

JACK KEMP  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

SYMPOSIUM  
ON THE ROAD WITH JACK KEMP  
September 6, 2012

Interviewer  
Morton Kondracke

JACK KEMP FOUNDATION  
WASHINGTON, DC

[James P.] Jimmy Kemp: I'm Jimmy Kemp, president of the Jack Kemp Foundation, and today we're here at my mother, Joanne Kemp's home as part of the Kemp Legacy Project, which is the cornerstone of the Jack Kemp Foundation, where our mission is to develop, engage, and recognize exceptional leaders who champion the American idea. Our mission was inspired by my Dad, Jack Kemp, and today we have the pleasure of talking to many of the men who travelled with my dad throughout his career. I'm sure it's going to be an incredibly entertaining discussion. This is part of the Kemp oral history project, led by Mort Kondracke, and we're very grateful to Mort for his leadership and the time that he's spent talking to so many people from throughout Dad's career. We hope you enjoy this as we've enjoyed getting all the gang back together again, so to speak. So I now turn it over to Mort Kondracke.

Morton Kondracke: I'm Mort Kondracke. Today is September 6, 2012. We're at Jack and Joanne Kemp's residence in Bethesda, Maryland, and this is the symposium we're entitling On the Road. First what I want everybody to do starting with Michael O'Connell, and then Michael Castine, and then go back and forth, is to introduce yourself, say what years you travelled with Jack, how you got you job, and then what was your continuing relationship with Jack after you left his immediate employ. Michael O'Connell?

Michael O'Connell: Thank you, Mort. I'm Michael O'Connell, I'm from Buffalo, New York, and I moved to Washington in 1981 to work for Jack as assistant everything: driver, you name it. I got the job because the Thanksgiving before I was in a local watering hole and ran into Michael Castine and said I wanted to come to Washington. He

had my resume, he called me in early December, said "I have a job for you as a driver with the transition team." That wasn't going to work out, and he called me about three weeks, four weeks later, it was probably the second week of January, and he said "I've got a job for you. I've taken a job with the Administration." I said, "Michael, I've just bought a house. Literally I'm talking to you sitting on the bedroom floor with the phone and nothing else in my bedroom." He said, "Well that's good. Here, he wants to talk to you." And I had a conversation with Jack, and a week later I was on a plane, the day after Super Bowl, talking to Jack. Karen Smitsky wasn't going to let me in because Sharon wasn't there that day and I wasn't on the calendar, but Jackie McLaughlin and Michael were talking to each other from the White House and got me in to see Jack, and a month later I moved down and started right after Presidents' Day in February.

Kondracke: How long did you spend with Jack?

O'Connell: I was with Jack for four and a half years, ended up being special assistant, and Sharon and I were trying to figure it out yesterday, but in October of '84, Jack and I travelled to about 35 or 40 cities in the month of October. He was number three on the campaign circuit for speakers, so we did a lot of travelling. Had a few incidents I'll share with you later.

Kondracke: Mike Castine?

Michael Castine: Yes, I started as an intern in the office in 1976, back when it was a good thing to be an intern. I was there for just three or four months, and then went back to the district, and met [Patricia] Pat

Brunner, who was working in the local office back in Buffalo, where I'm originally from, as Michael mentioned. Pat got me involved with the campaign. We were working on the campaign, and I don't even think Jack was opposed at that time, but our goal was to get over 90 percent of the votes in his favor. And I think we ended up with like 93 percent of the people voted for Jack that year, in 1978. So the campaign ended, and I kept doing my day job that I had back in Buffalo, and I remember this so vividly. It was a Wednesday night in December, the phone rang, and I got the same type of call that Michael got. "Jack wants to talk to you." And he said, "Can you be here tomorrow." So I said, "Well, I'll see what I can do," and I got on a plane and flew down, and he said "I'd like you to come back and take over." It was [Bernd] Bernie Heinze and [Joseph] Jo Ogiony were the two guys ahead of me. I was the third one who had this type of role, sort of this Jack of all trades, called "Aide to Kemp," so I started in December of 1978, I believe, and stayed through '81, was asked to interview at the White House and got a job at the White House day one in the Reagan Administration. So I went from intern, to staff, to friend of the family.

Kondracke: Ed?

Ed Brady: Ed Brady. I worked from '86 to '88 during the presidential campaign. I actually volunteered for the Michigan operation, Michigan Opportunity Society, worked for [W.] Clark Durant. I had met Jack coming in a few times, doing some political organizing in the state of Michigan. After Michigan ended, I had asked to come to Washington. I'm from Illinois, so I was travelling in the Midwest, asked to come to Washington, and John [C.] Maxwell hired me, in fact to take my future

wife's position. She moved up, I came in after her, and I did some political stuff in Iowa and New Hampshire, did some advance for Ann Stanley and Scott [W.] Reed, and had met a lot of the Kemp family actually in Iowa, and travelled with [Jeffrey A.] Jeff [Kemp] a little bit. Jack needed somebody to travel with, and so on a plane from, if I remember right, from Des Moines to Joliet, Illinois, he had asked me if I would be interested. And I came back to Washington and talked to Jeff, and had some conversations on what it entailed, and two weeks later I was on the plane with him as well. My wife is good friends, best friends with Jennifer Kemp, and so we've got a family history and have, in fact Joanne was in our wedding, and have a family history still going on.

Kondracke: J.T.?

J.T. Taylor: J.T. Taylor. I've got many different lives with the Jack Kemp organization and family. Started off as the aide to Kemp when Jack was secretary of HUD [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development]. I inherited that from Bill Dal Col. Worked with Bill, Scott Reed and Sharon Zelaska throughout the HUD years. Moved from there to help run Jack's PAC [Political Action Committee] with Bill and others in the mid-nineties, moved to Capitol Hill for a couple of years, and then Jack was picked as [Robert J.] Dole's VP nominee. Jumped back onto the campaign for what, three months in 1996. Moved back to the Hill, and then became the president of Empower America in 2000, 2001, until Jack, Jimmy and I formed Kemp Partners back in 2002 through 2009. So almost nine lives.

Kondracke: Rick?

Richard Ahearn: My name is Rick Ahearn. I first met Jack in 1978 when he was travelling on an RNC [Republican National Committee] cut taxes by 33.3 percent trip to Chicago. As a member of the Reagan White House staff, I interacted with him on a number of occasions. After the inauguration of President [George H. W.] Bush, I was seeking a position in the Bush Administration and I was talking to my old friend [Edward J.] Ed Rollins, a mutual friend of mine and the Kemp family, and he said "Well, I'd like you to go talk to Jack Kemp." And I said, "No, Ed, I don't think that's going to be a good mix. I don't think there'll be a fit there, just from our interactions over the last few years." And he said, "No, not really. You've got to go talk to Jack. I think you're wrong. I think you guys would get along." I said, "I really don't think it's going to work." And he said, "Well will you please just go and meet with Jack?" So I said, "Of course." So I was given Sharon's name. We didn't know each other then. He had already begun at HUD. This was right after the inauguration in '89, and Sharon set up a meeting for me with him in his office at HUD, and I went over and met with him, and we actually hit it off a lot better than I expected we would. And he said, "Well, look, how do you feel about it?" I said, "I'm just not sure I'm the right guy to come to this department. I'm not sure how we would interface." And he said, "Well, I think it would be better than you think. We could give it a try." And I said, "Well, I'd be delighted to give it a try." We clicked, he made me deputy assistant secretary for Public Affairs, and I set up his schedule and advance shop, and he turned out to be the most sought-after Cabinet member for domestic travel during that administration because of his dynamic speaking ability and his willingness to go out and campaign for people, no matter where and

when. I continued working for him after we left office, right up through the 1996 campaign, when I was director of VP Operations, as he was selected by Bob Dole as his running mate. And then Empower America, then at Empower America up to the '96 campaign and then I became president of the PAC he started after the '96 campaign, and travelled with him until leaving his organization and joining the [Malcolm S. "Steve"] Forbes [Jr.] campaign in 1999. So it was 10 years that we travelled together, and we had a lot of fun.

Kondracke: Bill?

William Dal Col: I'm Bill Dal Col. I first went to work for Jack at HUD in February of 1989, and worked through various capacities till 1996. At HUD I started out in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations, then got tasked with briefing books, which Sharon warned me about. Everything was true. Then travelled with Jack on and off through the HUD years, then over to Empower America. Like J.T., I followed as president of Empower America on an appropriate day, December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day. I could sum up the Empower America experience, now known as the birthplace of Paul [D.] Ryan, which Jack would be extremely proud of, to say the least. And then took a leave from Empower America to run Steve Forbes' presidential race in '95, which truly in most of our hearts was the Kemp '96 campaign. Post the campaign I came back to Empower America, and then left again when we ran in '96, when Jack was the VP nominee, and then went back one more time to select a new president for Empower in '97. And then formed a think tank for Steve Forbes called Americans for Hope, Growth, and Opportunity, which was largely based on all Jack's ideas.

The relationship with Jack post-Empower America was usually weekly or daily phone calls in reference to tax policy or growth.

Kondracke: What does the travelling staffer for Jack Kemp do? What was your range of activities, what was a day like, what was a trip like?  
Michael O'Connell?

O'Connell: My trips were early, and it was a matter of being everything. You had to be in touch with Sharon, make sure we were in the right place at the right time, do something when the helicopter doesn't show up in Nyack, New York, and you wait and you wait and finally the helicopter comes and you get over to Westchester and can't land, and the guy's going down like this, and finally Jack reaches over and says, "Hey, tell him to take it up. We're going to crash." You go back, call a taxi cab, go over the bridge that they didn't want us to drive over and fly off to the next stop. And between there you're on the phone. In those days we didn't have anything but a pager, and so make sure Jack was in the right place at the right time and meeting the right people, and getting cards and following up.

Kondracke: Coffee in the morning?

several: Every morning, promptly.

O'Connell: That was a long time ago. When I was working with Jack everything was more local, so a lot of what I would be doing was getting in the car with him and going to some local hotel, and he always had a stack of papers. What was fascinating, and it took me a few days to figure this out, but the car would get going and you'd ask

him a question, and he wouldn't even respond. He wouldn't even look up, and he'd have his notes going, he'd be drawing, and ripping articles out of the newspaper, and once you figured it out, he was gearing up to go out onto the football field. He was really getting charged up, and we'd go walk into the hotel, literally running into the hotel. First place he would go would be the staff area in the restaurant, and he would go and shake everybody's hand. He'd have 300 CEOs waiting for him, but he would go in and shake all the staff's hand, and say, "These are my people." He would get to know every one of them, look them all in the eye and say, "Hi, Jack Kemp." One of the times I was with him, the big thing for me would be if whoever was holding this event would say, "Hey, why don't you join us for lunch?" instead of standing in the back, and you'd get a free meal out of it. So one day I'm sitting there at a meeting, and I've heard the speech many times before, and all of a sudden I found myself clapping, getting caught up in the moment, and I said "Damn, he's got me too." [laughter] So we left, but it was all of the above. A lot of the stuff I did, Sharon and I were laughing about this earlier, was everything from keeping the car gassed up. Now when I was there it was during the gas and oil crisis, so the lines would be a mile or two down the road. You had to have an odd or even tag on your license plate. So I was getting to know the owners of this gas station and would show up with bottles of wine, cases of beer, pictures signed from Jack, whatever it took, and I would pull in and they would open the garage door, and I would pull right in, and somehow they filled up the car in the garage. I don't know how they ever did this, but they would just let me run, and off we would go. I could go on for hours. The other place where we did was one of the big events, one of the turning points in Jack's career was the Detroit convention. That's

where he was really one of two or three that were looking like he was going to be a VP candidate. And one quick story on that, when it finally came down and Jack did not get it, he was unbelievable. He was just such a great statesman and a diplomat and a professional about everything. He just said, "Well, we've got to go congratulate George Bush." And we immediately went to George Bush's suite, knocked on the door, and Jack walked in and said, "I want to congratulate you. This is great."

