



## EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

### INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT BATES

July 26, 2007  
Washington, D.C.

#### **Interviewer**

James Sterling Young

Index: page 30

© 2008 The Miller Center Foundation and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate

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

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

EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT BATES

July 26, 2007

**Young:** We are at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., for the second interview with Robert Bates. We've had an extensive conversation before the interview. I've gone over the previous interview, and I think this is one of the most valuable interviews we have in terms of getting the authentic picture of the times and the people, particularly Senator Kennedy.

Perhaps we could start out talking about the period when you were with Kennedy. You came in January of '69. The Senator's brother Jack [Kennedy] was in the grave going on six years. His brother was in the grave about six months at this point. Six months later, very close to a year after Robert's [Kennedy] death, there was the accident at Chappaquiddick. By the time you left—in 1977, was it?

**Bates:** Correct.

**Young:** Sixty-nine to '77. A lot of things happened during this time in civil rights and beyond civil rights. I'm interested in getting your window on those events over that period of time. You've talked about being the first black and the only black on the staff. You drew a very good, subtle picture of what the perspective was, what the world of Kennedy's office looked like from that perspective. You didn't talk much, though—other than the advance in D.C. with the schools and with Marion Barry and those people—about how connected he was with the aligned or prime activists: Clarence Mitchell, the people at the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and those who were around before he came to the Senate.

**Bates:** First of all, I appreciate the chance to continue discussing the time I was there. I came to the office on January 2, 1969, as a fellow of the American Political Science Association. Therein is another story that involves the Vice President.

**Young:** You told that.

**Bates:** I was on the phone yesterday with the office, because apparently [Richard] Cheney has issued a new biography, and his biography claims that he worked for Ted Kennedy. Kennedy's office called me yesterday, and they tracked me down as the possible source of this note. I had a great conversation with a young man named Eric [Mogilnicki].

**Young:** Yes, Eric's the Chief of Staff now.

**Bates:** I didn't realize that.

**Young:** He's been there, I guess, a little more than a year.

**Bates:** He said a year and a half. Anyway, he called me yesterday, and we had a nice chat about this episode with the Vice President.

**Young:** The readers of this transcript and the listeners to this second session will have to refer back to the first session to get the first part of this story. It's a wonderful story, and it's still going on.

**Bates:** Like the Saturday serials and the movies back in the day. In January of '69, the day I started as a fellow, on the 2nd, Kennedy was elected whip, and I think that was the beginning of his realization that he could ascend in the body itself. Up until this point, he had been a creature fashioned more by his brothers, and now they both were gone. I believe this was the beginning of his coming into his own. Of course he was jubilant, and the staff was pleased and excited. It was my first day on the job. There was a party that evening at his home, so I gathered up my wife, and we went out to his home in McLean. I thought, *Boy, this is great. This is going to be a great job.* You come to work, and then you go to parties. Of course it didn't turn out like that.

**Young:** He had beaten Russell Long.

**Bates:** He had beaten Russell Long, exactly. On the first day, there was no way for me to grasp what all this meant, but as the months unfolded, I could begin to see the development of the strength and the power that he would have at his disposal. He hired new staff just to work for the whip office, which included Wayne Owens, who I understand has died.

**Young:** Yes, he's dead.

**Bates:** Paul Kirk as well. Kennedy was hiring more people because he took over something called Administrative Practices, a subcommittee of Judiciary—AdPrac, as we called it. They had some great guys there, like Jim Flug and Tom Susman, and they could look into almost any aspect of Executive operations. At the time, I was unaware that no other blacks had worked for him on a professional level.

At that point, I called Kennedy "The Great White Hope," because since his brother had been killed in June and Dr. [Martin Luther] King had died in April, there was, particularly among blacks, a feeling that he ought to be the next President. In the months after January, I think this sense began to build. Then along came Chappaquiddick, and fate, if you will, ended that stride toward the Presidency, which may have been what he wanted—not the details of Chappaquiddick, but something to turn him away from striving for that position. After all, he had two brothers who did it, and look what happened to them. Why should he continue down that line?

I spent those first six months trying to get my sea legs, as it were, trying to figure out what I was supposed to do and how I was supposed to do it. I received no guidance, except the, “Atta-boys,” or, “Why the hell did you do that?” kind of thing. But it was all positive. Even though I was not always doing the right thing, I never felt rejected. I never felt that I was wrong. I saw myself as learning. It was a hell of a learning experience trying to figure out what to do and how to do it. Nobody said, “We want you to follow this path. We want you to deal with black folks.” Nobody said that. So I adopted it, I guess, as my own. I’m a native Washingtonian, so I also adopted a concern about how we could plug this guy into our city.

**Young:** He wasn’t plugged in then, was he?

**Bates:** He was not. I don’t think he was. There was no reason for him to have been. Bobby, as Attorney General, had been more involved with the city. When the burning happened after Dr. King’s assassination, people left the city alone. The city itself was almost like Detroit, the residential part of the city. I don’t know that he had been involved with the city prior to ’69.

**Young:** Did you get a sense in this or in other things that he was taking up Bobby’s causes, or was he proceeding on his own path?

**Bates:** I felt that he was proceeding on his own path. That’s the point I was making about his coming into his own as whip. My impression of him and his brothers is that they parachuted into these positions. Jack came in because of his father’s money and influence nationwide. Bobby, from Massachusetts, decided to run for the Senate in New York as a carpetbagger, if you will. Then Teddy came in after having put a guy in the Senate for two years to hold a seat for him, to wait until he became of age. I always had the sense that the family felt entitled to these positions, and he followed along with that. But getting elected to the whip position, he had to do it by himself. Papa couldn’t help him. The brothers were not around. I saw that as his first at bat, and he hit a homerun, as opposed to having had the family intervene in the past. I’m not sure that that’s the way it was.

**Young:** But from your perspective.

**Bates:** From my perspective, this is the first time they let him out of the house by himself, and he managed to come home all right at the end of the day and carry on.

**Young:** Before you were there, there was the Civil Rights Act of ’64. Kennedy was very junior at that time, and he wasn’t in the position, it seems to me, to make a major initiative of his own on this, though he did the poll tax and the 18-year-old vote. The establishment defeated him on the poll tax, but the Court found in his favor. That was all moving with the things his brother had started and that LBJ [Lyndon Baines Johnson] was carrying forward. He has indicated, long after the fact, that when he was defeated by [Robert] Byrd in ’71 for the whip position, that was probably the best thing that happened to him. *[laughter]* Times change.

**Bates:** Yes.

**Young:** Let's go back to the story. Was he well connected, or how was he connected with the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] folks and the organization people? Was he? Were they in and out of the office all the time?

**Bates:** Eventually, yes. Clarence Mitchell, as you mentioned, who was the NAACP representative and who was sometimes called the 101st Senator, was influential in the '70s for new civil rights legislation. But I saw Kennedy more tied in with Labor, and the NAACP was connected to Labor. A lot of the funding for the NAACP initiatives came from the Labor movement. I don't remember ever seeing Clarence without Joe Rauh. I had great respect for Clarence, but I always felt that he had this white man with him all the time, and this was his ticket into the halls of power. It takes nothing from Clarence. Once Clarence got in there, he was a bear, but there was Joe Rauh and there were a couple of other guys.

**Young:** Was Ralph Neas around at that time?

**Bates:** No, this was before Ralph.

**Young:** Wade Henderson?

**Bates:** No, these guys were younger. In '69/'70, there was Joe Rauh and maybe the woman who died, the reporter. She died last year, I think, Ellen something. She was with the garment workers.

