EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH NICK LITTLEFIELD

May 3, 2008
Boston, Massachusetts

Interviewer
James Sterling Young

EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH NICK LITTLEFIELD

May 3, 2008

Young: This is an interview with Nick Littlefield, May 3, in Boston. We've had a conversation about what to cover in this series of interviews and how, and now we'll start.

Littlefield: I'm assuming that we will be jumping around a little bit from topic to topic, sometimes chronologically and sometimes diverging from the chronology. This is going to contain a lot of disparate thoughts.

Young: What's very important is to get Nick Littlefield talking from memory, with the aid of notes, not to me, but to people who are going to be listening later on.

Littlefield: You asked me how I came to work for Senator Kennedy, so here's the story, which I will preface with a few background notes on my own life experience. I grew up in Rhode Island. I went to high school outside Boston. My parents were professional people in Providence. They voted Democratic, I think, but in a way, the Republicans were the reform party in Rhode Island when I was growing up. There was no such thing as right-wing Republicans then. It was people like the liberal reformer, John Chafee, who was the Governor when I was in college.

I went to Harvard and to law school at Penn. Between college and law school, I was an actor and a singer—which connects later with my relationship with Senator Kennedy. I went to New York for a year, was in a *My Fair Lady* touring company, *Kismet* at Lincoln Center, and various other shows. Then I decided to go to law school because public service was in my blood, it was the height of the civil rights movement, and there was so much going on.

It all began for me, politically, while I was at Harvard. I was a freshman the year President [John F.] Kennedy was elected, and I was a senior when he died. His election was transformative for all of us who where there. Kennedy came back to Harvard many times, but I remember when I was a freshman, after his election but before he was sworn in, he came back to Harvard and walked through the yard. We all came out of our dorms and waited for him. It was winter and cold. He had no overcoat, and he made jokes; he said he was there to see President [Nathan] Pusey to check up on our grades.

We just loved everything he did, and we loved the promise and potential and the feeling that we were the luckiest generation in the history of the world. We were at Harvard, and President

Kennedy was President, and America was at the top of its influence, and in every respect this was the future, and we were so lucky to be part of it. We wanted to be engaged in public service, and respond to his call.

And then he died in the fall of my senior year, and we felt that everything had been lost and that the world would never be the same. The opportunities would never be the same—it was completely and utterly devastating.

But we were still inspired about public service. So when I decided to go to law school, I was choosing public service instead of the theater and music. When I finished law school, I went to a law firm in New York briefly, and then I got involved in the anti-war movement, which solidified my place as a Democrat. While I was at law school, I had actually ended up working for Republican Governor Chafee in Rhode Island. I was his campaign manager for the gubernatorial election that he lost in 1968. He was the reform candidate in Rhode Island, and someone I had great affection for. Later, in 1970, I got involved in the anti-Vietnam War movement and worked politically for an anti-war Congressman named Allard Lowenstein, who was an inspiring figure in the anti-war movement and before that.

Young: He was in Congress at the time.

Littlefield: Yes, but before that he was active in anti-apartheid and civil rights causes; he was integral to all the great movements of the '60s. I worked with him in a crusade to have young voters register to vote. The amendment had just been passed to the Constitution lowering the voting age, and we thought that if we could register all the voters between 18 and 21, that could be a force to end the war through the ballot box.

Young: Was this national?

Littlefield: It was national.

Young: Not just New York?

Littlefield: No. We started an organization called "Registration Summer." We went around the country doing rallies and voter registration drives in probably 30 or 40 states. We had grants from various liberals, and we paid stipends to students to go to campuses and organize the youth vote. It was great fun for me. It was my first exposure to national politics.

Then after working for Lowenstein's Congressional campaign in Brooklyn, in 1972, I decided I needed to focus a little bit more on the law, so I took a job in the United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York as a federal prosecutor, and I stayed there for five years. Then I came back to Boston to teach at Harvard Law School. There was still no involvement with Edward M. Kennedy, but in the anti-war movement I met someone who became a good friend, a protégé of Lowenstein's, a man named Greg Craig, and we became very good friends. We stayed friends while I was in the U.S. Attorney's Office and when I was at Harvard.

Young: Could I interrupt? After President Kennedy's death, you got involved in the anti-war movement. What about Robert Kennedy?

Littlefield: I was at law school at Penn when Robert Kennedy ran for President. We were all incredibly excited about [Eugene] McCarthy, because he was the first one in; he was the one who challenged [Lyndon] Johnson in New Hampshire. I think it's fair to say that I didn't have a strong identification with Robert Kennedy at that point. We were all identified with McCarthy; he was the one who had gotten in the race. But then when Robert Kennedy got in, I—and many like me, who had been with McCarthy to beat Johnson—were torn about what to do.

Then Martin Luther King was assassinated, which was another terrible blow. Robert Kennedy came to Penn and spoke, and I went to it, of course, and was absolutely thrilled. But that summer, 1968, I had agreed to be the campaign manager for John Chafee in Rhode Island. So when I graduated from law school in May, I came immediately to Rhode Island and was really out of Democratic politics, working on Chafee's reelection campaign.

Chafee and I went to Iowa in the beginning of June. We went to Iowa for an event because Chafee was supporting [Nelson] Rockefeller against [Richard] Nixon, Rockefeller being the liberal and Nixon being the more conservative. Chafee was doing surrogate speaking in Iowa for Rockefeller, and he asked me to come with him. So we flew out, and it was the night that we were there when Robert Kennedy was shot in Los Angeles. We flew back immediately, and the next morning Kennedy died. That was just one more horror beyond words and one more lost opportunity beyond words and one more moment when we all said, "We'll never recover from this."

Of course the sad part is we really haven't recovered from John Kennedy's or Robert Kennedy's deaths. The country never came back to what it would have been if either of them had been able to serve out full terms as President.

So obviously the Kennedy aura was deep in my political consciousness and my commitment to public service, but I was not someone who campaigned for Robert Kennedy. In fact, ironically, I was campaigning for a Republican candidate for Governor in my home state of Rhode Island. One of the reasons I got involved with Al Lowenstein in the voter registration drive is that he wanted it to be bipartisan, and he thought he could pass me off as a Republican, which I suppose technically he could. But by 1970 or '71, I had left Rhode Island politics and on national issues I was clearly a liberal Democrat. In New York I completely broke with the past and was firmly a New York Democrat.

Among the types of cases I prosecuted as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in New York were cases of public corruption. At Harvard Law School I taught criminal investigation and a course called "The Government Lawyer." I was interested in government that worked for people and wasn't corrupt. For two-and-a-half years starting in 1978, I ran the Massachusetts Anti-Corruption Commission, which became quite famous for holding public hearings exposing state corruption.

Young: How did that come about?

Littlefield: Archibald Cox, a professor at Harvard, was involved with setting up the commission, and he knew me. He said, "Nick, you're the perfect guy to be the chief counsel." It was chaired by a person I admired deeply, John William Ward, Bill Ward. He was the President of Amherst College and just a sensational American historian, an Irishman from Dorchester: Boston Latin,

Harvard, Marines, Princeton, Amherst. Then he became chair of the Ward Commission, and I got involved with that.

It was a very active and public two-and-a-half years. The *Boston Globe* covered our corruption hearings extensively. I got to know reporters, I got to be known in the state, and all of that helped me with Senator Kennedy later on, because I knew many of the key reporters up here. They were covering the Ward Commission, and several became good friends of mine.

Obviously, as the staff director for policy for the Senator, I faced a lot of issues involving the press. Bill Ward was a great person I loved working with, but that ended. And by then I was married and had three young stepchildren. I needed to make a little bit more money than I had made to that point, having been in the federal government or teaching at a very low level, and in state government at the Ward Commission. I went to a law firm in Boston—Foley, Hoag & Eliot, which had a long tradition of public service and was very progressive. If I was going to be in a law firm, it was the place to be.

Then 1986 came along, and I was urged to run for District Attorney of Middlesex County, the largest county in Massachusetts. I did start to run. The incumbent DA, whom I knew very well, Scott Harshbarger, had been a classmate of mine in college. I was the chairman of his campaign when he won in 1982. In '86 he announced he was going to run for Attorney General, leaving the DA's office vacant. I was drafted to run, I announced that I would run, and I did for a month and a half. The campaign was going very well.

Barney Frank and Paul Tsongas were the chairmen of my campaign, and I think I was in a very strong position to win. But then Scott got cold feet about running for AG, and changed his mind and decided he was going to stay as DA.

This was a terrible blow to me, because I had finally decided I was going to make the leap into elective politics. I had been deeply involved in politics, but always on somebody else's behalf or on behalf of some cause, and I had the sense that if you were going to really do politics in a democratic society, you had to be willing to run for office. That was my sense about what I needed to do, and I thought I should try it.

So I put everything on hold, left the firm, ran for six weeks, had a really good chance to win—and then Harshbarger changed his mind. I couldn't run against the sitting DA, so I left that and got involved in the [Michael] Dukakis Presidential campaign. I said, "Okay, it's not going to work for me to run for elective office. Let's see if I can line up an opportunity to serve in a Democratic Presidential administration." It would have been in the Justice Department, probably, because that's what I had known and done.

I was still teaching criminal practice and investigations at Harvard. I started a course called "The Government Lawyer," which described the differences between a lawyer working in the private sector for private clients, and the obligations and aspirations and responsibilities of a lawyer in the public sector, where the client is broader than a single private client. The client is the government, or the people. There are many complex intellectual issues in sorting out the responsibilities of a government lawyer. I started this course, and it became quite popular at Harvard.

But it was mostly around investigations with the U.S. Attorney, teaching, the Anti-Corruption Commission, practicing law—at this point I was doing criminal white-collar practice pretty much. That's what my experience had been. So I hoped the appointment would be in the Justice Department. My whole life had been as a trial lawyer.

Then Dukakis lost. There went another chance to get back into public life. Now we're in '88, and out of the blue, my old friend Greg Craig from the anti-war movement called and asked if I would like to come down to D.C. and work for Senator Kennedy. Greg had been Kennedy's foreign policy advisor, and after five years was getting ready to leave, and he said working for Senator Kennedy was the greatest job he'd ever had. Greg wanted me to succeed him as the chief foreign policy advisor.

Well, since I was ready to do something different and go back into public service, this was very interesting. But I had never done anything in foreign policy, and I wasn't sure the foreign policy field was my passion or a topic I had any particular experience in. I also noticed that Senator Kennedy was not on the Foreign Relations Committee, and I wondered what influence he could have.

But as Greg pointed out, a Kennedy foreign policy operation exists parallel to the committee, parallel to whatever is going on with the White House, and it involves all sorts of amazing things. Greg had been to South Africa and he had been involved with the Russian trips, and the Irish activity. So there was all sorts of phenomenal stuff going on, and it was extremely interesting. But the idea of working with Senator Kennedy, whom I did not know, had never met, and didn't have a full sense of at that point, except that he had been my Senator, was compelling.

Young: What did you think of him? Did you have an impression of him?

Littlefield: In 1980, when he ran for President, my family was involved in his campaign. We were enthusiastically for him over Jimmy Carter, but I didn't have a personal relationship with him at all. I was just one more person who had a sense of his passion and commitment to working with the issues of the underdog and working people and low-income people and civil rights. I knew about his record, but I didn't have any sense of him as a person, up close.

Obviously I had enough respect for him that the idea of working for him was, *Wow! This is something I might want to do.* I might want to move my family from Boston, where everyone was very secure. We were living out in the country, and I had finally started making some money in the law firm. But along came the opportunity to work for Senator Kennedy, and it seemed as if I was leaping at it, even though foreign policy was not my particular background.

So I came down and met with Ranny Cooper, who was Kennedy's AA [administrative assistant] at the time. She had actually mentioned working for Kennedy six months before, but then it was the Dukakis campaign, and I don't think it seemed terribly real. She was obviously fishing around to see whether I'd be interested, and I think Greg had probably told her about me.

So I came down and met with her and said, "I'm not sure about this foreign policy job." She said, "Well, it just so happens that the Labor Committee job may be coming open."

I said, "What's that? What's the Labor Committee? I've never done labor law." She said, "Just take a look at the Labor Committee. It has much broader jurisdiction than just labor."

I came back to Boston and looked up the jurisdiction of the Labor Committee, and it was health, education, jobs, wages, medical research, the arts, and, *Oh, boy! This seems interesting. Now we're maybe talking!*

And Senator Kennedy also happened to be the chair of the committee. I didn't know anything about the Senate, but I knew enough to know that the chairman of the committee actually has responsibility for legislation in these areas. And I thought, *Well, this might really be interesting.*

So I came down and talked to Ranny Cooper again. I went around and talked to some of the staff members and to Tom Rollins, the staff director who was getting ready to leave. The job seemed to be something I would perhaps want to do. I had a little kitchen cabinet of friends in Boston I talked to about this: Did it make sense? What would it be like? Everybody was very enthusiastic, and the chance to work for Senator Kennedy in these areas really appealed to me.

Whether it was that point or over the years I was working for Senator Kennedy, my whole focus shifted from an interest in fighting bad guys who were corrupting the political process (which is what I had done for 15 years, in some respects), to caring less bout that any more. What I wanted to do was make sure that the underdog got a chance, that the people who didn't have the advantages other people had, got healthcare, that they got a good education, that they had a chance to succeed in life, to experience the American dream. And if they don't have that chance, society would take care of them. Everything shifted for me.

Young: Was it the prospect of the job that shifted?

Littlefield: It was the prospect of the job, and when I saw the opportunity to really be involved—I don't want to overstate it, but I stopped caring about making sure that government was perfectly honest. I'd leave that now to others. I obviously wasn't about to be other than honest, but I didn't care about fighting corruption any more. What I wanted to do was use government in a positive way to help people who needed help and couldn't help themselves. This was a fight against the entrenched, and related of course to fighting corruption. In both parts of my career, whether it was fighting entrenched corruption and entrenched power that I thought was taking away from what people deserve from their government, to fighting entrenched power, to fighting the Republicans, to fighting insurance companies or fighting employers who didn't pay decent wages or fighting for minorities who were being discriminated against. In a way it was the same fight against the powerful, but it was now about getting help to people as opposed to bringing down the bad guys.

I don't know how that happened, but it happened. I didn't care myself about bringing down the bad guys any more. I had done that; now somebody else could do it. I didn't consider it as important as I had before. I now wanted to spend my time fighting the powers that kept people back. This was, of course, Senator Kennedy's whole passion as a legislator. So as I began to see the opportunities on this committee; I saw that it was an opportunity made in heaven for me.

This was all happening after Dukakis lost the election in 1988: November, December, January, going into '89. [George H.W.] Bush was going to be the new President, and I made up my mind

that I would do it. I met Senator Kennedy for the first time, to talk to him. On election night Ranny took me over to meet the Senator at an election night party.

Young: In D.C. or up here?

Littlefield: No, here in Boston. He said, "I'm looking forward to talking to you." So it seems Ranny had mentioned me to him. Then at some point, I think in December, Kennedy was at the Harvard Club in Boston, having worked out, and I met him in one of the restaurants at the Harvard Club for 20 minutes. Barbara Souliotis, his chief of staff up here, set it up, and the two of us met and talked. He was talking about the Labor Committee and how much he would like me to consider doing it. I remember what Kennedy told me, "We want to raise the minimum wage, we want to get healthcare for everybody, we want to do something about improving the schools." I was writing this down on a napkin, and I was just, "Oh, my God!"

The combination of Senator Kennedy and his enthusiasm and his bigger-than-life personality—and he's focusing on me, wanting me to come to Washington to do this with him, and these issues! It was just irresistible. I knew at that point I was going to do it.

Then we went through the interviewing process with staff, and I came down to Washington in January, I think, to have my final meeting with the Senator, to decide. He was going to offer me the job, presumably, and we were going to have the interview. The interviewing normally is done by the chief of staff and others, but nobody's ever hired who doesn't have a full interview with the Senator, and the reality is always there that he's going to decide whether to hire you. But pretty much the die is cast when you see him for him to offer the job and you to accept. We've replicated that process many times since then with other people.

But in any event, I was now in this process. I came down to Washington to meet with Kennedy. I had never been in his office before, and that was a great thrill, with all the pictures and the location of his office in the Russell Building opening out onto the long balcony that runs along Constitution Avenue and looks out over to the Capitol to the right and the dome and down the hill to the Washington Monument and across to the Supreme Court on the left.

We had a nice meeting about the Labor Committee and what we were going to do, and the Senator took me out onto the balcony, and we looked out, and he said, "Nick, I do hope you will take this job." Here I was on the balcony, looking out at the Capitol dome and the Mall from the Supreme Court past the Washington Monument with Senator Kennedy, and of course I said I would take the job.

I've often told the story: it's pretty hard to resist. He takes you out on the balcony and you're looking up and down the span of the Mall, and the Capitol dome is right across. There are no leaves on the trees because it's winter, so you see the whole Capitol. You see Constitution Ave. from his office balcony and the Supreme Court Building to the left. It was pretty easy for me to say yes. It would have been impossible to say no.

Young: When you were interviewed before you talked with him, did you talk with Carey Parker, or did you know Carey?

Littlefield: I didn't know Carey, but I talked to Carey. I remember assessing what a great guy he was and how responsible and decent he was, and there was not going to be political warfare going on in the office. I didn't want to get involved in an office where everybody was fighting. It was very nice to know Ranny, as I did somewhat; it was nice to know Carey's reputation of being such a decent, smart, normal person. And of course Senator Kennedy has had exceptionally able staff.

Over the years, Senator Kennedy has had his share of tough-minded people working for him who didn't really want a team effort; maybe they were more about themselves in many ways. I wanted to have the sense that I wasn't going to get myself into the middle of that. The fact that Carey was there was very important, and, as I say, I had a lot of faith in Ranny.

Senator Kennedy had his Judiciary Committee staff and his Labor Committee staff. The Labor Committee had a health group, an education group, and a children and families group, I think, and a labor group. I met the people and liked them, for the most part, very much. I knew they would be working under me, as I would be the staff director. I had never worked on health policy, education policy, jobs policy, or labor policy, and it was an interesting example of Senator Kennedy choosing a person not because of his or her background in terms of the issues, but because he thought I could bring organization and spirit and leadership and drive and creativity to the endeavor. That's where I fit in.

Greg had obviously spoken warmly of me. I was 45 at the time. I had had a lot of experiences, except that they weren't working on the issues I was going to deal with as Labor Committee Staff Director. Greg kept mentioning the British model. People in Parliament move from foreign policy to domestic policy. When you shuffle a cabinet, the Chancellor of the Exchequer could well have been someone who was doing low-income healthcare. It's all about the person understanding how to lead and how to get things done, how to throw energy at a problem.

Young: So Kennedy wasn't looking for a knowledge expert.

