

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
BIPARTISAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH:

The Honorable Kenneth E. Brandt (R)

Lancaster County

98th Legislative District

1973-1990

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY: Heidi Mays, House Archivist
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Transcribed by: Nathan J. Robinson

Heidi Mays (HM): Good afternoon.

The Honorable Kenneth E. Brandt (KB): Good afternoon, Heidi. It's good to be here.

HM: Thank you. I am here today with Ken Brandt, who served the 98th Legislative District from Lancaster County between the years 1973 and 1990. I wanted to begin by asking you about your childhood and your family life and anything you'd like to share on how that prepared you for public office?

KB: Sure. I look back at my family life, I was born and raised in a little village called Falmouth, right along the river in Conoy Township, Lancaster County. And, from my youth, I always had a good feeling of being around people. When I was a kid, I delivered newspapers, but I'd say I got my start, probably, in church activities, and always was active in church activities. And, lo-and-behold, right after I got married, I joined the JC's: the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and that got me into more community involvement. And, through that, I ran for a school board position in Elizabethtown. And, I felt good. I was one of – there were nine candidates for three positions, and a little fallacy: I was the ninth name on the ballot, but I came in second with the numbers, so always people were concerned with ballot position on winning. But, through that, I became more aware of public life, and about that time, in about 1968-69 is when I aspired to be a Legislator, and I started working on the political end of it probably about two years before I got elected.

HM: Well, I want to get back to that in just a second.

KB: (*laugh*)

HM: Was your family political in any way?

KB: No, not really. Not really. My family was a staunch Republican family and being from Lancaster County that set well. I used to use the story that – in speeches – to show how strong of a Republican I was – I came from a strong Republican family – it wasn't until I was about eighteen years old that I realized that 'FDR' [Franklin Delano Roosevelt, US President, 1933-1945] and 'SOB' were two different things (*laugh*). But that just goes to show how strong the family – it was a strong Republican family.

HM: So, I guess your family was the reason you became a Republican, and – ?

KB: You know, that's an interesting thought. I often – I never had the decision to make on politics or religion. I was born into that atmosphere, and I often think of – it's always interesting to me when someone says, well, they can't decide if they want to be a Republican or a Democrat, or they can't decide what religion they want to go to. And, I'm thinking to myself, I never had that decision to make. And, I think that you just carry that through. If you are born and bred with that attitude – that beliefs, whether it's politics or religion, it's very difficult to change at some later time.

HM: So, can you tell me what your career was before coming to the House and becoming involved in politics?

KB: Yes. I never had any college. I graduated from high school, was out of high school two years and got married. We had a family business, which was a rendering business, a rendering plant. You ever hear of a rendering plant?

HM: I'm not sure.

KB: Well, a rendering plant was a business that gathered up the offal's and the bones and the fat and all that out of the packing houses. We picked up dead animals off the farms, picked up the spent grease in restaurants and made it into some worthy products, and also, with all the hides, became leather, and we sold a tremendous amount of hides to leather. But, it was more of an agricultural business, very related to agriculture. And, it was a difficult business, but that's what my background was.

HM: So, how long did you work in the family business, then?

KB: Actually, I sort of inherited the family business about five or six years before being a Legislator – probably even longer now that I'm thinking about it. But, I had the business up through – I actually didn't sell the business until [19]78, and I'd be in Harrisburg, I was worried about what was going on at home. I'd be at home, thinking I should be in Harrisburg, and I just went back and forth, and I looked over my shoulder

and none of my sons really had an interest in it. But the key was, I had a buyer, and you don't advertise a rendering plant too much in the Harrisburg Patriot News. So, I had a buyer, and that was the benchmark of getting out of the business and devoting full-time – more time to being a Legislator.

HM: So, you talked about your political aspirations, and what was going on at the time that you decided you wanted to run for the House?

KB: There were no particular issues. Those days, there really weren't any issues that were – I have to go back. I mean, I can go back. I have to go back to probably my seventh or eighth grade in school, and there was a class we had, it was called civics. The class of civics, and that had to do with the Pennsylvania Legislature, the Pennsylvania Government. And, in there, as I was reading about these Members of the General Assembly and who they were, it was part-time, you could be something else, and so forth, and that's probably when I started aspiring to be a Legislator. But, the time came along, the former Member from that District, a gentleman who is still living by the name of Jack Horner [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1965-1966] - he was the Legislator – and through the political rumor mill, it came about that Jack wasn't going to run the next time. And, that's when I started the political process of – and in Lancaster County, as it is, pretty much so, even today, but not as strong as it was then, if you wanted to run for political office, you had to get the County endorsement. If you got that, you were pretty well set to be in. And, I'd say, at least a year and a half before the actual election, I was working on the endorsement process with committee people.

HM: So, how hard was it to get the endorsement?

KB: Well, it was difficult at that time. I wasn't the only one thinking about this. There was about seven candidates, and the story is – it's not a story, but what had happened – when we finally got to having meetings for the endorsement, and it went two nights and thirty-seven ballots. And the deal was, you had to get two-thirds—you had to get a majority – you had to get more than a majority. You had to get a majority of those present, or two-thirds of the membership, whichever was greater. I don't know quite how that worked, but I got in a dead heat with a gentleman by the name of John Buch from Elizabethtown. The other ones fell off pretty quick, but the first night went to about three o'clock in the morning. Then two nights later – they went at it again, and finally, we got the endorsement about eleven o'clock that night. But, it was no easy task, because it was a goal to win. I mean, basically, like I mentioned, that was it. You get the endorsement, you were basically elected.

HM: So, there was no real issue?

KB: No, there was really no issues in those days, not like there is now. I mean, you take, for example, how easy-going it was in those days, quite a few years ago. But, there weren't any questions to me or John Buch of how we would handle a particular issue. I mean, it was more about who we were and what we did.

HM: Okay.

KB: And, I tell a little tale, and I'm sure John wouldn't mind. Between the first meeting and the second meeting, we got some research, and we found out that John Buch had changed his politics. Now, we're talking late sixties here, in the sixties, to keep a job. He was a Republican, and he had a job at the Education Department, that was before Act 170, and he changed his politics. And, we found that out and we put that out through the committee people, that, "Ken Brandt's been a Republican all his life. John Buch hasn't." And, that probably helped turn the thing. But, that was the type of issues there were. There weren't any issues. In fact, to show you that I kept my business, there was no question about that. I even stayed on the school board. I spent three years on the school board while being a Legislator. I finished out the turn. In fact, Representative Ed Burns [Edward F. Burns, Jr.; State Representative, Bucks County, 1973-1990], who came in the same time I did, he was also on a school board, and served the Legislature, because he school thought that was a plus. (*laugh*) Now, today, as you know, you wouldn't even make a suggestion of doing something like that, but that was a plus in those days.

HM: Well, what did you think about campaigning? Once you got the endorsement, did you have a challenger – a Democratic challenger?

KB: No, not really. There was two or three, but all the nine campaigns I ran, I never had any serious campaigns. The last one that I lost. But, there were a number of years I

never even had an opponent. And, most of them were a token; the Democrats put someone on as more of a token opponent than anybody, so.

