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Professor Edwin Fogelman  
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Dear Ed:

*I must ask a great favor. I'm unable to attend the Retirement Party for Charles Backstrom, which pains me greatly, because over many years he has been an exemplary friend and colleague and one to whom I owe a special debt for his help at a critical moment in my career.*

*Were I present I would want to share my special memory because it speaks both to Charles' capacity for friendship and to his professional competence. So, if it's in the keeping with the spirit of the evening, I ask the favor of your sharing this reminiscence.*

*The year was 1961. I was coming off an unprecedented six-year leave of absence from the Political Science Department. I had been serving as Governor Freeman's Commissioner of Administration when, in November of 1960, Freeman was unexpectedly defeated. I was suddenly adrift, and, in a state of considerable bewilderment, found myself a candidate for Mayor of Minneapolis.*

*The smart money rated my chances of surviving the primary somewhere between highly unlikely and zero. At that time the election was nonpartisan; the two candidates with the most votes were nominated and proceeded to the general election. Among ten primary opponents the two most likely nominees were the incumbent Republican Mayor, P. Kenneth Peterson, and the well-known labor leader, David Roe (later a noted University Regent).*

*Despite the gloomy outlook, I felt I could not withdraw and disappoint a small but loyal band of supporters. So we proceeded to the battle without great joy or much money, fearing the worst but determined to go down with honor.*

*Suddenly the trumpets sounded and out of the gloom there materialized Charles Backstrom and John Turner. They insisted that all was not lost, that all that was needed was some adroit use of the new skill of political science, namely, paying attention to the data.*

*Over several nights of analyzing election results Backstrom and Turner isolated those precincts in which non-labor liberal candidates did relatively better than they did in conservative or labor precincts. With their data in hand they took over my campaign.*

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*They argued that in a city election in which voting was customarily very low a campaign tailored to the historical election data could yield some surprises, that victory could go to a candidate who was able to identify his likely supporters and get them to the polls.*

*Accordingly, they said we should concede that the Republican incumbent Peterson would be one of the two nominees, that our concern in the primary should be Roe. They pinpointed the areas where we should campaign most energetically. These were largely in the conservative wards where many non-labor liberals dwelled and, if it meant more votes for Peterson, we shouldn't worry; he was going to be nominated anyway.*

*And they pinpointed the areas where we should campaign only discreetly. These were largely in the strong labor wards, where a larger vote would help Roe more than it would help us.*

*The Backstrom-Turner primary strategy worked. We came up on everyone's blind side. As expected, Incumbent Peterson ran first, but, to most observers' surprise, I ran second, edging out Roe. Everyone was baffled, except Backstrom and Turner.*

*In the general election that followed, our sages now directed us to reverse the strategy. Now they had us work the labor wards energetically and the conservative wards discreetly, reasoning that, with Roe out, our natural supporters now were more heavily concentrated in the labor or DFL wards.*

*Again, to everyone's amazement, including mine, the strategy worked, and I became the Mayor, leaving a dazed polity wondering how it happened. Now, 36 years later, the secret is out.*

*I have always felt that Charley's and John's motivation to rescue my candidacy had a double edge. One, they wanted to save their political science colleague from a devastating humiliation and two, they wanted to find out whether paying attention to the data really worked in real life.*

*I shall always believe it was friendship not necessarily scholarship that motivated them. In any event, it's with this memory in mind that I wish Charles many happy retirement years with nothing to distract him from paying attention to the data.*

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Art Kaufman". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.