

JACK KEMP
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

SYMPOSIUM

Jack Kemp, the Bills and Buffalo

Ralph Wilson Stadium Complex
Buffalo, New York

March 4, 2011

PANEL 2
CONGRESSMAN KEMP, POLITICS
AND THE BUFFALO OFFICE

Sponsored by
The Buffalo Bills
and
the Jack Kemp Foundation
Washington, DC

Kondracke: We are continuing our oral history program at Ralph Wilson Stadium, the home of the Buffalo Bills, co-sponsored by the Jack Kemp Foundation. This will be part of the Jack Kemp Legacy Project at the Foundation. I'm Morton Kondracke.

To begin, I'd like each of you to introduce yourself and just briefly explain what your connection with Jack Kemp was.

Ambassador Gioia.

Gioia: My name is [Anthony] Tony Gioia. I knew Jack when he was a congressman here. I was one of his premier fundraisers and followed Jack's career through Congress and then also when he was at HUD, and stayed in touch with Jack and we were kind of kindred spirits in a lot of ways.

Kondracke: Marie.

Shattuck: I'm Marie Shattuck. I worked for Jack in his Buffalo congressional office from 1974 until December of 1988, when he closed the office door for good. I was his executive assistant. I did a variety of tasks and jobs for him.

Kondracke: George.

Borelli: I'm George Borelli. I'm the over-the-hill political reporter for the *Buffalo News*, who retired in 1992, and I covered all nine of Jack's campaigns for the House.

Rutkowski: I'm Ed Rutkowski. I was Jack's former teammate with the Buffalo Bills, and I was his district representative from 1970 into 1978, a good friend and looked upon Jack as an older brother.

Kondracke: Let me start out by just throwing a question, a general question, to each one of you, Ed first. What words come to mind when you think about what kind of a congressman Jack Kemp was?

Rutkowski: I'll tell you a little story that he told me, which was reminiscent of what I think he represented. He once told me a story about the Duke of Mantua. The Duke was noted for his leadership ability. They once found the Duke and they asked him, "What is the most important quality in a leader?"

And the Duke answered in two words, "Essere Umano." To be human.

That reminded me of Jack, because he never had a mean bone in his body. There is a decent way of saying no to somebody without being sarcastic or nasty, and Jack always thought that you beat people with the competition of ideas. You don't make it personal. You don't make it negative. You try to have better ideas than the other person, and, hopefully, you can convince those people that your ideas are better and, hopefully, they vote for you.

Kondracke: George.

Borelli: Jack was very passionate, and I was always impressed by the fact that he was a jock, a physical education major at Occidental College in California, who pretty much on his own became an

intellectual and an expert on economic affairs. That really caught my attention.

Kondracke: Marie.

Shattuck: He was fair. He was very fair. He treated everyone equally, and his caring was very evident in dealing with every constituent that he ever came across. He always was very caring and actually was concerned about their issues and their problems.

Kondracke: Does any particular piece of constituent service stand out in your memory?

Shattuck: We used to have town hall meetings. We'd go out to a different town in our district, and we'd send out flyers so everybody knew he was going to be there, certain time and place, and people would just come. And no matter how many people came, he sat and he talked to everyone individually, one at a time. Some had problems that we resolved or we would follow up and resolve. Others just wanted to talk to him or let him hear their opinion on things. It was a grueling day, because we'd get over a hundred people oftentimes, and he would just sit there and go and listen, and the first person felt his caring as much as the last person of the day.

Kondracke: Tony.

Gioia: I was so impressed with Jack, always so positive, always so upbeat, and compared to the partisan politics you see today, that just wasn't Jack's style at all. He was never nasty to anybody. He would

never try to attack anybody. He'd always try to talk about the positive aspect of his ideas without trying to in any way detract from the other person. We really miss that today, and in Jack's passing, I think that was brought up. We don't have that kind of discourse anymore.

Rutkowski: Mort, can I interrupt a second?

Kondracke: Sure.

Rutkowski: When Jack first became congressman, his office was located in downtown Buffalo in the Federal Building, yet his district was basically the suburbs, and he was very upset because when they'd talk to people they'd say, "You know, we don't really get into downtown Buffalo. We don't know how to park. We don't know how to get to your office." So we decided "Let's go out to the people."

We decided, as Marie has said, to have these constituent meetings. We would send out notices in advance. We'd go to town hall and we'd go to Williamsville and Amherst, Cheektowaga, Hamburg, and take our staff with us so that they could provide on-the-spot service to the constituents, and they loved it. It was a good way of campaigning, because someone once told us every individual can have a profound influence, negative or positive, on twenty people, your immediate family, friends, the gas station attendant, your butcher, the mailman.

