EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH MILTON GWIRTZMAN

May 29, 2009
Washington, D.C.

Interviewer

Janet Heininger

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TRANSCRIPT

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Heininger: This is an interview with Milton Gwirtzman, on May 29, 2009, in Washington. Let's go back to the very early years, because that's where we don't have a whole lot, and that's where you can make a unique contribution here. When did you first meet Ted Kennedy?

Gwirtzman: I met Ted Kennedy in March of 1962, when he had already decided to run for the Senate and when he'd come to Washington to appear on *Meet the Press*. I think he announced around the middle of March. I met him in the office of Senator Ben Smith, who was then a Senator from Massachusetts, and for whom I was then working as a legislative assistant, what they now call legislative director, but at that time Senate offices only had one.

I had not known him at college because, of course, two of the years I was there he wasn't, and we didn't travel in the same circles. I really had not followed his career, although I did travel through Massachusetts with Ben Smith after the Senate had recessed in 1961. Ben didn't do a political tour then; no one knew what Ted was going to do. They said he might run for attorney general, he might go out to Wyoming and run for office there. So Ben decided he would act as if he might run himself until he knew what Ted was going to do. He was certainly loyal to the Kennedys. He had been John Kennedy's roommate in college and stayed close to the family. His was a prominent Catholic family in Gloucester.

So we did the sort of tour that a sitting Senator does, going to factories and meeting with public officials and things like that, all pointing to the possibility that he, Ben, might run. Then, as soon as Ted decided to run, he came down to see Ben and also to be briefed at the White House by Ted Sorensen and others for his *Meet the Press* appearance. He went in to see Ben and he was probably in there for an hour, and it was at that point that Ben offered Ted me and a couple other people in his office to help him. I was called in, I met him, and we talked about what I could do, which was to stay as a legislative assistant but be in close touch on the issues. He had a speechwriter, Hal Clancy, who was a former editor of the *Boston Traveler*, who had written some early speeches for Ted. Hal took a tour to Europe and the Middle East, and had written some articles for him. Hal was the one who came up with the idea that he should call himself "Edward (Ted) Kennedy" on the Democratic primary ballot. Hal reasoned that because of Ted Williams, the name Ted had a very good connotation in Massachusetts.

Heininger: How interesting. Was that not how he was known by friends?

Gwirtzman: Family and friends knew him as Ted, but you usually—occasionally, not often, someone runs for office and they put their nickname, but he wanted to really pound that nickname home.

Heininger: That's interesting. I have not heard that. So a very political decision from the very beginning.

Gwirtzman: Oh, sure. We decided that I should send copies of any speeches that I had written on issues to him, and keep him current on what was going on in the Senate, and then go up there once a week on weekends, to Hyannis Port. Once he started campaigning, he'd campaign Monday through Friday and most of Sunday, but spent Friday night and Saturday and Sunday morning at his home, which was on Squaw Island, but not that far from the President's home.

Heininger: What had Ted been doing up until then?

Gwirtzman: He had been assistant district attorney for Suffolk County, under Garry Byrne, and he had been his brother's campaign manager in the 1958 campaign, and had gone to law school at U.Va. prior to that.

Heininger: When he made the decision to run, was he still working as an assistant district attorney?

Gwirtzman: Yes, but he resigned.

Heininger: But he resigned at that point, okay.

Gwirtzman: He had done a number of cases, but it became fewer cases and more luncheon appearances and such things as that. I don't know who set up his schedule, but it was a typical Massachusetts schedule. Sundays, lots of communion breakfasts and lots of Brotherhood, Jewish breakfasts and things, and then during the week a lot of lunches and meeting with political leaders because there was a convention coming up in June and he wanted to be endorsed by that convention. He knew that Eddie McCormack was going to run, Speaker John McCormack's nephew, and Eddie had been a factor in many conventions there, was very well liked by the politicians, and had been a good attorney general. He had been a good attorney general even for civil liberties and the things that the academics in Massachusetts are concerned about. So Ted knew he was going to have a fight and he didn't want to bypass the convention. That is what some of them do. Usually, the person who loses in the delegate fight at the convention says, "I will go to the people." Well, Ted was going to do both. He was going to win that fight and go to the people.

Heininger: What was the press response at this point?

Gwirtzman: At that point it was the same as it would be now if someone his age, he had just turned 30, and who was the brother of the President—although our current President has no brother, let's say [Jeb] Bush decided to run for Senator. The public didn't follow it as closely as the press, but they loved John F. Kennedy in Massachusetts and they loved the family, going all

the way back to Honey Fitz [John F. Fitzgerald]. So the public reaction was not negative. The press had a generally negative reaction: too young and not as bright as his brothers. The Kennedy dynasty. The joke was that John Kennedy would serve until 1968 and then Bobby [Kennedy] would be elected for eight years, and then it would be Ted in 1984, which was the title of the book about the fascist dictatorship.

Heininger: George Orwell's, yes.

Gwirtzman: George Orwell. And then some very important people in the academic community were very strongly opposed. First of all, they were impressed by McCormack. They had worked with him on issues they were concerned with, and even someone as prestigious as Mark Dewolfe Howe, who was a professor of law at Harvard Law School and a leading liberal, sent a letter saying that Ted had no qualifications, a public letter, saying he was completely unqualified. It didn't help that he had had to leave Harvard for having had someone take a test for him.

Heininger: Did that come up immediately in the press?

Gwirtzman: Almost immediately, and it was deliberately planted by the Kennedy camp. They decided that with something like that, which was really the only big skeleton in his closet that anybody knew about, it would be better that they get their version of it. They weren't going to justify it.

Heininger: A preemptive strike.

Gwirtzman: And so they got Bobby Healy, who was a political reporter for the *Boston Globe*, which was by far and still is a dominant newspaper in the state. They got him to write the first story. It was as nice a story as it could be, given the fact that Ted had been suspended for two years from Harvard for having someone take an exam for him, which at Harvard was about the worst thing that you could do, worse than what just happened there, when a drug dealer was shot in one of the Harvard houses. So that certainly was on people's minds.

To go a little farther into the campaign, I was in Harvard Yard with him; we were going to a meeting during his campaign, I think after he had won the primary. The meeting had something to do with our Harvard class, the class of 1954. One member of the class came up to him and said, "Ted, you are a disgrace to the class of 1954." And Ted said, "I'm sure there are others who probably agree with you." So yes, that was a problem and it continued to be with that group for quite a while, maybe 20 years.

Heininger: What was McCormack's reaction to Ted announcing?

Gwirtzman: Well, between John Kennedy and Speaker McCormack, who had to work very closely on the President's program, they agreed not to disagree on this and made sure it did not affect the relationship a Speaker and a President of his own party have with one another. Below that, McCormack obviously was miffed. Then secondly, Kenny O'Donnell tried to get Eddie McCormack not to run by showing him numbers that I am told were false numbers, that showed he was going to lose. If they had taken a poll—Ted did take a poll in the late winter that showed he was ahead by maybe ten, but Kenny jiggered the numbers so it would be a blowout.

McCormack didn't believe it and his people didn't believe it, and that didn't help the relationship.

As far as between the two of them, I don't know if they had any personal dealings. I had never heard that they spoke or that Ted called him before he announced. I never heard anything like that, but what you had there was—Again, you have to know the political history of Massachusetts. It is not a strong party state like New York or even California used to be, where the leaders picked the nominees. Politicians had their own personal organizations. Somebody would graduate—

[BREAK]

Heininger: This is a resumption of the interview with Milton Gwirtzman on May 29, 2009. So you don't know whether, as far as you know—

Gwirtzman: The two of them, as far as I know, didn't have a relationship and didn't talk prior to this. Well, Massachusetts was full of personal organizations. Someone would graduate from high school and run for state representative and start building his own personal organization in his district, gradually expand it if you're going to run, say, for the state Senate, or statewide if you're going to run for Governor or attorney general or Senator. But they were personal organizations. There was no state organization that you could look to for workers, for money, or anything.

Kennedy had the organization of "Kennedy secretaries," which had been formed by his brother when he first ran for the Senate in 1952, and it had been involved in the Presidential campaign and was right there for Ted to use. The liaison to that was a very fine man named Eddie King, who was the father of Jimmy King, who used to be head of OPM [United States Office of Personnel Management] here, under [Jimmy] Carter. He just went through the state, activating what was called the Kennedy secretaries, with a Kennedy secretary in each city and town of the 190 cities and towns in Massachusetts, and they started to work.

Heininger: Wow. That's a very powerful way of organizing the campaign.

Gwirtzman: However, Eddie McCormack had a very strong organization in Boston, which is where maybe not the majority, but a large part of the vote in a Democratic primary would be cast, more so than now, since the suburbs are much larger than the city. So he had a good source of strength there and his uncle was the Speaker and could dispense patronage. There were charges right up to the convention and afterward about whether either the White House or the Speaker's office offering jobs in return for delegate votes and things like that. Now, I have no idea whether knowledge of that is true, but there was bad blood between the two camps. But as far as I know, there was nothing personal between Kennedy and McCormack until the first debate in south Boston in June.

Heininger: What was Ben Smith's reaction to Ted's running?

Gwirtzman: To Ted running? Oh, he was all for it. Ben Smith was, first of all, not a politician. He had been mayor of Gloucester, a small city. His family had been in the fish business. They made all the boxes that fresh fish were packed in when fish was a big item. So he was a prosperous local businessman. He had no further ambitions. He volunteered to help John Kennedy in 1960. He traveled with him in West Virginia, Wisconsin. He helped organize New York in the election. So when John Kennedy's Senate seat became vacant, President Kennedy prevailed upon then Governor Foster Furcolo to appoint Ben. Furcolo couldn't say no because it was the President and someone of his own state asking him to do it. Ben was absolutely delighted to be a Senator, be appointed a Senator. I used to think that would be the greatest job in the world. You get appointed to the Senate and you didn't have to go through all the campaigning and everything and raise all the money.

Heininger: Yes, fundraising.

Gwirtzman: Yes, you just get the job.

Heininger: Was he viewed by JFK [John F. Kennedy], therefore, as a placeholder or as a reward for loyal service?

