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RECORDED INTERVIEW

OF

MICHAEL CAREY

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES FEDULLO

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Part 1 of 1

UAF ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

SENATOR TED STEVENS PROJECT

Transcribed by:

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INTERVIEW OF MICHAEL CAREY

(Beginning of recorded interview.)

CHARLES FEDULLO: -- is the name of the interviewer. The name of the narrator is Michael Carey. Date of the interview, it is Tuesday, May 26. We're at the Captain Cook Hotel. This is Side A, Oral History, Senator Ted Stevens, Tape 1, Part 1.

And let's start with -- let's start with just a broad question. How do you size up -- well, you start where you want, but I guess where I would start is how do you size up Ted Stevens's long run in the Senate, and let's go all the way back and you can talk about his days in Fairbanks.

MICHAEL CAREY: I've written about this. People who are interested in Stevens will -- will find, no doubt run into, whether they set out to look for them or not, some of the material I've written. And it is, by any stretch of the imagination, remarkable what he achieved, the longest serving Republican in the history of the United States Senate, and the focus that he achieved while he was there, particularly on funding for Alaska. There's never been anybody like him in Alaska history who has served at that length.

It's true that Bill Egan was a member of our -- was Governor three times and was prominent in public life, at the Convention, the Constitutional Convention. And Ernest Gruening was Territorial Governor and United States Senator, but particularly the impact Senator Stevens had in Alaska for bringing home the bacon and setting up institutions and being present at virtually every major federal issue affecting Alaska from 1953 on is remarkable, and I'm sure others have commented on that, but that's really what stands out.

CHARLES FEDULLO: So talk a little bit about -- do you want to just start biographically --

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah. I was --

CHARLES FEDULLO: -- about his time in Fairbanks?

MICHAEL CAREY: I was born in Fairbanks in November of 1944 and grew up there. My father was a trapperman, construction worker, my mother was a public health nurse.

Ted Stevens came to Alaska after driving the Alaska Highway in the early 1953, and later that year became the -- the U.S. Attorney, the prosecuting attorney. I was aware of him, not necessarily as a nine year old or ten year old, but certainly quickly thereafter because his name was in the paper and he went to Washington, D.C. as -- as a Senator -- as an assistant to Secretary of the Interior

Seaton, returned to Alaska, settled in Anchorage, where he eventually ran for the U.S. Senate, first against Gruening in 1962, and lost badly,then in 1968. So he's been a part of my life as long as I can remember.

His family life interviewed me enough -- and I'm going to give you this, this is from ancestry.com, this is the 1930 census, it shows Ted and his mother living with his grandfather George I. Stevens in Indianapolis, and I actually hired a researcher to go to the house that he grew up in and take pictures of it, so I have that somewhere on my computer.

It's very -- the researcher was very, very good. And she believed -- one of the things that will amaze you, Charles, just take a look at how many people are living in this house. It's actually a pretty small house. So there's Ted's brothers and sisters, there's his aunt and her husband, there's his grandfather and grandmother.

And George Stevens, I think also by Ted's accounts, really kept the family together in Indianapolis, and then he died and the family split up and -- and had various painful problems, some of which Stevens has acknowledged and others he hasn't. But I can't say this with true authority, I can say on the belief of this very skilled researcher who is an expert on the history of Indianapolis where Ted grew up.

I should have noted that earlier, from

Indianapolis, that he -- that George -- the Stevens family, the researcher believed, was actually downwardly mobile. The grandfather came from -- from Albany, and they seemed to have -- I mean, he kept the family together, but there seems to have been more money at an earlier time than there was at the period in Indiana, which is not to say that grandfather wasn't a hard-working person, and he was at various -- had various different roles. There's an obituary you can read from the Indianapolis paper that talks about him. He must have been very well known.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And this was during the depression, too.

MICHAEL CAREY: Right. And he had all these other extra mouths to feed and was becoming an elderly man.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Let's talk a little bit about -- you knew him. What was -- what was his relationship to Fairbanks when he came --

MICHAEL CAREY: Oh, this is really interesting because he was a total stranger, a newcomer, but you have to remember, I don't know what the population of Fairbanks was then, it depended on how you defined it in the city limits, I don't know if it was 6,000, 8,000 something, 12,000, and more in the surrounding areas, and he was there a few years, '53 to '56.

But he would have been the newcomer, the greenhorn

lawyer from Back East, but there were lots of people who were greenhorns at that time, too. Fairbanks was attracting new people, there was an era of modernization.

And also the military was there in force, and most of them were very young men away from home for the first time, single, mixing with construction workers as the boom of the Korean War took place, and Stevens was there during the Korean War.

And this was not necessarily a happy time for civility. It was a great time for the bar owners and the working girls who came up and the dancers and people who liked to brawl in the street. There was a lot of business for a prosecutor frequently involving the bars of South Fairbanks, many of which were outside the -- quite -- some of which were outside the city limits, so that meant the city police couldn't go there.

But -- and there were several celebrated cases that Stevens was involved in. One of them -- and, of course, let's back up for a second. I don't want to take and make this a giant rabbit trail but why was he picked as the prosecutor? Well, it was, as always, a political decision. He was a Republican, and people -- and Eisenhower had just taken over the presidency, he had very good credentials, maybe not necessarily his experience especially in the criminal law, but he had gone to UCLA, he had gone to Harvard,

he was a very presentable young man with energy and ambition, who -- and there weren't a lot of Republican lawyers in Fairbanks at that time, particularly young ones, so he would have stood out.

