



Oral History Interview of Karen Harraghy (OH-009)

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Oral History Interview of Karen Harraghy

Interview Date: May 12, 2003

Interviewed by: Wayne Feugill, Northeastern University, HIST 4263- Spring, 2003

Citation: Harraghy, Karen. Interviewed by Wayne Feugill. John Joseph Moakley Oral History Project OH-009. 12 May 2003. Transcript and audio available. John Joseph Moakley Archive and Institute, Suffolk University, Boston, MA.

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Interview Summary

In this interview, Karen Harraghy, a member of Congressman John Joseph Moakley's district staff from 1983 to 2001, recalls her time working for the congressman. The interview covers Ms. Harraghy's responsibilities as a district staff member; Congressman Moakley's involvement in immigration and human rights issues in El Salvador; his relationships with the Massachusetts congressional delegation and other members of Congress; and his reputation as a bread-and-butter politician. She concludes by reflecting on Congressman Moakley's legacy of public service and political leadership.

Subject Headings

Boston (Mass.)

Harraghy, Karen

McGovern, James P., 1959-

Moakley, John Joseph, 1927-2001

Refugees Legal status, laws, etc. El Salvador.

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Interview Transcript

WAYNE FEUGILL: Wayne Feugill interviewing Karen Harraghy, May 12, 2003.

Why don't we just start off with a lit bit of background information—you were born here in Massachusetts?

KAREN HARRAGHY: I was born in Taunton, Massachusetts. I've lived there all my life. I went to the local parochial high school in Taunton. Then I went to Stonehill College and Northeastern [University]. And I've gone to UMass [University of Massachusetts] Boston to pursue a master's degree. I'm affiliated with the McCormack Institute for Women in Politics and Government. I'm married, and I have a seven-and-a-half-year-old son, Patrick.

FEUGILL: Where do you live now?

HARRAGHY: In Taunton, in the same house where I was brought up.

FEUGILL: How did your relationship with the congressman first begin?

HARRAGHY: I was a student at Stonehill. I was in my senior year, and I was doing an internship in the Brockton District Court, working with juveniles and providing risk needs assessments. It was part of my curriculum for my major in sociology. My supervisor there, she knew that I'd be graduating and have some time on my hands, so she suggested that maybe I'd be interested in volunteering in the congressman's campaign in Taunton.¹ And that started probably that summer, so that would be 1982—the summer of 1982.

So I finished my internship, and then I went and I volunteered my time, not expecting that any type of position would come of it, but just to get experience.

¹ One of Congressman Moakley's district offices was located in Taunton, Massachusetts, which is about forty miles south of Boston.

FEUGILL: Did you meet the congressman during that time?

HARRAGHY: I did, just briefly, though, because he'd come in during campaign visits. And at that time they had redrawn the district, the Ninth Congressional District, and Taunton was the new city in that district. So it was all new to him.

FEUGILL: When did you become full-time?

HARRAGHY: I became the campaign manager in September of that year; managed the southeastern part of his district, which included Taunton, Middleboro, Lakeville, Dighton, Easton, Raynham, Bridgewater.

FEUGILL: That was 1983?

HARRAGHY: Right. That's correct. So I was hired for the campaign, and it wasn't until the end of the campaign, two weeks after the campaign, that he was reelected, and he offered me a position. So I just briefly met Congressman Joe Moakley, not knowing what was going to happen.

FEUGILL: And then he offered you the position. What was the position?

HARRAGHY: District representative. And I was the sole person. I became his office manager, or district manager, in his Taunton district office.

FEUGILL: Okay. What were some of the things that you did?

HARRAGHY: I did everything. I answered the phone; I handled constituent problems, whatever it may be, from requesting a flag to making requests for tours. They had a problem with the streetlight; social security problem—they couldn't locate their social security check; they wanted to know how to apply for Medicare for the first time; they wanted to apply for citizenship, a veterans' issue, a military issue. The congressman had a Boston district office, and

in that district office he had specialists that just handled specific types of casework. But when I first started for the congressman, he wanted me to get more acclimated as far as what services were available, so I handled everything.

FEUGILL: And you were in that position for which years?

HARRAGHY: Well, from 1983 until 2001; October 2001.

FEUGILL: Were you involved in any particular issues closely?

