause)

No, nothin'. Just if you found anything, Ellen.

(pause)

Yeah.

Pete hangs up, walks up to Sid, and they both pick up their luggage and briefing books and walk OFF.

118 EXT: AIRPORT TARMAC - NIGHT

118

Pete and Sid are walking past private planes toward their jet when Pete's PILOT comes running up to them.

118 CONTD

118

PILOT

(excited)

You're gonna have to go commercial. I already booked you.

PETE

What's the matter?

PILOT

I don't know yet.

(shrugs shoulders)

I got back from dinner, and the plane's gone. The guys in the hangar said a truck hooked it up and towed it. They thought I knew about it. We found it way the hell in back by the old airstrip. Whoever it was went through it, but I can't find anything gone. I'm gonna hold it here and have it checked out tomorrow.

(pause)

You got any ideas what the hell's goin' on?

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he considers the question.

119 INT: PETE'S OFFICE - VIDEOTAPE ROOM - DAY

119

Pete is seated at the control panel, running and rerunning a six-second piece of tape of Jerome Cade and his wife walking down a supermarket aisle, stopping and picking up a can of tuna fish, and then turning TO THE CAMERA. WE SEE the tape on the six monitors above the panel, and also hear the accompanying SOUND.

CADE (VO)

... the real cost of government isn't measured in the billions spent for aircraft carriers, it's in the dollars and cents we spend every day on groceries like these.

Suddenly we hear Pete's secretary, Helen, over the intercom.

HELEN (VO)

You have a visitor -- Mr. Buckley.

119 CONTD

ANGLE - PETE

as a look of surprise crosses his face. He stops the tape, FREEZING A CLOSE UP of Cade on all six screens. Then he leans over to the intercom and hits the "speaker" switch.

PETE

Grab his arm, and help the old fart down here.

CUT TO:

120 ANGLE - DOOR

120

as Wilfred enters. Pete, smiling and standing, shakes his hand.

PETE

I thought you never came around this part of town.

WILFRED

(smiling)

Read somewhere in the Reader's Digest that life's dynamic -- Suppose to keep tryin' new things.

They both laugh as they sit down in front of the control panel. But after they sit, there is an awkward pause as they realize there is one matter that is going to have to be acknowledged.

PETE

I didn't believe it when I heard about the McKusker thing -- the guy must be on bad drugs or somethin'.

WILFRED

(waving it off)

Wasn't the first time I got my butt handed to me ...

(pause)

It was a good lesson. We'd lost focus.

(chuckles)

He was crappin' in his pants all the time about what you'd do next. I let it get away. Lost control of the terrain, started reactin', an' sure as shit started to lose the battle.

120 CONTD

PETE

What now?

WILFRED

(pause)

I'm gonna be in Pennsylvania.

PETE

(incredulous)

Symington? You're with Symington?

WILFRED

(awkward)

I'm with the college professor,
Aarons.

Pete stares at him, almost open-mouthed.

PETE

Ever seen him in action? You
gotta put lead plates in his
shoes.

Wilfred doesn't reply.

PETE (contd)

Why, Will? He's a loser.

WILFRED

(emotional)

It's real simple, son: He's
smart, he's straight, he needs
the help, and I need the work.Pete is abashed at causing Wilfred embarrassment. Wilfred
is equally abashed by his outburst.

WILFRED (contd)

(calmly)

I walk in and pull just another
six, eight points, an' he doubles
his share. It ain't impossible --
but with what he's got goin' for
him now, it'd prob'ly be considered
a fucking miracle ...

(flashes weak smile)

See -- real simple.

The two look at each other -- each feeling awkward by the
raw, open confessional.

PETE

(reflective)

They're out there -- I've seen the polling. But you're not even talkin' about uncommitteds plannin' to vote. You're talkin' seven weeks to identify and roust 50,000 people who are about as removed from the System as he is.

(pause)

You're too far down the line, Will, to start lookin' for 'em.

Wilfred remains silent and Pete instantly realizes that they've reached the point of Wilfred's visit. They are about to consider an action neither would have thought possible.

WILFRED

(softly)

That's what I figured -- they wouldn't be comin' from Cade.

Wilfred pauses and looks at Pete, hoping Pete will respond. But Pete doesn't move a muscle.

WILFRED (contd)

(emotional)

You're makin' me ask?

PETE

(unsure)

Ask for what?

WILFRED

Your demographics, goddamnit! -- the polls! You're right: there's no time, no money ...

(pause)

I need 'em! Listen to me: I'm callin' everything in. After this, you owe nothin' to me!

