HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

LAWRENCE BROOKS HAYS

Interviewed by

A. Ronald Tonks

May 20, 1975

July 17, 1975

September 8-10, 1975

March 23, 1976

August 23-26, 1976

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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PREFACE

Lawrence Brooks Hays was a politician and assumed that call with pride. Born in London, Arkansas, in 1898, he was the only son of Steele Hays. Trained as a lawyer, he practiced law in Russellville in the early 1920's and began his political career serving first as Assistant Attorney General in Arkansas, 1925-1927. He served in the U. S. Congress, 1943-1959, and became embroiled in the Little Rock desegregation crisis of 1958. Hays is best remembered for his leadership in helping the poor and disadvantaged both as a public official and a private citizen.

Brooks Hays served as Second Vice-President of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1951, and as President for two terms, 1957-1959. He was a member of the Social Service (Christian Life) Commission, SBC, 1948-1960.

In the early 1970's the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention sought to develop a formal Oral History Program. The purpose of oral history has been to gather the oral memoirs or recollections of individuals who are first-hand participants in important and significant events. Since it soon became apparent that there were many important people related to Southern Baptist life who should be interviewed through the ministry of the Historical Commission, a deliberate and specific plan was developed. The Commission determined that a program entitled Southern Baptist Convention Presidents should be of primary importance. A list was compiled of all the living presidents, and the plan was begun to interview them systematically. It very quickly became apparent that many of the presidents are extremely busy even in retirement, and consequently for any one of them to devote a block of time when an interview could be conducted posed some serious problems.

The interviews were conducted with Brooks Hays in Washington, D. C., on the following dates: May 20, July 17, September 8-10, 1975; March 23, August 23-26, 1976; August 15-17, September 15-17, and October 5, 1977. He took a very serious interest in this project and gave valuable time to check details to be sure his memoirs were preserved accurately. After the interviews were conducted, the transcript was returned for corrections of fact. Brooks Hays was a gracious interviewee and exemplified a most Christian spirit. He genuinely tried to be fair and accurate, but was also candid. The manuscript has been corrected only at points of error and to improve some points of style. The flavor of Mr. Hays' speech has been carefully preserved.

Appreciation is expressed posthumously to Brooks Hays and the staff of the Historical Commission who have prepared and edited the transcript and final copy. Patricia Goeller, Sue Jones, and Denise Porter deserve special recognition for their dedicated, careful, and skillful work in transcribing and preparing the final transcript and index for binding. Special thanks is also expressed to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs for the use of their research file by the interviewer.

A. Ronald Tonks
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Historical Commission, SBC
April 17, 1985

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: May 20, 1975

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: Mr. Hays, I appreciate your taking the time to talk with us today and to share some of your recollections of your life and your contribution through the years to different causes. I wonder if we could begin by asking you about some of your earliest recollections. What do you remember? What is the earliest thing you remember as a young boy?

H: You know, I have an idea that my earliest recollections are connected with the little Baptist church at Atkins, Arkansas, which was twelve miles from Russellville. We moved to Russellville from Atkins when I was five years of age. I remember two things that my mother says happened when I was only about two years of age. I don't imply that I was a precocious child, but I remember a time when a piece of beef that my mother had gotten to roast had been put on the edge of the cistern to cool. A cistern was a good way to keep meat cool and butter from melting in the days before refrigeration and before there were any ice plants. This meat fell in the cistern, and a neighbor, Mr. Jones, came and got it out. I talked about Mr. Jones, Mother said, to the extent that a two-year-old child could talk, for a long time after that--Mr. Jones getting that meat out of the well so we could have something for supper and also to keep the well from being contaminated.

Then, I remember when I was two years of age that my grandmother Hays was my baby-sitter; she lived with us. Mother was teaching school in Father's absence when I was two years old. He had gone to Washington and Lee University for one term in Lexington, Virginia, to pursue some special studies in law. He was a self-trained person. He was principal of the Atkins High School although he had never attended a high school in his life. He had gone through the first eight grades. His father had been a schoolteacher, but adversity had forced them to change their lifestyle to some extent. So, Father never had a formal education beyond the eighth grade. Mother had had the benefit of a short term in Ouachita College--a Baptist college in Arkadelphia, Arkansas; and then, a scholarship at Peabody College in Nashville gave her some background, some courses in higher education. She was teaching for Dad while he was in Lexington, and Grandmother was taking care of me. Mother came home one afternoon and I complained because Grandmother had spanked me for climbing on the sewing machine. She, of course, was afraid I would get hurt. She had had to administer a little corporal punishment, and I was reporting to Mother. Those two things stand out that happened in Atkins, Arkansas.

I remember the trains roaring by our little house. Atkins, like a lot of other villages, found business growing up on both sides of the railroad track. It was a great avenue--very wide. The tracks ran down the middle of that broad avenue, and we lived just a few yards from the city tracks. That was a fascinating thing for me. As a matter of fact, village life and Arkansas life were utterly fascinating for me as a child. When I was five then, Father decided to move to the county seat of Russellville. He had started the practice of law at Atkins. I was named, incidentally, for the man he was associated with in the practice of law, Tom Brooks. I became Brooks Hays. As a matter of fact, I had two given names. That's not known widely; the army knew it because I had to enter my two names. I became in the army Lawrence B. Hays. It would be found in that classification.

T: Would you say your parents were well-to-do people?

H: No, they were not. They were at one time fairly prosperous. My mother's father was a graduate of Vanderbilt Medical College in 1869, when he was forty years old. He was forty-five when Mother was born. She was his first child. He had married late in life. At least, he had not acquired a family. It's a commentary on the poor health conditions of that period to point out that he had married earlier. My grandmother, Mother's mother, was his third wife. The first two wives bore no children and died early in life. So the family of my Grandfather Butler was by his third wife. He had enjoyed some prosperity as a country doctor, establishing a medical practice in the little village of Ellsworth, Logan County, Arkansas.

Now, my Grandfather Hays had some means. He was a graduate of Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania--a classmate, incidentally, of William McKinley. He was a Methodist. Grandfather died when he was only fifty-one years old, in 1890, I guess. My father was a very young man when he died. So, he never had the pleasure of seeing his old friend--"Major McKinley," he called him--serve as President.

I asked Father one time, "Are you sure that they were friends?" "Well," he said, "he always talked about his friend 'Major McKinley,'" and since he died in 1890, he didn't think of McKinley as President. That was a little family item that interested our people. He was a good schoolteacher.