And probably back -- I know back in Washington there's some correspondence that some people were in favor of him being the attorney -- the prosecutor, others were not, but this was part of a -- sometimes the people who opposed him, I think, it was part of the local bars ragging around the new prosecutor. That goes on in a lot of places.

One of the first cases he became involved in was the Wells murder, which Cecil Wells is a very prominent --

CHARLES FEDULLO: Okay. Go ahead. Sorry.

MICHAEL CAREY: -- a very prominent businessman, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the State Chamber of Commerce, a big car dealer with his beautiful, young, I think, fourth blonde wife. I don't know if they were all blonde. And in October of 1953, somebody came into their apartment, in the Polaris -- Northward Building, where Stevens also lived, and murdered Cecil Wells in the presence of his wife.

This was an incredible sensation. The police, grand jury, many others looked at it, the -- including Senator -- or Prosecutor Stevens at that time would have been involved investigating this case.

There was a huge brouhaha at the behavior of the Police Chief Danforth, I believe, and a grand jury report on him; and if I remember correctly, not only was it critical of the police chief, but it was -- there was a widespread belief that he should be removed.

There was also some criticism of the prosecutor, being Ted Stevens, got to get to the bottom of this horrible murder. But this is -- about this time is when you see Bill Snedden, publisher of the News-Miner, if not necessarily coming to Ted's rescue, coming to praise him and talk about this is a fine young man who is dedicated to cleaning up Alaska, and they start to form the relationship, which becomes so important in the future.

This case was resolved in a -- in the -- Stevens indicted Diane, the beautiful wife Diane, and her boyfriend who was a Black, or as they would say then, "Negro drummer and named Johnny Warren."

So this case became sensational and was heard all over the world. There were news stories on it in London, it was in Life Magazine, it was in the Los Angeles papers, the New York Daily News, the biggest tabloid at the time in the United States, and it was resolved in a strange fashion when Diane Wells committed suicide, leaving an ambiguous note in Los Angeles. And --

CHARLES FEDULLO: Go ahead. Sorry.

MICHAEL CAREY: And Johnny Warren, the drummer, who at one point one of the newspapers referred to him, remarkably, as part Negro and part drummer, but remained under indictment for many years, and finally the indictment was dropped and so there never was a trial. There was a trial of a perjury case but -- related to this, but different. I'm getting too far away on that.

And then that was a -- that was a very big case that questioned his judgment and ability to handle the job very quickly.

CHARLES FEDULLO: But he didn't stay in the job very long, though.

MICHAEL CAREY: He was there until '56, is it? The summer of '56. And clearly he was a man of ambition, and he had -- was invited to serve with Secretary Seaton on the center of Eisenhower power in Washington, D.C. Seaton had replaced Douglas McKay who was, generally agreed at this point, I think, is pretty much the polite way to put it would be unsuited for the job.

Seaton had been a troubleshooter. I've written about him. I have a lot of interest in him, he was quite a performer, and Ted was very close to him, and this was his role that we never knew him in, the bright young man carrying the baggage and getting lunch and doing everything that the Secretary told him to do. It was more sophisticated than

that, but that's when he was young and on his way up.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And it changed -- I mean, that relationship actually changed Alaska's position to a lasting --

MICHAEL CAREY: Oh, yes, yes. And Seaton was very important as an advocate for Statehood, and he also was very important as an advocate for the Republican Party, and for -- and for -- for Statehood. Go ahead.

CHARLES FEDULLO: So I'm going to move you forward --

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, go ahead.

CHARLES FEDULLO: -- just a little bit. Stevens has two unsuccessful runs for Senate?

MICHAEL CAREY: Yes.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Two -- then sits in the House, and he's finally --

MICHAEL CAREY: He has one unsuccessful run for the Senate, then he's in the Alaska Legislature, then he runs again and loses.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Thank you. And then it's sort of assumed in the late '60s he's going to get out of politics. What happens then?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, he lost the August 1968 primary to Elmer Rasmuson, and it wasn't particularly close, and Stevens was very unhappy about that. I mean, not only

did he dislike losing, he thought Rasmuson had all this money and was able to use the bank to his advantage, and even accused him of using bank employees, which Rasmuson denounced.

So between August and Christmas, there was a lot of speculation of what was going to happen to Ted Stevens in the local newspapers. And I'm certain he went to the bar meetings or he went to any of the places where political -- political types gather for lunch or just have coffee,you would hear, "What's going to happen to Ted Stevens?"

I think there some suggestion he might get a job in Washington, if I remember correctly. I haven't looked at the clips recently, but it was unlikely that he had a future as someone who could win a U.S. Senate seat, or -- or run for governor.

The next Senate race after '68, Bartlett was the next Senator who was going to be up and was considered, like Stevens, unbeatable. Ernest Gruening had lost in the '68 election, as -- as your listeners will know. And so -- and Mike Gravel was now in, he wasn't going to be up for another six years, what was Ted Stevens going to do. Well, in December Bob Bartlett had heart problems, died in a Cleveland clinic in Cleveland, Ohio; and Wally Hickel, after meditating on who to pick for weeks, several weeks, selected

Ted Stevens.

And I would love to know the inside story of what happened, why Stevens was picked. The version Wally Hickel gave me was, "I knew that Rasmuson was a great banker, so I let him be a banker. I knew Ted Stevens was going to be a great Senator, so I allowed Stevens to be a Senator." That's a version of, due forgiveness to my friend Wally Hickel, that is making yourself the hero of the story, I had the brains to figure out who to put in all of these jobs. I don't know what the case are, maybe -- maybe he felt that way all along.

