

Robert P. Cramer Oral History Interview—1/25/1987
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Biographical Note

Cramer was a Massachusetts political figure, friend of John F. Kennedy (JFK), Massachusetts state representative and state senator, campaign aide during JFK's Senate campaign (1952), and Presidential campaign (1960), JFK's economic adviser for the Virgin Islands and president of Virgin Islands Corporation. In this interview, he discusses his friendship with JFK, his appointment as economic adviser to for the Virgin Islands, and JFK's 1952 senatorial campaign, among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

with

Robert P. Cramer

January 25, 1987
St. Croix, Virgin Islands

By Edward T. Martin

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MARTIN: This is an interview with Robert Cramer, former state senator with the Massachusetts legislature. The interview was made in the Virgin Islands at his home at 10 Estate Mount Royal. The date, January 25, 1987. Go ahead, Bob.

CRAMER: Well, Ed, the latter part of the 1940's, my father had a summer place down in Dennisport. I myself was really living in Williamstown, Massachusetts at that time. A friend of mine, who went to Deerfield with me, by the name of Jim Reed [James A. Reed], came down to visit me often at the Cape. He had served in the PT's with Jack [John F. Kennedy]. He once brought me over to Hyannis Port to meet Jack. Jack had been at Choate when I was at Deerfield and at Harvard when I was at Williams. We both were in the class of 1940. So we had a lot of mutual friends, and we seemed to hit it off from the very beginning. He was in the Congress by that time. And I went to visit with him both on the Cape and in Washington. Again, in 1952, when he was running for the U.S. Senate against Senator Lodge [Henry Cabot Lodge], he called and told me he didn't have anyone up in my area (Western Massachusetts), and would I be willing to be his coordinator in the Berkshires. I told him, naturally, that I was very flattered and didn't have much experience in politics, but would be delighted to do anything I could to help out. I really felt that he was the kind of person that Massachusetts needed in government. It seemed to me that at last we had an Irish Catholic Democrat from Boston who would be accepted in Western Massachusetts. Here was a Harvard graduate, top scholar, Pulitzer Prize winner, independently wealthy, who

wasn't afraid to say what was on his mind. No reflection meant on any previous candidates out of Boston, but you understand. They just hadn't projected a good image in Western Massachusetts. So, the first thing I did was go down to the town hall and register as a Democrat.

MARTIN: About that time, weren't you married or getting married, Bob?

CRAMER: Well, you know, the election was November 7th, I guess, of 1952, and on November 15th, I was married up in Springfield, Massachusetts. Jack came up, he was an usher in the wedding. As kind of an aside from that was that my wife [Sally Ann King Cramer] and I had, were planning to go down to Jamaica for our

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honeymoon, and somehow we found out that Jack and Torby Macdonald [Torbert H. Macdonald] were going to follow us down. So we changed our plans and got reservations to go to Bermuda. We'd take off from New York, and, my God, we got into that Bermuda airport, there were Jack and Torby, waiting for us. And as sort of a sequence to that was in '53. When Jack got married in Newport [Rhode Island], I was down there sort of helping out with the ushers, and my wife wasn't supposed to come because she was quite pregnant. She decided to come anyway. And interestingly enough, that morning around 8:30, the maid in the house we were staying in discovered that my wife had broken water and was about to have a baby. So I rushed her over to the Newport Hospital. Just about the time that Jack and Jackie [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] were married, my oldest son Rob [Robert P. Cramer, Jr.] was born. Jack and Jackie volunteered to be godparents and were very good ones. I can remember at a party, the night before Jack got married, and he saw my wife. He said to me, you know, "Torby and I wondered why we didn't see so much of you down there in Bermuda. Now I can understand why."