I never saw either of my grandfathers. That's always been a source of discontent with me, that I never knew them, because I think they were both rather excellent men from what I've heard. There was an article in The Arkansas Historical Quarterly about "two Logan County pioneers," and I think it may have been suggested by the fact that both of them were my grandfathers, both pioneers, and both prominent in Logan County. It would be indexed in the Arkansas quarterly--an article about the two pioneers who were my ancestors, Dr. William H. Butler and Grandfather David Hays--"Professor Hays, they called him. That was common practice, of course, they never thought about the technical point. Grandfather Hays was not a person of rugged health; he had a fragile physique. Doctors had told him in Pennsylvania, where he had grown to maturity, that he needed a better climate. An old friend of his had moved to Van Buren, Arkansas, and the friend wrote him that he had a job for him if he would come down and keep books for him. He was, I think, owner of a little factory. He had quite a thriving business in Van Buren, which was a good town right across the river from Fort Smith, but of course, a town long before Fort Smith came into existence.

So, Grandfather went to Van Buren with a little family in 1879. One day he received a letter from W. H. Butler, at Ellsworth, which is near Paris, about fifty miles east of Fort Smith. Butler asked if he would be interested in being interrogated regarding a position as head of their school. He was, and he received the appointment. He was there nearly ten years and built the first real school system in that part of western Arkansas.

That's where my father and mother met. Dad always talked about their romance. He thought of them as childhood sweethearts, and I guess they were. He insisted she was the only girl he ever loved, and I've never known of any other person that he dated. But, both families had the problems that came, as you know as a student of history, with that period. The panics, they called it. We called it depression. But the panics almost wiped out my Grandfather Butler's very limited fortune.

T: Which panic would that be?

H: Well, that, I guess, was one that was in the Cleveland administration.

T: 1893?

H: I hate to hang it on the Democratic administration since my father was a strong Democrat. My Grandfather Butler was a great Republican, but I don't think Grandfather Hays was anything. I've heard Father refer to him as a strong prohibitionist, and the Prohibition Party did have a good deal of strength over in Pennsylvania. Incidentally, the only prohibitionist, I believe, that ever served in Congress came

from that district. He knew my family. When we had a reunion of former members of Congress in 1970-72, . . .

T: You are president of that?

H: Yes. I am the founder of it. They gave me that honor, and I was the first president. I was president then. This old gentleman who was 101 years old came to the reunion in 1972--or it could have been 1971--came over and introduced himself and told me that he was acquainted with my people in western Pennsylvania. He said, "I'm the only prohibitionist that was ever elected to the Congress," and that was way back. I don't know exactly when, but I think before or in Woodrow Wilson's administration.

T: So your family originally came from the Pennsylvania area?

H: The Hays' side did. My mother's people were from West Tennessee. Now, there's an interesting commentary, when you think about my background, because Grandfather Butler was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, which is just south of Jackson, Tennessee--maybe a little southwest. You know, every state in the South except Florida has some hill country. The long fingers of the Appalachians reached into that part of the country, and there is a curved finger of the Cumberland Hills that extended up into western Tennessee. You can study the history of the voting pattern of Tennessee and other states in that area, and you will find that the Republicans lived in the hill country. The Democrats were the plantation owners--southern aristocracy. That is a sort of reverse twist on current divisions. The wealth of the Republican Party was the industrial wealth. There were some wheat fortunes involved; but in the South the Republicans were the free-holders. They were the independent highlanders, as we'd call them. Grandfather Butler came from that area. Now, that doesn't mean that his affiliation with the Republicans was explained altogether in the fact that he had no stake in the slave system. Generally, I think you could say that, if you'll permit me to take just a moment to expatiate on the moral fabric of the Republican Party of that period, because I'm confident that I would have been a Republican. You can study my Populist tendencies. I don't think I ever would have been a Populist, but I could have been a Republican. Mother told me, "You and your grandfather would have loved each other." I never knew my grandfather. I think that was inspired by my bulge of irritation over the excessive types of segregation that we had in the South. He was opposed to slavery and secession like so many Tennesseans were, although most of the Tennessee Republicans were from east Tennessee. So, I'm just explaining why a Republican showed up from west Tennessee where the Democrats prevailed. And in his family they prevailed. There were six Butler boys, and Grandfather was the only one of the six that did not go into the Confederate Army; but it was a matter of conviction with him. He was not only a country doctor, he was also a country preacher. He was an old Baptist--a Primitive Baptist. That used to embarrass Mother. She would say, "Now Son, he was not anti-intellectual. He was not non-progressive." You know, they had their reputation then. That's where they got the "Hard-shell" name, I guess. But, she said, "It just happened to be the only church in his community." And they

drafted him to preach. He was really the only educated person there at that time. So that's how he happened to get into the ministry.

T: It is very interesting that you speak of both of your grandparents and your father and mother as having had the opportunity for education and taking the opportunity for education. Education must have been pretty important to your family.

H: Yes. It has been. It is an interesting thing about both my wife's family and my own family, when we get down to talking about her history, that every person in our families down to and including our generation, hers and mine, at one time was a schoolteacher. So, we have quite a history in that regard--a great interest in education.

T: Did your grandparents or did your mother and father ever talk about the involvement in the Civil War as far as your grandparents were concerned?

H: Oh, yes. The family recognized that it was a delicate matter. The five brothers who were Confederates regarded William, my grandfather, as a dissenter and sort of a maverick. It pleased me to hear indirectly that the common talk around was--among the next generation--that Uncle William was such a good man that he just couldn't condone slavery and that he just couldn't fight for what he believed in the final analysis was a defense of slavery; and they loved him. He was so good to all of them.

As a matter of fact, when some fell on bad times, he supported them. He was the sole support for one married sister and one unmarried sister who lived with him and his family most of her life. She never married and never had any other home as an adult except the home Grandfather provided for her. While they were good Democrats and loyal Confederates, they all respected my grandfather.

He had said about the war when it came on that he simply could not fight against his brothers, and he refused to go into the Union Army. So he practiced medicine during the war. He didn't have his medical degree at that time, but he was able, as many doctors were, to practice without a formal medical college degree. He practiced some in Tennessee during that period and for a while during the war in Cairo, Illinois. I have often wondered about what kind of life he had there or what records there might be of his practice in Cairo--when he went and when he came back. Now, my grandmother, his third wife, had no family ties to the anti-secession struggle as far as I know. I think they were just lifelong Confederates, unreconstructed, and she had three brothers who fought in the Southern army. I met two of them in my boyhood. One of the last big Confederate reunions was held in Little Rock in 1911. Both of these brothers who had fought at the Battle of Shiloh and a number of other engagements went to Little Rock to that reunion and got on the train and rode to Russellville, seventy-five miles west of Little Rock, which was my home most of my childhood. Of course, I've indicated I went there when I was five years old.