Gwirtzman: Not a placeholder, at least at first. JFK didn't know whether Teddy was going to run, although he wanted Ted to have some career in Massachusetts politics, eventually. The strongest person for Teddy within the Kennedy family was Joseph Kennedy. He kept pushing and finally, as I understand it, he said to his other two sons, "You've got your places, now I want Ted to have his." They deferred to that. And of course he financed the entire campaign. Somebody had to hold the place, and then they looked around and said, "Who is completely loyal and who do we want to reward?" In fact, when Governor Furcolo announced his appointment, Furcolo said publicly, "He will hold a seat until the next election and will not run for election." Ben never said that, and as Ben became a Senator, with all the perks and the interests going through the state, and he loved people, he started to think, *Well, maybe I could*. . . . But he certainly believed he couldn't and wouldn't run against Ted.

Heininger: Did you get any sense about what JFK or RFK [Robert F. Kennedy] thought about Ted's running?

Gwirtzman: Yes. They wanted him to run, but they wanted him to do it in a way that would not affect their prestige if in fact he wasn't successful. John Kennedy did not take any part, aside from his own personal discussions with Ted, which we can get into later. He did not take any part in the campaign. He instructed everyone in the White House not to interfere in the campaign. He wanted to make it look like he was doing nothing, but he certainly wasn't opposed to it.

Heininger: Was it because he wanted to preserve his relationship with McCormack? Or was it that he really didn't know whether Ted was going to be able to win?

Gwirtzman: No. Kennedys love to do things indirectly and not have fingerprints to show.

Heininger: That explains a lot.

Gwirtzman: And so he didn't want any fingerprints. Every time we went to Hyannis, we saw him informally. We didn't have long discussions. We would go to the cocktail parties. Very often John Culver and I would meet up at Logan Airport, and John would drive us down to Hyannis. As we were going into the compound, the President's motorcade would be coming out from the airport, to the compound. We'd all stop, and President Kennedy and Ted would have a little talk. Would you do this event? Oh, you went to Fitchburg? Oh, God, I remember—Did you see so and so? John Kennedy had lived the life of a Massachusetts Senator for eight years and had just campaigned himself two years before, so he knew the people. They were his people. Ted would give him a little tickle with it. After the primary, where Ted did very well, he loved to say, "Jack, you know, in Leominster, I got more votes in the primary than you got in the general." [*laughter*] But it was a relationship between brothers many years apart, not anywhere near as close and intense as between RFK and JFK.

Now as to RFK, I don't know anything directly because he was busy being Attorney General of the United States. The one time I know it came up was prior to Ted's debate with George Lodge in the general election. It happened to be just as the Cuban Missile Crisis was ending, but they weren't sure it was ending, and he just wanted to make sure that Ted knew enough of what was going on so that he wouldn't say something that the Russians could interpret as, "The President's brother said. . . ." So they were very careful and he was very careful.

But as to their discussions about Massachusetts politics, Bobby was not that interested. He lived in Virginia for a long time, was born in New York, but there were people close to Bobby—I don't want to say his staff because they weren't on his staff—who did not like Ted's running and thought that it was rife with problems just because of the whole nepotism charge. Their life would be a little simpler if Ted had not run.

So, where were we?

Heininger: Well, I wanted to make sure we got the scene set. So lead up to the convention.

Gwirtzman: I started doing that, and by May of 1962 we decided I should probably go up there full time, after the convention, to take over the job of speechwriter and help Culver on the issues. As I said, John and I would go down and we'd talk to Ted about the issues and what he had coming up on his schedule. I would come back and do my regular job during the week, but if it was a weekend, I was up there. I would go around with him so we could talk some more and I could see how we're going to be writing his speeches, to get a feel of how he spoke and what he was interested in, and what questions were coming and what answers. We did a lot of that Q&A stuff.

Heininger: Who was managing his campaign at that time?

Gwirtzman: Steve Smith.

Heininger: So from the very beginning, Steve Smith is involved.

Gwirtzman: Yes. And I think Steve—I don't know whether he moved up there. Well, of course, it was in the summer, so he had his own place on the Cape. I think he was pretty much up there, although he was still managing the Joseph P. Kennedy Enterprises in New York.

If I could tell just one story. He had started the breakfasts, Sunday breakfasts at churches and synagogues and things, quite early in the previous fall. He would start out by saying, "When the MC [master of ceremonies] got up and said, 'Now it's my privilege to present the president of the Brotherhood,' I jumped up, thinking he had said 'the brother of the President.'"

I was not used to ethnic politics. To tell you the truth, I would go to one of these things and I wouldn't know whether the group was Jewish or Italian. I couldn't tell the difference, even though I'm Jewish and I have a lot of Italian friends. At one point, Pope John XXIII [Angelo Guiseppe Roncalli] was dying. He died probably in May, June, or July, and Ted decided to issue a statement and read it at one of these breakfasts. I wrote it, and it was a nice statement except for one glaring error: I called him Pope John XXII [Jacques Dueze] and Ted didn't catch it.

Heininger: Oooh, ouch.

Gwirtzman: Believe me, I never lived that down. We also—And this was my idea—His slogan was, "He can do more for Massachusetts," which was his brother's slogan. Eddie McCormack said this is a terrible slogan because it means he's got connections, he's got relations. So I thought, *Why don't we put that slogan into action and, as part of the campaign, make a few visits to companies in other states to show them what a Senator does, get a company interested in locating a facility in Massachusetts.* Massachusetts had gone through very difficult economic times with the loss of the textile industry and the shoe industry and the fishing industry, and they were just starting to get going with the electronics and medical science industry. We knew that any company would want to have Ted come and talk to them. This was a way he could say, "I was just in New York and I talked to people at Grumman and I tried to interest them that this is what I can do, more for Massachusetts, to try to bring industry in here." Well, I didn't know that on the other side was one Chuck Colson. He represented Grumman in Washington.

Heininger: Oh, my.

Gwirtzman: And when he heard about this—and he was a very savvy guy and I was sort of a beginner—he laid a wonderful trap, because Ted came and they were very nice to Ted. He talked to him about Massachusetts' workers and industry and environment, scientific environment and everything, and Colson made sure that the Long Island newspapers learned about it, implying Ted Kennedy was trying to move Grumman and its umpteen thousand jobs out of Long Island. That was sort of embarrassing. Chuck had been the executive director of the New England Senators Conference, with John Kennedy and Saltonstall. Leverett Saltonstall started to try to give the New England Senators a bigger voice in the Senate, and Colson knew all the people and would send them gifts at Christmas time. I got a lovely bedspread from Berkshire Hathaway, which is now owned by—

Heininger: Warren Buffett.

Gwirtzman: But it started as a textile mill.

Heininger: Did it really?

Gwirtzman: Yes. Berkshire Hathaway. Hathaway is a great Maine name, Hathaway Mills. Berkshire Mills.

Heininger: Wow.

Gwirtzman: Long before Buffett got hold of it, they made textiles. He sent me a lovely bedspread, a beautiful bedspread. I used it for years.

Going back to the campaign itself, Ted would campaign all week, and late Friday nights we'd go back to his house on Squaw Island, near Hyannis Port, and the first thing we'd do is raid the icebox because John Culver is a big guy and Ted's a big guy. We'd get there and John Culver would say, "I have this wonderful feeling in my tummy," because he was hungry as hell; we'd been out all day. Ted Kennedy's cook at the time used to be the cook for the Duke of Windsor,

so she prepared some wonderful stuff. That was the high point of the day, what would be in the refrigerator that night. We had a good time, and as campaigns go, it was easy.

Heininger: Did Joan [Bennett Kennedy] travel with all of them?

Gwirtzman: Well, on weekends, but John was a third-year law student at Harvard. He was head of the Phillips Brooks House, which is the undergraduate organization that does public service, and he had undertaken to organize those academics in the state who were for Ted, to contribute ideas and to use their prestige. In the academic community, there are 83 universities and colleges in Massachusetts, a very big industry, and some of them worked very hard, including the late Sam Beer, who just died at the age of 93 and who was a great friend and supporter. I think you interviewed him very early on, or Jim [Sterling Young] did. So John had plenty to do, and during the week he didn't travel. And he did a very fine job. I think once school was over, you got into June and the convention coming up, he then did spend full time.

Heininger: Who traveled with Ted during the weekend?

Gwirtzman: Who traveled with him? In Boston or outside of Boston? Outside of Boston it was Eddie Moss. Eddie Moss was from around Springfield, and he worked for the telephone company, but the telephone company detailed him full time to travel with Ted Kennedy. That's the sort of thing that was done in what I would call the old days. There are now rules against it.

Heininger: The old days.

Gwirtzman: Then he would have an advance man. He had a good staff; the campaign was well advanced, using the Kennedy secretaries. But Eddie Moss was always with him, Eddie Martin sometimes, if it involved the press. In Boston, it was divided between Gerry Doherty and Ted's cousin.

Heininger: Joey Gargan?

Gwirtzman: Joey Gargan. They did not get along that well. They had their own separate—They had to divide the city up. But those two were always with them, and then other pols, state reps. Maurice Donahue for the western part of the state. He was a state senator and was the cousin of Eddie Boland, who was a Congressman from Springfield.

Heininger: Now was Joan traveling at all with him?

Gwirtzman: Joan went to appearances, yes. She went to numerous appearances, especially those teas that Ted's sisters put on for his brother. They did teas, they did other women's groups, and she of course had a major role at a fundraiser or something. She did not put in the same full day that he did, but she traveled a lot and was very good.

One story. Within the family, Ted was the youngest and was never considered the intellectual, brightest of all of them, and he suffered from that and she knew that he suffered from that. But she would go out and there would be a receiving line, and the women would come through and they had heard Ted speak and answer questions. And Joan said, "The women would say, 'He's

so smart.'" She was amazed and delighted. She had never gotten that from her sisters-in-law or others.

Heininger: So different from the family reaction to him.

Gwirtzman: Yes, "He's so smart." She liked to hear that. She liked to tell that story.

Heininger: Did she enjoy the campaigning?