Littlefield: He was not—in my case he couldn't have been. But I had done politics.

Young: But he had specialist staff.

Littlefield: Oh, absolutely, in each of the areas I described.

Young: And outside advice.

Littlefield: There was a health policy team of two or three people on his staff who were experts in health policy. There was an education team who were experts, there was a labor team who were experts, there were children and families experts. This is not a large staff, but the committee staff had two or three people in each area, and they were substantive. I always assumed I would have to learn the policy, which I did, but I didn't come to him with that experience, and he wasn't looking for it when he chose me.

Young: Right.

Littlefield: I had done politics, I had done a lot of work with the press, I had led efforts like the Anti-Corruption Commission. I had those things going for me, but I obviously wasn't, as I say, a substantive expert on the Labor Committee issues. But I was passionate about fighting to help people in those areas, and I think that's what appealed to him.

In any event, I started on February 13, 1989, as Staff Director of the Labor and Human Resources Committee. I moved down first by myself to Washington. My daughter was still at school, so she had to finish out the school year. One son was in college, another taking time off from college for the time being, and my wife was working. So they didn't move until the summer. But I moved. We bought a house on Capitol Hill, and I lived in it by myself for the spring. The Staff Director had a nice big office in the Dirksen Building, right next to the Labor Committee hearing room. I was off and running from that moment on.

The first night I was there, there was a dinner at the Senator's house, an issues dinner—that's one of the ways he learned about issues. He would invite the five or six top experts in the world on a topic and give them a very nice dinner. And now as the Staff Director, I was invited as the staff representative, and I kept very careful notes. The topic of this first dinner was national service, because the Senator had an idea that the time had come for a renewed effort in the area of domestic service, a domestic Peace Corps, if you will. There had been a domestic national service movement for many years, but it had not received broad support from the Federal Government. The Senator wanted to bring the experts in the field together—one of whom incidentally, was Harris Wofford, who later became a Senator but then was Secretary of Labor, in Pennsylvania. He had always been interested in national service.

Various other leaders in that movement were at the dinner, and this was my first moment on the job. I went out to McLean, and we sat around in the living room. Then we went in for dinner; it was all very structured. The Senator asked all the right questions and got everybody's views. I was taking notes and pulling it all together, and we came back with a model of what a national service initiative that the Senator would champion legislatively would look like.

Young: His mind was made up as to how he was going to go after this.

Littlefield: Yes, he was going to do it. We probably didn't have the whole thing perfectly crafted at that point, but we knew what was going on around national service in the country. There were a couple of trade organizations that had been working on this, Labor had been working on it. There were various representatives of different people who had been interested in this, and he was hearing about all of that.

Young: How did he identify the people to come to the dinner?

Littlefield: The staff worked to identify the people. At that point the Senator was single, no children in the house. So dinners were a time when he really wanted to work and use them as briefing opportunities. I soon learned that one of the advantages of working for Senator Kennedy is that literally anybody in the world will take your call, and anybody in the world will drop everything and come to a dinner at his house in McLean to talk about an issue.

Over the course of my working with him, once he was married to Vicki [Reggie Kennedy] and they had the young kids, we still did dinners but not with quite the regularity we did them before.

Then we started doing breakfast meetings and lunch meetings and other briefings. We had other ways of briefing, of course. But during the time from ’89 until the marriage, which I guess was in ’91 or ’92, we had at least one dinner a week. This was a major feature of how the Senator would be briefed and how he would explore complicated issues.

Young: These were mainly outside people.

Littlefield: These were outside people. I would set them up, and sometimes I would bring one other staff person—usually not—and there would be no more than four or five guests. They would be the top people we could recruit to come to a dinner. They would fly in from California, from Europe, from anywhere for the chance to meet with Senator Kennedy and talk to him, because at that point he was the chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, which was responsible for health and education and jobs and poverty and the arts, medical research and all those issues. Everybody knew he was going to legislate, and so it was fascinating to come to his house, with all the Kennedy lore, and it was a chance to really make your position heard by the Senator.

We did this every week. We’d schedule the topics six weeks out. I’m digressing onto the topic of the dinners because that’s what happened the first night. The night before I actually started work there was this dinner. It was snowy, and getting out to McLean was a challenge, but everybody came, and that was it.

Now we’re talking about 1989, which was the beginning of the George Herbert Walker Bush Presidency. He had talked about a “kinder and gentler” Presidency, as compared to the [Ronald] Reagan Presidency. There had been no social progress during the Reagan administration in terms of legislation at all—or very minimal—and so there was a lot of pent-up interest in social policy legislation. Bush had signaled that he was going to be, as I say, “kinder and gentler.” That was his description of himself in his convention speech, and so there was a big opportunity for Senator Kennedy, as chairman of the committee with jurisdiction over all these issues, to move aggressively to make up for lost time in the Reagan years.

The Democrats had been in the minority in the Senate for the first six years of the Reagan administration. They had gone back in the majority two years earlier, and it was at that point that Senator Kennedy chose to be chairman of the Labor Committee as opposed to the Judiciary Committee. He had his choice, and he chose the Labor Committee for the same reason I chose to work for him: The country was turning back to social domestic policy in a way that it hadn’t under Reagan, when it had all been about budget cuts and tax cuts and smaller government. The country knew there were big, festering problems with health care and education and jobs, and they were going to be dealt with. There was a chance to deal with them through government, and Senator Kennedy was the chairman of the committee with jurisdiction over all these issues.

And Bush was willing to work with Kennedy—or so we thought. We had a big majority in the House, 40 or 50 seats. We had a slimmer majority in the Senate, but a majority. So we ought to be able to move new legislative initiatives, and if we worked with President Bush, we could make real progress in these areas, we believed.

What did happen in the first two years of the Bush administration is that more legislation was enacted through the Labor Committee in the areas of health, education, jobs, labor, the arts, than in any time since the Great Society, when the Labor Committee had been responsible for higher education loan programs, elementary and secondary school aid, issues affecting low income Americans participating in the healthcare issues. The 1960s was of course, until the Vietnam War dragged the Democrats down, a very progressive time. There had been nothing like it for the 25 years since then, and those first two years of the Bush administration were enormously productive. We will, probably tomorrow, go into the details of all the legislation that was enacted during those years. That's why this was such an opportune time to be there with Senator Kennedy, and why he was so excited about doing as much as could be done.

The committees always have many responsibilities. One of them is to reauthorize existing programs. In other words, the federal education programs, health programs, job training programs, labor programs, for the most part are authorized only for five years, and then they have to be re-upped. The committees are responsible for re-upping or reauthorizing these programs every five years—or every seven years. So there are things to do in the committee.

Reauthorizing a program provides a big opportunity to reform, to change, to modernize, to increase the program, to expand it. That's one thing the committees do. The opportunity is with new initiatives: you come up with new programs. The Labor Committee is called an authorizing committee, which means it writes the laws that describe how programs will be run. It's not the Appropriations Committee—that's a separate process where funding is actually appropriated—but the Labor Committee decides how much money will be authorized and all the exact details of how the program will be run by the Executive Branch. It doesn't actually appropriate the funds; that's the appropriations process.

We were always talking about the authorizing legislation, the programmatic legislation, and we set dollar sums. But then we had to go and fight for the money through the appropriations process. If it's an entitlement program that involves taxes, the Finance Committee handles it. So we were always writing programs in a way that didn't involve taxes. If the program needed funding, it was appropriated money, or funding provided by the private sector—employer mandates on healthcare, user fees for FDA [Food and Drug Administration], what have you—because if we wrote the programs to involve taxes, then the Finance Committee, not the Labor Committee, would have jurisdiction over the programs.

Kennedy was chairman of the Labor Committee, and the committee was, at that time, historically interesting. It has always been very bipartisan. New York's Senator [Jacob] Javits had been the ranking Republican at one point, Senator [Lowell] Weicker of Connecticut had been, Senator [Robert] Stafford of Vermont had been. They were all liberal Republicans, and they had chosen this committee because it was the progressive social program committee. They had worked in a bipartisan fashion with the Democrats on the committee. So the Labor Committee had a tradition of bipartisanship.

The Finance Committee was run by the southern Democrats and therefore was much, much more conservative. I learned about all this as I was there, but Kennedy's committee was the progressive committee for domestic social policy. The Finance Committee occasionally could do the big-bang things like Medicare, but for the most part it was run by the southern barons,

Senator [Richard] Russell, Senator [James O.] Eastland. I'm not sure which they were. Senator Kennedy also had a relationship with Senator Russell Long.

I learned that Senator Kennedy had had interesting, affectionate, productive relationships with these titans of the Senate, which I don't know details about because that was before my time. What I knew is I came to the Labor Committee, which was historically progressive, with a tradition of bipartisanship. I learned about Senator [Orrin] Hatch, who was the ranking Republican—he was a conservative from Utah, a Mormon, the polar opposite of Kennedy in so many ways. I have a lot to say about the Kennedy/Hatch relationship, because it really blossomed while I was there. I had a small part in it, spurred on by a love for music, which Senator Kennedy, Senator Hatch, and I share. That's one of the more amusing chapters we will get to when we get to the Hatch relationship.

Young: [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan came to the Finance Committee while you were there.

Littlefield: [Lloyd] Bentsen was the chairman until '93, I think, and then Moynihan became chairman. Bentsen—and as it turned out, Moynihan—were not as eager to legislate in these areas as Senator Kennedy was, so there was always competition between the committees and between the chairmen.

But I was talking about the bipartisan tradition of the Labor Committee, which is very important, because that's what enabled us to get so much done, to work with Bush so effectively. I learned about that tradition early on. We knew we couldn't really do anything big if it wasn't bipartisan, particularly when we had a Republican President. Senator Kennedy made working with the members of the committee one of the top orders of business.

Each year, at the beginning of the year—we talked about the dinners we had for experts on substantive issues—we also had a dinner at Kennedy's house for the members of the Labor Committee. We would have a Democrats-only dinner, and then we would have a Democrats and Republicans dinner, and sometimes we would have a Republicans-only dinner. Again, everyone would come because of the pleasure of going out to McLean for a Kennedy dinner. Being part of the Kennedy aura and charm and hospitality and compassion and generosity and friendship was something people enjoyed.

I have great tales of what went on at these dinners, the Republicans and the Democrats all sitting together, and Senator Kennedy tending to every detail of the dinner himself. He would pick the menu. He would decide which china, which silverware, who would sit where, the nametags, the place settings, everything, because he wanted to make it perfect. It's all part of his tending of his relationships with the other Senators.

It's in his nature as a person to be kind and thoughtful and to reach out to people; that's who he is. He's the youngest child in a family of ten, and he spent a lot of time with his mother, and I always thought she was the one saying, "Teddy, you have to be kind to this person. Teddy, you have to write a thank-you note to this person. Teddy, this person is sick, you have to call and visit him in the hospital." I'm sure his mother, with her social skills and thoughtfulness and generosity, was very much a part of the Senator learning this. He was incredibly committed to building these relationships. He understood that's how relationships get built and how things get

done. But it was also with Senator Kennedy much more than that. It was who he was—treating people with respect and being generous and hospitable was second nature to him.

So while on the one hand the Republicans would demonize Senator Kennedy to raise money in their campaigns and to make political points, to a man, to a woman, they enjoyed him and they were grateful for their friendship with him, and they appreciated his bigger-than-life personality and warmth and his sense of humor and joviality and how seriously he took his work.

They respected him for reaching out to them. He would reach out to them when a member of their family was sick. He would be in touch with them and offer to help and bring them up to Boston to be treated at the Dana-Farber or at Mass General. He would reach out to them when one of their kids was going to graduate from school. His reaching out to his colleagues was way beyond the norm. But this conduct was not strategic, pragmatic—this was who he was.

He has enormous respect for people in public service. He has enormous respect for people who run and win elections, and he was going to treat them with appropriate respect. Of course he had enormous respect for the White House and the office of the Presidency. This was an outgrowth in part of his love and respect for his brother, President Kennedy. No matter how much he disagreed with the White House, he would never diminish it. And the same was true with his colleagues. We'll talk about the individual relationships.

If you look at his legislative record, starting in 1989, which is what I know about, up until the time I left ten years later and certainly since then, each of his major legislative accomplishments was in partnership with one or more Republicans. The spectrum of Republicans that he made deals with crosses the entire range of Republican ideology, from Lauch Faircloth to Nancy Kassebaum and Jim Jeffords, from the most conservative to the most liberal Republicans or moderate Republicans. He told me from the very beginning, "Everything has to be done bipartisan at this point," and that's what we did. The story of how he worked on these relationships is a crucial part of understanding how he's been as successful as he's been.

I'm going to digress here for an overview of how we approached the legislative process, and you'll have this in mind and can reflect on it as we walk through the legislative process. I'll give you examples of each thing.

But now I want to come back to my relationship with him. As I started out, I didn't have a relationship with him. I didn't come from his world; I didn't come from the network of the people he knew particularly. Ranny Cooper kept saying, "It's very important to make a good first impression on the Senator over the first month or two because he forms an opinion fairly quickly about people, and if it's going to work, it's important to you that you have the relationship with him. If it's not going to work, it's not going to work, so you want to make it work in the beginning if you can." I'm going to come back to that topic.

Now I want to talk about the framework within which we approached every legislative issue. He did not discuss this framework with me, but I came to see it over time, and I thought about it consciously as we set out on each of our legislative initiatives. There were three components. Component one is the substance; component two is the politics; and component three is the

public side of it—communications, if you will. This may seem very rudimentary, but it is, in fact, how we did everything.

By substance, I mean Senator Kennedy always wanted to know more about the topic he was going to undertake to work on than anybody else could know. He wanted to have conferred with the very best people in the world. He wanted to have been briefed on everything that had ever transpired in that space. He wanted to have framed the issue in the best, most thoughtful way possible. He wanted to have identified the selling points in the best way. He wanted to know the negative arguments that would be used against whatever he was trying to do. He wanted to know the best answers.

He would work on this tirelessly. We'd do briefings, we'd give him thick stacks of reading materials, which he would read religiously and get back to us. At night he'd read this stuff. We would do these dinners, as I say, we would do breakfasts; we would bring experts in at all times of the day to meet with him. He loved hearing from experts—that's in many ways how he learned. He wanted to be able to refer to the Nobel Prize winner who discovered the gene for this, or the former Commissioner of the FDA, who now happens to be the President of Stanford University, Donald Kennedy. If we're going to talk about the FDA, I want to hear from him, bring him here. And Donald Kennedy would come, or we'd get him on the phone. Adam Clymer essentially concludes that Senator Kennedy has the greatest legislative record of probably any Senator in history, and this may be why.

Looking back to the 19th century, there were some great Senators, but in terms of the number of legislative initiatives and the importance of those legislative initiatives, there's probably no one who has been more dominant than Senator Kennedy, in more fields, over longer periods of time than he. It's not an accident that he has this extraordinary record. He worked at the substance, and he still does, harder than anybody else in the Senate. He's better prepared than anyone else in the Senate, and he holds his staff to higher standards than anyone else. They work like dogs to get him what he needs to be the most well informed, thoughtful person on the topic.

So whatever else happens legislatively, is it his parliamentary skill, his relationships with other Senators; is it the fact that he can mobilize Labor to be behind him? Is it that he has the Kennedy name? All of that's secondary to this first component of his legislative record, this astonishing insistence on knowing the substance better than anyone else in the building.

That comes first, and we would never venture into a field or onto the floor or to give a speech, when we hadn't completely mastered the substance. And we happened to have Harvard and MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] and BC [Boston College] and Wellesley and UMass [University of Massachusetts] and other outstanding institutions at our beck and call, because they were here in Massachusetts. There's no tie that's stronger to Kennedy than his Massachusetts ties and his work with constituents. So we were always able to draw on the people in our state, but we went way beyond that. That's substance.

Now, the politics part is equally important. You can't get legislation done without the substance, but you can't do it without the politics either. The Senator described politics to me as the inside game and the outside game. The inside game is all the people in the Senate or in the House who have to be brought in to make something work, make it happen. The outside game is all the

interests groups and advocates and public interest community and people in Washington and across the country who can help provide the grassroots support for legislative initiatives. We had to have complete control of the politics of the inside game and the outside game to move anything.

For every piece of legislation, we would work to find bipartisan cosponsors and Democratic cosponsors in the Senate, and then we had to have a whole strategy for the House. Normally it took the public interest community and the advocacy community working with us to get cosponsors, to get the majority, to get the leadership to be with us. Whatever it is, you need that whole political world. We would ask, "Okay, what's the strategy for this bill? Who are going to be the cosponsors, who's going to work with us, who's going to care about it, how do we get them to be involved?"

And the outside game—which groups are we going to be working with, who are the best people? If it's a children's issue, is Marian Wright Edelman going to be involved? If it's a healthcare issue, are the Heart Association and the Cancer Association and the doctors at Dana-Farber going to be involved? If it's education, are the teachers going to be involved, the principals, the school committees? Every one of these communities has trade associations and interest groups and public interest groups and advocates, and Senator Kennedy is very deeply engaged with the political grassroots side of these issues.

The third piece is communications and public relations. What I learned over time is that nothing happens in Washington if it didn't happen in the press. It's as if it didn't happen. You can have the greatest hearing in the world, but if it's not reported in the press, it's as if it didn't happen, because to move something, there needs to be a sense of urgency, a sense of recognition, a sense of visibility. Maybe there are some situations where you can do something on the sly, stealth, under the radar screen, special ops. And sometimes we do that, but normally speaking—

Young: I was thinking about some current discoveries of how things got done that were never known. This is on the executive side.

Littlefield: I'm not talking about the Executive Branch. The Executive Branch is completely different, because they have the power to do all sorts of things. What is the power of a Senator? It's to enact legislation, and this is all about enacting legislation or having hearings. That's another part of our job, oversight of the government. We did quite a few investigative hearings, but our main purpose with Kennedy was always legislative.

If it doesn't happen in the press it hasn't happened. I learned fairly soon that working with the press was an important part of my responsibility. I remember reading an article in the *New York Times* about James Baker, who was Secretary of State for Bush, but had been Chief of Staff for Reagan. He said that he spent 50% or more of his time working with the press, in both jobs. That seemed surprising, but I soon realized that if I wanted to be really good at my job, I should probably be doing that too. Things had to move, Kennedy had to be seen as effective, the issues had to be seen as important. How did you gauge that? By the press. So after my first three or four years, when I really got to know the Washington reporters—I always knew the Massachusetts reporters, but by then it was a Washington focus, the national reporters—I spent hours, probably half my time, working with them on stories and issues.

Young: Was this print press only?