T: Did your mother talk with real vigor about the war?

H: No. She was idolatrous, almost, about her father. She was devoted to him, as most of the children were. I know that her sympathies were on that side because of him, but I suppose that she was muted when she was in the presence of Grandmother Butler.

I was an only child, incidentally, but when we would have visits with Mother's sister where Grandmother Butler lived in Logan County, Grandmother Butler would entertain us with stories of the war. And, of course, any person could make those graphic pictures of the suffering of the Civil War and its romantic element.

T: What kind of things did she tell? Do you remember?

H: I remember once she told about one of her brothers, David, I believe, hiding in their attic when the Yankee troops came through looking for some stray Confederates. I think maybe David had been a prisoner and had escaped. At least they were rounding up the strays after they hit some engagements over there in West Tennessee. It made a good story--how the family shivered while they were trouping through the house. But, he managed to conceal himself effectively because she said they went on. Well, stories like that, of course, interested us.

T: Are there any particular things that would be worth recollecting that you remember that she particularly told you? Her memory, of course, plus yours, goes back well over one hundred years.

H: Oh, yes. I suppose Grandmother Butler was very young at that time. She was in child-bearing period up through the 1880's and much younger than Grandfather. He was born in 1829 and was in his forties when Mother was born in 1874, so she was very young in the Civil War. She was in her teens, I think.

T: She probably would have heard more stories about it than been much involved in it.

H: Oh, yes. Exactly. But these older brothers of hers, you see, were old enough to fight. That doesn't mean a great deal because they were fighting when they were fifteen and sixteen a lot of times. That was a terrible war, as we all know. I'm writing my memoirs, and my first chapter I've called, "A House Divided." The house that was divided was really the Butler house because the Hays house was not a divided house exactly, because they were all Pennsylvanians and sympathized with the Union. But Grandmother Butler and Grandmother Hays, living there in Ellsworth, where Grandfather Hays was doing such good work as an educator, were good friends; and I'm confident that they never talked about the war. Grandmother Hays outlived my Grandfather Hays around forty years--she died in 1929 when she was about eighty-two. She had dear friends. I think one of her Methodist friends was one of the shoutingest Confederates you ever heard. She hated Abraham Lincoln!

T: Your grandmother?

H: No. This neighbor of my Grandmother Hays just hated Abraham Lincoln. Grandmother Hays loved Mrs. Cook so much that she'd never refer to it. She wouldn't get into any arguments with her. That was an interesting thing you see. There were a lot of Northern people in that part of Arkansas, and they had to put up with it. When I talk about a "house divided," it wasn't

just a family house, it was the community house divided. We even had an M.E. Church and an M. E. South in the little town of Russellville, we called it the Republican Methodist Church, because they were loyal not only to the Union and their cause, but to the Northern Methodist Church. And they weren't going to be a part of a church that was established because of the war. I remember I developed some discomfort over that when I was just a boy. But, I'm pointing out that people had to live with that, and only the indelicate folks--the insensitive people--brought it up or entered into arguments--except good-natured arguments and talk. It was never anything, by that time, to cause bitterness; but still there were the evidences, you see, the remnants of a divided country. I don't want to depart too much from what you want to discuss; but this is all a part of the background of my Baptist faith, in a fashion. I'm talking now about the Northern immigrants that penetrated that part of Arkansas.

T: They would have come in the 1880's and 1890's?

H: Yes. That was the period of great expansion in Arkansas. The population of Arkansas increased from about 400,000 in 1880 to nearly 900,000 in 1890--doubled, more than doubled.

T: Pressure was beginning to be felt in Oklahoma, too?

H: Yes. The movement of people was very pronounced. Arkansas by 1860 was populous enough to be quite a factor in the Civil War. It has been a state since 1836, although, I think you could say that it wasn't ready for statehood. It was put into the Union only because Michigan was ready to enter the Union and it wasn't going to get into the Union with two "free-state" senators in the United States Senate without having two "slave-state" senators. Incidentally, one of those senators was my wife's cousin, William K. Sebastian. He remained loyal to the Union and had to get out of Arkansas. He tried to avoid any involvement, and being loyal to the United States, he immediately tried for his old seat in the Senate once the war was over. And, you know, that bitterness was such that they wouldn't seat him--just the mere fact that he had stayed in Arkansas. I guess he had avoided military action on the other side, but his influence was all on the side of the Union and in opposition to succession. That shows you how, for a while at least, that bitterness persisted. We've often said that there was more bitterness caused by the Reconstruction policies than by the slaughter on the battlefield. I suspect that's a fair appraisal. A lot of the Union soldiers stayed in Arkansas as they did in other states and married Southern girls. So it was not unusual. I pointed to the dichotomy in the Butler family--Grandfather being a Northern sympathizer and Grandmother being a Southern sympathizer. That was not unusual. They loved the mountain country where they had a little more company. There was a little more congeniality with their culture and point of view in that part of Arkansas than in the eastern part in the plantation area, of course. There was a mountain just north of us called Pension Mountain. They called it Pension Mountain because so many of the Union army veterans were drawing pensions. It was easy to live with what they got in the way of a monthly income. The Southerners didn't have anything like that, and I guess there was a little resentment of it.

T: You mentioned that your father's family were strong Democrats. That's interesting coming from the North and from Pennsylvania.

H: I think it was because my father wanted to fit into the new environment. He would not have been happy as a Republican. His friends were all Democrats, and he wasn't going to pursue the old animosities; and, of course, he was born after the war. That meant nothing to him, and as he said, his father was what was called "a political." I'm just speculating. If he had remained in the North where his grandfather, his mother's father, Judge Dale, was a big Whig and then became a Republican, then I'm confident that would have had some influence on my father. Now, he later developed some rather strong Democratic sympathies, you might say as an expediency matter, unconsciously laying the foundation for success in public life. He became a Democrat. He probably, though, would have been a progressive Republican if he had stayed in the North.

