



Oral History Interview of Michael Dukakis (OH-022)

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Oral History Interview of Michael S. Dukakis

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Interviewed by: Joseph McEttrick, Suffolk University Law School Professor, and Steven Kalarites, Oral History Project Coordinator.

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Interview Summary

Michael S. Dukakis, former governor of Massachusetts (1975-1979; 1983-1991), discusses the career of Congressman John Joseph Moakley. Governor Dukakis talks about Congressman Moakley's efforts to improve Boston Harbor and the Harbor Islands; recalls issues they worked together on while members of the Massachusetts legislature in the late sixties; what issues were prominent during political campaigns in the sixties and seventies; what the environment was like in the State House during the sixties; his thoughts regarding the Boston school desegregation in the 1970s and how important Congressman Moakley's public service and political leadership was to his constituents.

Subject Headings

Boston (Mass.).

Boston Harbor Islands (Mass.)

Busing for school integration

Comprehensive Permit Law

Dukakis, Michael S. (Michael Stanley), 1933-

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Moakley, John Joseph, 1927-2001

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This interview took place on July 12, 2004, at Northeastern University's Political Science Department, Meserve Hall, Boston, MA.

Interview Transcript

(Interview begins during conversation)

PROFESSOR JOSEPH McETTRICK: —you were governor while he was still in Congress and so forth. So it's funny how things kind of fall together. I was getting ready to do this—I thought you'd be entertained by this—you can have that really, I'm pretty much finished with it. This is just something that was in the *Patriot Ledger* over the weekend talking about—

(break in audio)

So just a few kind of general obvious questions, and then there are a number of specific things I wanted to ask you about. If you could just tell us generally what your contact was with Joe Moakley. There were a lot of people that you ran into both in the House and as governor—

GOVERNOR MICHAEL DUKAKIS: Well Joe was an interesting guy. Certainly I had a lot more contact with him when he was in Congress and I was governor. I can't say we were close. But there was one issue on which Joe was my teacher, my mentor, and a huge inspiration. And that was Boston Harbor and the Harbor Islands.

In those days—and Joe, you're old enough, I think, to have a sense of this—we didn't even know what a harbor was in a sense. It was all these old buildings, and, of course, the Central Artery had done a terrible job on the city and its harbor. And it certainly was not the place it is today, which is one of the favorite locations with all kinds of luxury housing and that kind of stuff. It was a broken down, old kind of wharf area that was in serious distress.

It was Ed Logue¹ who came along and started talking about the rebuilding and revitalizing of the waterfront area. And most of us had only a vague idea as to what he was talking about. And that was in the midsixties. There was this one guy in the legislature, who I knew, but in a kind of stereotypical fashion, said, “Well, you know, he’s a guy out of Southie, you know,” of course I didn’t know at the time he was half Italian, which was one of his good—great pluses.

But in any event, all kidding aside—but didn’t—I think Joe had been defeated [in a legislative election] at some point and had gone into the Commerce Department, which was a well-known place to take care of people who had been defeated and that kind of stuff. But I began discovering the harbor and the islands. And one of the reasons I did, apart from my love of urban parks and this city and so on and so forth, was that Joe was the one guy who said, “We’ve got to do something about those islands. This is a huge asset. Not only can’t we let them kind of be given away, but this could be an incredible public playground.” And he was the only guy, as I remember, around the place [the state house] who was saying this or doing that. And then he got a group of us—I can’t even remember who the rest of us—it was a small group of us in the House—he was in the Senate by that time—who kind of said, “Yeah!”

First we had to learn how many islands there were. There were thirteen, most of which, as I recall, were in private hands, some of which were dumps, some of which had squatters on them, some of which—I guess George’s [Island] was in public hands at the time but hadn’t been particularly well-maintained. And I think it was Joe—I’m not sure *he* invited me up there, but I finally started to take a look.

Now I had memories of the harbor because when I was a kid we never went away in the summer or any of that kind of stuff. One of the special highlights of my summers was once a year my mother would take my brother and me down to the wharf, which was a mess. And we’d get on the boat to Nantasket.²

¹ Edward J. Logue (1921-2000) was a lawyer and urban planner who oversaw the development of, among other projects, Boston’s Government Center and Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market. He ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Boston in 1967.

² Nantasket Beach is located in Hull, MA, a peninsular town southeast of Boston that faces the Atlantic Ocean to the East and Hingham Bay to the west.

MCETTRICK: Oh sure, yeah, from Rowes [Wharf]?

DUKAKIS: Yeah. And we'd spend the day at Nantasket Beach and then come back. I still have memories of—but it was a highlight of the summer. But I hadn't been out there in years. And I suspect 99.9 percent of the people of Boston, metropolitan Boston, hadn't either. It was polluted, it was a mess, it was economically depressed, and so on and so forth.

And then there was a guy named Edward Rowe Snow,³ I think, who was the great historian—

McETTRICK: That's right, yeah.

DUKAKIS: —who kept talking about the islands. But Joe was the guy that really led us on this, and subsequently filed legislation for the Commonwealth to acquire these islands.⁴ And a bunch of us in the House joined him and we got the bill through. That was in '67 or '68 as I recall. Frank Sargent⁵ was the governor. A good environmental guy. Strong believer in public parks. And he had a secretary of environmental affairs named Hank Foster—

McETTRICK: Oh, I remember him, yeah.

DUKAKIS: —who was a similar kind of guy. But from nineteen—whenever the bill was passed—'67, '68, until 1974, they hadn't done a blessed thing to acquire those islands. Just didn't do anything. And I know Joe was getting more and more upset. After all, he put the legislation through. And I don't know whether it simply authorized or authorized and directed, but in any event nothing had happened. So I get elected in '74. And I beat Sargent. Appoint Evelyn Murphy as my secretary of environmental affairs. We're the "new Appalachia," we've got the second highest unemployment rate in the country, we're dead broke, we have no idea

³ Edward Rowe Snow (1902-1982), born in Winthrop, MA, was an author and historian who was especially interested in the maritime history of New England. One of his first books was *The Islands of Boston Harbor: Their History and Romance, 1626-1935*, published in 1935.

⁴ While he was a state senator, Moakley successfully introduced legislation that created the Boston Harbor Islands State Park, and later introduced legislation in Congress that ultimately led to the establishment, in 1996, of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, which is part of the National Park Service.

⁵ Francis W. Sargent (1915-1998) was governor of Massachusetts from 1969 to 1975.

how we're going to get out of this fiscal mess. And I remember saying to Evelyn, "I don't care what kind of shape we're in, you go out and get those islands."

And she did. And I can't even remember—I assume some of it was negotiated, some of it was a taking—we bought those thirteen, or however many were in private hands, islands, for a total of three million dollars. The whole kit and caboodle. And here again, Joe was the inspiration for this. And when we finally did it, I remember picking up the phone, Steve [Steven Kalarites], and calling Congressman Moakley, and saying, "Joe, we just want you to know, it's taken—," (laughs) and we had talked about this obviously, and I'm sure I campaigned on it. I said, "I just want you to know, we finally got your islands."

So he was a hugely inspiring guy. But that was pretty much the one time that I—I'm sure we worked on other stuff together, I can't remember, but that was the one thing that just stands out in my mind. Once he went into Congress and began doing what he's doing, for a governor Joe was just, I can't tell you—not only on the harbor and the city, but on so much of our mass transit stuff and all this kind of stuff. Joe was just a huge asset.