Littlefield: No, it was whatever there was. It was certainly much more print than TV. Kennedy has a press secretary and we had a Labor Committee press secretary, and they were doing the day-in, day-out press releases. I was talking to reporters and thinking about how to shape the story for the press. When I say I spent half my time, it's not talking to reporters. It's thinking about how to get a press release, how to write a speech, how to get an issue framed so that it will be interesting to the press, how to design a hearing that will attract the press to the hearing.

I learned that you can have a great hearing, but as I say, if it doesn't appear in the press it doesn't make an impact. But getting it to appear in the press is very difficult. You first have to have the hearing be interesting enough that the press decides to attend it. That means it has to be a topic or there have to be witnesses or something that will attract the press. They don't want to come to just another hearing on student loans. You have to make it interesting. So figuring out how to make it interesting and to make news is the first thing; you have to get them there. And there are hearings all over the building, all over the Senate and the House and all over Washington. How do you get the press there to our hearing? That's the first challenge.

Then once you get them there, you have to have something happen in the hearing that's interesting enough that they decide to even write about it. Half the time they come to the hearing and say, "Oh, there's nothing interesting." So you have to actually make sure you've staged the hearing so that there's something interesting enough that they hear it and want to write about it. Thirdly, you have to get lucky that the rest of the news that day doesn't trump you.

I'm telling you, to get your hearing into the news is an enormous amount of work—and then ultimately some luck. So when I think about how we moved legislation, it's a combination of those three components. Without the first, we couldn't do the second, and without the third, we could do anything at all.

Young: On the second—and this may be a detail you'll want to get into later—you mentioned the House and who to bring into it. You didn't mention the leaders or the party caucus.

Littlefield: That's part of the inside game, and of course, Senator Kennedy is a master at working with the leaders. George Mitchell was the leader through '92, and then Tom Daschle was the Democratic leader, and Bob Byrd was always the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and we would always go and deal with him. Senator Kennedy's efforts with legislators didn't just begin and end with Republicans. They involved hours of thinking about and caring for his Democratic colleagues as well. I'll go into more detail on that when we get to the legislative pieces. Here I wanted to frame how we approached legislation. I don't know whether that all seems obvious to you or whether it's something you've heard before. You've heard people talk about legislation and touch on each of these elements, but perhaps not put it in this overview. I don't know.

Young: That's correct. What you're saying is there's a method here that involves these three, that you were being very methodical about this. You knew that these were the things that had to be done and you learned them.

Littlefield: The first year I was there I didn't say, "Okay, Senator, what's going to be the politics of this? How are we going to do this?" It's just that I realized, after a bit of time, that these things were what we were doing. And I also then realized that if I organized it this way, it helped me to keep the ball going forward.

Young: You quoted Senator Kennedy as telling you there's the inside game and the outside game.

Littlefield: Right. And also telling me that he was not going to go on the floor if he wasn't perfectly prepared. We knew that because he would get very pissed off if he wasn't prepared, and if he didn't know as much as the next guy, or if there was something that came up he wasn't prepared for. So we realized very soon that this is driven by Kennedy. This is Kennedy imposing the regimen on his staff and bringing the regimen to bear on his extraordinary success as a legislator.

Young: Would you go on the floor with him frequently?

Littlefield: Every time he went to the floor. I would be on the floor any time he was there on any of these issues. It's possible that if he was doing a foreign policy thing, I would not be there and somebody else would be there. So I would be on the floor, and along with me would be one or two of the substantive staff in the three or four areas that we're talking about.

So with that digression, I think we should come back to the Labor Committee and how it was structured, and then how my relationship with the Senator evolved over that first year.

Each committee is different. Let me start with the membership of the committee, and then I'll talk about the budget and the structure. Senator Kennedy knew that he wanted the Labor Committee to be progressive, to enact legislation—and he wanted it to be fulsome, full throated, ambitious, progressive, liberal legislation, whether it was healthcare, education, poverty, or whatever. And he knew that if he had to make large compromises in the committee to get the bill through before it would be ready to go to the floor, he would have to make another set of compromises on the floor. I didn't realize it right away, and other committee chairmen didn't apparently realize it ever. Remember, the Democratic Party has liberals and it has conservatives. He knew that if there were a group of conservative Democrats on his committee, he would have to make enormous compromises to get a progressive bill through in the first place. Like the Budget Committee, the Finance Committee had many conservative Democrats who wouldn't necessarily vote with a progressive chairman.

So basically Senator Kennedy, as much he could—and he was on the Leadership Committee that appointed people to committees—managed who was going to be allowed to be on the committee from the Democratic side. He and Carey Parker were doing that when I got there, they kept doing it all the time I was there. I'm sure he's still doing it today. That's why the committee when I was there consisted of Senator [Claiborne] Pell and Senator [Christopher] Dodd and Senator [Barbara] Mikulski and Senator [Thomas] Harkin and Senator [Howard] Metzenbaum and Senator Paul Simon, among others. They were all from the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, and basically they would vote with Senator Kennedy when he asked them to. So as long as the Democrats were in the majority, Kennedy could basically write the legislation the way he

wanted to and get it through the committee. Then, of course, he had the big challenge of getting it through the floor, where the Republicans can filibuster.

Young: What about the Republicans on the committee?

Littlefield: He had nothing to do with which Republicans were on the committee.

Young: But they?

Littlefield: They had traditionally been liberals, but this was changing because there were no more liberals. Stafford was gone, Javits was gone, Weicker was gone when I got there, and we now had Senator Hatch, who was not a liberal, but who would work with Kennedy occasionally in some areas, healthcare particularly. Senator Kassebaum was on the committee, and she was a moderate. She was the ranking Republican on the education subcommittee. Pell was the chair of the education subcommittee. They worked in a bipartisan way, so that was very good. If I had the list in front of me, I could tell you who the other Republicans were. Senator [David] Durenberger was on the committee—he was a bit of a moderate—and Jeffords was on the committee, and he certainly was a moderate.

The Republicans on the committee also tended to be moderates in a way because they were drawn to social programs, which was not something that the Reagan Republicans gave two hoots about except to cut them. When I got there, I think it was hard to find Republicans who wanted to be on this committee. They didn't care about the Federal Government's role in social programs. They wanted the Federal Government's role in social programs to be eliminated. Remember what [Newton] Gingrich tried to do—close down the Federal Department of Education. So the Republicans didn't really want to be on the committee because they weren't interested in an expanded role for social programs.

Young: Or were interested in wrecking it, in being there to stop things.

Littlefield: That might have been later. They didn't want to be on the committee because they knew Kennedy would make them take very tough votes on the committee. This was one of my jobs, coming up with votes on the committee that seemed like they were votes for motherhood and apple pie, but which the Republicans had to vote against because they didn't want a federal role in education at all, or they wanted a smaller federal role in healthcare, or whatever it was. And so a number of times, Republicans would come on the committee for two years and quickly get off, because they saw they had to take terrible votes, which were going to come back to haunt them if the people running against them in the next election ever could figure out what those votes were.

Now the committee activity receives much less attention than what happens on the floor, but every time I meet with a Democrat who's running against any Republican who has ever been on the Labor Committee, I say, "Go back and look at all those votes we teed up for you to use to run against them." So the Republicans decided they didn't like being on that committee.

Back in '88, '89, there weren't even that many Democrats who wanted to be on the committee, because, again—and it seems hard to believe it today, because the country has become so interested in social programs, and healthcare and education have all become so important—back

then it was still Reagan: smaller government, no taxes, no new programs. People didn't really see the potential. Some of the Democrats were afraid of being seen as part of this liberal Labor Committee, but then that changed over the course of the time I was there, to where many Democrats wanted to be on the committee.

So that's how we got the liberal membership we did; he understood that, when other chairmen apparently didn't see that that was crucial if they wanted to legislate in a progressive way. He was able, working with the leader and with the steering committee, which assigned people to committees, to make that come out right. So that's the membership issue.

Then there were the committee budgets. Each committee is different, but each committee gets a budget from the government, from the Senate's overall budget, and then how the budget is allocated is different in the different committees. There's a tradition in each committee for how it's done. Sometimes the chairman hires everybody, and the members don't get any money to hire somebody. This is how it was done in the Labor Committee. First you divide the money up between the Republicans and Democrats, and when I was there it was two-thirds for the party in the majority, and one-third for the party in the minority. We had a $5 million budget for staff on the committee, so it wasn't petty, but we had a lot of jurisdiction and a lot of responsibilities. It went two-thirds to the Democrats, while we were in the majority.

The tradition in the Labor Committee was that the chairman would control the budget, but he would allocate a certain amount of it to the Democratic members and they could each hire their own staff to do their work on the committee. I think we probably kept more than half for the chairman.

And then we had subcommittees, and the chairman is responsible for deciding what the subcommittees are going to be. We had a subcommittee on health, one on education, one on jobs, one on other things. But where Senator Kennedy wanted to keep control of an issue and not have the thing be controlled by a subcommittee that might not move as quickly as he wanted to move, he basically would assume jurisdiction for the issue in the full committee, as we put it. So there would be no subcommittee.

When I got there, I don't think there was a health subcommittee. There was a health group on the full committee, which people could work with, but any health legislation would come straight to the full committee. It wouldn't go first to the subcommittee, where it would have to be worked through, because, again, the Senator wanted to have control of what happened in the committee so he could move things to the floor in the strongest possible position in the quickest possible time.

Young: Are you saying there was no health subcommittee at all, or for certain issues?

Littlefield: Well, there may have been a health subcommittee for certain issues, but universal healthcare, for instance, was going to be retained at the full committee. I think there may well have been a health subcommittee for public health, although I'm not certain about that. It doesn't really matter. This is all about how Senator Kennedy would maintain control of what happened in the committee so that he would be in the strongest position on the floor to make the compromises there that he needed to make. He didn't want to make a lot of compromises early

on. He always knew he had to make compromises to get Republican co-sponsors, so we would make those compromises, but we would not want a lot of compromises with Democrats if we could help it. That's why who was on the committee was so important.

The point is that Senator Kennedy, with his share of the budget because he was the chairman, had staff in each of the several key areas of jurisdiction of the committee. We had three or four people doing health policy, two or three people doing education, two or three people doing labor, two or three people doing children and families. Labor was job training also, and we had staff in each of those areas.

When I arrived, there was David Nexon, Steven Keith, and Mona Sarfaty in the health area; Terry Hartle and various others in the education; Jay Harvey in labor and Michael Iskowitz was children and HIV/AIDS issues. We had these different groups, and they would handle all the work in their area. The other Democrats would have staff who would work with our staff in each of these areas, and there were four or five subcommittees. Senator Metzenbaum, probably then the most liberal Democrat in the Senate, let alone the committee, was in charge of the labor subcommittee. He was very close to organized labor and did a lot of work with them. Senator Pell was chair of the Education Subcommittee. Senator Dodd, chair of the Subcommittee on Children and Families.

So that's how the committee worked. When legislation gets introduced in the Senate, the parliamentarian decides which committee it gets referred to; then it has to be enacted through the committee in order to go to the floor—unless it comes directly to the floor as an amendment, but that's frowned upon and doesn't happen all that often. Normally speaking, legislation has to go through whichever committee has jurisdiction.

Now to shift to sort of the developing relationship I had with Senator Kennedy. As I mentioned, Ranny had told me how important it was to make a good first impression. Every week we would do memos for the Senator. I would do a cover memo, and then each of the issue groups on the committee would do a memo to be included. It would go to Ranny, who organized what went to the Senator, and it would all go into the Senator's bag over the weekend, and it would come back with scrawls and scribbles from the Senator on it. He always read through it, and it was the organized way in which we communicated with him.

Later on, when there was so much going on and we were meeting all the time, we didn't keep these weekly memos coming. I have weekly memos that will go to the Kennedy Library at least through '93, probably five years of weekly memos. That's a really extraordinary record of what was happening in the Labor Committee. Every legislative issue is fully explored in these memos: my cover memo and then the specific memos from the individual staff. That was one way we communicated with him.

We had markups. The way the legislation goes to the floor is it comes to the committee, there's usually a hearing, and then there's a markup, which is when all the members of the committee get together and vote on the legislation and on amendments. If it passes, it's reported through the committee to the floor, and then it goes on the calendar to go to the floor. So the events in the committee would include hearings and markups. The hearings were used to develop the

substantive case, as I've described earlier. The markups were the procedural opportunity to move the legislation through the committee.

How did I communicate with the Senator? Before a hearing or before a markup, there were briefing books which he wanted prepared for the weekend before the event in question—hearing or markup, press conference meeting, or whatever. There would also be an oral briefing, usually an hour before the hearing began, or the day before. So the Senator would get his briefing materials, which were the weekly memos, and then there would be a specific memo or a book for each markup and each hearing, which would have everything in it. If it was a markup, it would have the bill, all the amendments, the arguments pro and con, and a background memo. That was a book that the staff would prepare for every hearing, with the witness statements and the questions the Senator might ask, and briefings on what the point of it all was. So he would read all of this. There was an enormous amount of material going back from the committee to him. We were in the Dirksen Building and he was in the Russell Building.

We weren't part of the personal staff, which is a whole other set of staff people, but those were the people who aren't his committee people. Every Senator gets a budget for personal staff, so the chief of staff, the legislative director, and in Kennedy's case, the foreign policy people because he didn't have a foreign policy committee, so that staff came from his personal budget. He had Armed Services people, Judiciary Committee people from the Judiciary Committee, who had offices in the Dirksen Building. We had offices in the Dirksen Building and the Hart Building. So we'd communicate with these weekly memos, these briefing books, whether it was for a hearing or for a markup. We'd communicate in in-person briefings. That's when one had the chance to interact with him, either in writing or in person.

So over time we started getting quite a bit of legislation done, and I think one of the first things we did was raise the minimum wage, which was finally enacted in November of '89. When we talk about legislation I'll go back over all of that, but my sense was the first year there was a lot of communicating, but there was nothing particularly close developing, and it wasn't clear exactly how our relationship would be. I was trying to do the best kind of job I could.

In part, because of my background as a performer and in the theater, I think I came to the job with a sense of the theater of politics and the theater of the Senate and the theater of hearings and legislating. I was always looking at how to stage events, whether hearings or markups or bill introductions or a press conference or what have you, so that they had a certain public appeal, and press appeal.

Young: Kennedy also had the sense of theater, didn't he?

Littlefield: Big time. So I think in a way, I had this going for me: I would never have an event, if I could help it, that didn't have excitement to it, and we'll talk about some of the ways we did that. I think he might have begun to get the sense that he and I saw that and approached it in the same way. We'll have to go back to the memos and to the legislation to really flesh this first year out.

The point when we were really all thrown in together most intensely during this first year was in December, when we did a tour of the country to look into the healthcare crisis. This was a big

production. His brother, Robert Kennedy, had done the tour of Appalachia when he was in the Senate and had brought the attention of the public to poverty. Ted Kennedy had done his African trip several years before. Have you interviewed Greg?

Young: No.

Littlefield: But you've interviewed people who know about all of that?

Young: Some. The Senator has talked a lot about it.

Littlefield: When he traveled, and this was back in '89, he was still a Kennedy in the full mode of Kennedy-ism, the Kennedy world, the Kennedy land. I think as years have gone by, in terms of the full regalia of a Kennedy trip, I can't imagine that it's quite all consuming in the sense of what has to be done and what is expected— He thought if he's going to make a trip, it has to have the impact of his trip to South Africa or his brother's trip to Appalachia.

We were going to expose the crisis of the uninsured in America, to focus on different dimensions of it in each city. We were going to start in Boston and then in New York, and we were going to focus there on the twin epidemics of AIDS [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome] and drug abuse, and how the hospital system in New York was crushed to a point of almost imminent failure, because there were so many people needing these hospitals because they had AIDS or because they were drug addicts. There was no room in the hospitals in New York then. If you had a heart attack, you couldn't get into a hospital in New York, because the beds were full of people who were in the hospital for AIDS or drug addiction but didn't need to be in the hospital, but had nowhere to go because they had no insurance. So they would go to the emergency room, and there they would be until they were moved into a bed, and they filled the beds. There were not enough beds for the average person who got sick through a routine medical emergency.

I think St. Louis was the next stop, where we were going to look into health insurance for working people. Then we were going to go to California, to Los Angeles, where we were going to look at health insurance for people in poverty, and what was happening to the hospitals out there. And then we were going to go to a rural setting in Sparta, Georgia, where we were going to investigate healthcare in the rural South.

Young: How did you come up with Sparta?

Littlefield: I don't know.

Young: I'm from Georgia, so I was wondering.

Littlefield: Well, we came up with Sparta, but I can't remember why. This was supposed to be a tour for the ages, and we worked like dogs for weeks to get ready. Our staff went out a week ahead to the communities to set up the events. We were going to do a hearing in each place, and we wanted national television coverage wherever we went. We wanted big crowds, we wanted celebrities, we wanted to make news, and then we were going to produce a book, which we did.

I was in charge of the whole thing, and I would say the Senator saw the Labor Committee staff working at full speed. I remember he sent me a note on the way back, at the end, "Great job,

Nick." That was the first time he said "Great job, Nick." It appeared that he actually got what I was doing and the passion I was trying to bring to it and my love for him and for the work and for the cause and for fighting for the underdog.

I was a Yankee from Providence. I wasn't from the world he knew best, and I bet it took him a little time. I'm proud, as I focused on it, that I'm 100 %, one quarter Irish. My mother is half Irish, and I think that was an important part of who I am and I'm very proud of it. But I don't think he had any reason to expect that we would necessarily become friends. He didn't know that I sang, that I played tennis, the things that ultimately brought us together as friends, as well as boss and staff director.

Young: You traveled with him on the plane on this tour?

Littlefield: I think some of the legs I did. Some of the times I went ahead to be there when he got there. We had a chartered small plane, as I remember, because this was four days. We were doing a morning and afternoon event in each place. This was a Presidential campaign that wasn't a Presidential campaign. It was nine years after he ran for President. It was a time we were really thrown in together, and we did pretty well. He was on the *Today Show* in Sparta, Georgia, where he stayed the night in a house belonging to a rural family, and that night he talked about health reform. The next day the *Today* cameras were there as he got up, and had breakfast with the members of the family—discussing the need for everyone in America to have health insurance. We pulled out all the stops and used every trick in the book to try to create activity.

Young: The whole town must have turned out for it.

Littlefield: We had a hearing at the high school or the church or something and everybody turned out. If you talk to any of the key staff—to David Nexon or Steven Keith or Mark Childress or Michael Iskowitz or Jay Harvey—this was unforgettable. You should ask Mark, who was from North Carolina, about this. He went on to work for the Senator for another three or four years, then for President [William J.] Clinton in the White House, and then for Daschle. He now is a lawyer, believe it or not, at Foley Hoag in Boston, and his office is three doors down from where we're sitting.

