

Zell Miller interviewed by Bob Short
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MODERATOR: This series is hosted by a Young Harris alumnus, Bob Short, class of 1951.

Today's guest is certainly no stranger to this campus or this community. Senator Zell Miller is living proof that you can go anywhere from Young Harris College. But with all the places that he's gone, he has never really left this institution. He remains a part of it; he remains the heart and soul of it. And it is always a pleasure and an honor to welcome him back home. I would like to tell you that at the end of the program, if you would like to purchase any of Senator Miller's books, they're available at the campus bookstore across the plaza. The forum this afternoon will feature approximately an hour of Mr. Short conversing with Senator Miller and asking questions. There will be time for questions and answers from the audience at the end of this portion, so please, if you have questions, hold them until then. Finally, I would like to invite you all back to the Thursday, November 2nd conversation with former Governor Joe Frank Harris, and the Thursday, November 16th conversation with former Governor Roy Barnes. Both sessions will be held in the Wilson Lecture Hall in the Goolsby Center, and both will start at 3:15 pm. Again, welcome to the campus of Young Harris College.

BOB SHORT: Thank you, and welcome to another in our series of reflections. I know that Zell Miller needs no introduction to this group, so I will begin by asking this question: what shall I call you? Senator? Governor? Lieutenant Governor? Professor? Or by your college nickname, "Zip?"

ZELL MILLER: I'm afraid there's not much zip left, but...You left out my -- one of my

favorites. My grandchildren and great-grandchildren call me “Pa.”

SHORT: Incidentally, how did you get that nickname “Zip?”

MILLER: Well, I don’t know, exactly. I think it was my speed on the baseball field, baseball diamonds around here. Or maybe it’s that I got out of class so fast.

MILLER: I think it’s that - but I don’t know.

SHORT: Well, I presume I may call you “Senator?”

MILLER: How about “friend?” We went to school here 55 years ago together.

SHORT: Did you have to say that?

SHORT: Well, friend Zell, you live just down the street from this Young Harris campus, yet you seemed a bit reluctant to participate in this forum. Care to tell us why?

MILLER: Well, that’s true. Because I’ve been on the playing field a long, long time, and I have -- I want to get up in the stands and watch what’s going on instead of being down there on the playing field. I quit doing commentary for Fox News back in January because I just didn’t want

to get into all of that. As many of you know -- or some of you know -- this long political career I've had has had its share of conflicts and controversy. You know, politics is a contact sport, and I have got the skinned shins and bloody noses to show it. I don't want to talk too long, but when I first got into politics, I ran against the chairman of the Democratic Party here in Towns County. He was sort of a political boss. Well, that was a rough campaign. Then when I went to -- I won. Then when I went to the Georgia Legislature and the Senate, the very first thing I had to face was the integration of the public schools in Georgia question. And the first night I was down there, one of the reporters asked me what did I think about integrating the schools? And I said, "Integrating the schools is not the worst thing I can think of. The worst thing I can think of is closing the public schools of Georgia." Well, there was some who didn't like that. Well, then later, I worked for a number of Governors, including Governor Lester Maddox as his chief of staff, and there were many who didn't particularly like me working for Governor Maddox at that time. And then I ran for Lieutenant Governor, and my good friend Carlton Colwell is here from Union County, and he will remember that for 16 years, I -- we kept a fight going between me and Tom Murphy that just went on about all the time. By the way, he's a great man and a great friend, and he's in bad shape these days, so I hope you'll remember him in your prayers. But anyway... And then I got into two fights as Lieutenant Governor that ricocheted all the way up here, and made a lot of people angry. Well, one was we were building 515 highway to here, and a lot of people didn't want that done. There was an organization called "SMASH": Stop Super--

SHORT: Mountain Area.

MILLER: -- something. Yeah: Stop Mountain Area Superhighway. Anyway, there was a lot of business like that. And that's one of the reasons it stops over here at Blairsville when you just come over -- first come to Young Harris. And then I wanted to build a bypass around Young Harris, and there were a number of people in this community that didn't want to do that, so we stopped that. And then I had what was called the "Mountain Protection Act." Some of you may remember that, where I wanted to kind of limit the cutting of trees on high mountain ridges. And that stirred up a lot of anger. And then I ran for Governor, with the lottery as the main issue. And I couldn't even go to church without getting caught up into a lot of controversy. And then after I got elected Governor, we had the doing away with the flag, changing the flag. So Bob, I have had a lot of controversy and a lot of conflict in my life, and I haven't even brought it on up, what happened in Washington, D.C.

MILLER: So what I'm ready for is a little peace in the valley. (applause)

SHORT: For all these years I've known you, you've been a proud man of the mountains. Your roots are deeply embedded here in town in Union County. Your family grew up there. Would you mind telling us just a little bit about your family and their relationship to Young Harris College?

MILLER: You know, I can talk about that for a long time, and I'll try to make it brief. I can talk

about it for a long time because I'm very, very proud of it. I'll tell it this way: in 1834, now, the Indians had not been pushed out of this area until about 1836. In 1834, they had a census of Union County -- this was part of Union County at that time, here. And in that 1834 census, there were 162 names, heads of households. One of those names was Thompson Collins. Thompson Collins was my great-great-grandfather. And he settled over, as Bob said, in the Choestoe area. And I'll leave him for a minute, and that's on my father's side. On my mother's side, my mother was a Bryan, B-R-Y-A-N, from South Carolina. And my great-grandfather, Brantley Bryan, was wounded fighting with Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville, and then wounded again fighting at Gettysburg, where his brother who was with him was killed. That was ancient history, kind of, but my father came to Young Harris and graduate from here. His name was Stephen Grady Miller; he graduated from here in 1912. And he went to the University of Georgia, got his Bachelor's and Master's, and then World War I came along. And he went, joined the Army. And he was overseas, and he stayed after the war was over and went to Kings College in London, and got some more education. And then came back in 1919 to teach here at Young Harris College. That same year, a woman by the name of Birdie Bryan who had seen a notice about them needing an art teacher at this little Methodist college in north Georgia, and applied and got the job. She came by train to Mercer, and there a stagecoach met her and brought her to Young Harris College, and she got here in the middle of the night. And the next morning, she woke up and saw this beautiful place, and never wanted to leave. To make a long story short, she and Grady Miller, still in his uniform -- He still wore his uniform a good bit because he didn't have the money to buy other clothes, I guess, and also I guess he was proud of it.

Anyway, they fell in love, these two Young Harris College teachers, and married in 1921. And they lived in various houses that the college owned, faculty houses. They lived in Handy Hall, right behind this chapel. They lived over kind of behind where Appleby Hall is now, in what we call the Outler House. And then when I was born in 1932, they were living over here where Coach Luke Rushton lived, and kind of over in that area where Coach Bob Nickels lives, in that house there. And in 1932, 17 days after I was born, my father died, and left my mother no home, because they were living in faculty housing, no car; he left her \$1,000 insurance policy. And her father wanted her to come home, and she wanted to stay here. She wanted her children to grow up where folks knew their daddy, our daddy. And so she bought from Mr. Charlie Cohen two acres of land down where that rock house is for \$198. I've got the check still; I can show it to you. And then with the rest of that money, she hired some carpenters and rock masons to build a house. She had seen these beautiful rocks in Cowan Creek that goes down by the Lowell Mountain and on up that way towards Double Knobs, and she had the idea of building a house out of those rocks. And so in the spring of 1932, and summer, this widow, this young widow, got down into that creek, and would take those rocks and pile them up on the bank, and on Saturday the college would send a truck over there and haul them down to where the building site was to help her out that much. And she worked on that house until she ran out of money; spent that 700 and some odd dollars that was left, \$800, and it was never finished at that time. But that's where I grew up. I sleep in the same bedroom that I slept in when I was a six-month old baby. She moved us in there as soon as she could. And she said there wasn't even any windows in that house when we moved in, and a dog came in and ate the butter off the dining

room table the first night we were there. And it was a wonderful place to live. It was always a work in progress, and she worked on it. And in 19 and 41 when Pearl Harbor was attacked, she was a very patriotic woman; she wanted to help out in the war effort. And so she took me and my sister, Jane, and took us to Atlanta, and she worked at what was called the old Bell Bomber plant. And we lived in Atlanta. And as soon as the war was over, the minute that -- just a few days after the war was over, she brought us back up here. And I've lived here off and on ever since. And so I appreciate Lee talking about "you can get anywhere from Young Harris," because you can. And also, Thomas Wolfe is wrong -- you can go home again.