PETE

I owe you nothing now! I left for an opportunity. You didn't want to go with the guy, I did. So I left.

WILFRED

He was slime! He didn't deserve gettin' you.

(MORE)

120 CONTD

120

WILFRED (contd)

(pause; softer)

And I didn't deserve gettin'
left -- not in the middle of a
campaign.

(emotional)

I didn't deserve that from you!

(pause)

Christ, are you gonna make me
beg?

DISSOLVE TO:

121 INT: PETE'S OFFICE BEDROOM - NIGHT
EXTREME CLOSE UP - PETE

121

his face in shadows, as he lies on his pillow looking
up at the ceiling.

SID (VO)

(affecting Wilfred's
accent)

What happened, so: you drink
a coupla quarts of dumbass?

Pete doesn't appear amused -- and doesn't reply.

SID (VO contd)

(normal voice)

We billed Cade over a hundred
thou for those two polls. That
makes him the biggest contributor
to the Phil Aarons for the U.S.
Senate Campaign.

(voice turns hard)

It's illegal -- and it's stupid.

122 INT: AARONS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

122

PHILIP AARONS, 37, the gawky college economics professor,
dressed in turtleneck and chinos with a faint resemblance to
Philip Roth, is sitting on a folding chair in a corner
of his headquarters -- a low-rent Pittsburgh storefront,
a sharp contrast to the glossy Cade headquarters. He is
listening intently to Wilfred, who is walking back and
forth while talking. A lot of activity is swirling around,
as volunteers -- mostly college age -- are walking back
and forth, typing at nearby desks, talking on the phone,
etc.

WILFRED

... and 'cause we're running short on time, from now on, the campaign frames a single question: Is it or isn't it time for a change? We keep reshaping The Question, we keep makin' the other two guys part of The Problem -- but the critical thing is you don't get bogged down tryin' to come up with the answers. By November, they just gotta feel out there that you can do a better job at findin' 'em.

Aarons starts to protest, but Wilfred jumps in ahead of him.

WILFRED (contd)

Philip, I could squeeze you out a foot-and-a-half of bullshit but neither of us has the time. Everything I've learned in 36 years boils down to this: if they like you, they'll vote for you. Period. People don't vote issues, they vote people.

ANGLE - AARONS

At first about to argue with Wilfred, he is now sitting back and analyzing what he's just heard.

WILFRED (contd)

(voice softer)

You're the best guy runnin'. I got a stake in this, but I wouldn't be here if I didn't believe that goin' in. That's the way I've operated, and I think that's why you called me in the first place.

(pause)

But now the leaves are startin' to turn, this debate's comin' up -- it's gonna give us state-wide exposure -- and you got a question you gotta answer, Philip: Are you runnin' for office, or are you runnin' for principle?

122 CONTD.

122 CONTD.

AARONS

I hope I'm running for both.

WILFRED

(laughs)

Philip, I'm personally convinced you're gonna do one helluva job once you're in -- but first you gotta get through the door.

AARONS

What's the price of admission?

WILFRED

Why just kiss off the middle class? I've seen some intriguing numbers, son: There are a lot of 'em out there who like what you're sayin', but aren't gonna vote for you. Why? -- because they don't really know you. They think they know you, but they see you without a tie, wearin' some old jacket and chinos, and it frightens 'em. An' we end up throwin' those votes away. On the gut issues, you're not that far away from 'em right now. All you gotta do is ease off on the ones you are. Look, Phillip, they're scared about the future, about whether they'll still have a job next year. So make sure that they really listen to you, and don't just turn off because you stand up wearin' a flannel shirt and hikin' boots and lookin' like you just stepped off a picket line. That's all you have to do.

ANGLE- AARONS

as he makes his decision.

123 INT: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE - D.C. - DAY 123

Ellen is seated at a desk looking over files. In the BG, WE SEE clerks at their desks, etc.

CLOSE UP - ELLEN

as her eyes light up as she is running through the files, jotting down notes.

ANGLE - ELLEN

as she gets up from her desk and, carrying the files, walks over to a desk where a CLERK is working.

CLERK

(looking up)

Are you through with the files?

ELLEN

I think so -- I just want to be certain. If there are any outstanding notes on any of their property: liens, anything like that, it would be recorded here?

CLERK

They're residents here and the property is here?

ELLEN

Yes.

CLERK

Then it'll be here.

Ellen leaves the files on the clerk's desk and exits the office.