But he did Sparta, Georgia, and he could tell you tales about the family that was chosen to host the *Today Show*. The whole thing was great fun and I loved it, because it was almost like a Broadway production. And at the same time as it was a very serious examination of a crisis in healthcare, and particularly a crisis in HIV, which had now been around for seven or eight years. It was a death sentence, and the word was that Ronald Reagan had never even spoken the word AIDS until well along in the crisis. Senator Kennedy, in '88, had worked with Senator Hatch to pull together legislation to coordinate research at the NIH [National Institutes of Health], which was spread around and coordinated into one program. So Hatch and Kennedy had done that AIDS research bill together, but we began to see what a catastrophe AIDS was causing and how the Federal Government had to step in. What came out of this tour was one of the most important pieces of legislation we enacted during the time I was there, the Ryan White AIDS Care Bill.

When I think about what Senator Kennedy has done, and what a staff person working for him is able to do with him, the Ryan White bill is an example of how big an impact one can have

working with Senator Kennedy. At the time in 1989-90 there was no federal money for people who had AIDS, to support their care, whatsoever. There was no federal money, there was no money for treatment, no money to keep them out of the hospital. They didn't need to be in a hospital. They could be home if they had someone to bring them food and to keep an eye on them. They couldn't work, they were too sick to work, but they didn't have to be in the hospital. But because there was no program to help them and they were uninsured, they had to go to a hospital, and that's what filled up all the hospitals. So in the big cities, where the AIDS epidemic was most intense, the hospitals were so overcrowded because they couldn't sustain the demand.

And so Kennedy and Michael Iskowitz and Terry Beirn, who were the two staffers who worked on our committee, came up with this idea that we should have an emergency AIDS bill that would pay for care for people with AIDS. The analogy was that when there's a hurricane, federal emergency aid goes out immediately to the hurricane-hit state. Well, here we have San Francisco and Boston and New York and Washington and L.A., the ten cities hardest hit by AIDS, their healthcare systems are crumbling under the weight of AIDS. It's an emergency, and the Federal Government ought to step in the way it would if a hurricane hit these communities. If a hurricane blew through New York City and destroyed the hospital system, they'd get federal aid, but AIDS was destroying the hospital system, and there was nothing.

So we had this idea of legislation to support care for people with AIDS, and Senator Hatch agreed to be the cosponsor. We introduced the bill in early 1990; we passed it within six months. It was very difficult because Jesse Helms, who believed that AIDS was punishment for being gay—he said that and argued that on the floor. But we had to get enough votes to pass it. We did pass it. Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch got it passed, and today, almost 20 years later, it's reauthorized every five years unanimously. It provides $2 billion every single year to pay for drugs and treatment and care for people with AIDS, and it has literally saved the hospital systems. The money was divided into two pots. Many cities with the worst cases get the emergency money. The rest is divided up among states all across the country based on their share of AIDS cases. It has been a lifeline for people with HIV and AIDS, and now it pays for the drug treatments that keep people alive. None of this would have happened but for Senator Kennedy and this trip, where we really understood the seriousness of the crisis. And it could easily have not happened, in which case there would have been no $2 billion a year for this purpose.

I think of the people in foundations who raise money for HIV or AIDS, and they're heroic. There's a dinner in New York and everybody goes, and they raise $1 million, and then—oh, my—they have to do it again next year, and it's another $1 million. These people are widely recognized for their charitable efforts, and maybe in the course of ten years of dinners, they can raise $50 million. Senator Kennedy, by virtue of his commitment and identification of this problem and his skill brought the legislation together—the substance, the arguments, this whole notion of emergency aid, the bipartisanship with Hatch and then the press, and for almost 20 years federal funds—now $2 billion a year—are automatically appropriated for caring for people with AIDS.

Ryan White was a young boy from Indiana who got HIV through a blood transfusion. He died and became the poster child for HIV; we named the bill after him. That caught everybody's attention; that was the public communications piece of it. The result was that it happened, and now, because of Senator Kennedy, there's $2 billion a year being spent on people with HIV and

AIDS. It's hard to imagine, but I can repeat this story in education, in healthcare, in jobs, and I will, if we have a month. [*chuckles*]

This is what Senator Kennedy is able to achieve as a legislator, and this is why people want to work for him. They can attach themselves to his skills and his visibility and his legislative influence and power and get amazing things done. There is nothing that any of us have done in our lives that is more rewarding or more exciting than what we were able to do when we had our gift of working for Senator Kennedy.

Maybe we can take a break so I can go get some water.

Young: Sure, sure.

[BREAK]

Young: All right, we're resuming.

Littlefield: I described the first Congress where I worked for Senator Kennedy, which was the 101st Congress, 1989-'90. As I said, it was an extraordinarily productive time. In fact, when the Democratic Policy Committee began to set its legislative agenda for those first two years of the Bush administration, they identified 63 priority items for action. Fifty-seven were actually enacted into law, and 28—almost half of them—originated in the Labor and Human Resources Committee.

So of the priority items that were enacted, half of them came from our committee. They included such things as the first minimum wage increase in ten years, job training, math/science training, drug-free schools, reauthorization of the National Endowment of the Arts, National Health Service Corps, the Ryan White AIDS Bill, minority health, community service, childcare. Probably the most important bill of all was the Americans with Disabilities Act. It was a burst of pent-up productivity because Bush was willing to work with Senator Kennedy to get all these things done. That was the first two years of Bush.

Young: Do you need to say anything more about the general nature of the relationship, working with Bush on these things in the first two years of his administration?

Littlefield: I think this comes out best when we talk about individual pieces of legislation.

Young: Was there a personal relationship, though, between the Senator and Bush?

Littlefield: Yes. They had crossed paths for many years, because Bush had been around Washington, and Kennedy obviously had been. Bush's father had been a Senator: Prescott Bush from Connecticut. So there was absolutely respect, easy respect, going back and forth. There was wariness because one was the Republican dynasty, another was the Democratic dynasty, and because Kennedy was fighting for the little guy and the Bushes were protecting big enterprise.

They started out on opposite sides of the political fence, but there was certainly respect and cordiality.

When we look at specific pieces of legislation, I have memories of negotiating—not with the President, because he was not really involved when it came to domestic legislation, to put it mildly. That was his downfall. But there were people on his staff. His deputy chief of staff was Andrew Card, who came from Massachusetts. I remember we negotiated national service with Andy Card; Americans with Disabilities we negotiated with Bush's legal counsel Boyden Gray; childcare we negotiated with Tom Scully, who was one of the Republican OMB [Office of Management and Budget] people, I think. Kennedy and his staff negotiated every one of these big ones with the White House on the phone or in person. It was definitely a cordial, productive relationship. Then we had the first Iraq War, which was either '90 or '91.

Young: Ninety-one.

Littlefield: That was the spring of '91, and at that point, somewhere along the line, John Sununu, Bush's Chief of Staff, got the idea that the right wing was beginning to get concerned, if not angry, because Bush was doing so much social domestic legislation with Kennedy. So Sununu put the word out at the beginning of the second Congress of the Bush administration that they weren't going to do any more social legislation, they weren't going to have any more domestic bills. They had done enough of that, and they weren't going to do it any more. That changed things and made it very hard to deal with the Bush administration.

The other thing that happened was the Iraq War at the beginning of '91. It distracted everybody. Here's when Senator Kennedy played an enormously important leadership role in setting the direction of the Democratic Party. We ran a series of hearings at the beginning of 1991, four or five hearings in the committee where we talked about the domestic issues and the anxiety and the difficulties that average families in America were having with their healthcare, with the quality of the schools, with their jobs and their wages—primarily those issues.

We came up with this mantra, "jobs, education, and healthcare," and Kennedy gave speech after speech and in each of these hearings, highlighting one or more of those areas. Kennedy gave a series of speeches during and after the war, where he basically said, "Bush is riding high right now, but wait until we get back from focusing on the war. The people in the country are hurting, they're unhappy, and they need help in terms of their day-to-day life around the kitchen-table issues of healthcare, education, and jobs."

Kennedy kept relentlessly beating this drum, and he gave important speeches. We did these hearings, he talked on the floor. Our job was to remind Democrats and the country that there were real problems at home that had to be dealt with, and it wasn't enough for the President just to be dealing in Iraq.

He gave a speech in January of 1991 that I want to quote here. It was prescient in terms of what was going to happen with Bush. Nobody thought anybody would be able to beat Bush. He was at 95% popularity with the success of the first Iraq War. Kennedy said—and this captures what he said over and over again: "If the administration continues to neglect our problems at home, refusing to act against this recession, then the Congress will have to take the lead and stand up

for the people who are being hurt in this economy. We will focus on the changing workforce, the importance of education and training, the crisis in healthcare, and the tragic consequences for our future if we fail to help our children develop into productive adults."

Look at the role that Senator Kennedy played during each of the Congresses, starting in 1989: in '89, he was the leader of beginning to put education, healthcare, jobs, and discrimination back on the table as issues that needed to be dealt with by the country and by Congress. That was after it was *verboten* under Reagan even to talk about these things.

Young: The government was the problem.

Littlefield: The government was the problem, and it was going to be cut back. Ted Kennedy, in the lead, starting with the Bush administration after Reagan, said, "Let's go. This is where the country is, this is what it needs, this is what the people want, this is good politically, and we need to do it."

As I was saying earlier, during the Reagan administration they had to invite people to be on the Labor Committee. But as they saw the visibility of these issues—which Kennedy as much as anyone else put on the map—and the change in terms of the country's understanding of where it wanted to go on social domestic legislation, the first two years were very productive.

Bush then says he's not going to do any more—or Sununu says he's not going to do any more—and Kennedy picks up and pushes it, rhetorically and through communication. Now we're into the communicating part. We have the substance right, he's building the politics, and he does the communications through hearings, speeches, press conferences, through legislation he introduces. At a time where everyone's saying Bush is untouchable, Kennedy's saying, "No wait, just wait. When he gets back from dealing with Iraq, you're going to see how out of touch he is."

That was two years before the election, and in that two-year period we had the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which was a most important piece of legislation. John Danforth was the Republican co-sponsor, and it remedied a whole series of Supreme Court cases that had reduced protections against discrimination on the job because of race, color, religion, sex, and provided damages as a remedy for job discrimination. It was an enormously important bill that was negotiated with the Bush administration, with John Danforth in the lead.

Young: But Bush vetoed it the first time around.

Littlefield: Did he? I don't remember that.

Young: Yes. That was the quota bill. He wouldn't have a quota bill. But then Danforth got more involved, and it went through in '91.

Littlefield: Yes, it was the fall of '91. Then we had other things like job training. We had to do the Higher Education Act. That was a reauthorization; it had to happen. I remember Bush got a little nervous as the election was approaching. This was July of '92, and Bush's advisors were nervous that he wasn't going to have any domestic achievements. Now the people had begun to say, "Ooh, there might be some vulnerability here because of the recession and because the

education issues and things." We had a bill signing for the higher education student loan reauthorization, and Kennedy put some great things in that, including restarting an effort to build up a direct student loan program where education funding came from the federal government instead of from the bankers.

In any event, the bill signing was in Virginia, and President Bush was there the first time.

Young: It was at the University of Virginia.

Littlefield: I think it was in the suburbs of Washington, because we drove out.

Young: That's where the bill signing was, but Bush held an education summit here at the University of Virginia.

Littlefield: That's the Lamar Alexander stuff, which is a whole other story. That's elementary, secondary, but you're right.

Young: That's right.

Littlefield: The bill signing was outside Washington, somewhere in Virginia, and Bush came. Kennedy had to sit in the front row. He couldn't be on the stage with President Bush because they didn't want to associate with Kennedy that visibly. But they felt that Bush had to do something about student loans.

There was a big Head Start bill. Again, we were able to get through a lot of reauthorizations, but we weren't able to do large pieces of legislation during that two-year period because Bush was just not going to do it, and he vetoed some social legislation, including the Family and Medical Leave Act, which we passed, and then as soon as Clinton was elected, we re-passed it in the first five days of the Clinton administration. It was the first bill he signed.

Basically, in those two years with Bush, there were 20 or 25 pieces of legislation, but they were mostly reauthorizations. Bush was not interested in domestic legislation in the second two-year period. Kennedy's role was to bring home the message that jobs, education, and healthcare were crucial places for the government to focus. Obviously, the Clinton Presidential campaign, "Putting people first," basically picked up on the agenda Kennedy had laid out starting in 1989, '90, '91, and the transformation he had led in the Labor Committee.

That's a piece of his role in national politics that I don't think is understood, but it was critical. If one goes back and looks at those hearings, the coverage we got, the speeches he gave, he was exactly right. He was right politically, and he was right substantively.

Young: He seems to be coming back to this set of themes repeatedly at times when it seems as though there's not much attention being paid to them or they might die. Didn't he do the same thing—this jumps ahead—after 1994 with Clinton? He kept giving speeches.

Littlefield: Oh, yes, in a much more dramatic way.

Young: I'm just trying to trace this. He's returning to these themes in very different contexts.

Littlefield: He was the first person to use the term "working families" to describe who we were fighting on behalf of. We got a great kick out of the whole idea of "working families," because it's such an odd conjuncture of words. What does it mean, "working"? We knew that the key concept was family, and we wanted to identify with family and work, so "working family."

This doesn't mean a functioning family; it means a family that's working, and it's working on the job and in terms of whatever else. That became the term "working families," and jobs, education, and healthcare became the mantra. Senator Kennedy introduced it in 1990-'91-'92 for the first time; jobs, education, and healthcare. He used it during the Clinton campaign and worked with Clinton on it in his own campaign for reelection in 1994, where Kennedy faced Mitt Romney, a very serious challenge, and came back and ran and won on jobs, education, and healthcare.

Gingrich took over the Congress after Kennedy was reelected in '94, and the Democrats were in total disarray—Clinton was getting ready to give away the store, and the Republicans were in ascendancy. They were going to abolish the Department of Education, they were going to cut Medicare to smithereens, they were going to abolish the minimum wage. Those were three things that Gingrich wanted to do and said he was going to do.

Kennedy was the single person who said from the very beginning, "No! That's not going to work; it's not going to happen. We're going to stop you. We going to stand strong as the Democrats we are, for the people we were elected to represent who need help in these areas."

It may well be that Kennedy's greatest legislative period was when he was thrust into the minority and Gingrich was set to take over the country and to do the things I just said. Kennedy fought in the Senate, got Senators to rally 'round, to stop the Gingrich revolution. Almost none of it happened. Most importantly, to save President Clinton—who at the start was willing to triangulate his way right through to the Gingrich agenda—Kennedy said, "You can't do that" and held Clinton's feet to the fire. Ultimately Clinton vetoed the Gingrich budget, the government was shut down, and the Republicans basically lost the game at that moment. They lost seats in the next election, and Gingrich was gone two years later.

The period of 1995 and 1996 in the Senate and Congress is about Ted Kennedy leading the fight against the Gingrich right wing revolution around the core issues of jobs, education, and healthcare for working families. And even while in the minority, Kennedy in 1996 actually raised the minimum wage. Not only did the Republicans not abolish it; he got it raised. Not only did they not cut Medicare; Kennedy got the biggest increase in Federal Government regulation of private health insurance in the Kennedy/Kassebaum HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act] legislation to minimize the role of preexisting-condition exclusions from healthcare and to create portability from job to job. If you lose your job you can take your healthcare. That was the biggest expansion of federal regulation of private health plans in decades. He did that in the minority.

The following year he did children's health insurance, the SCHIP [State Children's Health Insurance Program] program which is so well regarded and celebrated now. That was a Kennedy initiative all the way. So in the minority, he took these issues of jobs, education, and healthcare and pushed them, to get the Democrats to stand up, and to actually make progress from the

minority, which is almost unheard of. He then drove Bob Dole out of the Senate, where he was going to show off his leadership ability to run against Clinton. Dole threw up his hands because he couldn't deal with Kennedy and his legislation and still be a Republican. He couldn't stop these bills, and the Republicans were saying, "What's wrong with you? You can't stop these bills. You're the Majority Leader. Why can't you do anything?"

Kennedy took over the Senate in 1996, and that's when the Washington powers-that-be came to see Senator Kennedy as *the* great legislator. There is story after story. The leading newspapers, most of the major political journals, all wrote pieces on this theme, "My God. Kennedy is now standing atop Washington; in the minority he's running the Senate." I don't think anyone has ever had that kind of an impact with that weak a hand in terms of where he was in the Senate, in the minority.

Young: And with Clinton in doubt.

Littlefield: Totally in doubt—and then brought around, and seeing how successful it was to come around. So that got us through '97. There was a famous *New Yorker* article written by Elsa Walsh, "How Ted Kennedy Saved Bill Clinton" in March of '97: "The Senator proposed a strategy that no one else dared and made sure the President stuck to it." That tells that story very well. Then we get into the impeachment situation, and once again, Kennedy comes up with a bipartisan solution to that in the Senate. Then we get to 2000.

Young: Barely.

Littlefield: Barely?

Young: Barely. That was very tricky.

Littlefield: You, I'm sure, know much more about that than I do, because I'd left the Senate by then. I leave in the beginning of '98, and we'll come back to that. But just to carry this jobs, education, and healthcare theme for working families. Vice President [Albert] Gore runs for President, and there's a big debate in the Gore campaign and among Democrats: should he be a populist talking about "the people, not the powerful," or "the people versus the powerful"? Or is that class warfare? You're engaging in class warfare!

Kennedy, of course, thought that was absurd. He, in fact, used the term "the people versus the powerful" in his election campaign in 1994. He brought that term into the political lexicon—in no small part because Bob Shrum was writing Kennedy's speeches in '94 and wrote Gore's acceptance speech at the convention in 2000, when Gore used that phrase. It was Kennedy who used it first, and Kennedy was fighting for the populist, working family, jobs, education, and healthcare agenda and believed in it, and it's what had worked. He wished that Gore had stuck to it, because Gore got conflicting advice and vacillated. Then we had the disastrous Supreme Court ruling dictating the outcome of the election.

At this point in 2001, with the new President Bush, Republicans have learned, in a way, how to contain Kennedy. They're much more right-wing, much more rabid. They now understand [Trent] Lott and these guys aren't going to let him do to them what he did to Dole and what he

did to Lott for the first part of Lott's leadership. So it's harder to get the big bills through from the minority with Bush as President, and a couple of things have failed.

I suppose the biggest bills that Kennedy has gotten through are No Child Left Behind, and then the Medicare prescription drugs bill, which in 2003, Kennedy basically put together with [William] Frist and the Republicans, so that it passed the Senate with 75 votes, with Kennedy as the lead sponsor, even though some Democrats are mad at him because he's cooperating with Republicans to get it done. Then in the House, Tom DeLay takes the bill over, hijacks it, changes it, and Kennedy changes his position on the bill and opposes it. Then the Republicans steamroll it through the House and the Senate with very shady practices, very shady votes, but they do get it through.

