

INTERVIEW WITH PONCHITA PIERCE - READER'S DIGEST, ON SENATORS
HEALTH AND PHILOSOPHY ON LIFE. SENATE OFFICE, 3/2/77

Ponchita: ~~And~~ [I thought it should be a piece under your ^{by} guideline. ~~And~~ the Digest agreed and is very excited about it. I felt, and if you agree, that it might end on being the Deputy President Pro Tempore and maybe you could start out with something reaching way back into your childhood and then picking it up in between with what you'd like to say. The Digest concentrates very much ^{on} ~~on~~ anecdotes? ~~and~~ [W] what we're looking for is what has given you that sense of encouragement not only in your own life but with the people you've admired, living and dead. Things in their lives that you have remembered and that you've kind of brought back into your own feelings. When people read this I want them to say, "Damn it, I can do it too".

Senator: Well, I would start out by telling you that I was brought up in a family where my father set the tone and part of that tone or philosophy was that ^h ~~tere~~ was no time for self-pity. That you had work to do. ~~there~~ were things to do, ~~there~~ were great opportunities ahead and you ought to get with it. In other words be a part of the action of your time. [I suppose that whatever I have been able to do in my private and public life is in a large measure due to the kind of up-bringing I had and the training or indoctrination in those early days of my life. Both in childhood and adolescence. I grew up ^o in the plains of South Dakota. Adversity was a part of our life. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Ponchita: Is that a special thing that strengthened the fiber?

Senator: Yes, I think so. The fact that we lived out on the plains, ~~where~~ ^T there was always a sharp wind, cold winters, hot summers, ~~which~~ ^T there was uncertainty whether there would be a crop or wouldn't be a crop. In a sense it prepared you for the later days in your life when you might face adversity or difficulty or a ~~tragedy~~. Also, it gave you the strength to pick yourself up - so to speak, and to carry on and not worry to much about the yesterdays or what problem (prevails) ~~You went through in the past~~. We were definitely future oriented. [If you grew up in the Dakotas you had to believe Number 1 that it was going to be a good year, whether it was or not. And, particularly this is true in my life, because I am what you might call a Depression boy. I was in my twenties, a very impressionable period of my life. In fact, in my

late teens and early twenties, when the depression hit its full strength. Actually the rest of the country was talking about prosperity in 1929. In that period the banks in South Dakota had already closed their doors.

Ponchita: And, you lost money, I recall.

Senator: And, as a boy I lost all my money. It wasn't very much. A couple of hundred dollars saved up. But, my father lost his money, my neighbors and friends, the parents of my friends lost theirs. We got an early start in the Depression.

Ponchita: When you said "Even in the worst year you still had to believe".

Senator: You had to believe that. Each spring you had to believe there was going to be a good crop.

Ponchita: And, what did you do when all the crops failed?

Senator: Then you made do with what you had. You go on and plant the next year or you prepare your business for the next year. You always were thinking--well, there is another year coming and I'll get busy and prepare the soil, I'll plant my crop and hope and pray that we'll get the moisture and weather conditions that will give me a good crop. [If you were in business in that part of the country or that part of the United States you were dependent a great deal on what was happening in agriculture. So you were part of that hope syndrome.

Ponchita: Hope is very important?

Senator: Very much so. I think that the hope and the promise, the feeling that somehow it was going to get better, the hope that it was going to get better. Each spring always appeared, and, you know, I always hear people say that spring is always the re-birth, it is always a period of coming alive in my childhood. I saw this. Every spring looked beautiful.

Ponchita: Spring followed the winter--

Senator: And it was after a very, very bitter winter. We keep hearing about the cold winter but I remember winters that were every bit as cold as this ^{PAST} one. I can remember the dust storms and I can remember the blizzards, and I can remember the burning heat of the summer and I can remember the drought when the lakes dried up and the rivers dried up. I can remember when we ran out of water in my hometown and the wells were drying up and yet despite all that ^{THERE} was an indomitable courage.

[The people that lived there ~~xxxxx~~ felt that they could still make it.

That times would get better. That there would be a change. It was a question of hanging on and not only hanging on but getting ready for a better day. There is a difference between just hanging on and surviving and hanging on for the purpose of getting ready for a better day.

Ponchita : You always have to have hope.

Senator: Yes, and you also have to have a willingness to not ~~to~~ give in. As some have said, ^{"I"} it's not what you've lost it's what you've got left that counts. We lost alot. We lost money, we lost opportunities, we lost a chance to make a better living for a long period of time, but we had alot left. We had ourselves, we had our families, we still have the soil, we still have the people. It was only a question of time we knew before things would get better. Who were the survivors? Who had the indomitable will to stick with it? And, I believe that has had a tremendous impact on my life, all of my days.

Ponchita: Did you ~~use to~~ make a balance sheet to balance the bad with the good?

Senator: Yes, as a boy and as a young man in my teens I did that. I became very discouraged at times, and ultimately I made up my mind that I would have to improve myself not only by hard work but by getting a better education and preparing myself, hopefully, for a more productive and happier life. That's why I went back to the University. I was out of the University for five years. Better than that.

Ponchita: But, even that was a disappointment when you had not got a scholarship to go to Princeton and you ~~wanted~~ to go there?

Senator: Well, first, I went back to the University of Minnesota because I was convinced that if I got a better education I could do better. I was always interested in politics. Maybe I should just relate this to you in an informal manner. ~~I listened to people out in the political and immediate local problems, the full ramification of the problem.~~ Every one understood what was happening to us as citizens in ~~xxxxx~~ Sfind(?) County or Beadle County, South Dakota or later on in Minnesota, because I didn't go to Minnesota to live until the 1930's, ^T the late 1930's.

^{TO} But, I thought how important it was, ~~since I did~~ at some time or another either go into teaching or political life. I had that as an early dream, ~~that it~~ ^I was imperative for me ~~and important for me~~ to get a broader knowledge. I knew a good deal about what was happening to me and what was happening to my neighbors, but I needed to know what was happening

to the nation. [So I went back to the University in 1936. And, there again despite the fact that we had little or ~~know~~ money, I was then married, Muriel and I together. She got a job with a very minimum income of something like 45 dollars a month in those days. I worked at night in the drugstore. I worked every night for six hours and I was carrying ~~a~~very heavy load at the University. [But, I never felt that we couldn't make it. This is the point that I'm trying to get across. There was never any doubt in my mind that ultimately we would succeed.

Ponchita: What is the difference between a person who thinks he can't make it and someone like you who thinks he can make it. Where it never gets so low that you can't get up?

Senator: I guess they ^{NOW} call it ~~now~~ "positive thinking". I never thought of it in those ^{PL} ~~same~~ terms. ¹ It just seemed to me that there was so much that was out there ~~someplace~~ that you could just reach out there and touch and get to it if you prepared yourself. [As I was saying to you my childhood particularly ~~and~~ my adolescence was at a period ^{OF} ~~in~~ time ^{IN} ~~of~~ our history when it was difficult, ¹ yet I saw father and I saw mother, and the family ~~that~~ knew they could make it and felt that they could make it. ^{THEY} ¹ Always gave me the feeling that we would succeed. [What do we mean by success? That we would still have our store, that we would still have our home. There were a few jolts along the way. When I was a very young man my father had to sell our home. That was maybe the most dramatic moment of my early life because we had a very beautiful home in a little town of about 600 people. [I still think of that home many times. When I ran for President I visited my ~~poor~~ little home town and I showed the reporters that home. I can still describe every room in that home, although I haven't been in there since the 1920's. That was a beautiful home and I remember when the banks first closed in 1926. The banks closed in our part of South Dakota. My father had to sell the home in order to pay our accounts. He ~~was~~ in business and he ~~had~~ accounts that had to be paid in order to stay in business. He had to find some capital so he sold ~~our~~ our home, ~~and~~ that is the first time I remember seeing both Dad and Mother cry.