124 INT: PETE'S OFFICE - DAY 124

Pete is sitting at his desk studying his papers. Occasionally he looks up with a look of annoyance toward the reception area of his office where through the closed door we can hear LOUD NOISES OF OBJECTS BEING MOVED. His phone RINGS.

PETE

Hello ...

(covers other ear
with hand)

What? ... Hold on!

He bolts from his desk and angrily walks into

125 INT: RECEPTION AREA - DAY

125

where he sees staffers and building janitors moving file cabinets and old equipment into the reception area and along the corridors. Pete walks over to Helen, who is directing the operation.

PETE

What the hell's goin' on?

HELEN

The pipes in the basement burst.
There's six inches of water down there.

Pete, pissed off, wheels around and charges back into

126 INT: OFFICE - DAY

126

where he slams the door and picks up the phone again.

PETE

Say that again?

(pause)

No, not over the phone. I'll
meet you there ...

(checks his watch)

At four-thirty.

CUT TO:

127 EXT: PETE'S JET FLYING OVER WASHINGTON - DAY

127

CUT TO:

128 EXT: WASHINGTON GHETTO STREET - DAY

128

A taxi approaches, suddenly pulls over to the curb and stops. Pete gets out, stands up and looks around for a moment, then, apparently spotting what he was looking for, starts to walk across the street.

129 ANGLE - PETE

129

as he crosses the street. WE SEE Ellen standing in the deserted, litter-strewn parking lot of a small, apparently new shopping mall -- but whose store windows are shuttered by plywood boards. He walks up to Ellen.

ELLEN

(looking around)

It never opened. The construction went way over budget, and nobody would pay the rents they were asking.

129 CONTD

129

PETE
(shrugging)
I don't get it.

ELLEN
The owner is the Liberty Mall
Development Corp.
(pause)
General Partners: Arnold Bauer
... and Claire Hastings.

130 EXT: HASTINGS HOUSE - NIGHT

130

Pete and Ellen are standing outside the front door.
After a few seconds, it opens and WE SEE --

CLOSE UP - CLAIRE HASTINGS

She looks drained, emotionally and physically worn.
Pete and Ellen enter the house.

131 INT: HALLWAY - NIGHT

131

Claire stands, almost frozen, and looks at Pete.

CLAIRE
(forces a weak smile)
Pete ...

Pete appears shaken by Claire's appearance.

CUT TO:

132 INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

132

Claire and Pete are seated opposite each other, only about
a foot away. Ellen is standing off to the side.

CLAIRE
... he advanced me some money --
a lot of money -- for my share
in the partnership, and, uh ...
(pause, embarrassed)
... when I went ahead and bought
this house, and the redecoration
started to ...
(takes a deep breath)
... get out of control, I took
a second advance in anticipation
of the profits when we sold
shares to the limited partners
and the rents started to come in.

Claire stops and looks, almost pleadingly, at Pete and Ellen.

CLAIRE (contd)

I did think about it before I went in. I'm not an idiot!

(turning angry)

That whole neighborhood was supposed to get an historic restoration grant, before it got killed in some goddamned committee. He lost even more than I did!

PETE

(softly)

He didn't lose a damn thing.

(pause)

What'd you tell Sam? -- I mean about the money for the house and all this other stuff?

CLAIRE

(pained)

I told him ... I told him it came from the project, that things were going great. I didn't want to worry him, and -- as ludicrous as this sounds -- I still believed, even then, that in the end, somehow, it would all turn out all right.

ELLEN

When did Bauer start to lean on you?

CLAIRE

In January. He mentioned that he had some clients who'd be hurt by the new solar design, and asked if I'd convince Sam to stop pushing it. I told him he was crazy. I mean, my God, Sam wouldn't listen to me on the abortion bill -- he damn sure wasn't going to listen about solar generation. This went on for a month -- six weeks -- and then he brings up -- surprise -- the money ... and also ...

(MORE)

CLAIRE (contd)

(lowers her eyes,
tries to stay in
control)

I took a couple of confidential
reports Sam had brought home to
study ...

(whisper)

I xeroxed them and gave them
to Bauer.

ELLEN

(pause)

How much money did he give you?

CLAIRE

A hundred and eighty thousand.

(lowers eyes, mumbles)

Maybe a little more.

She looks up at Ellen and Pete staring at her.

CLAIRE (contd)

(bitter laugh)

What was really funny was I
thought I could handle him.
Even when he started to show
up at the house, I thought it
was just a little intimidation.

(pause)

Then one night he walked right
past me and into Sam's study,
and laid it all out: the money,
the leaks, and then he asked
him to kill the appropriation.
Sam threw him out of the house,
and then ...