An other bill he was working on during this period, the Patients' Bill of Rights, the other big health bill, he couldn't get through. Things got very rough in the beginning of the first term of the Bush administration in terms of this domestic legislation we're talking about, but the two big bills were done because Kennedy did them: the Medicare prescription drug coverage and No Child Left Behind. Those were the two major domestic bills, and they were both Kennedy bills. One's healthcare and one's education, so he's still pushing his agenda, and he keeps pushing it right up through the [John] Kerry election and right up to the present day. Here he is again and what is this 2008 campaign about? It's about jobs, education, and healthcare.

Young: And Iraq.

Littlefield: And Iraq, where, of course, the Senator has been the leading critic of the war from the very beginning. It's hard to look at this 20-year period and not say that, more than anybody else, Ted Kennedy has led the way in defining what the Democratic Party's issues are going to be: jobs, education, healthcare, and working families and then the war, of course. But I'm not here to talk about the war.

So when you look at this whole thing from a macro standpoint and look at the history of these 20 years, you would have to say that Ted Kennedy has been the principal sponsor of every domestic piece of legislation that involved social programs, in the minority or in the majority. The tax cuts are about the only significant thing that's happened, domestic policy-wise, that Ted Kennedy wasn't the key sponsor of or the leader of, in the minority or in the majority. There's simply nothing else to look at, to compete with what he's done.

And it's not just he who supported these issues. He defined them and the reason they had such saliency is that he was right: they were what people wanted. We can look at all of his legislative achievements, but when you look at his role in defining what the party stood for and what the country talked about—

The reason Bush won his election in 2000 is that he decided to be a compassionate Republican. By standing up to Gingrich, Kennedy had proven that the country wanted a compassionate leader. Gingrich ran, and he was the bully and the radical, and he thought you could go straight at the government: cut school lunches for poor people, declare ketchup a food, abolish the Department of Education, abolish the minimum wage, cut Medicare, privatize Medicare, privatize Social Security. He thought you could do all that and shut the government down.

The Gingrich Republicans intentionally—it was part of their strategy to shut the government down. They believed that the country would say, "We don't even notice it's shut. We don't need a Federal Government. Let's eviscerate it even more." That turned out to be dead wrong, in part because Kennedy drew the line and persuaded Clinton to draw the line.

So the second Bush had the same objectives—not quite as extreme, obviously, because Bush accepted a role for Federal Government in Medicare and he accepted a big role for Federal Government in education in the two Kennedy bills. But Bush presented himself as the gentle, compassionate face, but Vice President [Richard] Cheney stands behind him. They learn to cover up their true intentions by putting a friendly, compassionate face out front. So they have Bush with Cheney in the background. Instead of Gingrich in the foreground, they have [Dennis] Hastert with DeLay in the background. The avuncular Denny Hastert, the wrestling coach from Ohio is the Speaker. Who could get worked up about him? So they learned to have the same objectives, but to do it under the cover of compassion and geniality. That's basically how they got themselves elected in 2000. If Bush had been Gingrich, he wouldn't have been elected, but he was a new kind of compassionate Republican—and then, of course, he turned out not to be.

Bush needed Kennedy, and Kennedy basically got Bush to go along with what Kennedy wanted. He wanted an increased role for the Federal Government in setting standards in the secondary and elementary schools, and he got it. People don't like the bill because Bush didn't fund it, but people like the standards idea—the Clintons were for it. Kennedy began the standards movement in '88, '89 and '90 with Lamar Alexander. The two of them put together the first Goals 2000, which is the beginning of this whole idea of standards in education.

It's not just the ideas, it's not just the big themes: it's substantive ideas running through this 20-year period, that Kennedy is the author of, whether it's Republicans or Democrats. Higher standards, testing, rewarding incentives for schools that do well and punishing schools that don't do well, publicizing the results, smaller class size—all of this is Kennedy's agenda for 15 or 20 years. Bush buys into it, so Kennedy's happy. He comes up to Boston, they announce the thing, have a bill signing, a big celebration with Bush at the Boston Latin School. Kennedy does that, he throws his arm around Bush.

It was the same thing with prescription drugs: he gets it through the Senate and then loses it in the House. But even today, I think Kennedy would say—if asked, and he was honest about it—it's been a bitter pill to swallow since they took that bill away and screwed it up and forced it through the House and the Senate, but he wouldn't want to go back to not having hundreds of billions of dollars spent on prescription drugs for seniors on Medicare.

When healthcare failed in '94, Kennedy vowed—I was with him then—we were going to pick up the pieces and do one piece at a time. We first did the health regulation I told you about in Kennedy-Kassebaum, in 1996. We next did children's health in 1997. The third piece was supposed to be Patients' Bill of Rights, but that we could never get through. The next piece was Medicare drugs, and we did get that through—although not in a way we liked.

I hadn't thought about this, but if you look at the last 20 years, it's Kennedy's agenda that has driven politics, and everyone's had to react to that. If you put a hard-line face on it, you're going to lose. If you put a compassionate face on it, the Republicans can win, but they still end up

doing the kinds of things he'd been talking about: the No Child Left Behind and the Medicare drug bill. So in addition to "He did this bill, he did that bill; he did this bill, he did that bill," if you look at the 20 years of policy, nobody has had the influence Kennedy's had. Nobody has set the direction—in both parties.

Young: There have also been very few Senators who have been there for that entire 20 years, not to speak of what went before.

Littlefield: Well, I don't know about that. They changed the name of the Labor Committee to the HELP Committee, after the Republicans took over in 2000, because the Republicans never liked having a committee named Labor Committee. Labor was a Democratic thing, so they had to change the name to Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, the HELP Committee. But if you look at the Democrats on the committee, they're the same people now as were there when I was there. It's still Kennedy, [Christopher] Dodd, [Thomas] Harkin, [Barbara] Mikulski, Jeff Bingaman. Jack Reed was there at the end of my time.

Now Hillary Clinton, Sherrod Brown, and Bernie Sanders are the new ones. But the old guys, the basic lions of liberalism, are still the top six people on that committee, the same ones. They're doing all the same things they were fighting for shoulder-to-shoulder with Kennedy: working family jobs, education, and healthcare issues.

When you look at it in this context, Kennedy's influence is much deeper and greater on both parties, on the whole political direction of the country for 20 years. Everybody will say, looking back, "This was the era of the conservative ascendancy," and that's true. Except that on domestic policy, it's really the era of ascendancy of the issues Kennedy pushed, whether the conservatives were in charge or not.

Medicare is twice as big as it was 10 years ago. There's three times as much federal money spent on education as there was 15 years ago. The minimum wage has been raised again. That's three times that Kennedy has led the raise in the minimum wage in the last 20 years.

Young: But on civil rights, you have the federal judiciary.

Littlefield: You have the Supreme Court, which is a catastrophe, and which Kennedy did his best to stall, which all came about because of the Bush election, of course. So, right. If you look at civil rights, if you look at the Supreme Court, that's the one place where there's conservative ascendancy, that plus Iraq and our reputation in the world. Those are the places—and the tax cuts, the deficits—where the biggest damage has been done to liberalism and to progressive direction for the country. And we'll obviously be paying for that for the next 25 years.

So on those overriding issues, Kennedy has not been in the ascendancy, but in terms of domestic social policy, which is after all what people really care about in their lives every day, it's his agenda, even in the toughest times for liberals since liberalism began in this country probably. And with a little luck, its time will come again and Kennedy will still be there in the Senate with a chance to really advance these issues in his own way.

I don't believe I'm exaggerating here. I would be happy to argue it with someone who said, "Oh, that's bull. What are you talking about?" Well, tell me what Bush has done domestically, aside

from make a wreck out of Katrina and the tax cuts, and wreck the budget. What's he done domestically, except the two things he would talk about: No Child Left Behind and Medicare drugs?

Clinton, what does he talk about? What did he do domestically? What he did is children's health insurance, which he even opposed—Kennedy did it over his opposition! But he takes credit for it now, which is fine: he was the President, he signed it. Finally at the end, he did work with us on it. Maybe I'm missing something.

I suppose the housing crisis. Ted Kennedy has not been involved in the housing crisis. He had no jurisdiction over any of those issues—housing and banking, no jurisdiction. But on what people talk about other than housing and, obviously, civil rights—on which he's been a leading voice, but he hasn't won—hasn't carried the day. I would debate this with anybody: his agenda is the one that has prevailed and is now poised to take off again with a new progressive government.

Young: Couldn't you say that this was always his agenda, going back to very early?

Littlefield: I don't feel I speak with any authority about what happened before I got there. I know that when he first came to the Senate, the first thing he did was fight the poll tax and stand up against the southern barons on that issue and prevail.

Young: Yes, but he was very junior at the time, and the civil rights movement was already afoot, very much afoot. LBJ [Lyndon Baines Johnson] was getting his brother's help—beginning in not only civil rights but Medicare—carried through and carried very far. It was in '69 or '70 that he came out for universal healthcare.

Littlefield: That's right.

Young: And it was in that context that he first declared it to be a basic right of all Americans. That goes way back.

Littlefield: From 1969 to now, he's been arguing for universal healthcare, and he's argued in every imaginable form. As he says, "I can argue it round, I can argue it flat." There have been opportunities, when one looks back, when one could have gotten something, which probably we should have taken.

Young: I'm just saying there's a certain continuity.

Littlefield: Yes, of course there is. On education, I don't think he had such a leading role until he became the chairman of the Education Committee, and then he's literally taken it over: student loans and direct lending from the government—that's his thing.

Young: That's right.

Littlefield: Elementary/secondary school reform, that's his thing. Head Start and early childhood education, that's his thing. Job training, lifetime education, that's his thing. So he's the education Senator. He's the healthcare Senator, he's the education Senator and he's the wages/jobs Senator. He's also the civil rights Senator, but that's the Judiciary Committee and I don't know as much

about it as I know about this other stuff. We ended up doing the Civil Rights Bill and the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, in the Labor Committee because the Labor Committee had jurisdiction. They were more naturally Judiciary Committee issues, but Kennedy decided to do them in the Labor Committee because he was the chairman and he could control them. If you're not the chairman, you don't control the legislation.

Young: Yes.

Littlefield: He's been the chairman now since 1987, so for 21 years he's been either the chairman or the ranking Democrat on the Labor Committee. He's held on to that position.

Young: How did your relationship with him change, grow, move on?

Littlefield: During all these years?

Young: Yes. You've talked a lot about when you were with him in the Senate.

Littlefield: In the beginning. I began to get more confidence in my relationship with him as time went on. It takes two or three, four years, I think, to get so you feel you can stand up to him and put yourself in front of him on your own schedule and not wait for the chief of staff or whatever.

Ranny Cooper was the chief of staff for the first three or four years, and then she left and was succeeded by Paul Donovan, who had been the press secretary. He was a more mellow character than Ranny. Ranny was very much in control of everything, so you worked through Ranny. Paul became much calmer about things, and it defaulted to me to be in charge of domestic policy, as if I was the AA for domestic policy. So I basically took that over and told Paul or the scheduler what we needed to do. I went directly to the Senator. That was probably at the beginning of the Clinton administration, more or less, because that's probably about when Ranny left.

Young: How did you work with Carey, or did you?

Littlefield: I was in the Dirksen building, so I was a five-minute walk away from the Russell Building. Carey's office is a little cubicle right next to the Senator's office. So he would sit in on everything. Every issue, every briefing, Carey would come in and sit in on, whatever the topic. I would be there only for the domestic policy briefings. But then I also became more influential in terms of whatever was going on. I would be brought in on pretty much everything, the way Carey was, and we would be two voices. Carey was always responsible, always keeping guard on the historic role of the Senator, and always the final word on every piece of written material that came out of the Senator's mouth or was issued in the Senator's name.

Every speech, every statement, every one-liner, every press conference—everything went to Carey before it went out. The Senator always saw it and approved it, but Carey always was the last word before it went to the Senator. So his role was sitting in on all the meetings to help decide the strategy and overseeing all the written materials.

Then, as it became clear that I was handling press on these big issues also, I would work with reporters and bring them to the Senator and brief the Senator and talk through the strategy and what the talking points were going to be for each of these events.

Young: Were there particular issues Carey was quite interested in, that you were working on?

Littlefield: He was interested in everything.

Young: Just everything. I've not interviewed him yet.

Littlefield: He has absolutely great judgment. He's a shy fellow in some respects. He wants to be under the radar. He doesn't want to be front and center. So, for instance, he basically never, ever left his office or the Senator's office. He would never go to the floor; he would never go to a markup or a hearing unless there was a crisis brewing that he needed to be there for. He would almost never meet with other Senators, whereas I would be in on everything. I was joined at the hip with the Senator on these things; whatever it was.

I would be there pushing my point of view and working out with the Senator how we were going to handle things. So I felt at some point he came to expect me to be in on all this, and he came to expect that he would make fun of me and fight with me, and I would fight back. He would get a big kick out of teasing me, ragging on me, pointing out how stupid that idea or this idea was. It didn't bother me.

I'm sure people might have been surprised, but I think it's part of the way he deals with the people he likes: he has fun with them. He knows I'm not going to get hurt feelings, and he knows I'm going to fight back. He'd get angry—if he was genuinely angry, I could tell. I worked for him. He was obviously the Senator, and I was a staffer. It was always "Senator this," "Senator that," "Senator this," "Senator that." It was never "Teddy." It was always very deferential.

I got to the point where if I didn't agree with him I'd say so, and I think he appreciated that. That's what he wanted, and that doesn't happen in the first two or three or four years of anybody working for him. It takes that long to get the kind of trust and closeness that enables you to do that. It happens to many, many staff members—not just me, by any means. It happens often, but it does take time, that level of confidence.

The other dimension that I think brought the relationship along was that he discovered I like to play tennis. I was a pretty good tennis player. Senators who play tennis hire staff who play tennis so they'll have somebody to play tennis with. This isn't Kennedy, because he wasn't that obsessed. John Breaux, for instance, played tennis on the Senate tennis court every afternoon, and I heard he hired a staffer who was number one at U.Va. or something, so that he had somebody to play with. It just turned out that Kennedy liked tennis. Kennedy has a tennis court in McLean. He played tennis three mornings a week at 7:30, doubles, with his friends.

Young: How did he manage that with his back?

Littlefield: It wasn't that noticeable back then. He was not a person who ran for the ball. He had a good serve: he'd throw the ball up and hit it with his arm. It was not a McEnroe-esque torquing of his back to hit the serve. He was very steady, and he liked to have a scrappy partner at net, which I was. I would cover the ground. If there was a lob or a shot over his head, I was expected to get it, and if I didn't get it, I was criticized. He didn't do a lot of running for the ball.

There were about six or eight people, mostly his oldest friends, people like Tim Hanan, Vince Wolfington, Lee Fentress, who was a tennis superstar. You know Lee, of course. He was a pro tennis player and way beyond the rest of us. We would play doubles once or twice a week. I would drive out to McLean from Capitol Hill and usually be late, and he would be pissed off that I was late. We would get there at 7:30, and we'd play doubles until quarter of nine. Then we'd go in and shower, and then there would be a sumptuous breakfast served in the little study, with a fire in the fireplace, brought out by—this was pre-Vicki, so it must have been earlier even than I thought it was. It was English muffins and jam and orange juice and coffee and bacon, always a rasher of bacon. That was the breakfast, and it was so much fun.

We'd sit in his little study, the four players, and rehash the game: who had missed this shot, who had missed that shot, who had won this, who had won that. He loved it; we had great fun. We laughed all the time. That was a chance for me to get to know him on a completely different level. I was a much better tennis player than he was at that time: I was younger, and I didn't have a bad back, so that was something I was in charge of. Everything else he was in charge of. Once we got back in the car, he was in charge. Of course, he was in charge at the house.

The other dimension—I don't know how it came about. This is a big-time digression, but it's amusing. Maybe you've heard because people have watched this over the years.

Marvin Hamlisch, the composer of *A Chorus Line* and other musicals, a very well-known Broadway composer—he's now the conductor of the D.C. Pops Orchestra—came to lobby the Senator about patent rights for music composers or something.

Kathy [Kathleen] Kruse was the staffer, and the Senator decided he should have a piano brought into his office, because that's the kind of thing he would do. If he was welcoming a person who played the piano, he'd want to have a piano there so the visitor could play, because that would make him feel at home. Every time the Senator was going to meet with anybody or have a party or welcome anybody anywhere, he would think, *What would be fun for that person? What would make that person feel at ease? What would be a gesture of generosity to that person?* For Hamlisch, it was obviously get a piano and he can play his songs, and he'll love it. What other Senator would ever do that?

So the Senator had a small upright piano brought into his anteroom, in his office, and we were all there meeting with Marvin Hamlisch and the Senator. We're learning about the patent issue and talking about music, and the Senator says, "Why don't you play, Marvin?" He says okay. At that point, he said, "Nick, don't you sing or something? Show us what you can do. There must be some song you know that Marvin Hamlisch can play."

I knew part of one of Hamlisch's songs that he had written from *They're Playing Our Song*, and I tried to sing it, but I didn't know it. And he said, "Is there something you know?" My standby for all purposes, when I'm called upon to sing, is "The Girl That I Marry," from the musical *Annie Get Your Gun*, by Irving Berlin, which was a big hit with Ethel Merman. "The Girl That I Marry" is a song I sang to my wife at our wedding.

Marvin Hamlisch knows it, and he plays it absolutely beautifully, and I sing it in the Senate office. When it's over I look up, and the Senator's whole staff has come and is peering in the

door. There are people out in the hall, and the place bursts into wild applause. From then on, the Senator is very enthusiastic about my singing. He has a staffer who can sing.

Now it turns out that the Senator also loves to sing, has a great singing voice, has perfect pitch, and can hold an audience, singing, very effectively. He doesn't know the words to a lot of songs, but he loves to sing. I would put that among his top extracurricular activities: sailing, singing, tennis (when he could play). He loves music.

It started then, and then I become the performing monkey. We're walking down the hall, and Senator Kassebaum is coming in the other direction. "Nancy" he says, "listen to him sing. Nick, sing." I'm supposed to stand there in the hall, in the Senate, and sing "The Girl That I Marry" to Nancy Kassebaum.

This then becomes a running joke: sing! Then it becomes an essential part of our relationship with Orrin Hatch, who loves music more, and he writes songs, Hatch does. He writes lyrics to songs and writes some tunes. They've been recorded and performed, everything from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to religious singers to patriotic singers. He has probably ten CDs and probably ten songs on each one. He's written at least 150 songs.

Young: What kinds of songs?

Littlefield: Religious songs, patriotic songs, country and western, those things. The story of the children's health bill, which I guess I can tell now, is that we were negotiating that bill for weeks with Hatch. He had said he would do it, but we hadn't worked it out.