Well, let's see, then in 1956, Dick Reuther, the state representative in my district, died. Jack called me and said I always talked about getting into government, and here was my chance. I asked him if he would endorse me if I did run, and he agreed to. So, we made tapes, and had our pictures taken together, and did all the other things that politicians do. And I finally did run, and luckily I won. I think he encouraged and inspired lots of young men to get into government around that time. As we used to say in those days, "He had class." And he brought it to the government and to the Democratic Party. You were proud to be part of his team. He seemed to inspire young people all over the country, to get involved in the government around that time. In 1958, I ran for the Massachusetts Senate and was elected. Then again in 1960, I was reelected, even though I'd spent a good part of that year in West Virginia campaigning for his presidency. He was always a very supportive and helpful guy, to me. And when I was first in Boston, I had to live in a hotel. He somehow heard about this and suggested I use his apartment, if I didn't like staying in a hotel. That was the apartment at 122 Bowdoin Street. Of course, I was very happy to share it with him, and did so for four years. In 1961, shortly after the inauguration, he appointed me his economic adviser in the Virgin Islands, and president of the Virgin Islands Corporation. I have been down there in the Caribbean ever since. I used to consult with him in Washington quite

frequently, and he always made a lot of time for me when I came up. Eddie, I think I liked him because he was so warm and so friendly and supportive. He truly was an inspiration. He seemed to me dedicated to his job, and in making his presence and ideals of government felt throughout the world. He very definitely wanted to leave his mark. It seemed to me, he was a natural leader, and always surrounded himself with the best talent available. In anyone, I suppose, if you look deep enough, Eddie, you can find a flaw or a fault. But I would really be hard pressed to find one in Jack. I think you probably heard,

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Eddie, that it's often been said that strong men never speak of strength, nor honorable men of deeds, of honesty. Jack was a guy who was both strong and honorable, and yet gentle and peaceful and warm. Evil was a problem to him to be solved, and not a trouble to be wept over. To me, he was unafraid. When I look for some source of his strength, I find it in his complete self-respect. To me, he is a shining example to all people, of the importance of accepting one's self before one can hope to be useful or important to his fellow man. Well, Eddie, before I start filling up, let me just say, I guess that the real remembrance for me now, is an inheritance of good accomplishment to be lived up to by those of us who carry a loving memory in their hearts. Even today, I find myself praying that he has found peace, and that he is rid of all that pain in his back, and that he will know that we loved him and will continue to love him.

MARTIN: Very good. Bob, let me take you back a little bit, to 1952. See if I can refresh some of the details. You said that at that time that you were asked by Jack to be a coordinator for the Ber, for the Berkshires—well, that's the western part of the state.

CRAMER: Yes.

MARTIN: What, how do you get to organize that district up there? I mean you were new to politics. I don't think you had any kind of real experience in organizing a campaign. How did you start out doing it?

CRAMER: Well, I think the first thing I did was to contact some friends around the Williamstown and Pittsfield area, that I had known well, who were interested in politics. And asked them to suggest to me names of Democrats. For instance, Bob Capeless [Robert T. Capeless], at that time was the mayor of Pittsfield, and his name came to my attention. Julius Calvi [Julius M. Calvi] was the mayor of North Adams, and I knew some people who lived there who knew him. So I got all these people together at a party at my house in Williamstown, and we all sat down with Jack, and of course we asked them if they would support Jack. I don't think we ever had a refusal. He was, he was really well liked. I don't know exactly how his name got so well known up in the Berkshires, the western part of the state, but even then he was very popular, and everybody seemed to want to get on the bandwagon.

MARTIN: He had served, I think, two terms in the Congress before he started this, and this was kind of a, a formidable task to take on an entrenched person like, and a well respected person like Henry Cabot Lodge. I thought up in that area—was it up in that area, the pretty strong Republican entrenchment? Wasn't the Berkshires...

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CRAMER: Yes. It's a very strong Republican district.

MARTIN: ...the *Berkshire Eagle*, I think, probably, although a liberal paper, would.... Can you remember what, who they endorsed then?

CRAMER: Well, I think the *Eagle* actually did come out for Jack. But the *North Adams Transcript* came out for Lodge. And of course, Lodge was popular. Certainly in the Berkshires because there are so many Republicans up there to start with, and he had a good record. Of course, that year, if you remember, he was Dwight Eisenhower's [Dwight D. Eisenhower] campaign manager.

MARTIN: That's right.

CRAMER: His national campaign manager, and so he was out of Massachusetts a lot. And I think that, of course, to a good degree helped Jack because I can remember Jack coming up to Pittsfield, and that area, and we went door to door in some of the towns. Some of the little towns like Washington and Florida and Egremont, and a few places like that. I don't think they'd ever seen a Democrat campaigning up there before.

MARTIN: What kind of a campaigner was he? Was he pretty...