(voice starts to
tremble)

Because of me, because of what
might happen to me, he's walking
away from a job he's invested
his soul in.

(she turns to Ellen;
passionately)

Remember the last time you were.
here and we sat in this room
and talked about friendship?

ELLEN

(embarrassed)

Yes.

132 CONTD

CLAIRE

You didn't tell me you were trying to dig up something on us. But as soon as you left, I knew why you'd come. That was ONE thing I managed to figure out all by myself.

Ellen doesn't reply.

CLAIRE (contd)

When you write this, just make sure I'm the shit ... make sure I'm the shit.

(crying, turns to Pete)

He can't face you, Pete! He lied to you because of me ... and now he can't even face you!

133 INT: CAR - NIGHT

133

Pete is driving, Ellen is in the passenger seat. The mood is tense.

PETE

(angry outburst)

What really gets my ass is the garbage you and the others write about how powerful I am. It's a fucking miracle that someone as good as Sam would run at all ...

ELLEN

(angry)

You're mad at me? Fuck you -- I didn't go on Bauer's payroll.

She instantly regrets making the last comment.

ELLEN (contd)

(softly)

Sorry.

134 INT: OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

134

Pete walks down the deep-carpeted hallway until he reaches an impressive oaken door with a discreet "Bauer Associates" nameplate. He opens the door and enters.

135 INT: BAUER ASSOCIATES OFFICE - DAY

135

Pete walks into the plush, but understated reception area. He is about to stop at the receptionist when he sees Bauer through his open office door. Pete continues past the startled RECEPTIONIST and walks into

136 INT: BAUER'S OFFICE - DAY

136

as Bauer, seated at his desk talking on the phone, turns and sees him enter. Just behind him, framed in the doorway is the stricken receptionist. Bauer waves her off. WE NOTICE that in several significant ways -- namely the assorted high-tech arsenal of monitors, recorders, etc. -- this office is an eerie echo of Pete's. Bauer, still cradling the phone to his ear, stares straight at Pete who stands just inside his office door, glaring at him.

BAUER

(quickly on phone)

Just go ahead and send it to me. If I've got any questions, I'll get back to you.

(pause)

Right ...

Bauer slowly puts down the receiver, then tilts back in his chair as Pete takes a step toward him.

PETE

(face taut with anger)

I had a long talk with Claire Hastings last night.

BAUER

(smirking)

I happen to know Mrs. Hastings quite well. I don't know if she mentioned it, but we're business partners.

PETE

(angry)

I'm out.

Bauer doesn't reply immediately. Instead, a look of contempt starts to spread over his face.

BAUER

I assume that means you're resigning from the Cade campaign -- is that what you mean, Mr. St. John?

136 CONTD

136

Bauer stares at Pete, then breaks into a thin smile.

PETE

The plane, the phones, two
clients cancelling out --
what was the point?

BAUER

The point was that I did not
trust you. I didn't want you in
this campaign from the beginning.
You were much too close to Hastings.
And then out of nowhere Aarons suddenly
jumps in. And your old pal Buckley
is calling the shots on that one. We
hired you to do a job. It wasn't to
investigate me or my company, and it wasn't
to exchange information with your ex-wife.
I wanted you to understand that: if you
really did screw us, something bad
could happen to you.

(pause, voice softer)

That was the message I was trying to
convey. Those were merely dramatic
illustrations.

Pete looks like he's about to explode, and is trying
to control himself. He turns and starts to walk out.

BAUER (contd)

Do you really think it's all some
game?

Pete stops and turns.

BAUER (contd)

You just fly in, jerk the locals
around, put in who's ever paying
you and leave? It's no fucking
game! You're deciding who's
running this country, who's running
other countries. I care about
that -- my clients have to deal
with the consequences! You don't
give a shit!

(pause, voice softer)

So why don't you go right on
doing what you've always done, and elect

(contd page 113)

136 CONTD

136

BAUER (contd)

Cade, and get paid, and then
leave. What's the problem,
Pete?

Pete appears to tremble slightly. It seems he's on the verge of breaking down. Bauer has zeroed in on the core of his own private anguish. He is about to answer, then turns and charges out of the office.

137 INT: PETE'S JET - DAY

137

Pete is sitting in his chair, clutching his drumsticks so tightly his knuckles are white, as he thinks about what has just happened.

CUT TO:

138 INT: PETE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

138

It is dark and deserted, all of the staff has gone home. The outer door opens and closes, we hear footsteps until lights are suddenly flashed on and WE SEE Pete standing in the outer reception area, still clearly distraught.

