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BIPARTISAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH:

The Honorable Christopher McNally (D)

36th District

Allegheny County

1989-1994

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Raymond Whittaker (RW): Good afternoon.

The Honorable Christopher McNally (CM): Hi. How are you doing, Mr. Whittaker?

RW: It's good to see you, sir. Today, we have the opportunity to speak with former Representative Christopher K. McNally, a Democrat, who served the 36th District in parts of Allegheny County, from 1989 through 1994. Sir, thank you for taking the time to speak with us today.

CM: Thanks for having me.

RW: First, I would like you to talk a little bit about growing up in Pittsburgh, in that area, and you had come to represent that area later on; but, what was your affinity with that area growing up?

CW: Well, I was born and raised in Pittsburgh and several generations back on both sides of the family. My great-grandfather, Henry McNally, came to Pittsburgh and lived in Oakland, and my mother was from the Beechview area. So, I was born in 1960 and my dad was, at the time, a waiter and did a whole bunch of jobs. He was a hustler; he would shovel snow. My mom was taking care of me. He became a city firefighter and that was sort-of a life-long dream of his, and I was probably about three years old when that happened, and that really opened up a lot of opportunities for the whole family. My dad did not graduate from high school; he got a GED and went to the Coast Guard. He came back from that experience in Alaska in the [19]50s and

was really determined to prove himself and take care of his family and once he got on the fire department, he was still a young guy, like twenty-five years old then, he loved being a firefighter. He spent 40 years in the city fire department, ended up being a battalion chief and it was his dream job. But, that job was something he loved doing and, as I said, it gave him a lot of opportunities. He, eventually, used that in a series of promotions: he became lieutenant, then captain, eventually a battalion chief, when I was about thirteen or fourteen. It allowed my parents to buy a home. He actually used the GI Bill to go to college and, eventually, while he was on the fire department working full-time, he actually went to law school. So, when I was going to high school, my dad was going to law school. And his brother was a firefighter, too; his brother Jim was a Pittsburgh firefighter. It was sort-of funny how going to law school happened, is that they both had the GI Bill, my uncle had been in the Army, and my uncle was taking a course – and he’s a very handy guy – he was taking a course on ‘How to Build a Color Television.’ So, it was an electronics course and the GI Bill was paying for this and in the course of this, you would actually build a color television set, and my dad thought, well, I can’t build a color TV set, so, what else can I do? So, he decided to go to law school. I was a junior in high school and he was graduating from law school and I was getting into my senior year and both [of my] parents were very big into education. They were always determined to see me and my younger brother go to college. So, I lived in a two-bedroom cape cod in the 32nd Ward in Overbrook, I went to Saint Norbert’s School in a neighborhood that was populated with a lot of kids whose dads were firefighters and police officers and a lot of steel workers and construction workers, so it was a blue-collar neighborhood, but it was very cozy and very neighborly; everybody knew everybody.

RW: So, following in your father's footsteps, you went on to college...

CM: Yes.

RW: ...and then on to law school...

CM: Yes.

RW: ...at Penn State and Pitt?

CM: Yes, I'm one of the few people that is on both sides of the fence.

RW: Yeah, that's an interesting distinction.

CW: I went to Penn State – my uncle, another uncle, my mother's brother, he had gone to Penn State and that's sort-of what led me in that direction. I got a Bachelor's Degree in political science; I was always very interested in history and politics. And after Penn State, I really did not want to continue in school, but it was 1982 [and] it was the worst recession since the Great Depression; steel mills were being shut down. So, I came out of college not wanting to continue school, but not able to find a job, either. So, what I did do is in the spring of 1983, I ran for a seat on City Council in Pittsburgh. I was twenty-two years old and I ran for the Democratic Party endorsement. In those days, the nine Pittsburgh City Council members were elected at-large, so the endorsement process was, basically, going around and visiting Democratic

Committee people, all over the city. That was a tremendous experience. I met a whole lot of people that were politically active, that were politically interested. I got a chance to learn at an early age what it's like to be a candidate and speak in public, talk about issues, and meeting people, making connections, contacts, and ultimately, I think that laid a lot of ground work for running in the future.

RW: Yeah, two years out of law school you decided to run for the House of Representatives.

CM: Yes, yes.

RW: The Representative at the time, Michael Dawida [State Representative; Allegheny County, 1979-1988; State Senate, 1989-1996] decided to run for the Senate.

CM: Yes.

RW: But, you had some past experiences with him before running for the House seat?

CM: I did, yes. While I was in high school, I had read this book, *The Making of the President 1960*, by Theodore H. White, about the Kennedy Presidential campaign and I was fascinated by the book. It really sort-of steered me in that direction as a career choice. So, having read that book, right at about the time that I was reading it, Mike was running for the House of Representatives in the 26th Legislative District, at that time. So, that district was represented by a guy named Charlie Caputo [Charles N.; State Representative; Allegheny County, 1967-1978],

who was a long-time, very influential and highly respected incumbent. That was in 1978. Mike ran a grassroots campaign. Charlie was, as I said, was a very entrenched incumbent, but it was coming off – in a sense, history repeats itself – it was coming off a big uproar about pay increase for legislators, and at that time, the pay increase I think had gone up to the magnificent sum of eighteen thousand dollars. But that outraged people at the time. So, they had set up something called the Commonwealth Compensation Commission, which ostensibly was made to take the legislators voting for their own pay raises out of the hands of the legislators and into the hands of the Commission, nonpartisan, but that was perceived to be a fig-leaf for favoritism for the Legislature. So, Mike was running on the wave of, sort-of, taxpayer revolt and anger, and he ran an excellent campaign. He had a fellow by the name of Pete Patrack, who was his campaign manager. Mike was, probably, twenty-eight at the time, so Pete was in his early to mid-twenties, I was seventeen, and Mike had a whole lot of neighbors, a lot of friends that were an army out there, going door-to-door. And Pete had a very excellent, well-coordinated strategy, a very good message and it was just a very efficiently run political campaign. It was probably one of the best learning experiences on how to run a grass-roots campaign. It was really like clockwork, in terms of when things were times, how various precincts would be targeted by both the candidate and volunteers, and Mike was successful. He won in a very narrow race, in what I think, was a three-way race. Actually, there was four candidates; it was Mike, Charlie Caputo, who I think came in third, and a guy names Jim McGrath, who was a retired Allegheny County police officer, and then there was a fourth guy, I think his name was McCaffrey. Everybody speculated that Mr. McCaffrey had been, sort-of, a stomping horse to confuse voters between McGrath and McCaffrey, and there was a margin of victory. You know, if McCaffrey's votes would have gone to McGrath, I think McGrath would have won. But, Mike was a young lawyer; he had

gone to Hamline [University] Law School, in Minnesota. But, he was also a native of Pittsburgh, a native of Carrick, the 29th Ward, and so, that was sort-of my involvement in Mike's campaign. And we remained in touch throughout his ten years in the House of Representatives.