Now, my great-grandfather Dale, I'm talking now about Grandmother Hay's father from Pennsylvania, must have been quite a guy. I learned, however, that this title of "Judge" was not anything to inflate our ego. He was an associate judge, not a lawyer, and in Pennsylvania they had what was in the modern parlance called a "flowerpot judge." He was a decoration for the regular circuit judge to sit by when the circuit judge came through to hold court. There were a number of these "flowerpot judges" designated over the state so they could explain the local problems and local situations to the regular judge.

When I was invited some years ago to speak at the Pennsylvania State Bar Convention, I referred to my grandfather who was an associate judge, and somebody told me after the convention session, "Your grandfather Dale probably sat there as a 'flowerpot judge,' and said, for example, when a witness took the stand, 'I don't believe this old scoundrel. He's a skunk.'" That kind of thing, you know.

Well, he got my grandfather appointed as postmaster by U. S. Grant while they were still in Pennsylvania before they moved to Arkansas. I made the statement to this law convention--my aunt was my authority for it--I said, "Grandfather Dale wanted to be president of the Standard Oil Company." They lived in the oil country. My father was born in Titusville, and Grandfather Dale couldn't get enough proxies to get the presidency away from "you-know-who, or whom," And I told the convention, "Now just think how much hangs on a little incident. If Grandfather Dale had made it, I'm sure I would have been named for him. I would have been John D. Hays, and I'd be the Republican governor of Pennsylvania, and Nelson Rockefeller would be teaching over there in western New York.

T: It's real interesting to hear you relate some of these things about your parents. What do you think your parents taught you? What can you recollect as you've thought through the years of the things that they taught you?

H: I should say, just classifying those influences, that there were two things. One, they were avid readers. Father didn't have a lot of money as a young lawyer, but extra money he would put into books. In those days book salesmen were plentiful, and Dad was an easy mark for them.

T: They would come on the circuit?

H: Yes. They would come around and sell sets of books. There were: Ridpath's

History; a set of about twenty-five Mark Twain volumes, which graced our little home--I think I read nearly everything Mark Twain ever wrote; and Southern literature. I remember there was a beautiful set of volumes there that was in our library--the choice writings of Southern and other poets and writers. I grew up on Uncle Remus, Louisa Mae Alcott, and so on. So, those influences were pretty pronounced. Then, I remember Mother bought me a book of Bible stories when I was just a tad. Among the first things I can remember in Russellville when I was six or seven was Safe Steps for Little Feet. It was a story about the Bible heroes of the Old Testament. I remember even the pictures--the ravens feeding Elijah--and things like that. Well, I would say that the influence--and this is something I wish every child could have--of good literature in the home was important, because, you see, it included religious literature and other good literature--both.

T: Did they read to you or did you learn to read early?

H: Well, I learned pretty early to read to myself. I guess they did read to me. I can't remember much about that, really. My father was a great believer in McGuffey's Readers and he fought any abolishment of McGuffey's Readers as a concession to modern readers. They were arguing then that there should be modern readers in the schools; and he would make no concession to progressive education on that, because he said that the moral lessons in the McGuffey's Readers were very important in the educational process, that moral instruction, as well as competence in reading, was just as vital. I remember when I ran for governor, I wasn't aware that this came out in my speeches . . .

T: This was in 1928?

H: Yes. That's right. You've done a little homework yourself, haven't you?

T: Well, a little bit.

H: Well, I was only twenty-nine when the campaign began, but I became thirty right after I campaigned for governor. It was the first office I ever sought, but there was a good reason for it. In the final wind-up there was a terrific rally out in the city park in Little Rock, and somebody told me that he heard a fellow ask his neighbor there, "Did you hear Brooks Hays last night out at the bandshell? I heard him give us the contents of McGuffey's Fifth Reader." So, this was an influence.

The other influence, I would say--I don't know how much weight to give it, but I think it was rather pronounced--was the exposure to the church influence. I think it's in a secondary position because the Sunday School teachers I had were not trained. Some of them were just illiterate. My regular public schoolteachers were competent people--unusual. I don't know to what extent that was typical, but at any rate, it signifies that the public-school system had standards even that early in Arkansas life. My sixth grade teacher, for example, I never cease talking about her. She'll show up in maybe a third of my speeches. I'll find some illustration out of Miss Lucy Hill's life. She had me memorize many of the Psalms, for example. I even got a chuckle out of an audience in Little Rock the other night when I reading a plaque in making an award to somebody. There I was holding it and trying to read it, and I said, "I'm having trouble

reading this. My trifocals won't work. It reminds me of the time I was asked to read the Scripture at the President's prayer breakfast at the White House. I had the President and the cabinet sitting out in front of me, and I just couldn't see the thing. I finally just stopped and pretended to read, and I gave it from memory. It was the first Psalm, and I'm so thankful it was the first Psalm. I was glad it wasn't the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel. I got by." But, I said, "Miss Lucy Hill had taught me the Psalms." Oh, our Sunday School teachers were not educated. The first time that I ever learned that "holp" is the past tense of help was when my Sunday School teacher said, "The little boy Samuel 'holp' the Priest Eli in the temple." So, I am putting this in secondary position.

T: What church was it that you went to at this time?

H: It was the Russellville Baptist Church and it became the First Baptist, as it was the first Baptist, but it was the only Baptist church in all that area, so no one ever thought of saying the First Baptist Church. We just called it the Russellville Baptist Church. Later, of course, they had other churches. But it is the first Baptist church, and it had its centenary in 1973. I was invited back to be the principal speaker at the centenary of my church. I could relate a lot of things that no one in the congregation could recall except about three people of my generation who were as old as I was and who had gone into the church that early. The church life was a factor in my upbringing and in the formation of my values.

T: Did they have a Sunday School program for the young?

H: Oh, yes, they did. I was in the Sunbeam Band. I studied Kind Words. You are familiar with the old juvenile publications. That kind of thing.

T: What early recollections do you have of your church?

H: Very clear recollections.

T: Were there any pastors that had any kind of influence on you particularly?

H: No, they didn't, and this is sad to relate. In the course of twenty years, twenty-one years, from the time of 1903 to 1923, we had eleven pastors. I was by that time a young lawyer and the superintendent of the Sunday School in 1923, and they put me on the pulpit committee. We called a graduate of Louisville Seminary to be our pastor. He had just married, or was getting ready to marry, Amy Compere, whose father was a very prominent Baptist. He had been a missionary to Africa when she was a little girl.

T: E. L. Compere?