I do recall once we were having a constituent meeting out in Cheektowaga, which is a heavy Democratic district, and we took all our staff out there. We started about nine in the morning and went till about four in the afternoon, and we went through about thirty-five or thirty-six people, and we tried to get some idea in advance as to what

the problem of that particular person was so Jack had some kind of clue before they came in to talk to him.

There was one lady who didn't want to tell any of us what the problem was, and you could tell that she was very distressed, but she did want to meet Jack. She was the last lady to go in and meet with Jack. I tried to pry it out of her, and she wouldn't tell me.

So, finally, at about four-thirty in the afternoon when we're all almost exhausted, I brought the lady in. The scenario was Jack was on my left, I was sitting here, we had some staff workers on both sides, and the lady or the person would sit there. I brought her in, I sat her over there, and I said, "Jack, this is Mrs. Smith," for example. "She wants to talk to you about the problem that she's having."

Jack looks at her and he says, "And Mrs. Smith, what's your problem? How can I help you?"

And she said, "They're after me. They're watching me."

And he said, "Who? Who?"

And she's sitting there and she points up into the air and said, "They are."

And both Jack and I turned around and look up in the air, [laughter] and then our eyes met and we said, "Okay."

Kondracke: That was a problem you couldn't solve.

Rutkowski: And we knew that we had to call in family for some psychiatric problems.

Kondracke: Ed, how did Jack decide that he was going to run for Congress?

Rutkowski: He decided during his playing days in professional football. Jack and I both lived in Hamburg. We would travel to practice together. During the off-season, he was very politically involved. He helped with the Goldwater campaign. He helped—I'm trying to think of the editor of the San Diego paper who was a good friend of his.

Kondracke: Herb Klein.

Rutkowski: Herb Klein, yes. He wrote some articles for the paper, and he knew eventually that he wanted to get involved in politics, so he prepped himself during the off-season for that. We had a lot of interesting dialogues. Hell, I was a kid from the coal mines of Pennsylvania. I never knew what a Republican was until I met Jack Kemp. We were all Democrats. He started to talk to me about his position and everything, and eventually he said that, "When I do retire and run, I'll want you to help me in my campaign."

I said, "I'd be more than happy and thrilled to do that for you." So that's how we became friends and I became involved with Jack.

Kondracke: [Richard Dean] Max McCarthy, who was the sitting congressman in the district, decided to run for the Senate. Did Jack immediately decide he was going to go for that seat?

Rutkowski: George, maybe you can help on this. With McCarthy, he was in and out as to whether or not he wanted to—

Borelli: I think Jack had decided to run for Congress before McCarthy decided to run statewide. Richard Max McCarthy was the three-term incumbent in that district, very popular, very good campaigner, and he

decided, much to his regret, to run statewide for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate, and he lost. I think Jack had already been endorsed by that time. I'm not sure.

Rutkowski: Yes, I think he was.

Borelli: But, anyway, McCarthy lost. He lost to a New York City Democrat who lost also. In fact, that was the year Jim Buckley was elected to the U.S. Senate on the conservative line.

McCarthy, after he lost the statewide primary, he tried to persuade the Democratic candidate for that congressional seat to accept the Supreme Court nomination so McCarthy could reclaim the line for the congressional seat. But [Thomas P.] Tom Flaherty, he refused, and, of course, Jack became the nominee against Flaherty, and he was in the right place at the right time, because he barely won that election.

Kondracke: But he would have run against McCarthy, had McCarthy stayed in the seat?

Rutkowski: Yes. Yes, he would have. And you're right, that was no easy election. Tom Flaherty was a widower, very articulate, an Irish Catholic from South Buffalo, had four kids and very well spoken, highly regarded, and here was Jack, this young whippersnapper who had played professional football, and people were saying, "We recognize the name Jack Kemp, but what the hell's a football player think he's doing running for Congress?"

So we had our job cut out for us, because we had to get him out into the throes of the people of Erie County and show that he could

chew gum and walk at the same time, but articulate the issues, and we started putting together a lot of these coffee klatches, and that's how the wives became involved, you know, invite about ten or fifteen of your friends and neighbors.

Borelli: He also had the conservative party endorsement, which put him over the top. In the Republican-Democratic head-to-head, Flaherty beat Jack, but Jack got, I think, 14,000 votes on the conservative line.

Gioia: Which was the margin of victory?

Borelli: He ended up winning by about 6,000 votes.

Rutkowski: Yes, it was only 51 to 49 or 50, yes.

Kondracke: Yes, 51.6 to 48.4, as a matter of fact. Tony, so what do you remember about that campaign?

Gioia: I was just getting involved in politics at the time, but obviously I knew Jack. I was an avid Buffalo Bills football fan. But when people used to criticize Jack because he was just a football player, he used to say, "Yeah, but I was the quarterback, and we used to call our own plays." [laughter] So he usually had that argument pretty well set.

