

**CENTER FOR FLORIDA HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM**

**INTERVIEW WITH:** Ed Chiles  
**INTERVIEWER:** James M. Denham  
**LOCATION:** Bradenton, Florida  
**DATE:** June 22, 2004

**M=James M. Denham (Mike)**  
**E=Ed Chiles**

**M:** We're in the office of Ed Chiles. Today is June 22, 2004, I believe. Is that right, Ed?

**E:** I believe you're right.

**M:** Mr. Chiles, can you tell me where you were born and what year you were born?

**E:** 1955 in Gainesville, Florida.

**M:** Do you remember what your father was doing when you were born? Of course you don't "remember" that, but –

**E:** Finishing Law School at the University of Florida.

**M:** Okay. What were some of your best memories growing up when you were a child with your Mom and your brother? You're younger than your brother, is that correct? Your other brother was –

**E:** Two years older than I am, then I have an older sister, a year older than my brother, and then a younger sister, 11 years younger than I am. Well, just great memories of growing up in Lakeland, family times with our immediate family and our extended family; times politicking since kind of from as early as I can remember. I was five, I guess four actually when Dad ran the first time in 1959, and so I just grew up really enjoying the involvement in the campaigns.

**M:** So as far as you can remember, your father was involved in campaigns and politics?

**E:** As far as I can remember, he was involved in campaigns, yeah. I guess actually I can remember before that interestingly enough. One of the first memories I have actually is going down and taking the picture that was on the first brochure, 1959. That was, we were all in our pajamas and –

**M:** Family picture?

**E:** We had a fire truck. It was a family picture that was taken for a campaign brochure, yeah.

**M:** Do you remember your aunt Jeannette?

**E:** Oh sure.

**M:** And her husband –

**E:** Joe?

**M:** Joe.

**E:** That's when I was to say "extended family", that's a lot of the memories. The Ruthvens and the Chiles' were very close, always spent our Christmases together and spent a lot of time in the summer together. One family would be in with the other family, or the kids of one family would be in with the other family, and vice versa. And also the Graftons in Miami, my Mom's brother. We would always switch domiciles in the summer for a couple of weeks. We'd go down there for a while and they'd come up here for a while. That was always a lot of fun.

**M:** Now that was Miami Beach or Coral Gables?

**E:** Well, actually that was Coral Gables.

**M:** Coral Gables, okay. Do you remember your Grafton grandparents? What were they like?

**E:** No, I didn't know, my mother's father was alive until I guess '53 maybe, I'm not exactly sure of that, but he died before, maybe he was alive when I was born. I'm not sure about that, but I never knew him.

**M:** But your grandmother?

**E:** And my grandmother on my mother's side I never knew. She died when my mother was 11.

**M:** Oh wow, okay.

**E:** Yeah, very young. And my paternal grandfather and grandmother I remember very well. My grandfather died in '60 or '61. But I remember him very well. We used to go over to their houses all the time on Saturday, Sunday and eat, and we spent a lot of time over there. We lived with them for a while.

**M:** Now, did they come here a lot? Did you come over here for vacations and things like that?

**E:** No, I don't remember coming here with my grandparents, but certainly with my parents. We grew up coming here. I was coming to Anna Maria's as long as I can remember and before.

**M:** Now was your grandfather involved in development over here?

**E:** No, my grandfather wasn't involved in development over here, but my, I think it was my great uncle that had a bunch of lots on the north end of the island that he sold for 50 or 75 bucks.

**M:** Right.

**E:** And there's a Chiles' house that's still owned by my Dad's father's brother's family, which is Joe Chiles and Alfred Chiles, who are the patriarchs of that family now.

**M:** Now, Alfred lives in Bartow, correct?

**E:** Alfred lives in Bartow, and Joe lives in Louisville, Kentucky.

**M:** Is Alfred still, how old is Alfred now?

**E:** Oh, Alfred must be 70 something. I think he's a little bit older than Dad, I believe.

**M:** Okay.

**E:** And we see Alfred, I see them, occasionally I see Joe, his brother, and Louise when they come in. I see them somewhat frequently.

**M:** Okay, when you were growing up, and your father was in politics, who were some of the people that you remember that would come around the house a lot that he would associate with in Lakeland, not only politically, but also socially? Who were the folks that he really hung out with in Lakeland the most?

**E:** Well, J. Petersen. Jimmy and Ann Miller were great friends of theirs. Pete Peterson and his wife, they had a bridge group that were great friends. The Travillions. Jim Black and Juanita Black, they were great friends with the Blacks. Burke Kibler. Chesterfield Smith, Bill Ellsworth, of course, all the law partners, George Carr and Anna Lee Carr. The Bronsons, Rick and Becky.

**M:** Now, I'm very much involved with Bill in interviews, long interviews, and also Ned Sinder as well. He lives in Long Boat, right, Ned Sinder?

**E:** Right. Yeah, Ned was, that was later on as I recall that Ned Sinder kind of came into the picture. I mean, you know, when I think of early days, I think of the kind of group that got out of the University of Florida and came back, started practicing law and that group that kind of grew up together here.

**M:** Right. Now when you were I guess in elementary school, who were the folks that your dad went hunting with? Just on a pure social level, not politics –

**E:** Oh, Bill Skipper.

**M:** Just the pure social level.

**E:** Bill Skipper. Jim Black. Us. You know, it was probably more about hunting with us, Bud and I, than anything else. We were loading up and going every weekend.

**M:** Where were your favorite places to go?

**E:** As a matter of fact, they'd take us out of school every once in a while and take us hunting. Well, my favorite place to go, which we didn't have real early, we got it later on, was a lease, a hunting lease that we had in the Green Swamp, north of Lakeland, and I guess it

was on the Polk County/Pasco County border and we had a lease there, 14 thousand acres I think it was that we leased with a number of other people that were, a lot of them were from Dade City, and we used to hunt there a lot and really enjoy it. That's what I used to ask for every Christmas, was a week in the woods and we'd always go, Dad and Bud and I. Sometimes the girls would join us.

**M:** Who were your closest friends when you were in elementary school? Do you remember any of your friends growing up?

**E:** Mark Carter was a very close of mine.

**M:** Mark Carter?

**E:** Yeah, and his dad and Dad were good acquaintances, Leonard Carter was a lawyer and really a citrus grower. And Steve Bark, who is down here now in real estate, was a great friend in elementary school. Oh, what were the twins' names? Dick and Bob, a set of twins. Tommy Hart. Thinking back to that class.

**M:** Now where'd you go to elementary school?

**E:** Cleveland Court. Started there in kindergarten and went all the way through sixth grade there.

**M:** And then middle school, where did you go to middle school?

**E:** Southwest Junior High School.

**M:** And you studied under Hazel Bowman, right?

**E:** I studied under Hazel Bowman, ninth grade English, eighth grade English, one or the other. Yeah.

**M:** Now was that the year, she told me, I think, was that the year that your dad ran for the Senate?

**E:** That was the year Dad ran for the Senate, sure was.

**M:** And you would've been in ninth grade that year? That was ninth grade?

**E:** 1970, no actually, that was not the year. Dad ran for the State Senate in '68 in his second term, I guess, and '70 is when he ran for the United States Senate and that was my summer before my sophomore year in high school. Excuse me, my freshman year in high school. No my sophomore year in high school, that's right, my tenth grade year.

**M:** What are some of your best memories of those middle school/high school years, just general, family or things that you did personally?

**E:** Well, family was great. Football was great. Playing football at Southwest Junior High, going huntin'. Political campaigns were a lot of fun. We'd all kind of go on the road and put up signs and put up bumper stickers and do all kinds of different things.

**M:** We can get into that in a second. What are some of your worst memories? What were some things that happened during your high school years and middle school years that really were bad? Family tragedies? Anything specific that comes to mind?

**E:** Well, I lost a couple of friends in a tragic car accident in the end of tenth [grade], I think it was the summer after tenth grade because we had played, that was before I went to Bolles. No, I mean, worst memories, tragedies, I really didn't have any that I recall. You know, moving around was hard, maybe going away to some Prep School when Dad moved to Washington, you went to Jacksonville so there was a little bit of just the normal thing of kind of gettin' uprooted, and that was my choice to go there instead of goin' to Washington. But you know life was pretty good in those days.

**M:** Would you say your parents were strict?

**E:** Yeah, they were strict. You know, relatively speaking, yeah, they were pretty strict but not unduly so. We needed somebody to have their hands on us that's for sure, me and my brother, he worse than I. I probably benefited from coming behind him. I'd say he probably might think they were stricter than I would have because I was two years younger than him.

**M:** Now your sister was deaf, is that correct?

**E:** No.

**M:** Your sister was –

**E:** My sister has a sight impairment.

**M:** Sight, I'm sorry, sight impairment. Can you go into that and how that affected the family, or was it just something that people learn to live with?

**E:** Yeah, I mean, Tandy had German measles when she was born, or my mom had German measles, I guess, so she always had, you know, thick glasses, but she could see and it didn't keep her from going to school or anything like that.

