

MEETING MARK HATFIELD

Interview #1

Tuesday, August 5, 2003

RITCHIE: The first thing I wanted to ask you is you're listed in the directory as J. Keith Kennedy. What does the J stand for?

KENNEDY: James

RITCHIE: When did you start using Keith as a name?

KENNEDY: Well, the James came from a maternal grandfather. My mother's grandfather was named James Coleman. The Keith was the name of my father's oldest brother. The maternal grandfather was long dead. The Keith was still very much alive. So I've always been called Keith.

RITCHIE: And the family started calling you Keith right away?

KENNEDY: Right.

RITCHIE: I know you were born in Charlotte but did you grow up there as well?

KENNEDY: Grew up in Charlotte and lived there for about a year and moved to Greensboro. Lived there for a couple of years, moved back to Charlotte, and stayed there until 1962. That was the year my brother graduated from high school, I finished the eighth grade, and we moved to a small town in southern Minnesota. My father worked for an insurance company that was headquartered there. So I spent my high school years in a very different place than Charlotte, North Carolina. It was a real Garrison Keillor sort of small town, fourteen thousand people.

RITCHIE: What's it like for a Southerner to land in Minnesota?

KENNEDY: It was fun. It was very different, but I got, I think, a remarkably good public school education and made fast friends that I still keep up with.

RITCHIE: Well that was in the '60s when the South was in the news because of the civil rights movement. Did that have any impact, moving in '62 from the South to the North?

KENNEDY: Well, it was more being in southern Minnesota and watching what was going on back in the Southeast of the United States while we were there. When we left in '62, not that much had yet begun to happen. North Carolina—if memory serves me right, the sit-ins at the lunch counter at Woolworth's, in Greensboro was '63 I think. Was it earlier than that?

RITCHIE: I thought it was '61 but I'll have to check.

KENNEDY: You're probably right, but in any event, it was, it was sort of interesting to be removed from it but yet still very much a part of it, of course, from Southern heritage and hearing comments and observations of folks in Minnesota about what was going on.

RITCHIE: You decided to go back to the South to attend Duke. How did you make that decision?

KENNEDY: Oh, I've always been a Duke basketball fan, even back then. I used to listen to Duke basketball on the radio in Charlotte. We were regular church-going Methodists and Duke has a very close association with the Methodist church, and every summer there were students from Duke Divinity School who would pop up in our church for the summer. I went there as a second grader for some treatments at Duke hospital. And my brother preceded me. He was at Duke. I applied to several different schools, but Duke is the one I went to.

RITCHIE: So when you went to Duke did you have any career aspirations?

KENNEDY: No, nothing real specific when I started. I thought about law. I thought about teaching, and then round about—actually I found some old letters that I'd written back home when I was a Junior. Starting about my Junior year, I started thinking about going to Divinity School. Maybe because, I don't know, I started to think that will all the rage in political and economic debates of the day there were more fundamental

questions if you will, and a place to think and study and talk about them was in Divinity School.

RITCHIE: What was the atmosphere of campus life at Duke in the '60s?

KENNEDY: Well it was you know, it was the '60s. We had our share of demonstrations, some of which I participated in, some of which I didn't. In April of '68, after Martin Luther King was killed, there was a campus-wide demonstration. We all marched out to the president's house and occupied his house for a night. He invited us in, to be truthful, and the next day we all marched back. There were several hundred of us at first and then we all marched back to the main campus and camped out on the main quad there, and over the days it got to be maybe as many as a couple thousand students. It lasted for about four or five days. And you know the march on Washington in '70, when everybody trekked up here. But having said that, it was still Duke and North Carolina and it wasn't as yeasty as Berkeley or some other places around the country.

RITCHIE: How would you describe your political leanings in those days? Were you becoming aware of the political process and what was happening?

KENNEDY: Oh certainly. I remember listening to the 1956 conventions on radio and course I was very attentive to the John Kennedy elections in 1960. I figured he was some sort of distant cousin. And then of course his assassination captured everyone's attention. Lyndon Johnson's "We shall overcome" speech, and then of course the Vietnam war. One definitely paid attention to politics and what was going on in the world.

RITCHIE: I was in college at the same time and at first Vietnam was sort of an abstract, something that was happening out there, but the closer we got to graduation it became more of a reality because of the draft. I guess the draft was still an operation while you were there.

KENNEDY: Absolutely! I well remember the night of the lottery drawing. My number was 193. I was a Senior.

