



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES MANLEY

September 28, 2009
Washington, D.C.

Interviewer
Janet Heininger

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TRANSCRIPT

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Heininger: This is an interview with Jim Manley, on September 28, 2009, in Washington. Let's start at the very beginning. When did you first meet [Edward M.] Kennedy, and what were your first impressions of him?

Manley: Well, I had first met him in the early '90s. I started out on Capitol Hill as the assistant press secretary, or press assistant, actually, for then-Majority Leader George Mitchell. At that time, especially late at night, when all the fun stuff happened, I had a chance to see the Senator in action, where the real negotiating occurred. So I got to know Senator Kennedy a little bit and the Kennedy staff much better, because I always was providing them help, especially Paul Donovan, when he was the press secretary.

Heininger: Did John Hilley hire you?

Manley: Yes, John Hilley would have hired me, yes. Actually, that's not true. I worked for Diane Dewhirst, Senator Mitchell's then-communications director. I started off on the third floor of the Capitol, again 19 years ago, and I say that because five years ago, when Senator [Harry] Reid hired me away, I actually ran the office that I first started out in 19 years ago. This time I had a better seat, however.

Heininger: Better seats.

Manley: A better seat, better view of the Mall grounds. So again, I first got a chance to know the Senator a little bit in the early '90s, and then in 1993 I was hired to go work for Senator Kennedy. He was getting ready to gear up for reelection in '94. They had just hired a press secretary from Boston who had decent relationships with the Boston press, but she didn't know anything about the national press corps, and so they thought it made sense to bring me over to serve as a deputy press secretary, to complement then-press secretary Pam Hughes' skills.

Heininger: What made you leave working for the Majority Leader?

Manley: Oh, this was an irresistible opportunity. The chance to go work for Senator Kennedy as he's getting geared up for reelection was something that I couldn't turn down. I have a great

fondness and respect for the Senate, and the chance to grow my wings and expand a little bit more was irresistible. Luckily it was with Senator Kennedy.

Heininger: This was a tough press time for Kennedy though, in the wake of the Willy Smith trial. It wasn't even clear at this point how tough his reelection campaign was going to be.

Manley: Actually, some of the press stuff was pretty easy. I learned how to say no any number of ways to most every interview request we got, for the longest period of time. But you're right, I did watch that coverage from afar, and then definitely had to deal with the after-effects once I started in August of '93, I believe it was. But again, the focus there was generating a great amount of media releases, press releases, highlighting different grants. He had an extremely effective appropriations staff, and obviously the best legislative staff in the business, that were always working and trying to highlight different issues in Massachusetts. That's when I spent about a year and a half letting everyone who cared to listen know about the latest of what Senator Kennedy had done for Massachusetts. Whether it was fishermen in Gloucester or something else for the Worcester area, my job was to get it out and get it out quickly.

Heininger: Well, now that's interesting, because you said Pam Hughes came from Boston but didn't know the national scene. You were hired because you knew the national scene. You've also got Melody Miller there, and yet what they have you doing is focusing on Massachusetts.

Manley: Yes, that's true, but I could provide advice about who the players were and whatnot, on the national scene. I was still relatively young, so I needed a chance to prove myself. I think I eventually—

Heininger: I think you did.

Manley: I did, as well. It was a great way to start.

Heininger: What was Melody Miller doing?

Manley: Melody mostly dealt with family-related issues. Still, especially in light of the situation down in Florida, there was a decent amount of tabloid interest, and members of the family were always looking for advice about how to deal with one issue or another. That's where Melody came in.

Heininger: So she was the designated extended-family person.

Manley: Correct.

Heininger: You were brought in for national, but used to tout what Kennedy did for Massachusetts, which was highly necessary for this election cycle.

Manley: It was, yes.

Heininger: And what was Pam Hughes doing?

Manley: Pam, as the communications director, crafted the strategy and did probably mostly on-the-record talking. Again, at that point in time, my goals were twofold: to write up and crank out the press releases and try and find as many opportunities as possible for Senator Kennedy to tape radio actualities, which he called beepers. The first time he called me back to his office and said he wanted to tape a beeper I had no idea what he was talking about. And he said, “Jim, the beeper, the beeper, Jesus.”

Heininger: In his abbreviated talking style.

Manley: Yes. I soon figured out he was talking about a radio actuality machine. So you tape little 30-second radio actualities about the issues of the day and then you put out a media advisory, telling radio stations that they could dial into number X, Y, and Z and get sound from Senator Kennedy. So that’s what I spent a good amount of time doing between I guess it would have been August of ’93 and the election of ’94.

Heininger: In that time period, which was a very difficult campaign for him, he’s working with Bob Shrum as his outside media advisor and strategist.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Did you have any contact with Bob at that point?

Manley: Honestly, I didn’t. That was still at a level beyond me.

Heininger: Did Pam have contact with him?

Manley: Pam would have talked to Shrummy and ditto with Paul Donovan, again, his longtime press secretary who by then had been his chief of staff.

Heininger: All right, so he’s heavily loaded with press people at this point.

Manley: Correct.

Heininger: So you get slotted to tout Massachusetts things, which frankly, Massachusetts really needed to know about him.

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: So he manages to get through this election.

Manley: Sure.

Heininger: At which point things begin to settle down a little bit.

Manley: A little bit, and then Pam—are we still talking about me? OK.

Heininger: Yes.

Manley: Shortly after the election, Pam had developed some health problems, and the then-press secretary for the Labor Committee decided that she wanted to move on, and so one day I was called back into the office to meet with the chief of staff and they said, “Pam’s sick and Theresa’s [Bourgeois] leaving, and you’re it. It’s going to take us six months to hire somebody,” so for six months—

Heininger: You got to do both.

Manley: I got to do everything.

Heininger: Wow, that’s shades of your later career too.

Manley: Yes. But after that was over, I settled in again to be his press secretary for the Labor Committee, which I enjoyed more than anything else, because it was at the intersection of policy and politics.

Heininger: So you’re really a wonk.

Manley: A wonk at heart, and Senator Kennedy, in the process, in this office, allowed me to bring that wonk to the forefront, because as I’m sure you know, Senator Kennedy never did anything without being heavily briefed. I’ve said it before, I’ll say it again, every time he went down to the Senate floor he was the best-briefed Senator down there, and there was a process that he underwent on any of these issues. OSHA [Occupational Health and Safety Administration] reform. I know more about OSHA reform, IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act], prescription drugs, managed care. He’d bring in all these experts. He had the ability, of course, to collect all these experts and bring them into his office. I usually sat in on those meetings as well, as he probed and pushed and prodded to learn more about the issues.

Heininger: Well, that’s interesting, that he would have his press person sitting in on that, not just the substance people.

Manley: He was smart enough to realize that the better I understood the issue, the better I can spin for him in the press.

Heininger: Was this the case with previous press people?

Manley: It’s the smart way to operate. It’s not always the way that it operates. Robert Gibbs does that right now, for instance.

Heininger: Right.

Manley: But again, he may have grumbled every once in a while, but soon—how am I going to say this one? Soon the national reporters knew that if they called me, (A) I’d know what Kennedy was talking about, and (B) I actually knew the substance, oftentimes better than many Senators, and so that helped me establish a firm relationship with the press corps, which I believe helped Senator Kennedy in the end.

Heininger: Now that you're seeing this from the vantage point of working for yet another Majority Leader, this is not necessarily the way most Senators run their press operations.

Manley: That's correct.

Heininger: From Kennedy's standpoint, this is a very shrewd thing to do.

Manley: No truer words have ever been spoken.

Heininger: I'm just pointing that out.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: I'm well aware of why this is a very good thing to do, and as a result, it paid off in press coverage.

Manley: I respectfully believe that it did. I had to work really hard at it, but yes, it paid off in any number of ways with increased press coverage, because I was always, among other things, the first person who had a reporter for the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* call.

Heininger: With his previous press people, had he done this with Paul Donovan?

Manley: I don't know if he did it or not, but I don't know if they had the same interests that I did. You've got to understand that I'm a creature of the Senate. I've now worked here for 19 years, but of course when I first started off that wasn't the case. I guess I simply don't know the answer to that, but I do know that it just fit in with the way I operate. I love this place, I have a great reverence for it, and I like to see things get done.

Heininger: Let's flip it in another direction. Staff directors of the Labor Committee also had a keen interest in the press dimension, didn't they?

Manley: One in particular, yes.

Heininger: Well, two actually.

Manley: Well, one that I—yes.

Heininger: Tom Rollins had an extraordinarily keen interest in the press, and I'm assuming that Nick [Bancroft Littlefield, Jr.] had an equally keen interest in the press.

Manley: I don't know Tom that well, but I would say that Nick had him beat hands down.

Heininger: Oh, I don't know. A lot of the things that Nick implemented had been put in place by Tom.

Manley: Interesting.

Heininger: And in fact had been crafted by Tom, not by the press secretary. It was Tom who wandered up to the satellite studio and said, "How do you—can you actually target that into—?"

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: So some of these things that were taken for granted once Nick came in were long in place, and hadn't been specifically done by the press secretary.

Manley: Interesting, OK.

Heininger: But which dovetails with what you had said about the extent to which it fit Kennedy's needs, of recognizing that the press dimension was just as important as the policy dimension to accomplish his goals.

Manley: Yes, I believe that's the case.

Heininger: So how did he use the press to get legislation enacted?

