

That was a big part of communications with the members of Congress, Senate and the House of Representatives. And then we also worked closely with the executive offices of the federal government, and one of the things I was very much involved with at that time was coordination of our policy initiatives with other states, because there I started to fully appreciate the relationship between the states and federal government and learned very quickly that the United States is the only western democracy, the only modern government, that was actually created by the states or the local jurisdiction. You know, when you study European models of government, it was the national government that created the subunits of government, and that impacts our relationship immensely in that some may think that the states are subservient to the federal government, but the states will beg to differ on that point every time. In fact, they are their own sovereign units of government and are protected by the constitution of the United States.

While the caucuses have been around for quite some time, it wasn't until 1976 when Jimmy Carter was running for president that they started to gain the national prominence that they have because a little known governor from Georgia worked the state, worked the caucus very carefully, and actually won. And that surprised everybody and got his name on the national agenda. If he hadn't won those caucuses in 1976, he'd still be a peanut farmer. But he did. He became president to the United States, and every presidential campaign after that tried to model itself after that. Whether they liked it or not, the caucuses are one of the ways that people end up in the White House. It is an outsized role, perhaps, but it is a opportunity for smaller campaigns without a lot of money to get their name out there, attract attention. It's a lot of retail politics, meaning you have to get out there and meet people; you can't just buy ads on TV and do it that way. So I think Iowa has viewed itself traditionally as a vetting process. It's never seen itself as the picker of the presidents. There are other states that do that better probably, but it does narrow the field. If you're not going to run a good campaign in Iowa, you're not going to run a good campaign anywhere. And your party's nominee is probably going to be another candidate.

I participated in it when I lived in Iowa and it's a very interesting process because unlike in a primary, when you go into a school and

pull a lever and go about your business, you have to really commit yourself to really go out. It's usually in the evening, from 7:00 to 9:00 or 10:00, and every precinct had a caucus meeting, and through that process, every candidate usually has somebody there that's talking about the benefits of supporting that candidate, what the policies are, the issues that are important to that candidate, and why you should support them. At the end of the night, depending on the party, you vote, decide who you're going to support, and then that tally is reported to the county, and then the county votes are added up and sent off to the state. It's a very time-consuming process. So you usually end up that the people who go to it are very committed, they're serious about their party, who their nominee is going to be, whether it's Republican or Democrat. One of things I observed about Iowa is that it makes you, as a citizen, very aware about the importance of this process. You do get engaged in government. Government is something that our founding fathers fought very hard for, this right that way have: democracy, to vote. I think that sometimes we take those freedoms for granted. They weren't inherent; they were earned. They were earned by the War of 1812, and throughout our history. People who are interested in government, learn your history, appreciate where we've been and then figure out where we're going to go. I've always appreciated working with states, working with governors. Governors are very critical to the governance of this country. While I think the nationally elected officials get a lot of attention, I think the real action is at the state level, and that's where people have influence over communities, over lives, they make priorities that matter, and they're accountable. Governors have always been very accountable; if they say they're going to do something, they're really going to do it.

Conventions are pretty exciting: as a kid, you watched them on TV and you either thought they were the most boring thing you'd ever seen, or like me, really interesting. That's one of the earliest political memories I have, was some of the early conventions, even though I didn't understand what was going on. Getting the opportunity to participate in one is really a great experience. They're opportunities every 4 years that the parties bring together the groups that make up that party: the state party groups, the committees, the local elected officials, state elected officials, national elected officials. Their goal, obviously, is to nominate a candidate and then hopefully go on to

elect that candidate as the next president and vice president. There's a lot of behind the scene activities going on. What you see on TV is just a little snippet of it, a lot of work goes into preparing for it, a lot of money is involved. They're very expensive propositions, so a lot of fundraising is associated with that. A lot of opportunity; in my case, I've gone there with companies I've represented and we've used that opportunity to reach out to people, talk to people, talk to elected officials, participated in hosting events. In my case, you have state campaign committees or national committees focused on state issues, republican governors association, Democratic governors association, Republican state legislative groups, Democratic state legislative groups. So they're all there at their respective conventions.

In a personal sense, it's changed substantially, where money now is just dominating the public debates that are going on. Each candidate, if they can't raise the money, they're just not going anywhere. As a junior high civics student, that's not what you learned. But the reality of it now is that there's so many things that demand money.

Campaigns are so much more professional than they were in the past: the use of the media, the use of technology, social media, all of these things are out there that just didn't exist before. A lot of this is driving that. You have polling, very sophisticated polling. You have campaign organizations that have to be built. You have to work very hard to get your messages out, and that all take a lot of money, and as a result, I think it sours some people to the whole political process, because I think as the small business owner, the teacher, the factory owner, the single parent, you don't have any influence any more, and that's discouraging. It doesn't have to be that way, but money has influence, there's no question about it. Races that 10 years ago, like a gubernatorial race, that you might have been able to have a successful campaign for 2 million dollars, might cost you 12, 15 million dollars or more. A lot of that depends on the integrity of the candidates, I think. That's why I've really working with governors, because they're a high level of integrity in that group and it goes back to the accountability. States have their own respective laws and expectations they need to follow, and they also expect the media to follow them and report anything that might be out of the ordinary. There's a very high standard set out there. It's something that's there, you have to be careful about it.

It's amazing, how even in the last 20 years, we started out, that people of my generation, we were wild when we had fax machines. We started out, we had mimeograph machines, and had to do it that way, then evolved through that. When I was in Washington D.C., working for the state of Iowa, I got my first fax machine, and I thought that was pretty sexy. And then all of a sudden it quickly evolves; the Internet, the ability to get information using email, and then social media came along. It was interesting to see things like Facebook and Twitter, how those became a part of political campaigns. I mean, people ten years ago, you'd never imagine they'd be using things like Facebook or Tweeting, and now they're doing them as a matter of practice, because that's how people get their information now. It's probably not good. I mean, I think that people do not read like they used to. They don't get their information by getting a book or by an extensive magazine article, or looking at something in depth or doing their own research. We're in a society now where it's instantaneous. You think of something, you go look it up. We're losing focus on that discipline in some ways, and that's a negative. I know a lot of people are concerned about that; if you're in education, that's a big issue. These are skills that are important—don't lose your analytical abilities.