

## Interview With Senator Lloyd Casey

It's November 17, 1998 and I'm Lee Bahrych coordinator of the Colorado Legislative Oral History Library. With me today is former Senator Lloyd Casey. He served in the Senate from January 1993 through January 1997.

L.B. Senator Casey, I'm very happy that you're here with me today. The first thing I want to ask you is about your family history and your education.

L.C. O.K. I was born in Anaheim, California, on December the 18th, 1926, one of five sons of George and Rose Casey. My dad was a Navy veteran of World War I and he was a clerk for the railroad. Some of my early memories was that he was out of work in the fall of 1929 till the WPA started, whenever that was, 1933 or 1934. In 1935 he was able to get a job in a place called Marapa, Nevada, as a clerk back on the railroad. So we lived in a building that was part of the railroad warehouse. We got our water from a tank car that was brought in from Las Vegas. There was no electricity, no plumbing. I went to a two room school house. Most of the students in there were Paiute Indians from a nearby reservation. There was only one other family along the railroad tracks and that was the guy that was the telegrapher. In 1938 he got able to bid on a job in Las Vegas and so then the five of us kids went through the elementary school and high school in Las Vegas, Nevada. It was only a city of ten thousand people at that time. In 1944 I dropped out of high school and joined the Navy and ended up, that was in August of 1944, and by March I was on a destroyer out in the South Pacific. Course the war ended in August 1945 and I got discharged in June of '46 and went off to college, not because I wanted to but because my Dad made me. I got a high school diploma through correspondence while I was in the Navy and then I picked a college out in Pennsylvania because I wanted to see more of the world. The Navy had introduced me to the northwest, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, got to Hawaii, got to Guam, got to Philadelphia, got to Charleston South Carolina. So I was thinking, wow, this is a big place, I want to see more of it. So I picked a college in Pennsylvania and my Dad insisted I go to a Catholic college cause he said I was losing my religion. Anyway after four years I got a bachelor of arts degree through the education department with a major in history and a minor in social studies. I married Grace Wells in September of '49, going into my senior year, and eventually we had five sons and two daughters, born from years '50 to '69. We now have thirteen living grandchildren, one died in childbirth. In 1963 I quit an insurance management job and took a ten month graduate course in theology and obtained an MA in applied theology and spent ten years as an adult educator working for parishes with the Catholic Church. You've got a question in here about what made me run. What made you decide to run for.....

L.B. Yes. We always get different answers to that.

L.C. O.K., well when we moved to Colorado in January of 1969. Ted Strickland was either our Rep. or our Senator. In 1988 when I first ran, Ted Strickland was the Senator. He'd been in office all those years. I don't have much faith in the electorate as those who oppose term

limits. Our primary issue since when we came to Colorado, the six youngest were with us, the oldest was off to college, so we had them all in Adams County District 12 Schools and I got involved in the school district. Then here my senator didn't seem to have any interest in public schools whatsoever. So that kind of bugged me and the Democrats out there in Adams County came after me and sold me on being their candidate. Actually I later found out the only reason they got me involved in it was because they wanted him to spend some money, have some opposition. They did nothing to help. I sometimes look back at that and at age 62 how could I be so dumb. Let my ego be flattered and got involved in a stupid race. Anyway I came close. So I ran again in 1992 and I won that time. You want to know what my feelings were, well in '88 I was totally depressed and in '92 I was totally elated.

L.B. Did your family come down and watch you when you were sworn in?

L.C. Yeah, they did. That was someplace, (he's leafing through his notes). What I've written down here was it was a very nice thing. My wife and our youngest daughter, she was a student at CSU at the time, they attended that. Neither of them had wanted me to be a candidate in either '88 or '92, but since I won and the ceremony was very impressive, they felt it had all been worth it. Do you want me to answer this question about the first impression when I entered this building?

L.B. Yes. Yes. Had you been here before to testify?

L.C. No, I'd never even been in the building.

L.B. Before you were elected to office?

L.C. I had driven by and looked at it of course, but I had never bothered to come into the place. So anyway to me it was just a dull looking building from the outside, except for the dome and it was just beautiful on the inside. I was just absolutely amazed you know with the three colors of marble and shiny brass and the stain glass windows. What kept going through my mind was that it would be a lot better to have this building as a museum than as a place to work. I thought to myself, we could do better work if we were in a warehouse and we all sat on folding chairs and folding tables for furniture. The atmosphere of ostentation and the people acting so officious kind of bothered me. O.K. the next question I have here is how was the family effected by the service, shall we go into that?

L.B. Yes. Yes.

L.C. Well they were really proud to have, you know my wife, I actually got this title, Senator, and the kids thought it was a big kick, you know, in a positive way. "Hey, our Dad's a Senator." They thought that was funny. They were, at the time I was sworn in, from age 43 down to 24 and so anyway they enjoyed hearing about the bills that I was most interested in doing. My wife thought I was nuts, she said that I'd never get elected again if I went after reducing prison sentences and changing the rules so that people didn't all sit, you know the Democrats here the Republicans there and that I didn't think anybody should ever introduce five bills because five hundred bills, nobody needs five hundred bills. So anyway I had to remind her

that I had made a promise that I was never going to run again no matter what, because I was 66 years old when I was sworn in. I found out that I was the third oldest member in the Senate and that year in '92 I was far the oldest person to even be elected. Most people retire at 66 and here I was starting something new.

