

Interview of Wyoming Governor Mike Sullivan

From the Archives of the Wyoming Department of State Parks & Cultural Resources

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MikeSullivanPart1_mixdown.mp3;
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Photo of Governor Mike Sullivan from web site
Made in Wyoming
[http://www.madeinwyoming.net/
profiles/msullivan.php](http://www.madeinwyoming.net/profiles/msullivan.php)

Transcriber's notes: I have added some reference footnotes to this transcript where I thought appropriate. In most cases I have deleted redundant ands, ers, uhs, buts, false starts, etc. If I deleted an entire phrase, I have inserted ellipses ... Where you find brackets [] I have added words for explanation or to complete an awkward sentence. Parentheses () are used for incidental non-verbal sounds, like laughter. Words emphasized by the speaker are italicized.

Introduction: By Sue Castaneda, Program Coordinator

Welcome to this oral history of Wyoming's 29th governor, Michael J. Sullivan. Governor Sullivan served from 1987 to 1995. Here he is interviewed by oral historian Mark Junge in 1992 while he was still in office. This podcast is produced by Sue Castaneda for the Wyoming State Archives, the Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources.

Beginning of Part 1:

Mark Junge: This is the twenty-fourth of January, 1992. My name is Mark Junge and I'm in the office of Governor Mike Sullivan, here in Cheyenne, at the Capitol Building. Governor Sullivan and I are going to talk a little bit—with your permission, Governor—a little bit about your background, a little bit about becoming Governor, a little bit about the job itself, and a little bit about your position on various issues. Does that sound fair?

Governor Sullivan: Okay. That sounds satisfactory to me.

Mark Junge: How would you like me to address you?

Governor Sullivan: Well, for the purposes of this, why don't you just say Mike. Or Governor. Whatever you're most comfortable with.

Mark Junge: I'm comfortable with Mike. I think it's symbolic, you know, for posterity.

Governor Sullivan: That's the way we do things in Wyoming. That's fine.

Mark Junge: Okay. I guess the first thing I'd like to cover is a little bit of biographical material. First of all, what is your full name?

Governor Sullivan: Michael John Sullivan.

Mark Junge: And your birth date?

Governor Sullivan: September 22, 1939.

Mark Junge: Where at?

Governor Sullivan: Omaha, Nebraska. One of the crosses that I carry is that I was born a Nebraskan. Both of my parents were born in Wyoming and had the bad judgment to move to Nebraska for a few years and that's where I was born.

Mark Junge: I see. Well, why did they go to Omaha?

Governor Sullivan: Dad graduated from law school in 19—like, '35 or '36 and you couldn't get a job anywhere, so Senator O'Mahoney¹, I think then Senator O'Mahoney, got him a job with the Federal Land Bank in Omaha. My mother was a secretary at the law school and she—sort of coincidentally, not because of their relationship, because it hadn't started yet—she moved to Omaha to take a job with the Federal Land Bank and they got married there, and my older brother and I were born in Omaha.

Mark Junge: Now, can you go back a little ways and talk just briefly—

Governor Sullivan: Further than that?

Mark Junge: (Both laugh) Yeah! Can you go back beyond your birth? What about your Irish ancestry—and your mother's side? Wasn't she a Hamilton?

Governor Sullivan: Her name was Hamilton. Her father was an engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad and she was born in Evanston and lived there, and then they moved around as railroaders were prone to do, and lived in Fort Collins for a while. When I grew up my grandparents Hamilton were living in Torrington, still with the railroad. My mother graduated from the University of Wyoming and then worked at the law school.

Mark Junge: Was that English? Is that an English background?

Governor Sullivan: My recollection is that there may have been some Welsh in there, but her mother was Irish. Her mother's name was Berney I think, and my father's mother's maiden name was Berne.

Mark Junge: Now your father was strictly Irish.

Governor Sullivan: They were Irish. His father was born in O'Neill Nebraska, which by its name you can tell has some Irish influence, and then came to Wyoming as a recent

¹ **Joseph Christopher O'Mahoney** (November 5, 1884 – December 1, 1962) was a United States Senator (Democrat) from Wyoming. Elected on November 2, 1954, to fill the vacancy caused by the suicide death of Lester C. Hunt, and also elected for the full term commencing January 3, 1955, and served from November 29, 1954, to January 3, 1961.

graduate of Creighton Law School and ended up practicing law in Laramie, Wyoming.

Mark Junge: This was your father or your grandfather?

Governor Sullivan: My father's father. My father was born in Laramie.

Mark Junge: What was your father's father's name?

Governor Sullivan: Joseph—J. R. Sullivan. I don't know—I'm not sure I know what the R is for.
Joseph R. Sullivan.

Mark Junge: Now it was his father who came to America?

Governor Sullivan: No, I don't think so. I think it was one generation before that.

Mark Junge: So you're fifth generation born in America.

Governor Sullivan: That's the best I know.

Mark Junge: Now on both sides of the family were people raised Catholic?

Governor Sullivan: Mm-hm. Both sides were Catholic.

Mark Junge: Were you ever told by your grandfather, [or] your father any of the good stories that sometimes fathers or grandfathers tell their kids about how they came across or how they—I'm not talking about covered wagons—

Governor Sullivan: How they came across? No, actually not. I didn't have much information on that, and I suppose part of that was because both sides, both of my grandfathers, were here. I mean, they were here in the United States. They didn't come across, and I'm not sure that their fathers came across. I think they were both second or third generation here. My Grandfather Hamilton's father was also an engineer on the railroad and lived in Evanston. So my Great Grandfather Hamilton was an engineer on the railroad in Evanston. And I suppose he started darn near as close to when the railroad started in Evanston as you can come.

Mark Junge: Well that sort of explains the Wyoming connection. You're talking about the U. P. [Union Pacific]. But it doesn't explain how the Sullivans got to Wyoming.

Governor Sullivan: Well, I don't know what brought my grandfather here except he was a lawyer looking for a job and somebody must have told him it was a good place. He went to Casper first. I didn't even know that, I think, until I started practicing law in Casper and we had a lady that—we moved into a house in 1970—lady that lived on a corner was named Tess Shulte. She was the first white woman born in Natrona County. She was then about 90. And she told me she knew my grandfather in 1902. When he came to Casper there was a group of single people and she was one of them and he was one of them and they sort of socialized together. He stayed in Casper a couple of years and then, I think, came to work for the Attorney General's Office and maybe worked here in Cheyenne for a year or two and then went to Laramie.

Mark Junge: So this legal background goes back through three generations at least.

Governor Sullivan: Three at least. And I think that's as far as it goes back.

Mark Junge: What is the predilection for legal work in the Sullivan family?

Governor Sullivan: I don't know. I suppose it's like any family. If you're raised with that kind of influence, you sort of have a tendency, whether it's the shoe business or the legal business to get into it.

Mark Junge: Speaking of influence, one of the questions on that form that I'd like you to fill out sometime, or have a secretary fill out if you don't have time, is who was the most important or influential person to you? You were a lawyer. Your father and your grandfather were lawyers. Who was the most influential person?

Governor Sullivan: Well, I think it's difficult to pick out, but I'm sure that by almost any standard my father would have been. But my mother played a very important role. My grandfather did until his death. Then my Grandmother Sullivan lived until she was 99. She died five or six years ago, maybe seven years ago now, and she was a very important sort of role model. She was a very, very wonderful lady. Anybody

that knew her would say that. She was a devout, good person. She never met anybody that was a stranger and she never met anybody that she could find any bad in, as near as I could tell.

Mark Junge: She was a devout Catholic?

Governor Sullivan: She was.

Mark Junge: Did she have a brogue?

Governor Sullivan: No, no brogues in my family!

Mark Junge: Probably wore off after a couple generations.

Governor Sullivan: I think that's what happened.

Mark Junge: No Irish stories, though?

Governor Sullivan: Well, none that I can recall, offhand. There were a lot of them and particularly on the Sullivan side in Laramie on Grand Avenue, where my aunt still lives. It was sort of a gathering place for a lot of people, lot of students and a lot of various people. The key was under the rock, and most of the time the door wasn't locked and people just sort of wandered in and out. And there were lots of stories but—

Mark Junge: I assume—maybe I assume too much here, but—I assume that your Catholic upbringing was very important to you.

Governor Sullivan: Very. It was certainly formulative in my early life and I think has been a part of the development, what everything that has motivated me—not motivated me, but directed my actions over the years.

Mark Junge: My wife is Catholic. And my boys were raised Catholic. I had to sign a piece of paper that said they would be raised Catholic. I'm born Missouri Lutheran—German Lutheran. You know, my wife is beginning to question now some of the things in her faith. She's beginning to question attitudes and opinions of the Pope

and the Bishop and the Priest and yet it doesn't sound to me like you've had that sort of problem.

Governor Sullivan: Well, I wouldn't say it quite that directly. I probably am less questioning than a lot of people, but I'm not without my concerns about how many of the both traditions and dictates of the Church really fit in to modern life, and I say that as a citizen and as a Catholic and as a governor. Some of my own positions, as an example, don't necessarily follow lock step with what the Church's positions are.

Mark Junge: For example?

Governor Sullivan: Well, in abortion, if I were to follow strictly the Church's position, and I've been accused of my position being the Church's position and not my own, it would not likely have the exceptions that I've been willing to place for incest and rape and a couple of other items that I've said publicly are the position that I take. It isn't as strictly or purely as I understand the Catholic Church position. We just—while I don't think it's a Church position, certainly I had a lot of 'advice', let's call it that, with respect to the death penalty that we've just gone through this week.