Ponchita: And, what did they tell you?

Senator: They didn't tell me. I just saw it, I just witnessed it. And, I knew what it meant to them. That they were giving up something that was very precious to them. Because we loved the home. It was not only the house it was the home. The family, the yards, the garden, and everything we had.

We thought it was pretty nice. It perhaps wasn't all that good but it seemed very good. That to me was a first awakening--

Ponchita: Did you cry?

Senator: Well, I didn't cry, ^B but I was really shocked to see the impact on my mother and father and I knew that there was something very drastic that had happened to us or they would never have sold the home. ~~I was a very young boy then.~~ I was 15 years old then. Obviously it had an impact, a traumatic impact on me to know ~~no~~ ^{that} that we had to give up something that was very precious to us, to see mother and father both in such great sadness and sorrow. That left ~~something~~ on me ~~that is~~ a scar. I've always felt sad for people that have lost their home or their farms. It ~~is~~ ^{HAS} conditioned ⁶⁰ my economic thinking and my social thinking.

Ponchita: Was there an (impaction) ?

Senator: No, because everybody was kind of poor. You see in those days, where we lived, there was very little difference between what you might call the well to do and the poor, in the depths of the depression in the early thirties. Why? Because everybody was under some kind of shock. [It is much different today ^H were in the ghetto and amongst ^X the poor people in rural America they are able to see on television the affluence of the well to do and the rich and the joys and pleasures of people in a higher income. [But, we were all kind of a family, A neighborhood. We all kind of shared each others troubles because the richest man in town lost all his money so he was right down with the poorest man in town.

Ponchita: People who face adversity, what do you think is the biggest mistake they make?

Senator: I think possibly the biggest mistake ~~simply put~~ is their giving up, ~~that is the biggest mistake.~~ When they feel that this is it, that it is all over. Adversity is an experience ^{THAT} ~~it~~ is not a final act. It is part of the process of life. Everybody has adversity but they do not recognize it as such. They may be having adversity in terms of their social relationships or troubles, adversity in their health or their jobs, their family. [Everyone goes through this. I think it is a question of whether or not you are able to pick yourself up, look at yourself in the mirror, and say, ^W well, that was an experience. It was a sad one, unfortunately. I learned something from it. Or, even if you didn't learn from it, ~~but~~ you made up your mind that you've got to start another day. I ~~have to~~ feel that I

learned to live for the tomorrows, early. That I never could really be content with the today, because in my impressionable years of my life there were those years filled with economic adversity for the family. [I saw my father work very hard and I'm sure the Depression took at least ten years of his life. I saw my mother go without things that she wanted for her home. We were never in a situation where we didn't have adequate food, clothing, we always had some sort of a car, not necessarily a new one or a good one. And, as my father used to tell me in comparison to some others we were really quite well off. But, I always sort of felt that the tomorrows would be a better day.

Ponchita: In looking to the tomorrows do you look backwards? and do you learn from that and do you advise that?

Senator: Oh yes, I think you have to. As Santa Anna once said, you must learn history or you're compelled to relive it. [I remember very distinctly what happened and I'm able to console people in terms of my experiences. History doesn't repeat itself. History is only a lesson from which you learn something, hopefully, and gain wisdom. [Wisdom is the result of concentrated experience. Condensed experience.

Ponchita: There are so many highs and so many lows--which was the worst?

Senator: Well, I guess its been recent. The worst thing for me was to discover that I had cancer. And, the worst thing wasn't the operation because once I had made up my mind to do that ~~that~~ I had understood it. But, the realization of it, and the incredible trauma and fear that comes with ~~it~~ that realization, because of what people know about this dreaded disease.

Ponchita: Does that take away the hope for tomorrow and ~~xxxxxx~~ what was the greatest fear then?

Senator: The fear of losing your life. More significantly of not being able to live a life. It isn't so much even losing a life as it is the concern that you just drag on. You don't have the vitality to live your life. And, I have made up my mind that as long as I have a breath of life in me that I'm going to try to live actively and be as much a part of the daily life of my family and friends, my job, my neighborhood, my country, my community as I can. [I mean in other words not to change. There are obviously some changes that are forced upon me because it takes time for example even under the best of circumstances to get over radical surgery such as a person goes through in the operation. If you take

chemotherapy" which I have been doing. It has a very toxic effect on your system, which is another way of saying you can become slowed down and you can become depressed. You feel like you have the "blas" in the simplest language. And that's a challenge to you because the minute you give up to that, and that's easy to do, you are in trouble.

Ponchita: Have you done this?

Senator: No, I haven't given up one bit! I insist that I come right back to work right after my chemotherapy.

Ponchita: But, If you sit down and say "Look, Humphrey, you're going to do this and you're not going to do that," How do you psych yourself?

Senator: Well, I don't know whether I have any plan of action, I can't really say. I think it is somewhat intuitive or maybe habitual. I've never had much time to worry about myself, quite frankly. I've never really been ill until I got this latest affliction. [Therefore, I suppose my biggest problem is and continues to be how do I pace myself during this period of time, To get the kind of recovery and strength that you need for the long run. Because, I'm prone to want to push right into action even if I'm not quite ready for it, physically or emotionally. You suffer both emotional shock and physical shock from something as drastic as the disease called cancer and the treatment which comes with it.

Ponchita: Is there an emotional shock?

Senator: A very great emotional shock. Because, first of all your body is altered, Secondly, you've read the statistics. Its constantly in every newspaper and magazine. And, if you think of yourself as only a statistic then you are really in trouble. [You've got to think of yourself in terms of individuality. You have to believe that some how or another that you can make it and that you can win this fight. And, it is a constant struggle. YOU have to gear yourself to the continuity of the struggle. There will be days that you won't feel too good.

Ponchita: What do you do on those days?

Senator: Well, I've said, you know, some mornings I've gotten up looked ~~and~~ in the mirror and said to myself, "Hubert Humphrey you look like a bum." [You loose your hair from chemotherapy. There was a time that I lost more weight than I have now. And, you just get plain discouraged. I give myself about 10 seconds of that. I groused around and I grumped around and then I just say to myself "Well, lets just get out of * here.*** Let's get down to the office." Even though you give yourself an inside whipping or spanking, I'd

say, ^{Or} if not that, and inside pep talk. I do that. I have to do that every once in a while, in all honesty. ~~There are~~ ^{for} example, something ~~that~~ happens to you--you loose weight, if only from the surgery. And, when you have chemotherapy you may gain some back and then you loose it again. Your clothes never fit you just right. And, if you're one that is accustomed to having the clothes fit just fight and look well ^{then} ~~and~~ all at once you look like you're a sad sack. The coat's too big or the trousers don't fit, your shirt collar is the wrong size, ~~and~~ ^I you can look in the mirror and just say, "Well, you really are something. You have had it. It's all done." All these external things condition your mental reaction until you get a hold on yourself and say look this is something you had to expect. You were told this would happen to you. You can't overcome it. SO let's get on with it. ~~Wxxx~~ We'll get your clothes altered.

Ponchita: What do you mean we will overcome it. What is that?

Senator: Because, if you don't believe that, then the game is all over. You can either play a nine inning game or a three inning game or four quarters in the football field or quick after the first half. A good football player never quit just because he is injured ^{unless} ~~or just because he is injured~~ ^{and} he is ~~laved~~ ^{laid} out. ^I If you are just bumped and you are still operable than you still play. And, the same thing is true in the business world. Many people in business have suffered temporary loses. The market goes bad on them. They've got labor-management disputes. They've got all kinds of things. A lot of people would say it isn't ~~all~~ worth it. Why take the heat? [?] ^I let's get out of this racket or this mess. But, that isn't the way this country was built. I have the kind of Mid-western native American attitude about that there is always a struggle. I have very little time for people who feel that life isn't a struggle. It is a struggle, but it is a good one. It's the joy of the struggle.

Ponchita: Its not going to be easy. (?)