RITCHIE: It was one of those things that whether or not you were politically aware, you had to notice that world events could affect your life.

KENNEDY: It focused the mind.

RITCHIE: So then you started Divinity School in 1970?

KENNEDY: Right, September of '70 and spent two years. At the end of the second year, Duke and two other seminaries collaborated on an internship program that was specifically planned and intended to take folks who had completed two years of the three-year program and send them off some place else, put them out in the real world, if you will, and see if anything they were learning and absorbing in seminary made sense out there in that real world. A friend of mine that was a year ahead of me at Divinity School had participated in this program in '72. He worked for Adlai Stevenson. Although he only did it for six months instead of a full year, he came back saying it's a terrific deal. So, I applied for it and was accepted.

The program was run in Washington D.C., Richmond and Durham, North Carolina. I wanted to come to Washington. The program was run by John Fletcher who was a professor at Wesley Theological out at American University. We had a weekly seminar plus an internship in a congressional office. This being 1972, I told John Fletcher—John would call offices and say, “We’ve got this program, we’ve got this candidate, can he come interview for a position in your office?” He would make the appointments, and I told him, “No Republicans.” Over the course of the spring of '72 I would periodically come to Washington go around and interview at offices. I went to Bill Proxmire’s office—there is a story about that. I went to Gaylord Nelson’s office, Adlai Stevenson’s office. I went to the office of Richardson Preyer who was a congressman from the Greensboro area that I knew of and about. I went to Speaker [Carl] Albert’s office and I was getting absolutely nowhere.

One day Fletcher had called me down in Durham and said, “You’ve got an appointment in the office of Mark Hatfield.” I said, “But he’s a Republican right?” He says, “You have an appointment with Mark Hatfield go and see him.” So I came up here and I went in and I interviewed with Senator Hatfield’s administrative assistant at the time with a fellow named Sam Mallicoat. We had about a twenty minute conversation

and he said, "When can you come back and see the Senator?" And some days later I came back up and sat down with Senator Hatfield. As I came to find out, I had a typical Mark Hatfield job interview, in that he never said a word about the work that I would be doing. He asked me about where I had grown up, where I had gone to school, my family, what I was interested in at Divinity School. After some twenty, twenty five minutes, he showed me to the door and said, "Talk to Sam about when you can start."

So in September of '72 I came up here. Hatfield's office paid me \$200 a month. The internship program paid me \$200 a month. I had a efficiency apartment in the 300 block of East Capitol that cost me \$115 a month. It was great. I did that as an intern from Sept '72 until August of '73, and had the weekly seminar for which I got nine hours I think it was for extra credit, and went back to Duke in September '73 with something like ten hours left to get my Masters' degree. So I did one more semester, and got that degree, and came back to work for Mark Hatfield in January of '74.

RITCHIE: Hatfield had been a minister before he went into politics right?

KENNEDY: He was never an ordained minister. He was a lay preacher in the Baptist church. He occasionally would get up and give a sermon.

RITCHIE: So would that have been an indication as to why he was interested in a divinity student in his office?

KENNEDY: Well, yeah, I think there was a certain resonance there. That and his Legislative Director at the time was a fellow by the name of Wes Michaelson, who had come to the Hatfield office out of Princeton Seminary. My recollection is that Wes came after a couple of years at Princeton and didn't finish his degree.

RITCHIE: What did you do as an intern at Hatfield's office?

KENNEDY: I was a junior LA really. In the Hatfield office, and this was the case throughout his entire career in the Senate, we did not have this system that lots of other offices used with their Legislative Assistants and Legislative Correspondents. Legislative Assistants answered the mail. So you not only researched issues and prepared statements and speeches on issues, made recommendations to him on legislation to sponsor and

cosponsor, and how to vote, but you also answered any constituent mail that came into the office on those issue areas. So, I had some handful of not-major issues and that's what I did. I wrote up memos for him and on various things going on and made recommendations to him on how I'd thought he'd ought to vote on things.

I mean these were very heady times. I mean, the Watergate hearings are going on. Every day, everybody in the office, just like every other office in the Senate I suspect was just riveted to the television. I knew people from Duke who were working with Sam Ervin, so I was getting sort of backstage stories about what was going on, too. It was a marvelous time. Marty Gold who's now with Senator [Bill] Frist, started in Hatfield's office two weeks after I did. Every morning he and I had *long* discussions about the previous days, events.