L.B. You were starting public service.

L.C. Yes. The next question is what role did you occupy in your time at the State House. Well I had no role whatsoever. I was just one of the people, one of the Senators. That's all.

L.B. What was the first bill you introduced and what happened to it?

L.C. Well, the first bill was to roll back the prison sentences to where they were prior to 1985,6,7 along in there someplace. There was a former legislator by the name of Mielke who got a bill passed which arbitrarily doubled every sentence. One became two, two four, four eight, right up to fifty, it went to a hundred years and the money that was being spent on building new prisons and maintaining the inmates that were in prison when I entered the Senate in 1993, was just sucking up so much money that we didn't have money for education. Then again education was my main thing. Right out of college I'd been a public school teacher for a few years so that was close to my heart. Then having seven kids, you know, education was a big thing. I got in touch with some criminologists at the University of Colorado, and at Denver University, and they had data which proved, in my case, five years is the break even point with trying to rehabilitate a human being.

L.B. What do you mean by that, five years?

L.C. Well it means, you've got somebody locked up for five years and you're working with them, trying to get their head straighten out to behave better and be a productive citizen, if you can't do it in five years, then things just start to go downhill. You've reached the point of no return.

L.B. I see.

L.C. Beyond five years, they'll either become more aggravated and nasty when they get out or they'll become sort of like a homeless person living on the streets, just like a vegetable.

L.B. Lost all initiative.

L.C. Yes. Just wiped out. So anyway that all had to do with the fact that I was talking about people who were in there for nonviolent offenses. The State of Colorado produced all kinds of data as to who was locked up and lo and behold, fifty-five percent of all of them that were locked up were nonviolent. Most of them were in there on some kind of a drug charge. So anyway I thought that would be a really good thing to do and of course it was defeated in the Judiciary Committee by one vote. So it didn't go far.

L.B. So your main interest down here was a prison situation but also your main emphases was on

education.

L.C. Right. Education and how could you get more money for education. Well you could get more money for education by spending less money on prisons. These people needed some kind of work done with them other than being locked up. I mean they're people with a problem obviously, but putting them behind bars just because they have a sickness doesn't make much sense.

L.B. Do you feel that the people, the citizens that you represented, were very aware of what you were doing and backed you? They understood the problem?

L.C. No, no they didn't understand that, no. It took a lot of studying, you know, when I got elected in November then, I had six weeks to figure out, well what should I do when I get there. It was a big thing in '93. How can we do better with our schools, education. Of course that was the main thing I challenged Senator Strickland about. I said, "Hey come on, you've never really supported the schools that well." As I delved into it, some criminologist came forward and said, "well if we quit spending so much money on the prisons, we could have more money for education." So I really got into that and did a lot of homework. Well you know you can't get the general public to spend eight or nine hours of real concentrated study to learn that kind of stuff. They're reaction is to listen to the news at night on television or pick up the paper in the morning and say "Oh my God we've got a crime wave" and all that kind of stuff. No they weren't with me because simply they didn't take the time to get educated. So that was that.

Let's see, what was the first bill approved by the assembly and sent to the governor? Well there was a bill, 93-057, it was a housekeeping, no brainer, that needed to be done by the Department of Labor, to continue to insure that fuel products met the state requirements. One of the lobbyists for the Department of Labor said "Senator Casey, do you have five bills entered?" I said no I've only have four. She said well here I've got one that you could carry. It will help you out, you will get something through because they have to pass it, blah blah blah. So I said O.K. I gave it a go. The interesting thing about it was I had a really hard time getting it out of the committee because the committee chair, well no it wasn't the committee chair, but Senator Wattenberg happened to be the chair of that. So he swung the vote so that bill would go out. They knew that they could put it off for another year. It wasn't going to do any damage if they didn't do it in '93, they could do it in '94. Anyway he was nice and he made sure it got out of the committee. Some of the Republicans on the committee put me through a terrible grilling about the necessity of this bill and I was beginning to feel like well to hell with it, I don't give a damn what you do with it. Anyway I hung in there and the goofy thing got to the Governor and it was signed. Nothing to write home about.

L.B. You say on the sheet that you handed to me that you wanted to cover partisan gamesmanship and that's an example.

L.C. Oh yeah, sure, that's right. The partisan nonsense that went on drove me nuts. I had a terrible time with that. You know, I thought that this group thinks that they're the Broncos and the other ones are the Raiders and yeah, that was one of the things that in the whole four

years, I couldn't never really get used to that. As you know, lets say, the Democrats think they're the Broncos and the Republicans are the Raiders and the Republicans think they're the Broncos and the Democrats are the Raiders, so there seemed to be just a natural animosity. It didn't often get to the surface but it was there. One year I said, you know what we ought to do is mix things up, and in fact in 1994 I suggested that in 1995 when we come back in here everybody should just take a number out of the hat. Let the two Republican leaders be up front because they're up and down all the time. The two Democrats leaders be up front because they're up and down all the time but the rest of us could just pick a number out of the hat and therefore we get all mixed up because what we have here is just an adversarial environment in which to work. It's like in a company I've spent the last...., well at the time I was with Storage Tech Corporation, and I was with Storage eighteen years, but what we had learned in the industrial world is that, if you always have all the management people sitting on this side of the table, and all of the other people on the other, you know we always referred to management as the Suits and the other people as the Grunts, so if you separate the Suits and the Grunts in an adversarial situation, physically, you create more trouble than you would otherwise. So let's mix it up. Let's have Repubs and Dems all sit together, so they get to act as human beings, but of course nobody wanted....