Mark Junge: I was going to ask you about that. I think it's important to note on tapes like this for posterity, that you've just been through one heck of a crisis in the Hopkinson² affair, and I think that one question might be in the minds of some people how do you square these two different ideas about life, the fact that you can be—

Governor Sullivan: Pro life? Pro-life in the abortion sense and pro-capital punishment in that aspect? I was asked that question as late as last week, I guess last Friday, and I'd been asked it before. And my response was a simple one: I don't think that you have to reconcile those two positions, because I don't think they're comparable positions. In one sense, you're talking about what those of us who take the anti-abortion stance view as *innocent* life, to life that has no one speaking for it, that

² **Mark A. Hopkinson** (October 8, 1949 – January 22, 1992) was a convicted murderer who was executed by the U.S. state of Wyoming in 1992 for the murders of Vincent Vehar, Beverly Vehar, John Vehar, and Jeffrey Green. He is the only person to have been subject to the death penalty in Wyoming since the 1960s.

has offended no one or society, has not had the protection of the constitutional rights that on the other side you have, and so my response has been I think it's apples and oranges. You're not comparing—while it sounds good semantically, it really isn't an accurate comparison of issues. Capital punishment on the other hand, you're talking about something that I think is within the dictates of the state. That is, the state is charged with certain things, such as the protection and safety of its citizens, and punishment for crime is one of those. The death penalty has a long history, and I don't purport to be an expert on that. The person who is threatened with execution has committed a crime that is abhorrent by its nature, and by the judgment of his peers, or her peers, and has been afforded all of the protections that we grant to people in that position in society by having first adopted and legitimized the death penalty, and secondly by having afforded those constitutional protections, notwithstanding that protection has determined that the death penalty was appropriate. Then you just simply have to decide as a governor where do you stand on capital punishment and does this case fit that stance.

Mark Junge: You've been through a heck of a lot lately, haven't you?

Governor Sullivan: Well it hasn't been what I'd call the easiest week or month of my gubernatorial career!

Mark Junge: I can't imagine—are you still sort of recuperating from that?

Governor Sullivan: I think so, in a sense. It's not something that you close the door and wander on and never think about again. And in particular, this case: The precedent that we were re-establishing—the first execution in twenty five years in Wyoming—and a case which generated a good bit of publicity, both by reason of the fact that we were altering that twenty five years of precedent, and by reason of the fact that the case had a lot of unique sort of twists and characteristics to it.

Mark Junge: The fact that he didn't actually pull the trigger?

Governor Sullivan: Well, yeah, that's right. The fact that he was accused and found guilty of arranging and ordering a murder and not having performed it himself gave it a

special characteristic that I think made the pressure more intense and actually divided the issue into more than just pro or con death penalty. You had the other aspects of those who claimed he was not guilty.

Mark Junge: How did your faith, your Catholic faith, play a role in your getting through this crisis?

Governor Sullivan: Well, it played, I suppose to some degree, contradictory roles in the sense that I got appeals from individual priests and from religious—not only in Wyoming but throughout the country—for me to commute, claiming that as a Christian and as a Catholic, that should be my position, and there shouldn't be any question about it. On the other hand, I think it provided some strength for a feeling that, look—I have a responsibility. I have to make, to some degree at least, my own moral judgments about the issue, which I'd made a long time ago, and that having done that, I could rest with reasonable comfort and confidence in my own decisions.

Mark Junge: Where was the point where the crisis became the worst for you?

Governor Sullivan: Oh, (sighs) I wouldn't say in the sense that the crisis became the worst. Certainly the worst time was during the time when the execution was about to take place. I was in my office with an open—not an open line but a dedicated line to the penitentiary—

Mark Junge: Why would you have an open line if you had firmly made up your mind?

Governor Sullivan: It was a part of the procedures that had been established at the penitentiary for a combination of reasons. I think first and foremost, that in almost any execution you have the potential for last minute legal changes or stays. I suspect the procedures that we adopted that came from a combination of other states were designed to protect, to make sure that if an execution takes place it doesn't take place when somebody's been advised that there's been a stay. So presumably the governor and the attorney general are the ones who would be advised of that. So there's an open line.

Secondly, right up until the time the execution takes place the governor retains the power of commutation. And I think for the benefit of those who are performing the execution it's appropriate that they have a direct line to the person who potentially could say, look, I've decided, or I've just come upon some new information, or a man just ran in my office and confessed to the murder, (laughter) we'll stop it. I think that's only fair to those people who are actually charged with physically accomplishing the execution.

Mark Junge: Now looking at this dispassionately, apart from the emotional issue, and the issue of your faith, how do you think this thing, this whole affair, the Hopkinson affair, if you want to call it that, affected you politically?

Governor Sullivan: Don't know. Don't care. And that's sort of the pure easy way to say it. It's not that I wouldn't speculate, as an example, how it affected me politically. It certainly was one of the concerns that I had, that the decision wasn't made by me on the basis of how it was going to affect me politically. Frankly, as you go through all of these things and debate the emotions, you say to yourself, this is not a political decision. And I don't believe it was. But you always worry that somehow you're making the decision in part based upon its political impact.

Mark Junge: Sure. And you're a person who cares about other people.

Governor Sullivan: I prayed a lot about the decision. I had made the decision some time ago, but it, until it's done, there's a constant barrage from the outside to get you to change that, and there's a constant questioning, I think, as a person who cares, whether you're making the right decision. And one of the things I prayed about is that it wasn't a political decision. That my mind wasn't playing tricks on me. That I was arriving at this conclusion because I thought it would be better for me politically. I don't think that was the case.

Mark Junge: Fair enough. But I feel, too, that knowing you a little bit and having studied your career just a wee bit, I get the feeling that you care deeply about other people, and certainly you must have thought how the Wyoming people looked at you as a decision maker.

Governor Sullivan: That's right. You couldn't help but look at that. And then you're affected by sort of the noise too, the crescendo out there, and in this case certainly the crescendo was to commute. I don't think that necessarily reflected the public sentiment as a whole, but certainly the noise was for commutation. So you have all kinds of cross currents that sort of come into play and ultimately you start saying to yourself, well, do I really value life, and you know, what is it?

Mark Junge: You were tested!

Governor Sullivan: It was a test, but one of the things I feel comfortable about. And I will say on this, because it's something, if I'd been asked the question, I would have shared it I suspect. I was faced with this decision, the first sort of exposure to the death penalty, a long, long time ago when my father, as a lawyer in Douglas, Wyoming, defended a young man who was about eighteen who was charged with—wasn't charged, he was guilty of killing a tourist off of a road not far from Douglas. He'd pulled a pistol on him and shot him about six times. And he was on a kind of a crime spree across the country. My father defended him, he was convicted, and he was sentenced to death. And he wore my suit to the trial. Well, it was a crisis in our family, because you get close to the people you defend, and he liked this young man, and his mother came out and stayed with us during the trial, and I knew how deeply my father felt about the death penalty in that case. As it turned out, Governor Simpson commuted that young man, whose name was Ernest Lindsay.

So at that time, and I was about twelve, I was pretty dead set against the death penalty. And I think that was consistent probably with what my father would have felt at that time too, although he'd been a county prosecutor before that and was then subsequently a county prosecutor again. Then there was another murder of a young girl, and I think that that coupled with another event that Charlie Starkweather³ was captured in Douglas when I was in college. And those things

³ **Charles Raymond Starkweather** (November 24, 1938 – June 25, 1959) was an American spree killer who murdered eleven people in Nebraska and Wyoming during a two-month road trip with his 14-year-

caused me to question whether or not I could really just sort of say, no, I don't believe in the death penalty without regard to the nature of the crime.

Mark Junge: What was your father's opinion?

Governor Sullivan: I don't know that I can tell you for sure. I don't know that we ever got back into the discussion of how do you feel about it. Now I know how he felt about it in the Ernest Lindsay case. That was a singular opinion about a singular case and I suspect as a result of that [he] had a general feeling about the death penalty, but I'm not sure that it didn't change.

Mark Junge: Well, he knew the kid—the family knew the kid—your family knew this Ernest Lindsay. Did he feel relieved when his sentence was commuted?

Governor Sullivan: Oh, of course. And he worked to get it commuted, and he was tremendously relieved and he was tremendously opposed to the death penalty in that case.

Mark Junge: Do you feel any sympathy at all for Gerry Spence in this thing? As a lawyer and as a person?

Governor Sullivan: Mm-hmm. Quite a bit. Both. I've known Gerry for a number of years, practiced both with him in a couple of cases and against him in a number of cases. He lived across the street from me when he lived in Casper. We were across the street neighbors. I think he participated in this because he felt he owed a duty to a friend and to the system. He's probably cursed by his own abilities in the sense that he's bigger than life in legal circles, and that gave Hopkinson a kind of an underdog role, as it turned out. Not during the course of the trial, but certainly as it turned out, and sort of laid all the blame at Gerry's feet, primarily because of the position he took on the death penalty eighteen months ago when he wrote me and said he would ask me to commute Hopkinson. It basically neutralized Spence as a voice for the prosecution, and in my view thereby sort of put out of whack the whole public perception of this case.

old girlfriend Caril Ann Fugate. The couple was captured on January 29, 1958, with Starkweather being sentenced to death, and Fugate serving a 17-year prison sentence.

Mark Hopkinson and his position were operating in a vacuum of opposition in the sense of having a prosecutorial presence. Saying, when Hopkinson would say that he wasn't guilty and that he had been railroaded, there wasn't anybody to say, wait a minute. Let's look at this piece of evidence. Let's look at this. Gerry couldn't very well do that, having said he didn't want him executed. He thought he should *not* be executed; he couldn't come out and say, wait a minute—he didn't get railroaded. He had the right to testify in his own behalf and didn't. His defense was this. And I think it's one of the things that sort of highlighted Hopkinson in the course of this.

Mark Junge: I think anybody that reads *Gunning for Justice*⁴ gets a pretty crisp clear idea of what kind of person Hopkinson was.

Governor Sullivan: It was interesting, because I talked with Spence very briefly when Hopkinson came out with the two additional names on—Monday, I guess it was—two days before he was to be executed. I was anxious that we run down as much as we could about those names, to assure that in fact he wasn't telling the truth, and so I visited with Spence to see if he'd ever heard of these names before, given his institutional memory, which he had not. In the course of that, he talked about *Gunning for Justice* which I had read years ago but did not read recently, and he talked about the evidence in the case and said it was pretty much laid out in that book. I didn't go pick it up because I had enough to think about the case, but I gathered that he did sort of go through the—

Mark Junge: Oh, yeah. Of course Gerry Spence wrote it with Anthony Polk, as a co-writer, and of course it's his opinion, and of course he's a brilliant man, everybody admits that. But I don't think you can read that without feeling emotionally bothered, and think that—Well! To give you an example of what's going on in my mind, and perhaps—I say perhaps—in other people's minds, I was a little confused about this whole issue. I talked to Shiela Bricher-Wade and she's very bright, she's very perceptive, and I said, "What do you think?"

