



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA SOULIOTIS

July 12, 2005
Boston, Massachusetts

Interviewer
Stephen Knott

Index: page 30

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TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA SOULIOTIS

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Knott: perhaps the best place to start, Barbara, would be to just ask you how to came to work for Senator Edward Kennedy or your connection with the Kennedy family, how that began?

Souliotis: Well, first of all, I didn't have any connection with the Kennedy family. I was going to school at Katherine Gibbs, and I knew from high school that I wanted to go into government. I got out in May of '61 and they said they had all kinds of job opportunities. I had indicated I wanted to go into government, and they basically said, "You may have to go to Washington for that." And I said, "Well, I'll wait." *[laughs]*

I went on a couple of other job interviews and I wasn't interested. They really weren't in government, so I said I think I'll just take the summer off and get a summer job and see what happens in the fall. Then the school called me and said, "We have something here you might be interested in and why don't you go on this interview." They said it was with Ted Kennedy. They didn't really tell me who he was, just, "We think he might be running for something, Governor or Senate." So I went in. I was interviewed by him and about a week later he called. I wasn't recommended by anybody. I didn't know anybody.

Knott: And the initial position was?

Souliotis: It was scheduler to answer invitations. At the time he was chairman of the Cancer Crusade in Massachusetts and he was Assistant District Attorney of Suffolk County. I was doing a lot of scheduling for the Cancer Crusade around the state and working with the other girls in the office.

Knott: Who were some of the other folks that you started with that you can recall?

Souliotis: Well, Mary Frackleton was working part time and Mary Jane Duris was working there. I think she was hired by Judge [Frank] Morrissey, and the Senator tells the story even today that I was the first person that he himself interviewed and hired.

Knott: That's pretty neat.

Souliotis: Yes, it is. So that was it.

Knott: This was '61?

Souliotis: November '61.

Knott: So he announces in the spring of '62 that he's going to run.

Souliotis: March '62.

Knott: How heavily involved were you in the campaign then?

Souliotis: I was very heavily involved with it. We worked out of 22 Bowdoin Street (the same apartment President [John F.] Kennedy used) that fall just doing some of his District Attorney work, also, as I said, going around on the Cancer Crusade. He was traveling across the state to test the waters and we were setting up a field organization following President Kennedy's pattern of having what we called a Kennedy coordinator or a Kennedy secretary in every city and town. The President had Eddie King do that, and we were working on building that organization up. Then after he announced for the Senate we moved to the headquarters on Tremont Street and Gerry Doherty was the campaign manager. Larry Laughlin was the head of scheduling, so I worked directly under him. Then John Culver, a Harvard classmate, came over to work on issues and speeches. Steve Smith, the Senator's brother-in-law, came in shortly after to be overall coordinator of the campaign.

Knott: Was the Senator's father present at all?

Souliotis: No.

Knott: Not at this time? I guess he would have had a stroke.

Souliotis: He had a stroke in December, 1961, and was unable to speak. Actually, I only saw him a few times after the stroke. I had more dealings with Steve Smith when I was doing the scheduling on the campaign with Larry.

Knott: You mentioned Judge Morrissey a minute or two ago. Was he a presence or was he—

Souliotis: Just on Bowdoin Street at the very beginning when we were starting out. I rarely saw him at headquarters. As I said, Steve came from the family offices in New York and he was sort of the overall campaign manager. Gerry Doherty was the campaign manager but Steve was over everything.

Knott: Was there optimism in that campaign? What were the assumptions? This is going to be an easy race because he's the President's brother?

Souliotis: No. The assumptions were it was going to be a very tough race because it was clear that Eddie McCormack was a very strong candidate. He was the nephew of the Speaker of the House, Attorney General of Massachusetts, and he was tied into the State House, to all the state senators, state representatives basically, and really had all their support. We knew we were in for

a battle in the primary. There was no question about that. It got very tough. It got tough. We didn't know we were ahead at all until after the first debate.

Knott: Was that the debate where McCormack went on the attack?

Souliotis: Yes. McCormack's headquarters were right next to ours on Tremont Street and he would have a sign in the window every day challenging him to a debate, and they finally said the first debate was in South Boston, which was McCormack's territory.

Knott: Were you there by any chance, or did you watch it on—?

Souliotis: I was there.

Knott: You were there?

Souliotis: I was there.

Knott: What did you feel in the hall that night when McCormack went on the attack? That he had the upper hand?

Souliotis: We had no way of knowing. Nobody knew what the reaction of the people watching it on TV or hearing it at home was. You couldn't tell. You couldn't tell which way the people were going to react to McCormack's taunting remarks until we got back to headquarters and the phones were ringing off the hook and telegrams were coming in by the hundreds and the polls following the debate completely switched. We had all kinds of calls saying, "I was with Eddie McCormack but I'm not anymore."

Knott: They thought he'd gone overboard?

Souliotis: They thought he went too far and came across as a bully and the Senator didn't react and lose his cool [*laughs*]. I think from that night on we had a pretty good idea we were going to win, but before that it was not a sure thing by any stretch. A lot of people thought he was too young and he was just running because he was the brother of the President.

Knott: The President did not really come in and campaign?

Souliotis: Not at all.

Knott: That was a decision made, that it would be best to keep him at a distance?

Souliotis: Right. He never came in. Robert Kennedy never came in. He wanted to do it on his own. I think some people in the White House thought if he lost, it would hurt the President and were not really in favor of him running in the first place.

Knott: When Senator Kennedy defeated McCormack in September, then you faced George Lodge. Was there a concern about Lodge or was it—

Souliotis: No. I think we sort of knew that the toughest part of the campaign was the primary because it's such a Democratic state. The toughest part was over, although we still continued campaigning very hard.

Knott: Did people see it in some ways as a continuation of a series of Lodge-Kennedy confrontations?

Souliotis: Oh, yes. Yes, they did. And George Lodge ran a very clean, very good campaign.

Knott: We interviewed him last Friday. He's a Kennedy supporter now.

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: Tells us he's a Democrat now.

Souliotis: Yes, he is. He called me a couple of weeks ago for some help on a case. He proceeded to tell me that he was a Democrat [*laughs*].

Knott: Having come from Massachusetts, to what extent do religion and ethnicity play a role in Massachusetts politics? Is that a fair statement that Senator Kennedy being Irish, being Catholic, his brother breaking the religious barrier for the White House, is that part of what explains perhaps the hold or the loyalty that Senator Kennedy has with voters in Massachusetts? Or does it go beyond that?

Souliotis: I think it goes beyond that. I think in the '62 campaign and maybe through the '60s that was truer than it is today. I don't think it is today. I think the President breaking the Catholic barrier was a major thing, but in '62 there were all kinds of ethnic clubs, ethnic picnics, etc. All across the state there were ethnic events that got a good crowd and the members were very active politically, but I don't see that today. They've sort of faded by the wayside. There aren't that many anymore. Even city and town committees are not what they used to be.

Knott: So what is it now? It's just that you reach people through media? Is that the big change?

Souliotis: Yes, I think it's media, it's online and the blogs. It's totally changed. I think the biggest thing with the Senator was personal contact. He basically outworked and out organized McCormack. I mean it was nothing for him to start at 5:30 in the morning and finish at 11:00 at night. That was done all the time in that campaign. He would be at the Charlestown Navy Yard at 5:30 to shake hands with people going to work and he would finish at 11:00. No breaks. It was just seven days a week.