CRAMER: He was pretty good. He was clean, and he had a lot of literature. He'd go to doors and he'd talk to, you know, knock and talk to the people. If they wanted to talk, and tell them who he was, and, of course, he was very personable, very presentable, and left a lot of literature at every doorstep.

MARTIN: Was Jim Burns [James MacGregor Burns] involved in that first campaign?

CRAMER: Jim was not in that. No. Jim didn't come in the picture until later, when he ran, I think he ran for the Congress in 1958. That was when John Heselton [John W. Heselton] got out.

MARTIN: We're talking about Professor James Burns.

CRAMER: I knew him well because he was a year ahead of me at Williams and he and I were co-editors of the local newspaper there, the college newspaper, the *Williams Record*, and we were in different organizations together. He was a

very serious-minded, very bright, scholarly kind of man. He was a Phi Beta his junior year but—not too well known because he spent most of his time with the books.

MARTIN: Part of that campaign's success rested on one thing, originally they were called coffee klatches but they

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became to be known as the "Kennedy Teas." Were those organized at the regular district....

CRAMER: Yes. We had some big ones in Pittsfield and North Adams, well attended, of course, everybody wanted to meet Mrs. Kennedy [Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy] and the girls, and the whole family, and I was asked by, I've forgotten who it was now, but I don't think it was Mrs. Kennedy, it might have been Eunice [Eunice Kennedy Shriver], to run the tea down in Springfield, Massachusetts, where Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien], was from, you know, Jack's close friend and adviser. We did put on a tea down there and 1,500 people came and shook hands. It was marvelous, people there would never come out to see any politician. But they did for Jack.

MARTIN: They were pretty successful. You had a tea up there in...

CRAMER: Yes, we had teas in Pittsfield and in North Adams and I think we had one down in Stockbridge. You know, where Tanglewood is.

MARTIN: Yeah. Now were other members of the family besides the sisters involved? Was Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] up there at all?

CRAMER: No I don't ever recall seeing Bobby, but Jackie campaigned with him.

MARTIN: She came into Pittsfield too?

CRAMER: Yes. She was in Pittsfield and Great Barrington, Lee, you know, that southern part of the district.

MARTIN: Well, Bob, after the '52 campaign, and you say you ran in the '58 for the Senate. You were running on a ticket with him at that time because he was, at that point, running for reelection.

CRAMER: That's right. We were running together, and I admit to being very thrilled because he was willing to come up and campaign with me in the Democratic primary and endorse me, because normally, you know, a politician won't endorse anybody in the Primary. He will go with them in the election, but not in the Primary. But Jack was willing to do that, and we used to go up to Pittsfield to a hotel there and have big teas, and testimonial dinners and all kinds of things like that, and he was a very, very

helpful man. That's all I can say. We were running and we used to run ads, you know, "put two great men," very complimentary to me, "two great men in the Senate:" Jack Kennedy in the United States Senate and Bob Cramer in the Massachusetts Senate. As a matter of fact, Eddie, I saved one of those tapes. If you are interested, I'll play it for you.

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MARTIN: Yes, Bob. I'd like to hear it.

CRAMER: Let's see if it still plays after twenty-nine years. [Tape plays march music. Then "This is United States Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts speaking on behalf of Robert R. [sic] Cramer. The Democratic Party must continue to present its ablest senators if it wishes to keep the confidence of its own members and to expand its support from the great number of incoming voters. I've known Bob Cramer as a friend for many years. He is highly capable, conscientious, experienced and responsible, a credit to his district, party, and to his friends. I recommend him wholeheartedly to you and earnestly ask your support of his candidacy."]

MARTIN: Gee, that's great. Who was your opponent that year?

CRAMER: Let's see. I ran against a fellow named Larry Vaber [Laughran Vaber]. He was the labor relations manager at the General Electric Company in Pittsfield.

MARTIN: Now after that campaign, of course, you were among others who were tapped to give him a hand in his presidential run. He was senator then and you went down to West Virginia to campaign?

CRAMER: Yes. In 1960, when I was running for reelection. I was in pretty good shape. So he asked me to go down to West Virginia, and I remember going down with Bunny Solomon [Bernard Solomon]. We took a train down and I've got all kinds of pictures of us down there coming out of the mines with all these Kennedy stickers. And we found that the miners who we expected to meet a lot of opposition from down there in that Baptist country. Actually we found that in the mining country, at least, that they liked Jack and they supported him. Of course, we were handing out that book of his on the PT boat, and I remember going up to Clarksburg, West Virginia, to meet a friend of mine and a friend of Jack's, a classmate of his at Choate named Danny Louchery [Daniel L. Louchery]. He was then chairman of the Republican State Committee in West Virginia. I wasn't able to convince him to come over with Jack but I don't think he was as hard as he might have been, had it been against some other Democrat running.