Ahearn: Great statesman and a diplomat on everything, huh?  
[laughter] We'll get back to that one.

Kondracke: Why don't you just go with that thought? We'll go around again.

Castine: Joanne's sitting here, Rick.

Ahearn: Joanne will remember some of these—well, part of my role was not just doing his travel arrangements, but we also had a lot to say about politics, and made suggestions to him on a regular basis. There were a number of occasions where we strongly disagreed. We had a number of battles royal. I can recall one time when we were in California, Joanne was not on this trip, and he was going up to the [Richard M.] Nixon Library to endorse, I think it was Proposition 527, or speak against it. Actually he was going to speak against it. And we were getting calls from everyone. This was after the '96 campaign when we were talking and hoping that he might consider running for president down the road. And we'd get into these arguments. I said, "Politically you just can't do this, Jack. You're going to alienate every

Republican voter in every border state there is, California, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, everywhere illegal immigration is an issue. It got to the point where he threw me out of his suite, which he regularly did, but then the next day or a few hours later we'd talk it over and he'd laugh and I'd laugh, and we'd patch everything up. Another time at the convention in Houston, where he was having a disagreement with certain people in the White House like [Richard D.] Dick Darman over budgetary matters

Dal Col: And [James A.] Jim Baker.

Ahearn: And Jim Baker. He was going to get up, and you'll remember this one I think, Joanne, he wanted to get up and give his speech. He was speaking to the convention, and he was going to lambaste the President's proposed budget. So we had another heated discussion in his suite, Joanne was present. I said, "You cannot do this as a member of the Cabinet. If you want to give this speech, you have to resign from the Cabinet. You cannot get up at the President's re-nomination convention and criticize his budget," and he got very perturbed, very angry, and he said, "You're not Ed Rollins." And I said, "No, I'm not. But if he were here, he'd agree." Again, we had a lot of disagreements, but they were short-lived and we'd laugh about them a couple of hours later. He was great to work with, but it was always a challenge and always exciting.

Kondracke: Ed, so what did you have to do, and what was the trip like?

Brady: I think the biggest task we had was to keep him on track, keep him on schedule. So whether if we were in town here and we were flying out of Dulles, there'd be many days that I'd be driving down [Route] 66 going 80, passing him, because I was supposed to be there first, and meeting him at the airport with the four or five newspapers and ready to go. If you're on the road in the hotel, you've got your briefing sheet. Seven-oh-five [7:05] you're supposed to knock on the door with coffee and newspapers, and so you do at 7:05 and 7:10 and 7:15, and by 7:20 he's out the door, and all during the day communicating with Sharon in the office, and the press office, to make sure that he was on track—not only on track on time, but on track on who he was supposed to speak to, who was going to be in the room, briefing him as you're walking down the hall. I've got to tell one story that I thought was funny, not at the time, but afterwards. I knock on the door, we get in the hallway, we're in a Holiday Inn, I think, in Des Moines, Iowa, or in Iowa somewhere, and we're walking down the hall, and I hand him the index card and it's got all the briefing material on it. So he's asking questions, he's looking at the card and I'm looking at the card, and sure enough, you know where there's a double door there's a middle piece to the double door? Jack hits it right in the forehead. He looks at me, doesn't say a word, and just moves on. That was Jack. He didn't express some of his emotions all the time but you knew they were there. He complained about his wrist that afternoon a few times, in some colorful language. Our job was to keep him on task, work with the offices and make sure that he was on track.

Kondracke: J.T?

Taylor: Yes, that's actually funny. My very first day on the job, I think it was with Bill, the hook on my garment bag as we were walking through the airport, Chicago O'Hare [International Airport], got caught on my ankle. I tripped and fell on my knees in a suit in the middle of the airport. Jack turned around, looked at Bill, shook his head, just said "Keep walking." [laughter]

Dal Col: And it wasn't one hook. You had two garment bags, because of course, why travel light? You had two garment bags, two legal briefcases, so you couldn't grab anything. We're standing behind J.T, the hook grabs one leg, and Jack goes, "Watch this." [laughter] He tries to shake it loose and the hook gets the other leg, and down he goes. Jack says, "Don't help him. Keep walking." And we did.

Kondracke: And it was your very first day on the job.

Taylor: Very first day as the body guy. But always newspapers. You could be in Nome, Alaska, and he'd ask for the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times*. "What do you mean 'you don't have it?'" And then he would, the major articles from the *Post* or the *Times*, faxed to whatever hotel you were staying, so it was coffee, newspapers, in the morning the wakeup calls, and of course every once in a while he'd misplace his Dopp kit, which was sacred, as we all know.

Dal Col: The hair dryer.

Taylor: The hairdryer.

Kondracke: The hairdryer?

Dal Col: Oh, the hairdryer and hairspray. Not good. Not good.

Kondracke: How did he react to Bob Forehead, by the way? I didn't know that he had a hairdryer, so he was cartoonized as Bob Forehead. How did he react to that?

Brady: He just kept going. It didn't bother him one bit.

Casteen: Yes, not too much bothered him.

Taylor: Nothing bothered him.

Kondracke: I always wanted to ask that question. Does anybody else have anything about what the routine was like?

Dal Col: Absolutely. In addition to newspapers, coffee, it was the first age of cellphones, so you had the three-pounder or the five-pounder. Obviously we were required to a) know how to dial it, and b) know every number of every friend he had in any given city—thank God for Sharon—and get them on the line. And then explain to him how the cellphone doesn't work every place. That was never good. And then the other big project was counting the bags, always making sure that when he left some place you left with what you came with. And my first hair-raising experience, no pun intended, being follically challenged, is we're in Santa Barbara, California, at Fess Parker's winery, we have to fly down to LA to get a flight to go back to the East Coast. So of course we're late. It's Clarence Day, Doug Duvall, myself, and Jack, we've got all the bags. Jack had a garment bag, two

legal briefcases, and the alligator skin hairdryer bag. We load them ourselves onto the nose of the plane. As we're going through the metal detectors and the x-ray machine, everybody wants his autograph, so they stopped the machine. Everybody who works at the airport stops working, comes over to get autographs. The pilot wants us to go, and we have to get Jack moving. We get on the plane, we landed at LAX [Los Angeles International Airport], and they dropped the stairs down, and the guys in the front of the plane taking their bags out. Clarence Day's sitting next to me, and he elbows me and almost breaks my ribs. "What's the matter, Clarence?" "Bill, there's a bag missing." I said, "What do you mean? I counted them." "There's a bag missing. We get off the plane, Rusty Paul meets us, we've got to rush to get the next flight, I go back, I'm in the nose of the plane. Where the hell is this bag? Because guess which bag's missing? The hairdryer bag. Jack yells, "Bill, they'll find your bag, don't worry about it." I said, "It's not my bag." He said "Whose is it?" I said, "Yours." That was good for five and a half hours flight on the way back on the plane of "Hey, Bill lost a bag." And the only thing that gave me comfort, Ed, was knowing you lost the coat. And the coat came back, and the bag arrived the next day.

Brady: More importantly than that, the one thing that I think I'm probably remembered for is, part of our job was to clean up after him and make sure we had the bags and the coats and everything else. I did lose the coat in St. Louis, if I remember right, and I swear Allen Allred has still got the coat just to spite me. The one thing that I did lose that he claims I lost is, you're sitting in the back of the plane and you've got cup holders, and Jack would always take his rings off just to relax. And sure enough I lost the AFL [American Football League]

championship ring because he didn't pick it up out of the cup holder. So I think I'm probably known for that.

Kondracke: But you got it back.

Brady: No, was there a duplicate made? There was a duplicate made, but nonetheless, I'm the one.

Kondracke: Somebody's got an AFL championship ring.

Brady: Some cleanup guy at the airport.

Kondracke: Who packed? Did he pack himself?

Brady: Yes.

Ahearn: I couldn't answer that one. He packed himself, on the road.

Dal Col: You would go through the room making sure there wasn't a suit hanging in the closet or a shirt, cause that was going to happen. And if you had a black tie event on the road, you always made sure you knew where to go get cufflinks or a bowtie, because guaranteed he a) lost his or b) didn't bring them.

Ahearn: And there were a lot of borrowed bowties from waiters.

Dal Col: A lot of \$20 bills in kitchens.

Ahearn: And speaking of black tie dinners, there was one time when I went with him, this was after HUD. He was a key speaker at a Heritage Foundation dinner, I believe it was in California, and he did something he never used to do. He said "I'll take this bag." It was a small garment bag that had his dinner jacket in it, his tux. And I said "Really?" He said, "I'll take that, I'll take that." So he took it and he hung it in the front closet of the plane, or the flight attendant did, and we're getting off the plane, and I said, "Okay, where's your garment bag?" And he said, "I'll take care of it, I'll take care of it." So we got off the plane, and we had left the terminal, we're getting in the car, and I turned to him, he'd stopped to buy some papers or something and he'd caught up with me, and I said, "Where's the garment bag?" And he said "Don't you have it?" And I said, "No, you took it off the plane." He was traveling not even in a sports coat. He was traveling in very casual clothes, like a yellow shirt and a pair of khakis, a pair of slacks. The plane left, and so we had a lot of good friends at United Airlines, thank the lord, Carol Washburn, especially, at National Airport. They would fix any problem they could, so I called her immediately, and they met the plane at its next stop, and they found the bag and they got it back. However, that evening we had to go in the hotel to a men's store and buy a blazer and buy some trousers, and there was not time to get them altered, and so I had to take Scotch Tape and hem his trousers, and they kept falling down, and so we're in the ballroom at a black tie dinner, and the hem on his trousers kept falling down. It was very embarrassing, frankly, to have to go up and keep Scotch Taping the hems of the trousers, but this stuff happened all the time.

Kondracke: He's not speaking.

Ahearn: No, no, I wouldn't interrupt the speech, but he was walking around shaking hands, and the hem would fall down. Before he went on stage we'd have to go off in the corner and tape the trousers again. There was never a dull moment.

Castine: Just to say on the shaking hands thing, it probably happened to all of us, you'd say, "Jack, that's Joe Smith over there, he's a big contributor. You may want to say hello." And Jack would go over there and say, "Hi, I'm Jack Kemp. What's your name?" [laughter] He wouldn't listen to you at all.

Taylor: One more thing about routine though, and Rick, this probably fell more into Rick's camp than anything. His team would time and again find the shortest route from a to b. So he was just hell to be with in any drive over 10 minutes. One day—and Michael talking about Long Island—something about Nyack brought this back up again, but we were going to drive from the City to the Island, because there was a fog coming in. He wouldn't hear anything of it. He said, "Let's take the helicopter." And he wasn't a big fan of helicopters, but he said, "Let's take the helicopter." So we get in the helicopter, mist is starting to come in. Some thing that happened to you, the helicopter goes down once, and then we are probably a story or two from the Long Island Sound, and all of a sudden his right hand goes into my left knee, and just puts a grip on it, and he starts screaming and yelling at the pilot, "Let's get this thing, let's get this thing down." The pilot goes back up, comes back down, does it a second time, and then he found another place on my knee that wasn't bruised, and dug his claws in there. Finally we got on the ground, and I said, "We

should have taken the car, shouldn't we?" And he shook his head and he goes, "Yup." He didn't talk to me for the rest of the day.