There's one other connection between us. And that is that, for reasons I'm not quite sure I understand, my dad was Evelyn Moakley's⁶ doctor.

McETTRICK: Oh no kidding?

DUKAKIS: Yeah. And there was this little kind of personal thing. And how she became a patient of my dad's I have no idea. But it was a funny kind of connection, you know? And so when I'd meet her we'd talk about my dad and all that kind of stuff. And I don't know how she became a patient of my father's but—

So there was that little personal twist. But it's the islands, the harbor, and Joe's incredible—call it what you will—vision, statesmanship; he was the one guy around the place that understood

⁶ Evelyn (Duffy) Moakley (1927-1996) was Congressman Moakley's wife. They married in 1957.

just how much that resource meant to us. And it was at a time— I can't begin to—I'm not exaggerating when I say he was about the only person, except for Snow, who was interested.

McETTRICK: Well I was looking at your years and Moakley's, and I guess you were actually in the House together for just one year.

DUKAKIS: Then he moved.

McETTRICK: Then he went over to the Senate.

DUKAKIS: Yeah.

McETTRICK: But when we were talking with Bill Shaevel,⁷ he was recalling—I guess he was hired in the Senate as some kind of a consulting guy, got assigned to a committee, wound up with Moakley. And in Shaevel's mind he was thinking of how on a few issues, it was interesting that you had Joe Moakley who was a pretty conservative, traditional, Boston politician, was at the state house. And then yourself—

DUKAKIS: And Dukakis, yeah. What were some of the other issues? Did he mention them?

McETTRICK: Yeah, I was going to run through the—Shaevel mentioned—he mentioned public housing issues, MHFA [Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency], that sort of thing, and tenants' rights, issues of that sort. And he said that there was some issues that you were into from really a liberal angle on things, which was really congruent with what Moakley was doing in a more traditional fashion that related to cities.

DUKAKIS: Was Joe chairman of Housing and Urban Affairs?

McETTRICK: He was—

⁷ William H. Shaevel was a member of Moakley's State Senate staff from 1967 to 1970 and Moakley's law partner, and is the treasurer of the Moakley Charitable Foundation. OH-017 in the Moakley Oral History Project is an interview with Mr. Shaevel.

DUKAKIS: What were his chairmanships?

McETTRICK: I don't know what his legislative chairmanships were.

DUKAKIS: Because if he was, then obviously we would've been working very closely on housing stuff, which was one of my big issues.

McETTRICK: Well actually I've got a list of things that I can just mention to you. And maybe some of them might sort of ring a bell. Because it's funny how time marches on.

DUKAKIS: For all of us, you know.

McETTRICK: That's why this [*Patriot*] *Ledger* article was so interesting, because I hadn't thought about this period. Sixty-three they started to try to knock off the Iron Duke as speaker, John Thompson,⁸ which I guess was unsuccessful. You must've just arrived.

DUKAKIS: First thing I had to do was—

McETTRICK: Probably you were kind of wondering what was going on?

DUKAKIS: No, I wasn't wondering at all. It was a big issue in the campaign.

McETTRICK: Oh, is that right?

DUKAKIS: Well Massachusetts, when I arrived in the state house, was one of the three or four most corrupt states in the country. We had investigating committees in here from Washington, we had a state crime commission that indicted and convicted all kinds of public officials. And

⁸ John Thompson (1920-1965), a Democrat, nicknamed the Iron Duke, served in the Massachusetts State House of Representatives from 1948 to 1964. He served as Speaker of the House from 1957 to 1964.

there was a band of us, Joe, young Turks—call us what you will—who got elected in '62, and then subsequently in '64 guys like Jack Buckley and Dave Flynn came in '64.

McETTRICK: Oh yeah, from Abington.

DUKAKIS: And from Bridgewater.

McETTRICK: Buckley was a very close associate. In fact I remember meeting him with yourself one day.

DUKAKIS: He became my first secretary of A and F [Administration and Finance], as a matter of fact. And we were the young reformers that were determined to do something about this. It was embarrassing. We had just elected this son of Massachusetts to the presidency in 1960, who came in and delivered the “City on a Hill” speech,⁹ and we had more public officials getting investigated and indicted than you could shake a stick at. And being convicted.

And that’s the backdrop in the sixties. On the other hand, a lot of us were working on a lot of issues that were important urban issues. Yes, I came from Brookline, but I was as interested in urban communities as anybody.

McETTRICK: Well I’ll just give you a list, just to help you kind of put the era together. Nineteen sixty-four they established the MBTA [Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority]; it went from the MTA [Metropolitan Transit Authority] to MBTA. Nineteen sixty-five, racial imbalance law.¹⁰ Sixty-six, the housing authority law, which was rental assistance, established the Mass. Housing Finance Agency.¹¹ Let’s see—Consumer Protection Act 93A¹² was in '67.

⁹ In 1961, President-Elect John F. Kennedy made a speech to General Court of Massachusetts in which he referenced the “City Upon a Hill” sermon given by John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, in 1630.

¹⁰ Passed in 1965, the Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Law prohibited “racial imbalance” in public schools and discouraged schools from having more than 50 percent minority students.

¹¹ According to its website, the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, now known as MassHousing, “was created by Chapter 708 of the Acts of 1966 as a self-supporting, independent public authority charged with increasing affordable rental and for-sale housing in Massachusetts.” (See <http://www.masshousing.com>)

¹² Chapter 93A in the Massachusetts General Laws, enacted in 1967, is officially titled the “Regulation of Business Practices for Consumers Protection.”

Anti-snob zoning, Chapter 40B, 1969.¹³ And then of course no fault [auto insurance] in 1970. So those were some of the issues. And some of them are urban-based.

DUKAKIS: A lot of them.

McETRICK: And the way Shaevel described it was that there were a lot of people in the legislature who—they were really more traditionalists, and a lot of this stuff they hadn't really focused on. But that on certain issues that people would fall together and that Moakley would have an interest in some of these things.

DUKAKIS: And these are all gut issues, you know; all of them. Whether it was auto insurance or housing or mass transit, any of this stuff. And it's not a surprise that Joe had a strong interest in them. If he was the Senate chair of Housing and Urban Affairs—

McETRICK: We'll check into that.

DUKAKIS: Yeah, check that, because I was a member of the Special Commission on Low Income Housing—I don't think Joe was—in '66, that really came up with an extraordinary series of proposals that actually pre-dated federal action. For example, the idea of rent supplements, now Section Eight, first came out of that commission. The idea of the state providing low-interest loans to both non-profit and profit-making developers, for mixed-income housing, Joe, had never been tried before. Putting welfare people and luxury apartments in the same place. Well that came out of that.

The notion that we would never again build public housing which exceeded more than a hundred units. Because we had done the Columbia Point¹⁴ and others, and they just hadn't worked. And I'm sure that was very much on Joe's mind, given the district that he represented and what was

¹³ Chapter 40B in the Massachusetts General Laws, enacted in 1969, also known as the Comprehensive Permit Law or Anti-Snob Zoning Law, allows developers of low-income housing to bypass certain zoning requirements in towns and cities in which less than 10% of its housing is designated as low-income.

¹⁴ The Columbia Point housing project in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood was built by the Boston Housing Authority in 1954, but fell into disrepair, and in 1984 Boston transferred management of the project to a private company. The project was revitalized and is now called the Harbor Point Apartments.

going on at Columbia Point at the time, which started out as some good housing for working people and then deteriorated over time.