H: This was Jim Compere, J. S. Compere, a brother of E. L. Compere. The Comperes were a very prominent Baptist family; and Amy was a very gifted young Baptist worker. I think she attended the Women's Missionary Institute. Now, that isn't the name of the branch. It became the Carver School of Missions. But she had attended there and that is where she and Clyde Hickerson got acquainted. So, actually, I think that influenced our committee in calling Clyde. But he remained there eleven years--a highly successful pastorate. He's still living in Richmond and was pastor of the

great Northminster Church in Richmond for a while, but he has retired now. We keep in touch with each other. Both Amy and Clyde Hickerson are living. Both have been members of the Foreign Mission Board. He had a very fine career as a minister, and that was the first pastor really to give me much help in my spiritual life. There were one or two of these eleven that I admired, but I'd say out of the eleven that there were hardly more than two or three that you would give more than a mediocre rating.

T: That would mean that the average stay was around three years, wouldn't it?

H: Less than that.

T: Any particular reason that they stayed such a short time? Were there problems in the church?

H: Well, there probably were, and I may be a little too hard on them; and, of course, I'm just lumping them all together. Some of them I really would have to speak of more admiringly, or favorably, than I have. I would alter my comment just a little. I do recall that some of them were just fine people and were much loved there in the community, but they weren't outstanding at all in pulpit excellence. And some were just downright dubious. I can think of two of them whose character I wouldn't be sure of out of the eleven; so there was some relationship to that fact to the short tenure. Well, that's a grim picture, but that's it. Of course, Russellville, we have to remember, was still a sort of frontier community and there wasn't a very high intellectual level in the congregation. There were not people who could absorb much in the way of poor performance, and I'm sure that the church would have to carry some of the burden of responsibility for these short tenures.

T: When you say that the pastors were not the greatest people, would part of the problem be that you would find out only after they'd been there a while something about them? Was there not the passing of information that there probably would be today?

H: That's exactly right, we Baptists--and I think we're gradually doing something about it--overemphasize the independence of each congregation and our easy yielding to the congregation to anoint anyone it wants to as a minister, opening wide the doors to the profession. In that day that wide gate was entered by a lot of incompetent people, most of whom, of course, had a laudable desire to serve; but, on the other hand, they didn't accompany that desire with any discipline and preparation. Now that's again a sad fact.

T: You used the words "overemphasis on independence." Do you think through your years, looking back, that this has been one of the weaknesses?

H: Yes, I do. I'm limiting it now to the one comment about the preparation of the minister and the examination of the minister's equipment to preach. For example, just a year or two ago our State Baptist Convention in Arkansas declined to authorize the establishment of a ministerial agency in the state headquarters to develop some counseling in this field and to say to some congregation whose pulpit committee was looking for a minister, for example, "Well, now here are some ministers. Here's this guy's record over at Podunk that you're about to hire." I can see them doing that, but

the Convention refused to do anything of that kind. So, you have no central guidance at all now. A fellow just shows up and he may be a very fluent preacher, but he may have a dubious record; and until we do a little better job on that, I think we are going to be plagued with poor performance. A particular congregation need not be plagued with it. Thank goodness we've had our fine seminaries dealing with this problem. But I venture to say that very few of those eleven preachers I referred to earlier ever entered the doors of a seminary. They were all uneducated men, speaking in terms of professional preparation. It was a problem and still to some degree remains a problem.

T: What are your recollections of your conversion experience when you were beginning to enter into the church?

H: Well, that's an interesting question, because I never had that rather mystical feeling you have about conversion--that is, you suddenly feel the call, and you want to make your declaration. It is nothing like John Wesley's, "being strangely warmed" at Aldersgate, nothing like that happened to me. I had sat through revival services as an adolescent, largely unmoved by the fervor of the typical emotionalism of a revival. At the same time, a child surrounded as I was by evidences of the Christian's gospel work, its reality in the lives of his family, and in the good examples of men and women in the church, simple people that I loved, just gradually develops a feeling that this is something "I want to be a part of." Then, I heard an eloquent preacher one night--a little blind preacher named Joe Ramsey. I think he was rather well known across the South. He happened to be a Methodist. I went down and gave my hand at his call--the usual call. Father said, actually the way he phrased it, that I had joined the Methodist church that night. So I enjoy telling about how for twenty-four hours I was a member of the Russellville Methodist Church. That wasn't quite accurate, but it makes a nice story because the Methodists got a big kick out of the fact that it took a little conversation and, I always add, some ecclesiastical ledger adjustment to get me out of the Methodist church over into the Baptist church. But that was my conversion as far as any outward demonstration of it. I think I had been converted gradually. That's what I am trying to say.

T: I wonder if this, perhaps, doesn't say something about what you said earlier of the continuing influences in your home--the influences of positive literature and the Christian message and gospel.

H: Yes. Exactly.

T: And then, your training and emphasis on education.

H: Right.

T: Did there seem to be a difference to you between the way the Baptist church carried on and your home experiences?

H: Exactly. As Clovis Chappel said--and here I am getting over into the Methodist arena again, "The best way to get Christians is to grow 'em." I agree with that. But I think my childhood experience was genuine, forthright, and profound. They used to say that about me.

One of the cutest stories is one of those myths (there's nothing to it, it's just legendary and maybe you've heard it). It was how I was introduced one time in Kansas City by Joe Culpepper.

He said that a fellow went through Russellville once and knew that that was my home (I, at that time, maybe, was a member of Congress), and he said to an old man who was filling the gas tank, "Is this where Congressman Hays grew up?"

The old man answered, "Yes."

"Did you know him?"

"Shore. Everybody knowed the boy."

"Well, what kind of boy was he?"

"Ordinary, normal boy."

"Well, come on now. Tell me something about him special."

"Well, the only thing I recollect you might say was special was he loved that little Baptist church. They just hardly opened the doors without him, but that didn't keep him from being an ordinary, normal boy. I seen him going down toward the depot one time with a valise in his hand and a Bible under his arm, and I said, 'Where you going, Brooks?' and Brooks said, 'Down to New Orleans to the Mardi Gras,' and I said, 'What you got your Bible for?' 'Well, if they have as good a time down there as I hear they do, and if the girls are as pretty as I hear they are, I thought I'd stay over Sunday.'"

Of course, I was sitting there suffering. It wasn't true. I knew it wasn't true and he knew it wasn't true, but in a way there was something revealing about it because that was sort of my image there later. They called me "Deacon" in the university. That was my nickname, and I got it out of my interest in the church life and the church work. Well, that story got around and they have had a lot of fun out of it.