**Young:** Doesn't ring a bell. So it was a Labor—

**Bates:** It was a Labor/NAACP thing at that point. The Urban League still had Whitney Young, and he showed up on a few instances.

Another interesting thing—and of course he was gone by then—was that Kennedy was impressed and awed, I think, by Dr. King. He had great respect for him. I remember going to events with Kennedy that featured awards or commemorations of Dr. King's work. I remember that we went to, I think, the Motion Picture Association downtown, and they showed a film of his speech at the Lincoln Memorial, the Senator loved it. It was as if he wished he could be as good an orator as King. I accompanied him at least once to Atlanta for events sponsored by Mrs. [Coretta] King. I don't know if you know it, but Dr. King's son was a page for Teddy one summer, Martin [Luther King III]. Marty, as we called him. Kennedy took up support for the King legacy in the '70s.

Kennedy was supportive of Andy Young. When Andy Young first ran for Congress, he lost the first time he ran. Ethel [Kennedy] held a fundraiser for him out at Hickory Hill, and the second time, of course, he was elected. Interestingly, Andy, after getting into Congress, was instrumental in working with blacks in Boston during the desegregation stuff.

**Young:** That's the first I've heard of it.

**Bates:** Yes. I went up to Boston with Andy a couple of times in order to work on Senate campaigns for Teddy.

**Young:** The '70 campaign.

**Bates:** What year did Andy get elected? I believe it was 1972.

**Young:** Ted was elected in '64 for the first full term.

**Bates:** I worked on his '70 campaign. Andy Young was not involved.

**Young:** He wasn't on that one. It was a later one.

**Bates:** It had to be '76.

**Young:** Okay.

**Bates:** Andy was involved with us in following the school desegregation order and in trying to cool things down.

**Young:** Did he assign you, or did you volunteer for connecting with the Boston folks?

**Bates:** Early on, that first six months, David Burke, Andy Vitale, do you know that name?

**Young:** Yes, I've heard it, but I don't know.

**Bates:** Andy was the hail-fellow-well-met type around the office, and he gave me the names of a couple of black folks in Boston whom he knew but who also apparently had had some contact with the Senator. They would say to me, "You need to get up to Boston and meet Otto Snowden and Muriel Snowden," for example.

**Young:** They were looking at the '70 campaign probably.

**Bates:** They were looking at the '70 campaign, right, because this was '69. Of course I was eager to do that and was looking forward to doing that. I wanted to be part of the flow of the black community in the city. It surprised me, the extent to which they weren't plugged in, that is, the extent to which the black community didn't take advantage of the fact that Ted Kennedy was its Senator. They weren't engaged in meeting with him when he would come home. He would come home every week almost. There were no meetings set up with him. I guess they thought that osmosis would cause him to do the right thing.

**Young:** You're talking about people in the local NAACP chapter?

**Bates:** No, I'm talking about the citizens here in D.C. D.C. is where politics began once we got home rule. The first thing we did was to elect a school board and a city council and the mayor. We were very much involved in local politics. It was a big thing. But that was new. This

happened after I became an adult. I assumed that in the states, folks were deeply engaged in what was happening with their elected officials. I learned quickly that they weren't. Most black folks had never even seen Teddy. They had never met him, never sat down with him to talk about what they thought ought to happen.

**Young:** And he never campaigned—

**Bates:** I don't imagine. He might have gone to a couple of churches, but I don't imagine so. So that was a surprise to me. I thought it was important to have him sit down with them in different settings. This was before the desegregation order came up, so it was just a matter, I thought, of having him meet with them. He was receptive to this. He eventually told me, "You need to have a couple of fundraisers for me in the black community. That is the way I can justify doing what I'm doing." So I went to the brothers and sisters, and, "Fine," we had some fundraisers. That was his initiative. That was his idea about the fundraisers. He told me that's what he thought I ought to do.

You said something when we were outside about why I didn't stay in politics. That's part of the reason, because after I got into the nitty gritty of it, I was somewhat turned off. Joe [Kennedy II], his nephew, fired me from a campaign in '76. I've forgotten what the incident was.

**Young:** I didn't know that. Tell me about that.

**Bates:** I've forgotten what the incident was. I forgot what triggered it.

**Young:** This was '76?

**Bates:** This had to be the election of '76, yes. I forgot what the incident was, but he fired me, and Teddy found out about it. We were together. Teddy wasn't involved. He wasn't present. Clearly the word got back to Teddy, so the next day we had a meeting, and this was with the black community, and the black folks were there when Joe did his ranting and raving or whatever it was. The next day, at this meeting that we apparently were putting together, the Senator made sure that I accompanied him as we came into the meeting. He had his arm around me and made it clear to the audience and to me that this was just a passing, fleeting incident and didn't have any meaning. I don't know what he said to Joe. We never talked about it. I did or said something that Joe did not like.

**Young:** Like not being 200 percent?

**Bates:** I must have rejected something that he wanted to do. I don't remember what it was. I never felt threatened, but I figured, okay, all right. I did nothing. I was working on the campaign in Boston, and I think I had been up there for a week or two, and I was tired, so I went back to the hotel and went to bed, I believe. The next day, Teddy acted as if that incident had never happened.

**Young:** But it made up your mind, that alone, to leave politics?

**Bates:** Not that alone. I almost got into a fight one time in the city. Yes, it must have been a hell of a campaign. It must have been in the same campaign. There was a black guy who wanted something, and I had whatever he wanted, and I didn't want to give it to him. I had some money. I had some cash. I don't know what he wanted it for, but I determined that I wasn't going to give it to him. I had a couple of guys who were clearly on my side, and this guy stepped up and physically drew back and was ready to swing. I was so shocked. I wasn't frightened. I just couldn't imagine. "This is not life and death. This is just a campaign." I often think about that today.

**Young:** Was this a black guy?

**Bates:** Yes, a black guy. We were out in Roxbury. At that time, we had what they call "walking around money," WAM, and I had a pocket full of money, and I was using it the way I thought it ought to be used.

**Young:** How were you using it?

**Bates:** Mainly we were buying taxi fares and buying soft drinks and stuff like that, to get people to the polls and to have meetings. It was mainly for transportation, getting people back and forth to the polls, which I loved. I loved doing that. That was a lot of fun. These were mainly older people, who you knew would vote—and of course would vote for Teddy. The rawness of the process turned me off more than anything else. I enjoyed the give and take of the legislative process. I liked that. I liked what you had to do in order to get support for whatever initiative you wanted to push through. I didn't like the meanness that I saw in the '80 Presidential campaign.

**Young:** Yes. Talk a little bit about that.

**Bates:** The same thing I was mentioning about what I considered the northern elitist attitude toward this southerner and an upstart. "We know it all, and you don't know anything." I saw that throughout—less so with him but more so with my colleagues, the rest of the folks who were on the staff, the way they would go after [Jimmy] Carter. Part of this, of course, was competition. This is who you have to beat, so you do what you can to beat him. I still felt that it was elitist and condescending.

**Young:** Kind of condescending.

**Bates:** It was very condescending, absolutely.

**Young:** Carter came from nowhere and beat all the Democrats in Washington who thought they ought to be President.

**Bates:** Exactly, yes.

**Young:** I don't know what these two men thought of each other, Carter and Kennedy. Carter had a good support rating in Congress, and Kennedy was with him on a lot of issues. They had a



difference of opinion on health care, but I don't know whether that was the symptom or the cause of their parting ways. Weren't a lot of black folks for Carter?