⁴ *Gunning for Justice My Life and Trials*, by Gerry Spence and Anthony Polk (Doubleday, N.Y. 1982)

And she said, “Well, I think three things: I haven’t made up my mind but, number one, I don’t agree with killing people, putting them to death; number two, I think life in prison, throwing away the key, is stupid and a waste, so that doesn’t do anybody any good and it costs a lot of money—

Governor Sullivan: A bit of a contradiction!

Mark Junge: Yeah—and third,” she said, “I don’t like this man!” And what she was saying, and I paraphrase what she was saying, “But I don’t want him for a neighbor. This man is dangerous. He’s a controller, he’s a manipulator, and I don’t want any—I don’t think the public should be subjected to a person like that.”

So she had all these conflicting ideas floating around in her mind which really reflected what—and I told people when I ask people about this issue, at the YMCA, jogging or whatever—I say, “You know, I say it’s too bad people can’t go back and read *Gunning for Justice*, because the papers almost assumed, the media almost assumed that the man was innocent. He was proven guilty in two different [trials].

Governor Sullivan: And sentenced to death twice by juries. Reversed once and gone back. And that’s what I say when I say that there was a vacuum. The factors or the facts that were talked about in *Gunning for Justice* were not covered for, let’s say, the last four, five years, really. The attention was focused on Hopkinson and his press releases and his press, and yet, at the same time, he’d had a couple of juries, he’d had both the Federal and the state court system reviewing the evidence.

Another point that I would make for the purposes of posterity, because it hasn’t been made currently and might not be made, but it seems to me it ought to be noted: Eighteen months ago he came within forty-eight hours, or we came within forty-eight hours of the execution. And we were in Federal court in a proceeding that he had started, alleging some legal deficiencies with respect to the prosecution and to the process and the procedure. And a federal district judge determined that there was enough evidence to stay the execution, to review those aspects that had been raised by his defense team. We, the State, had the

opportunity to appeal that decision by the district judge to the circuit court. I'm saying that it may have been a three member panel of circuit court judges that made that decision. In any event, we had the opportunity to appeal that to the entire circuit court *en banc*⁵, and chances were good that the circuit court would have reversed that determination at that time and altered the stay.

We elected not to appeal that because it was the position of the Attorney General, and a position that I agreed with, we arrived at it jointly, that look, here are three judges that believe there may be some deficiencies in this. The State should not be in a position that it is appealing somebody's determination that it needs more look to try to kill a man. That they ought to be afforded a review of that process if three judges believe that there is reason to do so. So we didn't appeal. There were those who said, well, we just were giving up on the case, or that it was a major mistake. I felt that what we were doing was affording him the fullest degree of justice we could. That a prosecutor may have the obligation to try to see that this gets death, and if the jury gives it to him, then the State has an obligation to try to see that it's maintained. But it doesn't have the obligation to appeal to try to impose the death penalty, and we didn't do that; others might have done it.

But when people say this was on a fast track, or he wasn't given adequate opportunity, I would simply point to that and say look, the State in that case said, "Okay, if you judges think that there may be some deficiencies, he's entitled to have that fully examined." They did. It took the district judge about a year. He went through all of the materials, rendered his decision in December, as I recall—Judge Mapes saying that, "No, I believe this is not—I see nothing that would require a reversal of this sentence."

Mark Junge: Well the whole process went on for what, thirteen years? Fourteen years?

⁵ *En banc, in banc, in banco* or **in bank** is a French term (meaning "on a bench") used to refer to the hearing of a legal case where all judges of a court will hear the case (an entire "bench"), rather than a panel of them. *Wikipedia*

Governor Sullivan: Thirteen or fourteen. And when I said the fast track, that was some of the comments that we heard recently as they were trying to regenerate additional legal processes.

Mark Junge: I wonder if, you know, you talked [about] the crescendo—and I don't think these people are, myself, a lunatic fringe. I think they're concerned people. But did you feel that the people who held vigils, like outside the Capitol, outside the penitentiary, were the lunatic fringe, or did you feel that these people were exercising their consciences?

Governor Sullivan: No, absolutely not. I did not feel they were the lunatic fringe. On the contrary, I think they were deeply committed. I talked to many of them over the course of the last two or three years. I've received correspondence—received phone calls from them. Most of them are committed. I respected, and respect, their views. I don't agree with them, but I respect them, and I didn't see anyone—I shouldn't say that. I saw a couple that I would more than disagree with. I thought their positions were offensive, and they carried it far beyond sort of the respectful position that I—it seems to me if that's the position you take, you maintain—but they weren't far out.

One criticism I would have in this case in particular is that I know five years ago, and I think again three years ago, a bill was introduced in the legislature to do away with the death penalty, and I suspect if you polled folks one by one, many of them would not have been involved in that at all, and I think that you could say, “Where were you?” when Lynn Dickey in the legislature tried to generate a public policy decision as to whether or not the death penalty was appropriate.

Mark Junge: What's going to happen, do you think, down the road with the death penalty?

Governor Sullivan: I doubt if anything happens. I doubt very much if anything will happen now as a result of it, even though there will be some legislation introduced to temper it some. Ultimately, unless there is some federal legislation introduced, it will probably fall of its own economic weight, not on a philosophical basis, but on the

basis that you just can't afford the time and the energy and the expense of processing a death penalty case.

Mark Junge: In Wyoming, people are a practical people. And don't you think they would support that?

Governor Sullivan: I don't think they will yet, but I think at some point they may. Again it depends on how many they get.

Mark Junge: Well this isn't over, I know. I'm just trying to get you to project a little bit down the road, because you're now under—you're going to be taken to court under a lawsuit, I guess, that's been filed by Bill Wilcox?

Governor Sullivan: I understand that.

Mark Junge: Yeah. So it's not over for you yet. Are you prepared for all that?

Governor Sullivan: Well, I don't think that that will last very long. And that's my legal background speaking. I don't think that lawsuit will see the light of day.

Mark Junge: Okay. Boy! We've taken up a lot on this issue!

Governor Sullivan: Well, and you're not surprised and neither am I. (Both laugh)

Mark Junge: Well, in a way, I am. I didn't expect to go on this long on Hopkinson, and I think in the total perspective of history, it might turn out to be a very—well, might be a very peripheral thing. I think what's going on now in the economy in this state and the decisions that you are in a position to make right now are much more important for broad groups of people. But—

Governor Sullivan: I agree.

Mark Junge: Okay. I didn't want to put words in your mouth, but—can we go back just a step or two?

Governor Sullivan: Sure.

Mark Junge: Alright!

Governor Sullivan: We moved from history to contemporary history—(Both laugh)—pretty quickly!

Mark Junge: Okay. I am kind of curious as to how you met your wife and to find out just a little about the Metzler background.

Governor Sullivan: Well, I met Jane in Laramie at the University of Wyoming. We had known each other—we were in the same class, so we started at the university at the same time. We knew each other, I'd say casually—

Mark Junge: When did you first meet?

Governor Sullivan: I think we must have met when we were freshmen. She was in the Tri Delta Sorority, I was in ATO Fraternity, so we crossed paths, but we weren't particularly well acquainted until we were juniors and we were both in the Student Senate. And there we got to know each other better and ultimately started dating and ultimately got married.

Mark Junge: There wasn't any of this chemistry, or love at first sight?

Governor Sullivan: No, I wouldn't say that, no. Absolutely not. We'd known each other for two and a half years before we even dated, I think.

Mark Junge: Really! They say that sort of an introduction to your mate, your future mate, is good if it develops like a friendship develops.

Governor Sullivan: Well, it developed like a friendship, and I would say it's certainly been good for us.

Mark Junge: Now, the Metzlers are from where?

Governor Sullivan: Well, Jane's father, Jeff Metzler, lived—she lived most of her life in Powell. She was born in Riverton at the Honor Farm, the State Correctional Facility in Riverton. Her father was superintendent of that facility when she was born, then later moved to Powell, to run the bean mills in Powell, and then subsequently

entered the real estate and insurance business. He was born in Riverton. His father was a blacksmith in Riverton around the turn of the century, I assume.

Mark Junge: I can remember back when, and this is personal side of Mike Sullivan I'm looking for here, but I remember dating Ardath and seeing her for the first time, and I'm wondering why you two were attracted to each other.

Governor Sullivan: Well, that's a good question. I'm probably not one to speculate on it. I can say that we enjoyed much the same things. We enjoyed people. I guess you'd have to say we enjoyed politics to a degree, because we both were elected from our colleges, Jane in education and me in engineering, to the Student Senate. We had previously been in college honoraries. I think that certainly wasn't the first time I met Jane, but one of the first memories I have, we were in a sophomore honorary together. She was nominated to be president, I was nominated to be president, and Russ Donnelly was nominated to be president. And I remember standing in the hallway of the Student Union while the group voted. I suggested to Jane and Russ that I'd vote for Russ and he could vote for Jane and Jane could vote for me, and we'd all be alright. That was fine with Jane, but it wasn't with Russ. He was going to vote for himself. (Both laugh) So I said, "That's just fine, I'll vote for Jane, you vote for me, and we'll be in the same place." And we did.

Mark Junge: (Laughing) Who won?

Governor Sullivan: I won!

Mark Junge: (Laughing) That's a cute story! So you guys just fit like a hand in a glove, huh?