So the housing piece was big. And I happened to be a member of that commission in the midsixties. So it's no surprise to me that we were working on these kinds of issues, even though we represented different districts.

McETTRICK: How about 40B? The special permit—

DUKAKIS: Well it was something I felt strongly about, and I assume Joe felt strongly about it.

McETTRICK: Because they're still debating it now, whether it's going to be continued.

DUKAKIS: Well, don't get me started on that. As you will recall, when I was governor, we never had a 40B problem because we were putting real money into affordable housing. There weren't any communities that were reluctant to do affordable housing. They just want to do it in ways that make sense to them. They don't want some developer coming and saying I'm going to give you a twenty-story tower on a corner lot. The fact that we have cut back so drastically in state resources for affordable housing has created a 40B problem which never existed, at least when I was governor.

On the other hand having the snob zoning act was not unhelpful when the Archdiocese wanted to get out to Scituate and put in forty units. Scituate or Cohasset or one of those towns. And they didn't want forty units of housing that were affordable. In those cases you had a certain amount of leverage.

But all of those projects were built with substantial support from the Commonwealth, both low interest loans and direct subsidies. That's the only way you can make these things work, and work as mixed-income developments. I know Joe was very committed to that, and it made a lot of sense to him.

McETTRICK: Do you have much recollection of his run for Congress? Initially Louise Hicks¹⁵ was elected to what had been the McCormack¹⁶ seat, John McCormack seat. And then he ran as an independent in '72. I don't know if you were really directly involved in that, but—

DUKAKIS: Well I knew a lot of the people—

McETTRICK: It would seem a lot of things were going on in that election.

DUKAKIS: Remind me; see I really am getting old. Who was his campaign manager—Pat [McCarthy]. Geez, isn't this terrible? I was just talking about him the other day.

McETTRICK: It will come to you in a second. I guess Shaevel was his treasurer—

STEVEN KALARITES: It might have been Roger Kineavy.¹⁷

DUKAKIS: No, no. He was the guy who persuaded him to run as an independent. Came out of BC [Boston College]—isn't this awful?

McETTRICK: That's why we're getting this down on tape. (laughs)

DUKAKIS: Was a lawyer down in Philly.

McETTRICK: Before we lose it completely. (laughs)

¹⁵ Louise Day Hicks (1916-2003), a Democrat, served on the Boston School Committee from 1962 to 1967 (serving as chair from 1963 to 1965), ran unsuccessfully for the mayoralty of Boston in 1967 and in 1971, and served on the Boston City Council before being elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1970. She represented Massachusetts' Ninth Congressional District for one term. It was in the 1970 election that Moakley lost his first bid for Congress, in part because Hicks was an outspoken critic of forced busing in Boston, which helped her gain support in South Boston. Moakley defeated Hicks in the 1972 congressional election when he ran as an Independent so he wouldn't have to run against Hicks in the democratic primary.

¹⁶ John W. McCormack (1891-1990), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts' Twelfth and, after redistricting, Ninth Congressional Districts in the United States House of Representatives from 1928 to 1971. He served as Speaker of the House from 1962 to 1971.

¹⁷ Roger Kineavy served as Congressman Moakley's district director from 1973 to 1994.

DUKAKIS: Patrick Henry—

McETTRICK: Oh, Hall McCarthy?

DUKAKIS: Yeah, Pat McCarthy.

McETTRICK: Oh okay, from BC—yeah, sure. In fact he ran for Congress himself.

DUKAKIS: Pat was the guy who asked the famous question of Tip O’Neill¹⁸—

McETTRICK: You’re right. That’s exactly who it was.

DUKAKIS: “How do you know they’re not lying to you?” But I think Pat was the guy who persuaded Joe, much against his fundamental instincts, to leave the Democratic Party very temporarily (laughs) and to run as an Independent. And didn’t Pat run that campaign, Steve?

McETTRICK: I think he had—

DUKAKIS: I’m sure he played a major role in it.

McETTRICK: I know he was at the meeting where the issue came up.

DUKAKIS: I think—did he run the campaign?

McETTRICK: He had some level of involvement.

DUKAKIS: I think so.

¹⁸ Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill (1912-1994), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts’ Eleventh and, after redistricting, Eighth Congressional Districts in the United States House of Representatives from 1953 to 1987. He served as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1977 to 1987. He also served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1936 to 1952.

McETTRICK: Because David Nelson¹⁹ had run the first time for that seat, and there was a split-off.

DUKAKIS: Yeah. But the decision to run as an Independent was obviously a very important decision for Joe. And not an easy one, I wouldn't think, given his instincts, his background, everything else. Now was I involved? Geez, I can't remember. I'm sure I was supportive in whatever way I could be. But I just don't remember.

McETTRICK: Were you surprised that he managed to pull it off? It would be the sort of thing that people would say, Gee, that's very unorthodox.

DUKAKIS: I'm not sure I was surprised, given the general level of tension and polarization and the rest of it. But I certainly wasn't surprised that almost a day after he got elected he made it clear (laughter) that he expected to govern as a Democrat, organize the House as a Democrat and everything else. It was basically a tactical decision he made. It turned out to be the right one, not only for him, but for a lot of us who felt strongly about him and strongly about the district and weren't that happy about Louise. But it was—he really took a risk, and a major one, in doing that. And it turned out to be the right one.

McETTRICK: Well even looking into acts and resolves, other stuff comes back. They had a special commission on blockbusting; they passed the racial imbalance law. And then of course the busing itself in Boston,²⁰ which really saddened Joe. He had all kinds of turmoil in the neighborhood, and there he was the federal representative. Now did you have much contact with that?

DUKAKIS: Oh yeah. I was involved—

¹⁹ David S. Nelson (1933-1998) was the first African American to serve as a judge of a federal court in Boston. He was appointed to the position in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter.

²⁰ On June 21, 1974, Judge W. Arthur Garrity ruled in the case of Tallulah Morgan et al. v. James Hennigan et al. (379 F. Supp. 410) that the Boston School Committee had “intentionally brought about and maintained racial segregation” in the Boston Public Schools. When the school committee did not submit a workable desegregation plan as the opinion had required, the court established a plan that called for some students to be bused from their own neighborhoods to attend schools in other neighborhoods, with the goal of creating racial balance in the Boston Public Schools. (See <http://www.lib.umb.edu/node/1596> for more information)

McETTRICK: Because you had just gotten in.

DUKAKIS: I was involved—remember, this was ‘62 I got in [to the legislature]. Did I have contact with this as the governor?

McETTRICK: Oh, yeah, yes, as governor.

DUKAKIS: But all during the sixties [we passed] the racial imbalance law and all that kind of stuff. Now, it’s interesting, Joe, in the run-up to the gubernatorial campaign, ‘73, ‘74, we saw this coming. And the longer I’m on this planet the more I tend to trust my instincts, when I see something that even a lot of my compatriots and like-minded friends are supporting, and I’m seeing this thing and saying, “There’s something missing here.”

Because Kitty²¹ and I were married in ‘63, we had three kids, and there isn’t any question that the fact that those kids could go to school around the corner was a very comforting and supportive thing to us. That school as a community school became the center of the neighborhood. It’s where you met your neighbors, it’s where you worked together, and so on and so forth.