**Bates:** Absolutely.

**Young:** With Kennedy running against him, when it came to that, it must have been a split.

**Bates:** I think Coretta and Andy Young got Carter over for black voters. It's not unlike the dynamics between Hillary [Clinton] and [Barack] Obama. The blacks who support Hillary do so primarily because they worked for Bill [Clinton]. There was some connection with Bill. That makes perfect sense. But those of us who support Obama are doing it because we love Obama. I think the same kind of dynamic existed with Carter. I was supporting Teddy because my life had been built around Teddy, but here we were in competition with this guy from the South. I did not like the engagement and the way we had engaged that battle. I thought that was beneath my Senator, and it certainly wasn't the way I would have wanted to do it.

**Young:** You had left the staff.

**Bates:** I had left the staff. I was working for Mobil, and I took a leave from Mobil.

**Young:** Who asked you to do that? Did Ted?

**Bates:** I asked to come. I came to Paul Kirk and asked him if I could get on the Presidential campaign, and he said yes. In November of 1979, I left the company and went to work for the campaign.

**Young:** Where did you do most of your work?

**Bates:** I was right here in town, in D.C.

**Young:** So you weren't out?

**Bates:** I did go out, but not often.

**Young:** To Indiana or Iowa?

**Bates:** I did a little bit in Massachusetts but mainly here and in Maryland. I even remember going to a meeting in Las Vegas. I don't remember what that was about. I was on the campaign staff for only two months. In January I was back at Mobil, because I got turned off again. Interestingly they brought in Ron Brown. Peter Edelman, I remember, came to me one day and said that we had brought Ron Brown in to be the top Negro, as it were. Ron and I were friends, and I felt, *Boy, this is great*. Ron is a good guy. The staff presented it as, "Bates, we have our guy. We don't need you." Fortunately I had a job, and so I didn't have to deal with that either, but even before Ron came on the scene, it wasn't a comfortable involvement.

**Young:** There was a clash even among the campaign staff. There was Jerry Doherty going out there and the other guys out there, and they—

**Bates:** It was not to be. He was not to be President. He had no business running. The interview with Roger Mudd showed that he certainly wasn't up to it, and I think it permeated down through the staff. I was working for a guy who obviously was not totally committed to this thing that I thought he was committed to and that I would have loved to see him do. It couldn't work.

**Young:** He kept at it even after it was clear that he was not going to get the votes, he was not going to get the nomination, and that Carter had those votes. He kept at it and gave maybe the best speech of the campaign on the floor of the Democratic Convention.

**Bates:** That's because, by that time, he knew what he wanted to do. Up until that time, he was doing the bidding of all these minions running around him.

**Young:** You mean he got the Presidential ambition during the campaign?

**Bates:** He never got it. He never had it. He knew what role he wanted in all of this by that time, by the time he made that speech. Up to that time, he was the puppet. He was doing what everybody else wanted him to do, which he didn't want to do. His marriage was falling apart. He had all this crap going on. He did not want to be President, I think.

**Young:** So that speech was—

**Bates:** That speech was finally Teddy. That was finally what Teddy wanted, and it was a vision for the world, for the country. It was a vision for Ted Kennedy. It was his thoughts about the way he felt the country ought to be.

**Young:** The dream shall not die.

**Bates:** The dream shall not die.

**Young:** That's the program for the future.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** There are a couple of theories about when Ted Kennedy really became a Senator.

**Bates:** When he became Ted Kennedy.

**Young:** Some people say that he became a real legislator when he lost the Presidency. Yet I don't think the evidence is clear on that. I think there are some indications early on that the Senate was his thing. Of course his brother had been President. His other brother was Attorney General. Maybe the Senate would be his way of going. Then fate intervened, and both his brothers were out of the picture. So I don't know. There's some speculation about this among

people who write about Kennedy, who say he had to lose before he could—I'm not sure of that. What do you think?

**Bates:** I think so.

**Young:** Of course, in '84 the wheels were turning again.

**Bates:** I think so. I think that the '80 campaign was a turning point for him. My short observation of the campaign led me to believe that this was not his campaign. This was not him. He was being driven by those around him, and I picked that up right away. I went there early in November, and before Christmas I had contacted the company and had asked to come back, and they said, "Fine, come back anytime you want." Right after the first of the year, I came back.

**Young:** Did you ever travel with him on the campaign?

**Bates:** No.

**Young:** Your connections with people on the campaign brought this conclusion to you, to that? Were some of them fighting over what he ought to do?

**Bates:** Right. Who was out of Chicago, his brother-in-law?

**Young:** Steve Smith.

**Bates:** Steve Smith. We were like oil and water. I remember having a big argument with him in his office, and I said to myself, "I don't need this. Who needs this?" I realized early on that it was not for me. I realized early on that it was not for him either.

**Young:** Paul Kirk was much involved in that campaign.

**Bates:** Yes, he was.

**Young:** I'm not sure what their counsel was when it came up, as to whether he should run or not. I think there were some people who thought it wasn't a good idea, but as long as they were in it, they'd do their best.

**Bates:** Yes, right. You have to. Jesse Jackson ran, remember? I got involved with his campaign while I was working for Mobil. He even came to me and asked me to take the role that Ron Brown eventually took, and I said no. But when I said it, it was a selfish thing. I was working for Mobil. I was making more money than I had ever made, and I didn't see any reason to take a risk to do that. But I can see why people do what they do. How many of your friends run for President and perhaps have a chance of getting elected? The way we produce these kings, we tie ourselves to them, and we get our own little egos caught up in them.

**Young:** You were thinking about the political education of Ted Kennedy over the years—where he started, where he came from. Of course his political education began long before he got in the Senate. I think it started in 1936, four years after he was born.

**Bates:** It was almost in the blood.

**Young:** Right. His grandfather, Honey Fitz [John F. Fitzgerald], his mother's father, Ted says, as a kid, when he was in school, he used to—Honey Fitz was the first Irish mayor of Boston, and I think Teddy would spend Sundays with him. Honey Fitz would take him all over Boston. He was very interested. He was close to the man, and I think a case could be made that that's where he got a feel for politics. Honey Fitz used to take him around all the neighborhoods, telling him the history of the Irish immigrants, and take him all over. He knew everybody, and Ted was a young kid who was fascinated with it. It was an education. He saw people, and he saw politics in the way that his father's people weren't. They didn't have any connection.

**Bates:** His brothers didn't get it either.

**Young:** His brothers didn't have that experience.

**Bates:** Because the grandfather was not mayor.

**Young:** This was after his grandfather was mayor, but he still might have been. He still knew everybody in Boston—and their cousin and their brother and their mother. It was a fascinating opening to the world of Boston politics, I think, to a young kid, and it was the street politics and the city politics. It was that kind of thing. It was high politics within the family, and it was talked about at least. These were the Irish and Italians and blacks and so forth in that early picture for him. But I'm thinking about the occasions in his life where circumstances brought him into personal contact with blacks other than a random individual, but in situations. I think the Army was one of them, when he went in the Army.

**Bates:** Milt Gwirtzman told me about the experience he had in the Army.

**Young:** That was the first year the Army was integrated.

**Bates:** Oh, was it?

**Young:** Yes. He trained in Georgia for the MPs [Military Police].

**Bates:** Is that right?

**Young:** Fort Gordon, in Augusta, and there were blacks in the unit. This is in the middle of the Deep South, which is interesting.