The general assumption was that he and Rasmuson, especially the Rasmuson Bank, the Hickels and Rasmusons didn't get along, And he wasn't going to pick him. There was some discussion of Carl Brady who was a friend,but he'd recently lost an election. In some sense, Ted Stevens, given his experience in Washington, seems a logical choice.

I've also heard some suggestion that -- that Richard Nixon may have talked to Wally about it, maybe he did, but God knows somewhere in the bowels of the federal records there might be -- Rose Mary Woods, when she was with Dick then, her notebook of telephone calls that Nixon made at that time, I don't know.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Well, I guess the question that that leads to is why, in your view, why would Wally Hickel

choose Ted Stevens? He says when -- and --

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, it wasn't -- it wasn't exactly. I mean, first of all, why was Ted picked as prosecutor in 1953 in Fairbanks? There wasn't a big -- there wasn't a large field to choose from, once -- once you thought about it. There -- Brady was a friend and had some interest and, of course, had money, Rasmuson had just lost an election to -- to Mike Gravel, but he also had money and prestige and a well-known name.

And here was Stevens who had been dogged in his efforts on behalf of the Republican Party, been a very good legislator in the House legis -- in the House as a Republican legislator, and he had all this experience in Washington. So -- and he had a good education, he was a lawyer, he was very smart. Many people didn't like his temper, but he had -- he had good qualities that would have stood out. Whatever Hickel said then or now, it was...

CHARLES FEDULLO: Let's kind of now just talk a little bit about Stevens and his time in -- in the Senate. He's there.

MICHAEL CAREY: Yes.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What was -- what was your relationship with him? You were a reporter, you covered him for a while.

MICHAEL CAREY: Oh, yeah, I covered him from the

mid '80s on, and actually, I covered him earlier than that to some degree writing independent journalism, and I also had been involved in partisan politics in the '70s. My family was very democratic.

Ted Stevens, when he was younger, was always a source of interest, and in some ways, bemusement or even amusement to some Democrats, including my family, because it seemed like he -- he had this energy, he had this determination, he had this willpower, and he had this terrible temper, and he tried hard but wasn't getting anyplace. But I -- you began, by the time I started covering him regularly, he had achieved a great deal of power, he had been in 16 years, something like that, and -- but even at that time people were starting to talk about senator for life.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What did you think of him? I mean, you've covered him a long time, '80s, your family knew about him, have -- have studied him in depth. I mean, what did you think of him personally and professionally?

MICHAEL CAREY: A remarkable guy, and in every sense. I thought his best qualities were a very good brain, a very good education, a willingness to go places intellectually and explore.

He -- sometimes he'd get sort of hung up on people who had grand ideas, and he liked them and was really

interested in them, and I think he wasted time on them, but his interest, his concern about Alaska was genuine, his -- he was involved in obviously the D2 controversy, the land claims. And I take it at face value that in all these cases, in creating the Native corporations, just about any -- Ted Stevens is like the snow, he's everywhere in Alaska, and there's just no escaping it because of his broad interests and willingness to insert himself.

I think, actually, late in his career what hurt him is there was just a lack of -- I mean, there was so much deference paid to him that there was really no countervailing powers.

And I want to tell one story, I've written about this, but tell it here, that was very illustrative of Stevens. Somewhere in the '90s, I went and had -- he invited -- I wanted to interview him, and he was very good about this. I didn't always see him, but he was very good about responding, and that is something I really admired in him. In some ways, I think he had a reputation of being personally generous with people. You know, I mean, he was the kind of guy who could blow his stack at you and say, "Well, that's okay, Mike, what the hell." You know, I mean, it was kind of...

That -- that kind of got tougher as time went on and really felt the McClatchy Newspapers was out to get him,

and he would say it just about like that.

One time -- I wasn't there, but he got so mad at the editorial board and he said, "Sayonara, baby, I'm out of here."

And -- but in any case, he -- the lack of, as time progressed, of countervailing powers just gave him such influence. I went to breakfast with him, that's where I was, and we were over at -- we were at the Cook, and I was trying to interview him, and I knew this would be a little bit, oh, dicey, but he wanted to do it because it was best for his schedule because people are fiddling with their food, and then you're talking to the waiter and somebody says something, but it was -- it was much -- I was going to say worse than that, but that's not really a very descriptive term. It was -- it played out somewhat differently.

The way it played out is I couldn't talk to him because of all the supplicants who wanted to line up and have just one little word with him about a project that they had in mind in Fairbanks, in Anchorage, in Valdez, in Shaktoolik, and Senator Stevens, this will be great for Alaska, my little project, I just need one thing: Federal money. Will you get it for me?

So we really couldn't have a conversation because of the number of times we were interrupted with some kind of discussion like that of -- and then there would be -- Ted

would wave to some guy across the room, somebody he knew, and the person would look just petrified. What do I do now? If I just -- do I just wave back and leave? A Senator has waved at me, so they would come over and say hello, not wanting to be rude to him thinking that, you know, this could be bad for me if Ted Stevens thinks I'm rude.

And it was -- it was sort of like watching the king and becoming a prisoner of his own power. You really couldn't relax. And, I mean, I'm sure he had old friends. And one of the things he told me was that as it became harder in life, he said,

"Goddammit, Michael, you don't like Bill Allen being my friend; well, my friends are all dead." And so there was that element -- I mean, not literally, but you get the point, or the listeners will get the point.

And the supplicants, I mean, some of them were friendly, but what they -- you know, I mean, they wanted to get their oar in with Ted for this little project they had.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Do you think this was a problem that other senators in his position who had been there long term ran into or was it --

MICHAEL CAREY: See, that's a really interesting question. Well, here's -- let me get a glass of water, and then I'll tell you this little story.