But I think that I expected Jack to win, and he had the recognition not just locally, but certainly on a national basis. So we expected big things from Jack when he joined Congress. I remember I was in the pasta business at the time and we used to have these meetings in Washington once a year, and you were allowed to invite

your congressman. So I thought, what the heck, I'll invite Jack. I never expected that Jack would actually come, because he was a superstar, as far as I was concerned.

But, sure enough, Jack showed up at this luncheon, and all the other congressmen were deferring to Jack, and this was when he was relatively new in Congress, and all the other people in the pasta business were just star-struck by the fact that Jack Kemp came to this luncheon. It really made the luncheon a hit.

So that was really the beginning of my involvement with Jack on a regular basis, because he took the time to come spend time with us, and the pasta business was not exactly the growth industry of the world at the time.

Kondracke: George, so tell me about the demography and the political character of the district. Was it a union Democratic district? McCarthy had had it for three terms.

Borelli: Yes, it was Democratic, but I don't think by a whole lot. McCarthy was a liberal Democrat, but he had a lot of support among moderate Republicans. That's an extinct group now, moderate Republicans, ala Nelson Rockefeller and Jake Javits. But he had a lot of support among moderate Republicans, and he had the Democratic Party, which was very powerful at the time, and most of organized labor, but not all of it. Jack made inroads with organized labor.

Kondracke: Was it because he was the president of the players' association that he could appeal to union voters?

Rutkowski: Yes, I think that was part of it, and we had a very interesting campaign strategy. [Thaddeus Joseph] Ted Dulski, who was a Democratic congressman, thought so highly of Jack, even though Jack was a Republican, he put a very nice article in the *Congressional Record*, and it had the congressional seal and it had all these nice things about Jack, what he had done in football and also in his exploits off the field.

So we took that page out of the *Congressional Record* and we reprinted on the back of the page, "Can a union leader ever be elected to Congress?" We had thousands of those. We went down to the gates at Bethlehem Steel when they were having the shift change at six-thirty in the morning, and we'd pass these things out. Just drove the Democrats crazy, but they realized that we had a person of substance.

Jack's cute line when he was running, somebody said, "Well, how do you expect to get elected to Congress, being a football player?"

And his line was, "Well, I'm going to tell the people of Erie County if they don't elect me to Congress, I'm going to have to go back and play for the Buffalo Bills. So that should assure my election."

Borelli: There's an interesting sidelight to that labor connection with Jack Kemp. I think it was in '84 or '86 when Jack was to appear before the Erie County Republican Executive Committee to be routinely re-endorsed for reelection. The meeting was at the Statler Hotel in downtown Buffalo, and the hotel was being picketed. Jack would not cross the picket line, so the Executive Committee had to move out to Delaware Avenue, a main thoroughfare, downtown Buffalo, and they held an outdoor meeting and endorsed Jack. Do you remember that?

Rutkowski: Yes.

Kondracke: Ed, what were the issues of the campaign? What was the campaign about?

Rutkowski: It was about jobs, entrepreneurial activity, creating jobs, reducing taxes, the tax burden on the citizens of Erie County was too high, and the tax burden from the state of New York.

When you talk about labor, I remember when Reagan was running for the presidency and we had this luncheon out in Route 5. There was a restaurant out there, and labor was going to picket it. George Wessel and some of the other labor leaders across the street were forming a picket line, and Ronald Reagan and Jack and I and some of his supporters were in the restaurant, and Reagan said, "Those guys, why not send them some coffee and doughnuts?"

So Jack got coffee and doughnuts on a tray, took it over to them, and these guys, they just loved him for doing it. They couldn't believe that he had that kind of relationship with labor, but he had some pretty good labor support from some of these people.

Borelli: The building trades people really loved Jack, got along well with them. I recall one year, I think it was the year Jack was running for President, the president of the International Longshoremen's Union came here to speak on Jack's behalf.

Gioia: I remember that. I think you're right.

Borelli: I think it was out your way in Hamburg or—

Rutkowski: Yes.

Kondracke: So he gets elected to Congress. What were the marching orders for the district office?

Shattuck: Because Jack had to be in Washington for much of the week, he had trusted us with being his face, his eyes, and ears in the district as to what issues were up, what problems were up, what feedback we would be getting from the constituents, and we would always act as if Jack were standing behind us saying, "You know, this is how I would handle it," and so you followed suit. So it was pretty much just to maintain the eyes and ears in the district on his behalf and feed him all that information that he was unable to because he was in Washington.

Kondracke: What was the connection between the district office and the Washington office? What kind of byplay was there?

Shattuck: There were some differences, because, for the most part, the people weren't from the Buffalo area. There were some staffers that were originally. Washington reacts a little differently to things than we do, so we would keep them grounded as to what was going on.