And I’m seeing this busing thing and saying, “A, it means those kids aren’t going to have what we had.” Now, we happened to be in a community with a damn good school system. But it’s more than that. It’s this community institution, which happens to be the neighborhood school, as kind of a common meeting ground for most of us.

And so I began trying to develop an alternative which would combine the best of the neighborhood school with integration. And I’m not quite sure I remember when I surfaced this, but basically it was a combination that is—it was an idea that kids would go—would begin their school day at the neighborhood school, but there would be integrated centers of learning around the city, in many cases attached to and connected to many of the city’s cultural institutions.

²¹ Katharine Dickson “Kitty” Dukakis (1936-) is Governor Dukakis’s wife.

Whether it was the zoo, the MFA [Museum of Fine Arts], the science museum, I don't know whether we had an aquarium at the time, and so forth, where, for one thing, a lot of kids in the city who had never been to these institutions would go. And secondly, they would have a lot of their classroom instruction in integrated settings. But they'd begin at the neighborhood school, they'd go back to their neighborhood school, and they would be the responsibility of the neighborhood school but they would be having a lot of their learning in, as I say, integrated settings at these great institutions.

I surfaced the thing and the *Globe* kicked my head in. "Dukakis was retreating on this, that, and the other thing." Years later, Joe—and I should've clipped this thing [the *Globe* editorial]—within the past four or five years, the *Globe*, as what's happened in the city happened—and part of it is just the demographics of the city, it was busing essentially—but this whole notion of what do we mean by integration when in fact 80 percent of the school population is black or brown.

Well there's a case to be made for integration even then. [There is] this kind of interesting prejudice of those of us who are white on either side of this, which is that you don't get an integrated school unless there are whites there. Well, we've got a community of schools, [the] student body is overwhelmingly non-white but is remarkably diverse. Isn't there something to be said for integrating the system? I think the answer to that question is yes. But how do you do it?

And I never—I should've saved this thing and laminated it and put it on the wall. (laughter) But there was this suggestion that maybe we could have a combination of neighborhood schools and integrated centers of learning. (laughter)

McETTRICK: That would've made—

DUKAKIS: By that time if there was anybody left at the *Globe* editorial board that was alive when I made this proposal—but I'll never forget it.

McETTRICK: A type of vindication.

DUKAKIS: With the benefit of hindsight, strikes me—but I know what Joe was going through. Now, while I was governor, my responsibility was to enforce the laws. And I'm the guy that put the state police in South Boston and made sure the law was being enforced.

In point of fact, the first time I heard about Charlie Barry²² was when he was the district superintendent. And he was the guy that rescued this Haitian guy that was in danger of being killed [in South Boston]. And Charlie went in there and just walked right into that mob and covered this guy with his body and just brought him out. That's my first memory of Charlie Barry, who subsequently became my public safety secretary, as you know, for every minute of the twelve years that I was governor. A wonderful guy.

But I don't see how you could look at this [the school desegregation issues] and not have questions. Not about the fundamental issue of whether or not it's better for kids to be in integrated schools, but how do you do it in a way that might give parents in Boston that same kind of fairly strong feeling of community that you get from being part of a neighborhood which happened to have a school in the middle of it, and at the same time get integration. Well here we are many years later.

But all of that stuff—strengthening the state commission against discrimination, I'm the guy that made it a full-time commission, first as governor. But all of the civil rights stuff in the sixties, I was involved in.

McETRICK: Well when you become governor I guess one project that was on the drawing boards even then was the Big Dig²³ and the Central Artery. And that meant federal dollars, and I guess Tip O'Neill was speaker then. And Moakley was on the Rules Committee.²⁴ Anything that you recall from that era?

²² Charles V. Barry (1927-2000) was deputy superintendent for the Boston Police Department in the South Boston and Dorchester neighborhoods in the early 1970s, during the time of the busing crisis. He served as public safety secretary of Massachusetts under Governor Dukakis from 1975 to 1979 and 1983 to 1991.

²³ The Big Dig, or Central Artery/Tunnel Project (CA/T), was the largest public works project in U.S. history and involved the replacement of downtown Boston's elevated highway with a tunnel. The project began in 1991 and ended in 2007.

²⁴ The House Rules Committee is responsible for the scheduling of bills for discussion in the House of Representatives. According to the Rules Committee website, "bills are scheduled by means of special rules from the

DUKAKIS: Well let me drop back a little bit. Before we even get into the Big Dig, which was an interesting project, an expensive one, but doesn't compare with what happened, and you will remember this—remember, when I first arrived in the legislature in 1963 we were on the way to building the so-called Master Highway Plan, which essentially was six eight-lane expressways right in the heart of the city, on something called the Inner Belt, which was eight lanes elevated, Steve. Right through Frederick Law Olmstead's Emerald Necklace,²⁵ I kid you not. Eight lanes elevated, right in front of Emmanuel [College] and Simmons [College], are you with me?

And this was a done deal. This was the way you were going to save cities. And by the way, every other major metropolitan area in the country had the same [plan]. It was basically a Boston version of the California freeway system. And I came into the legislature upset partly because the eight-lane elevated [highway], hell, it was going right through my town. And by the way, in those days the highway engineers picked out every park they could as a site for highway construction.

And secondly, because I was even then a transit and rail obsessive guy, who saw the MBTA—the MBTA was a basket case in '63. It was a disaster. It was full of political patronage, there was no investment, there was no state or federal money going into the T. We had taken it over a privately-run transit system that had gone bankrupt [in 1946]. But we had invested nothing in it. And in the meantime we're talking—we're spending billions on highways, airports, this, that and the other thing; nothing on transit. It just didn't make any sense to me.

So I and about four of my colleagues in the legislature said, You know, there's something wrong with this. And we started asking a lot of questions, and then folks started coming out of the woodwork, from some of the affected neighborhoods and all this kind of stuff. There was a young Catholic priest named Tom Carrigan who became chairman of this anti-highway group. But all of us—

Rules Committee that bestow upon legislation priority status for consideration in the House and establish procedures for their debate and amendment.” (See <http://www.rules.house.gov/>) Congressman Moakley was a member of the House Rules Committee from 1975 to 2001 and served as its chairman from 1989 to 1995.

²⁵ The Emerald Necklace is a chain of parks that winds through Boston and Brookline. It was designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead in 1878.

Now I don't know where Joe was on that. I can't remember. But to make a long story short, it was a brutal ten-year debate. By the way, part of it was going to go right through Milton, right? Fowl Meadow—

McETTRICK: Well they had the Southwest Expressway, [which] was going to go right through the middle of Hyde Park. Right up through Forest Hills.

DUKAKIS: Fowl Meadow, the whole thing. Right through Fowl Meadow, right through Forest Hills. And in fact, fifty to sixty million dollars had been spent to clear the Southwest Corridor.

McETTRICK: That's right.

DUKAKIS: It was one of those, "Oh, we spent this fifty or fifty or sixty million—what are we going to do now?" Okay? And the problem, Steve, politically, for all of us, was that there was absolutely no assurance that there would be any money for mass transit. Because at that point you couldn't bust the Federal Highway Trust Fund. That is, every nickel that went in there had to be used for highways.

So the obvious comeback to us, including comeback from a lot of unions, was, Well, this is a bird in the hand. You're telling us something else but how do we know? We're losing money. It's going to go to other states; there's going to be nothing there [for us]. And I'm sure Joe played a role in this, although Tip and Ted Kennedy²⁶ obviously led the way. We became the first state in the country, thanks to that congressional delegation, to be able to use interstate highway money for mass transit. In fact the entire Massachusetts allocation for interstate highways, in the metropolitan area, inside [Route] 128—because our position was, "That's it, no more." "Well we've got to do this." "That's it, no more; it's got to be all transit."

