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RECORDED INTERVIEW

OF

WILL ARTHUR

CONDUCTED BY

KAREN BREWSTER with MARY ANNE HAMBLEN

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INTERVIEW OF WILL ARTHUR

(Beginning of Part 2 of 3 of recorded interview.)

WILL ARTHUR: Okay. Now, I think I said one of the first places I took him was to a memorial service for General William Quinn, Buffalo Bill Quinn, who was -- basically, he was a general from the '50s and '60s, but he befriended the Senator through the chain of command here. He was also, I think, the last commander of the OSS, and he transferred him over to be with the CIA. So --

KAREN BREWSTER: What's the OSS?

WILL ARTHUR: Office of Strategic Services, which was what the CIA was in World War II.

And they were good friends. And in his memorials, one of the things he -- if you're writing speeches for him, eulogies were one of the things that he -- I think you'll find if you're going through his speech files you'll find his eulogies probably give more of his personality than anything. And because they are more heartfelt. I mean, because if you wrote one for him, he would literally write all over it and almost rewrite it.

And -- but that -- the system was that somebody had to write remarks or, you know, even for a eulogy, something

that personal, you know, we'd look up the correspondence file, and Kirk and I would always say somebody in Alaska who was an old friend of the Senator's would die, we would start digging out the old correspondence because he would want to see it. So we'd say, "Yeah, start digging." And it was like right away if somebody died, we would dig out all this stuff. And he would go through it all and, you know, find any record we had with him. And I think -- I said I think the -- General Quinn's funeral was the first one that I had ever gone with.

And I had known General Quinn from my own time in the Army because he was -- his nickname was Buffalo Bill Quinn, and the 17th Regiment that was at Fort Richardson were the Buffalo because they were named after him, so that's how tight he was with -- with the Alaska unit.

And I often wondered if that's why that unit was in Alaska because Stevens had been instrumental in getting the 6th Division activated in Alaska, and then when it activated, and suddenly they changed all the regiments, and the 17 was one of them. I was, like, I wonder if Stevens pulled some strings to get the 17th reactivated. So, yeah, it was things like that.

And, I mean, I found those were some of his best speeches were really his eulogies. And it sounds sad because, you know, it's how do you enjoy doing eulogies. But it's, I think, one of -- when you say what was his advantage

and what was his disadvantage in the Senate, or overall in a lot of things.

One of the advantages he had was longevity. The Senate works on longevity and seniority. So the longer he was here, the farther he worked up the system, you know, to a point where the Republicans have an eight-year limit on chairmanships, so when he was limited out of Appropriations, he moved to Commerce, he just exercised his seniority at Commerce. He said, "All right, well, I'm on Commerce, and I'm the new man and I'm taking over Commerce, which bumped Senator McCain out, then Senator McCain was then the Chairman of Commerce, and Senator McCain went over to another committee and did he the same thing. He said, "Well, I'm on this committee, I'm the most senior guy, I'm now the new Chairman."

So -- so seniority helped, you know. And I think he was well placed in Appropriations, obviously Appropriations brings in, you know, funding. And Commerce was, well, because it's -- you know, the real name of the committee is Commerce, Science, and Transportation. And that covers fisheries, logging, mining, it covers all the resource stuff; plus transportation, you know, Alaska aviation, things like that all get run into that.

So those two committee assignments worked very well in the fact that he positioned himself early to work

his way up, and then basically stayed around long enough to get those helped.

On the flip side of that, I think longevity, a lot of ways, didn't hurt him. He outlived a lot of people. You know, he outlived a lot of senators that were his friends and supporters. He outlived a lot of his friends that he had from before his Senate time.

And what tends to happen is you backfill with new people. And new people come in here, but you know, I think some of the people who came into his life after he was elected didn't always have the best intentions. They wanted to know him because he was a senator, you know, whereas the friends he had had before were people who knew him as Ted Stevens, you know, average citizen.

And I think that is the downside to being here too long is you tend to have people come in who, quote, are your friends, and maybe they are not your friends. But he was very loyal to his friends, and he -- you know, I don't think he always saw that.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: So he didn't necessarily understand the difference?

WILL ARTHUR: Well, I think he did, but a lot of these -- a lot of the people who do that are very good at doing that. And they are -- you know, I would call it convenient. I mean, they always seem to know whatever you

want to know or have whatever -- if you mention something, like, oh, yeah, I can get it for you. You know, it's just odd. You know.

So I think in the long run, you -- you know, you -- like I said, the staff was young. A lot of his former staff were lobbyists so, I mean, even then, their former staff and their -- their loyalty to senators, you know, Senator knew them as friends, but on the other hand, they are lobbyists.

You know, you always have to take them, you know -- but then, you know, when he died in the plane, you know, when I saw the list of people that was in the plane, you know, people like Bill Phillips who had been on the staff years and years ago was a dedicated Stevens person, and even if he was a lobbyist, didn't matter. Same with Jim Morhard. You know, same with Sean O'Keefe. I mean, these were people who were his old friends. And that's why they were fishing with him.

Stevens would go fishing every August. And it was his vacation. It was like the only real vacation he got. A lot of these other trips were -- it's, like, yeah, it's a vacation, it's a business trip, it's a vacation, but he would go fishing usually into Lake Harp (phonetic) area or Western Alaska once a year for two weeks, and he would take people who were, you know, fairly prominent people, but they

were people who liked to fish. And that's why they went. And they didn't talk politics, they liked to fish.