HARRAGHY: What happened was, there was such a need to service the immigrant population in Taunton. I started training with Dr. Jim Woodard, who was Congressman Moakley's assistant district director.² And he taught me how to go through the process of immigration, citizenship, assisting constituents, petitioning for relatives overseas. If relatives—if U.S. citizens had relatives overseas that wanted to come and visit, I'd go through the whole process of instructing them as far as what that relative needed to do overseas at our American post to file for an immigrant or non-immigrant visa. So it was interesting work.

Sometimes there would be an emergency where there would be a U.S. citizen that may have passed on overseas. We'd be in contact with the State Department in trying to assist the family here, as well as the constituent that was overseas, to try to see if your embassy could provide legal counsel. So a lot of different issues. People would call us asking if it was safe to travel overseas. We then would advise them, after contacting the State Department, whether they should be traveling or shouldn't be traveling. So it was just—

FEUGILL: Did you enjoy it?

HARRAGHY: I loved it. The last five years that I worked for the congressman, I became his immigration specialist. Dr. Woodward actually went on to law school—

² James Woodard served as Congressman Moakley's assistant district director from 1973 to 2001.

FEUGILL: What years was that? Ninety-two?

HARRAGHY: Let's see. So subtract—

FEUGILL: Ninety-six?

HARRAGHY: Yes, about '96.

FEUGILL: What was that title? Immigration—

HARRAGHY: Immigration specialist. And I handled all of the immigration casework within the district because Jim was actually going to law school and was only there in the office part-time. So we did everything. We had foreign nationals that would contact our office that had settled in the Boston area, the Taunton area. They actually went to work at the teaching hospitals; they were doctors. We had companies, computer companies, that were filing H-1B visas for people who have computer expertise that they wanted to employ. So we would assist the attorney, and also assist them through the immigration process, telling them—getting a status on their case, or telling them what type of paperwork they needed to file. We did a little bit of everything.

FEUGILL: One of the big issues that he was involved in was the issue with the El Salvadorian priests.³ How familiar were you with that? You were there during that.

HARRAGHY: I was. What happened was the congressman met—on a yearly basis, he met with his constituents. He would send postcards out to the constituency that didn't have a district office that would service them. So we had the Taunton office, Boston office. At that time we didn't have a Brockton office. And what he did is, Saturdays and Sundays he would go out to town halls and meet with individuals. And it was in—I think it was 1993 [sic-1983] that he actually met with a couple at the Jamaica Plain Post Office, and they brought a Hispanic couple

³ In December of 1989, Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley appointed Moakley as chairman of a committee to investigate violence in El Salvador, specifically the November 16, 1989, murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America in San Salvador.

with them and introduced them to the congressman. At that point, he sat down with them and talked with them, and they actually told him what was happening in El Salvador. People were being killed by the military there.⁴

And if anyone knew Joe Moakley, every constituent was very important to him. They were very personal to him. After meeting with that family, what he did was he returned to Washington, and he asked Jim McGovern, who's now Congressman Jim McGovern,⁵ to investigate what the State Department—were these atrocities actually happening when the U.S. government had been sending aid to that country for many, many years? It was almost like the Republican administration wasn't addressing those issues.

So Jim came back to the congressman and said yes, and just confirmed what these people were saying, that people were being slaughtered. Also, the Jesuit priests that were killed—six Jesuit priests that were killed, along with their housekeeper and her daughter that were slain—he then started a process of investigating these claims. The first part of that process was he introduced a bill into Congress. Now, I don't know the exact dates of this whole process, but I do have materials that will cover that. He introduced a bill that asked that if citizens came to this country to seek refuge, could they be allowed to stay here, not on a permanent basis, but on a temporary basis. They'd be allowed shelter and employment here until the U.S. government or the State Department had decided that it was okay for them to return back to El Salvador.

So what happened was the bill didn't pass in its first attempts through the House and through the Senate because it was so a-specific to El Salvadorian nationals. So the congressman each year introduced the bill again, and eventually it passed. It passed, I think I would say in the nineties, probably the mid-nineties.⁶ And what happened was—actually, it's politics at its best. In order

⁴ In 1983, a group of constituents alerted Moakley to the plight of Salvadorans in the Boston area who were being deported back to their country, where civilians were being killed in a violent civil war.