HM: Did you like running for election?

KB: Oh, yeah. You know, you run all the time. I always characterize Legislators versus Congressmen or even State Senators; retailers versus wholesalers. You're in the retail business, being a Legislator, because from the time you got elected, you started thinking about the next two years, and it's only one year before you start circulating petitions, so you have to constantly be at it. The folks across the aisle, the Pennsylvania Senators, they've got a little bit of a benefit: they don't have to be running for four years, they've got to start running in about two years before. And, Congressmen, the District is so wildly, I mean, big, that they can have a lot of excuses for not being somewhere (*laugh*). And, they have a lot of staff. But, in those days, you didn't have any staff, as far as Legislators. But, campaigning was exciting. You ran with, you know, you always ran with the rest of the ticket. I remember something like, "Nixon's the one"[Richard Nixon; US Vice President, 1953-1961, US President, 1969-1974] and Ford [Gerald Ford; US Vice President, 1973-1974, US President, 1974-1977] and Dole [Robert Joseph Dole; US Senator, Kansas, 1969-1996] all of those big-headed names, they came to Lancaster County. That was a big deal.

HM: Do you think your campaign techniques changed over the years?

KB: Yes, mostly, they did. Comparing, like, the first couple of years I ran, to the last time when I ran intense against Tom Armstrong [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1991-2002] (*coughs*), excuse me. As far as the mailing, there was probably one mailing put out by the county that listed all of the candidates. That was the mailing. There were really never any issue mailings, or anything like that. You would go to public events. Getting towards election times, I would start pulling out my list of Rotary Clubs around the District, and start making those, and visiting newspapers, but that's basically the campaigning there. It was very seldom you ever got any issues. I mean, someone would complain about a pothole, that's about all you would ever get.

HM: (*laugh*) Did your family help you at all through campaigning, or as a Representative?

KB: Yeah, particularly the kids. We had five children by the time I got to Harrisburg, and they were quite excited. They'd go along campaigning. My wife would campaign, she'd be – where'd she go – but, she never was too active about it. People would say, "You going to be there?" "You going to be there?" Jean's answer was, "Look, you elected him. You didn't elect me. (*laugh*) Someone ought to be home with five kids." So, that was basically the story on that. My father, by that time, had passed on, but my mother was around, she'd go to the parties. She loved the parties. (*laugh*)

HM: Well, could you describe for me the 98th Legislative District, and what region that encompassed?

KB: The 98th Legislative District, if you look at Lancaster County, is basically, the northwest section of the county. Its school district, Elizabethtown Area School District, Donegal, Columbia and, at that time, it was part of Manheim Central District, with the Township, and part of Hempfield School District, with West Hempfield Township. But, through the years, through reapportionment, from the time that I first ran in [19]72, until [19]90, right after Tom became Legislator, was reduced by about three townships because the numbers kept getting bigger. But, it was a very compact District. I could get anywhere in that District in fifteen or twenty minutes. But, it was very compact and very Republican. The only place there was any of the telltale sign of Democrats was in the Borough of Columbia. They tended – Columbia tended to vote the local people Democrat, but then when it got to state-wide or the national elections, they generally voted Republican. But, that was the biggest municipality in the District. It was more urban than the other areas. You really can't say that Elizabethtown itself was urban. I mean, it's not a 'downtown' as you would think about walking down Market Street in Harrisburg.

HM: Did they have any special concerns, these townships?

KB: They wanted more money for their roads and less taxes. That's about what they wanted. It was interesting, since you brought up the point, I had two District offices, as District offices got going. But, even before that, the comments you would get from people from Elizabethtown, versus the comments from the Borough of Columbia. From

Columbia you would get the concerns about, “Where can I get rent substance? How to pay my heating bills? What can you do for our community?” Versus Elizabethtown and the rest of the parts of the District, that was, “Keep our taxes low. Keep the tax collectors out of my pocket and the bureaucrats off my back.” I mean, that was the two differences in that District, but, you know, I tried to accommodate all of them, and I think we did.

HM: Well, that brings me to my question about your District offices. Did you always have a District office?

KB: Not until the time that we started – the availability of them came here, and I would say that was probably in the early eighties when we finally had, officially, District offices. But, back in the mid-seventies – and I could tell you who it is, I haven’t seen him for years, of a gentlemen with the name – he was sort of an advisor to me – his name was Paul Ficke. He worked at Elizabethtown College, and he helped me from campaigns from time to time. He conceived the idea that I should have a District office, a mobile District office. He said, “Just like the old folks had. Yeah, that’s it” And, when we were authorized in the funds for District offices, I made sure that included also a mobile District office. Now, people aren’t waiting in line to see that. It was more of a popular tool to set somewhere and I would be in that, generally Thursdays or Fridays, I would park that in a town close to a post office, close to a store or a place like that where a lot of people – and they would get people to come in – but I mean, they weren’t waiting in line for me (*laugh*).

HM: Did you have forms in there, such as a District office would have?

KB: Yeah, we had forms in there. We had a lot of information we had to leave, and I even had, like, a little literature rack in there. The biggest thing people wanted was, down in my area, were state maps or game laws. They were they two big popular items that Legislators generally got rid of, that people wanted.

HM: I wanted to ask you about your office in Harrisburg now. How did that compare and contrast to the District office. Do you remember your first office in Harrisburg?

KB: Oh yeah, very much so. There was no comparison between the District office and the office in Harrisburg. When I first got to Harrisburg, I was assigned to an office down in B-14. I was told B-14 in the basement there, but that's only one person's office. There were six Legislators in B-14. We each had our desk. There were six Legislators in this oversized room. And, there was two secretaries assigned to those six Members. I shared a secretary with Sam Hayes [Samuel E. Hayes, Jr.; State Representative, Blair, Centre and Huntingdon Counties, 1971-1992; PA Secretary of Agriculture, 1997-2003], Representative Sam Hayes, and Joe Levi [Joseph Levi, II; State Representative, Butler and Venango Counties, 1975-1984] from out in the western part of the state, who has since retired quite a few years ago. But, that was the – being as close as I was, those two gentlemen, they would consume all the time of that secretary on Monday or Tuesday or Wednesdays before they went home, and I generally came up Friday, and whatever I had, I would give to my secretary. But, that was basically the office. That's what it was.

HM: Well, you began your House service in the Seventies, as you said. Can you tell me some of the changes that occurred during your tenure here?