Knott: High energy.

Souliotis: High energy, very high energy. Never stopped. If he had 15 minutes, it was "What're we doing now? What're we doing now?" [*laughs*] The schedules were unbelievable.

Knott: Do you think he misses that old style campaigning? Is he as comfortable with the newer, more media—

Souliotis: I think he misses it a little bit, but I think he's as comfortable. He's 30 years older, and he didn't have the bad back then. He could keep that kind of schedule, no problem, so he just worked harder than everybody else.

Knott: Do you miss it? Do you miss the old style, the way things used to be, or is it as interesting and appealing to you?

Souliotis: I miss it somewhat, but it's still, even in the most recent campaigns against [Mitt] Romney, interesting and exciting. People in Massachusetts still want the personal contact, at least with him, and if polls were down in a particular city, if he went there, then they would go up and he would do very well in those areas. So I think people in Massachusetts still want to see you, they want to talk to you personally.

Knott: And Massachusetts is a small enough state that you can still—

Souliotis: Right. I mean, in California, you just can't do that, so it's all media, TV and stuff like that. But in Massachusetts, the Senator has always campaigned hard and they're used to seeing him, so I think they expect that. They really expect that.

Knott: So after he wins the election, how do you make the transition onto his staff, his Senate staff?

Souliotis: Steve Smith, at the end of the election— Naturally, we had a large campaign staff. Nobody knew who was going to get asked to go to Washington, and obviously you can take only so many people because of the budget, his Senate budget. So he could take only about four or five people and nobody knew who it was going to be. Neither Steve Smith nor the Senator wanted to be the bearer of bad news to the people who were not asked to go to Washington. I recall Steve heading to the airport and getting called back, and he asked me if I wanted to go to Washington and I said yes, so that's how I went down there.

Knott: So you went to Washington. Doing scheduling again?

Souliotis: Doing scheduling and appointment secretary.

Knott: How long were you in that position?

Souliotis: I was there from '62 to '69.

Knott: So a little more than the first term?

Souliotis: Actually, he was elected to finish President Kennedy's Senate term and ran again in 1964.

Knott: Could you tell us who some of the folks were in the D.C. office during that period?

Souliotis: Yes. Well, he, wisely, kept on some of Senator Ben Smith's people. Joe McIntyre, who was Smith's AA (administrative assistant), who'd been on the Hill for years. He knew everything. He knew how to get things done. He stayed on, and two or three of the women who did case work stayed on. Then Bill Evans came in as an administrative assistant, along with four or five of us from the campaign. I think the Senator brought in a legislative aide. Most freshmen Senators don't know their way around, and so Joe McIntyre was invaluable. It takes a couple of years for these Senators to find out how things operate, but he had Joe and so we hit the ground running.

Knott: Was he a good student? Did he learn fast?

Souliotis: Oh, yes.

Knott: We've heard stories that he made a real effort to build bridges with some of the older warhorses.

Souliotis: Absolutely. I was just going to talk about that. There was the feeling in the Senate that this was this brother of the President and he didn't really earn it, and the only reason he was there was because of that, and I think they were prepared to dislike him. I don't think there's any question about that. And these were old, southern, conservative Democratic Senators. So he made the rounds. He went and visited everyone, Senator [James] Eastland and Senator [Stuart] Symington, Senator [Richard] Russell, Senator [John] Stennis—he went and saw them personally and wasn't brash. A freshman Senator is supposed to be seen and not heard, and that's what he did. He didn't make his maiden speech until '64 on civil rights, and they couldn't help liking him. And he got committee assignments that he really wanted, which were Labor and Judiciary.

Knott: Do you know why he wanted those in particular?

Souliotis: I think Labor probably because his brother President Kennedy was on it and he always says today that there's been a Kennedy on the Labor Committee for like 60 years. Also because it covered issues that were important to Massachusetts, such as minimum wage, the unions, education, and health. Since President Kennedy there's always been a Kennedy on the Labor Committee. I believe Bobby was too, but I'm not sure.

Knott: Were you in the office when the word came that President Kennedy had been killed?

Souliotis: Yes, I was.

Knott: Do you recall that day?

Souliotis: Of course. All freshmen Senators have to preside over the Senate so many hours a week. So he was in the Senate, and I was in the office. We got word that something had happened and the only thing I remember was him coming back to the office and making some

calls and then leaving. He was trying to get his brother, I guess.

Knott: The Attorney General?

Souliotis: The Attorney General, and trying to get other members of the family. He then left and drove home and he was trying to get in touch with his mother and father.

Knott: Was he able to bounce back from that? Did you see him shortly after that, or did it take a while for him to kind of get back into—

Souliotis: We saw him shortly after that. He came back very quickly, which we found really amazing. But he just wanted to get back to work.

Knott: Robert Kennedy joins him in the Senate in 1964. Any noticeable impact in terms of cooperation with the new Senator from New York? I guess I'm just trying to get a sense of how it worked with these two brothers in the Senate, which was a very rare occurrence.

Souliotis: I think they had a lot of joking back and forth about what committees they were on and who was the freshman Senator. Although Robert was the older brother, he was the freshman Senator. It wasn't really much of a change. They both did their own thing, but I think Ted enjoyed the Senate more than his brother.

Knott: So you stayed until 1969 in the D.C. office?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: I assume then you returned to Boston?

Souliotis: When I originally went down, I said I would go for three years. I didn't really want to live there.

Knott: You didn't like D.C.?

Souliotis: I'm not crazy about it.

Knott: Too hot?

Souliotis: The summers were unbearable. It's a very transient population. I'm glad I did it. I think it was the best experience that I had, and so I knew both ends. I knew Washington; I knew Boston. But Grace Burke, who had worked for President Kennedy in his Boston office when he was a Congressman and a Senator, was retiring, and so I took her place. It gave me an opportunity to get back home, which is what I wanted to do.

Knott: You were originally from Haverhill?

Souliotis: Haverhill, yes.

Knott: You still have family in that area?

Souliotis: Yes. So I came back and did the statewide scheduling again.

Knott: I'm trying to get a picture of how this Boston office was structured then. Was there a chief of staff here?

Souliotis: You mean from the beginning?

Knott: From the beginning, but then particularly when you come back here in '69?

Souliotis: From the beginning, after the first campaign, Larry Laughlin was the state director. Mary Frackleton worked under him. We had maybe two or three caseworkers. Then Larry retired and Jim King took over as state director, followed by Mary Frackleton, and then Eddie Martin and then myself. When I came back from D.C., Jim King was in charge, was the state director here, and I did all the scheduling. And we had maybe four or five caseworkers.

Knott: That compares to today, how many—

Souliotis: Today, we have 12 staffers, plus interns.

Knott: A large number of interns?

Souliotis: Yes. It varies. More in the summer, obviously. Some come in three days a week; some come in two days a week. So it fluctuates, but at least 10-15 a week.

Knott: Is there a rivalry at all between the Washington office and the Boston office? You can tell I'm fishing here. It seems to me that would be human nature.