**Bates:** Fifty?

**Young:** Fifty-one. But once he's in the Senate, that is, connecting with black folks where they live, who they are, and not just talking about policy, he went to Jackson, Mississippi, in 1966. I think it was the convention of the—

**Bates:** The Leadership Conference.

**Young:** I'm not sure. Martin Luther King was there. But in '66, in Jackson, Mississippi, they were holding a convention. Taylor Branch has written a lot about the civil rights, and he describes the situation there, that the hostility—

**Bates:** Kennedy did?

**Young:** No, Taylor Branch in his book. It was really something. They flew in there. Dr. King and his wife were afraid that something would happen to them. They got in the car and brought him from the airport to the convention. They had some police escort, which was disabled because they threw roofing nails all over the road. So they had no police escort, but they got him to the hotel. That's pretty hairy. There was a lot of agitation outside in the hall. He gave quite a speech there. Dr. King introduced him, and after the speech, they were afraid, so they drove him back out to the airport in the dark of night. Taylor describes this, and I had the text to the speech, and I thought this must be burned in his memory, 1966, three years after his brother Jack was killed. But it's not there.

**Bates:** You're kidding?

**Young:** No. That was one, and I'm trying to think, was this it? What was your impression? Another time, in 1969 or '70, he started interacting with the blacks in Washington, and you knew about that. Then there was the Memphis talk. He went to Memphis. You were the advance for that, and that was another hairy situation.

**Bates:** It was hairy, because he was coming from Florida. Dave Burke was with him and, I think, Dick Drayne, the press guy, who is now dead. This was April of '69. I had just come to work for him in January, and I was asked to go out there and be the contact, to let him know when to come into the city. I was on the job three months, four months, and I was saying to myself, "You have to pay attention to what is going on." I was introduced to the chief of police or some police official who refused to shake my hand, and I was brought into an area outdoors where he was supposed to speak, and there were people out in the street. They were all black people, because this was the year after King had been killed. We could hear gunshots in the streets, and I don't know what that was.

Then I got a call from Dave Burke, "We're at the airport. When should we come in to town?" I said, "Well, there's somewhat of a disturbance right now. I guess you can hear the gunshots." He wanted to know something about the police, and I said, "I've met the police, whoever this person is, but I don't know that we can depend on him, because they're not being responsive to me."

**Young:** They didn't want him there.

**Bates:** Of course they didn't want him there. But he came on in, and he gave a great speech, and the crowd loved it. When he got through, we turned around and he went back out to the airport. I didn't go with him. I came home separately. But it worked fine. Having had an experience like that, you begin to think you can almost do anything you want to do with this guy because he'll come through it somehow. I started calling him "Steady Teddy" because we would go into situations and you could depend on him to produce a good result just by showing up. I could depend on him to have the right reaction when it came to black folks. Simple things. I think I told you the example about Jesse Jackson and the watermelon.

**Young:** Yes.

**Bates:** What white man from Boston would even be aware that that's an issue? But he was.

**Young:** He got it.

**Bates:** He got it, yes.

**Young:** I'm interested in how he got it.

**Bates:** I don't know how he got it. Angelique Voutselas was his secretary at the time. Is she still alive?

**Young:** I don't know.

**Bates:** Is that right? You've heard her name?

**Young:** Oh, yes.

**Bates:** She was the one who told me, because she had ordered his lunch for that event. The dessert for that day was watermelon, and she told me, "You should know that when your Senator heard that it was watermelon, he turned it down because Jesse Jackson was with him for lunch." I don't know how he got it. Have you asked him?

**Young:** I haven't put it in that way. This is not quite the way he thinks, but it's evident in what he says that when it came to his hometown of Boston, it had a powerful effect on him. It wasn't so much in terms of getting it with the blacks. It was such a powerful demonstration of whites and what racism can do.

**Bates:** Is that right?

**Young:** He wasn't in the South. He didn't know that the violence is just below the surface and what could spring it out. I think that was a shocking experience for him. You could know it in your head, but—you said a moment ago, Steady Teddy, you could count on him to produce a good result. That didn't happen in Boston, did it?

**Bates:** No, it didn't. That's my experience with him around the rest of the country. Everywhere else I went with him, that was my experience. In Boston they kicked his ass, but that's because he's theirs. They elected him. I've heard the same thing about Obama almost and Jesse Jackson in Chicago—more about Jesse than Obama. The people in Chicago see Jesse as their own. "This son of a bitch. This is mine. So, damn right." They have a completely different way of looking at him. The same thing happened with Teddy in Boston.

**Young:** But he stuck to it. Then he's the traitor; he's betrayed them.

**Bates:** The whites.

**Young:** Yes, the whites.

**Bates:** Of course, and that's why I call him Steady Teddy, because I could imagine a lesser man saying, "The hell with this," and just backing off or something. But Teddy hung in there.

The other thing I found interesting about your asking me to participate in this a second time is that I had a reaction when she called the day before yesterday. I was reacting to wanting to interview me to talk about civil rights and his involvement and the busing. He was not that involved. So for the project to say to me, "We want you to come down, and we want to do a second review of his involvement," I was almost ready to say, "You've heard it all." You haven't heard it all, but he wasn't that involved.

I was the one. I was on vacation in Cape Cod with my family the week before school opened. On Friday, I guess, Eddie Martin called me up on the Cape and said, "We want you here Monday morning when school opens." So I had to—I guess we drove back to D.C., deposit my family, get on a plane, and get back up there Sunday night. He didn't have anything to do with it. They said, "We want you to be out there," so I went out there, and I hooked up with my friends Percy Wilson, Otto Snowden, and Ellen Jackson. These were the community leaders organizing students and parents to enter school in South Boston.

The role of the adults was to get on the buses in Roxbury, ride into South Boston, and then stay down there. We'd come back to the city and then go back down there at three o'clock and come back—no guidance, no instruction, nothing from Eddie Martin or the Senator. Just go up there, and if you come back, you can tell us what happened, but if you don't come back—so this thing about his involvement, the incident with the flag, and the incident out in front of the Federal Building, that's his involvement with busing. What committed me even more to him, though, was that publicly, he didn't back off of his position.

**Young:** Yes, that's right.

**Bates:** That's the story, because even in the office here in D.C., people used to say to me, "Why do you support busing when the Senator is sending his kids to private school? How can you, as a black man, support him?" I said, "Because he can afford it. But more important, here is a powerful figure who is doing something that I think is important for my people. That's why I'm supporting him. He doesn't have to do this. He could back off. He doesn't have to be involved."

That's my commitment to him, because here is this engine, here is this force in the presence of Ted Kennedy, who is doing what I think is important not just for black folks but for the country." I felt it was important to make the statement that his involvement with busing, per se, is not the big thing. His involvement is being the power that he is on the Hill. This is a hell of a distorted comparison, but it's almost like [George W.] Bush on the war. Bush doesn't back off the war, regardless. Teddy didn't back off of decency.

**Young:** The word "commitment" is more the right word than involvement.

**Bates:** Commitment, right, precisely.

**Young:** When I look back on it, there were a lot of people who were deeply involved in it. There was Louise Day Hicks on that side. He was a Senator. How did you get involved in this? You worked for a Senator. You do that when you have it all sorted. There was [Michael] Dukakis; there was Louise Day Hicks; there was Judge [Wendell Arthur] Garrity and all of this. It came to be in the hands of the courts.

After Judge Garrity's order came down in the spring or in the summer, the fat was in the fire. There had been a referendum [inaudible—1:00:40], and they were going to do away with the Racial Imbalance Act. It seems to me that—leave aside the fact that he wasn't a player on the scene—things had already polarized so much that I couldn't imagine what he could do about it. But he came down on the right side, he wasn't deterred, and he got involved in the sense that he didn't go off and do something else.

**Bates:** Right. He also got involved with the U.S. Department of Justice. The CRS, the Community Relations Service, was very much involved. They were on the ground representing the feds, and he made the appeal to them to be involved. They would have done it anyway, but it was clear that he was concerned enough to make his presence known to the Justice Department.

**Young:** Was Stan Pottinger?

**Bates:** Yes. But there were also folks in Boston who lived there. Employees of Justice were sent up there, but there were people there. I gave Beatriz [Swerdlow], the day before yesterday, a list of names. She shared that with you?