- L.B. Nothing happened. What were some of the remarks?
- L.C. Oh that is was just nonsense. It went to some committee, probably Veterans Affairs & Labor or some goofy committee and whoever the chair of the committee was just said well Senator Casey has this idea that's certainly worthless and they all voted it down just like that. So that was interesting. Let's see where am I now?
- L.B. Well we have some issues that are never resolved, that are on going and certainly education, you've mentioned that. We're getting ready to build another prison down at Trinidad, so that's ongoing.
- L.C. Oh I know, yeah, yeah.
- L.B. How were committees handled when you served? Like they are today?
- L.C. Well, you know I have no experience earlier than '93 when I went there and it was well structured and there was staff support. The thing that bothered me was, I came into this thing saying O.K., I'm elected to office so who is my employer. Well my employer is the general public. The taxpayers are paying for me so here I am and I am their supplier to try and do law making for them and they are my customers. They're not only my employer but they're also my customers. So I owe them the greatest amount of respect I can have and I felt that when committees were supposed to start at 1:00 o'clock, by God everybody should be in there and get ready to start. Well, hell, half the time they started at 1:30 or then all of the sudden the guy would say we're not even going to have a meeting today. Here were people who came from 100 or 200 miles away to be here and then we do something like that to them. I thought that was really bad news.
- L.B. How did you handle that?

- L.C. Well I mouthed off a few times. They said ah that's just that damn old Casey again, he's kind of an interesting old fart you know.
- L.B. You bring up a very interesting and a very vital point. People take time to come down here to testify and they drive hundreds of miles down here only to find that it's been canceled.
- L.C. Yeah, it used to really just get on my nerves really bad but I couldn't do a thing about it. I wasn't a chairman, I wasn't a vice chairman. I was nobody. I was just one of the minority Senators who was kind of old and grouchy and you know I never got nasty or anything like that but I guess I was more or less a joke or something.
- L.B. Oh I couldn't agree with that Senator Casey, not at all.
- L.C. Well I felt that. Anyway lets see. Then there was one question that I thought was interesting here. How did I get into one of my things. In 1995, still going back to this prison situation actually it was 1994, going into 1994, I had met with a bunch of students at the University of Colorado and they said that one of the reasons we have so many people in prisons is that we're locking up a lot of people who get caught with some.... what's called marijuana. Well we had five sons and two daughters, they went right through that, you know they were born in '50, '52, '54.
- L.B. What a time for kids to grow up.
- L.C. Yeah, they were teenagers during the crazy, crazy '60's and did they ever get into some of that stuff, yeah sure they got into it. Did I know they got into it, yeah I knew they.... Was I happy about that, no I wasn't happy about it. Did it do any long term harm to them, no it never did. So I thought to myself my god that stuff is actually less of a problem in society than alcohol and tobacco. So this large number of CU students said well, we ought to decriminalize it. I thought yeah, I think that would be a good idea, that way it would keep a lot of people out of prison. Well the Democratic leadership was going nuts when they heard I might do that, cause 1994 was going to be an election year and they said they'd all be guilty by having me around. So I backed off and said O.K. forget it, I won't run such a bill as that. It wouldn't stand a chance anyway. I went back and apologized to the students and they were pretty chagrined at me, and I said normally if I say something I'm going to do, I do it. You know, my wife and I pledged to be loyal to one another, and this year's 49 years for me and Gracie. So I said I hate to ever go back on my word but the political reality is that I just can't do it. They said well, what about industrial hemp? I said well what are you talking about, industrial hemp? They said well weren't you in the Navy in World War II? I said yeah, sure. Well then don't you know they had a movie out called "Hemp for Victory"? I said no I never heard of it. So anyway they showed me the movie, "Hemp for Victory". I said my god, that stuff helped win the war, you know it supplied all the lines for the ships. It supplied the rigging for the parachutes. Some of our cloth shoes are probably made out of hemp fibers. I started studying the history of the hemp and I figured my god, Thomas Jefferson grew it. George Washington grew it. The Declaration of Independence is written on a piece of paper made out of hemp fibers. Betsy Ross flag was made out of hemp fibers. That ought to be a piece of cake, we'll get that through, no problem kids. Well

it never worked, it still hasn't because the DEA, the sheriffs, the city police, the Colorado State Patrol, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, all of these types people, you know using the language, they kind of came down my throat saying that well Senator Casey, what are you, kind of an undercover drug agent. I said, my god, wait a minute, no way, it's a perfectly legitament crop and we're not talking about a drug at all. Well anyway that never worked. Maybe one of these days it will get passed. I think Senator, well ex Senator Ament, who's now Representative Ament who is a farmer, in fact out of the whole hundred here he's the only one who makes a living as a farmer, he might run the bill in 1999. It might happen.

L.B. It will be interesting to watch that. We had the marijuana question on the ballot the last election.