SHORT: You were a student here at Young Harris when there was an academy. You finished the academies, and then you finished the college. Do you mind telling us some of your more pleasant, fondest memories of your time here on campus?

MILLER: Well, it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. I had an idyllic childhood. I walk these creek banks and fields now that I walked when I was a boy, and it was a wonderful existence. When we came back from Atlanta, we came back in 19 and 45, the summer of '45, and I started at Young Harris. Back then, they had all four grades of high school. And I was so shy that you could look in the Young Harris annuals and you won't see my picture, because I was too shy to have my picture made. And until 19 and 48, when I did have it made in a sports shirt. But this chapel has so many memories. We used to have regular chapel. That bell up there that no longer rings much anymore used to be the bell that would wake you up in the

morning, and it would make the signals to change classes. I can remember that I was a town student, and the town students sat down here, right along in here. And I can remember looking up at this wall and seeing a big photograph of Dr. Sharp, and on the other side, my father. And I always kind of thought he was watching me from up there. And having to live up to something -- “be somebody,” which my mama used to put it. And I can remember working down in the basement of this chapel, with one of the most wonderful women, one of the most wonderful persons I’ve ever known, who changed my life tremendously, by the name of Edna Ayer, who was the English teacher. I loved Ms. Ayer. If she taught a course, I took it. If she advised some campus club, I joined it. She was the one who first persuaded me to try to make a speech. She literally pushed me, practically, out on the stage. I had joined -- there were two debating societies: Young Harris and Phi Chi. I had joined the Phi Chis because my father had been a Phi Chi, and that’s what my mother wanted me to do. But I joined it because they played each other in sports, and I loved sports. And so I had to join the Phi Chis in order to participate in sports. And you also -- one of the requirements was to give a debate once a semester. And after I had been in there for about a year and a half, they finally noticed that that quiet little Miller feller hadn’t given a debate yet. And so they assigned me to give a debate, be a part of a debate. It was held down there in what was called the Charles Reed building. It was right down there at the bottom of the hill, where the Goolsby Building is now. And my father had been a debater, a champion debater, and my mother thought I had a lot to live up to. I’m answering these questions way too long. I’m sorry.

SHORT: No, you're not even...

MILLER: Either way, I made that -- I participated in that debate. I can't remember what the subject was. I can remember it had something to do with inflation and recession, about whether it was better to have an inflation and then have a recession... Anyway, I remember I used the line that "it's better to have risen and fallen than never to have risen at all." I thought that was something about that "four score and seven years." But anyway... We won the debate. And it was a wonderful feeling to participate in something like that -- oh, yeah. And I've always been very competitive. And to make a long story short, Short, I later got elected by the Phi Chis to what we called the Champion Debate team. And the Champion Debate was this debate that was held at the end of each school year in this chapel, and it was a big, big deal. I can remember being in this chapel, the windows would be open because it was in the summer and warm. There would be people outside out on the ground. There'd be people sitting in the windows. There'd be people standing in the doors. This place was packed. It was a big deal. Anyway, I got to participate in four champion debates with some of the most wonderful friends that anyone could have, including people like Ed Jenkins, Jack Brinkley, both of whom were Congressmen, Guy Sharp -- you may remember him as the weatherman for channel 5. And it was a wonderful experience. So to ask me about this campus is to ask me about my family. I wrote in the *Mountains Within Me*, that first book I wrote about 30 years ago, I said my life in Young Harris College, I think I wrote that it has been entangled like honeysuckle on an old fence ever since I was a baby. I love this institution very much. It meant so much to me. There was a President

here by the name of Dr. Charles Clegg, who was a magnificent human being. And I'll talk to you later about him when Bob, I guess, gets around to asking how I finally got into politics. But Dr. Clegg, for whom this building is named, was like a father to me. And he is the one in 1958, when I was at the University of Georgia working on my doctorate, offered me \$400 a month to come up here and teach Political Science. And I nearly ran people off the road getting up here.

SHORT: After leaving Young Harris, you eventually joined the Marines. Your book here, Corps Values, leaves the impression that the Marine Corps and your service, military service, changed your life.

MILLER: Oh, there's no doubt about that. My life needed changing in some ways. I don't think I'll go into how. I happened to -- some of you are smiling; you already know. I had a cousin. I had a cousin that I am so very, very proud of by the name of Eric England, who is sitting right over here. He is a descendant of Thompson Collins. He was a career Marine, a sniper instructor, a Marine sniper in Vietnam, and he had gone ahead and joined the Marine Corps about two or three years before that. Well, he had come home, and he'd be the sharpest-looking Marine I had ever seen. And I kind of wanted to be like that, but I didn't have the nerve, didn't have it, to go and join. And then an incident occurred in my life. I was drinking moonshine liquor one August, 1953. I had never tasted beer or any kind of alcohol while I was in high school or while I was in junior college, but then I did after I left Young Harris, and it got me into a lot of trouble. To make a long story short, I ran my car in a ditch. And the sheriff got me, as he should have,

handcuffed me, and put me in the back of that sheriff's car, and took me to the Gilmer County Jail, where I spent the night. I spent the night in the drunk tank with four other people. There were three old guys there. I don't guess they were too old, but I thought they were. There were three old guys there in overalls, and I never will forget it: there was this one kind of "dandy" there in seersucker pants, a white dress shirt -- or what had been a white dress shirt. And the place was so dirty you couldn't even lay on the bunks. I remember sitting cross-legged on the floor the whole night. To make a long story short, my good friend Max Nicholson came over there the next afternoon here, got me out, and brought me home. And it was an epiphany. It was a Sunday afternoon when he brought me home, and I went to Sharp Memorial Methodist Church that night, found my way out there, and sat on the back row and listened to those old familiar hymns that I knew the words off by heart, and I thought about the shame that I had brought my mother, and brought my aunts, and uncles, and kinfolks, and Ms. Ayer, and Dr. Clegg, and all these folks who had put their trust in me. And I remembered Eric in the Marine Corps, and I remember seeing that Marine Corps poster sign, poster that said, "We make men." And I thought to myself, "All right -- see if you can make something out of this guy." And so I joined the Marine Corps. And it was a life-changing experience. The Marines have this saying that change lasts forever. It does. I went into the Marine Corps in August of '53. In fact, I got out in August of '56, which was 50 years and two months tomorrow that I got out of the Marine Corps. And everything that I've seen since then has been filtered through that Marine Corps filter. I later wrote a book called Corps Values, C-O-R-P-S Values. "Everything you need to know I learned in the Marine Corps" -- that was the subtitle. And it did have a significant effect on me

that has lasted to this day, and probably -- and undoubtedly will go to the grave with me.

SHORT: And, I might mention that I failed to ask this question: while in the Marine Corps, you married and had your first son.

MILLER: Yeah.

SHORT: And your wonderful wife Shirley and your son Murphy went with you to the University of Georgia.

MILLER: Yeah.

SHORT: Where you studied history, I believe.

MILLER: Yeah.

SHORT: And while you were still a student at the University of Georgia, you were elected mayor of Young Harris.

MILLER: Yeah. You didn't run for the job back then -- they drafted you. They just put you in. My mama had been on the city council for over 20-something years. And I haven't talked much

about my mama, but -- and everybody thinks their mamas are remarkable. And they are, each and every one of them. But she was an unforgettable human being to any of you that ever knew her. And a strong, strong, strong person. But anyway -- where were we, by the way?

SHORT: You are now mayor of Young Harris.