Kennedy would go to Hatch's office, and we would negotiate the elements of the children's health bill. (That story we'll tell in more detail when we get to the legislative part.) We would go to the meetings in Hatch's office, and before we could meet on the substance, Hatch would want to play one of the latest songs on his CD. It would be the Senator and me and two or three other of Senator Kennedy's staff and Hatch and several Hatch staffers.

We would sit in Hatch's office, and Hatch would go to his sound equipment and put in his latest song, and we would sit and listen for three minutes. This would happen every time we went to meet with Hatch; this was the ritual. Finally, Kennedy decided that it can't just be Hatch's music we're listening to: "Nick, you're going to have to start learning songs, so that every time Hatch does a song, you'll do a song." This was to be the big surprise for Hatch.

We're now down to the final day of negotiating the bill, and Hatch is saying, "I'm not ready to make the deal yet," and Kennedy says, "I have a great treat for you. Nick's going to sing to Trish [Patricia Knight]"—his aide. So I sing "The Girl That I Marry" to Trish. Hatch is ecstatic, Kennedy is ecstatic. Kennedy was so pleased he had me try it again. This time Hatch's own song, "Freedom's Light." Soon after these meetings, Hatch signed on to the children's health bill.

The next time around, we're trying to get Hatch to sign on to the anti-tobacco bill, and I'm instructed to learn the words to another of Hatch's songs. So I learn the words to "One Voice." I recall singing "One Voice" about how if one person has the courage to lead, others will follow,

and then the world will come along. Hatch loves it—but it doesn't work and he doesn't sign on to the tobacco bill.

Meanwhile, the Senator and I have a warmth around music as friends. If he has an event at his house, he hires a pianist, I go out there, and we sing. Sometimes I went out for dinner, he'd hire a pianist, and we'd sing Broadway songs all evening. In the ten years since I stopped working for him, that's happened on the Cape, in Maine, in Boston. Whenever we have a chance, and he's relaxed and wants to have a music night, he has a pianist, and we all sing.

Often this is after one of the big events he's done at the Kennedy Library or at the convention or when he conducts the Boston Pops down on the Cape in the summer, which he does each year. There's some star Broadway performer either performing at the Irish dinner or at the annual JFK Library dinner, which by the way is next week at the Kennedy Library. They've had many of the great Broadway singers to the Library. He always invites them back to his house or up to the Kennedy family room at the library. I'm included, and we sing. These Broadway stars are called on to sing for their supper, with a glass of wine and just have a hell of a great time singing.

In 2004 we had the tribute to Senator Kennedy at the Democratic Convention at Symphony Hall in Boston. Brian Stokes Mitchell and Audra McDowell—they're both major Broadway stars—were among the star entertainment, with the Boston Pops and John Williams. After it was over, we went to the anteroom and were down there for several hours. Kennedy's singing, I'm singing, Stokes Mitchell is singing, and Audra's singing. We seemed to go through all the songs from *Oklahoma*, *My Fair Lady*, *Camelot*, *South Pacific*—everything.

Kennedy knows many of the words, and if he doesn't, I'm whispering them in his ear and he's leading the singing. He has Stokes Mitchell on one side, Audra McDowell on the other side, and me. I'm sure the audience was amazed, but they get a big kick out of it. Now this happens at the big dinners at the Kennedy Library. I'm supposed to come up to the stage and sing with him. Everyone is sitting there in black tie, and Glenn Close and Nick and the Senator are singing "I Could Have Danced All Night," to a thousand people in black tie. The Senator is loving it.

He had his big birthday party last year at the Library, and we got on stage and sang the whole of "Some Enchanted Evening." He loves it, and he's great at it. People love it when he does it. Then we have the whole Irish medley. He does "Sweet Adeline" and "My Wild Irish Rose," and he does "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." We all do this and have great fun.

Young: Does he do "The Wearing of the Green"?

Littlefield: No. I don't know. How does that go?

Young: There are several different tunes for it. I can't sing.

Littlefield: I bet you can. So he has the Irish songs. He loves those Broadway songs, but he doesn't expect we'll have a new one each time. The ones he likes are the ones he knows. We always start with "On the Street Where You Live," and "Some Enchanted Evening," and "I Could Have Danced All Night." Those are the ones he loves. One he loves especially is "Love Changes Everything." Did Vicki show you that musical tribute she made for him, with the dogs?

Young: Oh, yes.

Littlefield: That's set to the tune of "Love Changes Everything," which is the song that I sang to him the first time he ever heard it, and so every time we're together now we have to do "Love Changes Everything." He knows the words, and he gets the biggest kick out of it. I do, too.

At the party for his 75th birthday last year in the Senate, they brought everybody back. All the sentimental stuff was over, and I was sitting in the back thinking everything was fine. He said, "Nick, do 'Love Changes Everything.'"

I had to go up on the stage in the caucus room, by myself, with no piano, in front of 500 people who didn't know that I had this interest or this relationship with him, and sing without a piano the whole of "Love Changes Everything" to him. It's the performing monkey part that's amusing. It doesn't bother me. He loves it, and I get a big kick out of it.

The music side of him, the sailing side of him—these are the times where he relaxes and where he has fun, which I think gives him the chance to let the stress roll off his back a lot of the time and the strength to go on, day after day, holding himself to such high standards. He has the capacity to have fun in a constructive way. He has the capacity for friendship in a unique way. One of the things I admire most about him is here's a person who is a world class celebrity, and yet his friends are the people he has known and trusted for 30 or 40 years. They're not the famous people. They're the people he went to law school with, the people who knew his brother. There's a whole group of them.

I've picked up on this by seeing whom he chooses to associate himself with. It's not the hottest new TV reporter or the President of this country or that country, although he does all of that, of course. But when he can really relax, it's his friends. I can get quite emotional about a man who cares about his real friends as much as he does. Anybody would come to his house in a flash for a dinner party. It would be the most sought-after dinner party in Washington. But who does he have for dinner when he has a night off from work? The friends like Lee and Vince and Tim, who have been his friends forever. That's who he wants to be with. He doesn't need to be with a head of state or the top Senator or this one or that one, the movie star. He doesn't need to do that. It's the people he can relax with and the people he can trust and the people he loves.

He has this enormous capacity for loving people and for being generous to them and for giving them a wonderful time and making them feel appreciated and honored. He just loves it. The fun-loving side in a constructive way and his capacity for friendship is staggering for anyone, but almost unbelievable in a person who's as busy and as prominent and as charged up as he is.

Young: Is the Senate also fun for him?

Littlefield: Oh, the Senate is great for him. He has great pals in the Senate. I would say in the group of friends, you include people like Chris Dodd and ex-Senator [John] Culver obviously is one of his best friends, and John Tunney is another. Every time he's having dinner, when he can relax, they'll all be together. Jim Sasser is another of the old friends from the Senate, and I'm sure I'm overlooking others. Barbara Mikulski. There's a whole bunch of Senators who are great friends and are in the circle with which he is most comfortable and can let his hair down with and who love him and he loves them.

I can talk about his life in the Senate, but right now I'm talking about his outside the Senate life and some of these elements of his personality, which are not widely appreciated but in fact, I think are what he retreats to and what give him comfort. He is always on the go. There's not a lot of sitting around with Ted Kennedy. He has so much on his mind and so much to manage, so much to schedule, so many family responsibilities. Literally, once he gets to the Cape from May on until October, it's nothing but family, family, family, family, which he welcomes and loves, but it's a big responsibility. He's the head camp counselor. He organizes everything for everybody.

He organizes the trip for all the grandchildren and the great grandchildren. He's always organizing things. His scheduling. He organizes his whole schedule, everything, whatever it is, whether he's on the Cape or in Washington. He has a scheduler, but he signs off on everything and puts it in place, and figures out when to do it, and how much of it he's going to do. He's not walking through any aspect of life by rote. He's in charge of it. He's on top of it. He's putting it all together. He never forgets anything, always remembers. If he asks you to do something and a week later, if you haven't done it, he'll ask you about it.

You can never get away with thinking that he'll forget about it; he never forgets about it. He's got that amazing capacity that good politicians have, to instantly draw out of his mind that thing, when he sees somebody, that relates to them. And this is somebody who has 1,000 or 10,000 encounters a day, and yet if he bumps into person X, whom he hasn't seen for three years, and he has no reason to think he's going to, he has that capacity instantly to remember that thing that he's doing for them or he did for them or they asked him about or he just read about them. His brain is enormous in that respect.

I'm trying to put the sailing and the singing and what used to be the tennis and the family into the bigger picture of somebody who has so many responsibilities, when you think of all the issues he's involved in, who holds everybody around him, professionally, to such high standards. This whole substantive mastery of everything. He will not tolerate not knowing everything about something. Then, this vast family responsibility and running this dynasty, taking care of his sisters. Dropping everything to go to be at Eunice's [Kennedy Shriver] bedside or Pat's [Kennedy Lawford] bedside or Jackie Onassis' bedside or whatever Jean Smith needs. It's really a vast enterprise with all these dimensions that he manages, that he's always on top of. These fun things provide the relaxation, the calming time or the fun time, so he can laugh and joke and tease and ruminate.

I remember one boat ride I took with him maybe three years ago. The *Mya* was up in Gloucester, and he had to get it down to the Cape. So he said, "Nick, would you come along with me?" I got myself up to Gloucester, and we took the boat down to the Cape. It was maybe a six- or seven-hour—the wind wasn't blowing hard enough, so we had to motor most of the way. It was fascinating because we went right along the whole Massachusetts coastline, from Cape Ann, where Gloucester is, all the way down to Cape Cod, through the Cape Cod Canal.

We went by Nahant. He was telling me how his father tried to buy a summer house in Nahant, but he couldn't get into the club there, so they went to Hyannis. We went by Nahant; we went into Boston Harbor, down there by Plymouth, to all the different places the Pilgrims went. He

knew all of it. He knows it like the back of his hand. Out of the Salem harbor, that was phenomenal. The boat was in Salem, actually. He'd been in Gloucester the night before.

He brought the boat out of the Salem harbor with its little islands. Salem was a good harbor in wartime because it was so difficult to navigate, and the British had a hard time doing that. But he knew how to do it. Kennedy knew it like the back of his hand, zip, zip, zip.

Basically, we were working the whole time. We started with healthcare and went through the whole agenda. And at the end of the day—I had been keeping track, I was writing things down—we had a list of 29 new ideas he wanted to pursue the next day when he got back to working again. During the relaxed times, he's always thinking about how to get the edge, how to create the breakthrough moment on any of the policy issues that are on his mind all the time. The sparking back and forth of ideas, he just loves that, and that's part of where he gets his ideas—that sparring, that testing. That's what happens with Carey Parker in his office and with the staff today, and that's what happened when I was working for him.

All of this attention to detail, his constantly thinking about work, but then having these ways of relaxing—that's what keeps him going. So now, at age 76, he has just as much energy and just as many balls in the air as he ever had. But I don't think this could have been the case if he didn't have this way of structuring his life. When you're doing something you do it full out, and then you try to put it out of your mind and do something else that recharges you or relaxes you.

He has a way of making sure his schedule is full of stuff he wants and needs to do. You've now experienced it, how he fits the interviews on the oral history project into his schedule. You've seen it. How he could do that on top of everything else he's doing is quite amazing. It helps that he has a staff to move him from place to place and get him ready for things, but there isn't a lot of—There are these times that are set aside for relaxing, and once the summer begins, the boat is the major source of pleasure, relaxation. The Cape is really his oasis.

Young: It's his childhood home.

Littlefield: It's his childhood home. You've undoubtedly been there over night, and you've felt the wind coming in from the sea. He talks about that in a very emotional way, about what it was like as a child being in those bedrooms and the wind coming in from the sea—what it felt like, and what it smelled like, and what it sounded like, and what it made him feel like. It's very moving.

He has a wonderful partner in Vicki, who's in some ways like the best chief of staff and the best intellectual idea-generator and sounding board he could have. At the same time, she's someone who's going to protect him and work with him and have fun with him all day long, and who he can tease and laugh with. She's the perfect friend/wife, and she's no nonsense about helping him with the things she can help him with.

He's very lucky that that all came about. Obviously, she saved him in many ways, although he would have figured out another way to save himself.

Young: Maybe this was the way he figured out.

Littlefield: This was a great way; he couldn't have done better. If by some twist of fate she had not come along, who knows what he would have done? It wouldn't have been as good as what happened. It's really quite amazing.

The topic we were touching on just before that is, of course, the topic of how he has influenced the direction of public policy in America over the last 20 years. He's doing that at the same time he has all these other responsibilities and all these other pastimes. He's now basically overseeing the creation of the Rose Kennedy Greenway, which runs right through the city. We can see a part of it from right here where we're sitting. It runs a mile through the city, and he's raised the money for that. He's put together the conservancy that's going to protect and run it. He has his projects at the library, the Kennedy Center in Washington. He has the legacy responsibilities—

And at the same time, he's the leading voice against the war, and he's campaigning nonstop, every time he can get a minute, for [Barack] Obama, as he did for John Kerry and Al Gore. He's very solidly entrenched in Massachusetts, so he's not going to lose there. He raises money, which you have to do to stay alive in politics, to fund all the political operations he's engaged in. He gives most of it to other Senators. Then he's responsible for the domestic agenda, in the minority or in the majority. It's quite a remarkable record.

He ranks as one of the great Senators of all time. I have a little joke about how people who introduce him are always describing him as a great Senator: "Now I introduce to you one of the...." I grade introductions. People who say he's the "greatest Senator of the last half of the twentieth century" or the "greatest Senator since the war," that's a "C." "The greatest Senator of the century," that's a "B." "The greatest Senator of all time" is an "A." It's always one of those.

The people who say, "I want to introduce you to the greatest Senator since World War II," think they're giving him high praise. He and I know that's a "C." But the fact is you couldn't make these jokes if it weren't true. There hasn't been anybody like him. The greats—Hubert Humphrey, Lyndon Johnson was a great Senator; as Majority Leader, he got a lot done. But nobody's gotten as much done in as many different fields over as long a period of time, and has affected so many people.

I gave the Ryan White example, but take the minimum wage. When I went there for the first time in 1989, I think the minimum wage was $3.35. In 1990 he raised it 90 cents, so it became $4.25. In the minority, in 1996, when the Republicans said, "Not only are we not raising it; we're going to abolish it," he raised it again, to $5.15. Now, just in this past year he has raised it again, so it's going to be $6.25 or six-something.

Young: The last time around, the Republicans tried to tie it to the estate tax.

Littlefield: They always try to tie it to something. It was some small business exemption or something when we did it in '96. He's essentially doubled the minimum wage in the last 20 years. The effect on the ten million people whose salary is the minimum wage is just the half of it, because everyone above the minimum wage also gets bumped up, because they have to be significantly above the minimum wage. So the minimum wage raising has an impact on wages in the country like almost nothing else that can possibly happen.

The one in 1996 in many ways is the most impressive, because the Democrats were in the minority in the Senate, and Clinton was against doing it. The Democratic Party was against doing it, because they thought it would identify them with poor people, and they had just been run out of town for being identified with welfare recipients and the like. So they were not for doing it, and Kennedy, with the single-minded force of his personality, would not let up. He did the substance so he could trump anybody's argument; and he did the politics. He had all the unions and all sorts of people working with him. And he did the messaging so that you just couldn't be against it. He shamed and cajoled and browbeat and outwitted the Republicans so that they voted for it. And there are 20 areas like this: AIDS, minimum wage, the number of people who have health insurance coverage, children with health insurance coverage. It's an amazing record.

I didn't think people understood. When the extent of his legislative achievements began to be apparent to me, I was afraid that people wouldn't understand the enormity of them. I always hoped that there would be some record that was focused on his legislative achievements, so history could not ignore it. By that point there had been books about Kennedy, but they all had been about the lost potential or the end of a dynasty or whatever it was—the tortured soul of the last surviving Kennedy brother.

So the fact that Adam Clymer's biography of Kennedy was being written was so important. I thought it was crucial that there be a record of his legislative history, and I knew no one would do a more rigorous job than Adam. He was going to get every little detail. He was a student of the Senate to begin with, and he was contemporaneous. So what could be better? Is it the most lively book one will ever read? Maybe not, but it's there for history, for posterity. You can't overlook the legislative record of Edward Kennedy.

Some of these headlines are interesting in terms of what happened to Ted Kennedy in this 1996 period. The whole of Washington woke up to the role that Kennedy was playing—the *Time*s, the *Washington Post*, the *L.A. Times*, the St. Louis paper, the magazines, liberal or conservative, all were saying that he was literally running Washington, and he was doing it from the minority. No one had ever seen anything like it.

Young: I think eventually, when it was almost too late, his work as a legislator and his accomplishments as a doer, and the importance of what he did would have been discovered, but it would have been much later. I don't know whether you inspired Adam to do the work.

Littlefield: No, of course not.

Young: But you helped him make a better book than it would have been on its own. I can just tell that from reading the stack of interviews with you, and that's a very important point. Even academicians who've studied this understand that the difference between the Kennedy literature that was all focused on the man, Kennedy—the celebrity or the tortured soul or whatever—was neglecting the fact that this was a career public servant, doing service in the Senate and getting an enormous amount done. Nobody was writing about that.

Littlefield: Right.

Young: So Adam justly gets the credit for bringing it out.

Littlefield: Adam's book came out in 2001 or 2002, right?

Young: I don't know the publication date. It was about then.

Littlefield: So it's actually five years after this stack of conventional reporting.

Young: That's right, but that book was in the making.

Littlefield: It was in the making all that time, long in the making.

Young: During this period.

Littlefield: But there was something. It wasn't Adam's book that turned around Washington's conventional wisdom on Ted Kennedy. It was all this reporting that didn't happen in '93 and '94, when Kennedy was doing so well with Clinton. It happened in '96, when he was in the minority and the record just stared people in the face. Palm Beach was '93 and '94, and then the '94 election that people thought he might lose. So that was a big setback in terms of trying to take the focus off him as a person and focus on his legislation, because there just was no way around the saturation press that covered Palm Beach and all the rest of it. What's wonderful is that within a year or two of that, because of what he was doing legislatively and because of Vicki getting into the picture, and because the Senator obviously understood that he needed to change the life he was leading on the private side, his legislative achievements burst into the public.

I was the staff director all during the downtime of '92, '93, and the election of '94. Kennedy never changed his work habits during all the time he was so distracted, presumably, by all these things that were going on. He stayed in the Senate just as late at night; he was doing the legislative stuff just as aggressively, just as thoroughly. The dinners at his house were just as intense, just as frequent. He always had an amazing way of separating the personal distractions from the responsibilities as Senator and as legislator.

