

**Mary Davis Oral History Interview – 4/21/1976**  
Administrative Information

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**Biographical Note**

Davis, secretary to Representative John F. Kennedy (JFK) (1947-1952), discusses JFK's congressional staff, his temperament, working style, and interests while in the House of Representatives; his 1952 senatorial campaign; and conflicts over hiring his senate staff, among other issues.

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Mary Davis

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Oral History Interview

with

Mary Davis

April 21, 1976  
Washington D.C.

By E. William Johnson

For the John F. Kennedy Library

JOHNSON: Miss Davis, by way of background could you say something about your career on the Hill [Capitol Hill] before you went to work for John Kennedy [John F. Kennedy]?

DAVIS: Yes. I had started on the Hill in January of '39 with a member from the Bronx, New York, James Fitzpatrick [James Martin Fitzpatrick], and I was with him for approximately six years. Actually, I guess, it was closer to five and a half. And then for about six months, after he had announced his plans to retire at the end of that particular session—he had indicated he was going back to New York—so I then went with a member of Congress from New Jersey, Charles Eaton [Charles Aubrey Eaton]. He was on the Foreign Affairs Committee [House of Representatives]. In fact, he was the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee at that time.

JOHNSON: Is that Doc Eaton?

DAVIS: Yes. Oh, he was a lovable old guy, and he was right down the hall from me and had known, of course, that Fitz was going to retire. So he asked me if I would come on to his staff because his girl at the present time was going back to New Jersey and he had run a one-girl office. And so I went with Doc Eaton for six months. Toward the end of the year, I guess it was, Mary who was his secretary at the time called and

said that all her problems back home in New Jersey had been resolved, everything was squared away, so she was going to come back. She asked me to stay, but at the time, really, in Doc Eaton's office there really wasn't that much work for two people. So I told her, I said, "Fine, you come on back." And she said, "Well, Doc Eaton and I both want you to stay." And I said, "No. There's really not that much work, and I'd probably be bored out of my skull." I thought then, "Hmm. Everybody by this time probably has staff already." So I went to Gene Kinnaly [Eugene T. Kinnaly] who was John McCormack's [John William McCormack] man at that time and asked him. And he said, "You go over to John Kennedy's office. That fine young man has come down here, and he still doesn't have a full staff." So I said "Okay, fine I will." So I went over and that was it.

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JOHNSON: Now, was Kinnaly a friend of yours at that time?

DAVIS: Yes, yes.

JOHNSON: And he was a friend or associate, at least, of the new congressman as well?

DAVIS: Well, being with John McCormack, of course, who was the majority leader and from Massachusetts, why Gene, of course, knew the whole delegation.  
[Interruption]

JOHNSON: Now, did Kinnaly actually introduce you to Kennedy or just refer you over to him?

DAVIS: Just referred me over, and I believe he had made a call to Ted Reardon [Timothy J. Reardon, Jr.] who was, of course, on Jack's staff at the time, because I did not go to work for Jack until February, I believe it was.

JOHNSON: So he had been in town for some time.

DAVIS: Yeah, he had been in office for approximately a month. And, as I say, they were looking for additional staff, and Gene knew it, so he referred me over there, and I believe he had called Ted and said that he was going to send me over. So that was it.

JOHNSON: What's your recollection of the physical accommodations in the office at that early stage when you first...

DAVIS: They were fine, because they were like every other office in the Cannon Building. You know, there was no difference.

JOHNSON: What was every other office like then?

DAVIS: There was really no difference. The setup was the same. You had the same number of chairs, the same number of desks. You know, things like that. So the setup was just about the same as any other normal operating congressional office.

JOHNSON: At that time.

DAVIS: Mm hmm.

JOHNSON: The accommodations would be considerably smaller than here in the Rayburn Building, for example?

DAVIS: The offices in the Cannon Building at that time, the

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suites consisted of just two offices. One for the member, which was almost the size of this one in the Cannon Building. The staff room, then, was another room that was the same size. You walked right into it, and then, of course, you had to accommodate three, four, five, six desks—however many desks you had for the number of staff people you had. And we had generally four desks in the office at the time.

JOHNSON: Were they established or were they still in the process of trying to get the office off the ground at the time you....

DAVIS: They were still in the process of trying to get the office off the ground, actually, and of course they had a tremendous backlog of work that had accumulated during the campaign. Because, of course, Jack and his family were so well known that everybody, of course, had written to him even before he got into office officially. And there were stacks and stacks of correspondence around.

JOHNSON: And it wasn't being handled by anyone at that time?

DAVIS: Well, yeah, Ted was there, of course, and they had another girl on the staff at that time, a gal by the name of Mary McCarthy. She had been working for, I think, the majority leader, if I'm not mistaken, himself. That's right. She had worked for him, I think, on a temporary basis, and when Jack came down and was looking for secretarial help, I believe she had come over on a recommendation from Gene Kinnaly, too. And she had come in right smack dab at the beginning of the session. So she had been there about a month by the time I got there, and Mary was really snowed under. She really was.

JOHNSON: My recollection is that she was not there for that long. Is that correct?

DAVIS: She was there for about five or six months, I think it was. It might have been four, but then she went into the foreign service, actually.

JOHNSON: Now, was John Kennedy in the office the first time you came in?

DAVIS: Ah, let me see. That's going back a long, long time. Yes, I think he was, because I had called Ted first before I even went into the office to see if he would be interested and if Jack would be interested. And Ted had said, "Yes, come on over." So I went over, talked to Ted first, and then he brought me in to see Jack. And Jack was there.

JOHNSON: Do you recall your first impression?

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DAVIS: Very young! Really. He seemed almost shy. Really. But very, very nice. Very friendly. Very, very natural.

JOHNSON: That's right. He was really only a year or so older than you.

DAVIS: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

JOHNSON: Did that seem to you at the time too young to be...

DAVIS: Definitely, he did. I mean, I thought, "This is a member of Congress? My word, he's so young." And of course his appearance was even younger than his actual years. Because to look at Jack at that time, he looked like he was about 23 or 24, if that. Because he had that shock of hair, dressed very casually, and was very casual. And to see him sitting behind a desk as a congressman was rather startling, because in those years you didn't get the young fellows in Congress as you do nowadays. I mean, nowadays it wouldn't be a shock to see someone so young sitting behind a desk because we have so many young guys now. But at that time, yes, it was rather startling to see someone so young.

JOHNSON: I know it's hard to try to put yourself back into the time, but do you have a recollection or a lasting impression of whether or not in that initial period he struck you as friendly and an informal sort of guy in his dealings and....

DAVIS: Definitely. Definitely. Definitely. Well, from his attitude you could tell he came from a rather large family, because he was so casual and he was so informal and he was so friendly. He was easygoing and put you right at ease, but you could definitely tell he was rather shy. I wouldn't say he was awestruck at being here, because he had worked hard at being here and he had the qualifications, but he was new, too. Let's face it. He was a greenhorn here, too. Very good impression, a nice impression.



JOHNSON: So as that office settled down, then the staff consisted of you and Ted Reardon and Billy Sutton [William J. Sutton].

DAVIS: Yes, Billy Sutton.

JOHNSON: And that was it for most of the congressional period, isn't that correct?

DAVIS: Right.

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JOHNSON: Well, as things began to settle out, can you characterize—well, let's take them one at a time—what Reardon's role and responsibilities were to begin with, and then we can discuss Sutton's, and then yours, and see how the thing fits together. So what's your recollection and your characterization of Reardon's responsibility and jobs, and his role with regard to the congressman?

DAVIS: Well, Ted was more or less the administrator of the office at that time. We didn't have titles of administrative assistant or legislative assistant or anything along those lines, but Ted had been associated with Jack during the campaign, he had known the family, he came down here, and he was more or less, I think the boss—Jack's—coordinator, so to speak, and administrator and his liaison with people back home, because Ted actually was from Massachusetts, too. He was from Somerville, and he knew, of course, all the people who had helped Jack in his campaign, and he was a liaison man, really, between here and our forces back in Massachusetts. And Ted, in addition to overseeing the administration of the office, did research for Jack, kept an eye on the legislation that Jack would normally be interested in and contributed sometimes to outlines of remarks we wanted to put in the *Record* [*Congressional Record*], or speeches that Jack wanted to make.

JOHNSON: How major a thing was the legislative aspect of the operation at that point in time?

DAVIS: Not that much. It wasn't that much, really.

JOHNSON: Would you say that was typical of a freshman's office, that....

DAVIS: I would say it was not only typical of a freshman's office, but it was typical of every member's office. The importance on the legislative function of a congressional office wasn't as strong then as it is now. Sure, we knew that they were down here as legislators, but there was not that much stress or that much emphasis put on the legislative processes.

JOHNSON: Did you notice a change in that during the six years he was in the House [House of Representatives], or does that run....

DAVIS: Not that much, but towards the last of the six years, I think people were getting a little more into the legislative process of an office. Prior to that, I would say the vast majority of work in a congressional office was what we call casework—your correspondence with your people back home and their relating to you the problems they had, the difficulties they had, and your trying to be helpful to them in

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resolving these difficulties.

JOHNSON: How would you characterize Sutton's role in the operation of the office?