MILLER: Now I'm mayor of Young Harris? They gave me the books that had the lists of everybody that had been fined over the years in it, they gave me a .38 Special, Smith & Wesson, and they gave me a blackjack. And then when I was sworn in, I took that blackjack and I hit it on the table, and I said, "The council will come to order." We had a law house right down here; it's gone now, but right down here where the parking lot of Goolsby is right now. A little wooden building about the size of a single, of a 12-foot wide tree, there's a small little house. That's where you voted around here.

SHORT: Well, as you say, after the university, you came back to Young Harris as a professor. And it was at that time that you first offered for the state Legislature. And you won.

MILLER: Yeah. But I assume you want me to tell you that story?

SHORT: I do.

MILLER: Well, first of all, how in the world does somebody teaching at Young Harris College get into politics and stay teaching at Young Harris College? This is where Dr. Clegg comes in so very strongly. Dr. Charles Clegg was the President. He is the one that hired me to come back up here and teach. And a Senate seat came up. I had been here about a year. A Senate seat came open. You need to know this: Senate seats back then, you did not run in the three or four or five, six counties that made up the district. You ran -- the seat rotated between the counties. This was the 40th senatorial district, and it rotated between Rabun, Towns, Union, and it was Towns' time. And as I mentioned a while ago, a man by the name of W. K. Kaiser Dean was running for office. And I was a young, idealistic professor, and thought that I could do better than Mr. Dean could down there. I look back on that, and it's obvious I just wanted his job. But I went to see Dr. Clegg. And I told him, I said, "If you will let me run for office, run for this Senate seat, I will teach four courses, and I will take off winter quarter." The Legislature back then met for 40 days and 40 nights, and it really stayed that way. It didn't do like it does now. But I said, "If you will let me go down there and serve during winter quarter, I will teach four courses spring quarter, I will teach four courses fall quarter, and I will teach summer school. I will get all my teaching in." To my surprise, Dr. Clegg said, "Yes. Go ahead and do it." Looking back on it, I have no doubt that what Dr. Clegg was thinking was, "He will get beat. And then he'll settle down, and maybe make me a pretty good teacher." "Well, then he'd get it out of his system." Well, I won. And so I went to the General Assembly, and served in the Senate beginning -- that election, that was in April of 1960. It was quite an experience. I don't know if you want me to go into how you...? There were eight precincts in Towns County. There was Young Harris.

There was Brasstown and Gumlog together. There was Hiawassee. There was Macedonia.

There was Upper Hightower, Lower Hightower, the River -- you know where I'm talking about? Like you go across Union Authority?. And then there was Tate City, where you had to go into Rabun County to come back in just to get to it. No one would vote in this election except Democrats. It was a Democratic primary. And back then, you could take a voters list, and you could go down the list and by the person's name, you could tell whether they were a Democrat or a Republican. All the Dentons and Brysons were Democrats; all the Woods, all the Shooks were Republican, and so forth. And so you would take a voters list -- I had a man by the name of Guy Pewett. I don't know if any of you remember Guy Pewett or not. He was an elementary school principal out here. He really knew this county. And we would take a voters list, and we would put a zero by the Republicans' names, which meant that I -- no use going to see them. We would put an X by the Democrats' name -- need to go see that person! And then we'd put a minus by a person's name if -- today, they would be called "Independent." But sometimes they voted in the Democratic primary, and sometimes they didn't. We called them "floaters" back then. And so I would get up every morning real early. There's nothing that makes a voter happier -- back then; they're spoiled now -- nothing made a voter happier back then than for the candidate to come see them and knock on their door, and talk to them. And if you came before breakfast, that meant you really wanted to see them! And so I'd get up at daylight, and I'd knock on all the doors. I would go up Bug Scuffle Road one morning, and I'd go up Bear Meet the next morning. I'd go up Owl Creek the next morning. I'd go up to Lower Hightower and Scattaway the next morning. I'd knock on every Democratic door, plus all the floaters' doors, too. Even early in the morning

before class started, or late in the evening. It also was good politics to get a person up at night. Now that showed you were really interested in their vote. And I have waked up hundreds of people in Towns County -- back then asking for their vote. They put in a little radio station over in Murphy, WCDT. I went over there, and I made a speech. Nobody had never done that before. We had a janitor here, a great man who could play a fiddle like you've never heard named Lee Kirby. I got Lee to go up to the Towns County Courthouse with me when court was in session, and fiddled. And I got up on one of those rock columns and made him a speech. Well, to make a long story short, I won, by 151 votes. And I was the new state senator from the 40th district. And I guess that's where we stop. Now we go to Atlanta, right?

SHORT: Sure. Well, let me ask this question. You were a member of the Senate class of '63?

MILLER: Yeah. Let's talk about '61 first.

SHORT: All right, '61.

MILLER: Because that's important.

SHORT: All right. But you were a member of the Senate class of '61?

MILLER: Yeah. I was 27 when I was running, and I was 28 when I started serving. The reason

I got it in '61 -- and he already knows this, of course -- the reason I wanted to get out of there was because '61: important year in Georgia history. A very important year in Georgia political history. Because what happened was this. The session was to start on January the 9th, 1961. On January the 7th, the federal courts said that the University of Georgia would be integrated. And then, of course, the public schools would be next. Well, the Legislature had already passed a law saying that if any public school system was integrated, that immediately, you didn't have to send your children to school. The mandatory going to school was out. You just didn't have to send them to school. Well, we met on the 9th. That occurred on the 7th. It was a chaotic situation when the Legislature started convening in January of '61. There were protesters everywhere. There was a riot at the University of Georgia where they had to take Hamilton Holmes and Charlene Hunter out and get them safely out of there. Ernie Vandiver from Lavonia was the Governor at that time. He had run for Governor saying, "No, not one." In other words, not one African-American would enter our public school system. That's what he had said, and he had been elected by carrying 156 of 159 counties. So that's what we got into, and that's why I was telling you awhile ago. The first day of the session, Ernie Vandiver called a meeting out at the Governor's mansion of the 50 top leaders in the General Assembly to ask them what should we do. Fifty of them. Forty-eight said close the schools. Only two out of that 50 said integrate them and keep them open. Those two men were Carl Sanders, and he was a senator then, and Frank Whitty, the representative from Fanila. It was a lot of turmoil. I'll hurry through. On January the 19th, Ernie Vandiver made a speech to a joint session of the General Assembly. I will never forget it. It was historic. It ought to be remembered more than it is. In that speech

this man who had run on a platform of “No, not one” said, in essence, that you’ve got to integrate the schools. He had a phrase in there: something like, “This issue is a cancerous issue”... he called it a “cancerous issue that will devour progress.” And I’ll never forget that phrase: “That will devour progress, and everything in its path.” It was a brave and courageous speech for a Governor, especially Ernie Vandiver, to make. I think it’s one of the historic speeches in all of Georgia history. To make a long story short, with the Governor leading the way, we in Georgia then voted to integrate the schools, not to close them. And Georgia was spared what Alabama and Arkansas, Little Rock, and some of these other states later had, and it was because of the leadership of Ernest Vandiver as Governor.

SHORT: Class of ’63.

MILLER: Class of ’63! All right! Another thing that had happened in that first term was that they had done away with the county unit system, and also changed how you ran for the Senate. Instead of it rotating between the counties, they now put you in the area, just several counties. They’d leave this district, for example, a district that stretched from Jasper, Pickens County, all the way over to Habersham, Clarksville, and Cornelia, towns that were just a small part of it. I ran, Carlton ran that year for the House -- right, Carlton? And anyway, I got elected. I got re-elected. I got elected again. There were only five senators who were in that ’61-62 class, there were only five who came to the ’63-64 class. And I won. I got tremendous support out of Union County. I carried Towns County 11,035 to 17. I don’t think I could do that these days.