Manley: As we previously discussed, it ranged from touting achievements in appropriations bills—but no, I know what you're asking. Once he got comfortable again, talking to the press, I at least for one figured out that he was the best salesman around, and no one could do a better job than he could. At some point in the process he became comfortable with the idea. For instance, during a markup of the prescription drug bill, bringing a handful of reporters over to talk to him for 20 minutes at key parts of the debate. During the impeachment of President [William J.] Clinton, which he took a very big role in, just about every day, usually at a moment's notice, he said, "Bring some folks over," and I'd bring ten or fifteen people over and we'd sit up in the hideaway. His sisters would be there and he'd have a chance to—

Heininger: On the impeachment, he'd bring his sisters in?

Manley: Oh sure, they were there just about every day.

Heininger: Really?

Manley: Oh, yes.

Heininger: That's new. We didn't know that.

Manley: Sure. I remember any number of occasions, the Ambassador and Ethel [Skakel Kennedy] being there, absolutely.

Heininger: Ethel or Eunice [Kennedy Shriver]?

Manley: Eunice, excuse me.

Heininger: Also a policy wonk.

Manley: Exactly. In fact, I will never forget one of them said—who was the actor with palsy?—"Teddy, Teddy, your guy, he looks like Michael J. Fox," talking about me one day, because I was running around, moving people around, and bringing people in or out. I would find ways for him to talk to reporters in the hallway. There was this vigorous process we always had to go through to get formal interviews scheduled, and so I would just make sure that—well, sometimes

I'd go so far as to just tell a reporter to meet us in the hallway, but probably more often, if I saw a reporter that I thought Kennedy wanted to talk to and needed to talk to, I'd just go over and grab that person and bring them over.

Oftentimes we'd sit in those benches in the reception room. I put together more conversations, and also got one hell of a lot of great photos out of having them sit down on that bench out there. In fact, one of those photos from the day after he died that was on the front page of the *New York Times* came from something that I had done. He was sitting down there scribbling his notes before we were doing a press conference in here. I brought the *New York Times* photographer out and he snapped a wonderful photo of Senator Kennedy scribbling notes on his cards.

Background briefings before marking up major pieces of legislation, press conferences to start a debate, press conferences to wrap up a debate, to define it one last time. Making sure that he always went down to the White House for signing ceremonies, interviews with key reporters at different times. A couple times, I remember, he'd be up on the Cape. It would be August and reporters would be looking to write their week-ahead, session-ahead stories, and I'd put him on the phone with a reporter. I'd put together a call sheet of about four or five reporters to make sure he got in the stories that laid out the agenda for the fall, for instance. Little things like that.

Heininger: Not so little things. Those are actually big things. You used him to sell his agenda.

Manley: Very much so. And there was always a fine line between the innate caution that was sometimes pulsing through that office and the fact that (A) he had a major role in much of the legislative agenda, and (B) quite frankly, he wanted to be quoted in the newspaper.

Heininger: All right, innate caution from whom?

Manley: The different chiefs of staff who were sometimes a little bit more cautious about putting him out there. We can talk to his speaking style, another point.

Heininger: But the press adjusted for the speaking style.

Manley: Oh sure, very much so.

Heininger: They can take their 30-second sound bite from anything.

Manley: That's also true.

Heininger: How did you use the press, shall we say, to get other members to do what you wanted them to do? Which is different.

Manley: Yes, that's why God created the word "leak." There were different ways to advance an agenda, and sometimes you use the press to try and advance a position. I'm not sure if I can nail anything with any great specificity right now, but over the years it oftentimes included attempts to try and isolate Senator [Max] Baucus on health care related issues. Senator Kennedy and Senator Baucus were oftentimes at odds on health care related issues, so I can't think of anything specific right now, but generically, that was oftentimes an issue.

Heininger: What about media campaigns for specific pieces of legislation, like SCHIP [State Children's Health Insurance Program]?

Manley: SCHIP, I think that was probably—I was a one-man media campaign on that one, but there are other issues—the Iraq war, for instance, when he gave a series of speeches—six? seven? All over a matter of two or three years. I think the end of the last of which, if I remember correctly, was where he drew an analogy between that and Vietnam, which we can get into if you want. It's an interesting story, which many on the staff were very concerned about.

Heininger: Who wrote the speeches? Did Sharon [Waxman] write them?

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And Carey [Parker]?

Manley: Sharon, Carey, Vicki [Reggie Kennedy], and quite frankly, the Senator.

Heininger: It was a collaborative effort, but Sharon would do the drafting.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Then it would go to Carey.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And then Kennedy and Vicki would have input.

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: And you saw his hand in it.

Manley: Very much so, those in particular. There are some Senators up on the Hill who want to review every press release that goes out under their name. I think that's a tremendous waste of time. The point is, Senator Kennedy didn't worry about a lot of that stuff, nor should he have, but he was very much involved with the crafting of those speeches.

Heininger: But those weren't press releases.

Manley: No. Maybe not the best analogy, but I guess—

Heininger: I take the point of the analogy. I understand exactly what you're talking about.

Manley: Most speeches, he didn't really spend much time. He was a voracious reader, but speechwriting was not his thing. Of course you didn't need to with Carey.

Heininger: I was going to say, knowing that they had gone through Carey, that was usually sufficient.

Manley: Just beautiful.

Heininger: But this was a little different. This is something that toward the end of life, he said this was the vote he was most proud of.

Manley: Oh yes, very much so, and it was part of a concentrated campaign. Stephanie Cutter was heavily involved in the strategy, if not executing the strategy. It was very much a campaign, and you are correct, it was a very important vote for him.

Heininger: Why did he feel so strongly?

Manley: The sheer senselessness of it all, the thought that there was—in many respects, it became really personal for him once he learned the story about the Harts [Alma and Brian].

Heininger: Right.

Manley: And then it became—he had always had views on the war and obviously had taken these kinds of crusades before, but it became very personal to him once he met the Harts, and after that it became a cause. Like I said, over the two or three years he gave a series of speeches at different venues, the National Press Club and what's that called, SAIS? [School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins].

Heininger: SAIS, yes.

Manley: I think we ended up giving two speeches there. Where did he draw the Vietnam analogy?

Heininger: Why was the Vietnam analogy so sensitive?

Manley: It was a provocative charge to lay against the President at that time. Why is it? Because you're basically saying, just like we later learned, that the war is lost, and nobody at that time was willing to say that. Again, I lived through my own experience with that just two years ago, but at that point in time, when he was at the height of his powers, he being President [George W.] Bush, such an analogy was highly charged. I will never forget that there was a meeting. Why were we meeting on a Saturday? Because the speech was probably on a Monday morning. We met on a Saturday afternoon in his office to go over the speech one more time, and we kept on going back and forth on whether to keep it in or not. I'm not trying to brag. I think I argued against it in a press caution. Others correctly were arguing for it, and then I'll never forget; he was walking out the door with his wife at his side. He turned around and shrugged his shoulders and said, "Keep it in." And then he walked out the door.

Heininger: Was Carey saying to keep it in?

Manley: Oh, yes, Carey had been on all the—yes.

Heininger: That's the answer I would have expected. How did he feel about the fact that [Robert] Byrd was saying the same things that he was saying?

Manley: That's good. I never heard any grumbling.

Heininger: Didn't it strengthen his hand in this?

Manley: Oh, sure it did, and then of course when Byrd started working the Internet tubes, posting things on the *Huffington Post* and whatnot, that's probably when Kennedy really got excited about that as well. He liked the analogy of the "two old bulls" leading the charge one last time.

Heininger: And those who were trying to protect the integrity of the Senate.

Manley: Oh, sure, yes.

Heininger: These people, who had just given away the house.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: All right. You have said before that one of the most important votes or campaigns that you saw take place was for IDEA. Why?

Manley: He had two things going on. He had a very committed staffer in Connie Garner, and also he had his sister.

Heininger: Pushing.

Manley: Pushing, yes. It was one of those classic niche Kennedy issues that he seized on and drove home.

Heininger: IDEA has been reauthorized before. What made this one special?

Manley: Maybe I'm from the wrong perspective, because again, I was the guy who was fielding all these phone calls all the time, but I just felt beleaguered, not in a bad way, but in a good way. I was under pressure to make sure he got a lot of good press. I was under pressure to make sure that the story was told correctly. Again, we were trying to reauthorize in a somewhat hostile environment, where it's very easy to succumb to the budgetary pressures that the Bush administration had placed.

Heininger: Right. The previous reauthorizations had been in a different environment.

Manley: Correct.

Heininger: This was a hostile environment.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: IDEA, which costs schools.

Manley: Absolutely, and there was this huge debate that played out, and I guess we just found ourselves in the middle of it.

Heininger: Why was he so proud of it? Because it got Eunice off his back, or because this was something he really cared about?

Manley: Oh no, he really was committed to it. You couldn't help but meet these kids and be impressed by what they were trying to do and about the efficacy of the program. It gets back to one of his core principles. I'm sorry I can't cite the Bible verse like he could—I don't want to say less fortunate, but helping people who are disadvantaged, that's what he was all about, and there was no better case than this. He had seen, through Eunice's Special Olympics, how if you get these folks into the mainstream they can live vigorous, productive lives.

Heininger: He disagreed with Eunice on some issues, but not this one.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Hand and glove on this one.

Manley: Very much so. Eunice was banging him up all the time to push forward, and he was right on board.

Heininger: Did he get as much pressure from Jean [Kennedy Smith]?

Manley: No, I don't think so.

Heininger: If you had to prioritize the issues that he cared the most about, where would you rank them, in the years that you worked for him?

Manley: Because of my vantage point in the issues that were on his plate at that point in time, it would be the war on Iraq, health care, civil rights, and immigration-related issues. Those would be some of the top-tier issues.

