JACK KEMP
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with

SCOT W. REED

November 26, 2012

Interviewer

Morton Kondracke

JACK KEMP FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON, DC

Morton Kondracke: This is a Jack Kemp Oral History Project interview with Scott Reed, Jack Kemp's chief-of-staff at the Housing and Urban Development Department, 1988 campaign aide and manager of the Dole campaign in 1996. Today is November 26, 2012. We're doing this at Mr. Reed's office at Chesapeake Enterprises in Washington, DC, and I'm Morton Kondracke. Thanks so much for doing this.

Scott Reed: Thank you.

Kondracke: When did you first meet Jack Kemp?

Reed: I first met Jack in 1984 when I was working for the [Ronald W.] Reagan reelection campaign, Reagan/[George H.W.] Bush campaign. I was a deputy regional campaign director for the New England region, and one of my states was New Hampshire. I first met Kemp when he was doing surrogate work for the Reagan campaign and we did an event in New Hampshire. And it was the first time I'd ever seen him in person, let alone seen him speak, and I was kind of taken by his ability to motivate this crowd of activists, both from a political standpoint and from a policy standpoint. And it was pretty eye opening, and that's how I first got interested in him. Then I believe we did a couple of events that cycle where I was just like a staff guy. But that's where I first saw him in action.

Kondracke: So between 1984 and 1988 when you joined the campaign, what was your contact?

Reed: After '84 I went to the Republican National Committee [RNC] and I became a regional political director in 1985 and for the '86 cycle,

and I got to know Kemp a little during that process, because, again, now I was the regional director for New England. It included Ohio, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland and New Jersey, and I got to see Kemp a little bit. He was out campaigning for different Republican candidates that cycle. And then after the '86 campaign, there are seven regional political directors at the RNC, they started to move en masse to go work for Bush, and I didn't know much about Bush but I did know enough that I didn't want to be one of seven guys going to work for somebody. I'd rather try to be one of one. So I got to know the Kemp team and got hired to run New Hampshire for Kemp. And I went to New Hampshire in early '87. Because I'd already worked the region for three cycles, three years now, I knew pretty much everybody. And in those phases of the campaign you put together an organization, and that's what I did. I put together a structure and an organization so that we could run a campaign in New Hampshire.

Kondracke: Who hired you?

Reed: I was hired by Roger [J.] Stone and [Charles R.] Charlie Black [Jr.]. And at the time it was John [W.] Buckley, and it wasn't a big campaign. We had another fellow, John [C.] Maxwell, that was running the Iowa campaign, and when we got to about April or May we had a shakeup in the campaign, and Maxwell got demoted and I drew the short straw and went to Iowa. And I actually went to Iowa. It wasn't like New Hampshire where I was floating in and out every couple of days. I actually moved out there and learned how to put together an organizational effort in a caucus state, which was actually a great experience, because I learned a couple things. One, I learned how to really do organizational politics in all 99 counties. Two, I got to

know a lot of national reporters that would come through Iowa and want to have dinner, and I learned a lot about that whole process, about how to work with the national press corps. But third, I spent probably 75 days campaigning with Kemp. In those days it was all about getting candidates' time, especially in the early states where we weren't well-known, so I got a good commitment out of [Jeffrey L.] Jeff Bell and Black and the guys to have him in the state. He'd come in and we'd do two or three or four events a day. So I got to really know him on a personal level that way as I tried to manage his campaign.

Kondracke: Was it largely a career decision on your part to sign up with the Kemp campaign, or was it—

Reed: It was a combination. I thought he had an interesting message and I thought his place in national politics was of interest. Two, I saw an opportunity for myself. I thought I could play a bigger and a better role than I would have in an incumbent vice president's basically reelection campaign. And I liked the Iowa opportunity because it was a chance to really learn from the bottom up how to put together a campaign, which are skills I still use today, 25, 30 years later. But it was kind of a combination of the three. I didn't know Jack all that well, but I got to know him as we spent a lot of time together on these little airplanes, flying in and out of little towns in Iowa.

Kondracke: What attracted you to him?

Reed: Well, he had an upbeat, optimistic message about the country and about people exceeding all their expectations and having opportunity to grow. I thought that was kind of unique coming from a Republican. He didn't, you know, in those days in Iowa, he wasn't a negative campaigner. He was always positive. He didn't like to go after his opponents even when we would recognize there was a need every once in a while to do that. But he wanted to keep it on the positive. I thought the way he turned on crowds was pretty impressive, that he had some skill. I don't know if he just got it from starting in football and then being in Congress, but he had a communications skill that I thought was above and beyond most other politicians. And look, a lot of people told me I was crazy to go to work for him. He has no chance to win. And it wasn't just about winning at the time, it was about learning, and trying to do something that I thought would be exciting. I didn't know where it would end up going, but it ended up to be great.

Kondracke: John Buckley says that he was the attack dog of the campaign, and in fact got in a lot of trouble with the Bush people because of it. Do you remember any of what he said?

Reed: Yes, he was the attack dog, in print. He said things about—nothing over the line, by the way—but things that I have since heard that Mrs. Bush didn't like much, and when she didn't like you, you were done. To the point where we couldn't bring John into the HUD [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development] situation once Bush was president. It was something we just couldn't do, much as we liked him. Buckley made comments about guns and God and try to paint Bush as kind of out of touch, a blueblood, and that really got

under their skins at the time because that was really what their vulnerability was. When we first got to Iowa, though, the first thing we did was once we figured out a better structure in how we going to operate as we went and won the Polk County straw vote. It was like in June of '87. And that was really the first time we got Kemp on the national news scene, because we'd actually won something. It was 100 people, it wasn't a big deal, but we worked it. We snuck up on Bush and [Robert J. "Bob"] Dole, at the time, and won the thing, and it was kind of our first good glimpse of hope that from an organizational standpoint, if we worked our butt off we could do well.

Kondracke: How did you do that?

Reed: We just, the first day we got there, I just focused on it like a laser beam, and it was about buying tickets and sneaking up on the thing and not letting everybody know you were doing it, and turning out your vote that night, kind of what a mini-caucus is. It was a mini-caucus, but it was in June, it was before the big Ames thing, which was in August, and it was just Polk County, which is Des Moines, it was the big county at the time. We just worked it real hard and even surprised ourselves, and surprised Kemp, but for the first time, the next morning, Sunday morning, we made the talk shows for 'something happened last night in Iowa,' which in those days was really a big deal for what we were trying to do.

Kondracke: What then happened in Ames?

Reed: Well, Ames, I just have nightmares of the Ames event, because it was one of these things where, at the time, we worked it

hard and we did all the effort, everybody did, but I felt really good going into Ames because there'd only been about 5,000 tickets sold the Thursday before the event, and I knew roughly where we were at about 1,800 tickets or so, so I thought we were kind of in the hunt of what we were going to be able to turn out and have a good showing. And then [Marion G. "Pat"] Robertson goes in that day and buys 5,000 tickets and just kind of blew the whole deal from a certain sized electorate, to literally doubling it. And we found out about that. By then it's too late, there's nothing you can do about it. We were humping just to get to our 1,800 votes, and driving up to the thing was just a sea of Roberston people, and they kind of snuck up on everybody at that one and won the thing, as I remember. We got 15-18 percent of the vote, it wasn't a very good showing. He gave a great speech, but it wasn't about speaking in those days, it was about identifying your vote and turning it out. So that was a black eye.

Kondracke: You didn't see Robertson coming?

Reed: We didn't see him coming, we really didn't. We heard about him and he was out there. In those days the fight with Robertson was more about Michigan and the delegates in Michigan, because of some of the personalities in the campaigns, and I wasn't involved in any of that. Most of the Kemp-Robertson fight was about Michigan as opposed to Iowa, but he snuck up on everybody in Iowa and surprised everybody.

Kondracke: Now all of this happening in Iowa was after Michigan went first with an event that was, I guess, the summer of '86, two years before?

Reed: Yes, they had some type of an organizational event the summer before. I don't remember the details. Charlie would remember. I wasn't involved in it, but—

Kondracke: John Buckley says it was a major strategic disaster for the whole campaign, that Kemp devoted excessive energy and resources and time to Michigan

Reed: And came up with a goose egg.

Kondracke: Right.

Reed: Yes, that's true.

Kondracke: So what was the morale factor for the campaign after that Michigan thing? How did you—

Reed: Well, I don't know because I wasn't in the campaign headquarters very much. I was literally out in the field, and so I would come back every two or three weeks, normally to get an update on what's going on. But I really wasn't in the headquarters. It was kind of a weird campaign in that sense, is that the headquarters really didn't matter. What mattered at the time was trying to raise enough money to keep the plane flying, so you could go to Iowa and New Hampshire, and it was a little cycle. I'm sure John, John was in the middle of it all. He was traveling with Kemp every day, and so he was more in the knowledge circle of all that kind of stuff than I was.

Kondracke: You started in New Hampshire when?

Reed: Started in New Hampshire I want to say February or March of '87, and then I was there about three months before the shakeup in Iowa, and then I drew the short straw.

Kondracke: And you call it short straw because?

Reed: Because it was a very difficult environment. We had had a group of people who were all good-natured, good-hearted people. They just weren't doing the job right. Jack had no confidence in them, nor did Charlie or the rest of the campaign team. So to be injected into a situation like that is not fun. Two, to try to make something out of it was, you know, it was a big state, 99 counties. You had these organizational efforts and we kind of had to go back to the basics. In those days we had three by five cards at every event, we were signing up people at every event, and collecting the cards and putting them in a database. It's not like it is today with computers and handheld things. It was really back to the basics of politics. We organized in those days by coalitions, and we would try to do different coalition events as Kemp would come into the state, to get known, to make some news, but also to organize these different coalitions.

Kondracke: What kind of coalitions?

Reed: Seniors are a big thing in Iowa, veterans are a big thing in Iowa. We had farmers, we had pro-life, we kind of stuck to three or four basic coalitions that were part of our overall message, and did organizational events around those, where we would invite supporters

and try to get them to bring more potential supporters, and sign them up. And then we'd work them with direct mail and the volunteers. And then when we'd come to town again we'd do it. We also did some low dollar fundraising in states like Iowa and New Hampshire at the time, thinking that if we get them to give us a little money, they're probably going to be a little more committed to it. We didn't try to raise big dollars. But a big part of the campaign in those days was just about raising enough money to keep the plane going, because the plane was an expensive thing. It was the only way to do it. Fundraising kind of drives the campaign in those early stages more than you could imagine.

Kondracke: So Jack flew around in a private plane.

Reed: Most of the time he'd come to Iowa on a private plane just because it's the only way to get there if you're not going to blow a half a day going through Chicago. We occasionally flew commercial, but very rarely. Usually we'd fly private.

Kondracke: Some people thought that this was an outlandish expense.

Reed: Yes, some people thought it was excess, but those people weren't out campaigning like we were. It was a lot of money in those days to fly a plane for six or eight thousand dollars. It's three times that today all the way out there. But if all you've got is time, and that's really all we had in this campaign. We had a good candidate, we had a limited amount of time, because he had a day job in Congress. You just had to spend the money, you had to do it.

Kondracke: Briefly, what was wrong with the John Maxwell effort in Iowa?