Souliotis: Yes. I think there's a bit of that in every Senator's office, but the issues are so different. They concentrate on legislation, and we concentrate on constituent service. We work closely with them because the issues are connected. We need to be their eyes and ears up here, to tell them that there is a hot issue up here. If it needs legislation, then we need to deal with the person down there who does that. So we work very closely. It's not much of a problem at all.

Knott: To what extent is this office sort of his political eyes and ears? For instance, as 1994 approached and there were some signs that it might be a tough race with Romney, was this office trying to get the word down to D.C. that there may be some trouble back home?

Souliotis: Oh, yes. They're concentrating so much on national issues, and we're concentrating more on Massachusetts and the state and what's happening up here. Yes, we knew that Romney was going to be tough. It was going to be a big push by the Republicans in saying that he'd been there too long, and it's time for somebody else. We talked to the campaign people once they set up their shop. And the Kennedy coordinators—I said we have them today in every city and town—they would be calling all the time. "This is what's happening; Romney's out here

campaigning.” That network is very good to keep us informed of anything that’s happening in their city and town. That’s still ongoing today. If there’s a major fire, like Malden Mills in Lawrence, I would call the Senator and say, “You should come up for this because they will be needing some federal assistance.”

Knott: So this is your call? If there’s a tragedy in Springfield, do you have to make a decision that I think I need to bring this to the Senator’s attention, that this might require a personal visit?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: Can you give us some sense—because these things can be sort of never-ending, I would think—how do you decide? Is it simply the scale of the tragedy?

Souliotis: Usually. Well, the blizzard, that was just—

Knott: The blizzard of ’78?

Souliotis: Of ’78, when the whole state was shut down. That was an obvious thing, and the people needed federal help. It depends. If we know they’re going to need federal agency help, I need to get on the phone and say, “This is big and you need to come up,” and he always does.

Knott: He respects your judgment on these types of things?

Souliotis: Yes. It’s just experience. We’ve been through a lot of them and I should be able to make a judgment on when he really needs to be here. The economic effect on a city or a town can make a big difference. Many times, when the Senator reads the news clips, he calls me first and says he’s coming up before I even have a chance to call him. He has the best judgment of anyone on when he needs to be in Massachusetts.

Knott: Could you explain what this Malden Mills thing was for somebody who might be reading the transcripts?

Souliotis: Malden Mills was a factory in Lawrence, Massachusetts, probably one of the biggest fleece manufactures and one of the largest employers in the City of Lawrence. They had a fire that basically destroyed the plant, and all those employees were going to be out of work, and the owner said, “I’m going to keep everybody on.” He actually was invited by [George H.W.] Bush to be at the State of the Union as an employer who was doing the right thing. Some people were badly burned and needed health care assistance, retraining, the owner needed funds to rebuild, etc. So the Senator came up several times to talk to the owner and employees. [He] said he was going to do everything he could to make sure the owner could rebuild and keep the plant there, which he did.

We had a fire in Worcester, where seven firefighters got killed, the 9/11 tragedy when so many Massachusetts people died, floods, etc., and he was always the first on the scene to meet with the families and offer assistance.

Knott: Somebody told us, and I don't remember who it was, that in the '94 campaign against Romney, when they were doing all these focus groups and polling and this, that, and the other thing, that he could learn more from your parents than he could from these— Have you heard this story? Have you heard him say this?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: Does he talk to your folks?

Souliotis: Oh, yes. When he was traveling around the state, particularly after the plane crash, if he was doing a full day in the area, and he needed two or three hours to eat and relax and rest his back, he would come to my house in Haverhill. If he were in the western part of the state, he'd go to Don Dowd's house. He'd prefer to go to somebody's house than to go to a hotel. So when he was in the Merrimack Valley, he always went to my house. I think it was because of my mother's cooking. He would call them and say, "I'm coming. Is it okay if I come for dinner?" He's been up there many times for dinner.

Knott: And they will give him the—

Souliotis: My brother, who's a dentist up there, my father was in construction, and my mother worked at Western Electric at the time, and they had 12,000 employees. His Kennedy coordinator was the principal of the school and they all knew a lot of people. So, at dinner, he would always ask what was happening, and they didn't hold back anything.

Knott: So he doesn't have a problem with that?

Souliotis: Absolutely not.

Knott: He's not sensitive to criticism?

Souliotis: No. He always wanted to find out what the people were thinking or what they thought about what was happening in the schools, with businesses, what was happening with Head Start, what was happening with the economy and healthcare, or what people thought of some particular bill he was working on. He knew he was going to get the true answer from these people. But I remember one time we had like 10 or 12 people up there for dinner because *Look* magazine was following him around for a story, and there were two people from the magazine, Caroline Kennedy, and Joe [Joseph Patrick] Kennedy, the Kennedy coordinator, the driver and me, my family and some other staff. The people realize that he's just a regular guy. He played touch football out in the backyard with my nephews before coming in for dinner. He knows them all pretty well.

Knott: I hate to keep making you jump around a little bit here, but you mentioned 1964, and you mentioned his back problem. Could you give us some sense of the seriousness of that and how that may have changed him, if it did, in any way? Did you work with him when he was in the hospital, for instance?

Souliotis: No. In 1964 they had the state convention that June. They were having the cloture vote on the civil rights bill, so he was going to be delayed. Senator [Birch] Bayh was the keynote, and they were flying up on a private plane because he was going to be delayed for the vote. So they had the plane waiting. I was in the D.C. office then, and I'd chartered the plane through Eddie Moss, and as soon as the vote was over, they raced to the airport to get up to Springfield in time for the speech and everything. So I was in D.C., and that's when the fog came in over the airport, and the plane crashed. Eddie Moss, who was his good friend, and the pilot were killed.

The Senator, and Senator and Mrs. Bayh, were on the plane also, and the Bayhs basically pulled the Senator out of the plane. At that time, as far as I knew, they didn't know if he was going to walk again. His back was broken, vertebra crushed and fractured, so he was on a Stryker frame for six months at New England Baptist Hospital—or first at Cooley Dickinson in Northampton, and then he was moved to New England Baptist—and Eddie Martin was there and set up a little office there. He had people come from Harvard to brief him on different issues because he wasn't going to waste that time. Then Steve Smith called me and said that since he was not going to be moving around for six months, would I go on the Kennedy Library tour at that time. The traveling museum was going around the country to raise money for the construction of the JFK Library, and he asked if I would go and do that. I said I would, so that's where I was.

Knott: Tell us a little bit about the fundraising tour.

Souliotis: They had his desk, rocking chair, photos, exhibits, and many other objects from the White House—basically a whole museum that was traveling around the country. The crash was in June, so I left almost immediately after that, and I was on the road from June until October. They had a United Van Lines truck and a driver that did the whole tour. We would go sometimes two days in one city—or three days if it was a major city like Chicago—and we would get there at night, and set the whole thing up all night. The next morning, there would be a private press opening followed by a reception for major donors so they could get in for a private viewing. Then it would be open to the public. I had to make sure the truck got where it was going, had security in place, kept the films running, collect the money, and send it to Steve Smith.

Knott: What was the response?

