



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH WALTER MONDALE

March 20, 2006
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Interviewers
Stephen F. Knott
Paul Martin

Index: page 25

© 2006 The Miller Center Foundation and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate

Publicly released transcripts of the Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project are freely available for noncommercial use according to the Fair Use provisions of the United States Copyright Code and International Copyright Law. Advance written permission is required for reproduction, redistribution, and extensive quotation or excerpting. Permission requests should be made to the Miller Center, P.O. Box 400406, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4406.

To cite an interview, please use the following general format: [name of interviewee] Interview, [date of interview], Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia.

EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH WALTER MONDALE

March 20, 2006

Knott: Thank you, Vice President Mondale. We're really grateful that you're giving us this time. It's a pleasure to meet you. Perhaps we could start by asking you to tell us a little bit about your first introduction to the Kennedy brothers. Would it have been the 1960 campaign, perhaps?

Mondale: I'm not sure about that. Of course, as for a lot of people my age, John Kennedy was a hero, along with Hubert Humphrey. I was very aware of Teddy [Edward M. Kennedy] and Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] and the family role in Wisconsin—to pick a state at random—in what became kind of a lifetime of parallel careers and constellations around Hubert and around Jack and then the other Kennedys over almost 40 years. I think I really met Ted, other than maybe shaking his hand, for the first time when I went to the Senate in '64. I may have met him before, but I don't remember it.

Knott: Any early first impressions of EMK by any chance? Anything that struck you?

Mondale: He was a young, good-looking guy, big guy, a huge personality, what somebody would call a "room bender." He would come into a room and everybody knew he was there. Lots of energy, part of the Kennedy mystique, and was an all-out progressive, itchy and anxious to change and reform and get it done right away. Of course I immediately identified with him because I had essentially the same views on that stuff. We were young people at a time I call the high tide. You had a tremendous generation of young Senators unlike almost any other time—Fred Harris, Joe Tydings. All across the board, we must have had about 20 kids there and we had a wonderful time.

Knott: How would you compare your reflections or your first impressions of Bobby Kennedy versus Edward Kennedy?

Mondale: Well, of course I got to know both of them about the same time. Bobby joined the Senate a couple days earlier, but we joined the same time. We were in the freshman caucus. Next door, there's a picture of our freshman class. We served together on some of the committees, and for a long time for some reason our seats were together on the Senate floor. So we'd talk a lot while people were debating about this and that.

He wasn't the huge presence, huge man that Ted was. Ted just filled a room—big smile, big face, big bulk. Bobby was diminutive by those measurements, sort of private and insular—a

much-discussed part of his personality—and I would say moody. One day it would be a warm, fun conversation. The next day the shop was closed. He could be snippy, too. Teddy never showed that. He may have been that way, but I never saw it. I was close to Bobby and I really was heartbroken when he was killed. I always thought that if Bobby were alive when Humphrey had been nominated President, that Humphrey would have won, because I think Bobby would have helped him.

Martin: What do you think about their skills at that point in the Senate between the two brothers?

Mondale: At that point Ted had had two years in the Senate, which helps. I think that Teddy was deferring to Bobby for any Presidential or national ambitions. You always wondered how Bob was organizing what he was going to do, but that he was going to do something was clear. Ted was clearly ambitious, but I think he deferred to Bobby. That's the impression I had. He was a much more private guy, almost the same agenda, liberal agenda, progressive agenda, civil rights, hunger, poverty you know, Cesar Chavez, just go down the list and Bobby was there. But they were different.

Martin: Did you work more, would you say, with Bobby Kennedy or Edward Kennedy in that early period?

Mondale: Somewhere in here you've got the list of committees. Where is that?

Knott: I've got it right here.

Mondale: Here we go; this is what I want. You see, for example, labor and public, that was the citadel of liberalism at that time and you could see what we were doing. We were on education, health, employment manpower, handicap, Indian education—I was chairman of that and did a lot of work on that. Migratory labor—I was also chairman of that once. Alcoholism and narcotics was Senator [Harold] Hughes' committee. National Science Foundation, Children to Youth was my committee. We were on those committees together. Aging was not as important a committee because it was a non-legislative committee. It was a policy committee. The Hunger Committee.

The McGovern Committee was a very intense thing, and it was there that we developed a lot of the children's feeding programs, food stamps, and so on. Senate Equal Education Opportunity was my committee to try to deal with segregation, discrimination, and equal opportunity. We all served on those committees, plus a lot of the things on the Senate floor, issues where we were similar. I don't know if you've got a record of how we voted on issues as measured by outside groups. I wouldn't say we're identical, but we're damn close to it.

Martin: Maybe we could go through one of those issues. Indian Education would be a good one to talk through. You were the chair of the subcommittee.

Mondale: Did I replace Ted? It was Bobby's committee; I think I'm right on that. Then Bob was killed. I think Wayne Morris took it for himself for a while and then I got it—'69 it says here—and I worked very hard on it. We went around to Indian reservations, held a lot of hearings, and

shaped the Indian Education Act that tried to give parents more authority over their own children, tried to deal with that vicious boarding school problem that the old BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] had. We tried to get more money in there and encourage teaching materials that were culturally sensitive and built confidence and so on.

I think we helped build a new generation of leaders around the country and I think it helped lead to this community college program, which has been very successful around the country, where young Indian leaders and educators can find a home and build their communities.

Martin: What role do you remember you and Senator Kennedy playing in conjunction with one another on that issue?

Mondale: I don't remember. But I'm positive, just by looking at those committees, we had the same views. We worked together. You talk about this trip to Alaska—I'm trying to remember whether that was under the sponsorship of the Indian Education Committee.

Martin: I believe it was.

Mondale: Then Ted was on that trip, that famous trip back home. Fortunately, I wasn't on it, but you know, it showed the sort of things that we did. We held hearings, we went up to see people. We went all over Alaska and saw their housing and their health, the law enforcement, and all those things.

Martin: I don't know if you remember this part, but reading the record, there's a certain point where several Republican members of that delegation leave, publicly. Can you tell us a little bit more about what was the case there?

Mondale: This trip got a lot of national publicity. There were national cameras along and people were seeing the situation for the first time. George Murphy was there and George Murphy got the press aside and said what these natives need was to learn how to tap dance. Since Bojangles there were no tap dancers, and if they just learned how to tap dance then they'd find jobs, because there are a lot of jobs out here in Hollywood. So the Republicans lost interest in what we were doing, as they went off on their own projects. They went off on what we called the prosperity tour. Instead of looking at people in trouble, look at people who have money. So they left us somewhere and went south.

Knott: That was Murphy, [Henry] Bellmon and [William] Saxbe.

Mondale: Well, Bellmon is a good guy, Saxbe is a good guy and you know, Murphy is good, but he was somewhere else.

Knott: Mr. Vice President, earlier you mentioned that you were part of a group that came in that was young and eager—"itching for reform," I believe, is the term you used. The Senate, at least up until that point, had a reputation for being a place that sort of discouraged that kind of activism. Was the Senate beginning to change?