**M:** Okay. Now she was in the middle of you and Bud?

**E:** No, she was the oldest.

**M:** She was the oldest, okay.

**E:** Right, and she had, there was a car accident with Tandy, she got run over, gosh, I must have been four and I don't really remember that –

**M:** So she's how much older than you?

**E:** That was a family crisis certainly.

**M:** How much older is she than you?

**E:** Tandy is three years older than I am.

**M:** Okay, 1970. When was the first time that you heard that your dad was going to run for the Senate?

**E:** We were at Lake Hollingsworth sitting around the kitchen table and he talked to us. I guess, I don't remember the first time that I heard he was going to run because there was always talk about that. I remember the first time I heard about the Walk. Dad almost ran for Governor before, and that would have been in probably '66, because the Governor cycle was parallel to his, Askew was elected the same time he was, in '70, so I think it was '66 that he was thinking about running and there was some discussion about it.

**M:** That was when Scott Kelly ran, right, '66?

**E:** Scott Kelly ran in '66?

**M:** I think.

**E:** I guess so.

**M:** '64 and '66.

**E:** Yeah, that's right, ran a couple of times. So I remember the talk of 'I'm gonna walk the State of Florida' and 'that's how we're gonna do it' and I remember, you know, certainly some real surprise and some, you know, questioning and 'wow, you're gonna be hit by a truck' or yada, yada, yada.

**M:** Now, before we get to the '70 campaign, you were old enough to know what was what, I guess, as far as 'your dad's in the State Legislature'. Do you have any vivid memories of going to Tallahassee or anything about the State Legislature that you can recall?

**E:** Nothing, but I mean I grew up with all of that from the time I was in the first session, meeting Farris Bryant, hanging out with his limo driver, you know, pictures in front of the car, pictures on the cannons at the Capitol –

**M:** Going up there all the time?

**E:** All the time. We lived there. That was a very different Tallahassee in those days. Everybody moved their families up, and you were there, it was bi-cameral and then it was every year.

**M:** So you have a lot of fond memories of Tallahassee then?

**E:** Yeah, and a great circle of friends that are still friends, I mean Burr Boyd was one of my closest friends growing up. His dad, Wilbur Boyd, was one of Dad's closest friends, lived here in Manatee County, died recently. Burr died tragically years ago.

**M:** We were trying to interview Wilbur but it just never happened.

**E:** Yeah, and so Burr Boyd and Sammy Dubin and, you know, people that I still, you know, are great friends with to this day. We were pages at eight years old, 10 years old and 12 years old, and then we started going every year. We would go in and we'd go to school. We

went to Sealy Elementary and then we went to Florida High and so all of those people would come in and –

**M:** Oh wow! You went to Florida High?

**E:** Oh yeah, went to Florida High, sure did. So you'd see the same people every other year and then it was every year once they started having the session every year from '55 to '68.

**M:** So you actually lived in Tallahassee then?

**E:** Oh yeah. Lived in Tallahassee. Lived at the Capitol. You know, made more money than I ever thought was possible being a page. You got paid seven dollars a day in the House and then in the Senate 10 dollars a day.

**M:** So your dad had a house in Lakeland and then a house in Tallahassee?

**E:** We rented in Tallahassee. Yeah, we'd get an apartment. We lived in the Boone Mansion one year, actually a couple of years up there we lived in the Boone Mansion. That was great.

**M:** But you were there so often that you just enrolled in school?

**E:** Enrolled in school. That was a normal thing for us, to go up and enroll in school for a couple of months and just have a great time up there, paging, you know, knew the Capitol backwards and forwards, the old Capitol -

**M:** Now was that hard going from say, Lakeland High School, to –

**E:** No, 'cause we never did it from Lakeland, never did it from Lakeland. Didn't do it after, probably seventh grade, or eighth grade was the, seventh grade I think was the last time that we did it. And then I think maybe families quit doing as much when kids got older, maybe you didn't do it, but I know now it's kind of a Monday through Thursday thing up there.

**M:** Right.

**E:** But in those days, people moved up and stayed up. We had great parties. I mean we had parties at the Boone Mansion, they'd fry oysters and have big cooks and everybody would come over and it would be Dad and Eddie Gong and Wilbur that would throw the party, and it was just fabulous.

**M:** I got a good letter from Eddie Gong yesterday.

**E:** Fabulous. Fabulous. L.C. Edwards, get a plate up, you know 'go take L. C. another plate of oysters', 'no, no, no' and he'd take 'em and being pages and takin' 'em all their stuff. I remember L.C. Edwards, he'd always order a quart of half and half, a couple times a day. He'd just down it, half and half. Half white milk, half chocolate milk, you know. Just down it upright.

**M:** So do you ever see Eddie Gong anymore?

**E:** I haven't seen Eddie in a while. He, you know, is just one of the all-time great guys. And there's a lot of those kinds of guys. Jack Peeples is one those guys that I still see some.

**M:** See, I want to get down to Miami and interview all those guys.

**E:** Yeah, Murray Dubbins' dad was a great, great guy. He was Attorney for the City of Miami.

**M:** So in the Miami area, besides Eddie Gong and Pettegrew, who would be the people that you would say would be really good to talk about your dad, about the Florida Legislature, and then also, you know –

**E:** Well, when you go to the Florida Legislature, it would be Murray Dubbin it would be Eddie Gong. Murray Dubbin is still alive. Eddie Gong would be great. I'm trying to think who else was doing it. Jack Peeples, wasn't in the legislature but he was lobbying up there then, or he was Collins' beverage, you know, worked for Leroy Collins when he was really, really young. Jack, he's great with a story, nobody can tell a story like Jack. Oh I'll think of other names.

**M:** Okay. Well, I'll get you that list and if you could add to it, I'd appreciate it. So, are there any other vivid memories of the State Legislature, before we get into the Senate race?

**E:** Well, you know, again, I mean paging, just being up there for the sessions, the campaigns. I remember the Road Bond issue. I remember the battles, some of the battles that they were fighting.

**M:** The Haydon Burns' stuff?

**E:** I remember the Haydon Burns' fights. I remember the Road Bond issue, when they fought and they stayed up until 11 or 12 o'clock at night in session trying to beat it back and what a, you know, an incredible effort that was. I remember sitting right there. I remember being very involved in the cause, kind of what they were trying to do, and then they took it on the road and beat it on the referendum, and they just didn't think that was possible. You know, I remember there was a lot of guys from Lakeland that were the, oh, the wealthy builders and the people that were very close to Burns and had a lot to gain by all of this and, you know, Dad taking 'em all on and some of that was not very popular, and whippin' 'em.

**M:** Okay, now who –

**E:** He had stuff, he had a trunk full of stuff in his car all the time and he was on the road all the time doin' it and they whipped 'em.

**M:** Okay, in that fight, let's put 'em both on one side and then the other. Who would've been on your dad's side? Who would've been the leaders on your dad's side on that fight?

**E:** Well, Boyd certainly was. I'm sure Pettegrew was probably in there. Louie de la Parte was probably in there, you know, he was a tremendous legislator and a great, great friend of Dad's, and compatriot of his. Jack (John E.) Matthews I would have thought would've been in there as well. And then on the other side, I really don't know that I remember the faces so much of the people on the other side in the legislature. And I know some of the names in the .....

**M:** Now, was it a “pork chopper” versus the young Turks issue or did people divide differently on that?

**E:** I think they were divided a little bit differently on that, but Mallory Horne would give you the chapter and verse on it, I’m sure.

**M:** Okay, looking back on things, they won the battle, they won that fight, do you think your dad really scored some political capital on that or do you think it damaged him? How do you think that played?

**E:** Oh no, I don’t think it damaged him at all, and I would assume that he probably, you know maybe, did he rise in stature a little bit on that? I don’t know. I didn’t really look at it in those terms and I don’t think he did, but maybe he did. You know, he was already, let’s see, that was in the House, yeah that was in the House, so that was probably his last, it might have been his last session in the House, so you know, maybe that was part of him moving up to the Senate. I think it’s just part of his journey.

**M:** Well, let’s go back to Lake Hollingsworth where, was it you and your mom, was your dad and your mom there at the time that he said that he was going to run for the Senate?

**E:** We were all there. Anytime there was a discussion about what was going to happen, he would bring the family together and we would all talk about it. So he included everybody. When he did, I remember being down in Fort Lauderdale when he did the Ten Dollar Campaign and he laid that one on us. Nobody was very happy about that, not Bud or I, that’s for sure. So that’s the way he did it. He would bring everybody in and everybody was around the table.

**M:** Who would have been the people in town, in Lakeland, that would’ve been some of the first people he called to tell people he was going to run for the Senate? Who would have been the first two or three people that he would have enlisted for their support?

**E:** In Lakeland, who would he have called then?

**M:** Well we can go to Lakeland then we can go other places.

**E:** Well, I suppose his law partners, you know, like Jay and George. There might have been other partners, but it wasn’t as important to get their help; you would need the support of some of his major key law partners, so J. Petersen and George Carr. And he ended up being in practice with Jay. He was in practice with George from the time that he got out of Law School. Ellsworth by then, I think he’d probably be talking to Ellsworth a lot but Ellsworth by then was making a lot of money and doing his own thing –

**M:** Real estate?

**E:** Yeah, a lot of real estate. Ellsworth was really, really active in his first campaign. I mean Ellsworth would bring the maps over every day ‘here’s what streets you’re gonna run’ and he was really driving it, he and two or three other people that were doing it. I had a file with a bunch of those notes somewhere and it was really interesting. But I’m trying to think of other people in Lakeland that were big political supporters.