And the one year I -- I got picked to go with him to staff it. And one of the reasons I was there was because I wasn't an attorney. I didn't have issues. And the morning I got up and I would get on the radio, follow him back to Anchorage, call the office, see what's going on, then we'd go fishing; and then in the afternoon I'd call them up and, say, "What's going on?" That was the only time he really got away.

And, you know, on that trip, like I said, there was Postmaster Henderson was with us, Director Stafford from Secret Service was with us.

I'm trying to think of who else. I mean, now, they were people you consider, quote, "big wigs," but no longer on -- what did Stevens have to do with the Secret Service? I mean, Stafford just liked to fish. You know. And I know he would go out there with James Lee Witt, the FEMA director under Clinton, who was like a major bass -- you know, he probably called himself a redneck fisherman. You know, one of those guys that throw sticks of dynamite in the water and see what floats up. But they were all just fishermen and that was his big vacation.

And I think every year DeLynn would schedule it and tried to make sure it was not staffed with people who had

an agenda or wanted anything. It's, like, no, just go fish and leave him alone. And then he come off of that. This was August recess. He'd come off of that and he might be going fishing somewhere else, but the next trip would be people who are lobbying for something, or -- you know, some group were sponsoring it or something.

Or even -- yeah, and even the fishing class that's down on the Kenai, that was all about raising money for something. But that one trip every year, that was the -- if you find the records for that trip and who was on it, those were the people I think were a little bit -- I wouldn't call it closer to him, but relaxed a little more with him.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: He's known for have -- paying special attention to his constituents. Did you ever see a difference between the way he treated constituents and maybe dignitaries or more powerful political types?

WILL ARTHUR: No. I mean, we -- if constituents came to D.C. and we could get them in to see the Senator, even if they didn't have an appointment, we would get them in to see the Senator. We would try to get, you know, a photograph with them.

His -- all of his mail, all of his -- definitely all of the Alaskan mail was answered. There was a time when we worried a little bit about answering by e-mail. When e-mail first came out, because of the nature of e-mail and

how it can proliferate through the system, we used to say, well, if a guy writes you and asks you a question and you write back to him and answer him in a letter, he might tell five or six people what the letter says. But e-mail was sort of the thing where it's, like, well, if we answer in an e-mail, this guy could hit forward to a thousand people and it's gone.

And our concern wasn't that people would forward his answer, we weren't sure about people -- when e-mail first came out, you could alter a piece of e-mail. You know, you could edit out the word "not," you know, you could completely change something and then forward it to a thousand people. Once they fixed some of those problems, like now like if you try to alter an e-mail and forward it, it usually comes up in a different color, or sometimes if it's watermarked, it just won't let do you it at all.

Once those systems came in and we were fairly sure that, you know, they weren't going to be sending around false information, we were okay with it, and then he started answering e-mails.

The process before that was that somebody wrote to us an e-mail, we printed it out and treated it like a letter; so we still answered it, but you got a hard copy letter.

Now, he would answer every piece of mail technically himself. Correspondence would draft the

letter, send it through the attorney to get approval, and then if it was an original text letter, if it had never been sent to anybody before, it went to the Senator, and he signed it.

Now, once he established a position on something, we could run that text. Like if he -- if somebody writes him a letter and we answer it, and then the next day 10 more people write on the same issue, once he signed the first one, it was considered approved text, and then we could just send it out and use the signature machine. But whoever was the first person to write on a particular issue got the original letter. And that was hand signed. And that was just, you know, a convenience then.

I know one of the times we had sort of a backlog with that was the Elian Gonzales, the Cuban immigrant little boy who -- that issue was changing so fast that we had trouble keeping up because every day there was a new -- it was in a different court.

So what we would do is we would save the letters for two days, and then he would approve a text, and we'd send them all out; and then we would save them for two days, and we'd write a letter and send them all out. Because we didn't -- you know, we were afraid the letters -- as I said, well, the letter could only be based on the date of the letter. That was his position on that particular day. On

the next day it might move to a different court or something else came up, and that letter might be not be valid or his opinion might have changed or something like that.

Now, people would also write to him and say, "Well, how are you going to vote?" And he would say, "I never say how I'm going to vote until I vote," because things could be offered ~~on~~ at the last minute, a bill could be amended on the Floor and no longer say the same thing. I mean, you could literally ~~take it down~~ a bill and say I ~~align~~ would like to amend with everything from line one to the end and then insert a new text. So you can't promise the vote one way or the other on anything.

So he would never pin himself down on a vote until it happened. You walk in a room and see what happens. He could say, "Well, if things don't change, I would most likely support it," but things usually change in the Senate.

KAREN BREWSTER: When constituents came into the office and made appointments, and if it was a constituent to talk to the Senator about something that they disagreed about, for instance, environmentalists come in and talk about the Arctic Refuge development where they obviously had a difference of opinion to the Senator, how did those meetings go? How did he handle that?

WILL ARTHUR: I know occasionally he would -- I wouldn't say he would lose his temper, but he would stand by his position and they would stand by their position. And

I think at the end of the meeting it was two frustrated parties going in opposite directions, but he would meet with them. And, you know, he'd usually listen to them.

I mean, there were a few -- I think there were a few people -- I wouldn't say they were -- they weren't banned from the office, but there was a couple people that we had meet with staff because they had established a bad rapport with the Senator where it never went well. There were a few people that were actually banned from the inner office.

KAREN BREWSTER: Such as?