Senator: It never should be easy. If anything is easy, it's really not worthwhile.

Ponchita: Too many people expect it to be easy?

Senator: Well, I think there is a tendency ~~on~~ on the part of all of us to want it to be easy. Life gives you enough experience to tell you that it won't be easy.

Ponchita: You've been very hard on yourself.

Senator: No. I enjoy myself, basically. I enjoy living. And, that's why I can't ^{THINK} ~~thin~~ about dying. I really enjoy every day of my life. With the exception of

those days when I had the surgery or I had discovered the illness or something like that. ^{to} Be honest about it, those are days that cause you nothing but heartache and distress.

Ponchita: Do you cry? Do you pray?

Senator: I have.

Ponchita: What gets you over that sad--

Senator: I can tell you this that when I was in the hospital, ^{RECEIVED} and I had ~~all these~~ telegrams and ~~all these~~ messages from people all over the United States, in fact, from all over the world; They were sending me their good wishes, ~~xxxxx~~ Telling me that I was in their prayers. ^{WHOLE} ~~Knowing that~~ congregations, literally, were praying for me. Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, White, Black Chicano-- you can't believe the number of letters that I received from people. [The messages in which they really made it clear that I was in their daily prayers, that I was mentioned in their Congregational Services. That is in their Parish, or in their Temple, or wherever they worshipped. That had an effect on me. Emotionally, in the sense of how grateful I was, That people thought that much of me. [I really know that those messages poured in by the thousands from people all over. Some of them so-called VIP's. National and International leaders. ^{THE} ~~That that~~ messages of affection, ~~had a~~ and the prayers and well wishes had a healing effect. There isn't any doubt in my mind at all that it had a real healing effect on me. I could feel it. I said to some people that I could feel the warmth of it. AND, maybe it was in my imagination, but, I really felt it.

Ponchita: Did all of this make you more religious?

Senator: Well, it made me more grateful for my life. It also made me realize that a person alone is very weak and insignificant. I think that what it does to you is it brings you to a realization that there is a power that is over and beyond you. [And, now we know from ~~even from~~ medical science itself that the will to live-- The spirit of life-- the feeling that somehow or another that you and your God and your ^{MAKER} ~~maker~~, Divine Provider, how you interpret that, that you can help that process of recovery. Medical Science has documented that.

Ponchita: Your attitude.

Senator: Your attitude. Your attitude. I have found that in my own life for that to be very, very true.

Ponchita: Your heroes, people who have influenced you, people you admire, people who had ^{ADVERSITY AND OVER CAME IT...} ~~(unintelligible)~~?

Senator: Well I lived with people like that. Just ordinary plain people in my

childhood. And, I say that most of the experiences which have a lasting impact ^{ARE DURING} your impressionable years. After you are a little older you're pretty well conditioned. And, you sometimes develop a sort of protective wall. But, when you are young you are very vulnerable to anything. Evil thought, good thought, positive thought, negative thought, happy experience they all leave their mark on you. [And, in those early years of my life I saw so many brave people. The rural people in the countryside.

The workers that lost their jobs but still had their dignity. Those things those people left me with a great reservoir ^R of strength, ~~gave to me a great reservoir of strength~~. You know I also grew up in a time when Franklin Roosevelt was President of the United States. He was a hero. He is one of my political heroes. Because he cared for people.

Ponchita: Was the fact that he was crippled and had overcome it the strength that made him lead a nation?

Senator: I always remember when he spoke about having a strong and active faith. I have quotations of Franklin Roosevelt that I use at times in my speeches. We must march forward strong and we must move forward with a strong and active faith. This is a man that was a cripple and said to America that we must move forward with a strong and active faith. This was a man that needed steel braces to permit him to stand. And, when he stood he stood with pain but he never showed it on his face. Never for a moment did he indicate that he was in pain. He conveyed to the nation a message of confidence, faith, trust. I think that's important for people that are so-called leaders. [One of the things that I feel I must do for others, and my mail indicates this, that you don't need to throw in the towel. You don't need to give up. In fact you ought to be filled with life. Be grateful for every day of it. Buoyant with it. And, do the best you can with what ~~wh~~ you have. [My goodness, there are people born with physical defects, the handicapped we call them, who do marvelous things. We have the Helen Keller's and all of those that you remember as a child. [And, now we see the people that come out of wars that are amputees. They have lost both legs and an arm. Like one young man here who has become the Director of the Veterans Administration. Amputees from Vietnam. Look at what these people went through. [You see people that are blind. Great musicians--Ray Charles for example. You see people--I remember Lou Gehrig as a baseball player suffering from multiple sclerosis. ^{EROSIS.} He was right up there until the last game hanging in. I saw a young man-- Danny Thompson that was the short stop for the Minnesota Twins, who was a victim of

leukemia, and played in every game, almost every game right up until about the last week of his life. [There are hundreds of instances like this, hundreds.] I remember one time I had a young lady that wrote to me from Boston. It was after the '68 election and I didn't get her letter until after December when I came back to my office. And, she told me how she had tried to volunteer for my campaign up there and they said "no"! She was so disappointed. ~~xxxx~~ [then, finally, she told me that the reason they wouldn't accept her at first was because she was blind, but she said finally they did and then she told me what she did. She even had a seeing eye dog and how she worked in that office. And, I had heard how she did.] It was one of the most moving letters I've ever received in my life. In fact, when I read it the tears ran down my face. I could hardly wait to see that girl. I called her on the telephone, I thanked her for her letter. How much it meant to me that she cared that much. She was rebuffed at first but she came back. [And, I went to Boston one time and I called ahead and she came to the airport and I had a chance to see her. We've corresponded off and on. She has gone to college. She has gotten herself an education. She has a job. She learned how to be a typist. A court typist. Incredible things that people do. The world is filled with people like this. The great artist, Beethoven, who is deaf (the tape recorder did not record this part of the interview)]

(LARGE SEGMENT MISSING.)

Senator: Oh! I forgot about that.

Grega: Dick just called.

Senator: Holy Moo-slem. We've got more appointments today than we can take care of havent we?

Ponchita: Perhaps, I could come back another day.

Senator: Well, thank gosh. ~~All right well I have to go over there real shortly.~~
Are you going to be here tomorrow?

Ponchita: Yes, I could arrange to be.

Betty: I don't know whether you could arrange anytime though.

Senator: Well, let me see what have you got tomorrow?

Grega: Well, we have hearings in the morning, and a pretty full afternoon. You're going to be taking the appointments over in the Capital office.

Senator: I have hearings at noon don't I? And, ~~and~~ what do we do then?

Grega: Starting at 2:00 with some people on nutrition then Ambassador Hays,...

Senator: Well, I need to get this done.

Grega: Well, can I take a look and be right back?

Senator: Sure, you bet.

Ponchita: Are there days when you think or were there days before all this came down on you-- Why me? It's a human characteristic.

Senator: I remember one time when Muriel came to me in the hospital and she said "Last night I was so angry that I cried." And, I said, "What were you angry about?" She said, "I was angry because I said why you? And, I said, 'I felt that way too.' And, I don't know why me. I can't figure that out. That is something beyond me. It was me. It is me. And, therefore why spend my time figuring out why me. As a matter of fact, I've lived a long life already. Let's face it. ~~Because~~ I've been awake more hours than ~~anybody else~~ most people have. There are lots of people who sleep away their life. My father once told me, 'It's not how many years you live, it's how many hours you are awake.' Because living is awareness. And, you're not aware when you're asleep. So, I'm about 85 already. I've put in another 20 percent more than most people have. Average about 6 hours a night sleep and sometimes less-- many people average 8 hours. So they miss 2 hours of being what is going on, see.

Ponchita: Do you fight sleep now for that reason?

Senator: No, No, I just do what I need to do. I'm accustomed to living this kind of habit now. ~~Sixtythree moments of anger~~

Ponchita: So there were moments of anger?