DAVIS: Billy? He was a delightful guy. Funny? Well, he was here more or less as jack-of-all-trades, really. He came down with Jack and did anything and everything that you asked him to do in the office. If there was a message that had to be taken down to an agency, Billy was there. If you needed something from the floor or from a committee in a hurry.... And, of course, we did have pages, and the pages functioned very well, but still, if you wanted something immediately, you couldn't get it by page, usually. It would take maybe a half an hour, or an hour or so, and Billy was there, bam, you know, to do whatever you wanted to do. He drove Jack wherever he wanted to go. He did a thousand and one different things. Maybe they appeared to be minor at times, but he was a necessary staff member, really. And he was a delight to have around, because he was always joking. I used to say Billy missed his calling, really. He should have been on the stage. He really should have been on the stage as a comedian. Funny, likeable, knew more people, I think, inside of six months time here in the House than most people know in a career of fifteen or twenty years. He could walk down the hall and everybody he saw, he knew. He made friends so easily. Knew everybody, and everybody knew him.

JOHNSON: Was that a real asset to the congressman?

DAVIS: I was just going to say, he was a terrific asset to the boss, too. Definitely. Definitely.

JOHNSON: Would you say that was his greatest contribution.

DAVIS: Yeah. I think so. I think so.

JOHNSON: ...that way with people?

DAVIS: Mm hmm. Because he immediately established contact, and it was a good contact. And his relations with people were always top notch. I mean, everybody thoroughly enjoyed and thoroughly liked Billy.

JOHNSON: What would you say was Reardon's most effective area? What was the thing he either liked most to do or seemed to do most effectively?

DAVIS: I think actually Ted liked his liaison with the people back in Massachusetts mostly. After that, I think probably some of the research that he had done on some of the major legislation was second, as far as I'm concerned, and so far as his likes and dislikes were concerned.

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JOHNSON: And what was your role in the operation?

DAVIS: Well, I took care of most of the correspondence. And, of course, that was everything in those days. That was legislation, that was casework, that was everything. Answered the phones. Took care of the visitors who came in, and that was a full-time job, believe me. Because Jack had not only his constituents from the district back in Massachusetts writing. Because he was a Kennedy and came from such a well-known family we had correspondence with people all over the United States, all over Massachusetts. And it was pretty hard to restrict yourself to helping only those who came from the eleventh district of Massachusetts, because so many people did have a personal contact with the family in some way, shape or form. You know, "I knew your father here," or "I knew your mother," or "I met your sister," or "I met this one and now I'm coming to you and asking you if you can be helpful to me." It's pretty hard to turn them down, but you had to develop a hard-hearted attitude after a while, because you kept getting back farther and farther in answering the correspondence.

It was a very, very hard, difficult job, because it got to the point where I was working seven days a week. I would work here until about six o'clock, and then I'd take work home. And then I'd come in on Saturdays and Sundays. And it was very, very demanding. But as I say, I enjoyed it. I was younger then, besides that. Much younger.

JOHNSON: Well, at least one fan of yours from that period has characterized that little office by saying words to the effect that you were a political machine that did the work of twelve people.

DAVIS: [Laughter]

JOHNSON: And I've wondered, without wanting to be snide or catty, whether or not that was ever a source of any problem or difficulty, the fact that I have some sense that it was kind of vague and casual, easygoing operation, at least for Sutton and for Reardon...

DAVIS: It was.

JOHNSON: ...but that it may have been a very hard and time-consuming and demanding job for you.

DAVIS: Yeah, well it was.

JOHNSON: Was that ever a source of any problems in the office, or conflicts of personalities?

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DAVIS: I would say yes, to be perfectly honest. I got to the point where I resented it, not with Billy, because Billy was always so willing and he was there, but with Ted I did resent it. I mean, that was the first experience I'd ever had, and I did resent it because I never thought he pulled his load. I mean that's, you know, strictly my viewpoint, and maybe I was wrong, but I always felt that way.

JOHNSON: This has to do, don't you think, to a certain extent with the way he perceived his role, and his relationship to John Kennedy?

DAVIS: Yes, and I think actually it was because he actually had been promised a job with Joe [Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.]. Of course, Joe was going to be the one who came down here, and of course Ted was a college mate of Joe's, actually. And Joe had promised that when he came to Washington, why, Ted would be with him. And I think Ted felt that was a protection for him. He didn't have to put forth. He didn't have to produce, because, ergo, he had the job anyway and nothing was going to take it away from him. And I used to really resent the fact that Ted did not put forth, because Ted was a bright, bright guy. I mean, if he had to do it, he could do it, but he wouldn't push himself. And I used to think, "All that talent going to waste, not doing anything." That was what really bugged me most.

JOHNSON: Well, did you sense that maybe the reason he didn't pull his load as much as perhaps he could was that he didn't have that fundamental love of politics that perhaps some of the other people who worked for the Kennedys....

DAVIS: No, I never got that impression, that he didn't have that fundamental love of politics, so to speak. I always felt that Ted liked politics; he loved being in the political arena. But if it was going to take any specific effort, any undue effort, he wasn't interested. He didn't want to put forth that much. [Interruption]

JOHNSON: What's your recollection of the Boston congressional office?

DAVIS: My great love at the time was Grace Burke [Grace M. Burke]. She was terrific. She really was. My contacts, of course, with them were strictly by phone, most of the time. And to me Grace was such an asset because she was such a lovely person, willing, eager, nice, comfortable to talk to. And I'm sure she treated everybody who came into that office the same way. I mean, she was devoted to Jack. She really was devoted to Jack. Frank Morrissey [Francis X. Morrissey] was a political animal,

really. And I got along fine with him, too. But, as I say, he was more attuned to the political songs instead of, you

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know, doing the actual work in the office. He also, there, played the role of Jack's liaison with the people back in Boston and in Massachusetts, and therefore actually didn't have the time, really, to devote to the nitty-gritty routine duties of an office. So he was performing his duties and his responsibilities, and Grace was performing hers. And, as I say, she was terrific. She's the nicest memory I have of that Boston office.

JOHNSON: Many Kennedy people have said over the years that Morrissey deservedly had a reputation for passing the buck on things that he was supposed to have done for constituents. And I'm sure that a good many of those bucks got passed to Grace Burke, and I wonder if your recollection is that much of that got passed to you people down here. Would it have been Reardon who would have gotten the bucks passed to him from the Boston office, or would it have been you?

DAVIS: Probably not. It would have been I.

JOHNSON: Do you remember that sort of thing happening?

DAVIS: But Frank was, he was a pol. Let's face it. I mean, he was a professional pol. And as I say, Frank, while he was devoted to Jack, too, he also was looking out for Frank Morrissey. And you know you can't fault him on that, at all. That's the way so many of them are.

JOHNSON: That's the name of the game, I guess.

DAVIS: You're right.

JOHNSON: There was a consideration given once or twice, in those early years, to closing down that office altogether. Do you remember anything about that?

DAVIS: Well, see, that was the first time that, of course, that I had ever had to deal with a district office. Fitz never had one, of course. In fact, very few members of Congress had what they call district offices in those days and, in fact, I found it rather difficult to even try to accept the thought of having a district office function five hundred miles away from here. And I was a little skeptical about its operation and the efficiency of an operation of an office way back, so far removed. But it turned out to be all right, particularly, as I say, with someone like Grace Burke who was heading it, because she gave the service to the people that they were looking for. And at least she was there. If somebody had a problem and wanted to come in personally and talk to somebody, somebody who was a representative of Jack, there she was. And she was sympathetic, she was capable, she was dependable, and she definitely was an asset. And that's what finally changed my

opinion. I thought, “Well, I guess a district office can perform a satisfactory, needed function.”

JOHNSON: Did you have any sense of whether Kennedy was aware of and appreciated that kind of loyalty and dependability, or whether it was something that went unnoticed or taken for granted?

DAVIS: To a point, I think it went unnoticed and was taken for granted, because Jack had so many people around him who were like that he just assumed that everybody would be devoted to him and dedicated to him. But he did appreciate it. He was aware of it, and he did appreciate it. Because every once in a while he would let you know. He was awkward about saying thank you, but he said it. Or he let you know in some way that he was grateful. And that’s a tremendous asset.

JOHNSON: Is the reverse true, that if that kind of loyalty was taken for granted, that he may have been very much surprised and caught off guard when he found that wasn’t always the quality of service that the people throughout the—would give him?

DAVIS: Yeah. Because Jack himself was dedicated and loyal to his friends and open and aboveboard, and I think he expected everybody, and assumed everybody associated with him would have the same qualities. And if one came up missing or lacking, I think it would have been a source of astonishment to him, really.

JOHNSON: Can you think, offhand—I can think of a couple, but they’re more from Massachusetts than down here—of cases where that happened, and how he was able to deal with it or not able to deal with it?

DAVIS: Right off the top of my head, I can’t think of anything. I know one disappointment was Joe Rosetti [Joseph E. Rosetti].

JOHNSON: I did want to ask you about him, because he was in the Boston office with Grace and Frank Morrissey during the early period.

DAVIS: Right, right.

JOHNSON: Well, tell me about that, then.

DAVIS: Well, Joe was fine. I mean, Joe was really dedicated. He was a nice guy. He was an asset to the office up there, rather an unassuming young man. I mean, he wasn’t one of these real go-getters who was impressing everybody. He was a quiet doer, and I don’t know what happened. I just

don't know what happened, but he was very, very devoted to Jack, did a good job for him. And, as I say, I do not know what happened, but there started to become a wedge, and they just started to drift farther and farther apart. And Joe really got quite bitter. Actually, I think what he wanted was to come down here and get a position that would give him a title, which would give him a lot more money than he was getting, and Jack didn't do it for him, and I think Joe finally got to the point where he was so disappointed he became a little bitter about it. And they drifted very far apart, and that was it.

JOHNSON: He left about the beginning of Kennedy's senatorial career. He left and went to work in the State Department.

