



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD M. KENNEDY

Interview 24

October 9, 2007

Hyannis Port, Massachusetts

Interviewer

James Sterling Young

In Attendance:

Victoria Reggie Kennedy

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TRANSCRIPT

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Young: This new session, on October 9, is the third time we've talked about Ireland. Jean [Kennedy Smith] and I thought it would be nice for you and Vicki to talk about your trip at the culmination of the Irish peace process.

Kennedy: The trip was on May 8, 2007. I had heard—probably five, six, eight weeks before—that this event was going to take place. I circled it on my calendar and decided to go. The event itself was important not only as the culmination of so much time and effort we'd spent on Northern Ireland, but I had missed a similar occasion in South Africa with [Nelson] Mandela. There was some Senate business going on, and it was a long way there, and I passed up that opportunity.

I had been very involved and engaged in the abandonment of apartheid in South Africa, with all the legislation we had introduced with Lowell Weicker as a result of a trip I'd taken there in the early 1980s, and Mandela's release. I'd seen Mandela back here, and he had mentioned my going over there for the ceremony. I planned on it, but it came in the middle of a lot of activities in the Senate, and it was a long trip. I missed it, and I regretted that. I wasn't going to miss this one.

Sure enough, just at the time this was going to take place, which was going to involve leaving on a Monday night—the ceremony was going to be on May 8—one of the major pieces of legislation was called up on the floor, the restructuring of the Food and Drug Administration. I was the floor manager of it. So I had to decide if I wanted to leave that night and be gone all the next day, Tuesday, and then get back Tuesday night and be around Wednesday, and miss a very important part of the whole debate. I decided to go.

The situation had frozen when we had taken it up to the floor on Monday. I couldn't see a pathway for a series of amendments. I asked the secretary, Paula Dobriansky, if she planned to leave early Monday morning to get over there at 8 or 9 o'clock. We'd get a night's sleep and have all these program issues. I asked if she could wait until 6 or 7 o'clock Monday night, which she did. It was very decent of her.

I left the Senate floor and raced out there. I asked Sherrod Brown if he would floor-manage the bill for me, which he agreed to do. It looked like there was going to be a series of amendments, but it worked out. I might have missed one or two insignificant votes, but all the action on the

bill took place after I got back, and we were able to get it passed. It was, in retrospect, the thing to do.

I went out to Andrews Air Force Base; we were using a smaller plane, a jet. It's configured to have two fairly decent sized chairs that face each other, and then a sofa with, probably, three seats. In the back of the plane are four seats, one of which is taken by a radio operator. There were four Air Force people on the plane, and it was a very small plane, so it was a very tight fit.

On the plane was Paula Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs. She had been on the Council of Foreign Relations. She's a very bright, smart, and very pleasant person, and very nice to me. Richard Powers was from Boston. He's a big contributor to [George W.] Bush—he made a lot of money—and he was very pleasant. Sharon Waxman and Michael Myers, I believe, went over the night or the day before. After we took off, Paula Dobriansky sat in the seat facing forward, and I sat in the other. Powers was there, Vicki was there, and we were going to meet my sister Jean over there. We found out that Powers was a friend of a pal of mine in Boston, a trial lawyer [Thomas Dwyer]. It was a very congenial group.

We were going to be landing in Gander, and it was going to take two hours and 40 minutes to get there. So I said, "I'd like to have the dinner now," because it was going to be a four-and-a-half or five-hour trip after that. There was a steward on the plane, and he said, "That's not possible. We can't cook the chicken before we get to Gander." (We had already taken off.) It was two hours and 15 minutes to Gander, and he couldn't cook the chicken in that time, but he could give me the salad before we got to Gander.

He said that after he served the chicken, he was going to give us an omelet. So I said, "Can you cook the omelet between here and Gander?" and he said, "Let me go back and check." He figured out he could cook the omelet, so I had the salad and the omelet on the plane. Eventually we landed in Gander. I sat up in the chair on the way over. When we stopped in Gander, most of the people got off.

Young: Why did you have to stop at Gander?

Kennedy: To refuel. The plane couldn't carry enough fuel, which is amazing to me.

Young: This is like World War II.