T: Now, you left Russellville as a young man and went off to college. Tell me something about your college days, your recollections.

H: I've just been going over one of the chapters of my memoirs--it's an uncompleted manuscript yet.

T: Do you have a publisher for it?

H: I don't know what I'll do about that. I'd like to have a commercial publisher, I think, because when you put as much into a manuscript as I'm putting into this, you'd like for it to be read. Some of the church publishing houses would do about as much, except that it might be more appropriate as a political document and as a historical document rather than a religious publication, although the title is somewhat revealing. I'm pretty sure I'm going to stick to my choice of a title . . . . <u>Politics Is My Parish</u>. I'm trying to tie the work in the political arena with my . . .

T: You've delivered several lectures in that line, haven't you?

H: Yes, I have.

T: Recently, William Jewell, I think . . . wasn't that the subject?

H: Yes, and a set of lectures at Pulaski Heights Baptist Church in Little Rock where they have an annual lectureship--funded, endowed lectureship, on "the Church and Society". Recently, the Southeastern Seminary established what they call a "Brooks Hays Lectureship," on religion and the nation's life. So, I'm, of course, pleased to have that acknowledgement of at least my concern over this, but, not being a theologian, I have to be on guard that I'm not inflated by it. But it's a wonderful thing to have. I'd rather have a lectureship of that kind named for me than to have a bridge or a building or a highway named for me.

T: I think that speaks well for you.

H: Well, that's the way I feel.

T: Tell me something about your college days. How did you happen to go off to college? What was it like when you left?

H: Well, I can't remember when it wasn't just assumed that I would go to college.

T: That was strange for those days wasn't it?

H: Well, rather. It was changing rapidly though. When I graduated there were so many of the young people that I'd gone through grammar and high school with that never dreamed of going to college. The minute they finished high school, or even before that, they'd get the first job they were old enough to hold. Now my class at Russellville High School, in a city of about 3,500, had only fifteen seniors graduating when I finished high school. When I went back to my twenty-fifth anniversary of the high school graduation class in 1940, there were 350 graduates in that senior class. Now just think--and the town wasn't that much larger--that shows how in one generation--in twenty-five years--the situation changes. Now, of the fifteen that graduated from high school I don't suppose over three went off to college. I can think of only three.

T: How did your parents pay for it?

H: Well, college education, if you went to a state school, was not expensive. My father picked my college. He didn't consult me nor Mother either. Of course, later, since he was prominent in the church, they taunted him a bit about not sending me to Ouachita Baptist College. He had a good answer to that. They had an alumni meeting at Arkadelphia one time, after J. R. Grant became president of Ouachita back in the 1930's and 1940's. J. R. Grant was professor of psychology and pedology at the University of Arkansas in 1915. Later he became president of Ouachita. They called on Father to speak at this alumni meeting, and he was just speaking extemporaneously. He said, "I know you all have asked me why Brooks went to Fayetteville. I didn't send him to the University, I sent him to Grant . . . sent him to J. R. Grant," and, he said, "That's where Grant was teaching.

If Grant had been at Ouachita then I would have sent him there." Dr. Grant had been Father's pupil in a country school before Father became a lawyer. Dr. Grant was crazy about my dad and the feeling was mutual. He looked up to him as a good teacher. My father must have been a good teacher. I've heard from so many sources that he was. So, that was the reason. Dad just didn't entertain any other thought but that I would go to the University of Arkansas. Well, that, of course, was an easy thing for him to do from the standpoint of finances because there was no tuition. The fees were very low, and board, room, and laundry was sixteen dollars a month. So, he sent me twenty-five dollars a month, which he was able to do.

T: It would have been a lot of money in those days wouldn't it?

H: Well, yes. That was a good deal of money. I remember a new suit that I bought to wear up there. It cost seventeen dollars and that was regarded as a pretty expensive suit. But I managed since Father wasn't penurious, but he had some rigid ideas about a youngster making his own way the minute he could, bearing his share of the expense. So, he wanted me to find employment. I worked the first summer vacation after I started at the University. I taught school that summer and made fifty dollars a month and saved most of that, but I got a job. I did little odd jobs at Fayetteville. I worked in the library up there. Then, I got a little allowance as a member of the ROTC--the Training Corps, military work. I think that paid eight dollars a month. So, I managed to get along on a limited amount of money.

T: You would have been just eighteen, turning nineteen, would you not, when the war began in 1917?

H: That's right. I was eighteen and then became nineteen in August of that year. I did not enlist, however. Well, of course, few men were enlisting at that age. Some of my schoolmates did. My roommate went marching off with them. They reduced the school enrollment at Fayetteville among the men. The first summer then--that is in 1918--I went to Fort Sheridan as a trainee without being inducted, training for an officer. Then, I came back to the University and enlisted a month or two later after that camp was over. I had, in other words, a month's training in 1918, and then went into the army in September--the Student Army Training Corps, preparing for a commission in the infantry. I was just about ready to have a commission in 1918 when I had just passed my twentieth birthday. I often think about it now. I was preparing for a junior officer. I would have been a Second Lieutenant in the infantry, and I suppose that had the highest mortality rate of any branch of the service. Many men who went into the service about that time--a little earlier, maybe just two or three months earlier--were on the fighting front in time to get killed in the war, because they were shipping them over there very rapidly.

T: One of the things that is rather interesting to me is that you were a part of supporting your father's campaign for election just shortly after. Was it 1921?

H: 1922.

T: In 1919, between the time that the war ended and you were involved in

this political campaign, you graduated from the University of Arkansas and then went on to George Washington University. Why did you leave Arkansas to get additional training?

H: We had no law school in Arkansas. I had to leave the state.

T: You wanted to be a lawyer?

H: Yes. Well, I wanted to go into public service. I wasn't particularly enamored with the idea of the routine practice of law, but I knew that I wanted to go into politics, to use the less attractive word; and that this would be good equipment. I wanted a profession and law was appealing to me--yes, I'd say that. Since there was no law school except a little night school that was not well recognized--a private night school in Little Rock--I came to George Washington University. It was my father's idea, in line with what I said a while ago about wanting me to carry my part of the economic load, that I get work there and go to night school. George Washington had a very fine standard with both day and night schools. I got a job in the Treasury Department through the intervention of our congressman H. M. Jacoway, who was a friend of my father. I got off at 4:30 P.M., and was in the law class from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. each evening. It was a pretty strenuous schedule. Three years of that enabled me, though, to get a law degree. Upon completion of that I went back to Russellville and started practicing law with my father. He ran for Congress that summer, so I got back in June of 1922 in time to help him in his campaign. That was my first real activity in a campaign.

