RECORDED INTERVIEW

OF

JOHN KATZ

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES FEDULLO

WITH

PAUL MCCARTHY

IN Washington, D.C.

June 8, 2009

Part 2 of 2, Tape 2, Side A

UAF ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

SENATOR TED STEVENS PROJECT

Transcribed by:

CAROL A. McCUE, RMR

INTERVIEW OF JOHN KATZ

(Beginning of Part 2, Tape 2, Side A of recorded interview.)

CHARLES FEDULLO: Okay. Go ahead.

PAUL MCCARTHY: Did he raise basic issues about health and safety and clear, clean water and sewer that were issues that were just incredibly important to many of the rural villages to -- to a much higher profile than other western senators might have done with their own resident Indian groups or tribes?

JOHN KATZ: He didn't do it so much in the Claims Act itself because that was seen as an aboriginal land claims settlement, but he did do it in a lot of other contexts.

And it's hard for me to compare with other -- Senator Inouye has a huge legacy of identifying concerns that affect the Alaska Natives and American Indians. Senator McCain on the Republican side.

I think what Senator Stevens did in the Alaska context was really highlight those issues in absolute terms, and how that relates relatively to the accomplishments of other members, I can't speak with

authority.

But, for example, in Alaska, he developed special appropriations through the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to clean water and sewage, that -- those formulas still exist and are funded. Telemedicine and bringing modern technology to help with respect to healthcare. He was beginning in his Senate career to highlight problems with climate change and coastal erosion. The need to take responsibility for relocating Native villages.

So he -- he did highlight those issues, and then provide the wherewithal to begin to solve them. And I think it was a work in progress. I don't know where he would have taken coastal erosion, village relocation, climate change impacts on rural people and Alaska Natives if he'd stayed in the Senate.

CHARLES FEDULLO: What about his ability to work -- ? You talked about it a little bit, his ability to work across party lines. He's not a traditional Republican.

JOHN KATZ: No, he isn't. He's very hard to put in a -- a peg, in a hole because he -- one of the strengths that I think he really had was the ability to take each issue and analyze it separately and come to

conclusions about it. And in so doing, he cobbled together a constituency that was very loyal to him up until this last election. People interested in a diverse combination of things.

He was very frustrating for ultraliberals and ultraconservatives because he was so difficult to place in a box. You really had to move with him on the particular issue. And, you know, despite the fact that he would be involved in tough Senate debate on the Floor, he -- I think the people that were the subjects of his debate or the victims never took it -- hardly ever took it personally, and he didn't mean it personally. He would be dealing with them on the merits of an issue he felt strongly about, and I think he had that reputation, definitely of being a problem solver, of compromising, of trying to find a solution, and -- and that involved Republicans, as well as Democrats.

You know, sometimes people would criticize him for compromising on a particular issue, and I think, to some extent, his attitude was, if you're not willing to compromise at all, why are you in the legislative process because you take your principles and you adhere to your principles, but you have to be willing on a public policy basis to compromise some of the time to get most of what you want. And he seemed to have an

instinct for the strategy and tactics of accomplishing that.

CHARLES FEDULLO: There's -- I'll ask you one more question, and then Paul --

The two events in his life, one personal, one professional, that you read that sort of seemed to have had the most traumatic impact in his Senate career were when he lost Ann, and when he lost the election to be majority leader. Any comments on, you know, what you saw in him or how he felt during those time periods?

JOHN KATZ: He had a wonderful relationship with his first wife, Ann, and also a very close personal relationship with the other people that were on that airplane. And I think there's no question, as it would for any of us, that after that, he was -- he was different. It took him, I think, a long time to recover from that. He -- he had a sense of his own mortality. I think it pushed him even harder to work on issues.

He has a -- a relationship with Tony Motley, who was also on that airplane, that kind of transcends anything else because they shared that experience and the -- and the aftermath of that experience.

So I think for awhile, as it would for any of us, he was depressed and bitter and reflected some of that bitterness publicly with respect to ANILCA. Over

time, he coped with it. And I think it just emphasized that we're all here for a short period of time. For him, he had a lot of things to accomplish.

The majority leader thing I'm less cognizant of. I think he felt like he had the votes, and when people voted in secret, some people defected, and I think that made him a little less trustful of some people. But I don't know how that reflected itself on a daily basis because he -- he still worked with people of all stripes and, you know, never gave up his charter membership in the Senate club.

CHARLES FEDULLO: John -- is there anything you want to add?

PAUL MCCARTHY: No, no, I'm fine.

CHARLES FEDULLO: John, anything you want to add?

JOHN KATZ: No. I mean, we could talk for much longer, but I think your questions have sort of captured the essential essence, so I can't think of anything to add at the moment.

(End of Part 2, Tape 2, Side A, end of recorded interview.)