²⁶ Edward Moore "Ted" Kennedy (1932-), a Democrat, has represented Massachusetts in the United States Senate since 1961.

And thanks to that—and since I had beaten Sargent in '74, who to his credit, having been one of the original architects of the Master Highway Plan, listened and changed his mind. And it didn't help him politically. Remember?

McETTRICK: Oh that's right. Because he stopped the southwest expressway.

DUKAKIS: He didn't stop everything; I stopped the rest of it. But most of it he stopped. And it was a tough decision to make. Because he was faced with the same thing. "So what are you going to do? Where's the money for the transit?"

McETTRICK: And they finally at least put rail on it. You know, upgraded [it], the Orange Line got located on it.

DUKAKIS: Yeah, yeah. But had it not been for the congressional delegation, and you have to check this out because Joe, I'm sure, was involved in this, Tip, too, obviously because the Inner Belt was supposed to go right through Cambridge. And so was Route 2, which was going to come in. Remember?

McETTRICK: Yep.

DUKAKIS: Route 2 was going to come right through Cambridge as well. It was crazy.

McETTRICK: It was an amazing plan. It was incredible. They would've destroyed the inner city.

DUKAKIS: It not only saved Boston. In my opinion it is the single most important reason why Boston today is one of the most successful cities in America. We stopped building the damn highways and gave them [the city] instead the best public transportation system in the country, including, by the way, commuter rail. We bought the entire commuter rail system from the folks that owned it, Old Colony, Boston & Maine, in eastern Massachusetts, you wouldn't believe this,

in 1976, for a total of thirty-five million bucks. Tracks, stations, parking lots, which gives you a sense—.

And three million for the Harbor Islands. Think about it. Geez, I don't know what these things would be worth today, or what they are worth. And by the way, we bought and rehabilitated that commuter rail system with interstate highway money. We had a pot of three billion dollars that was available to us. By the way, at its inflating value—that was another provision that Tip and Joe and these folks put in the thing.

So depending on when we decided to draw it down, the amount of bucks was going up. And we extended the Red Line, extended the Orange Line, rehabbed the stations, bought the commuter rail, all of that stuff, with highway money. And again, you'd have to check it out, but I'm sure Joe was very much involved in it.

McETRICK: That's about ninety cents on the dollar, federal versus state?

DUKAKIS: Indeed, indeed, you bet. So we not only stopped the highways, we saved the city, but we then got a very substantial amount of money, without which we couldn't possibly have modernized the T. Then I brought in Bob Kiley²⁷ and began to manage the place effectively, and the rest, as they say, is history.

But without the congressional delegation in whenever it was, '74, '75, Fred Salvucci²⁸ could tell you this. And by the way, Fred would know a lot more than I do about Joe's—Fred was—Fred and Joe—

McETRICK: Yeah, Bill Shaevel said that. He said get a hold of Fred Salvucci.

DUKAKIS: Yeah, get a hold of Fred.

²⁷ Robert Kiley (1935-) served as deputy mayor of Boston from 1972 to 1975, then served as chairman and CEO of MBTA until 1979. He is also known for his work with the New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

²⁸ Frederick P. Salvucci served as secretary of transportation for Massachusetts under Governor Dukakis from 1975 to 1978 and 1983 to 1990.

McETTRICK: Now where is he these days?

DUKAKIS: He is at MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. And in fact you can get in touch with him and tell him I suggested you call.

McETTRICK: Okay. Steve, you got your pen out?

KALARITES: I've got my pen out.

DUKAKIS: He would be a fund of knowledge on all this stuff, Steve: (pause) 617-253-5378. And needless to say that includes the Big Dig. I don't know what Fred's telephone bill was to Joe's office. Joe was just a go-through guy. Just the best. So again, he was just—he hadn't been in Congress long. But I'm sure he had something to do with that decision, and clearly with virtually every major transit decision and funding source we made afterwards.

Now in addition to Tip and Joe, of course Silvio Conte²⁹ was the only Republican on the delegation, allegedly. And Sil would have been a Democrat except he couldn't get elected from the Berkshires, so he became a Republican. But he was terrific. And these guys were just—and Ed Brooke³⁰ was extremely helpful. So we had a really terrific group of people in Congress, on both sides of the aisle, who could do this. But Joe increasingly played a major role in this stuff.

McETTRICK: So to your mind that was a really fundamental shift of policy?

DUKAKIS: The single—nobody understands it or appreciates it these days. That was the single most important thing that we did to transform what, as you know, was a hurting city. This city was suffering from all of the problems of urban deterioration and disinvestment and so forth that

²⁹ Silvio Conte (1921-1991), a Republican, served in the Massachusetts State Senate from 1951 to 1958, then represented Massachusetts' First Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1959 to 1991.

³⁰ Edward W. Brooke III (1919-), a Republican, represented Massachusetts in the U.S. Senate from 1967 to 1979. He previously served as attorney general of Massachusetts from 1963 to 1967.

every other major city—something happened to turn it around. And it wasn't magic dust. That decision was fundamental. We were one of the few states in the country to make it.

San Francisco was the other one. Surprise, surprise, it's the other very successful city in America. Except in their case they had their version of the Central Artery, which is known as the Embarcadero Highway, which had been built halfway.

McETTRICK: And that was right along their waterfront?

DUKAKIS: Separating the city from that gorgeous waterfront. Right?

McETTRICK: That sounds familiar.

DUKAKIS: Here's this overhead—and they elected a guy as mayor named Jack Shelley,³¹ Steve, who was an Irishman, labor leader, had been in Congress. He came back and ran for mayor. His kid, by the way, Kevin, is now the secretary of state—former legislator, is now is the secretary of state in California.

And here we are, this little bunch of us in the legislature—although I don't think Joe was part of this initially. This was just a bunch of us in the house. And I'm wondering—I'm saying to myself, "I'm convinced that we're right. Are we nutty?" Well, two things happened. First, a guy named Kennedy got elected president. And he and his wife began questioning a similar plan for Washington, which I think, Joe, would've brought an eight-lane highway right down the Mall or something. (laughter) Today it's—and the president and Mrs. Kennedy looked at that and said, "We're going to rethink this." And then this guy from San Francisco says to the California State Department of Transportation, which has already spent millions on this thing [the Embarcadero Highway], "Stop, you're not going any farther." The thing's hanging there. (laughter) And Cal-Trans, which is the state agency, [says,] "Yeah, yeah—"

³¹ John Francis "Jack" Shelley (1905-1974) was mayor of San Francisco from 1964 to 1968,

Shelley says, “That’s it.” That was in ’63. For twenty-five years the Embarcadero Highway [was] unfinished. It was supposed to connect the expressway system from the south with the Golden Gate Bridge up in the north. Sat there unfinished. Just hanging there. It’s as if the Central Artery had stopped downtown and wasn’t going anywhere. And, of course, there were no cars on it. (inaudible)

Anyway, then we have the earthquake, right, ’87 [sic – 1989]. Remember during the World Series?

McETTRICK: Oh yeah. Wasn’t that something?