Dal Col: It was your fault.

Taylor: It was my fault.

Dal Col: That's an identical story. That's so funny. It's almost identical.

Taylor: But drive times, he was not fun to be with if it went over, if it said 10 minutes on the schedule, if it was 11 minutes—

Dal Col: There was only one city he was great at with driving: LA [Los Angeles, California]. Because wherever the driver got, Jack could get us out of whatever traffic jam. Back streets. The only city. He thought he could do it other places, but LA was great.

Ahearn: He'd regularly do it in places he'd never been before. He'd never been to a city before and we'd be driving along and we'd be stuck in traffic, he'd start complaining about the traffic. I said, "Jack, we told you it's rush hour. That's why I tried to get you to leave the hotel on time, but we're 20 minutes late." "Well, we're going to be late." "Well, we're going to be late because you left your room 20 minutes late. We're going to be late because it's rush hour, and that's the way it is, there's nothing we can do. That's life." And then he'd get on with the driver, "Are you sure you know where you're going? Are you sure you know where you going? By the way, is there any factory air in this car? Turn up the air conditioning." They'd turn up

the air conditioning. A couple of minutes later, "It's freezing in here. Turn down the air conditioning." He did that consistently.

O'Connell: Within my first couple of weeks, maybe a month, we were going out to Andrews [Air Force Base]. I think we were going out to Air Force One. Joanne, you were in the car. I had an idea of how we should go, and he was hell-bent on going out East Capitol [Street], the one that goes behind the Capitol. And we were supposed to go out towards Andrews and the Parkway and all that, and we go almost out to RFK Stadium before he finally gave in. I don't know if you remember this, and finally said, "All right. Where are we supposed to go?" And I said, "Let me drive," and I just did it.

Kondracke: You told great stories. What is your all time favorite Kemp story? If you were going to tell your grandchildren one Kemp story, what would it be? We can go around as many times as you like. Michael?

O'Connell: I'm going to pass that.

Ahearn: That's a tough question.

Brady: My favorite's really not political. It kind of gives you the flavor of Jack Kemp. He used to love to play tennis. He had a bad knee, he limped a lot, he always complained about the knee, quietly, but he was very strong in the sense that he went through some pain. Barney [J.] Skladany was always his tennis partner. If Barney couldn't play, he had to play tennis. So 25-year-old Ed Brady got to play tennis with him. I'd go into that tennis match thinking "What am I going to do?"

I'm a high school tennis player; I'm not a great tennis player, but he's 52 years old. I should be able to beat him, 25 years old." And we're playing tennis and he's just sweating his tail off and working harder, and I'm kind of nonchalant, because I don't know if I'm supposed to try to beat him, or not beat him, you know, am I going to get back on the plane with him or not? Well I hit a drop shot, and he's at the baseline, and he goes flying across the court, and takes a dive, and skins his forehead, his shoulder. He makes the shot and he wins the point. I turned around thinking, "What the hell's going on here?" It was his competitive spirit, not only in politics, in people, in sports. Everything. It kind of gave you the flavor of Jack Kemp. He gave it everything. I still remember and tell my kids this story about the competitiveness and the will to win, the will to do the best that you can. It was something as a 25-year-old, seeing this Congressman running for president dive across the court. He jumped up, didn't say a word, didn't smile, it was just part of him.

Kondracke: Anybody else? Favorite story.

Castine: There are so many, but one came to mind. It's sort of current in a way. We're racing to the airport one day. In those days you could pull right up to National Airport and park right in the front. They had a little lot, a little gated thing. So we get out of the car and all of a sudden this little Fiat is coming up, and he goes "Watch this. This is going to be great." So this Fiat comes up, and it's [Albert A.] Al Gore [Jr.] in the Fiat, and he goes "Al, I want you to meet Michael Castine," and he introduces me, which he didn't always do. And so we're talking, and he goes "Al, how can you drive a foreign car? You're a Congressman." This is back when he was in Tennessee. He

just berated Al Gore. Gore's sitting there doing his, he didn't know what to say, and I just said, "Nice to meet you, Congressman." We walked away, and this guy was just a crumpled mess after Jack just pummeled him for driving a foreign car.

O'Connell: Well he got in trouble one day because I had a BMW when I started, and I forget how we ended up, but I had to pick him up from the airport and take him to the Capitol. And we pull up, and you can pull up right in front of the Capitol and drop him off, and I go back and park my car. About two hours later I guess it was [Merrick] Mac [Carey] who was press at the time, gets a call and says, "What's Jack doing driving around in a BMW?" He never rode in my car again. We were always in the Thunderbird.

Dal Col: I think for me there's two that tie up, but the first one Sharon will remember very, very well. 1991 AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee] conference. We at that point had kind of gotten the then-Daddy Bush Administration a little riled up with some of the things we'd been doing, and they knew we were going to APAC, so the Secretary of State Jim Baker let it be known that the HUD secretary should talk about housing, not housing on the West Bank; housing in general. Nothing about land-for-peace. Say nothing. And Mary Burnett [Cannon], [Thomas] Tom Humbert, myself, Sharon in his office before the speech, leaving. Absolutely he's not going to say anything, no problem. Goes off to the AIPAC conference, couldn't have been done 10 minutes, and [Edith E.] Ede Holiday calls me, and I had to hold the phone about three feet from my ear because she's screaming, "He did it, he said it." "What did he say?" "He said 'not an inch of land for peace.'" Jack comes blowing back into to the office, as

the tornado always did. Sharon, Mary, and I go in the office and say, "Jack, did you say anything at the speech that we might want to be aware of?" "No, nothing." "You said nothing at the speech?" "No, why would I say anything." Dial up a staffer who gets sent over to do advance named Howard Mortman, because he had been big with AIPAC, and wanted to be there for the speech. I put it on speaker, Jack is sitting in the chair tilted back as he always did, on the verge of falling over, and I said, "Howard, how was the Secretary's speech?" "Oh, it was awesome." "Anything memorable?" "Yes, he said, 'not an inch of land for peace.'" There was a cat grin on his face. And then the second story would be the '92 convention, which Rick brought up earlier. But more importantly, not only the speech, but how he was received, and the fact that we had snuck in 40,000 Kemp '96 signs in through the ABC [American Broadcasting Company] News trucks, thanks to Sherrie Rollins [Westin], and when he got up to speak, the reaction within the place was nothing but awesome. And [Timothy J.] Tim Russert was standing right next to me as he was speaking, and you could see he owned Tim. And it was like, oh, yeah, there's the '92 election, but who cares? This is about down the road. And the [James Danforth "Dan"] Quayle people just loved it immensely, needless to say.

Kondracke: Right. What do you think are Jack's outstanding character traits, both strengths and weaknesses, but let's start with strengths. Michael?

O'Connell: When you were asking about the favorite story, this came to mind. It was the '84 swearing-in of the President, and it was freezing, and they moved it inside. My parents had come down, and

Sharon had helped, and we'd gotten tickets and all this great stuff. We ended up in the office, and Joanne was playing a wonderful hostess, and Jack came in and was just very warm to my parents, and it really touched me, because it was just that personal side of Jack. And things he said about me were like, "Wow, thanks." And it was nice. Jack could be tough and gruff, but he was also a great man.

Castine: I would agree. Some of my best times with Jack were after I left the staff. He would be in New York and he would be at a, say, "Come to a luncheon." And I would go and he'd say, "I want you to sit next to me." In the old days we'd be in the back of the room, but he would talk, and say, "Let's get together." And one time it was unbelievable. We're sitting at this—he was part of a forum, I think he was one of the cohosts, at the Harvard Club in New York, and he said, there's a group of us standing there, and he said, "Please excuse us. Michael, can you come with me? I'd like to talk to you alone." And I was sort of blown away by that, because these guys were CEOs of companies. We went down stairs and we had lunch, just the two of us, and had just a really nice discussion. And then another time my wife and I, we'd just gotten married, it was 1987, and we moved to Darien, Connecticut. I think Sharon had told us that [Peter K.] Pete Gogolak, who was an old buddy of Jack's, lived in the town, and so we get invited to this thing, we go and meet Pete, and he's really gracious. So we're kind of standing around, not knowing anybody, and nobody's really talking to us. They're talking to Pete and everybody else. All of a sudden Jack comes bursting into the room, and the first thing he says, "Where's Michael and Anne?" And we were sort of like "Wow, this is unbelievable." And he came over and gave us a big hug. "Congratulations, great." And after that everybody in

the room came by to say hello to us. So we had our blessing. Really just tremendous.

Kondracke: Everybody says that he cared about little people. You referred to greeting people in the kitchen, stuff like that. Bureaucrats at HUD as well, right? So what was that about? Why do you think he did that?

Dal Col: His compassion for people, and particularly for those less fortunate or downtrodden, or those perceived as less, was overwhelming. His strengths were clearly his passion, his search for ideas, his curiosity, and his biggest strength was his compassion. It was genuine, it was real. And from a weakness standpoint, timeliness. Late we were going to be.

Kondracke: Because he was blowing his schedule by spending his time with people.

Dal Col: Spending his time with people. He did not leave the room, if he thought someone was there to see him. He went up and acknowledged them.

Taylor: Whether it'd be a political speech, or whether he'd be in an inner-city project, visiting with families, he would just stay and stay. You could look at your watch all you wanted, you could give him the high sign, the let's get out of here sign, it would never ever matter. He would want to stay and connect with every single person in that room. And it just wasn't HUD. It was in every, since I had the fortunate happenstance to be in a number of different iterations, it was

at HUD, it was after HUD, it was at Kemp Partners, Empower America, I mean, it just lasted through every single day of his life.

Brady: It went to the, as you'd leave a big ballroom, he'd want to talk to the bartender, and if you'd walk through the kitchen, he'd take another five minutes, because he would introduce himself, shake their hands and thank them. To the drivers and the volunteers around the country, he really showed sincerity and thanks for the people that were helping him and helping the country.

Kondracke: Was it just a meet-and-greet, or did he have actual engaging conversations?

Dal Col: He'd stop and talk to them, and usually get a request that we would try and fulfill, or point them in a direction. No, it was real.

O'Connell: The less important the people, the more important they were to Jack. I can remember we had, he was speaking to interns over on the Senate side one day, and there was a vote coming up, and Sharon was like, "You have to get him there, you have to get him back." And I'm like, "Okay, I will." So I'm watching the time, I know the vote's coming, the pager goes off, 15 minutes to get him from Dirksen [Senate Office Building] to the Capitol. I'm going, "Jack, we've got to go." And he played me off the kids for 12 minutes. And then we ran to the, and literally, "Do you want me to go? Michael wants me to go. Do you guys want me to go?" "Noooo." And he'd play and he'd interact and he'd talked to them, and finally with three minutes left, I mean literally fly across to the Capitol, screech the brakes, he'd run up the stairs.

Kondracke: So let me get this straight. Is somebody with him all the time, all during the day? He would go into his office, presumably, and have private meetings, but after he came out there was always somebody who was going along with him or driving him.