RW: So, it comes to the point where he decides to run for the Senate, and you decide to throw your hat in the ring...

CM: Yes.

RW: ...to run for the House of Representatives...

CM: Yes.

RW: ...along with eight others, in an open Primary for that seat, in 1988-1989. Did you use some of those techniques that you learned in his initial campaign for the Primary?

CM: I used his campaign manager.

RW: That helps.

CM: Yeah, Pete Patrack. So, I signed up Pete, as we had remained friends, and, basically, ran the same type of campaign. This was in the days really before, the early days, at least, before cable television, and I don't think that at that point and time they had developed the ability to

target specific neighborhoods within a cable system. So, when you're talking about a Legislative District that is that small within a television market, buying television and radio ads, at the time, really was not really economical, it wasn't efficient, because you would have been buying television ads for a two million person TV market, when you were only intending to advertise to sixty thousand. So, it really had to be run on door-to-door grassroots campaigning; yard signs, direct mail, and I think we probably raised somewhere in the neighborhood of forty thousand dollars. I think I raised the most money of any of the other candidates, but we also did it in a way that everything we did was intended to create a repetitive contact with targeted voters; candidate door knock, volunteer door knock, and then in between those, have mail that would reach voters at timed intervals so that they kept hearing McNally at a regular basis. And, of course, to do that, the candidate has to knock on a lot of doors, but you also need to have a lot of volunteers, and I had a lot of help from the Firefighters Union, the Local 1, they came out in great numbers to do that volunteer knock on Saturday mornings and another number of units. I had a lot of help from Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers. They were big financial supporter; a guy named Howard Messer, who was president of the Trial Lawyers at the time. One of my classmates from Penn State, Bob Krebs, he was with Howard's firm, so, in that respect, I was very fortunate to have a personal friend who was working in the law office of the guy who was the president of the Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers. So, that was my entrée to the Trial Lawyers and, in addition, another fellow who was really pretty influential and certainly was a big help to me, was highly respected in union circles, was a guy named Bernie Burns, which was a perfect name for a firefighter. But, Bernie was the president of the local firefighter's union, Local 1. The Firefighters Local 1, they are sort-of the Pittsburgh Steelers or Penn State; over an enormous amount of time they have only had a few presidents. Bernie was there for a long time, and Joe

King has been there ever since. But, Bernie Burns was a big supporter of mine in that first campaign. He helped recruit a lot of other union leaders in the Pittsburgh area, so I had support from the carpenters, from the bakers union, which worked over at the Nabisco plant, they were big supporters of mine, the FOP [Fraternal Order of Police] they were supporters. I had a lot of help and I was very fortunate in that regard.

RW: And using all that help, you won by fifty-five votes.

CM: Yes.

RW: A tremendous victory.

CM: Yes, it was a landslide. The guy who came in second, as there were seven others, was a guy names Mike Stout, who was a really interesting person in his own right. Mike was originally from Kentucky, he was the son of a coal miner, and a real wiry, feisty kind-of a guy. What happened is, he came from Kentucky to work for the Homestead Works, U.S. Steel. I believe he was a grievance committee steward or chairman for the United Steel workers at the Homestead Works, and Mike had done a great job in the Homestead plant when the plant shut down in [19]86 – like, [19]84, [19]85, [19]86 – he had really done a lot of work for a whole lot of people there who lost their jobs of getting them benefits. He had worked with them to help them file for benefits [and] argue for cases when that was necessary. So, he had a lot of support in the Steel Valley and he was very well known. He was a folk singer and just an energetic guy. I think he now owns a printing company, Steel Valley Printers. So, Mike was sort-of at one end

of the district, in the Homestead/Munhall area and I was, really, from the city end in Carrick, the 29th Ward. I had actually grown up just over the border; my house was literally, on the border of the 36th Legislative District. It had been in the 26th [Legislative District] in 1980. In redistricting, they combined the 26th and 36th Legislative Districts, so that Mike Dawida and the other incumbent, who was a guy named Bob Horgos [Robert P.; State Representative; Allegheny County, 1981-1982], were forced to run against each other in 1982, but in the course of that redistricting, the 32nd Ward got left out of that new District, so I had to actually move into the 36th District in order to run for that. That was a little bit of a controversy; I was a carpet-bagger. I actually moved from Overbrook to Munhall, which is over in the Steel Valley. I was newly married at the time and had a baby on the way, so Munhall was a very nice little neighborhood community.

RW: After that first success, did you learn anything different going into your second campaign? Then you had a three-way primary and won that by a little bit larger margin. Did you find that any easier?

CM: Yes, it was easier. In a two-year term you either have the luxury or the burden of continuously campaigning. So, throughout 1989, I was always out meeting people, having my own town hall meetings and using the power of incumbency in newsletters to reinforce what kind of work I was doing. I had some really excellent staffers that were very community involved. Barb Zandeer, who was the wife of a firefighter in Carrick, she was from Carrick, and then on the other side of the District, I had a guy by the name of Dan Issacs, who was a councilman, who actually worked on the campaign of one of my opponents, John Dindack, and

then I also a guy by the name of Jack Faulkner, who was a retired city firefighter. So, all of them were really handy and really good at reaching out the people in the community. The other thing that helped, at least a little and it was sort-of an example of an advantage of incumbency was there was a bill that I introduced and ultimately it became law, it's the Tax Increment Finance Law. That actually began as an idea from Mike Stout. What had happened is we had a meeting, this was after I was elected, this was sometime in 1989, probably toward the end of 1989, and Mike and some of his friends and supporters wanted to meet with the Allegheny County delegation, including myself and Tom Michlovic [Thomas A.; State Representative, Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties, 1979-2002], who was the chairman of the delegation at the time. They pitched this idea to him of, you know, we want to get this tax increment finance law passed, and I think they were hoping that Tom Michlovic would be the prime sponsor, but in the meeting, Tom turned to me and said, "That would be great for you." I think that was something that they did not expect. So, that was another asset; I had other members of the House who supported me and would help me out that way.

RW: You talked a little bit about the District itself and that one issue that seemed to come up; what other issues were unique in your District? What types of things did constituents come up to you about within your District? What other problems did they have that you needed to find answers for?