Anyway, that was a great Senate. It was the first reapportioned Senate. In that Senate was a Governor, a man who was going to become President: Jimmy Carter. There was two that were going to become -- would be huge business leaders: J. B. Fuqua and Brooks Pennington of Pennington Seed. And a number of others. It was really a fresh day to start in Georgia. This is when I think the new, modern Georgia began, and I was proud to be a part of that.

SHORT: You decided to run for Lieutenant Governor, I assume after much soul searching and inner debate. What made you decide to run?

MILLER: The same thing that made me want to run against Kaiser Dean years earlier. The Lieutenant Governor job in Georgia used to be a very, very good and powerful position. It's not that way anymore -- it changed around too much. But the Lieutenant Governor appointed all the committees, appointed the chairmen of all committees, assigned all the bills going into conference committees, and it was always a powerful person. In the meanwhile -- we skipped over this -- well, I had worked for three different Governors. I worked for Carl Sanders when he was Governor. I worked for Lester Maddox when he was Governor. I worked for Jimmy Carter when he was Governor. And Jimmy Carter had appointed me the director of the Georgia Democratic Party. And I got to meet a lot of people being in the state capital like that, and I just thought I knew enough people to run for Lieutenant Governor, so I ran in that race with I think 11 or 13 candidates, including Max Cleland. He was running as a young state senator. I got in a runoff with a female mayor from Jesup named Mary Hitt, and I won that in the runoff. I never

will forget one of the first questions I was asked. They asked me, "What do you think about women being in politics?" Well, my mother, as I said awhile ago, was a city council member here in Young Harris for twenty-something years. She was the mayor twice. At one time, she was one of two female mayors in Georgia. And so I said, "Well, I've never known anything else." But anyway, I won that, and I ran against a Republican named John Savage -- a good guy -- and I was elected Lieutenant Governor.

SHORT: Rolling the clock forward now to 1980, when you decided to run against the legendary Herman Talmadge for the United States Senate. So tell us about that race.

MILLER: Well, everybody makes mistakes. I never will forget: I had a good friend named Peter Zack Geer who had been the executive secretary of Governor Vandiver, and then he had been Lieutenant Governor, and I had worked with him. And he and I had been very good friends. And so I called up Peter Zack -- he lived down in south Georgia, in North County down there. I called Peter Zack up and I said, "Peter Zack, I think I'm going to run against Herman Talmadge for the Senate seat." There was just silence on the other end of the phone. He said, "Have you lost your mind?" He said, "You're taking on the he dog!" The alpha senator . At any rate, I went ahead and ran anyway, and got him in a runoff. There were two other real good candidates running: Norman Underwood, who later became a judge on the Court of Appeals, and Dawson Mathis, who was a Congressman from south Georgia. But Senator Talmadge and I got in a runoff, and it was a brutal, brutal, mean, mean race. And out of it we both came so scarred up

that later, the Republican candidate beat Senator Talmadge, and it would be ten years before I could run, before I could put enough of myself back together where I could run for Governor in 1990. I made two races in my life I shouldn't have made, and that was one of them. The transportation committee in the House for years and years, and so much of what happened around here is due to his leadership, and I was there to just kind of help. But the thing I wanted to point out, because I see some students here, somebody that someday might get into politics: there is no way -- now, take it from somebody that's had a lot of experience -- there is no way that you can win using road politics. And I'll give you the best example I can think of. When I had campaigned for that Senate seat back in 1961, most of these roads around here were dirt roads. And there was a road down here in Brasstown Gumlog -- it was Gumlog road, really -- that I told those folks I would try to get paved for them if I got elected. Well, I got elected. And I went over to see Mr. Jim Gillis, who was the highway director, and I told him I just had to have a couple of miles paved. And he blew on his hand like this Bob, you remember, like that was asking an awful lot. And then he knew I'd been supporting the Governor, so he gave me that. He gave me about two miles of pavement down there on Gumlog. Well, it tickled me to death. Just think of that! I couldn't wait to get home. Saturday morning, I got up early, and I went down to Gumlog, got in my car and went down to Gumlog. First person I came to, he was out getting his mail out of a mailbox. I got out of the car and I went up to him. I'm not going to tell you these people's names, to protect the innocent. But anyway, I went up to them and I said, "Gettin' this road paved. "I'm going to have it paved all the way down here near to the Many Forks church." He didn't say "thank you." He said, "I'm going to have to move this expletive

mailbox.” That’s all he said, and he went on back in the house. Well, I got in the car and went on down the road a little bit further till I came to this service station. I had politicked there a lot. It was one of those, you know, where they had these glass cylinders up that you pump the gas up into it, and then you lift, bring that down into your car. I had stopped there a lot, bought about \$2 worth of gas at a time. I never filled up anywhere. That’s something I have never done in politics. I buy gas -- back then -- \$2 or \$3 or \$5 apiece so you can stop at a bunch of different service stations and see people. But anyway, I went into that service station. I went into it; told them, “Well, I’m getting that road paved! Getting that road paved!” And he said, “Oh, that’s good.” Then he followed me on outside as I’m walking to my car, and he says, “You know, you see here?” Talking about right in front of the store. He said, “If they are going to pave that road, how about them paving right in here?”: He said, “It ain’t but about 20 feet to the road. How about paving right in here?” I said, “Mister,” I said, “I don’t think they would do that. That’s private property. He said, “Oh, they’d do it if you’d ask them!” So I left that fellow antagonized. Went on down the road a little bit further, and I saw this man that I knew. And I got out and I says -- by then, I was a little bit down Gumlog, and I said, “Paving the road! I’m going to pave it right by your house, and right on down here, to just above the church.” He said, “You’re not taking it to the county line?” And I said, “No, I haven’t got -- it’s just two miles. I can’t take it...” Well, and he said, “Well, that’s the ignorantest thing I’ve ever heard, to take it right down here and not take it to the county line.” I got back in my car, and I went back home. And road politics: folks, if you ever want to get messed up in it, it’s not what you think it is.

SHORT: It's been often said that Zell Miller knows more about Georgia politics than the Pope knows about the Lord's Prayer. How do you explain your ability to rebound from lost elections and bad decisions?

MILLER: And paving roads that don't go far enough! All right. I tell this -- I used to tell this to my students. Well, I -- especially the late ones-- I mean, there is no reason in the world -- you can look up -- there's no reason that I ought to be able to sit up here having been a United States Senator and having been a Governor. I mean, I didn't come from the right part of the state -- there's only been two Governors from up in the mountains, that didn't come from the right part of the state back then. I didn't have the money. I didn't have the ability, and I didn't have the looks. I didn't have -- there's only one reason that I got to be where I got to be in politics, and that is that I just wouldn't quit. And I think I got that out of the Marine Corps: persistence. Persistence, I tell students, and I'll tell you, persistence will beat anybody. It'll beat money. It'll beat intelligence. It'll beat anything if you just keep on it. I was defeated three times before I ever made it to Governor and Senator. Anybody else with any sense would've stopped and quit! I didn't have that much -- I just kept on.

SHORT: Persistence. After four terms as Lieutenant Governor, 16 years, you finally decided -- and it pleased a number of your friends, including me -- to run for Governor. Why?

MILLER: Because I had quit bleeding over that 1980 race. I finally -- finally, the cuts and the

bruises had healed up. And it was a chance -- I loved being Lieutenant Governor. I loved that job. I used to say, "Call me 'Lieutenant Governor for life'," because I just stayed there for so long. But I loved that job. I loved the legislative process. I loved the give and take of it. I loved working out the compromises that enabled legislation to go through. But I got to thinking that if I'm ever going to run for Governor, it was wide open in 1990; that that's the time -- I thought that was the time to do it.

SHORT: You had four major opponents in that race. I would like to ask you for a quick assessment of each. Andrew Young?

MILLER: Well, Andrew Young had been a mayor and a Congressman, and UN Ambassador. I mean, Andrew Young was one of the great men of this era.

SHORT: Roy Barnes?

MILLER: Brilliant. Very good legislator. Brilliant.

SHORT: Bubba McDonald?