⁵ James P. McGovern (1959-), a Democrat, has represented Massachusetts' Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1997. He was a member of Moakley's congressional staff from 1982 to 1996.

⁶ Starting in 1983, Congressman Moakley introduced legislation to protect Salvadorans in the U.S. using the "Extended Voluntary Departure" provision that allowed a temporary stay of deportation and work authorization. Moakley was finally able to pass legislation that granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Salvadorans in the Immigration Act of 1990 (PL. 101-649). TPS grants temporary legal residency and work authorization to immigrants fleeing civil wars, natural disasters or other conditions in their home country for a set period of time. In El Salvador's case, TPS has been extended several times since 1990. The TPS designation has been used by other

for it to pass, other nationals were included in the bill: Guatemala, other Central American countries. Also, now, Nigerian nationals. It's just been extended to Lebanese nationals. They were allowed to stay here in this country after the passage of the bill, and they were able to work here and establish themselves.

People are still taking advantage of that program. It's called Temporary Protected Status. And what they do is they file an application and a series of documents with the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service], and the INS then decides or adjudicates their case. They have to prove that if they were to return to their country, they would be persecuted. Some of these cases were just so, so sad. Temporary Protected Status has ended at this point for El Salvador nationals because democracy has been instilled in that country.⁷ And I think a lot of that is due to the fact that Joe Moakley worked so hard after being appointed by former Speaker Tip O'Neill [sic – former House Speaker Thomas Foley] to a commission to investigate the deaths of the Jesuit fathers, also their housekeeper and her daughter.⁸ And Joe took repeated trips over to El Salvador and met with government officials, military officials, met with guerillas that the State Department didn't know he met with.

FEUGILL: Did you ever go down with him at all?

HARRAGHY: No, Jim [McGovern] actually was the person. He can give you a lengthy description and a better account of what happened in that country.⁹

FEUGILL: What were some of the things you understood happened down there?

countries experiencing civil unrest and is administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). (See <http://www.uscis.gov>.)

⁷ Temporary Protected Status designation is still available for Salvadorans in the United States.

⁸ In December 1989, Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley appointed Moakley as chairman of a committee to investigate violence in El Salvador, specifically the murder of the six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter at the University of Central America. The committee is commonly referred to as the Speaker's Task Force on El Salvador or the Moakley Commission.

⁹ OH-013 in the John Joseph Moakley Oral History Project in an interview with Congressman Jim McGovern. He discusses, among other things, his work with Congressman Moakley in El Salvador.

HARRAGHY: The congressman actually was taken by jeep to an undisclosed location, and he was told—and he saw firsthand where the Jesuits were killed. He sat down with government officials and just said, “I’m going to get to the bottom of this.” Anyone who knows Joe Moakley, once he starts something, he’s going to continue and he’s going to get it resolved.

Well, they investigated, and I can’t release a lot of the information that they found, but what happened was he brought his findings back. There were other congressmen on the commission—I can’t tell you who they were; I can’t remember who they were—and other government officials that went down and met with these individuals. He came back with his findings, provided them to Speaker Foley at the time. At that point, it was found that military officials had actually slain one of the Jesuit priests, the housekeeper, and the daughter. And what eventually happened was they were brought to justice and imprisoned, and it was all due to Joe Moakley’s efforts.

I think, too, that he tried to start additional efforts in Cuba (phone rings), which is a topic of discussion for another day. But it’s just amazing what he was able to find out, and how now the people there are allowed to vote—voting takes place, which didn’t happen. In the early sixties, it was twelve to fourteen families that actually ran the government in El Salvador. They were wealthy. And what happened in the seventies and eighties—there was an uprising in the eighties, and it was led by the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁰ The Roman Catholic Church—and it was Archbishop Romero that actually had the poor—there was no middle class—to start to speak up against the military and protest. And that’s what actually—what Joe’s efforts, the Catholic Church’s efforts, to try to bring democracy to that country.

FEUGILL: Was some of the motivation—was it his concern for the immigrants, or his concern of what our government was doing down there?

HARRAGHY: Both.

¹⁰ Ms. Harraghy is referring to the practice of liberation theology, a school of thought that focuses on using religious faith to combat poverty and oppression. It has been popular particularly among Latin American Catholics, but is not part of the official doctrine of the Catholic Church. (See <http://www.liberationtheology.org>)

FEUGILL: Were they afraid of another Vietnam? I've heard that they were afraid maybe that this was going to be another Vietnam-type issue.