DAVIS: Yeah. In fact, I think he had left before then, because I'm sure Joe had left while I was still here. I think Joe had left the Boston office at that time. He came down here, I know, to Washington and called me a couple of times, and that was about it.

JOHNSON: You don't sense that the parting of the ways was the result of his expressing his intention to go someplace else and get a civil service kind of job?

DAVIS: Oh no, no.

JOHNSON: Or do you think that came too far down the road?

DAVIS: Oh, no. Jack would never have stood in his way, in the first place, and if Joe had wanted to terminate his association with Jack and go onward and upward, or to some other field, Jack would never have stood in the way. He would not have been in opposition to it at all. He would have given him his blessing, I'm sure.

JOHNSON: Because my impression is that, on the few times later on when they met, even when John Kennedy was president, they would speak.

DAVIS: Oh, yeah.

JOHNSON: And I don't sense any continuing hostility.

DAVIS: Oh, no, no, there wasn't. As I say, there was a somewhat bitter parting of the ways, but given the natures of the two guys, they wouldn't have remained bitter enemies, so to speak, to the point where they would have ignored each other. No, I mean, they still would have been civil to each other, and over the years could have developed another little friendship. It would never have been as warm, I'm sure, as their association had originally been, but they certainly

would have been “friendly.”

JOHNSON: Do you have any memory of how responsibilities were divided, or broken down, between the Boston office and the Washington office, on service to constituents and piecework and things like that?

DAVIS: Well, in those days, as most congressional offices, district offices, most of the stuff was just channeled on down to the Washington office anyway, because in many, many instances most of your problems from your constituents would eventually deal with federal agencies, and in many instances so many of the federal agencies and departments did not have district or regional offices. So everything had to be done through the central offices down here. So most of the stuff was just taken down and then relayed on down here.

JOHNSON: So Reardon, then, and the Boston office were your basic lines communication to the constituents in Massachusetts. Were there any others that you remember?

DAVIS: Other than their writing individual letters—and they were very good at that.  
[Laughter]

JOHNSON: True. And we still have many of them.

DAVIS: I'm sure you do.

JOHNSON: Yeah. Money seems to have been a problem, a source of disillusionment on occasion.

DAVIS: Very much so.

JOHNSON: Characterize the pay scale and the salary situation of that day.

DAVIS: It was shocking. Well, given the fact, of course, that it was thirty years ago and salaries down here weren't, of course, as high as they are now, still Jack—I used to always lay it down to his New England frugality, I guess—was very, very poor paying salaries. But then his father [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.] was, too. That was my main reason for not going to the Senate with him, was the salary question. I said, “Forget it, forget it.”

JOHNSON: You don't remember, offhand, what the three of you, roughly, in the office might have been making at that time?



DAVIS: Well, let's see. Ted was getting a magnificent sum of about \$3,600, I think. And I probably had started

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off—I don't even know what it was, so long ago—at \$1,800, I'll bet, or \$2,000. I'll bet. And Billy was not on the payroll down here. Billy was getting paid out of the New York office. Billy got the magnificent sum, I think, of \$60 or \$65 a week. And I mean you could make it in those days on that much, but barely. And I thought, you know, "Well, I'll take this particular job." And I figured, well, with all the payroll, the allocation that was available, and because I knew he'd come from a well-to-do family, a fine upstanding young man, and Gene Kinnaly had said, "Go ahead, Mary, take it. He'll realize, and he'll adjust the old salaries. Don't worry about it." Well, he never did. In fact, I wasn't even on his payroll down here, his official payroll, for a period of time. I don't even remember how long it was, but I think it was probably for almost a year, I was paid out of the New York office.

JOHNSON: Yes, I know from my own experience going through Ambassador Kennedy's papers, appraising them and evaluating them—they're still at the New York office, by the way...

DAVIS: Oh, my gosh.

JOHNSON: I'm familiar with the kind of correspondence that went on between various members of the family and the office, and its financial role. Paul Murphy, in particular.

DAVIS: Oh, yeah. Is he still all right?

JOHNSON: No, he's gone.

DAVIS: I was going to say, if he were he would have to be up there. He was a competent guy.

JOHNSON: Was he your primary contact there?

DAVIS: In the New York office? Yeah, definitely.

JOHNSON: Did you also have occasion to deal with people like Tom Walsh [Thomas Walsh] who is now, and I think was even then, one of their head accountants?

DAVIS: No, no. Just about my....

JOHNSON: Eddie Moore [Edward Moore], who was the Ambassador's secretary?

DAVIS: Yeah, yeah. I had spoken to Eddie Moore several times, but my main contact was Paul Murphy. Whenever we had to get in touch with the office it was, "Call Paul Murphy." That was it.

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JOHNSON: But if you had occasion to be in touch with someone like Moore, would that be an occasional thing?

DAVIS: Very, very rare occasional thing.

JOHNSON: Landis [James M. Landis]?

DAVIS: Jim Landis. Yeah, very rarely did we ever contract him either, personally. Now, of course, Jack had some personal contacts with him because, of course, he knew him. But whenever we had a question that had to do with any financial problems, or practically anything that had to do with the New York office as opposed to this office, it was always Paul Murphy.

JOHNSON: Now, the Ambassador himself?

DAVIS: Very rarely. Very rarely did I talk to him. And very rarely did he call here, either. That's what used to burn me. So many people said that the Ambassador was pulling the strings for Jack, and he certainly was not. Jack was his own man.

JOHNSON: Now, in terms of dealing with the New York office and their handling financial matters, paying bills and salaries and things of that.... Can you just give me an indication of how that worked? How you got the bills to them and how they got money down to you? The kind of mechanics of

DAVIS: Well, it was really very simple, because when the bills came in here, it was automatic, you know. Bam, they were sent up to Paul Murphy! So it was very simple. Into an envelope they went, with a little note to Paul Murphy. You know, "Here are these bills Jack's accumulated over the past week. Would you please pay them?" That was it. And I knew when they were sent up, they were taken care of.

JOHNSON: There was no problem ever with accountability? It was assumed the expenses were legitimate expenses and...

DAVIS: Right. And they were. They were always legitimate expenses. And, as I say, there was never any question of the processing of them. I knew once they had gotten into Paul's hands up there they were taken care of. So we never had to worry about that.

JOHNSON: What was John Kennedy's own attitude towards this sort of thing? His sense of money expenses and....

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DAVIS: He couldn't have cared less. Coming from the family he did, bills, money meant nothing to him. He never carried money around with him. I mean, it was always, "Mary, lend me a dollar." "Mary, lend me five dollars." And you knew he wasn't good for it, but you could always send a little chit up to Paul Murphy after a while and say, "Hey, Jack borrowed so and so from me. He borrowed this, he borrowed that." And, bam! You'd get a check back in the next mail. He could care less about money.

JOHNSON: Occasionally, one would hear a story about his getting involved in some very minor and petty little thing. Questioning a five-dollar expense, never the five-thousand dollar expenditure.

DAVIS: Well, he never questioned me. He never questioned me about anything like that. But, you know, it was so funny because usually he was zipping off to the airport in such a hurry and always with about three minutes to spare, and he was leaving here, and it was, "Mary, throw me a dollar. I need to get some magazines." Or what have you, you know. That was it. That was it. And always, always in a hurry. Always late. Never on time.

JOHNSON: That's a family tradition, I think.

DAVIS: Oh, yes, it is. It certainly is, because Eunice [Eunice Kennedy Shriver] is the same way.

JOHNSON: Did you have to deal with other members of the family frequently in those years?

DAVIS: Not frequently, no. When he lived with Eunice, of course, when Eunice was working for the Department of Justice, once in a while we'd have to deal with Eunice, but very rarely did she call the office for anything. A couple of times there were some papers she wanted typed, or she wanted some information, but very, very rarely. Very rarely. About the only other one I had any contact with was Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] when he was down at the University of Virginia Law School. I didn't even know him. I'd never met him, and I remember—he came busting into the office one day and he said, "You're Mary." And I said, "Yes, I am." And he throws a sheaf of paper down on my desk, and he says, "You've got to type this up for me right away. It's one of my papers for school." And I looked at him and I said (there were pages of this thing) "I can't do that." And he says, "You have to. I'm Bob Kennedy, you know, I'm..." And blah, blah, blah. "And I need this paper." Here was my desk, this way with work—he was kind of overwhelming, believe me—and I said, "Well, I just don't have the time to do that. I mean, I've got all this correspondence that I have to get out." And I said, "If Jack says that I have

to do it, then I'll have to do it. But I can't do it." Of course Jack wasn't there at the time when he came busting in. And he says, "No, no, no. You've got to put everything aside. You have to do this because there's a time limit on it." And I said, "Well, I just don't have the time to do it." "You have to. There's no recourse. You have to do that." So I said, "Well, I don't know. You're going to have to wait. We'll see if we can locate Jack someplace." And Jack happened to be over on the floor at the time, so Bobby came in here—I mean, go into his office, and sat down.

Jack finally came back, and I asked him. And he says, "You don't have to do a thing for him. You have enough work to do. He's got a hell of a nerve coming in and asking you to do this." So then they came in, and he told Bobby no, there was no way that I could do that. If he had to have it done, then he could go elsewhere and get it typed someplace else. And I thought, "Oh, Bobby's going to be "whreep" [an aspirated whistling sound, presumably meaning "down on"] on me from there on in, but he wasn't. He was okay.

JOHNSON: Well, this is one of the kinds of things that the New York office frequently did for members of the family.

DAVIS: Yes, definitely.