Reed: There just was a feeling, and Maxwell's become a good friend, but there was just a feeling that it wasn't, things weren't getting done. The events, there weren't good crowds, there wasn't a level of enthusiasm, there was nobody in the headquarters. There just was a feeling that there wasn't a lot going on, nor was there enough going on to justify the amount of money that was being spent. What they tried to do was kind of absorb the [Charles E. "Chuck"] Grassley operation. Grassley had just won reelection, and he was kind of, he still is the king of Iowa. And they were trying to run the Grassley campaign, when Kemp was a different kind of candidate, we had a different strategy on how we were trying to put together the state. Again, we just needed to exceed expectations in Iowa. We never had visions of winning Iowa. We just needed it to get the bounce from the national press corps out of Iowa that we could go on to New Hampshire.

Kondracke: What kind of a bounce, what kind of a performance did you think you needed?

Reed: I think we ended up with 13 or 15 percent.

Kondracke: Eleven.

Reed: Right, 11. It wasn't that great and it wasn't enough. We thought we needed to finish in the top three, and Robertson in that

cycle was kind of the surprise. We were not enough of the storyline coming out of Iowa into New Hampshire to be relevant in New Hampshire. I didn't go to New Hampshire after Iowa; I actually went to South Carolina, where we were always going to try to fight on after New Hampshire even if we got skunked in New Hampshire, which we did. And I think Jack stayed in through South Carolina and then dropped out immediately, which was the right thing to do, because this wasn't going anywhere.

Kondracke: At what stage did it occur to you that this was a hopeless cause?

Reed: It never really did. I was pretty upbeat about the whole thing through the end.

Kondracke: How old were you at the time?

Reed: I was 27, 28. And I was pretty upbeat about our chances. Again, I didn't have visions we were going to score a knockout win, but I knew enough about the business that if we could just get out of there with our hide, we could on and fight another day in a more favorable environment at the time. I think he went to South Carolina and then I think Florida at the time. But I was, right through election night, I had my index cards, we had identified something like 12,500 people through all these efforts that we tried to turn out. I think we got 13,000 votes or something. It was an amazing effort in those days, of hand-to-hand combat, of trying to turn out vote.

Kondracke: So what are your all-time favorite memories of those Iowa and that campaign, and your travels with Jack?

Reed: The Polk County event was obviously a big deal because we shocked the country at the time, and the political intelligentsia, and it kind of got us on the stage. Obviously the Ames thing was a big downer, because it was a title wave of new people into the process that we didn't see coming, and it really got us into a battle with Robertson. It was a four-way race. We had funny experiences in different Podunk towns flying the plane in, barely getting over the corn to land to go in to meet with 28 people or something like that. That was a big deal in those days, just to have 28 people turn out. We always tried to stress to get people to turn out, because again, to my point, all you had was time, and we had to try to touch as many as we could. I wasn't in those days involved in what the television ads would look like. I just hoped we'd have ads, we'd have enough money to be able to run ads. I enjoyed getting to know Kemp. I learned to respect him a lot, his work ethic, the way he liked to get home Friday for football games for his son, but he'd be back out there Saturday by 11 o'clock campaigning, and he campaigned hard. I used to kid him all the time. He'd wear these goofy tie bars, which he thought were a real fashion statement, but to most people in Iowa you might as well be coming from Pluto. And I used to beg him to take them off because people would come up to me, "What the hell is this thing he's wearing around his neck?" But he was very proud of it. And his shirts. He was a little bit of a fashion hound himself. But it didn't work in Iowa. It was mostly getting to know him and the family and just the whole camaraderie of the whole thing. While everybody, the smart guys back in Washington, might well have known we had no chance, those

of us that were out on the front thought that we did. And we enjoyed it.

Kondracke: He wouldn't take off his tie bar?

Reed: I don't think he would. Buckley and I used to double-team him on it all the time and he wouldn't. He thought it was important that he dress properly, even though everybody else was in dungarees and flannel shirts and overalls, because this was the '80s.

Kondracke: Would he tailor his speeches to these coalitions that you were talking about?

Reed: He didn't, he didn't. He was sometimes to our frustration, where we would try to ask him to, and he would listen. Then he wouldn't do it. But no, he was pretty consistent. He had what he thought was a message that he was going to deliver in this campaign, and come hell or high water, and he pretty much did. I didn't understand back in those days the power of the message as much as the retail. I was more into the retail part of things. I now understand message matters a lot more than anything. But he pretty much had a message he wanted to stick with, and he pretty much did, contrary to all the guys back in Washington fighting, bringing in [Edward J.] Ed Rollins to second-guess Charlie, and then bringing in [Thomas P.] Tom Kemp, which was his brother, who second-guessed everybody and ended up coming out and spending a lot of time with me in Iowa, who was a great guy, but, you know, it was frustrating, because that was kind of Jack's management style. Like a lot of these guys in the House, they're not used to managing. They had lots of little spheres

of people running around doing different things, and he would give everybody the same thing to do. You can't do that when you're running a presidential campaign. That was one of the problems.

Kondracke: But he did?

Reed: He tried. He did, and it was very disruptive.

Kondracke: Talk about that a little bit.

Reed: Well, between having two power centers back in Washington, where Charlie and Ed were constantly contradicting each other and giving different directives to everybody, it was frustrating. And it was a lesson I took away from that campaign as I got into the business and ultimately ran my own campaign. No gray area in these deals. Everything is black and white. People have specific roles and responsibilities, and they're going to be accountable for things. That's how we got into the spending problem, because at the end of the day there was really not one person in charge of the campaign, there were two or three. And there was really nobody in charge of the money, and if you don't have money, you can't keep the plane flying, and that was ultimately one of the reasons he recognized he needed to drop out. I think he had a little debt when he dropped out, I don't remember. There was nobody in charge.

Kondracke: He did have a finance chairman, [Rodney A.] Rod Smith, right?

Reed: Yes, and Rod was a fundraiser. In structure he had all these people, but nobody ever really got the hands-on. And the real problem was the Charlie-Ed thing at the top.

Kondracke: What did you see as the Charlie and Ed thing, from your vantage point?

Reed: I saw bickering, I saw not agreement, I saw missed information going in and out. It almost became two camps in the campaign. And what I really saw was a lack of controls over it.

Kondracke: What does that mean in practical terms?

Reed: How money was being spent, how time was being allocated. I was always advocating I needed more time, I needed more time, and I got a lot, because I think they saw we had a good operation running, and recognized we can't get skunked in Iowa. But even to the point where—we never really, as I remember—we didn't have much of a television budget in Iowa, or radio budget or direct mail budget, or voter contact budget. We had to kind of scrape along. Which is the nature of campaigns, but it wasn't a competent one.

Kondracke: So why was that a Charlie and an Ed problem?

Reed: Because I don't think at the end of the day there was a real control system in place on the spending. There was a lot of emotional spending. "We need to do this," Jeff Bell, "we need to do this." And Jeff was the campaign manager. But in a normal campaign—

Kondracke: Wait a minute. I thought Charlie Black was the campaign manager.

Reed: Well Charlie was the campaign manager, and then Rollins was brought in as the campaign chairman, and then Jeff Bell had this title of campaign manager in the headquarters. I don't know if it just meant in the headquarters or outside. But to my earlier point, there was just a lot of gray area about what everybody did, and it was all about getting time on the schedule, getting the candidate in your state, trying to get some votes. And it was just a constant struggle. There was never a "This is our strategy, this is how we're going to win, this is our directive, go implement it." It was kind of us guys out in the state making it happen.

Kondracke: What does that tell you about Jack Kemp's management style, and why did he do things that way?

Reed: I believe it all comes back from being a member of the House. This is how these folks operate. They have a staff of eight or 10 people, they have a district office that's usually run by one of their friends or somebody from the campaign that picks them up when they land in the district, tells them what's going on, and they go out and campaign. And I just don't think it's a management style that's conducive to running an organization. It was a challenge when we got to HUD. That's why, when we first sat down, well, okay, we caught the car, now what do we do? Our first decision was "We need to find a guy like [Alfred "Al"] DelliBovi, who knows how to run one of these things, that can help us stay out of trouble. And that's why we recruited Al, because he had run across the street, had a good

reputation around town, was a good Reagan conservative. The second thing we did, I know I'm bouncing around here, is we got to get a lawyer in here. We got to get a general counsel. We've got to get someone who's going to keep us out of trouble. This place had a reputation around town as a cesspool, HUD did, about deals and all this other stuff. Once we got in there and we got our first briefings from the inspector general, I thought, "Oh, my God, this place is a swamp." So re recruited [Francis A. "Frank"] Keating, who had been the number three at Justice, so we at least felt we had a competent manager and a competent cop to keep us out of trouble. The rest was easy, once we got that done.

Kondracke: [David M.] Dave Smick has this theory that Kemp kept people doing the same job and denied people information as a means, as a control mechanism, so that he was in charge, or the person in charge, and it was kind of a manipulative side of Jack Kemp. Does that make any sense?

Reed: Yes, it makes some sense. I don't know if I'd go quite that far. Again, it's how these members of Congress operate. They're used to being handed pieces of paper. "You've got to run to a hearing," getting a briefing walking down the hallway. They are the center of everything. The scheduler doesn't know everything they're doing, their chief-of-staff doesn't know everything they're doing. That may have been part of it. It's not a good style on how to run anything. It's not a good style on how to get—I often saw it that he was just making all the staff compete, to get the best out of them. There is a management style to that, and I actually believe in that style, to a certain extent. Jack was kind of his own drummer on where he

wanted to go. He had obviously had an incredible amount of success in sports, in his personal life, and in politics. With his family and with politics, so I think he kind of thought he knew what he was doing.

Kondracke: But if you're a quarterback and you're calling plays, everybody who's on the team has a job to do in that play.

Reed: Right. And that was always a challenge for him in politics, to let everybody run their lanes or run their routes, because he was either changing the play or changing the routes. But he wanted to run for president, people wanted him to run before then. It releases some drug in your brain, I forget what it's call, that makes you feel good. Charlie Black had been his consultant for years. He had a great relationship with him, still does. Ed Rollins had just run the national campaign that won 49 states. Well, "We need Ed too." And, you know, "We need the best. We need everybody." But when you don't give people clear lines of authority, especially on spending money in campaigns—it's the most dangerous part of the campaign is waking up and being broke or in debt, or having a debt and then having to go raise money from your friends. He missed all that part, he didn't get the memo.

Kondracke: I've been told that he did not like to raise money.

Reed: He didn't. He didn't like to ask people for money. I think he kind of thought it was beneath him. And he would struggle sometimes to ask people for their votes. We used to jam him in Iowa to make sure that's your closing line. He didn't like to do it. I don't know why. In this business either you love to raise money or you hate it, there

isn't a lot of in-between. Some folks, Bob Dole, used to love it. He thought it was the best thing, getting all these rich guys to give him a lot of money to do politics. Kemp just hated it, thought it was sleazy, didn't like the whole thing. The campaign, as I remember, started to get into a deficit early on, and we were spending all this money on direct mail. Back then direct mail was the way you raised money, low dollar, because we were going for matching funds. The problem with that direct mail business is you run up a deficit pretty quickly, and you've got to keep pumping it to raise more money to raise a bigger deficit. It was a terrible downward spiral, and that's how the campaign got in trouble.

Kondracke: Was this a Richard A.] Dick Viguerie thing?

Reed: Well, no, it was, Rod ran the program. It was a good program. And Kemp had a good signature on direct mail, and they'd spent a lot of time cultivating that over the years and building a good base. It's hard to raise a lot of money when you're a Congressman running for national office, outside of four or five cities, so he had a limited base of where he was raising his money. He had friends from the NFL [National Football League] in a lot of big cities, but we weren't a powerhouse when it came to money.