Mondale: Yes, it was. The big change came in '58 with that huge class that [Eugene] McCarthy was in, because as majority leader Lyndon Johnson made this deal where he put every young Senator on two important committees. In the old days they wouldn't let northern liberals like Humphrey on any committee of importance.

By the time we got there in '64, a lot of these young, northern Senators were on important committees and had some influence. But there was still an inner moat in the Senate called the Steering Committee. It was controlled by the southerners and they tried to pick committee members—Mike [Mansfield] continued that policy, and was very much involved in giving new Senators important assignments so you didn't have to be on standby for years like before.

For example, look at what they did on the Finance Committee, the powerhouse of all powerhouse committees in the Senate. When we came in there in '64 with 67 Senators, committee ratios required maybe two or three new Democrats on the Finance Committee. They would clearly be northern Democrats and would take Russell Long's committee away from him. Long got up and shrank the committee. He said, "It's too big. We're so big now we can't do business." So he took about five people off the committee and then there was no change in his control, of course. Those are the kind of games they were playing.

Knott: You were so close with Hubert Humphrey; I believe it would be fair to say that he was your mentor. Is that accurate?

Mondale: Right, yes.

Knott: He is, of course, the Vice President of the United States during this period. Bobby Kennedy had a terrible relationship with Lyndon Johnson. Did you pick up any of this tension, and do you recall any involvement of Edward Kennedy in the ongoing war between Robert Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson?

Mondale: Good question. Bobby would often make wise remarks about his relationship with Lyndon. I remember that day that Johnson issued a statement that no one who had been in the Cabinet could be a Vice President, and Bobby was calling Cabinet members to apologize for getting them into that trouble. He would talk about that. I just assumed that Teddy was sympathetic with Bobby's point of view. Humphrey would have been, I wouldn't say one step removed, but it was the sort of thing he'd probably like to stay out of. He was Johnson's Vice President—you have to get along with Johnson—but he wanted to be a part of the progressive Senate. That's where his heart was, and he wanted to be a friend of Ted's and Bob's, but the details of that I just don't remember.

Knott: What was your relationship with President Johnson like? Did you get to know him at all?

Mondale: Oh, a little bit. We had so many Democrats; he wasn't fighting over one vote or another vote. I'd get invited to White House dinners, Senate class dinners. I'd go down for bill signing and things like that. I was close to people like Joe Califano, younger people in the White House, but I would say I wasn't that close to Lyndon Johnson, even though I admired what he

was doing and had a high Johnson voting record, but I was very mindful of what Humphrey was going through. These four years were tough on Hubert, and many people have written about it. He spent a lot of those years in purgatory.

Martin: Can I ask at what point you started thinking of Presidential races for yourself?

Mondale: I think it's after the '72 election. I had just been re-elected and Humphrey was encouraging me to run. I started stirring around a little bit, seeing whether I could have a chance. It turned out I couldn't, but I spent a year and a half running around. Of course this was a time when Bobby was interested—have we got that right? Bobby was interested and Ted was helping him.

Martin: Pre-'68, you mean.

Mondale: Bobby was gone. Ted was interested.

Martin: There were lots of rumors about Ted.

Mondale: And that was interesting. What year was Chappaquiddick?

Knott: Sixty-nine in July.

Mondale: I remember telling Ted, "I just got back from Chicago and I had four interviews and every one of them would allow me to talk only about Chappaquiddick." I said it was really painful but I said they're going at it like it happened yesterday and he said, "I know it." The intensity of that issue was just incredible.

Martin: Let me just follow up on that a little bit. One of the things that we haven't got a very good sense of is we know how the mass public and the mass media responded to Chappaquiddick, and even to this day it still comes up. But one of the things we have a harder time getting a sense of is how Senator Kennedy's colleagues within the Senate responded to Chappaquiddick. Do you have any sense about how that worked?

Mondale: I do. I think that conservatives who were competing with him and what he wanted to do found that issue one that they could use to diminish Kennedy's stature. When the fight over leadership occurred, I believe that Kennedy was Majority Whip and [Robert] Byrd ran against him. Byrd came to see me and said, "I'd like your vote." I said, "I can't give it to you, Bob, because I've already committed to Teddy." The whole mood around the Senate was: "Why would you kick out a sitting leader?" Something must have happened, and that's what happened. And of course Kennedy was defeated in a close vote. I would say most of us tried to stick with Ted, but there weren't enough of us. It was awful close, but Chappaquiddick got him.

Knott: Inside the Senate.

Mondale: Yes.

Martin: Do you remember any other conversations leading up to when Bobby Byrd took over?

Mondale: I remember how shattered Ted was. He came back. I don't know how he got the courage to walk on the Senate floor the first time after he got back from Chappaquiddick. He had a neck brace on—apparently his neck was damaged. It was to me an incredible show of personal courage that he got right up and tried to function, for Senate purposes, as if nothing had happened, and that he tried to hold on to his leadership position in the Senate caucus and tried to reassert his leadership role on the Senate on the progressive issues. It was really amazing to watch somebody who had been through what he'd been through, a scandal of this seriousness, nevertheless trying to pull himself together. It was painful, I'd say.

Martin: Did he get many people at that point to support him, or were people a little nervous about doing that at that point?

Mondale: I think I was typical. I worked with Ted a lot. I really liked him and I liked what he was doing. I couldn't justify Chappaquiddick. I mean it was a humiliation, a horrible embarrassment, and as I told somebody—it's in these papers here—I said he took us with him over that bridge because he was sort of our star. I think if that hadn't happened, he might have been in the White House himself. There was a huge transition period there that we had to go through because the parameters of his leadership had been damaged. I would say that we worked with him. We were, I would say, ashamed for him. I personally hoped that he would be rehabilitated, but I had no control over that and without taking any position on what he did, I wanted to be his friend.

Martin: What were the conversations like amongst this young group of progressive Senators after Chappaquiddick, when Kennedy tried to reassert a leadership role?

Mondale: I think it took them some time. I think people were not willing to just say, "OK, that was yesterday." When he lost his leadership position, it was a huge humiliation within the Senate, a very personal thing that happened to him that Senators rarely do to each other except for extreme purposes, and I think that badly damaged his ability to lead. Through time and through sheer energy and his ability to get wonderful staff people—Teddy always had, everybody will tell you that I'm sure—brilliant staff people who were very loyal to him, and he had a lot of crucial committee assignments and kept working on issues. He built himself back up just by the force of his energy and his leadership. It took a couple of years before he got over it, though.

Martin: Let me ask one last question on this one. At the time or shortly thereafter, were there pressures within the Senate and especially within the progressive caucus for him to resign?

Mondale: I don't remember that.

Martin: So it never went to that level.