HARRAGHY: I don't know if I ever heard that comparison.

FEUGILL: Okay.

HARRAGHY: But I think it was due to the fact that we had sent money over to that country, not knowing what it was being spent on. What was happening was we were supporting these paramilitary groups who were killing these people. And I think until this issue actually came to heart to Joe Moakley, that he wanted to be able to help them. This specific family that he met with was just the beginning. There's history, there's articles. It's just—that's how Joe Moakley was. He was just a great guy. He just took everything personally. He wanted to get to the bottom of this.

He fought the Reagan Administration and the [George H.W.] Bush Administration at that point, and he was chairman of the Rules Committee,¹¹ which was the traffic cop of Congress. And bills that would go before that committee, he'd stop them, so additional aid couldn't be sent to that country.

FEUGILL: What were some of the roadblocks that he faced with the administration? What were some of the—

HARRAGHY: They didn't want to believe these things were happening, and they swept them under the carpet. But his commission brought them to light.

FEUGILL: Did they have direct, confrontational—

¹¹ The House Rules Committee is responsible for the scheduling of bills for discussion in the House of Representatives. According to the Rules Committee website, "bills are scheduled by means of special rules from the Rules Committee that bestow upon legislation priority status for consideration in the House and establish procedures for their debate and amendment." (See <http://www.rules.house.gov/>) Congressman Moakley was a member of the House Rules Committee from 1975 to 2001 and served as its chairman from 1989 to 1995.

HARRAGHY: Absolutely. The Reagan Administration with the State Department, they wouldn't confirm that these things were happening. That's why Joe actually met with some members of the guerillas to get a different perspective, to know what was going on. I think was the [FMLN],¹² which was a combination of guerilla groups. I can't tell you who he met with, or where those meetings took place, but he used to recant about—he'd get into a jeep, and it would be in the nighttime. He would be with Jim McGovern or a soldier, and they'd drive to an undisclosed location. The lights would flash, and then he would get out and he'd meet with these people. He talked about the bullets flying. (laughter) But just to hear him tell these stories, it was just such an important issue to him, and he got to the bottom of it.

FEUGILL: Were his constituents—did he get any resistance from his constituents at home about time spent on this issue, as opposed to—

HARRAGHY: Not really. It was more support groups who supported efforts in El Salvador and Central America, pro-Democracy groups. No.

FEUGILL: He was from South Boston, right?

HARRAGHY: Yes.

FEUGILL: And he has a big Irish population [in his district]. Did they have anything—

HARRAGHY: It was—they didn't think it was really an issue. But I can comment on that off the cuff, too. (laughter)

FEUGILL: But did he get pressure to drop the issue from his own constituents?

HARRAGHY: I think just in Congress he received—not from his own constituents. Just from Congress, from the administration. He fought and fought and fought to get this bill passed just to

¹² FMLN stands for Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, or Farabundo Marti National Liberation, which began in 1980 as a group of guerilla organizations that, with the Salvadoran Communist Party, fought against the government of El Salvador. It became a legal political party in 1992 after the civil war in El Salvador ended.

help these people so they could come here and stay here and seek refuge here. He just never stopped. This went on for six years. I'm just giving you a brief synopsis of what happened.

FEUGILL: Sure.

HARRAGHY: Also, he submitted legislation to Congress to stop allowing members of these military groups that came here to the United States, who were trained here at military bases, and were sent back to El Salvador—now, I can't tell you what the time frame was, but [it] has since stopped because of efforts there that happened in the seventies and the eighties, when the Reagan Administration and the Bush Administration supported efforts, aid.¹³ Most of these military people were trained here in the States and sent over there and were killing people, which is awful.

FEUGILL: Under whose orders were they killing—

HARRAGHY: The military that was (inaudible)—well, the military there that actually took control. And the military was connected to the wealthy families who were coffee-producing manufacturers. And they allowed the military to take control. You see the wealthy homeowners and coffee producers moving to Cuba or coming to Miami to live here in Florida, and the military just took power.

FEUGILL: Now, during this whole issue with El Salvador, what was your role in that? Did you do any work on it?