**M:** Burke?

**E:** Oh absolutely, Burke Kibler would've been one, yeah, sure.

**M:** Chesterfield?

**E:** Bartow, sure, absolutely.

**M:** Okay, let's branch out beyond Lakeland, maybe even beyond Tampa Bay. Would there be anybody in Tampa Bay?

**E:** Oh absolutely! Boyd, you know and, gosh lots of people in Tampa. I remember those meetings with Victor Martinez and Elvin Martinez and former State's Attorney over there –

**M:** E.J. Salcines?

**E:** E.J. Salcines, and you know, there was the whole Latin contingent and there was the old Tampa contingent and there was the legislative bunch and, he was, from the time of being in Key Club, he was very good at –

**M:** Okay, let's branch out to Miami and, say, Alachua County and Duval County. Who were some of his closest supports up there?

**E:** Well Alachua County, it's C.B. Daniels and C.B. Daniels worked for, I'm trying to think of the fella that he worked for for a long time before C.B. took it over and was kind of the head banker, but there was another fella up there. Oh gosh, Mike, you know those names just don't come to me. There were a lot of 'em. All the University of Florida people, the old Law School contacts, you know in Miami, all of his legislative compatriots. He had quite a network.

**M:** Did he tell you the time at your house on Lake Hollingsworth, that he was going to do the walk, or was it just 'I'm running for the Senate'? Did he already have the walk in mind by that time?

**E:** No, that was what he, we knew that he was talking about running for the Senate for quite a while, but the walk was the way he was going to do that, and that was because he didn't do anything that he and my mother didn't agree that they were going to go do.

**M:** Well let's talk about your mother some in that. How do you think your mom was involved in that decision?

**E:** They made that –

**M:** It might have been her idea, you know!

**E:** In the walk?

**M:** Yeah.

**E:** Well they made decisions jointly, and a lot of the ideas, the creative ideas, came from my mother, absolutely. I mean she was his 'number one' person in politics. First and foremost from the 1959 race when she walked on one side of the street and he walked on the other

and she fashioned the campaign buttons and scripted a lot of the stuff, until the later campaigns. And she wasn't as involved in some of the later campaigns but, say, some of the second and third Senate campaigns maybe, but still involved, but not anywhere near like the old days. She was certainly very involved in the Governor's campaign, the first Governor's campaign, intimately involved, had the headquarters at the house for a while, set up all the computer programs, handled all the money so there was no problem with the money, and that was when we were doing the hundred-dollar thing and it was flying and it was not easy to keep control of, just because of the volume of it. So, and the walk came out of the idea, came out of two things. Really, it was born from not wanting to be in debt, not wanting to risk everything on a journey that might not work out. And that was because they'd seen it. They'd seen Jack Matthews end up with, I don't know it was 375,000 [dollars] but it was a lot of money back then. And how do you pay that debt off? And then what you've got to do to raise the money. So Mom said 'yeah, that's great. You wanna run, we need to do that. That's fine. But we are not going to go into bankruptcy over this. We're not going to be spending the next five years trying to dig out from under this'. So it was kind of born out of necessity. It was also born out of 'you needed a hook', you know, he had 4% name recognition. He was in the state Senate. He had a 12-year pretty distinguished career in the State Government, but who cared? I mean people in Miami didn't know that. Nobody out of Polk County knew that. And there was a five-man race there and they were running against a very entrenched incumbent that had the whole Nixon administration behind him, and so you had to find a way to differentiate yourself. And that's what he did in a way that people thought was kind of crazy. A lot of his friends will tell you they thought that was crazy at first. We certainly had questions about it, safety issues and how was he going to be perceived? And it was the thing that changed his life.

**M:** Can you remember the first time that you were on the road with him? [Do you have] any vivid memories of how that worked? What was the first time that you were out there with him walking, do you remember? It wasn't Century was it?

**E:** No, no. I think the first time I was with him was walking in Tallahassee for the session. So that would have been, maybe it took him, I don't know if it took him, it didn't take him 30 days to get there. It took him 91 days all totaled.

**M:** But you met him first right outside of Tallahassee?

**E:** It was probably outside of Tallahassee was the first time that we walked in with him. And that was quite a scene because all of his legislative friends came in and walked in with him and then walked out with him after the session, and then we brought a couple of busloads of people up there and cars and caravanned up and that was a great fun day. Me and all my friends were up there and we had a lot of fun doing it.

**M:** What was Kirk doing, just kind of hanging out, hiding out?

**E:** Kirk?

**M:** Yeah, Kirk. Wasn't Kirk Governor at that time?

**E:** Well, Kirk was Governor then, I suppose, yeah, and he was being Claude Kirk. I don't think Kirk ever hid out, he had no, he didn't have a hiding bone in his body, he just was –

**M:** All of a sudden, it just hit me, what would Claude Kirk be doing on that day? Probably nothing.

**E:** Well he was doing whatever it was he did, and doing it with style.

**M:** When was it that you thought your dad really had a chance in this thing? When did it kind of hit you that 'my dad might actually get the –

**E:** Oh I thought he had a chance all along –

**M:** From the very beginning?

**E:** Yeah, 'cause I just had seen him win so many races and he never had lost a race, you know, literally. In the first race, he ran against a guy that, you know, 'you're crazy, you'll never beat him!', Roy Surles. And then he won every other race, so I always thought he had a shot at it. I remember when Nixon came down and they had the big convention or big rally, I think it was in St. Pete, and golly, thousands of people, Nixon booming, and the cameras going and everything else, and my mom and a bunch of people at the house and 'oh, this is it', or something like that.

**M:** I guess this was after the primary, right?

**E:** This was after the primary, yeah, and I remember the talk in there and it kind of freaking me out and me running out of the house saying 'no, no, you can't lose! This can't be it' and being very upset and calling him from a phone booth and he said 'you know, don't you worry about that, that's a bunch of turkeys, they don't scare me or anything else', so I went home and I was alright. But he was great. He was fearless, you know. Even if he was maybe at times concerned, he didn't show it. My father had an incredible ability that he really taught himself, to see things that weren't as if they were. I mean, that probably is one of his greatest strengths, and it was something that was learned, that he worked at. He was a person that –

**M:** You mean an upbeat, positive attitude? Is that what you mean?

**E:** Well, I mean envisioning something that was not as if it was. If there was something that he wanted to change about himself, if there was something that he wanted to obtain, if there was something, a trait, that he wanted to have, if there was a way that he wanted to be and something that he wanted reflected in his life, man the power of positive thinking, the Emmett Fox stuff, he studied that, he envisioned things, he spent time in meditation and literally made great changes in his life by doing that. And I think the Senate was that kind of a thing. He just saw it. He saw it all along.

**M:** If we go back, just one more thing on the primary, your dad actually had a pretty good relationship with Farris, didn't he? Farris Bryant?

**E:** Well my dad was his floor manager in the House.

**M:** Yeah, that's what I've heard.

**E:** Yeah, and Farris told him he wasn't going to run. And then Dad probably wouldn't have probably gotten in, I guess, I don't know. I know Dad kind of looked at him and then Farris

came at the end of that race, and I think Dad wasn't too happy with that probably, but that's alright go ahead and still gonna win.

**M:** Also, do you remember your dad ever, if he had to pick a person that he admired most growing up, did he ever tell you that he admired so-and-so, a politician, or would there be somebody that he admired growing up, maybe –

**E:** Spessard Holland.

**M:** Spessard, okay.

**E:** Absolutely. Spessard was one. He would never have run for the Senate if Spessard was going to run. There were other people that were getting in that race, and he was always –

**M:** Do you have any idea [whether] he would've consulted with Spessard at all about the campaign?

**E:** Oh I think absolutely, yeah. You know, Spessard Holland was the consummate statesman, Polk County raised. Gosh he had been a Governor, a United States Senator, both, which is pretty rare, and prosecutor there, and just a major figure in Polk County, so I think he's somebody that Dad absolutely looked at, and probably patterned himself after a little bit.

**M:** Okay. But to your memory, Spessard really never did much at all? Did he do much at all in the campaign at all? Did he say anything? Did he say -

**E:** Oh yeah! Spessard -

**M:** 'this young guy, Lawton Chiles –

**E:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**M:** He did?

**E:** After the primary he did.

**M:** Okay, after the primary.

**E:** Yeah, yeah.

**M:** Okay, another person that ran in the primary was Fred Schultz, correct?

**E:** Sure.

**M:** What was your dad's relationship with him?

**E:** Well, they were certainly compatriots in the legislature, and I think they had a lot of respect for each other. I think probably fairly different. I mean Fred came from money and made a lot of money, and I went up to Bolles when Dad got elected and they kind of owned that school. I was a little concerned when I got up there. Got to be very good friends with both the boys. So I think they probably had, I think Dad had probably a healthy respect for

Fred. I'm not sure, and I would think Fred had it then, and if he didn't have it then he certainly had it afterwards. And I think they were good friends afterwards.