Heininger: Was disabilities a second tier?

Manley: I don't want to say it's a second tier. As I said, I remember the fights very well. The problem of course, in answering that question, is that Senator Kennedy, by the time I started or shortly thereafter, found himself in the middle of every fight, so that's why it's tough to prioritize like that. Again, not to make this about me, but policy staff throughout this period had the luxury of working like hell to get their issue out of the committee and onto the floor, and then they could kind of chill out while he focused on something else. For me, there was always another issue right around the corner, so I didn't have that luxury, because I swear to God, this guy was always trying to find a way to pick a fight, I mean on the best of terms, or decide that the next bill is up. The Labor Committee was a beehive of activity, and the staffers could come and go, but I had to be with him all the time for the next battle.

Heininger: What was your relationship with Nick Littlefield?

Manley: I like Nick a lot. It was good. Nick applied a lot of pressure to get a lot of good press. What happened was that both Nick and Kennedy are early risers and so they'd bitch at each other.

Heininger: And a Senate that is not an early rising institution.

Manley: Yes, especially on the Cape, when it took him a while to—well, I’m trying to tell two different stories here. For a while, he didn’t get the *New York Times* delivered to the Cape house. At some point I took care of that, but before that, he and Nick would talk at 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning. They’d bitch about the fact that he didn’t get a quote in the newspaper, and then he’d call me at 7:00 in the morning and say, “Jesus, what happened here? Why didn’t I get the quote in the newspaper?” I always chalked it up to Nick ginning him up. I love Nick, but Nick would always say, “I don’t know what happened to Jim,” blah blah blah. He put a lot of pressure on me, but all the best intentions. Nick was the energizer bunny. I’ve never seen anybody constantly in motion like that. He really was a piece of work. But yes, he’d get the Senator ginned up all the— if I had a dollar for every time I got yelled at early in the morning, I’d be a rich man right now.

Heininger: How was his relationship with Kennedy?

Manley: Oh, very close, much closer than any other staffer I’ve seen, just about, with a hint of sibling rivalry in there. Nick was his favorite whipping boy, and he used to push Nick both privately and publicly. Quite frankly, once Nick left, I served that role a little bit. As any number of reporters will tell you, you know the Senator liked to make fun of me by needling me in public—then he’s more willing to complain when something wasn’t going right, in full public view, so when Nick was gone I served that purpose.

Heininger: What was his relationship with [S.] Michael Myers?

Manley: He didn’t yell at Michael nearly as much, I don’t think. Still, very close. Senator Kennedy has been very lucky to have two extraordinarily gifted chiefs of staff. Both took the job knowing that it was a 24-7 job, and both dealt with it like that. Nick had a little bit of a more personal relationship, those things like Nick singing and whatnot.

Heininger: I was going to say, because Nick sings.

Manley: And you know, he probably went to the Cape house more than Michael did. But still, no knock against Michael at all, still the first phone call in the morning made and the last made at night.

Heininger: Their personalities are very different.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Nick’s a little more hyper, energizer bunny.

Manley: But still very close and very close confidants. The Senator would tell them everything.

Heininger: What about with Carey?

Manley: Where do you begin? I’ve now worked up on the Hill for 19 years and I’ve never seen a more talented staffer, a brilliant speechwriter, a brilliant chess player, with the ability to see

two or three moves down the field, or, if we're doing a chess analogy, to see two or three moves down. Well-grounded, brilliant, scientist, lawyer.

Heininger: Don't forget nice.

Manley: And also extremely nice. Carey would sit at his desk. Nick was always with him or Michael was always with him and then Carey was the constant presence in the office, Buddha-like. Kennedy would come in and they'd sit down and there's a chair right across from Carey's desk and all the time you'd see Kennedy sitting down talking to him or Carey would go into his office. Never seen in public.

Heininger: Was Carey a voice among equals, or was he a voice that trumped?

Manley: Oh, the voice that trumped, at least through most of the process.

Heininger: Were you there the year he was out?

Manley: Yes, I was.

Heininger: How was it different?

Manley: This is where I get into forgetting things.

Heininger: Mary Beth [Cahill] was his chief of staff.

Manley: That's right. How long is this tape going to be private?

Heininger: As long as you want to make things private on it. You are welcome to put any disclosure requirements on things that you want. He wants people to be candid.

Manley: I saw that and understand that. I'm just not comfortable and I don't know why. I'm not really comfortable trashing Mary Beth. I just wasn't a fan. We missed his calm presence, let's just leave it at that. Once Carey arbitrated, there was no second guessing and everyone supported the decision. Actually, I know what happened. It was more often that Nick would make these final decisions, or was it Nick or Michael by that time?

Heininger: Probably Michael.

Manley: It would have been Michael by that time.

Heininger: Nick was gone.

Manley: Yes, so Michael made more of the decisions or rulings that Carey would have made. Michael was very overstretched at that point in time, now that I remember it.

Heininger: It strikes me, from having followed Carey's career from the very beginning, I would have assumed that that year would have been very difficult for everyone.

Manley: It was, yes.

Heininger: Very difficult for Kennedy, but very difficult for everyone in the office, because everybody adored him.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And he was the final arbiter.

Manley: Yes, and now that I'm thinking about this more, I remember Michael being incredibly overworked at that point in time, constantly shuffling between the HELP [Health, Education, Labor and Pensions] office in the Dirksen Building and the personal office, and getting much more involved in Russell office stuff than he normally did. He and Mary Beth collaborated, I guess, very closely.

Heininger: And this was also a time period in which he had had a series of stellar, high profile—I mean there's nobody like a Ranny Cooper. But he goes through a period in the '90s of constant change at the top of his chiefs of staff, which also had to be disorienting for the office.

Manley: Yes, I think that's probably the case. The other way to look at it, of course, is that the average tenure in the House is two years and in the Senate it's five years, and so—

Heininger: The average Kennedy tenure is—

Manley: No, that's a point well taken. So yes, I guess a little bit disoriented would be fine, and maybe I'm not thinking clearly, but I guess right now I say that's kind of a natural thing on the Hill. But you are correct, for the Kennedy office it would have been unusual.

Heininger: Because in many ways, many of the staffers, the substantive policy staffers, were not changing during this time period.

Manley: That's correct.

Heininger: He's also had people who come and stay for a long period of time, senior people.

Manley: On immigration relation issues, education and health care, et cetera.

Heininger: Yes. Dave Nexon was there for what, 18 years?

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: You get long periods, so you get the stability there, but I still wouldn't assume that—I actually hadn't asked anybody about this, about that year when Carey was gone, but I would have assumed it would have been very—"Oh wait, the Buddha is not present."

Manley: We were freaked out in the beginning, I do remember that, and we were aghast when he showed back up again. He had vowed that—what was he going to do, was it two days a week? I can't remember. No, not two days a week. I think it was half days. I think he was coming in in the afternoon, and then sure enough that changed and he started working more normal days again, because nobody wanted to see him go, I guess. So yes, he was getting his

exercise in the morning and then he was coming in the afternoon, and then he was supposed to leave by 5:00 or 6:00, I can't remember which. Then sooner rather than later, he started working his normal hours again.

Heininger: My understanding is that he's kind of kept to leaving dinnertime.

Manley: He's never been a—

Heininger: Three o'clock in the morning one.

Manley: Yes, exactly. I think his lovely wife would get mad at him, but it was just the way he applied himself. He walked in, sat down, and then just, what is that phrase, "nose to the grindstone" throughout the day. I always felt guilty every time I had to call him at 9:00 with a press call to review a statement or something like that, because it just wasn't his style. Nick or Michael I could give a rat's ass. It's 3:00 in the morning, they got me into this mess, they're going to get me out of this mess kind of a thing.

Heininger: And they would, too.

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: All right, so tell me about Kennedy's relations with the press. Who were his favorite reporters, or did he have favorite reporters?

Manley: Oh, sure. A smart, savvy politician knew that you had to court the press. As I've alluded to earlier, there was a point in time where we didn't do much. It took me five years and dozens of nos to get him back onto *Meet the Press* again for the first time in, I think it was five years. Again, this is difficult to say about myself, but I'm going to brag, damn it. I think I changed the dynamic in that office from what it was, and I made everyone realize that we needed to do a better job of courting the press and talking to reporters, that talking points were great, but he's a great Senator and he's a big boy and he knows what he's doing.

I pressed to get him on *Meet the Press*. I tried to get him to go to different press-related events. I made sure in the hallways that he stopped to talk to the right reporters. I can't claim credit for this next one, because this was just the natural thing about Kennedy, that when things happened to different reporters, he'd write them notes or call them up. But going back to the specific answer to your question, the world began and ended, to a degree, with the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*. The rest of it was gravy.

I was never convinced that I knew exactly which of the two thought the *New York Times* was more important, Nick or the Senator, but for both, the *New York Times* was the end all and the be all, and the *Globe* was only shortly behind. Kennedy was always very good about stroking the *Globe* and making sure that they didn't feel slighted when all this stuff appeared in the *New York Times*. He was also smart enough to know that while he could rarely ever get a fair shake with the *Boston Herald*, he had to deal with them. So my natural reaction to the *Herald* would always be no, no, no, and oftentimes he'd talk to them.

I think one of my greatest claims to fame is there was a guy by the name of David Rogers, a legendary reporter, started off with the *Globe*, then for many years was the top Congressional reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*. I believe he used to be the best reporter in town. Now he's certainly still one amongst the best, but I helped to foster a relationship between the two.