KB: Yeah, I saw some substantive changes, just in that time, and now, when you see what they're doing on the House floor, it just boggles my mind. The scheduling of the House changed during my early years. I remember former Members would say about – you didn't get to Harrisburg – the session wasn't even called until about three o'clock on Monday afternoon. And, you knew that Monday wasn't a – nothing going to happen on Monday. You generally called that 'Happy Hour.' You get up there, and people would get up and vent their spleens on any particular subject that they'd have. Then, by eleven o'clock on Tuesday, they've pretty well decided what they were going to do. And then, by Wednesday – and very seldom was there ever a Wednesday session. The big deal was Tuesday's, and, looking back, the reason, if you'd ask people, "Why don't we meet until three o'clock?" well, the response was, so many Members were attorneys and they had to file their papers back in their respective courthouses before they got to Harrisburg. A lot of times, being close by Monday night, you would know if there was anything going to happen on Tuesday, and you don't have to bother coming up. But, that compared to the more – and, the other same thing, now they have what they call a 'Marked Calendar.' And, we've had that for quite a few years. But, that little anteroom off from the – to the left of the Speaker; when I first got here, there was a round table in there, and you'd have the four Leaders, the Leader and the Whip from both sides, they'd sit there and they'd go over the Calendar and decide what they were going to do with it that day. There was no

pattern to the – I mean, sometimes you would have a thirty-five page bill. There was no gate-keeping on the Calendar, and I have to credit Herb Fineman [Herbert Fineman; State Representative, Philadelphia County, 1955-1977; Speaker, 1969-1972, 1975-1977], Speaker Fineman, for getting a little bit of organization, and that's the time that they came up with the Rules Committee, that all bills go to Rules during those particular times of the year, so they can keep some manageable effect on the Calendar. We started meeting at one o'clock, rather than three [o'clock] on Monday. And, through that time, also, was when the Legislature became a more, bigger part of the government process, when we started hiring a lot of staff and giving Members individual offices. I had seen that whole situation evolve. When I first got here, the only staff was probably in the Leader's office. Maybe the Whip had a staff, but that was about it. And, you'd get the – even like the major, like, Appropriations Committee. They maybe had three or four people; that's all they had. And, if you happened to be the Party that had the governorship, they'd say, "Well, we don't need any, we'll be voting his budget anyhow, so why do we have to worry about what's in it? We're going to be voting for it anyhow!" So, you'd rely on one of the Administration for what you had. You had no counter. You had to take what you heard from the Administration. Plus, the NCSL, the Conference of State Legislators and the – I forget the other one. There is another one out there, but, they came about during the seventies, where you could get information. And, lo-and-behold, about the time the computer came along, that people had it, but we didn't have any type of computers until probably in the mid-eighties, and we started getting computerized around here. We had the MAG-card machines, and we thought they were great. *(laugh)* Do you know what a MAG-card machine is?

HM: No, I've only heard the stories. *(laugh)*

KB: Oh, okay. *(laugh)*

HM: So, technology was – ?

KB: I saw technology come about, yeah.

HM: And, it helped the process?

KB: Oh, no question about it. Now, I mean, even the – you know, just on the House floor, everybody has a laptop, they see what comes up. Keep in mind, when all amendments and everything was in print, you'd lined up with – every amendment had to be printed and on the Members desks before he would argue and somebody would say that "We didn't see the amendment." I started collecting the papers one year. I thought, I'm going to see how much paper we get off that House Floor. Until about June, I finally threw it away. I mean, it was taller than I was. We would get – I know some bills we would have 150, 160 amendments to one bill. Every one of those amendments was at least one piece of paper. So, now I understand that there may be amendment, or maybe twenty-five or thirty amendments, that's all they print. That's all they print because that's all they need. *(laugh)*

HM: Well, I wanted to talk a little bit about the camaraderie in the House. Do you feel that there was camaraderie?

KB: Oh, yes – very much camaraderie. You tended to associate yourself with Members from your area, plus Members that maybe you came in with, or maybe Members that you knew from a prior life somehow and you saw those families – I was relatively young for the time. I was only thirty-three [years old] when I got to Harrisburg, and there was quite a few of us that we saw our families grow up and we saw our kids get married, and there was a lot of camaraderie around the House. And, I think that’s one thing that’s missing – I often think about going back to B-14 – there’s a lot of learning experiences. You learn from each other, because you hear how someone responded to a question or how they handled a situation. It reminded me of the one-room schoolhouses from years ago. But now with these – which is okay; it’s fine. Every Legislator has its own little office with its own secretary, and you’ve got to get out of that room now to find anything out. I mean, they can sit there in their computer, but you don’t have that camaraderie. You were forced into having camaraderie in those days and I wasn’t the only one. I mean, all the Members in that basement were in large, big rooms. We were all together.

HM: Were there other outlets for relationships to be formed outside of the actual Capitol Building?

KB: How do you mean?

HM: Social outings?

KB: Well, you would see – the most social activities you had in Harrisburg were a lot of the receptions and dinners you were invited to. We would have – I never really got into that too much, being so close. I went home every evening. But, some of the Members, I'd get to some of their—somebody would host a party in their house, or a dinner, and we'd be invited to it. But there were extracurriculars, but when you have a bunch of Legislators or politicians in a room, all you're going to talk about it is politics. *(laugh)* I mean, you're not going to ask how their fishing's going. *(laugh)* Somebody would ask you, "How's your golf game, by the way, did you read about this or that?" That's how it went.

HM: How did you get along with the other Members of the Lancaster County Delegation?

KB: Oh, we were good. We had, like I said, there was a lot of camaraderie there. Marv Miller [Marvin E. Miller, Jr.; State Representative, Lancaster County, 1973-1990], Representative Miller and I came together, came in [19]73. And at that time, it was pretty well established, the big Representatives, who have all since passed away, unfortunately, but Representative Sherman Hill [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1965-1976], Marv Miller Sr. [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1967-1976] – Marv's dad – and Harry Gring [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1967-1976] from over in the Ephrata area. They were the bench; they were the pillars of Lancaster

County politics. And, Marv and I came in, along with a gentleman named Earl Smith [1973-1982], who was basically a Chester County Representative, but he had a portion of Lancaster County, so we counted him from time to time as one of us. But, there was always camaraderie. We were always back-and-forth, particularly with political activities within the county. And we all knew each other and each other's very well. Thinking about their – just mentioning it, I think, all those Legislators, we were at, one time or another, we were at their homes, and they were at our homes, so, there was good camaraderie there.

HM: Could you explain your relationship with Leadership coming up, because you actually became a Chairman of the Policy Committee.

KB: Yeah.

HM: So, you actually aspired to Leadership?

KB: Yes. Yes, that was part of it.

HM: So, what was your relationship like, prior to, and then while you were in Leadership, with the other Leaders?