Mondale: I think that a lot of them felt like I did, that the question of personal guilt was to be decided not by the Senate but by the authorities in Massachusetts, however they did it. It wasn't for us. We're not a court there.

Martin: But in terms of the political nature of him being associated with some of these progressive causes?

Mondale: I'm sure there was a time there when there were concerns about it, but I don't remember people asking him to resign. I don't remember that. It may be there; your records will tell you.

Martin: We don't really have a lot of what is going on inside within these groups.

Mondale: I don't remember that.

Knott: During the 1970s you had, I think, mentioned earlier that you began to think yourself of possibly running for President in '74 or so, and you had checked it out. You spent a year and a half in Holiday Inns around the country.

Mondale: Right, I did.

Knott: This is a little bit off track here, but what was it that turned you off during that period that led you not to take the plunge?

Mondale: It was a very dispiriting exercise for me because you know, it takes all your living energy at nights and weekends to be a Senator and to be out on the road. At the end of about a year and a half, I remember seeing a poll that I was opposed by more people than who knew me, and I said this trend, if it continues, could be bad. Frankly, I didn't see any hope in it and it was taking away from my Senate work, and I thought it was starting to get undignified, so I just got out. I felt good about getting out, and I did some of my best work in the Senate after I got out.

Martin: How does that work amongst rival Senators who have Presidential aspirations? Do you see at that point risks with working with not just Senator Kennedy but other Democratic Senators who are also looking for a national stage?

Mondale: Bob Strauss once said he had a secret list of eight Senators who weren't running for President. You know, there are a lot of Presidential ambitions around there, and when they start doing well in the Senate, their friends and everybody immediately start saying, "Well, you should be President," and it gets around. So there are a lot of those Senators walking around with a good idea who should be the next President. You get into some of that. I think that we did a pretty good job of containing those competing ambitions from legislative progress because we all, after all, believed in those changes, but it was there.

The thing I was going to say about Kennedy—I mentioned earlier Humphrey and that constellation around him and Kennedy and the constellation around him, and of course they're loaded with Presidential ambitions. I didn't know it at the time, but I was going to spend a good

deal of my public life in one way or another competing with Ted Kennedy or Bobby Kennedy, even though we were good friends. It was a very anomalous situation because we had some real train wrecks, and yet, speaking for myself, I still liked the guy and I have reason to believe he still likes me. Because we had that common progressive devotion and we had worked together so much on so many things, I think that feeling sustained itself in the Senate.

I got into some conflicts with Ted in the Senate. I remember one time he got up and he wanted to change the Steering Committee, if you can believe it, to take one member out of the Midwest and give it to the East. I got up and said, “Is this what I think it is?” That’s a crucial committee. Richard Russell says it’s not an important committee; it only meets once a year, but of course it decides all new committee members. So I got up and proposed another amendment that took our seat back.

He had a way about him that I’m sure has been reported to you by others of hogging good issues. There was a thing called the Teachers Corps that was a big idea for a couple of years. Gaylord Nelson was a big Teachers Corps man—it was his bill. Gaylord told me one day he was walking on the Senate floor and heard Ted Kennedy rise to introduce his Teachers Corps Bill. It was his bill. Ted did a lot of that. We got used to it, but it didn’t mean that people were very happy about it.

Martin: Was there anything that you could do as a Senator at the time to counteract that or to try to keep him from taking over issues?

Mondale: That’s a very good question. I didn’t want to make a personal spat out of it. I remember asking him once, “Ted, could this possibly be my bill that you’ve got here?” He said, “We’re not going to stoop to that, are we?” So I know I never fought that, but there was a kind of a quiet rumble around the Senate about that technique on his part.

Martin: Who else was involved within the rumble? Who else would he grab onto bills from?

Mondale: I can’t remember right now. I’d have to look back at the records, but it was a common complaint around there.

Martin: We came across a reference to a Kennedy caucus, which was supposed to be Senator Kennedy and several other young, progressive Senators. I don’t know if that was a term that the media came up with. I doubt many people in the Senate would have referred to it as the Kennedy caucus.

Mondale: I don’t think so. It may have been, but I don’t think so. That would be a dangerous thing to do, and I think it would have very few attendees. Even though they’re for Kennedy, they wouldn’t want to be identified that way.

Martin: Let me ask another question along those lines. Were there issues that you were interested in pursuing as a Senator but were fearful that if you got involved with them, Kennedy would still get all the credit?

Mondale: No. I did what I wanted to do. If Ted was with me, usually that was an asset. This thing I talked about was not a big problem. It happened once in a while and irritated me, but it was a minor thing. If you look at our careers, we worked very closely together on practically everything.

Knott: After you checked out the Presidential waters yourself and decided to pull out, then of course you end up on the ticket with Jimmy Carter. This is an EMK oral history, but we'd be interested in learning a little bit about how that came about. When Governor Carter made the offer to you, were you hesitant, were you excited?

Mondale: I knew there was a chance, so I went to see Hubert, who had the most experience. He recommended that I take it. He said, "You know, I've been through a tough time on that, but I think I've become a larger person. I learned more and you will too, so I hope if it comes up you'll take it." I think Humphrey was very excited about it, nominated me at the convention, as you remember.

Knott: How well did you know Jimmy Carter?

Mondale: Not very well. I had met him a couple of times down there but just pro forma, but they had done a lot of work studying me, and knowing this was coming up, I did the same about him. We had a very successful meeting in Plains, and I got to know the people around him. I had this discussion with Carter about how he wanted his Vice President to perform, and that's where we shaped what later became known as the executivization of the Vice Presidency.

All those things that you hear about—we actually spelled it out in a document. I didn't want to give up the Senate. I loved the Senate. I told Carter. I didn't have to. I could help him more there than as Vice President, unless he changed the nature of the Vice Presidency so I could be a significant assistant to him. I didn't want to compete with him but to be his helper, and that's what we ended up with and I think it has changed the Vice Presidency. Let's see, '76. Humphrey was in that race. I don't think there were any Kennedys in this time around.

Knott: Well [Robert] Sargent Shriver was in for a while.

Mondale: Yes, but it didn't go anywhere. I think that Ted was uncertain about Carter. Carter came from the South, his style was entirely different, and I don't think they really—although in the early years, they worked together quite a bit. I think there was an underlying uncertainty that existed going both directions.

Martin: Do you remember any conversations with Senator Kennedy about Carter at the time?

Mondale: No, I don't. I think he was basically positive and happy at the time because Carter was going to be the nominee. That was all right with him at that point. Kennedy was always, when push would come to shove, a loyal Democrat. He knew that we needed to work together, and even after Carter, that terrible convention—Kennedy, after the convention, tried to help Carter get re-elected. Maybe it wasn't the perfect, energetic support, but it was there.

Knott: You mentioned before that it went both ways, this uneasiness between the two. What were President Carter's reservations about Senator Kennedy?

Mondale: I think that when Carter came to Washington, he was a little suspicious of northern liberals. He had a different idea about the Presidency. He believed, I think, in a very strong President vis-à-vis the legislative branch.