Gwirtzman: Not as much as Ethel [Skakel Kennedy] did. And the other thing is—Was she pregnant during that? Kara [Kennedy] was born. I don't know when Teddy [Kennedy Jr.] was born. She may have been pregnant during part of that, so it would have made it a little more difficult for her. I would always see her in Hyannis, and she fully participated and went out on the boat, did all that stuff.

Heininger: Was she consulted? Did you get a sense that he consulted her on political matters?

Gwirtzman: No.

Heininger: So he had his own network and that didn't include her, for the politics.

Gwirtzman: Yes, well, she never professed to be a politician or someone who knew about politics. And he was away. He would get up early in the morning. He had gotten his routine down that he could shower, shave, and dress in 12 minutes, before the car came to take him to his—He'd be out shaking hands at factory gates at 6:00 in the morning. He had enormous stamina. He went through until 9:00 at night, one thing after another. *Time Magazine* had an article that went through a day of his, which I'm sure you have in your—

Heininger: Was he energized by it?

Gwirtzman: Oh, he loved it.

Heininger: Rather than exhausted?

Gwirtzman: He had limitless energy and was young, very young.

Heininger: Very young, yes.

Gwirtzman: He'd go out skiing in Colorado and he'd do 20 runs. And as the sun was starting to go down he'd say, "Come on, [John] Tunney, let's do a couple more runs." He always wanted to do more runs than anybody else. In a sense, at least my own opinion of him was, that sort of political campaign, the old kind of person-to-person, shake as many hands as you can, meet as many people as you can, that's what people wanted. They wanted that connection and especially with him, because he was the closest connection they had with the President of the United States, who was a co-religionist and from Massachusetts, and they were just so proud, the people who voted for him. But to him it was not unlike an athletic event. He would get his guys together and they'd go as fast and as hard as they could, and it was exhausting. It was sort of like a football game.

To me, who is not an athlete, I saw them do this and it was sort of like it was the team, it was athletic, it was very physical. I supplied some of the issue stuff to them. One time, it was late at night and the three of us, Culver and myself and Ted, were in his house. They're both pretty big guys. Culver came up to me, we had just had a session where I was giving some ideas, and Culver took my head like this and he said, "How is your brain? We need your brain." And then they kidded me and said, "Your brain is in park now. Your brain can be in park." [*laughter*] They wanted the brainwork from me, although they were very smart also.

The very first and one of the only times I played touch football, on the first play, they arranged it so that I was able to intercept a pass and run for a touchdown, to make me feel good. Then we had Dick Clasby out there, who was the captain of his football team. He lived on the Cape, a very close friend of Ted. He had married Mary Jo Gargan, who was Joey Gargan's sister. And John Tunney was the son of the boxer. It was a bunch of big guys engaged in a common enterprise.

Heininger: So how did the campaign proceed that summer?

Gwirtzman: You had two phases. You had one leading up to the convention, which was very much a politician's thing, where both camps would try to get commitments from the delegates while the candidate was campaigning among the public. I was not involved in the intricacies of that part, but it seemed to go very well. We had a headquarters on Tremont Street, which was the main artery in Boston that goes by a lot of the historic places. We had the whole building but we had a great storefront area with great pictures, and lots of people passed by. We operated out of there. The second was the convention phase—I think it was pretty clear a week before the convention that Ted was going to win and McCormack had to go to the people. There were some charges made at the convention, such as what I told you about, and then the day before the convention opened, somebody in the McCormack camp found, or came out with, the fact that Ted had not registered or voted several times in Massachusetts. They tried to make an issue out of that. Gerry Doherty can tell you exactly what happened at that phase.

Then, the next thing is, is there going to be a debate? Doherty negotiated the debates for us, but we were quite clear there were going to be some. McCormack wanted 15 debates. [*laughter*] He must have known he was behind. Ted said, "I will do three debates but the first one can be in South Boston, in your backyard, at South Boston High School." And so we spent lots of time, lots of briefing papers.

Wait, excuse me. He made a major speech in maybe May. The underlying issue in Massachusetts at the time was corruption. The State House was full of corruption. They had just built a garage underneath the Boston Common and it was rife with payoffs to politicians from developers and contractors. Massachusetts had a very bad reputation and people were sick of it. That was the overriding issue. Ted made a speech about why he was running for the Senate, and the main point of the speech was "People who seek public office for money or for power have had their day in Massachusetts. Now we want people who want to serve." That was the code word for get rid of the old-line politicians; here is a clean-cut young guy who wants to be in the Senate, who is not in it for the money, and he will be good, honest.

Heininger: Was McCormack tainted with any of the corruption?

Gwirtzman: He was not.

Heininger: So you had two clean politicians running at a time in which—

Gwirtzman: Yes, but McCormack looked and sounded like—

Heininger: An old pol.

Gwirtzman: Yes, a Boston pol, even though he was younger, he especially sounded like and was from an area where all this—I mean, the *Friends of Eddie Coyle*. What's the river?

Heininger: The Mystic River.

Gwirtzman: The Mystic River. That's the real seedy side of it, but the politics is another side. And he had been in Massachusetts and in politics for a long time, and his family had been in politics, not just his uncle, who was the Speaker, but his father, Knocko [Edward J.] McCormack [Sr.], who had no organization. He put up his own signs. It really was the old politics against the new in that sense. So this speech was about why Ted was running. It wasn't a knock on McCormack.

Despite advice from his brother, the President, who, after the first debate, said maybe you should try to say that the crime has increased in Massachusetts since Eddie McCormack had been attorney general. Ted refused to do that. He said no, no, no. I'm not going to say a bad word against him.

Heininger: Interesting.

Gwirtzman: Even though by that time he hated him because of what McCormack had done in the debate, before an enormous, nationwide audience, just ripped him apart.

Heininger: Well, tell me about the debate.

Gwirtzman: We prepared him very well for this debate. The theme of the debate was, "This is a very difficult time for the United States. Last week, an American convoy was stopped at the wall in Berlin. There were very delicate trade negotiations going on, and this has immediate effects in our state. At the bakery in Lynn, which I visited last week, there was an increase in the price of grain, and that was going to mean an increase of the price of bread." We took these national things and drove them right home as individual examples and made them local. That's the way he tried to say, "I want to be a United States Senator because national issues have enormous impact on your daily life."

Heininger: And we know from how he has subsequently handled himself as a Senator, with hearings and things, about making things very personal and with personal stories of individual people. So clearly, this starts at the very beginning.

Gwirtzman: I think that the main part of that started with Larry Horowitz, and the way that he brought people to Senate hearings, individual cases on healthcare. This idea of using local towns

and industries started with me on the campaign. There was no connection between the two, and several years intervene between the two. It just seemed that that was—

Heininger: But he's still putting a personal face on a national issue.

Gwirtzman: Yes, that's right, but it's not that he started right from the beginning. I don't think he glommed on Larry's program for doing this because he had done it in the campaign.

Heininger: There's a difference but there's still recognizing making politics, making issues personal in Massachusetts.

Gwirtzman: And that was something that his brother, in his own speeches, at least when he was running for President, didn't really do. He was at a more national level. Not that Ted was the first one to do it in a state campaign. I'm sure that idea comes to a lot of people.

Heininger: But there's a personal touch here.

Gwirtzman: His opening statement and his closing statement were written out so he could memorize them. In between, he answered questions, and very well, because by that time he had been doing it for several months and so he knew. He had been briefed on all the issues.

So anyway, we get to the debate, and how he prepared for the debate. He was very careful. He prepared for a high-level debate and McCormack just picked him up and slammed him down to the ground and said, "This man is running on the most disgusting slogan I've ever heard, he can do more for Massachusetts. What does that mean? It means he has connections, he has relations, and that's not what this—This campaign should be based on who has had accomplishments. I have." And he'd list all the things, and they were considerable, that he had done as attorney general. And then, which was the worst mistake he ever made, McCormack looked at Kennedy and he said, "If your name was Edward Moore, your candidacy would be a joke. But it's not, it's Edward Moore Kennedy, and you have no qualifications of your own."

Heininger: In the preparation for the debate—

Gwirtzman: We were not expecting that.

Heininger: But on the other hand, it would have been logical to expect him, with a long track record, to go after Kennedy on inexperience and the name.

Gwirtzman: Oh yes, but not as savagely as he did. Let me tell you a little more about that. How did Kennedy react? Kennedy was shocked; he turned white and he bit his lip, but he did not respond in kind. He said, and this was something that we had prepared for the conclusion statement: "We shouldn't be talking about personalities;, we should be talking about the people's destiny here in Massachusetts." Nobody knew, the attack would be so vicious, because he was running on his record.

Heininger: Right. And the *Globe* had already pointed that out.

Gwirtzman: And this was televised nationally and everybody watched in Massachusetts. Afterward, the first thing he did was to call Mary Moore. Mary Moore was the widow of Edward Moore, after whom he was named. Edward Moore was Joseph Kennedy's longtime personal secretary and assistant. The first thing that came to Ted's mind was "Mary Moore had to watch on national television, her husband being belittled." This is the wonderful personal quality that Ted has with the personal things. "I've got to call her and apologize for this guy saying that about her late husband."

Heininger: Well, now you're raising a couple of very interesting things. One is not anticipating a vicious attack, but when faced with one, not responding in kind—

Gwirtzman: He's very classy.

Heininger: —being very classy about it and having the presence of mind to immediately turn it to, "This isn't what we should be talking about. We should be talking about people, destiny, and things."

Gwirtzman: That was in his final remarks that had been prepared in advance, because he knew that McCormack was talking about Ted running on his name as he went around the state, but it hadn't gotten the attention that a live television performance before a live audience got. No, we knew that was an underlying issue, and he was prepared to say that before, but to say it after this attack was what made it much, much more important. He didn't just make it up but he knew that that was the proper place to do it.

Heininger: But what's also very interesting about looking in detail at this campaign is the extent to which it's setting patterns for the future. The enormous stamina and energy that he gets from campaigning and how much he enjoys it.

Gwirtzman: He enjoyed it up until the time—

Heininger: Well, until '94.

Gwirtzman: No, no, until '68.

Heininger: That's a little different. But he still enjoys campaigning. He certainly enjoyed Barack Obama's campaign. But this ability to think quickly on his feet, to respond not in kind.