MARTIN: What was it like, you mentioned Bunny Solomon down there, do you remember who else was down in that area working for Jack?

CRAMER: The only one I can recall was young Franklin Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.] and I guess he was asked to come down because his father

[Franklin D. Roosevelt] was very popular down there in West Virginia because of the coalmines and the coal miners. And he of course was very strongly with Jack and spoke in his behalf many times during the campaign.

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MARTIN: Bob, after the President was elected and before he was inaugurated president, I think it was some time around November or December of that year, 1960, that he came back to the state and addressed the Massachusetts Legislature and you were a member at that time, can you recall that occasion?

CRAMER: Well, Eddie, I still was in the Senate, at that time. I saw him come into the House chamber where both the Senate and the House were meeting in joint session to hear him give his speech on the Hill. He said when he came in, he just quickly saw me, and said, "I'll see you afterwards," and I said, "Fine." And so I stood up in the back of the chamber. He gave a really magnificent speech which was well received and when he came back up the aisle I was standing right there and we were shaking hands and he said, "I want to see you down in the car." I said, "Fine, I'll meet you down there." And so he, of course, was escorted down to the car after they cleared the way for him to get down there. When I tried to follow him down, Secret Service were all over the place and between everyone else, I had a tough time getting down there. As I got near the car I heard John Driscoll shouting out, "Anyone seen Bob Cramer? The President wants him to get in the car and go out to the airport with him." So they then cleared the way for me and I got in the car with him and we went out to his plane, I think it was the *Caroline* at that time, and he said, "Now look, Bob, you know, if you're interested in coming down to Washington, we'd like to have you." I told him of a problem, a serious problem I was having trouble with my back at the time and it could get more serious unless I got into some kind of a warm climate. And I said to the President, I'm looking over the book at things that might be available and I see that you have an appointment as the governor of the Virgin Islands. I said, now I've had some experience in government, administration work. I was vice president of a paper company up in Adams, Massachusetts, for a number of years. I said I'd been to the Virgin Islands several times on holiday and I like the place and if that were available I'd like to have it. He said, well, I don't know anything about it but I'll check it out for you and let you know. A couple of weeks later, I think he might have called me from Palm Beach, I think he was in Palm Beach at that time.

MARTIN: Was this before the Inaugural?

CRAMER: This was before the Inaugural. And he said that there was a man down there who was born in the Virgin Islands named Ralph Paiewonsky [Ralph M. Paiewonsky] who had been the Democratic National Committeeman for twenty years, very active with all kinds of congressmen and senators who he entertained when they were down there visiting and that he wanted the job and he had to give it to him. So he said I have had somebody check though, and there's another job down there called the president of the Virgin Islands Corporation. It runs all the economy of the Virgin

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Islands. The governor would run the political end of it and you'd be running the economy. So if you've had experience in business he said I think that job would be all right for you. So I said fine, let's let me take a look at it and see what it's all about. I looked it over, felt I was qualified, could handle it, and so that's how I got appointed down there.

MARTIN: Tell me a little about the job. Was it a job of liquidating the corporation?

CRAMER: Well, I think you've got to know the background of it to really have it make much sense. It was started by Franklin Roosevelt around 1934 because the Virgin Islands were in pretty tough shape at that time and he created this thing as a federal agency under the Interior Department to take over control of all the economy of the Virgin Islands, all the sugar mills and the sugar plantations, the power and light and water. It had a cattle program, a forestry program, and it controlled the telephone company, all the airports, all the federal housing there, and sort of administered all federal programs within the area where the small business loan program was under it. And we hired about twenty-two hundred local people, that is to say, they hired in the 1930's about twenty-two hundred people. But then gradually Virgin Islanders would not cut the sugar cane. It became demeaning for them. So we had to go down island and recruit aliens to come up to cut the cane. I used to bring up about twelve, fourteen hundred aliens from down there every year and put them up and house them and feed them for about four or five months in our villages and the President became aware of this and he said the whole point of the agency has been lost now because we're having a federal agency which we subsidize to about the tune of a million dollars a year to really employing aliens. So he said, "I want you to put it on its feet and then when you get it on its feet, put it out to public bid. We'll give some to the local government. Others we'll put up for a regular public bid all over the country and just liquidate the whole thing." So around 1964, about '64 or '65, I had put it on a basis where it was making about \$350,000 a year and of course President Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] was in office by that time and he said, you know, "Let's dispose of it." So we did. Then in 1966 we finally had it off the federal books and it was in that year that I decided to resign from President Johnson's appointment of me as the president of the Virgin Islands Corporation. And with that title also went, Eddie, the fact that I was an economic advisor to the president of the United States in the Caribbean which, of course, I was very proud of.