I remember talking to him about [Thomas] Tip O'Neill. I said, "Mr. President, before this is over, you're going to find out that Tip O'Neill is your best friend in the Congress. You don't think so, but you'll see, because he will want you to succeed. You're a Democrat and that's good enough for him," and he learned that that was the case. Some southerners that he thought would be his allies didn't turn out to be that good, and in the early period before Kennedy got this itch, Kennedy was a damn good supporter of Carter's legislative proposals, including a lot of painful ones.

Martin: I think his voting record was more than 80 percent.

Mondale: Yes. He tried to help, and then when he started thinking about running for President it changed.

Martin: What do you think happened? He is initially supportive of Carter. How does that evolve? It seems pretty abrupt, from my reading.

Mondale: Well, as you know, our administration kept losing public support. We had some problems that I think would have bedeviled any President, but we were there and we were the ones who paid the price. By '78, the midterm conference in Memphis, in his famous "sail against the wind" speech, Teddy was starting to inhale it a little bit and the polls were showing, as your papers point out, a three-to-one advantage.

I think there was a heavy Camelot feeling in the Ted Kennedy community that after all this tragedy, after all these Kennedys had been cheated in this way, and the recollection of the Camelot rapture, that he had a duty to restore that fabled promised land. He was struggling within himself about whether to fulfill this desire, this goal, that was deep in him, deep in his friends. There were a lot of northern liberals around Kennedy who were critical of Carter and encouraging Kennedy to run, and that stuff started really setting in by '78. I think that he was toying when he gave that—I heard him give the speech, the "sail against the wind" speech.

I'm an old liberal, but here we were with oil prices up, gas lines, with budget deficits that seem puny now but in the midst of inflation seemed disastrous, and here was Carter trying to do what I think any Democratic President would try to do at that time, do something to get these forces under control. And that included some kind of restraint over spending.

Along comes Ted Kennedy and he said, "Forget all of that, let's sail against the wind." Of course, the centerpiece of what he wanted to do was national health insurance—single payer, which, by anyone's estimate, would add seventy, eighty, ninety billion dollars, maybe a hundred billion dollars, nobody knows, but there wasn't a chance in hell that that was doable, and yet

that's what got proposed. I talked to Ted quite a bit during that time and I told him what you're hearing from me now.

I remember going to an autoworkers' convention and Doug Fraser was there, God bless him, one of the best people I ever met, but they were supporting Ted and they wanted to know why in the hell an old liberal like me was abandoning them on single payer health care. I said, "Well, let's talk about that a little bit. How many years have you been passing resolutions for single- payer national health insurance? Let me guess, 20 years? I'll bet you'll pass one today. How much progress have you made on that? Has it ever been reported out of the committee? Has it ever been reported out of the subcommittee? Has it ever been even called up? Has anybody ever discussed an amendment? No. It's not serious. It's a stylized position, and now you're trying to beat this President over the head with a hollow thing like that." And boy, they shut up.

In other words, this I thought was an unfair rap against Carter, who tried to do things in healthcare measured against the severe fiscal trap we were in.

Knott: You would try to mediate between the two, is that accurate? Would that ever occur?

Mondale: No. Ted and I could talk frankly. I'd just tell him what I thought of it and that I thought it was unfair.

Knott: How would he respond, do you recall?

Mondale: He was doing what he was going to do and I kind of knew that, but I wasn't going to let him roll over me. I wanted him to know there was a legitimate case on the other side. I was, at least on one occasion, very clear about the damage it was going to do to all of us, including him, if they pulled down Carter.

Knott: Could you tell us about that?

Mondale: He called me the day before he announced he was running and I said. "Ted, I'm very sorry to hear that. I'm sorry for us, of course, I'm sorry for you, but I'm really sorry for the Democratic Party and for what we believe in, because we don't intend to leave voluntarily. We're going to fight for this thing, and even though you and I will now say that this is going to be civil and pleasant on the issues, it never gets that way. I've been through it. It's going to get mean as hell and we're all going to be hurt in the process." And that's exactly what happened.

Knott: Do you know if he had some Senators pressuring him to run? We've heard this. You gave some reasons why you thought Kennedy jumped into the race, but there were reports that a lot of his colleagues, both in the House and the Senate, were saying, "Look, you've got to get in this thing or we're going to go down the drain."

Mondale: There were some members of the Congress who were afraid that Carter was going to pull them down. He was down at [George W.] Bush level then, and people were scared. I'm sure that some of the Senate colleagues asked him to run. On the other hand, there's a lot of those Senators who like Kennedy who believed that Carter was in trouble, who wouldn't necessarily

think that Ted was their salvation—maybe because of Chappaquiddick or for other reasons they saw a flawed candidate there. I’m trying to think of people in the Senate who stood up and told Ted he had to run.

Knott: We’ve heard that [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan was one of them.

Mondale: Moynihan could be one. Who else have you heard of? But I don’t think he made a lot of noise about it. My guess is that there are a lot of people who were afraid that Carter would pull them down who weren’t too sure that Kennedy was the guy. Just standing up there and fighting publicly for Kennedy—I’m trying to remember who did that.

Knott: Did President Carter try to do anything? Did he have a meeting with Senator Kennedy?

Mondale: Yes. I think they met several times, usually around a bill signing or some other occasion, but I think they had a breakfast or a lunch during that time and he tried to make, for example, a compromise on healthcare, long-term phasing in of national health insurance, things like that. Tried to recognize Ted’s dignity and so on, but as history tells us, it didn’t work. My guess—and I shouldn’t say it—is that Kennedy and Carter just didn’t click.

Knott: I know that President Carter was quoted once as saying that he would whip Kennedy’s ass.

Mondale: I wasn’t in on that, but as your papers would show it, it was probably a deliberate strategy. They wanted to show that Carter was tough, and they wanted to let Democrats know we weren’t quitting here.

Martin: Before Kennedy announced that he was going to run, do you remember any conversations with the DNC [Democratic National Committee] or other larger organizations, or at least within Democratic party circles about what was going on? Why was Kennedy going to be challenging? Was there any movement or momentum that you could see at the time to try to push back before he threw his name in the ring?

Mondale: Yes. I think there were a lot—like old Bob Strauss. I’m sure he didn’t want Kennedy to run. There were a lot of people in the Senate and in the Congress. Tip O’Neill did not want Ted to run. There were a lot of people who saw that in order to hold the Democratic position, which was now a dominant one, we had to avoid this fight. So I think he got a lot of talk along that line from colleagues in the Senate.

Knott: And there was just no persuading him?

Mondale: It didn’t work, did it?

Knott: Kennedy’s campaign got off to a pretty rocky start. He gave that disastrous interview with Roger Mudd where he had difficulty explaining why he wanted to be President, and then I think shortly after that, the embassy in Tehran was overrun, so the whole emphasis on domestic issues switched to foreign affairs.