KB: I always had high regard for the other Leaders. The Leaders that were in place, I mentioned one earlier, Representative Ken Lee [Kenneth B. Lee; State Representative,

Sullivan, Susquehanna & Wyoming Counties, 1957-1974; Speaker, 1967-1968 and 1973-1974] he was the Speaker at the time when I first got to Harrisburg; Bob Butera [Robert J. Butera; State Representative, Montgomery County, 1963-1977] was just elected Leader. We were in the Majority at that time and Matt Ryan [Matthew J. Ryan; State Representative, Delaware County, 1963-2003; Speaker, 1981-1982, 1995-2003] was the Whip at the time. And, then I can't recall the other offices. I got along with them. I always, I mean, whatever the Leaders said, we figured they put a lot of time and effort in what they did. I've got to tell you a little anecdote on that. It's somewhat true. Sherman Hill was setting aside of me in the House. Now they have them all worried about who is voting for who and all of this, but I'm sitting there as a young Member and the thing's droning on and on. And Sherman says to me, he says, "Kenny, I had enough of this. I'm going back to the office. You vote me." "How should I vote you, Sherm?" "Vote me with Butera and Ryan." "Oh, okay." So, after a while, he comes back and he said, "So, how'd you do?" I said, "Well, I voted you, all except one bill." "Why didn't you vote me on that one?" I said, "Well, Butera voted one way and Ryan voted the other way" (*laugh*) Sherm said, "You did the right thing. If they can't make up their mind, how am I supposed to make up my mind?" So, but, you look to the Leaders.

HM: Sure.

KB: You go into the Caucus with Leaders and, I mean, you didn't see anything about the bills unless you happened to get a lot of mail on one. You didn't know what was on the Calendar you got. And, I remember Matt would sit up there, or Butera, and going over

the Calendar, “Why are we voting this?” “Trust me.” “Why are we voting this?” “Our friends want that.” I mean, it wasn’t – you had the very public awareness issues that got everybody cranked up, but you respected your Leaders and they are the ones that you – and they were always a good excuse. People would accept, if you did something right or wrong. “Well, the leaders wanted me to do that.” And they would accept that.

HM: Well, during your tenure, you served when the House was mainly under Democratic Leadership with a few years of Republican Leadership. Can you explain how it’s different to serve under both of those situations?

KB: It’s interesting you say that, because now the sudden change in the makeup of legislature. I don’t know if anybody, but I’m sure somebody counted, It would be interesting to see how many Republicans are serving in this session that were never in the minority and how many Democrats are serving that were never in the majority. Big difference between the two. There’s more bipartisan – I think there’s more bi-partisan efforts now than there were during the days that I came, because, I remember you wanted to punish the minority if you became the majority, much more than you have now. My role as a Leader, aside from Policy Chairman, my extracurricular role was to get 102 Republicans elected, and that was always frustrating, to come so close, as we did election night, and lose by – now we only have like – many years we only had a hundred; we elected 101. You know, one away. But, for some reason, it wasn’t that there was a barrier or anything, but you really didn’t associate too much with the other Party. I mean, you saw them socially at gatherings and so forth, but it wasn’t that much camaraderie.

You sort of picked up some friends through maybe committee work, things like that, but, there was a difference. And, I don't know if it's still – I know when we were in the majority, that first year we were frustrated, the Republicans were frustrated they weren't in the majority for about six or seven years, and they thought this was great. And I remember different from the ones that – at that time you changed offices. They literally changed the Chairmanship's office and everything. And they couldn't wait to throw that other Chairman out and they wanted to take his spot.

HM: Well, I read on the Milliron Associates¹ Web page under your Company Biography, that you laid the groundwork for the Republicans gaining control of the House in 1994. Can you explain more of your role in that?

KB: Well, I think the groundwork we did up until 1990 – I know it took two years for them to do it, but that's pretty factual because we got some folks elected back in the late Eighties that I know some of them were longshots. I had to be talked into some of those races to get them to provide them funds and support to get elected, but they got elected. But, once they got elected, then they had the opportunity to go through reapportionment in [19]90, and make their Districts a little more safe than what they were. But, there's a lot of, I mean, elections, you work at them, and, a lot of times, what you're doing this election, you may not see the fruits of that for a couple elections later.

HM: I didn't think of that, so thank you.

¹ Government Relations and Legislative Law Company based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Mr. Brandt has been employed as a Senior Associate for Legislative Affairs since 1990.

KB: Yeah. (*laugh*)

HM: I was thinking strictly, like, [19]94, but yeah, all the work done beforehand. Good. You served under three governors: Shapp [Milton J. Shapp, Pennsylvania Governor, 1971-1979], Thornburgh [Dick Thornburgh, Pennsylvania Governor, 1979-1987] and Casey [Robert P. Casey, 1987-1995]. Can you explain their different styles of Leadership from a legislative perspective?

KB: I always thought it was a shame for Milton Shapp. He was a good businessman, and I remember him running on the term that he was going to bring some practical business practices to government. And, I probably said that at one time, but you don't have to be in the political arena too long to realize that government is not a business; it's a lot different. The buck doesn't stop anywhere up here (*laugh*), and that's the bigger difference between that and the – and I know that the sad point, I think, of Milton Shapp is, for him to get elected – and he ran once before he got elected, and he finally got elected in 1970. I think his disappointing thing, probably to himself – and this is my own personal opinion – to get the political power to get elected, he had to sell himself to so many political folks, that once he got here, he couldn't put into practice what he really wanted to do. And, he was the first governor that was allowed to succeed himself, and Ken Lee, who we mentioned earlier, was a Lieutenant Governor candidate against Shapp in 1974. But, that was – Shapp and – then he had aspirations for [President]. I think it sort of took the edge off him, being the Governor. I don't think he ever fit into the

Harrisburg scene. They refused, not refused; they never did live in the Governor's Mansion. They rented a house over in the West Shore somewhere. Now, they didn't even live there, and then suddenly, too, the flood came along and took it out, but they never did live in the Governor's Mansion. They never cared for that. Thornburgh was like a breath of fresh air to us Republicans. We were so frustrated through the years of Shapp, and Dick Thornburgh came along, and there was a very hot Primary at that time, but we really, really – great to see Dick Thornburgh. That felt good for us as Republicans. And, I think we were, I know, for one, I thought, now, all the problems of the world are going to go away (*laugh*) because we got a Republican Governor. But, then, suddenly, you know, we won the majority with his first term, and that was a 101 situation, too. We won the governorship with his turn, but it fast became that we had more responsibility, being that he was our Governor. Because, normally, you just say that if you're in the minority, you just sit there and vote "no" and that's all you had to do. But, suddenly, you had to defend the Governor. The Governor had initiatives that people maybe didn't think was the right thing, but, hey, that's what the Governor wants. And then, Dick Thornburgh and I came rather close to the unexpected happening at Three Mile Island. That was basically my area. And, I remember nights, right after Three Mile Island, being up in the Governor's office with Dick and his staff on what we were going to – "We got to start moving." There was concern about moving people out. They didn't realize that it was relatively new. I was telling them about the Crippled Children's Hospital in Elizabethtown, "We ought to move them out!" Well, they didn't even know we had a hospital there because they were looking at the welfare list of hospitals, but that was under the Department of Health. So, I had to educate them on that rather quickly.

And then, by the time Casey came along, it was pretty well – to that end, I never had any really problems with Governor Casey. Some issues I probably didn't spur on him as he did, but by that time we were back in the minority, and I didn't pay too much attention to what was going on in the front office.

HM: Okay. Did you feel, with your years of service, that you were ever able to be a mentor to anybody, and did you ever have a mentor whenever you first came to Harrisburg?