L.C. Yeah, yes, well see that kind of stuff, I wasn't pushing that at all because you know that's... in the hemp plant, there are some hemp plants that have a high content of an acronym of a drug called THC, Tetrahydrocannabinol. If the plant has five or more per cent of that stuff then you can get a reaction from it. If it's got one per cent or less it's impossible to get a reaction from it. So we're talking about three tenths of one percent. They even got upset about that. But the medical marijuana, they use that word marijuana, I hated that word. I went over to the library to find out how did that word ever get into the English language. I checked out two dictionaries of entomology, it's the origin of English words, and lo and behold, it came from the island of Jamaica. It's Mari, stands for Mary and Juana stands for Jane so all it means is Mary Jane. Some of the young ladies on the island if they happen to be going with some guy who then threw them aside for some other young lady, why then they'd take revenge on the guy by saying well we'll have a farewell dinner, you're going your way and I'll have to go my way, but anyway they'd lace the dinner with this plant. Well that plant on Jamaica had a lot of THC. They'd kind of sent this guy off on a little trip. It was written up in some women's magazine in 1894, 95 and that was the first time this word was ever used in the United States of America and it caught on.

L.B. How interesting. We had some on our farm and my father would always say, you know the cattle got in the loco weed today, cause they're very careful to keep them out of that corner.

L.C. Where did you grow up?

L.B. Western Oklahoma, in the panhandle.

L.C. Well, O.K. Well loco weed is a little different than hemp. The Indians use it to get a little high on. I forget what the drug is in loco weed. Hemp has grown wild in the United States of America going all the way back to colonial times. Then of course during World War II when the Federal Government begged the farmers to have crops of it, the seeds got dispersed and blown around and it grows wild. It's referred to as ditch weed. Some of the law enforcement people make money by going out and burning it. It's crazy. Well so anyway that was one of my big activities.

Let's see, was the public aware of issues. Well you know it's hard to say. What I put down here is, if it wasn't for the lobbyists there'd be very little public interest in 97 % of the bills.

The 3% the public really got into during my four years had to do with pets, if a bill had to do something with veterinarians or pets or putting cats on leashes or goofy things like that, then this building was over run with people. Another one was, should motorcyclists wear helmets. That brought out a ton of people.

L.B. That brought everybody. Did you notice there was every make of motorcycle and motorcycles you'd never seen before.

L.C. Well I was on Transportation and so I sat through that and I found it to be just a very interesting thing. The motorcycle crowd, well, working at Storage Tech, we had a motorcycle club at Storage Tech. So here are my friends that I worked with saying look you're in the Senate now Casey, don't you dare say that we have to wear helmets. We don't want to wear those helmets. We do our education, blah blah blah. So I really got into that whole thing and of course we didn't make them wear helmets, it failed two years in a row. The motorcycle crowd can be doctors and dentists and PhD engineers, and software geniuses, and it can also be people that dropped out of elementary school. So it's a rare mixture of human beings in motorcycle folks. Then of course when I ran the hemp bill in 1995, the first time I ran the hemp bill, the place was over run with a bunch of exhippies or current hippie, I mean people sitting on the floor in the lotus position, meditating on the ceiling. It was extremely embarrassing for me. I can remember in the Senate Ag, I think it was Senator Ament I think was in charge of Ag at that time. He and I were good friends. He said well Senator Casey, it doesn't look like this crowd of people in here are farmers and so one of the people who was helping me with the bill, a kid from the University of Colorado, who was getting a law degree and actually was a graduate of West Point before he got his law degree, he whispered to me, they are environmentalists. So I said well Senator Ament they're all environmentalists, and everybody laughed. It obviously was nonsense. Anyway in 1996, I confronted any of them who called up and said they wanted to come down here. I said absolutely not I don't want you around. Just stay out of the capitol. If you do come down here, be dressed in a business suit or overalls and don't come down here in your tie dye and don't come down here with your hair in braids and don't come down here looking like an idiot.

L.B. With all your beads on.

L.C. So 1996 of course it worked, I got the bill all the way through but then I got stabbed in the House by two Democrats from Adams county. That was kind of a shocker to me.

L.B. That was your county.

L.C. Yeah, my own county and my own party. The two members of that party in the House, one named Reeser, one named Armstrong voted against the bill, because it was being run in the House by two Republican farmers. A fellow named Acquafresca.....

L.B. Yes Steve Acquafresca from the western slope.

L.C. ...and Jerke. Jerke was in the tree business and Acquafresca was in the apple business and



they were both farmers and they understood what I was doing. They're both graduates of CSU. They had checked with the head of the Ag Department at CSU and he'd said absolutely support it, it's a good bill. Our farmers can make money with it and then two Democrats from Adams county who don't know anything about farms....

L.B. About farms.

L.C. No. Zip. Why did they vote against it? My very diplomatic language, well I said it's just a couple of gutless wonders who are afraid they'd get defeated in this year, '96, because their opponent will say they're soft on drugs. They won't try to take the time to...anyway it was just one of those things you have to live with and get over and try to forget.

L.B. So it got through your Senate committee...

L.C. Oh yeah. It went all the way through.

L.B. It went over to the House and it lost in committee?