Kennedy: Imagine stopping in Gander. We were in Gander 45 minutes for refueling, and then we took off. We arrived in Belfast at 6:30 or 7 in the morning. We went to the Culloden Hotel. We changed and went directly to Stormont, to the balcony of the Stormont government room. It's made of hard wood, a light tan color. It's a very hard, cold atmosphere. The desks are very austere, the chairs are very upright. The room has a higher rise for a couple of seats, and then a rectangular space where different officers sat. Then it extended a little bit into the room. When we were up in the balcony, I sat next to Mrs. [Eileen] Paisley, who was a gracious and lovely person. One of his [Ian Paisley's] daughters was rather stunning, and they were extremely nice. I sat up there with Richard Powers.

Young: Is the first time you met her?

Kennedy: It was the first time I had met her. She was very gracious and charming, and the daughter was very personable and lovely. In another location was my sister Jean, whom we had met at the hotel, and Sharon. Jean sat with John and Pat [Patricia] Hume, whom she knew, at a different place, not in the balcony. We were in the balcony. Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern arrived and sat opposite us.

We had talked to the press outside briefly before going up, and then they had a series of elections for the First Minister, and then the First Minister, [Ian] Paisley, and then the Deputy First Minister, [Martin] McGuinness. They had brief nominating speeches before electing the members of the Cabinet. They probably elected ten people, but it was all done very formally. It was obviously prearranged: people were recognized and spoke briefly.

It was interesting that there was a lot of banter and joking, a good deal of laughter, the typical schmoozing done by politicians. It was much livelier than I expected and much more engaging than I anticipated—much more upbeat. It was an extraordinary, hopeful moment, but considering the tensions between the various groups, it was truly a remarkable climate and atmosphere of banter, good humor, laughter, joking—

Young: Did this include Paisley?

Kennedy: Yes. He was lively; he acknowledged his wife. He looked at me, but he didn't really react very much. He has a lively sense of humor. [Vicki has just come in.] Paisley smiled and engaged in the banter. It was a very typical gathering of politicians, and Mrs. Paisley was pleasant and gracious.

The elections went on probably 45 minutes or so. They made brief statements and nominee speeches, a couple of minutes long.

Mrs. Kennedy: Teddy, you sat with the official delegation, and I sat with John and Pat Hume. When we got there, it was quite disorganized. There weren't seats, so people were trying to figure out where to sit. As historic and monumental as this occasion was, it wasn't run in an orderly way. John Hume is a great leader and hero, and he was wondering where to sit. So that's the other background. I don't know if you said Bertie Ahern came in late and was sitting with the Prime Minister of the UK. He was sitting in an opposite section.

Young: So you were part of the official delegation?

Mrs. Kennedy: Teddy was part of the official delegation, sitting with the—

Kennedy: So when that broke up, we went up to somebody's office and sat in there for a while, and they brought some party people in to meet us in a room where we made some calls back to Boston, to talk to some of the press.

Young: Had the election taken place at this point?

Kennedy: They had been elected.

Young: So you went through the nominations, and then they were declared elected.

Kennedy: Yes.

Young: And how did they seal the deal? Shake hands or—?

Kennedy: They just went right down the line. They had a nominating part. Then people accepted the nomination: it's so ordered. They went down the 14 or 15 nominations.

Mrs. Kennedy: People made little speeches.

Kennedy: Nominating talks, but they didn't make big speeches after they got the nomination. It was all *pro forma*, but more lively than most *pro forma* kinds of events.

Young: So there was no handshake between?

Kennedy: No. When they broke up, there was a lot of moving around and shaking some hands. Then we went off and made some phone calls. We assembled at the foot of the stairs of Stormont, and at the stop of the stairs were Prime Minister Blair, Prime Minister Ahern, Paisley, and McGuinness. The staircase was probably 40 stairs, I suppose, going up, and at the bottom of it, they had children afflicted with Down Syndrome, half Catholic, half Protestant. They had fake instruments, but they looked semi-real. There was background music, but they were pretending they were the ones playing it. It was very moving and very emotional.

Mrs. Kennedy: The idea that the only entertainment at this incredibly historic event was Down syndrome children was so moving. Up on the stage were girls in little white satin dresses—actually, they weren't girls, they were women, but with Down syndrome, with the more diminutive size. They had a pretend trombone and pretend music and a pretend singer who would just make mouth motions with the songs.