Kondracke: What was Tom Kemp's role, exactly?

Reed: When the campaign started to flounder a little, in terms of there weren't good internal controls, and over the spending and things like that, Tom, who was, I believe he had just stepped down as an executive at Pepsi [Cola Company] or somewhere big, was kind of

brought in not as an inspector general, but kind of as a super bean counter, making sure the money was being spent well. And this was all new to him. He didn't understand politics, he understood corporate governance. So he spent a lot of time both in the headquarters and some out in the field with me in Iowa, kind of going over what we were doing and why we were doing it. And he became a good ally. At the beginning it was kind of a hassle, but he became an ally by the end, of trying to get Jack to do the right thing. He became one of us.

Kondracke: And did he?

Reed: He did. He did. He became an advocate for what really mattered, as he learned what really mattered and what didn't matter, and turned out to be a good friend.

Kondracke: What was [Richard J.] Dick Fox's role?

Reed: Fox was a fundraiser, as I remember, but was kind of part of this posse that Kemp had around, of guys that were talking to him a lot, giving him ideas. I don't remember, besides fundraising and doing some events in Philadelphia or Pennsylvania, I don't remember a lot of involvement, except for being out Caucus Night.

Kondracke: What exactly did Jeff Bell do?

Reed: Well, I thought Jeff was the campaign manager or campaign director, who spent most of his time at the headquarters in Rosalyn [Virginia], kind of thinking, giving us some direction out in the states, helping us on scheduling, getting days, and then designing the trips.

When I would come back to the headquarters every two or three weeks he would be somebody I'd always spend some time with, tell him what I thought was going on out there. Not that there were different camps, but there were just, he was there, he was a listener.

Kondracke: Who was your favorite headquarters person that you thought you could go to and get something done that you really needed to get done?

Reed: Well in those days what mattered to me most was the schedule, and I had to get dates, because if I didn't have dates then I couldn't plan things and figure out where to strategically go and how to turn out votes. So I spent most of my lobbying time getting things on the schedule. Most of the time I think that was with Black, as I remember.

Kondracke: And what about Ben [T.] Elliot? What was his role?

Reed: Ben was a speechwriter, serious, smart guy. We would try to stage a big speech or something to say every month or so, and Ben was always crucial in helping him on that. Spent a lot of time with Jack, most of his time back here, would come out to the state occasionally to get a feel for stuff, but he was just what I would consider part of the intellectual brainpower of the campaign. Was good at capturing Jack's ideas and what he wanted to say and trying to put it in a more stylistic way.

Kondracke: Did Kemp deliver speeches that he was supposed to deliver?

Reed: Not always. Kemp was a guy that would spend a lot of his time absorbing ideas from other people. He read a lot, he read newspapers a lot, he talked to his brain trust friends. And then he would, in his own way, put together what he was going to say. We—I'm not a speechwriter, I wasn't then--but we have people who would write speeches, he would usually read them a couple of times, and then he would go give his speech. It caused some frustration in the campaign, but having now done this for 30 years, there's nothing wrong with it. If you're the candidate, you know what you ought to be saying, you go out and say it. Ben would write drafts that I think Jack would read and absorb, but he wouldn't give them exactly, at the end. I never thought that was a big deal. Some people did. It showed a lack of discipline, but Jack was actually a very disciplined guy.

Kondracke: Explain that.

Reed: The not wanting to read a thoughtful speech that strategically was important to his campaign, and almost disregard it, to me showed a lack of discipline, but at the same time, when the plane would land in Ames, Iowa, or wherever we were campaigning that day, he would get off the plane rested, thoughtful, ready to go. I'd brief him on why we were doing what we were doing, why it was important, and he would go and perform at an exceptionally high level nine out of 10 times. Like all of us, occasionally he would get tired and flub up. We all do that. But my point is, when it was game day, he would put on his tie bar and step off the plane and he was ready to go. And that was good for all of us that were busting our ass living out in this God-awful place, freezing, wearing hats every day because it was so cold.

That would keep us pumped up. And he'd be back in a week, or 10 days or seven days or four days or whatever.

Kondracke: How did he take disappointments?

Reed: Back in those days I didn't really see a lot of disappointment out of Kemp. He was always upbeat, he never swore. Again, I saw a disciplined side. Then as I got to spend more and more and more time with him, especially going through the HUD thing, I saw frustrations and things like that. But I never saw that during the campaign. He was truly a happy warrior when it came to the campaigning part, even though we weren't winning.

Kondracke: Were you in New Orleans for the vice presidential choice?

Reed: Yes, I was in New Orleans. I was actually with Jack at one of these famous restaurants when he got the call, and the call was to run back to the hotel to get the call.

Kondracke: So who was the first call from?

Reed: I think it was from [James A. "Jim"] Baker or one of Baker's team, saying, "Where are you?" The first call was, "Get back to the hotel. You're going get a call." It wasn't like he thought he was going to be picked. I mean I sure didn't. Nobody really did. And there hadn't been a lot of touchy feely leading up to the Convention, so that he didn't believe he was going to be chosen. But then we went back to the hotel, he went in the room privately. I guess he talked to Bush

but I don't even remember exactly, and came out and said "It's [James Danforth] Dan Quayle." We were all like, "What?"

Kondracke: John Buckley says that he was told by Stuart [K.] Spencer that he thought it was going to be Kemp, and that there were Secret Service men telling reporters, and reporters telling aides and stuff like that, that it was going to be Kemp, that there was kind of a disinformation thing going on run by the Bush campaign.

Reed: That's all news to me. You see in those days I didn't know a lot of reporters, so that was Buckley's world, and he would have known that differently than I would have. I was a political guy and kind of a body guy for Kemp, but I didn't know that. He hadn't been, to my knowledge he hadn't been really vetted, he hadn't turned over any product, he hadn't gone through the process at all.

Kondracke: So he didn't expect—

Reed: I don't think he expected it at all.

Kondracke: What happened when he got the call at the restaurant to go to the hotel? Was there a notion that something good was going to happen?

Reed: No, it was kind of weird. As I remember it was like a finance event for a lot of our old guys and gals, and just from around the country, so it was a social thing. And we just kind of had to abruptly leave, and tell. I think Sharon [Zelaska] was there, "You've got to deal with these people, just deal with it." And we kind of left in a

hurry. And then we were back at the hotel, and then I think within a couple three hours the whole Quayle landed on the boat thing happened. It all happened really quickly, and we were all right down in the middle and it just became kind of a zoo.

Kondracke: What was your connection with Kemp after the campaign was over and before HUD, during that interim?

Reed: After the campaign I went through South Carolina—

Kondracke: Any memories of that?

Reed: No, really when I got down there we had nothing, not that we expected anything, but there was really nothing going on. We tried to run around a do a couple of days of campaigning, but we couldn't get arrested if we took our pants off, I mean it wasn't going to happen. And he saw the handwriting on the wall on that. I stayed close to Kemp and Charlie and all the guys, and I did a little consulting with the NRCC [National Republican Campaign Committee] back then, and picked up a couple House races, one in New Hampshire, one in Maryland, and that's kind of how I ate during that period. But in those days I didn't get picked up by the Bush guys, and so I was kind of out on my own trying to just figure out how to make a living. Ended up helping [Charles G.] Chuck Douglas [III] in New Hampshire get elected to Congress, and I was going to be his chief of staff on the Hill, his administrative assistant, for about three weeks, until Kemp got asked to go to HUD, and then I had to tell Chuck, I'm sorry I can't do this. I've got to go, and that wasn't a pretty sight, but I did the right thing.

Kondracke: How did Kemp ask you to be chief of staff at HUD?

Reed: I was actually with him, I don't know why, when he got the call to go down to meet with the vice president. That was after the election, about a week or two. Craig [L.] Fuller's office called. So I actually—

Kondracke: Where were you?

Reed: I think we were on Capitol Hill. I think we were in his Congressional office, and he said, "Why don't you come with me?" So I rode down with him to the OEOB [Old Executive Office Building,] sat out in the hall while he went in and met with Fuller and the president-elect. And he came out and he said, "Well, I got asked to go to HUD." And I was like, "Wow, that's great." And then he said, "Would you come with me? I said, "Sure." We didn't know anything about HUD or anything, but I said I'd love to. I had to go unwind myself from Chuck Douglas, which was an awkward thing to do. And then I started out as his executive assistant at HUD, and we recruited a guy named Wendell [W.] Gunn to be his chief of staff, who was a fellow he had known around town, and through politics, I think from the Ford White House, or early Reagan. I was the executive assistant.

Kondracke: Sharon Zelaska was his personal assistant?

Reed: She was his personal assistant, confidential assistant, and Mary [Brunette Cannon] was his special assistant. And we were kind of the little Troika of the place. And then Wendell ended up leaving after five or sixth months, I don't remember why, and after a while

Jack asked me to take his role as chief of staff. But I was kind of operating as the chief of staff before then anyway, running the politics and the policy and the personnel stuff, which in the early stages of one of these things it's really all about the personnel, getting the right people in place.

Kondracke: Supposedly after he got the offer, he went to Joanne [Main Kemp] and talked about it with Joanne. Presumably he wanted a better job than HUD, didn't he?

Reed: I don't remember all that. He didn't know what he was going to do at the time. All he had done since losing and stepping down from Congress was signed up with the Washington Speakers Bureau or something, and he was going through, 'How do I make money? Do I do a couple boards? Do I give some speeches?' And he was kind of thinking through how am I going to do that and what type of an operation do I need, and all that kind of stuff. I wasn't really privy to any conversations with Joanne about HUD or anything. I think he was intrigued with the HUD thing, just because he immediately understood the politics of it, and how good the politics could be in terms of kind of being a non-traditional Republican. That was kind of our guiding light on where we went with everything we tried to do over there, once we got in there and recognized we inherited a mess. We had to fix that. But I think he recognized—nobody at the time knew Bush would be so hands-off on domestic policy. So we, I think, in the beginning thought there'd be more camaraderie and we'd all be part of something together, and I think that was part of the meeting, you know, Fuller and Bush. It obviously wasn't like that. Once we got over there we were on an island. The only time you got off the island was to go to a

Cabinet meeting occasionally, and we kind of did our own thing, which, our attitude was, 'Great, let's just make the best of this.' The one good piece of advice Rollins gave me when we first got over there, and I was like the first one in there, because when you get to be in the Cabinet you don't really go to the Cabinet department until you're confirmed, because you don't want to say anything to upset anybody. So I was kind of the landing party with Mary and Sharon. And the first thing Rollins said, he said, "You need to get a real good advance guy, "and we hired [Frederick L.] Rick Ahern, who had been a Reagan guy. And he said if you're really going to move this guy around the country, like we were all talking about, you've got to have a good operation. That was the first hire we made.

Kondracke: When you say that he thought this was good "politically," did he have notions about running again in '96?

Reed: Not that I was privy to. You mean in '92, or after eight years? Not that I was privy to. It was more, the guys may have talked about that, I wasn't part of that, but at that point in Kemp's life it was more like, 'Okay, what am I going to do now? I've done this for 20 years, I've never made any money. How do I transition and how do I stay relevant, and how do I stay engaged?'