RITCHIE: Well it's interesting that you were in a Republican office at the time—although it was a moderate Republican's office—but Senator Hatfield had been fairly close to [Richard] Nixon.

KENNEDY: Oh, indeed.

RITCHIE: Almost was one of his vice-presidential running mates.

KENNEDY: In '68 he was actively considering to be a vice-presidential nominee. In fact, that is how Marty Gold first met Mark Hatfield, because Marty was at that convention in Miami in '68.

RITCHIE: Was there some sense of conflict involved in—

KENNEDY: Well, no. There were many of us in the Hatfield office who were probably closer to the Democrats than the Republicans. Indeed, some would say Mark Hatfield himself was closer to the Democrats than the Republicans. I forget when he did this, probably around '74 or so, but George Will wrote a column about Mark Hatfield and some of the ideas that he was espousing at the time for example, something that Hatfield called "simpliform" and today we would call a flat tax. But anyway, George Will wrote a column in which he starts off with one of his unforgettable lines. He said, "Mark Hatfield fancies himself a liberal Republican. Being a liberal Republican is like being a

high church Unitarian. It is possible, but it is pointless.”

In those days there was a sturdy band of folks who proudly characterized themselves as liberal Republicans. The Nelson Rockefellers of the world: Cliff Case, Ed Brooke certainly, Mark Hatfield, Chuck Percy, when he first came to the Senate was viewed that way, and certainly Bob Stafford, Lowell Weicker. There was a fair crowd of them. [Charles] Mac Mathias. I felt very comfortable in that office, and over time more and more so. Interestingly, Mark Hatfield never asked was I a Republican or Democrat. He never asked anybody that he hired what their party affiliation was.

RITCHIE: He had also gotten an enormous amount of publicity at that point because of his stand against the Vietnam war, the Hatfield-McGovern Amendment in particular. Did that affect the office and the type of mail you were getting?

KENNEDY: Oh absolutely! And clearly that was one of the attractions for me to work for him. I'd said “no Republicans,” but this was a different kind of Republican. There was a certain celebrity attached to the office. There was a certain “we’re fighting the good fight” kind of attitude. I came to the office after most of that was over, because most of that was ‘70, ‘71. But there were great war stories of having to ask the Rules Committee for use of an old hearing room over in the Russell building because there was just so much mail that had to be dealt with that it couldn’t be handled in a regular office. Stories of people like Judy Collins coming to the office, and how this was a big deal. It was a lot of fun I mean hey, were talking about people who were in their twenties. Me, I was twenty-four, twenty-five. The Leg. Director was just maybe three years older than I. It was real vibrant, interesting place.

RITCHIE: Well then you went back to Duke and finished your degree in Divinity. What brought you back to Washington?

KENNEDY: When I left in August of ‘73 to go back to Duke, the then Administrative Assistant, Gerry Frank, who would come back to run the Washington office after the ‘72 reelection, said to me, “Okay, you’re going to go back and finish your degree in four months. We’ll have a job waiting here for you if you want to come back.” So I went back to Duke with the thought that I had to make a choice between three career paths: return to Washington; be ordained in the Methodist church; or pursue a doctoral

program in church history, which was urged upon me by one of my professors. At the end of four months, in December of '73, I had come to a decision. And I wanted to come back to Washington. It had the most appeal.

Being an ordained minister in the Methodist church in North Carolina was just being in a fish bowl that I didn't want to be in. It had more to do about the social aspects of religion than the theological aspects of religion. I was too caught up in the intellectual exercise of the theological stuff. Frankly, I suppose I felt that I was just sort of above all of that kind of silly stuff. Typical young kid arrogance. And the doctoral degree was just, struck me as too much minutia, too much academic rigamarole. The Washington opportunity was sort of a known quantity that I knew was exciting and interesting. So I came back.

RITCHIE: Most people I speak to were shaped by having gone to law school, and you can see how it plays out in their careers later on. How did getting a degree in divinity influence your thinking or your approach to life? Did it shape you in any way that if you hadn't gone to Divinity School you might have been different?

KENNEDY: Well, I'm sure. All of us would be different if we had done different things. I no longer can attach any specificity to it. It's been a good while, but I do know particularly my second year was intellectually—and dare I say spiritually—the most rewarding year of my academic life. As I say, I can't really attach any specificity to it, but it I do think without making too much of it that it just grounded me and gave me a sense of what's truly important—not that I always held to that. But that's why I wanted to go to Divinity School, and I think it helped.