MARTIN: Well, during that time you went, did you travel back and forth to Washington?

CRAMER: I used to go up to Washington about every six weeks.

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MARTIN: Who did you report to, who was your direct supervisor?

CRAMER: Well, my direct supervisor was Stewart Udall [Stewart L. Udall]. He was

Secretary of the Interior at that time. I would check in with him. Of course, I was then referred to the Director of Territories, I believe it was. He was a Guamanian at the time; his name was Richard Taitano [Richard F. Taitano]. And then finally Ruth Van Cleve was made Director of Territories. And I used to spend a lot of time in that office. She controlled not only the Virgin Islands, but Guam, the Northwest Trust Territories, Micronesia, all the American territories in the world.

MARTIN: And when you'd get up there you'd get over to see the President?

CRAMER: I used to go over and see him quite regularly and, my God, he was wonderful to me. Occasionally we'd go out to the movies together. We'd sneak out, couldn't believe it, here was the president of the United States slipping the Secret Service. He'd be coming down to the movies with me.

MARTIN: This was a movie house right around the corner from the White House, wasn't there?

CRAMER: Yeah, that's right.

MARTIN: But was he interested in the Virgin Islands Corporation, the work you were doing down in the...

CRAMER: Not really. I think as we had originally discussed, he said, well, if you go down there, you do a good job and this problem, you know, you can get rid of the problem. However, you do that and you might want to come up to Washington. I said, well, I really don't want to get stuck down there, Jack. But I liked to start. That's where I'd like to start at my federal employment and see what happens. Of course in 1964 I went up to the Mass. General [Massachusetts General Hospital] and had an operation on my back, which was then known as a vascular malformation of the spine, and I haven't walked since. Been in this wheelchair ever since then.

MARTIN: You were in St. Croix at the time of the assassination?

CRAMER: Yes. I was in, well actually I was living in St. Croix, but I was over in Puerto Rico. I got on a plane immediately right from Puerto Rico. My wife and I were over there shopping for Christmas presents for the kids. There was a big store in San Juan that had wonderful things. I got right on a plane and went up to Washington and stayed with some of my friends and spent a lot of time in the White House. Of course, let's see, I was on crutches then. I was on those Canadian sticks. And I think that I always had a great empathy

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with Jack, and maybe he did with me because I was on those crutches, Canadian sticks, just as he was, and I appreciated somewhat the pain that he was going through and the worry that

you have when you have a physical ailment of that sort.

MARTIN: Bob, you said earlier that you got married in 1952 and that Jack and Torby MacDonald apparently as a prank worked out an arrangement whereby they were to be waiting for you when you arrived on your honeymoon in Bermuda. Tell us a little more about that. How did that all come about? Were they aware that you had switched honeymoon spots?