**Young:** Yes.

**Bates:** I got those names from two fellows who are here in D.C. now but who were in Boston then. We were close with each other. The first time I was asked to interview, I called both of them, and they gave me these names, because they were up there, and they were on the ground dealing day to day with the mayor at that time.

**Young:** Were they federal people?

**Bates:** No. Percy Wilson was running a community organization called the Roxbury Multi Service Center.



**Young:** Yes, I remember.

**Bates:** Percy was running a community center.

**Young:** She's been on the phone to them.

**Bates:** That's what she said. The other guy is Rudy Pierce. Rudy eventually became a judge, then he left the judgeship, and he's now in a law firm. He's getting ready to retire, but he's here in D.C. They had names. I dropped in and dropped out of the Boston scene, but they were there every day throughout the years that this was going on. They knew a heck of a lot more of the players. I know the names that they gave me, but I certainly didn't know the extent to which these other folks were involved. You may not get a whole lot about Kennedy's involvement. Again, that's the message I want to give you, that when you talk to these people, they are not likely to tell you how much Kennedy was involved.

**Young:** Yes, I understand that. As part of this oral history, although people hear Kennedy's voice and his account of this, which is fairly extensive, I thought it might be useful to get the perspective of people who were more directly involved, so that when historians put the history together later on—I'm not writing the book—they will get a sense of the view from the bottom up on this, because that's one of the major incidents around the country if you lived in Chicago, Detroit, or other places.

**Bates:** Everywhere.

**Young:** I think it was particularly telling of him because Boston is where the abolitionist movement is, and that's why it's my city. It's all of this.

**Bates:** And the first public schools.

**Young:** Yes, and look, it's a shame. You had a lot to say about the city of Boston.

**Bates:** Tell me about it. David Burke used to call it "the conservative city that knows it has to be liberal," which is fascinating.

**Young:** You went to some of the reunion parties, but I take it you haven't gotten a lot of calls from him, as you know, his advisor, asking you about this occasion. You're watching from the outside. The perspective is from the outside now. We talked about how he keeps going and so on. You said, "He's there because he's there." That's his thing. When he was running, he went to vote for himself in the last election out there, and somebody asked him what he—he said, "I figure, if I stick with it long enough, I'll get the hang of it."

**Bates:** I'll figure out how to do it. *[laughter]*

**Young:** Would you guess that he's a changed man in any way over these years? I'm asking you to guess. Is he the same?

**Bates:** Is he a changed man? Steady Teddy? No, he's not changed. My wife, interestingly, just yesterday was involved with her high school class reunion preparations, and she met with a classmate. My wife is from Nashville, and she met with a classmate who is here in D.C. She hadn't seen this woman for 30 years or something. She was telling me how much the woman hasn't changed. Apparently they were on the phone with some other classmates yesterday, and she was saying the same thing: they haven't changed. I said, "People learn to perfect their imperfections." That's the way I look at Kennedy. He has perfected his, I'll call it commitment, if you will, his tenacity. Some people might call it stubbornness, but perseverance is what it is.

**Young:** Perseverance and tenacity is what I think.

**Bates:** It's perseverance. He must have had that as a younger man, and he's built on it. He's had to have built on it, because why would you continue to be a member of the United States Senate when you could go off and do almost anything you might choose to do? I think he's found his way in life, and he realizes what he's supposed to do. I don't think he's changed. I think he's perfected his imperfections.

**Young:** I guess he's also at home in the Senate.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** Knowing something about some other people for whom it was home. The electorate doesn't give many people a chance these days. I think it's home to Bob Byrd.

**Bates:** Fred Thompson is an example of somebody for whom it was not home.

**Young:** That's right. I think it was home for Richard Russell.

**Bates:** For Russell, [Herman] Talmadge.

**Young:** In fact Byrd says he was married. The Senate was his wife.

**Bates:** Oh, did he?

**Young:** He was married to the Senate. He had no children.

**Bates:** I guess that's understandable.

**Young:** He also has the safest seat of them all.

**Bates:** Byrd?

**Young:** No. Well, after Byrd, Kennedy.

**Bates:** Oh, you mean Kennedy. Yes, right.

**Young:** He has the chance to be persistent. I think that's a great advantage to him, that he's heard all this before. That's why I used the word "commitment" before. There are certain commitments he makes, and they don't change much. He's changed his mind on some issues. He used to have the standard Catholic position on abortion, for example. He's changed that. He didn't come naturally, I think, to women's rights any more than he came naturally to black people's rights. But when he did, they stuck. They connected with his purpose in life. That's very much involved with his purpose in life, his public service, and being in the Senate and doing something. I think that strain ran deeply in his family. I think it came from way back.

**Bates:** Would you say he's changed?

**Young:** I'm not sure. The amazing thing to me is that he doesn't seem to get tired. He still runs circles.

**Bates:** That's right.

**Young:** And that bag still comes home.

**Bates:** Yes, right.

**Young:** It has to be in your blood for you to do that. But I don't think it's power for power's sake. He doesn't need that. He doesn't need to be somebody.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** He *is* somebody. He doesn't need to run for reelection the minute he gets there. I was interested in your comment in the previous interview, that he said he's still doing the same old thing. I was intrigued by that, the same old NAACP thing, you said. You said that the world has changed, and even the blacks have changed. That's your statement. Of course it has, and I'd like to hear more from you about that, as the observer, not only in relation to Kennedy, but have the issues that forged his commitment, have the blacks now gone beyond that? School segregation and busing is out of it and so forth. Hispanics are very much in the picture. There were language minorities, but that started way back. In the political sense, how have the blacks changed? Is the politics no longer as important to them as other things?

**Bates:** It's more important, because a larger slice of our population has access to politics. There's a gap between the haves and have nots, those of use who are "affluent" versus those who are not. Dick Drayne was the guy's name I'd forgotten. Dick was the in-house racist, except that he wasn't racist. He would voice things to me. For example, when I accepted the offer to work for Mobil, the announcement was made in the office at some point, but I was still hanging around. One day he came up to me and said, "Has oil turned black yet?" He wanted to know if I really was going to Mobil. Those are the kinds of things that he would do. The point is that blacks have more opportunities to be involved in more of our society.

When I got the chance to go to Mobil, Andy Young was still in the Congress. I was first interviewed by API [American Petroleum Institute], which is the trade association. Andy Vitale, the guy I was telling you about, had gone to API. Andy called me and said they had an opening and would I come over to interview and so on and so forth. I told Andy Young that I had an opportunity to work for the oil industry, and I was seeking his advice. He said, “No way. You know how tough that industry has been on our people. No, you stay away from them. Don’t do that.” That wasn’t what I wanted to hear, because I thought it was an exciting opportunity, and I was disappointed that he didn’t support my view.

A week or two later, at some point later, I came back to him with it or he called me. He said, “Bob, I was wrong. We need to have good people everywhere throughout our society. We need to have our folk involved in as much of America’s institutions and commercial enterprises as anybody else.” That made me feel better. It also made it easier for me to figure out how to fit into this new career. I’m saying all that in order to say that we blacks are now into more places than we’ve ever been.

The other thing that you come to realize, of course, is that we’re all people, and we all have our flaws and our sins and our weaknesses. We screw up mightily. You get this guy Michael Vick and the dogs, but then you pick up the paper and you find Scooter [I. Lewis] Libby, or you find this guy out here in Maryland who just confessed yesterday that, as a state senator, he was taking bribes. So for blacks, as long as there was a system that oppressed us officially, we took on a sense of being pure at heart. We were oppressed, but we wouldn’t do anything like that. We wouldn’t perpetrate these kinds of crimes. We would be decent to our fellows. We would be caring. Bullshit. Who did the killing in Rwanda? It was blacks on blacks. Look at Darfur. That’s no different than Bosnia. Look at the Middle East.