CM: Well, without a doubt the overriding issue at the time, and really today, is economic development and jobs, because during that ten year period of the mid-[19]70s to the mid-[19]80s, there were over a hundred thousand manufacturing jobs lost, at least in western Pennsylvania,

maybe even in Allegheny County alone. So, there were a lot of people who worked very hard in all those factories, all those mills, who were really struggling. Those jobs really got shipped overseas. One of my colleagues, Ralph Kaiser [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1989-2002], was actually one of those steel workers that was laid off, I think he worked at Clairton, but it might have been Duquesne. But, just in that Steel Valley alone, you had the Homestead Works that was shut down, the McKeesport Plant was shut down, Duquesne Works was shut down and the only ones that were left were the Edgar Thompson Works, but the employment there was pretty drastically cut back as well as the Irvin Works, which was in West Mifflin. And that doesn't even begin to count the LTV [Coke Plant] or the J and L Plant [Jones and Laughlin Steel Company] in the Southside and in the Hazelwood side. So, trying to find some way to encourage investment and also to use government funds to redevelop Brownfield sites was really the critical issue and that's where tax increment finance came in, and I think it's been pretty successful around the state, in particular in the old LTV. The J and L Plant was probably, I think, the first tax increment project, where you used to have a steel mill, you now have CMU [Carnegie Mellon University], University of Pittsburgh and other high tech firms that have, basically, created a technology park on the north side of the Monongahela River, and that was financed, at least in part, by the tax increment finance type-of financing.

RW: One interesting thing that we found, I think it was during the [19]91, [19]92 session was, I think you did a TV show, called "The Legislative Journal." How did that come about and was that fairly successful?

CM: Apparently not, because I don't remember that. We did have – and maybe this is what you are talking about – actually, I think it was in this studio, I would come in and I think Christine Zarek and Cathy M[*inaudible*] would do an interview program like this to talk about issues that were developing in the House and then that would be shown on cable, public access channels, back home. So, I don't know that it won any ratings or awards or anything, but I think the real idea is to use every avenue that you have available to communicate and report to constituents about what's going on. So, whether it was newsletters, television, radio, sometimes we would do actualities – is that the term? – and, of course, town hall meetings; as much face-to-face interaction with constituents as possible.

RW: Yeah, because you are pre-internet, pre-email.

CM: There was no internet. There was no internet. There was no email. I don't even think I had a computer then. So, yeah. One thing, I don't know or imagine that people still do this: birthday letters. Somebody came up with the idea before I arrived that you should send senior citizens letters on their birthdays, to basically say, "Happy Birthday," and if you need any help, here is where to get a hold of us. So, it seemed like a popular way – you know, people would say, "How did you know it was my Birthday?" "Well, we have you date of birth on the voter registration." So, that was one thing. Another item, I don't know that I've ever done this, but Emil Mrkonic [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1975-1992] was a state legislator from McKeesport, and he gave away seeds, you know, like the little Burpee packets of seeds for people's gardens? He did that, and that was very popular, you know, it was a very popular type of constituent service. We did a lot of PennDOT assistance; that was very helpful to

constituents. I can't really think of any other sort-of typical – we did a lot of tax rebate, rent rebate types of assistance, PACE [Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly], that type of thing. I think that this is probably one of the most important jobs that a member of the General Assembly does is try to inform people about what type of help is available. My District, the 36th, did have one of the oldest average ages, in terms of the voters and constituents there of any, I think, in the state, so, they needed a lot of help. And the other thing too, in those days, and I think this has gradually diminished over the years, there used to be more people ineligible for social security, whether they were police officers, firefighters. Until maybe, the late [19]60s or [19]70s, maybe even later than that, municipal and government employees did not pay into social security and therefore did not receive social security benefits, so when you had a widow, in particular, who was a widow of a police officer or a firefighter, their pension benefits would be very minimal and they would not be able to get social security because her husband had not paid into it. So, making sure people knew what benefits were available to make ends meet was very important.

RW: So, you were elected your first term, you come to Harrisburg, was that the first time you came to Harrisburg, when you were elected to office, or had you some experience here before then?

CM: Yes, I had made a few visits to Harrisburg. The first, actually, was shortly after Mike was elected and I was at Penn State. I don't even remember how I got here, to be honest with you, but I came down from State College to Harrisburg and that was before the East Wing was built, that was before 322 was a four-lane highway. I'm fifty-three, but I'm sounding very old here,

“back in the old days.” But, I came down and I hung out with Mike for a day. I actually met a few other legislators; there was a group of democrats from Allegheny County who were all elected in 1978: Mike Dawida, Tom Murphy [Thomas J.; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1979-1994], Tom Michlovic, Frank Pistella [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1979-2006] and another guy named Huck Gamble, Ron Gamble [Ronald; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1977-1996], and they tended to hang out together. Allen Kukovich [State Representative, Westmoreland County, 1977-1996; State Senator, 1997-2004] had been elected a few years before that, but he was a friend of theirs, and so I had gotten to meet them. I think I actually was introduced to another couple of guys that were lobbyists at the time; one was Ernie Varhola, of Duquesne Light, and another was Tom Thamert, of Equitable Gas. They were both sort-of institutions of Harrisburg; they had been around for a long time. And, eventually, I would come back to see them in ten years. So, I had made that trip. I had made another trip in the early [19]80s. I came down as a part of a lobbying effort for Penn State student government for more money, because that was one of the first times that the appropriations for Penn State, Pitt, Temple and Lincoln were really, I don’t think they were cut, but they were really pretty drastically limited. They weren’t even enough to keep up with inflation, so we had come down to lobby for that. So, that was the first couple of visits. I also came out here, probably, in [19]87 with my wife, at the time, to show her Harrisburg and say, basically, if I run this is where I’d be going and this is what we’d be doing. And then, the other visit I had before I got elected was pretty memorable, because Pete Petrack and I came out in May or June of [19]88, after I won the primary and I had no General election opponent, and Pete Petrack and I drove out and as we were crossing the I-81 bridge, there was a story on the radio that a state legislator had been found murdered.¹ It was Mr. Telek [William; State Representative, Cambria and Somerset Counties,

¹ May 17, 1988

1979-1988], Representative Telek – I don't remember his first name – but, we came down Front Street and there was a block right around the exit that had been roped off, so I came in that morning to meet with Jim Manderino [James J.; State Representative, Westmoreland County, 1967-1989; Speaker, 1989; Democratic Leader, 1977-1978 and 1983-1988; Democratic Whip, 1975-1977 and 1979-1982] for the first time. He was a very impressive figure and we had a nice talk. He advised me then to make this your fulltime job. He said that the reason – and actually, they had just voted for a pay raise in, I think, [19]86 or [19]87; it turned out not to be an issue in my election, because none of us were incumbents and it was not an issue for Mike, because both he and Jim Romanelli had voted for it – but basically, what Manderino said was make it your fulltime job; it allows you to be independent, and the reason that we wanted the salaries to be at this level is so people don't have to be financially dependent on some outside source that will influence on how they vote. There were examples before then, because every member of the General Assembly had to have sources of income. They might have worked for Westinghouse or they might have worked for U.S. Steel or railroads and on critical decisions, they had to vote with their company. And so, he urged me to be a fulltime legislator, I was, and he was really an outstanding leader.

RW: What do you remember about your first Swearing-In day?