Senator: Yes. I guess it's better to call it anger. Not many. But, why me? Why did this have to happen? Why couldn't I have had some little illness, several of them. Because most of the time I've been disgustingly healthy. But, I guess my life is filled up with this kind of business. I win all the little elections and lose the big one. I wanted to go to Princeton and was unable to make it because at the time my father-in law was ill and I was worried about whether we would be able to provide for our little family. When I wanted to go to graduate school that was a minor little thing. But, I suppose ~~xx~~ it sort of averages out a persons life. I've had so many good days that once in awhile you should expect you're going to have some bad ones.

Ponchita: You touched on this but it's a thing I worry about, mortality. I worry about death, and how do ~~feel about~~ ^{DEAL WITH} the thought of it?

Senator: Well, basically, it's a very selfish way of thinking about it. Almost very egocentric way of thinking about it. I always think not so much ~~x~~ about what happens to me, because you're going to die one of these days, but what ~~x~~ happens to ~~my~~ my family. What are they going to do

with all this stuff ~~of~~ I've got? Have I made the arrangements so that everything will be more or less tidy. Well for all practical purposes when they put you out on the ~~n~~ operating table you're dead, you don't know anything. I can't remember a single knife. I can't remember seeing a single surgeon. I can't remember anything. For all practical purposes you're out. You're gone. Now ~~you're~~ body functions are still there, but the awareness is totally gone. You're absolutely numb. Now, I don't like to look forward to the possibility of death because I love life. I always say to myself I want to live until the year 2000. I want to know what is going to happen. I have a great inquisitiveness about what is going to be tomorrow. I see so many people younger than I that are not that anxious about what is going to happen tomorrow. They ~~don't~~ seem to be excited about what is going to happen. I know that things are going to happen, and I've often said that I won't forgive the doctor who finds out how to cure these diseases and extends your life and tells me about it on the day that I die. If he knows it, I don't want him to tell me, I want him to keep it a secret. But, I guess when you're older you tend to think about how many more days do I have left--how many more years. And, that passes through my mind, yes, quite frankly. And, then I figured there isn't much I can do about that. Except, to try to take care of myself, the best I can. Most likely the things you think you are going to die from isn't what gets you at all. Most likely you are going to get run over by a bicycle or something like that, rather than by some disease. I think the worst thing about disease is not that you expire but that you linger, as a sick person.

Ponchita: And, that is what you worry about?

Senator: More so than anything. That I wouldn't want to have happen. ~~Would you~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Ponchita: Would you believe in Euthanasia?

Senator: No. No, I don't believe in that. I just don't want to tamper too much with all the unknowns. I have enough to deal with around here in Congress and at home and other places, I don't want to mess around with what seems to be beyond my reach.

Ponchita: But, if you were there fully incapacitated and you could not and would not function, would you in perhaps an act of humanity want someone to kill you?

Senator: I doubt it. I might be too selfish, to be frank about it.

Ponchita: You'd still want to hang in.

Senator: No, there are miracles. YOU never know. There are miracles every day.

Ponchita: That's what I get from you that in a way you are a gambler. That you are taking the odds.

Senator: Yes, the odds aren't very good. But, I think it's a race that I'm in and I can't get off the pony. I've got to ride that pony and I've got to hope that I'm going to break into the finish line that I'm going to win it. How long should a person live? It's more important how you should live. So many ^{GREAT} people have lived only a few years.

Ponchita: What are you living for now?

Senator: I guess I live to do the things that I want to do for people. My life is very public as you know.

Ponchita: Have you become more selfish lately?

Senator: No. I think I might be a better man if I was a little more selfish with my time. But, I can't change that too much. I can but I don't. That's one thing I don't spend too much time on.

Ponchita: Did you get sort of razzled by this? I felt that I walked into it.

Senator: Well, you know people are always telling me "don't do this," "don't do that." They say you ought not to have all these appointments, you ought to cut down your ^e schedule. Then they'll say, "here is a letter you've got to take care of," this is a group you ought to see, and here are some people who are coming in you've got to see them. And, I say, "thanks, I appreciate your earlier advice which ^{HAS} ~~is~~ all been washed out by your latter request."

Ponchita: But, it's because they know you wouldn't want it any other way.

Senator: No. The things they have in mind are the "important things". Everybody feels that theirs is the important one. A man flies down to see me and he says, "I know you're ^{terribly} busy, but I had to see you. I realize that you shouldn't be seeing all these people but this is important. My time is important-- other people think there's is."

Ponchita: Are there days when you think, "Hell what am I doing this for"? I mean I see people come into your office ^{GIVE} "Get the Senator this". People calling to see you, I am among them.

Senator: Yes. There are days that I wonder if I'm really doing the right thing, and making the best use of my time ^B but, I'm here and, what would be better for me to do. I enjoy, basically what I'm doing or I wouldn't be doing it.

Ponchita: Work is mental Therapy.

Senator: Work, I'm a "workaholic". Work is mental therapy. I want to say that in this situation of my health that if I were not working I'd most likely be moody about my fate. The fact that I can be at work, that I have the strength to be at work, that I have the vitality and strength to be at work is good therapy. There is no doubt about it, at all in my mind.

And, so it's not just that I'm involved in the work but I'm involved in the work for several reasons: No. 1, I'm a Senator. It's a great opportunity and responsibility. I have a job to do. I know how to do my job, too. I sense that I know how to do it and, therefore, I ought to do it. Secondly, I enjoy it. Thirdly, it's good therapy for me. There would be nothing worse for a person that is afflicted with what they call the "dread disease" than to have time on his ^{or} ~~his~~ hands that he didn't know what to do with. Now there are other things to do besides work. I can go away and read, and I can travel. I can enjoy many of the pleasures of life but to me a balance is necessary. I'm a restless person. I've simply got to be on the job. If I'm elected to do the job. Hired ~~out~~ ⁱⁿ to do the job, my upbringing tells me it is to be done.

Onchita: Do you do readings for inspiration. I know ~~many~~ a large part of the American Bible Society--Does that give you comfort, does that give you direction?

Senator: Yes. You know I enjoy going to church. I don't wear my religion on my arm as such and I don't try to talk too much about it, but I enjoy it primarily because it takes me away from the immediate and lifts me to a different ~~than~~ plateau. I listened over the radio to the Reverend Robert Schuller. And, I like him. And, a lot of my friends will say, "Why are you doing that?" I get a tremendous lift out of this man. He is just incredible. He is not only a great spiritual leader, I think he is really a psychiatrist as well. I think he understands the workings of persons' minds. The individual's mind. He has built a great community church. But more importantly he keeps telling you what you can do. The incredible ability of mankind to do things that you never dreamed possible. He speaks of the peaks and the valleys. How you can reach up--and I believe it. I have a little paper that Woodrow Wilson wrote "When a Man Comes to Himself". And, I have it right here in my desk. Every so often I'll tug it out. And, when I want to look at it I've got also the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, I take a look at that one. When a man comes to Himself. Extracts from an essay by Woodrow Wilson. It is life in

its wide meaning.

Ponchita: What is the most important thing you have gotten from that?

Senator: ~~What is that~~ there is a tremendous source of power and strength out there if you just give in to it. And, this is really what the message of religion is, to believe. This force or power called God is a great source of strength and power if you can give in to it.

Ponchita: You have tremendous faith then?

Senator: I do. ~~And~~ sometimes like everybody else it ~~is~~ rocked, it is weakened. Listen to this: "A man who lives only for himself has not begun to live. As yet to learn ~~his~~ his use and his real pleasure in the world. It is not necessary that he should marry to find himself out, but it is necessary that he should love. It is unselfish action ~~growing~~ growing slowly into the high habit of devotion. And, at last it may be into a sort of consecration that teaches a man the wide meaning of life. And makes of him a steady professional in living. If the motive be not necessity but love. Necessity may make a mere drudge of a man, and no ~~more~~ ^e drudge ever made a professional of himself. That demands a higher spirit and a finer incentive than ~~gives~~ ^{HIS} what every man seeks as satisfaction. His mind is spent in vain upon itself. Not an action itself, not a pleasure shall it find its desire satisfied, but in a consciousness of right. The powers greatly and nobly spent."