You couldn't measure his legislative record; you couldn't find any way of saying "What's going on in his personal life?" His legislative record keeps going full speed ahead, affected by large forces like the first Bush and what he wants to do. Bush doesn't want to do stuff, Clinton's in control, Gingrich is in control. That's what affects his legislative record, although as I've pointed out, he seems to be just as good at getting things done in the minority as in the majority, which nobody in history has ever been able to do. Achieving what he achieved legislatively from the minority is probably unmatched, ever. All the power in the Senate is with the majority, so to raise the minimum wage, to expand healthcare regulation and coverage of children, from the minority, is in and of itself staggering.

Young: Yes, to get things done. The Senate is a great place for stopping things.

Littlefield: It would be like Senator [Michael] Enzi of Wyoming single-handedly getting the Democrats to abolish aid to elementary, secondary education in America. What? To take something that's an article of faith with the majority, and from the minority, upend it—in the world of the Senate, in the world of Washington, it's staggering in what it suggests that person is capable of doing.

It's easy to do things when you're in the majority. There are a hundred authors, coauthors. The President, the chairman, the body as a whole, the leader: they're usually all marching together. Or you just take something and you have the number, you have the votes when you start out or don't have the votes, and they're dead set against doing what you want to do and you get them to do it anyway? I'm beating this horse or this drum right now because as I'm talking, I'm becoming more convinced of how unusual this was.

What has one seen in the Senate for the ten years since then? He did it again. He did No Child Left Behind and prescription drugs with the Republicans and Bush wanting to do it; those were both important and big deals. But in terms of the legislative skill or genius required to do from the minority something the party in charge is determined not to do is amazing.

Young: All right.

Littlefield: Let's take another break?

Young: Yes.

[BREAK]

Young: It's rolling, and we're resuming after a break for lunch.

Littlefield: We were talking before lunch about the Senator driving the agenda, and I remember that one of the ways we did this was the Senator would give what we came to call an agenda-setting speech in January of each year. It would be worth it to anybody looking at this period to get copies of those. They were major speeches.

The first one he gave at Yale in 1989, January or February, when he was a visiting Chubb Fellow for a day. Then he gave one at Georgetown in one of the next years. Every year it was a major speech, and we would talk about it for weeks before he gave it, about what he wanted to say about how to drive the agenda—for Democrats, particularly. The Senator would discuss what he wanted with his staff. The committee would write the first draft, and then Carey Parker would Carey-ize it, and then it would go to Shrum, who would probably do another draft, and then back to Carey and to us. The Senator would see it at each point and work on it himself, and get it to the point where he liked it

This was treated as another major agenda-setting opportunity. Each January, we'd write one of these speeches. That has continued through much of the last decade, but not necessarily every year. If one is looking at how he tried to set the agenda for the committee, for the whole Senate, for the whole of the Democratic Party—it was partly all the work he did on the Senate floor, partly the work he did on the committee, and then explicitly these speeches he gave to get our attention, once each year.

We would do them so they'd be carried on C-SPAN. He would then get the text of the speech to the Majority Leader or the leading Democrat, who would then send it to all the Democrats in the Senate. It would be sent to all the Democrats in the House by [Richard] Gephardt or whoever the Democratic leader was. We'd give it a lot of publicity; we'd pump the speech up in terms of attention. It was a State of the Union *a la* Kennedy, and we took it very seriously. He took it very seriously. There were big crowds for the speeches, and they became a tradition—sometimes at the National Press Club; once one of the think tanks hosted it. It was always a big deal.

That was one thing I neglected to talk about in terms of how he set the direction of the legislative and political agenda for Democrats.

I also want to drive home the point about the impact Kennedy made in 1996, and the fact that the Washington conventional wisdom came around to accept—indeed, to broadcast in full throttle—the idea that Kennedy was back, that Kennedy was the legislative champion and that he was literally running Washington, even though he was in the minority and this was the Gingrich era. Some of these headlines and some of these articles will give anybody looking at this whole period a taste of it.

Tuesday, July 9, 1996, in the *Washington Post*, by Lloyd Grove, the big front page of the Style section: "The liberal element. Ted Kennedy is in the minority, but Senate Republicans are finding him mighty hard to ignore." It's a fabulous, long article. Grove traveled with the Senator for several days and spent a lot of time with him. We had no reason to know that he would write such a positive piece.

Here's the same kind of story in the *Los Angeles Times* by Elizabeth Shogren, May 10, 1996, another long feature: "Ted Kennedy, a new man. The Ted Kennedy walking Senate halls is a far cry from one of two years ago. He's trimmer, more focused, and on a roll—" It goes into his legislative accomplishments during the Gingrich period.

Here's one in the *Wall Street Journal*. This is actually a little bit later—February 19, 1998. Al Hunt—and I'm sure there are Al Hunt pieces from before—but this one: "The liberal lion roars louder than ever."

Here's another in 1996 from *Newsday* by Elaine Povich, the Washington bureau chief, Sunday, May 12, 1996: "Climbing back atop the Hill," a big profile of Kennedy.

Here's the *Sunday Republican*, May 19, 1996, by Newhouse News Service: "Energized Kennedy bedevils GOP ranks. U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy is enjoying a personal and political revival amid increasing public disillusionment with the Republican revolution." That says it all.

Here's the *New York Times*, Sunday, August 11, 1996, by our friend Adam Clymer, in the News of the Week in Review: "Big man in Congress: Kennedy, of all people."

Christian Science Monitor, 1997, by Lawrence Goodrich: "Senate icon shows off skills."

Here's the *Chicago Tribune*, October 2, 1996, Washington bureau chief Mary Jacoby: "Kennedy, an unlikely star of the 104th Congress."

Then we have Cal Thomas, a nationally syndicated conservative Republican columnist, May 19, 1996: "Kennedy making a comeback with principle-driven agenda."

Finally, here's the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* March 31, 1996, Philip Dine: "Kennedy looms large on Senate Labor Committee, U.S. workplace."

Then there's the article I referred to earlier, the profile in the *New Yorker* by Elsa Walsh, March 31, 1997: "How Ted Kennedy saved Bill Clinton."

This is just if anybody were ever interested in digging more deeply into the point about what an impact Kennedy was having. This is not just Nick talking. This was national newspapers, in Chicago, L.A., New York, Washington, St. Louis, Boston. They're all writing the same thing: Kennedy has taken over the Congress, and it's unlikely because he's in the minority. Gingrich won the election less than two years ago, and Kennedy's dictating what's happening in the Congress.

Young: It's also a Presidential election.

Littlefield: Yes, and Dole is the Republican nominee and he's in the Senate. I'll talk about what happened when I talk about the second two years of the Clinton administration. The whole experience with Dole is evidence again of how powerful Kennedy had become.

Now we're going to jump into the chronology, and I'm just trying to decide whether to start with 1989 or 1992 and come back to '89 tomorrow. I think I need to do a little more refreshing on that first Congress. I'm very clear on the first two years of Clinton, when the Democrats were in the majority; I'm very clear on a number of the items from that two-year period.

Young: It's healthcare.

Littlefield: It's the failure of healthcare and the success of education, Kennedy's education agenda. I'm going to go through the key legislative issues here. This leads to the Democratic disaster of the Gingrich takeover of the Congress and the election in November of 1994. I'm going to talk about from the Clinton inauguration to the election of 1994, from Clinton's inauguration in January of 1993.

Young: This is the last time until a future time from today when you had a Democratic majority in both Houses and a Democratic President.

Littlefield: Yes. You probably had a 30- or 40-seat majority in the House, and you had at least 55 Democratic Senators. You had a Democratic President. Reagan had been President in 1980. From 1980 to 1992, we had a Republican President for 12 years—Reagan and then Bush for four—and Republican control of the Senate for the first six years of that period.

Democrats have been in control since then. There was Democratic control of the House the whole way through. Before that, you'd had Carter, who had Democratic control of both the House and the Senate for four years. So if you look at what happened with Carter and Clinton, and you look at what happened with Bush and Gingrich, you would have to say that the party that controls everything doesn't necessarily do that well. It's interesting. We're thinking that if

the Democrats can win the Presidency, they'll control everything starting in 2009, but that doesn't mean they're going to get the legislation through that they want to get through. Look at the record on both sides.

Obviously, all of us working on the Hill and working for Kennedy were incredibly excited when Clinton won the Presidency. This was spectacular, because we'd been out in the wilderness in the Executive Branch for so many years. There was a lot of activity during the transition. I'll come back and talk about that in the context of health reform in a minute. I'm going to first talk about education, then come back and do healthcare.

We tried to be involved with the Clinton transition team. The Senator would go and meet with the people on the transition taskforces. There was an education taskforce and a healthcare taskforce, and he would meet with the people on the taskforce and the chairperson of the transition team. When Clinton took office, he was very positive about the Kennedys. He liked the association with the Kennedys.

He had that picture of John F. Kennedy when he was at Boy's Nation years before, and he reached out in a very warm and enthusiastic way to the Robert Kennedy family and to Ted Kennedy and his family. There were a lot of very positive feelings about the way the Clintons were responding to the Kennedys.

We started right off cooperating around key legislative aspects of the Clinton agenda. The first thing we did right off the bat, literally, on January 26, within the first week after the President's inauguration in 1993, Senator Kennedy reported through the committee the Family and Medical Leave Act. It then passed the Senate and the House and was ultimately signed into law by President Clinton on February 5, 1993.

So within the first two weeks, a bill that had been vetoed by President Bush in 1992 was re-passed and resubmitted to President Clinton and signed, and became one of his first key achievements. It provides workers in firms with 50 or more employees with 12 weeks of unpaid leave for the birth of a child or the serious illness of a family member. That was a major accomplishment right off the bat. Everything we did was jobs, education, and healthcare, that mantra I mentioned. The whole job training and education agenda was something we were very focused on, and something we succeeded at—in contrast to health reform. Before I get to health reform, I want to make sure people understand the breadth and expansiveness of the work we did in education.

The Secretary of Labor was Bob Reich, who is from Massachusetts, from Harvard, was a friend of Kennedy's, a friend of mine, and we were very excited about having such an activist in the Labor Department. Reich was very close to the Clintons and had gone to law school with Bill and Hillary. He was a Rhodes Scholar with Bill Clinton. So they were great friends and had been intellectual colleagues for all the time between Oxford and the Clinton Presidency.

Bob Reich was the Labor Secretary, and he was very interested in job training in all its elements: in "school to work," meaning kids who are leaving school going directly into work; job training for people who don't finish school; job training for people in a job who want to advance; job training for people who are out of work, who want to change careers. This whole world of job

training that people put a lot of faith in, and which is a whole infrastructure in the country, is supported in large measure by federal programs. The Job Training Partnership Act was something Kennedy had worked on with Dan [J. Danforth] Quayle—talk about bipartisanship!—back when Quayle was in the Senate during the Reagan years. That's actually something that had been done in the Reagan years.

There's also a Hillary Clinton angle in this whole job training area, because she had been chairperson of the commission that had been set up by the government to study the workforce and workforce needs and how to train a workforce for the future. She had been the executive director of the commission. Ira Magaziner had also worked on the commission. He had been another Rhodes Scholar with Clinton and Reich, so they all knew each other that way.

Mrs. Clinton came to testify in front of our committee about this report, the High Skills, High Performance Taskforce in 1991. They came up with these recommendations on how to train the workforce and how to develop a high skill, high whatever workforce. We then took the pieces of that report, and working with Bob Reich, we basically enacted them into law during 1993/'94.

We had a School to Work Opportunities Act, for instance. We had an act that created uniform standards across the country for job training, so that if you were going to train to be a plumber in Massachusetts, the standards would be the same if you were going to be a plumber in California. So you could move if you needed to. It had been completely disjointed; the whole workforce skills training rules had been in chaos, and we basically brought them all together. A lot of important work happened in "school to work" and in training.

But the big area of success was the whole area of education. By that I mean we went back to early education by reauthorizing Head Start and expanding it to provide comprehensive early childhood development, health, nutritional, and social services to low-income preschool children. That was in 1994.

In 1994 we also enacted the Goals 2000 Educate America Act, the first major school reform legislation, which ultimately led to No Child Left Behind years later. This was a Clinton/Kennedy initiative that passed the Senate and was enacted on March 31, 1994. The National Skills Standard Board I just referred to was part of it, enacted in the spring of 1994.

So we had early childhood education, we had elementary and secondary school reform. The Student Loan Reform Act, enacted in August 1993, created, among other things, the direct student loan program, where students could borrow directly from the government. We felt that would be cheaper for students, cheaper for the government, because they wouldn't have to pay the fees, the profits to the private lenders that were built into the system if the private lenders were lending the money. The government can lend money at a much lower interest rate. So basically, Senator Kennedy led the effort on student loan reform.

We did Head Start, school reform, student loan reform, and then the school to work job training programs I referred to, and then also national service legislation, which created AmeriCorps. That was a second iteration of the Commission for National Service that Senator Kennedy had enacted under Bush. AmeriCorps was an enormous expansion of national service opportunities, so that young Americans during college or after college could take a year off, spend the year in

service to their community, and in return receive assistance with college loans and with the cost of going to college. AmeriCorps was one of the big Clinton initiatives. Volunteers earned vouchers and loan forgiveness in return for service.

We trumpeted the really important education record of the Congress and of the Labor Committee under Kennedy's leadership and under the leadership of President Clinton. That was the most significant education work overall, probably since Johnson, but it all got lost in the sauce with health reform becoming such a fiasco.

At the same time, in the health field, under Clinton we passed the revitalization of the National Institutes of Health, which was most important because included in the reauthorization was approval of fetal tissue research. Fetal tissue had been one of those issues like stem cells that the Republicans had been blocking even though it was widely believed that it would be crucial to move ahead with fetal tissue research. Here's one of the Republican odd bedfellows with Kennedy. Strom Thurmond had a son or a daughter with diabetes; fetal tissue research was supposed to be a promising approach for diabetes treatment. Senator Thurmond therefore joined with Kennedy as one of the lead Republican cosponsors. Kennedy reached out to Senator Thurmond, identified him, got him to go along, and that's typical of how he got things done.

All of these education bills I've mentioned had key Republican cosponsors, because if there was a filibuster you needed to get 60 votes, and that took Republicans, even though there were 55 Democrats. Education had always been bipartisan, so it wasn't a big surprise that we were able to get Republican support. But it was important because it was such a comprehensive education agenda that had been enacted.

There were other smaller healthcare bills that targeted child immunizations, minority health, cancer legislation, the whole organ transplant program, which now administers the way organs are available for transplantation, and other typical kinds of issues that our committee works on. That was a particularly productive time. There was another bill with a Republican cosponsor, the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances. I think Hatch was the cosponsor on this. Hatch, who is a pro-life Senator, supported the idea of making sure that people who were going to go to clinics in connection with reproductive issues, including abortion, should have freedom of access to these clinics. That was enacted with Republican support.

Women's health was another major issue. I mentioned fetal tissue research, but we learned, during the course of the years just before 1993, that women had been inexplicably left out of clinical trials funded by the NIH. Women essentially had not been included. When that became known, Kennedy took the lead along with Barbara Mikulski and other Senators on the committee to require the NIH to have equal participation of men and women in clinical trials. It focused money on breast and cervical cancer research. All of this was happening on the healthcare agenda, but it was all overshadowed by the major issue, health reform, which failed. So let me now tell that story through the eyes as I saw it.

Senator Kennedy, Senator [Jay] Rockefeller, Senator Mitchell, Senator Daschle, Senator [Donald] Riegle—a whole group of Democrats on the Finance Committee and on the Labor Committee had been working for several years to develop a Democratic universal coverage consensus health reform bill. In 1992 Senator Wofford was elected in Pennsylvania in a special

election, basically by running on the theme that if all Americans are entitled to a lawyer when they get charged with a crime, they ought to be entitled to a doctor. He won the election in an upset. He beat the former Attorney General, Dick Thornburgh, and he came to the Senate and gave health reform a big shot in the arm. It was widely believed that healthcare was the issue that got him elected. Clinton had been out there on healthcare reform during the campaign, but not as actively as he was at other issues he was more interested in.

Young: For education, he was pretty strong.

Littlefield: He was very interested in education.

Young: He had been as Governor.

Littlefield: He gave a couple of major speeches on healthcare, but it wasn't his top issue. Then he was elected. At that point, Kennedy and Mitchell had prepared the bill, and they had a letter from 45 Democratic Senators to the President saying, "The bill is all ready. We've been working on it for three years, but we couldn't do it with a Republican President. We can do it with you, so now let's go." It was a very simple bill, an employer mandate. Employers had to provide health insurance or contribute to a fund that would then be used to help their workers afford health insurance.

Young: A public fund.

Littlefield: Yes, contribute to a public fund that would subsidize insurance for workers who didn't have it. So this bill was all set, and it was very simple. If you already had insurance from your employer or from any other place, it wouldn't upset that at all. It just required employers to provide insurance, and it was very straightforward. It was referred to as "play or pay." You either played by providing insurance for your workers, or you paid to subsidize it.

Young: That had been essentially the Pepper Commission.

Littlefield: Oh, my gosh. You're right on the money. This whole group I just mentioned had been on the Pepper Commission, and this is what they'd come up with. We worked for several more years to get it ready for the moment we could introduce it in the Senate. In the meanwhile, in each Congress Kennedy is introducing this bill and reporting it through the Labor Committee, but not actually insisting on a floor vote. Kennedy was spending considerable committee time each year to move the "pay or play" employer mandate, universal coverage bill through his committee.

Young: Did he have bipartisan support for that?

Littlefield: Not really. Jeffords, I think, was probably the only one. I can't remember whether there were others. There may have been.

Young: Even back in the Pepper Commission, when it made this recommendation, it was divided.

Littlefield: It was divided. It was eight to seven, the final vote, very contentious. But this group of Democratic Senators was very interested in health reform, and they had this bill all ready to go. There were a group of Republican Senators very interested in health reform—Chafee, Dole, Durenberger, Kassebaum—who were working with our group of Senators, but they would not support the employer mandate. The business community, obviously, the small business community, particularly, was dead set against it.

In any event, we had written the bill, we had a letter signed by at least 40 Senators —Mitchell, Kennedy, Rockefeller, Riegle—saying, "Let's go. The bill's all ready to go, and you should massage it during the transition, introduce it and pass it when you become President." In fact, Clinton appointed to his transition team Stuart Altman, who was a health policy expert from Brandeis University up here in Boston, and Judy Feder, who had been chief of staff for the Pepper Commission, who was a health policy expert from Georgetown, and incidentally now happens to be running for Congress a second time, against Frank Wolf from Virginia.