(Recording paused.)

CHARLES FEDULLO: And we're back.

MICHAEL CAREY: Trying to get some perspective on -- on Stevens as -- as a Senator in relation to other senators, I interviewed Robert LaFollette, professor of politics at the University of Wisconsin, very prestigious job. You know, of course, LaFollette was recognized as one of the greatest senators in the history of the whole institution. A very different kind of person.

But this particular scholar, Professor Kettle, believed that states develop expectations of what their senators are going to be like, and -- and have -- would like them to sort of live within that -- that image.

And for Alaska, it's been, get on the -- by Ted Stevens, get on the Appropriations Committee and deliver the federal bucks. Lisa Murkowski is following in that tradition, and to some degree, Bartlett was -- was that way, although he mostly did it -- he didn't have the kind of seniority; he was able to do it through -- through his relationship with Lyndon Johnson.

And the Wisconsin senators, Russ Feingold holds one of the seats now, is -- their understanding is -- or feeling is we want somebody in this particular seat who raises hell. So you have Russ Feingold down there doing it from the left who is getting on the government and got on George Bush and made a case for -- very much against the

Republican establishment. He's not on the Appropriations Committee, he doesn't bring home a bunch of money.

And he was preceded by Proxmire who was similar in his approach as a gadfly, and before that by Joe McCarthy, so this is sort of their -- one of their traditions. The other senator would take care of business, the second senator would be a hell raiser. That isn't what we want here, for various reasons, it's the standard set by Stevens of this appropriations approach.

And in some ways, I've kind of felt that the voters eventually got to misunderstand the role of senators because, from that perspective, somebody like Richard Lugar who becomes the Chairman of Foreign Affairs and now he's the ranking member of Foreign Relations is kind of a sucker. There's no money to be had on the Foreign Relations Committee, or going on the Judiciary Committee where Pat Leahy of Vermont and Feingold are, the money is elsewhere, but I guess tradition here has been we're a young state, we need federal help, so our attitude towards Uncle Sam has been repeated many, many times is send us the money and stay home.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Okay.

MICHAEL CAREY: He was very good at that.

CHARLES FEDULLO: So people's perception of the Senator is kind of part of the box. How do you -- how do you rate his skills as a legislature -- legislator and as

a senator?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, I -- I only knew them by (indiscernible - coughing) not the way lobbyists were, but many people have reported on -- on his ability to deliver, particularly financially. And on the other hand, people have reported to me they've gone to him and asked him and asked help, asked for help, and Stevens has --

CHARLES FEDULLO: So lobbyists --

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, I mean, but he has, on occasions, I've been told by lobbyists and others familiar with the legislative process, just looked at people, one or two people or a roomful of people and said, "Goddammit, I'm a Senator, I'm not a magician. What the hell do you expect me to do here?"

So even -- even he, you know, recognized his limits; although, that's not what you want to be able to tell people, right? You want to be able to tell them all things is possible -- all things are possible through Ted.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Talk to me about the temper. Did it help or did it hurt?

MICHAEL CAREY: Oh, I think the answer has to be both. I think sometimes the reporters develop the attitude of -- I mean, it was almost like they were going to have a pool, how long can he go before he blows his top, and what's -- what's it going to be that gets him going.

I do know that -- I mean, among -- he had very dear friends in the Senate, people who he was very close to, but there were other people, and I've talked to staffers since then; in fact, I talked to a national committeeman from one of the very Republican states who had previously worked in the Senate and saw Stevens regularly and just said, "I didn't like him at all, I didn't like the way he did business, I didn't like what he stood for."

So he -- a senator, part of your job is to make friends, especially in that kind of environment, to show people that you're serious about what you're doing, and he certainly did that. And he was some -- the man -- the riders that he was able to attach to bills, his ability to protect something like the timber in the Tongass for so long. And his ability to -- his -- the wisdom of, unlike some of the people we've had, of knowing when to pick your fights. There were many, many times when he would just say, "It's over, we can't do anything about this."

CHARLES FEDULLO: What --

MICHAEL CAREY: You might not say that publically -- I don't think that he was given to --

CHARLES FEDULLO: I'm going to have ask --

(Recording paused.)

CHARLES FEDULLO: Is it better now? There we go, buzz is gone.

Okay. So talk to me about the direction of over 40 years and the accomplishments. I mean, it was huge.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, the accomplishments, yeah, the -- he -- it would be interesting to ask him, or did you write it down, do you have anywhere what you wanted to do as a Senator when you got in, because -- but he would have been probably responding to what was going on in 1968, which was the foreign policy, the Vietnam War, the new pol -- the -- all the social dissent that went -- went with that, and the coming of the land claims issues, which was one of the biggest things that he faced very quickly, and how that would play out for Alaska; how Alaskans, to some degree, were divided on it, including the Alaska Natives, how -- what the Anchorage Times and other media were saying up here they expected of him on the land claims, but that would have been a very big early challenge, although it took several years to -- to play out.

And here you had -- it was 1968, he was -- became the Senator and with Mike Gravel, and there are many stories about their relationships which generally emphasize how bad the relationship is, probably interesting, I don't know, how quickly they went bad, although I do think to some degree, senators are inevitably rivals.

Now, you see it in part with Begich and Murkowski, but they are of different parties, even if you're in the same

party. Bartlett wrote a number of memos in which he talked about Ernest Gruening in the most unflattering kind of ways.