Kennedy: Lip sync with the song.

Mrs. Kennedy: And there was a male who would lip sync. Everybody was looking, because one of the pretend band members was drinking out of a flask, and we were wondering, *Oh, my goodness, is this young Down syndrome man getting drunk?* But it was part of the act.

Kennedy: But we didn't know that in the beginning. He play-acted, but then it was obvious that he was part of it. It startled the whole audience. It was very sophisticated.

[Gerry] Adams was there. He had all of his top lieutenants there, very political—they call them “hard men”—and the Protestants' hard men, people who despised and hated each other but were forced into the process. It was an incredibly eclectic group, and they had this performance by the Down Syndrome children, Protestant and Catholic. It was a surprise, but extremely well done.

There was a poignancy. People stopped talking and listened. You know, at any other occasion like this, everyone would be talking, no one would be listening. But because it was so poignant, everyone listened, and it made people think of the Troubles. People really listened and watched, and they saw these children, and they realized that if they weren't in conflict, there may be some hope for these kids.

Mrs. Kennedy: I can't remember, but the name of the group was something about hope and about the future.

Young: You saw the title?

Mrs. Kennedy: Yes. They had it on a drum in the front, or on a sign. So you knew their name, and they were introduced by that name.

Young: This wasn't on your printed program?

Mrs. Kennedy: You think you're going to have a different set of musicians, and then you see a lot of Down syndrome people standing there and you think *How wonderful. They've come in from someplace.* But then you realize they're the entertainment.

Jean Smith was so deeply moved. We all were. I don't think there was a dry eye in the place when they finished. At first, as Teddy said, it was so startling, and then it was just so moving. Gerry Adams was standing right behind where we were. We had chairs because Teddy's staff people wanted to make sure he could rest his back. I felt a little bad, but we did have little chairs in the corner. Gerry Adams was right behind us. Teddy—do you remember?—he knew every one of those children.

Kennedy: Yes.

Mrs. Kennedy: He went up to them afterward to congratulate them, and he called them by name. It was an incredible moment. They finished their first song, and then we looked up to see these four men—Tony Blair, Bertie Ahern, Martin McGuinness, and Ian Paisley—walking down those tall stairs together. It was absolutely incredible. I took some snapshots. I whipped out my little digital camera, so I have some pictures of them coming down. It was really stunning.

Kennedy: They came down probably a third of the way, and then they spoke. The first one was Paisley, and basically he was saying, "We're all here at Stormont. We're committed to the Queen. We love Her Majesty, and I'll be a part of this government because we're going to remain respectful and in love with the Queen of England. To the Queen!"

I thought, *Oh my God, what's going on here?*

Then up gets Martin McGuinness who says, "I'm up here as a free Irish Republican, and I'm here to tell the people of Northern Ireland, we're going to be united and free. All Ireland will be united and free!" And he stops talking, and I thought *For crying out loud. Here are two politicians maintaining their constituency.* Then Blair gets up and gives an eloquent talk about different traditions and la di da di da. Then Bertie Ahern says nice things about Blair. Blair says nice things about Ahern, and Ahern says nice things about the Kennedys.

But these first two tigers just didn't give an inch on their interpretation of the agreement. To perpetuate ties with the Queen and England: that's why they were there. And the other one was there because Ireland will finally be united and free, and a republic.

We were just waiting for the gunmen to come out and start shooting. [laughing]

Mrs. Kennedy: Teddy's taking it to an extreme, but that really is basically what happened. It was an unbelievable thing.

Young: After the children, pomp, and everything.

Mrs. Kennedy: Exactly, but people were still happy, and then the children came back and sang a song, or there was some music.

Kennedy: They were singing a song, but they mixed around. Then the others came down and they had a reception.

Young: How could that idea come about? It's so extraordinary.

Mrs. Kennedy: Of the children? I have no idea. It was a stunning, startling thing.

Young: Gerry Adams knew them. That suggests that he had some connection.

Kennedy: I don't know who put that together.

Mrs. Kennedy: I don't know.

Young: And how did you know they were both Catholic and Protestant?

Mrs. Kennedy: I think maybe Gerry told Teddy.