JOHNSON: I know. I've seen their copies of all sorts of college papers and term papers and magazine articles...

DAVIS: Oh, yes.

JOHNSON: ...and speeches anything that they might be working on. That's why I wondered if the New York office ever did any of that kind of thing for the congressional office, if you ever had occasion to use them for any of that kind of support.

DAVIS: No, no. Jack never used them.

JOHNSON: It was a purely financial thing.

DAVIS: Yeah. Jack never used that office to do anything that would have been in the least way associated with his congressional responsibilities. No, that was strictly his bank, his credit union, the New York office.

JOHNSON: Yes. What can you say about Billy Sutton's departure and return to Boston in 1951? There are kind of fragmentary and conflicting stories about why he went home.

DAVIS: Well, actually, that was another thing that I was a

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little surprised at, too. I know Billy wanted a raise, and he wanted a title, also. And Jack just couldn't see his way clear to give it to him. And Billy thought he'd been here long enough to have warranted a sizeable raise, but I think Jack actually at that time was right, because Billy was really not equipped to take on at that time any more responsibility. It just wasn't his nature, and he just didn't have the background and qualifications. I was sorry to see that split there, because they were so close; very, very close association. But it was something that Billy had just gotten in his mind.

JOHNSON: You don't recall any specifics that led up to his departure? Some of the stories are different. One kind of genre has to do with his getting into difficulties with Eunice and with Margaret Ambrose, and just being kind of a nuisance around the house and unreliable. Another kind of story has to do with his publicly complaining to people both here and back home about his financial situation.

DAVIS: Well, that's true. See, at that time Billy had been going with a gal by the name of Barbara Taylor for quite some time, and I think Barbara was pressing for marriage. And Billy, I think, was seriously considering marriage. Billy, to me, was a guy who would remain single all his life. That's the impression he had given me. But, as I say, he and Barbara had been going together for some time. And I think Barbara felt, you know, we've been together for a long time. Our lives should take some direction or we should split. And Billy, I don't think.... [Interruption]. And I don't blame Barbara. I mean, why should she waste her life, really, on just going with a guy when she wanted to get married? And as I say, I think Billy was rather seriously considering the possibility of marrying at the time, and who could have supported a wife on the salary he was getting? Barbara was working, too, but in those days, sixty-five dollars a week, seventy dollars a week was not that much for a man to bring home. And Barbara started to date other guys at that time, and Billy got very upset about it. And I think he put all the blame on the fact that he wasn't getting enough money so that he could assume the responsibilities of a married man, and because he wasn't getting the money from Jack then the blame went on to Jack. Jack destroyed the possibilities of his getting married, brought about the breakup with Barbara, Barbara went off and finally married somebody else. Only that, really, I wouldn't say it destroyed Billy, but it destroyed his faith in Jack. And that's when, I think, Billy started to sit back and say, "Well, what am I doing down here?" You know, "I'm just wasting my life for sixty-five dollars, seventy dollars a week, and where am I going to go? What can I do?" I mean, there was no ladder with rungs that he could go up. And that's when he sat down and talked to Jack about getting a sizable increase in salary, but it didn't come about. Billy, I think, decided, well he'd had a broken love

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affair, and he was unhappy because of that, and I think that's when he decided he was going to go on back home. And as I say, he was very unhappy about the whole situation, more or

less blamed it on Jack, and was very vocal about it, unfortunately. I never thought he'd do that, because he hadn't impressed me as the type who would do that. But I think he was so unhappy and so upset that he did.

JOHNSON: It seems that Kennedy people in dealing with the outside world are very close-mouthed and all loyalty.

DAVIS: Well, you know it's like being in one big family. You don't air the family wash to everybody.

JOHNSON: But among themselves, I think, there might be different rules applied, and I can see where, because so many of them had come from working class backgrounds, and it was a bad time economically....

DAVIS: Yeah, yeah.

JOHNSON: Was there ever much of this, kind of within the clan, candid discussion of any sense of bitterness and frustration, of the fact that the man was...

DAVIS: No, no. I mean we might have griped to one another about, "Gee, you know, I've got all these bills, and why couldn't Jack with all his money, with all the family's money, raise my salary just five dollars a week?" You know, maybe something like that, but nobody was really ever bitter about it, and nobody dwelt on it. It was one of those things that you accepted. That's the way it was. You knew that was the way he was, and, you know, you just went along with it. You had a job to do, and you did it.

JOHNSON: So Sutton returned to Massachusetts in '51, Reardon went back to Massachusetts to begin to work on the Senate campaign part time, and Rosetti came down here for a short time.

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: That left you for much of the time, for the balance of the congressional period pretty much alone in the office, didn't it?

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: And did you find that you were having to, in effect, do everybody's job?

DAVIS: Well, yes, you had to. It was there, it had to be

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done, so you had to do it. But it was a good period of learning for me, really, that whole six years. It really was because, as I say, Jack had so many people

from outside your congressional district other than constituents who were contacting the office for one reason or another. There was so much work to do, such a variety of work that, as I say, I think it was invaluable experience for me. And, in effect, because I had handled the office almost singly for such a long period of time, I walked right into a tremendous job. So, you know, I was happy about that. I hadn't wanted to leave. I had no intention of leaving. But when the Senate staff setup was sent back to me, I said, "Forget it. Forget it."

JOHNSON: I'm going to get to that. I was kind of saving that for last. One of the impressions that we get from the Massachusetts end, from that perspective, is that while it was a small staff, permanent staff, there were a number of his Massachusetts aides and supporters—people like John Galvin [John Thomas Galvin] and Mark Dalton [Mark J. Dalton] and a number of others who....

DAVIS: Is Mark still around?

JOHNSON: Yes, he's still around.

DAVIS: I haven't heard of him, or seen or anything, Mark Dalton for years and years and years. And I know when John Galvin was down—I guess the last time he was down was last year—he bust in, and I asked him, and he said yes, Mark was still around. He had impressed me, that Mark Dalton. When I first met him, it was a real, bright, nice, capable guy who was going to go a long, long way.

JOHNSON: Well, as I recall, it's Galvin himself who put it better than anybody else I can remember, saying that everybody who was associated with the Kennedys over the years, their lives were affected, and not always for the better. And I remember, I think, that he characterizes you, for one, and himself, because of his insistence on a certain independence and detachment, as having survived it fairly well; and characterizes Dalton, and I think perhaps Sutton could be in this category, too, as people whose lives were not necessarily affected for the better, that they were perhaps permanently harmed in some way.

DAVIS: Well, I don't think Billy's was in the long run, really, because even though it was a rather bitter split at the time, it did get Billy back to Boston, and I think it made Billy sit back and take stock of himself and try to determine where he was going, what he was going to do. And I think Billy sat down and thought, "Well, here I am. I'm almost forty years of age. What have I done? What have I accomplished?"

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JOHNSON: Was he about that age when he went back?

DAVIS: When he went back, yeah. I think Billy was just about thirty-seven, thirty-eight. Of course, he was a perennial kid, too. And I think it forced Billy to sit down and take stock of himself, and determine what he was going to do with

his life. And was he just going to bounce around as a court jester all the time or was he really going to sit down, put himself on the road to accomplishing something? And he eventually did. So while the split might have been regrettable at the time, I think it made Billy sit up and take notice of himself and what he could do, and in what direction he was going to point his life.

JOHNSON: What do you remember about some of those other people who came down from time to time to work on legislation and on speeches, and on position papers and material?

DAVIS: Bright.

JOHNSON: Now, do you remember Dalton specifically?

DAVIS: Well, as I say, I remember Mark Dalton. Very quiet, unassuming guy who had a lot upstairs, and who could put it down on paper, and who could convince the good lord, I think, that it was raining outside. Bright, bright guy. In fact, Jack had all bright ones around him. I mean, they really were so capable.

JOHNSON: Now, it was toward the end of that congressional period that Dalton went his separate way.

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: It was during that Senate campaign, early in that Senate campaign in fact. Of course, I know that was all up in Boston.

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: Do you have any recollections of the events surrounding it?

DAVIS: No, I don't. I really don't. You know, I had rumors here and there, but I couldn't put credence to any of them, really. It was all just hearsay, and I don't have any actual knowledge of why.

JOHNSON: That's a problem with so many of these things, that there are rumors and fragments.... [Interruption]

DAVIS: As I say, I had no actual knowledge as to why there was

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a split, but I always felt that the split wasn't so much between Jack and Mark,



as it was between Jack's people in Massachusetts and Mark. And I couldn't even pinpoint one or two individuals who might have been the catalysts for the split. I just don't know.

JOHNSON: I don't mean to seem to be focusing disproportionately on individuals and personalities but, in my thinking, one seems to lead to another. It was during that same period, as I remember, that O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien], Larry O'Brien, who was working for Congressman Furcolo [Foster Furcolo]...

DAVIS: Furcolo, yes.

JOHNSON: ...also came over to the Kennedy people, and he worked in that Senate campaign up in Massachusetts. But they met first down here, didn't they?

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: Do you remember anything about the relationship between Kennedy and Furcolo, and between your office and Furcolo's office?

DAVIS: It wasn't that close, really. And while there was a friendly association because, naturally, they were members of the same congressional delegation, there wasn't an overwhelming closeness. There wasn't a real warmth in the association between Jack and Foster Furcolo. And I think a lot of Jack's cronies and associates looked on Foster Furcolo as somebody who was rather new on the political scene and who could, in the future, possibly be a problem to Jack in his ascendancy. Because Foster was, here again, a nice, bright young man, new face, did a good job while he was here, and was ambitious. And I think they viewed Foster with jaundiced eyes somewhat.