Kennedy could be abrupt in the hallway. For a guy his size, I've never seen a man who could walk so fast as Senator Kennedy. He could just blow past reporters, and I always made sure that the Senator would stop and talk to David. I mean, my God, they had known each other since the late '80s. Senator Kennedy had been instrumental in giving David a scoop about the bombing of the harbor in Nicaragua, then a big deal in the Iran-Contra stuff. So they had this relationship, but David's a cranky old bastard, and Senator Kennedy had his moments as well. I wrote some sort of rapprochement between the two that I think David will say he'll never forget.

Kennedy liked the old-school guys: [David] Broder, Haynes Johnson. I'd be surprised when I'd go to these National Press Club things where you can see the old members; he'd meet the old timers from the '60s and early '70s, and he always had a good thing with them.

Heininger: He knew them all.

Manley: He knew them all, but it was also more of a time when he would see them at social events, at Georgetown dinner parties and whatnot, and that time is long gone.

Heininger: What about Mike Barnicle?

Manley: The best I can figure out, they had a personal relationship up on the Cape, but they didn't necessarily talk to each other a lot during the week. I'd be hard pressed to—oh, [Thomas] Oliphant. I don't want to say constantly, but he would bounce ideas off Tom. He had a very good relationship with Tom Oliphant. I'm blanking on all the old Globies right now, sorry, I can't think of them right now. The publisher and editorial writers, he had personal relationships with them as well that he would use.

Heininger: How was the way Kennedy dealt with the press different from other people that you've worked for?

Manley: Most members, I think, would be gratified by the attention and more willing to stop to talk to them than he would. If he was in the mood, he would stop to talk. If not, he'd just keep right on going. Most members are probably open to press requests, but he had more caution, or the authority figures in the office had a little bit more of a caution. But he'd invite the—I'd always be allowed to invite 25, 30 reporters to the Christmas party, and they sure loved it. He'd just charm the hell out of them. He'd stick around afterwards to talk to everybody. I'd always be by his side and I'd say, "You remember so and so, don't you?" and he'd say, "Oh yes, how are you doing?" And just work the room and charm the hell out of them.

Reporters, to a man or a woman, could appreciate that he was a very smart, very savvy guy who knew his policy, who just got—the words tripped him up every once in a while.

Heininger: Did they like him?

Manley: Yes. I just realized this after he died. Somebody sent me a wonderful photo of when he went down to Iowa to barnstorm for John Kerry, and Ceci Connolly, who is not afraid of anyone, asked him to take a photo with a bunch of reporters who were covering Kennedy's travels that day, his barnstorming, and I just saw the photo a couple of weeks ago. There's like six or seven reporters. Kennedy's got his arm around Ceci on one hand, and I can't remember who he had on the other hand, and everybody's beaming and you could just tell that everybody was happy as hell, and besides, they had just covered one hell of a rally. It was one of those ones where Kennedy blew the roof off.

Heininger: Is this when he said, "Now you can make it up to me"?

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: "You didn't vote for me, you didn't vote for my brother—"

Manley: Yes. I talked to the reporter who sent me the photo. He said, "I'll never forget that day and I'll never forget getting that photo taken with Senator Kennedy." My current boss has taken a leave when it comes to the press corps. Senator Kennedy very much liked the press corps, respected the press corps, knew their rhythms, but just to be quite candid about it, he also liked to see his name, and maybe more importantly, his photograph, in the newspaper, and there was a tremendous amount of pressure to do so.

Heininger: But it did good when he did.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Did he like it for ego stroking, or did he like it because it was designed to accomplish something?

Manley: A little bit of both. He liked nothing more than when I'd bring in—cut out a couple of the photographs from the newspaper and show it to him. More often than not he'd ask to get a copy of the photo and he'd get a frame and hang it up somewhere.

Heininger: Did he give exclusives to people?

Manley: I've never been a fan of that, ergo, he rarely did that. At certain times during the process of a managed care bill, for instance, we gave an exclusive to the *New York Times*. But no, not a big—

Heininger: It engenders a wall with the other press.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Were there times when he would freeze out certain press, or were there grounds on which somebody would be frozen out? Or did he not do that?

Manley: No, he really didn't. That goes back to the meta themes about Senator Kennedy; he's smart enough to know what comes around goes around, just like in legislating he knew that your

enemy today could be your friend the next day. So he could complain about the *Boston Herald* to high heaven and Howie Carr calling him “Fat Boy” and calling his son “Patches,” but he also knew that he had to deal with the *Boston Herald*—so.

Heininger: Did he get upset if his family was attacked?

Manley: Yes. For instance, at some point we all agreed that I would stop giving him Howie Carr’s column. It just wasn’t worth it, because yes, these were ad hominem attacks on his family. He obviously wore a lot of scars, and it was tough to provoke, but the family stuff sometimes went a little too far.

Heininger: Did they go after Patrick [Kennedy]?

Manley: The *Herald* would call him, Howie Carr would call him “Patches.” At some point, I was smart enough to realize that he’d just get mad, so I finally said, “Senator, I’m not going to give you these columns anymore, OK?” He said fine, it just wasn’t worth it. I would rarely, if ever, hide any of that stuff from him. I’m not a big believer in that. Ditto with my current boss. They need to know what’s out there, but that kind of stuff no one needs to worry about.

Heininger: It’s gratuitous.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: When he went to Massachusetts, who was responsible for press there?

Manley: He always had a press secretary up in Boston as well.

Heininger: Oh, so there was always a press person who was in the Boston office?

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: So how closely did the Washington people work with the Boston press?

Manley: Very closely, but let’s face it, most of his action was down here in Washington. He’d spend a certain amount of time up there during election years, but I don’t think he set any world records with his number of appearances in Massachusetts. He’d go up there because—

Heininger: That’s an interesting point, because many people, particularly House members, are back in their districts all the time, and every weekend is consumed with appearances. Senators much less so.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: A lot of them tend to live here, and when they go back there, there are appearances. But with Kennedy, when he would go to Massachusetts, principally he was going to the Cape, wasn’t he?

Manley: Exactly. That’s what I was trying to figure out, so how does this work? He’d go to the Cape. He really didn’t go up there during the winter months, and so this is the summer and it

involved sailing. So how did this work? He would leave on Fridays, go up to the Cape, go sailing, drive in from the Cape on Monday morning to do an event, and then get the shuttle usually about 3:00 down here.

Heininger: So he'd usually protect basically Saturdays and Sundays.

Manley: Yes, that was for sailing.

Heininger: As he did the whole last year.

Manley: Exactly. So yes, quite honestly, that was it. Sometimes he'd have to take a chopper to the western part of the state to get out there, but during the summer months at least, it was an event on Monday morning and then take the shuttle down. It's not as if he went back to Massachusetts all the time during the winter months.

Heininger: How do you control the press for a Kennedy?

Manley: That's one hell of a—

Heininger: Is it possible to control the press for a Kennedy?

Manley: Well, it became even more difficult after I left, when we really entered the 24-hour news cycle. At that point in time, the forces of evil included the tabloids, the *New York Daily News*, and the *New York Post*, the *Boston Herald*, and then the gossip page at the *Globe* as well, names and faces. With this proliferation of blogs out there, and then there's just much more to deal with.

I became a good blocker, if that's what you mean, you know, moving in—I know how to move him in and out of a room, that's for sure. You plot his movements very carefully, in part because of his problem with the back, but also to limit the ability of someone to come running after him to ask him some random question—how could you kill that woman, et cetera. So you'd carefully plot out a route and stick to it. When you're at the National Press Club, for instance, you put together a plan just like you do with the President of the United States, for that matter, and then you stick to it.

Heininger: Some of this is a little different from what you might have had to do with Mitchell or with Reid.

Manley: Well, with Reid, not so much, kind of the same thing. I learned all this stuff and now I apply it, but certainly with Senator Mitchell, sure. It's night and day. If I had a dollar for every time I'd get a phone call from—I'll never forget one day in August on vacation and Richard Johnson's calling me from *Page Six*, something having to do with one of his sisters, I think it was. I don't have to put up with that stuff. I didn't have to put up with it with Mitchell, certainly don't have to put up with it with Harry Reid. How is it different? I had to deal with the tabloids much more when I worked for Senator Kennedy. Every once in a while I'd have to deal with *Extra* or *Access Hollywood*, stuff like that. Then of course there's the right-wing columnists that love to take shots at him as well, though obviously I have the same thing in this current job.

So how is it different? The family-related stuff, sure. You were being asked to comment on all sorts of things, imagined or otherwise, having to do with his family. Then of course there are the tragedies that have come up over the years: John [Kennedy, Jr.]’s death, Michael Kennedy’s on New Year’s Eve, stuff like that.

Heininger: Did you feel that the press was generally hard on Kennedy or kind to him?

Manley: The people that I saw most, the Congressional reporters, appreciated how hardworking he was. They did not fall for the hype that he was just some guy who drank too much and was a playboy, if you will. The people that I dealt with day in, day out saw firsthand that he was the hardest-working man in show biz. There’s always haters out there, so you just deal with them. I’ve got haters in my current job. There are many members of the press corps that (A) were touched by personal acts of kindness that he gave them, (B) saw how hard he worked, or (C) saw how effective a legislator he was.

Heininger: These personal acts of kindness, which we’ve obviously heard a great deal about, the sense that I’ve had about them is that they truly were pretty altruistic. They were not designed to get something in return. It was not a calculated, *If I’m nice to this reporter because this reporter has a sick child, somehow it’s going to affect my press coverage*.