WILL ARTHUR: Theresa Obermeyer. She got a restraining order and that was based on -- that was why he couldn't debate her in the same room during the campaign, so there was a restraining order against her.

So if she was in the building we would usually hear about it through Capitol Police, and I don't know how Capitol Police knew, but they would call us up and say, "She's in the building." As far as I know she never tried to come in the office.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Is there a particular issue?

WILL ARTHUR: Between the two of them?

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Yeah.

WILL ARTHUR: She was pretty insistent that the Senator had blackballed her husband's bar exam. And he had taken the bar exam 30 some times and failed to pass. And

one of her other complaints was that Stevens never took the Alaska bar exam. That's because Stevens came up as the Federal Prosecutor so he didn't need to take the local bar exam because he was a Federal Prosecutor. And that was before Statehood.

So when Statehood came in, everybody got grandfathered. If you were a practicing lawyer in Alaska, you're a practicing lawyer in Alaska in the State of Alaska. So he was grandfathered in, and she's, like, well, that's not fair because he never took the exam. And it just went on and on. She just wouldn't leave it alone.

KAREN BREWSTER: And were there other people -- you said some of these people who were directed to staffers instead of talking to the Senator.

WILL ARTHUR: That was usually after multiple meetings with the Senator.

KAREN BREWSTER: Were ~~they~~ there particular topics or subjects or was it more --

WILL ARTHUR: I don't think so. I think it was more of an individual's rapport and maybe a poor selection of the spokesman lobbyist. You know, gee, if you want to walk into a meeting and be yelled at. You know because, I mean, I've -- even I've been yelled at in meetings by people. It's, like, well you don't understand, I'm not even handling this. I mean, I get that now in the Senate. My phone number

is almost identical to Senator Rubio's. It's, like, one digit off. So I'm constantly getting yelled at from people from Florida, to include, I think, when it was Senator Martinez.

KAREN BREWSTER: So as a -- as a constituent with a concern to persuade your Senator, yelling at them is not your best strategy?

WILL ARTHUR: Well, not best -- well, not being belligerent. And that's the thing. I mean, usually you can state your opinion, you can state your opinion boisterously, but when you get in, like, personal insults, we had a policy if somebody calls you a name or swears at you on the phone, you can hang up on them at that point, but you have to say, "I'm sorry, if you can calm down and call back, I'm willing to talk to you, but you're becoming belligerent and..."

KAREN BREWSTER: And did it happen to the Senator? Did people --

WILL ARTHUR: Not as much by phone call because usually they started screaming at the front desk guy. A few people I think over the years came in and -- well, I know at one point in the last few years, he had somebody that came in with a group on a newer issue, and I'm not sure what the issue was, and one of the guys immediately said, "In 1973, you promised me this." And the Senator said, "Well, we'll -- we'll get back to that. Let's handle the issue you

came here to talk about."

And I was sent a note to go up and find that piece of -- that piece of mail. And by the time that meeting was over, Senator Stevens said, "Well, I have the letter in front of me, and I don't see where I said that; I can't share it because it's confidential, but if you want to share it with everybody, go ahead." And handed the guy the letter and the guy would -- he shut up. It's, like, he never said that. He had an excellent recall on things like that.

But, you know, I remember, you know, he said to staff one day, he said, "You know, I'm probably the only Senator that could go back to my home state walking down the street and somebody will say, 'Hey asshole,' and I'll turn around because there was just enough people in the state that call me that."

It's -- you know, you try not to take it personal, but after awhile, people can only beat on you so long and he will strike back. He would say, "Well, I won't talk to you." You know. "I'm your senator and I represent you and, you know, if you can handle this in a rational way."

Now, probably on occasions he probably yelled back at people, which probably wasn't -- didn't help the situation. It's a little bit of both, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Because not -- you know, any senator doesn't have a hundred percent support from all

their constituents.

WILL ARTHUR: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: And so I wondered how he handled that.

WILL ARTHUR: Well, they will get his vote, you know, up until his last election, he was really good. You know, if you're getting 75 percent of the vote, you're getting pretty good percentages. But you're always going to have people that disagree with you. I mean, it's part of the game.

Now, be it that people disagree with you, but you're going to have people that disagree with you -- you know, one person disagree with you on every issue. It's almost an issue-by-issue thing. You know, I think that's in the election, and when you vote for somebody you might not fully agree with them. You vote how closely you agree with the number of topics within there and how you prioritize your topics.

Now, I think Senator even had times within his own party where he disagreed with the party. He said -- you know, well, I know that his position on choice was probably a big factor in why he did not become Majority Leader, Senator Dole did, because he did not have all the right boards in his platform. That's how party politics works. If you don't have the right boards in the right order in the right

shape, you're not the party's guy.

And, you know, I think, you know, I said that there was -- you know, he would sometimes get generalized about his position on, you know, physical and mental handicaps, they said you're an unfeeling Republican. And it's, like, no, I don't think you understand this, or you know, some people categorize it, you know, if you went with the stereotypical Republican, he wouldn't have necessarily been in favor of all the women's issues that, you know, he was a prime sponsor of.

He didn't always fit the party platform. And I think that in a lot of cases it's a fairly typical Alaska thing. It's raised in a different place, different priorities.

From my experience at the State Legislature, as far as I know, Republican or Democrat, there wasn't a single state legislator that was opposed to oil development in some way. There may have been one or two of them that were opposed to guns, you know. Even the Democrats were, it's, like, yeah, as long as you use them for hunting, that's fine. It's a different mentality than maybe the rest of the Lower 48. You know, you can't really compare states to states.