Mondale: Right. And then suddenly the polls switch. Kennedy went right into the ditch there. I read your materials that said that Ted—maybe in his oral history—said that when he did the Mudd interview, it was just before the Kennedy Library was opened, and Carter was coming up there and he just didn't want to be critical of Carter. He wanted to be generous. That struck me as maybe having some relevance.

I also think that he had somehow psychologically put Chappaquiddick out of his mind. He thought it was worn out as an issue and he thought Roger Mudd, according to your papers, was going to just have a pleasant "how's the weather" interview. Instead of that, it was tough and he was simply not ready to deal with it and didn't deal with it.

Then I think he was in a trap. Here he had announced. The war broke out and this horrible situation in Iran, and I believe if he hadn't been running for President, he would have tried to help the President. Instead of that, once you get into those races you start using whatever the circumstances are to pick up some leverage. In doing that, he totally misjudged the national mood at that time.

Martin: One of the pieces that we read in the briefing materials suggested that you were on record or at least there were rumors that you had said something along the lines that you didn't think that Kennedy would be a very good campaigner, that you had seen him work in the Senate and you weren't convinced that he was going to be a tough opponent. Is that accurate?

Mondale: Well, it comes into the category of not remembering, and I can guess. I mentioned earlier I had told Kennedy the kind of Chappaquiddick stuff I was getting, and I wasn't soliciting it, but I was getting it everywhere. So I knew that issue was not dead. I thought Kennedy would have trouble because he was trying to upend a good Democratic President and all that that meant, not necessarily to him, but to a lot of people, and I think history shows that that was a terrible price we paid for that. And that he would get himself into a trap where it wouldn't work out nearly as well as he thought it would, and it didn't.

Martin: What was your strategy for dealing with that campaign?

Mondale: I was, I would say, the point guy. The President decided, and for a long time I think very wisely, that he would be the Commander in Chief dealing with this horrible situation in Iran and that he would try to stay away from the direct daily train wreck of retail politics, although he spent a lot of time on the phone calling people. He pulled that off I think quite well. Kennedy kept trying to get him out of the Oval Office and he wanted to debate him. I said, "I know the public agrees that we need the President there working on this problem a lot more than we need one more night of debates," and people would nod their heads.

One of the best speeches I gave in my career, although I didn't get credit for it, was the midterm Memphis speech, where in effect I was answering Kennedy about sailing against the wind. I don't know if you saw that, but I asked the delegates, "What do you hear when you talk to your friends and neighbors about our problems Do you hear about inflation?" They all nodded. I started talking about how you had to deal with real problems in order to be given the mandate to

deal with our dreams. Although it was kind of a root canal speech, that sort of laid out the basis that I was going to use, progressive but dealing with real problems in order to be progressive and holding this thing together with a good President who is doing his best and deserves their support. So that's what we did in Iowa, Wisconsin, and beyond.

Then of course I had that one deal in Iowa that I'm sorry about and I apologized to Kennedy. I guess I was tired that day or something. It was about the grain embargo, which I personally did not favor, although I probably supported the President's position. He attacked us on this and I said Kennedy's was the politics of the moment and I implied a lack of manhood or something. He was angry about it and said the Kennedys don't have to be told how to serve their country. That's true, and I was sorry about what I said.

Knott: It almost seems like the campaigns go on so long that it's hard not to at some point say something nasty because you're just tired.

Mondale: Right. I was angry at Kennedy for trying to take this government away from us because I didn't think we deserved it, and I knew what he was doing and I liked the guy, but I thought he let these instincts get the better of him. So I wasn't that kind toward him at that time, even though as I said repeatedly here I respected and liked the guy. So it was a very conflicted time for me. I felt I owed it to Carter and the Democrats, everything I believed in to win this case, and so I went out and campaigned very hard. I was out there 10-15 hours a day, every day, in this war, and once in a while I guess I stepped over the line. Not often, but once in a while.

Knott: Were you surprised that Kennedy stayed with it for so long after defeat after defeat?

Mondale: Yes. If I were talking to Ted, that's what I would say sticks in my craw right now. At some point it was clear before the convention that he was not going to be nominated, and I knew that if Carter were nominated he'd support us. If that's where we're going, we should have been able to work out a transition that would allow Carter to get in charge of that convention, look like a President again, put his money into the campaign against [Ronald] Reagan, and lay the groundwork for a possible re-election.

That's not what Ted did. Ted kept plugging away long after it was clear he couldn't make it and he got pretty rough with us. The convention was a flop because all the attention was on him, the Camelot legacy, his powerful speech at the convention, and then the way that Carter's speech, the all-unity session on the platform, turned into a sour experience, and the press fully reported it. It ruined our national convention, and although Kennedy later came out for us and I appreciate that, the damage done was so bad that you couldn't make up for it.

Knott: Has he ever given you any explanation after the fact why he stayed so long?

Mondale: No, and I wouldn't ask him. I mean, this is what happened and I'm sure he knows my views. I don't know what the hell he was thinking about. I think maybe he wanted to end up being the kind of guy who was talking in his address about how the dream will never die. It's a Camelot thing and how he wasn't going to quit and I'm sure by then he had persuaded himself,

and those around him surely had tried to persuade him, that Carter was a sellout and so he was being true to his faith.

Martin: Were you doing polling at the time?

Mondale: There were polls being taken, but I don't remember the figures. I know we were in tough shape.

Knott: Is it true, though, that there were some people around President Carter who were sort of looking forward to running against Ronald Reagan?

Mondale: Yeah. There was a story around that Reagan, because he had all these atrocious right-wing statements—he had opposed civil rights. He opposed every arms control agreement. It's just a massive museum of idiotic, right-wing statements and we're thinking, *This is a great target*. Wrong. People liked him.

Knott: Do you recall if you believed that in the summer of '80 that Reagan was probably beatable because of those?

Mondale: Yes, and he had stumbled around at first and his polls were coming down. I think I'm right, he kicked off his campaign in Philadelphia, Mississippi, where the civil rights workers had been killed. It was clear what he was doing, so I thought, *Well, we can beat him*. But as we now know, it didn't work.

Knott: And the seeds of that defeat were pretty much sowed during the vicious primary battle with Senator Kennedy.

Mondale: I don't give him all the blame. I think we were in serious trouble, but I think the chances that we could possibly get back on our feet and defeat Reagan were dramatically diminished by that last three weeks leading up to the convention and the convention itself.

Knott: And of course, it didn't help to have John Anderson in the race.

Mondale: No, but if Carter had come out of that convention stronger, Anderson would have been less of a threat. Anderson got his strength out of the same argument, that Carter was a failed President and he could be a good President, so what's to lose? I think it had some impact. Anderson faded in the stretch anyway, but he did probably cost us two or three percentage—if we'd been close, he could have tipped it.

Martin: What was your relationship with Carter like at this period, going from the convention on?