CHARLES FEDULLO: But did they ever come to the point where Stevens and Gravel did where there had to be sort of a coming together of, state leaders to say --

MICHAEL CAREY: No, I don't think it was anything like that. And Bartlett did say eventually, you know, "As mad as I get at Ernest Gruening and all his highfalutin ways, I know that when I need him, he will always be there."

CHARLES FEDULLO: And I don't think Stevens and Gravel were ever at that.

MICHAEL CAREY: No. No. No.

CHARLES FEDULLO: So what -- what were the significant accomplishments? I mean, we can talk and go through the list, but if I'm asking Michael Carey, give me five, I mean, there's thousands of them, but let's start with the five you think Ted Stevens did.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, first of all, the land claims. Second, the -- which even with -- and I think a subset of that, although I'd make it number two, is the Native corporations and the decisions that went into establishing what kind of corporations there would be.

Third would be the -- the -- the various -- well, the Stevens-Magnuson Act or Magnuson-Stevens Act dealing with offshore resources.

Fourth would be the creation of these various Native fishing organizations legislation that he sponsored that allowed them to be created. A lot of what I'm saying here is natural resource,-- based, because we are a natural resource state.

And fifth, I think, would be his funding of a lot of projects here that, you know, wasn't just, you know, if there was a hospital, an airport, things that people needed, things that were important to the way they lived, whether they were White, Native, or whatever they were, he was frequently there and his fingertips are on them.

What you won't find his fingertips on, and it's kind of surprising, although if you think about it, perhaps not, is anything that has to do with the oil industry. I would be hard pressed to name one piece of legislation that -- well, I guess, if you want to talk about the pipeline bill, but that's so obvious, but certainly anything that involved with regulatory questions in dealing with the oil industry, Ted Stevens was not a leader.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Why do you think he stayed out of the oil industry?

MICHAEL CAREY: Big, powerful private sector, that's who they are; it's not my job, let Russ Feingold rant about Exxon if he wants to, it's not my job.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Did he serve the state well?

Did he serve the country well?

MICHAEL CAREY: Sure. And served as a -- in many capacities, served the state and the country well, particularly -- I mean, he was -- he was a serviceman, he was a prosecutor, he had all these different roles.

I -- my -- I disagreed with him a lot on foreign policy because I think he deferred way too much to -- to presidents who had ambitious -- and to me, I mean, if you can find much that he said that was critical of Richard Nixon or Lyndon Johnson in the Vietnam War, I don't know what it was, maybe it was they weren't pursuing it enough. I don't think he really showed independent judgment on that. But he was also of the generation that had grown up in World War II and very much these cold warriors, and some -- and in that respect, I don't think he was a lot different than Henry Jackson who was a Democrat.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What about --

MICHAEL CAREY: And you know, he was -- people forget, he -- he and Don Young supported Nelson Rockefeller for president in the '60s, they were not the conservative Republicans of today. They became them in some sense, or felt that they had to answer to them, but they were considered moderate Republicans.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What about the frustrations --

MICHAEL CAREY: But the other thing I think is --

CHARLES FEDULLO: Oh, okay.

MICHAEL CAREY: -- is, just to add, the political achievement and so on is how important Stevens was in working with Seaton and Snedden, and advancing the agenda of the Republican Party and making Republicanism eventually the dominant political force in this state.

Now, there's a huge dynamic of that that involves a lot of things, including the changing nature of the state, but he had a role in that.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And I want to talk about that, I want to get into the relationship with Snedden and with Atwood a little bit. Talk to me about where you think frustrations that -- areas of disappointment, where, what areas didn't things happen --

MICHAEL CAREY: ANWR is the biggest one, he's talked about that many, many times. And also the ANILCA, which, you know, he could probably have some kind of -- you know, it's like the -- my dog sees the mailman and barks, no offense to Ted, right, just mention the word, and aaaarrrrggggg!

And similarly with the opening of ANWR, he felt that he had been treated dishonestly, and certainly in the case of opening ANWR, badly, and he wanted to stay in long enough to see ANWR opened, and it never happened. And I don't know, by now maybe listeners know that ANWR is open

and we pumped all the gas out by the time -- the oil out by the time you're listening to this.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Well, along those lines, "Scoop" Jackson and Paul Tsongas, both passed, are the ones who Senator Stevens said that they were --

MICHAEL CAREY: Yes, he quotes them, and the -- I mean, it's very hard to sort out because the other witnesses are dead, he's the last survivor, and so we hear his side of the story and nobody else's. It's just inevitable and doesn't reflect badly on anybody.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Legacy. And -- and that ties into the court case, the indictments, the convictions.

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, I think that the legacy is clearly the institutions that he helped create, the institutions he helped found, and the financial -- I mean, I had a reporter from the LA Times who, I mean, he's not a political scientist or an expert, but a very informed person, said he thought that Ted Stevens had more influence on his state than any Senator in history. First, there's the length of service; second, there's the infamy -- the issues he was involved in here over all those years. Not just research and resource issues, but when money was needed for hospitals, for development projects in communities, Stevens was always involved.

So I'm repeating myself, and many people have said

this, but just the legacy is the interest and participation and -- by his understanding, advancing Alaska making it a better place to live through the Federal Government and through legislation. I mean, he would say, "I'm a legislator. That's what I do." That's what he wanted to do with his life, and he did it.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And let's talk about -- how did the trial impact people's views of that? How did the trial impact that?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, it was painful to me, and probably, you know, at this point, persona non grata with him because of my criticism of him, but, oh, I mean, I wrote and others have written, you know, basically, you didn't have to smell sulfur to know that Bill Allen was doing the devil's work. And Stevens, I think it was convenient, you know, the Eastern reporters and others, they could be Western, for that matter, kept talking about this friendship, I think eventually reporters discovered it was -- it was a political friendship based on convenience.