JOHNSON: Do you remember anything about O'Brien's moving into the Kennedy camp, and becoming associated with the Kennedy people?

DAVIS: Not that much. In what way do you mean?

JOHNSON: Well, after he left Furcolo, it may have been that he returned to Massachusetts, and then the Kennedy people asked him to come on board after he had gone back to Massachusetts. I'm not sure

DAVIS: I think there were some preliminary talks down here...

JOHNSON: Well, that's what I'm getting at.

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DAVIS: ...but nothing was wound up actually. Larry, here again, was a guy who had such a grasp of the whole Massachusetts political scene, not just western

Massachusetts, and was interested in Jack. I think he knew Jack was going to go onward and upward. And Larry was confident enough in his own abilities and his own qualifications to know that he could be very helpful to Jack, and that's why he wanted to become associated with Jack. And while he knew Foster was going to go onward and upward, too, his would be at a slower pace than Jack's. And I think Larry decided then and there that he was going to hitch his wagon to the star, so to speak, because he had something definite that he could contribute. He could be a valuable member of Jack's association and he was, definitely was. I mean, he pulled that thing together, and he was bright himself. He had a good grasp of politics, and as I say, everybody liked Larry. He had that ability to get people together.

JOHNSON: Do you remember when you and the people in the office and the people that you dealt with, Kennedy political people, began to become aware of and began to talk about the possibility of running for higher office?

DAVIS: Well, I would say that was always in the back of Jack's mind, and in the mind of the people who had supported him first for representative in the House. They always felt that this was a start and that he would go onward and upward. And I'm sure that the Senate was always in the back of their minds. But they did not work at it really. I mean, he concentrated on being a good member of Congress down here in the House, and so did his staff, but kept the liaison and the contacts with the people back in Massachusetts so that if we ever needed them, then they would be there. And I would say it started to get off the ground after Jack's second term. In fact, when he was running for his second term in office he felt, I'm sure, at that time that this was going to be the start of his personal contacts with these people. And it was never really an overt operation, but it was there, and we knew that probably after the third term in office, it was going to be onward and upward.

JOHNSON: Do you remember when it was—was it '50, '51 or even earlier?—that he began these incredible weekends, leaving Washington on Thursday night and touring all around Massachusetts?

DAVIS: That was in '51. Yeah, it was just about in '51. Because, let's see, he went into the Senate in '52, and it was just about the year prior to that he started his campaign.

JOHNSON: I asked you about Furcolo briefly in connection with

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Larry O'Brien. What do you remember about other with whom he was close, either colleagues in the House personally or professionally?

DAVIS: Well, he was very close with George Smathers [George A. Smathers] from Florida. George Smathers had come in I think about the same time Jack had come in, or possibly maybe a Congress before. I'm not even sure on that.

JOHNSON: He beat him to the Senate by a term, I think.

DAVIS: Yes, yes, he did. And then he, of course, went over to the Senate, and then they continued that close relationship while they were in the Senate. He was closest, I think, he had actually.

JOHNSON: Was that, would you say, more a personal than a professional political friendship?

DAVIS: Yeah, it was. Of course, it was all three rolled one, but they were good close friends, too.

JOHNSON: Any others that you remember that he was either close to or you recall him working particularly effectively with? I think, for example, of Karsten [Frank Melvin Karsten]. I think they were on the Education and Labor Committee House [of the House of Representatives] together.

DAVIS: Yeah, they were. And they had a close working relationship, but not a real, close personal relationship. Jack, I think, respected and admired Frank Karsten for his ability and qualifications, his background, what he could do, and that was about it, really. It wasn't, as I say, a...

[END OF TAPE 1; BEGIN TAPE 2]

...went downward in a hurry, too. Jack Javits [Jacob K. Javits] was up the hall, and of course he preceded Jack into the Senate, also.

JOHNSON: Now the '48 and '50 congressional reelection campaigns were not terribly difficult or significant.

DAVIS: No, no, because Jack was a good representative of that area. I mean, you know, he voted exactly the way they would have voted if they were down here. So he really an excellent representative and, of course, having been in one term for the '48 campaign, I wouldn't say it was a snap, but I wouldn't say it was a worry to us at all either.

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JOHNSON: But as the '52 campaign came up, was that something that was taken much more seriously?

DAVIS: Definitely, yes, yes. Because we had to run in areas in which we'd never run before. And while the Kennedy name was known, the Kennedy family was known, Jack had to sell himself in other areas of Massachusetts. And while the name was a plus, his own personality was a plus, the fact that he was in the House was a plus, he still had to campaign. And he knew it was serious business.

JOHNSON: Now what role did you in the office here have in that campaign, in addition to carrying on the day-to-day business?

DAVIS: Well, we usually had to write position papers and....

JOHNSON: Now, you say "we." There wasn't really anybody left in the office.

DAVIS: Well, when Reardon was here at first, and then if we got position papers sent down to us from some of Jack's brain trust, we had to go over them, Jack and I and what have you, whoever happened to be here at the time. And then, of course, the logistics of having them typed and what-have-you. They were all accomplished here.

JOHNSON: There was a great campaign book that was put together for the Lodge [Henry Cabot Lodge] fight on his record and quotes, and Kennedy's record and quotes. You were involved in that, weren't you?

DAVIS: Some of the research, yeah, on the legislative business. Yeah, because we had to go through them and check out Lodge's record, voting record, and of course Jack's voting record. Jack's was very easy, because each member gets it, but getting a hold of Lodge's was a little different. That took a lot of turning pages and pages and pages of stuff.

JOHNSON: Was that done before Reardon had gone back to Massachusetts?

DAVIS: Part of it was done before Ted had gone back to Massachusetts, and part of it then we finished it up and finalized it down here after he had gone back to Massachusetts.

JOHNSON: That was a very effective instrument, too.

DAVIS: Yeah, yeah, it was.

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JOHNSON: How seriously, do you recall, did he take his committee assignments during those years?

DAVIS: I would say, the first year not very seriously. But then I excused him totally. Number one, he was new. Number two, he was not feeling well. I mean, he still had his jaundice, he still had his back problems. And he would go, but I just had the impression at that time that he was just sitting in. He was a presence there, and he wasn't really contributing, he wasn't really absorbing. But I also felt that he was so new that he was sitting back and just getting a feel of things, as to how things operated, how you could manipulate the committees, what the legislative procedures were, what the parliamentary procedures were. And then after he had been here for a year or so he did feel much, much better. I mean, you could tell it in his reactions to everything, in his attitude, in his increased interest in things, and then he started to take an interest in his committees and his committee work.

JOHNSON: What kinds of things do you remember him becoming most interested in first?

DAVIS: Well, I can remember the housing for veterans—we had a big conference on that down here—and anything that had to do with veterans legislation he was very, very interested in. And housing per se. That, definitely, he was interested in because at that time everybody knew that housing was a major problem in the United States. It's not only housing for veterans, but for John Doe, too. So those were about his prime interests at the time.

JOHNSON: He was interested initially in housing, and it seems to me almost as soon thereafter when the Taft-Hartley [Labor Management Relations Act of 1947] labor legislation....

DAVIS: Oh, yeah, because that came out of his labor committee. Yeah.

JOHNSON: I don't know if it was quite so popular to characterize congressmen in that period as liberal and conservative and progressive or whatever, as we do now, but do you remember having a sense of where he fell in that frame of reference in that early period?

DAVIS: Yeah, in that period I would still classify him as a rather liberal Democrat. Definitely, at that time. He was not a conservative Democrat at all. He was a liberal Democrat. And with his background and everything I was quite surprised, pleasantly surprised.

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JOHNSON: It seems to me that from the very beginning his interest in foreign policy is pretty much uniquely his own. While he seems to be in the mainstream of bread-and-butter liberals on most welfare and labor legislation and that sort of thing, did he begin to develop the reputation of being something as a maverick in foreign policy right away? Do you remember him having....

DAVIS: Somewhat, yes. Yes.

JOHNSON: Do you have any sense of why that was, why he was so independent, almost to...

DAVIS: Well, I think, actually one of the main reasons was because his father had been an ambassador, and I think he wanted to set himself as independent, his own man, in foreign policy, not being influenced by his father in any way, shape, or form. I think that was one of the reasons.

JOHNSON: That, in effect, it was so important to him to be his own man that it developed his thinking....

DAVIS: Definitely, definitely, because he had the finger pointed at him so many times, that, oh well, this is the Ambassador's son and the Ambassador's pulling the strings, and Jack doesn't make a move, he doesn't cast a vote unless he first checks with Dad. And, you know, that was so wrong, so inaccurate, and I think Jack bent over backwards then to establish the fact that he did make his own decisions, he was his own man, he did make his own determinations, he did not consult with the Ambassador in any way, shape, or form on foreign policy other than any normal father-son would have a discussion on foreign policy.

JOHNSON: Trying to get closer to his personality, now. Two or three things kind of intertwine. First off, what was his role, personally, in the operation of the office? The things he liked to do and the things that he didn't like to do, for example.

DAVIS: Well, he didn't really—that was one of the things I liked about the office—inject himself into the operations of the office that much. He just let me operate it the way I saw fit with no interference, no interference at all. So when the mail came in I just took it, processed it, and wham, away it went. He very rarely even wanted to be bothered signing the mail. In fact, I've seen so many of these letters signed by Jack Kennedy...

JOHNSON: That were signed by you.

DAVIS: ...that were not signed by Jack Kennedy.