Kennedy: Yes, they told us. It was interesting because they had a Special Olympics team from Ireland, and it was the only Irish team made up of north and south and Protestant and Catholic. For years they went to the Special Olympics games that Jean started over there.

Mrs. Kennedy: Maybe they thought that was the perfect example of coming together.

Kennedy: They thought it was a coming together, because it was the one element that incorporated both sides, and people knew it. The parents of these kids were so engaged in all of this. They knew it. So, at the end of the event, we went back to the little office for a while.

Mrs. Kennedy: Maybe we went to the office a couple of times.

Kennedy: In Stormont. Stormont is like a medium-priced boys' dorm in a medium-size boys' school, to give you a sense about the taste of the rooms. We went into the speaker's room and the deputy minister's. There's more style in the—

Young: When you described it, I was thinking hardwood—I was thinking Protestant.

Kennedy: Well, it's all that in Stormont. We had sandwiches there.

Mrs. Kennedy: Inedible sandwiches, I might add. The worst sandwiches I've ever had in my entire life, which is hard to imagine, to say something that dramatic. But we'd been traveling for a long time.

Kennedy: They were terrible.

Mrs. Kennedy: They were the single worst sandwiches I had ever—dry bread with mystery meat. They were not edible.

Kennedy: But they had a meeting with Blair. We were going to meet with Blair over in Hillsborough. We stayed at the Culloden hotel.

Mrs. Kennedy: Teddy was part of the official delegation, and only the official delegation was to go to the next wave of meetings. So I was with Jean because she wasn't part of the official delegation. She and I left. There was a very nice fellow, a Bush supporter, named Dick Powers.

Kennedy: I mentioned him.

Mrs. Kennedy: He was on the trip with us, and he was part of the official delegation along with Dobriansky and Teddy. They were the three, or maybe the local embassy people were with them as well, and they were also very nice.

Kennedy: So we went over there. Blair was just in the process of leaving as Prime Minister. He had a week more to go, and this was the high point of his term. He came over, and we were in one of the waiting rooms. Hillsborough is a lovely place. It had been the British royal family's home for years. We waited while he was saying goodbye to all the people who had been part of the team: the negotiators, the home secretary team, and the servants. It was very nice.

We heard roaring laughter coming out of the room. Afterward, I asked him what they were laughing about, and he said, "The negotiations had gone on and on and on, and part of the team for one of the groups was another chap named McGuinness, not the IRA [Irish Republican Army] McGuinness, but another McGuinness. And he was just so difficult, so terribly, terribly, terribly difficult.

"And so the negotiations broke up, and we sat around a little bit, and we had a glass of wine, and I went up and went to bed. As things would have it, someone had steered Mr. McGuinness to my room. I walked into the room and pulled down the covers, and there's Mr. McGuinness. So I said, 'Shall I take one for the Queen?'"

Mrs. Kennedy: This is Tony Blair?

Kennedy: This is Tony Blair—"Shall I take one for the Queen?" You can imagine! The poor guy was mixed up and went to bed in the wrong place, and then he pulls the sheets back and there he sees this fellow in the bed.

Blair was very funny. He retold the story a little bit when he saw us. I told him we had just seen the movie *The Queen*, and he rolled his eyes. Then I mentioned how Vicki and I had gone up to Chatsworth, the great home of the Devonshires, and Charles [Charles Philip Arthur Windsor, the Prince of Wales] was there. They didn't tell us Charles was going to be there. We had a wonderful lunch, and he was very good company, very interesting, lively and charming. Then Debo, the Duchess of Devonshire [Deborah Freeman-Mitford], said, "Don't you think the crown

ought to give Charles a place where can walk his dogs? He can't walk his dogs in any of his estates, and he loves to walk the dogs. And the crown ought to; don't you think so, Teddy?"

I mentioned this to Blair, and he said, "They just don't get it, do they?" He asked if I had met the Queen, and I said, "Yes, before the war I went to the tea dances, and I danced with Elizabeth." He said, "You did?" I said, "Yes, I didn't dance very well, but I danced with Margaret [Margaret Rose Windsor, Countess of Snowden] and I danced with the Queen." He said, "I shall remind her the next time I see her, Teddy, and I'll let you know what she says about it." He was quick, sharp as a tack.

Mrs. Kennedy: You were about six when you danced with her, right?