Oh, and Stevens, in some cases, clearly did some things he shouldn't have done in his relationships with Allen, whether or not they were crimes and -- but it was this -- I think that the longer he went on, the longer it really became -- and I've criticized him of this in print, he just didn't answer to anybody, he could do whatever he

wanted. Who was -- so what. Who are you? What are you going to do? Ted Stevens is Senator for life. And I think that -- I don't think it made him crooked, I do think it made him sloppy and indifferent.

One of the things that offends me the most is the number of lobbyists who -- who left him and then made independent fortunes, but others will see that differently. I mean, in some ways it's sort of the American way. You know, you come to Washington, you're underpaid, work hard, and then you go and do good. No shortage of that. It's not something that I found appealing at all; in fact, I was very much against it.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What about the way the trial ended, Stevens feels vindicated, but lost the election?

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, it's the "vindicated but." He rolled the dice and just about pulled it off, but didn't quite come up. He didn't have -- and now, can you imagine if he'd -- if he'd won the election and been vindicated? Of course, he would be in the minority, and this would be a serious matter, but he'd still be on the Appropriations Committee, and still have a lot of influence among -- he'd be one of the true old bulls if not the oldest bull, although I guess Byrd is older and Inouye is pretty much the same way.

And if you think about -- think about this for Inouye, we're talking about this in 2009. Dan Inouye has

been a member of the Congressional Delegation of Hawaii since Hawaii became a state. It's almost 50 years. He's another one. Point of that being people who go and stay in a long time and probably too long, but I think that's something, he is open to criticism. And other senators, Bartlett couldn't give it up, Gruening couldn't give it up, it sort of brings on delusions of immortality, it seems.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And that gets back, actually, interesting to what you said when we started the interview, which was this sense of you are so empowered that you can't have lunch with someone, someone comes to you and says, I need this project, people across the room are waving, how do you respond to that.

MICHAEL CAREY: Yes.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Which is almost --

MICHAEL CAREY: At the same time, you know, that could lead to a person being imperial, I've run into him at the airport where he just got into, you know, a window seat in the -- in the back of the cabin, not in first class, and curled up and went to sleep and flew all the way to Washington. So there was a -- there was that, too.

CHARLES FEDULLO: I mean, how would you describe -- how would you describe your relationship with him? He's clearly frustrated with you at this point.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, I think -- I mean, I --

CHARLES FEDULLO: This is somebody that you were close to.

MICHAEL CAREY: He was some -- somebody I -- I wouldn't say so much close to, but professionally; he could talk to me and I could talk to him. And he knew I understood the history of Alaska and was interested in it and respected what he had done, and the same here.

So that meant a lot to me to be able to -- to realize just how influential he had been, and all the things he had done, and be able to talk to him, and at the same time realizing, you know from my perspective, there was things I disagreed with, and hell, he disagreed with the paper on all kinds of things, not just me personally.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Well, and let's talk a little bit about that. I mean, he -- Stevens is somebody who seems to want credit for his achievements in the Senate, and there's tons of them, but he -- he doesn't, like, work -- particularly towards the end of his career really shunned media scrutiny.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, there's no question about that. And he -- he had a real tendency to catastrophize. I mean, I remember when he came in, it was the Thursday -- or no, it was the Wednesday after Bill Clinton got first elected in '92, and his response was, "This is the darkest day in the history of the United States."

And I said, "Senator, I mean, worse than, you know, the Confederate secession, or -- I mean, come on." And so we had a discussion about that. But that was sort of his partisanship coming through, there's no question about that.

But with the media, yeah, he got crankier. And the other part of it, you have to realize, is I think the media, and he felt in particularly the LA Times and the news had questioned his integrity with the whole question about Rubini and those business deals that he was involved in.

I don't -- I never wrote and I don't know who did, it would be interesting to go back and see what they said about Snedden giving him the yacht. I didn't really think much of that because I thought, you know, Stevens would have done whatever he was going to do anyway, whether Bill Snedden gave him a yacht or not. Do you know, by the way, if he -- how much money he made off that? No idea. It's been reported he sold it for a price.

CHARLES FEDULLO: The -- I'm going to switch the...

(Recording paused.)

MICHAEL CAREY: -- the cost of actually doing it, so...

CHARLES FEDULLO: Well, and -- but that leads to the larger scale question with the yacht and money, that was a very difficult financial time for him in the '80s.

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, I don't really know. I mean, I know that it's been reported that way; I have no personal knowledge of any of that.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Do you think that -- Senator Stevens it seems, looking into his history, spent a lot of time around people with money. His friends in college were sons or related to oil company executives, always been around wealthy people, but never had money himself. Does that -- a Depression kid. Does that affect him at all, or has he always been about, this is public service, what's good for the state?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, here we're really into speculation and sort of drawing inferences from the public record. I don't know. Every -- you -- well, especially when he was younger, I mean, there was a long period of time there where whatever Ted Stevens's interest in wealth, money, he had, it really wasn't particularly manifested or we didn't hear about it.

But then remember sometime in the '80s, especially the late '80, you'd hear every once in awhile he'd come up with these diatribes when he would say, "Dammit, you know, I don't need to stay around here, I could go out and make a lot of money." There are editorial -- there are -- you can find those, and I wrote editorials about that, and so that raise -- does raise the question, well, what was that

all about? And that he said, "You know, I wanted to raise -- I wanted to come up with some money for my children and grandchildren with these different kinds of" -- or grandchildren, I guess it was, "with these -- with these investments."