Over the years I know, like, Senator Stevens had close friends in a lot of senators. He did not get along with Senator Torricelli from New Jersey. I think they just

came from different worlds.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Was it issues that they didn't agree on, or --

WILL ARTHUR: Yeah, a lot of issues, and a lot of, I think, you know, whatever, they just didn't support each other's legislation, they just didn't like each other.

I know the Senator would usually -- you know, this was years ago, he would get in fish from Alaska, and we would give one to every senator, except Senator Torricelli because one of my duties as Executive Assistant was I distributed the fish. The only time we gave Senator Torricelli a fish was when he resigned. And as I said to him, being from New Jersey, I said, "Well, giving somebody a dead fish in New Jersey means something completely different, so can we give him a fish?" And he said, "Go ahead and give him a fish this time." But he was, like, the only one.

Then he would send -- and they were state product. You know, he was allowed to distribute state product. You know, the ones from Iowa can give out corn, Idaho gives out potatoes. We had fish just because ours is better than theirs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, the other separate thing, the issues in the opposition, you know, Stevens was known for his opposition in conflict with the environment community in Alaska.

WILL ARTHUR: Uh-hum.

KAREN BREWSTER: Okay. What did you observe about that?

WILL ARTHUR: I think that was just a difference of philosophies. I mean, on development. Like I said, in that case, in some cases you might have people there that were completely against petroleum development. They were completely against roads, you know, or something like that. You know, you're going to run into that on every issue.

You know, that obviously, the ANWR development was the toughest issue that he had in his agenda during the 40 years. It lasted the longest, it ebbed and flowed with various legislators and various presidents.

You know, it became close, you know, sometimes it came close under, you know, presidents you wouldn't think it would come close under, and other times it was so far back under a president that you would think, you know, being from Texas would be pro oil. Wait a minute, that guy should be on our side. Yeah, it was just one he went round and round against on. And that is probably the one that he had the most contention on.

He had some fishing issues when -- when they were creating the fishing quotas inside the openers, and I know there were some people there that were probably going to be, like, squeezed out of the system. But there had to be

something done because, you know, the Deadliest Catch now, wow, you should have seen it 20 years ago, you had twice as many people dying. You know, something had to be done about it. So there's the good and the bad.

And that's a life or death one. Oil development is not necessarily a life and death issue, but it's a huge economic issue, you know. What are you guys paying for gas up there now?

KAREN BREWSTER: 4 something a gallon.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Yeah.

WILL ARTHUR: We were paying almost 4 here, you know, for a while.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I mean, with ANILCA, which was in there before your time with the Senator, you know, which -- there was a lot of conflict within the environmental community in Alaska, and he's sort of known for having some pretty heated debates there.

WILL ARTHUR: Yeah. And he had -- he had an opinion and they had an opinion. Once again, does it go back to, you know, he believed in what he was saying. His -- now, his heated debate was it's in the debate, once again. It's the court of public opinion, whatever, it's like on the Floor. Some of it's bluster, some of it's his belief in the thing and the -- and the issue.

And I know -- I think I remember reading in some

of the -- when some of the times in Alaska when he had run-ins with various protestors. You know, the guy was a saint. You know, he -- those were his opinions, and he had a temper. You know, it wasn't the best, it wasn't the worst.

And I know -- I mean, I'm not sure who has the record now. We would have to see what roll call is saying now who has the worst temper. It might be McCain now. McCain used to be second, I think he was second. And Mikulski was, like, third. She's a feistier woman.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: What do you think was the Senator's greatest disappointment?

WILL ARTHUR: Probably his failure to get ANWR through. It was a perennial issue.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: There's a public legacy that historians are going to remember about Stevens. Is there a private legacy, something that you think he should be remembered for?

WILL ARTHUR: That, I don't know, I'm not -- I'm not sure where you -- you know, what you're looking for there.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Something different from the public, something maybe Stevens would have been proud of that wasn't part of his legislation or his political career.

WILL ARTHUR: I would say probably, you know, and saying this in two ways, his family and his staff because

Stevens's staff I think when we charted it at one point was, like, 700 people if you count in all the interns and all the places they went because I run into people all the time that are all through Alaska.

You know, I think at one point -- well, I think the current Governor, I don't think he was an intern, I think he came down as a close-up group, and how many people in Alaska at some point or another met him, and -- but -- but the staff itself, when I look at the number of places they've gone and things they've done in Alaska, you know, Lisa Murkowski was an intern. You know. And when we were closing the office I dug out that year's intern files and we sent copies to her press people. But things like that.

And, you know, he had a very far reaching -- you know, where it's going to -- where it's going to go from those people, I think, is more, you know -- you know, in a long term is going to sort of say where his influence lands. Because a lot of them, like I say, in Lisa's case, it was probably her first job at maybe out of college or during college, and so many of them are like that. And there was usually, if I were to track them, two or three members of the Stevens alumni that are in the State Legislature. I know there's been a couple of attorney generals that have been Stevens staffers and it's -- and sometimes they go on, they go on in different ways. I mean, they don't necessarily all

agree with him. I mean, they -- some of them end up running for legislature as Democrats. I mean, that's not bad.

I think in a lot of ways his office was less party conscious. I mean, I was a nonpartisan when I came here. If you read my resume you would say I was a Republican, but I vote all over the board. You know, I don't agree with anybody. And it was never really brought up. You know, maybe if you looked at it and said, you know, "He's an Army officer, he went to military school, he's a Republican," but you know it's not necessarily true.