**E:** He was a very good competitor, that's for sure.

**M:** Do you remember what election night was like? Do you remember election night?

**E:** Yeah.

**M:** Where were you on election night?

**E:** At the headquarters.

**M:** Which was in –

**E:** Lakeland. South Florida Avenue.

**M:** South Florida Avenue.

**E:** Mm-hmm. Just south of the Polk Theatre. It was incredible. Dad was standing Tandyng up on a car. I remember what I was wearing. I remember who was there. I remember the room where they were in there doing the counts. I remember all the attention and the trucks and the, absolutely, remember it vividly. What an incredible night!

**M:** So what did you do the next day?

**E:** Oh I think he just kind of basked in it, you know. Dad would always say 'just give me a little time before I do anything else to just sit here and enjoy it', you know, "the moment". So I think we all probably did that.

**M:** What did you do the next couple of days, do you remember?

**E:** He took some time off. I don't know how quick, but I remember he took, he and my mom, and maybe all of us, I'm not sure where he went then. He didn't go to the woods I don't believe, but that was in November. We probably went to the woods pretty quick, yeah. But I think he and Mom probably had some time and it may have been Miami or somewhere, who knows? I'm sure there were all kinds of offers waiting for them to take a little time off. We went huntin' after that, I know that.

**M:** So did you decide after the election, did your family decide for you two boys to go to Bolles High School?

**E:** No, Bud was already in school at, where was Bud then? Bud was finishing at Hill, I guess. I had gone up and looked at that. I didn't want to be that far away. I didn't want to go to Washington, so it was 'find a school in Florida' and I found Bolles. Chesterfield Smith's son was going there. He showed me around the place, Chet, great guy, great friend. So I ended up in Bolles.

**M:** Okay. How many years were you there, the whole time?

**E:** No, I was there the second half of my tenth grade year after he went to Washington. I went into Yorktown, Virginia, to Yorktown High School, then Arlington, Virginia, my junior year, then came back and finished at Bowles my senior year.

**M:** Did your mom and the whole family move up to Washington?

**E:** Mm-hmm. Well 'whole family', Bud, it was, Tandy was in college at the time I think, and Bud was at Hill, and very quickly, yeah, I guess he was finishing at Hill and then he went to Duke.

**M:** Now did you go to college? Where did you go to college?

**E:** Started out at American University in Washington and then, lived in the dorms there, then finished at University of Florida, one year at American.

**M:** Okay. What are some of your best memories of Washington? Did you work for your dad, work with your dad? Do any of that?

**E:** No, didn't work for him. I, we worked up there for a couple of weeks one summer but I was in the Capitol all the time. I was there for the May Day and for the demonstrations that were in the early '70s. Georgetown was an incredible place to be then because it was still very much the kind of revolutionary time. I remember very much the May Day experience, of Dad walking to work that day and almost getting arrested and having the whole city, they were trying to shut down the whole city, and him walking from Georgetown to the Capitol, it was a great story.

**M:** That's a long way!

**E:** Yeah, well it was the only way to get to work that day. You weren't going to drive.

**M:** What year was that, do you remember?

**E:** '71 I believe. Yeah, well he went up, he was inaugurated in '71.

**M:** Did your dad ever, in the campaign or even right after that, did he ever stake out any specific positions on Viet Nam?

**E:** Yeah, the War Powers Act was a huge thing, and I remember the discussions around the table, and they were heated, and they were continual and they went over, for a very long period of time, and he switched his position on that and -

**M:** He started out -

**E:** That was a big dilemma.

**M:** He started out -

**E:** Started out as a Hawk and turned into a Dove.

**M:** Okay, and that would've been '70, '71, '72?

**E:** Mm-hmm.

**M:** Did he ever confide in you about the Nixon situation, what he thought about it? Or did he keep those things pretty close?

**E:** No, we talked politics all the time. And we talked around the table, and everywhere. And he and I talked politics a lot. No, he didn't confide anything. He was very troubled by it.

**M:** Did he express any personal observations of Nixon [or] on Nixon's situation?

**E:** Yeah, I think he did. I don't think he was a, certainly wasn't a Nixon supporter. But I think that was an interesting time, you know, when it was Nixon versus McGovern he wasn't a McGovern supporter. That was not somebody that he was going to really put his arm around either because he just, McGovern was too liberal and Florida was too conservative.

**M:** So that must've been tough. It must've been tough for all the Democrats at that time.

**E:** I guess it probably was, yeah, considering \_\_\_the challenges.

**M:** So in the early years, the first couple of years, he was feeling his way through the Senate, trying to learn things.

**E:** Absolutely. He was very studious. He would bring home literally stacks of stuff that he would go through, every single night he'd spend three or four hours in his chair studying, studying, studying.

**M:** Who were the first people that he really got to meet and to know in the Senate in the first term, would you say, that he really enjoyed being with and learning from?

**E:** Oh he had a great group there that he was very close to. When he got close to 'em I'm not sure, but you know, Mark Hatfield and Ted Stevens and, Sam Nunn came in after Dad but Sam was probably his closest –

**M:** Ted Stevens is still up there, isn't he?

**E:** Yeah, Ted Stevens is still up there. They had a prayer group that they were very bonded with, Republicans and Democrats. Now that maybe was a little later. Nunn was his closest friend in the Senate. Mike Mansfield really took Dad under his wing, as did Ed Muskie, but Mansfield was Majority Leader then and was somebody that Dad learned a lot from and spent time with. Ed Muskie, you know, they started the Budget Committee. They authorized that act that passed the legislation and then Dad was kind of the "water carrier" for Muskie on that committee and did all those, did a lot of the leg work for it and all, and eventually became Chair of the committee. I'd have to look through the portrait to see; I know there was a lot of, in the early days there was a lot of camaraderie. You know, we had parties and Mom would have these great parties and all the senators would come over. Then later on we did things at Florida House, and it got to be less and less.

**M:** Now how soon was it before your mom got into the Florida House situation?

**E:** Not long. I mean, I think the idea was germinated about, almost when she arrived because of her experiences when we all went up there as kids and took the camper up as a

family and had the kind of griswold to go to Washington. So she, I think, started working on that pretty quickly and they, somebody bought it out from under 'em and then they ended up having to pay a premium, which turned out to be kind of chicken feed in the scope of things, relatively speaking in today's prices not too long after that and certainly today. And that was another one of those things she was going to do and by gosh she did it.

**M:** Did you have a chance to meet any of your dad's Senate colleagues, interact with them?

**E:** All of 'em. Yeah, all of 'em.

**M:** Yeah. Did you go hunting with them, or did you do things –

**E:** Hunted with some of 'em, yeah, we'd go on some trips and hunt with them or we'd just go, some of 'em would come down here. Not only his colleagues but people like Jim Baker who he was close to, and do a lot of stuff with Nunn, Pete Dominici, Dale from Arkansas, Dale –

**M:** Bumpers?

**E:** Dale Bumpers.

**M:** So they would come here?

**E:** What am I thinking now that, the younger, no not Bumpers, Dale Bumpers too, but the younger senator from Arkansas?

**M:** Pryor?

**E:** Dale, David Pryor

**M:** Yeah.

**E:** Great guy! Great friend of Dad's. Sasser was always funny. Jim, Lloyd Bentzen and Dad, very close. I think they might have gone in together and that would've probably been one of those initial people that he stayed very close to. Marlo Cook, was a Republican that was appointed and then I think ran for the seat, great guy. He lives down here now. So there were, yeah, you meet 'em all. Byrd. You'd just be in the Capitol with 'em so you'd always be introduced and, Hubert Humphrey. I remember Hubert Humphrey very well. Met Humphrey one time and then saw him a couple weeks later and the guy called my name in an elevator, knew who I was, which was just, I mean, just had me just spellbound that he could do that. And I heard that about him, but to experience that was really something. Remarkable guy! Just his face and his skin, his persona and his aura, really a remarkable guy. Ted Kennedy. You know a lot of those guys were pretty impressive.

**M:** Yeah. This is great! I'm glad. Really good stuff here. Now your dad suffered a heart attack during his time in the Senate, didn't he?

**E:** No, never had a heart attack. He had some chest, actually he was hunting in Colorado and he experienced some difficulty in altitude, and I think that's what caused him then when he got back to go get checked, or maybe he was doing some stairs or something. He was always very physically active. He always stayed in good shape. He always was very

disciplined about his exercise, and so he went and got checked, and his heart was all clogged up and they said 'we're gonna bypass ya' and that was 1978 maybe? 1980? No, no. It wasn't –

**M:** '82 is what I thought.

**E:** Yeah, maybe it was '82.

**M:** I just had that down here. Did he have that done in Lakeland?

**E:** Had it done in Lakeland.

**M:** What do you think your dad liked the best about being a senator?

**E:** I think he liked the legislative, the collegiality of the legislative process was something that he liked, and it was something that he was really disappointed when that started to fragment and fall apart. And it was something that ultimately caused him to want to leave the Senate, part of all of that when he got so "turned off", literally depressed, the whole budget process, the deficits, being at the pinnacle of his career too was critical. So I think that collegiality of the legislative process was something he enjoyed. He loved the battle, the process of the battle, the struggle of putting it together.