I believe this you know. When I look at this perfect prayer of St. Francis of Assisi--"Lord make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred let there be so love." I believe this.

Ponchita: Catholic here. I know that one.

Senator: Where there is doubt, faith, despair, hope, where there is darkness-light, where there is sadness--joy. Now I think that is the perfect prayer. But, I really believe it, and I just think that the fact that once in a while I pull this folder out. This is very personal. It's all tucked away. See all the things I've got in here. Just what a lot of people would call junk.

Ponchita: What people you have not met would you like to meet?--What things would you like to do that you haven't done?

Senator: Well, I love to travel. I have ~~an~~ an insatiable appetite for History. Yes. There are people that I would like to meet. Really, I would like to meet many of the people in Africa. Many of the leaders there because they are new. They are trying to seize their future. There trying to

stake out something for themselves. Not that I know them but I would just like to see what makes them tick. I would like to meet again more of the Chinese leaders. Simply because I have an inquisitive mind. I'd like to know what they're thinking. What I'd really like more than anything else is to talk with musicians and writers, sports figures, people of different lifestyles than my own. I can talk to the politicians all the time. I feel I sense them pretty well. I know them. There isn't much more I have ~~time~~ to learn in that area. But, there is a lot I can learn from an artist, musician, a great literary mind, and I enjoy people that are on the stage and theater. They're extroverts in a sense. They are communicators. They are basically communicators. I like most of the athletes because I enjoy their professional confidence. And, it is a different way of life from mine. It's a vista that I have not traveled. So without going into names I enjoy them as a group.

Ponchita: Will you be dedicating more time to that, perhaps catching up--

Senator: Oh--I do that all the time anyway. I read the sports pages and I ~~always~~ ^{ENJOY} good music.

~~that~~
Ponchita: What bores you?

Senator: Bore. People that are only thinking of themselves. Who have no outward reach. The people are what excite me. I'm always excited by people. But, when you run into a dead one. One that is a drone. That is self-centered. That has no vision of life. They're a terrible bore. I can't stand it. And, I get away from them quick. I'm not very much bored by any scenery. I like scenery and travel as I said. Most anything that is happening in nature I like.

Ponchita: When you went back to teach after the '68 election, was there that association with young people that brought you out of that low period? What brought you--you said--

Senator: Well, that helped, going back to teaching. First of all it was a change of pace. It was an opportunity to in a sense even contest with new minds, young minds. And, it also compelled me to organize materials for presentation as a teacher. Also I got the feel of their feelings. I was able to observe feelings as a public official. And at times to sense them deeply. But when you're in a classroom with them you really sense their feelings. You become a part of them and they become a part of you. And I think that helped me. I think that gave me a better perspective ^{AND MORE} of tolerance. ~~AND~~ And during the very difficult period, because I came out

of the political situation and the political leadership during the Vietnam War. And, to have to meet the young people and discuss that issue openly. And, to listen to their bitterness about it. The cynicism. And to try to appreciate why they felt that way I believe was helpful.

PONCHITA: Was there, I think in your book you talk about these moments, and you say "Humphrey you got to keep to business, you can't be bitter".

Senator: No, No. I feel very strongly about that. I think that takes too much energy. It actually destroys you. It doesn't hurt the other person. Bitterness is something that is hard to transmit. It is caught up in you. It eats you. You think you are sending out the ray of bitterness, like a laser beam that is going to destroy the one with whom you are angry or bitter. But, it doesn't. It doesn't get beyond your skin. All those emotions are inside of you. And, they consume you, they eat you. They destroy you. I really feel that very strongly. [I've been disappointed by politics. I've had people that I thought were going to help me, but didn't. And, I've had lots of people helping me that I didn't even know were helping me. And, you have to keep in mind that people are people. They are human. They are fallible. They are not infallible. They are not always strong, sometimes they are weak. They are not always loyal sometimes they betray you. This is true of people. [I think one of the great lessons that you learn out of the New Testament with Jesus Christ and His Disciples was that they were so human. There was Thomas the Doubter. And, there was Judas who betrayed. There was Peter who Denied his Lord three times in one night. And, there was John who was Christ's most precious friend, who was always kind. The idealistic young man amongst the Disciples. ~~xButxxxxxxixxxxxxx~~

Ponchita: But, He cried in the garden.

Senator: That's right. You learn so much out of that. Actually that's a whole life story compacted in a few chapters. That is the life story of mankind right there. It is really amazing. Because all of the human emotions are there. [And, the fact that in my religious belief experience, the fact that Christ didn't go around with just what I call the "goodies". He understood, the people that were fallible and sinful. He was always admonishing those who were standing with their judgment on others. I think those are great lessons. [I've tried translating those lessons into my private and public life, to be frank about it. I don't always do it. Don't miss understand me, but I do try.

End of that day's interview.

Ponchita: Just being in your new office over there and thinking when you came back after the Presidency, you kind of thought you would be like Goldwater. That maybe you would come back with some of the trappings. You had to start all over again. Was that hard to do?

Senator: I started all over again like a school drop-out. And, it was difficult. ~~Maxx~~ The difficulty was primarily in two areas: Number 1 ~~was~~ ^T the tempo of the Congress is very different than the tempo of the classroom. And, while I'm a very busy man, a very active man, and ~~while~~ ^{EVEN} during my two years away from government I was involved in dozens ~~in half a dozen~~ ^{ACA} of things. ~~Thxxx~~ I was a professor at the University, Professor at ~~McAlester~~ ^{ACA} College. I was writing a column, ^A weekly column. [I was doing lectures all around the country, and I was also working for Encyclopedia Britannica. I was Chairman of their board of the Educational Corporation, and ^{ALSO} a member of the ^B Board of Directors of Encyclopedia Britannica. I traveled overseas on business ^{trips} for Encyclopedia Britannica. All of that while I was intensely busy. ^{BUT} It was different than being here in the Congress. Washington, D.C. has a beat of its own. It has a ^H ~~rythm~~ ^h of its own. It has a tempo.

Ponchita: Is that what keeps you in step, almost?

Senator: Yes, it does, ~~and~~ ^V you know when I came back I always felt like I was a day behind. It really is a fact. ~~xxxxxxx~~ It was one of the things that bothered me more than anything. It took me at least a full year to begin to get the pace again. And to get the feel of what had happened. Much ~~that~~ had transpired between 1964 when I left the Congress and when I came back in January 1971, even though I had been Vice President four of those years. [That was an entirely different ~~ex~~ ^E experience than the Senate. The activities in the Executive office are very differ^Eent from those over here in the Congressional ^{UP HIGH} offices.

Ponchita: So many people experience that. They are ~~a pie~~ ^{WOULD YOU GIVE THEM?} and they are pushed back down. What advice ~~to give them to do what you had to do~~ -- Come back, start over, and move on?

Senator: Well, in this instance ^{AS} I said to you there was the problem of just getting the beat and getting the time frame worked out again. The timing. But, also, as you have indicated, I came back and I started at the bottom. [Like I was a brand new Senator, No seniority and no experience and we had very limited quarters. We were over^Hwelmed with mail. We were average-^Hing any where between 1200 and 1500 letters a day. You see, I was a

National figure. [Even though I was a freshman Senator once again, having lost all my seniority because I had broken from the Senate and moved down into the Executive Branch. I, nevertheless, had all the duties, had all the work of a Senator that had been here 20 years. [And, having been a candidate for President, having been Vice-President of the United States I was a National figure and not just a State figure. How did we cope with it? -- Well, we worked our hearts out.

Ponchita: How did you cope with it? -- What was your emotional feeling?