Gwirtzman: To know the right time to make a decision.

Heininger: A split-second decision.

Gwirtzman: I will be the nice guy.

Heininger: I'll rise above it.

Gwirtzman: Yes. But nobody knew who had won that debate until after it had ended.

Heininger: What was the media response?

Gwirtzman: Well, none. So he calls Mary Moore, then he calls his father, and then he gets a call from the President saying how did you do? I don't know whether the President saw it or not. Ted handed me the phone and said, "Would you tell him how things went?" He had just been kicked in the you know what by this guy. He had never been through anything like that and he just didn't feel that he could give a dispassionate account. So I gave a dispassionate analysis. I said "Look, on points, if people just look at the pros and cons, McCormack did pretty well, but I think Ted's demeanor was the right sort of demeanor." President Kennedy said, "Don't give him an objective analysis. He has to go out tomorrow morning and shake hands at the docks. Tell him he was great." I learned something. At times like that you just buck up the candidate. Don't just be objective.

Heininger: But I'm assuming that Jack did want the dispassionate analysis, so he could actually know how it went, even though there was a difference between what he would say.

Gwirtzman: He was upset and he'd been through enough of these himself. When he in effect lost in Wisconsin, he wasn't able to do well enough in the Protestant areas. So he had to do it all over again in West Virginia. He went through some tough times in his own campaigning.

Then we turn on the radio, to the talk shows, and all these Irish ladies are calling in saying, "Oh, that Ted, he was such a fine boy, and that McCormack, that dirty politician." Over and over again. And he said, "That's the campaign." The two of them were never going to get the same huge audience, never going to be so dramatic. And clearly, at the gut level, Ted had won and McCormack had killed himself. We just listened to those wonderful ladies, and we all felt much better after that. And sure enough, he won like 70 percent of the vote. He got a larger vote in the primary than candidates for the Senate in Massachusetts get in the general election, when your entire state can vote. He got more votes in the Democratic primary than in the statewide election for the Senate. There was a huge turnout. Everyone voted.

Heininger: So even if his instinctive reaction was to rise above it and to not counterattack, he also really didn't recognize that this was also going to resonate with the public.

Gwirtzman: He just did—

Heininger: He did what he thought was the right way to respond. Was there ever any discussion subsequently with McCormack about it that you know of?

Gwirtzman: Shortly before McCormack passed away, I think they had a couple of meetings. I'm not sure what transpired, but I think if you look at what Ted said in his own interview about Eddie, he said, "I made peace with him," and Eddie really said he was never proud of the things that he'd done. So he did, but apparently not at that time.

But then there was a second debate, and that was going to take place in Worcester, in the first week of October 1963, which was the week of the Cuban Missile Crisis and before the Chamber of Commerce incident. The day before the debate, we were sitting around and we were going over the stuff.

Heininger: Now, this was with McCormack still?

Gwirtzman: Oh wait, wait.

Heininger: No, because that would be with Lodge.

Gwirtzman: Yes, a second debate with McCormack.

Heininger: In October?

Gwirtzman: No, not Worcester. The second debate with McCormack was in the western part of the state. I'm not sure where, Springfield or somewhere, but in between, on Labor Day. My family home was in Rochester. I was not married at the time. I was a bachelor, visiting my parents. They sent a private plane to pick me up in Rochester, New York, and fly me to Hyannis. Lord knows what that cost them. I went out on a boat with President Kennedy, his father, who had had a stroke, and Ted and a few other people, to discuss what to do in the second debate. That's when President Kennedy said, "Maybe you should goad him a little bit, talk about the increase in crime rate." And Ted said, "No, I'm not going to do that." So we tried, as everybody does, to make sure to fix any mistakes we had made in the first debate. I don't think anybody thought that McCormack was going to continue on that path, and he didn't. It was a very gentlemanly debate, especially since they didn't disagree on many issues. It was very anticlimactic, of course.

But the day after, shortly after that, I guess there were a couple weeks between the first and second debates. The next week, just before the debate, John, Ted, and I were preparing for it at Ted's house on the Cape.

Heininger: And this was still with McCormack?

Gwirtzman: Yes, the second debate with McCormack. A car comes in, and out of the car gets Robert Kennedy and Ted Sorensen. Robert Kennedy said, "Have no fear, we are here." And they had been dispatched just after the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis. There was an exchange of letters between JFK and [Nikita] Khrushchev, and then JFK sent a second letter. The ships bearing the missiles had not turned around yet, and they just wanted to make sure that Ted didn't say anything in his second debate that could be interpreted—It was the sort of the debate where you have opening statements and questions from newspapermen, and the newspapermen were obviously going to ask him about the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was the only thing people were thinking about, since the world could have come to an end. Without getting him involved and telling security information, they put him through paces on exactly what to say to questions on that subject.

But there was one other thing that happened between him and Bobby. Bobby was out on the lawn. There's the house and a big lawn that overlooks a little beach. It's very dramatic because the beach is a cliff that goes down. Bobby was talking about what to talk about, about why he's running for the Senate, in his opening statement. Bobby said, "Tell them why you're interested in public life. Tell them why you don't want to be sitting on your ass in an office in New York." And that said it all about the three of them. That's how their father had made lots and lots of money, but they wanted to serve. In other words, he was saying just talk from the heart about why you want to serve the public. And this was coming from Robert Kennedy. It was unforgettable to hear that. But anyway, the second debate went without much that's memorable.

Heininger: And when was the primary?

Gwirtzman: The primary was the first week in September.

Heininger: So it was a very late primary.

Gwirtzman: A very late primary.

Heininger: So in this whole time, Lodge is out there campaigning.

Gwirtzman: Yes, Lodge was campaigning, and Stuart Hughes, the grandson of the Chief Justice of the United States, who was running as an Independent, antiwar. He was a professor at Harvard; he was very much opposed to war generally; antiwar, anti-nuclear program. And that drew interest not just because it was Ted Kennedy, the brother of the President, and George Lodge, the son and grandson of Senators whose father had beaten Ted's grandfather. No, his grandfather beat Ted's grandfather. There was a lot of dynastic things about that in the news magazines, which many more people read then than now. It had pictures of the three of them, with the dynastic implications, on the cover of *Time Magazine*. They used to say you were successful when you get on the cover of *Time*. They were all on the cover of *Time*.

Heininger: So you get to the Democratic primary and he beats McCormack, put him out handily.

Gwirtzman: Very handily.

Heininger: Does McCormack then campaign for him?

Gwirtzman: Not that I recall.

Heininger: So not the tradition like in the Presidential primaries, where those who lose go on and support the winner.

Gwirtzman: Having a late primary, the wounds take time to heal.

Heininger: The wounds are still pretty fresh. So what was the campaign like with Lodge, aside from all the dynastic implications that were played up by the media?

Gwirtzman: Well, Massachusetts was not as Democratic a state as it is now. It had a Republican Governor, the other Senator was Republican, so there was a good Republican vote there. I don't remember seeing any polls. Ted polled extensively in the primary. Joe Napolitan, do you remember that name? He was the partner of Larry O'—the one from Springfield, who was Lyndon Johnson's liaison to the Congress and the Postmaster General? Larry?

Heininger: O'Brien?

Gwirtzman: O'Brien, yes. Larry O'Brien's partner in their PR [public relations] and polling firm. He polled extensively. He probably polled in the general election, but I don't remember seeing anything. I don't have anything in my papers about it, but I'm sure that Ted was always

fairly well ahead and Lodge didn't do anything unusual. But the thing that happened was the Cuban Missile Crisis, which really locked it in for Ted, because by the time of the election, the Cuban Missile Crisis had been successfully resolved and Kennedy was at the height of his popularity.

Heininger: Did you get the sense that it would have been any different had that not happened? Would it have been a closer election with Lodge?

Gwirtzman: A little bit, yes. Ted came out of the primary with such a head of steam. Even the debate between the two of them before, and that was in Worcester, at the Chamber of Commerce. Before the debate, everybody watched President Kennedy's speech on the Cuban Missile Crisis. So it was this national—

Heininger: Timing is all.

Gwirtzman: Are we going to cast a vote of no confidence in the Kennedy family after the way JFK resolved that? And he did have a very good relationship with George Lodge, I think. Lodge then became head of international affairs for Mobil. He served for a number of years, but he did some things for either the state or nationally that Ted helped with.

Heininger: What was his father's reaction?

Gwirtzman: To what?

Heininger: To his election.

Gwirtzman: Well, remember, he had had a stroke. As I say, the one time I ever saw him, except from a distance, was on that boat, when he had also had the stroke. I'm sure he was overwhelmed, and he got somebody to pay the bills. It was a very luxurious campaign. We used to go out to Locke-Ober's, which was the best restaurant in Boston, and we were always treated by the son in-law of the PR guy, all the bills were run through the PR guy and there was never any problem with cars or arrangements. I stayed at the Parker House every time that I was there.

The very first thing Ted—I did go up to see him after that meeting in Ben Smith's office, and he was very cordial and wanted to introduce me to his sister, who was there. He said, "Oh, I thought we all knew each other." He treated me like I had been White House staff. "I thought we all knew each other." And he said, "Give Milty an airline credit card to fly up and back from Boston." So raising money, which takes up so much time of other candidates, was never an issue.

Heininger: Did his sisters play any role in the campaign?

Gwirtzman: They did teas, nothing more than that. Remember, this was before anything.

Heininger: I know the roles were different, but it's not like there was any reluctance to back him, given what his position had been in the family. He's just another Kennedy, another one moving on.

Gwirtzman: Well, he would come to our parties. He was always great at parties. I remember parties in Washington that we did; they liked that. His only special relationship with the family, I think, has been with the youngest.

Heininger: Jean [Kennedy Smith]?

Gwirtzman: Yes, because they were the nearest in age. When they were little they shared a bedroom. But the way that they were so affectionate with each other, there were always digs, little digs and stuff. And they were all quite young at that time and all just caught up in the administration. Each of them, except maybe for Pat [Kennedy Lawford], had their own special interests that they followed, like Jean with the arts and for the handicapped, and Eunice [Kennedy Shriver] with the Kennedy Foundation and the Special Olympics. Ethel, of course, was busy having children. That's the closest team relationship of all of them that I saw. So for two years it was just a great time.