And I know we had people on the staff who were not Republicans. But somebody asked me once, I think it was -- actually, it was the Senate Office of Employment, after the office closed, we all went down there and registered because we were looking for jobs, and the counselor there says, "Well, if you worked for Stevens, you're a Republican," and I go, "Well, that's true." And she goes, "Well, only Republicans are going to look at your resume." And that's not always -- that's not true.

You know, and as it turned out I started working with Kennedy, which, if I remember right, was not a Republican, but he was a friend of Stevens, you know.

But what I found there is that they would jump to the conclusion that I was. And I told somebody once, it's like I came down here in 1999 and the delegation was Don

Young, Frank Murkowski, and Ted Stevens. Ted Stevens was the liberal. You know. That dynamic changed a little. You know, it's changed a lot now, but when Frank left, I think Lisa came in to the left of Stevens, which made her the more -- the more liberal of the three, you know. So it's categories of -- of gray here, I guess.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Or nuances of --

KAREN BREWSTER: It is interesting that you -- people do think if you're a staff person that you are of the party and you agree with that senator or congressman's issues.

WILL ARTHUR: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you're saying that's not always the case.

WILL ARTHUR: That's -- that was not the case in Stevens's office. I'd say most likely probably they voted most of the time Republican, most of the people. I wasn't an issue person, I didn't do legislation, but as I said, I know people that were, it never came up.

We didn't work campaign, didn't have to work campaign. It's like you got to go to the state where you campaign. Stevens kept his campaign completely separate to the point where from his archives, if the campaign needed to confirm something from the archive, they couldn't call me. I was told to not talk to them. Stevens could ask me

for anything, I'd give it to him. What he did with it was his business. So if he needed some statistics from something, I'd give him the statistics, but we did not talk to the campaign.

We did not take money at the office, we didn't -- I mean, that was separate. There are three people in the office that are -- or maybe it's two that are considered political designees that are allowed to discuss campaign, but they are not supposed to do it on the property.

So there's people wandering around the street over at the Catholic church talking, it's usually the political designee because that's -- I think that's the nearest spot that's not political, although it's Catholic, so I'm not sure where the (indiscernible). But that we, you know, if they -- people called, they'd say, "How do I do this," we'd say, "We can give you the number to campaign but we can't talk about campaign issues." It was -- you know.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Was that Stevens's choice to do that or was that --

WILL ARTHUR: We were like that -- well, we were like that before the ethics bill crunched down on it. It was just easier. That's why, you know, you've just gotten papers from the campaign, they were completely separate.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Separate.

WILL ARTHUR: When Juliette Arai went to Alaska to

work on them, she would to work on them after hours. She went to work -- well, she really was going up there to work on our Anchorage office. And then they said, "Well, after hours, could you work -- could you do some work on the campaign?" And they had to pay her.

KAREN BREWSTER: The campaign had to?

WILL ARTHUR: The campaign had to pay her, and they had to pay her the going rate for consulting archivist. So she couldn't work on government time, she -- and she had to get permission from the Senate to take an outside job. So, I mean, there were all kinds of controls just to get her, and she was only over here for a couple hours, but I guess the going rate for consulting archivists is pretty high. So -- but, I mean, that's the going rate.

And, you know, it was just easier to have her look at the papers because she knew what's there, and plus she had an eye to what was going to go to you guys. So they could have brought somebody in. You know, if they had had a repository at that point, which we wish they had, would have saved a lot of trouble, they would have probably contacted you directly and said, "Could you come in and look at them?" And we would have said, "Fine, we don't want nothing to do with them."

KAREN BREWSTER: Previously you mentioned -- or you were talking about Stevens as the great master legislator

in the process, and you mentioned that -- the working with the House of Representatives side of things.

WILL ARTHUR: Uh-hum.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you talked about that relationship that he may have had with people in Congress, not -- you know, we've talked about other senators, but what about with the House side?

WILL ARTHUR: Well, I mean, obviously, we have a relationship with Congressman Young. And, I mean, that was pretty much based on Alaska politics. He also had a fairly close relationship with the other Congressman Young, Bill Young in Florida, who was, I think, the Chairman of the Defense Appropriations on the House side. So they worked together fairly close on that.

And then he had, obviously, a pretty good relationship with the members of the Appropriations Committee over there. And so, I mean, we would -- we would talk to them, or he would talk to them, but their business and our business was really separate because we're dealing with two -- we're dealing with two bills that will eventually meet up, but the process is different.

KAREN BREWSTER: But it sounds like there's an importance to have that relationship because it's an issue that comes from both bodies eventually coming together.

WILL ARTHUR: Yes. Well, it's particularly

important for Alaska to have that relationship because we only have one member over there. You know. So all of our eggs are 1 out of 435. Whereas in the Senate, we're all equal, every state's equal. And over there, I think there's only two or three states that have at-large center -- or at-large congressmen. So it's a distinct disadvantage.

KAREN BREWSTER: So having a senator helping persuade congressmen besides just Young helps --

WILL ARTHUR: Yeah, in some ways -- in some ways he was just another lobbyist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

WILL ARTHUR: You have to look at it because he really didn't have any more say than anybody that walked in on off the street. Other than the fact he's looking at the same bill, and maybe, you know, if he's looking at the Defense Appropriations bill, and you're looking at axing some program and they are looking at promoting some program, maybe you should talk about this beforehand and just save everyone a lot of amendments down the road.