CM: I had my son, Andrew, who at that point – he was born in May of [19]88 – so, he sat with me on my lap. My family was there and it was a huge affair. There had been an orientation, it was very festive and I still have the *Bible* that was given to me for that, with my name on it. So, it was a lot of fun. I do remember the House of Representatives before the restoration. One of

the things that Mike Dawida did was that he brought about a rule that you could smoke on the House floor – people used to do that and before that they had spittoons – but, the chamber had become sort-of gray and dull and the restoration and restored it to the architectural beauty that it really is. I think it's remarkable. I think anybody who comes to visit can't help but be overwhelmed and impressed with, really, a landmark that we have.

RW: What was it like being a freshman legislator? Did those in power make it any easier or harder for you? Did you have mentors? You said you sort-of had a support system already built in when you came here; what was it like being here for your first term?

CM: I was one of the youngest, I don't think I was the youngest, and there were actually some people who had started younger that were still around: Keith McCall [State Representative, Carbon, Luzerne and Monroe Counties, 1983-2010; Speaker, 2009-2010; Democratic Whip, 2007-2008], I think was elected when he was twenty-two. He was probably about a third or fourth term veteran at that time. But, I thought people were very kind to me, very supportive, I was youthful and probably more energetic than a lot of my colleagues. But, I always felt that I was treated, not so much like father and son, but like an uncle or older brothers. We did not have that many women at that time. I don't think we had in the Democratic delegation from Allegheny County, I don't think we had any women at that point. Elaine Farmer [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1987-1996] and Alice Langtry [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1985-1992] were in the Republican delegation from Allegheny County. And I think that was one other thing that was helpful to me, was that I came from a big delegation; we had twenty-six? I want to say twenty-six members from Allegheny County at the time, and all

had a very good rapport with each other, worked well with one another and, for the most part, were sort-of ideologically politically fairly close to each other. There was a range on the political spectrum, but not that it made much of a difference. And even the Republican members from Allegheny County, we had a very good relationship [with]. People like Rick Cessar [Richard J.; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1971-1994], Terry McVerry [Terrance F.; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1979-1990], I mentioned Elaine and Alice Langtry and I think that might have been it on the Republican side from Allegheny County.

RW: Did your training as an attorney, or your degree as an attorney, help you in any way or give you any basis to what it would be like as a legislator, on the law side of things?

CM: Sure. It was very helpful in terms of reading the bills and understanding what the implications would be. The other thing that it helped is, I probably took a more active role in drafting my own legislation and amendments and asking the Legislative Reference Bureau to do particular things. One, sort-of, obscure piece of legislation I sponsored, which actually came from my relation with Pitt Law School, was the Uniform Foreign Money Judgments Recognition Act. The idea for that came from a guy named Ron Brand, who was a law professor who specialized in international business transactions and the problem for that bill was ordinarily it would have been an amendment to Title 42 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, but the reason that it was difficult was that Jim Manderino and later, Bob O'Donnell [Robert W.; State Representative, Philadelphia County, 1973-1994; Speaker, 1990-1992; Democratic Leader, 1989-1990; Democratic Whip, 1983-1986], basically, could not move an Title 42 bills because they would always be used as vehicles by House Republicans to amend so that they could put in

tort reform types of legislation, which none of us wanted. So, we couldn't introduce that particular legislation as an amendment to the Consolidated Statutes, so I think this was probably unorthodox and it would be frowned upon from the standpoint of the best practices of legislative drafting, but I basically asked them and they did draft it as a free-standing bill, and so, it is Title 42, but it Pennsylvania Statutes; it's not in the Consolidated Statutes. So, as a result, it couldn't be used as a vehicle for tort reform. So, that, I think, was probably an example of my legal background.

RW: Since we're talking about some of the issues that you had, what were some of the toughest votes that you had or the toughest issues that you found difficult to get through the process?

CM: Well, early on, one bill that came up was the Ethics Act, at the time, the Sunset Act, the Sunset law was in effect, which meant that virtually, every state agency went through a period of review and would automatically be discontinued or cease to exist unless the General Assembly enacted new legislation to reauthorize that agency. The State Ethics Commission had come up for its sunset period in [19]87 or [19]88 and it had to be reauthorized and there was sort-of, as I recall, a series of continuing resolutions, for lack of better term, that kept the State Ethics Commission alive, but ultimately, it came up for a vote in 1989 to reauthorize it. So, that was a big fight; there was a battle over that. I felt that a lot of the reforms were necessary and appropriate. I actually introduced a few amendments; most of them failed and, I believe, that the one amendment that I may have introduced was somewhere along the lines – because, we actually had a client, Tom Hitchings, who had a State Ethics Commission case, I believe originally under the Ethics Act, there is sort-of a gag order; if a complaint is filed, neither the

complaint nor the respondent could publicly comment on those allegations. Yet, what would happen is the complaint would secretly leak the news of filing of the complaint and even the complaint itself to the news media, so it would be out there reported in the media and you, as the respondent, could not publicly defend yourself. So, I think that may have been one amendment that I proposed that may have been adopted to add some fairness to the system. I think that's still in effect. The Abortion Control Act, I think that came in [19]89. I was in a district that, and I think is still – Harry Readshaw [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1995-present] is my successor, since 1994 – I think there's always been a pro-life member of the House in that district, including myself, but that did have a lot of controversy associated with it and lot of pressure from both sides. And, in fact, one of the people who ran against me in 1990, Theresa Chalich, ran against me because of that vote. So, I didn't find that particular kind-of pressure to be – I really never worried too much about it. I always felt that if people felt like you listened to them and gave them respect and if you could announce or express some reasonable basis for your votes, most people were willing to accept that. We're never going to agree all the time, and I think most people understand that.

RW: Probably, one of the most talked about pieces of legislation that you had wasn't even legislation, it was a resolution.

CM: Right.

RW: That was calling for the impeachment of Judge Rolf Larson [Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice, 1977-1994].

CM: Right.

RW: How did you come to develop that, to author that, at that time; to be the main guy out ahead on that?

CM: Well, I'm not sure why no one else did it, but sort-of the background to that is that there had been a sort-of history of increasingly more serious allegations and proof that Justice Larson had been engaged in improper conduct. And, ultimately, it led to the Supreme Court issuing an order, and I think it was in the nature of a reprimand; it was very mild penalty or sanction that they had imposed for some fairly serious violations. There were conflicts of interest involving real estate transactions, and I don't recall all of the details twenty years later, but very significant ethical problems that would have ordinarily warranted more serious penalties. What had happened is, for reasons that I'm still not clear about, at least two of the Justices, I think [Robert N.C.] Nix and [Nicholas] Papadakos, had to recuse themselves from any decision in that matter. I believe Justice [Stephen, Sr.] Zappala and Justice [Ralph J.] Cappy voted for this reprimand and, of course, Larson could not vote and there was, I think, one member of the Supreme Court that voted against any kind of sanction. And following that decision, Justice Larson was not willing to accept that reprimand and began to engage in actions, at least, that I perceived as being retaliatory, which caused me a great deal of concern from the standpoint that whether the Supreme Court would be able to fairly and properly function in deciding capital cases, matters of life and death, as well as all of the other very important types of cases that would come before them. It was clear that at that point, the Supreme Court had become dysfunctional by Justice