He came to Washington and they very carefully choreographed his first days, because he just was not some other Senator. He was the President's brother, in the Senate. I had seen a few examples of this. I worked for the President's roommate in the Senate. I would be sitting in the conference committee and, for example, Senator Pat McNamara of Michigan would come up to Ben Smith and say, "Could you put in a good word for [Thaddeus] Thad Machrowicz, who wants to be a federal judge?" This was a Congressman from the Polish section of Detroit. So can you imagine having the brother of the President in the Senate? They didn't know quite what to do. But Ted's great advantage is that he was the youngest of a large family, so he had learned instinctively through his family how to deal with older people. He was 30. There were Senators who were 60, 70, 80, but he knew how a young person should deal with the old people and when to be differential.

Heininger: His momma taught him good manners.

Gwirtzman: He had the best manners I've ever seen. He would always open the door. It could be a man or woman, he'd open the door. He just had a natural grace and good manners. But aside from that, he knew how to—And remember, these were Senators, all of whom had clawed their way up to get to the Senate. They clawed their way up and here he's coming in because he's the President's brother, so there was at least some resentment. But it changed quickly. I remember going up in an elevator with Stuart Symington, who had two sons Ted's age. And he said, "I didn't know what he was going to be like; but he's so attractive." I could just see the two of them together, and Ted just knew when to defer. He said sir, and the whole thing. It was natural with him.

Heininger: It was natural—

Gwirtzman: Because he was dealing with older people all his life.

Heininger: —not put on.

Gwirtzman: That's why now, when he's the older one, it's so different.

When you talk about the first part of the Senate years, do you mean when he came in to the assassination?

Heininger: Yes. Well, first of all, talk about the whole issue of setting up his office. Did he simply take over?

Gwirtzman: Offices were much smaller.

Heininger: And he was sworn in early, wasn't he?

Gwirtzman: He was sworn in early. He was sworn in, in probably late November. He took over Ben's office, which had been John Kennedy's office, and he took Ben's administrative assistant, Joe McIntyre, to whom he added his own administrative assistant, Bill Evans, who had worked in the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]. I don't know how he got over with Ted, but he was the administrative assistant during the campaign. He was a liaison with—I think Joe sort of faded back and then Evans became the administrative assistant.

Heininger: Was that intentional? Did he keep Joe McIntyre?

Gwirtzman: Joe McIntyre had worked for the first Democratic Senator from Massachusetts, David I. Walsh, who was from Clinton, Massachusetts. Joe had been his assistant and he knew the Senate, but he was very much of the old Senate and he was reaching retirement age. Evans, on the other hand, was from New Mexico. He was a good guy, a little dictatorial. We kept some people from Ben's office, caseworkers and others.

John Culver came down to be legislative assistant and press secretary, combine those two. And he wanted to make sure that Ted got a good start. I don't know if you know John, but he's a very earnest guy. He was from Iowa. His father had been a big car dealer in Cedar Rapids and his wife was the daughter of the good football coach at the University of Iowa. He had his heart set on being a Congressman from the second district of Iowa. And sure enough, after about a year, he left to run. But before that he brought in—not right away but during this period—someone who was a lawyer in Chicago, named Jerry Marsh, who had been on the football team with Ted and John at Harvard. The administrative, legislative—oh, Angelique Voutselas Lee.

Heininger: Where did she come from?

Gwirtzman: Out of Boston, probably from the [Katherine] Katie Gibbs secretary school.

Heininger: Yes.

Gwirtzman: I think they picked her up from there. But before her there was another woman who I know was from that school, Mary Jane Duris, who was his secretary during the campaign itself. But Angelique, that was sort of the core group. However, on the political side, this was before Paul Kirk got involved, before Dave Burke got involved. Oh, there were a couple women who had worked for Joe, who were kept on. It wasn't a large staff, maybe 12 people. And he had no committees or subcommittees until he went in to have a drink with the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator [James] Eastland, who said, "I'm going to make you the chairman of the Refugee Subcommittee. You've got a lot of Italians in your state, don't you?" And Ted said,

"How about civil rights, do you have something? I can work on that." Eastland said, "It's in the committee; I take care of civil rights."

Heininger: So, unlike now, he wasn't automatically assigned by the leadership.

Gwirtzman: What, to committees?

Heininger: To committees.

Gwirtzman: Oh no, he consulted with his brother as to what committees he should be in, and his brother might even have put in a couple calls for him. He knew he wanted Labor. It's now called—

Heininger: From the very beginning.

Gwirtzman: What's it called? Health and Human Services.

Heininger: Now it's HELP, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

Gwirtzman: But the labor unions were still around and he knew he wanted that, and then he took Judiciary.

Heininger: But he got refugees, not civil rights.

Gwirtzman: Yes, but he didn't get it right away; he got refugees. And that was not immediately. Remember, he started in November. He was organizing in January and February. So what did we do? There was a lot of attention paid to him, but the first thing he says is, "I'm not going to take any speaking engagements or anything outside of Massachusetts for the first six months." He wanted to be the Senator from Massachusetts, no matter who his brother was. He wanted to batten that down. He got involved with the fishing industry. I think I have it noted.

Heininger: Well, that's interesting, because that started at the beginning and has remained preeminent.

Gwirtzman: And the other thing is that he knew that if he attached his name to a bill or got involved with something, the press would play him up, and he always made sure to share the credit, in fact give the other, if there was a colleague who was cosponsoring, give him more credit, because he knew that the natural inclination of the press would be to give it to him because he was a Kennedy.

Heininger: So this is a pattern that remains to this day.

Gwirtzman: Yes, which has evolved into Republicans, but this is with Democrats, this is with people like Birch Bayh.

Heininger: But he does that with Democrats as well.

Gwirtzman: Yes. I mean he knew—

Heininger: So he starts that very early.

Gwirtzman: He started that because he could see. He was always willing to share credit. So we're talking about civil rights, immigration, [Frank] Morrissey, China. Oh, and the other thing is that every day, because of his back—Well, no, excuse me; I think the back was later. Even before he broke his back, every day he'd go to the steam room. They had a Swedish masseur there named Olaf [Anderson], and of course, that's where they socialize, in that steam room. He made a lot of friends in there. I think he saw that as a way to—because he had to—get on a basis with these people who had been in the Senate for a long time and who were much older than he.

Heininger: So he expected there was going to be skepticism about him.

Gwirtzman: Oh, of course. These people read the national press. He didn't get any good national press during his campaign. The national press was, this 30-year-old guy, the Kennedy dynasty will go to 1984 and what's he done? And so that's what they knew about him. Then they'd be with him in the steam room a couple of times and they began to like him, because he was such a very attractive person. And you forget how—We've seen him now, for many years, as sort of an old man, but how rigorous and energetic, personable, he was.

Heininger: And deferential.

Gwirtzman: Along with being deferential. He didn't do it the way Lyndon did it. I mean, he didn't know everybody's birthday and call them, and he wasn't in a position to do deals with them because he didn't really have much power, and he was basically born with the administration. While his brother's first speeches had been on the economy of Massachusetts, his was on the civil rights bill, and that's because of what happened in—Remember, in early '62 was Birmingham, all that stuff, ending with Kennedy's speech to the nation where he put forward a civil rights bill. He worked on that.

I don't know whose idea it was, but he's always had a great interest in foreign policy, especially in arms control. Somehow, he wanted to give a speech on relations with China. We had no relations with China. No recognition. No contact.

Heininger: Yes, that's an unusual topic.

Gwirtzman: I don't think that the administration was giving much thought to this, but he didn't want to just be a lackey for his brothers. So he thought if he could take a long view, we've got to live with China. He didn't recommend diplomatic relations with them, and he didn't even go into Taiwan. I forget what the substantive parts of the speech were, but I know I worked on it. But that got him some attention, except not in Massachusetts. The wags there said Kennedy has a policy toward China but not toward Massachusetts. They're very parochial up there. [*laughs*]

Heininger: Well, most states are. So were you there principally as a speechwriter?

Gwirtzman: Yes. I had been on the Senate payroll. I continued for a while, but John was the legislative assistant. He took the job that I had had with Ben. I wanted to start a law firm. At that time, you'd start a law firm with your friends. I was friendly with the late Fred Dutton and the late Nick Zumas, who had been in the State Department, and Herb Schmertz, who was a labor

arbitrator, and we said let's start a law firm. And so we started a law firm and took Ted as a client and was paid by the Park Agency, which was Joseph P. Kennedy Enterprises, but I was not officially part of the Senate staff.

Heininger: From the very beginning, you were not.

Gwirtzman: And that created some conflicts with John, because while I was not officially, I was up there all the time and I knew all the people. I think John and I had a bit of a turf problem, because I was writing the speeches and getting involved with the policy, because I had done it for Ben and I was interested in it. That's why I was here. Until John started to concentrate on Iowa, we had a bit of a turf problem. After that it was fine, and it turns out that I moved into a house in Chevy Chase and John was next to my next-door neighbor, and we've been good friends. John thought I was going to get completely out of it, and I never intended to get completely out of it.

Heininger: Did you talk to Ted about it?

Gwirtzman: No, because that's the sort of thing that you didn't want to bother him with. It didn't affect what we were doing. Probably a lot of the blame was mine. I did not think John was sensitive to it. I didn't read it right, and so we didn't talk about it until it reached a head, when John—we were at a party. John had had too much to drink and started going after me and I hid in somebody's closet, because John's very big. The next day Ted called me and apologized for John, and then John called me and apologized. But then I realized that he had really been upset by my continuing to have as active a role, and I was infringing on his turf, especially, I think, when it came to the press, because he hadn't had much experience dealing with press and I wanted to put my two cents worth in. But he wanted, and I think I wanted, to be very protective of Ted in the beginning. Especially the first days, when Ted was just followed by so many reporters, and John wanted so to choreograph everything.

Heininger: Did you back away at that point?