Manley: Yes. He was much smarter than that. He knew that that was not going to happen. He was not a very reflective man. I don’t know how you guys did on your—that’s why I was blown away by this whole project. But he knew the power that such an effort would have on people; he understood that. He didn’t revel in it, he didn’t dwell in it. He just knew if he sent a note to somebody it was going to brighten their day, and he liked that.

Heininger: But there isn’t a better reason to do it than it’s the right thing.

Manley: In a perfect world, he could have done that for everybody, but it’s not a perfect world, so he did what he could.

Heininger: His mother taught him to write his thank-you notes.

Manley: And his mother taught him to write his thank-you notes.

Heininger: Why does it not work with my kids? *[laughter]* OK, let’s talk about a couple of the pieces of legislation that were most critical in the time that you were there. Fighting the [Newton] Gingrich budget cuts. There were two issues that Nick—and I’m assuming in conjunction with you also—pulled out that you’re going to make as a focal point for fighting Gingrich. Minimum wage and education.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Why those two?

Manley: Core middle-class concerns. Why those two? Because he was smart enough to see that leaving the issues aside, it was an assault on core Democratic Party values.

Heininger: How were the campaigns done? How did you work with outside groups, grassroots campaigns, stuff like that, and how did that play into the press strategy? Were there a bunch of press events that were set up in conjunction with raising the pressure on these issues?

Manley: There were. Minimum wage and—

Heininger: Education.

Manley: No Child Left Behind? No, that would have been later.

Heininger: This is '96, '97. And granted, minimum wage hadn't been raised in ages.

Manley: See, that's what I'm getting at. That was a proactive effort on Kennedy's part.

Heininger: That was proactive. The education, in fact, was reactive, because they wanted to do away entirely with the education department, and Clinton had all these reforms he put in place.

Manley: Yes, that's why I wanted to revise and extend. Minimum wage, it must have been at least a year-long effort, culminating with a strategy that he himself actually came up with on the floor. He ended up driving Bob Dole out of the Senate shortly thereafter, if I'm getting my time period right.

Heininger: You are.

Manley: Five months later Dole decided that he couldn't handle the Senate. Kennedy had an inside game and an outside game. He had put together a strategy to force any number of votes on the Senate floor for about a year, working with outside groups, the names of which I honestly can't remember right now, to do any number of events designed to try and highlight the need for an increase in the minimum wage. It culminated in—we were in a briefing with his staff one morning, and then he called up the cloakroom and he talked to Marty Paone and asked what the floor situation was. Marty said they filed first-degree amendments and second-degree amendments, and Kennedy said something to the effect of, "Well, what about the last slot, the motion to recommit?" Marty said, "No, they forgot to file that one," so they left it open.

Heininger: They didn't lock it up.

Manley: Yes, and so they worked out a strategy where he and Kerry would go to the floor, and I can't remember which one offered the first amendment, but one offered the motion to recommit and one filed a cloture, and that's how we ended up getting the successful vote on minimum wage. But it only came after a year's worth of events. Again, there was one of those situations where, if I put together one press conference, I'd put together 12 or 15.

It would be interesting to remember how closely we coordinated with ACORN [Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now]. I don't remember. They were there, certainly. There were rallies at the—let's see here. There would have been rallies up in the upper Senate—no, it would have been at the "Senate Swamp." Yes, because we could still do press conferences in the Senate Swamp, right outside there, and at different times, working the editorial pages, not that for most you needed any convincing on the editorial page, certainly for the *Post* or the

Times. We did staff briefings, we did briefings for the press—Kennedy was a big believer in telling personal stories, and rightly so, and so the goal of all these press conferences was to bring up folks, more often than not in this room. Put folks up there and just tell their story.

Heininger: Did this resonate with the press?

Manley: I think so, yes.

Heininger: Because they could put a human face on something.

Manley: Sure. And let's face it, most thought it was absolutely outrageous. Again, I've forgotten my talking points by now, but we hadn't had it increased in six or seven years, and the minimum-wage worker was falling farther and farther behind at a time when Congressional salaries had been raised exponentially, by X, Y, and Z.

Heininger: To what extent was this directed at his colleagues? To what extent was this directed at the press?

Manley: He was never a big fan of going at his colleagues. He didn't like the idea of backing them into the corner like that, so he engaged in that debate only very reluctantly, and I don't remember him focusing on that a lot. He just tried to lay it out as a fundamental issue of fairness.

Heininger: But ultimately trying to raise the public pressure.

Manley: Oh, sure.

Heininger: So his colleagues would see that this was an issue that needed to be dealt with.

Manley: Yes, but there were people in our caucus who wanted it, like a [Russell] Feingold, for instance, would want to go on the hypocrisy issue, and he just didn't find—

Heininger: That's not where Kennedy was.

Manley: No, and he engaged in that particular debate only reluctantly. And then the floor speech and some of the most impassioned times I've ever seen Senator Kennedy were during the minimum wage floor debates. He would just go down there and pound away. Again, I don't want to brag—I don't know if you saw what I did for the *National Journal* or something like that after he died, but I told them that one of my most memorable experiences was on a Friday; we were in the midst of the minimum-wage debate, but there were no votes on that Friday. He could have just hung out in his office, but he had a floor speech prepared so he just said, "Let's go on over." He walked to the Senate and did a stem-winder of about 40 minutes, the full pounding and the roar and the whole ball of wax. I was sitting in the staff area and it must have been the weird acoustics that day, but he literally drove me out of the Senate, my ears were ringing so much. There were no Republicans around and he was just pounding away. I had to take a step outside for a second to get the ringing out of my ears, he was yelling so loudly.

Heininger: The staff bench is right behind his desk.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And it does resonate back.

Manley: I've never seen it like this. It was a hot, humid day. I don't know if it was stuffy inside there or whatever, just weird acoustics that day. I literally had to—and then I'll never forget, I walked him out of the Senate chamber and left him at the elevator and he just kind of smiled like, *We did good, that was fun*. He didn't say anything and I said, "See you later," and he took the elevator down, took the car back to wherever he was going. That was a bread-and-butter issue for him, so ongoing strategy, dozens of press conferences, floor speeches, briefing for reporters, working closely with his allies, reaching out to Republicans, all that stuff went into the process.

Heininger: Was it up to the policy people to organize the grassroots?

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: So you would coordinate the press dimension of it, but they had to put together those groups to actually do that stuff.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: What about on education?

Manley: Well, that was again more of a reactive effort. You had a Republican Party coming in, vowing to "eliminate," I believe was their word, the Department of Education. Thereto, it was working with education groups to fight proposed budget cuts, and so again it involved not only coordinating with groups on outside events, PIRG [Public Interest Research Groups] and others, on lobbying activities on Capitol Hill and press conferences, again to rail against the budget cuts. But also, I don't want to say he became an adjunct member of the Budget Committee, but for someone who wasn't on the Budget Committee, he spent a hell of a lot of time focusing on it and he spent a hell of a lot of time talking to people about it.

Heininger: And he was extraordinarily successful in the education dimension.

Manley: Yes, another real passion of his. You asked me to list those things earlier and I forgot No Child Left Behind, which of course is its own story, but at the time he passed it he was extraordinarily proud of it.

Heininger: The interesting thing about this time period is that the changes that the Clinton administration were making with the standards and accountability movement were in fact ones that Republicans wanted, and yet you get the Gingrich people coming in, and they weren't willing to put the money behind it.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And wanted to get rid of the Department of Education because there shouldn't be any federal role in education anyway. Kennedy's efforts manage to both prevent the budget cuts and salvage the Department of Education.

Manley: Yes. He came with the premise that that was a totally—I don't want to make him sound naïve, but it was such a foreign idea to them. These guys came in here wanting to cut the Department of Education?

Heininger: And they were actually doing things that Republicans wanted done.

Manley: Well, yes, but he just found the idea so terribly misguided. But like everything else, he just threw himself into it heart and soul.

Heininger: Tell me about No Child Left Behind.

Manley: A fascinating process. I was there every step of the way because he wanted—he was smart enough to realize that I needed to sell the thing.

Heininger: But this time to the Democrats?

Manley: Yes, and to the public at large. He knew that the changes that were proposed were going to upset core constituencies and he was going to get hammered by them, which he was. He knew that the political stakes were high, that is, he was going to have to work with George Bush and then inside the beltway. He had set up a process where he worked very closely with Judd Gregg and John Boehner.

No Child Left Behind involved dozens of press conferences, aggressive press outreach, background briefings by staff for reporters, briefings by Senator Kennedy and Congressman [George] Miller for reporters at key times. Aggressive press outreach during the long markups, My own version of rapid response, except the rapid response was me. Different ways to have Kennedy talk to reporters. At the end of a markup, I'd usher a whole group of reporters up to the front and have them talk to Kennedy for five or ten minutes, or right outside the hearing room, you know, get out spin on the story.

Heininger: How closely did you work with Danica [Petroshius] on this?

Manley: Very closely. We became good friends after that. She is another person who symbolized the fact that Kennedy's got the best in the business, extraordinarily talented and passionate woman.

Heininger: Did you have her doing press stuff too?

Manley: Only upon occasion. She more so than others on that policy staff didn't like talking to reporters, so I had to study my briefing books. I got copies of all the memos that went to the Senator, attended all the briefings, to try and learn the stuff.

Heininger: From what you have seen of other Senators, and not just the other two that you worked with, is that common, for the press person to be as substantively knowledgeable as you needed to be?

Manley: No.

Heininger: I didn't think so.