I'm dating myself, but this was before cell phones, and I remember getting the first fax machine, because every morning we'd have to read the newspaper articles to him over the phone. Then when we got a fax machine, this was like heaven-sent. We would be able to fax them, because then we would have to quickly mail them

off. So he wanted to keep abreast of what was happening, and that was our purpose there as well.

Rutkowski: We had our issues at times there.

Shattuck: Yes.

Rutkowski: A couple times I couldn't get the Washington staff during the day, so the next day I'd call and say, "Nobody answered the phone."

He'd say, "Well, it snowed here."

I said, "Oh, really, how much?"

He said, "Half-inch."

I said, "A half inch? We call that a dusting in Buffalo."

Unbelievable.

Kondracke: So were there any other issues with the Washington office besides their not being there during a snowstorm?

Shattuck: No.

Rutkowski: Well, I think Jack prided himself on constituent work, working on behalf of the constituents, and we had a great staff and people just threw their heart and soul into these constituent matters. They say the best advertising is word-of-mouth advertising, and I think that really helped them, because they knew that if you went to Jack Kemp, you can get your problem resolved most of the time.

Shattuck: And get some action.

Rutkowski: Yes.

Goioa: Jack had great loyalty to his staff as well, I remember, through all the people that he had working for him. He really treated them with respect and they were always held in high regard by Jack, and, therefore, I think all the voters felt the same way about Jack's staff as well.

Shattuck: Jack had the ability to hire people that fit into the family, because his staff was also his family. As his football players and his real family, we were also a family and we all worked towards the same end. Jack, as a leader, he set that tone.

Kondracke: How did he manage to make people into family?

Rutkowski: He said always, "You put your country before your party." And that's why I think he got along so well with Henry [James] Nowak, who was a congressman; John [Joseph] LaFalce, who was a congressman. Even though they were Democrats, they worked hand-in-hand with Jack, who was a Republican, and I think people respected that and admired him for it, that he wasn't petty or vindictive or negative about it, and that made a lot of people happy.

Kondracke: How often did he come back to the district?

Rutkowski: He tried to come back as often he could, but the good thing about it was that I became a surrogate for him, and we both came off football careers. Everybody wanted Jack to speak at a

dinner, but if Jack wasn't available because he was in Washington, they'd take Ed Rutkowski, because Ed was kind of a star somewhat in the football arena. So I'd go out and speak on Jack's behalf, and, to some extent, that's how I developed a political base of my own, by going out and speaking on Jack's behalf. But he would try to come back just about every weekend to have constituent meetings and be with people.

Gioia: Jack was also a national figure, so that took a lot of his time, and as a national leader of the Republican Party, there were a lot of demands on Jack's time on weekends. Sometimes our friend at the news, not George, but the [*Buffalo*] *News* used occasionally criticize Jack as not spending enough time in the district. I would argue with them and say, "Look, Jack doesn't need to spend the time here because he's a national figure. It's almost a contradiction. If you're spending all of your time in Buffalo, you don't have the clout that Jack had," and he didn't need to spend as much time here in the district. It isn't fun getting up at five o'clock on a Saturday morning to travel to Cleveland or travel to Iowa to help a congressman that's running for reelection or in a tough race, and Jack did that. But as a result, he had a lot of clout. So when Jack wanted something done, he had the juice to get it done, where a lot of other people wouldn't. I think this was one of the real contradictions that they had to deal with.

Borelli: In defense of the *Buffalo News*, the *Buffalo News* was very good to Jack. My recollection is they endorsed him every time he ran for the House.

Kondracke: He goes from 51 percent victory to 70s and in one case 90 percent victory. But in '84 he got 75 percent of the vote, in '86 he got 57.5 percent of the vote. He dropped almost twenty points. What happened in 1986? [to Rutkowski:] You were gone.

Borelli: I can tell you, I think. In '86, that was to be Jack's last election for Congress because he was preparing to run for President.

Kondracke: And everybody knew it?

Borelli: Yes. And they set high expectations. They wanted him to win by fifteen or twenty points. Well, his Democratic opponent turned out to be a young, aggressive, well-known Democrat named James [P.] Keane, who was the Majority Leader of the Common Council, and he waged a very aggressive campaign. But Jack won by eleven or twelve points, and a lot of politicians would give their right arm to win by eleven or twelve points. But because the expectations originally were so high, some people interpreted it as a slap at Jack.

Kondracke: Did anybody in the district think that he was spending too much time away from the district and wasn't attentive enough because he was a national pol?

Borelli: I think his Democratic opponent made reference to that during the campaign, but, still, if you win by ten, eleven, twelve points, that's not a bad victory margin.

Kondracke: There was one race, or maybe more than one race, in which his opponents charged that he didn't live in the district, that he

was actually a resident of Bethesda, Maryland, and said that the official residence that he was listing was his treasurer's house. Now, was there any truth to that? Did he maintain a residence here?

Rutkowski: He did have a residence in Hamburg, yes.