Gwirtzman: No, I didn't back—Well, I don't know. I did the speeches because that's what I was being paid for. I was hired to do that. I had worked in the Senate, for Stuart Symington and Ben Smith, and had been there about four and a half years. At that time (I don't know what it is now), the general rule was five years and out, and if you stayed more than five years you're a Senate hack. I was a lawyer, and to do law or do whatever it is that you were trained to do, you get part of this experience in the Senate. It's not unlike an executive agency, and then go out on your own. It was a lot easier to go on your own then than it is now. You didn't have these huge firms. I was a young guy, I didn't have clients of my own, and he was my main client, so of course I was going to spend a lot of time there. And I liked the people. I stayed in that position, with Ted as a client, until 1969. I got involved with Bobby and his campaign in New York, which was where I'm from, his campaign for the Senate in '64, and an important surrogate's race in the Democratic Party in a borough of Manhattan in '66, and in his campaign for President.

During that period, I stayed as a speechwriter for Ted, and then afterward we moved to Europe for a couple of years. When I came back, from then on I was not employed by the Park Agency, except to do specific things with the Kennedy Library, review Joe Kennedy's papers, and things

like that, but not to staff Ted. I stayed in Ted's circle and there were lots of memos that I wrote him, mostly about having to do with running or not running for President. As far as the day-to-day work of his substantive legislative group and everything, I was not involved, except as a speechwriter. And even with the speechwriting, gradually Carey [Parker] took that over. There have been other people, but it was basically Carey.

I was involved with Chappaquiddick later on, but that was largely because the two people I worked with most closely after the first year or two with Ted were Steve Smith and Dave Burke. Dave was his legislative and then his administrative assistant. We worked on not legislative policy but personal things having to do, very often, with—Well, I'm sure you're familiar with the 18 years in which he was considered to be President, in the least. You know that whole thing. Dave and I were involved in all of that.

So we had China, we had his maiden speech on civil rights, which was after the JFK assassination.

Heininger: In that first year that he was in office, what relationship did his office have with the White House?

Gwirtzman: It was different from what a normal Senate office would have.

Heininger: Was it different, or did they both work to make it—

Gwirtzman: No, it wasn't that different. On a number of Massachusetts things that involved the White House, President Kennedy ran his own operation. But Ted, as a Senator, got some credit, and I know they had some meetings. Just as when I was working for Ben Smith, we tried to get what is now the Houston NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] lab to Massachusetts. We made a big effort on that, and we thought that having a President from Massachusetts would help. Well, it turned out it didn't, mainly because Albert Thomas, who was head of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on NASA, wanted to have it in Houston. This was the sort of thing in the White House that did not get to the Presidential level, but President Kennedy was advised not to take on the guy who holds your purse strings. So even though we made a case and we had all the scientists for it, and it would have been a great place for it, we were never really in the running.

Heininger: What did you see of his relationship with his brothers in that first year?

Gwirtzman: Actually with the President, I learned more from Ted when I interviewed him for the Kennedy Library oral history. I didn't think that he had spent that much time over at the White House, but he says that he—You've got his interviews—very often would go over there late in the afternoon, have a drink, talk. And that his brother was very interested in what was going on in the Senate because that's where he had served for eight years. He knew all the people.

Heininger: Now this was very quiet.

Gwirtzman: It was very quiet. I didn't know about it. I only knew about the social things. Teddy had Bobby's birthday party at his house in 1961, and it was a great party but it went on a little

too long, and neighbors—This is 28th Street in Georgetown—started calling and the police arrived. There's the Attorney General of the United States being very deferential to a couple of cops because the neighbors said, "What's all that noise going on?"

Heininger: Well, those Georgetown neighbors have a lot of power. They still do.

Gwirtzman: And then with the Morrissey thing—

Heininger: Tell me about the Morrissey nomination.

Gwirtzman: Have you talked to people about that?

Heininger: I want to get your view on it.

Gwirtzman: I mean do you know enough, do you know the background?

Heininger: I know the background, yes.

Gwirtzman: Let me ask you one question. Do you think Lyndon meant it or he was trying to discredit him?

Heininger: I think he wanted to do something nice for him.

Gwirtzman: Yes, I think you're right, because Ted had been very—

Heininger: He did know how to repay people.

Gwirtzman: And Ted had done a lot of work on the immigration bill. You've got the two memos I sent, the two things that Ted dictated about that, of his phone calls with Johnson on Morrissey, one before the nomination and one after. But the nomination went down the tubes. They certainly indicate that it was Ted who wanted it.

Heininger: Did he want it because his father wanted it?

Gwirtzman: Yes.

Heininger: Did he not anticipate the controversy that was going to erupt?

Gwirtzman: He did not anticipate that.

Heininger: He didn't know about the funny degree.

Gwirtzman: Of course not. The *Boston Globe* turned that up. They won the Pulitzer Prize for it.

Heininger: I know they did. Even though there had been such a long-standing relationship with the family, this wasn't recognized.

Gwirtzman: Morrissey was the guy who never let Joe Kennedy's overcoat touch the floor. Bill Evans and I used to do skits about Frank Morrissey saying, "God love ya, Teddy. I just saw the

Cardinal [Richard Cushing] and he said to tell the Ambassador that this and this and this." He was a sketch and the people in the White House knew it. Actually, it had been blocked by Kennedy and others, in '61.

Heininger: Right.

Gwirtzman: But then the father is sitting there in Hyannis, completely out of it. He did not take any part at all, even before his stroke. He was not part of the administration and never consulted. He had the stroke, and who's going to go see him? Frank Morrissey, every week, the one faithful person to go and see him and tell him what Cardinal Cushing, who he sees a lot of, is saying and doing. He was between the two of them. Frank would be the liaison to these two old guys.

Heininger: Was Joe understanding?

Gwirtzman: Oh, sure.

Heininger: Okay, just not able to speak.

Gwirtzman: He understood all too well. And so he would indicate, in the way he could, whenever Ted was around, How about Frank? He wanted him to get that judgeship.

Heininger: Did Ted not—There was a lot that the press raised about his, not really the funny degree, but relatively thin record as a judge. Was this not out of the ordinary, for someone like that to be nominated?

Gwirtzman: It was not out of the ordinary for federal judges—

Heininger: —to be nominated with thin records.

Gwirtzman: To go with judges who had just sat on misdemeanor cases, no felonies. Judgeships were quite political back then. Not to the Supreme Court, but the choice of federal judges was a perquisite of the Senator from that state. I think George Abrams might have done some work at the time on the sort of people who were made federal judges, you know, uncles of friends. It was not a good system, but Morrissey was not unusual.

Heininger: This was not an unusual nomination.

Gwirtzman: Except for two reasons. One, Morrissey was such a hail-fellow that he'd agree with anybody, including Everett Dirksen, who in the hearing started walking him down a garden path of basically saying himself that he was unqualified. He thought it was more important that Dirksen like him, so he didn't disagree with anything Dirksen said, and of course wily old Dirksen just used all that stuff. But see, the thing with Morrissey and the people in the White House goes back a long way because Morrissey was Jack Kennedy's secretary in the original sense of secretary. He was the top Massachusetts person for a long time. And there was always, as I'm sure you know so well, sort of a rivalry between the home office and the Washington office in terms of where does the Senator spend his time, "We need him up here." "Well, we need him down here."

So it was that and God knows what else, maybe appointments and things, and they had it in for Morrissey. Morrissey wanted the judgeship and he knew that if he was nice enough to Joe Kennedy when no one else was being nice, and were all ignoring Joe Kennedy, that Joe Kennedy's sons would do it. Ted says in this memo of his meeting with LBJ, "Lyndon says, 'Do you really want this?'" and Ted says, "I do."

Heininger: Did the other people around Ted think that this was a good thing for him to embark on, trying to press this nomination?

Gwirtzman: Well, remember that in '61, the White House had vetoed him, and of course even when it was first mentioned, the *Globe* started jumping on it. The other people around Ted, you're talking about Jim Flug, who had just started and really wasn't involved; Dave Burke, who I can't remember what his—I didn't know Frank. This was before he came down to his hearing.

Heininger: Before the testimony, right.

Gwirtzman: Actually, I did know Frank, in the campaign. I was a bachelor, so he would suggest women working in the campaign I could date.

Heininger: So the nomination blows up.

Gwirtzman: Then as soon as the *Globe* gets after it. Morrissey was a terrible witness. Burt Hersh's book said that I briefed him. I don't remember briefing him. I don't think anybody briefed him, or maybe they tried to but gave up.

Heininger: But then you were involved in Ted's speech.

Gwirtzman: No, then the stuff blows up, but because the members of the committee liked Ted they approved him anyway in a vote. Saltonstall gave an okay. This is the other Senator in—

Heininger: —his state.

Gwirtzman: Yes. The other from the state has to submit some sort of card where he says it's okay with me, even though I was not involved in it. But then, after the publicity, Salty withdrew his card. Joe Tydings—who John Kennedy had made U.S. Attorney in Maryland, putting him into position to run for the Senate—turned against him, maybe because he's a lawyer's lawyer. He may have thought the guy was obviously not just unqualified, but had held back relevant material from the committee, that he had gone to Georgia, gotten a degree from the diploma mill, had to swear that he was a resident of Georgia at the same time he was running for state rep in Massachusetts.

And then Bobby got involved because he thought, *We've got to do something about this*. He had a shootout with Dirksen privately because of an article that appeared in an Italian paper. Remember, when Ted first started running for the Senate, it was Morrissey who took him around. That's the other thing I forgot. He had a debt to Morrissey. He liked Morrissey, because Morrissey had taken him around and introduced him to all the state politicians. Because Morrissey had been JFK's secretary, he knew all these guys and took Ted around the state.

So Morrissey and Teddy are in Italy, they're on the Isle of Capri and they're having a drink. In comes this guy, an Italian guy but speaks English well, and they have a chat and they invite him for a drink because he said he used to live in the United States. They have a drink and somebody takes a picture, you know how somebody will say, "Oh, let's have a picture of the three of them." It appears in this newspaper. This guy had been deported because he was in the Mafia in the United States. But the reason they saw the guy was because he had a story. He had a very sad story of the American government not wanting to let him see his wife. He had some sad story he wanted to tell, and then they had a drink.

