

Does 'Together We Can' include media?

By **JESSE NOYES**

When Deval Patrick, fresh from his gubernatorial victory, decided to lecture the media for its "cynicism" a little over a month ago, some members of the media shook their heads, others just shrugged their shoulders.

PERSPECTIVE

But Patrick's finger-wagging — which was delivered from the safe side of the election victory, as he put it — raised an intriguing question, one that is even more significant one day before Patrick takes the Corner Office: How will Patrick deal

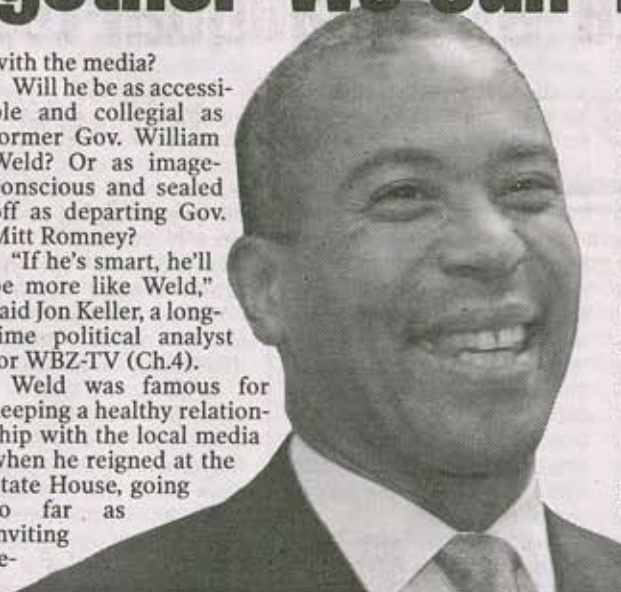
with the media?

Will he be as accessible and collegial as former Gov. William Weld? Or as image-conscious and sealed off as departing Gov. Mitt Romney?

"If he's smart, he'll be more like Weld," said Jon Keller, a longtime political analyst for WBZ-TV (Ch.4).

Weld was famous for keeping a healthy relationship with the local media when he reigned at the State House, going so far as inviting re-

IN THE CAMERA'S EYE: Analysts differ in their views of how Deval Patrick will handle the press



HERALD FILE PHOTO BY ANGELA ROWLINGS

porters up to his office for drinks.

It's hard to picture Patrick pouring bourbon for local reporters, but some in the media see similarities between him and Weld.

"I believe that Deval Patrick could very easily invite a reporter or two over to cook for them," said Andy Hiller, political analyst for WHDH-TV (Ch.7). "I think that's very analogous to Weld reaching back into his desk" for a bottle of booze.

Ray Howell — the former press secretary for Weld who now does corporate public relations — sees similarities between Weld and Patrick's style. "Weld was willing to take a short-term hit in the media in the service

of a good long-term relationship with the media," Howell said.

But some in the local media also see a Romney-like need for control in Patrick. "I think both are used to environments where media access to them is very controlled," Keller said.

Romney, a man with presidential ambitions, is known by many in the media for his ability to keep the media at bay. But his attempts at carefully crafting his image often led to him being panned as an empty suit — that is, when he was in town.

"In a way I look at Mitt Romney as being a very handsome mask," Hiller said.

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Deval media team vows candor

PATRICK, from Page 20

Patrick's press team is already promising an open administration. Patrick spokeswoman Cyndi Roy — who will work with at least three other media handlers, including former NBC correspondent Nancy Fernandez Mills, House Speaker Sal DiMasi's spokesman Kyle Sullivan, and former Herald city editor Jose Martinez — said the media can expect a "much more transparent administration than you've seen in a while."

One difference the press might notice is a disregard for the long-held hierarchy of influence some top media outlets have held in terms of securing exclusives.

Patrick's people were adept at using the blogosphere during the gubernatorial campaign, and it's expected the new administration will continue to use bloggers' influence rather than just play to the mainstream media.

"There was a pecking order that was based on who would set the media agenda" with past governors, Hiller said.

"With Patrick, it's going to be more horizontal."

Other past governors have been known for their discomfort when dealing with the press. Paul Cellucci was known for being fairly accessible, but he never really established a rapport with the media, local re-

porters and analysts said. And Jane Swift, who took a lot of knocks in her short tenure as acting governor, was infamous for her poor press relations.

Patrick's advantage is the charisma and the outsider-image that won him the governor's race. He's also a quick learner, Keller said. But if he wants to keep the headlines positive, he'll have to straddle the thin line between charming and careful.

"As of Thursday at 1 p.m. he's no longer the outsider, he's the ultimate insider. The earth has changed under his feet," Keller said. "The honeymoon will sour fast if he plays it wrong."