Shattuck: He always had, yes. He always had a residence here.

Kondracke: So he was eighteen years in Congress. Did his attitude, as Tony mentioned, change over time, his presence change over that period of time? Were there certain periods of different kind of activity toward the district? In the beginning, presumably, he was here every weekend. Did that change over time?

Rutkowski: Yes. He got more passionate. I don't know if at Jack's service in Washington when he passed away, whether it was Jimmy or Jeff, but they got up and said, "My dad's passion was passion."

I recall vividly when he came back on a weekend, he was so excited. He was in our living room standing by the fireplace, he said, "Eddie, I've got this great bill I'm going to introduce. It's called the Jobs Creation Act. We're going to cut tax rates, and it's going to stimulate the economy. It's going to create jobs, and it's going to get this area out of the doldrums, and we're going to go forward."

That morphed into Kemp-Roth, which morphed into the tax-cut proposal that he initiated with Ronnie Reagan, who Reagan adopted, who then convinced Maggie Thatcher to adopt. So he had a profound effect on the economy, not only here but worldwide, and it was because of his passion in doing that.

Gioia: Absolutely. No question about that.

Borelli: That Kemp-Roth bill originally called for a 27 percent across-the-board tax cut, and Ronald Reagan adopted the guts of that plan for his 1980 campaign, which, of course, he won, and eventually, I think, the first year in the Reagan administration the Congress passed an across-the-board tax cut of 23 percent, which was at the time the largest tax cut ever enacted, and Jack was really the primary guy behind that.

Kondracke: Let me bring it back to Buffalo for a second. What did he do for the economy of the district and the Buffalo area?

Rutkowski: He got people thinking about how heavily they were being taxed, and his premise was—he was kind of an educator too. He based his tax cuts on what Kennedy did in the early sixties. Kennedy cut the tax rates, the economy took off, and he said, “This is what my Jobs Creation Act is predicated upon.” He was a student of history, a student of economics. As George said, he taught himself well. He said, “It drives my Democratic friends crazy because when they ask me, ‘Hey, Kemp, you’re crazy,’” he said, “I’m not crazy. I took it from one of your guys.”

They said, “Who?”

He said, “President Kennedy. I’m doing what your guy did.” We had a lot of fun with that.

Borelli: Incidentally, they had the same initials.

Rutowski: J.F.K.

Kondracke: But did he bring home bacon for the district?

Rutkowski: Yes.

Borelli: A lot of earmarks.

Gioia: I think that Jack was philosophically opposed to earmarks, and he said so publicly, but he said, "As long as they're going to be there, I'm going to bring mine home for my district. As long as there's going to be earmarks, we're going to get them. I'm opposed to it philosophically, but if they're going to be there, I'm going to see that western New York gets our fair share."

?: And he did.

Rutkowski: He worked with Henry Nowak and John LaFoss for the Light Rail Rapid Transit funding, which brought a lot of federal funds into Buffalo.

Kondracke: So he was not exactly a small-government conservative?

Rutkowski: I would say yes, he was, but to the extent that he could do something that could improve the economic base in Buffalo, he would be for it. He always told people, he said, "Look, I want to cut your taxes. I want to cut your tax rates. I want to give you more of your money back so you can spend it the way you want to spend it, not the way the people in Washington tell you how to spend the money. I would put my trust and faith in the first twenty-five people

in the Buffalo phone book than in the Council of Economic Advisors.”

He said, “If we cut your tax rates and you get more money back, you do one of three things. One, you spend it, which stimulates the economy; or, two, you invest it, which helps companies grow; or, three, you save and it goes into a pool of capital from which businesses can borrow.” Those ideas, that concept, cut across party lines. That’s why he got such good support from Democrats as well as Republicans.

Kondracke: Was there ever any tension in your relationship with Jack? There’s a memo in the files about one of the campaigns that says, “to avoid any further strains in the Jack-Eddie relationship, which is currently very intense.” Do you remember what that was about, ’74 or something?

Rutkowski: No, I don’t. We always had a good relationship, and I always made sure that I treated him with the utmost respect, but if he wanted to start talking about being a buddy-buddy and football friend and stuff like that, I would then take the lead. But I always let him make the lead on that. We had our differences. Sometimes he would be a bit aggressive when it came to driving. [laughter]

Kondracke: Tell us about that.

Shattuck: Oh, man. [laughter]

Rutkowski: He was almost always late leaving a meeting.

Shattuck: Always.

Rutkowski: And wanted to make the plane on time. I was the driver trying to get him to the airport on time, and I remember vividly he would step on my foot on the gas pedal.

Shattuck: He would push the gas pedal down.

Rutkowski: Push the gas pedal down. And if we got stopped by the police, as the officer was coming, he said, "Tell him I'll get him an autographed football. Tell him I've got to get to the airport."