Souliotis: I've never seen crowds like that in my life, ever. It was like July and August. They'd be waiting four or five hours in line to get in, and they'd be fainting in line. There'd be pouring rain and nobody would leave. Thousands and thousands of people lined up to get in. Sometimes we had to keep it open all night because people had waited, and you couldn't shut the doors at eight o'clock. Then, for the press opening, we usually had a Kennedy family member come up. Mrs. [Patricia Kennedy] Lawford and Dave Powers did a lot. We always tried to get somebody for the opening. So I stayed on the tour until the end of October. The Senator was re-elected in November, and that's when he came back to work.

Knott: Any noticeable differences when he returned to work after this back injury? Six months in kind of a stationary position has got to test most people's character.

Souliotis: He just kept on going like he always did. You knew he was in pain, and he's been in

pain ever since. It's obviously gotten worse over the years.

Knott: Oh, it has?

Souliotis: Yes. He's been in constant pain from that day, but he keeps on going, and anybody with a bad back knows how that is. He just keeps on going, and I don't know how he does it.

Knott: Where do you think that comes from?

Souliotis: I think just from family upbringing. You don't give in to anything like that. You can see that some days are worse than others, and he's had constant problems with it over the years.

Knott: I think we'll bring you back to when you return to the Boston office in '69. Could tell us the kinds of constituent problems that the office had to deal with then and whether they've changed now, here we are in 2005, if that has changed over time?

Souliotis: When I came back, the big thing was the Vietnam War. Probably our biggest cases were parents calling about their sons who were either wounded or killed, trying to get their bodies back, trying to get VA [Veterans Administration] benefits if they were wounded, and trying to get them into hospitals, trying to get education funds from the VA, and to expedite red tape. That was a major part of our cases, the Vietnam War veterans.

The usual—Social Security, disability, education—that stays the same. People have those problems all the time. Just trying to cut through the bureaucratic red tape. That stays the same. It's probably more so now. Desert Storm, Iraq, problems with the Veterans Administration. The Senator visited every Massachusetts family who had a son killed in Desert Storm, went to every one of those homes. It pretty much stays the same, except if there's something like 9/11 or a war going on and all the problems that entails for families.

But immigration is huge in this state. I think we get more immigration cases than any other Senator in the country; even Immigration tells us that. It's because he's on the committee that deals with immigration legislation. Plus because he was the brother of the President, and everybody thought, *Well, I'll contact Senator Kennedy even though I'm from California*. We obviously get more mail because of who he is.

Knott: Do you handle a case for somebody from California? What's your approach to something like that?

Souliotis: It's Senate courtesy that you're supposed to send it to that Senator from that state, and most of the time we do, but we've had Senators' staff call us.

Knott: You've had Senators call you to help—

Souliotis: Senate and Congressional staff, because they know that Emily [Winterson] knows so much about it, how to get it done. New Congressmen always come to Emily to be trained in immigration. They call her all the time [asking], how do you do this, and how do you do that?

We had so much mail that she has to carry it down to the Immigration Office a couple of times a week, because they didn't want to handle it by mail. Too much coming from us [*laughs*]. It's a very heavy load, helping people with immigration problems in Massachusetts.

She has a lot of adoption cases—overseas adoption, expediting cases. In the 1980s, there were 225 adoption cases from the Philippines—people in the military in Okinawa who had adopted babies from the Philippines—and it turns out that the lawyer who was doing the paperwork was not on the up and up and was charging them \$20,000 a case. Someone in Immigration got on to him, and they were going to take all of the babies back because they said it was not done properly. And they had already been with these families. They had already been attached to other siblings.

Emily called the Senator. He was sailing, was on vacation, and the parents are crying. They were calling here, and the Senator went down and met with the Department of Defense, with the State Department, and with Immigration and got all of the babies—got it all cleared up so the children could stay. She just got a letter last week from the parents saying that the boy just graduated from high school and was going to medical school. He responds to all of these situations. He got right on it.

A lot of things he does that a lot of people don't know about, such as Russian dissidents. He got a lot of those out of the Soviet Union. Whenever he went to the Soviet Union, he always managed to get some of them out. He's very caring and compassionate.

Knott: These stories of personal difficulties that people are in, he's very responsive.

Souliotis: He's very responsive. He really feels it very deeply. He does tons of things like that.

Knott: Do you ever have to turn people away, though, because he's such a high profile figure? Is it manageable?

Souliotis: It's tough. As I said, if it comes from other states, we really try to say, "You need to go to your own Senator because we just can't handle it all." But we get through it. We have a lot of interns. We would never be able to do it with just the small staff that we have.

Knott: Right now the other Senator from Massachusetts is Senator [John] Kerry. There've been other Senators—[Edward] Brooke, [Leverett] Saltonstall, [Paul] Tsongas. Have those relationships usually been good relationships?

Souliotis: Oh, yes. He's always gotten along with all of his colleagues. Saltonstall, they were very friendly in Washington. Senator Brooke, we always got along with very well. Tsongas, obviously. Yes, he's always worked very closely with all of his colleagues. It's always for the good of Massachusetts.

Knott: Good staff cooperation as well?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: No jealousy on their part that there's this high-profile figure?

Souliotis: Sometimes [*laughs*]. I think sometimes.

Knott: I guess I can't ask you to speak for them.

Souliotis: There's probably a little bit of that. It's natural. He's such a giant in the Senate, and they're trying to get their own little niche. It's probably tough to do.

Knott: Senator Kerry's not in this building, is that correct?

Souliotis: No. He's right down the street. Tip O'Neill used to be in here until they moved to the O'Neill Building. Almost all of them used to be in here, but [Edward] Markey's moved out to his district. O'Neill's staff obviously moved to the O'Neill building. [Joe] Moakley moved to the Moakley Court House. The rental for this building has gone up a little. They went somewhere less costly, and also to be in their district, but this is good for us because all the agencies are in here.

Knott: So it's very convenient. The Immigration people, for instance, are right in this building?

Souliotis: They're right in this building. If we have a question, if we have a veteran with a problem, we can send them right downstairs, which makes it more work for us because people are in this building getting their passport or something, and they'll say, "Oh, let's go up and see Senator Kennedy" [*laughs*]. So it creates more work.

Knott: So you do get a lot of people who just walk in?

Souliotis: Absolutely. A lot of people walk in, a lot of phone calls.

Knott: And e-mail now, I would assume.

Souliotis: E-mails.

Knott: Now it's even more accessible.

Souliotis: Right, but we have a lot of walk-ins. They're in the building. If they feel that the VA hasn't responded to them quickly enough or they have a problem, they'll just come right upstairs. So that's also convenient for us too.

Knott: Some Senators, I believe, have more regional offices. That's a decision up to the Senator, if I understand it correctly.

Souliotis: Right.

Knott: You've always kept just one office in Boston?

Souliotis: Yes. We've always kept one office because it's a budget problem too. You'd have to split up your funding. We've talked a couple of times about having an office in Springfield.

Knott: Has Don Dowd lobbied for that?

Souliotis: *[laughs]* Not that much. Senator Kerry had, I think, three or four at one time, but I think he's closed them. He may have one or two now. We've never had a problem with people finding us. We have an 800 number.

Knott: A statewide 800?

Souliotis: Yes. A couple of times, the Senator would do constituent days, so he'd go out to Springfield and spend a day, and anybody could come in and talk to him. It was overwhelming.