Kondracke: But you said that he thought that this was good politics. And this was going to be a different face for the Republican Party that he could—

Reed: Yes, good politics in that you could go out and actively communicate with Hispanics and Latinos and African-Americans and

under-privileged parts of the country, which was always part of his message, even in Iowa when he was running for president. Which didn't exactly ring a lot of bells, but that was what, to your earlier point, he would campaign on what he wanted to campaign on, even if it wasn't in the focus groups.

Kondracke: You say you were an island, because the White House—

Reed: They didn't have a lot of interest, besides hiring people, filling some jobs, the personnel. The only people we heard from the White House were the Office of White House Personnel wanting us to interview people. He always had a relationship with [Richard D. "Dick"] Darman that was kind of strained, and OMB [Office of Management and Budget] ran all the budget stuff, still does. He didn't have a great relationship with [John H.] Sununu, because Sununu would try to bully him like he did everybody, and Jack wouldn't get bullied by Sununu.

Kondracke: Do you remember any incidents of that?

Reed: Not in particular. Just that it was always a strained relationship with Sununu because of his style. He was very kind of gruff and pushy, and just nobody like it.

Kondracke: Was it that Jack wanted the administration to do certain things and Sununu said no, or that Jack was doing things that the White House didn't like?

Reed: It started that we would be advocating that the President ought to do certain things, talk about certain things, you know, use some of our agenda in speeches and things like that, and occasionally they'd throw us a couple little crumbs and we'd think it was the greatest thing in the world and put it on everything we did, when it really didn't even matter. And then it got to the point where I think there was some hostility, just that we were being so ignored. And then Jack would occasionally overstep, write a confidential memo or something and we'd leak it to [Robert D.S. "Bob"] Novak or something, and then they'd go crazy.

Kondracke: Do you remember any specific incidents of that?

Reed: I don't remember any specifics, but I do remember that there was some tension. The biggest tension as I remember was with Jim Baker, though, over Israel, over—

Kondracke: Over Ariel Sharon?

Reed: Over Sharon's visit. And Jack just taking a meeting with the guy, not thinking it had ramifications that he's part of the federal government.

Kondracke: So did he tell you in advance that this was going to be problematical?

Reed: No, I don't remember that, no. Jack would never tell me in advance he was doing something that was going to create some type of controversy. He would just, we would just do it and know what was

going to happen. He didn't premeditate a lot of those kind of things, I don't think he did. He thought this is what he ought to do, and he just was going to do it, and it just got to a point though, that we were really ostracized from these guys. And then it got a little depressing. Because at the end of the day they're going to win a battle, and the war.

Kondracke: So what do you remember specifically about the Ariel Sharon episode?

Reed: Just that Kemp had agreed to meet with him through other channels, through some friends of his that were part of the trip, or something like that. I don't remember if it was [Norman] Norm Braman or somebody, maybe Dick Fox, in the Jewish community. And that the White House went bonkers and Baker went Bonkers, and called, and had a pretty ugly conversation with Jack. I think I was in there. I just got the feedback from it immediately. And, you know, he didn't liked being talked to like that by anybody, but—

Kondracke: Did he tell you what Baker had said?

Reed: Just said that he'd chewed his ass, that he wasn't to be making foreign policy, he was to stick with making HUD policy, stay in his lane, something like that. Which immediately leaked out, within seven seconds, and was in all the newspapers and everything, so it was kind of embarrassing.

Kondracke: Who leaked it?

Reed: Baker's team. It wasn't us.

Kondracke: There was an episode in which Jack raised some issue where Baker was present, about Jews, and Baker said something like "Blank the Jews. They didn't vote for us anyway." Do you remember that episode?

Reed: No, don't remember that. Wouldn't surprise me but I don't remember that.

Kondracke: Now you said in the HUD symposium [6/29/12] that you would get calls from the Cabinet secretary after a Cabinet meeting reporting to you about what Jack had done during a Cabinet meeting. Talk about that.

Reed: It usually, it was [Edward M.] Ed Rogers [Jr.], who was, I think, deputy to Sununu, I believe, at the time. He was kind of my liaison. Occasionally he'd call, either before a Cabinet meeting to say "Make sure Kemp stays on the reservation today," or after the Cabinet meeting, saying, "Well, it didn't work. He did x, y or z."

Kondracke: What were the x, y and z?

Reed: Oh, sometimes he would take a memo and hand it out at the meeting and stuff like that. It may have only happened once or twice, but I remember it happened once and it was a big deal.

Kondracke: Saying what?

Reed: That we ought to have more of an empowerment agenda on this, and you at [U.S. Department of] Energy could talk about this and you at HHS [U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources] could talk about this, and kind of how to get everybody involved.

Kondracke: This wasn't pre-cleared?

Reed: No. And our relationship with the White House really got strained when after like the first five or six months we decided we were going to put out this reform agenda, and we put it together, and Keating pulled all these ideas together, and we culled it down to 50 ideas or whatever, and we called a press conference for the next day. And OMB found out about it and came over that morning, literally with 20 people, and sat in the conference room and DeliBovi and I went in. Kemp wouldn't even go in. And walked them all through what we were going to be doing, and they were just hysterical. "You can't do that. You can't say that. It hasn't been pre-cleared," and all that business. And we did it respectfully, anyway, because we had to do it, but we didn't really go through the channels as you normally would, and that was part of the problem.

Kondracke: Let me understand, how deep into the HUD era was this?

Reed: This was early. This was like, I want to say, by the fall of the first year. It took us like six months to figure out not only how to operate the place, but what to do about it. And so I want to say it was by the fall. Normally you would put all this kind of stuff in clearance and have meetings and talk about it, and it was everything from there were some issues with the Justice Department about enforcement that

we probably should have cleared with all them, but we just thought we needed to do anyway. And it was our governing agenda, and we just didn't do a very good job of clearing it internally. Like we didn't do it at all.

Kondracke: This was the reform agenda to fix the building because there'd been so much fraud and abuse.

Reed: Because we had inherited all this mess, right. Which was separate from our offensive, our six-point agenda of what we wanted to do while we were there. We felt until we kind of closed the chapter on the mess and got the *New York Times* off our ass every day about all the problems [Samuel R. "Sam"] Pierce had had, we couldn't ever be for anything. And so it was a strategic decision. We do this first, shut that down, and then we do what we wanted to do.

Kondracke: So you just surprised OMB with—

Reed: Yes, we totally surprised them, and they didn't like it. And again, it wasn't anything that was crazy. They just didn't like the way we handled the process. And it haunted us for the next four years, three years.

Kondracke: Why?

Reed: Because they didn't like us. They didn't like our style, they thought we were a little off the reservation, Lone Rangers, and it was just a constant problem.

Kondracke: And how did that affect your offensive agenda?

Reed: Mary would know better on that. I don't know. I don't think it affected anything, to be quite honest. In a way, you know you have to remember, at the time Kemp was jetting around the country going into places no Republican cabinet official had ever gone. Members of Congress were fighting over who would be able to go with him, who would be able to be on the stage, who would take him to their favorite place. The clips in those days, we still had clips in those days, they were inches thick every day of positive not just news stories, but editorials about what the administration, and Bush would always say, "Well Bush said it, so it's the Bush Administration was trying to do." He took full advantage of that.

Kondracke: So he would go to a place and do an urban event at a public housing—

Reed: Sometimes at a public housing. By then we would really know where the troubled spots were, and so sometimes it would be going in to kick the hell out of some developers that had just ripped off this project for 10 years, and it was a dump. Sometimes it was to meet with the resident management about how to become self-sufficient, and how to do your own thing. Sometimes it was to make a speech, a broader speech in Chicago, in Cabrini Green [public housing project], or at some of these places that were symbols of terribleness. It was a little bit of everything, but it was quite an aggressive schedule. He wasn't sitting around on the tenth floor at HUD, waiting for someone to bring something to the in box. It's like, "Let's go do this." Granted, they were our appropriators, they were our oversight committees. We

had to play that game well, and we did, but by the end, everybody was asking us to go everywhere, because they recognized the power of, I think, the message and the messenger.

Kondracke: But he was giving Bush credit, and giving good publicity for—

Reed: He was always careful to say, "And President Bush believes in this and said this." Kemp was always walking around with a pile of newspapers, a folder, scribble all over it. And he was just constantly update that with news into his speeches. And when Bush would say something, he'd put that right at the top, because it was his way to kind of connect everything together.

Kondracke: Talk about his leadership style. Did he engender leadership? He always told his kids, "Be a leader." I just wonder whether he inspired other people to learn about leadership.

Reed: Well, in HUD, where I really saw it, in the campaign you didn't see stuff like that because he was the candidate and it was all about him, but in HUD, he put together I think a topnotch team, gave them some direction, did not micromanage them, and kind of got out of the way. He had some Reaganesque qualities in that sense. He would want to know—this stuff's very complicated, I mean a lot of this stuff in the Department is very complicated, and little decisions down here make huge implications on people's lives and properties and taxes and benefits and everything. So he would encourage a healthy debate. We had [Lowell P.] Weicker [Jr.] as the head of PD and R [Office of Policy Development and Research], that was kind of our little in-house

think tank on what worked and didn't work. Weicker didn't have any real control over anything, but he was always brought in to kind of give a historical context, and then give a view of what's been going on in the think world. But we'd have some pretty healthy debates with the senior assistant secretary levels on some policy decisions. Like any of these places, you appoint people with the best of intentions, soon they end up getting co-opted by OMB or GAO [U.S. Government Accountability Office] or the members of Congress, and they turn to be disloyal. Once they became disloyal they had to go.

Kondracke: Any specific?

Reed: The biggest one, the biggest mistake we made was we brought in a woman named [Catherine] Austin Fitts to be the housing commissioner. She was from New York, she was a financier, she was making a million bucks back in those days, which was an incredible amount of money. Attractive, hard-charging, you know, good dresser, the whole deal. She had worked for [Nicholas F.] Nick Brady at Dillon-Reed [& Company]. And Nick had recommended her, and we met with her, and we kind of liked her. We thought, you know, we need a tough broad to straighten up FHA [U.S. Federal Housing Authority], to kick ass, and it was the biggest personnel mistake we made in the whole four years, because she turned out to be not very smart, and not at all a team player. She was a liberal in a conservative administration, that should have been a warning sign. And we ended up having to get rid of her, which was a painful thing to do. But that was probably our biggest mistake. The rest of the team was men and women that were great, and that were all experts in their field, and were all, this was a step up for all of them, so they were excited about

the role, and the fact there was an agenda, and the fact they had a lot of problems, and everybody did their job. And he would take some of them with him on different trips to engender, keeping their excitement up. As I remember, in the first two years or three years, besides Austin Fitts, I don't think we had a personnel mistake. That was a big one, don't get me wrong. FHA was a big job. But most of the rest of the team—

Kondracke: So what did she want to do that was out of line?

Reed: She kind of got co-opted by Darman's people and the Hill people, and she didn't really believe in our agenda of what we were trying to do from a public policy standpoint. She was more—now you look at FHA 25 years later, it's gone broke. There may have been some things we should have done back then to strengthen the fund, but she was just not on our agenda. You can't operate that way.

Kondracke: Just to round this out, as I understand it there were people in the White House like [James P.] Jim Pinkerton, who were your advocates. How did they operate? How did they advocate?

Reed: Pinkerton would occasionally communicate or call Jack or me or somebody and, "Keep up the great work," and "Here's something you should look at." [Irving] Kristol was over there at the time, he was with Quayle. Quayle was an advocate too. [William J. "Bill"] Bennett.