RITCHIE: One problem with American education these days is that so few students read much philosophy. It strikes me that at an early point in our lives we all need some philosophy to give us some direction. Did you have any particular professors who influenced you either as an undergraduate or in Divinity School?

KENNEDY: Oh yes, there was an American history professor in undergraduate school by the name of Richard Watson. There was a political science professor by the name of Hugh Hall, who I got to know really more as a dean. In Divinity School the principal influences were Tom Langford, who not when I first started but soon after I

started was the dean of the Divinity School, who taught a course that I took in my last semester. A fellow by the name of Harmon Smith who taught moral theology, and was quite a character. And Stuart Henry, who was the professor of church history. Harmon is the only one of those three that's still living. Stuart Henry was the fellow who wanted me to pursue a doctorate in church history.

This is way far afield from Senate experiences, but I love to tell the story. My second year and my second semester I took an independent study with Dr. Henry, and he wanted me to read and get to know Richard Niebuhr, the brother of Reinhold Niebuhr. Not nearly as well published or celebrated, but Dr. Henry thought was much more intriguing fellow. But before he wanted me to read Richard Niebuhr, he wanted me to read a whole bunch of other stuff. So I read two or three books by Paul Tillich, and then I read about six books by Reinhold Niebuhr, and then finally got to Richard. By this time it's mid to late April, early May. I was taking five courses that semester. It was the heaviest load I held in the three years I was there, and I was loving all of it. I was having a great time. But I was very conscious of the fact that I needed to produce something out of this independent study. One lovely spring afternoon—we met in his office once a week in the afternoon and just talked about what I'd been reading—and I said, “You know Dr. Henry, we need to be talking about what sort of paper you're expecting from me.” He said, “Oh, Keith, I wouldn't worry about that. We're having these good conversations once a week. We'll just keep doing that. You don't have to write a paper.” Just blew me away, just lifted an enormous burden.

When I returned to Divinity school in September of '73, I went to Stuart Henry and entered and said, “Look, Dr. Henry, I only need ten hours to finish my degree. I really don't want to take four courses, twelve hours. How about if I take three courses and then I do another independent study with you and get an hour's worth of credit?” He said, “That would be fine. Why don't you read every Pulitzer Prize-winning play?” And he stops and he says, “When were you born?” 1948 says I. “Read every Pulitzer Prize-winning play since 1948.” Because he was a huge fan of the theater. He had never been married, had once been in the circus. He was a trapeze artist. He loved theater, and every summer—every year, not necessarily every summer—he would go to New York and spend two weeks on Broadway just going to plays. So I did that. I went out and read every Pulitzer prize-winning play from 1948 onwards. I would read one a week and go to see him and we'd talk about it. Come December, I breezed into his office and said, “So,

we're having such fun having these weekly conversations, I probably don't need to write you a paper do I?" And he said, "Oh yes, you do." Much chagrined, I dutifully went off and wrote a paper. But he was great.

I mentioned this fellow Hugh Hall, poli-sci professor. I once took an exam in his class and I had not read some particular piece of the assigned reading, but a classmate of mine had. As everybody, we kind of just swapped notes. I read his notes on stuff and talked to him about it. So I took the exam and sure enough there was a question in there about some of this stuff, so I answered it. Dr. Hall called me in and said, "You didn't read that book did you?" I said, "No, I didn't." He said, "Go read it." So I went off and read it, came back. "Did you read it?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said fine and he gave me the exam. I had gotten an A on it, but he knew I hadn't done the reading, and reminded me that I was supposed to. It taught me something about integrity that I really appreciated. Thank you for jogging my memory, I hadn't thought about that in a long time.

The story that I wanted to tell you, when I mentioned about going to Bill Proxmire's office, was when I went to Proxmire's office to interview for an intern position in his office, I was interviewed by his Legislative Director, a fellow by the name Tom Van der Voort. That was in '72. In 1981, when Mark Hatfield was kind enough to make me staff director of Appropriations, Bill Proxmire was the ranking Democrat on the Committee on Appropriations, and Tom Van der Voort was the minority staff director.

RITCHIE: But you didn't get the job with Proxmire's office.

KENNEDY: I used to remind Tom of that periodically, too.

RITCHIE: When you decided to come back to Hatfield's office, what type of work were you doing when you got back?