We had one situation where we were so far behind in our schedule trying to get out to the airport, got up to a stoplight, and there was a car in front of me. He said, "Go around the car. Go around the car."

I said, "Jack."

He said, "Go around the car."

I said, "You want to drive?"

He said, "Yes."

So I said, "All right." I got up out of the car, and he came. I got in the passenger side. He pulled the car up on the sidewalk, went across the road because there weren't any cars coming, and cut in front of the other cars. He got us out to the airport with about a minute to spare, but I'm telling you.

Joanne [Kemp] summed it up succinctly. She said, "For a guy who didn't obey the rules of the road, he was a pretty good driver," because he used to drive with his right and left foot.

Shattuck: Yes.

Rutkowski: He put his left foot on the brake and his right foot on the gas pedal. But we've got tons of stories about driving.

Shattuck: He was addressing the Rotary Club in Williamsville, and I'm in the back of the room telling him he's got to catch a plane. He has no more time left. "You have to leave right now." But he was answering questions, and he was still there and still there, and I literally had to walk up and guide him out. So now we're very behind, and we had to get to the airport quickly.

I called ahead to the airport to the passenger service and told them, "We're coming. Don't give his seat away."

Bob Blaney had an accident with the car in the parking lot, and so I was the only one that had a vehicle, and at the time I just had this little RX7, a two-seater car that was teeny. So I had to take him to the airport, and he got in the car, barely, because he didn't fit. We got to the first red light, and he's yelling for me to go through the red light so we can get to the airport. I said, "No, I'm not going through the red light."

Then he put a magazine over his face, because there were people waiting to cross. He didn't want them to see him in the car. He did the same thing with the stop sign. He said, "Go around them."

I said, "I can't go around. There's a car there."

He said "No, go around the other way," and that meant going in oncoming traffic to get ahead of the guy.

But, unlike today, he could get to the airport in five minutes before the plane shut the door, and he could get right on.

Kondracke: No security in those days.

Shattuck: No security.

Kondracke: So were there any other foibles?

Rutkowski: We were going out to Ken Lipke's house for a fundraiser, and it was at night, and I was in the car with Mary Lou and Jack, and we're going along the road, and he said, "Turn up there! Turn! Turn! Turn!" and he grabbed the steering wheel. So I turned and we went into this big clump of bushes and then stopped.

I said, "Are you satisfied, Jack?"

He said, "I swear there was a road there, Ed. I swear there was a road. I'm so sorry." [laughter] But he would literally grab the steering wheel.

Shattuck: Yes. He insisted on driving my car one day, and I got in the back seat and Joanne and Jack were in the front seat, and my garage door opener fell off the visor when he pushed it down. So he took the garage door opener and he just threw it in the backseat, and it hit me in the head. Joanne's going, "Jack, you hit her."

He goes, "Oh, did I? Did I?" He was just so intent on getting to the airport on time.

Rutkowski: When he had a place to go, we had a situation where the Republican Party wanted him to come back, and this was after his congressional days, to speak at a Lincoln Day Dinner. It was in February, and he had an engagement the next day in Chicago. He had to speak at a breakfast meeting, and he very much wanted to honor their request to speak at the Lincoln Day Dinner at night. So I had a friend of ours, Gerry Buchheit, who has his own company and he's got

his own plane. He's got a jet and he's pilot. So I called Jerry and I said, "Got a little problem. Jack wants to do this, but we've got to get him to Chicago the next morning. Could you fly him?"

He said, "I'd love to."

So I pick up Jack and we go to the dinner and he speaks at the dinner, and Jerry's at the dinner, and Jerry gets in the car with Jack and myself and I drive to the airport. Now it's ten-thirty at night, and getting out of the car, you hear the car door slam, and I hear, "Open the door! Open the door! Open the door!"

And the door opens and there's Jerry, shaking his hand like that. I said, "Jerry, what happened?"

He said, "Jack. He slammed the door on my fingers."

I said, "Let me see." And I said, "Gee, I'm going to have to take you to the emergency room or something."

And Jack said, "Oh, no. No, no. He's all right. He's okay."

I said, "Jack, he's the pilot."

He said, "No, no, no, he's okay. Look."

And Jerry flew him to Chicago that night and turned around that night and flew him back. The joke is now every time Jerry would see me, he'd say, "Where's that Kemp? I want to sue him."

Shattuck: As you know, he was just an incredible reader. He would read several newspapers every day, but his style of reading newspapers was literally read a page and toss it, and so he'd end up just surrounded by a heap of newspapers. Well, he did the same thing in the car while we were driving, and he never liked to drive more than twenty minutes at a crack. So you'd always tell him, "It's just going to take twenty minutes to get there," even though it was longer. But you'd have to clean out the car with a shovel by the time you got

there, because there were Dorito bags and newspapers and magazines just strewn about.

Kondracke: What did his office look like?