So he had an interest in money, although he -- I think it'd probably be fun to ask him, do you think -- were you any good at making money? And I don't know what his answer would be because he's fond of telling people about, "Yeah, well, you never write about the bad investments I had, how I lost my butt." I don't know if he said "butt," but you get the point.

CHARLES FEDULLO: I do.

MICHAEL CAREY: I don't know if he said that to you, but you -- you've heard -- you're familiar with that, aren't you?

CHARLES FEDULLO: Yes.

The -- the efforts that you've talked about, some of the -- his view of being a Senator and creating Alaska's view of appropriations and bringing money to the state, do you think it created a dependency that's hard for Alaska to overcome, or was that a responsible stance by a senator with a Western state that's relatively new?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, to a point. And, of course, now we see how much -- how -- one way to look at it is just

take the money and run; another one is, you know, the role that federal spending pays in our -- in our -- in our economy, and can that be sustained, and how much further can it go on. But then there's such a thing as unforeseen circumstances that we couldn't have imagined, right, or barely imagined.

I don't know, if you check the paper today, it says that the stimulus money we're getting from the Obama administration is going to be between 1.3 and $1.5 billion. Nobody had that money in mind a year ago.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Wow. You look back at Senator Stevens's career, and there's so many different things. Anecdotes, you've told me several with you and him, anecdotes that sort of describe him as a person, describe him as a politician, things that just come across to you?

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah. There are a couple of things. Once I remember being taken to lunch in the Senate dining room by Ted and -- Senator Stevens, and had a nice young man who came with him, but nice young men went everywhere with him, that was sort of their role. I -- there were -- there were nice young women, and I need to be fair about that, and he was good about that.

He was just so gracious and good -- good humored on that occasion that my wife thought it was such an honor having been raised in a poor family in Scotland, and he was

so gracious about it. And he was -- it was kind of funny at a couple points, the different senators would come by and he would nod to them and wave to them. And at one point there was -- I think it might have been Rick Santorum but -- of Pennsylvania, but I'm not sure who it was.

And Stevens leans over and points to the guy and says, "See that guy? He's got it all wrong about what it means to be a senator here."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "He thinks, 'I introduced the bill, you pass it now.' That ain't the way it works." Except he wouldn't have said "ain't." And he would make several of these other comments.

And -- and then I've heard -- well, I mean, I had, you know, my own experiences with him that, as editorial page editor, on the phone where he'd be mad, and then we would sort of patch it up. And I think what he really got upset about, I mean, he really felt the paper, after awhile, the California newspaper, was out to get him.

And, I mean, our view was we tried to be balanced in our criticism, and we criticized other people, and I mean, I had -- although, I've got to tell you, people talk about Stevens is thin skinned and his railing at reporters, there are other politicians in the state who I can tell you were much worse.

I'm not going to -- this is not the forum to announce who they are or -- but I remember one very prominent public official accused me of secretly recording him over the telephone while we were having this discussion of some pending legislation.

And I said, "We are just going in the -- all -- all in the wrong direction here. That's -- that's not what we're talking about." This guy got so mad, I thought, I can't believe this. I mean. And clearly what it was, was senators or governors or people in that, legislative leaders, they don't get used to talking about somebody just saying you're wrong.

And so Frank Gerjevic who worked for me many, many years on the editorial page had a great line, he said -- I said, "How did I do?" He said, "Well, you sounded fine in dealing with this politician, it just looked like you were about to have a heart attack."

In any case, those kind of things came and went, and of the personal kind of nature. And he -- he sent me many, many, many cards, not all of them correcting my views. And people have told, his staffers have talked about him either sitting on the airplane or in a -- I don't know, waiting room at the airport or someplace the stack of these note cards, maybe you've gotten one over the years that just says, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, you know, some brief little

point, hey, this was -- this was Ted's Twitter before there was tweets.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Right.

MICHAEL CAREY: Right? He would send you 50 words on some particular subject, and they were -- and you know, they were interesting to get and I'd save them, and they are going to wind up someplace, somewhere, I hope, besides the garbage.

So he took the time to correspond with people even though -- especially in the media, but I think he was selective, clearly.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What about the relationship with the media? You've talked a little bit about it, but he had this strong relationship with them that he developed.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, first of all, I think that, you know, it was sort of -- he was really interested in the hometown media, which would be Fairbanks, Anchorage, especially the News-Miner because of the personal relationship with Snedden, but sort of like these guys from the LA Times and Washington Post, "Goddammit, go ahead and write whatever you write, I'll be around long after you're looking for a new job."

But that became tougher when the -- and I think he had a hard time adjusting, as Congressman Young has and others, to the whole notion of the new media with -- I mean,

he was very good at -- he had Blackberries, he had -- he had the equipment himself, but the idea that the news cycle was changing all the time, and that people in Anchorage could read what the Washington Post was saying about him with ease, and that so many of his critics, I mean, when he had them, could just blast him from -- from their computers or from -- from blogs or whatever it was. This was -- this was a different world than the old AP version of the story, which was one version, and that's all you got from that news cycle.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What would Bill Snedden think of this whole process? I mean, he seems to -- I mean, I've never met Mr. Snedden.

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, they were -- their idea was they were great friends, there's many different elements in their relationship, and -- and it was professional, as it had been between Snedden and Seaton, that we got an idea of what we want to do for Alaska, we want to build Alaska, we want to build the Republican Party and, by God, we're going to do it.