Somebody had gotten this article to Dirksen, and of course it was a bombshell; the President's brother, a Mafia figure, and Morrissey. Dirksen said, "I'm going to use this." Dirksen became really invested in this because Dirksen had just cooperated with Lyndon on the civil rights bill, so he had to make nice with the right wing of his party. Here was a perfect opportunity to do so by bloodying up the Kennedys. So he was really into it. He set his traps and he was ready. He was loaded for bear. If you read the transcript, he says—Well, you know what Ted said in his speech. And then everybody got up to praise Ted for doing such a statesmanlike thing of sending it back to committee so they can consider it under a calmer atmosphere. And Dirksen said, "I agree with the junior Senator; he's done a fine thing here. I had spent a great deal of time on this matter and I was prepared to get deeply involved in it. But I'm delighted that the Senator has seen the light."

Okay, so how was I involved? We had written a speech, making the case for Frank. We got the American Bar Association endorsement. The head of the Boston Bar Association, who was a very distinguished lawyer, personally testified against him, but the other judges—George Abrams had lined up about 80 judges in Massachusetts who liked Frank. To them a federal judgeship was not that big a deal. It might be now, but it wasn't then. So we had the case, and I think I had written a speech. It was '65 so Bobby was already in the Senate.

Adam Walinsky looked at the speech and said he wanted to add a few things to it. He put in this wonderful paragraph, making the case that you're against him because he's poor. His father was a dockworker and his kids couldn't afford to buy shoes, and he had to put wooden pegs in the shoes for them to go to school. He just didn't have the opportunity to go to a big law school. He had to work and he had to make a living, and it was poverty that caused this, not that he's bad; you know, the *West Side Story*. It's not that he's no good, it's that the world is no good. It was great. It was Adam, as only Adam can do.

So yes, I wrote most of his speech, but he did that part, which was a little beyond the pale. And we said okay, we're going to play a little trick with reporters in the Senate Press Gallery. So I go on the floor (this was when an assistant could just walk on the floor, there was no limit). I walked on the floor, my arms full of law books, and I put them on Ted's desk, to give the impression that he's going to make a real fight here. So the first 90 percent of the speech is a case for Frank Morrissey and all the judges and others who are supporting him and all the public good that he's done. But the conclusion was "In view of the fact that some Senators have raised some objections, I think we should consider this under a calmer climate, and refer the matter back to the committee."

Now, what happened? Bobby was in Ted's office talking to him about this. This had become a big thing for Bobby, because of Dirksen. [Jacob] Javits had suggested sending it back to committee. Bobby probably thought that was a good idea and went to sell Ted on the idea. A group of us were waiting outside. I don't know if Carey was there yet, but it was Jimmy Flug, Dave Burke, and a couple of others. They called me in. It was just me and Ted and Bobby, and Bobby said, "This is the plan. We're going to send it back to committee." And I said, "But how about your commitment to Frank Morrissey?" Bobby looked at me with as icy a stare as I'd ever received from anybody, saying, "I think we've fulfilled our commitment to Frank Morrissey." In other words, we got him this nomination; he screwed it up by not giving us all the facts.

Heininger: He had sunk himself.

Gwirtzman: He lied; he sunk himself. We've done all we could for Dad, but they felt that they just couldn't do anything more.

Heininger: Not our fault, it was doomed.

Gwirtzman: So that's the story. Frank is now in a nursing home in Wayland.

Heininger: What was the relationship that you could see, once Bobby is in the Senate, between the two Senate offices?

Gwirtzman: Well, remember, they had stayed off each other's committees, and while Bobby had a lot of programs that involved labor and welfare, he was not on that committee. They had a national constituency that we didn't even think about. We were all friends, but they didn't work on a lot of stuff together. As far as I know, there was nothing that would cause conflict. Remember, Bobby had been in the Senate only five months when Teddy had his air crash, and Teddy was out of service for eight or nine months. Bobby had his own subcommittees and Teddy was doing health and Bobby was doing Indians and black people in the South, Bedford-Stuyvesant, New York, projects. The staffs only worked together intensely when Bobby decided to run for President, or in the initial discussions over whether Bobby should run, because Ted was involved in that.

Heininger: What was your role in Bobby's run?

Gwirtzman: Read my book, *On His Own: Robert F. Kennedy, 1964–1968*. You're doing this for people who don't read books.

Heininger: Well, but more to the point, what was your role in Bobby's running in terms of how it affected Ted, and what was your interaction with Ted.

Gwirtzman: Which run?

Heininger: Not the Senate run, but the Presidential run. What did you see of Ted during Bobby's Presidential run?

Gwirtzman: Nothing. He was out campaigning in the states, he and Dave Burke. I didn't see him at all. I don't think I wrote anything for him. I was involved with the RFK Presidential

campaign under very difficult circumstances in Indiana and Oregon and California. Ted was doing what we call the delegate hunt, in other words, delegates from nonprimary states. On the question of whether Bobby should run, he and I might have talked about that. He was always against it. I've written on this in the book *On His Own: Robert F. Kennedy, 1964–1968*.

Heininger: I know, and I don't want to get into that.

Gwirtzman: He never pushed Bobby. Bobby was this way, that way, so many times on the question of whether to run. There was a meeting in January with Bobby's people, Dave, Ted and I, in which Ted did authorize Joe Dolan and Dave Burke to make discreet soundings, winks, and nods with people like Senator [Harold Everett] Hughes of Iowa and Jesse Unruh of California. It was important because people were saying, "Bobby's going to run, we're never going to win with LBJ because of Vietnam," but it was very discreet because of the sensitivity of the whole thing. Anyone listening to this should read my book and also read the book, *Mutual Contempt,* by Jeff Shesol, which goes into many of the memos written on the subject by RFK and LBJ staff.

Heininger: Well, let's skip ahead to another period of real involvement with Ted, and that was on Chappaquiddick.

Gwirtzman: Well, I can only talk—He's been interviewed on Chappaquiddick.

Heininger: Right, but I want you to talk about what was your role in the writing of a speech.

Gwirtzman: Let me put these things in order here. This is 1969 and at that time, I was still writing his speeches, but not all of them, because even by 1969, his staff had expanded. One thing he always made sure was that when he was taking on any new personnel that they could write, so in case they had to write a speech about their area, they could do it. So I did not have to do all the writing. So I was not as involved, but would drop in his office frequently.

One Saturday I dropped in. The drowning had taken place on a Friday, it was a holiday. But I dropped in on a Saturday and Dave Burke was there, and he calls me into his office and told me what had happened and showed me the statement that Ted had given the police. Ted had called him about it. I think he had also called Burke Marshall. No one else, except Steve Smith. Dave could see this was going to be very difficult, especially since he knew that Scotty [James Barrett] Reston was on the island because his son, at that time, edited at the *Vineyard Gazette*. So Scotty Reston, the main political columnist for the *New York Times*, was on the island.

Then there was a period of a few days when it became a huge national story, but nothing emanated from Hyannis at all. A number of us, not just me but other people, were saying this can't keep going. Not only did he not tell what he did and why he didn't do some things, but there's all these rumors that he did all sorts of other things, for example, that young Joe had been driving, and he was taking the rap for Joe. Or that he tried to get Gargan to take the rap for him. Drew Pearson was writing; he had been on the island several times and knew the island of Chappaquiddick very well. In reality, Chappaquiddick is just a beach off of Martha's Vineyard. It's not very wide, but there is a very deep and strong current between the two. A ferry goes back and forth, but it was only like 500 feet.

So Wednesday came and I said, "I've got to go up there. They are not aware of what is going on in the country. I have some notes that I wrote on the plane. He's got to talk to the public about this. He's got to say something." I had been talking to Angelique Lee, who was there, who said Ted was talking about issuing something saying little more than, "I'm very sorry that she's dead," nothing about how and why. I said that's not going to get you anywhere. I did not know Mary Jo [Kopechne]. I fear I looked at it as primarily a political problem, even though it was an intensely personal one, a young woman dead at the prime of life. I looked at it from his point of view, not hers or her family's. I did it because my entire career and a lot of my life had been invested with him over the past ten years. I couldn't believe someone who was that fine a person and that concerned about everybody would let this girl drown. There must be some reason for it, and he should tell what his reasons were.

So I just went up there. Angelique arranged for me to come, and I saw Steve—Steve Smith and I had been working very closely on a lot of stuff at that time—and he said, "Okay, you're going to be one of our lawyers." He said that because he could talk to somebody who he had taken on as a lawyer. And he probably said that to every lawyer who went up there, because I wasn't the only person. Some people were already there. I think they all went up on their own. They were not called or summoned. I think they all went up on their own because of their love of Ted, their desire to help him, and they just couldn't understand why there was silence coming from Hyannis Port, as days went by and the public mood about this became worse.

Well, when I got there, I could see why there was silence, because the lawyers he had retained in the negligence case (leaving the scene of the accident) were telling him that if he said anything prior to being sentenced for leaving the scene of the accident, the judge would just throw the book at him. So he said, "I can't say anything. My lawyer is saying I can't say anything." That happens. Nowadays, your lawyer speaks for you, which is okay, but then—

Sorensen was there, and then I saw Ted. First of all, he was in a brace. You could see that he was in terrible shape. I don't know whether he was under medication for pain or what. It was before he went to her funeral, and what he was saying was basically, "I willed her alive." I thought maybe this was something in his religion. He could not believe she was dead. He thought that she had escaped from the car just as he had, but it was a matter of will, that he willed it, and that's why he—Well, he'd dived several times and couldn't get anywhere because of the current. He didn't continue because after he dove several times and saw nothing, he thought she had gotten away. That's the main thing I remember about my conversations with him. From then on I worked with Sorensen and we divided—

The strategy I suggested at that point was that for Ted to save his career he had to rely on the people who made it possible. These were the people of Massachusetts. He had to put to them the question of whether he should continue in office. If they said no, he should get out, and if they said yes, he could stay in office. They were his base and they would support him because they knew him. The people in the rest of the country just knew him as the dead President's brother. This was 1969; he didn't have a big Senate career because he had only been in there six years. They knew him from the funeral and they knew him from his eulogy at Bobby's funeral, but they didn't know him as a person. All they knew is this guy ran away from an accident where a girl had drowned, and that he was responsible for her going over the bridge. That's very bad. He had to deal with his own people in Massachusetts, and therefore he had to speak to them and tell

them, as he said in the speech, it may be, because he had admitted to leaving the scene of this tragic accident, he should retire from public life.