She and Stuart were the transition team. They came up with a recommendation in December and January, very similar to the Mitchell/Kennedy bill, the play or pay bill. They presented it to Clinton at an economic retreat in Little Rock in January, and Clinton was very critical of it. He didn't see how it was going to be paid for; he didn't think the mandate would necessarily fly. We learned immediately that he took the healthcare issue away from Judy Feder and Stuart Altman and gave it to Hillary Clinton and Magaziner, to run a taskforce to basically come up with a healthcare bill that fell into the general category of managed competition, competing HMOs. The exact dimensions of the bill were not immediately apparent, but what was clear is that they were going to reinvent the wheel in January.

Young: What did you understand by managed competition?

Littlefield: There would be plans competing with each other in a managed—

Young: In every area, or was this just nationally?

Littlefield: As it turned out, there were going to be statewide alliances, and you'd be assigned to an alliance. You would then pick a managed care plan from among options of plans that had bid for the business of that alliance or had submitted proposals to that alliance, and would get approved by the alliance. You'd get your insurance that way. Your employer would be required to contribute a set percentage to your health insurance. That was the idea.

The competition was among the managed care plans, but it was managed because there was a global budget for healthcare, for each alliance, as to how much the whole thing would cost. It was managed in that everybody would be able to join. If you already had insurance, you didn't have to join the alliance. (Or maybe you did. I can't remember that.) That was the idea of managed competition. It was an employer mandate, but it had this managed competition dimension that made it different from pay or play where there would be a public fund that would subsidize care, but you'd be left with your existing insurer. You wouldn't be put into some new alliance, some new group, and have to start all over again with a health plan.

In any event, exactly what managed competition meant was not known until the fall, when the Clintons finally released their bill. Clinton had given a speech during the campaign about it, so

perhaps we should have known that this thing was not going to fly the way Kennedy, Mitchell, Riegle, Rockefeller, and Wofford had worked on it for three years to make it fly.

In any event, we thought it was great that Hillary Clinton was going to head up the healthcare effort because that meant the President needed to make sure it was a success; it was his wife handling it. We thought it showed that healthcare was going to be a priority. That was all good. We wished they had gone ahead with our bill, but that wasn't to be. So we played along enthusiastically. Whatever they were going to do, we were going to be with them.

Then 11 months later, by the time they finally got the thousand-page bill up to the Congress, business and Republicans had decided to kill it no matter what. They saw political advantage, political opportunity, in killing the Democrats' number-one agenda item. Gingrich said, "At all costs, we have to kill it." And William Kristol, the columnist, wrote a famous piece in the fall of '93 saying, "If we kill health reform, we can win the House and the Senate back. We have to kill health reform."

During the summer of '93, Dole, Chafee, Durenberger, Hatch, and other Republicans were speaking positively about getting universal coverage. They, in fact, had proposals that would get us close to universal coverage. They supported an individual mandate requiring every individual to have insurance, and so there was a bipartisan opportunity there. But unfortunately, Senator Moynihan didn't like the Clinton healthcare proposal at all. He didn't think there was enough money to pay for it, and he thought we had to take care of the deficit first. So he was not with the Clintons on this, and he was the chair of the Finance Committee.

Young: This is getting ahead of the game. Was the contemplation from the beginning that this would be designed to be in the bailiwick?

Littlefield: Of Kennedy?

Young: Yes.

Littlefield: I'll talk about that. That was a whole massive struggle, which I can describe. We're still in '93. That was a '93 struggle.

In any event, starting in January or February of '93, the Magaziner taskforce is meeting, and it becomes absurdly unwieldy. It's meeting in secret, and it's meeting 24 hours a day. Policy experts are brought in from all over the country. There were 650 people divided into 35 taskforces; it's all very complicated. The Republicans complain that they're not allowed in the room, they're not allowed even to talk to Magaziner. They don't know what he's doing.

Clinton won't talk to them; no one will talk to them. We have representatives on the taskforces, but we're also a little bit out of the loop. This is ultimately the hubris of the Clintons: thinking they can reinvent the whole thing, that the fact the Democrats have been working on this for three years doesn't matter, the fact that the transition team recommended something doesn't matter. They're going to try this. It's what they're going to go with, and it's going to be the ultimate brilliant conceptual plan, written by the smartest guy in America, Ira Magaziner.

Ira Magaziner is very smart, and they came up with a very sophisticated, complex plan that would have covered everybody and managed budgets and put everybody into insurance pools and all the rest of it. But by the time it finally got up to the Hill in November, the Republicans in the business community had decided to kill it. They had Harry and Louise ads out there, they claimed it was written in secret, that no one had been allowed to participate, that it was going to force everybody who had insurance to give up the insurance they had and go to some new insurer, some new doctor, it was a thousand pages. It was a government takeover of healthcare.

Young: You referred to reinventing the wheel. Why the elaborate process? Were they building support for various aspects?

Littlefield: No, they weren't building support.

Young: They were just creating.

Littlefield: They were creating the ultimate, perfect healthcare system that was not government-run.

Young: In a political void?

Littlefield: Yes. That's what's so, so surprising. They really believed that whatever they came up with could pass. So they were going to rewrite the system from scratch, and they were going to do it in the most clever way possible, to control costs, improve quality, cover everyone. It was going to do everything.

Young: Policy development without political preparation.

Littlefield: There didn't appear to be political preparation going on. But Hillary Clinton is very persuasive, and people were with her right along as it was happening. There were a number of fatal mistakes. One was that they reinvented the wheel. Two is they waited too long: by the time they got it up there, the politics of the next election had taken over, and Clinton had lost whatever honeymoon he had. We'd had Lani Guinier; we'd had gays in the military. The economic investment package, a $35 million package to build roads, had been killed.

Clinton had chosen to go with the tax increase package, the budget deficit package, which in August passed the Senate by one vote. Bob Kerrey voted for it at the end, to pass it, to raise taxes on upper-income people. It turned out to be a very successful piece of legislation in terms of what it meant to the economy and to the deficit, but it also meant that Clinton was using all of his political capital on subjects other than healthcare.

The healthcare thing wasn't ready, and these other things were very important to him. Deficit reduction was very important to him. That was another reason it failed. There were four or five reasons: one, too slow, so the honeymoon was lost. Two, too complicated: people who had insurance might have to switch to a different insurer. Three, there had been no involvement —or there was inadequate involvement—by Republicans in the process. Four, the jurisdiction was a big mess: the fight between the Finance Committee and the HELP Committee or the Labor Committee—between the Moynihan committee and the Kennedy committee—was something Mitchell couldn't work out.

The main problem was a technical, procedural decision they couldn't pull off. There's a process in each Congress—each year, actually—where there's a budget, and the budget is passed under certain rules for budget reconciliation that don't involve the right to filibuster. You need only 51 votes to get a budget bill through, and that budget reconciliation bill is also given a timeframe within which the final vote has to be taken. It cannot be filibustered. So you can't force the Democrats to be in a position where they had to get 60 votes to pass it.

Kennedy went up to the White House and begged Clinton to put the health bill on the budget. Technically you could do that. Now Senator Robert Byrd is the author of something called the "Byrd Rule," which says the budget reconciliation process shouldn't be abused for purposes of extraneous legislation; legislation that "didn't" have a direct effect on the federal budget. He believed that healthcare on the budget was extraneous, and he told Kennedy and the President and Mitchell—despite the work they put in to try to persuade him—he could not go along because of the Byrd Rule and the integrity of the process.

Now, of course, under Bush the tax cuts were all done as part of the budget, even though they didn't necessarily belong there. President Bush didn't pay for the Iraq War, he didn't pay for Medicare expansion, he didn't pay for the economic stimulus that's just happened. So another thing they could have done is waived the budget, the "pay as you go" rules. They could have done it that way. But nobody was going to do that at that time. Everybody was too worked up about the deficit. And Clinton wasn't going to ask him to do it. Clinton wanted to pay for it and thought you could pay for it by savings in the system, by this reform of the system, which Moynihan didn't believe. He ridiculed Mrs. Clinton when she came to testify in his committee. He was just dead set against it. He wanted to do welfare reform first.

Young: Yes.

Littlefield: We wanted to do healthcare first, but Moynihan wanted to do welfare reform first.

Young: And Clinton wanted the deficit.

Littlefield: Clinton wanted to do the deficit first, and that's where it ended up. Clinton got his way, and we didn't get health reform first. We got it second, which pissed off Moynihan. And then Clinton got welfare reform done the next year or the year after, which pissed off the liberals who didn't want to do welfare reform. It was all dysfunctional and one whole long process.

Young: All Democrats.

Littlefield: All Democrats, all liberal Democrats. This doesn't even speak about the House, where Dan Rostenkowski was indicted, and his successor did a "Medicare for all" bill. The Energy and Commerce Committee under [John] Dingell couldn't pass anything like the Clinton plan. The only committee that passed anything was the workforce committee that William Ford of Michigan chaired. We couldn't get anything through the House.

In the Senate we knew there was going to be a big jurisdictional fight about which committee had jurisdiction over the bill. Mrs. Clinton understood that if it went to Moynihan it would be killed immediately; it had no chance. Moynihan had told Dole that he wasn't going to pass a health bill that Dole and he didn't work out together. At that point, Dole was basically ready to

kill the bill no matter what, because he was running for President and saw this as a way to make nice with the right wing, which was pushing the Gingrich/Kristol strategy of blocking health reform at all costs. So if you gave Dole the veto power, you were essentially killing healthcare.

Mitchell decided there would be a process to determine who got jurisdiction. Like the judge he had once been, he set up a set of rules where each side was to submit memoranda about what the bill was going to look like and why it should go into his or her committee, and he would judge it, along with his chief of staff, John Hilley. They would judge which committee got jurisdiction.

Of course, Mrs. Clinton wanted Kennedy to get jurisdiction, so that meant she had to write the bill as an employer mandate—which she was going to do anyway—but leave the tax part out. So it was now going to be an employer's responsibility to provide health insurance. Employers, not the public till, were basically going to pay for it. That meant the bill would go to the Labor Committee, because we had jurisdiction over employer/employee relationships.

The bill was introduced whenever it was, September/October/November, and the parliamentarian called Senator Mitchell, "Where does it get referred?" He said, "It's an employer mandate; it goes to the Labor Committee, to Kennedy's committee."

Moynihan's people hadn't really participated in this process, because they didn't want to have anything to do with it, so they pitched a fit and blocked the referral of the bill to the Labor Committee by objecting to it. Mitchell then had to hold the bill at the desk, and it was never referred to the Labor Committee. We said that didn't matter, because we would have a markup and report out the Clinton bill, which we did in May of the next year. It took about six weeks of marking up. We went through every section with our whole committee and reported it out with Jeffords supporting it. He was the only Republican. Kassebaum was great; she worked hard on it. But we didn't get any real Republican votes because by then they were going to kill it politically.

So the jurisdiction thing was a fiasco, Moynihan was a fiasco in health reform, the House was a fiasco, and the vast right-wing conspiracy was all over this, killing it with the Harry and Louise ads, business, and everything else. We couldn't get traction. Our committee reported it out, but by then we saw there was no chance of getting the Democratic Clinton bill through.

Clinton gave the State of the Union speech where he held up what he called the "health security card," which everyone was going to have, like Social Security, which would give them health insurance security. He said, "I'll veto any bill that doesn't cover everyone." He was fully committed, even in January. He must have thought he still had a chance of pulling it off—or we had a chance of pulling it off for him. You'd think we would have had the votes, but it turned out we couldn't do very much.

Then he decided—or Mitchell decided—that the best chance was to try to make a deal with the moderate Republicans who had been willing to do something. Dole, by then, had dropped out of that group, but Chafee, Durenberger, Kassebaum, and a few others were still part of it. They created something called the Mainstream Coalition, and John Breaux and [Joseph] Lieberman and various Democrats were on it as well. They worked on a sort of centrist version of the Clinton proposal during the summer, but when they released it, they had no support beyond their own members. The liberals weren't for it because it wasn't liberal enough, the right wing wasn't

for it because it wasn't conservative enough, and so they ended up with nothing that was worth anything.

Moynihan then took the mainstream bill, and I don't know what they did. They somehow got it—or something that looked like it—through the Finance Committee. It finally got to the floor in the summer of '94, but we were clobbered in the debate. The Republicans by then were very well organized to kill it.

They made fun of every aspect of it. They had charts that showed how complicated it would be to implement, and it was overall a very unsuccessful time on the floor. When Mitchell realized just before Labor Day that he wasn't going to get anywhere, he adjourned the Senate and announced that he would work on fine-tuning the mainstream bill to come up with a bill to introduce in September, to pass there. People finally went home; they were furious.

They came back in September, but Mitchell didn't have anywhere near enough support to introduce even his modified bill. Kennedy went to the floor and gave one of the most powerful speeches I ever saw him give, saying, "We're taking the bill down now, but we'll be back. We'll figure out what we can do next year, and we will never rest until every child in America has healthcare, every adult in America has healthcare, every disabled person has healthcare."

It was a beautiful speech.

Young: Never even came to a vote?

Littlefield: Never came to a vote. Kennedy was the last one standing. We kept saying, "Keep going, keep going, keep going." Meanwhile, of course, he was in a very tough reelection race in Massachusetts with Mitt Romney. Romney had been campaigning actively against Kennedy. People still thought of Palm Beach. Kennedy hadn't had a tough election in a long time, so there was no sense of what he was doing. He hadn't been advertising in the state, he took it for granted that he could beat Romney.

On Labor Day, it was a neck-and-neck race. Kennedy finally came back to Massachusetts in the middle of October and campaigned for three weeks, and just pulled away and won by 20 points—or close to it, I think, maybe 15 points, 57 to 43 or something. Kennedy won, and we were always consulting: was his fighting to the last, his being the last one standing for healthcare, a good or a bad thing? We believed it was a good thing, so we worked like dogs right through to the bitter end. David Broder and Haynes Johnson wrote a book called *The System,* which describes this whole thing very well. It's a very good book.

Also, in August of that year, Clinton was trying to pass his crime bill, which, among other things, provided funding for midnight basketball for kids in the inner city, and that was a disaster. The Democrats were beaten over the head with midnight basketball and finally had to pull that section out of the bill if they wanted to pass the crime bill. But that didn't overcome the sense that Democrats had failed miserably with healthcare.

Meanwhile, Gingrich was running his campaign around the Contract with America. The Contract with America was, of course, ten carefully poll-tested ideas that on the face of the description in the Contract were popular, but were in fact very misleading and actually would result in

draconian ideas like abolishing the Department of Education. There's a whole story around the Contract with America, how it came to be, what it would have done. It was basically the old Republican standards pushed to extremes. They announced the Contract; they brought all the Republican candidates to Washington; they kicked off a very energized campaign. The Democrats had had problems with corruption in the House around the post office scandal. Clinton was very unpopular because of failed healthcare, and also because of gays in the military and a whole bunch of other things.

Young: Whitewater was going on, too.

Littlefield: It was very bad for the Democrats, and predictably, in November 1994, the Democrats lost the biggest election ever. A tsunami rolled over them. They lost 60 House seats, 10 Senate seats. They lost every contested Governorship. No Republican incumbent anywhere in the country for governor, House, or Senate lost, and the Republicans took over control of the Congress for the first time in 40 years. They hadn't controlled it since 1950 or something, 1952.

Young: As you look back on the healthcare debacle, do you see any way it might have succeeded?

Littlefield: Once they decided to go this new route, to reinvent the wheel, if they had gotten the legislation up in the first month or two months and it had been put on the budget, it could have succeeded. It was a great plan that could have succeeded. But they waited too long and didn't do it on the budget. If you didn't do it on the budget, you needed 60 votes, and they were never going to get 60 votes.

Young: So if Byrd had said yes, it might have passed?

Littlefield: If Byrd had said yes, it might have passed, although Moynihan might have killed it. But if they had Moynihan and Byrd, and Magaziner could have gotten it ready—remember, it took him ten months, so he might not have been able to—they probably would have said it's not ready. That would have been absurd, but they might well have said that.

The lessons for now are very clear. With big legislation and a new President, do it fast, do it clean and simple, do it on the budget, work out jurisdiction, make it a top priority, hold everybody accountable, use all your chits, do it in 100 days, don't upset the arrangements people already have with their insurers, focus on coverage but also cost and quality. It's doable.

We'll see if the next President understands how to do it and is willing to put that kind of capital into it when he's going to have energy and deficits and Iraq and everything else. But if Kennedy has anything to do with it, this will be the top priority.

So that led to this utter fiasco of an election, and tomorrow I can talk about the extraordinary legislative work that Senator Kennedy did to stave off the Gingrich/Republican revolution, which literally wanted to take the country back to before not only Franklin Roosevelt but before Teddy Roosevelt: no minimum wage, no FDA, no antitrust, everything. Everything was on the chopping block, and Kennedy basically led the resistance. He stalled the juggernaut of the Republican revolution.

Young: Okay. We can stop.

Littlefield: I can go back over any elements of healthcare you want, because this is something I think about a lot and know a lot about.

Young: Looking at it from Clinton's perspective, would it be fair to infer that he made a choice not to turn his commitment to healthcare over to the people with a history in it, who knew about it, and who were working on it?

Littlefield: Yes. He made a choice not to do that.

Young: He was going to do it himself.

Littlefield: Remember, this was the third way; this was the new Democrat, the DLC [Democratic Leadership Council] way. It wasn't going to be a heavy-handed government; it was going to be managed competition. But that turned out to be a much heavier hand for government at the end of the day, because everyone would be moved into these alliances, even people who already had health insurance—which was 85% of the people, after all. Why would you take on 85% of the people to help 15%? It didn't make a lot of sense politically.

Young: From the viewpoint of Presidential choice-making, in relation to what gets done, people are looking at the politics of healthcare. Why didn't it happen? There's plenty of room for a study that goes back to the first one with Teddy Roosevelt. Why did every damn one of them fail? And look at the politics.

Littlefield: I'll tell you there is. David Blumenthal at Harvard is writing that book now; it will be out within the year. He's been working on it for five years.

Young: We've interviewed him.

Littlefield: You have? So you know about this.

Young: Yes. He may do it, but it's a Presidential choice, it seems to me. There's a parallel in my mind between Carter and healthcare and Clinton and healthcare.

Littlefield: Right, yes.

Young: Under similar circumstances, a Democratic President, a Democratic Congress, and the presence on the scene of some people—most notably, Ted Kennedy—who were pros on this and who gave it very high priority. This is the case in both administrations.

Littlefield: That's right.

Young: And yet, neither President would go with him on this.

Littlefield: Or Mitchell, who was one of the best legislators in Washington. Mitchell was offered a seat on the Supreme Court by Clinton and turned it down in order to stay in the Senate to do

healthcare. Ultimately, in the spring of ’94, it turned out Mitchell was really planning to leave the Senate entirely and go into the private sector—which is what he did.

Young: OK, we’ll close it down there, thank you.