DUKAKIS: And it cracks the damn Embarcadero. (laughter) A sign from the good Lord himself that it was time to take that thing down. And they took it down. And then—if you guys ever go there, you ought to take a look at this—and then they brought a trolley line right down where the Embarcadero had been, using vintage trolley cars, one of which comes from the Boston Elevated Street Railway, or the T, I can’t remember—the Boston Elevated Railroad. It’s orange, as they used to be. And it’s not just a Toonerville Trolley; it is heavily used and it connects the downtown district with Pac Bell Stadium. And it’s this terrific kind of combination of a restored waterfront and this lovely trolley line, with these vintage cars from everywhere: they’ve got them from Cincinnati, they’ve got them from Milan. But they’re used, and it’s commercial; it’s part of the municipal transit system.

But it was Shelley who was the one guy in addition to the president of the United States in the early sixties who convinced us that maybe we weren’t totally insane, and that we were making some sense here. But it’s a huge story, and maybe it’s a sign of advancing age but virtually—of course there’s nobody around, Joe, remembers that we almost paved over the Victory Gardens³² and the Fens as parking for the Red Sox.

³² The Fenway Victory Gardens is one of the last two remaining victory gardens in the United States. Victory gardens were planted throughout the United States during World War II, after President Franklin Roosevelt urged Americans to grow more vegetables to help alleviate food shortages.

McETTRICK: Yeah, I remember that. And my mother liked the Victory Gardens, too. She wasn't too happy.

DUKAKIS: Well, we all did. It's in the Fens; this is Olmstead, right Steve? The Red Sox say, Well, we may have to leave town. A lot of us said maybe if they got themselves another good left-handed pitcher they might be [better]. Nothing has changed, right? So anyway, they're going to pave it over. And under the Massachusetts Constitution you've got to get a two-thirds vote, as you know, Joe, to take parkland and use it for some other purpose. You've got to go through the state legislature no matter if it's a municipal park or whatever.

It had passed the House and Furcolo³³ said he was going to sign it. We've got to take care of the Red Sox, right? The Senate President is this tough little Irishman named John Powers,³⁴ who's never gone beyond the eighth grade until he finally gets himself into law school somehow—remember Powers?

McETTRICK: Yep, that's right.

DUKAKIS: Another guy, guy from Southie. Turns out Powers was a fabulous rose gardener. When he was clerk of the SJC [Supreme Judicial Court] he had roses up there. Remember?

McETTRICK: Right there on the roof, sure, of course.

DUKAKIS: Prize roses.

McETTRICK: That was when Moakley got his seat.

DUKAKIS: Yeah. Anyway—and Moakley succeeded him. Here's this tough little five-by-five guy, out of Southie, left school in the eighth grade because his father died and he's the sole

³³ Foster Furcolo (1911-1995), a Democrat, served as governor of Massachusetts from 1957 to 1961. He also represented Massachusetts' Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1949 to 1952.

³⁴ John E. Powers (1910-1998), a Democrat, represented South Boston in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1939 to 1946 and in the Massachusetts State Senate from 1947 to 1964. He served as Senate President from 1959 to 1964.

supporter of his mother and I don't know, thirteen kids, eleven kids, I don't know. But he loves gardens.

McETTRICK: Definitely the man you want on this issue, yeah.

DUKAKIS: Who would think it? That's what makes this business so interesting. Joe and the harbor—anyway, John Powers killed that misbegotten proposal before it—but that's what was going on around here. They were tearing the city down to try to take care of automobiles.

McETTRICK: What was it at the state house in the sixties that—there was a whole world around them, of course, that was changing. But it just seems as if now it's being talked about thirty years later as almost something of a golden age, which would've come as a surprise to the people who were there I'm sure. Was there something in the water up there? What was going on?

DUKAKIS: Hey, it was the sixties. Kennedy was in the White House, our guy, right? We had this horribly corrupt political system. We had a guy, a Speaker of the House, who certainly had unbelievable talent, but by the time I got there was hopelessly alcoholic. And three years later, Steve, John Thompson died of alcoholic poisoning. Not cirrhosis. He died when apparently there was so much alcohol in his system that it killed him. And by the time I got there his so-called friends were just taking advantage of him all the time and this kind of thing.

McETTRICK: I was trying to recall, who was in that Speaker's fight? Was it Paul Feeney and was it Kiernan?

DUKAKIS: Feeney and Kiernan.

McETTRICK: Was it Kiernan who was the chairman of the judiciary or something?

DUKAKIS: I voted for Kiernan.

McETTRICK: You were in the Kiernan camp. Moakley was probably with the Speaker; do you recall?

DUKAKIS: Maybe, I don't know. I remember saying to—

McETTRICK: It went on for days didn't it? They had several votes of—

DUKAKIS: Oh yeah, I don't know how many votes we had. And I remember saying to my friend Bob Mooney, who was the guy from Nantucket who I had gotten to know back when I was a law student, a Democrat from Nantucket; in those days that was unheard of. (laughter) His grandfather got shipwrecked on his way from Ireland—

McETTRICK: Wound up on Nantucket. (laughs)

DUKAKIS: —and they took him to Nantucket; he said, "I'm never leaving this island." (laughter) Bob's father was the chief of police and Bob ended up at Holy Cross and Harvard Law School and as a legislator—I said to him at one point, I said, "Look, if Thompson is the Iron Duke, and Kiernan is the Silver Fox, what is Feeney?" He said, "Whispering Paul." (laughter) And if you knew Feeney you'd understand—

McETTRICK: Yup, yup, yup. (laughs)

DUKAKIS: It was an interesting bunch of characters. And into this mix come Dukakis, Buckley [from Abington], Dave Harrison from Gloucester, Bill Homans, the Yankee Brahmin Democrat from Cambridge, Dave Ahearn from Norwood, Flynn from Bridgewater.

McETTRICK: And they're pursuing all of you, because every vote is counting.

DUKAKIS: And we're all these so-called reformers, Steve. When we're out there every day, something else was cooking. And not just on the reform stuff. Four-year terms [for governor] and reorganizing the cabinet system, we were all involved in that kind of stuff. Civil service

reform and so on. But we were surrounded by an interesting group of colleagues, some of whom, like Joe, were interesting kinds of combinations.

McETTRICK: Right, I guess that's what I'm trying to get to, yeah.

DUKAKIS: And some of which, like Julius Ansel,³⁵ were just old rascals. (laughs)

McETTRICK: It was quite a collection.

DUKAKIS: It was quite an interesting group of people. And then we had Powers, who I was close to, because I had worked for Powers when he ran for mayor and lost in an outrageous campaign. Remember the famous sign?

McETTRICK: The Collins race.³⁶

DUKAKIS: Yeah. But I was a law student at the time, and I had done some work for him. So he kind of took me under his wing. And we always had a good relationship. But then you had poor old Thompson, who had all kinds of talent but was just—his drinking just killed him ultimately, and overwhelmed him. You never knew when this guy would roll in. One o'clock, two o'clock, four o'clock.

McETTRICK: But he managed to hang on though, in this fight.

DUKAKIS: For awhile, until finally there was a vote on vacating the chair. He won this one. And then there was a vote on vacating the chair. By that time, I think it was '65, I voted to oust him. And he won that one. But then he was indicted, and then I think he stepped down, and about six months later, all of a sudden, he's gone. So when you're in the middle of this, Joe—

³⁵ Julius Ansel (d. 1965) was a Russian immigrant and resident of Boston's Dorchester neighborhood who served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Massachusetts State Senate, as well as on the Boston City Council.