HARRAGHY: When constituents would come to us and wanted to know what the process was as far as filing temporary protected status—

¹³ The members of the Salvadoran military who were responsible for murdering the six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter in 1989 were trained in the United States at Fort Benning in Georgia, at a school then called the School of the Americas. Despite efforts since the early 1990s to close it, the school, now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, continues to train mainly Latin American military groups in security and defense tactics. The School of the Americas Watch (<http://www.soaw.org>) leads the lobbying efforts to close the school on the basis that some of the school's graduates are responsible for human rights violations.

FEUGILL: Oh, I see.

HARRAGHY: —the congressman would then direct them to me or to Jim Woodard, and then we'd assist them in going through the whole process.

FEUGILL: Now, you mentioned Speaker O'Neill.¹⁴ Now, he was a big influence on the congressman?

HARRAGHY: Absolutely. Joe was Speaker O'Neill's protégé. And then Jim McGovern, who was Joe Moakley's protégé—but Speaker O'Neill was wonderful. They were very, very close. And as you know, Speaker O'Neill was very, very powerful. Again, he appointed Joe Moakley because Speaker O'Neill wanted to get to the bottom of this, as well as Joe Moakley. He was as committed. Tip did so much for Massachusetts in bringing federal aid back to Massachusetts. He was wonderful. He was a local politician. He was like Joe Moakley: "All politics in local." And new politicians nowadays, they're a different breed.

FEUGILL: So Joe Moakley sort of modeled himself after Tip O'Neill?

HARRAGHY: I think so. I think so, absolutely. He's a bread-and-butter politician. He would tell me that there wasn't one night that he wouldn't sit down at home and pick up the phone, where a Mary Agnes O'Leary hadn't received her social security check, and he'd get on the issue the next day. Tip was just like that. It was a very personal issue to him, the constituents. They took their job very, very seriously.

FEUGILL: What was it like to work for Joe Moakley? It seems like you enjoyed it.

HARRAGHY: Yes! It was my first job out of college. He was more like my father than my employer. He'd come into the office, big hug, big kiss, "How's everything going?" It's just

¹⁴ Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill (1912-1994), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts' Eleventh and, after redistricting, Eighth Congressional Districts in the United States House of Representatives from 1953 to 1987. He served as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1977 to 1987.

amazing. I get emotional just talking about it. He was just a great, great man. He loved all of us.

FEUGILL: So, quite an impact on you?

HARRAGHY: Yes, I think so.

FEUGILL: Were you always located up here? Or did you go to Washington?

HARRAGHY: I was in Taunton, but I worked three days—when I was going to UMass Boston I worked three days in the Boston office too, and commuted back and forth. So I did a little bit of everything.

FEUGILL: What was his relationship like with the [congressional] delegation for Massachusetts? Was there a lot of interaction between them?

HARRAGHY: Oh, there were—there was a lot of interaction. He was seen as the dean of the delegation.

FEUGILL: Oh, he was? Okay.

HARRAGHY: His leadership—he was just so powerful. And people didn't realize that, not only from his role as chairman of the Rules Committee, but how he worked with all members of Congress. Upon his death,¹⁵ at his funeral, George Bush, Jr., was there, Al Gore was there, Bill Clinton was there. I mean, it didn't matter what political party you were from. He worked with everyone. I think that was just so, so important.

¹⁵ Moakley passed away due to complications from leukemia on May 28, 2001.

As far as the Massachusetts delegation, he worked with everyone. They weren't all alike. He would sit down with Marty Meehan.¹⁶ He was a freshman member of the delegation at that time. He [Moakley] would say, "Well, this is how we do things in Massachusetts." (laughter)

FEUGILL: Teach them the ropes.

HARRAGHY: Teach them the ropes. And people respected him. Like with Jim McGovern. I mean, he was like a second father (inaudible) because he learned by example. He worked with Joe in the Washington office. He was his foreign affairs person. And he just learned. He's very similar to Joe Moakley as far as worrying about his constituents.

FEUGILL: So you were there during the whole—when Congress changed hands.¹⁷

HARRAGHY: Mm-hmm.

FEUGILL: Did anything change?

HARRAGHY: It was very dramatic.

FEUGILL: It was very dramatic. What were some of the things that went on there?