Manley: Quite frankly, that's why I'm in the position I am, that I'm so well respected, because people know that I—Robert Pear used to laugh that I knew health care better than most Senators. That's certainly not the case now, because I don't have time for that, but at that point in time, that's just the way it was.

Heininger: Anything Kennedy did, you needed to know.

Manley: I believe so, yes.

Heininger: Long hours.

Manley: Very long hours.

Heininger: How did you stay so long?

Manley: It gets back to why you're there. You go to work with the guy because you know you're going to get things done. It's one thing to go work for a Senator and to work long hours under tense circumstances for a Senator who kind of checks the box and works hard but leaves at 6:00. You worked for Kennedy knowing that he was working just as hard as you were. After he went home, he read his briefing books diligently every night, got back to you the next morning. He worked late into the night negotiating bills. You could work for him knowing that he was working just as hard as you were, and that made you feel good. It made you feel even better when you walked into a room knowing that you were better and smarter than anybody else in the room and that you were going to win. That's why I liked it.

Heininger: So why did you leave?

Manley: Oh, eleven years. Why did I leave? Needless to say I had plenty of chances to go downtown and I turned all of them down. Reid had just become Democratic leader and he decided he wanted me and he got me. One day it appeared in the newspaper that I was being courted by the new incoming Democratic leader, Harry Reid, and that kind of sealed the deal.

Heininger: Did Kennedy resent your leaving?

Manley: No. He's much smarter than that. You surely have heard this from others. He loved the idea that he could pick up the phone and call any number of former aides. So I'd get the phone call saying, "Hey, mister big-shot, you know what the deal is, when can I leave for the afternoon?" No. He knew I'd put in a good run, and he loved the idea that he had an ex-staffer who was now the staff director for the Senate Majority Leader's press operation.

Heininger: You started as a deputy press secretary and became the press secretary for the Labor Committee. You then became press secretary for Kennedy. What's the difference between the two? What did you do as press secretary that was different from what you did as press secretary for the committee?

Manley: The press secretary for Senator Kennedy was more focused on Massachusetts stuff. At the Labor Committee, it was just the full panoply of issues. I'd attend all the hearings, work on press for that, but day-in, day-out in the other job, it was just like I said, cranking out the press releases on the Massachusetts—highlight any Appropriations Committee work, or we'd talk to—what was the name of that place? NMFS [National Marine Fisheries Service], or whatever the hell it was, and we got them to change—I learned all about fishing in Gloucester Bay.

Heininger: Really big, big, big in Massachusetts.

Manley: Yes, so stuff like that.

Heininger: Which did you enjoy more?

Manley: Oh, clearly the HELP Committee. I got a chance to do politics and policy, got a chance to deal with the best reporters in the business, had a chance to see Senator Kennedy in action, legislating, dealing with the President on No Child Left Behind.

Heininger: Why did he want you to go and become press secretary?

Manley: For the Labor Committee?

Heininger: No. When you went from the Labor Committee to the personal office, although I know you did both of them together for a while. Why did he want you to be the press secretary?

Manley: No, other way around. I was the press secretary and then I spent most of my time for the HELP Committee.

Heininger: Yes, but from 1997 to 2004 you were press secretary.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Right. Oh, you did both of them for quite a while.

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: Never mind, I hadn't looked at my dates. You did them both together.

Manley: Yes, it almost killed me. At one point I had such bad migraines I actually had to do acupuncture.

Heininger: Did that work?

Manley: Actually it did, after I had MRI [Magnetic Resonance Imaging] scans and CAT [Computed Axial Tomography] scans and the whole ball of wax.

Heininger: And you thought you had a tumor. I know. I've been there, done that. I know what you mean.

Manley: A Nick Littlefield-developed tumor, but that was the one that was going to—

Heininger: A Nick Littlefield-developed tumor. I like that one. [*laughter*]

Manley: That was because of the FDA [Food and Drug Administration] reform. I learned more about FDA reform.

Heininger: Be glad you weren't doing FDA reform when Larry Horowitz was there.

Manley: Agreed. FDA reform, yes.

Heininger: Then there's a communications director. Stephanie Cutter comes in as communications director in succession of William Keyser.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: What's the difference between the communications director and a press secretary?

Manley: One is working on a long-term strategic plan, coordinating with the policy operation, working more on the personal side of the operation, and the other one, i.e. me, is executing the day-to-day responsibilities, talking with reporters on a day-to-day basis, stuff like that. So long-term strategy versus day-to-day responsibilities.

Heininger: What did Kennedy need in terms of a long-term strategy? This was a relatively new position.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Why at that point did he feel like he needed a—

Manley: At that point in time, I don't know the answer, I'd have to think about that, but clearly at some point he started looking at his future, and that's why he wanted somebody to not lose sight of the strategic vision. Why? Because he was smart enough to recognize that the nature of the game was changing and that to play in the big leagues, to be a top-tier person, you needed someone who took a long view and had an idea of a strategic plan and knew how to execute it, just like a President, for instance. I'm having a hard time articulating this. He ran his office just like a President. We had advance people, we had outreach people whose job was to outreach to different constituencies. It was a mini Presidential operation in that office, albeit one of the larger staffs on Capitol Hill, come to think of it.

Heininger: That's interesting, because we've come to the same conclusion, but we haven't heard many people talk about it that way.

Manley: Oh, yes.

Heininger: Our assessment in looking at it over the years is that his career was Presidential in nature.

Manley: No truer words. Nothing was ever taken for granted. He never walked into a meeting without knowing who was in the room. Everything was done via briefing memos, everything was signed off.

Heininger: Do you think that the advent of a communications director for him was in part due to the shift in the media, the electronic media, and the 24-hour news?

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Stuff that had not traditionally been the focal point for how he dealt with the “press/media.”

Manley: I think that’s probably right, though the more I think about it, I like my original answer better, but that’s part of it. He was a savvy consumer of the news. He watched cable TV via his wife. He saw the influence of the Internet, his wife and his kids and others. So yes, he could see all that, but it got down to it was just a mini little Presidential operation there.

Heininger: Did the nature of who you had to deal with from a press perspective change in the years you were there? Did you get into having to deal with all the electronic media people and the blog people?

Manley: That came after me, probably shortly after I left.

Heininger: So it didn’t even permeate toward the end?

Manley: No, it didn’t. A year or two later, after I left, he started posting things on the *Huffington Post* and talking to bloggers, appearing before Move On-type crowds, but at that point in time it was still the traditional mainstream media.

Heininger: Do you have to do that for Reid now?

Manley: Yes. We have bloggers, we have outreach to the Hispanic media, African American media, so yes.

Heininger: So it’s not that you couldn’t have done it. You didn’t have to do it for him. It came in simply when it became a dimension of the news cycle that could not be ignored any longer.

Manley: Correct.

Heininger: And had to find ways to exploit it.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: In the good sense of the word exploit—utilize.

Manley: Utilize, better, yes.

Heininger: A better word. What other labor issues did you see him focusing on? What about the impact of Enron and pension rules and things like that?

Manley: Well, two different things. Another bill that almost killed me was pension reform.

Heininger: It was killing everybody.

Manley: Very obscure, highly technical issues. Again, as the press secretary for the Labor Committee, it was my responsibility to explain what was going on, a multi-billion dollar issue to reporters when we did pension reform.

Heininger: Did you find the reporters well-versed in it?

Manley: Yes. The problem here in Washington is that there is a publication for every little facet.

Heininger: Yes, there is.

Manley: So you've got *Pension Weekly*, you've got *Pension Daily*. I don't remember them anymore, but yes, I mean there was a tremendous amount of money involved. He threw himself into this just like he did anything else. I'll never forget—many long conference committee meetings where no one else understood the issue except for him, and I guess it probably was Bill Thomas at that point in time. But there, that wasn't really a campaign. He was charged with getting the pension reform done and it took a while, but he got it done. So, over the years, IDEA, OSHA reform, No Child Left Behind, ergonomics, pension reform, FDA reform, minimum wage.

Heininger: Union rules.

Manley: Union rules, prescription drugs, managed care, health care. I think we already mentioned IDEA.

Heininger: Immigration.

Manley: Immigration, though that wasn't a Labor Committee issue, so that was one issue that the communications director handled, along with other Judiciary Committee issues. Then there's the Judiciary Committee-related issues: Supreme Court nominations, different fights over civil liberties issues, the Iraq war of course.

Heininger: Well, how did you end up—OK, you were filling two functions throughout this, as press secretary and as Labor Committee or HELP, whenever it became the HELP Committee, press secretary. So you're dealing with all of those. There is a Judiciary Committee press secretary who is handling things like immigration, Supreme Court nominations, et cetera. But was the press secretary then not overseeing all of this but really just Massachusetts-focused?

Manley: Yes.

[BREAK]

Heininger: This is a resumption of the interview with Jim Manley on September 28, 2009. Just a few more questions. What were the things—I want to go back to how he dealt with the press. Where were the venues that you actually felt that he performed best in? The one-on-ones with reporters, or—

Manley: On the Senate floor.

Heininger: Press conferences?

Manley: On the Senate floor is the easy answer to that question. He was most comfortable on the Senate floor. It was just a very comfortable place for him, and when he felt like unwinding a real stem-winder, the floor was the best way to do it. He was great at give and take on the floor. He may sometimes warm up to it, but nine times out of ten he knew more than anyone trying to challenge him on the floor. Most Republicans learned the hard way that it wasn't so easy to go down and try and sandbag Senator Kennedy, because he knew a hell of a lot more than they did. Rick Santorum found that out the hard way.