T: You have spoken several times about your father having indicated where you should go to school and directing you there. Was he the kind of man that said, "Brooks, this is where I want you to go"?

H: Oh, he was indeed. That was both his strength and his weakness. I would say he was a very powerful and dominating influence--not domineering. He was a gracious person and an awfully good man. But, my wife, who has a great gift of kidding--now Father was a great kidder, too, and had a lot of fun in life--sort of patted him on the back and said, "You're an old czar." It amused me and I winced when she said it, and he laughed. So we hung that title on him, and every now and then somebody would call him "Czar Hays."

But, you've sensed the fact that Dad was very adamant in his opinions and in his demands of me--more than he should have been, as I look at it now--and I submitted more than I should. I was a very submissive youngster. I had great affection, and I was a devoted son. Mother was, at times, a mediator between us, and that wasn't a hard job for her because of my resiliency and my submissiveness. I was pliable where he was concerned, and he had no problem with me and didn't pile up any strong resentment. Now today, some parents of his type would find the independence of this generation creating some counter influences that would be pretty powerful. As an example now, Father was very sure that I shouldn't dance. That was against our Baptist standards and principles. I think that to some extent he didn't want my image damaged. I think that it was more than just a feeling that dancing was evil. I doubt that he thought that. I think that it was a sort of public relations factor there. But he said, "No sir! If I knew that you were figuring on going to those dances up there,

I might not have wanted you to go to the University. So just you don't do that." So just to humor him I didn't go to the dances. That was an awfully unreasonable position for him to take as these dances were well chaperoned, well conducted, and concluded at a reasonable hours. There was fine discipline on the University campus, and there was no misbehavior, no drinking, no misconduct. I didn't make an issue of it, partly because I was not particularly interested in dancing. I was more interested in debating and other extracurricular activities, so I didn't regard it as much of a hardship; however, I'm sure that if I were doing it over again, I would say, "Now, Dad, this is my decision. I'm old enough to decide and these dances are all right so I'm going."

Another decision he made that really did put a strain on us for a while, was made when I had an invitation to go to the Hollister, Missouri, Assembly Grounds of the YMCA. They had a very wonderful assembly there, and the YMCA had been one of my interests through my four years at the University. The area supervisor wanted me to attend what I think was maybe a week or two-week assembly up there in that area, and said, "We'll pay your way and your costs and maybe give you a little compensation for it, and you can serve in the office to help us a limited number of hours." So it was just a wonderful opportunity for me, and Dad said, "No, I need you at home. Come on home." He was adamant on it; and that's about the only thing that he did in the way of strictures that I really resented. But it's easy to forgive a man of his type because he was always generous in spirit. This tendency to be bossy was something that you could forgive.

T: Did he pretty well have in mind that you would become a lawyer and take over his practice?

H: I think so, but, on the other hand, neither Father nor Mother, to some extent, was aware of the fact that I had acquired an education and a maturity that should have relieved me of much contribution from them in the way of decision making. An application of that would be that Father was inclined not to let me participate in the big end of the legal business as I should. I guess he thought of me as "the boy," and I had become a man. So while the community was acknowledging me, and he was proud of that acknowledgment--I became president of the Lion's Club when I was only twenty-four years old; superintendent of the Sunday School when I was twenty-three; and a member of the board of deacons at the same time, and all of that pleased him--yet, he continued, I believe, to think of me as a boy. But, of course, in time, he was inordinately proud of my coming to Congress. They said he was just fit to be tied the night I won it, because we had had so many frustrations, and he had become so identified with me in political ambitions. I had been defeated for governor twice before I was thirty-two years old. I had been defeated, or rather robbed, of a congressional office in 1933, in a special election. That's a long story, but there's no question but that it was a corrupt election, and outrage. This special election was the most corrupt election in the history of Arkansas. They literally took it from me by giving my opponent 200 more votes in one county than there were people in the county. So that's the story. Well, this had created a traumatic situation with Dad. So, when I was finally elected to Congress in 1942, he was just thrilled. Then, he lived to see me elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and that was a tremendous honor from his point of view because my father was one of the finest churchmen I ever

knew. He was a Christian to begin with, but Dad just had an institutionalism in his Christian life that I would say was more impressive than mine. I am a great believer in my church, and I have given a good deal to it. I am ecumenical, too. Yet, I see something of the Christian influence in life that lies completely outside organized Christianity. That is something that my father would probably never contemplate.

T: Did you counsel much with your Dad through the years?

H: In later years we did.

T: Not so much in the younger days?

H: Not much in the early days. I enjoyed his company, but a conversation with my father was a monologue. It wasn't a dialogue, and I have that same problem. On the other hand, in later years, he would listen. He was very interested in the radio talks that I made during my congressional service. I would send a taped address home every week, a ten or fifteen minute talk that was on several stations after the church hour in the different county seats, in the larger towns, I should say, in my Congressional district. At any rate, if the hour differed, Mother used to laugh about it. He'd listen to me maybe when he got home from church on one station, and then if it came on fifteen or thirty minutes later on another one, he'd tune in and hear it the second time.

T: Well, if you were an only son--I'm an only son--I can appreciate how they would look to you with pride.

H: Right.

T: Well, you came to George Washington University in 1919 and stayed these three years. What was it like when you came to Washington? What was Washington like as a city? How do you remember it? What kind of things stuck in your mind in that period?

H: July 19, 1919, about noon, marks the time of my arrival. I rode into the railroad stations as that was the only means of travel there was from our distance. It took about thirty-six hours, as I remember it, to come from Little Rock to Washington. It was a hot day. I went to the National Hotel, the old, old hotel located around Sixth and Pennsylvania. It had had a rather glorious period, and a lot of politicians stayed there. Somebody had referred me to it, and the rates were fairly uniform, I guess, so I didn't pay out more than the usual amount; but it was three dollars a night. That jolted me, so I stayed only one night and went out the next day and got a room in a boarding house on Maryland Avenue, just a short way from the Capitol. I think I paid thirty dollars a month and got two meals for that. So living was cheap, relatively speaking, in those days, but it had to be for me because I was to make only one hundred dollars a month. I stayed there only about one month. An old Arkansas University friend, Bolon Turner, who later became the chief judge of the Tax Court of the United States, came up to get a job with the Bureau of Engraving, paying a little less than I was making. We found a room out in Northwest and were roommates about two years at that particular place or elsewhere in Northwest. Life was quite different then. Washington was what you would call a sleepy city--well, it was

exciting but still "sleepy"--when you compare it with the complex social problems of today. It was easygoing, and there was sort of a calmness in spite of some of the post-World War I problems.