KB: If I had any mentors at all, it was folks like Sherman Hill, Harry Green. There was a gentleman by the name of Eugene Fulmer [State Representative, Centre & Clearfield Counties, 1959-1970], who was a former Member from State College, and he wound up in Butera's office. And, he gave me a lot of good advice. Originally, he was a Lancaster County fellow, and I looked to him for a lot of guidance, and I think that I probably had mentors or people were looking up at me that I didn't even realize, and Representative [David] Hickernell [State Representative, Lancaster County, 2003-present], who now represents the 98th District, I would say I opened the door for him into politics. He started working in one of my District offices while he was still a student at Elizabethtown College, and I think the political bug bit him during that time, and he changed his vision of a career and eventually became a Legislator.

HM: Do you recall your relationship with the press while you were a Member?

KB: I always got cringy when the press would call. I was never good with the press, because I figured they were going to – the moral of the story was, I generally figured they had their story written, they were just wanting to confirm it to you. Particularly in Lancaster County, there's no – everybody realizes that the morning paper² is a very Democratic paper and the *Lancaster New Era* is a very Republican paper. So, you always want to get your news in the *New Era*, the evening paper, because you know they would treat it more kindly than the morning paper would. I really never had an ongoing daily thing with the press. Up here, once in a while, I would get to be quoted in an AP story, but not the extent as being a Leader or something like that.

HM: One thing I forgot to touch upon earlier, in addition to the changes that you had mentioned about the staff and the technology, there were also physical changes to the Capitol Complex, I think, during the eighties, including the East Wing expansion in the Capitol Building. Were you involved in any of those?

KB: Yes, very much so. The East Wing was built around the time that I was a Legislator, as a Leader. We couldn't get anybody moving, and I remember being in meetings, they would say, "Let's just start moving some dirt, and that will get people on it." I mean, that was massive, that was all parking lot out there. That was a massive job. Wally Baron, Walter Baron was Secretary³ under Thornburgh when we did that project, and the building – as we sit here in the Ryan Building, we took that over as Republicans. We actually, at that time, we had staff downtown in an office, and we took this over and

² The Lancaster *Intelligence Journal*.

³ Secretary of Department of General Services, or DGS.

basically, this became a staff operation over here. But, yeah, I was around when both those things happened.

HM: You've served on many different committees –

KB: I'd like to back up to that space thing. You know, it was probably in the early Seventies, and when Legislators got an office, like four or five in them. I remember, a good story was Hank Geisinger. He lobbied for the milk dealers for years. He was - you mentioned milk, you mentioned Hank. And, he used to tell the story that, in the Fifties and Sixties, you'd go see a Legislator. If a Legislator wasn't in the hall of the House, then they weren't in Harrisburg. I mean, that's the only place they could be, because you see, in the back of the House, when I first got there, that's where all the lobbyists sat. There were chairs back there back then. They would call you back and you could sit down and chat with them. Or press, whatever it was. Hank used to tell the story that if you didn't see the Legislator in the hall of the House, the Legislator wasn't in Harrisburg. He said, "Now, you'll go to an office. You'll go to three different buildings, go past four secretaries, and find an empty desk." (*laugh*) That's how we expanded, I mean.

HM: Well, you touched on lobbyists. How has the lobbyist changed since you were first on the Harrisburg scene?

KB: Well, there's more of them. In fact, I'm one myself.

HM: That's why I figured you have a very first-hand perspective.

KB: *(laugh)* A good lobbyist will tend to know what that Legislator's background is, and what their prime interests are. And, if you have an issue that you know doggone well, that person shouldn't either be voting for it or against it, you let that Legislator know. Honesty, being honest – the handshake, that's the thing with lobbyists. If you make a mistake, if you tell a Legislator something that proves wrong, get back to them and let them know: "Whatever that situation was, I stand corrected. It wasn't that way." But, you have to be honest with folks. But, lobbyists, I think, they're that way. I can't think of anyone that doesn't have that critique about them. But, there's just more of them than there were back in my days, and that was before – now they're registered. Maybe there were that many, but we just didn't know because they weren't registered. I think they're still a major part of legislation in Harrisburg. Do you know the definition of a lobbyist?

HM: No.

KB: That's a person you hire to protect you from the person you elected.

HM: *(laugh)* I did not know that.

KB: Good story. Good joke. Good joke.

HM: Well, I wanted to talk about your committee work. You served on many different committees. Was there one committee that was your personal favorite?

KB: Probably agriculture. Agriculture is an easy committee. If there is any committee in the House, it's the most bipartisan committee there are. Agriculture was a good back-home issue. Anytime, if you had to vote for something or against it, and you say, "Well the farmers, that's how they feel," that was good enough for everybody, so, yeah.

HM: Any good issues come through any of your committees that you were particularly fond of, or thought interesting, or – ?

KB: No, I can't think there was any particular issue that I was spearheaded on any of the committees I served. It was interesting. There was a committee called Law and Justice in the House a number of years ago. No longer there, but that was on my first or second terms I was on Law and Justice, and that's where the death penalty issue came out of, and I was surprised of all the intricate information that was put forth at that time because you had the folks that were writing for it and those who were against it, and it really became a tough decision to make on that one. And, I remember Representative George Gekas, [State Representative, Dauphin County, 1967-1974; State Senator, 1976-1984; US Congress, 1983-2003] who was a Member of the House at that time. He was the spearheading Leader on putting the death penalty back in place. That was one I remember as being very intricate and a lot of information on it.

HM: Can you tell me about being the Republican Policy Chairman and your role and any special interesting facts that may have come up through that?

KB: Particularly, in the minority; that was the only place that we, as a Caucus had an opportunity to voice our position on issues. So, therefore, we would hold Republican Policy Committee Meetings across the state. And, we would have folks come in, and, particularly, we would try to do them – on the political side, we would try to do them in a Democrat district (*laugh*), so the Republicans in that area would have a chance to vent their positions on things. We put out newsletters. We would get some mailing lists from this or that groups and mail information out. We'd call it the "Inside the House from the Harrisburg Republican Policy Committee." We met every Monday, we would have lunch, and the Policy Committee was about a quarter of the Caucus – about twenty-five Members plus the Leadership – and we generally always had some time of a speaker, some time of a program to give us another view on things. I remember we would get Congressmen to come in. We had Arlen Specter [US Senator, Pennsylvania, 1981-present] different times. John Heinz⁴ would come in, God bless him. But, they would come in and tell us what was going on in Washington or something that we should be aware of, from those different points of view.

HM: So, it was an informational awareness?

KB: Yeah.

⁴ Henry John Heinz, III; elected to the US Congress in Special Election, 1971. Served to 1976, then was elected to the US Senate and served until his death from an airplane crash on April 4, 1991.

HM: Okay. Looking at your legislation, was there anything that you felt was your most important piece of legislation?

KB: Well, I named a bridge one time. I got a bridge.

HM: *(laugh)* Well, we looked through some –

KB: Oh, you've got it, okay.