Governor Sullivan: Well, we did, to some degree. I really didn't finish 'cause I got off on that story. We had those things in common, and we didn't know it, I suppose, at that time, and I don't know when we first knew it. We also were both Catholics. We also, by heritage, were both Democrats. And I don't know about Jane, but I have to say, I know, and she knows because she likes to tell the story, that when she first advised her parents that she had a date with me—which we weren't what you'd call 'going together', but we were dating—her father checked up on me a

little and found out I was a Catholic Democrat, and when you grow up in Park County, or in my case, Converse County, but in Jane's case Park County, you don't run into very many Catholic Democrats. You don't run into very many Catholics, and you don't run into very many Democrats, so the combination is even rarer. And he was particularly pleased by that! Not that that would have made any difference to Jane, but I think it did cause him a good deal of comfort.

Mark Junge: So you didn't have to be apprehensive in visiting your future father-in-law?

Governor Sullivan: Well, I did, because he was a tough man, but I had a leg up, let's put it that way.

Mark Junge: (Laughs) That's good!

End of Part One

Beginning of Part 2:

Mark Junge: Today is the twelfth of February, 1992. My name is Mark Junge. I'm in the Governor's conference room adjacent to his private office here at the Wyoming State Capitol Building in Cheyenne. This is the second of two interviews—at least two interviews—with the governor concerning his job as governor. What we're going to be talking about today are, first of all, just a very brief review of what we talked about on the first tape; to talk about the elections that he has gone through, his two elections; being governor; a little bit about state government; about his personality and how he's reacted to this job; and finally a summary of his greatest accomplishments, greatest disappointments—and that's about it. I hope that's what we can get accomplished today.

As you know, this isn't going to be transcribed word-for-word and put into a book. If we use anything it'll be just a short snippet. But I think the value of this is to get you as a person down on tape for posterity. Somewhere down the road, Mike, I think maybe—who knows? Maybe fifty years from now people will pick this up—

Governor Sullivan: (Both laugh) My God! Just imagine that they had those kind of thoughts back then! What were they thinking?

Mark Junge: You know, I think you have a sense of history. I think Herschler⁶ had a sense of history. I think most people have a sense of history when it comes to their own genealogy and their own families. But I think that you have a sense of history in particular that's beyond that. I notice that, and I'm not just trying to flatter you; I know that that came out in your State of the State address. You said this was a historical session, or a historical time—

Governor Sullivan: Or potential to be historical.

⁶ **Edgar Jacob Herschler** (October 27, 1918 - February 7, 1990), popularly known as "Gov. Ed", was the 28th Governor of Wyoming from 1975 to 1987. Herschler built a personal appeal to voters based on charisma, a small-town background, and shrewd political maneuvering to such an extent that he was the only three-term governor in Wyoming history.

Mark Junge: Yeah, and I thought about that as a historian, and I thought, wait a minute!
Everything in the past is history!

Governor Sullivan: But this could be *really* historic! (Both laugh)

Mark Junge: Okay. What I think you were trying to say, weren't you, was that this could be a very significant time?

Governor Sullivan: Well, it's a watershed year, or it could be a watershed year in the sense that we've reached a point where the mineral revenues that we have relied upon for so many years have declined. Other revenues have declined. The demands, including Federal mandates and just the needs of the state have increased, so we're in a situation where we sort of have to decide which path we're going to take. Are we just going to pull back into our shells, or are we going to continue to move ahead? I think there's a choice, and it may not be just two choices; there may be more than just two choices.

But at some time, whether it's this year or whether it's next year or whether it's five years from now, as the mineral resources decline, we are going to have to start, as a people, saying we're willing to pay our share of the burden of providing the services that we've come to expect from government. And this could be the year that that decision is made. It could be a year that at least it's discussed, and it could be a year that they simply say, no, we're just going to pull back, or we're going to divert monies from other accounts, highway and water and other potential, and we'll come back and talk about it another year.

Mark Junge: Just for fun—I know this isn't for the media of course—but just for fun, what do you speculate will occur? Are you a little pessimistic?

Governor Sullivan: Yes, I'm pessimistic, because I've learned to be pessimistic. I always come in with optimism, that it's clear to me a direction that we should take, and I think it ought to be clear to others, but then I listen to what's being said for a day or two and I think, oh oh! I really shouldn't be so optimistic! (Laughs) But I still think that the significance of the gap this year is going to make people, even those that

are still saying well, we can handle it, they're going to have to look fairly closely. The problem is, they do have the choice of looking at it on a one-year basis. They can probably take care of it for one year and go home and then come back, or have somebody else come back, and deal with the larger problem. And I'm convinced it'll get larger if they don't deal with it this year.

Mark Junge: T. A. Larson⁷, in his book, his nice little Centennial Wyoming book—have you seen that?

Governor Sullivan: I don't know whether I have. I'm sure I have.

Mark Junge: Well, you know he's produced that great big text—

Governor Sullivan: Right, the big one, yeah.

Mark Junge: Well, he's got this centennial book that came out in '76, '75, and in it he sort of summarizes, very beautifully I think, the major periods in Wyoming history, and his last chapter is called "The Energy State." And I don't think T. A. could look into the future any more than you or I could. But in talking to T. A. recently over at Laramie, I said, "What about the future? You know, a hundred years from now what's Wyoming going to look like?" He says, "Well, I don't know." He says, "If they perfect this fusion process, what are you going to do about oil and coal? Wyoming may no longer be the energy state. We may not have go very far out of L.A. or Chicago or Philadelphia or New York to take a hydrogen atom and get all the energy we need." Did you ever think about that, or speculate on that?

Governor Sullivan: Well, yeah, even closer than that. I think that we have to be very concerned about ten years down the road and the fossil fuel utilization as the pressure mounts for global warming and the gasses that we're emitting into the air as a result of burning fossil fuels. Whether that's a legitimate cause or not, it is a cause that is being pursued, and fossil fuels are the boogey man. And I believe in ten

⁷ T. A. (Taft Alfred) Larson was a highly respected and popular professor of history at the University of Wyoming from 1936 to 1975. He was a co-founder and president of the Wyoming State Historical Society, and he was president of the Western History Association. He died in California on January 26, 2001. *From the Rocky Mountain Online Archive, <http://rmoa.unm.edu>*

years, if we don't develop a clean coal process that is more efficient and less polluting, we could risk the potential of losing the major markets for coal in particular. Oil and gas is declining and the large mineral producing companies are going off shore. So I see that moving down anyway. We're losing four percent of our production a year. The costs are going up, and there's no equivalent price increase, and so we're going to see more abandonment of old production, particularly in Wyoming, because most of our production is oil. So that's a declining process that we see regularly and part of the problem we face now.

But I think there's a more serious problem long term and that is, even though we have the clean coal and it'll last longer, are we going to face pressure that is going to make it not only environmentally contrary to where the philosophy of the people goes, but that in turn will enhance and advance the kinds of research you're talking about. So I don't think we have to wait a hundred years. I think it's gonna be ten to twenty, and we're going to have to look seriously.

That's one of the reasons in my State of the State a few days ago, I said I did not agree with those—and I don't know how many there are—but I've heard some who said what we ought to do before we raise taxes is invade the Permanent Mineral Trust Fund⁸ and take the money that's flowing in there and use it for operations. And I think that's just the worst idea I've heard. Because that's the one thing that we've set aside to try to build up so we would have an account from which we could fund a portion of our operations, recognizing that most of our income's becoming a depletable resource. That is a resource that we're developing, that being the Permanent Mineral Trust Fund, on the basis of the monies that we're getting from the depletable resource. So hopefully we'll have a fairly significant fund.

Mark Junge: Do you think that most people agree with you on that?

⁸ In accordance with an amendment to the Wyoming Constitution approved by the voters in 1974, one and a half percent of the severance tax on each mineral is deposited in the Permanent Wyoming Mineral Trust Fund (PWMTF). *Source: <http://www.swfinstitute.org/fund/wyoming.php>*

Governor Sullivan: Yeah. I think if they consider it they will. What we would be doing is taxing the future in lieu of taking the burden ourselves, and I don't think people would favor that.

Mark Junge: Now, I agreed with you when I listened to your speech. By the way, you must have poured a lot of work in that, because sometimes I think the simpler the speech, the more basic the ideas, the tougher they are to construct. How many hours did you spend on that?

Governor Sullivan: I don't know. I spent a couple of weeks moving in and out of the printed version. And then when we got the printed version done I wasn't satisfied with it from the standpoint of specifics, which as you say is difficult. It's a wide ranging problem. You sure can't talk about it all, but yet you have to be specific enough so people can understand what you're saying.

So I decided, okay, I've got to change this. And I never have liked the style of standing up there with a written speech. And frankly, I have to tell you—and I almost said it in my speech, but I didn't—what prompted me to do it probably more than anything else was Bush's State of the Union. I was just put off by sort of the staged drama of that whole speech. I mean, it was all staged. There wasn't anything spontaneous about it. I don't even think the applause that he received was spontaneous. I'm convinced somebody sent out a script and said this is where you stand, and this is where you clap, and do it a little longer here than there, and it just didn't seem to me that that was the way that we should try to discuss very serious problems.

So I looked at what we were doing and what I'd done, and I'd always been a little uncomfortable that we gave some—hopefully—reasonably inspiring and profound speech, but people listened to it or they sat and read it while you were giving it, and really you don't have the ability that you're just talking to 'em about what the problems [are] that are coming forward. So that was what I tried to do in moving away from the printed text.

Mark Junge: Did you construct the speech, or did a member of staff write it for you?

Governor Sullivan: The original printed version was a combination of efforts between staff and other advisors that I look to. The one that I gave was a sort of a composite of the discussions that I had leading up to the printed version and discussions that I had within the last three or four days before the speech with the staff and advisors.

Mark Junge: Do you mind saying who the major—

Governor Sullivan: Dave Friedenthal is the guy that I look to for good political advice and always have, and I visited with him. We just talked about the way I felt and the things we did, and then I went home and put it on a legal pad and worked most of Saturday and most of Sunday putting it together.

Mark Junge: Now, I didn't see you give the address; I listened to it on the radio and I recorded it. Did you drop your notes? Did you get away from it? Did you have it memorized to the point you could just—

Governor Sullivan: No, I didn't have it memorized. I closed the printed version and had a legal pad with about five pages of notes just to make sure that I didn't miss the areas that I wanted to do. I could have done it without the notes, I think, but I was afraid that I'd leave out some important part of it. I use notes generally as an outline just to make sure that I touched all the bases.