Kennedy: I danced with the Queen at seven, at a tea dance.

And then we sat down and people asked him a few questions. I asked him why he thought this agreement would stick when others broke apart. He said it was really amazing. He said, "When I make a speech and talk about reconciliation, I can look out at my audience and people are nodding. It's entirely different from any other time I've ever talked about reconciliation. I'm completely confident that this time it will take."

It was an interesting observation about the significance of the agreement and the fact that, as one who had spent a lot of time with the parties—and knowing the groups that had been supporting these parties—he believed it was going to hold and was going to take.

After that meeting, we went back to Stormont for a meeting I was supposed to have with Paisley and Martin McGuinness. Blair had taken more time, and the afternoon had gone on, so we were about an hour and a half late getting back there. McGuinness was there and Paisley's son [Ian Paisley, Jr.] was there, and he extended apologies for his father's not being there. He said his father had had a big day and it had gotten very late—which was true.

He's very impressive. He's very smart, very tough, very shrewd. He has a wry sense of humor, laughs at his own jokes. He'd say things and then laugh at them and himself, to try to make a point. The basic point he and McGuinness were talking about was the funding that was going to come from London—it wasn't going to be enough. As a result of the Troubles, there had been a very significant deterioration in the infrastructure in Belfast, and they needed a peace dividend.

They felt that the only way they were going to be able to convince people on the ground that this agreement and renouncing violence were going to hold was to get a peace dividend. They said the United States ought to participate in the peace dividend by helping them with their deteriorated infrastructure.

Young: Well, they could both agree on that.

Kennedy: They both could agree on that. They made the pitch about what they thought they were going to get from London and what they thought they could get, and about their needs, and about the important responsibility of the United States. They wanted to be candid with us about it.

My comment was, “Welcome to the political world. That’s what we worry about, water rates. We had this problem in Boston, cleaning up Boston Harbor. Water rates all went up, from \$120 up to \$800. This is what politics—” They didn’t think that was terribly interesting or very funny.

Then they switched to the investment conference. They were going to try to have an investment conference, to get people over there to invest. They asked if we would help. Everybody was aboard on that, and that’s in process now. I talked to the Irish Foreign Minister the other day. Powers is very much involved in having a significant conference—in Boston, and also in Chicago and Washington—trying to get people over there to invest.

The overwhelming conclusion on this—and particularly in the climate and atmosphere of the world community now—is that this worked in Northern Ireland. This has now taken hold, and everyone has benefited, and they didn’t have to have success at the expense of one of the parties; each of the parties benefited. That was John Hume’s great theme in the very earliest days, at the start of this whole process—that everyone could benefit and not at the expense of the other. That’s been the theme that has kept those negotiations positive and constructive and open: if everyone holds hands and moves together, everyone benefits.

That’s in contrast with so much that’s going on in politics, both in terms of the United States Senate, which we just finished talking about regarding immigration, where the Democrats are saying, “We can’t do this because we have to have hard votes, and let’s let them not get cloture and blame it on the Republicans.” It’s getting into the blame game, which is so common and has permeated our politics now to a much greater degree than it had when this country was at its best. It’s so much a part of what’s going on in other parts of the world.

Mrs. Kennedy: Can I say just a couple of recap things, which you may have discussed before I got here—

Kennedy: Vicki, what was the name Powers’ friend in Boston?

Mrs. Kennedy: It’s Tom Dwyer. One of the interesting things people were talking about was the change that brought Ian Paisley to the table. In all the conversations we had with people, it was that his wife turned to him at one point and said, “Okay, Ian, you have to do this for the children and grandchildren. We have to make peace here.”

John Hume, Pat Hume, his wife, and other people were pretty consistent in saying that she had had a big impact on him. We had been in Northern Ireland probably ten years before, and the feeling and the atmosphere were so dramatically different this time. This time, we’d go into Belfast and we could see cranes everywhere. It was a moving, hopping place. When we were there before, we had to go through checkpoints to get to Northern Ireland. I remember we had to have guards sitting outside our bedroom door at night. It was the threat of violence. This time it was a whole different atmosphere of things on the move.

Teddy, you had gone to Hillsborough and met with lots of the leaders when we were there ten years ago, but I don’t remember that Ian Paisley would meet.