Knott: People standing in line?

Souliotis: Yes. We don't get many complaints about people not having access. Just budget-wise it works out better to keep everybody centrally located.

Knott: This may seem like an odd question, but do you also have to deal with the entire Kennedy family as part of your responsibilities—if they're going to be in town or if there's a big event in town?

Souliotis: Yes, we do. That all goes with the territory.

Knott: Does it ever get to be a little too much?

Souliotis: No, not really

Knott: Okay. I won't put you on the spot. How often does Senator Kennedy actually come to the Boston office? Does it vary widely?

Souliotis: It depends on the Senate recesses. He comes Monday mornings because they have a roll call vote at 5:30 on Mondays now. It depends on the Majority Leader, and that's what Trent Lott does. That's a way of getting everybody back. They're usually in session Friday mornings, so he'd come up Friday afternoons and night, obviously weekends, and Monday mornings. Other times the Majority Leader would give them all day Monday and Friday off. So if there's no votes on Mondays and Fridays, they get to spend more time in their state. That has not been the case with the Republicans who are in now. They have the roll call vote on Mondays at 5:30. They're usually in session Friday mornings, so it's more difficult.

But he's here when the Senate recesses, which are pretty frequent now. He's in whenever they adjourn—it could be November or it could be December—and then they're out until around January 20. So he's here. Then they'll be out on Washington's Birthday for a week; they'll be out Memorial Day for a week; they'll be out July 4 for a week; they'll be out the month of

August usually. So, during those breaks, he'll come up and go around the state, but he doesn't want to miss votes. So if they're in session, he's usually down there—like I said, Monday mornings and Friday nights and weekends and recesses.

Knott: You've worked for him when the Democratic Party has been in the majority. You've now worked for him for the last, what, 11 years or so when the Democrats have been in the minority. This may probably not even [be] worthy of a question, but is your life easier when they're in the majority, or is there no noticeable difference in terms of dealing with constituent problems with the executive branch?

Souliotis: Oh sure, because the heads of agencies would be Democrats. They would be appointed by the new President. Well, if we have a Democratic President, then you have regional directors of federal agencies who are Democrats and who respond more quickly to us.

Knott: So it's noticeably different?

Souliotis: It's noticeably different. Well, I'll give you one example. When we did these economic summits when [William] Clinton was in, we would have a huge summit in Springfield, say. We would get the head of the SBA [Small Business Administration]; we would get the head of the Department of Commerce; we'd get someone from the Department of Defense. They would come up and spend the day with these businessmen who wanted to know how to get grants. And we would have breakout sessions where, whatever the company was interested in, they would go and sometimes we would have a Cabinet member there. Well, forget that when there are Republicans. So there's actually more work, but it's easier to work with the people.

Knott: Does it ever occasionally reach the point where you have to say to him, "We are just not getting anywhere with X"?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: Somebody needs to lower the hammer on this?

Souliotis: Yes. I can give you a perfect example, and that was the regional director of Immigration wasn't handling any cases. They were just sitting down there. One time the regional director of Social Security in Boston was not responding to people in a timely manner and we were getting tons of complaints from them. We were hearing that constituents were being treated very rudely. If I say something to the Senator, he'll call them right in here and say, "What's going on?"

Knott: He'll call that person?

Souliotis: He'll call that regional director in here and say, "I want responses. This is a Congressional inquiry. You're supposed to answer within so many days." It doesn't happen often, but you can put the hammer on them if they're not doing it. He had a hearing on Social Security as a result of that. He had a Boston hearing and had these constituents come in and testify to the way they were being treated.

Knott: Is that the most extreme option perhaps?

Souliotis: Yes.

Knott: If it gets to that point, things have gotten really bad.

Souliotis: Yes. If things get really bad and I say something to him, he'll get right on it. He'll say, "Get them up here." It was so bad from the constituents that he had the hearing.

Knott: That usually straightens it out?

Souliotis: Yes, it does. Immigration today, they're very cooperative, but they're overwhelmed. They've got Homeland Security measures. They've got demands being put on them by Homeland Security to slow down the process and make sure everybody is getting in who should get in and that others who shouldn't get in don't get in. So it slows down and people get impatient. They don't understand that.

Knott: Barbara, you mentioned earlier [that] after Robert Kennedy was killed that it seemed to hit [Senator Kennedy] in some ways harder than the death of President Kennedy. He was out of the office for longer periods of time after Bobby was killed. Is that an accurate—

Souliotis: He just didn't come back as quickly. I believe he was sailing, I think, down on the Cape. He didn't come back as quickly to work as he did after the President. That's just my impression that it hit him harder. But when he came back, he just kept on going.

But he then had all of the Kennedy nieces and nephews. He had to be a surrogate father to all of them. He went to every graduation; he went to their weddings; he went to their high school graduation[s] and communion[s] and the confirmations. I don't know how he did it. He made sure they were involved in his campaigns. Joe ran one of the campaigns. Michael [Kennedy] did. Max [Matthew Maxwell Kennedy] did. Kathleen [Kennedy] did. He always took them on these camping trips, which I think you'll be talking with Don Dowd and Gene Dellea about. Forty Kennedy kids camping out up in the Berkshires, out rafting. He always made time for all of that. I don't know how he kept up the schedule that he did.

Knott: What was his attitude about Bobby's running for President in '68? Did you pick up any of that, whether he was opposed or for it or neutral?

Souliotis: I don't believe he was in favor of it for a variety of reasons.

Knott: The conventional reports were that he was skeptical.

Souliotis: I believe that's true. I did work in that campaign, insofar as he was involved. I went out to Indianapolis for the primary, and I worked in Portland, Oregon, which is where he lost, and then we were in San Francisco.

Knott: The night that Bobby was killed?

Souliotis: Yes. I took a leave from the Senate and worked in Bobby's campaign.

Knott: I didn't realize that. Was that, obviously, up until the unfortunate assassination? What's your impression of that time?

Souliotis: It was a very tough campaign. In the beginning, I think after California, we thought he would go to New York and really win it. Indianapolis was very tough, he lost in Oregon, and won California.

Knott: You look back on it now, and it's hard to believe you could put a Presidential campaign together in such a short period of time.

Souliotis: In such a short period of time. [Eugene] McCarthy had this running start, and people were a little skeptical about Bobby, for whatever reason. Oregon was very issue-oriented. We shared some polling that showed he probably wasn't going to make it there. There was a lot of comparison in Indiana between Bobby and Ted who was out there campaigning for him. We were hearing that they liked Ted because he was more gregarious, more outgoing, more of a campaigner, and it got sort of, "We've got to keep him in headquarters."

Knott: Because of the contrast?

Souliotis: Because of the contrast and personality. So it was tough. We knew it was going to be tough. There's no question about that. But then Senator Robert Kennedy really started to take off. But they were different personalities.

Knott: Did you know Robert Kennedy well?

Souliotis: Not well, but I met him several times.

Knott: And the differences in personalities were what people say, which is that— Well, why don't you tell us?

Souliotis: Well, he wasn't as outgoing, and he was not as approachable, I think, as Ted.

Knott: Was it a shyness?