KENNEDY: Same stuff, Legislative Assistant work. In the Hatfield office, as people came and went—although there wasn't, there was not a lot of turnover in the Hatfield office, at least that's my recollection. There may have been, but it seems like it was a fairly stable group of people that stayed with him for chunks of time. But as people left or got promoted or got a committee position, there was sort of a renegotiation of

issues, what L. A.'s would handle, what issues. Typically, the more senior you got, the better issues you got, or at least you had you pick. Junior people got stuff that nobody else wanted to do. So over time I got into different issues. I used to do agriculture. I used to do "the economy." Defense issues after a while—in fact that leads me to another story.

In those days we had what we called roboletters. A piece of equipment known as the robomachine mass produced letters. A very primitive piece of equipment compared to what we do now but nonetheless the idea was the same. If there was a hot issue we would get thousands of letters in and you just had a standard reply. At the time, I want to say this was in maybe '77, because my recollection was that Jimmy Carter was the president. There was much debate going on about whether to build the B-1 Bomber. And there was some debate going on about whether to create a Consumer Protection Agency, CPA. Nixon had created EPA, and now Ralph Nader and others were advocating the establishment of CPA. So I had two brown folders on my desk. In one of them I would put all the letters on the B-1 Bomber for them to get that roboletter, and the other was the CPA.

Well, one day Senator Hatfield gets a letter from L.B. Day, and he was a very prominent and vocal union leader out in the state of Oregon. He wrote in about the Consumer Protection Agency. I forget now on which side of the issue he was on, but I just looked at letters, saw that's what it was and stuck it in the folder. But I put it in the wrong folder. I stuck it in the B-1 Bomber folder. Some days go by and this scorching letter comes back in to the office from L.B. Day. It said, "I know what your position is on the B-1 Bomber, you idiot! I didn't write you on the B-1 Bomber! You and you staff just dadadadada."

The AA, the aforementioned Gerry Frank, was just compulsive about mail. He just drove us: you've got to get it out within forty-eight hours; it's got to be right; very attentive to that. I was scared to death when this letter came back again and I ran off and found you know some of the fancy gold leaf stationery and dictated this just cozy, smarmy letter back to L.B. Day, oh, I couldn't be more sorry about this mistake. I got it back in the secretarial pool. Well, Gerry had a habit of going back to the mail room periodically and going through the responses that had been dictating, the mail that is in the folders for the stenographers to type a response to, and he found this L.B. Day letter of

protest. He marched back to my little cubicle and showed this to me and wanted to know what this was all about. I spluttered some explanation, and he marched off into Mark Hatfield's office and I sat there thinking, "Well, I might as well pack up."

My friend Tom Imeson, who was another LA, was back in Senator Hatfield's office at the time when Gerry came storming in and said, "Why, this is just outrageous! You've got to write a note to this guy right away." He slapped a piece of paper down on the Hatfield desk and gave him a pen a virtually dictated to Senator Hatfield. Dutifully enough, Senator Hatfield wrote out this note and signed it "Sincerely, Mark. PS"—I won't use the precise terminology—"go to hell." And he handed it to Gerry, who just exploded and said, "You can't do that!" They went through that routine two or three times. Imeson came back and told me the story. Of course, I was greatly relieved but it spoke volumes, not just to me but to all of us beleaguered LA's back there about Mark Hatfield. Yes, he wanted us to be doing the right thing, and do a good job, and do it in a timely manner, but he wasn't going to let anybody be nasty to us. That was a great moment.

RITCHIE: That raises a question: he was a Senator from Oregon and you lived in North Carolina and Minnesota. Had you ever been to Oregon by then?

KENNEDY: Never, no.

RITCHIE: So what were the problems at working for a Senator from a state that you're really not grounded in?

KENNEDY: Well, good question. Most of what I did was really national issues that didn't have a particular order and focus, with the possible exception of agriculture, and there I did have to get a little schooling. It's important that the National Weather Service has a frost forecast down in the Southern Willamette Valley because we grow a lot of pears down there.

The first trip I took to Oregon actually was with my agriculture hat on, because one of the things that I specifically needed to go and see was field burning in the Willamette Valley. The Willamette Valley is a very fertile place and a lot of stuff gets grown there, but one of the premier agricultural products of the Willamette Valley is grass seed. I venture to say ninety percent of the grass seed that's produced in this

country comes out of the Willamette Valley. Once they've harvested the seed, they then burn the fields to sterilize them, before they replant, so they can be sure that the seed that your getting, as it says on the back of every grass seed bag, "ninety-nine percent weed free." Well, that's just fine but that generates a whole heck a lot of smoke, and a lot of this activity occurs down in Eugene. Eugene is a university town and they are not always sympathetic to the farmers. When all this smoke got generated, people would get kind of antsy. So I went out there to get a first hand look at all this stuff.