HM: I have some things. I didn't put down the bridge, I don't think. *(laugh)*

KB: I always tell somebody. They say, "What did you do?" "Well, I named a bridge"

HM: If there's something else you'd like to talk about? As far back as 1977, you wanted to prohibit smoking in public places, and that's still something we're talking about today, except in designated smoking areas. Why do you think it has taken Pennsylvania so long to, kind-of, come on board with that?

KB: Did I sponsor that bill or cosponsor it?

HM: I don't have that information. It's probably – .

KB: Oh, okay. Probably – I was a smoker in those days. I can't imagine I would have sponsored that bill. (*laugh*)

HM: But, that was interesting.

KB: Probably, there may have been, and I really can't point to that for sure, but I'm sure that was probably an issue that was coming about at that time. During our time, back to the Floor, I remember the time when we quit smoking on the House Floor. And the ones before me, told me there used to be spittoons on the House Floor. And they used to have – in fact, I garnered one; when they put those new computers in, there was a nice ashtray there, and I made sure I had one of those ashtrays out of one at the desks. There was varied competition that you have there on the smoking ban. You know, then there was the compromise, "Well, we're going to have smoking sections and non-smoking sections." And, really, it's not practical. You can walk into a restaurant or you can walk into any place that you know after a doggone while, even as a former smoker, I can still smell smoke, you know, if there is a place there or not. But, I think that that was a time, I think a lot of the – that was [19]77, all of a quarter of a century ago, that was probably the first when that started. But, I think, you have a couple different groups working. You have those that say, "That's my right if I want to do that or not." You have the folks that say, "Well, I want a clean place to, either be in an airplane or a restaurant." And then you have the health effects coming. I think the health probably has more of a character on it than the other two forces. I remember reading that someone thought we were going to be a smokeless society by the year 2000. They may be off by a couple percentage points,

but it's getting closer to that all the time. Nothing new to you, Heidi, but, gosh, now, you don't see anybody that smokes. I remember the time when everybody smoked. You went into a room, the ones that didn't smoke was the exception. There were ashtrays up and down the hallways. I remember ashtrays in doctor's offices. I remember ashtrays in hospitals. You know, you think that would be terrible, but that's the way it was. And, on the House Floor, everybody, my gosh, there wasn't anybody that didn't smoke. Very few. And they were former smokers, probably, if they don't smoke. I remember one Legislator, I always thought – he was sitting right across the aisle from me, and he never used the ashtray. The ashes, he flicked them right on the floor. Now, he put the butt in the ashtray, but around him was all coated with cigarette ashes every night it was like that.

HM: No wonder Capitol Preservation had to – (*laugh*)

KB: Yeah, that Capitol Preservation, and I remember sitting there on the House Floor, or even when Herb Fineman was speaking. You'd look, and just like a blue hue all on top of the – because Herb would sit up there smoking a pipe. (*laugh*)

HM: (*laugh*) Okay, we had something, a note, on farmland preservation and the prevention of Avian flu.

KB: Yes.

HM: And that was to help the farmers with those outbreaks. The Helmet Law, and you're involvement in that, which I think is kind of interesting because we have a photograph of you on a motorcycle.

KB: That's right. *(laugh)*

HM: Controlling forms and publications from State Government.

KB: I can tell you about that one.

HM: Go ahead.

KB: I don't know what the number of the bill was, but it's in the mid-seventies, Democrats are in control, and there is a Legislator by the name of Representative Berlin [Theodore Berlin; State Representative, Bucks County, 1975-1978] from down in Bucks County, and he circulated this bill and he was so proud. He got 105 sponsors for a bill that was going to reestablish that all the print, all the forms and stuff in Pennsylvania. And I have this pretty good public relations issue, so I wrote to all the Departments; all Bureaus, Boards and Commissions. I wanted a copy of every one of their publications and forms. I was still down in B-14, and this stuff started coming in like trout. I mean, big boxes. And, what am I going to do with this? I think I'm going to do something, so I alerted the press and one Monday morning, I started piling all these papers on steps there in the rotunda. Great big piles, so that we're awash in paper. And, the bill never even

got anywhere. I mean, it had 105 sponsors and it never got anywhere, but I use that as a – and I’ll never forget Berlin coming through the hall and he stops and he looks like this and he says to me, he says, “Why didn’t I think of that?” (*laugh*). That was a good PR quote at the time.

HM: Elizabethtown Hospital – ?

KB: Transferred Elizabethtown Hospital to Penn State University. Yes.

HM: Recycling and amending the Dog Law?

KB: Dangerous Dog Law.

HM: Yeah.

KB: I was the author of establishing, in the Dog Law, the ‘Dangerous Dog’ part of that bill. And, it gave people – if you had a lot of folks that defined the dangerous dog and what are you going to do if you’re basically charged that you have a dangerous dog. And, that laid out how you can keep that dog, or you have to keep it muzzled and all these types of things, buying insurance and so forth.

HM: That’s apparently something that’s in the news these days still – .

KB: Yes. It is.

HM: Well, as a motorcycle owner and rider, you have become concerned about the helmet laws in Pennsylvania for some time. The current law does not mandate the use of helmets. How do you feel about that?

KB: I still wear my helmet. I still wear my helmet. I take wearing a helmet is like using your seatbelt. You can argue about it, but after you use it for a while, it becomes customary. The helmet really isn't as detrimental as you try to make it. For years I rode without a helmet, but it became law, I rode with a helmet.

HM: Do you remember what "Do It Yourself Month" was?

KB: No. What year was that?

HM: [19]86.

KB: [19]86. What was "Do It Yourself Month?" What was it?

HM: I don't know.

KB: What does it say there?

HM: I just had a question, and then – .

KB: Was it a resolution?

HM: Yes, it was. House Resolution 260.

KB: Well, I don't –

HM: Okay, I'll look back on it.

KB: It was probably one of those resolutions that you got a memo on it, and it sounds pretty good, so you signed on.

HM: Yeah. What was known as the “Brandt-Bellefonte Chicken-Catcher Amendment?”
Do you remember that?

KB: Yes, very well.

HM: That was –

KB: It was amended to a bowling bill. A Bowling Act.

HM: I thought that was a great title for the amendment. Can you explain that?

KB: Long and it's short. We had to amend the child-labor law. We had chicken-catchers out there that were – they wanted to hire or were hiring kids under [age] sixteen. Now, you look at the child-labor and define what kids can do or can't do. Those laws were written when kids were working in coal mines and all types of heavy stuff. In fact, we amended it – we amended it the same time, there's a little bit of story on that, from there to where I'm at now, but we allowed folks that went out and caught chickens at night. They generally catch chickens at nighttime for the next day's processing, and they go through the chicken house and just pick these chickens up and stick them in crates. Well, this is a good opportunity for them. They didn't have enough people to do this, and this allowed them to hire kids less than the mandated years, I guess it was sixteen, to do this type of work. And, they put ramifications; they couldn't be up till – they could work until nine-thirty or ten o'clock at night, or something like that. But, it was added onto – at the same time, my partner, who was a lobbyist at the time, John Milliron⁵, represented the bowling establishments, and they wanted to allow kids under [age] sixteen to set up pins. That was prohibited. And, this amendment was put into that bill. But, that's what that was. Bob Belfanti [Robert Belfanti; State Representative, Columbia, Montour and Northumberland Counties, 1981-2010] and I, he had the same situation up there, and he was also Chairman at that time of the Labor Committee, so I guess that's why I got behind it. But, that's what it was about. I even forgot about that one.