Kondracke: This is the outreach agenda and the concern with urban affairs, which no one else cared about.

Reed: Nobody else cared about. I think they all recognized, you can't help but read the clips and the type of feedback, the nontraditional type of feedback Kemp was getting was a powerful political thing that I think smart political people understood.

Kondracke: But Bush didn't.

Reed: Bush was busy on other things. I think if you talk to him about Kemp, he liked him, he didn't really know him that well. Most of the information he would get about Kemp was from his guys, and it was not positive, so it just kind of got worse and worse and worse and worse.

Kondracke: So Darman at one point banished the word empowerment as I understand it

Reed: I don't remember that, but I wouldn't be surprised.

Kondracke: Okay. After the Gulf War success, Bush's popularity rating is 91 percent or something like that. Kemp said somehow that he should use the capital that he'd built up to fight poverty. Do you remember that?

Reed: Yes, I do remember it.

Kondracke: How did he do it? Did he say it out loud, or—

Reed: I think he started talking about it and I think he wrote him one of his confidential memos on that, to the President, about you should use your capital to go in a new direction, show people you care, blah, blah, blah, blah. I don't remember. That was kind of when I was starting to transition out. I don't remember exactly what came of all that. Mary would know that.

[interruption]

Kondracke: At the end of the Bush Administration Bush violated his no new taxes pledge, and lots of people went after him, especially members of Congress did, and Jack apparently talked about leaving the Cabinet?

Reed: As I remember, Bush violated that in '91. I want to say it was in the fall of '91, because I left in January of '92, and I remember it was quite a debate. He had been—part of his brain trust outside of HUD, had advocated, I don't know exactly who, that he ought to resign over principle. I know he thought about it, but I don't think he thought about it very long, but I don't know that.

Kondracke: Did he talk to you about it?

Reed: We talked about it, and I told him I thought it was kind of a crazy idea. Recognizing the magnitude of what Bush had done, I didn't think it was the right thing for him to do personally or politically, or for his long term. Now at the time, we didn't know Bush was going to lose. Nobody thought he was going to lose at that time. He had taken a hit, but it hadn't been a severe hit yet. But I don't know how

serious it ever was. I just wasn't in that loop on that. I was kind of transitioning out at the time.

Kondracke: Who would have been in the loop on a decision like that?

Reed: Jude.

Kondracke: So Jude was a constant presence during the HUD years?

Reed: Jude was a constant presence in Kemp's life from when I knew him when he ran for president in '87, through the HUD tenure in and out. I mean, he wasn't, I don't mean a constant like overbearing pressure, but he would talk to him occasionally, right up through when he was on the ticket in '96.

Kondracke: Talk about the Jude influence.

Reed: First of all, I didn't know Jude that well personally. I didn't have a relationship with him. As a staff guy guys like Jude are kind of a pain in the ass, because they're always end-running. You try to put together a competent system of decision-making to serve the person, and he was always an end run around it when it came to ideas and things. So Mary and I, and Sharon, I think, we all kind of had an attitude about it, "Oh, there he goes again with Jude." But Jude was a smart guy, some would say a brilliant guy, an outside-the-box thinker, and I think Jack took a lot of his really great ideas and maybe some of his goofy ideas from Jude, and used them in politics. I think people like that are positive, it's just frustrating sometimes.

Kondracke: Any particulars?

Reed: Well, the worst one I have is not HUD-related, but it was when Kemp was on the ticket, and Jude gave him two pieces of advice that were really stupid and against everything we were trying to do in the campaign, and really hurt us.

Kondracke: '96.

Reed: '96. One was his whole laissez faire attitude about going into a debate against a guy like [Albert A.] Al Gore [Jr.], and how you don't need to practice, you just need to be yourself and show everybody they like you. And you don't need to go in with a strategy or a line of attack or anything to talk about. And in the first question in the debate when he was asked about ethics, and Kemp said, "I'm not going to get into that," that was a Jude line, and it was devastating. It lost the debate, it turned the whole corner on a lot of stuff.

Kondracke: So it was Jude who put that in his head.

Reed: I believe it was.

Kondracke: Do you have evidence for that?

Reed: I just believe it based on everybody who was talking to him at the time, and when I asked, "What the hell was that all about?"

Kondracke: Did he say it was Jude?

Reed: He didn't say it was Jude, but I got the sense from the guys that were around that it was Jude. And the second was Jude telling Kemp when he's on a national ticket with another candidate, and he's the number two, not the number one, that he should go out and embrace Farrakhan, because it's good for all of America to be embracing Farrakhan. And Kemp said something about Farrakhan, which was just a totally stupid thing to do, and disruptive, and knocked everything off, and we almost had to start over again. So those are my two—

Kondracke: Was this because Louis Farrakhan allegedly was a self-reliance person for the black community?

Reed: And a healing person for the black community. And it was the wrong thing at the wrong time. Like everything is in national politics, because it blows up to a whole different level. But those to me are my two worst Judisms.

Kondracke: Right. So going back to the HUD and we'll finish with this. Did Kemp have certain Congressional allies during the HUD years?

Reed: Well, he had pretty much everybody that was on the Banking Committee, Republicans were allies, as were a lot of the Democrats. Even the Democrats that were all in power back then, they were all pretty much Kemp allies because they wanted him to come campaign with them. And he did a lot of events, not campaign events but official HUD business, with a lot of Democrats all across the country. Congressional relations to Kemp was kind of pain in the butt because

he know that a lot of them were kind of whiny, and so we had [Timothy L.] Tim Coyle, and I did a lot of it myself too, not on the substance, but just when they were calling about politics and things. Our only real problem was with Barbara [A.] Mikulski, who was our appropriator. Two things I learned at HUD: one is the appropriators and OMB run everything in this town and nobody else matters, and for years the Appropriations Committee, the Democrats in the Senate, had really run HUD, right under Pierce's nose. She had a lot of people in the building, they all reported to her and her staff, and we had a real antagonistic relationship, because we stopped all that, we cut all that out. And we weren't going to let there be all these back channel negotiations around our backs going on. And so Mikulski clamped down. I think she even put in an appropriations rider that the secretary of HUD is not allowed to fly first class. Little petty shit like that, but that was the only bad relation we had. I think the bulk of the rest were good. Look, when Kemp went to the Hill to testify, it was a circus, and for politicians it was a good circus. He got a lot of attention, he always made news, he had something to say. And if you're a member of Congress, that's the highlight of being on the Committee.

Kondracke: So when he was going to make news, how did that get hatched? Was it your press person, you?

Reed: It was usually Mary, because she was the best at that. In the beginning we would have these murder boards on going to the Hill, and then after the first couple in the hearings, Kemp got it. He knew exactly how to play to the members, and he would go with something to say. The biggest thing we always made sure of is that there weren't

any surprises, that there wasn't something sitting around in the building or something somebody had asked for that we hadn't responded to. So we made sure all that was done. And then Kemp would try to make news on some policy initiatives to try to promote an agenda, and it usually worked.

Kondracke: Between the time you left and the '96 campaign, what were you doing?

Reed: I did a little lobbying, and then I helped Haley [R. Barbour] run his campaign for chairman, and then I went over as the executive director—

[interruption]

Reed: of the Republican National Committee, where I stayed in touch with Kemp a little, but not a lot. He was setting up Empower America. The next time Kemp came on my scene was in late '94, when [Peter B.] Pete Wilson came forward with his immigration policy about 10 days before the election, the midterm elections that we won, and Kemp denounced it, and it was just a huge ruckus politically. Then the election came and went, we won everything, and then I started talking with Dole about going over to run his campaign. And I told Kemp, I had said no a couple times, and then I went back and said yes, but I told Kemp right before I did it that I was going to do it, just because I felt I owed it to him. And he said "Great. Good luck." He wasn't planning on running.

Kondracke: He never considered running in '96?

Reed: Not to my knowledge. Never once, not to my knowledge. And I think I would have known.

Kondracke: Okay. So is he basically off your radar screen until the vice presidential choice?

Reed: No. He's basically off my radar screen, but during '95, I did talked to him with a good bit. He'd call with ideas, not being an advocate for Bob Dole, just "You ought to think about this." We had a relationship, and then the time we really got into it was in, I want to say February, when Kemp endorsed [Malcolm S.] Steve Forbes [Jr.]. I want to say the Thursday before the South Carolina primary. We hadn't chased him for an endorsement. We were really in those days chasing governors for endorsements, that was our strategy. Governors were the base of the Party. I didn't hear much from Kemp, and then he calls me literally the Thursday before South Carolina. I think he had just endorsed Forbes. Or maybe I called him, I don't remember. And I was like, "What are you doing?" And he goes, "Well, he's a friend, and I really believe in his hope-growth message." And I said, "Jack, we're going to win this thing on Saturday and then we're going to win 20 straight elections. We're going to win. Your timing is just incredibly stupid, for your own good." "Well, it's what I believe, this is how I wanted to do it, so I did it."

Kondracke: But it was late.

Reed: It was too late. It was literally the day before the South Carolina primary that we won, which was the turning point, and then

we went and won 22 straight primaries in a row. So yes, and it was kind of weird how he did it all. Then we were talking after we were the nominee some, and he was kind of, not lobbying me but lobbying me on, "Am I going to get a role at the Convention?" And I would always remind him, "Yes, that was so brilliant. You endorsed Forbes the day before we won this thing." But I just kept saying, "Just keep your powder dry. Make sure you've got that week plan. I don't know, I can't tell yet." This was like during May and June, and he was getting a little hot, and "I can't believe you don't want me to give a big speech at the Convention" and all that. And I'm like, "Well we don't know what our strategy is going to be yet for the Convention, so just bear with me." And then we went through the normal vice presidential process that started in May, I want to say, and June—

Kondracke: Who was in charge of that?

Reed: A fellow from Kansas, just passed away, Ambassador—had a gray beard—[Robert F.] Ellsworth. He was one of Dole's friends. And we had a committee. Ann [L.] McLaughlin was on it, it was like six or seven. I forget exactly. And that was really to collect names and talk, and we met with Dole a couple times, and it was a public committee, you know. I called it a phony committee, but it was a public committee. And then as we went through the process, we were looking at folks. We kept kind of coming back to them. This wasn't, you know, exciting enough. We knew we were going to have a tough campaign, so we needed some energy and electricity and excitement. And I think in about mid-July is when Dole said to me after one of my field reports coming back from having met with one of the potential candidates alone, and really kind of drilled down on the sex and the

drugs and the rock and roll stuff, and I came back with a report, and was like, "Here we are. This isn't very exciting." And at one of those meetings, I want to say in July, he said, "Well maybe we should talk to the quarterback." That's what we kind of kidded Kemp's name as the quarterback because when he'd pop off on things Dole would call me and say "There goes the quarterback again." And I said, "Okay, I think that's a good idea." And we started a process of one, me meeting with Jack, took Buckley to one of the meetings once to make sure Jack was serious about this. And then we had a private meeting with Dole at the Watergate [complex apartment building], at John [A.] Moran's apartment, where they really got along. And then we kind of started a process of Kemp having to, you know—we had a process in those days of you filled out a questionnaire and you turned over your tax records and your health records, I think. With Kemp we kind of jumped all that process because we didn't start on him until it was so late that it wasn't the normal process. I do remember sending the questionnaire to Bill Bennett. I had him out campaigning with Dole for a day. They really got along on the road; had a good day. I forget where they went. And Dole said, "Well maybe we ought to talk to Bennett." So I asked Bennett if he'd be interested. He said sure, I sent him the questionnaire. He literally called me back the next morning and said, "No, I'm not doing this." [laughs] And it wasn't that intrusive.