L.C. Uh huh, yeah and Acquafresca was so embarrassed, he was running that committee, he had told me ahead of time, he said "Casey, we're going to get it out of committee, we're going to get it on the floor of the House and once it gets on the floor of the House it's a shoo-in. I can promise you we're going to get this down to the Governor". Then those two people, Jeanne Reeser and Don Armstrong did that, and he came to me and he apologized and he said I've never had this happen to me, all the time I've been a chairman, if people commit to a vote they stick with it but these two people waffled and went the other way.

L.B. Yes. That's not honoring a commitment.

L.C. Yeah, well.

L.B. So he couldn't control the committee.

L.C. No he couldn't control 'em. I mean that's the way they are. Thank god neither of them are around here any more. So anyway that was an interesting thing.

Let's see. Some issues are never resolved, we've talked about that. How are committees.... I was really pleased with the committee....well I was two years on HEWI, Health Education Welfare Institutions and that was in 1993 and '94 and that was a very unpleasant thing. First of all the issues that were brought to that committee attracted people, who to me represented the fringes of our society. People who were unable to roll with the punch and accept the fact that nobody ever said life is fair. They would come in here with their problems of marriage and their problems of adoptions and their problems of kids. They were all issues that I thought, my god, if they had just gotten their act together and figured out how to take care of the finances and keep a job and so forth we wouldn't have all of this crap going on down here at the state Capitol. Another thing that I went in, you know, I had a degree in theology for heaven sakes, taught ten years in the Catholic Church and I was totally convinced there's

no way you can ever legislate morality. It just isn't possible. Human beings will react against anybody trying to tell them how to live their life. So I was always uncomfortable in that committee and thank god I didn't get put back on it. In my first two years, I was on three committees and I didn't realize what a tough thing that was. HEWI, Transportation and Business Affairs & Labor so I told our leader, get me off that HEWI, I can't stand it, it's driving me nuts. So anyway, that worked. I spent four years on Labor and four years on Transportation. Labor was just a joy, I mean that was Senator Wattenberg who's probably the very best friend I had of all the Senators. He and I are still real good friends. We call each other off and on, even now. I've been out two years but I told him, Senator, you ought to run for Governor. Well it didn't happen. Anyway he and I are just good pals. He ran a great committee. He just ran it so fair.

L.B. I've heard that before. Always a fair chairman.

L.C. Yes, very fair and everybody got to hear and he wasn't butting in and you know, he didn't take...now the other committee was run by Senator Mutzebaugh and Mutzebaugh if you kept track of who was on the microphone the most in Transportation Committee you'd have a whole bunch of people coming in to give testimonies on this way or that way on bills, but he'd have more to say than anybody. He'd cut people off, he was very arbitrary. We could get together at a party or across the street at a restaurant and he would just "Hail fellow and well meant" and a lot of fun and company to be with. But when he was in charge of that committee or he was on the Senate floor he was just a different human being. That's the way it was. Anyway they had a lot of staff and the staff were really super good people and did a great job. So I thought that was one of the best things around here. Thank god they've got some full time staff people that can keep this place together because if it was just left up to us people who'd come and go, it would be a mess.

L.B. Now you're going to come and go more often. The House is going to change.

L.C. We need the staff even more.

O.K., what changes do you see, etc? Well I said term limits are starting to take effect. I was all for them and I got petitions signed. I forget the name of that ex-Senator that pushed all that, do you remember that guys name?

L.B. Yes, he was in real estate. Terry Considine.

L.C. That was the name, yeah. He came up with that and I thought, yeah, because I mentioned earlier that I don't have that much faith in the electorate. The thing that bothers me I guess most about the whole political scene is that the general public in the United State of America is responsible for the fact that we have a lot of stuff that doesn't work. They don't, in my mind, the way I grew up, knowing what's going on and taking an active interest in voting is a responsibility, it's not a privilege it's a responsibility. It is a privilege but more than a privilege it's a responsibility. In this country, we've gotten to the point now where barely 50% of the people who are eligible to vote, vote.

L.B. 37% I think.

L.C. You know the thing that scares me, well scares me, I'm getting too old to be scared about anything, but what I remember from elementary school or high school in Las Vegas, Nevada, leading up to World War II was, some teacher, probably a history or science teacher saying that when Adolph Hitler got in charge of Germany, the voting turnout was like 25 or 24%, something like that. So if the number of people who accept the responsibility for the governing that goes on, gets down to that tiny per cent, then somebody with a strong personality who has their own agenda can get a bunch of people around them and do a thing like that and get into power and become what they want to become.

L.B. Did you know Hitler came to power on one vote?

L.C. I didn't know it was one vote. I knew it was very slim.

L.B. It was in the Reichstag. He appeared before it and he won his case by one vote. So it's very important. It is the responsibility that everybody needs to take.

L.C. Yeah. Some of the folks would go up to the mike and they'd talk about a mandate. So my work at Storage Tech was in the quality department and primarily my job was analyzing and collecting data. I became a statistical engineer and on-the-job training. I was really good at it and when I heard somebody say well we have a mandate, then I'd break down and, O.K. there's this many people who could register if they would register. Then we have this many that actually did register, then out of these that did register, this many that really voted. It was in 1994 when at the national level, a man named Newt Grinrich managed to get a bunch of people from his party elected so they became the majority party at the national level for the first time in years and years. The word mandate was being blown around just viscously. I worked it all out statistically and found out none of them have a mandate. They got in there with 23% of the vote. That's what they got in there with. So it bothered me that people will say stuff like that cause the general public isn't going to take the time to do what I did and I don't have a podium in which I can get to the general public. The Governor could have but he's not going to do it. Nobody's going to do it. So they get away with this. They get away with talk about a mandate when it's not a mandate at all.