Souliotis: I think he was shy, but even the President said that Senator Ted Kennedy was the best campaigner in the family. I don't think there's any question about that. He was much more outgoing. I think he enjoyed campaigning more than Senator Robert Kennedy did. And I think there was a shyness about him.

Knott: Edward Kennedy generally enjoys meeting people. Is that accurate?

Souliotis: Oh, yes, he does. He's funny; he has a good sense of humor. He's a pretty good mimic

too.

Knott: Who does he mimic?

Souliotis: He can do different dialects. He can do Honey Fitz [John Fitzgerald] really well.

Knott: Oh, he's done that for us, actually.

Souliotis: He's good at that.

Knott: He's a good singer, too.

Souliotis: He is a good singer. He likes to sing.

Knott: If you don't mind, I'd like to ask you just about your recollections about some specific events, some of which we've already touched on. I know this is not comfortable, but I will just ask you if you can recall the time around Chappaquiddick and the mood. I assume you were back in the office here.

Souliotis: I was in Boston.

Knott: I'm not asking you for anything other than just the mood in the office at that time and how difficult a period it was, both for him and for the office.

Souliotis: Well, it was a very difficult time, a very sad time.

Knott: Did you know Mary Jo Kopechne?

Souliotis: I did not. Never met her. They were really Senator Robert Kennedy's people. I didn't know—maybe one of them, but I didn't know most of them. It was something that Joe Gargan had arranged as a thank you for their work on Bobby's campaign, and you just didn't know how people in Massachusetts were going to react. That was '69, and he had to run in '70, and I don't think anybody knew what the reaction was going to be. It was very tough and, obviously, you get the hate calls, and you get people who were very sympathetic and wrote nice letters. So you just didn't know what was going to happen. But it was very sad and very difficult for everybody.

Knott: Do you think he ever contemplated resigning? Have you ever heard anything to that effect?

Souliotis: I don't think so.

Knott: It would go against that nature that you were telling us about earlier, that you fight through things.

Souliotis: Yes, that's right. Now, I can't speak for him.

Knott: Sure, of course.

Souliotis: But nobody knew what the reaction was going to be.

Knott: He turned it around with that speech he gave to the people of Massachusetts? Is that a fair statement?

Souliotis: I think so, but it was still a very tough campaign because of it.

Knott: And I think he lost his Majority Whip post not too long after that.

Souliotis: Right. But that was a position that you need to be in Washington all the time.

Knott: Why did he run for that?

Souliotis: I'm not sure. You really need to be there all the time. It's usually somebody like [Robert] Byrd who lives near D.C. and doesn't have to travel a lot back to their home state. I think, probably, it was for the best because he was able to move around nationally. But you really can't do it if you want to be a really good Whip. You have to be there all the time, so that would have really confined him to D.C.

Knott: He probably didn't miss it.

Souliotis: I don't think so.

Knott: Barbara, the last time we were here, you told us a bit about the whole situation during busing in the mid '70s, and specifically about the event that took place right outside of this building here, the John F. Kennedy Federal Building, where the Senator was given a pretty tough reception by some anti-busing protestors. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about that time and any memories, particularly of that day or other—

Souliotis: Well, that was a very tough period.

Knott: These were his constituents, his people.

Souliotis: These were his constituents—Irish Catholic, South Boston. His driver was from South Boston, Jack Crimmins. Frank O'Connor was from South Boston. They took a lot of heat. So they had this rally at City Hall Plaza, and he decided he was going to go down and meet them. I think most of us thought that he shouldn't, but he said he was going. It was a very tough crowd. They shouted him down. He tried to speak; they shouted him down. They were throwing tomatoes and stuff, and it was very difficult to get him back into the building and, actually, I think the glass broke when something was thrown against the building. That was a really bad scene.

Knott: Was he shaken by that?

Souliotis: I think he was.

Knott: Or angered? What was his reaction?

Souliotis: No, I don't think he was angered. I think he was shaken. I think he was surprised at the intensity of it. I think he expected it was going to be tough, but I don't think he thought it was going to be that tough, definitely. But he said that day when he came to the office, they had a right to their opinion. He just wanted to express why he was doing what he was doing.

Knott: What were you picking up? What were your parents, what was the grapevine on that one?

Souliotis: Well, it really didn't affect people in our part of the state.

Knott: You were out of Boston.

Souliotis: Yes. Outside of Boston—Charlestown, West Roxbury. You knew what was going on, obviously, and I think Mary Frackleton probably knew more because she had kids in Boston schools, and she had a little better sense of it. We had some of them leaving the public schools to go to Catholic schools, which was not supposed to happen. People didn't want their kids put on buses for the trip across town, but he thought it was the right thing to do. He wasn't going to back down from it, not at all. That day and the day in Quincy were probably the worst.

Knott: What was the day in Quincy?

Souliotis: He was speaking at a Knights of Columbus breakfast, and word had gotten out in Boston that he was going to be there. So we were down there, and Bill Connors—who was head of the Veterans Administration, was a friend of President Kennedy's—he was the chairman of the breakfast. All of a sudden, we saw these trucks coming down with South Boston and Charlestown people, and it was pretty obvious that they had been drinking. We could see the beer on the trucks and stuff, so it was a very hostile crowd, and once we saw that we knew it was a dangerous situation. We were inside and as the breakfast was ending, I said to Bill Connors, "Don't leave the building. I'm going to call the State Police for security." So I was on the phone, and they walked outside anyway and soon they were surrounded by these people. They had flattened the tires on his car, among some other things to the car. And Jim King was there, who was a big guy. So we didn't know where we were going to go. They had flags and were poking us.

Knott: Poking you with the flags?

Souliotis: Yes, with the flagsticks. The Knights of Columbus came out with the Senator to help him. So we headed for Jim King's car, and they had surrounded that. So then Jim came over, and he said, "When you get near the subway station, just head for that."

Knott: What were these people saying the whole time? They were just shouting at him?

Souliotis: They were shouting at him.

Knott: About busing?

Souliotis: Busing, yes. So we got near the subway station, and we just headed for that, and Jim held the doors. Basically, the Senator and I are the only two who got through, and he held the doors against the others. They were throwing rocks at the subway.

Knott: So you took the subway back?

Souliotis: We took the subway, and we ended up at South Boston at Jack Crimmins' (the Senator's driver) house, ironically enough. So those are probably the two worst.

Knott: Has that damage been repaired, or are there still bad feelings in South Boston?

Souliotis: Oh, I think it's been repaired, but it took a long, long time—a long time.

Knott: Did you know Judge Arthur Garrity at all?

Souliotis: I knew who he was. I didn't know him personally.

Knott: Because he was affiliated somehow with the busing case?

Souliotis: Right. He had the case.

Knott: This is a somewhat sensitive question. If you don't want to answer it, that's fine, but you mentioned earlier hate mail, or hate calls or whatever, after Chappaquiddick, and Senator Kennedy is still such a high-profile figure and vilified on the far right. Is that still something that's fairly frequent that you would receive mail or phone calls that require security follow-ups?

Souliotis: Not so much as we used to. We used to get probably more during busing. Usually they're people with psychiatric problems, but you always have to be on the lookout. But I think much less than we used to. During busing we had some security. We had two Boston policemen who used to come with us. That's the only time other than when he was running for President and you automatically get Secret Service. But, other than that, that was the only time we had it.