Larson's continued presence. Ordinarily, I would have preferred to leave that disciplinary process to the judiciary itself, but where it was apparent that the judiciary was not going to be able to correct that problem, I thought that the only way to ensure justice for people in Pennsylvania was to remove Justice Larson. At that point and time, there was no criminal prosecution that had been published, so I felt that the nature of that dysfunction and the need to correct it really warranted impeachment. And I still think so. Ultimately, what happened, the House Republicans were pretty much against impeachment at the time. They wanted to defer to the Attorney General, who ultimately, did prosecute Larson who was convicted on a couple of counts, which I believe were related to his obtaining prescription drugs by false means using a staff person. But, in the meantime, he sat on the court, and I think, in retrospect, that shouldn't have been permitted to occur; impeachment should have happened right away. Frank Dermody [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1991-present; Democratic Leader, 2011-present; Democratic Whip, 2009-2010], who is now the House Minority Leader, was one of the prosecutors in the impeachment case, after Justice Larson was convicted.

RW: What type of reaction did you get, either internally or externally from introducing a resolution like that?

CM: Well, a lot of opposition from the Republican side; from the Democratic side, sort-of uncertainty about what to do. It was the first time, I think, any impeachment had been filed in over a century. So, in fact, filing the petition for impeachment, nobody really knew how this was done; it was being invented as we went along. And the other thing and I think I said this at the time; that people needed to make the decision on their own conscious. This is not something that

ought to be campaigned for or against, but you need to really look at your own personal judgment and whether you think this can continue. So, in that respect I was satisfied that I had done what I should do and made my position clear and other people were free to decide for themselves what to do.

RW: I think all-told you had five bills signed into law in three terms. Were there any others that you – now, you can feel free to say all of them – but, where there other bills that you authored that you really fought hard for, that you really thought should have been law?

CM: No. One thing that I'm really glad was accomplished, but it is certainly not a bill, it was an amendment to the Advanced Healthcare Directive Act – and, actually, that amendment came from Karen Ritter [State Representative, Lehigh County, 1987-1994]. She had asked me whether I would introduce this amendment. Basically, it amends the Living Will Law and provides that if a pregnant woman, who is incompetent, is unconscious, but is being kept alive so her child can be born, that the Commonwealth would underwrite all the costs of her medical care. Fortunately, that is an occurrence that seldom occurs in the Commonwealth, but it did occur in Virginia a few years ago and I thought it was really a shame that the family had to go around, sort-of, hat-in-hand for charity. I don't think that anybody should have to do that and risk being impoverished bringing the child into the world by necessary medical care. I don't know if people know that that is available; it's not in the public welfare code, its sort-of hidden away, but I think it's probably a pretty unique benefit that exists in Pennsylvania. Knock on wood, hopefully, we never have to use it, but if we do, it's there. And I think it's something that everyone would agree with. I think it's something that people – in that respect, I think it reflects

very nicely on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It's a statement about what our people believe in and what we are willing to commit to, to help others. So, in that respect, it does represent the Commonwealth.

RW: Do you recall the committees you were involved in?

CM: Yes, yes.

RW: I know you were involved in Judiciary, Urban Affairs during the time that you were here. What was that process like, as opposed to just working and debating on the floor?

CM: The Judiciary committee was very active. Tom Caltagirone [Thomas R.; State Representative, Berks County, 1977-present], who is still, I think the chairman, succeeded Bill DeWeese [H. William; State Representative, Fayette, Green and Washington Counties, 1975-2012; Speaker, 1993-1994; Democratic Leader, 1991-1992 and 1995-2008; Democratic Whip, 1989-1990 and 2009-2010], his predecessor. It was very uncommon for a freshman to be on the Judiciary Committee. But getting back to the trial lawyers, I had at the time and continue to have, a very strong conviction about the rights of people who are injured, so they were happy to see me get on the committee. Getting back to my meeting with Manderino, the summer of [19]88, I told him at the time that that's one thing I wanted to do and part of the meeting was assessing what kind of Judiciary Committee member I would be, because there were other veteran lawmakers who wanted that seat or one of the others that were vacant at that time. So, in that respect, it was an active committee. Tom took us to a lot of state prisons and county jails;

we did a lot of visits along those lines. There was a bit of a battle over things like, particularly in [19]89, [19]90 as I recall, over drug issues. There may have already been drug forfeiture on the books before then, but the Attorney General at the time was very aggressive promoting enhanced penalties for people convicted of drug-related crimes. That was sort-of the beginning of when you begin to see things like safe zones around schools and other places with children, playgrounds and so forth, so we began to see a lot of legislation like that. Tort reform was always, sort-of, in the background, because Democrats had the majority, it really seldom came up as an issue that would be voted on. But, I think those were sort-of the major issues at the time.

RW: You already mentioned the members that you worked with, some of the larger than life characters, if you will: Bill DeWeese, James Manderino, Bob O'Donnell, even Matthew Ryan [Matthew J.; State Representative, Delaware County, 1963-2003; Speaker, 1981-1982 and 1995-2003; Republican Leader, 1979-1980, 1983-1994; Republican Whip, 1973-1978] on the Republican side. What was it like to work side-by-side with them and get to learn from them on a daily basis?

CM: As you said, they are larger than life. Matt Ryan was a great, great leader. One thing that I did get to do, in speaking of other members, in the [19]90 election, Governor [Robert P.] Casey won in a landslide and pulled in, I think, some other members, so we had, I think one hundred and seven or one hundred and eight majority in 1990. So, I suppose because I was one of the least likely to be influenced by the other side of the aisle, I was one of two or three Democrats who had a seat on the Republican side of the aisle. So, one of the things that I actually really

enjoyed, I sat in the second row behind guys like Ron Raymond [Ronald; State Representative, Delaware County, 1985-2008], Tommy Tomlinson [Robert M.; State Representative, Bucks County, 1991-1994; State Senator, 1995-present] and in front of Nick Micozzie [Nicholas A.; State Representative, Delaware County, 1979-2014] and Bill Adolph [William F., Jr.; State Representative, Delaware County, 1989-present]. So, that Delaware County and Bucks and Montgomery County delegations were all sitting around me and they were great guys. I really like being around them. And, actually, the other Democrats that had seats next to me – that was one nice thing about this, I got an aisle seat – Bob O’Donnell actually had one of those seats. He was Speaker then and did not have to occupy the seat and Kathy McHale [Katherine; State Representative, Lehigh County, 1991-1992], who replace her husband on an interim basis, Paul McHale [State Representative, Lehigh County, 1983-1991; U.S. Representative, 1993-1998], she sat next to me for a while. I can’t remember who else, but that was sort-of a rare experience. And, you know, I followed Nick Micozzie and Bill Adolph in later years. Nick is really one of the outstanding members of the General Assembly, I think. I followed with a lot of interest, what he has done with property tax reform, and I hope that people will remember him when, eventually, that does come about, because he’s fought a great fight for that and Bill Adolph too. The other aspect of that experience is that it gave you a sense of bipartisanship and nonpartisanship that I really enjoyed and you get to know people better just by being around them.