HARRAGHY: We lost staff. That was the biggest part—people who had worked for Joe for a long time. Joe tried to help them with securing other position in the House. He took care of everyone. What happened was, he went from his beautiful office to a smaller office, and he became the minority person on the Rules Committee. That was pretty hard for him.

FEUGILL: Was it?

¹⁶ Martin T. "Marty" Meehan (1956-), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts' Fifth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1993 to 2007.

¹⁷ For the 104th Congress, beginning in 1995, both the House and the Senate shifted from Democratic majorities to Republican majorities.

HARRAGHY: Yes. Very, very hard for him. I think what kept him going—he had so many battles with his health. He wanted to become chairman of the Rules Committee again, and I think that’s why he worked so hard and he fought so hard for the Democrats. So he didn’t see that happen, unfortunately, but that was important.

FEUGILL: What were some of the things that changed? Was it—I don’t know if I should say less busy, or—

HARRAGHY: No, our constituent work never changed. We were always busy. But Joe, again, worked with other members of the Rules Committee. He still got what he wanted accomplished, because he worked with everyone.

FEUGILL: And how was his relationship with the new leadership?

HARRAGHY: It was conflicting. It wasn’t as easy to get more money for Massachusetts, in particular the Big Dig.¹⁸ But he still got a lot accomplished. And, again, he worked with everyone. The new chairman of the Rules Committee at that time—there were conflicts there because he took over, and it was a different style.

FEUGILL: Who was that, do you remember?¹⁹

HARRAGHY: I can’t tell you. I can’t remember everything as I used to. But that person has since left Congress. But it was difficult for him, very difficult for him, to be in a leadership role, and then not have that role, but that didn’t stop him. He still fought for Suffolk or for the new courthouse in South Boston,²⁰ and the Joe Moakley Bridge—the Evelyn Moakley Bridge.²¹

¹⁸ The Big Dig, or Central Artery/Tunnel Project (CA/T), was the largest public works project in U.S. history and involved the replacement of downtown Boston’s elevated highway with a tunnel. The project began in 1991 and ended in 2007.

¹⁹ Moakley was replaced as chairman of the Rules Committee by Gerald Brooks Hunt Solomon (1930-2001), a Republican, who represented New York’s Twenty-ninth, Twenty-fifth and Twenty-second Congressional Districts in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1979 to 1999. (The area he represented was redistricted twice during his tenure.) He was chairman of the Rules Committee from 1995 to 1998.

²⁰ The John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse, located on Boston’s Fan Pier in South Boston, was built in 1998 and dedicated to Moakley in April 2001, shortly before his death.

FEUGILL: The El Salvador issue obviously is a big issue. What were some of the other major issues?

HARRAGHY: Cuba.

FEUGILL: Cuba was another.

HARRAGHY: He wanted to bring democracy. He wanted our relations to open up with that country, and he was fought by the Clinton Administration, which was a Democratic administration, and he was fought by his constituency because of the Communist tone of having any type of involvement with that country. Jim McGovern has continued the efforts in that country, and trying to lessen the sanctions on that country, and bringing businesspeople over to that country. You now can travel to Cuba. But that was all because of Joe Moakley.

He met with Fidel Castro on two or three occasions. He brought over a Red Sox jacket and gave it to Fidel Castro.

FEUGILL: Oh, he did?

HARRAGHY: Yeah. In return for—I got some Cuban cigars. But I think his efforts in that country—relations are getting better with that country. I don't know if I'll see it in my lifetime.

FEUGILL: Did he catch a lot of grief?

HARRAGHY: Absolutely.

FEUGILL: Yeah, he must have.

²¹ The Evelyn Moakley Bridge, which opened in October of 1996, spans the Fort Point Channel to connect downtown Boston and South Boston.

HARRAGHY: From the media, especially from his constituents. Why are we going over there? Why are we spending tax dollars?

FEUGILL: How'd he react to that?

HARRAGHY: He said, "This is an island that's ninety miles off our coast. They should be our neighbor, our friend, and we should reestablish our efforts and work with"—he was working with the Catholic Church at that time. The Catholic Church wanted to establish relations in that country, which they've done. And he just thought it was very, very important that we be a part—he just saw a lot of opportunity there, whereas other people put on their blinders and said we shouldn't get involved.