Kennedy: No, he wouldn’t meet.

Mrs. Kennedy: You met with [David] Trimble and Gerry Adams and with others in other parties, but I didn't recall that—I thought he wouldn't meet. He was so hard line, and to think that now he and Martin McGuinness were going to be together was quite something.

And I think you also had mentioned that this was Tony Blair's last week in office. And this is really important—Teddy, you were so instrumental in getting President [William J.] Clinton to give Gerry Adams his visa all those years ago. That really started the peace process. They had a lot of fits and starts and fits and starts, even after the Good Friday Agreement, but in the last couple of years you refused to meet on that one occasion with Adams because of the bank robbery and the killing of Robert McCartney.

You met with his sisters, and Adams came to town and you said no. They were in that “no snitching” mode, and no one who had been close to it would talk about it, and Teddy refused to meet with Gerry Adams. It was a huge slap in the face, I think they felt, but actually it was an enormous positive message for everybody. I personally believe—and people have written it, and I think it's going to be more and more understood—that that was a catalyst for pushing toward this last time.

They'd lost you. You had always been anti-violence and had been very strong against the IRA's use of violence, but after having championed the visa, your refusal to meet with Gerry Adams that time was a very powerful message.

Kennedy: Yes, that was a big deal. I think we described in our earlier meetings the role of the White House as a meeting place, where they all could come together. In Ireland, everybody was watching everybody, and if they had a meeting in a hotel, someone would always be seeing and snitching on them. Here, although they were reluctant, they could all go into the White House. They'd all sit in different parts of the room, but they could talk, and then they could meet at the hotels.

Young: And they couldn't say no to the invitation.

Kennedy: They couldn't say no, because people back home would say, “Why are you turning down the White House?” They had to go. It's the political dynamic of the United States and the political dynamic of positive reinforcement of political initiatives, all of which are available and which worked in this case.

Young: Was anything said at the ceremony itself or outside the ceremony informally about any sense of pride of accomplishment by the two sides, or any sense that there are lessons to be learned? Was anybody talking that way?

Kennedy: No.

Young: Blair wasn't?

Mrs. Kennedy: Well, maybe Blair. I don't know about lessons. Blair's speech would be worth looking at. I think people were very pleased that people had come together. Blair's message—and Ahern's role in those talks—was more that people worked hard and had come together.

Young: Yes. You couldn't expect it from McGuinness and Paisley.

Mrs. Kennedy: They had a little.

Kennedy: They had some. If you look back on this, what made a difference to the people on the hard right was their visits to South Africa. The Afrikaners had been big supporters. When they went down there and saw that there was beginning to be some reconciliation in South Africa, that made a big difference.

Adams was trying to get me to get involved with the Basques, to see if we could try to get some reconciliation between the Basque leadership and the Spanish. I looked into it, but there wasn't the political—

Young: Father [Alec] Reid was very much involved.

Kennedy: Reid was involved in Ireland.

Young: Well, also with the Basques.

Kennedy: He was interested in the Basques, but there wasn't any—at least we couldn't see where the—That was very loaded and dangerous because there are some very bad people there.

There are some bad people in the IRA too, but [Albert] Reynolds said that from the time Adams said they had given up violence, they couldn't find a single instance where he violated that commitment, that pledge. He said, "The British Intelligence can't find it, we can't find it, and your people can't find it, so he can be believed." That's the big deal: we had that kind of assurance from the Prime Minister of a country, saying that about somebody. But we couldn't get anything close to that with the Basques. We inquired about it, but I never got beyond the point of inquiry.

Young: Was Hume noticed or acknowledged?

Kennedy: Yes. He was acknowledged, but never as much as he deserved.

Mrs. Kennedy: I thought that was the one sad note of the whole thing. After all he suffered and fought for, he was treated in a very secondary way. Here's this man from the middle, who was against violence from the beginning, and the two extremists, McGuinness and Paisley, were honored while Hume was shuffled very much to the background. Maybe one person mentioned him. I think he's not well, and it was just sad. That was the one sad note.

Albert Reynolds was there. He was happy, of course; he'd been from the south, but it was the other people who had played external, very tangential roles, who seemed to be more in the thick of things. Hume seemed isolated and very sad. I think he's suffering great depression anyway. It was difficult.