There was just a certain comfort level on the Senate floor. One-on-ones, again, sometimes his words were a little out of whack and reporters had to cut through some of the idiosyncrasies, but you could get a better idea of what he was thinking by talking to him. He was good at press conferences as well, but his two most effective forms, I believe, were on the Senate floor and in a grand speech such the annual speech he did at the National Press Club, as we discussed previously for instance.

Heininger: Those were the agenda-setting speeches?

Manley: The agenda-setting speeches and then the Iraq War speeches. Again, he really could deliver a great speech full of passion, intensity. He had a nasty habit of—he couldn't roll with the applause lines.

Heininger: That's a problem.

Manley: Yes, it was a problem, but he could deliver a speech very well. To bring out the passion and the intensity, there was nothing like a floor speech. There was just a certain comfort level there that he could go down and just rail away.

Heininger: And when did he do a Sunday talk show?

Manley: The easy answer is very rarely. He would do it, however, when he had news to make, and I believe in the by and by that was the correct thing to do. His goal was to pick and choose his spots and only go on a show when he was front and center on an issue, trying to sell something that was very important.

Heininger: Were there times when you wanted to see him do Sunday talk shows and he wouldn't do them?

Manley: Correct. Whether he or his staff didn't—the powers that be didn't think it was the right time. Let's face it, as long as we're speaking in candor, they weren't exactly his forte, if you will. He did have idiosyncrasies in his speech patterns that held him up to ridicule. It's not as if he couldn't handle them or handle it, because he'd go in there much better prepared than anyone else and he could stick to his sound bites, but sometimes his words got ahead of his thoughts.

Heininger: The Sunday talk shows by definition are places where guests are grilled.

Manley: Or gotcha moments—

Heininger: Gotcha moments, yes.

Manley: —are much sought after, and the beauty of being a Senator of 40 years or whatever that was, was that you didn't need to go on a Sunday talk show to prove your bona fides and to set yourself up to a grilling. He just didn't need to do it. So in the end, I strongly agree with the assessment, but it's just—would there have been more times I would have liked to have seen it? Sure, but in the by and by I strongly believe that there was no need to get him out there like that. There was no human reason why you need to set yourself up to get grilled by Tim Russert. He liked all those guys, but he didn't believe the hype. He knew that they were going to go on and they were going to try and trip him up.

Heininger: Was he scarred by the whole Roger Mudd interview that he did in 1980?

Manley: A psychologist would have a field day with that. Was it that in particular, or just the whole totality of his being? I don't know the answer to that. When I came in, I always attributed it to the post-Au Bar situation, and maybe I've deluded myself, but I fought very hard to try and change the dynamic, to make him much more accessible. In the end, I think I succeeded, and Stephanie took it to other lengths and the others have as well.

Heininger: What do you mean, the Au Bar situation?

Manley: Down in Florida.

Heininger: Oh, that one.

Manley: Wasn't that the name of it?

Heininger: I can't even remember, but yes.

Manley: I thought that's the name of it.

Heininger: I tend to block on that piece. Just the Florida situation.

Manley: Exactly.

Heininger: What change did you see Vicki make in his life? You came kind of at the same time as Vicki.

Manley: About six months after they were married, maybe a year. Very important. Obviously, I'm a consumer of the news as well, and I'm a creature of inside the beltway, so I had seen him churning from afar in the late '80s, early '90s, photos from him at Studio 54 in 1988, stuff like that, so I had seen all that. It gave him a certain peace and solitude that he'd been looking for. She became a trusted advisor, close confidant, and a pretty damn good speechwriter. Well, speechwriter might be too much, but she helped. She provided plenty of great ideas on speeches. She had a keen legal mind, but more important than that, it's the stuff that most of us didn't really see. I'm not going to stay here and claim I hung out at the house in McLean or the one up in upper northwest all the time, but a certain peace and serenity.

Heininger: What do you think his overall legacy will be?

Manley: Oh, easy. One of the greatest legislators in this century or any other, right up there with Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun. He achieved more in his time than his brothers ever did. Of course, the flip side of the coin is he had a chance to live and his two brothers did not. As a student of the Senate, as someone who has now worked here for 19 years, I think he will go down as one of the greatest in history. The depth and breadth of his impact on people far transcends anything that his brothers could accomplish.

Heininger: Did you see any changes in how his colleagues view him in the years you were here?

Manley: Honestly, no. The smart ones always knew that you could work with Senator Kennedy. And I'm talking about the smart Republicans. Why? Because (A) you knew that his word was good, and (B) if you did events with Ted Kennedy, surprise! You'd get press because Senator Kennedy had such an efficient press operation. There were the punks who came in over the years—Rick Santorum comes to mind. Senator Kennedy slapped him down pretty early in the process, during the debate over welfare reform. But no, because the smart ones—and this obviously transcends me, but going back to his stories about having a bourbon or scotch or whatever with [James Oliver] Eastland and the others. So no, I never saw a change. I always saw the smart ones knew that they could work with him, and as things became more polarized in the recent years—well actually, that's not true. Even as things become—

The Senate unfortunately is becoming more and more like the House in its level of discourse or lack of discourse, but still, most everyone has always treated Senator Kennedy with respect. Kennedy has been told before. He loved the idea that Republicans were making money off him, because he realized as soon as they stop talking about you, that's a sure sign that you're losing your effectiveness.

Heininger: One of my favorite stories about him was when he was inadvertently invited by Jerry Falwell.

Manley: One of the all-time—

Heininger: Celebrity Baptist, I thought.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: There's a terrific speech he gave.

Manley: It was a beautiful speech, wasn't it?

Heininger: It was a beautiful speech.

Manley: Yes. That story is one of the all-time classics.

Heininger: Who was he close to?

Manley: Oh, I don't know, Chris Dodd, John Kerry. He had a good relationship with Trent [Chester] Lott, a decent relationship with Bill Frist. [Hillary Rodham] Clinton and [Thomas] Harkin and [Barbara] Mikulski. He had an excellent relationship with Thad Cochran that paid off in any number of ways, for obvious reasons, as a ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. He got along well with Ted Stevens, Senator Byrd, despite their clash early on. He was close to [Thomas] Daschle. I know Reid has always enjoyed his time with him, despite—they were two guys you can't find any more different.

Heininger: Right. One sings, the other doesn't. One *sang*.

Manley: Yes, exactly. He had a great relationship with Jack Reed.

Heininger: Tell me how he felt about the Senate.

Manley: Loved it, revered it. It was his home. Again, I'll leave the psychoanalyzing to others, but it's clear that at some point he decided that this is where he belonged and that he would try to be the best Senator that he could. His briefing books were legendary. For No Child Left Behind, for instance. I'll just never forget the dog-eared copies of the briefing memos and the CRS [Congressional Research Service] reports, all of which were heavily underlined and annotated and carefully tabbed. His briefing books were legendary for all of these issues he went to the floor. As I mentioned earlier, actually I put it in my voice but it was George Mitchell who once said that Senator Kennedy is the best-prepared Senator every time he goes to the floor. He put his all into this. He'd want to go home at 6:00 and then somebody would come in and say, "Hey, the pension conference is about to start, we need you to go over there." He'd maybe whip off a few swear words then he'd say, "OK, let's go."

He'd go over, and again, it was very difficult for him because everybody was watching him. He had to know his issues, he had to talk to the Republicans because they wanted to talk to him. He couldn't go over there and be distracted. He had to play on so many different levels and he did so exceptionally well. His work ethic was just absolutely amazing. He got up early, read the newspapers, in the office by—I think for a great majority of the time it was usually 8:00 or 8:15. In later years it got to be about 9:00, I think. I'm sure he would leave at 6:00, but then several hours worth of phone calls.

Heininger: With the bag.

Manley: With the bag, chock-full of memos that he would assiduously read, criticize as necessary, underline, and annotate.

Heininger: When you think about what he was dealing with, not only the pressing business that overwhelms any Senator I think, but this enormous extended family, all of whom depended on him.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Two new stepchildren; he loved to go to soccer games and teacher conferences and all that stuff. I don't know how he ever slept.

Manley: No, that's a fair point, and furthermore, he was pretty good, better than most, at slipping away to go to the soccer games. He read with that young girl at the school every Tuesday. We were constantly interrupted during briefings, constantly interrupted by phone calls from different family members asking for help. More often than not, he'd take the phone call, usually kick us out of the room for him to take the call, and then I suspect he did a lot of that stuff at night once he went home as well. Everybody's got troubles, we're all just struggling to get on by, but there were tremendous demands put on him that transcended his workload. It was obvious that he was the rock for that family. You could see it any number of times over the years, with John [Kennedy, Jr.] and Caroline Kennedy [Schlossberg] and the rest of the kids.

Heininger: You liked him, didn't you?

Manley: Oh, yes. He was very tough, and God love you, Senator, but he was very tough to work for. He whacked the hell out of me on any number of occasions. Especially after Nick left, I was his most public staffer. So we could be walking down the hallway and reporters would want to talk to me and not to him and at a press conference, any number of occasions, sitting up there, something would go wrong and he'd scowl at me or do the, "Jesus Christ, Jim" routine. He would usually mutter it. He was smart enough not to say it publicly, just mutter it under his breath, but you could see that he was yelling at me. He's yelled at me on plenty of occasions, but quite frankly, I rarely made mistakes. It was just he demanded a lot.

Heininger: You know, it strikes me, something that I hadn't thought about before. Press secretary is a very different function than any other Senate staffer.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: You face inward; you also face outward.