But generally speaking, there were other people in the office who worried about timber. There were other people in the office who worried about the Columbia River and the individual ports down the Oregon coast, those kinds of Oregon-specific things. I was dealing with defense issues, and global hunger, and the economy, and big stuff that did not necessarily have specific Oregon hook. So, it was never really a problem.

RITCHIE: Was it a very large office in those days? That was before this building opened so staffs were a bit more constrained then they were today.

KENNEDY: Golly, Don, I suppose maybe it was about thirty people all told. I could sit and try to think about it. We occupied one, two, three, four, five staff rooms and the Senator's office in Russell. Back then there were four or five typists; there were six LA's. Thirty was probably too many; it was probably more like twenty-five.

RITCHIE: Small enough that you really knew what was going on most of the time.

KENNEDY: Oh yeah, all of us all on one floor, all in adjoining rooms.

RITCHIE: Did you have much access to the senator in those days?

KENNEDY: Oh yeah, very open, ready access, even in my first year as a intern. In that first year, I got all excited, in no small part because my friends who were working for Sam Ervin, who at the time was chairman of the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights of the Senate Judiciary Committee. There was a big debate going on about whether or not reporters could be compelled to testify and reveal sources of information. Somehow or other I convinced Mark Hatfield that he ought to join in on this fray and

introduce legislation, a federal statute giving reporters a shield so called against testimony, just like lawyers or doctors or priests. I wrote up this Jeffersonian speech. That was my first time on the Senate floor. Hatfield went to introduce the bill and give the speech, and he got me on the Senate floor. When he was done, Mike Mansfield got up and said it was the best speech he heard on the subject to date. I was just sky high that day. But he was very accessible . It was not at all a hierarchical kind of office.

RITCHIE: What was the relationship between that office and [Robert] Packwood's office, the other senator from Oregon?

KENNEDY: It was never really very good. I mean the staff interchange on a social level was fine, and the relationship between the two principals was of course cordial. But they were just never in sync, really. They were two very different people. And this is not uncommon, as I'm sure you know, that senators from the same party, from the same state, often do not get along. It's like neither one of them can understand how it is that the same people that elected them could have elected the other guy.

RITCHIE: At least if you are from a different party from the other senator you don't show up at same meetings, you don't go to the same people for campaign contributions.

KENNEDY: Right! That was the other guys that elected him. No wonder he's that way! Now this topic came up in a seminar that the Dole Institute had a couple years ago. It just seems to be historically the case.

RITCHIE: Sure, two of the previous senators from Oregon, Wayne Morse and Richard Neuberger, had virtually identical voting patterns but hated each other with a passion.

KENNEDY: One of my early assignments in '72 was to do opposition research, if you will. I spent a good bit of time looking up—as a matter of fact when I would go to the Republican Policy Committee and get old *Congressional Records* and read Senate floor debates, which of course is not the place to do opposition research—but '57 Civil Rights Act that [Robert] Caro writes about in—and there had always been a suggestion, undoubtedly unfounded, and hotly disputed by Wayne Morse, that somehow there was a

connection between his vote on the Civil Rights Act and his vote on the Hell's Canyon Dam. Caro writes about that a little bit.

RITCHIE: A couple of western Senators seemed to have been tied up with that.

KENNEDY: Right.

RITCHIE: Did you ever get involved in any of Hatfield's campaigns?

KENNEDY: No. Well, I shouldn't say that. When you say involved I didn't, I didn't take time off from the Senate and go out there and work directly on the ground and campaign. That first one in '72-'72 and '90 were his two hardest. In '72 he was running against Wayne Morse. Packwood had defeated Morse, and Morse was trying to make a comeback. Then '78 and '84 were fairly easy reelections. '90 was a real tough one because it's only because it sort of took him by surprise. This fellow who had never held any public office whatsoever popped up, suddenly got a lot of traction. It was just mainly attributable to a kind of general dissatisfaction. Oregon was just in kind of a sour mood. Folks back here were genuinely concerned, and he did things that he hadn't gotten much out of before. He bought a bunch of TV time and he ran ads. In the end it turned out just fine, but it got everybody's attention.

RITCHIE: It seems to be that Western states also have the situation where their population has grown so much that in the six-year intervals between elections a lot of people don't know who their senator is.