Brady: You'd always meet him at the door, or meet him at the back of the room, or you'd walk up to him and pull him out of the speech, and you'd stand at the back of the room. A 40-minute speech is now 60 minutes and you're going like this, so you're right there. The only time during the day traveling, we'd have down time, occasionally, not enough. You'd take him to his room and he'd have down time, and that's about the only time he was alone. I've got to say, I think one of his strengths and weaknesses that you asked was the competitiveness, and I keep going back to that. Competitive because he was competition of ideas, competition of ideology, but it also worked as a weakness at some times. He would compete. He would pit consultants or people like [Charles R.] Charlie Black [Jr.] or Ed Rollins against each other. But it was his game, it was his way. I don't know if it was a game or not, but it was his way to vet the ideas that he wanted to be vetted in order to make a right decision. But it was, in my mind, and one particular when I questioned him on David Carmen and John [W.] Buckley and who was his press secretary, at one time on an airplane. I didn't think I was getting back on that airplane. He had never spoken to me the way that he did before—

Kondracke: Just for bringing that question up?

Brady: Yes, just for a guy like his bag guy to question him in front of his assistant press secretary and the guy running Iowa, [James] Jim Weber. I just couldn't take it anymore. It was one of those deals where you've got to move forward, and you can't pit these two against each other. You've got a press secretary, one that happened to be in New Hampshire and the other happened to be nationwide, but that sometimes, in my opinion, was a weakness.

Kondracke: What did he do? He chewed you out, obviously.

Brady: He chewed me out. Like Rick said, two or three hours later, after the event, he said "You doing okay?" Never apologized, nor did I. But "Are you doing okay? I want to make sure we were okay." So we moved on.

Ahearn: I would agree with what everybody said about his strengths and his weaknesses, and just another illustration was when he was the nominee for vice president. We had to amend our scheduling practices to expand the allowed time at each event, because you could not get him off the rope lines. We'd have very large turnouts in many instances, relatively speaking for a VP candidate. We don't draw like the presidential nominee always does, as we all know.

Dal Col: On college campuses he did, though.

Ahearn: He'd draw very large on campuses. But he would not leave the rope line, and it was not just up to J.T. to try. I would try and pull him all the time as well, and say "We've got to go." As every nominee does, we were trying to hit three or four cities a day, so that involved

flights to and from events. We'd be in danger by the fourth event of the day in danger of not being able to hold our crowd, because we would run so late. But he loved people, and he felt, and we talked about it, he would say, "They went to all the effort to come out and see me, they want to shake my hand. I should shake their hands." But there was only so much time in the day where we could build events, and that was a problem.

Taylor: There's one exception to that. In '96, when the Secret Service and they said they'd identified a man in the audience with a gun, and they came up to me and they said, "Look, Jack will want to shake every hand afterward." So the Secret Service was part of the show as well, and they knew that he had to touch everyone, and they said, "You have to get him off the stage as soon as he's finished with his speech. No exceptions." So I went up to him, looked him right in the eye, said, "You never listen. Listen to me right now. Just walk to that door." I pointed to a door in the corner. I said, "Just leave the stage, do not shake a hand. Trust me on this one this one time." He did, I walked with him, the Secret Service pushed him through, cast me aside, and he was safe. They got the gunman, who actually had a permit to have the gun and was a federal marshal, but nonetheless that's the only time, the only time he listened.

Kondracke: Another strength is that he would go places that other politicians, especially Republicans, would never go, right?

Ahearn: I'll take this one.

Dal Col: There were Rick's favorite stops in America.

Ahearn: The classic example of this one is when he first becomes nominee for vice president, and he insists, he insists that we go to Sylvia's Soul Food Restaurant in New York, and we had another one of our disagreements over this. I said, "There aren't going to be two votes at Sylvia's Soul Food Restaurant." He said, "Oh, it will be great. I'll get my friend [Charles B.] Charlie Rangel to come over and be there with us." I said, "Charlie Rangel is working against us in the campaign. This is not a great idea." Well, of course we went to Sylvia's Soul Food Restaurant, and it was packed with people that Jack had gotten to know as secretary of HUD, and Charlie Rangel was, in fact, there, and he wouldn't leave, as usual, so the event dragged on and dragged on and dragged on, and of course the first thing Charlie Rangel did when he walked out of the restaurant was go right over to our traveling press, and say, "Jack's my very good friend, he's a wonderful guy. But he shouldn't be vice president of the United States." And he went on to explain why he was supporting our opposition. So yes, he would regularly insist on going places that we had not planned to go, and other politicians wouldn't go, because he was truly committed to expanding the base of the Republican Party to include minorities. That was something that he felt very, very strongly about, and it's an admirable quality, and as we see the demographics of the country changing, there are more and more people that are recognizing that now. So he was a visionary in that respect, but it was frustrating at certain times.

Kondracke: He got into a big fight with [Peter B.] Pete Wilson over immigration. He went out there to campaign against the proposition that Pete Wilson was advocating.

Ahearn: Well, he didn't go for that reason.

Dal Col: What he did was he got invited out for an event, and the prop that was up was Prop 182.

Ahearn: Oh, I said 257. It was 182.

Dal Col: That was a later one, but 182 came out, and what was interesting is there was a TV commercial produced by a guy named [Donald] Don Sipple, for Wilson, only ran once, that showed the border along Mexico, and showed these poor trade illegal immigrants rushing through the gates. That incensed Jack to no end. So at the events when the question came up about Prop 182 and immigration, Jack teed off. And then on a flight back from California, he happened to sit on the airplane next to [Ronald] Ron Brownstein, who was then with the *LA Times*, and that was one of the rare occasions when staff wasn't upgraded, because we actually asked to be put back in coach, because it was one of those trips where you did not want to sit next to [Myron L.] Mike Wallace on the flight for the five hours of *60 Minutes*, and Brownstein dug deeper, and Jack let his true feelings known, that he thought it was outrageous, that we're a nation of immigrants, and that these people were only looking for opportunity and we needed good legal immigration and a way to take care of the situation. The story ran on, I believe, a Thursday, and we were at Empower America in those days, and I think Sharon, it's safe to say, our phones melted with death threats, you name it, and the Wilson people, obviously incensed. But then Empower America, within 24 or 36 hours, I can't remember, [Peter] Pete Wehner authored a white paper on Empower

America's official immigration policy, which was quite the opposite of Pete Wilson.

Kondracke: You guys who were there during the HUD years, he obviously spent a lot of time in projects. Who was on the Watts trip, anybody? Tell us about the Watts trip.

Ahearn: Well the Watts trip—

Kondracke: This was after the Rodney [G.] King riots.

Ahearn: This was immediately after the Rodney King riots, and we went out there. I went out ahead of time, and Jack came out with the President on Air Force One, and we were tasked by the White House to help find some spots where we could go. We went to a YMCA, I think it was, in East LA, and one of the things that disquieted Jack more than anything else about that trip was a conversation he had with Maxine [M.] Waters. Jack had been, obviously, a very outspoken advocate for the poor, and for those in public housing, trying to improve their lot. He advocated home ownership for people in public housing very strongly, and there was nobody who was a stronger advocate of equal rights than Jack Kemp. Maxine Waters laid into him. I was in the room and I could hear, he held the phone away from his ear. She used the most vile language, and accused him of ridiculous things. It was very upsetting to him. I lost all respect that I might have had for that woman in that phone call. She deserves no respect in my opinion as a public servant because she absolutely was out of line.

Kondracke: What was she accusing him of?

Ahearn: Of racism. And if Jack Kemp was nothing else, he was not a racist. He frequently told the story about when he was first playing pro football, he told this story all the time, that, I think, there was an All Star game that was being played in a city in the South, and a bunch of the guys on the team were going to go out to the movies, and the black guys would have had to sit up in the balcony. So the whole team left the theater. And that made a real mark on him. He never forgot that. Told that story for the rest of his life, in my presence, and I'm sure in everybody else's presence that's here, repeatedly. So he was a very strong advocate for equal opportunity, equal rights, and Maxine Waters accused him of being the opposite. We had some good events out there. We went everywhere he wanted to go, we shook a lot of hands, we talked to a lot of people, it was very hot. There was no air conditioning either at the events we attended. The place had been badly damaged by the riots. He was well-received by the populace in East LA and in Watts when he went out there.

Kondracke: [Alexander B.] Brit Hume on ABC, reported that Jack—he and Bush are both there at the same time—but that Jack, of the entire retinue, was the only person who actually went and talked to people along the parade route. Is that true? And the Bush people did not like the news report as a result.

Ahearn: That's my recollection. That's true.

Dal Col: That was true, and he also was the only one who took his jacket off, rolled up his sleeves and walked along, and was in with the

crowd. So the visual you got was stuffy White House above the fray, hey, we're doing the whistle stop, and then here's Jack. With the people, really concerned about the people, and yes, they were not happy.

Kondracke: How did they express their unhappiness?

Dal Col: Usually with phone calls that were fairly loud and screaming, and usually at that point it was Ede Holiday, who was a Cabinet secretary, and then other messages would come through from other Cabinet officials. Was [Samuel K.] Sam Skinner the chief of staff at that point, because I think—

Ahearn: Yes, I think it was Sam Skinner.

Dal Col: And that would come through. And Sharon can attest to it better than I. We were probably, at least one day a month we thought we were going to be fired, maybe more.

Kondracke: Why did you think you were going to be fired?

Dal Col: Well, we had our own foreign policy, we—

Kondracke: Kemp would be fired as a Cabinet officer, I see.

Dal Col: We responded to the earthquake in San Francisco in, I think, 12 hours. The White House took three days, so we were out the door first. That was a Kemp operation. Take care of people and go.

Kondracke: Was it ever seriously possible that he might have been fired as HUD secretary?

Dal Col: I don't think so. I think the closest we probably came was when he was doing [Robert D.S.] Bob Novak's show, [Rowland] Evans [Jr.] and Novak, on a Saturday morning, and Bush had come out with his tax plan at that point, for the re-election, and Bob hated it, and he knew Jack really didn't like it, and he kept pushing Jack. And then he had the final big question session, and I believe it was Mary Brunette and I were sitting in the Green Room, and we're like, "Oh, God, what's going to come?" And he said, "Mr. Kemp, what do you really think of George Bush's tax plan? Isn't it a scheme?" And Jack says, "Oh, Bob, yes, it is a scheme." And then he tries to recover. That was the sound bite. We get on a plane to fly to Richmond right after that for a fund raiser, and he's telling Mary and I how, "No, nobody will report it. It wasn't that big a deal." We walk into a Marriott [hotel] and had a sliding glass door with a huge color TV right in the reception. Perfect timing. As we walk in, there's CNN [Cable News Network] with a sound bite of "It's a gimmick." And that one I thought for sure.

Kondracke: And then what was the blow back?

Dal Col: The blow back was screaming and yelling, but if I remember right, that was also the weekend of one of the National Governors Association conferences where Joanne and Jack went to a dinner at the White House, and we figured, if he's going to hear it, he'll hear it there in the receiving line. And Daddy Bush couldn't have been any nicer. So dodged that bullet. And then one other one was the infamous Jim Baker Oval Office conference, and I'm trying to remember who the

mayor in New York was, former mayor, [Edward I.] Ed Koch. So we get in the car after he leaves the White House, and Jack very rarely was that red, but he was red. Secretary Baker had used the famous F bomb in terms of the Jewish people, and we get in the car, we go to the airport, and he's steaming. We fly to New York, and because it was New York, Rick didn't do those advances. He let Doug Deval do it, because New York wasn't Rick's favorite city. So we go to 101 Park Avenue, which was Peter [S.] Kalikow's building, and to a fundraiser for [Alfonse M.] Al D'Amato. Clarence and myself walk in with Doug, and Jack's over there talking to Senator D'Amato, and Ed Koch shows up. Jack goes in the corner with Ed Koch. I'm looking at Doug, he's looking at me, we're going, "Oh, God, he's not." We leave, we get in the car to go to the, we stayed at the Waldorf Towers that night. At the Waldorf Towers I said, "Did you say anything to Ed Koch that I might want to be aware of?" "Oh, don't worry. I didn't tell him. I didn't say anything." Famous last words. The next morning, front page of the *New York Post*. Yes, that one I thought we were dead.