Mark Junge: You bet. Well, I thought it was succinct; I thought it was well spoken; I thought the emphasis was good, a little humor, ending up with a poem—what was it? In the attic?

Governor Sullivan: Well the poem is from *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein. Good book! He does wonderful stuff and when the kids were little we got those books and now we enjoy them more than the kids. But Jane brought—I was working on the speech Saturday night, I think—and Jane came in from the kitchen and said, “Here's a poem you ought to use. Sort of puts it all together.” And so I did.

Mark Junge: And yet you had your partisan detractors. I notice Beemer True in the paper mentioned that, “Well, there wasn't anything positive here. We want to see something positive.” Did you read that?

Governor Sullivan: Yeah, I read that this morning and I thought it was interesting because some people just never can say anything positive about a partisan situation.

Mark Junge: Well, that's his job!

Governor Sullivan: Yeah, it is his job and that's politics. But I thought, frankly, there was a lot of positive in it. I tried to make it positive and not just a somber speech, because I think we do have—we've left ourselves the flexibility to handle the problems and we have much to be proud of and thankful for, and that's what I said. What I don't want us to do is get overcome by what I referred to in the speech as "the tyranny of limited expectations," which I picked up from a friend of mine's speech in Mississippi. He was defeated as governor just recently, Ray Mabis, and sent me his farewell speech. That phrase was in his speech and I thought it said a lot, that we want to keep moving forward. We don't want to say, well, we don't have the money, that we can't educate our children, or we can't take care of the things that I think we need to do, because we can. We're blessed still by lots of mineral resources that are providing funds, by a Permanent Mineral Trust Fund that [is] providing funds, we're the least taxed people in the country with the exception of Alaska, and we have a lot of room to keep going forward. I don't think that we want to be overcome by grief or such conservatism that we don't keep moving forward.

Mark Junge: Mike, how do you look at the speech? As something that sets the stage? As something that is meant to get people moving, or is it your historical duty just simply to do it and summarize where we are? How do you look at this?

Governor Sullivan: It's a combination. I look at it from a historical perspective. People go back and say, okay, here's sort of a summary of where at least the governor thought they were and what the major challenges for the session were. To some degree, it is intended to deliver messages to the—more to the majority party than anything else that, look, here's the way I feel about things. If you stray too far from this you risk the ultimate use of the power that I have, the veto. So you ought to be concerned about that and kind of keep 'em moving back.

I really believe maybe the more significant part of that is to try to deliver a feeling and a message to the people of Wyoming. Because the legislature, those guys come down here and maybe they know what the situation is, maybe they don't, but they get into caucuses and they sort of whip 'em into line, which is sort of the discouraging part. A lot of people say well, I agree with you, or it was a great speech and I sure agree with where you are, then they go out and pressures of one kind or another end up altering the position. But I think at the same time, it's important that the people hear the message as to where I think we need to go and what we should be doing.

Mark Junge: Good! Well, on this same issue, it seems to me that the state, especially in the legislature, but even in the state government itself, has what I would call a very poor corporate memory. People come here, they're in here for two years or four years, or six years, or whatever it is, and sometimes they're re-elected and sometimes they're not, and a new set of faces comes in every session. People come and go in state government, and it seems like sometimes there's no real corporate memory. The body of state government sometimes loses little pieces of its memory. Like, we did this in the past and it didn't work. Why are we doing this again? As a state employee, I feel there's a real deficiency there. When somebody comes in who's brand new to the system and says, why do we need a State Historical Preservation Officer? Why do we need this over in Health and Social Services? We don't need this; let's cut here. Sometimes I think that it even goes beyond that. Sometimes I think there are no faces on those people there, and there's no history there. It's just come in and if you've got an idea, take it to its bloody end.

Governor Sullivan: I think you're right. I don't know that I would agree with you fully, but it seems to me that in part, that's the function of the leader. To the extent that it isn't accomplished, it may be the leadership's problem. I view it in a little different way, but much the same. We're talking basically about institutional memory and why is it that we have this and why do we have that. One of the points that I've tried to make and will continue to make to legislators as they wander in and out of

my office during the course of the session is look, when you came in a year ago and raised the classroom unit value, as an example, you did that for a reason. You established a value. This is the level at which you thought our education system should work. You didn't do it because we had the money. Certainly we had to look at the money, but you did it because you thought this is where it should be. When you raised the standard of need you did it because you thought that was the level at which people in those conditions ought to be able to exist.

Now, I've made some adjustments in that, and I think they were adjustments—in those two things in particular—they were adjustments that were necessary and appropriate, but you don't just remove everything that you've done in the past without looking and saying, okay, why is it that we made that decision? What is it that we thought was important about having this agency, or whatever? And those are the things I think they ought to focus on instead of well, let's just balance the two columns.

Certainly, ultimately they have to balance, but there are different options as to how you get there. And what I was trying to say to them, similar to what I think you're suggesting, is that, don't throw out all the values that you've worked long and hard to get to simply because you have some ideological attachment to working within revenues, because there are alternatives. And one of the most disturbing things to me are people who, because of some hard core conservative value, say we are going to fund government on this basis and they draw a line at the bottom and say, this is how much money we're willing to put in. And then they make their decisions. They don't have to make value judgments. All they have to do is get to the bottom line. And what falls off the track in the process doesn't matter, because their goal is to get to the bottom line.

Now certainly I've tried, and I think with reasonable success, to be conservative, to be responsible as we look at where the values are and where our revenues are, but I've never adopted a position, well, here's how much money we have so we just have to get there. I've always tried to look at what is it we're doing to the

programs that we have, to the services that we're asked to deliver, and how should we handle it.

Mark Junge: Do you think you make decisions on the basis of morality or politics or both?

Governor Sullivan: Oh, clearly both to some degree. I mean, we're in politics and we can never get away from the fact that decisions that you make have to be tempered by the political implications of them. Sometimes I make decisions knowing what the political implications are and notwithstanding that I know the political implications are not going to be good. I make the decisions anyway because I think the policy moral or just philosophy dictates otherwise.

Mark Junge: Now you were not in politics before you became governor, and I'm wondering how difficult it has been for you to play that political game? I mean, with your legal training and with your ability to make decisions as a lawyer or the legal expert, and as a person who was raised Catholic, you have made moral decisions. How tough is it to get into that, you know, to play the political game and make political decisions?

Governor Sullivan: Well, you get used to it reasonably quick in the sense that you get used to the evaluation process. But I was thinking this morning, as I was thinking about the legislative session and whether I'm optimistic or pessimistic, that I suspect one of my weaknesses is a lack of lifetime political experience where you end up doing, playing those political games and tradeoffs and so on and so forth. I don't think that's necessarily bad. It may be better not to have had that kind of training. But I think as far as—and I almost had this in my speech, but I don't think I put it in—governors accused of bullying legislatures into doing certain acts, I've interpreted that always as that means that the legislature doesn't want to take responsibility for it, so they say the governor bullied us into it. Well, in my experience I don't really see this governor as bullying the legislature into anything, partly because I don't have the majority party on my side, and while I can get them to take certain actions, they act pretty much—as we've talked about before—on their own. That's sort of the Wyoming ethic. But I think if I'd have been in politics all of my

life I would probably be in a position to act in a little more hard core political way.

Mark Junge: But you say also that that may be a drawback.

Governor Sullivan: Yeah. I don't think that makes that good. It just is a fact of life that you might be doing more of that.

Mark Junge: I think that if I were to guess, I would say the citizenry probably prefers somebody who doesn't have a lot of, or a lifetime of political experience. You know, I got this from a person who was talking about your position, or the governor's position, and this person had some wonderful insights and said, you know, Wyoming people, when they make a decision, look at that person like, if I was in a jam, personally in a jam, could I count on that person to help me out. And I think they see beyond the rhetoric.

Governor Sullivan: I agree. And it's one of the wonderful parts of Wyoming and Wyoming politics. If you had one of those charts you historians do about the way things travel and you charted the political process, we'd be clear back at the tail end of the political process as far as how far we've advanced, I suspect. And I think that is very good. We still have an ability to look—and partly because we're still a small state—but we see each other on a personal basis. We recognize pretty much when somebody is being political and when they're not. Whether they're being just rhetoric or whether they're sincere. And so I think it's good, and I think frankly it's the reason I got elected. If we were advanced a long way along that political scale that I referred to, a Democrat would not get elected in a state that was as highly Republican as Wyoming is.

Mark Junge: So you're saying historians might view it as a lack of political sophistication?

Governor Sullivan: Well, you could call it political sophistication. I frankly would prefer to say if you look at true sophistication, we are the sophisticates, and those further advanced because of technology, or lack of interest, or professional politics, or whatever it is, are on the other side. I like the system the way it is.

Mark Junge: We're closer to the people.

Governor Sullivan: The people have a greater role to play. They have a greater participation and a greater opportunity to be heard and represented.

Mark Junge: And that leads right into another topic about accessibility to your office and you personally, which I'd like you to comment on. But let's go back just a second and go back to the 1986 election. Why did you beat Pete Simpson?

Governor Sullivan: Well, a combination of circumstances, some of which was luck. Some of which we—and when I say we, I mean my family and my wife and my kids and my campaign organization—worked our butts off and got around the state. Partly because I think I was, or tried to be, and I don't mean this in any denigration of Pete, but I think the people believed that I was a little more direct and honest with them. As an example, Pete said, "No new taxes." He basically said, "Read my lips!" before George Bush did.

Mark Junge: Where did we hear this before?

Governor Sullivan: And I said, "Look, I'm not going to say that I won't raise taxes, because I don't know that we can avoid it. I will try not to raise taxes. I don't want to raise taxes, but I do want to protect the things that I think are important to Wyoming, and if that means raising taxes, that's what I'll recommend." Fortunately, I got away pretty much with it for the first six years, and this last week we've sort of gone over the cliff on my position. But I think it was some of that. It was a perception, real or not, that maybe I was even more conservative than Pete was. And I think, frankly, Pete's style, which comes out good initially, wears a little thin after a while.