⁵ Mr. Milliron was also a former Member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, a Democrat from Blair County, serving from 1975-1978.

HM: Very good. One other thing that we noticed back in [19]86, you introduced a guest chaplain on the House Floor. Do you remember who that was?

KB: My son.

HM: Your son. Now, what was that like? Because, so many times, you listen to the prayer, and to actually have your son – .

KB: It was quite exciting, and my son, Edward Brandt, who is since, now a Presbyterian minister out in Pacific Palisades in California. I was just out there a couple of weeks ago to see him. It was a very proud moment. In fact, I don't know if the date's on there, but that's about the time that Leroy – K. Leroy Irvis [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1959-1988; Speaker, 1977-1978 and 1983-1988] invited him to be the Chaplain for the opening ceremony, and I hope you have the time. I'll tell you a good story on this one.

HM: Sure.

KB: Ed was a Minister, a Church of God Minister, in the little town of Newport up in Perry County. Ever hear where that's at? So I had him down as the Chaplain, the guest Chaplain. In Newport, Pennsylvania, Ed celebrated and gave a sermon on Martin Luther King Day. Now, you think of Perry County, you think of issues like Black issues, they are just non-existent there. But, his sermon, I gave Leroy Irvis a copy of Ed's sermon,

and he was so impressed of this sermon that he shipped it to folks all over the Eastern Seaboard, and that's what got Ed, he invited him back to be the prayer – he gave the invocation at the opening of the eighty-whatever session it was. In fact, I still have that video. Probably from this group here, the ones that tape it. Tom Pyne was probably the one involved with taking that.

HM: Very nice.

KB: Yeah.

HM: Yeah, that's a great story. Well, I wanted to – .

KB: Do you have a list on there? Do you have a bill, something about the Widow Brown Bill? Do you have anything on that bill?

HM: No, I don't.

KB: Okay.

HM: Would you like to talk about that?

KB: Yeah, I'd like to talk about it real quick, about the Widow Brown Bill. There was a lady. Her last name was Brown. I forget her first name, but she had her house taken in

Columbia for back taxes. And, she pleaded that she kept getting this mail, but she didn't know what it said. She couldn't read. She didn't know what it was. Her eyesight was bad. And, her name was Brown. We started to call it the Widow Brown. It made the tax claim bureaus, or the sheriff's office, if they were going to get a place for back taxes, they've got to do personal service. They've got to make sure the person understands what they're getting and so forth, so that was an achievement.

HM: It was something very helpful.

KB: Yeah, it was helpful to that, and we characterized it "The Widow Brown Bill."

HM: Well, good.

KB: In fact, it wasn't too long ago that there was a staffer in the Senate, Trudy Troutman. Somehow she got to know a granddaughter of Widow Brown, and she was relating about this Ken Brandt and what he did, and I happened to have a picture with her grandmother on it, and I gave it to her, so.

HM: Do you remember what year that was, roughly?

KB: Probably [19]81, [19]82, I remember the office I was in along that time, because I was in room 100, because that's where I brought them in there and I took them up and had them meet – they signed the bill with Thornburgh there, so, I still have that picture.

HM: I will make a note of that, too. I wanted to ask you, do you remember how you felt during your first Swearing-In Ceremony, and did those feelings change with each subsequent one?

KB: Well, the first one is like everything that like the first of every event: quite exciting. My family was here, and I'll tell you, I really felt great. I was probably – alphabetical – I was asked to give the adjournment motion, so, because, maybe Brandt was the first one in the class. I don't know, but, I felt quite proud of that. But, that was very impressive. I mean, I brought my mother, my widowed mother, and all our family, our kids. Ed was the oldest. He was probably only about nine or ten [years old] at that time; maybe 12. But, all the kids were there. And, I'll never forget, they came down on the House Floor, and then there was an AP writer that came – an AP, a newspaper guy, and they asked my daughter Kelly what she thought of where she's at, she said she thinks the chair is too big for daddy. *(laugh)* I said they'll probably never use that, but. *(laugh)* I remember that, but, it was quite impressive, and after that, then, at the Swearing-In, I would tend to invite different people, because, you know, you couldn't invite a whole bunch of people, but maybe you could generally get five or six places. There was always receptions and stuff afterwards, so I tended to farm that out, so to speak. I never had to – except my family was always here, but I'd always bring somebody else.

HM: What aspect of your job as a State Representative did you enjoy the most?

KB: I think, being back home and the stature that the position gave you and talking to people and listening to people, what their points were. That was probably the best. I mean, in Harrisburg, it's so intense, but it's such a short time. Everybody goes back home, and you don't see them until the next Monday or Tuesday. But, back home it's more continuous. And, with the benefit, of the built-in benefit of living close to Harrisburg, I mean, I could just about go to anything during the week, unless, for some reason, we had a late-night session. I couldn't use the excuse "I'm in Harrisburg." They'd probably would say, "Well, I was there today, too." (*laugh*)

HM: Well, what did you not like? What aspect did you not like about being a Representative?

KB: I really can't say there was anything that I cringed about doing. A lot of the events you got invited to, after being there eighteen years, you got to know the ones that you should be there, the ones you got to be there, and the ones you don't care to be there. And, where you generally took care of that, I'm not telling you – the first couple of years, you went to everything, because it's all new. You know, you wind up with nearly two or three receptions in one night or a dinner or something. But, after a while, you would end up and suggest this to other Members when they say, "I don't know what I'm going to do." I said, "You get a hold of that lobbyist or that group and see if there's anybody coming from your District, and, if there isn't, maybe you can skip that one." Or, go in, "Is there anybody here from 98th [Legislative District] or Lancaster County?" "No, I don't think so." Then you, "Thanks a lot," and go to the next one. But, that started to get

to be a little bit old hat toward the – but, you know, you went there for two purposes: number one, that lobbyist that asked you to it, or that Association, you didn't want to say 'No' to them, and particularly if it was somebody from back home, you didn't want them to be coming to an event and their Legislator isn't there, so. But really, there wasn't anything about the job that I just really detested or anything like that. I enjoyed it.

HM: What do you think the hardest issue you ever had to face as a State Representative was?

KB: The abortion issue.

HM: We didn't even talk about that.