Young: Was Garret Fitzgerald there?

Mrs. Kennedy: I don't know; did you see him?

Kennedy: No, I didn't see him.

Young: But Albert Reynolds was there.

Mrs. Kennedy: He was there.

Kennedy: After that we went back to the hotel and got changed and took people to dinner.

Mrs. Kennedy: That was great fun. Teddy treated everybody. But just back up and say this one thing about Paula Dobriansky. What a gracious and lovely person she is. I don't know if Teddy said at the beginning that she held the plane for his work in the Senate. More than that, she gave up the seat of honor in the plane and sat in a less comfortable seat.

Kennedy: On the way back.

Mrs. Kennedy: Actually on the way there, too. She sat and visited with you for a while, but there was one bench that was the only conceivable place anybody could lie down, and she gave that to Teddy: that was the respect she showed.

Kennedy: That was coming back or going?

Mrs. Kennedy: Coming back and going. She went to the back.

Kennedy: I don't remember that on the way over.

Mrs. Kennedy: Well, that's because I took it on the way going. That's why you don't remember it (plane politics). Remember, she sat with you for a while at the beginning, and then went to the back. She was very respectful and very nice, even though she was the President's representative. She treated Teddy as the senior person on the trip who had done so much for this peace process. She was enormously gracious and very nice.

Young: So, one of the other fathers of the historic event was you. You were mentioned?

Mrs. Kennedy: By Bertie, certainly, and Blair might have mentioned the Kennedy family.

Young: They did, right.

Mrs. Kennedy: I think Blair did as well, in the public place. Yes, that was very nice.

Young: Do you share Blair's sense of confidence that this is going to work now?

Kennedy: Yes.

Young: Did you get those vibes? He was getting the vibes from the audience. You were getting the political banter and all that.

Kennedy: This is going to stay. I think we had a pretty good indication that Adams and his group had made the decision to go for it. The others are troublemakers. They're criminals, the Loyalists, and a lot of them are still in groups over there.

Young: Both sides?

Kennedy: No. The IRA have given up their arms. What's happening, according to the foreign minister I saw last week, is that increasingly Catholics are going into the police force, and they're becoming increasingly effective, and they're beginning to isolate more of these criminal elements, and that thing is beginning to take. That was the last area, the policing power.

Young: You were pressing this too, for them to get into the policing?

Kennedy: Yes, get into the police.

Young: So that the police are not all on the inside.

Kennedy: Adams always wanted to leave something out, so we could always go to 10 Downing Street and get a picture that he was negotiating with Tony Blair. He never wanted to settle everything. He always wanted to leave something out, and he did that with great success. He kept going up and up. The SDLP [Social Democratic and Labour Party] was John Hume's party, and it kept going down.

Young: You didn't happen to see Sean Donlon?

Kennedy: Yes, I saw him. He was there, yes. He's always there.

Mrs. Kennedy: As a last point, it's in every way such a contrast from being there before, and that's a positive thing, the whole feeling of the people, but also the movement and building and go, go. Teddy, where did you make your big speech?

Kennedy: In Derry.

Mrs. Kennedy: They were supposed to have metal detectors. It was the whole thing, bulletproof vests and so on. It was a big deal there before, and such a different feeling now. They were supposed to have metal detectors to go in, and Chris Doherty, a lawyer who used to be on Teddy's staff, had advanced the whole thing. He's in Washington. We assumed everybody had gone through metal detectors, but somehow they couldn't get the metal detectors there in time, and he said they told him, "Don't worry. Everybody's armed in the room, but we know who they are." Teddy was making a speech to an armed crowd.

Kennedy: They all have their guns, but we know who they are. [*laughter*]

Mrs. Kennedy: We found that out on the trip home. It was such a different—

Kennedy: They wouldn't let somebody in there that they didn't know. That's their task. It isn't that they're carrying heat; it's just if you don't know him—

Mrs. Kennedy: Don't worry, we know who they are. They have their guns. When Teddy spoke then, he had Protestant and Catholic parents who had lost children in the troubles, who talked about coming together and healing. All those important symbols and people were out there. Think about the change that happened over ten years.

Young: Well, it must be something that you take a lot of pride in, because without you it couldn't have come about.