MILLER: He was the Speaker's candidate, and that's almost enough said. He was the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and knew the budget back and forward. He could sing

beautifully. He couldn't talk, but he could sing beautifully. He was a good-looking person. He was a tough candidate.

SHORT: Lester Maddox?

MILLER: Well, I had worked for the man, and knew him well. He had got -- as you know, served as Governor and as Lieutenant Governor, and now was running again. I felt a little sad for him, to tell you the truth.

SHORT: You and Andrew Young wound up in a runoff. You went on to defeat Mr. Young, and after defeating him, you faced a very popular Republican: Johnny Isakson.

MILLER: He's a good man.

SHORT: Who, of course, is now a United States Senator. As I recall, that was a very spirited and close election.

MILLER: It was 53 percent to 45 percent. Yeah, it was a tough race. Johnny was a great candidate. Johnny can make you a great speech without any notes. He's very knowledgeable. He's a good, likeable person. Some of you may remember that after that election was over, I appointed Johnny Isakson as the chairman of the State Board of Education. I liked him a lot. I

like him a lot. I respect him and admire him a lot. You see, that race with Andy and Roy and the others that you had mentioned, and then later with Johnny, there wasn't but one issue in 1990. That was the lottery. You could get into all these side issues, but there wasn't but one thing: the lottery. And so that -- it just dominated the race. You were either for that or against it, and if you were for it, you'd tell them.

SHORT: After defeating Isakson and taking office, you learned that the state was on the verge of financial collapse. How did you manage to overcome that?

MILLER: I had a lot of good help from the Legislature, especially Speaker Murphy and others. It was a hard time. We had a budget back then of about \$8 billion, and there was a huge shortfall because of the recession, and because there was no rainy day fund left. And there was some hard times. And to give you an idea, we had to -- end the regular session, then we had a special session that summer. And then in the next regular session, in those three sessions over a year period, we cut 5,000 jobs. There was room to cut them, but one of the ways that I did it -- and in a way, this was a blessing: it enabled us to streamline government a little bit better. But there were 2,000 jobs that were unfilled. There's always a number of jobs because of attrition that are unfilled. Well, there were 2,000 jobs up there that were unfilled. Well, we immediately did away with those. Then we began to whittle on the others, and eventually cut 5,000 jobs, usually through attrition. We trimmed -- we did away with 200 programs in the budget. We trimmed 300 more items in the budget. And we managed to make it. And then when we did, the state

rebounded in a tremendous way. But it was hard going right there to begin with, very hard going. And I got a lot of good help from Speaker Murphy. Speaker Murphy and I had a lot of fights when we were Lieutenant Governor and Governor -- I mean, whenever we were Lieutenant Governor and Speaker. We had both come down there to the Legislature at the same time, in '61. He was a veteran of the Navy; I was a veteran of the Marine Corps. He was from rural Bremen, and I was from rural Young Harris. And even he was Lester Maddox's floor leader; I was Lester Maddox's executive secretary. We had worked together, and knew each other well. And the reason we fought so much: we saw things differently, a lot of things differently, but you just naturally have fights between the House and the Senate. If Tom Murphy hadn't been there, I would have invented one. And if I hadn't been over in the Senate, he would have invented a Zell Miller to kind of rally the troops.

SHORT: You will always be remembered for cowboy boots and HOPE Scholarships. Tell us, if you will, where you got the idea for HOPE Scholarships, and give a little history of HOPE.

MILLER: Well, being an educator from a family of educators, education had always been my main issue. And I have long carried around the idea of some kind of scholarship based on merit. But I didn't mention that during the election because I had no idea what kind of money a lottery would bring in. I mean, we were in uncharted ocean. We were on the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. We didn't know where we were going. And so you couldn't promise too much, and so we just talked about the lottery going to education. But I had had in my head a long time

something like that, and where it came from was I had been able to go to high school here and be at home, go here to junior college and be at home. Money had not been a big issue to go to college -- until I finished Young Harris. Then it became a huge issue. My mama didn't have the money to send me anywhere, very much. I got a part-time scholarship to Emory. She borrowed money from an outfit called "Picket Hatcher Educational Fund," and I started to Emory. And the money ran out and we had to borrow some more, and I won't get into that. And then later you know I went into the Marine Corps. Well, when I came out of the Marine Corps, I had the GI Bill. The GI Bill is the best government program that has ever been put into practice. It was just great. And a lot of men got an education that never would have. So I had experienced going and getting an education with the GI Bill, and I had experienced earlier having difficulty going to college because of money. And so I came up with this idea. I came up with the idea of this scholarship that would be based on merit, not need, and we would call it "HOPE": Helping Outstanding Pupils' Education. I named it. And it took a while to get passed, but we got it passed, and we changed it a lot over the years. When we first started it, we didn't have enough money, so we had a \$66,000 income cap for the families. Well, then we got enough money coming in we saw that we could raise that. We raised it up to \$100,000 income cap. Well, that took in 96% of the people in Georgia, if you were under that, I mean... And so we might as well just go ahead and give it to everybody, and so that's how we did it, and I was glad, because I didn't want it based on income. I wanted it based on merit, on keeping that "B" average. And there were a lot of people who got it, and then didn't make it in college. We fully expected that. That's why we put the addition to it that you could get it back. If you went to college and didn't

keep that “B” average, it was taken away from you. But if you could go into college and keep a “B” average the next year, you would get it back. It’s worked pretty well, and a lot of young men and women have been able to go to college because of it, and practically every state in the union has tried to copy it. But they can’t, because they don’t have the money to start it like we started it, with the proceeds going from the lottery. Because 38 states already had lotteries, and they couldn’t change it or they’d be taking money away from where their original lottery money was going.

SHORT: In addition to the lottery and the HOPE Scholarships, what would you say were your most major accomplishments of your eight years as Governor?

MILLER: Oh, well, that’s a setup question. Make me sound like I’m running again! But you asked the question. I am very, very proud of what we did in education. And I want you to know, now, Carlton Colwell and the Legislature and the Speaker, a lot of them were extremely helpful. I didn’t do this by myself -- please believe that. But during that eight years, we created the HOPE Scholarship, and we also created pre-Kindergarten, voluntary pre-Kindergarten, for four-year olds. No other state in the nation has that yet, except Georgia. It has not worked as well as I had thought. I thought it would do something with the dropout rate in this state, and it hasn’t. I was wrong about that. But I think it’s helped in a lot better ways. So education. We built \$1 billion worth of construction on the university campus. We raised the university professors’ salaries to the highest in the Southeast. We raised our teachers’ salaries in Georgia to the highest

in the Southeast, and up to the national average that everybody had said was a major goal. So I was proud of that. I was proud that we cut welfare rolls, long before the federal government came along with a welfare reform program. We cut the welfare rolls in Georgia during that eight years by 42%. I wanted to cut it in half. We didn't quite cut it in half, but we cut it by 42 percent. The personal income in Georgia that eight years went up 60 percent. We created an average of 2,000 jobs a week. We built more prison beds than have ever been built. There were 24,000 prison beds in Georgia when I became Governor. When I left, there were 44,000 prison beds in Georgia. That's probably enough. But you've got to remember what Dizzy Dean said. Dizzy Dean said it ain't bragging if you've done done it. (applause)

SHORT: You finished your --

MILLER: And I'm proud of how we streamlined government, and I've already talked about the way.

SHORT: You finished your two terms as one of the most popular Governors that Georgia ever had. What were you thinking when you left office?

MILLER: "How quick can I get to Young Harris?" I was teaching at Emory three days after I left the Governor's office. And I also taught at the University of Georgia, and at -- of course, here. I taught a leadership course here. I was -- I wanted to come home. I was ready to come

home. I thought my political career was over.

SHORT: So then were you surprised --

MILLER: And many people think -- they requested it had to end.

SHORT: Were you then surprised when Governor Barnes appointed you to the United States Senate?