Kondracke: Front page of the *New York Post* what?

Dal Col: "Jim Baker, F \_\_\_ the Jews." Yes. Of course there was no source listed. We all knew who it was.

Ahearn: It's worth going back to point one thing out, if I could, about the LA riots. Not only did we go in and talk to the victims, or a lot of black and Hispanic people, he was also very concerned about the victims of the riot. And we went in to a lot of small businesses, people who had been burned out and smashed out, looted out, and he was very concerned, as he was always about economic growth. He was

concerned about small business, and he was across the board compassionate to the people who suffered in that riot.

Kondracke: Let me just ask you, why, in advance of all this, did you think you didn't want to work for Jack Kemp before he went to HUD.

Ahearn: Well, we had had very limited contacts, but it just didn't work out well. It was kind of like oil and water.

Kondracke: Come on, come on. Like what?

Dal Col: Rick is a very structured, organized, [laughter] upper class-type individual, and Jack comes into a room as a tornado. The schedule goes by the wind, and Rick likes a schedule, and the photo shot's got to count, and Jack's answer was, "Let them take whatever photo they're taking. I'm doing what I do." Which drove Rick crazy, and I'm sure the initial view, and you can speak to it better than I, HUD probably didn't particularly entice you.

Ahearn: Well no, I mentioned that. HUD was not a burning issue to me, it was not necessarily where I wanted to be in the second administration, or I mean the Bush administration.

Kondracke: So none of you was a Bush plant in HUD, to watch over Jack?

Several: No.

Kondracke: Okay.

Dal Col: They might have tried, but they weren't going to get past Sharon, Scott, or Mary.

Kondracke: One of the other virtues that lots of staff have said is that he was really inclusive with staff, listened to staff, or at least heard staff out, is that fair to say?

Dal Col: Absolutely. At HUD we'd have huge debates, and then you had Sharon's golden rule at the end of the day, "If you really want Jack to do something, ask him to do the opposite." And you'll get what you need.

Kondracke: How did that work?

Dal Col: What you would do is, "Jack, I want you to go over here," when you really want him over there, and he'd end up over there. And he got onto the game after a while, and he'd play right along with it.

Kondracke: You guys have sort of explained all this. Not only did his staff love him, but he also drove them crazy.

Ahearn: Absolutely.

Dal Col: We were never bored, never bored.

Ahearn: Never a dull moment, and that's an absolutely fair description. You loved him but he'd drive you crazy.

Dal Col: Oh, Sharon received many phone calls, for hours, from every place in the world, from personal experience from Jerusalem to Dirty Corners, Mississippi.

Kondracke: From staffers?

Dal Col: From me, in this case, saying, "My God, Sharon, here's what he's doing now." And she'd talk you off the ledge, or, there was the other game we'd play, and I'll give this one up, Sharon, where it got to the point where you would act things out to help control him. So for example, if you get to an airline counter and they're going to close the plane door, and you know he's going to get upset, you go to the counter and act like an absolute maniac, so that he's saying, "Calm down, calm down, don't get crazy." [laughter] And then you'd get on and it's all fine. Or you'd get to LAX for a Congressional fundraiser, so there was no advance because we were still in the government, and there's no car there. So you get on a pay phone, in those days, next to a glass wall, screaming at the phone telling Sharon "I'm going to scream now. Just listen." Scream and yell as if you're yelling at the campaign because the car's not there, Jack gets, "Calm down. Why are you yelling at them that way? They're never going to speak to me again," not knowing it's Sharon on the other end of the phone, hang up, put him in a taxi, then he tells the taxi driver how to get there. And he was right, but it was LA.

Kondracke: Driving stories. Everybody's got a driving story. What's your all-time favorite driving story?

O'Connell: We would compete on how quickly we could get from Rayburn [House Office Building] to DCA [Reagan National Airport].

Kondracke: Why would you both have to go?

O'Connell: I would drive him out and then bring the car back, usually. So we competed. He was seven and a half minutes; I only got to eight minutes. We literally, for the three and a half, four years we were doing that would compete in how fast we could race out there.

Kondracke: So he would clock it?

O'Connell: Oh, yes. We'd watch ourselves. It's a little game we had.

Castine: You would literally leave the office with 10 minutes before the plane was leaving in those days. And Sharon would call ahead and say, "He's coming." And they would hold the plane, but we would be doing 95 down the Parkway.

O'Connell: He was so proud that he had found this little area down below, where I guess the flight attendants went in, that he could sneak in that door, so he would pull up and throw it into park, and the car would jump, and he'd jump out and grab the bags, and he'd slide over and take one of the Thunderbirds in. We had two or three of them in the course of my time there.

Kondracke: He owned more than one car?

O'Connell: No, no. When I came, Michael had, there was a black Thunderbird, it looked like a pimpmobile, and then—

Kondracke: I thought Thunderbirds were sports cars.

O'Connell: No, and then we got the silver one that I drove down from Buffalo, and I think there was another one. I can't be sure.

Brady: He loved the Thunderbird. I remember there were a handful, or many times in the campaign that we got lost. You didn't have GPS back then. I remember going to Dick Fox's in Philly, and we were lost for a half-hour, and we were late for the meeting, late for the fundraiser, and that was a bad one. But the one that really sticks out is we were in Iowa and they shut down the highway for Vice President Bush, and we were sitting literally for 45 minutes they had shut it down, and he did not understand. None of us understood it. He was supposed to be somewhere as well, but they shut the entire Interstate down for 45 minutes to an hour.

Ahearn: It's a good way to get votes.

Brady: And the minute the motorcade came by we were released, but he was frustrated with that one. It was my fault, I think. [laughter]

Ahearn: The issue of driving was always a huge thing. At HUD, at Empower America. It got to the point at Empower America where we had to come up with a plan, because we were having arguments on a daily basis with Jack about this. So finally we drew up a sheet, and had it typed up by the scheduler. It said, "Drive time, from Green

Tree Road to Dulles, from Green Tree Road to National,” and there were one or two other locations we put on there, and Sharon, Bill, and I walked into his office and said, “Would you please read this, and sign it.” Because every day he would argue with us about how long it took to get somewhere. And we said, “This is going to be the formula for your schedule for all the future years that we’re doing this. There are certain points A to point B that we drive all the time, and every time you complain that our timing’s wrong. This is what you’ve said it should be. We’re now going to schedule according to this.” And we made him initial it. It also got to the point where we’d argue over flight options a lot, and would do the same thing. It got to be standard routine practice, that once he agreed to a flight, I would get it typed up by the scheduler, and bring it in and have him initial it. So as we got to flight day he’d say, “Why am I on this flight? Why aren’t we leaving earlier?” Or “Why aren’t we leaving later?” I said, “Because *you* picked them.”

Taylor: It actually carried into when he ran for VP as well. One of the good stories is he was having a disagreement with his advisers on the plane, so there was a heated discussion on the plane. We get off the plane, the camera crews come up and he’s still having a heated discussion with one or two advisers and myself. Get into the car thinking there’s a 10-minute drive time from the plane to the event, and Joanne was in the car with me, in a limo, actually, the big armored limo, and 10 minutes turned into 15, turned into 20, and he and I started going at it, and that’s the one time I took Bill’s advice and started screaming back at him. And we got to the event, we were ready to open the door, and I said, “You have what choice. We can continue this, we can open the door, continue this disagreement, or

you can just shut up and deal with this and go out and deal with the cameras.” He chose the latter, and everything was all good. But you actually had to upstage him or one-up him on the anger side of things.

Kondracke: You had to have a thick skin to work for this guy.

Several: Oh, absolutely. Or you developed it. Screaming.  
Screaming.

Kondracke: I have to ask, is this screaming profanity? Screaming,  
‘What the Hell is going on here?’

Ahearn: Oh, there was profanity involved.

Taylor: Not when Joanne was in the room.

Ahearn: Not when Joanne was there, no.

Kondracke: I was going to ask you this question later, but I’ll ask it now. What were Joanne’s influences on Jack?

Dal Col: Saint.

Ahearn: Unbelievable. Calming.

Kondracke: She’d calm him down?

Dal Cal: Calm him down, his behavior was completely different. The minute he would start to act up, she didn't even have to say anything, other than occasionally, "Jack." It stopped.

?: Just the one word, Jack.

Brady: I think the whole family had that impact on him as well. If he was traveling with his daughters especially. The sons, maybe not as much. The daughters especially, Judith and Jennifer, had that impact as well.

Castine: And the other thing, we've been talking about how important people in the inner cities were, but his family came first. Everything was about the family.

Ahearn: Absolutely.

Castine: We haven't talked about that too much, but everything was about the family.

Kondracke: So that means that you had to get back for stuff like games.

Brady: Games or whatever. Not only did you have to get back for games, but there was really an unwritten rule, that if you entered into this campaign, and you said anything negative about the Kemp family, from Uncle [Thomas P.] Tom [Kemp], to the daughters, to anybody, you're pretty much gone.

Kondracke: What staffer would say anything bad about—

Brady: I don't know that anybody did. If they were there, they weren't there very long. But it was an unwritten rule that you knew that that was sacred. Everybody lived by it.

Kondracke: Give me some other examples of Joanne's calming or quieting effect. Also, did Joanne have political input too?

Several: Absolutely.

Kondracke: Talk about that.

Taylor: Go back to '96 when I talked about that disagreement on the plane. Later we did the event, got back into the car, a little bit more screaming, back onto the plane, with the advisers, again, and the eruption started. Joanne and I took Jack back into this very private area in the very front of the plane. I let the two of them alone for about five-10 minutes. He came back and apologized to everyone for his behavior. It was easy.

Dal Col: '92 Convention, in his room just before the speech, as Rick earlier alluded to, wanted to rip Darman and Baker to shreds. If Joanne wasn't there, that speech could have been a lot more colorful than it was.

Ahearn: If it had been, that would have been the end of his Cabinet career.

Kondracke: So Joanne intervenes with him to get him distracted.

Dal Col: And get him to see other people's points of view. Before the '92 debate with Al Gore, Jude [T.] Wanniski had placed a last-minute phone call and done what only Jude could do.

Kondracke: '96.

Dal Col: Yes, '96, the Gore debate. And it was Joanne who got him to take the Jude stuff and put it in the compartment where it belonged, as opposed to—

Kondracke: What was the Jude stuff going to be?

Dal Col: Jude was into the Mommy Party and the Daddy Party, Republicans were the Daddy, hand out the punishment. Democrats were the Mommy, hand out the gifts, and Jude was advising Jack to go in there and basically apologize for Bob Dole being the Daddy Party, which wasn't going to happen. That was one example that stuck out in my mind, that if Joanne wasn't there, I'm not sure.

Taylor: Every night after five or six hours of grueling debate prep, Joanne would take him aside at the end of the day and just go through everything with him, and make sure he was in a much better place because what not a lot of folks realize, I think Bill and Rick are the only other two here, and Joanne as well, is that we crammed a lot in six days. And we realized that the onset of the debate prep—Bill remembers getting the call and Rick was there—that Jack couldn't get his responses into 30, 60, 90 second answers, and so we had a

problem on our hands. So for the next five or six days not only did we have the Jude stuff to tackle and the other controversies to tackle, which Joanne handled, we also had this programming issue. So at the end of every day he would play tennis with me and I've got a couple of other stories, and then into Joanne, where Joanne would calm him down and get him focused and get ready for the next day which was just as important.