Mark Junge: Fair enough. People make comparisons, and they make—they have made, I'm sure—comparisons between you and Herschler. Do you think it's fair that people make comparisons between you and Herschler?

Governor Sullivan: No, it's inevitable, but it's not fair any more than it's fair for people to make comparisons between anyone. I mean, they're going to make them, and you can't

avoid it, and I wouldn't expect the comparisons not to be made, but we're different people from different times and dealing with different circumstances. So it's hard to develop those comparisons. But when you come in right after someone, particularly someone like Ed who'd been there for twelve years, that's what—you know, twelve years is a long time and that's what people knew and identified with, The Governor. And all of a sudden, I'm the governor. How do I compare, how do they evaluate? The only thing they can evaluate me against is—not the only thing, but certainly the most current situation—is Ed Herschler. And so it was inevitable, and it took place for a long time. And it was painful for me for a while, because we were totally different people. We were good friends and I had great respect for Ed as did I think most everyone in Wyoming, but we were different individuals.

Mark Junge: How were you different?

Governor Sullivan: Well, we were from different eras. He was a veteran of World War II. I was four or five years old in World War II. My father was in World War II. My father and Ed Herschler were friends. They worked together at Boys State. Ed was a Marine and I think that inoculates people with a certain attitude! He was big and raw-boned and from an agricultural background that gave him a certain charisma, I think is a proper way to describe it, that was appealing to a lot of people. I'm not big and raw-boned, and there are just differences that exist. I don't think our political philosophies were that much different, in the sense that he was a Democrat who was reasonably conservative. But just as persons and our personalities, we're much different.

Mark Junge: He was in politics longer?

Governor Sullivan: That's right. He had been in politics a long time.

Mark Junge: One person I talked to said it seemed Herschler knew intuitively what Mike has to ponder over for a long time. Is that a fair assessment?

Governor Sullivan: I think to some degree that's certainly true. At least he gave the perception that he knew it intuitively. Based upon what I heard, he pondered a lot, but it maybe wasn't as perceptible. But he had been in the legislature for a long time, so some of those decisions that I had to look at were easy for him. But I think one of our differences is that I tried to develop a greater understanding of an issue before I made a decision. And maybe that's unfair. He may have understood it more quickly. But I've always been a fairly detailed kind of person. I don't know whether that comes from my engineering education or what, or the legal side—although Ed was a lawyer—but I do sometimes to a fault probably, want to understand and get as much information about an issue and a decision before I reach it.

Mark Junge: Let's say some rancher decides to run for governor and his point of view is—and I just want you to comment on this or react to it—"I sure like Mike, he's a hell of a good guy, but you know, he's a lawyer and these guys are taught to look at both sides of the issue—sometimes so long that they can't really make up their minds. And what we need in there is somebody who can make quick, hard and fast decisions about some of these things."

Governor Sullivan: Well, my reaction would be, I've heard that said, not just in that way. But I think if people look at it, part of that kind of discussion comes from not understanding the job or the position. I'm making, and have since I was elected, hard decisions every day. There are a few of them that get out into the public and the media, and people start worrying about how long it takes you to make 'em. But if you follow any governor around, any time, they don't have time to delay decisions very long. And there are decisions that are made every day that are difficult decisions and have big impacts on both sides. So you have to make those—the important decisions, I worry about the implications. I consider the implications. And certainly sometimes over the course of my first term in particular I've taken too long making decisions from a political standpoint. I've never felt particularly that it altered the course of a decision or a process, but from a political standpoint, one of the things in leadership, people want hard and fast

decisions. [They're] looked on with favor, and I think that it's important that those be made. And I've done that. But certainly, particularly early on as I was trying to sort of get comfortable in the job, I took too long in making decisions.

Mark Junge: But at least people know where that well-spring of decisions is. Or, I mean, the well-spring from which the decisions come is a moral well-spring.

Governor Sullivan: I hope. I hope that they know that it's not a concern about making a decision, it's a concern about making sure that it's a well thought out, well considered and appropriate decision under the circumstances.

Mark Junge: Do you think that your training in engineering, Mike, and your legal background, your legal training, were particularly suitable for the job that you're in now?

Governor Sullivan: Oh, I think so. I don't know that there's anything that suits one for the job other than a life in politics. As we talked before, I'm not sure that necessarily suits you for it. But the one thing that I've always felt—the engineering, that's just a discipline and an thought process, and I'm sure it's helpful in many ways. But the practice of law, I felt, was particularly helpful because the nature of my practice was a lot like governor. I was hit with a lot of different problems, with a work ethic that required long, hard hours, and you never knew one day to the next what was going to blow up in your face, or what was going to walk into your office with a major problem. My practice, as most lawyers in Wyoming, it wasn't limited to one particular thing, so there was a diversity of problems. That is the way the governor's office is. You have to be a generalist because you're dealing with so many different issues and you're expected to be an expert on all of 'em. Everybody looks to you to tell them how to unlock the vault. It doesn't matter what the issue is, you're supposed to know how best to do it.

Mark Junge: Well, you go back into the professions of the various governors and you've got bankers—early on you have bankers, you have cattlemen, the last three governors have all been lawyers. Should that be a surprise to the population?

Governor Sullivan: Probably not. I think politicians throughout history have often times been lawyers, and that's partly because the law deals with public policy. So there's maybe a greater tendency to get involved with politics as a result. But certainly it doesn't necessarily—because you're a lawyer it doesn't mean you're necessarily suited for politics or for being governor. I don't know if anybody knows if they're suited until they sit in here and handle it for a while.

Mark Junge: Have you changed a lot since your first year in office?

Governor Sullivan: Oh, sure! I've changed. I hope I'm still basically the same person I was, but as anybody does with experience and with being tested by fire, you change your outlook, you change your perspective, you change your concerns. When I started practicing law, I'd go home at night carrying the problems of my clients home wondering how I could ever practice law for very long, because I could never get those concerns off my mind. When I started as governor, it was much the same way. I wondered, is it going to be like this all my—am I going to carry it twenty four hours a day, the weight of the problems? And finally I decided, not too long after I'd been here, that look—I had a job to do. I needed to do it. I needed to do it the very best that I could. But I was not responsible for all of the problems that existed in the state of Wyoming.

Mark Junge: You could not be the savior of mankind.

Governor Sullivan: And that was a particularly difficult time because the economy was so bad. That was the overriding concern. Okay, the economy, what do you do with the economy, and we were trying to do some things that would be helpful. I finally said, look, I'll do the best I can, but if it doesn't alter, I can't take on personal responsibility for it.

Mark Junge: Now that leads into another question that I had, and that is—Herschler it seems had a lot of positive decisions to make. I mean, how are we going to spend our money? It seems like when you came into office you had a lot of negative decisions to make. Is that true?

Governor Sullivan: I think it's true, although not having been in the same position that Ed was in part of his terms, certainly there were years, twelve, that he was here where things weren't as good as others. But there were years where they were damn good! I've often wondered what it would be like. I'm not sure the decisions would be any easier, because then everybody wants a little part of it and you have to decide how you parcel it out. Maybe having less money is even easier, because the expectations aren't as high in the decision making process. I'm not sure that it was all good in the sense of positive versus negative decision making, but I can tell you that I've thought often and wondered often what it would be like to do it with money. And I really thought we were reaching a point where the economy was better throughout the state, and we were going to be in a better position and maybe I'd get a taste, a slight taste of what that was like. And then this year comes along, and as a result of a combination of circumstances, including the national economy and a continuing lagging energy market nationwide and increasing federal mandates and so on, we end up with one of the biggest budget problems we've ever had.

Mark Junge: And has that been your biggest problem?

Governor Sullivan: No, I don't think so. I mean, it hasn't played out yet. I don't know whether it will be, but currently, it's certainly the biggest problem. It's the biggest problem for this legislature. Although they're discussing re-apportionment, the budget in my view is much more important.

Mark Junge: In my opinion, I don't know how many other people hold this or share this opinion, but it's my opinion that the legislature knows that it's not going to get this thing through and they're just going to sort of let the courts decide.

Governor Sullivan: I don't know. That's an interesting observation. Certainly there may be some of that—hey, we're just not going to address this, but they are addressing it. They look like they're trying to do something right, but I'm not sure they'll get there.

Mark Junge: There are some jokes being made about this, I know, because some people are just amazed at the way they've drawn the lines. At the way some of the legislators have drawn their lines.

Governor Sullivan: Yeah, as I've talked in the State of the State, there's politics, and there's protectionism, and the concern about being re-elected. Basically protectionism. And those are all playing a role. But the one thing I would say, and I said it in my speech but I didn't want to overdo it because I thought it could be misinterpreted, it is an extremely complex issue. It is much more complex than anybody that just knows a little bit about it can appreciate. There are 53,000 census blocks in the state that the census department has established where there are given numbers of people. And those census blocks don't necessarily follow voting precinct lines. So as they're trying to reach this deviation of representation, they have to draw lines, or they have to reach into a census block, or reach out and pick up a census block and put it into the pot, and then figure out where it lies in the voting precincts and so on. It becomes very complex.

We've got three people on computers that have been taken from the executive department and are now upstairs. They've been moved over in the last few days to be near the legislature. And they're working with what they call Star Wars computers. They can bring maps up and they can tell you where every one of those 53,000 census blocks are, and if somebody wants to draw a line, then they can draw the line for them. But it is very complex. I don't even think the legislators who aren't on the committee or who haven't been involved appreciate the complexity of trying to get the deviations and trying to take a county, which doesn't have enough population, or an area of a county that doesn't have enough population for a representative or a senator, and then reach out and bring enough voters in.

Mark Junge: What difference does it make? Aren't all people in Wyoming pretty much the same? There's no difference between Republicans and Democrats anyway, is there?

Governor Sullivan: Well, let me just give you an example. And I don't think in that sense it's political. It is more geographical and community related. Wilsons up in Teton County has been, in the preliminary re-apportionment maps— because of the numbers, they've taken the Wilson voting precinct and put it in with Sublette County. Well, if you picture—

Part 2 ends abruptly.