**M:** Presenting it?

**E:** Bringing it all, getting it hemmed in. You know the "herding cattle" kind of, you've got, one of 'em's out here, you gotta go round 'im up and you gotta go round up another one, you gotta keep 'em all together. I know he would always love the process in the budget where he would think he had the budget done to that time, I don't know after where he got all, every Democratic senator to vote for it. And that was one of those very sweet times that he said 'you've gotta just stop and leave me alone for a little bit, just give me a little bit of time to savor this', so I think he enjoyed that process a lot.

**M:** By the '80s, he challenged Robert Byrd –

**E:** That's right.

**M:** For the leadership, is that correct?

**E:** Yep.

**M:** Was that '86? '84, '85, something like that?

**E:** Well, maybe '84, I mean he was out in '88, so it could've been '86, could've been '84.

**M:** Okay, before that, though, can you point to, if he was sitting here today, could you point to a time or an event, or maybe even the election of Ronald Reagan, or whatever, where that collegiality really began to rupture? Was there an event, or a time, or an election –

**E:** No, I don't think there was an event that happened. I think it was, it probably, if there was a cause, I think he would say that maybe it was the money in politics, how expensive it got to run races, and the influences therein. You know, when you had all the independent groups

already coming in, and then you were getting attacked like crazy from the right or you were attacked from the left, and you had all of these people raising this money and pouring money into campaigns and then most of the senators had to be on the phone a couple of hours a day for so many days a month, so many months a year, and the collegiality, I mean, I know the thing that had him run against Byrd, I think I know, was kind of the breakdown in that collegiality in the club. I mean, Dad always believed very much in the institution of the Senate, in kind of the, they always said it was the most exclusive club in the world, and to Dad, a club where there was a bond with people and he saw that bond breaking down.

**M:** Bipartisanship?

**E:** Yes, bipartisanship and even the Democrats bonding with the Democrats, spending time together. I know the long hours in the Senate, of not being able to have time with your family, and votes long into the night, and all of that. [Those] were the kinds of things that he was concerned about. That's what he talked about in the caucus. He talked about 'if this is a club, then my definition of a club is wrong, it's faulty'. Wanting that, we would run the Senate in such a way that you could have time for your family, that you did know what was coming up, that we made time to get together with each other, that we weren't all just 'the Super Senators over here' and 'these senators over here' and everybody disperate and doing their own thing. And that's what he was concerned with, I think as much as anything else and I'm sure there [were] other things too but –

**M:** Now what were the dynamics?

**E:** But was to try to bring that back together, that collegiality.

**M:** What were the dynamics, in your opinion, moving away from that, what were the dynamics at work?

**E:** Well, as I said, I think the money was big. I think that probably some of the egos that were involved, and it was the days of the Super Senators, you know; there was more bitterness that came into the process. A lot of that bitterness came in because of the right takin' their hits and the left takin' their hits. That was something that disappointed him and bothered him. No question about it.

**M:** As best you can remember it, if you're willing to go back to that, that challenge for the leadership, who were the main backers of him in that and who were the ones that were primarily addressing that situation? Or were concerned –

**E:** Well, Nunn certainly was one of his big backers in that. I suppose Lloyd was, I don't remember that clearly. I remember David Pryor being very concerned and knowing when Dad called what he was calling about.

**M:** Do you have a sense that they came to him with that or that he was the leader in –

**E:** No, he stepped out on it. Now there may have been some people talking to him too, but, you know, that was when the Democrat Leadership Council was getting ginned up. Remember there was a big meeting in the DLC that was, and Dad was one of the three people that kind of started that. And that was the concern, too, that the Party was moving too far to the left and that there had to be a center where people could still feel comfortable.

**M:** Let's talk about that a little bit. That obviously was a concern for your dad, all the way through, particularly by the time he was thinking about running for Governor, is the switchovers, the Party switchovers. Did he ever express frustration to you about that situation, maybe some of his old friends in Lakeland, like Bob Waters or somebody like that saying 'now you're way too far to the left' –

**E:** Oh, Bobby Waters, that's a great one to bring up. That's the guy that just, yeah, Bobby Waters would just give him holy hell.

**M:** Yeah, right. I've interviewed Bob Waters.

**E:** Oh, I think Dad knew where he was. I think he was probably frustrated that some of his friends, and you know some of his friends were pretty narrow-minded, that would be charitable to say some of 'em were narrow-minded. But they also reflected the very conservative background of what they'd been brought up in in Lakeland, in Polk County in general. We've seen Polk County get even more conservative. So they were the early ones to probably switch and to stay Democrat but vote Republican early, and then become Republicans. But no, they used to give him holy hell. I mean Panama Canal vote, or it might have been a tax thing or whatever, and blistering. You know? And I think that would bother him for a little bit, not too long.

**M:** Do you get a sense of a lot of those people just sayin' 'aw the hell with it, I'm still votin' for Lawton no matter what'?

**E:** The great majority of them did. Yeah. And then there were some that would turn their backs on him. And that was alright too. That was their right to do so.

**M:** How much do you think, in your opinion, this is your own opinion, how much do you think race comes into all of this? How much do you think the Civil Rights Movement and –

**E:** Well, I think it's underlying behind a lot of it. And it doesn't get –

**M:** In other words the Democrats –

**E:** It didn't get voiced much.

**M:** The Democrats are lovin' up.....

**E:** Absolutely, absolutely. And especially out of Polk County. You see, the Democrats, the Liberals –

**M:** The Liberals.

**E:** Yeah, you know, the Ted Kennedys, or the welfare state –

**M:** Yeah, 'they're givin' all our tax dollars to the blacks' –

**E:** Johnson's Great Society, absolutely. Sure.

**M:** And that's why I think that's why your dad's so interesting. Because he comes out of that background but yet he is able to –

**E:** Well he was a cracker.

**M:** Sure.

**E:** And that's who he was, but yet he was progressive.

**M:** Well I think we're moving along real well here. And I don't have my watch, so you let me know when you need to cut with this.

**E:** Yeah, I'm okay.

**M:** Would you say that challenge for the leadership was really kind of a crescendo of your dad's, or a climax of your dad's thinking in the Senate? Not too long afterwards, do you think he began to think 'well I've done pretty much all I can do here'?

**E:** No, not if that was '82 or '84.

**M:** Yeah.

**E:** No, I think that only happened, 'I've pretty much done all I can do here', it escalated pretty quickly. I mean he didn't go through more than about a year of that.

**M:** Okay, well let's go back then to the leadership on the Budget Committee. He was certainly instrumental in trying to hold back the tide of spending.

**E:** Yep.

**M:** And that must have been mighty frustrating.

**E:** Well it was. And it was also, it would concern everybody in his, I mean when you talked to Rick Farrell, talk to Rick about that, the concern about Dad getting on the Sunday news shows and talking about putting caps on Social Security, changing the COLA, Cost of Living Adjustment, or changing the age and things, about that. God, it would just send 'em into apoplexy. They could just see the campaign commercials. You know? That was heresy for a Democrat to say that. But yet it was what needed to happen. Medicaid, you had to make some changes. I mean he knew where the major issues were, that were eatin' our lunch and that were growing much faster than our ability to maintain them, and he was frank about talking about 'em.

**M:** Now, did he ever talk to you about, by that time, you were pretty old, did he ever talk to you about his opinion of Ronald Reagan?

**E:** Yeah. He was no fan of Ronald Reagan. I mean I think he appreciated his ability to communicate, but you know he abhorred his arithmetic. I mean Dad and Domenici worked very, very close together. Dad and Domenici were great, great friends and stayed great friends, through some tough times, because when it was Pete running the committee, Dad was doing everything he could to help him, and when Dad was running the committee, Pete wasn't doing much to help him, in fact not helping him at all in a lot of those things. And that's the way the Republicans lined up. Well Dad saw that as what it was, and I think it

probably strained the relationship at points, but they still remained very, very close friends, very close friends. They had quite a bond. Dad went to Pete's deathbed.

**M:** Now help me remember, when did the Democrats lose the leadership in the Senate? What year? Was that '86?

**E:** Let's see, they lost the leadership in the Senate in Clinton's, well no, that's before –

**M:** I mean in the '80s, when your dad was there.

**E:** Yeah, in the '80s.

**M:** He would have been Chair of the Budget Committee in what year, I guess, and then lost it what year?

**E:** He was not Chair of the Budget Committee. He left as Chair of the Budget Committee, and I don't believe he ever lost the Chair of the Budget Committee. Domenici was Chair of the Budget Committee and when the Democrats came back into power, then Dad became Chair of the Budget Committee.

**M:** Okay, and that would've been about '86?

**E:** I suppose so.

**M:** Yeah, okay. Well I can check that out. Okay. When was it –

**E:** And I remember being on trips with Domenici and Dad, went bass fishing down in Central Florida, and Domenici was on the phone to Stockman and the budget deals were going on and they were kind of doing it all on their own and Domenici knew the numbers didn't add up, you know? Then they would come back to the table and kind of rail about it and all of that. But they were following their line, that's what they did, so I think, yeah, I don't think he was a fan of Reagan's, again because he knew the numbers didn't add up. He knew you couldn't cut the taxes and build up Defense like crazy and do a minor cut in domestic programs and expect that to add up. It didn't add up. It was a big negative, as we saw later.