Eventually, especially with appropriations bills, they are probably going to end up in conference committee where they are going to go through -- one House is going to approve theirs, the other House is going to approve a completely different one, and then you're going to set a conference, which is going to be made up the chairmen of the

committees and a couple members, and they are going to sit down. So anything you can work out beforehand really makes the conference that much easier.

So yeah, I think in the long run, you're having to deal with them; but the short run, you're really just a lobbyist. And if the guy doesn't want to talk to you, he could -- he can, if he wants to, throw you out of his office. I don't know if that's ever happened. But there's that one guy that got caned in the Senate by a congressman.

KAREN BREWSTER: What about with presidents? You know, Stevens was around for many presidential terms.

WILL ARTHUR: Uh-hum.

KAREN BREWSTER: How did he relate to the different presidents, do you know?

WILL ARTHUR: Senator always had the deepest respect for all the presidents. And he always referred to them as Mr. President. And he never -- even if he had known them, you know, before, you know, especially I think with George W. Bush where he knew George H. W. Bush, and is, like, all right, I knew your father, but that never really came up, it was just Mr. President.

He had various relationships with the different senators -- or with the different presidents, and as I said, the only one I was here for was the tail end of Clinton, Bush, and that was about it, you know. So I only really saw that

one.

And I know he would go to the White House, I wouldn't say fairly often, maybe once a month, maybe once every other month for various meetings, but I don't think they were one-on-one's. I think it was usually, you know, a couple of the senators going. And then you go over for the signings, which, you know, bill signings if they are having a formal signing, but I wouldn't consider it as meetings, it's more of a ceremony.

You know, I know he -- he had friends who -- or senators who went into the various administrations that, you know, he knew pretty well. I mean, and the people he had known previous to being in the administration. And Senator Ashcroft, you know, was the Attorney General, he knew Senator Ashcroft before he was the Attorney General, so obviously, he had an existing relationship.

And once again, Senator Ashcroft was, you know, one of the old -- you know, he was one of the older senators, and he fell in the group where they were all sort of friends. I know he had a long relationship with Colin Powell, and that went back to Colin Powell's military service. And, you know, Stevens was pretty much close with most of the generals because they would all have to go before Defense Appropriations.

And when we had a West Point cadet that one year

as an intern, I sent him down to a Defense Appropriations meeting and I said, "Well, it's kind of fun to watch generals beg for a project." It's humbling to sit in the back of the room and you watch the guys you're all afraid of.

But, you know, as I said, he was, I guess, what you would describe as a hawk in a way because he was pro military, I don't know if he actually was a pro the conflict we happened to be in at that time.

So I think there was a lot more of, you know, at least for the George W. Bush administration, I think he had almost closer relations with members of the administration, particularly the Bush's first term. The first term he had Colin Powell, and obviously, the Senator had known Senator -- sorry, or Secretary Rumsfeld from before. You know, Senator Ashcroft, Tommy Thompson, people that he had met through various ways, and he got along fine with them.

The second Bush administration was more Texans. I hate to put it that way, but it seemed in the second administration he kind of got rid of a lot of the guys that were more nationally prominent, and instead intended to surround himself with more of the Texas crowd.

Now, I know the one lingering thing he had when I showed up in the Clinton Administration was the Stevens vote on impeachment. And he voted not to impeach. And his position on it was he looked at it as an attorney. And

that's -- I know he took a lot of heat from the Republican Party for that, but he says, "Well, as an attorney, I would have to say that's -- that is not high crimes and misdemeanors; it might be morally reprehensible, but it's not high crimes and misdemeanors."

So, you know, I mean, I don't know how he got along with that with President Clinton himself. I know -- like I said, I know he got along pretty well with James Lee Witt, he was the FEMA director, but that was based on more they were fishermen, they talked fishing. So the other administrations before that, I really can't say.

I know somewhere in the collection we have a really good photograph of -- it was George H. W. Bush's inaugural, and because Stevens I think at that point was the Whip, we had, like, the overall area of the photograph of the entire group, and we -- when Reagan died we were looking through the photos for pictures of Reagan, and there was a point where we -- we saw Senator Stevens was escorting President Reagan and Nancy Reagan in to sit down. So we blew that up, and around them were the entire Bush family, the Reagans, Stevens, and the Supreme Court, so it's a pretty -- it just worked out that when we blew the photograph up, it had everybody in it.

And there's a guy that we think might be Dick Cheney, we're not sure, but we weren't sure what Cheney's

role was at the inaugural that year. So we don't know if he's coming as a guest or if he had a role. I'd have to check and see if he was in Congress at that point.

You know, so it's a pretty good photograph buried somewhere in the collection. That one may have gone with the memorabilia because that was in his office, but if you can find that group photograph, you can blow it up, it's a really good picture.

So I know he -- you know, he -- I think he liked Senator Reagan's position with the military. I mean, once again, Reagan was a very pro military guy, even though at the same time I think Gramm-Rudman -- was it Gramm-Rudman was kicking in, which was the military cuts. So -- but that was congressional cuts, so...

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Is there any particular memory or anecdote that you would like to share about Senator Stevens?

WILL ARTHUR: Well, I know -- I have a couple. I mean, one is I know in 2004 -- well, late 2004, my mother was terminally ill, and I know she died in 2005, and she actually died the day before I was taking the Modern Archives course, so I had to be in New Jersey on a Sunday when she died. I had to drive back to class on that Monday, and so I drove back through the night and it was just a real terrible storm. 95 was closed. If I didn't have a good sob story

and a bunch of brothers who were policemen, I would have -- I got stopped in every state. "What are you doing on the road?" And I got through.