139 ANGLE - PETE

139

as he walks down the corridor toward his own office. As he reaches Helen's office (just outside his own), he sees that it is still packed with all the file cabinets and equipment carted up from the basement. He notices that the door to his private office is open. He stops at the entrance and sees that, having run out of room in Helen's office, they moved some of the cabinets into his own. He is about to flip on the lights to his own office when he sees Sam's old chair resting in the corner next to his videotape equipment, reflected in the light coming through the large plate-glass windows.

CUT TO:

140 INT: JET - NIGHT

140

Pete on his way to Pittsburgh. He's drumming with better control than we've ever seen him.

141 INT: MAKE-UP ROOM - NIGHT

141

Wilfred and Aarons are sitting in the make-up room of a Pittsburgh TV station just before Aarons will participate in the campaign's first statewide televised debate. Aarons, wearing a new blue suit, looks the best we've seen him.

141 CONTD

WILFRED

You're gonna do good, Philip.

AARONS

(wry smile)

I've got an idea: instead of me trying to impersonate a statesman, when it's my turn to speak, maybe we should just turn down the lights and run Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.

WILFRED

(chuckling, then serious)

We're startin' to move. You could feel it on the last trip. We're framin' the right message, and it's gettin' through.

They approach the door when it suddenly opens and Pete enters.

PETE

Will, look, I know this is a bad time, but have you got a couple of minutes?

Wilfred, startled by Pete's appearance, is also suspicious.

WILFRED

You're right, it's bad. We're headin' out.

(turns to Aarons)

Philip, Pete St. John.

AARONS

I've read about you.

PETE

(not sure how to interpret that)

Yeah ... Hello.

He reaches out and they shake hands.

WILFRED

We'll talk later.

PETE

(emotional)

I gave you two polls! You give me two minutes!

Wilfred turns, his face reddening with anger.

WILFRED

What'd I give you? And what'd
you do with it?

PETE

I sold out, Wilfred, OK?

(turns to Aaron)

He thinks because he won't work for
someone like Cade that makes every-
thing OK.....That that makes me a
shit, and him some kind of holy
crusader.....We're the same! Look, uh,
(points to Aarons suit)

He got that for you, right? And the
hair and the contacts. And what you've
been saying -- has it started to
shift? Have you softened anything
you were saying before he showed
up to help you out? But that's OK,
because getting you in is his job.
"Once you're elected, you can do
anything you want." I'm not goin'
to hurt your feelings, am I, if I
tell you you don't have a chance.

WILFRED

Hey wait. How the hell do you
have the gall to come in here
tonight when there's ...

AARON

No, no, no, it's OK, Wilfred.
I want to hear this.

PETE

You've gotta be bright -- you
teach college -- so this can't
be news. You don't have a prayer.
Instead of just goin' back and
teaching history, why not go out
there and make some. You've got
nothing to lose. Stand up and
say exactly what you think...
what YOU think...maybe even what
you feel.
Not what the polls say, not what
Wilfred told you...

WILFRED

You sayin' I can't handle my
client?! You got personal problems
-- get out! But don't you dare
bring me down!

CONTINUED.....

PETE

It's not you I'm talking about.
You're the best. Of all of us,
you never bent. You stayed with
people you cared about. I didn't.
OK -- you care, I don't. But it
doesn't mean a damn. It's what
we do! It's not who's running
the show -- it's the show! It's
the show!

WILFRED

What do you want? Go back to the
good old days? Have the machines
run everything and put their boys
in? You want the newspapers in
charge? Have the L.A. Times creatin'
another President Nixon?

(pause)

Well, you wanna.....come on Phillip.

Wilfred walks out. Aarons starts to follow him but
Pete stops him.

PETE

We're irrelevant. But you're
stayin', and the people out there
ain't leavin', and their problems
aren't gonna disappear no matter
who gets elected.
Can you look at them and say what
you feel?

(pause)

I'm not saying you might not make
a horse's ass of yourself, but just
the spectacle of something human up
there might shake up enough people
to pour out of their homes, in a
huge tidal wave of emotion and vote
for you.

(pause)

You read the papers. You gotta know
that there's a higher voter percentage
in Bolivia than in the U.S. In
Bolivia, for Chrissakes! Maybe its
because they still feel connected
to what's going on. Maybe it takes
too much in America: too much
attention, too much energy to follow
it all. That's why they like gettin'
their candidates predigested, pre-
packaged, like TV dinners. I've
become rich believing that. Prove
me wrong.