Shattuck: About the same thing. There were stacks of newspapers.

Rutkowski: Yes, all over.

Shattuck: Incredible memory. He would read something and retain it. It was just remarkable, amazed me, and people's names he would remember.

Gioia: Oh, his memory for names was phenomenal.

Shattuck: Incredible.

Rutkowski: He just had a photographic memory. If he wrote it down, he could remember it. He had three elements of things. The most important stuff he put in his vest pocket, and then the other stuff in his two pockets. Then he had a folder, and I can't tell you how many times he lost the folder. But he would always pull out the vest pocket stuff first, and then give it to us, and "Follow up on this," and, "Follow up on that," or give you a napkin with somebody's name and a phone number scribbled on it.

Shattuck: Let me tell you one quick story. There was one time when Jack was speaking at the Naval Academy to the entire corps of midshipmen, so there was like four thousand, and he brought Joanne

and Judith [Kemp] was with. Judith was a teenager. She was a very beautiful girl, blonde girl. So they're on the stage, and this was the only time I saw Jack blush, was when he introduced Judith, all of the young midshipmen started whistling. Jack didn't know what to say. He was speechless and his cheeks got very red.

But there were microphones in each of the aisles so that the cadets could come down and ask Jack a question, and this one cadet asked him about a Department of Defense report, something specific in that report, and Jack answered him.

Afterward, I was talking to the staff person who worked Defense, and she said, "I can't believe he knew the answer to that, because I handed him that report and he just literally paged it and never touched it again." But he retained what he had written.

Kondracke: Why did he not run in 1980 for the U.S. Senate, Ed?

Rutkowski: I think, as I said before, Jack's passion was passion, and not only for the Senate, but we tried to get him to run for governor.

Kondracke: What year was that?

Rutkowski: Too many concussions, Mort. But one of the problems was that he was so committed to the cause, the tax-cut cause, that he felt that if he left the halls of Congress for any other position, that nobody would be able to fill that vacuum the way he filled it, and I think he proved himself right that day. It went from a Jobs Creation Act to Kemp-Roth to the Reagan tax cuts. He just didn't feel that there was anybody who was as committed or as passionate about that cause that he was.

Gioia: There's a lot of talk about the Reagan Revolution, obviously, but Jack Kemp provided the ammunition for the Reagan Revolution. Clearly, I don't think Jack gets nearly enough credit for that. I mean, you hear it talked about sometime, but not as often as it should be. I mean, Ronald Reagan adopted Jack Kemp's ideas, and they became very, very successful, and that led to the Reagan Revolution.

Kondracke: But he conceivably could have done it from the Senate if he'd run against Jacob Javits, who, after all, had been diagnosed with ALS and was not going to make it through his next term, so the seat was available. Why didn't he run, do you think?

Borelli: I think he was too politically astute. Jack was an upstater, not that well known in New York City, and the overlay was about at that time three-to-two Democratic, and statewide Democratic politics can be pretty vicious at time, and I think he made the right decision by not running statewide.

[Crosstalk]

Gioia: He might have won, though. A Republican did win.

Borelli: He was from Long Island.

Kondracke: Do you think, could Jack have beaten Alfonse D'Amato in the primary?

Borelli: Possibly, but D'Amato was a New York City area guy and very much better known than Jack was in the metropolitan area. Upstaters don't get too much attention in New York City.

Kondracke: What happened? How did he decide to run for President in '88? You must have been there, Ed, during the thought process. He decides not to continue being a congressman. He decides that he's going to run for President.

Rutkowski: It wasn't me or anybody locally prodding him to do that. I think he had a lot of national support, and people thought that he was ready for that kind of a stage.

Gioia: For quite some time too. This wasn't just some whim at the moment. I mean, we all knew that, if not Jack, certainly his supporters were pushing him in that direction for years. He would have these parties and bring national people in to go to the Super Bowl games. We had people from all over the country who were Jack supporters, who really admired Jack, what he had done. So this was going on for a long time. So it was not a surprise.

Kondracke: Were you involved in the national fundraising efforts for '88?

Gioia: Yes. In fact, I hosted the dinner we had that announced it at the Old Executive Hotel. Remember the 727 came in and Newt Gingrich was on the plane, among others, and I sat right next to Lou Saban, between Lou Saban, I think, and Jack. So that was a great time.

Kondracke: Why do you think he didn't do better in '88 than he did?

Gioia: It's really hard to say. Obviously, the Vice President was running then in George Bush, who had name recognition, had a national standing as well. Jack's time may have crested a little earlier in terms of the ideas Jack had which were being embraced, and there's a timing thing here, I think, and all political candidates, everything is the right time. Ronald Reagan may not have done as well four years later or four years earlier. I think Jack peaked when Ronald Reagan was President. Had that not been the case, I think he might have had a different outcome.

Kondracke: Do you have any theories about why he didn't do better?