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JOHNSON: That's true.

DAVIS: As I say, he really didn't inject himself into congressional procedures, office operations, that much. And I took it, I guess, as more or less a compliment to

me, too, because he didn't interfere or inject himself in any way. He obviously was satisfied with the way things were going.

JOHNSON: How was he able to know, really, whether or not you were doing a good job? How was he able to....

DAVIS: I guess he assumed I was, and possibly got reports, you know, from people back home.

JOHNSON: Well, what sort of things around the office, or to do with his responsibilities, did he like to do himself, or do best himself?

DAVIS: Really not much of anything. Really, honestly. That's true. Because he didn't spend a lot of time in the office. When he came in, usually Billy was in here and they were joshing back and forth, or he buzzed on out, maybe he played tennis some place, or he was over on the floor, or maybe he had gone off to visit George Smathers or somebody else. So he didn't really put in that much time in the office because he didn't have to. The office pretty much ran right on its own.

JOHNSON: What about the work on position papers and speeches, things for which he had to take some personal responsibility?

DAVIS: We didn't have that much. He didn't make that many speeches, and we didn't issue that many position papers when he was here in the House, but when he wanted to write a speech he did it, most of it. I would say 99% of that was done by JFK himself. I can remember first time he ever called me in—I even forget what the speech was going to be on, but it was going to be a major speech, one of his first major speeches. And I thought, "Oh, oh, this young, green congressman. What's he going to do?" No preparation. He called me in and he says, "I think we'd better get to work on the speech." And I said "Okay, fine." And I thought he was going to stumble around, and he'll er, ah, um.

I was never so startled in my life. He sat back in his chair, and it just flowed right out. He had such a grasp of what he was saying, and was able to put in such beautiful language without any editorializing. I mean, you know, I didn't even have to edit it. It just came and it came, I mean, for fifteen or twenty minutes. He just went on and on. It made absolute sense. He didn't have to say, "Now wait a minute. Go back. What did I say

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back there about such and such?" Nothing. It just flowed, and I thought, "Wow. This guy has a brain." I mean you didn't get that impression when you first met him because he looked so young and casual and informal. But he knew what it was all about. He knew about everything. He had a grasp of anything. You mentioned a topic, and if you wanted to get him into a serious discussion he could tell you backwards and forwards, from A to Z, what it was all about.

JOHNSON: Is that little story typical of the way he would prepare a speech?

DAVIS: Mm hmm. Exactly. To me he never made any preparations. He just had it all stored in the back of his mind somewhere, and when he needed the facts, when he needed that information, he could bring it right out and it was there in final form as I was taking it down in shorthand. Exactly. And he was just a remarkable.... He had a remarkable brain, he really did. And he was very deceiving from his appearance. You wouldn't think that he had that many serious thoughts in his head, but he did.

JOHNSON: Now on position papers, I remember the first was when he issued his own dissenting report. In addition to signing the democratic minority report on Taft-Hartley, he issued his own, and I think Mark Dalton came down to work on that. Am I correct?

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: Now the impression I have of that kind of document is that it was something that was prepared very carefully and very systematically, not just off the top of the head.

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: Do you remember how something like that might have been worked on?

DAVIS: Well, actually, when he did something like that and he brought somebody down, then he and the fellows would sit in and it would be a give and take sort of thing until they finally got to a position that everybody agreed on. And then he would contribute some to me, Mark Dalton would contribute some to me. Then we'd put it all together, the rough draft, and they would go over it. And they would combine this, they would delete this, they would eliminate that, they would change this. There were maybe two or three revisions. And then we had the final.

JOHNSON: Now the brainstorming part of that exercise, would

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that, do you remember, take place in a period of one day, or would it be over a period of several days?

DAVIS: It was usually a couple of days, yeah. Because, I think that's the beauty of it. Because if you are limited in your give and take, your final product probably does not really reflect what you wanted to say. If you have two or three days in which to sit down and shoot the bull with the guys, and get everything out and have it evaluated and then put down on paper in black and white, you read it back again. That's, I



think, when you get something in the final analysis that is really what you wanted to say, not just something off the top of your head. So it was a couple of days that the guys came down.

JOHNSON: What was your perspective, of the people working for him, on what he liked and what he didn't like?

DAVIS: He liked sailing, loved sailing, I know that, liked the water. He liked to play tennis, didn't like schedules, didn't like to have to be any place, liked to do what he wanted to do when he wanted to do it. He liked to be a free agent. That was about it. Loved movies, loved to read, and wanted time to himself.

JOHNSON: Now, of the things that you and others might do around the office, what would he react to? What would he appreciate and enjoy, and what things might irritate him that you'd have to look out for?

DAVIS: I can't say that anything would irritate him. He loved darts, and we had a dart board in the office. [Laughter]

JOHNSON: Did he throw them from behind the desk?

DAVIS: They went from behind the desk, or it was over on that wall. I remember it was on the door once, and he was playing darts, and I happened to open the door just as he threw a dart. So that's where we put it, on the opposite wall. [Laughter] All he had to do was stab a constituent.

JOHNSON: I know it. That would be awful. But you don't remember him being particularly irritated by anything?

DAVIS: No, he wasn't the type of guy to become irritated, really. I mean, he wanted things his own way, but then he was entitled to that. He was kind of a spoiled young man, but I can't say that he became irritated at anything specific, anything in particular.

JOHNSON: What do you remember about how he and the rest of the

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office dealt with constituents coming in to visit, both individual constituents and perhaps groups?

DAVIS: Oh, he always saw them. Very happy to see them, and particularly got along well with the guys from the Boston navy yard. Of course, that was your blue-collar guys, and he got along fabulously well with them and met them right on their own ground, and they idolized him. And he always had a nice, friendly, casual way with everybody. And if he was in the office when anybody came in, whether it was a

group, whether it was a family, whether it was an individual, he was always willing to take the time to say hello and come out and shake their hand. But it was so funny sometimes. If it was a second meeting or a third meeting, it was really funny. If he would come out into the office, or if he was coming into the office and they happened to be out in my office, he'd come buzzing in. They'd say, "Oh, hello, Congressman. Hello, Jack. Hello, this." He'd say "Oh, hi, how are you? Give me a minute, give me a minute, will ya? Be right with ya." Buzz into his office, buzz me on the intercom, "Come in here, quick." Go in there. "Who the hell are those guys? Tell me what are their names." Tell what the names are, and then, "Hi!" He'd come back in a few minutes, "Hello Jack. Hello Joe. Hi, Bert. It's good to see you." He was really funny. It was constant. It was always constant. And it went over terrifically. And you couldn't expect him to remember everybody he'd met. Maybe he'd met them at a tea or in a beer hall in Charleston or East Boston or something, you know. That was it. It was really fun. But always, always willing to take the time to say hi. And enjoyed it. It wasn't a duty that he had to do, he enjoyed it.

JOHNSON: Did the same hold true, do you think, in dealing with business groups or professional groups as with....

DAVIS: A little more reserved than with the blue collars, but, yes, always willing to sit down and take the time to listen to them, be pleasant with them, hear what they had to say. I mean, he was that kind of guy, and that's I'm sure, why he had so much support. Because he was nice to everybody.

JOHNSON: Did he have during those years to meet very often with interest groups who might not have been constituents, who might have been from another part of Massachusetts or a national interest group?

DAVIS: Not as many as we would have nowadays, but yes, there were. And not only from Massachusetts. I would say interest groups from any part of the states. Some from New York, some people from down here in Washington, some from the Midwest. They came in. Of course he was, as I say, well known anyway, and they thought it was a feather in their caps if they

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could get to see Congressman Kennedy. And so he was quite in demand, because everybody felt that he was a young, upcoming member of Congress and was going to go far. So a lot of them, of course, did want to see him, not only to get their views across but to say, "Yes, I met John Kennedy." And he was always very willing to see them also. He never held himself aloof from anybody. If anybody wanted to see him, he was there. He was available.

JOHNSON: He has been characterized a number of times as being generally quite well liked, but at the same time not having a large number of very close political friendships.

DAVIS: No, he did not have. And I think that's because he was more or less a free spirit. He liked his own time, he liked to do things on his own time, he wanted to make his own decisions. And while he did have a lot of close associations, he did not have a lot of close personal friendships. And besides that, his interests were so scattered, so to speak. I mean, he had a lot of interests in Boston. His family was based there, so to speak. He was down at Hyannis port [Massachusetts]. He was in New York. He was flying off here. He had a lot of associations in Europe, you know. So he didn't have to have a lot, develop a lot of close friendships here. He had them all over the world.

JOHNSON: To what extent did you feel that he looked to somebody like Sutton for that kind of general camaraderie and Dave Powers [David F. Powers], I think, in the years after that for that kind of informal....

DAVIS: Well, because they were funny guys, really. Really funny guys, and he could get a good laugh out of them. He could relax completely with, them. And that was important. Because, you know, when you're on stage—you're a Kennedy, you're on stage, let's face it—in addition to that he was a member of Congress, and it was important to him that he had to relax and have some time for fun and relaxation.

[Interruption]

JOHNSON: Speaking of Dave Powers, when do you first remember seeing him around and his being on the scene?

DAVIS: Well, I think Dave had been down for the inauguration. Well of course, I wasn't on the staff at that time when they all took their oaths of office. But Dave, I think, had come down about a month or two after I came on the staff and that's when I first got to know him. And I thought then that he was a good, close personal friend of Jack's because he was so relaxed, he was so informal. He was, you know, available when Jack needed him. They wanted to shoot the bull,

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Dave was there or Billy was there, available. And it was good. It was good for Jack. They were both good for Jack.