Beginning of Part 3:

Governor Sullivan: We were talking about Wilson, the Wilson voting precinct in Teton County.

Wilson has been put in—I think it's with Sublette and maybe northern Uinta. Well, Wilson is divided from Sublette County by Hoback Canyon. It is part of Teton County. It's eight miles from Jackson. All of the issues that relate to the people who vote in Wilson relate to what's going on in Jackson and Teton Valley. Well, they feel disenfranchised by being put in with Sublette. It's not that they're Democrats or Republicans, or necessarily their political philosophy. It's just that the big problems, the big issues in Sublette County are much different than the issues they're dealing with.

Mark Junge: Or northern Uinta.

Governor Sullivan: Or, yeah, northern Uinta is even further removed and that, coupled with the fact that they know that if there is anyone in that voting precinct that wants to run for the legislature, it's highly unlikely they'd ever get elected because they are from that area. When you get into election, the people in Uinta or northern Uinta and Sublette County are going to elect somebody who is associated with their regional problems. So they view it as a disenfranchisement. And I think realistically it is, to a degree. But the law says you have to have this basic population percentage that provides everybody in the numbers game with the same representation. And that is repeated to a lesser or maybe even greater degree in some other areas.

Mark Junge: Do you think there are significant differences between Republicans and Democrats in this state?

Governor Sullivan: Yes, not as significant as other places, but I think there are some significant differences. And then you get into a range within the Republicans and Democrats. There are significant differences between a moderate Democrat, for example, and a right-wing conservative Republican.

Mark Junge: Would you classify yourself as a moderate Democrat?

Governor Sullivan: Yes, I think so. But there are not so significant differences between moderate Republicans and moderate Democrats. And that's probably true throughout the country. There's a range again of degrees in politics that define political philosophies, and so you start toward the middle and those differences aren't as distinct as they are on the edges.

Mark Junge: Somebody said to me one time that one of the real differences between Republicans and Democrats was that Republicans seem to have a penchant for power—wanting power. Is that unfair?

Governor Sullivan: No, I don't think necessarily so, but there are certainly Democrats who lust for power as well. But I think it may be a fair comment, although again that may be individual. I view the big difference—and I don't, again, view it that much in Wyoming—but the big difference I see that people always say to me is, well, you're very conservative, you really ought to be a Republican, and I get accused as late as—Hello!

(A group of school children from a history class enters the room. The interview pauses while Governor Sullivan speaks with them.)

Mark Junge: I've got to say this and put this on tape: I think you are *so* good at this kind of thing!

Governor Sullivan: Thanks! Well, I'll tell you; talking to school children is the best fun that you can have as governor, to see their eyes light up when they see somebody who they ordinarily see on TV. That's fun!

Where were we before they came in?

Mark Junge: We were talking about Republicans and Democrats—

Governor Sullivan: Oh, I think I was saying that a lot of people say that you're so conservative you really ought to be a Republican, and why aren't you a Republican and so on. And one of the reasons is I wouldn't have near as much fun if I was a Republican, because everybody I know is a Republican. But I've always said, in Casper any

time they had a party and needed a token Democrat I was the token Democrat. But I really believe there's a difference in the underlying philosophy related to compassion, related to the role that government plays. That government, in fact, does play a significant role in what it is and what accomplishments we can make as a society. And that is a constant struggle. I don't think that government should be involved in everything. I don't think it should be the overriding influence. But I have, from a compassionate side in particular, a significant belief that it has to be there to take care of segments of society. And clearly it does. But in that sense I would put it in a greater role, and I think economically, and other areas, government can be a very important tool.

Mark Junge: I would agree with you on the compassionate element. I think that to me is the significant difference. I am, of course, a Democrat, so I would agree with you, but I wonder how you would contrast that, say, to the—if you can call it this—the Republican point of view?

Governor Sullivan: Well, I would simply say that the Republican view, to the extent that you can generalize about those sorts of things, is that everything can be taken care of at the private sector side. To the extent it can't be, it's probably not worth maintaining. Now that's an overstatement, but it's reflective of the directional trend I think you take. And that government is sort of the enemy. It's good sport to kick government around. I think that was a line that was in my printed version of the speech, not the one I gave. But a lot of people, because they're Republican, because they're conservative, they have this inner feeling that they have to come down and kick government. And my view is you have try to make sure that government is efficient, it's productive, and that it's well run, but that it isn't the enemy. It can be very helpful.

Mark Junge: Now along that line, I have to ask you about reorganization. When you came in, very soon after you came in, reorganization occurred. What, '89?

Governor Sullivan: Started. Right.

Mark Junge: Not very soon. But the process was started. The Ferrari Report—

Governor Sullivan: When I came in we commissioned the Ferrari Report. That's one of the recommendations I think I made to the legislature in my first State of the State. We went for a year or two with the efficiency reports that developed into reorganization.

Mark Junge: How do you feel it's working?

Governor Sullivan: I think it's working satisfactorily. I think it's still in its infant stages and will be for a while, but I think it provides an interrelationship within government and a communication within government that wasn't there before. You can say, and you probably have your own views about how it's working because you're impacted by it to some degree. But when I came in there were 79 agencies and departments and various other—called by various other things, and then additional boards and commissions that sort of were out there on their own. I looked at various of them and there wasn't any way for the governor to really have a grasp of what they were doing or how they were operating, because your span of control is necessarily limited. You can't deal with 79 different entities.

The second impression I had—it wasn't an impression, an observation I guess would be better—is we had a reception the first year that Jane and I were in office, before Christmas, for the agency and department heads. There were probably 100 or 150 that came to the house one night, and most of them didn't know each other. They'd never met! Ninety percent of them had never been to the governor's residence before, but there were probably seventy five percent that had never met each other. I had the same impression when I called the first department heads meeting. We had to hold it in a big room over in the Herschler Building, one of the big conference rooms, and I looked around and I didn't know forty percent of them or what they did.

So from that perspective, now we have a—what we loosely call a cabinet. I say loosely, because I'm not sure I necessarily like calling it a cabinet form of government, because that seems to exclude those who aren't in it and that isn't my intention. But we get the major department heads in this conference room

where we're sitting now, with fifteen to twenty people, and I'm able to look at 'em, and I know what they're doing, and I know that for the most part, the major part of government is within their control. If I want somebody to be accountable, I can talk to them.

Now it's been said, well, we'll get down to fifteen. We're not going to get down to fifteen. There's still going to be a larger number of government entities, but in fact, there is a greater ability to provide accountability and to know what's taking place. And as these department heads sit in this room, they all know each other, and they now know, as a result of the monthly meetings we have and the informal meetings that take place during the month, some of the problems of the other agencies.

Mark Junge: What's your mode of operation at these meetings? How do you perform?

Governor Sullivan: Well, we have an agenda. We go through the agenda. I ask for comments on specific issues. I ask for particular concerns from agencies and departments. It's pretty informal. As an example, the Health Department has very basic problems and a basic mission that doesn't relate much with the Highway Department. But now the Highway Department, which is another major factor in state government, a major—I don't want to sound like it's a sponge of money but it takes up a lot of money—recognizes what some of the Health Department problems are and vice-versa.

They're not going to be able to use that except in a sort of operational sense, that they recognize as we're going through these difficult budget sessions, for example, that hey, if I, the Highway Department gets twenty more million dollars, it's got to come from somewhere, and maybe it comes from the Health Department who's trying to take care of the elderly and provide preventative medicine programs and so on.

When I came in, of those 79 agency and department heads or more, they were all up there, they didn't give a damn about the Health Department, or the Arts Council. The Division of Tourism didn't care about the Highway Department.

They were sort of on their own. They're still, in the various departments, advocates of their own programs, but they now are not advocating free of knowledge of the problems that the others have. And I think long term that is going to be an important improvement in state government.

Mark Junge: Well said! I was not aware of that. It seems so obvious, but I wasn't aware of it.

Governor Sullivan: Well, it does! You'd think that people have a basic understanding and a basic concern and so on, but as an example, what is now Family Services—used to be DEPAS—was a part of Health and Social Services. A huge conglomeration. It didn't even get along within itself! Didn't really even have control internally. And DEPAS had its own constituency out there. In every legislative session, they were doing something, based upon everything I could gather, for their own benefit that didn't have anything to do with what the governor might or might not have wanted. Didn't have anything to do with what the head of the department might or might not have wanted. They were out there promoting their own constituency. It was simply because things were so big and so diverse as not to have control.

Mark Junge: How do you as a manager though, when you sit here with your up to fifteen people, how do you operate yourself? You described the modus operandi more or less, but do you try to bring things to closure, do you allow people to debate? I've never been in on one of these, so I don't know.

Governor Sullivan: We allow them to debate. There's some debate. And we're still getting our sea legs on that as well because it's relatively new within this year. Within the last twelve months is the first time we've had those kinds of meetings. I try to promote discussion and to listen and not to squelch discussion by prematurely giving my own views, which is always the case. When you're governor and you sit in on a meeting, once people know what your view is it sort of generates the direction in which the conversation is going to flow.

Mark Junge: (Laughs) I'm sorry. I've got to laugh on that, because there's a lot of respect, not just for you, but for the position.

Governor Sullivan: That's right. When I came in as governor, I'll never forget driving over to Laramie for the first time I attended a Board of Trustees meeting. It was within a couple of months after election, and I came in as governor thinking that was going to be one of the real delights of being governor was attending the University Board of Trustees meeting. My grandfather had served on the Board of Trustees, and my father and my uncle had all served on the Board of Trustees. I always thought maybe someday I would get to serve on the Board of Trustees. As one of my friends in Casper said, it was—I don't know exactly how he termed it, I think I'll lose the word—but it was sort of, “you get this seat by reason of your heritage.” That maybe someday if things broke right, I'd get a chance to sit on the Board of Trustees. I never anticipated I'd be on the Board of Trustees as a result of being elected governor.