MILLER: I will be honest: I wasn't surprised he asked me. I was surprised I said yes. He -- I'll tell you this quick story. Paul Coverdell, who died and opened up that Senate seat, was a very, very good friend. He and I had served in the Senate together for 12 years. I was the leader of the Democrats; he was the leader of the Republicans. We were good, good friends. And that Coverdell Senate seat had come up in the year I left the Governor's office. I could have run. I didn't want to run. I didn't want to go to Washington, and I wanted to come home. But anyway, when Senator Coverdell died suddenly, Governor Barnes called and said he wanted to come up here and talk to me. I knew what it was about. And you've got to keep in mind that whoever he appointed -- this was in July -- whoever he appointed would have to run in November. So it had to be somebody that could get another campaign real quick. And so I knew I fit that category, and so I knew what he was coming for -- or I thought I did. When he came, he and I and Shirley sat in our living room. By the way, I got to stop. Another one of those things that happened

during the administration that I am so very proud of was what we did in adult literacy, and that's due solely to Shirley Miller. We put an adult literacy teacher in every county, and she did a tremendous job with that. (applause) And now maybe I'll get a little supper. I knew what he was coming up here for, and I knew what I was going to tell him. He told me he'd like to appoint me to take that seat, and I told him no, that I was as happy as I could be doing what I was doing.

And we talked some more about it. And when he went out the door to the house, he spun around and came back in. And he said, "You've got to do this, Zell. I don't have a Plan B." I said, "Let me sleep on it a while." And so I slept on it for a couple of days. And Shirley and I talked about it, and one morning at breakfast, Shirley looked at me and she said, "This is what you do, isn't it?" Meaning, politics, government. "This is what you do, isn't it?" And I said, "Yes." And I said, "Will you go with me?" I wasn't about to go up there by myself after... " She said, "Yeah, I'll go with you." And I said these words to her. I said, "I am not going to do that party stuff." And she said right back to me something she had heard me say many times. She said, "It's not whose team you're on -- it's whose side you're on." I had said that a lot of times in my political career. "It's not whose team you're on -- it's whose side you're on." And so I picked up my phone and I called Governor Barnes, and told him I would do it. And I went to Atlanta, and we held a press conference. And in that press conference, I said, "I'm not going to serve any single party."

I said that. I said it all during the campaign that followed. I was sick of that. And so I went to Washington. I was elected. Seven people; seven different -- there were seven of us in that race, and I was elected. I went to Washington. And now you've got me in Washington, Bob. What

else do you want from me?

SHORT: Well, I thought -- I'd like for you to tell us your impression of the city when you arrived.

MILLER: Well... I had wanted to go to Washington in my younger years. That's obvious! I don't think anybody that has been Governor, a chief executive of a state, can be very happy in the Senate. It just doesn't move like it moves in the Executive branch. I was sitting at my desk one day -- I guess I was looking pretty gloomy -- and Joe Biden of Delaware came over. He had been in the Senate since he was 30. In fact, he was elected when he was 29 and had to wait till he turned 30 to take his Senate seat! And he came over and sat down, and he said, "I've watched a lot of you Governors come up here." He said, "You're all the same." He said, "You go through three stages. The first stage is, you just can't believe this place." And he was right. I got up there, and I got up there in an appropriation period, and I couldn't believe. Because you see, in Georgia and in state government, if you're going to add a program, you've got to cut another one somewhere else. You've got a balanced budget you've got to work off. So if you're going to add a program of \$300 million, let's say, you've got to come up with that \$300 million somewhere. You just can't get it out of thin air. But you can in Washington. It doesn't matter how many -- it doesn't matter how much you go over. You just keep adding to it! Anyway, so I couldn't believe it. He said, "Then the second stage is, you get mad, and you want to change this place. And the third stage is that you finally just accept it." I never got past that second stage.

SHORT: You were governor –

MILLER: I mean, I guess it was because of being Governor that made me think a lot like that. You see, in state government -- Carlton knows all this -- in state government, you can just cut an amendment -- you can offer an amendment only if it's germane, only if it's part of the subject matter that you're discussing. In Congress, you can offer an amendment that it doesn't have to be germane or anything. You can be talking about highways, and you can add something on education. And on and on. And so I didn't like the way it operated.

SHORT: Who were your best friends in the Senate?

MILLER: Those of us that had served as Governors together, like Evan Bayh from Indiana, and Ben Nelson of Nebraska, and Tom Carper of Delaware, and George Allen, Virginia. And there were others. The best friend I came to have in the Senate was Phil Gramm, who was the senator from Texas. He was a Georgia boy, born in Columbus. Grew up in Columbus; went to the University of Georgia; got his doctorate in Economics from the University of Georgia. Then moved to Texas. He was a very, very good friend. Jim Bunning from Kentucky, the Hall of Fame baseball pitcher, we were good friends. Orrin Hatch from Utah -- we became very good friends. I went up there and gave a speech with him a couple of weeks ago.

SHORT: You knew and were close to three Presidents: Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush. How would you describe each of these gentlemen?

MILLER: Bob! We're already over this time! I'm going to try to answer that this way. Shirley has saved -- I must have twenty-some odd notes from Jimmy Carter. Keep in mind that I served in the state Senate with him, I worked for him when he was Governor, when he ran for President. For a long time, I was the only elected state official who supported him for President. So we've been through a lot. And I must have twenty-some odd notes. About half of those notes, he's bragging about something I did and commending me. About the other half, he's just giving me pure hell. So I'm just batting about .500 with Jimmy Carter. He is a tenacious --- a modest man he is not. He's won the Nobel Prize. Got to be President of the United States. That's quite an achievement.

SHORT: Bill Clinton.

MILLER: He's --- Bill Clinton... He is a political genius. He is brilliant. He has a photographic mind. He is a policy wonk; knows all his policy stuff from those propeller heads. But he also is charming and great with the people. He's the best politician that's come along in my lifetime. But he can be petulant, and he can be deceptive. Move on.

SHORT: George W. Bush.

MILLER: Not what you see on television, and this is a shame, and I don't quite understand it.

We hit it off when we were Governors together because of our love for baseball. You know, he was the General Manager for the Texas Rangers at one time. And so we got to know each other then. And I have a very high respect for him. A courageous man. History's going to be better to him than many think.

SHORT: What was the best advice --

MILLER: Good sense of humor. Go ahead.

SHORT: What was the best advice you've ever been given?

MILLER: Oh, that's an easy one. My mama. My mama used to say, "'Take what you want,' sayeth the Lord. 'Take it, and pay for it'." I was a grown man before I realized that's not in the Bible. That was my mama's scripture! If you want something, you've got to work for it. If you want a house, get the rocks out of the creek. If you want to be a good baseball player, practice. If you want to be a good speaker, work on it, writing that speech, and practice it. Take what you want; take it, and pay for it. Short, I could talk a lot about my mama.

SHORT: OK. Georgia's had 25 Governors during the 20th century, dating back to Allen

Candler in 1898 to Roy Barnes in 1998. Who in your opinion was the best Governor?

MILLER: How many pages have you got going?

SHORT: Very few.

MILLER: This'll seem strange. I think the best Governor of the 20th century in Georgia was Herman Talmadge. And I say that because -- not only because he educated me; I -- but because of what he did. He had said -- this is how politics works sometimes: he had said he wasn't going to raise taxes, and when he got elected Governor, he put the three-cent sales tax in. But that three-cent sales tax did amazing things for Georgia. When Herman Talmadge began Governor, there were over 1,700 one-room schoolhouses still in this state. He changed all that. Schools were built all over this state. The Hill-Burton Hospital Act was coming along at that time, and he built hospitals all over the state of Georgia. He built airfields. He built good roads. He was a very, very good Governor. And I'll tell you this: when I went to Washington, Robert Byrd, the old senator from West Virginia, came over to me and started talking to me, and this is what he said. He said, "You know, Herm" -- and you know, he's been in the Senate now 50 years -- he said Herman Talmadge was the smartest man he ever served with in the Senate. Now, that's saying a lot from Robert Byrd. He was a very, very good Governor, and I want to give him credit for that. I didn't mention that whenever I was running against him, but... Carl Sanders was not very far behind. Carl Sanders was an excellent Governor. So was Ellis Arnall, and Ed

Rivers.