Kondracke: Let me understand this. You all are sitting around talking about what Jack is going to do in the debate or in his nominating speech. What was it? '96? He's going to beat up on Darman and Baker in the '92 Convention speech, right?

Taylor: Correct.

Kondracke: And so you're sitting around talking about what's in the speech, and tell me how that discussion goes.

Ahearn: Well, there were multiple discussions.

Dal Col: The big one when, I can't remember who made the call to Jack in the suite to let him know that here's what Darman and Baker were saying, that hey, second administration, you're out the door. We didn't even speak yet. First off, to get us to Houston, they made our life as fairly complicated, I think Sharon would agree, as possible in terms of bringing staff to Houston, what our role was going to be. So we went out and did our own thing, which is how the 40,000 posters got there. But then when this word came down, Jack in the speech was looking for "Where am I going to hit them? I've got to

take them on because if they're going to get rid of me, let it be on my terms." And I remember in the room where Kevin Stack, Mary Brunette, myself, Rick, Sharon, Joanne, and he was ticked off, and when he got ticked, he was like a volcano for a while, and the only person who cut through was Joanne. She's telling him "Listen." There was one segment of the speech which was not related to that where he didn't listen, and it was the Syracuse housing project. I can't remember the woman's name. There's an African-American woman who was a deputy in the Syracuse Housing Authority, and Jack was going to mention this great thing she did, and we had gotten word that the then-Democrat mayor of Syracuse let it be known that if she's in a Kemp speech at the Convention, she's fired. And that was the only time I saw we couldn't have an effect, and even Joanne weighing in there, because we were begging, "Don't say it." He said it. It was not pretty afterwards. It all got fixed, but that was the kind of influence she'd have, is get him to have an open mind. And then together with her in combination with, when appropriate, Tom Kemp, could get Jack to see the bigger picture.

Kondracke: Let me understand, though. You had gotten word in advance of the '92 Convention that you were going to be out if there was a second term?

Dal Col: That Darman and Baker were discussing that a second term, the one Cabinet officer gone is Kemp, and that was making the buzz of the press rounds, and we were hearing it from other places. And then somebody had called into the suite and actually gave a description of a conversation that took place.

Ahearn: It actually got so bad that they were in the Cabinet box at the Convention, and starting passing notes, Darman and Kemp. And the tone of the notes was escalating and escalating and escalating—

Kondracke: Like what?

Ahearn: Well, I didn't see the notes. I could just see that they were both getting really steamed. It got to the point where we pulled Jack out of the box early, because he was going to punch him. I swear he was going to whack him, or he'd come close to a confrontation that would have been picked up on camera. Perhaps he wouldn't have hauled off and punched him per se, but there was going to be at least a big confrontation in the Cabinet box. We pulled him out and left early, called up the motorcade and left.

Kondracke: Did he tell you what that was all about?

Ahearn: He didn't tell me, he told others.

Kondracke: So what was it all about?

Ahearn: It was about the budget.

Dal Col: It was about the budget, it was about the speech, it was about Bush breaking the no new taxes pledge.

Ahearn: That's right.

Dal Col: It was Darman's budget, green eyeshade look at it, and Jack saying "You're going to kill us," and then throw in a little chemistry of [Nicholas F.] Nick Brady and light bulbs and tires, which literally did happen in a Cabinet meeting of these are our economic indicators, as Jack's saying, "Hey we're going off a cliff." These guys don't see we're going off a cliff. Where are we being sent? We're going to states like Indiana, which means they know they're in Republican trouble, and he's trying to get their attention. So we get to the Convention, and Jack's worried about in the speech what's Bush going to say, and he was battling for what he believed were the right ideas. And Darman liked to zing him and get under his skin, and I don't remember the exact quotes, but it was all playground stuff, and Jack didn't do playground. And he took offense at his childish behavior. And then you add in the chemistry, what helps stoke it, and Sharon may remember this. In the Cabinet box this guest suddenly appears and sits down, named Jude Wanniski, and Jude got under Darman's skin as bad as Darman got under Jack's skin. So now it's really rolling, Russert sees it, he knows all the players, so he's got to pass his comments on, and it just escalated.

Ahearn: I'd like to give one more example, and this was an important one, of Joanne's helping temper Jack. It was at the very end of the '96 campaign, and Bob Dole was on his 96-hour campaign, where he came up with the idea himself, and he said, "I'm going to campaign for the last 96 hours." Now when I say that I mean non-stop. He was going to keep doing events for 96 hours and not rest, not sleep. We were not doing the same thing on the VP campaign, and we came to a hotel in California, and Jack said to J.T, who was his, J.T. we already referenced was his aide in that campaign. He came out of retirement

to do that. He said, "All right, I'll meet you in 15 minutes." I said, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute. Where are you guys going?" He said, "We're going to play tennis." I said, "No, Jack, you can't play tennis. Bob Dole's going to a bowling alley at three o'clock in the morning in Las Vegas. We've got a traveling press corps. You cannot be filmed playing tennis while Bob Dole, who's at the top of the ticket, is working 24 hours a day." And we had another one of our arguments, and he said, "I'm going to play tennis. I'm going to play tennis." "Look, we all know what's going to happen." "Look, I'm going to play tennis." He went back to the suite, and Joanne calmed him down and said, "They're right. You can't go play tennis." So he didn't, thank goodness. But Joanne is the one who convinced him, I believe, behind closed doors.

Brady: I wouldn't say it was always easy with Joanne. There were quite a few give and takes.

Casteen: Jack never thought he was wrong.

Kondracke: Tell me about the relationship of Jack Kemp and Bob Dole over time. You guys were more than coat carriers. You obviously were friends and political allies, and you told him what to think, and he obviously told you what he thought about other people. So tell me what he thought about Bob Dole over time.

Ahearn: During the '96 campaign, we spent a lot of time with Senator Dole, and to a lesser degree, Mrs. [Mary Elizabeth] Dole, and it appeared to me, and I believe from what I've heard Jack say, that both Senator and Mrs. Dole, now Senator and Senator Dole, and Jack

and Joanne actually became very good friends, and this extended beyond the end of the campaign. I never heard him badmouth Bob Dole on the airplane or anything of that nature. I think he respected him, and he respected the fact that he was the nominee for president, and I believe Jack was very grateful that he'd been selected as the nominee for vice president. And so he was respectful of Senator Dole in all the interfaces that I saw, and there were a lot of them in that campaign, and as a matter of fact I think more than usual, there were times when the two planes would come together and we'd go on board Senator Dole's plane, and we'd have meetings. There were very few of us who went, but they had a very cordial and good working relationship.

Dal Col: During our time at HUD I'd say it was probably strained, to put it mildly. I think that was probably residual from the '88 race. But at HUD, Jack would try outrage, Bob would stiff-arm us, and Sharon may remember this one. Bob's daughter Robin [Dole] was I think at the realtors then and she came in with a request, and we were going to deep-six it, and it was Jack who saw the opportunity, saying, hey, it's Robin Dole, it's Bob's daughter, the kid's asking for it, we're doing it. And we did it, and from my seat it was always chilly. Bob Dole was the green eyeshade, couldn't stand supply-siders, Senate majority leader. He respected Jack as a thinker, but did not agree with his philosophy. Probably dismissed us in other terms behind closed doors.

Ahearn: The quarterback.

Dal Col: Yes, along with other things. And that relationship, I think, took another turn in '95, when Forbes entered the race against Dole

late, after Labor Day, and in Joanne and Judith's good graces, Jack kind of saw the benefit of endorsing Steve Forbes for president, which I'm sure just made Bob Dole's day, but still he chose him for vice president. I'd say the relationship probably grew to where Rick and J.T. can speak to it in '96 of what it was, but before that, I would say it was tenuous.

Taylor: The turning point, in my opinion, and Joanne is probably the best one to speak to this, is when they did the joint event in Kansas at Bob Dole's house. And they went down to the basement and looked at a number of photos and the history of the Dole family and Bob Dole's war story. And I think that really changed Jack. That's one of the first things, and I joined the campaign two or three days after that, and that's one of the first things he sat down and told me. We had some time together, and he just told me all about the announcement, the visit to Dole's house, and how much that meant to him, and how he was going to spend every waking minute trying to get this man elected. And throughout the campaign I remember conversation after conversation with Dole, including missives he would write to the Senator before the debates and at critical junctures throughout the campaign that he just thought incredibly highly of the man, and tried to influence him to the best of his—

Kondracke: So I guess the two Michaels were there in the days when Jack was promoting Kemp-Roth, and Bob Dole was opposing Kemp-Roth. What conversation did you have with Jack about Dole in those days?

O'Connell: I don't think we were the ones having the conversations very often at that point. We were the get-around guys, but—

Castine: The irony for me was, and John [D.] Mueller's here, who was very active in the economic policy, and one of the funny things was I don't know about the rest of it, but Michael and I would work on little bits of legislation here and there. So I'm dealing with Orrin [G.] Hatch's office on promoting a bill that had been introduced like for 10 years that had never gotten, 10 Congressional rounds and never gotten anywhere. And it was the National Ski Patrol bill, that granted federal charter to the National Ski Patrol. It was a minor thing, but it helped the Ski Patrol and saved them a lot of money if they could register once as opposed to in every state. So Jack says, "Yes, why don't you do that." So at the end of the Congressional session he stands up and he looks and he goes, "The only bill we passed was the National Ski Patrol bill, with all this great economic legislation going on?" He was almost mad about it, and then later I got this little note from him on the actual bill that said, "Hey, great job." Not much gets through Congress anyway, as we all know, but we actually got that one passed, in both the Senate and the House, so it was enacted into law.

Kondracke: Tell me 1988 travel stories. Clearly it was not a successful campaign, but you knocked yourselves out, right?

Brady: We knocked ourselves out. It was a large field. [Marion G.] Pat Robertson was a big player and probably took a lot of the steam out of the Jack Kemp campaign. And you had [Pierre S.] Pete du Pont [IV] as well. We're talking about '88, with Dole, I think it was frosty

from then on. I don't know what it was before, but he was a competitor. The '88, we put a lot of miles in, we crisscrossed Iowa and New Hampshire. I believe I traveled to 46 states with him during that '86 to '88 campaign. So he worked hard. It was a very, very difficult night in Iowa, and when we came in I think fourth, third, and then we went to New Hampshire. After New Hampshire's loss we were somewhere around 10 or 12 percent in both of those races. Dedicated to go to South Carolina, at least see it through South Carolina, but the steam was really out of the campaign. Fundraising was difficult. We did a lot of fundraising, private fundraising. He did not like to do fundraising. He would not make those phone calls. And he had a lot of very strong support throughout the country, especially in southern California and some in the New York area. But we had a call list, and as you're on the road you would not only sit him down, you'd get some down time to make phone calls, which he found incredible ways not to make those phone calls. [laughter] Somebody was calling him to do something, or something, so you'd get the last 10 minutes, and by the time you're through it you just dial the phone. You get [William] Barron Hilton on the phone and you say, "Jack, Barron Hilton's on the phone. No, Barron Hilton's on the phone." The travel was intense, six days a week. He loved it when family joined. His brother joined. Jeff was a very active, Jimmy was still in high school so we would definitely have to make all the Churchill [high school] football games to the best of our ability. That was a priority. It was also on the road a pretty thin staff, considering the staff that others had. Vice President Bush was traveling with an entourage, Dole had a fairly large entourage. Pete Du Pont flew in a big plane and Pat Robertson came in his [Boeing] 727 [aircraft].

Kondracke: What did you have?