Knott: Did you take a leave, or did you participate in the 1980 Presidential campaign, or did you stay in the office?

Souliotis: I stayed mostly in the office. I took a leave to do some campaign work in New Hampshire—Steve Smith asked me to go to New Hampshire, but it was over before we really got into it.

Knott: Here you have a sitting incumbent Democratic President controlling all the agencies, and you're trying to work with these agencies. That must have been a difficult time, I would think.

Souliotis: Yes, it could get difficult. I mean, they weren't going out of their way to be helpful, but the career government employees still had to respond to a United States Senator. It's not like having Bill Connors, head of the VA, who was President Kennedy's friend.

Knott: Or Eddie Martin.

Souliotis: Eddie was head of HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development] in Boston.

Knott: It looked for a while in 1979 like Senator Kennedy might be able to beat President [Jimmy] Carter. The polls showed that.

Souliotis: They did. The polls showed that he could, but once you announce it's always different, and they start scrutinizing everything. The polls usually go down.

Knott: Did you go to the convention in New York?

Souliotis: Yes, I did.

Knott: So you were there when he delivered that great speech?

Souliotis: I was. Yes, it was an unbelievable speech.

Knott: Stole the show.

Souliotis: Yes, stole the show. Then I think people were starting to say, "Wait a minute. Times are tough for the incumbent Democrat."

Knott: I remember Jimmy Carter chasing him around the stage trying to get him to shake his hand [*laughs*].

Souliotis: That was amazing, and it was amazing to be in that hall then. They just went crazy.

Knott: Since Senator Kennedy has abandoned his Presidential aspirations, has that made him a better Senator? Is he a little more focused, perhaps, on his job as a Senator?

Souliotis: He was always focused on the job, but I don't think there's any question that becoming chairman of major committees and gaining seniority means a lot. If you're chairman of a committee, then you have the opportunity to do some hearings across the country especially on healthcare. Yes, I think, probably without question, it made him say, "This is where I'm going to be, and this is where I'm going to create a great record." I mean I don't know for a fact, but he'll probably have more legislation passed than any Senator in history has ever had.

Even when he wasn't the chairman of the committee, he would go out and do hearings and call them "forums." You don't get the backing of the committee, but he still did them, especially on national health insurance. He just never gives up. He keeps on going. He'll get it in increments. He'll get kids on the CHIP [Children's Health Insurance Program] program. If he can't get it all,

he'll get what he can and try to improve it later.

Knott: This is what we've heard. He's very good at staying the course over the long haul.

Souliotis: He just doesn't stop, doesn't give up. It's amazing. He works with the Republicans. He works with [Orrin] Hatch and other conservative Republicans. He knows how to compromise and get things done.

Knott: He seems more comfortable in the Senate—this has become a cliché—than either of his brothers were.

Souliotis: I think so. I was too young to really know President Kennedy when he was in the Senate, but it certainly appears that he's much more comfortable than they were. He'll go down as one of the greatest ones of all time. I don't think there's any question about that.

Knott: We're interviewing the Senator and Vicki [Victoria Reggie Kennedy] this Friday, actually, on the '94 campaign against Romney. We've already touched on that. Perhaps we've already exhausted it, but it was the one race where, for a while, it looked like Senator Kennedy could be beaten. It came within a couple of years on the heels of the Willie [William Kennedy] Smith trial, and I think there were stories circulating out there in the *Boston Herald* especially and elsewhere. Can you give somebody who might be reading this transcript years from now a sense of where things stood going into the summer of '94, and how he turned the polls around and ended up winning fairly comfortably?

Souliotis: Well, as I said, I think it was totally based on publicity about Willie Smith. Otherwise, I don't think there even would have been a race. I think that's why the Republicans thought they could come in and possibly have a chance. Obviously, the *Herald*, a Republican, conservative paper, also pushed the message that he's been there too long; it's time for a change. Obviously, Romney was an attractive candidate, and he had the money and the backing from the Republican Party, and was a much stronger candidate than some of our previous opponents. Romney brought in a lot of people from out of state who were very active in the campaign. He also had a lot of support from the business community. I think it was just, as I said, when the Senator appeared in the cities and towns across the state, and emphasized how much he had accomplished for the people of Massachusetts, his polls went up. People thought that Romney would be better than he was in the debates, and the Senator was just very strong.

Knott: How important was Vicki in that race?

Souliotis: I think she was very important. She traveled with him. She campaigned with him everywhere. She was always there. It was very important.

Knott: He defied that tide; '94 was a year that a lot of his colleagues went down to defeat. The Republicans took back control of both bodies.

Souliotis: Well, the economy wasn't great.

Knott: I think the Clinton health care had already been defeated by the time of the election.

Souliotis: It was just spending a lot of time up here and people really realizing, “Look at what he’s done; he can deliver,” and people being made aware of his record that sometimes you take for granted. [He] just turned it around the last month or so of the campaign. I don’t think we were ever behind. But it could have been close. He won by a wider margin than most people thought.

Knott: He turns it around.

Souliotis: That’s right.

Knott: Does he have a good relationship with Romney these days?

Souliotis: He works with him all the time.

Knott: That’s what I thought.

Souliotis: On the wind farms.

Knott: Oh, off of Nantucket.

Souliotis: Off of Nantucket. Education, healthcare, and keeping the military bases open. BRAC [Base Realignment and Closure], in particular, just did that. Anything, the economy of Massachusetts, they work very closely together.

Knott: Romney’s maybe going to take a run for the big house, right?

Souliotis: Looks that way. He’s certainly acting that way. Most people think he is. He says he’s going to make a decision in the fall.

Knott: In the fall?

Souliotis: Yes. That’s what they’re saying. We’ll see. Some of the things he’s saying around the country certainly appear as though that’s what he’s doing.

Knott: It would seem so. Senator Kennedy was very active last year when John Kerry ran for the Presidency and also very active in bringing the Democratic convention to Boston. Let’s start with the convention. Was that something that you were involved in? How much of a priority was that for Senator Kennedy to land the convention?

Souliotis: It was a top priority.

Knott: Why?

Souliotis: I think because Massachusetts never had a national convention. I think he thought it

would be good for the economy of Massachusetts. I'm sure because it would be good for John Kerry, but mostly because he just wanted to bring it to Massachusetts badly. It was an all-out effort to get that convention here, and he worked very closely with Mayor [Thomas] Menino because he had to raise the funds. The DNC [Democratic National Committee] had to see that you were going to be able to pull it off, be able to raise the money. It was an all-out effort for well over a year to get it here and not New York. It was between New York and Boston.

Knott: So he beat both the Yankees and New York.

Souliotis: That's right. And he made a lot of calls at night from home and worked with Menino to get these major corporations to contribute.

Knott: It must have been an exciting time.

Souliotis: Yes, it was very exciting.

Knott: Maybe there's always a sense of relief when these things are over with if you're in the middle of them.

Souliotis: *[laughs]* Yes, it was great for Boston. It was great for the city, and we raised the money and had a surplus, which I don't think any city has ever had before. Menino's going to distribute the surplus to various groups and charities who apply for funding for the money that's left. The Senator and Menino really did a great job of raising money, and the business community was very responsive to the Senator. They really wanted to see the convention come to Boston.