Senator: It was difficult. In all honesty. But, I knew there wasn't much I could do about it and I felt as I generally do that when you're in trouble just work like the devil.

Ponchita: Is that a lesson for us sometimes, [?] ~~and~~ ^T to recognize things that you know you can't do anything about?

Senator: That's correct. Then you just make do. You have to do the best you can.

Ponchita: So, there's a part of being realistic? ^T That's a part of your character?

Senator: I think so, and not necessarily being submissive but being realistic. Knowing that you don't like it but if you work at ^{IT} maybe you can overcome it. And, I always felt I could. I felt that give me a couple of years I'll get back ^{IN} to the groove, get back into the tempo of the Senate, and be a creative legislator again and I'll make my mark.

Ponchita: Have you ever been cynical?

Senator: No. Seldom, I may be for a day or a week.

Ponchita: And, what would it be about?

Senator: Oh--you get discouraged more than cynical.

Ponchita: Personally discouraged or legislatively--

Senator: Not personally discouraged about yourself ^{SO MUCH,} as about the progress you're making in certain areas of endeavor. Yesterday you asked me what kept me going here. ^T And I thought about that this morning as I was sitting in committee handling a huge array of legislative proposals--all in the field of foreign policy relating to our foreign assistance programs. Our United Nations programs, our ~~Peace Corps~~ ^P, the World Bank, The Asia Development Bank. I have responsibility for all that legislation. [And, ^E today I worked at it ~~for~~ very intensely with a feverish pace, with my subcommittee. To prepare my budgets. To get ready for the legislation. That is what keeps me going. I like it. I feel as though I'm a part of the life of the nation. [I feel that I'm a part of the ^T history of the country. Quite frankly in this time in my life, having been here now for a number of years, and been Vice President of the United States,

candidate for President, Majority Whip of the United States Senate, I know I am a part of the ~~History~~ of this country. I feel both vital-vital in terms of my current life-my present life, I feel also that I have made a contribution to the well being of the country. I'm not arrogant about it nor do I want to have any false pride about it, but I know that I have.

Ponchita: What do you want your legacy to be?

Senator: That I was a Senator who not only had concern for people but, that he expressed that concern in positive ways in governmental action. You see I really believe that government is a partner with the people. It ought not be the dominating force over people but it ought to be a partner. I am sufficiently ^{idealistic} ~~(optimistic)~~ to believe ~~that~~ in a government of the people by the people, for the people. [I believe that people really do not have freedom if they are poverty stricken, if they are illiterate, if they are sick, if they are needy. That's not real freedom, that's survival. I truly believe that government must play a positive role in making available opportunity.]

Ponchita: Do you think your legacy is in showing the importance of government in doing that--making more respect for government?

Senator: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ I think my legacy is in demonstrating that government can not only be efficient but also compassionate. The first quality of government that government should have is a quality of justice and fairness. I have said many times to students and others that you can read all the great documents of history that we refer to in the Old and the New Testament, ~~The~~ Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, The Emancipation Proclamation, and you will never find the word efficiency. It is not there. Not that it isn't important, but it isn't a priority item. But, you will find justice, compassion, service, love, kindness, fairness, liberty, freedom..

Ponchita: Are you idealistic?

Senator: And, those are all the words that democracy means to me. Now efficiency is only a way to better achieve the fulfillment of the meaning of those commitments of freedom and justice, fairness, and service. Its better to minister than to be ministered ~~on~~ to. And, it is better to ^{SERVE} ~~be served~~ than to ^{BE} served.

Ponchita: Do you think some people might say that you are an idealist.

Senator: I am, my goodness. I just met with a young man here from the Soviet Union Mr. Bukovsky, ~~and~~ I told him when he left here, ~~that~~ you know you have millions of friends in the United States ^{WHO} ~~they~~ don't even know you. But,

they know the pain and the suffering you have gone through. And, therefore, you will find that the American people are almost childlike in their idealism. ¹They are idealistic. They are also materialistic. But, they are basically idealistic if you appeal to them. There is a quality of fairness in ¹The American people. I think that the classic example of this

¹ I'll never forget this one picture in the paper. It was in one of the Southern cities at the time of ^{THE} Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. marches, and his struggle. There was this picture of an elderly black man beaten down into the street by the clubs of the law enforcement officer, and the dogs were on him. That picture, as Confucius said is worth 10,000 words. ^{WHEN} That picture ~~when it~~ ^{RALLIED} crossed this country, it ~~did more to rally the~~ ^{BECAUSE OF THE OUTRAGEOUS ACT THAT WAS COMMITTED.} people ~~to their outrage.~~ And, the American people have a sense of outrage over injustice, if they can see it.

Ponchita: You told him that he had friends all over the world. The same can be said of you. Millions of people generally consider you their friend.

Senator: I consider them my friends. That is the highest honor that I have. I would say of all the things in my life that have meant something to me, is, first of all the realization that I have friends. That there is a warmth of friendship. That is even more important to me than being President. It is truly. ¹ ^{WAS} The second great thing that has happened to me ~~was that my college~~ when I took the oath of office here for my 5th term in the Senate. I walked away from that platform on the day that I was ill because I had had the flu and I had gone through the surgery. My colleagues stood up in a body and applauded. And, one of the men who came from the ranks, ¹ Believe it or not, none other than Barry Goldwater, who is the leader of the Conservative opposition ~~and~~ embraced me.

¹ Well, I tell you my eyes almost filled with tears ~~because~~ because that to me was the consum^mation of a lifetime of public service. Because to be judged by your peers, in such a manner is really the ultimate tribute. Because they know you. They know your weaknesses they know your strengths. Because they have lived with you. ¹ I suppose that that along with having been given the chance to have been the Presidential Candidate to be the spokesman of my party, to be elected Vice President and to be elected Senator. Those are the great public things in my life. The great public rewards.

Ponchita: And, the great private ^{RE} awards?

Senator: The great private ^{RE} awards? ^{First,} The great private ^{RE} award in my life is to ~~be~~ truly have a wonderful family. I'm not trying to be ^{MAUDLIN} mandling about it.

Because we know that every family occasionally has difficulties. But I've been married 40 years.

Ponchita: What is the secret of that success? When people are getting divorce after 4 months.

Senator: A tolerant wife. I'm not trying to be nice to her, but she has had to put up with an awful lot with me.

Ponchita: ^NCatankerous, moody,...

Senator: No, not ^Ncatankerous, I'm not even moody. But, I'm sometimes inconsiderate of those that I'm closest to. I'm so much devoted to my work that I sometimes take for granted the affection and love of my family and ~~of~~ my closest friends. I know that in my younger days I maybe wasn't as good a dad ^{AS I COULD HAVE BEEN} to my children. [But, my wife and I have had a pretty good understanding. We really talked it out in the early days. It was perfectly obvious that after I had been mayor of Minneapolis, that if I was going to be in public ^{LIFE} ~~office~~ I would have to give an awful lot of time to it. In other words, public life was like another marriage.

Ponchita: But you're marvelous because you are so modest and you look towards the negative areas-- but the positive areas that you brought to make that marriage a success.

Senator: Well, I want to give you a little anecdote. In 1964 when I was nominated Vice President, one of the CBS cameramen took one of the microphones and put it right up in front of my son Robert. [They said to him "Bob, well, your father, has been a very busy man, has he ever had any time for you and the family?" [I had heard that question just like that and I wondered, "Oh--what is that boy going to say? Because in many ways he could ^{HAVE} ~~of~~ said that he had too little time. At that moment he could have said that Dad could have done more with us but do you know what he said-- he said, "It is true that my father hasn't had as much time with us as we would have liked but, he said whenever he was with us it was a ball". [It was his way of saying that we always had ^A ^{TOGETHER} great times. And, I think that is true-- I think what I did do for my family was that they always knew that I was thinking of them, for one-- Number two when we did have time together we really lived it up. I always had good communication with my children. That is most important. My daughter, my sons--always had good communication. There was never a time when they felt they ~~could~~ ^{couldn't} visit me, nor did I feel that I couldn't talk to them. And, they also knew that I expected certain things.