KB: Yeah. I evolved. I guess, if they had terms when I first got here, I was probably a 'right to life' person. Now, we didn't have those titles. We didn't have that until they got into that and stuff in the Eighties. But, I evolved from that to being, basically, the title of being a pro-choice person. And through that time, I remember, even, I took a page out of Dick Thornburgh. He vetoed an abortion bill, and I took what he had at that time, and people were satisfied with that. But it got to the election, I basically –the election, I wouldn't say that was a hundred per cent of my defeat, but, pretty close to it. There were some other things people were grumbling about with me after eighteen years up here, but the abortion issue is the one that really took me out. I evolved to the point that I determined myself and what I heard and what I saw, that was your business. That

wasn't a political person's business. And, I always would say that, when people would argue with me, I'd say, "Well, you know, if the abortion issue would become an issue in my family or in your family, and you determined to have that procedure on whoever it is, daughter, granddaughter, whatever, no law is going to stop you. You're going to have it done." I said, "But, now how about the poor girl that don't have any family and comes to that same conclusion. Where is she going to want to wind up?" But, if I hear the term one more time, "family values," I'd like to wring their neck (*laugh*), because when I hear there's a person with five kids and ten grandkids and they were saying I don't have "family values." But that, those pro-lifers, that's their little box, right there. If you're outside that, you're not with them. I mean, I had folks come up to me even on Election Day, they're telling me, "Kenny, boy, you did a lot of good things, but, boy that abortion issue." I mean, I wasn't out there promoting it. I was just stating what I thought was the best, but, anyhow, that was then; this is now. If I had a tough issue, that was probably the toughest one.

HM: Well, whenever you recount your experiences on the House Floor, or as just being a Member, do you have a favorite story?

KB: I have a couple of them. The best one, and I often tell this to a lot of people, John Hope Anderson [State Representative, York County, 1961-1982], who is another mentor of mine from down in Southern York County, John sat next to me on the House Floor. And we were there one night, and it's a real zoo. Irvis is in the Speaker's Chair and we're trying to get things done and nobody's paying attention. I mean, it's all around,

and John Hope looked over at me and we were talking about how people aren't behaving and aren't listening, and he say's, "Now, Brandty, look around here. Just remember, these are the winners. *(laugh)* Can you imagine if we had the losers in here?" *(laugh)* That's one of my favorite stories.

HM: *(laugh)* That's good. Do you have a fondest memory?

KB: June Honaman [State Representative, Lancaster County, 1977-1990], God bless her. She passed away, but June sat right next to me and she was very active in the Republican circles. She was Vice Chairman of the Party at one time, and Republican National Committeewoman and all of that. But, I think that being able to lean over and chat with June was probably my fondest memories. At that time, we were both smokers, so we took turns going out to smoke. We voted for each other if we weren't there. I would say, my finest memory is remembering June Honaman. Got a lot of good camaraderie with Sam Hayes through the years, in fact, we still keep in touch.

HM: Now, I'm not sure the tense of this, so you may have to help me. I was going to ask you, what do you want your political legacy to be, or what do you think it is?

KB: Oh, my heavens.

HM: Because, you are still very active.

KB: Yeah, my legacy is continuing. (*laugh*)

HM: So that's why I said I'm not sure about the tense on this.

KB: Hardly gave it a thought. I mean, I know there's, they call it the Government in Exile Group, former Legislators. And, I went to one or two of their meetings, but all they want to do is talk about the past. That's probably all they had, and I could relate to that to some, but I was still very active, I mean, it wasn't that – a week doesn't go by that I'm not in the Capitol Building, and I keep up with the current folks. But, I've never really thought about a legacy.

HM: Okay, well.

KB: I'll have to work on that for next time. (*laugh*)

HM: Okay well, I'll ask you that again. We talked a little bit about what you've been doing since you left. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about what you've been doing since you left the House service?

KB: Different people – just as more of a fun side – people say, “What's the difference between being a Legislator and a lobbyist?” I say, “Well, the good points are, now when I'm home, I'm home. I don't have all those phone calls to make; don't have all that mail to respond to. And now I can put things off until tomorrow. I don't have to have that

getting today's work done during the day." They say, "Well, what's the downside?" I say, "Now I've got to read the bills." (*laugh*) That's the only difference. I'm not saying that as a Legislator, you would read bills, but you always had someone else, a staff person, to tell you generally what's in the bills. No, I keep active. I'm in a group now with four other lobbyists. Not day to day as I did at one time, but I'm still around and people still recognize me.

HM: It sounds like you're traveling.

KB: Yeah, I do a good bit of traveling. I've got a motorcycle to ride.

HM: Good.

KB: In fact, the biggest trip, two years ago, I went to Alaska on a motorcycle from Elizabethtown.

HM: Really? Good for you.

KB: I tell everybody, 8400 miles with a Harley between our legs.

HM: Wow.

KB: We do about 10,000 miles of motorcycle riding a year .

HM: How long was your trip?

KB: Just about a month. It took a month to do it.

HM: Wow. Good for you.

KB: That's the way to do it.

HM: Well, what is your advice for new Members of the 2007-2008 session? Because I think we have a lot of new Members this year.

KB: A lot of new Members? I think if I'd have to, and it's off the top of my head is: number one, try to draw from past experiences on how you handle situations. If you promised an awful lot in the campaign, make sure you do it. Particularly the first term, anyhow. Try to support the institution. The problem is a lot of new Members are now – unfortunately, I can not relate to that because I never had that situation, but so many people get to Harrisburg by running against Harrisburg. And, once they get up here, they realize that it probably isn't all as bad as the picture was painted, and that there's not much you can do about it. You've got to remember on the House Floor that you've got 203 Members, and to get anything in, you've got to get a majority of them going the same direction. And, that's where Leadership comes in, for Leaders. But, once you get on the Floor and you hear debate, some of you will realize that there are 203 opinions on

how something should happen or not happen. That would be my – draw on it your past experiences. Try to utilize them in the situations you have. If you promise something, make sure you do it, and try to pick out those folks that – maybe they assisted you in your campaign, maybe you got to know them through your campaign, but if you have any comfort level with them, listen to them. And draw on experiences and draw on people back home. Ask them what they think. Of course, I could give you more than that, but I really don't – .

HM: Well, that's very good advice. Well, I'm going to let you have the last word. If there's anything else you'd like to add to the interview at this point, something I didn't cover that you'd like to share?

KB: No, it was very interesting. I'm anxious to see what this end product, once you've got fifty or sixty of us old-timers into the file here. I think it's a good thing. I was glad to see two things happen: this Government in Exile, and plus I think Speaker Perzel started a, like a bringing the folks home or having a day for the former Legislators.

Unfortunately, I just didn't make one of them, but I would like to set up – coming to Harrisburg is no big event for me. But, I think that type of activity is good. You know, it's tough to find a list. We know who the past Presidents were. And then we can figure out who the past Governors were, at least we can walk around and look at pictures, but there's an awful lot of folks that served in the House of Representatives, and if you look at the average, I mean, we're talking, you know, I'm eighteen years and Sam Hayes is close to twenty-five, and all of them. But, the average time a person is spending in the

House is just a couple of years. And, there are many folks that spent some time here that nobody knows about, and I'm glad that at least there's an opportunity for them to come back and bid their times and tell everybody how it used to be. (*laugh*)

HM: Well, we appreciate you taking the time today to certainly educate us and enlighten us about your experiences. Thank you very much.

KB: My pleasure.