L.B. People believe them.

L.C. Yeah, one of my favorite old things again, I don't think they teach kids any more. Maybe there's too much to teach but Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the some but you can't fool all of them all of the time." Never forget that.

Now lets see, where was I? Term limits. I was really for it, I don't know, we'll have to wait and see whether it's going to be good or bad. I think in terms of sports, you've got a whole crowd of young ones coming up every year, guys like John Elway are exceptions to the rule that they can last that long. In the business world, I was there eighteen years, we had three different CEOs. In the quality department we had maybe four or five different vice-

presidents in the period of eighteen years. People come and go. I don't think anyone is indispensable. Think back to World War II, I'm out there on a destroyer and the enemy's trying to kill us and we're trying to kill the enemy. Everyday, I happened to be in the radio gang so I'm taking down this dit dit dah dah dit, morse code stuff and translating it and you think oh gee we can't afford to lose this admiral. Well the admiral's ship gets shot down and he's dead and the war keeps going on. God, we'll never be able to win this war if we lose this carrier. Well that carrier goes down. So as a seventeen eighteen year old kid, it got rubbed into my face that nobody's indispensable. These people like this guy Strom Thurman, who's 95 years old who's still the governor....

L.B. Is he 95?

L.C. I don't know, I don't know, maybe he's 105 but to me how much faith and respect do I have for the voters of that state? Damn little. That guy should have been voted out of office a long time ago. But there he is. He happens to be a Repub, but the same thing can happen to the Dems. How come we have term limits on the President of the United States but nobody else. Well because there was a guy named Franklin D. Roosevelt who was in there for 8, 12, going on 16 years and so after he's dead and gone, and the Republicans get in charge, they say we're never going to have this again. Has the country done O.K. ever since we had term limits on the Pres. Yeah, it's done O.K. So I don't see any problem I put some stuff down here. Lets see, as far as I'm concerned the term limit thing is working. I never could get used to being around people who considered what we were doing to be so almighty and important, but not everything. Day in and day out we handled a lot of just nonsense crap.

L.B. Do you agree, Senator Casey, that we cut the number of bills allowed to be....

L.C. Oh yeah. I put that in as a resolution. That went to probably that same committee, the one I wanted to mix the people up where they sat. I went in and said there's a hundred of us, that's five hundred bills, then there's exceptions to the rules. Actually we go in starting the session and we're going to have maybe six hundred and fifty but even if just thought in terms of the five each, times a hundred, five hundred, I said is it even reasonable, common sense? You go to the general public and say do you think the people we elect down there need to consider five hundred different things to change, well hell no. Maybe five or six things but not five hundred things. O.K., so.....

L.B. There was a Representative that was here in the early 1970's and his thought was if you introduce a bill, that bill must do away with two on the books.

L.C. Yeah, that would be wonderful if we could get rid of some of the old. Well nobody pays attention to them anyway, so they kind of die simply because they're not used. They're still on the damn books and taking up space, which is a shame. I introduced that resolution, lets have just two. They're having some fun with me in the committee and said well would you settle for three? I said well, yeah I could live with three. They said well could you settle for four. Well of course I'm not going to go any higher than four, and they all voted against it. They knew that was one of the things.

Oh yeah, the other thing I said was let's quit using the language "Postponed Indefinitely" cause it's always just PI.. I said now just think about those two words, postponed. If your going to postpone that means well maybe tomorrow, maybe next week, maybe next month. Postponed has the significance that maybe we're going to get back after it. Then you stick the work indefinitely after the word postponed, I said you've got an automatic oxymoron. Like military intelligence, there's another one, you know. I said let's start using the word kill that's what we're really... talk about killing it but we don't want to use it publically. Let's be honest with the public and say we kill things, we don't postpone things indefinitely. That's why people thought I was kind of goofy.

L.B. Oh I can't agree with that.

L.C. So this was part of my problem. It also amazed me to be with people, who because they were in an elected office, acted as if they were an authority on every subject. It blew my mind. Here we are coming from, you know, I come from a background of insurance and adult education and statistical analysis, well that's what I know. When you get down here you're dealing with a myriad of subjects that are just unbelievable. How can you then act as if you know so much about these things? You don't. Some people do. They just drove me nuts. I often thought of that "Fiddler on the Roof", the song, "If I were a rich man". People would sit at my feet and think that I had absolute knowledge on every subject just because I'm rich. So if I could, what would I do? Well, I'd repeal the sentencing law, I'd have 120 days, (tape changed ) I'd have the Capitol building as a museum, because it is a beautiful thing. It's got a lot of historical impact, and all these pictures on the walls and all these maps. I really enjoyed being in here. We could do the nitty gritty things that we had to do better in some other kind of environment rather than in this environment.

Then one of the things was is there anybody that you'd like to see back? Well I'd feel very honored if our Governor was Dave Wattenberg but that didn't happen. He decided he couldn't raise that kind of money.

L.B. It does take a lot of money to run.