And Snedden put out a good newspaper, many of the people who worked for him reported on his tyrannies and feuded with him or lost their job, but the newspaper, if you go back and look at it in the '50s and the '60s, it got much better when he took it over. Much better. He just had a better eye.

And you know, it's a very interesting thing about Snedden, it surprises me in some ways, he wasn't afraid to run crime stories on the front page, or even things that were highly risque or maybe at the edge of bad taste, the stripper who got bitten by her boa constrictor, you know, that kind of thing. Or as a wonderful description of a woman who was arrested while she was running down Cushman Street shooting at a soldier who was trying to get his pants on in what the News-Miner described as "a dispute over personal services."

But, I mean, he was -- he was -- he had a -- he -- the problem I think with Snedden for me was he was extremely partisan. He hated Ernest Gruening, and maybe had good reason to hate Ernest Gruening because Ernest Gruening had a huge ego and try to imagine these two guys in the same room at the same time, it's just impossible. I mean, in some ways, Snedden recruited Ted to run against Ernest Gruening. I don't know that there's a memo that you'd find about that, but Bartlett was a friend of -- of Snedden's, he's going back to publishing days and newspaper days, part of Bartlett's background, but Ernest and Bill Snedden never hit it off, and -- and so the candidate was Ted.

CHARLES FEDULLO: And so Stevens had a relationship with Atwood, too, so he understood --

MICHAEL CAREY: Yeah, I don't know that

Atwood -- that relationship nearly as well, but it must have been, he would have realized that, you know, that -- that the publisher of Alaska's largest newspaper was important, he was Republican.

Although the other thing you have got to remember, this is a very -- there are others who know much, much more about this than I do, but Atwood had a pretty good relationship with Ernest Gruening, too.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Huh.

MICHAEL CAREY: And that was partially because Ernest had been around so long, it was in his interest, Atwood's interest. Right? He'd been the governor, he had been part of the Constitution -- or rather he had been the Tennessee plan Senator, he had been a U.S. Senator from '58 to '68 -- '59 to '68. There was a lot going on with him.

CHARLES FEDULLO: When people write 10, 20 years from now what happened, how Senator Stevens leaves office, how are they going to write that legacy?

MICHAEL CAREY: Well, you know, that's interesting because there will be a lot of realtime reporting and video for them to rely on that deals with the trial, the aftermath of the trial, his relationship with Allen, there are going to be books that are going to be written and have been written about that.

The difficulty is the further you get away from the

events, the harder it is to capture the magic. And so the question of, well, what was it that Ted Stevens -- was it just all transactional politics? Part of it was. You give me the votes, I'll deliver the money. But part of it was also a certain respect and understanding that this is a guy who got it done. I mean, I don't -- Stevens wasn't beloved in the way that Bob Bartlett was beloved, but he was certainly respected and appreciated.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Anything you think it's important to add or talk about? I mean, I think that -- I'll get into different issues. The things that people don't talk about with Senator Stevens are the work for technology, the work for women's athletics, people don't talk about moving the BIA schools a lot, and some of those issues. And I don't know that it's appropriate for you and I to discuss this, but what are some of the things --

MICHAEL CAREY: I think -- I really don't know much about those because those are things I weren't -- I wasn't involved in.

CHARLES FEDULLO: I mean --

MICHAEL CAREY: I mean, I do know them as -- yeah. But they are part of the record, but I don't have any personal knowledge.

CHARLES FEDULLO: But just is there anything you think you and I should talk about? I mean, I think this is --

MICHAEL CAREY: I'm thinking here, just a second.

It would somehow be this. It would be fun to know more about Ted Stevens's origins, he doesn't really like to write about them, but they were hard scrabble, and whether he was in Indiana or California, I think one of the things that he learned was never give up. Never, ever give up. So this made for a certain kind of toughness and combativeness that served him well most of the time.

But, you know, I have these various things I say all the time, nobody's the same person 24 hours a day; your emotions are like the weather, they are always changing. So you have to think about Ted in that way, too, like other people, that some people see him as sort of a black and white kind of person, but over a 40-year period, especially involved in Alaska affairs, I think it's more complicated than that.

I do think he wasn't particularly forgiving of the enemies he made or if he just -- you know, once he established you were not on his side, that probably didn't suit him very well or work to his advantage. There probably were people he could have won over, over a period of time, and he just wrote them off. I can think of a couple of who I'm not going to name here, people he got mad at for various reasons. And of course, there were people that got mad at him and stayed mad at him, too. But that's sort of the political game at

its worst, or part of the fallout of the political game.

CHARLES FEDULLO: You know, we could go through some of the time periods as when he ran against Bob Dole for majority leader.

MICHAEL CAREY: I don't know anything about that except he lost from one vote. By one vote. I know the other thing from my reading about those elections, they are highly personal, and the participants are a big bunch of liars who will say, "See this note here, this says I'm voting for you," and then put another one in the -- I don't know if that happened there. It happened in the House of Representatives, I know that. But it's a very intimate, personal -- I mean, probably in that case, what, there were 53 people or 5 or something voting, to lose -- lose by Dole by one? His vote -- his whole career would have been so different as majority leader. I think he just -- you know, I mean, he would have been legislating on behalf of Alaska, but he would have had to have a bigger perspective. I mean, it just would have been so different.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Anything you'd like to add?

MICHAEL CAREY: Ted Stevens has been a part of my life for so long, I don't know any better. 50 something years since I was a little kid.

CHARLES FEDULLO: Wow.

MICHAEL CAREY: Not personally, but

professionally.

(End of recorded interview.)