Borelli: In '88?

Kondracke: Yes.

Borelli: Well, Bush, having been Vice President under Reagan for eight years, had a distinct advantage in that campaign, and I think they were able to raise huge amounts of money compared to what Jack was able to raise, and it was too much of a handicap for Jack to overcome.

Kondracke: Tony, had you hoped in 1980 that he might have been Ronald Reagan's running mate?

Gioia: No. Well, I thought that was farfetched, but I did think that Jack should have been George H. W. Bush's running mate in '88. That

would have made a much stronger ticket, and that would have been a much, I think, more well-rounded ticket.

Borelli: But remember during the primary Bush had labeled the Kemp economic plan "voodoo economics," so that might have been a factor in Bush not picking Kemp to be the V.P.

Gioia: But Jack was always such a positive guy. I don't think anybody who may have disagreed with him philosophically felt bitter towards Jack. Jack certainly didn't feel bitter towards them. It's not the same kind of discourse we have today.

Rutkowski: And, see, the humorous thing about it, when they accused him of voodoo economics, he said, "Well, if I'm promoting voodoo economics, I'm the chief witch doctor." [laughter]

Kondracke: Then he did become the vice presidential candidate under Bob Dole. Were you surprised when Dole picked him?

Rutkowski: Well, we were hoping it would be a Kemp-Dole, the other way around.

Kondracke: But he didn't run in '96. Why did he not run in '96?

Rutkowski: Don't know. I think for the same reason before, that he just wanted to make sure that there was no vacuum with the tax-cut policies that he was promoting.

Kondracke: When he was HUD Secretary between '88 and '92, did he maintain a connection with Buffalo? I mean, did Buffalo in any way benefit from his being HUD Secretary?

Shattuck: He was a national figure at that point, so he came back to Buffalo as HUD Secretary, but I don't believe that he did anything specific just because it was Buffalo, but it was never out of his mind that this was his second home. But he did things for the entire country. And he was faced with a lot of difficulties right in the beginning of his term, because he had to deal with some things that had happened in the previous administration that he needed to get taken care of before he could go forward with his ideas in the housing field.

Kondracke: Summing up now, let me just ask each one of you, how do you think Jack Kemp should be remembered in history?

Borelli: Well, as a very passionate man who educated himself from a degree in physical education to one of the leading experts on economics, and his passion was unrivaled.

Kondracke: Tony?

Gioia: Yes, I think his passion was unrivaled. His civility was also unrivaled, and I think the contributions that Jack made to the U.S. economy are tremendous. As time goes on, I think Jack's stature has increased tremendously, because we in Buffalo knew him and I don't think can fully appreciate some of the national things that occurred. I mean, when I used to go to Britain quite a bit, because we sold our

company to a British firm, the Brits were just in love with Jack. Margaret Thatcher thought the world of Jack Kemp. I met her a couple of times, and when I told her I was a good friend of Jack Kemp's, well, she was just so impressed with Jack. I mean, he really had really an international following that I think as time goes on will be remembered more and more.

Kondracke: Ed?

Rutkowski: I think people will remember Jack not only as a passionate man, but a compassionate man. About a year and a half ago, I think it was when Mary Lou, my wife, and I were at church on Sunday. It was the fourth Sunday of Easter, and the gospel was about the good shepherd. As far as Jack Kemp was concerned, there wasn't a person who he thought was too small or too insignificant that he wouldn't try to help, and I think that's going to be his legacy.

Kondracke: Marie?

Shattuck: He was a good man. He was a politician. He was a football player. He was a family man. His family was so important to him. His wife, Joanne, was a rock. She was literally his wind beneath his wings, and he loved that. He loved his passion for what he was passionate for, and he put all his energies into it, all of those families, including his football family and his staff and his constituency. I think the people of western New York, if they really think about it, that they owe a lot to him, because he's contributed a great deal to this community at many different levels.

Borelli: One more thing, Mort.

Kondracke: Yes.

Borelli: He had great hair. [laughter] Most of the congressmen from that district had great hair. Paxon, Jack Quinn, and then [Thomas M.] Reynolds came along and broke the string.

Rutkowski: Marie brought a pretty good point up. I mean, Jack was the consummate family man, and I really tremendously admired him and respected him for that, because in Washington he never got caught up in the trappings of Washington, going out with the lobbyists and stuff like that. If you wanted to meet with Jack, you come to his house, and the Kissingers and the Bill Bennetts would come and have dinner with Jack and Joanne and the kids. I really admired and respected him for that.

Gioia: He was his own man, no question of that.

Shattuck: Right.

Rutkowski: Absolutely. He was true to himself, he was true to the cause, and he never lost his soul.

Kondracke: That's a good way to end it. Thank you so much for doing this. This is going to make a great addition to the Kemp Legacy Project. Thank you all.

[End of Panel 2]