Kondracke: Did it have something to do with slot machines?

Reed: It had something to do with something. I didn't know at the time. But I think in retrospect it had to do with gaming.

Kondracke: So did you poll on vice presidential candidates?

Reed: No. We did, we did, but I don't think we ever put Kemp's name in the poll. You see, part of my thing with Dole was, I had a great relationship with him. I still do today. He loved the element of surprise and I knew that if we were going to put Kemp on the ticket, it had to be a total surprise or he wouldn't want to do it. And so I never told our official group, Ellsworth, that we were vetting Kemp. I never told my team, my strategic team, my guys and gals. Because if it got out, I knew, I knew the way Dole would react to it. And so it didn't get out. So we never went through the normal—I had put together a vice president team in, I want to say June. [Wayne L.] Berman was in charge of it, Wayne, to integrate with the campaign. I had him out on the road a little with the campaign team on the plane to learn how we operate, how we make decisions, how it works. And he didn't know who it was and I didn't tell him until the end, until it was public, actually, because I didn't want it to leak out. Just like when Dole left the Senate. I'm telling you, if that had leaked out, he wouldn't have done it. We came to the conclusion in mid-April after we won the nomination, that the Senate was killing us. [Edward M.] Ted Kennedy in those days was doing a great job at tying us up in knots on the Senate floor every day. And as hard as it was, it was a simple conclusion. We can't do both. And if it had leaked that morning, I'm telling you, Dole would not have gone and resigned. And the fact that it didn't and the fact that everybody had all these crazy stories of what was going on, he loved that intrigue and went and did what he thought was the right thing to do. When I saw that happen in May, I said to myself "That's how the VP thing's got to be done. Because if it's out there he'll go in a wrong direction possibly, for the wrong reason."

And so that's why when we did the Kemp thing, my deal was no one's going to know about this, except for Buckley. Buckley was the only guy I had in the loop on it, and I trusted him 100 percent.

Kondracke: So when did you decide that it ought to be Kemp?

Reed: I decided it ought to be Kemp when I came back from my last private meeting with one of the other potentials, and I was just like, I kept envisioning the arrival ceremony at the Convention and the need for it to be an exciting—we had planned this, big coming down the bay and the boats and all this other stuff, 10,000 people and a real exciting thing on Sunday to kick off the campaign and to kick off the Convention, and the excitement, and I kept envisioning Dole up there with one of these other guys, and there being, like, no enthusiasm. And it was like a nightmare I was having, because they were all great men, they were all great people, but none of them struck the chord of enthusiasm that I felt we were lacking in terms of excitement about Dole and the ticket.

Kondracke: So the quarterback idea is a fairly late one. I mean, this wasn't something that you plotted way in advance.

Reed: I think the quarterback idea came up July 20th.

Kondracke: And the Convention started—

Reed: And the Convention started about August 14 or something. And in the middle of this we were rolling out pre-Convention, we were rolling out our tax cut plan, our 15 percent across the board tax cut

plan, which was kind of the centerpiece of the campaign. Because you may remember back in July, the Senate had taken welfare reform and sent it to Clinton for the third time, and they took that off the game. So we were kind of, okay, the 15 percent was going to have to be the base of the campaign, which was another thing we thought Kemp would be a supporter, not only a supporter, but an enthusiastic advocate for and could help us.

Kondracke: Now, Kemp had been, along with [Edwin J.] Ed Feulner [Jr.], the chair, co-chairs of a tax commission.

Reed: Right.

Kondracke: Did that lead to Dole's 15 percent?

Reed: No, but that helped, that helped. That was something that we had done with [Newton L. "Newt"] Gingrich, as I remember, as the leader and the Speaker, and we had put Kemp, we had asked Kemp to be on it as part of my early on trying to make up with Kemp and bring him together with Dole. We thought it would be a good opportunity. And I think it was good for both of them, actually, because I think they both saw that they really didn't dislike the other one. I mean all that was terribly overblown, like it always is in politics. But that was part of the process, pre 'let's look at the quarterback,' but it helped him say those words when we got down to the jam.

Kondracke: Did you have any inkling in advance that this was, it sounds like you had a plot here.

Reed: No, it wasn't a plot, except for—it wasn't a plot. But it was a reality that these other men we were all looking at were just not going to get us there. We had done some testing and some polling, you know, [Cornelius H. M.] Connie Mack [III] would not make a difference in Florida, example. Carroll [A.] Campbell [Jr.] we had looked at. We were looking at [John M.] Engler: we were looking at [Donald L.] Don Nickles. That was pretty much—

Kondracke: Christy Todd Whitman?

Reed: Christy Todd Whitman, not really. I mean Dole liked her a lot. I spent a lot of time with her. But that was a bridge too far, to have a pro-choice—

Kondracke: Was there a [Mary Elizabeth] Liddy Dole?

Reed: No.

Kondracke: Somebody said that he'd thought about—

Reed: No, never

Kondracke: I mean it's crazy, I know, but—

Reed: No. Never, never. I do remember we talked to [Richard B. "Dick"] Cheney. I met with Cheney in my office, and I immediately called Dole and I said, "This guy's going to have a heart attack." He was overweight, he was sweating profusely like if we were sitting like

this. We didn't even talk to him because we didn't think he was fit. Shows how wrong I was.

Kondracke: How much discussion about the quarterback was there between you and Dole, over time?

Reed: There was a lot, in the sense of, first thing I said was, "Are you sure you want me to start this process?" Because I didn't want to start it and find out—because I was managing my time— I mean there was so much going on. I first met with Kemp one-on-one, and I said "Look, we're going through this vice presidential thing right now."

Kondracke: When was this?

Reed: I want to say in July, right after Dole said go see him.

Kondracke: Where was this meeting?

Reed: It was over here at the Weston [Georgetown Hotel], over here on M Street. "And would you be interested in talking with us about being on the ticket?" And he said, Yes," and I said, "How's your personal life? Is there any issues with drinking or anything like that I don't know about?" because I hadn't seen him in a long time. "No, everything's great. I'm fine, everybody's great, 16 grandchildren," all that business. So I went back and reported to Dole that he has interest. And then he had a couple of questions for him, I don't remember what they were, but I then set up a breakfast and I took Buckley with me, because Buckley was the only one I could trust,

because he had our best interest in this and Jack's best interest in this not being a disaster for anybody.

Kondracke: Buckley was your communications director.

Reed: Buckley, I'd recruited him and he was our communications director. We met over at the Key Bridge Marriott, had a second meeting with Kemp.

Kondracke: You and Buckley snuck out of your headquarters.

Reed: Yes, we pretended we were going to the dentist or something. Met with him, and—

Kondracke: You went in a Chevy Suburban and hid.

Reed: We may have, I don't remember.

Kondracke: That's what he said.

Reed: We probably did, because this was like two and a half weeks before the Convention. There wasn't a lot of time. And we had another meeting with Kemp, came back and reported to Dole.

Kondracke: What was that meeting like?

Reed: I think it was more about the seriousness of this.

Kondracke: Did you have a suite over there, or—

Reed: No, I think we just met and had breakfast. I don't think it was a big, fancy, we met at a suite at the Weston, but I think it was, I just think we had breakfast in a private room. But it was more about from us to him—

Kondracke: But it was in a private room, I mean it wasn't in a public place.

Reed: No it wasn't.

Kondracke: Because if you'd been seen—

Reed: It would have been a disaster. And nobody knew anything at the time, and I think it was more about from John and I to him, are you ready for the seriousness of this? If this goes forward this is the real deal. This is going to be a life-changing event for you and your family, and everybody involved, and are you really up for this? And he said yes. "You can't tell anybody about this." He said he wouldn't. I'm sure he was. And that generated the next thing, was to get he and Dole together, I think I have this chronology right, at the Watergate Hotel a couple days later, where Dole lived. John Moran was our finance chairman, he had an apartment there, and we snuck Kemp in and we had a dinner, just the four of us. I think it was Dole, Moran, Kemp and myself. It was a social dinner. More to see how they got along and could they get along, and it wasn't even a lot of talk about the ticket. It was just more of a can they get along deal. And they did.

Kondracke: So what did they talk about?

Reed: Issues, politics, what was going on in the campaign, what the country needed, the direction the campaign is going. We talked a lot about our 15 percent across the board that Kemp was fully supportive of.

Kondracke: Which Kemp must have loved.

Reed: He loved, he loved. By the way, it's what Bush ended up doing four years later. Same thing, they just changed the name. But it was a positive dinner, and I kind of left that with, "Okay, do you want me to go to the next level of this with Jack?" He said yes. And so we got some financial information from him then. We had to kind of do a crash deal, because Jack had scraps of paper in his back pocket of stock options and stuff [Lawrence J.] Larry Ellison had given him. He didn't have it all together like normal people do, so we had to spend a lot of time with accountants quickly in the conference room kind of, Sharon [Zelaska] was helpful with that. Kind of getting all that straightened out, his tax records, going over all that, making sure there was no big hiccups, and the analysis was there weren't. Then we got into like the last week of it, you know. I think that we had always planned to announce the nominee in Russell [Kansas] on Saturday, and to fly in to San Diego on Sunday for the arrival event. So I want to say by about Monday or Tuesday we were good to go with Kemp internally. Nobody knew what was going on. I had told Kemp that I thought he ought to have a—

Kondracke: There were no rumors about Kemp?

Reed: There's no rumors, and that's why this is going along so well, to my earlier point of the element of surprise.

Kondracke: Did you put out disinformation?

Reed: No, we really didn't. We just kind of just shut up about the whole thing. I mean people were speculating, and we just kind of let it go on, because it was kind of funny. Dole actually thought it was hilarious, because they were totally wrong. And then talked to Kemp about the need for him to have a conversation with his family about this. I thought they ought to all know what may be about to happen to their life, and it could turn everything upside down, and they'll be reporters and they'll be everything coming out about everything in your life, and to make sure the kids are all 100 percent on board on that, because they're all four, as you've gotten to know, pretty strong individuals. He had that conversation. It was funny. The Thursday, we were leaving Friday to go to Kansas, to Russell, and so the Thursday night the plan was Kemp's going to have this conversation with his family, and let me know. So Dole calls me at like 10 o'clock, "Have you heard from him?" I said no, so I called him, "Still on the phone." Eleven o'clock Dole calls and says, "You heard from him? Because I have to go to bed." We were getting up at like six the next morning to fly to Kansas on the campaign plane. I said no. I don't think I heard from Kemp until like one o'clock in the morning. But I did—

Kondracke: So what was Kemp doing?

Reed: He was just having a family conversation with all his kids about this opportunity and what it may mean and how they needed to be braced as a family, that they'll be some ugliness that comes out, as it always does, to be prepared for it. I'm sure they were praying together, and they were just doing the family thing.

Kondracke: So this went on from what time to what time?