CUT TO:

141 CONTD

141

ANGLE - PETE

as he looks at Aarons and Wilfred, and then exits into

142 INT: CORRIDOR - NIGHT

142

where he walks down the hall toward the studio where the debate will be held. As he walks, he first passes the dressing room of MICHAEL SYMINGTON, the Republican candidate, just as Symington and two aides are walking out toward the studio. Pete falls in with them, and they take several steps, approaching the last dressing room on the right, just as the door opens and Hugh Swenson walks out, quickly followed by Bauer, Cade, and then Sid. Pete is held up in the hallway with Symington's group as Cade walks over and quickly shakes Symington's hand and they wish each other luck. During these few seconds of formalities, Pete stands mute, just staring ahead at Sid, who stares back at him -- unblinking, unrepentant, she smiles at him, shrugs, and walks off with her new group.

CUT TO:

143 INT: TV STUDIO - NIGHT

143

The studio is packed with supporters for all the candidates as the three men walk onto the stage to LOUD APPLAUSE and take their places behind three podiums, and in front of a banner reading:

"Pennsylvania League of Women Voters
U.S. Senate Debate"

The MODERATOR, a middle-aged woman who is the League's president, is seated in the middle of the stage. A panel of three reporters is seated at stage right. While the moderator introduces the candidates and the reporters and explains the rules of the debate in a MUTED VOICE, Pete enters the studio from a side door and walks up an aisle until he reaches the back, where he stands with the studio ushers. As he is walking to the rear, the moderator's voice becomes louder and we hear:

MODERATOR (VO)

... the order of opening and closing statements was determined this afternoon by lot. Mr. Aarons will give the first opening statement followed by Mr. Symington and Mr. Cade. Mr. Aarons ...

ANGLE - AARONS

as he pauses, seemingly deciding exactly what he'll say. Finally,

AARONS

(turns to moderator)

Thank you, Mrs. Bernhardt.

(turns to audience,

pause)

For those of you who still aren't sure who I am, I'm the guy for whom this job actually means a raise in pay.

AARONS' line is greeted by LAUGHTER and then APPLAUSE.

MODERATOR

(breaking in)

I would like to remind the audience that they please refrain from any kind of public demonstration during the debate.

AARONS

(pause)

I feel very uncomfortable right now ... I feel uncomfortable standing up here, under all these lights, trying to fit what I believe in into a hundred and eighty seconds. But more than that, I feel uncomfortable with the job of being a candidate -- with trying to convince you that by electing me to the United States Senate, you're going to get a better job, you're going to make more money, that your lives are somehow going to magically improve.

(pause)

Because that's not going to happen.

The AUDIENCE NOISE BECOMES PERCEPTIBLY MORE HUSHED as they become drawn.

AARONS (contd)

That's not going to happen if you elect me ... or Mr. Cade or Mr. Symington. Therefore, I'm not going to ask you now for your vote.

CLOSE UP - PETE

as he watches Aarons, realizing that in the last thirty seconds he has suddenly become a force in the campaign.

143 CONTD.

143 CONTD.

AARONS (contd)

I am going to ask that you listen
to me for the next few minutes
and during the rest of the debate,
and then just think about what
I've said.

The large room is now completely silent. Aarons has
them literally in the palm of his hand.

BACK TO AARONS

Above all else, our real problems -- shrinking
resources, chronic poverty -- are long-term.
But the solutions we're given are designed to
get politicians elected in November -- not to solve
the problems!

A LOUD, EMOTIONAL CHEER swells up from the crowd.

MODERATOR

Once more, I will remind the audience not to
cheer or applaud. It only takes time away from
the candidates. Thank you.

AARONS

Right now, right here in Ohio, why can't we be
the first to forget about the election and start
thinking past November, and past next year, and
even beyond our own lifetimes, and for the first
time think hard about the real answers.

AARONS' VOICE FADES as we

DISSOLVE TO:

144 MONTAGE

of the last week of the various campaigns using the
synchronized, multi-projector technique which utilizes
up to seven or eight different slides on the same screen,
FADING IN AND OUT independently or in concert. The images
are all of machines: computers, automatic dialers pumping
selected messages into selected voters' homes; automatic
signature machines scribing the candidates' signatures
to "personal" appeals; envelope stuffing and sorting
machines; banks of video monitors; printers turning out
reams of polling data; monitors charting the respiration
and heartbeat of test audiences reacting to political
commercials before they are released, etc. All of this
IS SEEN against WILD SOUND of snatches of speeches, bands

CONTD.