But the Senator wrote me a really -- a really touching card when my mother passed away, and he talked -- it's in the collection because I made sure it stayed, but it was -- it probably shouldn't have been because it was hand delivered to me, but he talks about how he felt when his mother died, which I always felt was, you know, something that you don't share with somebody else, I think. But it was -- to me, it was very well, you know, received.

And he also assisted me in the next few weeks with in the case of a veteran dying, we tried to get a flag for the funeral, but my mother was a British veteran, so Senator Stevens did me a favor and called the embassy and got a British flag from the embassy for me.

So I thought that was nice because, oh, she's a veteran, yeah, but she's really not -- you know. So I thought that was very going above and beyond for a staffer because the Ambassador wrote me a note, too, so it was like he must have called the Ambassador, seems like he called the attache or something, he took care of that for me, and that was very special to me.

Now, the other story, and I'll tell it because he's passed away now, and it wasn't a -- it wasn't a bad thing.

It was on one of his fishing trips and we were out in Western Alaska. And if you've read any news reports about the trip that he died on, they said they were playing cards the night before. And they tended to play poker at night. And it was penny ante poker, not a lot of money, and drinking wine or whatever, just you know, fishing, a bunch of boys fishing.

And when I was on my trip, I was not playing cards, I was sleeping down the hallway, or in my room, and I heard this large commotion. And when I went out to the table, or went out there to see what was going on, everyone was at the table, and as I said, it included Postmaster Henderson, Director Stafford of the Secret Service, and the Senator was at the table with his hand, they were playing poker, with his hand and a glass of wine and a cigar and no pants. He was wearing boxer shorts. Now, that's what you would think.

And the story is that he spilled red wine on his khakis, and he had just gotten his khakis. He didn't want to get out of the game, so he didn't put his hand down. So I guess he put down the wine and maybe the cigar, and when he held his cards and took off his pants and soaked them, I guess, in ginger ale or whatever you -- tonic water, tonic, whatever, over at the sink while he stayed in the game. So it's just one of those things, you know, with your boss sitting at a table with these guys with no pants. He was wearing his boxer shorts.

So the next day I was in -- we were in several boats, and I was in the boat with Postmaster Henderson and Director Stafford. And Postmaster Henderson, who's -- you know, he's another good old boy from North Carolina, he's like, "That was the funniest thing I have ever seen." And he goes, "Will, you should have gotten a picture of that."

And Director Stafford being the Secret Serviceman he is, he said, "No, Will's job was to make sure that nobody got a picture of that." Because here he is, a cigar, a glass of wine, poker hand, and no pants.

And, you know, it was his vacation. And he was just being a regular guy. As I said, if he were alive and he were still in office, I wouldn't tell anybody that story, you know, but I think it was really -- it was his time to blow off steam. We were out in the middle of nowhere, and that's what he did on vacation.

But as I said, you know, the next day, you know, interesting enough that same -- the conversation -- the other conversation that came up in that boat, this was August 2001, was terrorism through the mail because I was sitting with the Secret Service and the Postmaster, and it wasn't, what, a month before 9/11 and three months or four months before anthrax, somebody mailed us anthrax, and that's what they were saying. If somebody mailed you something, you couldn't stop it. So it was sort of an

interesting day in the boat. But that -- I mean, that was just the way he was, and as I said, it was one of those images you don't forget.

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Is there anything else you would like to add?

WILL ARTHUR: No. Do you have any questions?

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I have a couple questions.

WILL ARTHUR: Sure.

KAREN BREWSTER: You were just saying about the things getting out. So the press, how the office dealt with the press, how the Senator interacted with the press.

WILL ARTHUR: Again, the Senator maintained a press secretary the whole time I was there, at least one person, usually up to three, to include usually having an intern.

All press inquiries were directed to his press office. So for the most part, staff didn't really deal with the press, other than the press secretary, press secretary's staff, maybe the Chief of Staff.

So I don't think it was really a matter of worrying about things getting out, it was just maybe not saying -- not being the spokesman for -- anything you said would be construed as being "a spokesman for the Senator said," and you weren't a spokesman for the Senator. So it was all centralized.

I think when I was there we went through two or three press secretaries. Connie Godwin was there when I first arrived. I don't know if you know Connie. Connie had worked for the Anchorage Times for years, so she was well established. She's actually -- she lives out here in Chestertown, but she had been in Anchorage for years. Her husband was the section chief or whatever it is for the FBI up there. So...

KAREN BREWSTER: But how did Senator Stevens get along with the press? What did he think about it?

WILL ARTHUR: I think he had a pretty good relationship with most of the press, particularly the Anchorage press -- or not the Anchorage, the Alaska press.

Now, he would hold meetings probably once every couple of months where they would be invited into his inner office, and it would be just a question and answer thing. I think those meetings were, you know, less contentious than some of the meetings we were talking about earlier.

I know at one point he went -- he was having disagreements with the Anchorage Daily News, and he went up and met with them in their offices, and I think that shocked them that he actually showed up in their editorial room and said, "Ask me any questions you want."

I said I think he got along pretty well with the -- you know, the Alaska press here. I don't -- I can't

think of anyone who he had a problem with. I mean --

MARY ANNE HAMBLEN: Nothing particularly?