**M:** Well the hocus-pocus even now is 'it doesn't matter', you know, 'it doesn't seem to matter'.

**E:** Yeah. But it does matter. And it mattered, and Dad knew it did matter.

**M:** Yeah. So, running through '85, '86, summarize what you were doing back in those years, during that time, were you in college by that time?

**E:** No, I was out of college in '79. I was working here.

**M:** Okay, so let's go into your business career here for a little bit. After college, you came back here. Right after here?

**E:** Went to Joe's Stone Crab and worked for a year. Dad talked to me about getting into the restaurant business after I had gotten out of school. I didn't know what I was going to do. I might have done something in real estate. I had a Political Science Degree; that wasn't

going to make me earn a paycheck. I thought about coming over here, doing something in real estate, and he talked to me. He had a good friend in Washington that was a restaurateur. They played tennis together all the time. He talked to me about did I want to do something in the restaurant business. Dad had done the first four Red Lobsters. That's what really allowed him to be in the Senate, was the money that he made.

**M:** Did Bill Ellsworth pull a lot of that together for him?

**E:** Bill Ellsworth and Dad did that, yeah. Dad was initially very, very involved in it, and then Ellsworth ran it from the time that Dad got into the Senate. Dad didn't do anything but just cash the checks. Ellsworth did all the –

**M:** And the first restaurants were in –

**E:** Lakeland, Daytona, St. Pete, and Tampa are the four stores, I believe.

**M:** Okay.

**E:** And that was an exciting time. Again that goes to Dad as a risk-taker, just like his political career was about risks. He was a heck of a businessman for a lawyer. He was not afraid of risk. He never was afraid of risk. And they stepped out on that and were the first ones that were done. They were not the operators. They were dealing with the guys from Gary's Duck Inn –

**M:** I grew up in Orlando so I know -

**E:** Woodsby's, and Joe Lee and those guys. So they did the first four, built one at a time. I remember he borrowed money from my maid to do it, as well as everybody else. I think he had, I don't know, five thousand dollars in it or something in cash.

**M:** Was that '68, '69 when that came along?

**E:** That was '68, yes. I think they were building the first one in '68 and if you look back in that brochure from that one, they're sitting out on the car with plans and that was one of the pictures in the campaign brochure. So he had always thought about being more vertically integrated into the business. You know, everybody would like to own a restaurant. So he talked to me about it. He had talked to his restaurant friend about it. This is where we had grown up. This was the area we were looking at. His restaurant friend said 'hey, send him to work for a year in a restaurant. If he still wants to do it after that then we'll talk about it. I'm not going to take any chance on some wet-behind-the-ears kid'.

**M:** So you did it.

**E:** So I went to Joe's, had a great experience at Joe's, just loved it, still have friends down there that are still there working in the kitchen. And came up here.

**M:** Now Joe's?

**E:** Joe's Stone Crab in Miami.

**M:** Oh, no kidding? Oh yeah. Oh wow!

**E:** Yeah, I worked at Joe's.

**M:** That's a famous place!

**E:** Yeah, famous place. I can still get in.

**M:** So you would've had a lot of fun there.

**E:** I had a lot of fun there. My brother used to represent some pretty big clients and he would, he'd say 'you want to go to Joe's'. Edward Ackerman, like the head of Pan Am, and he'd say 'I'm not goin' to Joe's. I don't wait anywhere', you know, '30 minutes much less an hour and a half' and Bud would say 'well I can get you in' and he'd say 'well nobody can get into Joe's, what do you mean you can get me in' and he said 'well I can get you in'. Well he wouldn't tell him that his brother was washing dishes, working in the kitchen, and that's how he was getting in, and he'd slip in. Bud would always come into the kitchen and grab something to eat back there where I was, 'cause I worked right in front of where they cracked the stone crabs and did all the oysters and clams and lobsters and the grilled tomatoes and stuff. So he'd always come in when he was by himself or with friends, but if he was with a big client, he'd never come in and see me. He didn't want to act like his brother was in the kitchen. So I did that for a year then came up here and took over and worked different parts of the operation for six months. They had a manager in here, and then I took it over and made every mistake in the world once and some of 'em twice and had great partners in Dad and Wilbur Boyd. And Dennis Fectau was the fella' from Washington. He came out pretty quick. We had some cash calls in the first year or two or so and he, so he got out and it was just Dad and I and Wilbur and they were great partners. And I bought Wilbur out and then I was partners with Dad until he died.

**M:** So that would've been '85, '86 when all that was going on?

**E:** Well, after '79 until Dad died.

**M:** So you've been here –

**E:** Since '79.

**M:** Doing this since '79.

**E:** Sand Bar since '79, the Mar Vista since '89, Beach House since '93.

**M:** Okay. When was it that you began to see that your dad was really beginning to get tired of this Senate deal and he was going to, he was thinking about getting out? Did it come all of a sudden? Or was it –

**E:** It came fairly quickly. I mean I guess it was all the budget stuff. He got so frustrated with that and you could watch him age, it was a very tough time, and see him go into depression, you know, kind of shrink actually, and then you know he had to go out and put on the face and I was always just amazed at how he was able to do that, because I was just wondering how he could go any further. And then the campaign, he was very kind of ambivalent about the campaign. I remember a bunch of discussions with Dad –

**M:** You mean the upcoming campaign, the '88 campaign?

**E:** The upcoming campaign, the '88 campaign. Here he was, the pinnacle of power, and 'how could you let this go' and 'you're so important to Florida' and 'you're so important to the nation' and I think he knew inside that that was a bunch of hooey.

**M:** But you saw that he just lost the fire and ability to run again?

**E:** He lost the fire and the ability to run again. We sat in the kitchen over here in the living room and we had long discussions about it, and we finally, and I was trying to rouse him to the battle, you know, trying to kind of fire him up. And we finally decided we were going to go back out on the road again. And he kind of came to that, so we went back out and I went with him. And we just drove up. We started just like he started the first time, with very little fanfare. There were a couple of reporters there maybe one or two and started walking again. And in that process, and I was with him that whole time until he said 'I don't want to do this anymore' and it was the right thing to do.

**M:** Now let's see, the election would've been in November if it would've gone over and this would've been, gosh, this would've been around Christmas maybe or in the spring?

**E:** Maybe in the spring. It seems like. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

**M:** Did he ever talk about 'well if I'm not running what am I goin' to do, just gonna retire'? What did he –

**E:** No, he wasn't going to retire.

**M:** Did he say what he might want to do?

**E:** He talked about maybe doing something with teaching. That was something that he was interested in. We were going to do stuff with business, you know. We were going to have fun doing that. So that was great. He always had good ideas in that regard and you know a lot of stuff that he could do. He wanted to start a water company and golly I wish we had pursued that.

**M:** You mean bottled water?

**E:** Bottled water.

**M:** He saw that?

**E:** Yeah, yeah. Absolutely.

**M:** 'This is something that's really gonna take off'.

**E:** Yeah, and early.

**M:** And boy did it ever!

**E:** The other thing he wanted to do was maybe go out and buy some citrus groves, so one of 'em would've done great and the other one would've –

**M:** You would have been on the cusp of that water thing -

**E:** Oh, we'd have been early.

**M:** That was about the time that all of that just -

**E:** Yeah, like Zephyrhills water. Yeah, we would've been early. And we had all the, of course the connections and everything else, but we had the springs. We could've done that and we probably wouldn't have to work anymore. You know Dad too, when he got out, he was going to look into doing some things in Latin America. That was a big specialty of his in the Senate.

**M:** Yeah, Bill, Bill Ellsworth talked about that a little bit.

**E:** Yeah. He liked it. He was very well respected down there.

**M:** Talk about that a little bit.

**E:** Well he made Latin America his specialty. When he went in the Senate, he wanted to have a specialty and Latin America was going to be his. He studied Spanish, he had a tutor, and he traveled a lot there, and he just became a student of it, and the developing democracies down there, and he saw the burgeoning market, how that populace was coming along and how the economies were coming along and how important they would be to Florida and to the country. So that was what he carved out -

**M:** Where did he enjoy traveling most in Latin America? Did he have connections down there?

**E:** I know we went to Panama after he died and they gave him, posthumously gave him a big medal and all the people talked about what he had done down there supporting the forces against Noriega and how important he'd been. Costa Rica I think he liked a lot. You know he was in Honduras where he got shot down with a helicopter with Bennett Johnston from Louisiana. So I think that Central America, Latin America, some in South America, Venezuela -

**M:** Now what was his attitude on Cuba? Was it pretty much mainstream? Or do you think he was -

**E:** Yeah, I think it was pretty much mainstream.

**M:** Do you think he would have been -

**E:** He thought Cuba was going to turn during his governorship and that would've been, god, how much fun that would've been.