144 CONTD

144

playing campaign songs, crowd noise, news reports, etc., until WE SEE a STILL of Pete in the lower right corner of the screen -- the first time in the sequence that WE SEE a human being. His face is in half-shadow as the

145 CAMERA ZOOMS toward Pete until he FILLS THE SCREEN 145
with

EXTREME CLOSE UP - PETE

and the STILL UNFREEZES and he slowly cradles his brow as the CAMERA PULLS BACK and WE SEE him sitting alone in his darkened office, sitting on the corner of Helen's desk, talking on the phone to Wallace.

PETE

... probably not for at least
another ninety minutes, Wallace.

As Pete listens to Wallace's response, he hears the OUTER OFFICE DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE. He leans forward slightly so he can see down the corridor, and a few seconds later he sees Ellen. He smiles to her and she walks toward him.

PETE (contd)

But you've got the latest drafts
of the victory and concession
speeches, right?

(pause)

Just make sure the concession
speech is the one that talks
about this being "the first of
many challenges, the framework
for my continued involvement,"
blah, blah, blah.

(pause)

No -- stay right there in the
hotel suite.

(pause, smiles)

No -- Irene doesn't have to be
there with you. Just have
Charlie keep her on ice until
you're ready to go down and make
your statement.

(pause)

Hang loose, Wallace. I'll talk
to you later.

Pete hangs up and turns to Ellen, who is standing next to him.

ELLEN

(sarcastic)

And how are the Furmans doing
on Election Night?

PETE

(deadpan)

Wallace and Irene are doin'
great.

ELLEN

How's their marriage?

PETE

Like between a bug and a
windshield.

Ellen laughs.

ELLEN

That's a nice little plane
you've got.

PETE

You got the last ride. Tomorrow
she goes back to Hertz.

ELLEN

I thought this place would be
packed.

PETE

They all had the day off.
Nothing more we can do, it's
all in the hands of ...

(shrugs and grins)

... the people.

Ellen laughs.

PETE (contd)

You hungry?

ELLEN

Are you kidding?

PETE

(smiles)

I've got some stuff sent from
the Carnegie in my office.
Beer's in the refrigerator.
I just gotta make one more
call.

145 CONTD

145

ANGLE - ELLEN

as she walks into

146 INT: PETE'S PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

146

and sees the food spread out on a coffee table in front of the couch. As she walks over to the table, picks up some hors d'oeuvres and starts eating them, she walks around his office looking at his photos, tapes, machinery, etc., we hear:

PETE (VO)

(playful tone of voice)

... no, you don't call him an asshole, you're gracious in victory.

(pause)

Because you're a woman and mother -- we proved that, remember?

(pause, then laughs)

Congratulations, Andrea.

(suddenly serious)

You deserved it -- you're a great governor. Goodbye.

CUT TO:

147 INSERT - TV SCREEN

147

Rex Grimby~~Edwin Newman~~ is at the anchor desk.*Grimby*
~~NEWMAN~~

If there is an early pattern in this off-year election, it is that voters are sending a strong signal that any politician who takes them for granted, does so at his -- or her -- peril. We have dogfights all over the board -- Senate races in New York, Florida, Maine and Oregon where most experts had predicted easy contests. Jim Hartz, there is still another hour or so before the polls close in the West, but what do our exit polls show so far?

148 ANGLE - JIM HARTZ

148

by HARTZ
 Ed, one contest in which it appears that the experts were right -- though it was exceptionally bitter and hard-fought and much closer than expected -- is the New Mexico gubernatorial race. Based on our numbers, we believe that Congressman Frank McKusker will wind up with about fifty-three percent of the final vote, defeating millionaire Wallace Furman, who spent an estimated five million to wage the most sophisticated campaign ever seen in the ...

SOUND FADES as we

CUT TO:

149 ANGLE - PETE

149

as he lies on the floor leaning against the couch, eating a corned beef sandwich. Ellen is sitting on the couch. The office is dark, lit only by the bank of screens in front of them showing all three networks, CNN, etc., giving their Election Night coverage. Using his remote control, Pete can switch the SOUND from one set to the other, focusing on one screen while the others glow silently. At the news of Wallace's defeat, he slowly brings his hand up to the side of his head, points it and pulls the trigger as if it were a gun and then slowly slides OUT OF VIEW onto the floor. Ellen starts to giggle uncontrollably. After a few seconds, Pete slides back up.

ELLEN

(softly)

Wilfred called me last week
 from Pennsylvania.

PETE

(guarded)

Yeah? How is Wilfred?