JOHNSON: Now I don't know Sutton nearly, as well as I know Dave, and I understand that he's not nearly quite as flamboyant as he used to be, but is it accurate, you think, that they were essentially the same type of....

DAVIS: Yeah, I think so, definitely. Definitely. And I think that's why Jack was so attracted to Billy, because he was another Dave Powers, so to speak. And Dave wasn't coming down here, and so Jack saw the opportunity to have Billy as a substitute for Dave Powers down here, somebody he could completely relax with, who would be available, who would be on call, who could do a thousand and one things for Jack

that Dave would have done up in Massachusetts. Just being there, knowing that he was a friend close by. That was it. That was the important thing for Jack.

JOHNSON: What do you remember—of course he was a bachelor in those years and didn't marry until after he had gone to the Senate—about his social life?

DAVIS: No, Jack didn't have much of a social life then. He had very, very few people that he went out with, and at that time most of the girls he dated were airline hostesses. I mean, he went between here and New York, and here and Boston, and here and Florida so many times that he got to know some of these gals, and he dated a few of those. And his dates usually consisted of going to a movie, preferably a western, and then coming back home where Margaret would have her scrumptious cake and chocolate sauce for him, and that was it. And they'd sit and, you know, look at television, and knowing Jack, I'm sure half the time the girl was looking at television and he was reading a magazine. But that was the extent of his dates. He didn't have much of a...

In fact, I used to say to my sisters and my family, "You know it's funny. Jack comes from a big, big family. You'd think he'd be buzzing around here and there and everywhere. But, I said, "I think he'd look at a girl and say, 'Girl? What girl? Was that a girl? Oh.'" Even though he had girls for sisters he was unconscious as far as the opposite sex was concerned. They didn't register with him at all. He did go out, but his dates were very casual. And, as I say, most of the time I'm sure the girl was bundled up and sent home after eating Margaret's scrumptious cake by ten or ten-thirty, because he'd usually try to catch an early show. Maybe if it was a big, big date they'd have dinner first.

Of course, Margaret was the best cook in the world. They'd have dinner at the house in Georgetown, then go out to a show, and

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then come back. And that's what he always wanted for dessert, was her cake. Oh, and that chocolate sauce she made. Oh, it was out of this world. And that was it. If he had a date beyond twelve o'clock, I'm surprised, or it would have been a most unusual occurrence.

JOHNSON: He didn't have anything of the ladies' man reputation that's been cultivated recently?

DAVIS: Oh, not at all. The only ladies' man image that could even say he had here was that everybody thought he was so cute. But that didn't turn his head, and he didn't take advantage of it. All the girls thought he was, oh, so cute. Jack Kennedy! And the older women, he was a son figure to them. You know, oh, what a nice, fine young man he is. He had no image of a ladies' man and, you know, if anybody had told me that he was, I would have told them to their faces that they're liars. And I'll tell them to this date that they're liars. I don't know where all this fabrication came from, but it's totally, absolutely false.

JOHNSON: I'm going to start editorializing a bit. I find it difficult to deal with these questions because I'm confused. There are some accounts that are of one nature, and there's other evidence that's of a completely different nature, and I think it's awkward because this whole aspect of his life was never really dealt with and it's all very new to everybody, and I don't think people really know how to assess all of this, and how to cope with it. That, combined with the fact that many of the American people have built up such an unrealistic image of the man, much as they did of Jackie [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] after the assassination. Almost anything she did that wasn't on a superhuman scale....

DAVIS: Right, right.

JOHNSON: I think the whole question of his social life, his interest in women, it's a legitimate area of studying and questioning, but still very sensitive and awkward to deal with.

DAVIS: Yeah, it is. He was a young man, and naturally he appreciated a good-looking girl, was probably particularly nice to good-looking girls, but that's normal and natural. If he hadn't been nice to them, if he hadn't been taken by so many of them, I would say he was abnormal. But, as far as dating is concerned and going beyond that, according to some of the reports that you get, forget it. Forget it. I mean, he had nice relationships with some of these gals, and that was it. But it was a casual, friendly dating relationship mostly. That's all.

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JOHNSON: Is it now, and was it then, the nature of things in a place like the Hill that if a man were a rogue or were carrying on, he would have a reputation? That people's reputations....

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: You see what I'm trying to say.

DAVIS: I would [say] that if he had that reputation, I would have known it here on the Hill at that time, because I was about his age, and I know that it would have been common gossip on the Hill.

JOHNSON: I think that's what I was trying to ask you.

DAVIS: Everybody would have known about it. Particularly, not only because he was a young congressman, but here again, he was a Kennedy, very well known. Everybody knew him or knew of him or his family. So he was more outstanding than a normal new congressman would be, and it would have been common knowledge, and it was not. It was not, because it didn't exist.

JOHNSON: The press. In the very early years how important were the office's dealings with the press? Was there much press interest or much....

DAVIS: Well, yes. And we didn't have to do anything with regard to press relations, because he was a Kennedy. Of course, here again, the press came to us.

JOHNSON: From the very beginning?

DAVIS: From the very beginning. Because, I mean, he was John Kennedy of the Kennedy family. So I don't think we probably put out one press release in the whole six years he was here. If we had anything, all we had to do was pick up the phone and call the press gallery and talk to the guys who were representing A.P. [Associated Press] or U.P.I. [United Press International] or what have you, and say, "Hey, we've got an item for you," and bam, that was it. They wrote the story and everything. In fact, we didn't even have to do that when he first came down, because the press guys were constantly in here. Several times a week they'd drop by and say, "Okay. Got anything for us?" You know. If we had, fine, we'd tell them; if we didn't, then okay. And then if we did specifically have something that we wanted to alert them to, all you'd do is pick up the phone. And that was it, and we were beautifully covered. So we had to make no press efforts at all.

JOHNSON: Do you remember who you might have been most inclined

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to call, or who you might have, had the most contact with?

DAVIS: I can't remember the guy's name....

JOHNSON: I know it's a long time ago.

DAVIS: He was a real nice guy, but he was.... There was a guy with A.P. that covered his area, but I cannot remember his name. It seems to me it was an Irish name, naturally. But I think he's dead now.

JOHNSON: That wouldn't have been Joe Dinneen [Joseph F. Dinneen]? He was a Boston reporter. I mean, he's dead.

DAVIS: No, no. There's just, you know, guys who were assigned down here over to the press gallery by A.P. and U.P.I., who covered the New England area usually and....

JOHNSON: Was this almost entirely New England press, or was there any national press interest?

DAVIS: Well, actually, it was national press interest, too. And while the A.P. and U.P.I. used to have their New England representatives constantly contact us, if it was something that was of national interest, why it would get into the other papers. It would get into the papers here. It would get, normally, into the papers in New York and in the Massachusetts papers, because he was a Kennedy. I mean, that was definitely a built-in asset.

JOHNSON: Did he like to deal with newsmen directly?

DAVIS: Yeah, because most of the newsmen are very, very nice, and it was a good give-and-take relationship there, too. And he respected them, and in turn they very much respected him and admired him, too. So, I mean, it was a good working relationship between them.

JOHNSON: Did you sense that he had a good instinct of how to handle them, what he could and should say, and what he shouldn't say?

DAVIS: Yeah, yeah, definitely, definitely. Even when he first came down and was brand new. I mean he had a lot of smarts about that. [Interruption]

JOHNSON: What do you remember about the files and what was involved in maintaining them and keeping them?

DAVIS: Well, my filing system really was very simple. Every piece of correspondence that developed into a case was

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in a folder. Each individual case was filed in a folder with a tab, the name, the address. Then my regular correspondence was divided into what I call general and legislative, and they were just all filed alphabetically in folders, A's, B's, C's, D's. Then, of course, we had breakdowns on requests for funds, of which there were many, and requests for public documents and government publications, and that's all. Those were all the divisions I had, because I found it was easier that way, and much more simple for anybody who might have wanted to go into my files to find things that way then.

JOHNSON: And you said after he went over to the Senate you'd get calls. Tell me about that.

DAVIS: I don't know what happened to my files, but I boxed them all up, marked them all clearly, sent them over to the Senate. I don't know what happened to them over there. They [were] constantly calling; they couldn't find these files; they couldn't find those files. Where were the boxes put when they got over to the Senate? How I were to know, I don't know. Could I remember what had happened on this particular

case? Could I remember what had happened on that particular case? Where would this be? Where would that be? How would they go about doing this? How would they go about doing that? It was amazing, believe me.

JOHNSON: You had, if I'm not mistaken, intended originally to go over to the Senate?

DAVIS: Yeah.

JOHNSON: And you had actually recruited or begun to recruit a staff?

DAVIS: I had just about recruited a staff for him.

JOHNSON: You were pretty far along in that operation.

DAVIS: Yeah, I was. I was. I had seven gals all line up.

JOHNSON: Tell me what happened.