On the one hand, we blacks are coming to understand our place in the world as being no different than the place of any other group in the world. But specifically in this country, we have three black CEOs [Chief Executive Officer] of American Express, Merrill Lynch, and Time Warner. We have a black woman billionaire in Oprah [Winfrey]. You have a black man who, God willing, could be President. It’s a different day. It’s a new day.

**Young:** Is Kennedy irrelevant now?

**Bates:** Is Kennedy irrelevant? Hell no.

**Young:** When you say that he’s still doing the old NAACP thing and the world has changed, is he stuck in neutral?

**Bates:** No.

**Young:** Or has he moved too?

**Bates:** He has shifted somewhat with the times, but he’s like Bob Byrd. Bob Byrd is what, 87, 88, or whatever? He isn’t going to change. Teddy’s not going to change. I described one slice of black life. The majority of black folks are still shooting the shit out of each other; we have the

highest rates of AIDS [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome]; we have the highest rates of TB [Tuberculosis]; we have prostate cancer at a higher rate than other folks; we have high blood pressure; we have cardiac problems. So Teddy's there trying to work out a deal for health care.

When I worked for him, I did the gun control legislation. We put two bills in. The first bill, we got four votes. The second bill, we doubled it; we got eight votes. I must say that I haven't heard him say much more about gun control in all these years since then. I guess I haven't thought much about it, but I haven't heard about his involvement with gun control. I can't imagine that those two votes are what turned him off. I imagine that it's more his maturity in the legislative process. I'd like to see him get back into gun control because we're doing the opposite in our society with guns. This thing down at Virginia Tech, the response from some folks is, "You should give the students and the teachers guns."

**Young:** That's right.

**Bates:** What is that? Is this a civilized nation? I would like to see him more involved. It seems to me that he has more bona fides in that area than anybody else.

**Young:** He gave an address at the National Rifle Association convention. Were you working for him at this time?

**Bates:** When?

**Young:** No, I don't think this is recently. It was quite a while ago, and John Dingell—

**Bates:** Right. Dingell has always been a member of the NRA [National Rifle Association].

**Young:** Pro-hunting. I don't know how he got invited to give an address to NRA, but it was one of his—

**Bates:** Major.

**Young:** Yes, it was—this shouldn't be on the tape, because Congressman John Dingell didn't speak to him.

**Bates:** [laughs] Today?

**Young:** For eight years or something.

**Bates:** Is that right?

**Young:** His wife, Vicki [Reggie Kennedy], is actively involved.

**Bates:** Yes, she is. She's with the [James] Brady Commission.

**Young:** Yes, with the Brady—guns and kids or something is her part of that.

**Bates:** I contribute to the Brady campaign. I'd like to see him get back on that, although I can understand why he wouldn't. But no, I don't think he's changed. I think he has perfected his commitment, and he's solid. He has to be the rock, and he is.

**Young:** The people who will be looking over his career, writing, I think, will and should say a lot about the consistency of his principles.

**Bates:** Of his positions.

**Young:** They should also say something about his ability to take half a loaf if he can't get a whole one.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** I once asked Ken Galbraith—he was on his last legs—I said, “Is Kennedy really a liberal?” Galbraith said, “He's as liberal as he can be and still be effective.”

**Bates:** That's very good.

**Young:** You get these split images of Kennedy. He's the poster boy for the liberal icon, and he provides a lot of red meat to the right wing and so forth. But when you look at him in the Senate and when you talk with Republicans in the Senate, that's not what—

**Bates:** Of course not.

**Young:** He has a lot of respect for them. I think the record would show that on most of the major initiatives, he always starts out by finding people on the other side of the aisle. I don't know how the history is going to read when it's all over, whether it's that he's the failed liberal—one of my colleagues, when I was talking about this project, said, “Well, the theme of this project will be the failure of liberalism.” Of course he must be thinking capital L. I don't know, but I didn't think that would appeal to Senator Kennedy to say, “We're going to figure out why you failed.” But he is persistent, so I assume it's pretty deep within, the motivation to improve life. Basically that's it: health, welfare, and happiness. It's very deep in him, perhaps even more so than it was in his brothers. I don't know. It's very personal with him.

**Bates:** You have to put him in the context of the present Senate too. He was elected in 1962, and you had [Hubert] Humphrey and the Senators from Georgia Herman Talmadge and Richard Russell and [J. William] Fulbright from Arkansas, while you also had Jacob Javits from New York and Everett McKinley Dirksen from Illinois. What I'm trying to get at is, the Senate was not nearly as polarized as it is today. You had so-called liberals, or at least progressives, on both sides, and you had the conservatives on both sides. The conservatives were the southern Senators. Most of the Senators from the North, regardless of whether they were Republican or Democrat, were considered progressive or moderate.

**Young:** Moderates, some more liberal.

**Bates:** Right. This is another reason why I say that he hasn't changed. Here he is now, in this body that is so at each other's throat, recrimination after recrimination, and he's still plodding along, doing the same stuff that deals with the basics of life and still reaching out to those groups that are trying to protect and support life. Yet he could have fallen. But just as you said, he has reached over to the other side, and he has tried to encourage those who initially oppose him to be part of a program that he can succeed with.

**Young:** What do you think of the idea that, in the practical sense, he refers to an alliance as a "coalition"? "Let's talk about what we can agree on," and you work from that, and you build on that. He can give some mighty, fire-breathing speeches, but he's also a reconciler. Isn't he sometimes? He tries to reconcile one side with the other in order to get them on the same page. Wasn't that what he was trying to do in Boston, put calm on the water? That was his intention, but it didn't turn out that way. People weren't listening to reason. That was a polarized situation in Boston.

**Bates:** Yes, but I—

**Young:** You don't think so.

**Bates:** I listened to what you said earlier about how soft he was, and I see him as wanting to shed that part of Boston rather than reconcile it.

**Young:** On that, you're right. I agree. No, I meant in the operational situation.

**Bates:** Right, okay. Maybe, but as much as I've praised the man, he's still a human, and he wants to win, and he's used to winning. When I was with him, I always felt that, dammit, you have to figure out a way to win. I never felt like it was reconciliation when we were engaged in legislative stuff. I used to play tennis with him. He would call me up the night before, and he'd say, "Meet me tomorrow morning at seven o'clock at the house." When he was living in McLean, he had a tennis court. That son of a bitch used to cheat. But it was benign.

**Young:** Better there.

**Bates:** Yes, right. Still, it was a sense of entitlement, that "I have to win. Almost no matter what, I have to win." That's the way I felt about working for him. "Don't come up short. Don't come up and tell me you can't do it or that you didn't finish it. I expect to get it done." I would not call him a reconciler.

**Young:** Okay, all right.

**Bates:** That's a personal view. You may get some other folks who will buy your view.

**Young:** No. I think I put it wrong. He's a peacemaker more than a war maker. I'm thinking about North Ireland.

**Bates:** All right. I see what you're saying. Yes, okay.

**Young:** Maybe that's not the right analogy for anything domestic.

**Bates:** He wants calm waters. It is not his motive in life to go out and ruffle things up, but when he sees problems, he tries to make it better for those who are suffering. There are folks who like to stir things up. That's not the way he functions. He's always in the midst of rough waters, I think, because that's where the fun is; that's where the action is; that's where the energy is. That's why the family likes to succeed, and they admire people who succeed.