Reed: This went on the last night. I think it started that day, because they were all done separately with Joanne [Main] Kemp. He didn't call me until one o'clock in the morning, and say, "Okay, I'm good." Now he had a speech that next morning in Florida or somewhere that he was going to fly to, and I said, "Well this will be the plan. We're going to go to Russell tomorrow. I'll brief Dole in the morning. He's going to want to talk to you. And if we're going to do this, I'll have someone meet you and fly you and Joanne into Kansas, where you'll sleep Friday night, and Saturday morning we're going to bring you over to the house, we're going to sneak you into the house, and we're going to unveil you, if this goes forward, with Dole and his wife on his front yard. And you cannot talk to anybody about this." "Okay, okay." So I get on the plane the next morning, tell Dole, I said, "He's in a good place, the family's in a good place, everything vetted out, there's no problems, there's no issues. He's on his way to Florida or New Mexico or somewhere where he was giving a speech that day," and I said, "I can have him brought in tonight, so you need to think about this, and you're going to need to talk to him before we bring him in." "Okay, okay." So we go to Kansas, we get through the news that night, and those days, if you made it through the networks, you could kind of turn off, because the papers had all gone to bed and

it wasn't like today. And I remember, we got to Kansas and we all watched the news, the [Daniel I.] Dan Rather [CBS Evening News] show, and he had nothing. And so we were like, "Oh, this is great." And I had Kemp waiting at an FBO [fixed-base operator at an airport] with one of my guys with a plane to bring him in.

Kondracke: FBO?

Reed: An airplane, private airplane place. And what I told Dole was, I said, "You've got to talk with him, you've got to ask him, and then we'll fly him in here and we'll meet with him in the morning." So Dole's like, and by the way, we had 75 reporters in the front yard, in this little house that he lived in, and I was in the back in a Winnebago [recreational vehicle], that was kind of my command post. The house was kind of like if you remember going to your grandmother's house. I mean it was kind of musty and old. It was very nice, but it was old. And so I said to Dole, "You need to call Kemp, you need to have the conversation with him, and then we need to get him up here." And Dole was like, "Okay." But he was in control of this deal. He says, "Okay, well I'm going to my sister's for dinner but I'll be back after dinner." So I call Kemp, and I say, "Just sit there for another hour, he's got to run out."

Kondracke: He's at an airport?

Reed: He's at an airport in an FBO room waiting with Joanne, pacing. The bottom line is he ends up calling Kemp that night, I want to say around 7:30 or so our time. They had a great conversation, and I had

kind of written out some talking points on a yellow pad about, you know—

Kondracke: Saying what?

Reed: Well, the first thing he says, he said, "I want you to join the ticket," but he told the story, which I loved, about when he was asked to be on the ticket by [Gerald R.] Jerry Ford [Jr.], and President Ford said to Dole, "You know, I don't plan on you being out there making farm policy for me," which was a way to say to Kemp "You're not going to be out there making economic policy for me. You know, we've talked about the tax cut plan, we unveiled it last week" and Kemp was like, "Yes, it was great, it was great, it was great." So they had the conversation.

Kondracke: Were you privy to the conversation?

Reed: Yes, I was sitting right in the living room. I had written out on a yellow pad about five points. I started with the Ford story, I said let's do that first, and they had a great conversation, and Elizabeth was there—

Kondracke: What were the other points?

Reed: Just that we were going to be a team, this wasn't an attack dog role—

Kondracke: So he was told that it was not an attack dog role.

Reed: It was not an attack dog role, because it wasn't. It wasn't. There's a difference between an attack dog role and being in a debate and standing up for what your candidate's talking about. That's not an attack dog role; that's doing your job. But we talked about that, and there was about five or six things. Nelson [Warfield] was there, and Buckley. Buckley may not have been in the room. Nelson was there, I believe, and Elizabeth was there. And the plan was so then he said great, he got on the plane, flew to somewhere in Kansas, they snuck him in a hotel, the next morning at 8:15 they drove him down. They brought him in the back with Joanne, into the house—

Kondracke: How did they sneak him into the house?

Reed: We had everybody out front and we had a back thing, and they just brought him in the back, and we got him in, and it hadn't leaked. And I think after the news Friday night, I think Dole had actually called Novak, and told Novak, he showed him a little leg. He said, "I want to do Novak," just because this was part of Dole having fun. And I think Dole told him "We're taking a good look at the quarterback," or something like that. And I think Novak was able to report that a little somewhere, somehow, that kind of gave Novak an edge on getting the thing

Kondracke: Didn't Dole actually ask Novak about Kemp?

Reed: He may have. I think he did, but that was like two months earlier. That was in an interview like two months earlier. But I think he gave him a little to Novak so Novak could get a little edge on everybody on it. And then—

Kondracke: Novak was on CNN [Cable News Network] in those days?

Reed: Yes, he was on CNN, but he was also putting out his newsletter thing all the time. But he was on CNN. I think he said something on CNN Friday after the news, that Dole had given him. "I just talked to the leader" and all this kind of stuff. So we had Kemp and Joanne come in. It was the first time I'd really seen him since meeting at the Marriott three weeks earlier, and there'd been a lot going on in 100 conversations. We all got together in the living room, and I think Joanne and Elizabeth said a prayer with everybody, and then we talked about "Okay, it's show time. We're going to go out, we're going to introduce you to the press corps. Immediately after that you're going to come back in, we're going to do a cover shoot for *Time* and *Newsweek.*" I mean, we had it all choreographed out, and then we're going to go down to the courthouse, where Dole used to have a job when he was a county lawyer. And that's where we did the real unveiling. We'd built this elaborate stage outside and all this kind of stuff. We went down to that, had that big event, it was a total homerun. Kemp was perfectly on message, it couldn't have been better. Dole was pumped, he had that spring in his step. He thought he'd made a good decision, and he loved the way it had rolled out, the intrigue. We had a dinner that night with everybody in Russell, steak place, and then we all flew to San Diego the next morning. That's kind of how it rolled out.

Kondracke: What about all the history between Kemp and Dole? They had been rivals, critics. Dole hated supply-side economics for years and years and years, which frankly amazes me that he picked up

this 15 percent across the board tax cut. Because he'd been against all that stuff, and—

Reed: But the world had changed. That was one of the things Dole was good about, changing with the world. Some people say it's flip-flopping or whatever, but the truth is, look at the debate we're going on right now with this Grover [G.] Norquist thing. I mean the world has changed, and the Republicans that are standing up on that, I think, are good. Look, when I got picked with Haley to go to the Republican National Committee, Dole took a shot at me. "Ah, Kemp guy going over there." He had kind of remembered me from beating him at the Polk County picnic, he didn't know who I was. So there was always this kind of back and forth, but neither of them are the kind of politicians we know that carry that around from early morning till late at night. They may have done it for political reasons, but it was it.

Kondracke: So Dole had no animus toward Kemp?

Reed: No, not at all. Not at all. And he used to say to me, "You know, everybody thinks we hate each other. We don't really hate each other. We've had some dustups. We all have dustups." And as they had the little dinner at the Watergate and got to know each other, they liked each other, and I think they did even after the election. They did some stuff socially together after the election before they went their separate ways. It was a little overblown.

Kondracke: The Convention is a big hit?

Reed: The Convention, the arrival ceremony was a huge success. It was probably the highlight of the Convention, to be honest. Kemp spoke Wednesday night. Very good speech. Elizabeth had spoken Monday night, that was kind of exciting. [John S.] McCain [III] nominated. That was a good speech. Dole's speech was very well-received. We left the Convention; it was a three-point race. It was the closest it ever was in a three-way race with [Henry R. "Ross"] Perot. Perot was getting seven or six, seven, I think, at that time. And there were no dustups at the Convention, there was no ridiculousness, I mean, everything worked well. Jude was there. Integrated Kemp with the whole operation. Then I believe we left the Convention, I think we flew back East, and I think we went to Buffalo, and we did an event. We had them campaign together for about a day or two and then we split them off, because we had so much turf to catch up. And then I think we reunited them once or twice during the campaign cycle, the 60 days or whatever it was. But Joanne campaigned with him every day. She was on the plane every single day. He kept a pretty aggressive schedule.

Kondracke: Did you guys dictate where he was going to go? But I thought he insisted on going to Harlem [New York].

Reed: As I told you, Berman ran his campaign team, and we would dictate to a certain extent where we wanted him to go based on what was going on at the time of the plan. I think he wanted to go to a football game one night in Colorado or Denver, Broncos or something, that we worked out. The Harlem thing worked out. I think the Harlem thing is where he did the Farrakhan thing actually. I was running a national campaign. I didn't have time to micromanage Jack's

schedule. There were guys and gals that were running it that were supposed to be doing the right thing on where it would help us win. I'm sure they gave in to him on some things, but it wasn't a big deal. The big deal was the debate. Everything was great up till the debate. And the debate he just wiffed.

Kondracke: One other thing. So Ed Feulner is his guy on the plane.

Reed: Well no, it's actually funnier than this. As soon as he's chosen and we get to San Diego the first day, Quayle comes to see him, and we have this meeting in his suite.

Kondracke: Quayle comes to see—

Reed: Quayle comes to see Jack. He says, "You've got to get rid of all these guys. They're just going to screw you up." And then he precedes to tell all his sad sorry stories about how the problems he had with the Bush campaign. So Kemp says to me, "Well I want to put Feulner in charge of my campaign." I said, "You've got to be kidding. I mean Ed Feulner's a great guy, he's a fabulous guy, but he doesn't know how to run a campaign. It's like I don't know how to pave a road." And so we had a little bit of a go-around. Berman was like, "Well, if he wants Feulner, I'll leave." I'm like, "No, you're not leaving. You're staying here, you're doing this." So that was the only Feulner thing. I said, "Feulner can ride around on the plane with you if you want." Because I remember, Feulner went out on the campaign for about four days, we so exhausted, went to Europe for two or three weeks to recover, and then came back. This wasn't a sport for guys that don't know how to do the sport. So that was the only Feulner

thing. But Feulner was part of his little posse. Nothing wrong with that. [John P.] Sears was involved, Charlie Black was involved. I asked them to come back and manage the Kemp operation.

Kondracke: Where were they?

Reed: Charlie had been with [William P.] Phil Gramm, so we asked him over the summer to come help us some. I didn't know Kemp was going to be on the ticket, but he had gotten involved with us. Sears was not involved at all, but we asked him to come get involved just because Jack liked Sears, and I respected Sears, and thought it would be a good, the more adults you could get around, the better. Again, I didn't want to be micromanaging the Kemp plane. I had bigger problems to deal with, and I kind of let it go.

Kondracke: Some of the Kemp people say that the Dole people kept his people away, in other words, that he was divided from his pals.

Reed: The Kemp people?

Kondracke: Yes.

Reed: That's not true.

Kondracke: That's not true?

Reed: Well first of all, Kemp didn't have any people, and the people he had that he wanted to involve, [Frederick L.] Rick Ahearn, [William "Bill"] DalCol, who had been with Forbes, J.T. [Taylor], these were his

personal friends. I said of course they can be involved. But we weren't going to run an airplane and fly a bunch of these guys around that didn't have a job. So when he occasionally wanted to have some of his friends involved or some of his sports friends involved, they'd be part of the program. But, I mean, this was a serious deal, this wasn't just to fly around the country. And I think some of them had this attitude like this was just going to be fun, let's fly around. That's not the way it is, so I don't buy that.

Kondracke: Right. Okay, debate. Tell me everything you remember about the debate.