L.C. Then it was, what was your favorite place? Well actually it was in the basement outside the coffee shop because I'm an early riser and I like to beat the traffic on I-25. I'm coming down from Northglenn, which is about a 14 mile commute and I knew if I got on that I-25 at 6:30 I could get down here and if I waited until 7:00 I'd be in a parking lot. So I used to always be in here by 7:00 in the morning and there would always be, well Wattenberg used to be here or Don Ament, there were a few of the guys who always used to be in here. One of them was a guy named Clarence, who is just kind of a fixture around the Capitol Building. In fact I let him use my cubical up stairs in the minority office, so he shared my cubical with me to keep some of his stuff. Then this is a, I don't know whether I should have put this stuff in here, but I can't help it, another memory I'll never be able to get away from is that of being in the men's room prior to the morning sessions in the Senate Chamber and seeing Bill Owens inspecting every hair to make sure it was in place and watching Paul Weissmann visibly refraining himself from messing up Bill's hair. (Laugh)

L.B. (Laugh) I like that.

L.C. It so happened there'd be others in there too you know but there would be Bill and there would be Paul and it was just humorous anyway.

Then I've got you a copy, I photocopied those two things and here was something that I came up with. The Art of Conscious Celebration, a new concept for today's leaders. I found it some where. I must have made this comment, it was August 11, 1994 when I was invited to speak to some group and what it amounts to is that when we're down here, instead of using one hundred percent of our time for this law making, that I felt that we should use thirty percent of our time implementing changes. As we started this conversation, there have been dramatic changes in the number of committees, the names of the committees, but they happen so slowly. If we were in the competitive world of high technology where I spent my last eighteen years, we'd have been out of business a long time ago.

L.B. Change every eighteen months, isn't that Moore's law?

L.C. Oh, yeah. I mean the products that we had for sale, they had a normal life history of those products was two years. We had to have engineers creating new products all the time and sometimes they'd hit and sometimes they wouldn't. So if they didn't hit you had to have at least two or three backups otherwise you're out of business. I put that on there, and I didn't turn the page, I don't know what you had back here.

L.B. Well what I asked you Senator Casey, was that to me, people seem to be more pessimistic and skeptical and even cynical about government. Do you think that's a true perception?

L.C. Yeah it is, Um hum.

L.B. Why do you think this is happening. Or do you think it's always been there?

L.C. No, No. I had a major in history so we've had such dramatic changes. In the beginning you had to be a landowner to vote, right? Then eventually you didn't have to be a landowner.

L.B. Vote on taxes.

L.C. Right. Course half the population is female and you didn't get to vote until when, 1919?

L.B. Right about then, I've forgotten.

L.C. We got started in 1789 or something like that, after the constitution was ratified. We won the war in 1770 something and then they had, I'm trying to put this thing together, but I think it was right around 1789 we they finally ratified what we called the constitution, so forth. Then we had certain elements of our society who couldn't vote. Native Americans who lived here, the slaves who were brought over here, and so we've had these incremental tiny little changes come over, but if we just think, I forget the history that I've learned, and I think about my own life growing up, going through schools basically in the depression and then

World War II came along and boom the depression was over and I'm learning what a world it is. I really think if we looked at it there'd be something like 60 or 70 % of the people were voting back in those days, it seems to me. I think when John F. Kennedy got elected in 1960, we had a good turn out of maybe 60%. It was close to that as I recall. I kind of think that the assassination of that man did something to the psyche of my own kids. He was assassinated in '63, our oldest was 13 years of age and then they went through that horrible turmoil we had, my god, 1968 was just a year that I wish had never happened. The riots in Chicago, the riots in Miami and the Viet Nam problem. It was just a horrible mess. We have a whole generation that got turned off and we haven't got it back yet. I don't think we're looking back through rose-colored glasses, something has happened and we have to get it turned around. Now, did the thing that just happened two weeks ago with a guy named Ventura or his name is really George Janos, that's what he was baptized or born with, what happened there? Well we have a son that works for a newspaper in Duluth, Minnesota. I called him and I said Christopher, what in the hell is going on in that great state of Minnesota? He said, Dad, in Minnesota you can register and vote on the same day. In about three days prior to, so we're talking about the Saturday and the Sunday before the Tuesday, this guy is a showman and he's got a popular talk radio about sports and so all of the sudden the high school kids who are eighteen years of age and of course the whole college crowd, it was just one of those spontaneous things that that age of boys and girls were going to do. They get, Oh lets all go to this let's all go to that, you know how they do. So all of the sudden on campuses and high schools all over the state of Minnesota there was this social phenomena of that age group saying what the hell, lets go register and vote for Jessie.

L.B. ....and they did.

L.C. ...and they did and he got elected and it's the craziest thing in the world. Will it do good? I don't know. If the guy turns out to be a good governor it'll be fabulous.

L.B. It was a remarkable race, I'll tell you.

Well Senator Casey do you have any stories about members or staff which would be interesting and amusing to future people, historians that want to listen to these tapes?

L.C. I don't know. I got along wonderfully with all the staff whoever they were. I would see them early in the morning. I was usually one of the first ones to walk into the Senate Chamber to pick up stuff, it's always on the desk you know, and say hi to the people who were there. I had so much respect for them for the work that they were doing cause it's not easy, it's tough work.

L.B. Thank you.