KENNEDY: Well, that's true in the state of Oregon. Mark Hatfield had spent most of his adult life in electoral politics in Oregon, in the legislature, as secretary of the state, and then two times as governor '58 to '62 and '62 to '66. But by the time you get to 1990, Oregon had changed a whole heck of a lot. It was a much bigger, much different place then it had been back when he first started building that base as governor. So yeah, there were a lot of new people.

RITCHIE: You have to reinvent yourself every time you run for reelection, to remind people who you are.

KENNEDY: Of course, by 1990 he had been chairman or ranking Republican on the Appropriations Committee for nine years. He'd been on Appropriations for—I think he got on Appropriations in '71—so he'd been on the committee for a long time and been able to do a lot of stuff for the state but virtue of that position. So he had a lot to remind people about, and he was able to do it.

RITCHIE: Well in '77 you went to a committee staff. You went to Interior, am I right on that?

KENNEDY: No, I went to the Select Committee on Indian Affairs.

RITCHIE: Indian Affairs, okay.

KENNEDY: Senator Hatfield had been a member of the American Indian Policy Review Committee which was sort of an ad hoc, bicameral committee that got thrown together. My recollection is that this was in the wake of Dee Brown's publishing *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and Native American issues had bubbled up for the first time in a while, really since the '50s. Oregon has a significant Native American presence, both federally recognized tribes with reservations, federally recognized tribes without reservations, and tribes that once had been federally recognized and had been derecognized in the '50s. This was also in the context of various court rulings. I don't think it had gotten to the Supreme Court yet on Native American fishing rights and how treaty obligations between tribes and federal government trumped state fishing regulations, which pitted the tribes against the non-Indians interest.

Anyway in the wake of that commission and its recommendations, the Senate created the Select Committee on Indian Affairs, which survives to this day. Like all select committees it was originally created for two years and it just kept going. There were five members. Jim Abourezk was the chairman, Senator [Daniel] Inouye was on it ,and remains on it to this day. I forget the other Democrats. The two Republicans were Dewey Bartlett and Mark Hatfield. Mark Hatfield was the junior of the two. Bartlett was the ranking. But Hatfield got to appoint one staffer and he sent me over there. The minority staff on the Select Committee on Indian Affairs was just Outer Siberia. It was awful. It was August of '77 is my recollection. It was great to have a committee job; it was a little more money. I think it was the princely sum of twenty-four thousand dollars.

And it was no constituent mail, which was the Holy Grail of anybody in a personal office, to get away from the mail. But it was just mind-numbingly boring. The committee did very little and the minority staff of the committee did much less than very little.

RITCHIE: This was just after minority staff really got on under way in the mid 70's when the senators first got the chance to appoint people, and hadn't quite figured out how to deal with them.

KENNEDY: That's right. The minority staff hadn't figured out it had to be a minority staff. It was sort of like: Okay, they're in the majority. They've got the votes, they do the work I can occasionally make a suggestion but they can ignore me. Nobody had really gotten used to kicking up a fuss if they really wanted to.

RITCHIE: And you were physically separated from the majority offices?

KENNEDY: There were four of us on the minority staff: two professionals and two secretaries. We sat in one room, originally from the far northeast corner on the sixth floor of Dirksen, which was just as far away as you could get on the action. After some time there, we were moved even further away to what was then known as the Immigration Building, when the Immigration Service moved out of that and before the Capitol Police took it over.

RITCHIE: I had an office in that building. We used to call it steerage.

KENNEDY: Yes, people forgot that you existed. So that was not a real happy time. I was just thoroughly delighted when my friend Tom Imeson, who I mentioned earlier L.B. Day episode, Senator Hatfield appointed him to the minority staff to the Appropriations Committee on Energy and Water subcommittee—Public Works subcommittee in those days—and by the late fall of '79, Tom had decided that he wanted to go home to Oregon, and he did. He and his wife and two boys went home to Oregon, and he ran the Hatfield office in Portland for many years. And Senator Hatfield then moved me over to Appropriations. I felt like I had died and gone to Heaven. Everybody knew that was as good as it gets.

RITCHIE: Before we get into Appropriations, what's the relationship between a

senator's staff on a committee and the senator's own office? You had come out of Hatfield's office and you were Hatfield's person, but you were operating in a physically separate environment. Did you continue to have regular contact with Hatfield's office or were you pretty much an independent operator?