Brady: We flew different planes. We flew [Beechcraft] King Airs. We rarely flew commercial, but we flew King Airs, [Beechcraft] Hawkers, through a number of different supporters.

Kondracke: One of you said that you were with him in two almost-plane crashes.

Taylor: One was in a helicopter.

O'Connell: We had the helicopter incident. We were on the runway, this was in '84 when we were doing all the cities, and we were at Dulles, and it was a Lear Jet, and just the two of us, and the pilot looks back and says, "You guys ready to go?" "Yes, sir." "All right." Start to go and in a Lear Jet, you're like this, and the next thing, our heads were in our laps, because a truck had gone across the runway in front of us and the guy was doing everything he could to stop the jet. I mean, I swear to God, it was nasty. But literally, turned around, the pilot says, "You guys all right?" We turned around and Jack said, "Let's get out of here. Let's go." We turned around and took off again.

Ahearn: He was a white knuckle flyer.

Kondracke: He was a white knuckle flyer?

Ahearn: Absolutely.

O'Connell: Yes he was.

Brady: We had a King Air that an engine went out. It went out for maybe 12, 15 seconds. Seemed like an eternity, but you know the wing dropped, and he did one of these. [demonstrates] We all did one of these, and nothing was said after that. The one plane trip that I remember we were flying into Traverse City, Michigan, and it was a big event before the caucuses up there, I believe. We were in [Norman] Norm Braman's plane, and his pilots became good friends of mine because of all the hustle and bustle we had to do. It was a snowstorm, and they said, "We can't get in," and Jack said "No, we've got to get there." We can't get in. So I'm whispering in their ear and he's yelling and they're saying, "Ed, we can't get in." Well, they land this plane in Traverse City, and slam on the brakes, and it's a whiteout. They just slam on the brakes because they don't know if they're on the runway or not. Fifteen minutes later somebody taps on the windshield of this Lear Jet and says, "We'll follow you." And so we followed this plane. That's how some of the risks that they take, as many times as they're in the air, it was just amazing. You couldn't see one inch outside of the windshield.

Kondracke: This was Jack who insisted that you had to fly?

Brady: He was pushing, yes. He wanted to get to the event. He didn't quite understand, I think none of us did except the pilots the severity of the weather. The airport was closed. They probably—hopefully they're retired by now—but probably could have been, taken their license away because it was very risky.

Kondracke: Jack was a legendary optimist, but when he started losing in '88 did he express discouragement at all?

Brady: Not in the public, from my perspective. Yes, you could see moments in private that he was strained. When we were in town we had Saturday morning kitchen cabinet meetings, if you will, that Tom, his brother was in for most of the time, and you could see some frustration, you could see some despair inside those groups. But certainly an optimist, as you suggest. He never really, that I saw, made it public. He was always upbeat. He always thought that we were going to win the next election.

Kondracke: In the '96 race, let me ask, if Dole is doing a 96-hour straight run, why wouldn't his vice presidential candidate do the same to match him? Why did he not do it?

Ahearn: Number one, Senator Dole did not ask us to. Number two, I thought it was, I didn't think it made sense to do that. I think a candidate that is totally exhausted is prone to make mistakes, and I didn't see the benefit of it. Frankly the polling data was not too good by the time we'd gotten to the last five days of the campaign, and I just don't believe in pushing a candidate that way. I thought it was counter-productive. It was all Bob Dole. His staff didn't want to do it, they didn't want him to do it but they also didn't want to do it themselves. We just were not under pressure from Senator Dole to do it and it made no sense to me to do it. We maintained long schedule days. I'm not suggesting that we went to the beach or anything like that. When he was going to meet J.T. to play tennis at 10:30 at night on a lighted court in the backyard of the Hyatt Regency Irvine [Hotel]

or something like that. It wasn't noon. We worked from eight in the morning until 10:30 or 11 at night, but I thought it was pointless to try and do things, especially since we were the vice presidential candidate, and we don't get the network coverage that the presidential nominee gets. We're lucky to get local and regional coverage. And we were going to get nothing after 10 o'clock at night. There was no benefit to it as the vice presidential nominee, none. We wouldn't have gotten any press coverage.

Kondracke: So, there's been a lot of chatter ever since the '96 debate about Jack's performance and all that, and the amount of preparation that he did. What is your version of what happened in that debate?

Taylor: Day one we were in Florida at Bob Dole's condo, if I'm not mistaken, for debate prep. Senator Judd [A.] Gregg is playing Al Gore, and all the advisers are in the room. Gregg and Kemp are up at the podiums, and the debates starts, the mock debate starts, and within 15 or 20 minutes, Senator Gregg had let's just say run circles around Jack. And we cut the debate prep short and realized that we had a problem on our hands, and it goes back to what I said. We couldn't get his, Jack would love to say it took him 60 or 90 seconds to use a verb, let alone answer a question.

Several: To clear his throat.

Taylor: To clear his throat, yes. And so the issue became, again, for the next five or six days, holed in, when you thought that you'd be doing a few events and doing a number of other things, we were holed in with advisers. Bill, did you fly in for that?

Dal Col: Yes, I had the stop watch which he wanted to wrap around my neck.

Taylor: Yes, so for the next five days it was "We know you know the answers. Now let's get them into this format." And that's all we spent the next five or six days on, and one of my not-so-favorite stories, is the morning of the debate I woke up. I always had the room adjoining Jack and Joanne's. Walked over, and I would bring the papers in and have coffee with them, and Jack immediately would start in. "What's in the news? What are you hearing?" And for the first time he hadn't said a word to me in five minutes. He was just reading his paper, and finally I said, I couldn't take it any longer, I said, "Jack, how are you feeling?" And he flips the paper down, looks at me, and he says, "My mind is mush." And then flips the paper back up and starts to read again. And that's when I knew that we had a problem on our hands.

Kondracke: Because he'd been over-prepared?

Taylor: Over-prepared.

Brady: If I could say, because I wasn't on the campaign, but I came down for the last two days of that prep at Don CeSar [Resort], I think is where it was. So I sat in on that prep. Not only was he inundated with information, it wasn't what he wanted to say. It wasn't Jack Kempian. And he'd been in debates. He was concerned about the sound bites, he was concerned about the timing, but it really, truly, as I sat in the corner watching it, it wasn't about what he wanted to say.

Kondracke: Was he supposed to do attack dog stuff, which was not in his nature.

Taylor: You know, they let up on him on that. That's part of the conversation he would have with Dole and Scott Reed and others, that there were times when he wanted to go in and defend Dole, and he would. Jack could never be an attack dog, let's be honest. But he could do something with a smile on his face and try to go after policy instead of people.

Kondracke: After the debate was over, how did he react?

Dal Col: I think it's safe to say he knew it wasn't his best performance and acknowledged it.

Ahearn: I was the first one to see him coming off stage, and I can assure you he knew.

Kondracke: What did he say?

Ahearn: He just said, "Well, what did you think? I didn't think that was my best day."

Kondracke: What kind of feedback did you get from the Dole campaign, and how soon afterwards?

Ahearn: I didn't get any feedback from the Dole campaign.

Kondracke: How much did he get back, or did you all—

Dal Col: It was probably Scott that reached out first, and was probably fairly mild with it, but just said, “Hey, we’ll do better,” or something to that effect, but everybody got it.

Ahearn: Everybody felt it was left in the locker room.

Kondracke: Let me ask about Empower America.

Ahearn: By the way, he did get a call from Jude in the holding room just before we went on stage. That was probably not a good thing.

Kondracke: I thought there was a rule in the campaign that he was not to have a cell phone because Jude would be on the other—

Ahearn: It wasn’t a cell phone. Somehow we had a drop in the holding room, which you always do in a debate on the general election campaign, and somehow that phone rang, Jack answered it, and it was Jude.

Kondracke: What did Jude tell him?

Ahearn: I don’t know. I wasn’t on the line.

Taylor: And one of us cut it off.

Ahearn: I cut it off.

Kondracke: You cut it off because?

Ahearn: Number one, he wasn't supposed to be taking any phone calls, and number two, we didn't want him talking to Jude.

Kondracke: Why didn't you want him talking to Jude?

Ahearn: Because we'd spent a great deal of time preparing him for this debate, and the last thing we wanted—this is the way it is with any candidate, not just Jack Kemp—is somebody who is outside your debate prep calling in to second guess what you'd just been doing for days, preparing your candidate for a debate. You want the candidate to be focused, you want him to remember. Joanne was in the room till the last few minutes, and then she, as happens with every one of these debates, and you've been in a lot of them, there's a timeline you have to follow and the spouse has to go out at a certain time, and then you just keep your candidate relaxed and pumped until you actually walk him to the side of the stage. You don't want him talking to anybody outside the organization, regardless of how friendly they are.

Dal Col: And Jude was not a calming influence by any stretch. He'd have a hundred ideas, 99 are horrible. You never knew when he was going to get to the one good one. You don't want him hearing that just before the debate.

Kondracke: How influential with Jack was Jude over time?

Dal Col: From my limited exposure, I'd say he was influential in getting Jack to think of other things and perspectives, but Jack was

very good at going through what was bad about Jude, or what may have been Jude's other agenda, versus what Jack truly believed. But I thought he was helpful in being thought-provoking, and occasionally, one out of 100, maybe one out of 1,000, there'd be a little nugget.

Brady: In the '88 campaign he'd talk to him almost daily. So he was influential, whether good or bad, he was influential.

Kondracke: Was he on the plane with you?

Brady: Very rarely.

Ahearn: He talked to him a lot in the '96 campaign too.

Castine: It goes back a long way, because in the Congressional days he was in the office all the time.

Ahearn: They were good friends.

Dal Col: There was a period at Empower America, I think, for maybe two years, or three, when it was isolation. Jude did not call. He'd try and get in, but never got through.

Kondracke: What was that about?

Dal Col: I can't remember what tipped it off. It may have been some policy thing with other outside advisors, and Jude tried to put Jack in a difficult position. So when he couldn't get through with calls, in those

days faxes were the hottest latest thing, so he'd jam our fax machine to the point we'd unplug it. Because it was Jude round the clock.

Kondracke: What about Arthur [B.] Laffer?

Castine: He was around all the time as well.

Kondracke: Who else would you say were influentials on Jack, close, close, important?

Castine: Stockman, David [A.] Stockman. They were very close. When Stockman was a Congressman.

Kondracke: When Stockman went into the Administration, then Stockman turned against supply-side economics, how did Jack respond to that?

Castine: I was in the Administration then, so I wasn't—

Ahearn: Also [C.] Trent Lott and [Newton L.] Newt Gingrich

Dal Col: Trent Lott, Newt Gingrich, [John V.] Vin Weber, [Cornelius H. M.] Connie Mack [III], José Pañera [Echenique], who's the guy, the Third Way? Peru?

Taylor: Oh, gosh.

Dal Col: South America.

Taylor: Yes, I'll think of it in a second.

Dal Col: He was hot for two or three years.

Ahearn: Was it Peru or Chile?

Dal Col: No, Chile was José Pañera. The Third Way was Peru land reform.

Kondracke: We've talked about Darman. What about Baker? What was his, what did he say about Baker?

Dal Col: Well, not a lot, because there wasn't much to consider. [laughter] He thought Baker gave Bush bad advice. I think he respected Baker as a political figure and as a thinker to a degree but in terms of the bigger picture, in terms of interaction with real people on real issues, I think Jack thought Baker left it at the law firm. I think he saw him more as a political operative for a Candidate Bush as opposed to an effective Secretary of State.