³⁶ John Powers lost the 1960 mayoral race to John Collins (1919-1995). The "famous sign" to which Mr. Dukakis is referring is a "Powers for Mayor" sign that was photographed hanging over Bartolo's Ringside Café, which just days before the mayoral election was raided by the IRS for illegal gambling.

McETTRICK: Yeah, and just arriving.

DUKAKIS: —it’s an interesting collection of characters.

McETTRICK: Now was it Al Cella³⁷? He was in it at that point.

DUKAKIS: Al by that time had become an assistant to Thompson.

McETTRICK: He had been a member, and then lost an election.

DUKAKIS: And I worked with Al on the Sacco-Vanzetti thing.³⁸ That’s how I got interested in Sacco-Vanzetti. I was a young—I was a law student across the river and I came over as a volunteer intern and Al put me to work on the Sacco-Vanzetti case. And Cella was this guy, Italian American, graduated from Harvard, very liberal, representing Medford. Then he ends up as an aide to Thompson. And of course he was the one guy in the place that guys like me could go to. And Al was terrific, ended up teaching at Suffolk Law School for years, and just a great guy.

MCETTRICK: Yeah, his portrait is in the library there, yeah.

DUKAKIS: Yeah, great guy. Wonderful guy. But he was the inspiration ultimately for that proclamation on Sacco-Vanzetti. Which wasn’t exactly uncontroversial either.

³⁷ Alexander Cella (1929-1993), Suffolk University Law School class of 1961, served two terms in the Massachusetts State House of Representatives before becoming a member of Suffolk’s law faculty in 1971. He also served as counsel to several members of the Massachusetts General Court, including House Speaker John Thompson and Senate President Maurice A. Donahue.

³⁸ Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were anarchist Italian immigrants who were executed in 1927 for the murder of two men during a robbery in Braintree, MA. After reading transcripts from their trial, Mr. Cella concluded that Sacco and Vanzetti were not guilty. Legislation that he helped file to have them pardoned was unsuccessful, but then-Governor Dukakis issued a proclamation in 1977 that the two were not treated fairly and “any disgrace should be forever removed from their names.”

But it was a period of great creativity and a tremendous amount of activity. And I've got to tell you—look, we solved a lot of very fundamental problems. I look at the state house today, Steve, and I keep saying to people up there, including a lot of folks I respect, “Are you guys on tranquilizers or what?”

I don't hear anything. The sixties were a very noisy period. All the time.

McETTRICK: What was it? Was it the House cut, or just the timing?

DUKAKIS: No, it was just—I don't know. Look, we were making a transition from a kind of horse and buggy government to something—remember, two year terms for governor. Governor and lieutenant governor of different parties. The governor couldn't appoint his own department head, Steve, can you believe this?

KALARITES: No.

McETTRICK: Oh, they had to be confirmed by the executive council?

DUKAKIS: Not only was the governor's council—we had a governor's council and they had to practically give you permission to go to the bathroom if you were governor. Had to confirm every single appointment. But five of the eight of them were indicted and convicted and went to jail for corruption. This is all going on in the sixties.

Well this young band of reformist whippersnappers are going at it and all this kind of stuff all the time. We were up to our eyeballs. And then you have in addition the whole racial stuff [the school desegregation issue]. Interracial balance, and back and forth, and so on and so forth. So it was a period of enormous creativity.

McETTRICK: Joe was able to tap into that to get his congressional seat.

DUKAKIS: And Joe was kind of a—I don’t know want to call him a bridge figure because he was more than that. Because he had some very strong policy interests. But he was—he moved back and forth pretty easily [between us and the old-timers].³⁹

McETTRICK: Yeah, can you tell us a little bit about that? Because several people say that, but how did he do that? What was that—?

DUKAKIS: Well, who the hell was I? I’d go and say—Bill [Shaevel] obviously was a key staff guy to him. But he was interested in this stuff, and he moved on it. And Joe knew how to move. Particularly in the Senate, which for us in the House was kind of a mystery land. Things had a tendency to disappear in the Senate, for reasons nobody could explain. Later we figured it out, but—

In those days—so we worked like dogs in the House side. You were looking, Joe, for people in the Senate that understood what you were trying to do and were supportive. And my memory—the harbor thing just stands out like a beacon.

McETTRICK: So he was a contact point at least in terms of—

DUKAKIS: But when it came to the housing stuff, to tenants’ rights, to this kind of urban stuff, which I was deeply into, Joe was there. And he’d work with you. There was none of this, “Who are these guys?”

McETTRICK: Now you say “work,” would that be in lining people up or drafting?

DUKAKIS: Everything.

McETTRICK: Because the legislator’s craft is kind of a mystery to the uninitiated.

³⁹ Note: This clarification has been added by the narrator.

DUKAKIS: Look, none of us did our own drafting; we had staff and resources to do that. But Joe just—he understood instinctively how important this stuff was. And if you wanted somebody in the Senate who could move legislation we would work very hard to get in the House, Joe was as good as anybody when it came to that.

And you needed somebody like Joe. I couldn't go over to the Senate and get it done—who the hell was I? And look, I wasn't—to say that I was not beloved by the party legislative leadership was an understatement. You know me. (laughter) Geez. So having people like Joe in the Senate, who were both respected and had good relationships with their colleagues, who would take this legislation we had worked on and really move it, was absolutely critical to us.

McETTRICK: So how do you think he cultivated that? He had a pleasing personality, but what were the ingredients?

DUKAKIS: He was just—Joe was just instinctively a good person. That's all I can say. You never had a sense that he had separate agendas. There's no game playing. You went to him and said, "Joe we're gonna—." "Yup, I like it, let me take a look at it." He might flip it over to Bill [Shaevell]. There was none of this—you never were given a sense that Joe was dealing with eighteen other people simultaneously. And that was Joe in Congress. I never remember going to Joe on anything where he would say, "And by the way, can you do this for me?" It was always, "Hey, what are you looking for? Makes sense to me, let's go do it. For Massachusetts, for Boston, I'm with you."

McETTRICK: Well we've certainly used a lot of your time. We don't want to monopolize it if you've got someone else coming in.

DUKAKIS: It's okay. Anyways, I was a huge fan of Joe Moakley's. Now when he decided to get into foreign policy in El Salvador and all this kind of stuff, that was a whole other thing.

McETTRICK: Yeah, this is a whole other side to Joe.

DUKAKIS: I admired him enormously for doing it. But that was not something one would've sensed in the sixties or seventies that Joe would be into. Urban stuff, the Boston stuff, the Massachusetts stuff. But that was another dimension to him which I admired from afar, but I don't think we saw a lot of—why would we anyway? We were all state legislators.

Just a rare guy, Steve, I tell you. Miss him every day. Geez, I just—and, as I say, no hidden agendas. It's always, "What are you looking for?" Just no question; bingo, let's go.

Talk to Fred. Because on the transportation stuff—

McETTRICK: Yeah, we will. That's a good lead. That sounds good. So Steve, how am I doing? Did we get to everything?

KALARITES: I think the last few statements kind of sums of Moakley's legacy. The Boston and Massachusetts politics.

DUKAKIS: And remember, like all of us he evolved. There's just no question about it. That's one of the things that you—people don't think about that. But did the guy grow? And he just—as we all do in different ways, but Joe just got stronger, tougher, more skillful, better, deeper. Which isn't—we all start out as stripling youth in the place.