RW: That was going to be my next question. There seems to be such a partisan debate, slant on almost every topic now; what was it like back then? You said, it seemed to be more bipartisan, caucuses seemed to do more things, members seemed to do more things together either in the

House or extracurricularly; what was it like serving, the nature, back then?

CM: Well, I think there was a great deal of camaraderie. I would spend time with Ken Lee [Kenneth E.; State Representative, Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties, 1989-1994] who was a House Republican, a young guy. There are a lot of card games around town. My first term I lived right across the street from the capitol, called the Early Arms, sort-of what people called it. The building is still there, but it was basically a boarding house; you had a room. It didn't have a kitchen or anything; it was just a place to sleep. I think Ken Jadlovec [Kenneth M.; State Representative, Cameron, Clearfield, McKean and Pottery Counties, 1987-2002], I didn't play cards – I still don't play cards – but Ken Jadlovec had a place in the Early Arms and he would have people over and they'd play cards at night. The firefighters, they were very active and had been for decades, since the [19]60s, in lobbying here in Harrisburg. They would come up every week that the Legislature was in session and then they would host a card game and they would invite Democrats and Republicans alike down to, what is now, the Crown Plaza, I think it is now the Holiday Inn then, and, in fact, I think Mr. Telek had been at that card game the night that he had died. Fred Trello [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1975-2002] and Tom Petrone [Thomas C.; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1981-2008] and Tony DeLuca [Anthony M.; State Representative, 1983-present], they would all go over there, so, they spent a lot of time together. I don't know if this is an accurate perception on my part, but in those days I felt that politics attracted almost exclusively people who liked other people and who wanted to be liked. And as a result, I think that type of personality, you are more willing to be agreeable and compromise. My perception now, and this is a perception perhaps more as a private citizen is, that more and more people are being attracted to or becoming

involved in politics who may not really like other people, or at least some types of people and I think that's unfortunate. There's a lot of people, and maybe more at the national level, even at state and local levels, people who really don't care if other people like them. I can understand the idea of personal conviction, but I think there is an uglier and steamier side of politics that I don't think was present back then. I thought there were a lot of funny people. One of the transcripts of these interviews that I have read, Gaynor Cawley [State Representative, Lackawanna County, 1981-2006] is like, one of the all-time funniest people. Gerry Kosinski [Gerald A.; State Representative, Philadelphia County, 1983-1992], is another guy, from Philadelphia; very smart, witty and entertaining and just enjoyable to be around. So, my perception is there has been a change, unfortunately, not for the better.

RW: A theme has sort-of run through your coming to the House and, again, it occurred in 2006, when there was a pay-raise; there seemed to be a fallout and the makeup of the House changed drastically from that point on, I think we had, probably, seventy-five percent turnaround from members who had served at that time. There were a lot of reforms that were made. Looking back now, what were some of the things that you, maybe, would have changed about the either the legislative process, the way things were done; and then, do you agree with some of the reforms or do you think there needs to be more reform from the way things are done now?

CM: Well, taking, first of all, things that I would not have changed. I think in hindsight, and I think, actually, I thought this at the time, in [19]93, following the [19]92 election, there was an internal battle in the House Democratic caucus; Bill DeWeese ran against the sitting Speaker, Bob O'Donnell. I was a supporter of Bob, you know, it had nothing against Bill, but, he was the

sitting incumbent Speaker; there was no reason for him not to continue to be Speaker. I thought he did a very good job. He was what a Speaker ought to be; he was impartial, he had instituted some management reforms within the Democratic caucus and the within the Bipartisan Management Committee that were certainly not drastic, by any means. [They were] things like, systemizing and standardizing salaries within the legislative staff, particularly in the Democratic side, so that people who were doing similar work would be paid approximately the same amount of money. I think the intent of that was to prevent House members trying to use their votes to leverage rewarding their staff members. Things like that, Bob did, starting as majority leader and then continuing as Speaker. I never really understood why he should have been unseeded and, I think, that it did set in motion a long series of events that ultimately led to 2006. I think Bob is excellent as sort-of a moderating influence on members of both caucuses. I think he had high ideals and principals and he reminded people a lot that you need to be mindful of how the public will perceive your conduct. So, he used his position in a way, and was very active I think in this regard, to make sure that we didn't do things as an institution that would create a negative impression on members of the public. I think in his absence, the remaining leaders did not have that strong of a sense of being aware of and caring how the public would perceive things like pay raises. So, I think, in the [19]90s you got indexing of legislative salaries, in order to, presumably, avoid having to cast votes for a pay increase, there were changes to the pension at the time and then, ultimately, the 2006 pay raise, that was a disaster and rightfully so. I think it does go back to the change in leadership – and when I say the change in leadership, Matt Ryan and O'Donnell, I think shared similar values, that was my perception, in terms of moderating the worst impulses of the members of the House and the Senate, as well, I think, in their absence things sort-of got off the rails.

RW: It seems now, also, that the media is much more involved in the everyday goings on in state politics. Did you find that to be the case back then? I know cameras were just starting to be introduced onto the House floor...

CM: Yeah.

RW: So people could see actually what was going on in the chamber. But, this seems like, everyday there's a bit of news on what goes on in state politics, whether in print or in the TV media. What kind of sense did you have about that when you served?

CM: I still have a perception that the news media is lazy; I don't think they work very hard at this. The experience that I had, I recall two bills that illustrate what I think is the news media's attention to ridiculous issues and ignoring serious ones. Getting back to, "is there was anything that I would have fought for that I would have like to have seen get passed?" I introduced a bill to have a progressive income tax, to have a standard deduction, raise the rate, but that would have given tax relief to, at least, the majority of people in Pennsylvania. It would have required people, like myself, who make more money, to pay more. But, I thought then and I still think that that was fair and would be better for the economy as well. But, getting the news media to pay attention to that issue, forget it. I think there was one guy that came to the press conference. There was no amount of discussion that would interest them. And that's an issue that affects everybody, whether you think it's good or bad; it was important. And it was important to have

the discussion and I think we would have been better off had the bill passed, but, in contrast, another bill that I introduced was called the Peeping Tom bill. Did that pass?

RW: It passed the House, but it didn't get out of [Committee in the Senate].