Kondracke: And what about George H.W. Bush himself? He ran against him in 1988, then he worked for him as HUD secretary. What did he say about George Bush?

Dal Col: At HUD I'd say definitely he obviously had an affection for him, not only because he had brought him into his cabinet, but he saw what a nice guy he was and his heart was in the right place. Thought he probably had bad advisers around him on certain issues. But I found, and Sharon can attest to it better than I, he would constantly

write him notes. Some of them were notes we would prefer he didn't write him, but it was always thoughtful in, "Hey, protect yourself, maybe look at this, this will help increase our base, this will increase your support, hey, look at the inner-city." I think there was not only a respect there, but I think a level of affection.

Taylor: Especially in the later years. Just like with Dole, in the late '90s and the 2000s it was genuine affection.

Kondracke: How did they communicate in the later years?

Taylor: Both phone and notes, but mainly by phone. They would be in a number of joint events together and Jack would always come back saying how fond he was of the President and how much he admired him. Again, more and more so later in life than early on.

Kondracke: What have I not asked you that I should have, that the world needs to know about Jack Kemp? Or a story?

Taylor: Well, Bill can tell it, but the one story that maybe Jack's favorite stories, and Bill's probably best, or Rick, is when Jack, in as many events as I did with him would tell it constantly. It's when they toured the inner city of Washington with the Queen [Elizabeth II], and the Alice Frazier story. Going back to Jack's affinity and this passion for the inner cities. Go ahead, Rick.

Ahearn: No, no, go right ahead.

Taylor: No, no, you know this story better than anyone.

Dal Col: You know it best, Rick. Plus, your natural affection for the Queen of the United Kingdom. Your blood goes back there, Rick.

Ahearn: The Queen was going to meet a common resident of—I don't know the proper term to use—a private citizen, a resident of the District of Columbia. She'd been fully briefed as to the proper etiquette when you meet the Queen of England as to what you do and as to the fact that you don't touch the Queen and that you don't offer your hand to shake hands with the Queen. There's a lot of protocol in the Crown of England, as we know. And so Alice had been fully briefed, and Jack's out there as the interlocutor or the host, and Alice Frazier is this very friendly, outgoing woman.

Kondracke: Who was she?

Several: A resident of public housing.

Ahearn: The Queen was interested in seeing some public housing in the area of the District of Columbia as opposed to what the "council housing," they call it in England, was like. So Alice Frazier just comes right out and says, "Hello, Queen." "Queenie" I think she called her. Hugged her. She didn't not just reach out to shake her hand, but she hugged the Queen. So here's this large black lady, unprovoked, just goes over to the Queen of England and goes, "Hello, hello. It's so nice to meet you." And the Queen had this expression on her face like "What is happening here?" Jack thought it was the best thing since sliced bread. Everybody else's jaws were dropping.

Taylor: What Jack would be fond of saying was that the press would run up to Alice Frazier afterward and say, "Why in God's name would you violate all rules of protocol and hug the Queen?" He goes, "Well, because I wanted the Queen to see *my* palace." And that was Jack's tag line. "It's her palace, it's her home."

Kondracke: Jack told the story over and over again.

Several: Over and over and over and over again.

Taylor: Would that not have been his favorite story?

Ahearn: Oh, yes.

Taylor: It's the American Dream. He would talk about the American Dream. Alice Frazier's palace. This woman had eight palaces and was worth hundreds of millions of dollars, yet this woman wanted the Queen to see her palace.

Ahearn: She had gotten to own her own home, and through some of Jack's initiatives at HUD.

Dal Col: Tell the Prince Charles story.

Ahearn: Oh, this is a classic one, and Joanne was there. Jack was going to have lunch with the Prince of Wales at his country home.

Dal Col: High Grove.

Ahearn: High Grove House. So I went out ahead of time and scoped out where it was and checked out the security situation and how early we'd have to be there. And I was over ahead of time working with the Embassy and with the Palace on the timing. We were invited for lunch at twelve o'clock by Buckingham Palace as confirmed by the Embassy. So we drive out to High Grove. It's a pretty good ride. You have to drive all the way past Bath to get there. And we arrived a little early. So the police officers at the gate waved us in. There's a dirt path or dirt road that runs up to the forecourt of this house, and it's a relatively modest home, which you'd think for the Prince of Wales, as his country house, wasn't a big manor house like you see in the television shows. There's nobody there, and it's got a little mudroom in the front, a glass-enclosed mudroom in the front. We're early. Jack says, "Well, go tell them we're here." I said, "Jack, we're early." And he said, "Well go tell them we're here." I said, "Well, we're early." And he said, "Just go tell them we're here." So this is not what you normally do at a royal household, but he insisted. So I went up to the front door, there was a little doorbell thing and I rang it and nothing happened, and I came back to the car. I said, "Well nobody answered but we're early. We're not expected until twelve o'clock. If you're not supposed to go until 12 you don't go until 12." And so he said, "Go in and tell them we're here." So I said, "I can't go in." Not to mention the fact that I've got the map of Ireland on my face and the troubles are still going on. He said, "Go in and knock, or do something." So I knocked on the door. There's no response. I turned around, he said, "Go in, go in." I stepped into the mudroom, the front hall. It's very interesting. There are dog bowls, muddy boots and all this stuff, because he's a gardener and spends a lot of time in the woods. And the front door was open into the house, and I

knocked and nothing happened, so I came back out again. I know this is redundant, but I was very reluctant to do this. And so he said, "Just go in and shout. Just go in and tell them we're here." I said, "Jack, I can't." He said, "Just do it." He was getting perturbed, so I literally knocked on the door again and it swings open a little more, and here is the foyer of Prince Charles' home. "Good afternoon, good afternoon," hoping that a maid would come along and say, "who are you?" He kept saying, "Go in." I stepped into the house, knowing this is not the right thing to do, and there's a cross hall, there's a living room off to the left and the dining room's off to the right and it was all set for lunch. "Hello, good afternoon." And all of a sudden I hear these footsteps coming down the hall, it was a wooden floor, and a fellow in a military uniform shows up with his tunic off. He looked like a Marine but I wasn't sure, and he was startled. He said, "Good heavens. May I help you?" And I said, "Good afternoon. My name's Rick Ahearn, I'm here with Secretary Kemp. We're here for the noon luncheon with his Royal Highness." He said, "Oh, there seems to be some mistake." I said, "No, sir, there's no mistake. We were invited for lunch at 12 o'clock with Prince Charles and we're here, Secretary Kemp and Mrs. Kemp are out in the forecourt." And he said, "Well, I'll have to check on this." And I said, "Well, I've got his schedule right here that says 12 o'clock, and the invitation from Buckingham Palace for 12 o'clock." So he runs into the back, he puts on his blouse, comes back. It turns out he's a major in the Marines, and he says, "There seems to be some mistake. Actually Secretary Kemp was invited for 12:30." And I said, "No, sir." Now I'm knowing, if I go back outside and say, "Jack, we're 30 minutes early, he's going to say, "How did you screw this up?" Well, I didn't screw it up because I had the documentation from the Palace that said, from Buckingham Palace, that said 12 noon on

this date. His first inclination would be that I had fouled it up. So I told the equerry, I said, "Listen, I've got the communications right here from Buckingham Palace. I don't what they sent you to Kensington Palace, but they sent us 12 noon at this house and here we are." He said, "Well, his Royal Highness is not here. He's out in the gardens." And I said, "Would you mind telling him that Secretary and Mrs. Kemp are here, as the Palace invited them?" To make a long story short, although it's a little late for that, [laughter] I said, "Well what would you like us to do?" And he said, "Well, what would you like to do?" And I said, "Well it would be nice if we could wait somewhere, but if you want us to wait in the car, we'll wait in the car." And he said, "One moment," and he ran back into the house, and then he came forward and he said, "Perhaps you'd like to wait in the garden." I said, "We'd be happy to wait anywhere you want. The garden would be just fine." So we went into the back garden, and sure enough, Jack was on my mind case. "How could this happen? How could this possibly happen?" I said, "Jack, this is an English screw-up, not an American screw-up." And the guy from the Embassy was with us and he confirmed that we were on time. So finally the Prince came, and he was there about 12:30, and they had their lunch. But it was a classic, classic moment where Jack insisted that I walk into the house of the Prince of Wales.

Kondracke: We're sort of out of time, but I would like to ask you what lesson does Jack Kemp, since you all knew him intimately, have to teach the country and the Republican Party going forward? We'll just go in the final order. Michael?

O'Connell: Talk to everybody, listen to everybody and try to work with everybody.

Castine: Civil discourse. It's communicating, less of a battle the way Washington is now and being so polarized, and working together to actually get things done.

Kondracke: Did he have Democratic friends, by the way?

Several: Oh, yes.

Kondracke: Who were his Democratic friends, besides Charlie Rangel?

Castine: Tip O'Neill. We would get things all day long. We were horse trading with O'Neill's office, for one.

O'Connell: We were friends with staff, and Jack was friends with the Speaker.

Brady: Optimism. Three months before Jack died when I'd come into town I'd try to stop by and see him. He was sick and I'd asked to see him. But he wasn't going to the office much, so Jimmy allowed me to go to the park where Jimmy and his kids were playing baseball, and Jack was there just sitting in the car watching his grandkids play baseball. We had a 15-minute conversation about what's going on, where's the country, so forth and so on. And I'm a builder and developer and 2008-2009, that wasn't a pretty time. One of the last things he said, "Don't worry. Our best years are ahead of us."

Taylor: Inclusion. He was just all about, from day one, from the very first day I met him all the way up to the end it was all about inclusion. Optimism.

Ahearn: I would echo what my friends have said and emphasize optimism, inclusion, expand the base of the Republican Party, bring more people in. Believe in your ideals, believe in your ideas. If you have a political philosophy and if you have an economic philosophy and you believe in it, you should never abandon it, no matter how strong the pressures are. And the other is the value of friendship. Once you became a friend of Jack Kemp's, you were a friend for life, as I think all of us were blessed to be. He was very, very true to his friends, no matter how long their friendship existed. It was something that he valued extremely highly, and I think that's a great ideal to follow.

Kondracke: Let me just ask you one question. Some people have said that he was friendly but it was hard to be intimate with him. Is that true or not? There was some sort of sense of distance, some people say that.

Ahearn: That certainly wasn't my experience.

Several: No.

Dal Col: I think if you were close to him that wasn't the case.

Castine: As a staff person you were staff, but after, like I said, when I left, I had a great relationship with him right up until the end.

Taylor: Even his staff, though, the thing that would come second to family, of course, was Monday night or Sunday night football. So after a long day you'd be in the suite or in the room wherever you were in the country, watching whatever game was on.

Kondracke: With him.

Several: With him.

Ahearn: And he welcomed your company. Absolutely. He welcomed your presence.

Taylor: So that's definitely contrary to what you're hearing.

Ahearn: And it's true that we always recognized that we were his staff, we were not his co-equals, but he treated us in many respects as equals. He never talked down to anyone in my presence that was a member of his staff, especially those of us who were with him all the time and those who worked for him for a long period of time. He made you feel, when you weren't disagreeing on things, he made you feel very, very comfortable and very much at ease in his presence.

Taylor: And empowered.

Dal Col: I think the biggest strengths I saw walking away from a distance is compassion, particularly for those less fortunate, but for

everyone, and continuous and ongoing curiosity. Don't be worried about having the answer; be worried about having the right question. To keep growing, learning and expanding, and it's something we can all learn today.

Taylor: And be a leader. That was his phrase.

Ahearn: Leadership, right.

Kondracke: Thank you very much. This has been a wonderful occasion.

Several: Thank you.