On the other hand, to go back to the—to wrap up with the Harbor Islands, that tells you something about the guy, that even in his early years there was a kind of visionary to him who could sense this. And it wasn't just that he happened to come from Southie. It was a far broader dimension.

McETTRICK: Well one question that I asked him, that I'd like to give you an opportunity to respond to as well, and actually you started to speak about it—

DUKAKIS: We have one other bond. We're obsessive litter-picker-uppers. (laughter)

McETTRICK: Is that right? That was a Joe characteristic?

DUKAKIS: He used to walk around cleaning up the neighborhood. I do the same thing walking over here. Can't stand litter. He couldn't stand litter.

McETTRICK: Well my wife does that every morning. She's a selectman in Milton. She goes for a morning jog and she comes back with a bunch of junk every morning.

DUKAKIS: Joe used to walk around picking up the neighborhood. He was a member of Congress. A senior member of Congress. He's walking around picking up the neighborhood.

McETTRICK: We frequently ask people, and I asked Joe himself about this—it's the idea of legacy. And you started to speak about this a second ago when you were talking about the legislature generically today. What would you say to these guys who are coming along and just starting? What's the advice that you might give them? Or what do they have to bear in mind as they're trying to do the job? Because you guys grew through it, you evolved.

DUKAKIS: The advice I try to give them is this. Look, it's a great opportunity. But you've got to be noisy. You've got to pick out a policy area, too, as I think he and I did, to some extent, whatever it was, and you've got to master it. And then you've got to go at it intensively. And you've got to raise a little hell. If affordable housing isn't one of the most serious problems facing this state I don't know what is, Joe.

We've got a governor who says that. In fact he says when he talks to his friends in the business community the first thing they say to him is not, Cut my taxes, they say, Do something about affordable housing; I can't hire people who can live here.

Okay, so what are we doing about it? Beats the hell out of me. Now this is going to take a quarter of a billion dollars in state investments every year. If you want to do what we were doing, which was six or seven thousand units of affordable housing every year, statewide, then you've got to

put that kind of money into it. In addition to a lot of other things, working closely with communities and so forth.

I think building a first class regional rail system is a part of this because when you extend commuter rail to Brockton, all of a sudden you open up a huge affordable housing market that isn't there for people who are being priced out of Boston. Go down to Fall River, New Bedford, connect North and South Station by rail at long last so we can have through service and so forth.

And suddenly—you do two things. First you open up affordable housing opportunities to thousands of people that are priced out of the market. And secondly you do great things for the communities affected. Look at Brockton today. Geez, it's not Nirvana but it's a hugely improved community, and that commuter rail connection has made all the difference.

So, hey, are you out there? I'm not hearing anything. Auto insurance. I hate to go back to my old chestnut, but the fact of the matter is that to put a car on the road in Roxbury today, Steve, costs twenty-four hundred bucks—which is basic auto insurance, twenty-four hundred bucks. In Wellesley it's nine hundred. What are we going to do about it?

Now as Joe will tell you, I surfaced as a statewide figure for the first time around the auto insurance thing. I didn't create the thing, it was Keeton and O'Connell who produced the bill.⁴⁰ Well now O'Connell, who's an infinitely creative guy, been at UVA Law School for years, Joe, as you know, has come up with a sensational alternative called Auto Choice. Very simple. Want to stick with the present system? Fine, you can pay whatever you're paying. Although I won't get into the regulatory process and how it was that nine territories went to twenty-seven. But that's a whole other thing. It's outrageous. We'll put that to one side. That's what happens when you elect Republicans to governor. (laughter)

⁴⁰ Robert E. Keeton (1919-2007) was a professor at Harvard Law School from 1953 to 1979 and a Federal District Court judge from 1979 to 2006. Jeffery O'Connell has taught at University of Virginia Law School since 1980. He specializes in accident and insurance law. In the late 1960s, they collaborated on a study that is widely credited as a major contributing factor in the development of no-fault auto insurance.

In any event—but here’s a simple thing which O’Connell has worked out. You want to stay with the present system? Okay. Or if you want to choose, and it’s your choice, to go straight no-fault, prompt reimbursement on a no-fault basis for all economic losses but no pain and suffering, you can do that. And if you live in Boston or Milton or Brookline, I might add, you’re going to save yourself hundreds of dollars every year. There isn’t a tax cut around that would produce this, especially for folks in high-rated urban and close-in suburban communities, right?

Potentially there’s a savings of over a billion dollars in Auto Choice. Now maybe I’m nuts, Joe, but if I were a member of the legislature, and my constituents were looking at these kinds of premiums and increases, I’d be doing what I did back in the sixties. Why isn’t that happening? Anybody out there?

We’ve got a governor who says, “Well, we’ve got to go to competition.” We tried that in 1977 and it was a disaster. The insurance companies raised their rates 60 percent in urban communities, which of course they’ll do if you let them. I don’t hear anything. Hello? Anybody out there?

McETTRICK: Well, that’s pretty good advice.

DUKAKIS: So what’s different today? I don’t know. And look if you want to move up— if you don’t make some noise about things that people care about then nobody’s going to notice you. I’m not saying this is all just a political exercise. I’m talking about doing good things and saving people a lot of money and eliminating a lot of unnecessary cases in the courts. Yeah, there’s going to be opposition, trial lawyers will oppose it; they did the first time. They opposed malpractice tort reform, [but] we did that too.

But I’m just baffled. If Jack Bachman was—(phone rings—interruption)

McETTRICK: We’ll get out of your way. We wanted to give you this photograph, incidentally. [See attachment A] We thought you’d enjoy this. (laughs) Since we’re giving you memorabilia.

DUKAKIS: Where were we?

McETTRICK: We're not sure, right? It looks like the waterfront somewhere.

DUKAKIS: It looks like the harbor. We're close to water someplace.

McETTRICK: It's either the river or the harbor. Maybe the Charles, I don't know.

DUKAKIS: Teddy was a lean guy in those days.

McETTRICK: Yeah, isn't that something? What date would you put on that? Early seventies?

DUKAKIS: Mid-seventies. I must've been governor.

McETTRICK: You look important in the picture.

DUKAKIS: No, I must've been governor. Teddy was a senator. I'd bet it had something to do with the islands. Maybe we announced the Harbor Islands park system for the first time or something.

McETTRICK: Because we have this in the archive—can we give that copy?

KALARITES: Yeah, you can keep that. I was searching for a file of a cartoon we had for an upcoming gallery exhibit, and I came across that last week so I thought you'd be the person to identify it.

DUKAKIS: It looks to me like we're on the waterfront someplace. And I don't know where, whether it's one of those—it could've been on one of the islands.

McETTRICK: Well it sounds like the conversation we just had with you. You were in the middle of it.

DUKAKIS: Anyway, don't ask me why these days things are so quiet in the state house. I don't understand it.

McETTRICK: That's a shame, so anyway—

DUKAKIS: Great to see you both, glad we could put this together.

McETTRICK: Thanks for your time, we appreciate it.

DUKAKIS: Tell your wife to keep picking up litter—the former governor does it.

END OF INTERVIEW

OH-022 Attachments

Attachment A Moakley, Michael Dukakis, and Ted Kennedy at event, 1970s, photograph, (DI-0022), John Joseph Moakley Papers Collection (MS100/10.4-015), Suffolk University; Boston, MA

Note: Original photograph is available for in-archive use only. Call 617-305-6277 to make an appointment.