Mondale: I think our relationship was always good. You know, I was loyal to him. I thought he was a good President and an honorable man. I wanted to protect him from what I thought were unrealistic demands by stylized liberals who were not being practical about the predicament that any one of us would have been in if we were President at that time. So I tried to be there when

the President needed me, and I tried to go out and campaign for him. I was working liberal groups every place I could to try to get them to help us. We talked many, many times during all of it. I would say that Carter, by the end, was quite irritated with Kennedy because he didn't think he gave him any room to be the President leading up to the convention, and I don't know that that's entirely disappeared.

Knott: To take you back just a bit, I think in the summer of '79 President Carter delivered the so-called "malaise speech," and then realized that he had never used that word.

Mondale: Right, he did not.

Knott: You were opposed to that speech?

Mondale: I was opposed to one of the first drafts. I thought the speech itself was pretty good, and in fact had a good public reaction—as your excellent papers report. The public responded very favorably to it, but unfortunately, that great massacre four days later killed us.

We were building back up. Somehow Liz [Elizabeth] Drew of the *New Yorker* got an article that had a lot of details on that. They were pretty accurate. Pat Caddell was reading some social psychology textbooks that persuaded him that the public was going through a severe psychological-psychiatric breakdown. When I was a student, I took a year of social psychology, and I figured it was a dry hole.

"I know these books," I told them. "It's not what's happening out there. The public has tremendous, real tangible things shaking their confidence. They have gas lines, people are being killed out there—the price of gas, inflation, and now our problems in Iran and so on. People are worried about real, explainable things, and to have an administration that got elected on the principle that we needed a government as good as the people, to now say we need a people as good as the government—that's not going to sell." And it didn't sell. They dropped malaise from the speech and I said, "Let's get on to things that we can do together to lick this problem." Kennedy, having heard the background story about malaise, used malaise as an issue against us because he knew it would hurt us, even though we never used that word.

Knott: So it was in the first draft?

Mondale: It was sure in the talking points.

Knott: After the defeat in 1980, how soon do you begin to think about possibly gearing up for '84 for your own race?

Mondale: I'd say that night. You know, I was thinking about it right from—

Knott: Really?

Mondale: Yes. That's how you have to do it.

Martin: There was some report that you had considered or had talked to President Carter about stepping down, and I was hoping we could talk a little bit about that.

Mondale: That's in Steve Gillon's book. I told Steve he was dead wrong. I know where it came from, and I can explain it, I think. You often see this in politicians. When I got frustrated I would feel sorry for myself and would give these lamentations about my predicament and how hard it is and so on, and by God, I think I'll quit. I never meant that. It was cheaper than a psychiatrist and I'd feel better the next day because I said it. Gillon got some guy to explain that he had heard that from me, but it was not in me to quit.

Martin: Glad we got the chance to clear that up.

Mondale: I tried to clear Gillon up, and I couldn't.

Knott: So when you begin to prepare for '84, did you take some steps to rebuild your relationship with Senator Kennedy?

Mondale: Yes.

Knott: —not that it was damaged all that badly, I guess.

Mondale: I did, and we met. He was thinking of running again, as your papers point out, but he pulled out. He could see it wasn't going to work, and so after he did that, he came over to my house and we spent a couple hours talking about it. He was very positive about it. I don't think he said he'd endorse me but he thought it was mine and that he hoped I'd go on and be elected and so on. My campaign faltered, particularly after I was defeated in Maine, and it looked like Gary [Hart] might get me. I think that Kennedy started wavering a little bit there, but I know—I'll bet everything that he would have preferred me as President. This is me talking—who's to say?

Knott: When you did secure the nomination, was he of help to you?

Mondale: Yes, at the convention. I believe he introduced me at the convention, didn't he?

Martin: I don't remember.

Mondale: He gave one of the first speeches. Oh yes, he tried and we had a big, big rally in Boston and he was there.

Martin: Did you get a sense from this period that the rest of the Democratic party thought that Kennedy had some making up to do?

Mondale: Afterwards?

Martin: Yes, after the '80 campaign.

Mondale: I think it left some wreckage in the South and in the West. Urban progressive Democrats like me tended to forgive Kennedy because he was so much with us on the big issues that we felt so deeply about, even though, as I've explained earlier, a lot of us were very distressed by what happened there personally. I think a lot of people never did feel the same way about him after this.

Knott: Do you feel like talking a little bit about your race against Ronald Reagan?

Mondale: I don't mind, if you can call it that. [*laughs*]

Knott: How did you think as you stood there when you got the nomination that night? What did you think your chances were against a fairly popular incumbent?

Mondale: I thought I had a chance. I knew it wasn't 50/50. I decided that one of the reasons that I did what I did with the Vice President was, in addition to liking her and admiring her, I knew I had to take some bold chances to get people to look at us or we were going down. Running against a popular President, the economy was in good shape, we weren't at war, this guy was a master at television. I'd say I thought we had a chance. I intended to give it all I had, and after that convention, which was very successful, we ended up briefly with a one or two point advantage over him.

Knott: So as far as the selection of Mrs. [Geraldine] Ferraro, was that your idea?

Mondale: There were a lot of people involved, of course, but we were looking for running mates who could help us, and we were looking at polls. We were down 10-15 points, and another white male wasn't interesting the public an awful lot. So there was this very strong movement in America and in the Democratic Party, saying that the time had come to include women on the ticket. A bold idea—I hope some day that it will succeed. So we started exploring that. We decided to pick Ferraro. The reaction was very positive, and at the convention very positive, but the history tells us it didn't work.

Knott: When you had your first debate with Ronald Reagan, he didn't perform all that well?

Mondale: I don't know what was going on there, but the moment he stepped onto that platform I knew he was a goner. He was just kind of half there. When I came off the platform, I told him, "I'm worried about Reagan. There's something wrong there. He was not tracking." I knew every one of his speeches. Reagan was a very simple guy and he had about six speeches in him. Something would trigger one of his speeches and he'd do it. But he would get in the middle of one of those speeches in the debate and then forget where he was going. He had his famous speech about going down the West Coast and thinking of things he's going to put in his memory capsule that people would read 50 years from now about America, and he got halfway down that road and by God, he forgot all about it.

One of the panelists told me afterwards, "Fritz, you lost the Presidency. You should have said, 'I'll give up my time and let the President finish that trip.' There's not a chance he could." But anyway, the public saw that and it shook them. Then he got it back the next time.

Knott: Kennedy—I don’t want to exhaust this topic, but he was helpful during that fall.

Mondale: Yes. I considered him a friend, and I’m sure he wanted me to be President.

Martin: If we could roll back just a little bit to the 1980 campaign and shortly thereafter, you said you started thinking already about ’84. I’m wondering, in-between ’80 and ’84, what your thinking is about how you’re going to challenge what at the time was an increasingly popular President. I’m curious about those sets of decisions. How do you proceed? How do you strategize? Did you consider waiting until 1988?