ELLEN

(pause, then a
 short laugh)

When he called me he was shook
 up. You blowing in on them
 like the mad prophet of Doom.
 At least that's how he described
 it.

(MORE)

149 CONTD

149

ELLEN (contd)

(pause)

He was happy you'd left Cade
... but he was ... bothered by
some of the things you said to
Aarons.

(pause)

He wouldn't get specific --
what did you say to him, Pete?

PETE

The truth -- that somewhere down
the line we made the package
more important than the product
... that finally all he had to
offer was himself.

Ellen looks at him, amazed.

DISSOLVE TO:

150 INSERT - TV SCREEN

150

Margaret Hall on ABC is looking up from some reports just
handed her.

HALL

Based on our ABC exit polls and
early results from key precincts
in the State of Washington, we
are now projecting that incumbent
Governor Andrea Jackson will win
a second four year term, soundly
beating State Senator Albert
Murdoch in a contest that at
times escalated into ...

SOUND FADES as we

CUT TO:

151 ANGLE - PETE AND ELLEN

151

They are both standing in front of a huge plate-glass
window, looking out over the midtown skyline.

PETE

You having problems with your
story?

ELLEN

(suddenly defensive)

What do you mean?

PETE

Just that it hasn't come out yet. I was surprised -- that's all.

ELLEN

It's ...
(shrugs)
OK.

Pete looks at her. He can tell that there is something else.

PETE

You're having trouble getting other sources?

ELLEN

No ... it's just that, uh ...
(sucks in her breath)
I've decided not to write it -- about Sam and Claire.

PETE

(genuinely astonished)
Why?

ELLEN

(embarrassed)
First of all, Sam didn't commit any crime, he didn't do anything wrong. Claire was the only one who did anything, and that was just copying a couple of reports for Bauer.

(voice stronger as
if to convince
herself)

Bauer went into business with a senator's wife, and then tried to influence his vote. OK, he's a sleaze, and what he did was lousy and against all the rules, but when you look at it, it was a matter of degree. He's basically a lobbyist, right. And that's what they get paid for -- trying to influence legislation. So what's the real story? It's the way U.S. business tries to influence foreign elections.

(pause)

That's what'll be coming out next week.

151 CONTD

151

Pete looks at Ellen, then starts to laugh.

PETE

Are you nuts? Even I think it's
a great story, and I hate it.

(pause, stops
laughing)

What is it? Are you gettin'
human on me? -- I thought you
were a reporter.

Ellen covers her face with her hands. Pete gently moves
them away.

PETE (contd)

God, I don't believe it. You're
blushing.

Their faces are close. They are staring at each other.
You can feel the heat rise.

CUT TO:

152 INSERT - TV SCREEN

152

Roger Grimsley
Ewin Newman is at the anchor desk.

Grimsley
NEWMAN

... certainly one of the biggest
surprises this Election Night,
which has been chock full of them,
is the now apparent second-place
finish by an independent running
for the Senate seat in Pennsylvania.
Philip Aarons, not long ago an
unknown college history professor,
has lost to Republican Michael
Wentworth Symington, but will clearly --
some might say miraculously --
finish ahead of Jerome Cade, in
a --

The sound stops as Pete hits the remote control switch.

CAMERA PANS across the bank of screens until WE SEE
Aarons addressing his supporters in the ballroom of a
Pittsburgh hotel. Pete hits the volume switch for that
channel.

AARONS

... something none of the commen-
tators, none of the newspapers,
(MORE)

AARONS (contd)

none of the so-called political experts predicted came into this race. Something human came into this race -- some straight talk, some honest feeling ... something that wasn't slick and prepackaged, that wasn't engineered by media wizards.

Aarons is interrupted by cheers and applause. He stops and begins waving to the crowd until it quiets down.

AARONS (contd)

We together have achieved an historic moment in politics -- and we've come too far to turn back now.

He is interrupted by louder cheers. Aarons motions for them to quiet down.

AARONS (contd)

Tonight concludes the first chapter. Together we will --

Sound fades as we hear uproarious laughter from Pete and Ellen, as, with their arms around each other, they walk across the room to the bank of screens and together flick off -- one by one -- the glowing images of anchors, reporters, politicians, commercials, until they reach the last one -- still showing Aarons -- and pause. They look at him silently for a moment, then start to laugh again and flick off the last screen, and we hear them laughing in the darkness until suddenly we hear Ellen shriek as Pete does something or other to her. Then we hear some more laughing as we hear them walk out of the office toward the bedroom. The laughter subsides and there is silence.

FADE OUT.