Reed: Debate, like it or not, debates are a big deal in these things. They're kind of the defining event after the Convention. It's the first time people zoom in in an unfiltered way, so you have to do well in the debates. They had put together kind of a mock team for Kemp. I want to say Judd [A.] Gregg, I think, was playing Clinton, Gore, I mean. And they'd put a lot of time into it. I started getting reports from Wayne and from Charlie and from [John V.] Vin [Weber] that it wasn't going very well, that he wasn't taking it seriously, that he wasn't preparing. I think I talked to Greg a couple times, "What do we need to do better here?" But I was in the middle of getting Dole ready for his debates, trying to, and everything else we were trying to do in the campaign. About four days before the vice presidential debate, this was a big turning point in the campaign, the Chinese money story had just broken on Clinton and [Terrence R.] Terry McAuliffe and the White House, and it was a big deal. For the first time people were really sitting up straight about the race.

Kondracke: Polls narrowed?

Reed: Polls had narrowed some, Dole went out to San Diego and gave a real tough, good speech on ethics and on this Chinese business. And for the first time we were getting some real momentum. You know we'd only get about three day of momentum in a row and then something would happen and then we'd start over. And so, we knew this was going to be a topic in the vice presidential debate. It was timely, it was happening all week and the debate was whatever night it was. So I remember flying down to the Florida debate, I forget where it was, Tampa or somewhere, and I went to see Kemp before the debate, at like six o'clock. I flew all the way down there just to see him. And he was having dinner with everybody, his family, and they had apparently had a session that day, but it hadn't been that great. But my whole message to Kemp was "ethics is going to be the top issue tonight. It's going to be probably the first question. You read what Dole said yesterday, you've got to be tough. Reread his speech and be tough. That's all I'm asking."

Kondracke: He didn't have a talking point, I mean a specific script?

Reed: Well, they had tried that with the practice session, and again, I wasn't involved in it, I don't know. I've heard all the horror stories about it. But my whole message was, "You've got to be tough in the beginning of these debates. It sets the tone for the whole night." Well, the first question was about ethics and the Chinese thing, and Kemp gave an answer that basically said, "I'm not going to wallow in that kind of mud," or something like that, I forget what it was. It was terrible. I'm in the room with everybody watching the debate, all the

governors and all our spinners. My phone—you know in those days we didn't have cell phones—the phone rings, it's Dole. "What was that? I didn't see that in the briefing book." Click. And it was one of those nights that just went on. The phone kept ringing, to the point I couldn't answer it anymore. I was like, "Wayne, you've got to answer. Someone answer this phone."

Kondracke: How many times?

Reed: I bet you he called me four times. And it just got worse and worse. It was one of these deals—

Kondracke: What did he say?

Reed: "What's going on? Didn't he practice? Wasn't he ready for this?" And it got to like 9:15, only 15 minutes in, and it was over, it was over. We had lost the night. And then all the governors, I remember Engler was in there, [Andrew] Lamar [Alexander], Haley, everybody was like, "I'm not going out there. You guys go out there." I mean, it was terrible.

Kondracke: It was a spin room afterwards.

Reed: Yes, it was just terrible. And it was a missed opportunity, and it really hurt Kemp. He did not take the process seriously. He underestimated how serious the event would be. And I think from that point forward he lost his confidence. He never was quite the same in terms of fire and brimstone, let's go. It strained his relationship with Dole some. We had them campaign together. Kemp was always kind

of paranoid. You know, "Why isn't he back here with me? Why doesn't he want to talk to me?" "He's running for president, Jack." But it was a real turning point.

Kondracke: Wasn't there an event in Cincinnati the next day where they were supposed to meet up? And somebody said that Dole went to the event and didn't go with Kemp?

Reed: No. We met at the event, and Colin [L.] Powell was also meeting us at the event, so it was supposed to be a big unity event. I think it was in Ohio. But Dole didn't want to be alone with Kemp he was so mad. And so we had a tent or something in the back where they were going to meet up, and it hadn't all sunk in to Kemp how bad it was. This was only the day after, and we'd only had the morning shows, so it hadn't really sunk in. But Dole was upset, and he didn't want to be alone with him, and he was like, "Stay here. Wayne, stay here. Scott, stay here." And I think at that time Kemp knew. "Oh wow, I screwed this up." Then the only other time—

Kondracke: Did Dole ever say anything to Kemp about it?

Reed: No. He's not like that, he's not like that.

Kondracke: So what did Dole say to you guys?

Reed: "What happened?" After the first line of "I never read that in the briefing book. What happened?" But it wasn't the end of the world, but it was a bit of a falling in their relationship.

Kondracke: I mean you had some momentum going.

Reed: We had real momentum, to the point where we hooked up with him about a week or two later in California. I remember we did a bus tour, and we had like four or five buses and had the Kemps and the Doles in the first bus, and I had a suite in the back of the bus, and Dole was hanging out with me the whole time. And Kemp would come over to me after, when we'd get to the event. The first thing I'd say was "Be short. Don't give a 20-minute introduction." He was there to introduce Dole. But he's like, "What are you guys doing back there? What are you talking about?" I'm like, "We're talking about the campaign." But he was very kind of paranoid. And it was because of the debate. It was a game changer.

Kondracke: Did you ever talk to him about his debate performance, and why he didn't do what he was supposed to do?

Reed: Not during the campaign. I may have after the campaign.

Kondracke: Ever?

Reed: After the campaign.

Kondracke: So what did he say?

Reed: And I said how disappointed I was. I felt let down. And he goes, "Well I felt I let down too." This was, I want to say, three months after the campaign. Because you remember, Kemp thought about maybe running some day.

Kondracke: Still?

Reed: After we lost, in '97, he thought about maybe running. He was now a nationally known figure. And that never got serious, for a lot of reasons. But I think the debate had a real impact on him in terms of his psyche, and I think he feels he let Dole and—by the way, it wasn't as big of a deal nationally. It was a problem in the Party. Vice presidential debates are inter-party events. And it just let everybody down.

Kondracke: He got a terrible press over it too, didn't he?

Reed: He got killed, he got killed. To the point where he was wildly defensive about it and tried to blame the guys. "You didn't prep me right." "Well Jack, you didn't want to do prep."

Kondracke: Really? He tried to blame?

Reed: Oh, by the first week it was like, "Well you guys didn't do a good job getting me ready for it."

Kondracke: Ed Feulner says that he would not look at the tapes of Gore, that they tried, and he said, "I got it. I can handle it."

Reed: Well Feulner should have done a better job. I mean those guys should have jammed him. I wish I had jammed him. I wasn't around. But they should have done a better job.

Kondracke: What was [F.] Reid Buckley supposed to do?

Reed: I don't remember.

Kondracke: He was his speech coach. [William F.] Bill Buckley [Jr.]'s somebody or other.

Reed: I don't remember. I didn't even know he was involved.

Kondracke: Okay. So [Daniel R.] Dan Coats says he knows that Dole was furious with Kemp and stayed furious, and that he thought it was a permanent rift. What do you know?

Reed: Well, he never let that on to me. But we had a lot of things going on, so we didn't spend a lot of time dwelling on it. But as I've said earlier, I felt there was a thawing in the relationship in a negative way, and I don't think it was ever the same. At the end of the campaign we did this 96-hour fly-around thing with Dole because one, we knew we were going to lose; two, we didn't want to lose the Congress. You know, he was still a Congress guy at the end of the day, and a Party guy first. And to his credit he was like "Well we've got to go help these guys win. We've got to go create some enthusiasm." And so we just literally, on a napkin in the plane, we charted out a 17,000-mile adventure at the end, and I could just tell at the end Dole was like, "I don't even care where Kemp is. I mean I'm sure he's campaigning, that's great. Send him to the right places." But it wasn't like, "Let's talk to Jack every morning," like he was in the beginning.

Kondracke: Did Jack do a 96-hour thing too?

Reed: He did something that was not 96 hours. And it was really kind of weird. There was almost a contrast between a 72-year-old guy doing 96 hours straight. And by the way, we caught the Clinton guys by surprise. I mean they were freaked out a little about it. We dominated for the last four days. It wasn't enough, obviously. But you'd think Kemp would have wanted to do the same thing, or 102.

Kondracke: This is so un-Kempian. I mean Kemp usually put his all into everything, he was always positive and competitive and—

Reed: I think the debate was a turning point.

Kondracke: But why would he not, he practiced football, you know. He threw passes. Do you have any psychological—

Reed: I think practicing for the debates, if you're, you know, look at what [Barack H.] Obama just went through. He had been for four years, nobody telling him what to do, he didn't like it. I don't know, I don't know. I mean, Kemp had a pretty great life before he went back into politics. He was making a ton of money, he was doing whatever he wanted to do business-wise. He was traveling, he was a big player. But he wasn't getting the $50,000, $100,000-a-speech like he could have after the V.P. thing. I just think it changed his whole psyche.

Kondracke: Did you ever reflect with him on that whole experience?

Reed: We visited after the campaign, as we both, I tried to figure out what I was going to do with my life and he was trying to figure out how he was going to get his going again. And we visited. We tried to do some business stuff together. We didn't spend a lot of time going back over the campaign, we really didn't.

Kondracke: Okay, we're almost done. If you look at Jack Kemp's character, what would you say his personal strengths were?

Reed: Oh, he had a great heart, he was someone that motivated people to do better, which is a unique skill set in a politician. Usually politicians are just out for themselves, but I think he had a little bit of a broader view, what he was trying to accomplish through politics. He was a good person, kind person, great family. Focused on his family, his grandkids. He's someone I truly admired a lot, and when you went to his ceremony with those 2,000 people up at the church, you saw that was a Kemp classic event. Bipartisan, family-oriented, a lot of people.

Kondracke: So if he had flaws, what were they?

Reed: I think at certain times, like the debate, he lacked seriousness. Not a lot, but at important times he lacked some seriousness. And I do think his management style of when he was in Congress and when he ran for president, and even a little at HUD, was a little flawed, which we've already covered, but it wasn't the best style to get a lot out of people. But for a flaw that's not the end of the world.

Kondracke: How do you think he should be remembered in history and what lessons does the Kemp example have to teach contemporary politicians?

Reed: I think Kemp will truly be remembered as one of the most influential national politicians that was never elected president.

Kondracke: Because?

Reed: Because of his input and impact on policy, on how Kemp-Roth changed Reagan, that changed the world, that changed the country. And I think that is probably, and his impact from HUD on urban issues and the whole outreach to Hispanic and Latinos and African-Americans, and the empowerment agenda, and urban enterprise zones, and resident management, ownership of homes and just the whole idea of owning a home, I think that's his biggest impact. I think for younger people, Paul [D.] Ryan is a classic example. I mean Ryan is a guy that sat at his knee, got him ideas, read for him, wrote for him, went and took a shot at politics himself, very Democrat district. Wins by 15 points, and finds himself on the national ticket. I mean Kemp inspired a lot of young men and women. I run into businessmen and women every week, mostly African-American, that have a Kemp story. "Kemp told me I ought to go do this. I did it. I'm now worth $50 million. In this business I employ 800 people." I hear it all the time. And I think he inspired a lot of people to put on your football pads and go out there. It's partially what inspired me to go run Dole's campaign. I had said no to Dole. I had a great job, I was very happy sitting at the Republican National Committee as the executive director and winning elections and doing well. But I was like, "Well, this is a

serious deal. I ought to give it a shot." And I did, and I don't regret it for a minute. Part of Kemp taught me that. You've got to take your shots.

Kondracke: Okay. Thanks so much.

Reed: Good.

[end of interview]