Mondale: Yes. As I used to say, up or out. I figured if I waited eight years I would be yesterday’s toast—that I was going to run, that somebody needed to challenge Reagan. It was going to be very tough but he deserved to be challenged. His international policies and arms control and so on were very reckless. He was the first President in 50 years of either party who never tried to control nuclear weapons, and I thought that the Star Wars thing was dangerous. I still think it’s dangerous; it still doesn’t work. It was all that right-wing, high-frontier stuff, and he deserved to be challenged.

I’m an old—I’d say new—social reformer who believed that our kids had to have opportunities. We had to put money into education, into higher education, into science and protecting the environment, these things that build our future. I felt and feel very strongly about it.

He had opposed civil rights. He played a very pleasant guy, but he wasn’t for any of that, and so I felt strongly about my campaign. It didn’t sell, but I believed it then and I believe it now, and I think he deserved to be challenged. And while I’m very sorry how it came out, I have no regrets about what I said. Now a lot of people say that it was an old campaign, old issues, and maybe it was, but it’s where I was and where I am now.

Martin: How do you think the public responded? I mean even though things didn’t work out the way you wanted to in 1984, do you think you pushed Reagan to address some of the issues?

Mondale: Well, afterwards he was an entirely different person on arms control. After the election, I read that Nancy Reagan told him that he had to change. In fact, when he got to Reykjavik he almost gave the whole thing away, but he did change afterwards. I drew some blood on him on Social Security. At least on Social Security, not Medicare, he changed. I lost the election, but I believe some of the issues that I talked about influenced the next four years of his administration.

Martin: At some point you give what’s considered a pretty gutsy speech, “I will raise your taxes.”

Mondale: Yes. I did that at the convention.

Martin: Do you want to talk a little bit about coming up with that speech or how that came about?

Mondale: Well, I was clear behind and I didn't think that I could be elected unless people saw that I could be a President, that I was strong. I believe that telling the truth and staking out a difficult and challenging course might buy the support of moderates and sensible people, whereas the usual political campaign, where you duck the tough ones, would not.

It was clear to me that the central question for the new government would be the deficits. How would you get those deficits down? I knew because it had been reported in the paper that Reagan's tax department was working on a tax bill right now. They had to call and kill the bill when I made the attack because in fact Treasury was working on it. So I said that we had to raise taxes. "Reagan won't tell you that. I just did." Some people say it hurt me. I've got my doubts. I think I was telling the truth. Certainly history vindicated me. They passed several tax increases afterwards and they had to get that deficit down just as they're going to have to do now and they're going to have to raise taxes to do it. So I feel good about that too. I didn't get elected but I told them the truth.

Martin: I'm curious—as someone who has run for President and has served as Vice President, did your feelings about your average fellow citizen change as a result of these experiences?

Mondale: I told somebody afterwards that I think I would have voted for Reagan if I weren't running, because he is a nice guy. He never was mean to me. I was never mean to him, and look at that campaign. It was a pleasant year, I think, for Americans. I think we ended up a united country, and so I could see why the average American liked the guy. They thought he was stable and good. They had a lot of memories about Carter and me that weren't very good from the tough times we'd had, and that was a cloud over my campaign. Even though I could explain it, people don't all hold doctorate degrees in political science and sort out this stuff. They have to deal with moods and feelings and tendencies, and he persuaded them that it was morning in America, feeling good, and it worked.

Martin: I think one of the lessons people take from your campaign to a certain degree is that one indeed shouldn't be straightforward with the mass public, and you should tell them things that they're going to be happy with.

Mondale: I think if I had done that I'd be lost inside myself because that's not how I was feeling. I think that authenticity has to be the beginning of a credible campaign or a credible presence. The thing I feel best about is having leveled with people, and I think I was going to lose anyway. I hope that's not the lesson. I think that ducking around and trimming, there's always going to be some of it but I hope that's not the lesson that people learned.

Martin: Should we fast-forward to 2002? We were curious about Paul Wellstone, who unfortunately passes—has the plane crash—and you are called to service to run in his place. We're curious in terms of was Kennedy involved in that in any certain way, or how that came about.

Mondale: As you know, we only had eight days or something and it was a weird, weird time because we should have been mourning and yet we had to be in politics. I think I talked to Ted

maybe five or six times during the week, and I remember him calling me after our debate—I had the debate with [Norman] Coleman—telling me I did a good job. He was trying to help me, encourage me by phone. I didn't ask anybody to come in. I didn't ask Kennedy to come in. I thought I should do this on my own and bringing in outsiders would look weak, so I didn't do it. But I'm sure if I had asked him he would have come in.

Martin: One of the things that was really inexplicable—I was in Minnesota just after that campaign and I remember hearing from the newspaper folks, the pollsters for the newspapers, that the poll numbers shifted radically over that prior weekend before the election and nobody seemed to have a good explanation as to what had happened.

Mondale: Well I think it was that memorial service where it was all live, a huge crowd at the university auditorium there, and right in the middle of it, a couple of good people I think who were just unhinged started this hard-line political challenge. We had a hall full of Republican Senators. They weren't welcomed and honored the way they should have been and then the Republicans were able to use that. They had the election in Missouri where a Senator had died in an airplane accident and they immediately got together with them and figured out a strategy to take advantage of this. They were very clever about it.

Martin: Was your campaign at that point—did you have internal polling that you could look at to try to figure out what had happened?

Mondale: You know, these eight days, I think the *Minneapolis Tribune*, a good poll, showed me up about 12 or 14 points. I felt pretty good about it, but then you could feel that last couple of days it went sour.

Knott: Well, we'd like to ask a few retrospective questions about Senator Kennedy, if you don't mind.

Mondale: I think Kennedy goes down as one of the really great, solid people of our time, if you look at his total record. To be a rich kid and have the options of the easy life and to go through what he did with two brothers assassinated and all the other problems in the family, to be the head of that family in effect, for all these years and to be true to his liberal, progressive beliefs all of these years and plug away as a really gifted legislator, as Adam Clymer's book will point out. To be tried and true, to be faithful to social justice in our country and international rationality for this many years and in this way for so long—I think you really—he's running again, isn't he?

I think there are very few examples of people who have been that true for that long for causes that pay no money, many times getting into issues that made his own reelection at risk. I remember those awful issues we got into about school desegregation and busing, and Boston blew up on him. Well he just stood there and took it. I think he's been magnificent. Even with all the troubles we've had, I still think he'll go down as one of the giants.

Martin: What made him a particularly effective Senator? In his early period, other members of the Senate aren't particularly sure about him.

Mondale: No, and I think some of the—a lot of strains went to it, but over the years, getting involved in all of these issues, he became increasingly knowledgeable about them. People in the field looked to him for leadership. He got more and more powerful positions in the committee assignments, much larger budgets for staff. He always had this unique ability to get the very best. He always stayed close to Harvard and MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] and these think tanks that added to the sophistication of his position.