CM: That bill came up in, I guess, [19]93. What had happened was, there was a YMCA, and it's still there on Curry Hollow Road – at least, I think it's still there – in Pleasant Hills, and some kid – I say kid; a young man in his twenties – who worked at the YMCA pool, figured out a way to go down in the – all the work to do this – go down between two walls, one of which is the girls locker room, and he replaces a mirror and so he is watching girls undress in the girls locker room. So, he got relatively minor charges and the D.A. [District Attorney] – this is obviously in Allegheny County – the D.A. felt that because he was allowed to be on the premises, that there was no charge for burglary. Basically, he said we can't prosecute him for a felony. Well, understandably, the parents of the girls involved were very upset and they were very angry, came to me. I got a lot of phone calls, a lot of letters, about how terrible this is and how you got to do something about it. So, I introduced the Peeping Tom bill. I got national news coverage. You know, that's a bill that would affect a few people once every ten or twenty years. There was, like, radio stations that were calling and wanted to interview me. It was in newspapers all over the state, because it's all about sex. So, in that respect, I thought that it illustrated what I think is sort-of typical in the news media today, that we see, just in the last month, we're going to talk twenty-four hours a day about where an airplane is under the water and speculate about all the things that could have happened², and meanwhile we're really not

² Malaysian Airlines, flight 370, en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, went missing on March 9, 2014 over the South China Sea.

going to talk too seriously or too extensively about things that are affecting everybody in a major way. So, that unfortunately, is something that needs to change.

RW: Just imagine if we had internet and social media and email and everything else, all the advances we've had since then; how do you think that would have affected your job on an everyday basis, having people being able to contact you twenty-four, seven, on any type of issue?

CM: They could contact me because people had my home phone and I think it would have been good. Even now, with my smartphone, I stay in constant contact with my office and monitor things that are going on, my email, newsfeeds and so forth, so, I actually kind-of enjoy that. I like doing things in little bites. I think and I hope that constituents would like that and being able to be in touch. The one thing that, perhaps, I would not care much for is the anonymity that often comes with posting on websites and that type of thing. I think it appears to embolden and encourage people to be mean and to really fly off the handle. That was something that you didn't really have to deal with too often. When it did happen, and there were some occasions, for example, on the Abortion Control Act. We had a protest at my office; the pro-choice people, in fact, Theresa Chalich and her supporters came and protested my office while I was in Harrisburg, so I couldn't actually be there, and there were news cameras there and what they did is, there was a dry cleaner next door, and they went to the dry cleaner and they got a bunch of coat hangers and they hung the coat hangers on the front of my office, which is pretty clever. But what I did was, I said, we're going to use all the coat hangers to have a clothing drive for families that are in need, so we did turn that around. But, that is something that should happen in

politics; people should be able to express themselves in that way. But, you know, when they take ownership of it, I think that's inherently more respectful. It might make me more uncomfortable, but at least, you know, if you're willing to do that and be up front about it, I respect that. Theresa and I have been on good terms for twenty years. I don't see her very often, but, that's okay. But, I think the anonymity of websites and so forth, that's one negative thing about it.

RW: Why did you decide to leave the House after three terms?

CM: Well, in 1994, and I had been chairman of the Allegheny County delegation for that last term, the Democratic delegation, we had introduced the local sales tax, the Allegheny County sales tax. I was not a sponsor of that, but myself, Rick Cessar, Mike Fisher [D. Michael; State Representative, 1975-1980; State Senator, 1980-1996; Pennsylvania Attorney General, 1997-2003], who was a state senator at the time, Tom Michlovic, we had all worked very hard with some of the civic leaders to institute and one percent sales tax in Allegheny County that would fund things like the museums, the libraries and the regional parks. So, that was a very successful effort and so, having been chairman of the delegation, in [19]94 Rick Santorum [U.S. Representative, 1991-1994; U.S. Senator, 1995-2006] was planning to running for Senate against Harris Wofford [U.S. Senator, 1991-1994] and so there was a vacancy. I lived in Santorum's Congressional district, so I belatedly decided to run in, like, November of [19]93 and I was kind-of, and I still have, a bad feeling about running for two jobs at once. If you really think you're good enough for another job, you really ought to just run for that office, which I did. So, I ran in the primary – and that was another crowded primary – Mike Doyle [Michael F.; U.S.

Representative, 1995-present], who is the incumbent Congressman, a guy named Mike Adams and another guy named John Delano, were the other major candidates and I think there were some other guys. Richard Caliguiri – speaking of, like, the news media, I think there was one article on the Congressional primary in the newspapers and it involved Richard Caliguiri’s posing nude, in I think he had a newspaper ad or something. It was not the mayor of Pittsburgh; it was a distant cousin who had the same name. It was a side view; it was not full frontal. But that was, like, the one article of any newspaper that actually carried about the race. But, Mike won that primary and he’s been an excellent Congressman. I’ve supported him ever since.

RW: Do you have any desire to run for public office again, being relatively young?

CM: No, I don’t. I reside back in Pittsburgh again. After I left the House, I lived in Munhall for a while and eventually, as my kids got older, we moved out to Upper Saint Clair, further out in the suburbs. We lived there for probably about twelve, thirteen years and given that it’s a very Republican district, I had no intention or desire to run there. But, I’ve moved back to the city; I work here in Harrisburg, but I maintain my permanent residence in the city. I guess Harry Readshaw is my state legislator and he’s running against Erin Molchany [State Representative, Allegheny County, 2013-2014] now, because of redistricting, getting back to the Horgos/Dawida history, and both Harry and Erin would make excellent members of the House of Representatives. I think they both have very good records and I’ve known Harry for a long, long time, back since [19]88. He was a prominent funeral director in the neighborhood and so I really wouldn’t have – if the Governor came along and wanted to make me a judge, I think I’d have a hard time saying no, but other than that, no I don’t have any plans to run.

RW: Well, you certainly answered my next question, which was going to be, do you stay active and top of what's going on politically? It seems like you do, with the people who are in the district and the reforms that are going on. Is that something that you regularly do to try to stay in the know with what's going on and who's representing and who is running?

CM: I haven't in the last few years, since 2008, I've been working in Harrisburg, so I haven't had the opportunity to have that much involvement, but when I was in Upper Saint Clair, I was the chairman of the Upper Saint Clair Democratic Committee for several years and so I was very active during that period of time. Dan Miller [State Representative, Allegheny County, 2013-present] was one of my colleagues; he was the chairman of the Mount Lebanon Democratic Committee and he is somebody who I really admire. I think he is the kind of legislator that I was – and Matt Smith [Matthew; State Representative, Allegheny County, 2007-2012; State Senator, 2013-present]. So, I follow them. I think they're doing a great job and I think, you know, their districts are very lucky to be represented by them.

RW: What aspects of your job as a legislator would you say you enjoyed the most and enjoyed the least?