Manley: Throw in the fact that policy staffers, once their issue is done, get a chance to check out, and ours never stopped.

Heininger: And most of the policy staffers face inward and only occasionally face outward, when they deal with advocates and that stuff. They're inward-facing and they're not having to deal with the press. Some of them may talk to them if they're allowed to, but they're inward-facing.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Press secretary is an anomalous position, a whipping-boy position, actually. I mean no matter what you do, you're liable to get it from one end or another.

Manley: Oh yes, very much so. He had high standards and he pushed me hard, and the other part of it, just to play psychological, is that I was his most public—the first time he yelled at me was just instructive. The first time I got quoted in the newspaper he said, “As soon as you have been elected five times to the Senate, let me know, and then you can be quoted in the newspaper.” That was like two years after—and my quote, I don't remember who it was, was much needed. Despite his yelling, there was no question that I needed to go on the record to give the quote. I don't remember what it was about, but anyway, he called me into the office and said, “As soon as you're elected four times or five times to the United States Senate, let me know, and then you can go on the record.”

Heininger: That's interesting; do you find that attitude with other Senators too?

Manley: My current Senator doesn't care. Some do, some don't. But he soon realized that sometimes when I'm talking to the *New York Times*, I can't hide under anonymity.

Heininger: Well, and not only that, sometimes there is a utility in having a press secretary say it rather than the member say it.

Manley: I don't want to belabor the point, but I was his most public staffer. One time he asked me to walk the dog and that ended up in the gossip page. He never asked me to walk the dog after that.

Heininger: Better to have his scheduler do that.

Manley: It's just who I was. He made me. What can I say? Because of him, I became so influential or whatever, started making roll calls, you know, top staffer lists every year. It was because of him. I learned everything I could from him. I learned how to treat people, learned how to not treat people, learned that it's important to have—just because someone's a Republican doesn't mean that they're a bad person. Little things like that.

Heininger: Did you learn to write thank-you notes?

Manley: A little bit better than I had in the past, yes. No, actually much better than I had in the past, probably not as much as I should, but yes, I did. I still can't whip out poetry, however.

Heininger: We don't ask many people to do that. Besides, we came from the generation where we didn't have to do it in school. We never had to memorize any poetry in school.

Manley: No [William Butler] Yeats for me.

Heininger: He had to do that in school.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: Anything else you want to add? Maybe there's one more thing I should ask you about, and that's the Medicare drug benefit in 2003, in part because of the switch at the end. This is something that he had worked for for a long time.

Manley: Yes.

Heininger: And once he shifted to incremental reform, recognizing that this could be a tremendous benefit to seniors, ended up voting against it.

Manley: I was going to say, yes, but—

Heininger: Yes, there's a yes, but. Maybe I should ask you about Patients' Bill of Rights too, because those are two we don't have much on.

Manley: We began with the premise that he was largely excluded from the process. This was a bill that in the end was cut between Senator Baucus, the then Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, I guess, probably with Mr. [William] Archer. Or Thomas—Thomas. We ended up, he voted for it the first time around, but then he was accused of selling out. "There he goes again, Kennedy cutting deals with Republicans." But the bill became so unpalatable that in the end he had to end up voting against it. From my perspective, there are two. I had to work the press very hard, and we—you know, there were all sorts of times when I made sure that he talked to Robert Pear to make sure that he got his views known. These were not formal interviews, because again, as to burdens to the process I described to you, but if he ran into Robert in the hallway or if I knew Robert was around, I'd bring him over to the hideaway and I'd have him talk then.

I'll never forget putting out a press release at 9:00 at night or something like that, the day that the agreement was reached that Kennedy had to oppose. I'll never forget running down the hallway, trying to find Robert to have Kennedy talk to him real quick. Robert was on deadline and it was at 9:15 or 9:30, and Kennedy had been waiting for word up in his hideaway. Word came in, I put out the statement, and then I made sure he talked to Robert that night as well. Let's face it, he was behind the eight ball a little bit, and he had to get out of it.

Heininger: Was the magnitude of the DOMA [Defense of Marriage Act] and the impact that that was going to have on people, were people aware of that when it was coming to vote?

Manley: Sure, but it was all—not ethereal. That's not the right word. It was all conjecture, and now we're seeing the reality.

Heininger: Yes. It hasn't been fixed, either.

Manley: And it hasn't been fixed yet either.

Heininger: Patients' Bill of Rights, and then that's the last thing.

Manley: That's fine.

Heininger: Why was it not possible to get the Patients' Bill of Rights through? Efforts year after year in the early 2000s, late '90s, and through 2002. Why the resistance?

Manley: Probably the easy answer is the industry croaked it. It wasn't for a lack of trying.

Heininger: Oh, I know.

Manley: A lot of quality time spent with Senator Kennedy, Senator [John] McCain, and Senator [John] Edwards. A lot of press conferences, a lot of outreach, a lot of secret meetings that didn't end up on his schedule, one of which, by the way, I do believe was where Senator Kennedy asked him if he wanted to switch parties. You know again, another issue that almost killed me. McCain, Edwards, and Kennedy would meet in the President's Room every morning, at I think it was 8:00, to plot strategy for a half hour before the debate on the floor every day. Press conferences by the dozens. I don't know how else to answer that except for just the industry. It's a similar situation now. An overwhelming number of people want health care reform, but the industry proves still too powerful.

Heininger: The interesting thing right now is that it's less the industry. The industry is not croaking it right now.

Manley: OK, that's a fair point.

Heininger: The Republicans are croaking it right now.

Manley: Fair point, I stand corrected. You are absolutely correct.

Heininger: This is a real shift.

Manley: Yes, that's a fair point.

Heininger: But the ramifications of the Patients' Bill of Rights would have been—one of the ramifications would be potentially the increased litigation costs, because it gave patients the right to sue, and now you get the trial lawyers, I mean the opposite of trial lawyers, blah blah blah.

Manley: Yes, and that's where—

Heininger: Creating real problems.

Manley: That's where John Edwards was particularly helpful, in threading those needles with regard to the trial lawyers, absolutely.

Heininger: What was Kennedy's relationship with McCain?

Manley: Two old bulls, two cranky personalities. They started with the Patients' Bill of Rights and they soon started working on immigration-related stuff. That was after I left. McCain will never forget—How did that story go? He got the Profile in Courage Award one year, and so Kennedy arranged for his son to get a tour of Boston Harbor. It was his birthday. Was his boy's name Jimmy [McCain]? The one that's in the Marines.

Heininger: There's one in the Marines.

Manley: Or in the Army or whatever. I think it's Jimmy. It was his birthday, and when Kennedy learned it, he picked up the phone and—I think it was a tour of Boston Harbor, in a boat. Yes, just two fellow warriors, albeit one is a real-life warrior and both were Senatorial warriors. They were both honorable combatants.

Heininger: What about Edwards?

Manley: Well, I don't know how he ended up eventually feeling, but we all liked him at that time. Edwards is—may God strike me down for saying this, in light of what we know now, but he was really smart, very facile, and as you alluded to, one of the key issues had to deal with legal issues, and he had an amazing ability to break down the obtuse legal issues into language that everyone could understand and was very good. But of course I say that not knowing how in the hell he got into this current situation. But at that point, I think Kennedy—

Heininger: Stupidly, is my guess.

Manley: No, that's a charitable description, you're being way too kind. Kennedy saw him as an up and comer. Edwards was desperate to attach himself to Kennedy, for all the right reasons. [Barack] Obama did the same thing. There's no better—though he didn't have enough time to do it as Edwards did—but there's no better person to learn the Senate from than Senator Kennedy.

Heininger: Did you get a sense that Edwards was disappointed that Kennedy backed Kerry in 2004?

Manley: Oh yes, that was very tough. Yes, I believe that's the case. That was very tough for Kennedy, but he was smart enough to realize if he didn't, that would be the death knell for Senator Kerry, and he would be wrongly criticized for doing so if he didn't.

Heininger: Was he close to Kerry?

Manley: Oh, sure. They went through their periods. Obviously at a staff level I have very little good to say about him.

Heininger: More rivalry at the staff level is what I've intuited.

Manley: Yes, that's fair. I don't know.

Heininger: It has to be difficult to be the junior Senator to Ted Kennedy.

Manley: Don't know if there are many more difficult jobs in Capitol Hill than that one, playing second fiddle.

Heininger: No, not on Capitol Hill.

Manley: Because you're reaching for something, to find your niche, and all of a sudden Kennedy is there as well, not necessarily by purpose, just because he ended up there, and during much of this time he was such a constant presence on the floor and in committee. His staff was

always pushing him to go into different issues, and he'd chew on it a little bit, noodle around a little bit and realize this is something that he was interested in getting into.

Heininger: Last words.

Manley: I will miss him very much.

Heininger: Did you stay in close contact with his office after you left?

Manley: Yes, sure. I still dealt with many on different issues. I had a nasty habit of getting closeted up in my office and not going out as much as I should. You know the joke; you've got to understand the joke is whenever I'm seen in the Dirksen Building, invariably somebody will ask me what the hell am I doing out of the Capitol. But I have personal friends there and then I have professional relationships with all those guys. I see Michael all the time, for instance. I don't know what else to say except he taught me everything. I've been here 19 years and I've gotten to a certain level where I'm generally regarded as one of the best in the business. I have a professional reputation that's pretty damn good, and I owe it all to Senator Kennedy.

Heininger: Yes, but the one thing you don't owe to him, about which I have heard, is that you're a really great guy and you brought that to him.

Manley: I tried, yes.

Heininger: Thank you very much, Jim.