Ponchita: At that time many parents could/^{nt} communicate with their children,
What's the difference?

Senator: I don't know why it was, but it is a fact. I am not trying to embellish it but it is a fact that I was able to communicate. Maybe it is because of a very simple thing. I let them know all the time that I truly loved them. We are not an overly affectionate family but we are affectionate. It is not uncommon for my sons to throw their arms around me and give me a big embrace ~~xxxx~~ instead of a "Hi, Dad". [For example when I had to tell my family about my illness this last October;--did I mention this to you?--Well, when I found out from the doctors that I knew I would have to have surgery because of the cancer. The question was, "how do I break this to my family"? [The first thing I did of course was to tell Muriel. And, of course to tell her the seriousness of it. It was a very serious matter. Now we've got to tell the children. She said "Yes, we surely do", "I think we should tell them as a family not one by one". So she so wisely and properly said we will have a brunch. We will all get together out at Wabery, Minn. The children love our home out their--it is really a Mecca--a gathering place. And, we'll not have the grandchildren. We will just have the children and the wives. We will have Sunday brunch and you can tell them. They thought it was great. They were going to have brunch with dad and mother. [We sat down--they had learned by then that dad was in some difficulty health wise--but they didn't know the degree of it. So we sat down and we had our brunch. We had a great time laughing and joking. We always tease each other, we have a lot of fun together. We are a very gregarious family when we get together. The daughter is always teasing the brothers, the brothers have got something on each of the brothers. [So, finally we called them to attention. I said, "Well, now I want to tell you what your dad is up against." I laid out what it was. I told them what my plans were. The surgery and the degree of danger that was involved. What the odds were and holding back on ~~xxx~~ nothing ~~xxxx~~, just laying it all on the line. [And, I said you've just got to have ^{FAITH} with me ~~the faith~~ that this is all going to come out all right. We don't have any time to think if dad is going to make it. Because when you begin to doubt if dad is going to make it that is 10 points off on my chance--so we have got to have solidarity among the ranks. [My youngest son, Doug, who is a very dear young man, and he is always a very affect-

ionate young man, ~~he~~ put his arm around me and he said "Dad, I just know that everything is going to be all right". I could see how really worried he was, I could see the tears run down his face. Then Bob, who is also very much like him--he likewise. Skip has always been the older brother, he is a little more stiff lipped. It isn't just Dad, gee thanks for telling us. It's a little more intimate. [We've always had in the family a lot of what I call good ~~hole~~ family activities. We are competitive. We play games--monopoly, checkers, chess,--competition. We ski, we skate, we snowmobile, we swim, ~~and~~ even when these younger sons of mine, ^{WHO ARE} ~~there~~ all good swimmers, ^{AND WHO HAVE} ~~they've~~ been on the swimming teams at high school and college, ~~they~~ are all the time trying to get me out to swim better.

Ponchita: But, I've seen you swim. That's evidence of your "Keep on trucking".

Senator: Yes, they'll try to get ole dad up there on the water skis; I'll practically break me back. Their mother can water ski. On her 64th birthday she was water skiing like an eighteen year old kid. But, their mother is precious to them. [Now this is something I've done for them. I brought those boys up to respect their mother. I never in my home would tolerate any disrespect for the mother. They got by with a lot of things, as all boys do. We were a very normal family, but I ~~said~~ said when it comes to mothers if I ever catch you using profanity with her or abusing her, I'll beat your brains out.

Ponchita: I want to take you back. You said that a picture was worth a thousand words--The picture that I will never forget is when you were announcing just recently that you were not going to seek nomination that you were not going into the primaries. There was a picture of you in the New York Times in which you were crying.

Senator: I had tears in my eyes. I tend to do that. ~~Am~~ I'm an emotional sort of fellow. First of all in all candor it is also physical. Television lights make my eyes water. I've been told that I can have them operated on--I don't need any more operations. But, I'm not ashamed of it I have emotions--they run very deeply. Sometimes they show. My emotions of anger show less than my emotions of passion.

Ponchita: What number do you do on yourself to keep that anger under, not to show it-- and is that good?

Senator: I guess what I really say is it just isn't worth it. It just wears you out. The real truth is it doesn't hurt the other guy. It's like what Lyndon Johnson once ~~said~~ said, "You can tell a fellow to go to

hell but it's hard to get him there." It's quite a job. I've told a number of people where to go in a quick fury of anger but that doesn't really make that person feel any different except maybe that he will resent you a little more.

Ponchita: If those tears were more by the ~~xxxxxx~~ cameralights...

Senator: No¹ they were both--

Ponchita: I was going to ask what can you remember that you really cried about?

Senator: My father's death. It's interesting--when my father passed away--my father was the dearest friend I ever had in my life. He was my teacher, my guide, my friends, my buddy, everything... I literally grew up under his mantle, under his arm. When he passed away, everybody in the family seemed to break up for some particular reason, I didn't. I knew we had to make the arrangements for father's funeral, burial, and all that went with it. And, even during the funeral services, and I'm prone during the services of a friend of any loved one to show my emotion--~~not~~ not necessarily in sobbing ^{BUT} frankly I've got to get the handkerchief out. [But, in this particular instance while I had some tears I was really controlled. I couldn't quite believe myself when I thought about it, Until it was all over. ^{IT DIDN'T HAPPEN} ~~I wasn't~~ immediately. ~~but~~ I got back to Washington and I went into work and all at once I literally almost broke down. I mean all at once it covered me ~~xxxx~~ like a flood--that I lost my dad. I would be driving alone in my car and honestly the tears would role down my face because I was thinking about it. [This is true of most that happens in my life. There is a delayed reaction ~~to~~ . The fear about losing an election is a delayed reaction. The moment I ~~xxxx~~ ^{steer} myself toward. I've got to face the camera, I've got to face the press. I'm a public man and, therefore, I can't afford to show emotions like other people do even though I show some. But, after awhile I will kind of come apart. This ~~is~~ inevitably happens. That was particularly so in the instance of my father. The more that someone means to me the more that is the case.

Ponchita: Who was your hero, your inspiration, after your father died?

Senator: Most of my heroes had been political heroes as such. I don't have too many heroes, and I'll tell you why. Everybody has feet of clay. You've got to be careful that you don't have too many heroes. My heroes are basically ideas, rather than persons, but I like people as such and I get a big kick out of it. I don't like to make everybody perfect,

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Ponchita: But how many Harvard graduates have Magna Cum Laude or Phi Beta Kappa?

A Senator: I know that but you see that's just a little weakness, let's put it that way. You've got to know that you've got some weaknesses. I think it is fair to say that there have been times that I have lacked ~~the~~ confidence. When I ran for the Mayor, I knew I wasn't going to win. I knew I couldn't win. When I ran for the Senate, for the first time I felt I could beat that guy. I've always felt that. Wherever my constituency is close enough to me so that they know me and I know them- I think that I can win. I have absolute confidence that I can do it. But when you get on the total national picture, then you may feel in my kind of politics, which is very personal. It is not so much ~~personal~~ image or stereotype as personal. I feel that there

PONCHITA:
SENATOR: *←* were times that I felt some lack of confidence. Could I do it? Could I really make it? Did you feel that about the Vice Presidency? No, I felt that the Vice Presidency I could handle. ~~Did~~

Ponchita: Did you feel that about "68"?

Senator: There were times. Particularly when I was so far behind in the beginning.

Ponchita: What do you tell a person who has a similar feeling of lack of confidence. That it doesn't keep you down. That it doesn't stop you from taking the next step.