**M:** So would you say he was as hard-line on Cuba as Graham would've been or a little less hard-line?

**E:** No, I think he was probably very similar.

**M:** About the same?

**E:** Yeah.

**M:** Okay. So he left the Senate. Did he come back here to live?

**E:** He left the Senate and came back here to live, yep. And he goes and takes the Leroy Collins Center at the University of Florida, teaches in Gainesville. We bought a plane, Bud and I and he, together. I did it basically because of them and him; it moved him around, a little Malibu that flew him around. And yeah, he was happy and we had time and hunted and enjoyed ourselves and yeah, I think it was a good time.

**M:** Now before he decided not to run again, the Republicans had already put up –

**E:** Connie Mack.

**M:** Connie Mack, correct. Do you remember anything that came up in that campaign in the pre-campaign, kind of conflicts or controversies that may have been unsettling to him?

**E:** Well, the marijuana issue was right around there.

**M:** Yeah, can we talk about that a little bit?

**E:** Oh yeah, I was in the room you know when the question got asked 'cause it got asked to somebody. It started somewhere else, you know, and then it, so it was fair game.

**M:** Where was this?

**E:** We were in Washington.

**M:** In Washington.

**E:** We were in Washington. And I knew he'd smoked marijuana 'cause he told me about it, I think like twice or something. And I said 'you didn't smoke marijuana. You ain't sayin' you smoked marijuana? You didn't get high? You don't get high the first couple times you smoke? You didn't do it', alright, 'look at me! You didn't do it. You're not gonna say you did it. You didn't. It ain't a lie', 'they're makin' you lie' you know. They just beat on him. And he said 'no, I did it and I'm not lying about it' and I said 'yeah you are', you know 'yes you are! You're not gonna allow them to use this' tada tada tada. Every –

**M:** So you knew, you knew this was coming.

**E:** Every good rational normal reason.

**M:** In other words you knew this was coming.

**E:** Oh I was there. I was there in the room. And he said, to his credit 'screw it, I did it, I'm not lying about it, if they ask me if I did it, I'm telling them I did it'. Well I was just beside myself. You know I smoke marijuana, you know, I know about marijuana. You don't know nothing about marijuana. And he did it. God bless him, you know. He did it. He did the right thing.

**M:** Now help me remember, isn't it true that they had gotten on Mack about that, Connie Mack about that?

**E:** Well afterwards.

**M:** Isn't that how it happened? I mean, somebody had asked Connie Mack -

**E:** Oh maybe it was. Maybe Connie was, yeah, first. And that was even more reason to say that he didn't do it, you know.

**M:** Yeah.

**E:** Maybe it was.

**M:** And so that was -

**E:** I thought it had happened somewhere else first.

**M:** And so your dad coming along, basically -

**E:** That's exactly what it was.

**M:** It was an issue breaker.

**E:** No, that's exactly right.

**M:** Once your dad says 'oh yeah', fine, you know, whatever. 'Connie might have, I might have'.

**E:** Oh yeah.

**M:** Then nobody's even talking it about it anymore.

**E:** No, no, it's gone. The issue is over.

**M:** That's not going to be an issue anymore.

**E:** Issue is over. The issue was over.

**M:** And everybody just forgot about it.

**E:** That's exactly right. He saved Connie.

**M:** Yeah. That's the way I've heard it.

**E:** Yeah, that's exactly right, that's exactly right.

**M:** I just wanted you to help me remember -

**E:** No, that's exactly right. I was thinking it started somewhere else, and it may have started somewhere else and then went to Connie, but I guess it went to Connie; maybe it started with Connie.

**M:** Now did your dad have any role at all, play any role in Buddy MacKay's campaign against Connie Mack? Do you remember if your dad campaigned for Buddy?

**E:** Oh hell yeah. He played a role. He worked like hell for Buddy. Yeah. Went up in those condos and went all around for him. You bet he did.

**M:** Did you go with him? Did you help too?

**E:** Very little. Very little.

**M:** Well that was a heartbreaker for Buddy MacKay, that's for sure.

**E:** Heartbreaker. Buddy had a couple of heartbreakers. Well that was "the" heartbreaker because Buddy, 'you're a Senator', you know. Yeah, that was tough.

**M:** So summarize the two years between leaving the Senate and then, how did it happen?

**E:** Well I think they were refreshing, you know he came out of the Depression, he just got himself really well grounded again, he was enjoying teaching, he enjoyed the stuff at the Collins Center. You know he did a lot of the causes that were still so important to him, the prenatal issues, the maternal health issues, the governmental issues, integrity in government and things like that. Those were things that he got to work on. You know he had time and I think it probably was a very refreshing time for him.

**M:** Now when was it that you heard or found out or intuition told you that he was going to run for Governor?

**E:** He was talking to me right along and I could see it building, and his concern –

**M:** Did people come to him?

**E:** About what was going on? Oh people came to him all the time, but that wasn't, you know, that could never motivate him. That was, 'cause he was the name that could beat Martinez hands down, any poll, you know, Mac Stipanovich would say 'now if you told me Lawton Chiles was thinkin' about runnin' then maybe we'd get a little worked up' but you know, nobody else scared him. Nelson was really not going anywhere. But you know it really wasn't about Nelson not going anywhere. I think the things that concerned Dad were about where Nelson was going. And Nelson tried to adjust there at the very end, but the issues that Dad knew were very, very important weren't getting talked about, and that was all the early stuff. That was all the preventive stuff, and Bill had the space thing and the "this technology" and the "that technology" and none of that made a hill of difference in terms of the kind of situation that Florida saw and how it was going to correct its defects and get things straightened out that would take a long period of time. And that was starting from the front end, and that's what his, at that point 18 and 12, 30 years of professional public service had taught him, had shown him.

**M:** And that was a tough situation for the Democratic Party with Nelson you know going out there for so long, working up to run for Governor and –

**E:** Well it probably was for the Party. There were probably some conflicts, absolutely. But it was just, it was like you lit a match and set off a huge fire as soon as he got in that race. I mean, the race totally changed and energized the heck out of the race –

**M:** Right, I was reading clips on that.

**E:** And it was very, very exciting. You know, there was a little tough time and Nelson came out real hard trying to attack and to cut down, which is what all the strategists need to tell you to do, and that wasn't going to be good for anybody and you had to endure that, that was alright. You know, Dad knew, win or lose, that it was going to be a great thing for everybody. That's the way he approached it and he told Nelson that 'look this'll be the best thing that ever happened to you no matter what happens, you're gonna learn, you're gonna grow'. You know, I guess he knew he was gonna beat him.

**M:** Now Buddy MacKay, how instrumental was Buddy MacKay in that decision to run, do you think, for your dad?

**E:** Very instrumental. No question about it.

**M:** They went back a long, long time.

**E:** Oh, they were, yeah you know, when you go back again to the compatriots and the legislative process, Buddy came along a little bit later, he was younger, but Buddy was, you know, a hell of a senator and a hell of a State Representative and –

**M:** And he was in Congress when your dad was in the Senate, too, correct?

**E:** He was in Congress when Dad was in the Senate and he was very involved on the budget matters, yeah. And I remember where I was, maybe I was at the house or maybe I was here, and a discussion about, Dad called me up and, and exactly, that was the moment that it was going to happen and what was said about it and the discussion that he'd had, and it was a moment I'll never forget.

**M:** He told you that he was going to run with Buddy?

**E:** Told me exactly what was going to happen. Told me exactly kind of how it had come about and the phone call that had happened that put him over the tipping point.

**M:** With Buddy?

**E:** With Buddy.

**M:** Do you have any memories of that campaign? What did Martinez and DeFoor do? What were their -

**E:** They just tried like hell to keep their campaign together and Chiles' was, you know, they just ran for their lives. I mean they were running against a legend, you know. They were running against a powerhouse, a guy that had all the people behind him and people were fed

up and you know Martinez had suffered the service tax issue and they just did everything they could to, bless their hearts, you know, to try to run against this guy. They tried to raise money and Dad was doing the hundred dollar thing, and that was, you know, the greatest thing that ever happened because it got you so much involvement with so many people that there were stakeholders and went out and, by God, they'd given you the maximum amount and it was just a grassfire. That '70 campaign and the first Governor's campaigns were the two most exciting campaigns, two of the most exciting campaigns in Florida history, I think, and certainly the two big campaigns in Lawton Chiles' life, and they were fun to be around. I mean it was, those were, a lot of campaigns were tough and grueling. The second Governor's campaign, no fun. The first Governor's campaign, God what a great time that was. How incredible that was. There was spirit behind that campaign.

**M:** When your dad was elected, what were some of the first things that you remember he tried to accomplish and tried to do?

**E:** Well, it was really to change, I think first it was to change the morale of State government. Those people had been beat down and he went and personally visited every single one of the agencies and talked to all the people, and told them that they were valued. And he started with you know 'we're gonna go work at the front end again' and 'we're gonna care about mothers and children' and 'we're gonna be investing in our people'. And now they had the terrible budget situation that he had inherited so it was tough times, very, very tough times, cutting things. And you had to do the cuts before you could come in behind them and try to lay on the stuff, the increases, which they weren't always successful in doing. But they had to make the cuts on the front end. But I think it was about building morale and I think it was about changing the focus, very much about changing the focus, and I think they pretty successfully did that.