So anyway, I was driving into Laramie thinking what a wonderful—from a historical standpoint and a (??) standpoint—what a wonderful opportunity this was. Well, I sat in on that meeting and maybe one other, and realized that, as governor, it is not a particularly comfortable place to be. You sit down at the end of the table, when an issue comes up, everybody sort of looks down toward the end, “What does the governor say,” and when you get over, “Well Governor, what is your opinion about this?” And all of a sudden your board of trustees is not operating on the basis of what twelve separate people think is the right answer. They're looking to what the governor thinks. They don't want to embarrass the governor. They're all appointed by the governor, so they're deferential to what his concerns are. The press is sitting there, and if the governor states that well, he thinks this is the way it ought to be and the board of trustees votes differently, then they've caused some embarrassment that the press is going to report on.

My conclusion was that that board of trustees would operate better if I didn't attend their meetings. That if they're really going to conduct the responsibility that they're appointed for, they need to do it free of this overriding influence that the governor brings to any meeting.

Mark Junge: So no matter how good a guy Mike Sullivan is, no matter how much he tries to elicit other people's opinions and attitudes and let them, in a democratic atmosphere, exercise their democratic rights, there's still that barrier?

Governor Sullivan: Well, I think that's correct. It is the position. And it has greater influence in different settings. We started this discussion about the legislature. I'm not sure how much influence it has on the legislature. (Both laugh) But in a meeting of lay people, in a meeting particularly of people that you appoint and that you might want to reappoint, the position of governor, just like any position of authority, is going to have some influence.

Mark Junge: I liked your statement about the legislature because that's a healthy sign.

Governor Sullivan: Oh, sure. It's good. It's politics. And it's the two party system. They are political. The Board of Trustees, the other boards that I appoint, the advisory boards that I sit on, the cabinet, they're not political. Politics *is* involved. And some of them may be there because they're Democrat or Republican. But it isn't political in the sense that the process is not a political process. The legislature's process *is* a political process. They *are* political. Whether it's the President of the Senate or somebody else, part of their mission in life is to discredit the Democratic governor.

Mark Junge: And that's part of the separation of powers.

Governor Sullivan: That's right. And it is healthy. It is what makes maybe the best and the worst of this country's democracy.

Mark Junge: And I still want to get to this accessibility question, because Michelle had an interesting story about you up in Jackson Hole—because you can go to the other end of the spectrum too, where people become, in Wyoming, so familiar with their governor that they don't proffer the appropriate respect. But I was asking you about the reorganization. Now you didn't describe, and I'm sure there is, a downside to the reorganization. A negative aspect that works against you too.

Governor Sullivan: Well, I suspect there is that in the sense that because it becomes more hierarchical you lose some of the contact with the middle level and lower level people that you would have if all of that was spread out over 79 agencies. So you have to balance the hierarchical nature of it with the inability to have the appropriate span of control.

Mark Junge: Let me throw this at you and just see how you react: If you create a pyramid with you at the top, which is what I envision this to be, you have cabinet level positions and these cabinet people filter all the information up towards you. It also puts you in the responsibility of being—doesn't it—of being the decision maker in that normally the small decisions and the small problems also get funneled up?

Governor Sullivan: Sure. Although one of the reasons for having the cabinet level people, the department heads, is that they have their own responsibility and hopefully, by giving that additional responsibility, the decision making can be made at a lower level as well.

Mark Junge: But aren't there certain things that you don't even want to hear about?

Governor Sullivan: You bet! That's another advantage of the reorganization, I think. The more responsibility you have placed in those people, the less likely you are to get the peripheral issues. But, you get back to that accessibility. . . The governor is expected to be accessible. We are. It's the best part of politics. At the same time, it can also—it's a double edged sword. It can also get in your way, as you said, and it's one of the difficult things I had to get used to, and I don't know that I'm used to it yet, or that I've balanced it appropriately. That is, the nature of the job requires a certain degree of respect, and you can't get too close.

Mark Junge: Well, Michelle was talking about how you had, one time early I guess in your tenure as governor, gone up to the Mangy Moose and wanted to visit with your friend Bruce Howser, and she said the bouncers or the guys at the door, told your messenger that, hey! You're just like anybody else, you're going to have to pay, or wait or whatever it was, I'm not sure which. But she said she was a little bit embarrassed by that. I mean, here was they governor of the state and he can't

even get in to see a Country and Western singer who's his friend? And she felt a little bad about that.

Governor Sullivan: I'd forgotten about that incident. But that was early, and particularly when you came in as I did, with no sort of baseline understanding, the one thing you don't want to do is start trying to utilize your position to gain either special benefits or recognition or whatever. I still believe that, and I think in Wyoming there is a certain limit to how much advantage you can take of the position. Because people pretty much expect you to be kind of a regular guy. There's a distance that must be maintained. There's a certain aura that is always there, but the worst thing you can do is get kinda pompous. And so you're always trying to avoid that impression—whether it's standing in the theater line, as Jane and I did last Saturday night, with everybody else—I would not, and I don't think the people of Wyoming would want me to walk in to the front of the line and buy a ticket and go in. Or get a ticket and just move in. That's just not the way it works in Wyoming.

Mark Junge: It would be disastrous!

Governor Sullivan: But it would be the way it would be handled in probably almost any other state. The governor would come wandering in with two or three security guys, they would have bought his tickets in advance, or called the theater and arranged to have it, and he'd go in under some special circumstance. Doesn't work that way in Wyoming. It shouldn't work that way in Wyoming, and I don't think it will. Certainly won't as long as I'm governor. That's just sort of the ethic that we've established in Wyoming.

Mark Junge: Okay, we're runnin' down here, but I've gotta—

Governor Sullivan: We're also about out of time.

Mark Junge: Are we? Okay.

Governor Sullivan: Yeah, I guess we're—we had an hour, we're now at about an hour and a half! (Both laugh)

Mark Junge: You know I appreciate this!

Governor Sullivan: Well, I appreciate it too. I enjoy it. And I'd say to you—I visited with Jane on my way out this morning—you really ought to interview Jane.

Mark Junge: I'd love to.

Governor Sullivan: And she would be very willing to do it.

Mark Junge: Great!

Governor Sullivan: It's an important part—you know this is really a partnership.

Mark Junge: Is it?

Governor Sullivan: Yeah. And she's the hardest working non-paid state employee that exists.

Mark Junge: You mentioned that in your first interview, which I was allowed to listen to, that you felt that maybe that ought to be a paid state position.

Governor Sullivan: Well, I would never suggest that, because I don't think I could. But in fact, I heard Bill Clinton say during one of their interviews that you pay for one, you get two. Pay for one, get one free. And that's certainly the case. I don't think anybody appreciates—and it'd be one of the reasons I think it would be helpful for you to interview Jane—the work that the first ladies, the wives of the governors do almost anywhere, but certainly here. She has her own staff, she runs the house, she is required to appear and speak, and she replaces me in a number of places, but she is—it's a full time job.

Mark Junge: Okay. Can we do just a few more little things?

Governor Sullivan: Sure.

Mark Junge: I'm wondering how important she is to you?

Governor Sullivan: Extremely important. I don't know how I could perform in this job without the support and comfort and the work that she provides.

Mark Junge: Wasn't there some problems with her getting used to the job as well as you?
Because your family life changed—

Governor Sullivan: Oh, dramatically! And there was. I think I probably mentioned it in previous interviews. I don't know that you ever fully adjust to the circumstances that you have, but you come in sort of off the street and all of a sudden you're living in a fishbowl. You lose your privacy. You don't know how both outwardly and inwardly to react to that. You realize that you can never again change your life, you can't turn back the clock to where you were and all of those things work on you.

Mark Junge: You have a pretty good memory for names—

Governor Sullivan: Pretty good.

Mark Junge: I'm wondering how necessary that is. I know in academe, you're an excellent student if you can grasp concepts. And you're also an excellent student if you have a command of the facts—do you feel that you've got a good memory?

Governor Sullivan: Yes.

Mark Junge: And it's easy for you to remember names?

Governor Sullivan: No! (Laughs) Let's put it this way. I do probably better than most, but it isn't easy. I have to work at it. Sometimes it comes spontaneously—the names and faces, as with those kids in there. I saw a couple that I recognized. But . . . in this whole business there's a kind of like information overload and that information overload is particularly apparent with names and faces. Because you get so many, and then you see them in different context. And you're operating oftentimes at a high level of exhaustion, so you really do have to work at maintaining it. You have to take a lot of cues, and you have to listen. I'd say maybe even as much as memory, I have good peripheral vision, and I can listen out of both ears. And that's helpful.

Mark Junge: (Laughs) I noticed that! One last question, and this may be a tough one for you to answer, but occasionally when I'm under stress or in a crisis situation or I'm going through a crisis, I find it difficult sometimes to understand who I really am. I lose touch in a way, I guess, with reality. How do you, in your tough times, in this job, maintain sort of a self awareness, of knowing who Mike Sullivan is?

Governor Sullivan: Well probably not much different than anyplace else. I hope I never lost touch with reality. I suppose people would look at me, and people that know me well know that I'm not a volatile personality. I don't become much overcome by stress in the sense that I internalize it more than externalize it. I don't know that that's good or bad.

Mark Junge: But don't you become disoriented sometimes?

Governor Sullivan: No, not disoriented, but I do become concerned about things. I wouldn't call it depressed, but down. And it's in those times I think I have to do the same thing that you've just said, and that's just—look, you have to have basic self confidence and faith in yourself and you have to keep reminding [yourself], look, you're in here because people have confidence in you, they've expressed that confidence. That is one of the reasons that I was particularly pleased to get re-elected. I'm sure that's always an ego-builder for a politician. But you're elected once, maybe it's a fluke. You're elected twice, it's based upon what you did and what people thought of you. So I was pleased by that, and I say to myself, look, you're here because people think you can do the job. It's not an easy job, nobody is perfect in it, but you do the very best you can.

Mark Junge: And if you're elected three times?

Governor Sullivan: If you're elected three times you're the second third-term governor in the history of this state!

Mark Junge: And you've been here too long, right?

Governor Sullivan: Maybe! Okay? Thanks, Mark.

Mark Junge: Okay, thank you!

End of interview