WILL ARTHUR: No, not really. Not on any -- not like across the board. I think he understood that their -- their job and his job, you know, they were going to ask him a bunch of questions, he might have the answers they want, he might not. They might continue to ask the same question, at which point you're just poking at him.

He would usually answer questions walking down the hall. Yeah, he was, you know, probably most -- most approachable, if you could keep up with him. Which, for a man of his age, he was not easy to keep up with. He moved pretty quick.

The security detail learned that. They were saying he must have, like, hyper speed or something, you turn your back on him and he's gone. And they would be chasing him around because it was their job to keep -- to stay with him.

KAREN BREWSTER: What about the national press? Was there a difference with them?

WILL ARTHUR: I don't -- I don't think he had like a -- like a feud with anybody. I mean, I don't think he always agreed with them. I mean, once again, I think there's a lot of political disagreement. Well, the press is a wide spectrum. I think it's wider than it used to be, but you

know, I can't think of anyone that he had like a feud with.

I know he -- when the John Stewart Show was beating him up on a few things, he wanted to go on the John Stewart Show, we suggested he don't. Because he -- he couldn't have won that. You know, John Stewart's a comedian. You know, he's going to spin it to make you look bad. And I don't think Stevens -- and somehow I don't think he -- I think he understood that, but he wanted to defend himself.

And he really -- I mean, he was really getting beaten up over the series of tubes comment. That was taken out of context. And then he was getting beat up, he and Senator Byrd were getting beat up over their age. And he wants to go talk to the guy. And it's, like, you don't want to talk to him, but it's the nature of his business, he's not real news.

So I don't think he was -- I don't think he was happy with it, I don't think he was feuding with John Stewart, but I mean, that was the only one that I could think of where, you know, I can't even think of them being accused of misquoting him anywhere. You know, I don't think he ever had that where you're going to find -- I mean, can you think of an incident in particular that you're --

KAREN BREWSTER: No, I was just thinking, you know, that press does not always report things the way a senator might want things to be reported.

WILL ARTHUR: Uh-hum.

KAREN BREWSTER: They might not always agree on the issues.

WILL ARTHUR: Oh, hardly ever. I mean, that's --

KAREN BREWSTER: And if he ever talked about how he felt about that, or if there were particular incidents.

WILL ARTHUR: No, I don't -- I don't think so. I think he understood their job, and he understood that they were going to go after an issue.

I think, you know, towards the end of his career when his legal issues kicked in, I think then it got a little bit annoying, but that was, I think, because they were sort of after him on every angle. But prior to that, when you're just dealing with his pure legislative career, you know, I don't think he had a particular problem with the press.

You know, but like I said, I wasn't a spokesman but I knew -- you know, I would see the papers, I would see the clips every day. And I knew, you know, based on what I know what's in his papers, I knew there were things in there that were wrong, but it wasn't my place to call him up and say, you were wrong. I mean, that was it. You know.

In the end of his career, I don't think everybody served him well, to include his attorneys. I mean, his attorneys made very poor use of his archive. And quite frankly, the Justice Department made very poor use of his

archives. They came in and they removed files from the office. I don't think they ever realized that we had 4,000 boxes in storage. It's like -- and they randomly came in, it was like coming in saying, I want that drawer and that drawer, only because of their proximity to the scheduler. They were -- it was completely -- they had no idea what they were doing.

But then on the other hand, I don't think the Senator's attorneys, his defense people, were particularly good at using his archive in his defense. You know. They weren't coming to me to defend him. And this is all my opinion because I know -- I can't even remember the attorney's name -- Brandon Sullivan who is the Senator's attorney, he's a very good attorney, he's good at what he does. I don't think he wins cases. His philosophy seems to be he doesn't lose cases. It wasn't like he was trying to win, he was just trying not to lose. And more of it was more like, we'll get it thrown out on this, we will get it thrown out on that, and I'm sitting there with a pile of archive paper that says, but you can prove that wrong. And he says, I don't see that. I never spoke to him but the people who came to his office never wanted to see the research.

The Senator launched a search of his papers as soon as the investigation started, and he wanted copies of

everything about everything. And the way it was done, he knew this and I knew this, I searched the records on a series of terms. Those papers were collected in spot, but they were not the originals. The originals were put back in the system. And they were sent back to the warehouse before anybody knew we had the papers.

So I wouldn't tell anybody that I had the correspondence records with a certain person until after those originals were back in the warehouse and buried in the 4,000 boxes.

The Senator looked at them then but then the attorneys didn't want to look at them. It was strange to me. It's like so we ended up with, like, two boxes of research that his own defense attorneys didn't want to look at.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's interesting.

WILL ARTHUR: So I don't know where they learned to research, I don't know where the FBI learned to research. When I sat -- when I did my interview with the FBI there was probably 13 people in the room, I think 3 of them were FBI agents, the rest were all attorneys, there wasn't an archivist or a records manager there. And they didn't understand how the files worked.

If I said, "They are arranged by issue," they go, "What does that mean?" Or they are arranged by

chronological, what does that mean. They didn't understand terms that would have made their life easier, would have definitely made the Senator's life easier. I don't understand it. You know, you had the tools at your hands on both sides, and you could have avoided a lot of time and money if you'd looked at the papers. You know, because they -- they weren't using the subpoena process, they were using more of a request process. That's what we would like to see. It's like, all right, here you go. And, you know, we gave them everything they asked for; but if we had given them some of the things they didn't ask for, the case might not have gone forward. At least that's my opinion.

(End of Part 2 of 3 of recorded interview.)