L.C. You're welcome. So I got along fine with all of the staff people and well, yeah, there's a lot of amusing stories. I mean some of them, I don't know whether they're right for the tape or not. I think a lot of it happened prior to my being here. During my four years the idiosyncracies of human nature, people going up to the microphone, you're standing in line and everything is so spiffy and all like that and then somebody gets an itch and they scratch

their behind. I thought that was quite interesting.

L.B. Do you like having a separate office away from the chamber floor?

L.C. Well I was just in a cubical so I was never in an office.

L.B. You shared an office with somebody.

L.C. Well I was in a great big office that had a bunch of cubicles.

L.B. I see you were in the minority office right off the elevators. I see.

L.C. So it was a very public place and it was very difficult too, that's another thing that I enjoyed getting here early because after I had a cup of coffee and told stories and talked with the folks outside the coffee shop, I could still go up to my cubical and get some work done and have some quiet time before it just became a mess. Because about 8:30 forget it. The lobbyist were in, the other people were in, the phones were ringing, and you couldn't keep your head together very well.

L.B. Did you feel the lack of having some personal staff or intern or somebody to.....

L.C. Oh God. I had some college kids, a couple, who were trying to get some credit for college for being an intern down here, but honest to God, I could have done better without them cause I'm trying to teach them when I could go ahead and do it myself. Yeah, having no personal staff made life more difficult.

L.B. I've heard that before. Now I think they do have paid interns.

L.C. Well how can you afford it. I mean you always have to balance what you'd like to have with what you can afford. I figured out, especially during the special session when we had to come, that first year I was here, 1993, they ballyhooed, I think it was all artificial. That's the way I took it. I resented the whole thing. The summer of violence or the summer of crime or the summer of some damn thing or another. The way I looked upon that whole goofy thing, you know that was in 1993, O.K. well in 1994 we were going to elect a governor again and I couldn't help but feel, even though he was my governor, and he belongs to the party I belong to, that this whole damn thing is being orchestrated to give him more ballyhoo to get elected again in 1994.

L.B. It was a media event.

L.C. Yeah, and he helped it and I go back to my statistical analysis work, see. In 1995, finally somebody, maybe I had some influence on them, analyzed the summer of 1995 compared to the summer of 1993 and the summer of 1995 was worse than the summer of 1993. What made the summer of 1993 special? Well because of one school teacher event. One murder. Anyway it was just one of those cultural phenomenal goofy things that got all blown out and didn't deserve to be that way, but anyway we came back in the special session and we



resisted the, let everybody have the gun on them if they want it, but then we did tighten up the sentence laws which was totally counter to my efforts my first year, but since I had to take time off from Storage Tech, and I wasn't getting paid there where I actually made a decent living compared to my seventeen thousand five hundred here, and Storage Tech did not pay me when I was here. Now some of the legislators kept on the payroll. They had it both ways. I didn't. Storage Tech said if you get elected you will go off the data base and we won't even recognize you as an employee so I didn't accrue vacation time I didn't accrue profits sharing, I didn't accrue anything.

L.B. It was a sacrifice.

L.C. It was. I was taking it in the chops to work down here. So here I had to take an extra week off in that week of September and I kept track of how many hours I was down here and how much I made. I got paid two dollars and thirty five cents an hour.

L.B. You should have gone to McDonalds. Well people always have to weigh that. Now ..... will continue paying you a salary and then your legislative salary goes to them, so that you maintain that but many do not.

Well is there anything I should have asked you Senator Casey that I failed to ask you?

L.C. No I think you've done a very thorough job here.

I heard a lot of stories about how, you know, guys like my friend Dave Wattenberg. He used to say Casey you should have been here in your thirties. You should have been here back in the 50's or the 60's instead of coming in here in the 90's when you're an old fart like you are. He would tell me stories. Now he wasn't here but I guess there were some of the guys that, at one time it was really kind of a rare thing, one of the stories that he told that I can tell, I mean some of them I can't tell because of the language, I think the fellow you mentioned earlier, Fred Anderson, and I met Fred and I liked Fred, you know he defeated one of the bills I had early cause I didn't know what I was doing but he and I became good pals. When he was president of the Senate he had a habit as many people develop, like I have habits. Right at the time that the session was going to start in the morning, he would walk right up there and he always had a glass of water and he'd chug a lug his glass of water and he'd whomp down the gavel and we'd get going. So a couple of his buddies, now Wattenberg might have been involved in this, filled that glass with vodka. So Dave said it was absolutely amazing, Fred got up there and he grabbed that glass like he does and you knew immediately that he knew something but, damn it he chug-a-lugged it anyway and then when he whomped the gavel down the thing flew apart. He really hammered it hard. (Laugh)

L.B. He was a full-time farmer. I think he's fourth generation. He had purchased a farm that he worked. It was the farm that his great grandfather homesteaded on and Fred purchased that farm. Cause when I first came down here to work, this was still a rural legislature. I saw the change.

L.C. Well I think the reason I took to guys like Dave and Don and Fred was because they came from roots a little bit like me. I grew up at a time when...

L.B. Small towns.

L.C. Yeah, I lived in a place without indoor plumbing, without electricity, went to a two room schoolhouse with the Indians so it was a .....

L.B. ...and all of you had served in World War II and that was a real turning point on many young mens lives.

Well Senator Casey, I'll thank you again and I'll turn off my tape.

L.C. Well you're welcome.