**Young:** Yes, and they're very competitive.

**Bates:** He loves to be around people who have won something, who have succeeded, who have accomplished something. That's why they did the Profiles in Courage. They like to recognize people who have been successful.

**Young:** Not just with money.

**Bates:** No, not money. They've achieved something.

**Young:** Making a difference.

**Bates:** Making a difference, that's what it is, right. That's why I wouldn't call him a reconciler. He wants to make a difference. He wants to change things. What did Bobby say, "I see things as they are and wonder, why?" You know what I mean. "I see things and wonder, why not?"

**Young:** He's certainly a survivor.

**Bates:** He is indeed a survivor.

**Young:** You met Father Tutu.

**Bates:** Desmond Tutu.

**Young:** Desmond. He says to me to call him Father. *[laughter]*

**Bates:** Is that right? Father?

**Young:** I asked how he should be addressed in the interview. I interviewed him.

**Bates:** Did you?

**Young:** Yes.

**Bates:** No kidding.



**Young:** Yes. Ted saw to that. He wanted him interviewed. He made time for the interview, but he spoke of the Kennedys, “The other voice of America in the world,” and he was not only speaking about today. He was speaking about when [Ronald] Reagan was in office and when things were pretty—he said, “We felt very alone,” and that was just before he got the Nobel Prize. “The European countries, they’re doing business with the regime. Reagan was against this, and we felt very alone. This man came to me and said, ‘What can I do to help?’” It was very moving. As you know, Tutu also has a fine sense of humor. He’s not at all a stuffed shirt. I’ve come to realize that there’s an international constituency for the Kennedys but for him too.

I want to talk to you about his trips abroad and his back channels and all of that. That’s important. He never was on the Foreign Relations Committee.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** But from Ireland to—

**Bates:** Bangladesh.

**Young:** —Vietnam to Bangladesh.

**Bates:** Nigeria.

**Young:** All of those. His touch is worldwide. You went as his representative, with the black Caucus folks and others, to Africa.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** It was exciting.

**Bates:** Loved it. Just fantastic. The first trip I took was with Charles Diggs, who was chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa.

**Young:** You mentioned that in the other interview.

**Bates:** We did about ten countries in one trip. We went into South Africa, couldn’t get into South Africa. I also went with the Congressional Black Caucus, with Andy Young and other members, back to South Africa. I went one time with Bob Hunter. Have you interviewed Bob Hunter?

**Young:** No. We should, probably.

**Bates:** Do you know that name?

**Young:** Oh, yes.

**Bates:** He and I went to South Africa together.

**Young:** He was the foreign affairs guy.

**Bates:** Right. He had worked for Humphrey, and he was also in the Carter administration. Bob and I went into South Africa. He's from the London School of Economics and is a very polished, diplomatic type. He was schooling me on how to behave when we got to South Africa: "You're in a host country, so you must be courteous and understanding." We landed and we had a press conference, and he was doing his thing and I was bitching and moaning and complaining, and he thought that was absolutely the wrong thing to do. Then when we got ready to leave, we had another press conference. *He* was the one who was bitching. He said he had been to Russia, and he was aware of the oppressive nature of the Russian society, but South Africa had it beat. He was so turned off by what we observed in South Africa that he was motivated to express his dismay.

I also went to Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique when the Portuguese turned over power to those colonies. Massachusetts, as you know, has a large Cape Verde population, so that was an interesting time.

**Young:** In '94, when [Mitt] Romney was running against him for his seat, Kennedy wasn't getting good numbers. Did you follow that?

**Bates:** No.

**Young:** They were worried. "He's the old. We need the new. He doesn't care about us in Massachusetts. He has all of his world projects," and so forth. Kennedy had grown very fat by that time. It was interesting to hear how his nephew was running the campaign.

**Bates:** Joe?

**Young:** No, this was Michael [Kennedy], Joe's brother, who ran it with people who were not experienced campaigners. I was interested to see how he responded to that bad news. I think Dave and Paul came in and rescued him in terms of the running of the campaign. Vicki pitched in. He had married her by then, and it was remarkable to see—this is the low point, I think, for him—how he renewed himself and bounced back. Of course he beat Romney by a comfortable percentage, having come from behind in the polls. I think he rediscovered the people of Massachusetts. He reconnected.

There's something renewing in the experience of going out, and he likes to interact with people. He campaigns even now. He's told me, "I'm not going to be able to do an interview. I have to do some campaigning this last time around. It's important to get out and let people see you, and you can listen to them." He has a good signal processing through the crowds. I don't know whether he always had that, but he has it now.

**Bates:** I think so—at least what I've observed with him, both up there and down here. Even though I said that the folks up there tended to trash him, once he showed up, he had them. Once

you announced that there would be a gathering and he would to attend, until you got to that point, he was trashed. “He’s not coming. He never shows up. He doesn’t do anything for us.”

**Young:** That story about the ex-cons in Washington you told in the other interview.

**Bates:** Oh yes, right here, with Marion Barry, right, same thing. “He’s not going to show up.” That was different here, because they were ex-cons. I’m talking about up there. They would have the same attitude. Then when he showed up, it was a love fest. He could have extracted anything he wanted.

**Young:** He’s lost some big battles, and they’ve been telling losses, on the Supreme Court nominations. Those are consequential, it seems to me. He’s concerned about that, the way the courts have been going since Reagan’s term.

**Bates:** He has a lot of company in being concerned. Did you see that D.C.’s going to the Supreme Court on gun control?

**Young:** No.

**Bates:** D.C. has a law that prohibits a citizen from owning a handgun, and it was challenged in the local courts, and the court agreed with the plaintiff.

**Young:** Federal court?

**Bates:** The district court. So the mayor has announced that he will take it to the Supreme Court. Apparently the Supreme Court has agreed to hear it, and the concern is that the Supreme Court will uphold this so-called right to bear arms as it appears in the Constitution. I think this is the first time in 70 years that the Supreme Court will have been presented with a case focusing on the right to bear arms. It’s touchy. But all observers claim that this is the only way that D.C. can go, that you have to do it; you have to challenge it, because we have enough crime as it is, and if you were to let the ruling stand, who knows what would happen to the murder and crime rate? We have to take this risk. We have to take the chance. I think he’s absolutely right about the Court—Clarence Thomas, [Antonin] Scalia, [John] Roberts. Did you interview Steve Breyer?

**Young:** Not yet.

**Bates:** Can you? Does he make himself available?

**Young:** We haven’t asked.

**Bates:** But you assume he would.

**Young:** Sometimes when people are reluctant—

**Bates:** You don’t push it.

**Young:** No. I say, “Maybe you could give the guy a word.” I don’t do that often, but most people will do it. Some of his colleagues are reluctant. He had to push Byrd a little bit, I think.

**Bates:** Oh, did he?

**Young:** That’s a different situation, because he’s a sitting Senator with him now. What are they going to say?

**Bates:** You have to get Byrd, because he won’t be around much longer.

**Young:** Oh no, I interviewed him. I spent a whole afternoon with him.

**Bates:** Oh, did you?

**Young:** Yes. It was a good interview. It was just about him and Ted Kennedy over the years. It was good.

I think health care is an example of something that he, I don’t know, maybe has given up on now. I don’t know. Everybody else is getting in on the act now that it is again the season for advocating health care for everybody. This was something he started early, about the time you were there.

**Bates:** He became chairman of the Health Subcommittee.

**Young:** He came out for national health insurance. Walter Reuther was very much—who was the guy in the House? Wilbur Mills and the Kennedy-Mills bill. [Richard] Nixon was committed to health care, not particularly that version, but maybe they could get something done on that. That flopped. He tried to push it again under Carter, and Carter had a different plan. That never went anywhere. Then came Clinton, the third major push, and that went nowhere. In the meantime, he got a lot of other smaller things done, such as the CHIP [Children’s Health Insurance Program] program and things like that. I don’t know whether the hope still springs. He says, “I’m an optimist basically.”