FEUGILL: Which is an issue that's still going on?

HARRAGHY: Absolutely, absolutely. Bill Delahunt²² was a member of the congressional delegation, as well as Jim McGovern. They're still visiting that country and still trying to loosen the sanctions. And people are now doing business there. So that has changed.

FEUGILL: So there was Cuba and El Salvador. I know that the busing was a big issue.

HARRAGHY: In the seventies it was a big issue.

FEUGILL: Yes, before you came along. Is there anything you know about that?

HARRAGHY: That was an issue that bothered Joe Moakley, really bothered Joe Moakley. Joe, when he first ran for Congress, ran as a Democrat against Louse Day Hicks,²³ and was unsuccessful. He ran again, changed his party to be Independent, and beat Louise Day Hicks,

²² William D. Delahunt (1941-), a Democrat, has represented Massachusetts' Tenth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1997.

²³ Louise Day Hicks (1916-2003), a Democrat, served on the Boston School Committee from 1962 to 1967 (serving as chair from 1963 to 1965), ran unsuccessfully for the mayoralty of Boston in 1967 and in 1971, and served on the Boston City Council before being elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1970. She represented Massachusetts' Ninth Congressional District for one term.

and became a congressman at that point.²⁴ And that was the biggest issue—a person who you could interview to get additional information would be Molly Hurley,²⁵ who was with Joe for more than twenty-five years. I was not part of the staff at that point. But that always bothered him.

FEUGILL: It did?

HARRAGHY: Absolutely, absolutely. There was so much violence, especially in South Boston, his hometown. Not wanting to be bused, South Boston people being bused with blacks, black students. And protests that were involved—emotionally, that was a big issue.

FEUGILL: Even to this day, there's still a lot of raw nerve with a lot of people. So I was just wondering how—obviously, as you said, it was an emotional issue for him. What was his involvement like? Do you know what he was—?

HARRAGHY: I can't tell you per se. I'm not sure.

FEUGILL: Because it was before you came.

HARRAGHY: But if you interviewed Molly, or if you interviewed Roger Kineavy, who used to work for the congressman, who was the congressman's district director.²⁶ He also was employed by the congressman since he [Moakley] was a state rep and a state senator; he could talk to you about those issues.

FEUGILL: Were there any other major themes or—

HARRAGHY: Not that I can think of.

²⁴ It was in the 1970 election that Moakley lost his first bid for Congress, in part because Hicks was an outspoken critic of forced busing in Boston, while Moakley did not take a strong stand on the issue. Moakley defeated Hicks in the 1972 congressional election when he ran as an Independent so he wouldn't have to run against Hicks in the democratic primary.

²⁵ Margaret "Molly" Hurley worked in Moakley's South Boston district office from 1977 to 2001.

²⁶ Roger Kineavy served as Moakley's district director from 1973 to 1994.

FEUGILL: What was it like during the whole impeachment era? What was it like to be involved in that?

HARRAGHY: I think he—with his efforts, he tried to remain fair, and just bringing justice and honesty to find out what the facts were. He never prejudges a person, and whatever happened, happened. But another very emotional issue. He was just a very sensitive person.

FEUGILL: Did he take things very personal?

HARRAGHY: Absolutely.

FEUGILL: So it sounds like you have a very favorable view of him.

HARRAGHY: We miss him.

FEUGILL: Is there anything else that you want to say on a personal level about him?

HARRAGHY: I'm trying to think. (pauses) He was just a wonderful man. I don't think anyone will ever fill his shoes. They'll try to, but a lot of the things that he did just went unannounced. He wouldn't go to the media. Just with simple issues, like El Salvador, or a Social Security check, or worrying about the Jesuit fathers that were killed—he was just a very sensitive person.

FEUGILL: Very caring.

HARRAGHY: Very caring.

FEUGILL: He was good to his staff, good to his people?

HARRAGHY: He was wonderful. We all stayed on until he died, just to take care of him.

FEUGILL: That was a rough time for everyone?

HARRAGHY: It still is.

FEUGILL: It still is. I can see that.

HARRAGHY: I'm getting emotional just talking about it. We miss him so much.

FEUGILL: Well, I thank you.

HARRAGHY: Sure.

FEUGILL: I think we are all set.

HARRAGHY: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW