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SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN INTERVIEW
JOHN MCCAIN: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS
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JOHN MCCAIN

Senator

August 29, 2017

Interviewed by Peter Kunhardt

Total Running Time: 2 Hour 12 Minutes

START TC: QT: 01;00;00;00

QT: 01;00;00;00

CREW:

Senator John McCain interview take one, soft sticks, marker.

QT: 01;00;07;06

TITLE

The ranch in Sedona, Arizona

QT: 01;00;11;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We're near a small town called Cornville up in northern Arizona. It's not too far from Prescott or from Flagstaff, and it's a valley that was settled by the Mormons back in the late 1800's. It's on Oak Creek which is magnificent and we have been here for many years. We've grown flowers and trees and built houses and—and we've had our kids so many times up here together that it's really—it's a part of our lives that is probably—we're the most grateful for of our entire family life.

QT: 01;00;49;01

TITLE

On being lionized as an elder statesman of the Senate

QT: 01;00;53;05

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It's very flattering and obviously they've forgotten some aspects of my career in the senate but it's very flattering, it's very moving. After I gave the speech in the Senate about the need for us to work together and to be together, to have every senator at his and her desk and receive the affection as well as appreciation is one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. There is nothing more important than the approval of one's peers and that's the first time I have ever seen every senator sit at their desk to hear another senator speak. It was deeply moving, I'll never forget it and I can tell you that it not only came from my friends but also from my enemies.

QT: 01;01;44;09

TITLE

On President Donald Trump

QT: 01;01;48;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

You know, I've gone through various iterations of how to address this issue of Donald Trump not only in his campaign but as the President and I've decided that the best way for me is to do my job, number one. Number two, work with the people that he has around him that are old friends of mine that are great on national security; General Mattis, General McMaster, others that are really top notch. I've worked with them; I work with them well. And as far as the number of the other things that he has done such as the pardoning of Sheriff Arpaio or these other things, I make a statement and then I move on. My job, my job after 30 some years in the United States Senate is to do everything I can to help the men and women of the military defend this nation under what is in many ways unprecedented challenges.

QT: 01;02;49;20

TITLE

The first indication that he was sick and gratitude

QT: 01;02;55;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Actually the first clue I had was that I came for a physical and I was driving up here and the doctor, my doctor called and said, "You've got to get—turn around and come back. You've got a problem." And I said, "well can't I"—it was on Friday, "can't it wait till Monday?" She said, "No, you've got to come back." That was really the first indication and I'm very thankful to Mayo, I'm very thankful to all the wonderful caregivers but most of all I'm so grateful for the cards and the letters and the phone calls that not just appreciation but affection and it's deeply, deeply, moving and I think I understand given my family's history and given my experiences, the important thing is to celebrate a life well lived. To celebrate the fact that I was able to make some contribution to the betterment of this nation.

QT: 01;03;51;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Not to look back and figure out all the things I should've done and theirs lots of those but to look back in gratitude that I've had the opportunity to serve in the military, to serve in the House of Representatives, to serve in the United States Senate and almost serve as Pre—as President of the United States. It's been a life well lived. You have interviewed and will continue to talk to some of the greatest people in the world. You will never talk to anyone that is as fortunate as John McCain.

QT: 01;04;26;15

TITLE

The doctor's initial assessment and the McCain family's long history of service

QT: 01;04;32;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well, he said, "We've gotta operate because we've got to remove what that is." At first they weren't sure what type of cancer it was and I said, fine. I said, I trust you, let's go do whatever we need to do and let's explore other options and what needs to be done and understand that this is a very vicious form of this disease but to celebrate and not to commiserate. You know, my family

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goes back all the way to the Revolutionary war in military for this country. And my father was a submarine commander in World War II in the Pacific. My grandfather was the commander of the aircraft carriers in the Pacific under Admiral Halsey.

QT: 01;05;20;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So when the war was over, my father brought his submarine into Tokyo Bay and my grandfather—they hadn't seen each other, obviously came in on the aircraft carrier and they met the day of the peace signing and my grandfather said to my father, he said, "It's much better to die for the things you believe in and the country you love." And my grandfather then after the peace signing flew home to Coronado. The day he got home there was a bunch of people that came over, and he went upstairs and he died. And to me, my grandfather epitomizes of what service to the country is all about.

QT: 01;06;04;12

TITLE

Going back to Washington after surgery to vote on the Affordable Care Act bill

QT: 01;06;09;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well I love the doctors at—at Mayo and I think they're wonderful people. But they—their recommendation was that I not take the trip because there could be complications from it. And with respect I said to them, I said, "Look. There's men and women out there as we speak that are risking their lives and perhaps even getting killed or wounded and they depend on me to guide the defense bill through the United States Senate and I just have to go back. I have to go back and then I will come back and do whatever you want, but this work I have in the Senate is for the men and women including my own children that I need to do.

QT: 01;06;54;14

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So they agreed and I flew back and arrived when the Affordable Care Act bill was on the floor and I gave a speech saying the importance of us working together, of my role models life—ranging from Ronald Reagan to Teddy Kennedy and the importance of us working for the American people, which we are not doing. I also said at the time that I would not vote for that version of the Affordable Care Act, whatever that was. So I happened to arrive on the floor. It was 1:30 in the morning. They'd been told that I would give a speech and I did and the reception was frankly overwhelming and I was grateful for not just the appreciation but the real affection. There wasn't hardly a Senator in the Senate that didn't come over to hug me. That's pretty interesting in an artificial town.

QT: 01;08;00;02

TITLE

His vote on the Healthcare bill

QT: 01;08;04;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I just said thumbs down. And that—after—none of that was particularly planned. I had planned on voting against it and I'd announced it. But they sent the Vice President over, the President called me, everybody was calling me. And I said, "Look, I will do anything I can to help but I cannot vote for this and I think you understand it." But they wanted to talk to me, the President wanted to talk to me. So while the vote was—extended vote, I just said, "Look, it's time for me to vote." And I went on the floor and got the attention of the clerk and gave a thumbs down and the reaction was really phenomenal, from both sides.

QT: 01;08;45;02

TITLE

McCain was born at a base in the Panama Canal Zone

QT: 01;08;50;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I was born on the 29th of August, 1936 at a naval base in the Panama Canal Zone on the western end called Cocosola which by the way is now a Chinese container port or—but—and in those days the navy was very small because of the depression and shrinkage of the navy and there was a submarine base there—submarine division there and my mother and father were there and I was born at the hospital there and interestingly enough there was some question of my citizenship because Panama Canal was a territory and guess who's case had been decided that and that was Barry Goldwater who was born in Arizona when Arizona was a—was a territory. There's a bit of trivia and it was a happy time for all of those brave people but honest to god in the depression, the military did not get what they needed which accounted for to a large degree a lack of readiness when December 7th, 1941 rolled around.

QT: 01;10;04;19

TITLE

On a photo of the three McCain's taken in the Panama Canal Zone

QT: 01;10;09;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well it was part of a gathering of the McCain's because my grandfather who was an aviator was in command of the aviation assets in the Panama Canal Zone. Remember in those days there was a great fear of the protection of the Panama Canal which has since passed. So my grandfather and my father and I had that picture together. My grandfather who was a unique character who rolled his own cigarettes and loved flying airplanes and wore a very strange hat but was really one of the great characters in the United States Navy and that picture was taken pla—was taken not too long after I was born. I still am very touched by it to see the pride in my grandfather's face as well as my father. They were very close, those two.

QT: 01;11;05;09

TITLE

The military tradition in the family and McCain's rebel spirit

QT: 01;11;09;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well as I mentioned, my family goes back militarily all the way to the Revolutionary War including the Civil War. But what I remember a great deal of was on December 7th, 1941, we were in New London, Connecticut. Car pulls up, and the executive officer of my father's submarine said, "Jack, the Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor." My father went upstairs, packed a bag, left, left with his submarine and the next time I saw him was at the end of the war and he was in the pacific and then he was in—excuse me, in the Atlantic and then in the pacific. And so I missed out on my father but I was so proud of what he and my grandfather were doing.

QT: 01;12;04;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

But I would also argue that maybe one of the reasons why I was a bit of a shall we say rebel was that I was always kind of fighting against the system. Not so much because I didn't like the system but I enjoyed fighting against it.

QT: 01;12;21;12

TITLE

John McCain's father, Jack McCain

QT: 01;12;25;21

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

As a young man, my father was a very dedicated naval officer. In those days, the only way you could get—literally the on—literally the only way you could get a commission in the United States military was going through one of the service academies. So they all knew each other, they were all close friends. For example, Admiral Halsey was in the class of 1904, my grandfather was in the class of 1906, there was like 30 guys—members of each—of each class so they got to know each other very well. My father was very, very shall I say admiring of my grandfather. He really had the greatest admiration for him and they were very close. Because my father was gone all during World War II, then came home for a while, and then Korea broke out and he was gone then.

QT: 01;13;17;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I never got as close to my father as perhaps I would've under normal circumstances. Don't get me wrong, I admired him and all that, but our relationship, though admiring, was not at—like we went on vacations together or that kind of thing and he was a dedicated naval officer. He was dedicated to the United States Navy. If our viewers ever are looking for a couple of books to read that kind of describes that period, read Herman Wouk's book *Winds of War* and *War and Remembrance*. It's a wonderful book. It's about the Holocaust but it's also about the navy and the military in that period prior to World War II. But—so I had admiration for my father, I appreciated the opportunity to be around him, we spent a lot of time together but there were periods because of his service that he just wasn't there which placed a much more burden on my mother who of course is an astonishing person and is 105 years old.

QT: 01;14;21;20

TITLE

John McCain's mother, Roberta McCain

QT: 01;14;26;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well her influence was really remarkable. For example, during the war, my father's submarine, he shifted from a submarine on—in the Atlantic to a commanding officer of a sh—submarine on the Pacific. She piled the kids in the car, drove across to California taking care of all of us. She was amazingly strong and she is beautiful and she has a twin sister who is—who is now passed away who is also beautiful and I think she had a very significant impact on my life.

QT: 01;15;02;14

TITLE

John McCain's mother was dedicated and rebellious

QT: 01;15;06;09

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And she always was but yet she also was dedicated to the United States Navy and she was very good for my father's career because she was socialable, she was helping of him. There's—ya know, there's not an exaggeration when we say navy family. There's a lot to the navy family.

QT: 01;15;28;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

She was devoted to my father in the navy and did so much to do whatever she could including basically in many ways raising me and my brothers and sisters which is not unusual in a military family.

QT: 01;15;43;08

TITLE

He wanted to make his parent's proud but also engaged in youthful rebellion

QT: 01;15;49;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

But I also rebelled in the—in the aspect that my life seemed to be charted out for me. In other words, he's going to the naval academy, he's gonna—ya know, and I kind of disagreed with that. Just sort of—there's no doubt that I was a rebel and always breaking the rules and always trying to—but it was to me, it was like a game, ya know? Can I beat them or are they gonna beat me? They usually beat me.

QT: 01;16;18;10

TITLE

On being a "fighter" and modern politics

QT: 01;16;21;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I think there's no doubt that when I believe in something, that I'm really willing to fight for it. And I have done that all of my life and I have done it whether it be on a major issue such as campaign finance reform or many of the reforms that I've been involved in or whether it be just normal standards of behavior, honorable behavior. The American people don't hold Washington and the people that work there in very high esteem. We need to make sure that we give the American people what they deserve and right now, they're not getting it and you can—we can decide on who's fault but right now, they're not getting it. That's why I gave the speech that I did on the floor of the Senate.

QT: 01;17;08;04

TITLE

Growing up in the military, youthful rebellion and his short temper

QT: 01;17;13;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well when I was a boy my mother used to have me spend a lot of time in my room and I was quite a challenge to her obviously. But my mother and I were also extremely close, especially with my father being gone so much. So—and I think part of it if we're going to analyze it was, going literally every two years from one place to another, there's a transience there that results. But at the Naval Academy where I was really well known as a—as a real rebel, to me it was kind of fun. In other words, see if I can get away with sneaking out and going over the wall and having a beer some place. It was like a contest which by the way as I said I usually lost, but it wasn't that I was angry at the naval academy or angry that much, as what—come on Will, come on you guys, let's try it, you know? And not—but on the other aspect of it is of—of my temper which you just made a reference to, it was a failing. It was a failing of mine, that I was short tempered and a lot of that had to do with, I'm kind of a perfectionist, a lot of it had to do with immaturity but frankly I'm not proud of some of the displays of temper I was subject to in a number of years.

QT: 01;18;37;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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Now, of course in intervening years that has subsided to a large degree and I could go through a whole lot of symptoms of what it was but part of it is, I am in some ways a perfectionist and I want people around me to be that way and therefore when they're not, I get angry. And second of all, immaturity. I was not mature. I wish I could say I was.

QT: 01;09;04;11

TITLE

Getting in trouble, his relationship with his mother and learning from past mistakes

QT: 01;19;08;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

On occasion she would put me in the bathtub in cold water. She thought that was a great trick and it was, but my mother is very loving and warm and I think maybe if you really look back on it, I think I took advantage of her sometimes because she really was so devoted to me and my sister and brother but I did learn. I did learn to control better, I did learn to focus better, I did contribute, and a lot of it wasn't easy and yet at the same time I always tried to do better. I am a very, very different person as far as the conduct of my office than I was the day in January 1983 when I became the Congressman from the first congressional district of Arizona.

QT: 01;20;05;14

TITLE

Barry Goldwater and Morris K. Udall

QT: 01;20;10;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

In my good fortune of being a member of Congress and in the senate was having the opportunity of knowing two wonderful men. One was Barry Goldwater who was in many ways our icon and the other was Morris K. Udall, a liberal democrat who just—when I went to the House of Representatives, literally took me under his wing and he taught me more than I can tell ya and he taught me a lot about being a gentleman.

QT: 01;20;40;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And he was widely respected and had a great sense of humor and Morris Udall was—he was a lot of fun to be around. He always had a great quip or a great saying. Like all of us, you repeat em a lot but when he was r—for example, he was running for the majority, he was the group of Young Turks and they were taking on the old bulls and they got beaten and it's a secret ballot and he came out after he'd—they'd been destroyed and he said, "I'd like to thank the 120 guys that committed to me and the 60 that voted for me." And one of the media guys says, "What'd you learn from this experience?" He said, "I learned the difference between a cactus and a caucus." He said, "With a cactus, all the pricks are on the outside."

QT: 01;21;26;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I mean, he had this great sense of humor that I learned some from that ya know, if you use a little humor it really can get some things unstuck and that was Morris K. Udall and he and Barry were very close by the way. Liberal democrat, conservative republican, yet they were very close friends. And that was another lesson I got.

QT: 01;21;51;07

TITLE

When Mo Udall got sick

QT: 01;21;55;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Mo became very well his last couple of years in the house of representatives and it was a debilitating disease that he had and so when he had to leave the house, he went over to the VA facility there not far from Capitol Hill. So a lot of mornings I would get up early and just drive out and say good morning to him and help feed him and bring him some clips about what had been going on and reading to him and by that time he was almost incapacitated but yet

his eyes would light up and—and when I'd say such and such happened and read it to him, you could tell that he valued the visits. And I didn't go there for any reason except that I admired and loved the guy. It wasn't anything but that and I wanted him to know that there was a few of us no matter where you are that still love and appreciate you and I love and appreciate Morris K. Udall.

QT: 01;23;02;16

TITLE

Barry Goldwater's influence and his final days

QT: 01;23;07;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

The other one, Barry Goldwater—Barry Goldwater as you know was in the Senate for a long time. I was new to Arizona so Barry was not particularly excited about me. We were cordial. But as the years went by, I would go over and see him at his house which was—isn't far from ours and his health began to deteriorate and his wife Susan called me and said, "Barry's not goin—doing well. I'm gonna call you and when I call you, I want you to come." So one night I got a call and she says, "You've got to come over." so Cindy and I came over and Barry was in a hospital bed o—on a picture window overlooking the valley, it's a beautiful scene.

QT: 01;23;50;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And he said—I re—I still remember he said to Susan, he says, "Am I home?" And she says, "You're home, Barry." And so I was talking to him and I wasn't positive that he—'cause he said "Hi buddy, how are ya?" But anyway, so Cindy and I were standing there by the bed and he reached out and grabbed Cindy's hand and held onto it and wouldn't let go of it. So Cindy pulled her hand away and—and as we left, Susan said, "You know, Barry always loved a beautiful woman." And he died right—right away. Barry was a wonderful, lovable man who loved Arizona in a way that no one else I've ever known did.

QT: 01;24;33;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Honesty, integrity, there are things obviously that Barry believed in that I didn't, particularly on some of the social issues but I admired him and in many ways I was grateful for the opportunity of learning from someone who in his own way is a part of American history. Ronald Reagan has said that the reason why he was president is because he joined the Goldwater for President Campaign so he did have an enormous impact and in some ways you could argue that he was a real—one of the founders of the conservative movement in the United States of America.

QT: 01;25;15;12

TITLE

Military life and the number of schools he attended

QT: 01;25;20;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

You know, one time I was trying to get some kind of clearance and I had my mom put em all together. There must've been like 15 up until the time I went to high school and then when I went to high school I went to a boarding school for the exact reason that they wanted me to go to the same—to the same school. And by the way, I didn't take very well to the discipline at the boarding school either but it was a wonderful school and one of the great things about that school, it's called Episcopal High School, is they have a strict honor code which had a real significant effect on me even at the Naval Academy.

QT: 01;25;57;05

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Roughly I would say that there was—there was something like to be two in a year depending on where we were and what we went to. I would say probably ten, ok; if I'm being on the conservative side, I would say that I probably went to ten different schools and that's not good obviously but it's also the life of a military family. You know, when you join the military, you give up a lot. And so I'm very grateful that we recognize now so much more

than we used to, the rigors of the life of a service family. Not just the individual but also the spouse and the children.

QT: 01;26;37;22

TITLE

Sports, influential teachers and the honor code in school

QT: 01;26;41;23

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

'Cause I was good at athletics to start with and that was a great way of taking care of some excess energy. Second of all, there was some masters there, there was particularly one who had been in Patton's tank corps in World War II that had a very big influence on me. Mr. William B. Ravnell was a remarkable man and he would kind of take me aside and he would talk to me and he would—he was—he could teach Hamlet and he made me love literature and so—and there was a strict honor code there.

QT: 01;27;21;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I mean, you can break all the rules you want to, you know? Get caught smoking or something like that but the honor code, if you violated the honor code, you were gone and you should've been and so that was an important—had an important effect on me so at the Naval Academy, very frankly, I thought the honor code at the Naval Academy wasn't quite as impactful as it was at Episcopal high school.

QT: 01;27;46;18

TITLE

Wildlife at his ranch in Sedona, Arizona

QT: 01;27;51;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We are surrounded by all kinds of different animals and insects and things. For example, there's coyotes here, there is rabbits, there is deer, there's

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Havalina and there's lots and lots of different kinds of insects and birds. According to the autobahn society, in this little oasis there are 68 different kinds of birds including bats that fly out because of the insects so it really is a little oasis in the desert with the water and the trees and all that. And we have a wonderful, wonderful pair of black hawks who spend the winter in Mexico, come and spend the rest of the year with us, have a baby, have a huge nest and it is an incredible experience to watch that pair raise that baby hawk.

QT: 01;28;47;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It is one of the incredible experiences you can have in this world and the interesting thing is, I'm not sure it's the same pair but a pair comes here every single spring and they either use the old nest or they build a new nest and they've gotten so used to us that it doesn't bother them when we're up close to them and they fish and they eat insects and they also eat other birds.

QT: 01;29;15;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

These are cicadas, they come out once every—I've been told six years, I've been told eight years, but every so—certain years they come out, and they make lots of noise and they mate and then they go back into wherever the hell it was that they came from and we wait another six years. So we are hearing this phase of the cicada's life, which is really fascinating, it's really interesting.

QT: 01;29;40;10

TITLE

On personal honor

QT: 01;29;44;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Personal honor means to me that you are really at the end of the day accountable to yourself. You can fool people, you can deceive, but you've got to be honest with yourself. At the end of World War II, my father and grandfather met. My grandfather was commander of the aircraft carriers and

they were gonna have the—a peace signing. My father was the commander of a submarine. He had met a Japanese submarine, put a crew onboard and bring it in so that the submarine didn't come by itself and that afternoon for the first time since 1941, they were together and I have that picture and they talked and they hadn—as I said, they hadn't seen each other and my father told me that my grandfather said to him, said, "There is nothing more honorable than to live a life that which you can be proud of when you die."

QT: 01;30;47;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

After saying that, my grandfather was on this peace signing the next day, got on an airplane. In those days it took a couple—three days. We turned the car now over where my grandmother was living, there was a big welcome home and he went upstairs and died.

QT: 01;31;01;21

TITLE

The Naval Academy

QT: 01;31;06;16

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

God only knows how I graduated from the Naval Academy. I—I was what I would say, not a serious student. I was serious that I didn't want to fail out and I was serious about number of demerits and I didn't want to get kicked out but anything short of that was fine with—was fine with me. And we had kind of a group of—of us that hung around together, ranging from Chuck Larson who was our brigade commander to people like me who were always in trouble and we kind of hung around together and we went on liberty together, it was kind of—kind of a band of brothers that—that we had formed up and we spent a lot of time together and we enjoyed each other's company.

QT: 01;31;51;14

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I didn't enjoy studying and I just knew that I—what I had to do to get by and I'm not proud of that by the way, people talk about oh, isn't that great—I'm

not particularly proud of it. Frankly, I think it was immaturity and I was fortunate that I had enough maturity that I was able to graduate but I always knew that I was going to be a naval aviator so it didn't matter to me where I stood in the class, I was gonna go out there and fly airplanes and shoot down MIG's.

QT: 01;32;22;04

TITLE

Following in the footsteps of his ancestors and the weight of the McCain name

QT: 01;32;26;05

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

As a—as a young man and going to the Naval Academy, I was following in the footsteps of my father, my grandfather, great uncle who was West Point, another great uncle—all the way back to the revolutionary war and I wanted to have fun and I wanted to beat the system and all of that but I didn't want to embarrass my family. I didn't want to embarrass the name McCain by some stupid young man that did something that is embarrassing to his family. So on the one hand I was the rebel without a cause but on the other hand I didn't want for the McCain name to be shall we say damaged but again at the same time, one of the same reasons I was a rebel was because I had the name McCain, you know?

QT: 01;33;14;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So I knew—look, they expect everything of you, well screw them. So it was—it's kind of a—very much of a two edged sword because everybody knew who my father was, everyone knew who my grandfather was and so they were always kind of watching me. And so, I thumbed my nose at 'em. But at the same time we had a lot of fun, we had a lot of comradery. We had—we were like brothers, literally like brothers. We were together 24 hours a day, we went places together when we had leave or liberty, we spent a lot of time together, there's a closeness that develops in an environment like that that lasts till this day. I'll get an email today from one of my classmates at the Naval Academy, usually critical. John, why did you do thus and such, you

know? They still have some ownership and I'm glad to give them that ownership.

QT: 01;34;11;08

TITLE

On his own superstition

QT: 01;34;15;05

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I am superstitious and I am unashamed and unabashed to say that because I don't think there's any reason for me to be alive with crashing airplanes and getting shot down and being so badly wounded and dying—almost dying, all of the things that I've been through in my life and I am superstitious because I've been very fortunate. You know, if there's anything in this program that I hope—in this piece that people will take, if there's anything that they will take away from this story is that John McCain is the most fortunate and grateful person that they will ever see on HBO and part of that is I've been given so many opportunities, so many chances. I wish I'd have done better but no one believes the story of my life, including me.

QT: 01;35;06;13

TITLE

He's a people person

QT: 01;35;10;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I enjoy the company of other people; I enjoy learning things. I enjoy the spirit of togetherness. I'm a big knights of the round table advocate. I'll never forget reading that book, I wanted to be the knights of the round table. So I've always enjoyed the company of others, I've always learned from others and so it's not that I mind being alone because when I'm alone, I read but I do enjoy the company of others. One of the really wonderful aspects of this beautiful place that we're—where we are now is that we've had been—had the privilege of having so many friends. We have the McCain Institute up

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here, we have so many family members, so many people and nothing I enjoy more than to have people or persons or other individuals and families would come up, stay with us, hike with us, swim with us, ya know, and eat with us so that—that's—that sharing is so much important part of my life and when I was in prison, I was about two and a half years in solitary confinement and I learned then to appreciate the company.

QT: 01;36;28;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

But I also learned to tap on the wall and I also—the dearest friends I have are the guys I tapped on the wall with and we kept our sense of humor and we kept our spirits up. And if we hadn't have been doing that, we probably would've fallen prey or more likely to fall to prey to the efforts of our captors who wanted us to say bad things about America.

QT: 01;36;51;15

TITLE

His first wife Carol

QT: 01;36;56;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

She's a wonderful person and we're close and we have three wonderful children. In fact, they were just up here last weekend and she's a very, very wonderful person. I think during the period of time that I was gone, things just change and any responsibility for the break of that marriage rests with me, not with her.

QT: 01;37;23;21

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Carol was my first wife and when—when we're together while I was instructor in pilot training, then I went to a squadron and then of course that was when I was shot down and captive. Carol is a wonderful person; she was a wonderful mother to three—our three children, she is—was loyal and dedicated and if there was one thing that I—well, I regret it but in the same way it's one of the things that I'm least proud in my life and I will always appreciate her.

QT: 01;38;04;03

TITLE

On leaving for Vietnam and the fire on the Forrestal

QT: 01;38;09;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It wasn't hard because I know it's what I was trained to do and that was my job and I wanted to and I volunteered and sought it and then after the that I was on, on the Forrestal and they came over because the Forrestal was badly injured because of a terrible fire; we lost 134 young sailors in that fire. They came over to the Oriskany and they said hey we need—oh they came over to the Forrestal which was badly crippled and they came over when we were in Subic Bay in the Philippines and they said, "We need some A4 pilots because we're losing pilots. We need somebody to volunteer. And I don't know that why to this day my hand—hand went up so I transferred immediately from the Forrestal which was going back to the—to the USS Oriskany.

QT: 01;38;56;20

TITLE

The Tonkin Gulf and the fire on the Forrestal

QT: 01;39;01;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well, in that phase of our operations in the Tonkin Gulf, we were launching what we called alpha strikes. That means that all—a large number of the airplanes would join together and go strike a specific target or targets. Usually you go in cycles of four, six, or eight or whatever it is but these were what we called alpha strikes. So we were getting ready one afternoon for an alpha strike and my airplane was on one side of the flight deck pointed this way. Take—look at the flight deck like that. Planes lined up, planes lined up and then planes faced forward in the rear.

QT: 01;39;39;03

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

There's lots of airplanes because the front is for the catapults to launch the aircraft. So I got into my airplane, there was a brave, wonderful young man named Tom Ott who was my parachute rigger which means he had this habit every time after the plane was started, I would hand him my helmet down and he would clean off the visor and give it back to me. It just became a habit of ours. I handed him my helmet, he handed it back to me. On the other side of the flight deck was an F4 Phantom with a rocket called a Zuni rocket on board. Now I'm not gonna go into the details but a rocket was fired and it came across the flight deck and it went through the fuel tank under the center of my aircraft and also knocked some bombs off of the wing into the fire which then was spreading. I saw the fire all around. I got out of my airplane—if you've ever seen an A4 aircraft, the refueling probe is very high off the deck; went out on the refueling probe, jumped and rolled through the fire.

QT: 01;40;49;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

This is all on film by the way because the filming—and went across the other side of the flight deck. Then I was watching and I saw another guy, a member of our squadron that tried the same thing I did only he fell and rolled through the fire and was on fire. I started to roll over towards him and just then the first bomb ignited and it was horrendous after that. It blew holes in the flight deck which is so thick with steel, planes on fire, ejection seats rockets firing off in the air because of the fire and brave, brave, brave, brave young sailors running into that fire trying to put it out and as I said, 134 sailors died that afternoon and I—again, there are so many stories but I had shrapnel in—in my thighs and a few in my chest. Nothing bad at all but I decided I would go up to sick bay much later that day.

QT: 01;41;56;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Like, I think the fire started around noon and we put it out finally, finally the next day but it was mainly out—went up to the sick bay to see the doctor, I said, "Do you want to look at this?" I went up there, and—and I walked in and there were these young people laying there, horribly burned. And one of them said, "Senator McCain—Commander McCain." I—I went over and he said, "It's me." I won't mention his name and he said, "What about Mr.—I

won't mention his name—he didn't make it, did he?" And I said, "Oh yeah, he made it, I just saw him down in the ready room." He said, "Thank God." He died. I mean—**(makes croaking look with his face)** you—you can imagine.

QT: 01;42;39;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And anyway, I wanted to get back to the parachute rigger, Tom Hott—Ott, who I forget to mention his name again, to the parachute rigger, he had just handed me the helmet. So when the rocket came over of course, we never heard from him again. And he was from Mississippi and I—it's been a while but I corresponded for years with his family.

QT: 01;43;03;03

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

He had handed me back the helmet and he had turned away, then it hit. And so I've always thought a lot about him, thought a lot about all of those people and it brings us back to what we were talking about earlier; no one should have lived through what I lived through on that day. And I don't know if it means that there's a purpose but I do know there's nothing wrong with being a little superstitious.

QT: 01;43;33;21

TITLE

October 26, 1967, the day he was shot down, his injuries and the Hanoi Hilton

QT: 01;43;39;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

During that period of time, they decided to escalate the air war over North Vietnam. That's the subject of a whole 'nother program but we started doing what we called air—alpha strikes, which were large numbers of aircraft and we started striking targets like inside Hanoi which we had never done before. So this particular alpha strike was going to hit the thermal power plant inside the city of Hanoi, the first time we'd been there. And by the way, the day before, we went to the airfield outside of Hanoi which was the first time we'd gone there but—so—it was—we knew it was gonna be very dangerous, I mean it just—there were too many—there were concrete circles of surface to

air missiles around Hanoi, would every ten miles or so closer and closer and then in Hanoi it was an incredible number. So we briefed up on it and I'll never forget, one of my dear friends said, "Hey John, you better be careful on this one, this is pretty dangerous." And I said, get this, "Don't worry, they'll never get me." **(Laughs)** So anyway, we go in and they suppress the flak and then the—with the fighters, and the other fighters are above in case of MIG's, and then the attack planes, which I was one called the A4 do the actual dropping of ordinance on the target.

QT: 01;45;08;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So there was probably 30 airplanes in—in this strike and as we came in of course it was the 4th of July, missiles flying everywhere. I think we lost six planes that day as I recall. So we headed in and I saw the—you—the—our—the apparatus tells us when a missile is headed our way and that's not so bad but when there's a whole bunch of missiles, you're not sure which ones. So anyway, we were headed in and I—I got over the target and rolled in and just as I released my bombs, and I was in a steep dive, a missile hit—took the wing off of the airplane which of course sent it into a very steep and fast spiral downward, so I then ejected by pulling the ejection handle. It's hard to know how fast I was going but it was awfully fast so that when I—when I hit the air stream, it broke my arms because of going out into—in the air stream and also hit my leg on the console as I went out, breaking my—my leg.

QT: 01;46;21;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So, strangely enough I landed in a lake in the center of the city of Hanoi that's called the western lake and was able to—both—both my arms were broken. I was able to get the inflator on my life vest and floated to the top and you'll see this picture of them coming out and pulling me out of the water and they were not happy. We just finished bombing their place. And so when they got me up on the ground, one of 'em stabbed me with a bayonet and another one smashed my shoulder but then some army came up and they put me in a truck and took me to the prison which was a brief, five-minute ride from where I was shot down.

QT: 01;47;10;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

The injuries that I experienced were severe with broken bones and they put me ya know, on a stretcher in a cell in the prison camp that we called the Hanoi Hilton, which was the old French Prison and for a couple—three days, as far as I can remember, they would come in and give me some tea or something like that. So they said, we'll give you medical help if you give us information. I said, "I can't." Well anyway, I believe it was the third day, they had a blanket over me and they came in and the guy pulled the blanket up and my knee I could see was just huge. And I said, "Ok." I said, "You take me to the hospital and get me fixed and then I'll give you information. And so—which was what we were trained to do.

QT: 01;48;10;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So they put me in my stretcher, took me to this—what they called the hospital in a very small, damp room in the hospital but they did put a chest cast on me. This arm was broken in two places—put a chest cast on me and started feeding me and yet I still wasn't getting much better and one day the interrogator, which is another story, the head interrogator came in and he said, "Our doctors tell me that you are not getting well." And I said, "Well look, I'll tell you what. You take me and put me in with some Americans and I'll get well. Ok?" And he said, "Ok." And that night he left.

QT: 01;48;56;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And then about a few hours later, the interrogator came in and said, "Your father is a big admiral." And I said, "Yes." He said, "We're gonna take you to the hospital." That was when they picked up and took me to the hospital. And the reason why they knew it is because the Hanoi Hannah, the—their propaganda radio had broadcast that John McCain, the son of Admiral McCain was a prisoner. So then they took me from there into a room with two other people. Bud Day who was a air force Major, wonderful guy, ??? air force guy, and they literally nursed me back to health. They were sure that they had put me in—the Vietnamese had put me in that room because they wanted me to die there rather than in the hospital, and those two literally nursed me back to health and it was miraculous and yet the love and affection that both of those guys bestowed on me was something that I will never, ever, forget.

QT: 01;50;05;19

TITLE

On the power of belief and shared values

QT: 01;50;10;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well I believe in love and I believe that there's such a thing as shared values, shared goals, shared experiences and shared—kind of things that we believe in that bring us closer together. When I was in a squadron with 16 pilots, and ya know, you all get very, very close together and it is a form of love and it isn't always fun and there are jerks and there are—it's not the Bobbsey twins at Paradise Lake but there's also relationships that you build up which are—which are forever.

QT: 01;50;48;08

TITLE

His father's rank at the time of his capture and his parents silence after

QT: 01;50;53;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

My father was the commander—after I was shot down, he was made commander of all US forces in the pacific based in Hawaii. And when he was told about it and my mother was told about it, they decided that they would not discuss it with anyone. They discussed it with each other and with any intelligence information that may have come out but everybody that came to see them, they—the request was, please don't talk about McCain's son because it's just—they prefer not to. Which I thought was the right thing to do. But it was very hard, it was very hard on them as you can imagine.

QT: 01;51;36;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So anyway, my parents were—were extremely strong and brave and my father carried out his duties and again, except for intelligence briefings, he didn't—he did not nor did my mother want to talk about me and I think that

was the best way to handle it and I'm proud of the job he did under certain pressures as you can imagine.

QT: 01;52;03;00

TITLE

His treatment as a POW and refusing early release

QT: 01;52;07;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We were treated well, the three of us. In other words, they didn't bother us. And then they gave me a crutch and I was able to get up and walk on a crutch. And that was a mistake because as soon as they found I could walk on a crutch, the next day I found myself alone in the cell. And for a period of time, I would say six months, they basically left me alone and then one day, I was taken up to an interrogation room. There was a guy there, he—I had seen him when I was first shot down. Erudite, spoke perfect French, perfect English, was obviously one of Ho Chi Minh's number one guys and he sat down and there was cigarettes and there was tea. It was a very friendly conversation, went on for an hour or so and finally he said to me, he said, "Well, you know, everybody wants you to go home because the doctors say that you can't—you can't live."

QT: 01;53;16;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I said, "Well, I don't—I don't believe that. I believe I can live." And I said, "Our code of conduct says that we go by order of capture." He said, "Except for sick and injured." And I said, "But I'm not that sick and injured. I'm getting better, I can get around, etcetera." And I said, "And I know what this is. I know it's for propaganda and I'm not gonna provide you with propaganda." About four days later, back up again, same routine. Your family wants you home, your parents want you home, everybody in America wants you home. You could be doing—and I just said, "I just don't think so. I just don't think so." I went back and tapped on the wall—on the wall to Bob Craner who was the guy next to our air force major and we went back and forth and he said, "Maybe you should take it."

QT: 01;54;09;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I said, "But what am I gonna say to the families of those who are here?" Anyway, finally, the last meeting was on the second of July and I went in to one of the regular interrogation rooms. They had a stool, the cat as we called him sat in there and he—I was fascinated because he had a copy of the New York Herald Tribune on the desk in front of him and he had an ink pen, one of those old kind of ink pens. So he said, "We want—we want to know your final answer." I said, "As I told you, I can't. That's my final answer." And he took the ink pen and he broke it and ink spread all over the newspaper and he kicked over the chair behind him and he turned and he looked at me and he said, "They taught you too well." And walked out and slammed the door. So leaving me and the—one of the interrogators. It's dead silence for about two minutes and he said, "Things will be very bad for you now, McCain." And went back to my cell.

QT: 01;55;18;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

About four or five days later, they release these three Americans, there's a lot of publicity, nobody bothers me, just in my—and then about three days after that, they took me over to an interrogation room and the fun began. And they were really, really rough. And I mean, to the point where they rebroke my arm, they did all kinds of stuff but I wasn't gonna—I wasn't gonna give in and they beat me so—it was so bad that I thought I was gonna die and so I wrote out a confession, a war crimes confession. And I will be ashamed and embarrassed about that for my whole life. It was stupid, in other words I wrote it in a stupid fashion. And—but I'd reached the—I'd—I thought if it continued—I was tied up in ropes in a way that I won't bother to describe, that I figured I was gonna die and so I wrote that and then they left me alone for a while but then it was—it was rough for a couple—couple of years. But the word spread throughout my camp that I had refused and there were some others then that were offered it later on that also refused.

QT: 01;56;44;03

TITLE

He eventually signed a wartime confession

QT: 01;56;48;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

The instructions that our senior ranking officer sent out to us; resist, resist as long as you can but do not break. In other words, if you have to sign something or write something, do it before they break you. When they break people, then all they gotta do is go to 'em and say, do this, do that, do this, do that and unfortunately that happened to some of the POW's. So when I knew I was just about to break, I said ok, alright. And then they were ok for a while but they keep coming back and coming back, you know?

QT: 01;57;29;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I thought about the honor of my family, I thought about the fact that they had now on record a confession from a United States Navy pilot. I was aware they were going to use it for propaganda purposes obviously and frankly if it had not been for the senior ranking officer and several of the others that I was in communication with, they said "Look, you did the best you could. You did the best you could, you came out of it with a broken arm." And so they—they bucked me up, you know, and said all of us are proud of you.

QT: 01;58;09;16

TITLE

His regret over signing the confession was profound

QT: 01;58;14;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

When I say I was suicidal, and I wrote that when I wrote that, I—I was so sometimes embarrassed because of what I had done by signing it that I thought about it but I really, honestly fought that the bes—thought the best thing to do was keep up the fight. But let me put it this way. I was so ashamed that I had written that confession that I contemplated saying you know—but I never really got, frankly, very serious. In fact, in most respects I got to hate 'em even more so I was a better resistor than I had been before.

QT: 01;58;56;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

When it was put in all perspective and I talked to the senior officers and I talk with people, they said, “Hey, they broke your arm.” You know, what not, you know. And our code of conduct does say that you hold out to the best of your ability. None of them thought that I had—but I—look, do I think it’s one of the bright chapters of my life? No.

QT: 01;59;22;05

TITLE

On his time in solitary confinement

QT: 01;59;27;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Solitary confinement’s great strength is it makes the person feel alone and when you’re alone, then you don’t have the couragement—encouragement, the comradery, the strength, there’s a reason why throughout history they’ve used solitary confinement. And I was caught tapping on the walls to I think it was again to Bob Craner, so they took me and put me in this cell that was away from all the other cells and it was very small, it was about seven feet by three feet as I—as I recall and it was in May and it gets very hot in Hanoi in May and they fed me less and all that, but they didn’t punish me that much, they just left me alone. A couple of times they took me out for interrogation but not real serious kind and so I lived there for—from May until October I believe it was.

QT: 02;00;30;14

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I’d been in solitary confinement but I’d been in contact with a lot of these guys. This is when I was by myself. I—it didn’t make me any weaker or make me want to do anything different but if I had been put in solitary confinement when I first got there, I think I would’ve—it would’ve had a weakening effect. It’s like we hear about prisoners. You get tougher and tougher; you know? I was a lot tougher in five years then I was the day that I was captured. So then in October they put—took me back and put me back in my cell again but

again, being in solitary confinement and being able to communicate with others is tough but being in solitary confinement and not with others, it is—it is real tough. And of course the weather was so hot, there was only a small hole at the top of the cell so you can imagine how unpleasant that might be.

QT: 02;01;38;15

TITLE

The POWs used a system of tapping to communicate

QT: 02;01;42;07

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

When I was put in with Bud Day and Norris Overly, they were in contact with—by tapping, with a—one of the air force officers who had gone to survival school, escape and evasion school where they taught this tapping and so it spread that way throughout—throughout the camp complexes and everybody then knew about—and it isn't just tapping. It's—if they ask you to brush the floor, you brush the tap code. It's—it's really quite remarkable and it lifts up your spirits, it lifts your spirits.

QT: 02;02;20;09

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I can tap to you faster than I can talk.

QT: 02;02;25;03

TITLE

Nixon's relationship with John's father and support of the military

QT: 02;02;30;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well, President Nixon had known my father years before when he was the legislative affairs officer for the navy to congress and he had gotten to know him then and my mother's sister was married to a guy named Bert Andrews, who was the head of the New York Herald Tribune in Washington DC, so they'd known each other socially for a number of years and Nixon, for all his

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faults and all the things we know about him, was very attached to the military. He had a—he had a real attachment and belief in the military, especially of course during those times because the military was telling him we could still win, etcetera.

QT: 02;03;13;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Which by the way they did not do him any service by the way they conducted or allowed for that war to be conducted by McNamara which is the subject of another program but—so Nixon had a family kind of relationship also, not really great but knew him and had worked with him. So when he would fly out to Hawaii, even my father's headquarters and then on to someplace else, my father would always be with him and I gotta say, when we came home, Richard Nixon was very emotional. Everyone paints him as the unemotional, etcetera. He was very emotional and frankly I will always appreciate the fact that he decided to bomb the hell out of Hanoi otherwise I might still be there.

QT: 02;04;04;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

President Nixon referred to my father as the little admiral, which is understandable, and he did have a lot of affection for my father. They would go out to these meetings including like at—at—at Guam or Midway, my father would always be with him and you know, where they would plot the situation in the Pacific and my father liked him.

QT: 02;04;28;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

He was a—he was a cigar smoker which to this day I can't stand.

QT: 02;04;33;01

TITLE

The 1972 Christmas bombings

QT: 02;04;37;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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We knew that something was going on in that there had been kind of a way—almost a pause, the bombing anywhere around Hanoi. And then one night all of a sudden, all the sirens went off. Everywhere, sirens went off and we were in a big room of that time with like 25 in each room and we had sort of a grillwork that you could see and you could see those missiles going up and you could see when a B52 got hit and it would burn from 30,000 or 40,000 feet all—all the way down and the next day they continued with tactical air and I still remember one of the strings of bombs landing very close to our cell and the—the North Vietnamese were panicked, they were panicked. And by at least the fourth or fifth day, they weren't firing any surface to air missiles, they were all taken out. It was like a milk run and they continued to bomb them.

QT: 02;05;50;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And obviously that then was the catalyst that they reconvened or made some progress in their negotiations and brought about the end of it but it was something to see when strings of bombs are going off, when planes are being shot down, when surface to air missiles are flying up—flying up in the air and we loved it, and we applauded and we cheered and the Vietnamese hated it when we were—when we were doing that. And we sang the star spangled banner. So we knew if they really hit them hard enough, that it would change the status quo, and the status quo was limbo.

QT: 02;06;37;12

TITLE

His father had to make the decision to bomb right where his son was

QT: 02;06;41;19

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And it was very hard on him and yet at the same time, it was never a doubt. Ya know, it was hard on him and he—it was—you know, worried and all that but he also knew that there was a whole lot of other fathers of sons who were in there with me as well, so he was—he was very straight forward about it and he had always advocated that if you want to wrap this thing up, you're

really gonna have to go at 'em hard. And so you know, he was—they were doing what he'd been recommending for a long time.

QT: 02;07;17;09

TITLE

His father and Christmas while he was a POW

QT: 02;07;22;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Every Christmas he would fly to Vietnam and he would go up to the DMZ, the border between North and South Vietnam and have Christmas dinner with the Marines and then he would kind of walk and—towards the DMZ but every Christmas he went and he loved having the Christmas dinner with the Marines, there's a wonderful picture that I'm sure we're gonna show that—of him with these Marines, all of em—remember, 17, 18, 19 year old kids, just remember that, who had been drafted.

QT: 02;07;58;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And they're all smiling and they're all happy and it was really therapeutic for him and he—he—he just—he just loved to do it but at the same time, he had the emotion also of not knowing exactly what I was going through but I—it's hard to describe but we have talked before about the military heritage of my family, and yes he was worried about me and yes he was concerned. But the fact is, he knew that McCain's were doing what McCain's were bred to do and if it takes you into harm's way, that is our profession, the profession of arms and I know that that was of some comfort to him.

QT: 02;08;52;12

TITLE

Discussions with his father after his release

QT: 02;08;57;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Talked a lot—talked a lot about it. He—he—he was—talked a lot about it and he told me about what was going on from his side of the—of the—of the situation to you know, how the decisions were made. You see, when you go for five and a half years without any information, you become a glutton, you know? I wanted to know what happened. Everybody said they wanted a steak. I wanted to know what Time Magazine or Life or Newsweek or US News had said. I wanted to know what happened during all those years and so talking to him, obviously I had an insight into the whole Vietnam situation. So we spent a lot of time talking.

QT: 02;09;38;16

TITLE

Christmas as a POW

QT: 02;09;42;16

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

At Christmas time, we would have—they would give us one decent meal for—and it was decent. It would be a piece of turkey and some—I think a vegetable. We would have one of our POW's dressed up like Santa Claus and everybody would have to go up one by one and sit on Santa Claus's knee and get a—get a present from Santa Claus. That was—that was our Christmas celebration and it was wonderful.

QT: 02;10;15;05

TITLE

His dad's Christmas ritual while he was a POW

QT: 02;10;19;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

My dad went up at Christmas up to the DMZ and had Christmas dinner with the marines and then walked up towards the DMZ to contemplate and then came back and so the marines launched an artillery strike in my name to let them know that Admiral McCain was there.

QT: 02;10;45;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

He would have the Christmas dinner with them and then after the dinner just before he would fly out, he would walk some distance away up to—by himself, towards the—the—Hanoi, towards North Vietnam and contemplate things and obviously it was very emotional for him and yet at the same time, came back and here are all these young Marines, just wonderful example of America. So it wasn't so depressing for him as it was sort of sustaining and invigorating.

QT: 02;11;23;05

TITLE

His release and later the normalization of relations with Vietnam

QT: 02;11;27;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

After the bombing stopped—we did the period for about two weeks of bombing, then all of a sudden it stopped. And then a few days later, all the prisoners in each of the camps were called out and we stood in ranks, and this was part of the agreements that the North Vietnamese agreed to. The CO—commanding officer of the camp read off the provisions of the settlement and one of the—part of the settlement is, prisoners will be returned by order of capture, etcetera, you know? So we knew it was over though; the guards had acted different, the food had gotten better.

QT: 02;12;05;23

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I mean, it was obvious that it was over but it was nice—it was nice to hear. So then we went back to our cells and they released in groups, there was four groups each by order of capture, first group captured, second, third, fourth. And so they fitted us for shirt and trousers and very high quality and everyone had one of those on and shoes. So we—but then they kept 'em until the day that we left. The day that we were leaving, we went outside and put on the pants and shirt and shoes and got on busses and went out to the—to the airfield and we got off the airfield, we stood in ranks, they said our name,

name **(Inaudible)** went and there was an American waiting to take you to—the airplane. It was—it was very emotional in many respects but at the same time, I hate to tell you but it was almost anti-climactic. We'd been waiting so long for it, you know?

QT: 02;13;14;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

But there was one kind of interesting anecdote while we were waiting these few days before we were out, they said, McCain, come in, we need to talk to you. So I went in to this room and there was about eight Vietnamese in this room, officers, and they had a tape recorder. And they said, "McCain, you're going to be leaving now and we saved your life as you know. Don't you want to have a parting message of thanks for the Doctors who took such care of—good care of you?" And I looked at them, and I said, "You want me to thank the doctors?" They say, "Yeah." "Well, first of all, I'd like to say, where **(Expletive)** have you been for the last five years? Could I say that?" "No McCain, go back now, leave." And so that was kind of a funny part of the ending but I want to fast forward again. I went—when we were doing the normalization of relations, I got very—I got to know very well the Deputy Foreign Minister, a guy named **(???)** and he was the one that did most of the negotiating on the accounting for the missing in action.

QT: 02;14;28;09

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And so I got to know him very well because General Vessey and John Kerry and I went back and forth many times on different cases, so I really got to like the guy and he was reasonable and he wanted to get a result so I said, "look, if this thing is ever over," I said, "when it's over," I said, "You come to Washington," I said, "I'll take you to lunch in the Senate dining room." And he said, "Fine, I'd like to." Well, the previous two Christmases, they'd been playing Christmas music. Every cell, I was in solitary—every cell had a loud speaker and they would play since it was Christmas, wonderful Christmas songs like I'll be Home for Christmas and others.

QT: 02;15;11;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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Well, about 11 o'clock at night and I'm in this small cell, the door opens, who comes in but the cat. The same guy who had offered me release five years before. He comes in, he's got a suit on, he's got a little stickpin. He's got a cigarette holder thing, opens it up, gives me a cigarette. "How are you McCain? I know I haven't seen you." And he starts talking, and talking, and talking; talked about how his father was a rich guy and he joined the Viet Minh and how close he was to Ho Chi Minh, and on, and on, and on, and on. And he said, "And by the way," he said, "Ho Chi Minh has an island off of Huy Fong where he used to go to contemplate; it's flowers, it's beautiful. It was Ho Chi Minh's island." And I said, "Gee, that's great." Ye—he said, "Yes, my father and I used to go out there."

QT: 02;16;07;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I said, "Fine." Anyway so—anyway, we go on, and he stops at the door, and he said, "You should have taken our offer." And I said, "I don't think you'll ever understand why I didn't take your offer." And he paused a minute and he said, "I think I understand better than you think." And left, ok? So we fast-forward again to (???) the Deputy Foreign Minister, we're having lunch in the Senate dining room. H's a very pleasant, very—he—he'd been in Paris with La Duc Tho and so we're talking, he said, "Now look, the Vietnamese people really now respect you because of all you've done." He said, "Whatever you want to do in Vietnam, you tell me, you can do it." I said, "That's interesting." I said, "I want to go to Ho Chi Minh's island." He said, "What?" I said, "I want to go to Ho Chi Minh's island." He said, "Nobody knows about Ho Chi Minh's island." He said, "How would you know about Ho Chi Minh's island?" I said, "One night on a Christmas eve." And he sa—**(Sighs)** Ya know, and I said, "That's where I want to go."

QT: 02;17;17;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

About three months later, Mark Salter, Cindy McCain, John McCain go to Hay Fong, get on a boat with some other Vietnamese, go to this island, which is by then run down and go up to the—it had—couple—three buildings on it, went up to Ho Chi Minh's bedroom, stand at the—at the terrace, and watched the

sun go down on Ho Chi Minh's island. Now that is a great story. And so I've always—and I used—by the way, he's since passed away but I used to see him quite often, he was a very decent guy.

QT: 02;17;58;04

TITLE

On coming home and adjusting to the changed world

QT: 02;18;03;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

First of all, going home was something that we looked forward to for so many years; in some ways it was almost hard to believe we were gonna do it. And of course we had news and information but think of yourself going five and a half or six years with only information provided to you by your communist captors, so there was a lot that was going on that we wanted obviously to know about. Everybody takes this kind of activity differently but I just wanted to know what had happened. I wanted to know how the anti-war movement began, I wanted to know about the flower people, I wanted to know—ya know, well there was a hell of a lot of things that happened between 1967 and 1973. And of course we weren't really prepared for the warmth of the reception. The POWs had emerged—I'm sorry to say, I'm terribly sorry to say, were the only heroes of the Vietnam War. The average Vietnam veteran was not well treated. That's a shame, and a black mark on American history and thank God we are honoring those who are serving today.

QT: 02;19;21;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

So—we got to the Philippines, had three days there, had good food, talked to our friends, family, read things and all that and then went to the various places where our families were, different groups of us. And of course my family was living in Jacksonville in Orange Park, Florida. So I went back there and it was wonderful, I mean it was—the band was there, everybody was cheering, everybody—I felt a little bit guilty, because so many of our other Vietnam veterans coming home did not receive that kind of welcome. And then it was kind of a blur because you're at very slow speed when you're in

a—like a prison existence by yourself and then everything accelerates. And so we went—I went around and spoke to the rotary club, went out to the base, you know, did—and also got a number of medical things—operation on my knee, tooth, various things that I was taken care of, and then I wanted to get back to—to the business.

QT: 02;20;31;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I had a flight surgeon who closed his eyes to several disqualifying physical problems that I had and I was able to go back to a squadron, be the commanding officer of a squadron which is what I always wanted to do and again, the period of a justice—adjustment was not as hard as you might think in most ways. In a couple of ways because the world and the United States had changed, it was sort of adjusting to the United States more than the United States adjusting to us, you see what I mean? And when you look at the—the flower children, when you look at all the upheaval, the anti-war movement, the—you know, the racial difficulties and of course the incredible upheaval caused by the Vietnam war, so there was a lot of things we had to adjust to rather than them adjusting to.

QT: 02;21;27;12

TITLE

His lasting injuries

QT: 02;21;32;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I can do everything I need to do, it's just I can't bend my knee more than 90 degrees, and this shoulder, and that, but—but none of that is in anyway debilitating in that I can't—ya know, do everything that I need to do. I've been very fortunate and very fortunate to have good doctors, especially when you have bone broken in three places, and it heals up. That's pretty miraculous.

QT: 02;22;01;21

TITLE

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Ho Chi Minh's villa and John's celebrity in Vietnam

QT: 02;22;06;16

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We looked out from the terrace and we spent the night in Ho Chi Minh's villa. I mean, can you believe it? But I can al—I can al—there's a whole lot of things I can tell you but if you and I went to Hanoi today, I am more recognized in the street in Hanoi than I am in Phoenix, Arizona. I mean, it is unbelievable. The last time I came, there were billboards all over Hanoi, my picture, welcome back John McCain. It's truly amazing when you think about it.

QT: 02;22;40;05

TITLE

Returning to Vietnam and visiting the bridge over River Kwai

QT: 02;22;44;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Yeah, I go back. I try to go back for reasons that—that there's a reason. When we were doing this issue of normalization, I went back a lot. But Hao Long Bay is one of the most beautiful places on earth. Hanoi is a charming city. I don't care much for Saigon, it's just a modern city. But I—I always enjoy going back there. About—it must be ten years ago now, I took the whole family and we started in Saigon and we went all the way up to Hanoi. I just wanted the kids to see the whole countryside and it is a beautiful countryside. And it is a beautiful countryside, as you know.

QT: 02;23;33;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I took em to—I took em on the train from Bangkok to Mandalay, yeah. And we stopped at the bridge over at the River Kwai. And there—ya know, the British leave them where they lay, and so we're walking through these grave stones, one of them says so and so's name, etcetera, known only to God, known only to God, known only to God. I mean, at least 3/4th's of those graves were people who obviously---and there was the train. And then, to top it all off, was a group of about 25 obviously veterans of that war that were

there. Most of them in wheelchairs, others in crutches and they were standing there together and I'm telling you, it makes you cry.

QT: 02;24;27;16

TITLE

How the POWs kept their spirits up and leaving the past in the past

QT: 02;24;31;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Maybe one of the most underrated actors in history is Alec Guinness. Ya know?

QT: 02;24;37;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I mean the guy made some fantastic films, and William Holden of course.

QT: 02;24;42;15

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

One Christmas, what we did was—I was the movie officer so I had to tell movies in the room, ya know, and I'd have to make up movies because after a while I had to make up movies. So Christmas time, we did Stalag 17 and you know, of Christmas and Stalag 17, they loved it, they loved it. We did the whole movie.

QT: 02;25;08;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We had one guy as William Holden, we had another guy as the senior ranking officer, we had another guy as you know, the one that was dancing, you know the funny guy, the heavysset guy. We'd—I had all those roles and we played the movie, you know? And it was easy because we didn't have to have any clothes, but that was fun. Keeping spirits up by keeping a sense of humor was one of the most important keys to success. And you know, it doesn't matter, there's a whole lot of things to talk about but now that we talk about it, I think about it, but honestly, I don't think about it anymore. I mean I—I'll

think about it in a pleasant context but I don't—it's not that I don't think it in either way, I just don't think about it. If somebody asks me, I tell 'em, but for a long time I got tired of telling about it, you know?

QT: 02;26;04;02

TITLE

Christmas carols as a POW

QT: 02;26;08;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well every Christmas that we were together which was two, when everyone was together, we tried to celebrate Christmas as much as we could, make presents for each other, have Christmas carols, awake(?) the days before Christmas, it was a great diversion and we were fortunate in our room to have the former choir and glee club director at the Air Force Academy and we had several guys who would—sung in choirs and glee clubs, so we really had a professional group that were singing and they practiced; of course they had nowhere else to practice but come Christmas, I mean it was really, very exciting and fun.

QT: 02;26;48;09

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And it wasn't being depressed or sad away from home because we had made such a festive occasion out of it. So that was really kind of neat. It just shows if you get a whole bunch of pilots crammed into a room with nothing to do, they might do something right.

QT: 02;27;05;02

TITLE

Fellow POW Mike Christian and the American flag

QT: 02;27;09;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Mike Christian has been an inspiration to me for—ever since I have known him. As I mentioned before, we spent a long time either separated, single to a room or two, or a maximum of three to a room. After about four years, they changed the treatment and put us into large rooms with say, 20 or 25 in each cell and by the way, the treatment changed, there were—the beatings stopped and it was—clearly a change in policy towards the prisoners. Well one of the prisoners that was in this big room with me was a guy named Mike Christian. Mike came from a very poor family from Southern Alabama and he was enlisted and then he was able to become an officer and a bombardier navigator in an A6. I mean, one of the great American success stories and Mike appreciated the opportunities of being—serving in the United States Military.

QT: 02;28;12;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well he was shot down and captured, the time before I was and was put into the cell system. Well it happens that when we were put in a large room together, Mike was put in with mine. At that same time that I mentioned, they gave us at Christmas some small packages from home, like a handkerchief or a bar of soap or something like that. Some of us they gave 'em too. And so Mike Christian was able to get a hold of a piece cloth—red cloth, a piece of white cloth and we wore a blue shirt and trousers. By the way, sandals that were cut out of automobile tires, I recommend them very highly. Well Mike got a piece of red cloth, and a piece of white cloth and on his bamboo—on his blue shirt, he sewed the American flag so—with a bamboo needle.

QT: 02;29;13;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Every night before we would have our bowl of soup, we would put Mike Christian's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the pledge of allegiance. Now saying the pledge of allegiance is not the most exciting part of our day. Saying the pledge of allegiance to our flag in a country in those circumstances was really important. Well, one day the Vietnamese came as they did periodically, searched our cell, found Mike Christian's shirt, removed it, and that evening came to the door of the cell, called for Mike Christian out, closed the door of the cell and beat him rather badly outside the door of the cell for the benefit of all of us and then threw us back in.

QT: 02;29;54;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well, he was in—you know, they beat him up pretty good, his eyes were swollen and he was bleeding some and—anyway, we tried to clean him up as well as we could. The room in which we lived was a concrete slab, large, and lights that shown in each corner of the cell. Well, we all—after we cleaned Mike up, we all went down and to go to sleep on the ce—on the slab, I happened to look over in the corner of the cell and under the light bulb with a piece of white cloth, a piece of red cloth, his bamboo needle, his eyes almost shut from the beating that he had received was Mike Christian making another American flag. He wasn't making that for Mike Christian. He was making that for us because he knew how important it was for us to have the ability to pledge our allegiance to our flag and to our country. I will never forget Mike Christian and that act of selfless patriotism that meant so much to all of us.

QT: 02;31;02;06

TITLE

Religion was important as a POW

QT: 02;31;06;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I'm a religious man, I believed in prayer, I believed that I'm the most fortunate person on earth and I don't think it all happened by accident and it mattered. It mattered particularly when times were really tough, to pray and I believe that I was granted some relief from pain. I may be wrong on that but I thought it was important. I thought that once we were in the big cell that we were in, that we had Sunday church services. We had a big fight with the Vietnamese about that and it was very important to us and I don't mean that it's the fair-weather sailor; I mean that it becomes important to us, as important as the bonds that were forged amongst us.

QT: 02;31;58;09

TITLE

The Deputy Foreign Minister of North Vietnam

QT: 02;32;03;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

The individual that was—when we started these negotiations on the—trying to identify those that are still listed as missing in action, an individual named La Mai who was the Deputy Foreign Minister of North Vietnam was the one we dealt with. He had been with La Duc Tho in Paris; very erudite, very intelligent and easy to work with, to the point where I got to like the guy and I said “Look, we settle this issue and we become friends again, normalize our relations, you come to Washington and I’d like to buy you lunch.” And so a couple of years later, the normalization took place and all that, he came to Washington and we had lunch together. And he was very friendly and all of that and I told him about the story that I just related to you about Ho Chi Minh’s island and having dinner sitting in Ho Chi Minh’s room on an island that was—that nobody had really heard about. It’s one of the neat experiences I’ve had.

QT: 02;33;13;21

TITLE

Matthew Stanley, an American G.I. killed in Iraq

QT: 02;33;18;17

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I was at—at a town hall in Wolfeboro New Hampshire and of course it was the primaries and we all know the importance of New Hampshire and how a small state can shape who the next President of the United States is. And at the town hall meeting there was several hundred people and a woman stood up and she said, “I’m from Wolfeboro and she said my son was just killed in Iraq and I want you to promise me that you’ll do everything in your power to make sure my son’s death was not in vain.” I was deeply touched by it. I saw her afterwards, I bought a bracelet then that I’ve been wearing now for 11 years and I will always wear it and I will always think of her and the courage

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she showed at that moment. You know, when there's something like this happens, eventually people get over it; the wives, the husbands, the children, all those. The ones that never get over it are the mothers and she's there in Wolfeboro and she's proud of her son and I'm proud of her son and I will always wear this bracelet to try to make sure everybody remembers Matthew Stanley but all those other brave young men that never came back.

QT: 02;34;47;20

TITLE

Meeting his second wife, Cindy

QT: 02;34;52;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well, I was escorting a delegation of United States Senators, two of them being Gary Hart and Bill Cohen, and we were going to China and we stopped in Hawaii. The man who—the General—Admiral who was commander and chief of the Pacific, my father's old job, was very friendly with Cindy's father Jim Hensley so they were having a reception for this congressional delegation, invited Cindy and her parents and I was there and that was—that was where we first met, interesting.

QT: 02;35;30;20

TITLE

Cindy and John's wedding

QT: 02;35;35;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well our wedding was in Phoenix Arizona, it was very nice. We had all of her friends, a lot of my friends including Senator Gary Hart, including Senator Bill Cohen, came out for the wedding so that was pretty neat and it was just—it was just a very nice occasion and I'm—it went extremely well and I'm very happy that so many of my friends and her friends came from all over the world to be there.

QT: 02;36;05;23

TITLE

On deciding to leave the Navy and move to Arizona

QT: 02;36;10;03

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Since I was still in the Navy and doing my job as the Navy liaison officer to the Senate, can't we—came back to Washington, had a home, and then there came to be a crucial point whether I was gonna be able to stay in the Navy or not and maintain flight status. I was unable to maintain flight status. That is a—puts a ceiling and I had to make a tough decision and I decided since I was not gonna be able to reach all the heights that I wanted to, that I'd get out of the Navy and we'd go to Arizona and go into her father's business and enjoy life.

QT: 02;36;50;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It was the end of my rootlessness and it was the beginning of me having a place that I could really call home and Arizona is a magnificent state as everybody knows. It's diverse, it's magnificent, it continues to grow and It's a great place for opportunity, so I was very happy to—to come back to Ari—to come to Arizona and live and I've loved it ever since.

QT: 02;37;14;14

TITLE

His father's love of the Navy and reluctance to retire

QT: 02;37;19;08

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

My father achieved four-star status, which is really the highest level you can reach. He was commander of the largest force in the military, commander and chief in the pacific and yet after he'd done such a wonderful job, he didn't want to retire. He just didn't—he loved the Navy so much. He came to the Naval Academy when he was 16 years old and all he knew in his life was

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really the Navy and so he was not happy about having to retire. But after he'd retired and got together with his old buddies down at the Army-Navy Club and stuff like that, he got a lot better. It was just tough for him to leave what he had known his whole life and frankly that happens to a lot of us.

QT: 02;38;06;14

TITLE

The pressure to succeed

QT: 02;38;11;21

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I did have—feel pressure from the time I was very small to do well, to—to succeed in the Navy. I had famous father and grandfather and all the way back as I said to the civil war, our war of independence, I mean it goes way back so I felt the pressure to succeed and I think that was part of that, that instilled the rebel without a cause in me but I didn't think about it in the context of living up to them as much as I was living up to the tradition so to speak.

QT: 02;38;53;20

TITLE

On leaving the Navy and deciding to go into politics

QT: 02;38;57;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well when I left the Navy, it was really nice. We had a nice reception there and a bunch of the Senators came that I'd traveled with and spent time with and it was at that time that both Gary Hart and Bill Cohen both said to me, "You ought to look at going into politics. You ought to look at the political scene and see what it looks like." And I of course did not think that much about it. I had been exposed to the political environment being—working in the Senate, so I was certainly interested.

QT: 02;39;31;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I was certainly—saw what a hardworking young Senator like Bill Cohen or Gary Hart could accomplish, a lot. And so that kind of got my interest in it but I really came back in order to go into my father in law's business and be a business man and ya know, do all the things that they do. But once I got here, and was that people like Bill Cohen contacted Barry Goldwater, I had gotten to know Barry in the Senate and Barry said, "You ought to think about running for office, there was a house seat that came open so there was a lot of people who knew me from Washington who were sort of putting pressure on or—not a pressure but encouraging me to get into the political arena and I had gotten addicted because of those years I spent as the Navy Liaison officer in the senate.

QT: 02;40;29;10

TITLE

The job of Navy Liaison in the Senate

QT: 02;40;34;17

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

In the Senate, there's little offices down in the basement of the different services and they are the ones that handle the travel for Senators, they handle cases for them. They have a constituent that got thrown out and wants to—they handle issues with them when they are interested in whatever. For example, the Senate Armed Services Committee legislation, and so you do a whole lot of things but one of the things that you do which is of benefit is you travel with these senators on various trips and you go all over the world. I went everywhere. I went everywhere with John Tower. John Tower, who I was very close to really kind of took me to raise and sometimes it would just be me and him traveling to Egypt, into Morocco and to wherever it is so that's where I really became familiar with the Senate and how it works is these travels that I went on with the various Senators. And I learned one heck of a lot.

QT: 02;41;37;13

TITLE

His sense of urgency

QT: 02;41;42;17

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I just have always had a sense of urgency, a sense that you better do what you can while you can. I'm not sure if it has to do with some past experiences where I've seen awfully good young men leave awful early but I've had—and it's not all good, I've always had a bit of an urgency to fill in that square and take another one. A good example, when I came back to Arizona with Cindy, it became known that Barry Goldwater was gonna retire some two years, three years later. Yeah. And so right then I started positioning—as soon as I was elected to the House, I started positioning myself for running for Barry's seat in the Senate, and I didn't make a lot of bones about it so I was always looking the next step down the road. That's good and it's wonderful and it's successful but the downside is that sometimes you don't stop to smell the roses.

QT: 02;42;48;23

TITLE

Regret, political ambition and lessons learned

QT: 02;42;53;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I've been tested on a number of occasions as any politician has. I haven't always done the right thing. In the case of the Confederate flag in South Carolina when I was running for President where I said, "Well it's up to the people of South Carolina, it's up to the people of the United States of America." And when I said that, I was basically a cop out. And it didn't get me—gain me a single vote by the way so the—what I learned over these experiences, it's a tough decision, do the right thing. If you do the wrong thing, then you will pay a price for it. And I have been gifted, thank God, and we can go back to Mr. Ravnell and the code of conduct back in high school but I always know what's the right thing to do but I haven't always done the right thing because of my political ambitions and every time, I've paid a price.

QT: 02;43;57;11

TITLE

The Keating Five Scandal

QT: 02;44;02;03

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

There was an individual here whose name was Charles Keating, he was a very big builder. He was probably at that time the biggest in Arizona. He also was very patriotic and he took a liking to me and he helped me with my campaigns and he helped republicans and democrats so I got to know him very well. Then there was a case where he got in trouble with the housing authorities, we won't go into the details but he got one of the other—the other repub—the other senator from Arizona to set up a meeting with several senators, John Glenn, Dennis DeConcini, me, there was a couple others.

QT: 02;44;44;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And we met with the regulators and I was told, "Hey, we're gonna have a meeting with these regulators, let's all meet with him." And frankly I didn't think much about it but we came to this meeting and it became what was pretty clear to be an improper pressure on these individuals. In fact, there were several times, "Well you have to," or "You need to." And frankly these regulators didn't like it and they complained about it and then it got into the media and then there was a congressional investigation and I was found guilty of bad judgment. That is—that is true, it's—but others, there was much harsher verdicts but that will always be somewhere a black mark on my record even if it was only using bad judgment. It was wrong.

QT: 02;45;38;17

TITLE

On his reputation as a critic and strong convictions

QT: 02;45;43;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I think it was the—that I saw things that I didn't agree with that I thought was wrong like pork barrel spending. When I see earmarks that helps a certain industry or company in that Senator's hometown or state, then I think it's wrong and I get angry about it. And so I worked with Russ Feingold on Campaign Finance Reform, I've worked on all different kinds of reforms because I think that we have an obligation. So sometimes in my zeal I would get angry. Now a lot of that faded over the years with wisdom and age and I still fight like hell with people and I really argue with them, but I don't get personal. I just have a strong conviction when I want—when I think something is before me and I think that the result of that was the other night when I gave the speech and every single Senator in the United States Senator—every one of them in the United States Senate came over and either shook my hand or hugged me. That was a remarkable moment.

QT: 02;47;01;22

TITLE

Strong convictions and Ted Kennedy

QT: 02;47;06;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well that's true with a lot of friends of mine in the Senate but we all know that Ted Kennedy was a unique figure and he and I used to fight, I can tell you that we'd fight and we'd argue. If I could just tell one story; one day I was walking by the Senate, I saw a young sen—two young senators in a fight on a parliamentary issue which neither one of them understood. I went to the floor and I started arguing and who comes out of the cloakroom but Ted Kennedy. Pretty soon the freshmen have fled the floor and Ted and I are nose to nose arguing, breaking all the rules of the Senate and we finally got it resolved, walked off the floor together and he puts his arm around me and says, "Hey we did pretty good, didn't we?" That was the essence of Ted Kennedy and he had a personality. He had a larger than life personality so that he was a lot of fun to be around.

QT: 02;48;05;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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He and I used to socialize a fair amount because he was a fun guy to be around, and he had a million stories, that's one thing I guess happens to us with—with old age. But we became very close friends and when it came time for the Profiles in Courage Award, I could not be more honored not only for the award but for the person who really was the one responsible for me receiving it. I received a lot of awards and I'm not diminishing any of them, particularly my military because that's different from—but I'm really most proud of the Profiles in Courage Award. And I just made every person who ever gave me an award very angry. I apologize.

QT: 02;48;53;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Ted and I developed a relationship where I could just walk in his office or walk up to him and start talking and we'd—we would do things. Armed Services Committee, he was very contributing member on the Armed Services Committee, we got a lot done there and I'd like to tell you that all 100 senators get a lot of things done. That's not true.

QT: 02;49;13;06

TITLE

The influence of Ted Kennedy and others

QT: 02;49;17;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

He and some others beginning with John Tower and others, as I watched them succeed, I began to change more and more and more and still though let's not—I'm still a flawed person, I still will get angry, I will still yell at somebody but it's also at the point when I yell at somebody, they just say, "Ah, that's just John, ya know," and move on. Some of those that I have had some of the fiercest verbal battles with, one of the first came that came up and gave me a hug the other night. I thought that was really touching.

QT: 02;49;57;18

TITLE

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Ted Kennedy and Joe Biden's son had the same cancer

QT: 02;50;01;10

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It kind of struck me because he fought it and he had it and also Beau Biden's son—I mean Joe Biden's son, there is something there, there is something there. And the last time I saw Ted was they brought him from the Hospital to cast a vote in the Senate, one of these—and Ted came on the floor and I didn't see him and I was leaving and as I was down—where the—that—the entrance to the Senate, I looked over and I saw him getting into his car not very easily and I heard this voice, "Oh John." Ya know, and I went over and gave him a hug and it was really touching.

QT: 02;50;48;19

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

"Oh John, oh John!" Yeah.

QT: 02;50;51;18

TITLE

Ted Kennedy's Senate hideaway

QT: 02;50;55;01

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Every Senator has a hideaway. He had a hideaway and in that hideaway where I used to go all the time because we were doing immigration reform, Ted Kennedy was like a museum. So he would take one of these freshman senators, republican or democrat, they would come in, then he would show him a picture of his brother, the one that was killed in England in that mission—it was basically suicide, and then he had pictures of the boat, and then he had pictures of his sister and then he had pictures and you know, he'd say, "And this is my sister Rose. Now she was"—you know? And I'm telling ya, after about 15 years, whatever Ted wanted, he was gonna get. It was fun to watch.

QT: 02;51;33;09

TITLE

Receiving hate mail as a Senator and a plea to come together

QT: 02;51;36;21

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I never felt in danger but I have felt over the years an intensity of the anger in the more of these kinds of emails and letters that are—that are just pure hatred. You know, there’s a lot of people in politics I don’t like and I don’t have a lot of respect for, there’s some, but I’ve never hated anybody. I didn’t hate the Vietnamese. I mean, it’s—there’s a—there’s an illness out there and I hope that we can—which was really one of the major subjects of that speech the other night, we’ve got to stop that. We’ve got to sit down and work with one another. I told you the story of Ronald Reagan and Tip O’Neill. I told you the story of many others that they sat down together and got things done. What have we done now? Passed corsage.

QT: 02;52;30;05

TITLE

On Bob Dole

QT: 02;52;33;16

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I did spend a lot of time on a lot of issues working with Bob Dole, who was our leader. He had a very strong affection for me. So I think obviously when you’re the major speaker that it certainly gets people’s attention, especially those outside the party. I think it was a seminal moment. I think another seminal moment was nominating Bob Dole. Real quick story. I was walking along, my cell phone rang, I answered it and I heard this, and I said, “Hello,” and he said, “What’s up?”

QT: 02;53;11;14

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I said, “Nothing, this is—how are ya Bob?” He said, “Ok.” He said, “How’s it going?” I said, “Well I thought Elizabeth did a great job last night, I think

that things are going fine.” “Will you nominate me?” I said, “What?” “Will you nominate me?” I said, “Yeah,” I said, “it’s tomorrow night.” He said, “Well you better get busy.” Click. So that’s my process of nominate—giving the nominating speech for Robert Dole. It was a classic Bob Dole. And by the way, another thing about Bob Dole, and I don’t mean to wax too off the subject but when I saw him and Dan Inouye together, there was something magic. Both of em wounded, both of em in the same hospital, both of em had a bond that was just very touching.

QT: 02;54;02;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I visited both of em and—and I visited Dan and Dan and I were the—he was the chair and I was the ranking member on the Indian Affairs Committee. He was a man of dignity and it was very touching when we honored him after he passed away.

QT: 02;54;22;10

TITLE

Admiration for Teddy Roosevelt and campaign finance reform

QT: 02;54;26;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I was a big follower and still am. My role model is Teddy Roosevelt. Teddy Roosevelt really got his start as a reformer. He took on Tammany Hall and he cleaned it up. He called them the malefactors of great wealth and he was a reformer, that’s really how he got his claim to fame. That and his western activities as well. So when I see and still see the influence of money and the way it changes votes and changes priorities and I’m very unhappy about it. I’m very unhappy when you see a certain interest being able in various ways to contribute huge amounts of money which then changes the outcomes of elections and that has happened. So Russ and I got together and by the way he’s just as honest a person as you’ll ever know and we came up with our proposal and we got it done through the Senate and in the House we got it done and it was a real good accomplishment until as you know they—the Supreme Court basically voided a significant amount of it to their everlasting

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shame. And by the way there will be more scandals. There's too much money washing around the American political scene today.

QT: 02;55;51;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And it is the source of also all cynicism of all young people.

QT: 02;55;57;19

TITLE

Money in politics is a source of cynicism among young people

QT: 02;56;01;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I think young people see the system and they see all this money washing around and they see their priorities which do not have a lot of money behind them either disregarded or pla—not given the priority that they think it deserves, and they don't like it and they think it's wrong and they think they're being left out. That's why you are seeing the millennials acting in some ways that shouldn't surprise us but they are very, very active and they will get more active.

QT: 02;56;31;22

TITLE

On the decision to run for President in 2000

QT: 02;56;37;06

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It was something that evolved. Ya know, I went to the house and then I was in the Senate and then was involved in all of these issues, and involved in people, said, "You know, you ought to run." And we looked at it and there—the normal process sort of that you go through and we decided that in 2000 that it was doable and so started with New Hampshire and did extremely well and ya know, about South Carolina and other parts but it was a great experience. When I—when I begin to indulge in self-pity which I do from

time to time, look, how could a person like me have an opportunity to run for President of the United States twice. It's amazing, it's amazing. And as I look back over those years as we describe them, it's amazing. I'm still startled that I was able to get done all the things that I've been able to get done. And I also remember the failures which I was not able to get done.

QT: 02;57;42;17

TITLE

George W. Bush, Karl Rove, and dirty politics in South Carolina

QT: 02;57;47;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

You know, I've always liked George W. Bush. He's a fine man and he's a good guy and when the campaign was over, he gave me a couple of weeks but then I pledged to do whatever I could. But the campaign in South Carolina was really not honorable. And I'm not complaining. There is no point in complaining. But when you send out thousands of phone calls saying, "Do you know that the McCain's have a black baby?" When you say that, "McCain wants to take the flag down." When you say—there was all these things out there that he was able to buy with money. Now again, when I look back on it, I'm proud of my campaign and there's no sense in me beating up on George Bush or Karl Rove. But the fact is that that isn't a campaign that I wouldn't have been proud of.

QT: 02;58;40;10

TITLE

His adopted daughter Bridget and South Carolina in the 2000 presidential primary

QT: 02;58;44;21

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

We have a daughter from Bangladesh, Bridget, that Cindy brought home from Mother Theresa's orphanage. Mother Theresa made her do that and obviously she has been golly. And so we're proud and love our daughter and so the phone calls went out all over South Carolina, "Do you know the

McCain's have a black baby?" And that's just—you know, we were at a quandary too as to what—how to respond. We had two choices; go ahead and run the campaign and probably lose or get into some kind of mud throwing contest and I d—we talked about it, we talked about it, we talked about it and I just finally said, "Look I can't." ya know? And it's not that I'm the knight in shining armor, I've done things I haven't been proud of. I said that the flag—confederate flag should still stay over the state capitol in South Carolina. I've done lots of things, ok. So I'm not painting myself as a knight in shining armor at all. But in that particular case, it just—it's—it's those kinds of things that the best thing to do is not think about it.

QT: 03;00;00;08

TITLE

Getting back to work after the 2000 presidential primary

QT: 03;00;05;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I left the race and—because we had run a good race, one that people could be proud of. But also, the best cure for losing is get to work, get busy. As soon as we came down from the airport overlook up there in Sedona, I sat down with these guys, I said look, ok, I'm gonna take a couple days off but we got to get to work because that's the only way to get over this, so I redoubled my efforts and my energies and also I gained some seniority in the Senate as also—and so I really worked as hard as I possibly could which is the best way to do it, you know? Sometimes—oh once a blue moon I'll wake up and think about one of the campaigns and I'll say, come on, go back to sleep.

QT: 03;00;57;16

TITLE

The social and political environment during the 2008 presidential election

QT: 03;01;03;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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I think the campaign in 2008 first of all obviously was not a primary. We succeeded in the primary and second of all, I think the environment was much more toxic than it was in 2000. There was more hatred, there was more anger, there was more things floating around the internet, like you know, accusing me of all kinds of weird things, meeting with ISIS, things like that. It was—and so there—and so therefore the campaigns themselves became more toxic so therefore the personalities—I have always admired Barack Obama and I refrained from attacking him personally. I did point out as strong as I could that I disagreed with him but I believed that he was an honorable man. But the whole environment including the media was much less, lets examine the issues. That the boys on the bus was not there. And I wanted to bring the media back on the bus, I wanted them to be there and have the same dialogue we had before.

QT: 03;02;20;22

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

But they'd get on the bus and then it would be a challenge as who can ask the worst gotcha question and I thought, hey gang, I'll tell ya whatever you want to know but let's not—but it didn't—it didn't succeed. I'd also point out that—and there's no excuse for losing but when the stock market crashed, we went from two or three points up to four or five points down, I still believe that Barack Obama would've won anyway. I also believe that he ran a very good campaign and he's a very good campaigner. But I think it might've been a little closer if it hadn't had been for the stock market collapse but who cares, I lost. Maybe some bespectacled scholar will like to look that up and see how much McCain lost by.

QT: 03;03;12;05

TITLE

The change in media culture in the 2008 presidential election

QT: 03;03;16;13

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Yeah, it was a big change and it was very disappointing to me in very respects. I mean I hate to even talk much about it or think much about it but I remember I got on the bus one time and some—one of the questions was, “What do you think about the economy?” And I said, “Well you know, I’m working hard on the economy because that hasn’t always been my top priority, armed services, etcetera, etcetera.” The next day in the New York Times, “McCain said he’s not familiar with the economy.” Ya know, I mean it was that kind of stuff that got so frustrating that then the reaction is, your press person says, “Send me a written question, we’ll send you a written answer.”

QT: 03;03;58;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And I’ve had people like John Dickerson, and Jake Tapper and a lot of people that said that that campaign of 2000 was the most enjoyable experience of their lives because we did have fun, we joked, we laughed, but we also were serious on the issues. But they didn’t try to stab me in the back.

QT: 03;04;19;21

TITLE

Presidential ambition as a disease

QT: 03;04;25;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

A disease that can only be cured by detoxification or death. I think that once people get that ambition that they have to go through it one way or another. And one of the saddest things to see is sometimes they won’t let go when they should’ve let go long before. It’s a heady environment. It’s a—it’s an incredible area of responsibility that you’re competing for but it’s also a chance to get to know America like nobody else could ever do. And I’ve been to places that I would never have gone to ever in my life but—and it all enriched my life.

QT: 03;05;14;13

TITLE

On past mistakes and admitting when you're wrong

QT: 03;05;19;12

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Well I try not to admit to all of them but I think the only way you can put these things behind you is to understand that you were wrong, to admit that you were wrong and then move on and the only way you're gonna learn is to say I was wrong in not saying the flag, the confederate flag should come down from on top of the state house in South Carolina. Now every time something like that has come up or like that, I just—ya know, because I'm not gonna make those mistakes twice but I also think that when you don't admit you're wrong, then you're gonna make a mis—the same mistakes and I've made a lot of mistakes but I've also had an incredible ride.

QT: 03;06;11;08

TITLE

On wanting to run with Joe Lieberman as VP in 2008

QT: 03;06;15;18

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I was persuaded by my political advisors that it would be harmful and that was one—another mistake that I made. I should've said, "Look, we've got a hell of a campaign anyway, Joe Lieberman is my best friend, we should take him." Now that is not anything against Sarah Palin or anyone else. It was that this guy and I are like brothers and I thought I could do best with him, and then—but after that was rejected by me, the final vote, then we started looking around at all the others.

QT: 03;06;50;06

TITLE

On Sarah Palin

QT: 03;06;54;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I think there was a lot of negatives on Sarah. I think a lot of it was uncalled for. I think some of the things that were said about her including on late night shows were—were cruel, and I think she was loyal and I think she worked hard and I'm proud of her and I wish her every success and I will always treasure her friendship and her family. She's not the reason why I lost that race.

QT: 03;07;20;19

TITLE

His current health

QT: 03;07;24;16

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

Feeling fine. Plenty of energy, eating right. The doctors say that I have a constitution that is really, really tough, and so I've not had any side effects of that treatment I'm happy to say.

QT: 03;07;41;03

TITLE

On life and death

QT: 03;07;45;14

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I think all of us think about death, particularly when you're going through something like this but I think more about life. I have lived an honorable life and I am proud of my life despite a number of serious mistakes, so I'm very proud to have lived and I want to celebrate that and I don't wanna—I don't wanna worry about dying. Dying happens to all of us, it's not about dying; it's how you lived and I want to think about how I lived and I'm—have some reasons to be proud.

QT: 03;08;20;16

TITLE

He's not afraid to die

QT: 03;08;24;23

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

It's not that I'm sure I'm going to heaven, don't get me wrong. But I—I think it's another chapter and it happens to all of us. I think it was Thornton Wilder that said, "I always knew that nobody could live forever but I thought there might be one exception." So sometimes I think about Thornton Wilder.

QT: 03;08;42;19

TITLE

His epitaph

QT: 03;08;47;03

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

He served his country. He served his country. Four words is what I would like to say. By the way, my closest friend, Naval Academy graduate, four-star admiral, superintendent of the Naval Academy had two plots on a hill overlooking the Severn River reserved, one for him, one for me. He's there now.

QT: 03;09;09;19

TITLE

Our current social and political moment

QT: 03;09;14;11

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

I always am optimistic about America because I believe we're the strongest and best nation on earth but I think we're going through a period of great

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peril. At the end of World War II, a new world order was established. Free elections, freedom of the press, all of the things about democracy that made it also the most prosperous period, the last seventy years in history. Now we're seeing that eroded. We're seeing rights taken away, we're seeing the rise of radical religions, we are seeing a disregard for the basic human rights and we are also seeing a weakness in the United States in our leadership. For the last seventy years, every time there was a crisis, whether they should've or not, they looked to the United States of America.

QT: 03;10;06;04

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

That's not going on so much today and so I still believe we can surmount all these obstacles. I believe we can contain Mr. Putin, I believe we can defeat this radical form of Islam, I believe that the Chinese—all of those things we can handle but we're going to have to exert ourselves in a way that we haven't recently.

QT: 03;10;28;10

TITLE

On dying with honor

QT: 03;10;32;20

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

My grandfather loved his life and he loved the fact that he had to leave. My father the same way. I am the same way. I love life and I want to stay around forever. But I also believe that it's a great honor that you can die with and that's what I want to do.

QT: 03;10;54;02

TITLE

Wanting to be told the truth regarding his time left and bitterness in old age

QT: 03;10;58;02

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

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Well, these doctors keep talking to me about people who if you tell em the truth, then they just give up and die. That you really wanna—and I—I keep saying to em, just tell me. Just tell me, that's all I want to know, you know? Some say, "Well it's not good." And others say, "Well—" ya know, it's just **(Expletive)** and it really drives me crazy. But then I talk to other doctor friends of mine and say that most people, that's not what they want to hear. Why wouldn't they want to hear it, ya know? Why wouldn't they want to spend a few more days here.

QT: 03;11;32;00

SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN:

And my old friends that are still left, it's interesting how they've all kind of turned out in different ways. And I'm sorry to say a few of them have gotten angry and bitter. Why? You know? Why? But some of em, we're still close buddies and I hear from em every day and they send me emails and they say, "Why didn't you—" or "Why did you—what is the matter with—" You know, it's—it's great to hear from them.

END TC:

QT: 03;12;02;23