**M:** In 1992, the big presidential election, the Bill Clinton election, do you remember your dad having any opinions on Bill Clinton? Did they know each other? Did they interact together?

**E:** Yeah, they did. They knew each other as governors and, you know I don't know that Dad was all that impressed with Clinton. I think he worked hard for him, but I know he became very impressed with him, because Clinton was a hell of a President for him. When Florida needed something, Clinton came through every time. You know, when Dad needed him, he got him on the phone in a minute's notice. Clinton always came down. They got very close. And Dad had very high respect for him.

**M:** Now I'm trying to remember, did Clinton run right out of being Governor or would he have been out for a while?

**E:** No he was Governor when he ran, I believe.

**M:** Okay.

**E:** He was in one term and then he was out, you know when he lost, and then I think it was five terms after that.

**M:** Five terms, yeah. How did things change, I guess in '92 when Clinton became President? You got a Democrat in the Whitehouse and your dad's Governor. Things went a lot better obviously.

**E:** Yeah, that was great. But I think at the same time that was when the Republicans won the Senate, I believe, so you know you had to shift and you weren't able to kind of put through what you wanted to put through anymore, and Ander Crenshaw was running the Senate and was very much kind of anti-tax, conservative, all of that, so you had to work a lot harder to get kind of anything done and they didn't want to give Dad anything 'cause they didn't want him re-elected again, so you had all that political crap that you had to deal with. So, you know, that's just, that was what it was. Dad understood that and he worked with it.

**M:** Now in '94, you just mentioned that '94 was a bad, bad scene all the way around. The '94 campaign.

**E:** Well it was a tough campaign.

**M:** John Ellis was out there. John Ellis. Bush is out there. What did your dad think of Jeb Bush?

**E:** He thought he was a neophyte. Thought he could get up and talk about everything but he had really no real idea of what the situation was in Florida –

**M:** And very little experience.

**E:** Very little experience. You know, he was running on name, hadn't earned it, didn't have the political background, didn't have the public service background, didn't have any you know, hadn't been anything, hadn't been elected anything.

**M:** The '94 campaign would've been a campaign where the switchover issue and everything turned Republican in Florida would've been really tough in that campaign, even in that sweep seems to me really would've been pervasive.

**E:** Well he was the only Governor left at the end of that. You lost California to Wilson. You lost Texas with Richardson. You lost New York with Cuomo to Patakie, so when you looked out at the big redwoods, every one of 'em fell, except Florida, and that was pretty amazing. I mean that what we were fighting was this incredible shift and the reaction to the, you know you lost the Congress. I mean that was the –

**M:** '94 was the worst –

**E:** One of the largest turnovers ever, if not "the" largest. Clinton was devastated. I mean, you remember the days after that, devastated. And the fact that Dad pulled that out, now that was probably the greatest victory. Worst campaign but the greatest victory.

**M:** What did you think when you heard your dad's he-coon comment in the debate? What did you think?

**E:** Well I'd been on the debate preparation team for, with him.

**M:** Were you there?

**E:** Oh I was there. I'd spent, I don't know two weeks with him before that and they had all of these people. They were gonna do all of this preparation and you know, and I'm kind of in charge of it 'cause I'm the one person that can tell him what he doesn't want to hear and

dadadadada. And it was a joke, because he's gonna do it like he wants to do it and he ended up kind of writing out his stuff longhand. I remember when Ron Sachs had this guy, a great guy, great media guy, brought him into the Capitol Hill, Dad wouldn't even come down from the Residence. The guy just, we sat around for an hour and a half and waited for him to come down and finally 'he ain't comin' down'. If he wanted to play possum, he would play possum.

**M:** So they got the press but he didn't really care about the press.

**E:** So he really, yeah, he prepared himself. He was not really able to prepare him that way. That's not who he was. He was kind of from a different time or whatever, and you weren't going to get him in front of there and coach him and try to package him, and I guess he innately knew that that was not what he should do. And everybody believed, 'cause that's "the conventional thing to do", 'well that's what we need to be doing'. Well that wasn't what we needed to be doing. And he wouldn't scream and holler at us, he would just very quietly not do it. And it was frustrating. It was damn frustrating. And then we went down to –

**M:** So you were thinking that they might've been right and he might've been wrong.

**E:** Oh! I was thinking he needed the coaching! Because we weren't doing well in this, and the first debate didn't go well. And you know 'let's try that!'. Sure, 'let's get your talking points when you're up there and you're ready and you've got the answers for these things', absolutely! And then we went down to Tampa to the Marriott for the last two days and we sat in that room there and Krog and I, and I guess Peebles came in and it was very guarded and Dad would stay in the back bedroom and sleep, and wouldn't come out, to do what we thought we were kind of to do then. We'd kind of send stuff in and I remember he was back there with legal pads and he would write. He would just write out things. Write out kind of the way he felt about things. And what he was doing was, in his inimitable style, he was building his righteous indignation about, you know, 'how dare you come on without a –

**M:** This kid, this rich kid –

**E:** Slogan eering and your, you know, shallow perceptions and ideas and pandering and all that and 'how dare you?' and that's what he built up.

**M:** And that came through in the debate.

**E:** And that's what came through in the debate. When we came in that second debate, there was never any coaching about 'come out in front of the podium'. There was never any, you know, 'move around' or do that. That was all Lawton Chiles. Nobody else. Not a bit of me or a coach or anything else. It was just him. And then when he came out with the he-coon thing, I was sitting right next to Buddy on the front row. I remember going in. I remember every bit of it. I remember running into Jeb, saying hello to him. It was the first time that I'd met him, and then I remember that thing taking off from the get-go and the first question that Russert asked him was the death penalty question and 'how could you politicize that?' and they put this ad out, this, oh the ad that was a head shot of a woman saying 'my family member was killed and this person is still alive' and dadadadada, and it was a head shot, I thought. And then we came back hard after that. That was the ad that really freed up our campaign. I remember that very vividly of Dad saying 'no, no, no, no' and finally when that thing came out, we were in the study of the mansion and I said, you know,

'look! What else is it going to take?' and we had a tough ad and he just looked at me and said 'run it' and that gives me chills thinking about it. But when he did it that night –

**M:** Now what ad -

**E:** Russert's question was, and when Russert asked the question on the death penalty, Jeb rocked back on his heels. If you watch that debate, you will see him visibly physically rock back, and from that moment on, we had his ass. And Dad was his best that he ever was probably that night. He was very comfortable with himself. He, you know –

**M:** What was the question that Russert asked on the death penalty?

**E:** That Russert asked? It was 'how could you politicize this?' basically.

**M:** Oh, okay. Okay. 'How could you put such an ad on television –

**E:** And Dad, who took that so seriously and agonized over that, and it was the thing about the job that he, you know, and I remember him walking out in front and saying, you know, 'I'm there. I hold the phone in my hand. I hold the' you know, dadadadada, 'and I never would ever' and you know 'I can't imagine that you would try to use that for political gain' or whatever, and it was 'boom!' and we were off to the races. And it just got better.

**M:** So was that –

**E:** I could hardly stay in my chair.

**M:** So was that the same night as the he-coon quote?

**E:** That was it! Yeah. And I remember going up to him in the middle of one of the commercials and just saying 'you're so far ahead just keep your cool. Don't let him get ya', you know, cause you could see, I could see it in him, I don't know if other people could see, I could see. He wanted to go over there, when Jeb called him a liar is when he used the comment about he-coon. Well that just came up from inside of him. It was either that or he'd have wanted to go over there and punch him. I mean, where my dad was brought up, in Polk County, if you called somebody a liar, then you better be ready to fight. You know, that's your integrity. That is who you are. It is your character.

**M:** And that's what that quote meant.

**E:** And that's exactly what that quote meant. And Bush didn't understand it. You know, it was also, in his style, however, I don't know how he was sending that message to North Florida at the same time, but that's part of what it was doing too somehow, or maybe that was just providence, I don't know. But people in North Florida knew exactly what it meant.

**M:** It was a close election.

**E:** We've just got to wrap up 'cause I'm five minutes late now, so I don't want to be more than 15 minutes late.

**M:** Is there anything in the second term that sticks out in your mind after the close election that you'd like to reflect on? Obviously it's tobacco litigation –

**E:** Oh yeah.

**M:** That was mainly a big thing.

**E:** Sure.

**M:** And I can cover that ground with you later or somebody else.

**E:** I mean, the tobacco fight was, you know, I was so fortunate that we had this great relationship that he was, you know, we talked a couple of times a day, and to be a part of that and to see all of that get ginned up and how it was going, 'they think I'm crazy! Let 'em think I'm crazy!' you know, 'I want 'em to think I'm crazy. I don't want 'em to think that I'm gonna react rationally to this. I don't want 'em to think they can figure it'. By the time Ann Richards came to him and talked to him and she was working for the tobacco companies and what he said to her, the message she sent back to him, that was the greatest fight of his political career hands down, no question about it.

**M:** Well, we've had a good day and I really appreciate you doing this.

**E:** Sure enjoyed it.

**M:** And maybe we can follow up some more later?

**E:** Anytime.