I also suggested saying, "And I know that because of this, I will never be able to seek the Presidency." Eunice took that out. But Ted did the narrative and I did the end, which was referred to as the "send in your box tops" or the Nixon Checkers speech thing. It was generally decried as tasteless and out of place, but it worked. He got 100,000 letters, not e-mails, 100,000 written letters from people in Massachusetts, urging him to stay in office despite this, because they knew him and they knew what he had done for them. He had been a part of their lives for the last seven years. It's the difference between someone you just read about in the paper a couple of times and someone you feel you've known personally for years.

[BREAK]

Heininger: This is a resumption of the interview with Milton Gwirtzman. Let's talk about one other important speech. So clearly, the Chappaquiddick speech resonated in Massachusetts.

Gwirtzman: It did what I hoped it would do.

Heininger: Then there's another famous speech.

Gwirtzman: Let me just say that, at the time, Dave Burke was much more involved with helping him decide whether to stay in office, personally. I was not really involved with that. At one time he was talking about leaving public life. He was serious about it, and Dave Burke said, "What are you going to be, the Duke of Windsor?"

Heininger: Unlikely. You were also involved in the Saturday Night Massacre speech.

Gwirtzman: The speech?

Heininger: Was there a speech for the Saturday Night Massacre? Didn't Kennedy make a speech about it?

Gwirtzman: He may have. Have you interviewed Jim Flug?

Heininger: Yes.

Gwirtzman: Did he say he wrote a speech?

Heininger: I can't let you know.

Gwirtzman: Well, I was involved on the day of the Saturday Night Massacre. I was on the Hill. We met in somebody's office, Phil Hart or somebody; Ted, Jimmy, me, maybe Burt Wides, the people on the Judiciary Committee. Ted had been very close to Archie Cox, and when [Richard

M.] Nixon made Archie Cox his Special Prosecutor, Ted—and Jimmy staffed this—Ted worked out an agreement, a signed agreement with the Attorney General, [Elliot] Richardson, who was also close to Archie, of what Archie's independence would be vis-à-vis the White House. So Archie went and did his job. He did it so well that Nixon asked Richardson to fire him. Richardson resigned. So did the two next in line. [Robert] Bork fired him. That's all we knew when we had that meeting, except then another piece of news came in, that the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] was over at the Special Prosecutor's office, refusing to let people take their files with them and locking all the files, we assumed prior to destroying them.

Here we are, we're sitting in that Senate office, and we're helpless. What can we do? We've got the FBI moving against the Special Prosecutor. What can Senators do? The next thing that happened was Archie's appearance before the press, and that was a critical thing. That turned things around.

Heininger: Was it?

Gwirtzman: Yes. Before Archie's press conference we were despondent. I mean, this looked like takeover, a fascist takeover of the government of the United States. It was a Saturday, and what can you do?

Heininger: Well, if they tried to do the firings out of the news cycle it didn't work, did it?

Gwirtzman: No, it didn't.

Heininger: It did not. It was big news.

Gwirtzman: Very interesting about Archie. Archie worked very hard for John Kennedy in the Senate, to pass the labor rackets legislation. He was its special counsel. And then he went to work in John F. Kennedy's campaign, but there really was no—In a campaign of that vintage there was really no place for people whose expertise is lawyering.

Heininger: Unless you get into trouble.

Gwirtzman: And there were very few campaign finance issues. Sorensen had been—He and Ted Kennedy had this relationship that nobody could break. George Ball couldn't break it, and Archie wouldn't want to break it because Archie is a very high- minded guy. So they put Archie to work and he hired some very good writers to do what is called "advance." You'd go into the town and find out what the issues were and get a memo to Kennedy, so at the next stop he'll know what to talk about. Working with Archie were John Bartlow Martin, who was a very distinguished writer, the greatest writer the *Saturday Evening Post* ever had. He also had the person who became the editor of the *Atlantic*, Robert Manning. He had these really highly skilled writers going and doing his work. He'd supervise them. And he got out these fantastically good memos and sent them to the plane, and never heard anything back. And he was sure, and it's probably true, that Ted Sorensen was going to do it his way.

After the election, he went back to Harvard Law School. I visited him because we worked on the same floor and I got to know him. I hadn't gone to the Harvard Law School, so I didn't know him that way, but we were sort of colleagues in the campaign. And I said, "Are you going to

come to the new administration?" And he said no. He said, "I haven't heard from anybody. They did not want me, they didn't want my stuff," and he was saying, "That's the way it goes. I'll go back to being first selectman of the town of Concord," which is the job he had in addition to being a professor of law at Harvard. But because of the relationship he had had with Kennedy prior to the campaign, Kennedy did want him in the administration and he took him in at the Justice Department, the Solicitor General. Anyway, he wasn't the choice. He was Richardson's choice to be Special Prosecutor and they arranged this pact, and the pact was violated and he was fired, and the rest is history.

Heininger: I've got two other quick things before I've got to stop. One is, what was your direct experience with Ted after JFK died? And then the second is, what involvement did you have in Ted's decisions to run or not run for President?

Gwirtzman: That will have to be the subject of another session because it's extensive and I have extensive stuff on that.

Heininger: Well, what about after JFK died?

Gwirtzman: Oh, that's easy. It's in both the [William] Manchester book and the book that the *Boston Globe* editors put together. Have you seen that book?

Heininger: Yes.

Gwirtzman: The fact that I drove Ted to his house in Georgetown. I'll go over it again, if you want. In fact, I'll read it for you.

Heininger: Don't read it. We want to hear it in your words.

Gwirtzman: Well, those are my words. I was in his Senate office and he came in. He had been presiding over the Senate and somebody rushed up to him and gave him the news. So he took his papers and came over. The first thing he was concerned about was his wife, because the phones weren't working and he had to assume that if they're going to do a [Abraham] Lincoln-type thing, where the conspirators try to kill everybody, that his family was vulnerable. He wanted to go home and make sure his wife was okay, but his car was being repaired so I said, "I'll drive you." So he and I and Claude Hooton, who was an old friend of his from Texas, drove from the Senate Office Building to 28th Street, ignoring all red lights. I drove. Hooton was saying, "The President has been assassinated and in my state." Ted didn't say anything.

We got to the house and Joan wasn't there. Joan had gone to Elizabeth Arden for whatever you do at Elizabeth Arden, so I said I would go get her. I went to Elizabeth Arden; they were a little surprised to see me walk in—It's only women there—and I got to Joan and said to her that—I didn't know what the status was, the death had not been announced. I said, "Ted wants you to come home because something has happened to the President, he's been hurt." And she said, "Oh, what a shame, after the miscarriage that Jackie [Onassis] had had."

So we got back there and he was really distraught because he couldn't get to anybody, there were no phones. So we went up and down 28th Street in Georgetown, looking for someone who was home and would have a phone. I think we finally despaired and he said, "I'm going to go to the

White House." So we go to the White House and as we go in, you could just—And I knew right away. We did not turn the radio on. I did not want to be there when he was hearing on the radio that his brother. . . . I didn't know, but you could see as you drove into the White House, the secretaries were crying. You could see, you could know that he was dead.

Heininger: The flags hadn't been lowered.

Gwirtzman: I didn't look at the flags. The Kennedys then proceeded just like it was a tough political fight. They made assignments. Bobby was at his house; [J. Edgar] Hoover had called him and said, "The President's dead." Sarge [Shriver] took over and made the assignments. He would be in charge of the funeral, Bobby would be in charge of Jackie, Ted would go up and inform his parents, and Eunice would go with him. I think [Robert] McNamara or something—They just said, "All right, this is what we have to do. We can't bring back the dead. This is what we have to do." And of course it was an atmosphere of shock all over the place. He left to go to—I think they got a plane for him, out of Andrews, to take him up to the Cape.

I did not see him again until he came back. I was at the White House. I had been doing some work in connection with the upcoming campaign, the 1964 reelection campaign. He came in, he looked terrible, he hadn't slept obviously. He said, "Let's go up." And he meant let's go up to the Capitol, where his brother's body was lying in state. So he and I and I think Joey Gargan went up there. There was a long, long line, going all the way out into the street. As soon as people saw who it was, they just parted and he went up. We stayed back, he went up and got on his knees and prayed for a while, and then he went back to the White House. The next day was the funeral.

And then, either that day or the day after, I was in Mike Feldman's office and there was a draft of Johnson's first speech to Congress, which was to be given like two days after the funeral. And the speech said the most fitting thing we can do in his memory is the earliest possible passage of the law authorizing the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. I didn't say anything; it wasn't my business to say anything about that. But then Lyndon goes to the Congress. He had changed it to "the most fitting thing we can do is the earliest possible passage of the Civil Rights Act."

Heininger: Interesting.

Gwirtzman: So that's the end of our—

Heininger: Give me just a quick overview on Ted's running for President.

Gwirtzman: Which time?

Heininger: Well, the first one, '72.

Gwirtzman: Sixty-eight.

Heininger: I don't know if there is a '68 one.

Gwirtzman: The '68 convention—Did he decide to run? In '72, no; '76, no; '80, yes; '84, no; '88, probably not. But all those had fairly heavy involvement and all were different, all

significant in terms of how he dealt with the people who were elected. Eighty, of course, was probably where he came the closest, which basically he went in because everybody was sure he would win, and all the polls had him running 2 to 1 against Carter.

Heininger: Right.

Gwirtzman: In ’76 he came pretty close but his kids talked him out of it. Seventy-two was too close to Chappaquiddick, ’68 he was not prepared. It was the pols who wanted it, and he was advised that if he came to Chicago, it would just be too much, that there would be riots. (Then of course there were, anyway.)

Heininger: Your advice on ’68?

Gwirtzman: My advice was no on every one.

Heininger: On every one?

Gwirtzman: Yes.

Heininger: Okay. I’ve got a conference call shortly, so we need to stop.