SHORT: You served with Joe Frank Harris when he was Governor and you were Lieutenant Governor, and George Busbee.

MILLER: I loved them both. I loved them. I have a picture of me and Busbee the night that we were nominated by my backdoor. As I go out my door every day, and I look up there and I see Busbee. I love the man. He's dead, as you know. We were Governor and Lieutenant Governor for eight years, and then we had also served in the Legislature. I'll tell you a story about George Busbee. I may not have run for Governor if it hadn't been for Busbee. I went over to see him whenever I was thinking about running for Governor. I wanted to see what my friend George would say, who knew me very, very well. And we had lunch. We worked for King & Spalding and we had lunch, and I asked him. I said, "George, can I be elected Governor?" And I'll never forget what he said. He looked at me, this very wise man. And he looked at me; he said, "Zell, not only can you be elected, but you can govern after you are elected." That coming from him just meant so much to me. I floated out that building.

SHORT: You have had a very illustrious career: teacher, politician. You are known to be a very wise man. Tell us what you think lies ahead for this country in the near future.

MILLER: Well, the way you told me, you wanted me to make a -- by the way, you didn't ask me

this question, and I was hoping you would. And so I'm -- even if it takes a few more minutes, I'm going to have to. I served with a lot of legislators, like Carlton and others. And they deserve so much of the credit. One of the legislators that I served with that I think is probably the best legislator I ever served with was a man named Denmark Groover from Macon, Georgia, Bibb County. He had been a Marine aviator in World War II. He had been in that Black Sheep Squadron under Pappy Boyington. And he was brilliant. He knew everything that was in a bill. He got to the capital about 6 o'clock in the morning and studied them, and knew what was in them. And you know, speaking -- people's minds, legislators' minds are not changed by what the speaker says down there in that well. Very seldom. You already know how you're going to vote before somebody gets down there and starts speaking about it. Denmark Groover could change votes, couldn't he, Carlton? He could change votes. And he was a brilliant guy. We were -- sometimes he would be for me, sometimes he would be against me. He helped pass the lottery legislation. He came to me right before it was about to come up. Even though I had been elected, it was no -- by no means assured that the people of Georgia would vote for it even after I got elected, so we had to have a referendum. And in order to have that referendum, I had to get three-fourths of the House and the Senate for me -- two-thirds, rather. Anyway, Denmark came down and he says, "I want to get you on your lottery bill." Boy, that was news -- that was good news to me. And then he said this; I'll never forget it. He said, "You know, men will do three" - - "most men" -- and I shouldn't -- I think he said "men," not "most." He said, "Men will do three things: they'll drink liquor, they'll chase women, and they'll gamble." He says, "The stomach will take care of the first. Old age will take care of the second." "But they'll never get

over the gambling. So I'm going to try to help you get this bill through." And he made the last speech before putting the vote on it, and I can hear it now. Shirley and I were listening to it down in the Governor's office. You have a -- what we call a "squawk box" down there where you can hear what they're saying. And Denny got up there, and he said -- well, I'm trying to remember. He said, "The Constitution emanates from the people." And then he went on and talked about that the people ought to have the right to vote on it. Well, we carried the lottery vote by about six -- five votes in the House. I don't think we would have carried it without Denny. So anyway, Denny's dead. He went on to his reward. I was there. When that Marine bugler blew "Taps" at his grave that he was a good one, and thanks for letting him get it in.

SHORT: Now, going back to your -- I wanted to ask you what you think is ahead for this country over the next generation.

MILLER: Well, you asked me to make a list. I'm going to give that quick, because we need to get on with this program. One -- this is what Bob said: list my eight or ten challenges that I think this nation faces. I wrote it down this morning. One -- and this is probably -- this the most: we face a well-armed fanatical movement just as dangerous as Hitler's Nazis or Japan's imperialism, or Stalin's Communists. Like them, it seeks a new world order. Iraq and Afghanistan are only two of its many battlefields. It will stop at nothing to dominate us, and as in past struggles, we do not have a choice. We either win, or lose. We either deal with this problem now, or we leave it up to our children to deal with. That's the main threat. Two -- (applause) -- we've got a

political system, especially in Washington, paralyzed by partisanship. And far too often, they are working not on what would be a result for the next generation, but an issue for the next election.

Three: a large part of this country's underclass, not limited to color or ethnicity, that refuses to be educated or learn a skill, that creates babies in families that are not really families, and that glorifies violence. On the other end of the spectrum, a management class at too many of our largest corporations that steals from the stockholders and employees, and whose sole goal is a quick buck for themselves. Five: a trade deficit disaster; a balance of payments so unequal that if unchecked, can leave us to become a second-best power sooner than anyone might imagine. Six: a flood of illegal immigrants that gives us great labor and brave soldiers, but is overwhelming our schools and hospitals, social services, and law enforcement. Seven: a defense establishment that today has the finest American soldiers ever produced, but is too small, too spread out, and too poorly paid to be the force that it must be. A system of government entitlements that if not controlled soon will literally bankrupt this nation. For we are close to the tipping point that many historians and economists have warned us about, where there will be more tax-eaters than tax-payers. And last, a mainstream media that too frequently disdains our values, mocks God, and undermines this country. (applause)

SHORT: One last question before you agree to accept some questions from the audience. Your Master's thesis on your family friend Ed Rivers, you wrote these words: "History, not a man's contemporaries, is the only judge of a man's worth." What should history say about Zell Miller?

MILLER: Well, I would be my contemporary. That's what I'm saying -- I can't judge that. I hope they'll say that he never forgot where he came from.

(applause)

SHORT: So what's ahead for Zell Miller?

MILLER: Well, if I get out of here before dark... ..I'm going to go walk my dogs down in that creek.

SHORT: Now, Senator Miller has agreed to answer a few questions from the audience. I'm going to ask you to do this: please raise your hand, and be ready to ask, because we don't want everybody asking questions at once. Are there any questions?

Sir?

Q: Senator, where did you get the inspiration as Governor to have the classical music in the maternity ward? My daughter lives all the way in California. When her baby was born, she said, "You know, Governor Miller said to do that, and my kid's been listening to Brahms and Mozart." What did you do?

MILLER: Well, I read a bunch of studies that said that. It was not something that I just all of a

sudden ordained that this is how it ought to be. I had read studies that it would be helpful. I don't know if it is or not, and I said so on that CD that we sent out. But it was some pretty good music, wasn't it?

Q: Absolutely.

Q: Senator Miller, many of us are very worried about the I-3 project. Could you give --

MILLER: I'm sorry?

Q: Many of us are very worried about the I-3 road that's to come through. Would you give us your opinion?

MILLER: Well, here is my suggestion. You just sleep as easy tonight as you possibly can.

That's never going to happen. The way that thing came into being was, what they were trying to do -- the man who came up with it is a good friend of mine; I know what it was -- was to try to get a four-lane highway from Savannah to Augusta. And then another Congressman came in and said, "Let's take it to the coast." And then in order to get some other support, they moved it on up into -- That's never going to happen. That's never going to happen. Certainly not in my lifetime or your children's lifetime. I don't think it'll ever happen. I don't worry about it. And I would suggest you not worry about it, but I know people like to go ahead and get names on

petitions! I've had a few delivered to me in my day.

SHORT: Other questions? Yes, sir?

Q: What is your opinion of Newt Gingrich and his future?

MILLER: Newt Gingrich is a very, very intelligent individual who knows a great deal of history and a lot about politics. I would not underestimate him. He's on television every time you turn it on these days. He's got a new book out right now, and he just had one out last -- less than a year ago, so he's turning out a lot of books, and he's traveling around a lot. Newt and I go back all the way to 1966. He was teaching at West Georgia; I was teaching here. And when I ran for -- 1964, not 1966. 1964, when I ran against Congressman Landrum, Newt Gingrich was the campaign manager for Jack Prince, a poultry man from Georgia who ran on the Republican ticket against him after Landrum had defeated me. I wouldn't underestimate him. He's a very, very, very smart person.