As his Presidential aspirations disappeared, and I think some of the load of Camelot faded, people were able to accept him more and more as a legislative leader. His ability to find bipartisan support—many times things he couldn't have done alone he did by bringing along Republicans who worked for them, like I think it's the Kennedy-[John] McCain Immigration bill. It's the best bill out there. They did it, and I'll bet you before we're done, we'll end up with something like they propose. I think a lot of people feel for him because of what he went through and what that family has been through, but I think a lot of his colleagues now accept the stature, the depth, almost unmatched over four decades of—I don't know what number Senator he is now. He must be about two or three.

Knott: He's number two.

Mondale: Number two. I truly admire the guy.

Martin: Do you remember any points in your early career where you start looking at him in a different light? OK, he's a little more serious than I originally thought of him—?

Mondale: I thought he was serious about his progressive instincts from the start, and that's one of the things that was tested over all these tragedies and humiliations, that whenever he could get back on his feet he was there again, fighting for these progressive causes. So no, that's been tested in every conceivable way and that's where he is. I don't think you can say he faked that.

I think that one of the things about him that would have to be discussed is whether he changed with the times, whether he was willing to grapple with some of the profound budgetary and administrative challenges that some of his proposals raised. My guess his answer to that would be he'd say, "Yes, we have to deal with that, but unless somebody is out here pushing these issues it will never be dealt with, and the government will be bent by these huge tax cuts for the rich and these other things that have strapped America." Unless we're pushing these issues—if you go out and look at the surveys now, the public is for healthcare, they're for education, they're for the environment. The stuff that he's pushing is pretty much where the public is right now, I think. Would they be if he hadn't led that? Good question.

Knott: Well, thank you.

Martin: Yes, this has been very nice.

Knott: I think we covered the ground we wanted to cover.

Mondale: So this goes into a big pile of stuff you've got there. Now you're going to make a transcription, right?

Knott: Absolutely. You should receive yours in three to four months. It takes a little while. We're keeping a pretty fast pace.

Mondale: You must have a good budget for this.

Knott: We do. The funding for this project comes from that Center for the Study of the United States Senate that I mentioned to you earlier.

Mondale: Good. So they came up with some support for that.

Knott: They did.

Mondale: But they saw you as the—

Knott: They came to us.

Mondale: Because you do a lot of this.

Knott: We do, but this is the first time we've gone outside of the executive branch.

Mondale: Well, he's the perfect example to do so, don't you think?

Knott: Absolutely.

Martin: It poses a lot of challenges because when you're accustomed to a four- or eight-year period of time when people served, and now we look at 40 years and try to figure out—even with the interview today with you, we have to really think, *Wow, that's so much time covered*.

Mondale: You know, this is really good stuff, but it's hit-and-miss, too. I've just spent four days down at the Carter Library going through my stuff and there's a whole room like this with just classified stuff from my four years there. But you can go back and start putting this stuff together, but you're asking questions about how I felt and what we talked about 40 years ago, and I have to say that unless I can get some documents, I'm not exactly sure. I got a feeling about what it was, but in many cases I can't tell you for sure what happened.

Martin: It's so much easier when we're asking a year ago or somewhere along those lines.

Knott: Well, thank you again.

INDEX

Anderson, John, 16
Arms control, Reagan, Ronald, and, 20

Bellmon, Henry, 4
BIA. *See* Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs, 4
Byrd, Robert, 6, 7

Caddell, Patrick, 17
Califano, Joseph A., Jr., 6
Carter, Jimmy, 10, 11, 12, 14, 21
 and EMK, 11, 12, 13, 17
 and Mondale, Walter, 10, 15, 16-17
 Presidential campaign, 1980, 15, 16
Chappaquiddick, 6-8, 13, 14
Chavez, Cesar, 3
Clymer, Adam, 22
Coleman, Norman, 22

Democratic National Committee, and EMK's Presidential ambitions, 13
Drew, Elizabeth, 17

Equal Education Opportunity Committee, 3

Ferraro, Geraldine, 19
Finance Committee, 5
Fraser, Douglas, 12

Gillon, Steven M., 18

Harris, Fred, 2
Hart, Gary, 18
Hughes, Harold Everett, 3
Humphrey, Hubert, 3, 6, 10
 and Mondale, Walter, 2, 5
 Presidential ambitions, 9
Hunger Committee, 3

Indian Education Act, 4
Indian Education Committee, 3-4

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 14
Johnson, Lyndon B., 5
 and Mondale, Walter, 5-6

and RFK, 5

Kennedy, Edward M.

and Carter, Jimmy, 10-11, 12, 13, 17

and Chappaquiddick, 6-8, 14

Senate colleagues and, 6-8

contrasted with RFK, 2-3

and “Kennedy caucus,” 9

and Mondale, Walter, 2, 4, 15, 18, 20, 22

and national health insurance, 12

personality, 22-23

Presidential ambitions, 9, 11-12, 13-14

pressure from Senate, 12-13

Presidential campaign, 15-16

aftermath, 19

and RFK/Lyndon Johnson relationship, 5

as Senator, 9, 22-23

staff, 7

and Teachers Corps Bill, 9

Kennedy, John F., and Mondale, Walter, 2

Kennedy, Robert F.

contrasted with EMK, 2-3

and Johnson, Lyndon, 5

and Mondale, Walter, 2, 4

“Kennedy caucus,” 9

Kennedy-McCain Immigration bill, 23

Long, Russell, 5

Mansfield, Michael, 5

McCain, John, 23

McCarthy, Eugene, 5

McGovern Committee, 3

Mondale, Walter

and Carter, Jimmy, 10, 15, 16-17

and changes/reforms in Senate, 4-5

and EMK, 9, 10, 15, 18, 20, 22

and Humphrey, Hubert, 5

and Indian Education Committee, 3-4

and Johnson, Lyndon, 5-6

Presidential ambitions, 8-9

Presidential campaign, 17-19, 20-21

and RFK, 9

and taxes as campaign issue, 21

as Vice Presidential candidate, 10, 14

Morris, Wayne, 4

Moynihan, Daniel Patrick, 13
Mudd, Roger, 14
Murphy, George, 4

National Science Foundation, 3
Nelson, Gaylord, 9
New Yorker, 17

O'Neill, Thomas P., 11
 and EMK's Presidential ambitions, 13

Reagan, Nancy, 20
Reagan, Ronald, 15
 and arms control, 20
 Presidential campaign, 1980, 16
 Presidential campaign, 1984, 19-20
 and Social Security, 20
 and taxes as campaign issue, 21
Russell, Richard, Jr., 9

Saxbe, William, 4
Shriver, Robert Sargent, 10
Social Security, Reagan, Ronald, and, 20
Steering Committee, 5, 9
Strauss, Robert, 8
 and EMK's Presidential ambitions, 13

Teachers Corps, 9
Teachers Corps Bill, 9
Tydings, Joseph, 2

Wellstone, Paul, 21