**Bates:** He has to be to have hung in there this long. You have to be an optimist. Would you have liked to have spent the night up there last week on those cots? That was so silly, really, but it’s a tactic, I guess, and I suppose [Harry] Reid felt he had to play that card. What are you going to do?

**Young:** Well, this was an extension of the earlier interview, and again I want to thank you for giving all this time. If you have any final words for this session, please say them. I think history will learn a lot from these interviews. I think it will from the whole project. The ultimate audience is the people who come after us, and I think it’s important to have the people who made and lived that history speak about it, because down the pipe, there are going to be revisions, and all these writers and scholars are going to revise history, and none of us can do a damn thing about it. So we’d better speak now. That’s the spirit in which I take this project. I’m retired. I

retired long ago, so this is a retirement project for me, and it's interesting. It's a retirement project for you too.

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** I hope you'll maybe use some of these transcripts to prompt your memory to write a few things about your time and what you saw when you were there, because I don't think many people have done that the way they should, in a non-self-serving way.

**Bates:** Jim, I appreciate the opportunity to be involved, and I also thank you for your description of my participation. It may prompt me to rethink where to go with this. It was such a valuable experience having worked with him, and particularly at that point in time. Any time you work for Kennedy, it's exciting, but that was a very interesting time, having come off of those two assassinations and then the Vietnam War, the civil rights battle, and then Nixon and Watergate. We had all that. It was like a TV series, 14 series jammed into one six- or seven-year period.

**Young:** It was eventful.

**Bates:** Yes, so much.

**Young:** A revolutionary time in American history, it seems to me.

**Bates:** It was indeed.

**Young:** That was the decision that I guess President Jack Kennedy made, that Executive orders and litigation would not be enough. That was quite something to do, to say, "You have to legislate these things."

**Bates:** Right.

**Young:** That's high risk. Everything else can go down the tubes if you try that, but it at least started—it's also the first time, I think, in our history that a strong movement grew up against the national security policy, the foreign policy, the policy of a sitting President. There again, it seems to me that the people were ahead of the government on this. You had the first Presidential resignation in history. It was quite a time.

**Bates:** One thing would happen, and then something would happen right after it.

**Young:** That's right.

**Bates:** Because when Dr. King was killed, that was a trauma. Then what? Six weeks, eight weeks later, there was Bobby Kennedy's assassination. I remember those times very well.

**Young:** The best of times and the worst of times.

**Bates:** Right.

## INDEX

American Petroleum Institute, 20  
American Political Science Association, 2

Barry, Marion, 2, 27  
Bates, Robert  
and EMK Presidential campaign, 8-9  
and gun control legislation, 21  
and Senate campaign of 1976, 7-8  
trips to Africa, 25-26  
Black Caucus, 25  
Brady, James, 21  
Brady Commission, 21-22  
Branch, Taylor, 13  
Breyer, Stephen, 27  
Brown, Ronald Harmon, 9, 11  
Burke, David, 6, 13, 17, 26  
Bush, George W., 16  
Busing, 15  
Byrd, Robert, 4, 18, 20, 27

Carter, Jimmy, 8, 26  
and EMK, 8-9  
and healthcare, 28  
Presidential campaign, 1980, 8-9, 10  
Chappaquiddick, 2, 3  
Cheney, Richard, 2, 3  
Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), 28  
CHIP. See Children's Health Insurance Program  
Civil Rights Act of 1964, 4  
Clinton, Hillary Rodham, 9  
Clinton, William, 9  
and healthcare, 28  
Community Relations Service, 16  
Congressional Black Caucus, 25

Desegregation, 5, 6, 7  
Diggs, Charles, 25  
Dingell, John, Jr., 21  
Dirksen, Everett, 22  
Doherty, Gerard, 10  
Drayne, Richard, 13, 19  
Dukakis, Michael, 16

Edelman, Peter, 9

Fitzgerald, John F., and EMK, 12  
Flug, James, 3  
Fulbright, James William, 22

Galbraith, John Kenneth, 22  
Garrity, Wendell Arthur, Jr., 16  
Gun control, in District of Columbia, 27  
Gwirtzman, Milton, 12

Henderson, Wade, 5  
Hicks, Louise Day, 16  
Humphrey, Hubert, 22, 26  
Hunter, Robert, 25-26

Jackson, Ellen, 15  
Jackson, Jesse, 11, 14, 15  
Javits, Jacob, 22  
Johnson, Lyndon B., 4

Kennedy, Edward M.  
and abortion, 19  
and anniversary of death of Martin Luther King, Jr., 13-14  
bipartisanship, 22  
and busing, 15  
and Carter, Jimmy, 8-9  
character, 18, 22, 23  
and civil rights, 14-15  
and District of Columbia, 6  
and Fitzgerald, John F., 12  
and gun control, 21  
and healthcare, 28  
international influence, 25  
and King, Martin Luther, Jr., 5  
as majority whip, 3, 4  
and national health insurance, 28  
personality, 18, 24  
Presidential campaign, 8, 10, 11  
and race issues, 19  
Senate campaign, 1976, 7-8  
Senate campaign, 1994, 26  
as Senator, 10-11, 20, 23  
and Supreme Court nominations, 27  
Kennedy, Ethel Skakel, 5  
Kennedy, John F., 2, 4, 10, 13, 29  
Kennedy, Joseph, II, 7

Kennedy, Michael, 26  
Kennedy, Robert F., 2, 4, 10, 24  
assassination, 29  
and District of Columbia, 4  
Kennedy, Victoria Reggie, 21  
and Senate campaign, 1994, 26  
Kennedy-Mills bill, 28  
King, Coretta Scott, 5, 9, 13  
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 3, 13  
death, 4, 29  
and EMK, 5  
King, Martin Luther, III, 5  
Kirk, Paul, 3, 9, 11, 26

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, 2  
Libby, I. Lewis, 20  
Long, Russell, 3

Martin, Edward, 15  
Mills, Wilbur, 28  
Mitchell, Clarence M., Jr., 2, 5  
Mogilnicki, Eric J., 2-3  
Motion Picture Association, 5  
Mudd, Roger, 10

NAACP. See National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 5, 6, 19, 20  
National Rifle Association (NRA), 21  
Neas, Ralph, 5  
Nixon, Richard M., 28  
NRA. See National Rifle Association

Obama, Barack, 9, 15  
Owens, Wayne, 3

Pierce, Rudy, 17  
Poll tax, 4  
Pottinger, Stan, 16  
Profiles in Courage award, 24

Racial Imbalance Act, 16  
Rauh, Joseph, Jr., 5  
Reagan, Ronald, 25, 27  
Reid, Harry, 28  
Reuther, Walter, 28  
Roberts, John, 27



Romney, Mitt, Senate campaign, 1994, 26  
Russell, Richard, Jr., 18, 22

Scalia, Antonin, 27  
Smith, Stephen Edward, 11  
Snowden, Muriel, 6  
Snowden, Otto, 6, 15  
Susman, Thomas, 3

Talmadge, Herman, 18, 22  
Thomas, Clarence, 27  
Thompson, Fred, 18  
Tutu, Desmond, 24-25

Urban League, 5

Vick, Michael, 20  
Vitale, Andrew, 6, 20  
Voutselas Lee, Angelique, 14

Wilson, Percy, 15, 16-17  
Winfrey, Oprah, 20

Young, Andrew, 5-6, 9, 20, 25  
Young, Whitney, 5