SHORT: Yes?

Q: Senator, in your opinion, what do you feel can be done about the special interests and the seemingly tremendous amount of corruption in our government today.

MILLER: Well, you're going to have to get a new set of folks up there that ain't corrupt. Money plays such a terribly important role in politics. It's become a shame. When I ran for Lieutenant Governor in 1974, I didn't buy any television -- didn't have the money to buy any television. Bought very little radio. The way I got elected to Lieutenant Governor is that for one solid year, Shirley earned the living -- she earned it more than just one year. She earned it. That year, all I did was get in my car and drive all over the state of Georgia and see people. I would go to a county, I would go to a town; if there was a courthouse there, I'd go in the courthouse and go into every office. I'd come out of the courthouse, go down the street, shake every hand in every store on this side of the street, and go out across, come back up, shake every hand there. I'd look up in the sky and see if there was an antenna, and there was a radio station there. I'd go say, "Won't you put me on the radio?" And they'd say, "I don't really want to talk politics." I'd say, "Well, let's talk about country music. I can talk about country music. Let's talk about baseball. You want to talk about baseball?" I'd go try to get my picture made down at the county newspaper. I did that. I went to every village. I did that for a solid year. And that's how I got elected Lieutenant Governor on \$268,000. That paid for a primary, a runoff, and a general election. Today, you can't run for state representative for that much money. Casey Cagle running for Lieutenant Governor will probably spend 7 or 8 million dollars. Money has become so important. When I ran for the Senate -- and really, like the last time I ran for Governor, I didn't travel around the state seeing people. I'd just get in a place, and I'd call people and beg them for money. If they'd send me some money, then I'd give it to these folks, and they'd buy television spots. It's got away from the people, and it's -- and who's got in-between us is the

lobbyists. And the lobbyists furnish the money, they furnish the manpower, and until we break that cycle, I honestly don't know how we're going to deal with it.

SHORT: Yes?

Q: I teach public speaking here. I see some of my students here. As a man who's given a lot of speeches, if you could give these students one piece of advice to succeed as speakers, what would it be?

MILLER: Don't try to be like me. Try to, but I don't think you're going to. Talk to the audience. Talk to them. Don't try to speak to them. Now, I'm somebody to talk: I've made so many speeches, I violate that all the time. I've made speeches off of the end of pickups; I've made speeches up on picnic tables; I've made speeches where we stacked up Coca-Cola crates, and I'd have to get on and holler, and act silly and say things just to get attention. Don't do that. Also, it's according to whether you're speaking to a group, or whether you're speaking over television. There's all the difference in the world these days. These people that were great stump speakers like Marvin Griffin and others in Georgia history would be lousy on television, because you're in somebody's living room, and they don't want some idiot like Miller getting in their living room.

MILLER: Yeah?

Q: As you know, Roger Baldwin in the early 1900s started the ACLU. He was an atheist Communist; wanted to see this country turn to socialism; wanted to see all people that were in business pulled down. He was not in favor of anything good for this country, and he only died in 1981, and we are still seeing the effects today of what he has done. We have heard you speak in other venues about the moral issues of this country, and fully agree with you. Could you just give us some brief feelings of what your thinking is on where this country is going morally? How can we turn it around?

MILLER: Well, I wrote a whole book about that called The Deficit of Decency. And the bridge to the future I think is out. And it's got to be rebuilt and restored. And you don't have to look any further than our Founding Fathers. I think George Bush said at the National Cathedral a few days after 9/11 that the commitment of our fathers is now the calling of our time, and I believe that. When I taught history here, I used to tell my students about that group that came over here on the Mayflower. Just think about that: they came across an uncharted ocean to a wilderness they had no idea of what they were going to find. And they realized there'd be future generations like us who would wonder why anybody would put their children and their wives through something like that, and they wrote it down. The very first sentence in the Mayflower Compact says, "This voyage was taken for the glory of God, and the advancement of Christian faith." That's why they came here. And with a Bible under one arm and a musket under the other, they carved out a civilization. And they built their churches and their brush yards, and

their camp meeting grounds. And then you see that, of course, in the Declaration of the Independence, where the good Lord is mentioned five times. And I always used to tell my students what Benjamin Franklin said whenever they were looking like they were going to break up and go home at the constitutional convention in 1787. And Ben Franklin, who was not an overly religious man, stood up and reminded them of how -- he said, "Back when we were sensible of the danger, we used to ask for divine guidance." And he said, "Have we forgotten how our prayers were answered?" And then he said, "I've lived a long, long time, and the longer I live the more convinced I am of this truth: that God governs the affairs of man. And if a sparrow can not fall to the ground without His notice, how can a country endure without His aid?" And then he said, "I make a motion that we take a break, and that we ask for guidance." And if I had you in a 50-minute history class, we'd go into it in more detail. They came back, and in a renewed atmosphere, they began to make these compromises that finally they were able to work out, and have a constitution. And then it was ratified by the states. And when George Washington was sworn in, he added the oath "so help me God," and he bent and kissed the Bible. And I could go on, but that's what's missing. That's why the Found- it is the calling of our time to remember how this country was founded, and what it means. And we have forgotten that. And I'm afraid that in too many of our educational institutions, that history is being diminished, and our heritage is being diminished, and there's too many shades of gray and not enough absolute truths being taught.

SHORT: There's a young man right here.

MILLER: I know it. I met him when I came in the door. Are you sorry you came to this door?

Q: Do you think it's most difficult to be elected a senator or a Governor?

MILLER: Well, it was harder getting elected Governor, but it was easier being elected senator because I'd already had campaigns for so many years that I already had a lot of friends in a lot of different counties, and so I could go back to them. I know they said to themselves, "I thought we'd got rid of him, but oh, here he comes now."

SHORT: One in the back.

Q: What do you feel is going to happen in Iraq? And Iran?

MILLER: I got "Iraq," but I didn't get what you said before that.

Q: How Iran --

MILLER: What about Iran?

Q: What do you think will happen in Iraq now, and also in Iran?

MILLER: If I knew that, I... I don't know. It's going to be a hard slog. It's going to be a very hard deal. But I know this: that as I said a while ago when Bob had asked me to name some of the challenges and threats that we have, I know that we have got to win. We can't afford to lose. We can't afford to put it off and let our children deal with it. And it's going to be a very, very tough situation to get that place straightened out over there. But we are there, and we can't leave now. As far as Iran, we hear all this talk about -- that they want to have the nuclear bomb, and that they could get it in the next four -- or they could perfect it in the next four or five years. Well, they don't have to perfect it -- they can go buy one, and have one in 24 hours by buying one from North Korea, or even Pakistan, maybe. Some people in Pakistan. So it is a challenge that is as great as I tried to say a while ago. It's as great as the generation who came before us faced in World War II. And we've just got to deal with it, and we've got to trust in the good Lord.

SHORT: Any other questions? Thank you very much, Senator Miller. You have certainly added to our forums on reflections, and we appreciate your being here today.

MILLER: Let me just say this: I want to thank Bob for having these forums. This is a wonderful thing. I appreciate your asking me. I appreciate you putting up with the things that I said, and if I sounded like I was making light of some things that were really serious and important, I didn't mean to do that. I also want you to know how much this college means to me, and how

wonderful it is to be back in this chapel. And to be with my wife of 52 years -- soon to be 53.

And my grandson over there is going to maybe be coming to Young Harris next year. And thank all of you for your interest. I have had a blessed life. God has been so good to me from the moment that I came into this world with the mother that I had and the family that I had, and the relatives that I had, and Dr. Clegg and Ms. Ayer, and all the people who touched my life. I was so blessed to have a wife that would put up with me these 52 years, stick with me in all of these races. It's been a wonderful career that I've had, and I'm very grateful to the people of Georgia. And I'm grateful to have this opportunity to talk with all of you. May God bless all of you.

He certainly blesses me.