CRAMER: Well, I don't know. I think they originally, of course, found out we were going to go to Jamaica, from the parties that they had the first couple of days before the wedding, when everyone was talking about where were we going and all that sort of thing, and they must have heard it, and then somehow my wife heard that they knew that we were going to Jamaica and they were going to meet us down there. So we changed our reservations, and I don't know how they found out we did, but Jack and I used to get some reservations down in Bermuda and before we got there, and he apparently was staying with some old friends of the family, he and Torby, and then, my God, when we got off of that plane, there they were waiting for us, smiling and clapping their hands and making a big show out of it. And we spent a little time together, of course, they came over and had dinner with us and we went and had dinner with them. The thing I remember, I guess, most about their being there was Torby. They went out on these bikes, you know, those motor bikes, I forget what you call them now, mopeds I guess, and, you know, Jack always used to go at top speed whatever he was doing, driving a car or on a motorcycle or whatever, and Torby keeping right up with him, of course, and, you drive on the left in Bermuda, and they were going around this corner and Torby forgot about it and almost ran into a car and in trying to avoid the car he went over this big wall, right down on a coral reef. He was very lucky he didn't break his back, but he didn't. But he was in the hospital for four or five days—it was a very serious thing. And I remember we came in to visit him and we took pictures of him and afterwards he did get out, fortunately, with no serious repercussions from it, and I remember a couple days after that they left. Apparently they got bored to death. It was a bad time of the year to be in Bermuda, you know, in November. I guess there were very few tourists there, so they got bored and went over to Europe or someplace. But I remember sending the pictures that we took of Torby in the hospital thinking he'd think it was really quite funny and would write to me certainly and thank me for them. I never heard from him. Yes, I think he was so embarrassed about the fact that he'd goofed on that thing going around that corner, and I talked to him a couple of times when I was up in Washington but he never wanted to talk about it.

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MARTIN: You know, you mentioned when you were first elected to the Senate that when you'd come down to Boston you'd stay at 122 Bowdoin Street. That was that little apartment that I think was a two-bedroom apartment up on the third floor. Now what did you do? You'd stay there during the week and when he would come up in the area, you would move out?

CRAMER: Yes. It was a two-bedroom apartment right across from the State House. It couldn't have been more convenient for me. It was just absolutely perfect. I could go out the front door of the apartment and walk maybe 50 or 60 steps and I'd be right at the side door of the State House to go in and be in the Senate. So it was just perfect for me. I used to come down, of course, Monday mornings. I'd drive down from Williamstown and I'd get there about 11 o'clock or so and I'd go up and unpack my stuff and put it away, sort of shape the apartment up a little bit the way I would have liked to have it, and then I would stay there usually through Friday nights, certainly to Friday nights. Sometimes if we had extra sessions down there, I'd stay till Saturday. Jack usually came up from Washington on Thursdays. So it gave us a chance to be together and, you know, we got to know each other a little better. I guess most fellas would. It was just wonderful for me.

MARTIN: Who else stayed there?

CRAMER: I think some other members of the family. I know that Jackie at one time, after they got married, stayed there and I can remember Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] coming in and staying and I think Dave Powers [David F. Powers] might have been there, at least once, and Joe Gargan [Joseph F. Gargan] came in and, of course, Joe Gargan would sometimes come in with Teddy [Edward M. Kennedy]. And when the two of them were there, of course, I would move out because there wasn't enough room for all of us. And then finally when Jack, after he was elected president, and I was still in there, and they came up from Boston, that was when he was making that speech. Jack said, "I think it is getting too complicated now. The Secret Service men don't like to have anybody in there, and so you'd better move along." Which I did, of course.

MARTIN: Bob, you knew the President for so many years and you knew him as a personal friend. You knew him as a public servant. You know, you knew him, you shared many an intimacy with him. Over those years what would you say, or what would strike you when you look back over those years as the type of person he was, is there any special quality he had that kind of stands out in your mind even today?

CRAMER: Eddie that, you know, is a very difficult question to answer because he had so many good qualities, but if I were to pin it down to one—again it goes back to his tremendous warmth and personal charm. He could talk to a ninety

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year old woman and have her right in the palm of his hand. They absolutely loved him. On the other hand, I have seen him talking to little six and seven year old children and charming them. And a fellow who is antagonistic to him would come in, and I have been there when they have had meetings, and was going to tear him apart, by the end of the meeting Jack would have sort of got him over to his side. It was just that great personal warmth that he exerted, and, of course, this is what they talk about the fact that he had a lot of girls who were interested in him. This was the reason. It was just that, everybody seemed to love him, and it would be very hard not to get along with Jack Kennedy. I would say that would be his

greatest attribute. It certainly helped him for whatever office he ran, but people all over the United States when he ran for president in different states—the Southern Baptists and this group in California and of course up in New England where he was so well known—all of them were very charmed by his great personal warmth and desire to be their friend and in some way help them out. [Interruption] You know Eddie, I learned a lot from Jack and the whole Kennedy family—among many other things, I came to feel and understand the real sense of always trying to be helpful to your fellow man and its immense importance.

MARTIN: Yeah. This is the conclusion of Robert Cramer.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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