KENNEDY: Oh, no, I had regular contact with him. I wanted to, because at that time on the Indian Committee I felt so far removed from anything that was going on that I stayed in regular touch with the Hatfield people back in the personal office. And by then he had people on the Senate Rules Committee, and on Senate Energy. So, yes, was very much at regular continuous contact.

RITCHIE: And was he particularly active in the Indian Committee? Did you keep abreast on everything?

KENNEDY: Well, he always came to the hearings. He certainly came to the infrequent mark-ups. But the committee itself wasn't all that active. I can't really recall now how much in the way of hearings and the like we did, but it seemed to me that we weren't all that busy.

RITCHIE: I knew someone who worked for Clifford Case as a minority staff member on a committee that Case wasn't particularly interested in and Case would see him coming down the hall and turn the other way because he didn't want to have to deal with him.

KENNEDY: [laughs] No, but I gave Hatfield regular memos of what was going on kind of stuff and he would dutifully show up and do what he needed to do. There was a time when it sort of caught the attention of a lot of people, the Umatilla Indian Reservation out in Eastern Oregon is one of the several reservations throughout the country where, again this was in the '50s is my recollection, individual tribal members were authorized to "sell" their allotments. Even though the reservation was universally held by every member of the tribe, at some point a scheme was concocted so that individual members of the tribe could sell parcels of land. A lot of them did so because they were all desperately poor. So you had a whole lot of non-Indian folks living within the borders of the reservation, but their piece was no longer tribal land. There arose, and there continue to arise, issues of legal jurisdiction and to tribal police jurisdiction over

non-tribal members.

Senator Hatfield introduced some legislation that asserted tribal jurisdiction. Things really hit the fan out there in eastern Oregon, specifically in the town of Pendleton, and we had to have a field hearing. Gerry Frank, the AA, dispatched what he felt to be cooler heads than mine to go out there and sit with these folks and try to calm them down. So yes, he did pay attention to these things. Over the years Senator Hatfield did a number of very good things for Native American tribes in Oregon. He and Les AuCoin, a Congressman from Oregon at the time, worked together on legislation to restore federal recognition for several smaller tribes over in western Oregon, in the valley and the coastal tribes on the west side of the Cascades. Those were not easy things to do because there was a lot of hostility to Native Americans at the time. Reclaiming federal recognition and carving out a chunk of land that could be called their reservation was a fairly big deal.

RITCHIE: Well, there's clearly a lot of history involved in everything that you were dealing with Indians. How did you prepare yourself to do a job like that? Do you recall what you did when you moved to that committee?

KENNEDY: Oh, good question. I did a fair amount of reading. I read *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and I read other polemics about that situation. And the people I was working with on the committee, particularly people on the majority staff committee, were folks who had been involved in Native American issues for a long time. I learned a lot from them. Pat Zell, the woman who is Senator Inouye's chief counsel on the committee now was then a member with the majority staff of the committee. I learned a lot from her.

RITCHIE: The chairman was Senator Abourezk, who had a reputation for being irascible. What was he like to work with?

KENNEDY: Oh, he was fun. He was a lot of fun. I wouldn't think of him as irascible, really, but he was unconventional. He didn't fit nicely into the Senate mold. Once upon a time I had a wonderful picture of Jim Abourezk sitting in a green army uniform with Fidel Castro, also in a green army uniform, both of them puffing on enormous cigars. Abourezk was a member of the Judiciary Committee and interestingly

enough had a good relationship with the then chairman Jim Eastland, maybe it all revolved around good Cuban cigars, I don't know. But when Abourezk left, and my recollection was that he was only here one term, he decided he wasn't going to run again. Wasn't going to bother with it. He had a big reception down in the big hearing room in Dirksen. He stood by the front door shaking everybody's hands and he had a big lapel button on that read: "I'm getting the hell out of this chickenshit place". I could not believe that a United States Senator standing at the door of the hearing room sported that lapel button. We should probably wrap it up.

RITCHIE: All right, this is a good spot. We can pick it up and talk about the Appropriations Committee the next time. This is kind of fascinating for me since my own experiences here start about the same time, so it's very good to hear it from your perspective. I came here in 1976 but I was a graduate student living on Capitol Hill in the '70s, and went to the Watergate hearings and all that stuff. It was a heck of a time.

KENNEDY: It was fabulous.

RITCHIE: Now I look around here and most of the staff weren't even born then.

KENNEDY: Yes, but it's helpful to sit and reflect on all these things because it reminds me that I too was once twenty-four years old doing what these kids do.

End of the First Interview