Senator: I can only tell them what experiences I had. Again, it is better to put it into another experience. When we came out of ^{THE} Chicago Convention in 1968, I knew that the chance of winning the Presidency was 3 in 10. ~~That~~ ^{THIS} I knew ~~we were~~ in so far as the scientific evidence, the pollster evidence, was concerned that we were beaten. Then I found out of course that the party was broke--1 million dollars in debt. The country was divided. The President himself had said that his cabinet would remain neutral. We were very late coming out of the convention. No time to really get organized. No time to wage battle without even having a trained army. And, I can recall some days, I really recall it vividly when ^{I came} ~~the~~ home ~~here~~ on occasions. ^{or} ~~it~~ wasn't very often that I was back at the apartment in my home. I remember one time saying to Muriel when I was very discouraged, I said, "Honey, if there is only two of us that believe we can carry on then we're going to do it, ~~for~~ ~~the~~ Just the two of us. If we don't have enough money for an airplane then we're going to get in an airplane or bus, because damn it we're

not going to give up--we're not going to quit. And, we are going to keep at it. ¹¹That was the lowest point. I mean, it really got to the point ¹²where you really wondered if you could get into an airplane. We had to pay money for the plane. We didn't have money for rent. We didn't have money for telephones. ¹³In fact, the very first experience I had in the campaign was to get called by Mr. Short, who was the treasurer, and said they are going to take out the telephones and they are going to close the office. They hadn't paid the landlord, we hadn't paid the telephones. ¹⁴The National Committee was 1 million dollars in debt. We had nothing. That is the whole point. ~~That's it~~ I lacked confidence then but I also was stubborn. I mean proud. I had been given the chance that I had dreamed about in my life--to be the standard bearer of my party. Even though I did lack confidence at that point knowing that the odds were against me, I most likely couldn't have made it. Nevertheless, I was determined that I wouldn't give up. That they would have the fight of their life. They may ~~wipe~~ whip me and they may drag me into the dirt but before I went down there would be a ~~fight~~ few blows laid on the other guy, ~~before it was over~~

Ponchitz: Was it to show them or to show yourself?

Senator: Both. It was a sense of pride and also the feeling that I wasn't going to let the opposition have it easy.

Ponchita: I've got to tell you I came out of that election somewhat hating Johnson because I thought he didn't help you. And, God you must have a closer feeling about it. I mean I think he did everything to work against you.

Senator: No, I'll tell you I don't have all those feelings and I'm not trying to be nice either. Johnson, you have to remember ~~this man~~ was a very human ^Ppresident. He had all the weaknesses and the strengths of a man of his size and his personality. I never could have been Vice President without him. And, by the way there have only been 39 Vice Presidents, so I figure it isn't too bad to be Vice President. Then ¹he had made up his mind that he was not going to seek that office again. I think he could have won. I really think he could have won had he run again.

Ponchita: Is that one of your regrets that he did not run?

Senator: Yes, I felt he should have run.

Ponchita: I thought about that. You've whole ^{APPROACH} ~~(unintelligible)~~ could have been

different.

Senator: Yes, because you see I felt I would have another four years as Vice President, and that would have most likely been a period of time in which the ~~war~~^{WAR} would have been over. We could have gotten ourself on a ~~defferant~~^{PLANE} so that we could move ahead. But, when Johnson made up his mind that he couldn't run--because of the war, because of inflation, and that he wanted to spend his time to end the war and to control the inflation it was quite obvious that this very subjective personal man just couldn't do it, ~~if he couldn't~~. That's the way I always analyzed him. [And, secondly I don't think we asked him to do as much as we should have. I really believe that a number of my advisors in particular felt that he was a political liability. And, I think that the most serious mistake that I have made in politics at the National level is not taking enough time out to consult and to think through before we move.

Ponchita: I wonder if some of that might have result^{ED} ~~maybe a little bit of that coming back~~^{IN BEING} not confident enough about your own feeling^S because you have come to certain thoughts about the war[?] and yet I sense perhaps that there was not enough confidence there to push your voice more?

Senator: Partly so at that time which ~~is~~ made the controlling thing--~~whereas~~^{AND ALSO} the fact that we had ~~negotiated~~ negotiations underway in Paris. I think that so many people forget this. Maybe it is just because I am trying to rationalize ~~this~~ my position but by January 1968 I had then become very discouraged about the war. I had made open recommendations that we should reduce our forces and start to phase out of Viet Nam. That was in the privacy of the White House. ~~When~~^{THEN} Johnson was able in May 1968 ~~to the first~~^{TO} beginnings of the Paris negotiations which Averill Harriman and Cyrus Vance were assigned. From that day on I was in a very difficult position as a political candidate^{and} as A Vice President. Because these men were in negotiations and for anything to happen in our administration was a split.

Ponchita: So your hands were tied. Let me take you to another area. One thing that I notice that comes out of all of your conversation is a sense of humor being very important. Is that true?

Senator: Very important, particularly for people in public life. There is nothing more boring than a pompous public official. They are the epitome of Jackasses--I really can't think of anything worse. It is easy to become that way because you meet all kind s of "big" people and you

spend your time saying " I was visiting with so and so." I just can't take that and I feel that if you don't have a sense of humor about yourself and about the country as such and about ~~the~~ your party you just become an utter bore. First of all every body isn't ^{as} interested in politics as the politician. There is nothing like hearing a bunch of politicians get together. They are just talking about you know a onesup~~er~~manship on each other all the time. Because all of them ~~are~~ really extroverts in one way or another. And, they all ~~kind of~~ ^{HAVE} got to get their brownie points and their little gold stars no matter where it is, whether it is a cocktail party, a convention, or meeting, ^{HAVE} ~~I~~ if you over two politicians together you've got a contest. They are always turned on. I've always felt that if you didn't have a sense of humor you would start taking yourself too seriously. And, you loose perspective. You also have to be willing to be the butt of a joke. Let ~~the~~ the other guy work you over without getting angry. Now your humor, the humor must never be sarcastic ~~that's~~ that's the important thing. You can hurt people with sarcastic humor. And, the best kind of humor is on yourself. ~~like~~ ^I I told just a little bit about meeting Greta Garbo down on Caneel Bay--" I said what a wonderful place is Caneel Bay--they've got Greta Garbo who won't talk to anybody, and Hubert Humphrey who will talk with everybody." ^{WELL} everybody knows I like to talk. Why go around pretending I don't. And somebody will get up and say now we will have a few brief remarks from Senator Humphrey and I will say, "Apparently this guy had never met me". He has obviously not been reading about me. He has been poorly briefed. So why don't you all just take your coats off and lean back because I'm going to enjoy what I am saying.

Ponchita: There is something else this reminds me of, ~~too, though,~~ that you have always been able to see the bigger picture. And, I was wondering if there was any advice there. There ~~are some~~ ^{were} many different things snipping at you it seems throughout your life but that you never lost sight of a larger picture?

Senator: I feel that way. I get very intense about the work that I'm doing each day but I know it is only a little part of what hopefully will develop into something better and bigger. I am kind of a dreamer about ~~life~~ lots of things. I get an idea and I know you have to be persistent, not obnoxiously persistent. But you've got to keep at

it. Like whether it was the Peace Corps, or if it~~s~~ was the Arms Control Agency, or the Civil Rights Program, or Medicare, ~~or these many ~~it~~ things~~, ^{or} the student scholarships. I knew that these things wouldn't ^{float} sell all points. But, you ~~xxxxxx~~ the idea out. You see what lightening it attracts. Right away they send missiles out to us ^{OR TO USE} another analogy, to shoot you down. A few of them miss. If you've still got the idea you keep at it.

Ponchita: Persistence--

Senator: ^{PLENTY} ~~Plus~~ of that. Critical analysis of your position makes it better because right away you find out the mistakes you've made, the weaknesses you have. I present many ^{pl} pieces of legislation knowing full well that all its going to do is bring criticism, but most of the criticism permits you to refine what you had. And, if you can live through it you get a better product. It is like flight testing an airplane. You've got to get the bugs out of it. You surely wouldn't want to get into a plane that had just been off the assembly line and never flight tested. So, I for example watch a bill.



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