CM: Well, I think the most; I like the people. Constituents are very nice people. That district is really a nice cross-section of Pittsburgh; it's ethnic. Pittsburgh is a big city of very small neighborhoods, so everybody knows everybody and there's a lot of hospitality and neighborliness, friendship. There were people like Zora Mae Stone, who was a committee

woman up in the 31st Ward, up in Lincoln Place, the neighborhood called Gates Manor. She was the committee woman up there and Gates Manor was a precinct that was all residential; there were no school buildings, no churches, nothing in that precinct. So, the voting machines were all in her basement on Election Day. So, all the neighbors would go to Zora's house to vote and she would cook. She was Serbian and would just make, you know, it a great experience to go to Gates Manor on Election Day. That reminds me of another thing: the election that I won by fifty-five votes, I had a law school friend of mine, Dan Kashka and his wife Maureen, [who] worked at that polling place. She stood there from seven a.m. to eight p.m.; never moved, never went to the ladies room, nothing, and she met every single voter there, and when you have that kind of help – she may have met fifty-five voters who voted for me, so if she misses a few, I may not be here today. But, getting back to Zora Stone, there was a lot of that in that district; churches that had their own Lenten or Christmas events, neighborhoods that had special Veteran's Day or Memorial Day parades. I think one of the things that I really liked up in Munhall, I guess it was a Memorial Day parade, where I got to give the Memorial Day speech. You know, there was Kioto's Bar and Pearl's Café and Joe Piscianari's Barbershop and Valses Restaurant; there were just so many interesting places and people where you felt comfortable. That was one nice thing as a legislator; you always had an invitation to share time with them, they welcomed you. So, if you do like being around people, that is one of the best things. The worst thing? You know, I don't really think there are any. I really enjoyed my three terms. I don't miss the fact that I didn't stay there. My kids were young; I think my oldest son was six and my youngest son was three when I left, so I got to spend a lot of time with them being a private citizen that I would not ordinarily have the opportunity to take advantage of. That, maybe, would have been the one thing that I did not like about the job is that the time that I had

to be in Harrisburg was time that I couldn't be with my family, especially when the kids are that young. It puts a lot more pressure on your spouse to take care of the kids alone. You know, there were times where I was actually driving home on Thanksgiving Day; I missed Halloween. So, all those things that, you know, I think a lot of parents take for granted that they get to do with their children, those were things that I missed. And, fortunately, I didn't miss all their childhood like that. I saw that with other people. I know Ron Cowell [Ronald R.; State Representative, Allegheny County, 1975-1998] just did a – I don't know if he's ever talked about this, but, he did just an incredible – when you talk about how great parents are, his son was pretty sick and Ron would drive back to Pittsburgh every day from Harrisburg when he was in session. He would drive back so he could be with his son, every night. You know, that's a very, very big demand and stress on your family. Ultimately, our best accomplishments are our kids, so whatever I may have done or may have been able to do in the House of Representatives, it really pales in comparison to what I can do as a father.

RW: Any disappointments or regrets, either politically, legislatively?

CM: Well, it wouldn't have been bad to win that Congressional primary; I think I would have enjoyed that. On the other hand, Mike Doyle has been a great Congressman. I'm not sure that I could have done better, and I certainly could have done worse. So, in that respect, I am glad he won. He had a lot of talents and abilities that I don't have, or at least they are more highly developed, so in that respect, I think it probably worked out best for everybody. The one thing, too, and I suppose in terms politically in terms of being a candidate that I've said this when I was a candidate, I told other people who aspire to be candidates, that there's Aristotle, I think, said,

“An unexamined life is not worth living.” That’s, I think, one of the great things about human beings; we can look back at our lives and ask ourselves, ‘what have I done poorly, what can I improve and what have I done that’s right?’ and continue to do that. Elections, ultimately, are about examining our life as a community. That’s something that other people in other counties don’t have the opportunity to do. So, if you are a candidate, just asking your fellow citizens to think about our life as a nation as a state as a neighborhood, you are doing a great service whether you win or you lose, because if we don’t examine our collective lives, it’s not worth living. We haven’t justified our existence as a nation or state or as a community unless we really ask the difficult questions of each other and of ourselves. So, I always encourage people to be a candidate and be a candidate for that reason. If you win, great; if you don’t and if you’ve done the right thing as a candidate, if you’ve asked people serious questions and gotten people to think about our country and our state, then you’ve done a great service and you should be proud of that. In that respect, I think I’ve succeeded as a candidate.

RW: What types of insights have you taken away from your time in the House that you still apply today?

CM: One insight that I had from the House is that before I got to the House of Representatives, I kind-of viewed people in public office as being sort-of the heroes and the rogues, for lack of a better term. People who were, sort-of, the idealistic and high-minded individuals and those who were sort-of like the run-of-the-mill politicians that were pragmatic and winning elections, and you encounter both of them, I’m sure not only in the House of Representatives, but in any institution. And what I found was that preconception that I had; you would be surprised, that in

crucial moments, the people who were sort-of the high-minded and idealistic individuals may crumble to self-interests, and then you would see people who you thought of as being sort-of the street politicians would be the ones who rise up to the moment and do something courageous, politically courageous, and legislation got passed because there were people took a stand for what they thought was right, they had no advantage in it. One guy, Frank Giglioti [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1989-200], was unfortunately, another friend in an adjoining legislative district, Frank got into trouble and he's passed away, but Frank was one of those guys that, you know, you thought of as sort-of a street politician kind of a guy, and in fact, I wrote a letter on his behalf to Judge Diamond, you know, "I saw Frank do things for people and for issues that wasn't going to help Frank." So, I think in that respect, the experience gave me some perspective of, "Don't be quick to judge other people; not everything is what it seems and there's a little bit of good and bad in everybody." So, that would be one. The other, I think, it the perspective of coming, again, being so interested in history and politics and, really, sort-of glorified that realm as something that I aspired to, but ultimately realizing that really life is lived in small places with your family, your neighbors; that all the things that you can do in politics that might make the history books really are not as significant as all those little things that really are not going to be remembered in history books. Your life's most important work is in those small places.

RW: Lastly, I wanted to ask you, in taking stock over the last twenty years of your career, how would you like your tenure as a state House member to be remembered?

CM: Well, I have been fortunate to have people tell me and say nice things about me, before and after I was in the Legislature. Ivan Itkin [State Representative, Allegheny County, 1973-1998; Democratic Leader, 1993-1994; Democratic Whip, 1990-1992, 1995-1998], who is another friend and who was the House majority leader for a while, he told other people that I was the conscious of the House. Ethics was never really a big legislative issue for me; it was not a legislative priority. I thought the Ethics Act was good, but my interest was more in economic development and other issues, but that's probably one of the highest honors that anyone has ever expressed. Bill DeWeese called me the young Lafayette, the Marquis de Lafayette. I think that I would like to be remembered as a friend of labor, of people who work for a living, somebody who was principled. I mean, I always told people how I would vote, why I would vote the way I did, so I'd like to be remembered that way.

RW: Well, thank you again for taking the time to speak with us and I wish you well.

CM: All right. Thanks very much. It was a great pleasure. Thank you.