DAVIS: Well, he told me I had free rein. And I told him, I said, "Well, okay," I said, "because I have some contemporaries of mine who would love to go over to the Senate and be on your staff." They were all experienced, knew exactly how to do things, what to do, where to go, and they really could have been an invaluable asset to the functioning of his Senate office. I mean, the transitional period would have been inconsequential, really, with experienced help such as that. And he said, "Go ahead. Do whatever you want." I said, "Fine." So I had recruited these gals, and they said yes, the first of

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the year they'd all be delighted to go over to the Senate. He called me one day about the middle of December from Palm Beach [Florida] and said that he'd been discussing the situation with his father, and his father said, "Did you find out exactly who they are, what they are, what the salaries are going to be?" So I told him. "Well," I said, "yes." And I told him what I thought the salaries should be in line with the money that we were being allocated from Massachusetts. And I thought he was going to go through the ceiling. And they were not inordinately high salaries at all for what he was getting in return. And he said, "Well, I don't think we're going to be able to work that out." And I said, "Well, why not?" He said, "Well, number one, I have to have a Polish girl on the staff, I have to have an Italian on the staff, I have to have an Irish girl on the staff, I have to have, you know, these different ethnic groups." And I said, "That is ridiculous!" I said, "You know, a staff member is a staff member." He said, "No, you don't understand. I've got to have these ethnic groups." And I said, "Well, I've got an Italian, I've got two Irish girls, from their names, if you want to call them that." And that was about it. The others were just plain, ordinary Anglo-Saxons. He says, "No, Mary, we've got to do something different about that." And I said, "Well, what do you want me to do?" And he said, "Well, see if you can't find anybody, and the salaries are



going to have to be cut.” And I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “Well, I can’t pay any more than sixty dollars a week.” I said, “Sixty dollars a week!” I said, “You’ve got to be joking. Nobody I’ve lined up would be willing to accept a job at that salary. And,” I said, “I wouldn’t ask them. I wouldn’t insult them by asking them to accept a job over in the Senate for that salary.” And he said, “Well, that’s the way it’s going to have to be.” And I said, “Well, then you just lost the whole staff, including me.” “Oh, no, no, no, no. You’d never leave me.” I said, “Yes, I would. I am not going to go over there. I’ve worked hard enough over here. If I go to the Senate, the work’s going to be twice as hard. And,” I said, “the responsibilities are going to be increased. I’m going to have to have a competent, capable staff who can back me up. If I don’t have that, I won’t have a life to call my own. I wouldn’t be interested in going under those conditions.” He says, “Ah, come on, come on, come on. You know, you can...” I said, “Where are you going to get somebody competent for sixty dollars a week? You cannot do that.”

His famous reply to me at that time was, “Mary, you can get candy dippers in Charlestown for fifty dollars a week.” And I said, “Yes, and you’d have candy dippers on your senatorial staff who wouldn’t know beans. If that’s what you want on your staff, I’m not taking charge of it.” He didn’t believe me.

JOHNSON: Did you have several go-arounds on this question?

DAVIS: Oh, yes. He called me from Palm Beach. His father

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called me from Palm Beach and begged me to change my mind. And I said no. I mean, that really threw me up against a wall, that they were being so picky about salaries for people who would run his office, and run it well and efficiently and competently, and they were going to dicker, really be insulting about the dickering, on the salary levels. And I thought, “Un unh.” Boy, I just made up my stubborn Irish mind, and said, “No, that’s it.”

JOHNSON: Were you ever able to satisfy yourself in your own mind as to why they made such a big issue out of money, which...

DAVIS: Well, I know they did. They did. You know, it was just, as I say, their New England frugality. I couldn’t believe it, but I thought, well... And that’s the way the Ambassador was, too. He was very pinchpenny, and Jack took it honestly, very honestly. But that threw me up against a wall, and that’s when I said, “Uh unh. Not me.”

And I remember the final decision was the day after Christmas. And the Ambassador called me again, and I told him no. He says, “Mary, you’ve got to change your mind. You’ve got to go over as you promised.” And I said, “I promised on the basis of promises that were made to me. If I can’t have my staff the way I want it, if I’m going to have to be in charge of ten or twelve greenhorns, forget it. I’d lose my sanity.” So I said, “I’m not going.” He said, “Change your mind.” “No, I’m not.”

I put the phone down, and I thought, "Oh, cripes. Here I am the day after Christmas without a job." And I thought, "Oh, I am sure that everybody who is coming in new to Congress had their staffs already lined up by that time." And I thought, "Mary, you're going to be in the unemployment ranks."

So I called a gal friend of mine and just told her. I said, "Be on the lookout for me in case you hear of anything. I'm available." And that's when she told me, "Well, have you tried Lester Holtzman from New York?" And I said, "From New York? I know he's got a staff lined up." She said, "No, he doesn't." 'Cause she was with the New York delegation, too. And she said, "Because I was talking to Mr. Delaney [James J. Delaney]," who was still in Congress. She said, "I was talking to Jim Delaney the other day. He was telling me that Lester Holtzman had not gotten a staff, and he was still looking for a staff." So I thought, "Oh, well, whew! Thank goodness. Maybe I can..." So I called him and he said, "Yeah, fine, Mary. I'll be down in Jim Delaney's office day after tomorrow. Come on up and see me." So I thought, "Oh, good. At least I have something." And the Ambassador called me the day after again, and told me he wanted me to go on over with Jack. And Jack called. And I said, "Nope, not unless the whole setup's changed. It's the way I want it."

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No, they couldn't see it. Well, maybe they could go up to seventy-five dollars a week for the girls. And I said, "No."

JOHNSON: Are they getting even close at this point to....

DAVIS: No, no. Not at all. They were still going to grossly underpay these girls. And I said, "Uh unh." With the staff that I had proposed to begin with, with seven good competent people, it could have started his office out on the right foot, and it could have run it beautifully. And if the workload had increased in the future, then we could have added as the need arose. But they couldn't see it that way. So, bam. That was it.

So I went in to see Lester Holtzman, and all I got from him when I walked in was, "Hi, Mary. When can you start work?" I said, "Wait a minute. You haven't even interviewed me yet." He said, "I don't need to. You've got my position." So I thought okay, fine. That really set me up. So then when they [John and Joseph P. Kennedy] called again, I told them no, I've already made a commitment and I wasn't about to change it. But then I had to interview some of the girls for the staff that came down here. Goldberg, and this, that, and the other thing, Jewish girls.... For the Senate!

JOHNSON: You mean, interview the girls that he hired for the Senate office?

DAVIS: Sent them over to see me. And all nice girls, believe me, but totally incapable of running a Senate office. And that was his problem for the first year he was over there. He never got off the ground. And it was nobody's fault but his own. I mean, these poor green girls didn't know where to go or how to do it, or what to do. And they were changing right and left. They were going back home or getting other jobs and everything. They just couldn't handle it.... But, that was it.

JOHNSON: So you think you were proved correct by the way that office operated in the years after?

DAVIS: Definitely, definitely. Because, I mean, he himself called me and asked me to come over for about, oh, I guess, the first three years that he was over in the Senate. Every once in a while he'd get on the phone and say, "Haven't you changed your mind? Don't you want to come over here now?" "No." Then when he went to the White House he called me and asked me, and I said no. Because I knew if I went to the White House, definitely that would have been seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. And by that time I wanted a little bit of time to myself. That was it.

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JOHNSON: How closely did you follow his career after he went over....

DAVIS: Oh, very, very closely. He was a good senator and an excellent president. Did all the things he should have done. Handled himself very well.

JOHNSON: Did you sense him getting more deeply involved in his legislative activities?

DAVIS: Definitely. When he went to the Senate, he became a whole new man, really. And I've credited that to Jackie. After he married her, he really started to come into his own then. Of course, most of his physical problems were behind him by that time.

JOHNSON: He did have a bad year.

DAVIS: Oh, yeah, yeah. He did, he did. But after he married Jackie and started to settle down and, as I say, started to really overcome his physical problems, felt, I'm sure, a thousand percent better than he had. He really did become a working senator and a good one, a very good one. I mean, he was involved in so many things and always on the right through.

JOHNSON: Just one question on that health.... He was obviously sick for a lot of the time after the war.

DAVIS: Yeah. He had jaundice and malaria. It wasn't that much of a handicap to him, really. He would have malarial flare-ups, and he'd get jaundice every once in a while and, of course, his back was bad at that time. I can remember lacing him up once. [Laughter] He'd say, "Mary, come in and lace me up." But that, too, passed. And he more or less outgrew the jaundice and the malarial attacks, too. And then, of course, when he had his back operation, why that fixed his back up as well as it could be fixed. But it was just something, with regard to the jaundice and the malaria, that he had to more or less outgrow, and time took care of that for him, actually.

But he was such a horrible color when he was down here first. He was yellow. He really was yellow when he was first down here, and he used to get so sick. And of course he was so skinny. He was skinny as a rail. And his face was just a skull, really, with skin over it. He was so thin, and a shock of hair, and big white teeth. And always pleasant, though, and, as I say, then he kept getting a little better and a little better. It took a long time, but you could just tell that he was making slow progress in

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beating malaria. And he finally did overcome it.

JOHNSON: As I said, I'll think of a hundred questions before I get out the front door.

DAVIS: All right.

JOHNSON: Thank you. This has been most interesting and most rewarding.

DAVIS: Well, I'm sorry it had to be so long, but I can never count on my schedule.

JOHNSON: The only bad part about that is the danger of people losing their recollection. The mind is like a sieve.

DAVIS: Oh definitely, definitely.

JOHNSON: One question I want to ask is whether or not you have kept any papers over the years.

DAVIS: No, no.

JOHNSON: I thought you might say that, but I thought I'd ask just for the record.

DAVIS: No, I never have. Because anything that was in the files, everything was shipped over, and even some of the personal mementoes that I might have had—a signed picture or this, that, and the other thing—they've gone the way of all flesh, so to speak. Whsh, they've gone. No, I'm not a pack rat, unfortunately. I don't keep a lot of stuff. You know, it hangs around for a while and then I get rid of it.

JOHNSON: Okay.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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