Knott: Did you know Mary Beth Cahill well?

Souliotis: Not that well. I didn't know her before she came to work for us. She was here a couple of years before she went with Kerry, so I just talked to her on the phone all the time, but I did not know her before she came.

Knott: I'll ask him this, but was it his recommendation to John Kerry that he take her on board as his campaign manager?

Souliotis: I'm not sure. I've heard two different stories, so I'm not sure.

Knott: You mentioned Mayor Menino. Senator Kennedy has had a good relationship with Mayor Menino, it sounds like.

Souliotis: Excellent.

Knott: We've heard that there was not always the greatest relationship with Kevin White. Is that fiction or fact? Did you see anything to lend credence to that?

Souliotis: I don't think they were particularly close. I think he works very closely with Mayor

Menino through the convention and everything else. Kevin White, I don't think it was a close personal relationship, and I don't know why. He could best answer that, I think.

Knott: Right. You've been with him now 40—

Souliotis: It'll be 44 years in November.

Knott: You've probably been with him the longest, is that correct, of any existing employee?

Souliotis: Right. Carey Parker, I think, probably would be next. Carey came when I was in Washington—maybe, I don't know, '65, '66, some time in there. I don't know if there's anyone in the Senate longer than me unless Senator Byrd—Senator Byrd is the only one with more seniority than Senator Kennedy, so unless Senator Byrd's had someone who's been with him from the beginning.... *[laughs]*

Knott: You deserve some type of reward, I think. So I assume it's been a rewarding—

Souliotis: It's been great. He's been so great. I really don't think people realize how caring he is, how sensitive he is, how compassionate he is. The 9/11 families, they'll be the first ones to tell you how much he did for them. He got the Massachusetts Bar Association to give them free legal advice, and to handle financial problems. He got social workers to be assigned to each family who needed help in so many ways—and it's ongoing. He continues to do that and just help them decide whether they're going to accept the federal money or whether they're going to wait to sue the airlines. I've seen him take a redeye to get back here for a funeral for Paul Kirk's father. My father had a stroke, and the first caller to the intensive care unit was from him offering to get the best doctors and to assist in any way. It's amazing what he does. It's just unbelievable.

I was recently in the hospital for a ruptured appendix, and he was in Europe with Vicki and he called me every day, and then came up to Haverhill to visit me when he got home. I don't know too many Senators who do that. I really don't. It's unbelievable.

Knott: This will not be the last question because I don't want to end on a sour note, but has he ever got angry at you?

Souliotis: Never. And I know people don't believe this, but it's true. I don't care what boss you work for, it's unheard of in 44 years to not get upset with him or he with me. Never. Never happened. I'll keep my fingers crossed. I don't know why, but he never has.

Knott: Well, thank you very much. This has been terrific, and, hopefully, we've covered all the important things. Like I said, when you get your transcript, if you want to add something—

Souliotis: I don't know. Is that okay?

Knott: It's terrific.

Souliotis: I don't think there's anything else. I'm just trying to think history-wise if I did it that

way.

Knott: I'd hate to miss something so, honestly, if there is something—

Souliotis: I think that's it.

INDEX

Bayh, Birch, 12
Boston Herald, 25
Brooke, Edward, III, and EMK, 14
Burke, Grace, 8
Bush, George H.W., 10
Busing, in Boston, EMK and, 21-23
Byrd, Robert, 21, 28

Cahill, Mary Beth, 27
Cancer Crusade, 2
Carter, Jimmy, 24
Chappaquiddick, 20
Children's Health Insurance Program, 24
Clinton, William, 17
Connors, Bill, 22, 24
Crimmins, John, 21, 23
Culver, John, 3

Dellea, Eugene A., 18
Democratic National Committee, 27
Doherty, Gerard, 3
Dowd, Don, 11, 16, 18
Duris, Mary Jane, 2

Eastland, James Oliver, 7
Evans, Bill, 7
Fitzgerald, John F., 20

Frackleton, Mary, 2, 9, 22

Gargan, Joe, 20
Garrity, Wendell Arthur, Jr., 23

Hatch, Orrin, 25
Head Start, 11
Housing and Urban Development, Department of, 24

John F. Kennedy Library, fundraising tour for, 12

Katharine Gibbs School, 2
Kennedy, Edward M.
 airplane crash, 12-13
 and Boston office, 16-17
 and Chappaquiddick, 20-21

- and constituent problems, busing protests, 21-23
- as freshman Senator, 7
- and Kevin White, 27
- on Labor Committee, 7
- and Mitt Romney, 26
- and 9/11 families, 28
- and Presidential campaign, 1980, 23
- response to personal difficulties, 14
- and RFK running for President, 18
- Senate campaign, 1962, 3, 5-6
 - debate with Eddie McCormack, 3-4
- Senate campaign, 1994, 25
- as Senator, 24-25
 - and constituent problems, 13, 15, 17-18
 - office rivalry, 9
 - and Thomas Menino, 27-28
 - and Vietnam War, 13
- Kennedy, John F., 22, 24
 - assassination, 7-8
 - and EMK Senate campaign, 3, 19
 - as Senator, 25
- Kennedy, Joseph, 3
- Kennedy, Joseph, II, 11
- Kennedy, Kathleen, 18
- Kennedy, Matthew Maxwell, 18
- Kennedy, Michael, 18
- Kennedy, Robert F., 4, 7-8, 20
 - as Senator, 8, 25
 - death, 18-19
 - running for President, EMK and, 18
- Kennedy, Victoria Reggie, 25, 28
- Kerry, John, 15, 16, 26, 27
 - and EMK, 14
- King, Edward J., 3
- King, James, 9, 22
- Kirk, Paul, 28
- Kopechne, Mary Jo, 20

- Laughlin, Larry, 3, 9
- Lawford, Patricia Kennedy, 12
- Lodge, George, 4-5
- Look* magazine, 11
- Lott, Trent, 16

- Malden Mills, 10
- Markey, Edward, 15

Martin, Eddie, 9, 12, 24
Massachusetts, politics in, religion and ethnicity and, 5
Massachusetts Bar Association, 28
McCarthy, Eugene, 19
McCormack, Edward J., Jr., 5
 Senate campaign, 1962, 3-4
McIntyre, Joe, 7
Menino, Thomas, 27-28
Moakley, Joe, 15
Morrissey, Frank, 2, 3
Moss, Eddie, 12

9/11 families, 28

O'Connor, Frank, 21
O'Neill, Thomas M., 15

Parker, Carey, 28
Powers, David, 12

Romney, Mitt, 6, 9
 and EMK, 26
 Senate campaign, 1994, 25
Russell, Richard, Jr., 7

Saltonstall, Leverett, and EMK, 14
Schlossberg, Caroline Kennedy, 11
Small Business Administration, 17
Smith, Benjamin, II, 7
Smith, Stephen Edward, 3, 6, 12, 23
Smith, William, 25
Stennis, John, 7
Symington, W. Stuart, 7

Tsongas, Paul, and EMK, 14

Veterans Administration, 13, 22, 24

White, Kevin, 27
Winterson, Emily, 13-14