T: Are you thinking of the "Red Scare"?

H: Yes, that's right! I've got no business speaking of Washington as sleepy at that particular time because I got here right in the midst of a race riot. I was thinking of the later months after the racial conflict was resolved. But I remember how tense I was, and I could sense a feeling of tension in the city when the troops marched down Pennsylvania Avenue. As I remember it was a Cavalry group that came marching out of Fort Myer.

T: Had this just happened before you came?

H: Just had happened. It was under control then, but there had been some rioting and some fighting. It was nothing like as serious as some of the other riots in Detroit and Tulsa and elsewhere; but still, you can see how that tended to depress me somewhat--to come to this great and wonderful city in the midst of that kind of thing, which seemed so out of keeping with its character as the great political capital, you might say, of the world. Although at that time it was less so. You had to divide honors with Paris and London and others. But I was excited and to some extent the excitement persisted; the fact that I was in a political atmosphere was satisfying and gratifying to me. Now, you might be interested in the church aspect of it.

T: Go ahead.

H: I was what you'd call a "sermon-taster." That's true of a lot of Washingtonians. They so seldom settle down. If they're here just as students or as members of Congress, they don't transfer their church connections like they bring their clothing, for example. I had my favorite ministers. I probably attended church far more often than the average college law student. I had seen at Fayetteville, in my undergraduate days, that students at that stage largely tend to forget their church life, with many notable exceptions; but they pick it up later. It isn't, except in some instances, a permanent severance of their tie to the church.

T: Do you remember where you went?

H: Yes, indeed I do. I was beginning to break out of the rigid Baptist mold. I had done that to some extent in Fayetteville, primarily because of the young lady I was courting a Fayetteville, and whom I later married in my senior year in law school.

T: I want to ask you something about that.

H: Yes. We must talk about her--Marion Prather. She was a Methodist and as nurtured in religious life as I. We went to the Methodist church in the morning at Fayetteville and to the Baptist church in the evening. I was already feeling the ecumenical bug so I had no compunction about visiting other churches.

In Washington I often went to the Foundery Methodist Church on Sixteenth

Street. It was just a few blocks from our boardinghouse--the one I've already referred to in Northwest. I always heard a good sermon there. Mr. Randolph was pastor. They had good pulpiteers, but I think my favorite pulpiteer at that time was Charles Wood, who was at the National Memorial Presbyterian Church on Connecticut Avenue. That was their national church, their leading church. I sat in the balcony. Generally in these churches I felt that I had to take a back seat and wanted to.

This may surprise you. I was a shy individual. That was later detected by some newspeople. At least one new representative told me, "Mr. Hays, one quality of yours has never been publicized very much. You're a shy person." I think that shyness was detected in the restraint I used in answering some questions that I wasn't absolutely positive of, even though I had acquired some recognition as a speaker. I've seen references to my early campaigning as "The Young Orator." I did have some reputation in that field, but it was acquired with great difficulty. My first performance in the BYPU at Russellville was a miserable failure. I really fell on my face. But this debating experience that I referred to was good for me; I practiced, in other words. I want to say this for the Baptist opportunity to speak. That was a tremendous help to me. The literary societies in high school and at the University, my work in the Baptist Young People's Group, and the YMCA were my proving grounds--my testing grounds--and good practice was acquired in those places.

But, I've been diverted here. I was talking about my backseat status. I sat in the gallery and enjoyed marvelous sermons by Dr. Charles Wood, a Presbyterian preacher. I would see such men as Robert Lansing, secretary of state worshipping there. I saw William Jennings Bryan walking down the street in that neighborhood one day. It was not uncommon to see notables, and as a young man from the hinterland, that was rather exciting. I occasionally went to hear Henry Allen Tupper at the First Baptist Church on Sixteenth Street, again, close to us. I remember hearing Len Broughton, a visitor from the Baptist community to the Congregational Church, which was Coolidge's church, soon after this period we are talking about. That was on G Street, downtown. That took a little longer walk to get there, but I went to hear him. Then, you may be familiar with the name of G. Campbell Morgan. He preached there some as a visitor from England. I enjoyed his sermons. I could appreciate a good sermon, and by that time had become a bit irritated by some of the mediocrity in the churches that I had attended in the rural areas. So this was one of the very attractive aspects of Washington life. I was hearing good preaching. I heard William Jennings Bryan in Dr. Tupper's pulpit, the First Baptist Church, and I remember being quite impressed. That was the first time and one of the only two times, I guess, that I heard him. No, I had heard him on another occasion on the Chautauqua platform, but I was very young. I had heard him when I was just a lad. My father introduced him to the Russellville audience. You remember he was a great Chautauqua circuit speaker, and Father and Mother went to greet him at the Russellville Hotel before he spoke. That was one of Father's roles as one of the leading lawyers in the community. I remember that Mr. Bryan patted me on the head. I was sort of shifting around, and Dad told him that I had worn some new shoes in his honor and that was what was causing the trouble, which was true. It embarrassed me. I guess I was about six or seven years old. But, I heard him then at a stage when I could appreciate his great eloquence. The fairy kissed him

on the lips when he was born. There is no question about it. I later could understand that he was not a man of great intellectual attainment, nor a great thinker, but a superb orator. He could hypnotize you with his theology, and his theology was not profound; but it was genuine. He was a product of a nineteenth century biblical interpretation that gave him this fundamentalistic fervor quite in keeping with the spirit of the time. He would have been more miserable in the latter part of the twentieth century than he was in the first part of the twentieth century in the evolution fight, because, of course, the church has had much more of a dialogue in determining its theological base. I've been, to some extent, a part of that because there was some question about my fitness to preside over a religious body that has great credentials and great consistency in its conservatism, theologically. I tried not to offend. It was a challenge to me because I had to find the balance between the two pulls on me. One was to retain this devotion to biblical truth and to be intellectually honest because I felt that Bible truths had to have all the enlightment that modern science and modern scholarship could give. So, that illustrates how I feel about Bryan. At the same time, I thrilled to hear him and these ministers.

T: I want to ask you something more on Bryan. What particularly gave him this ability to hold an audience in the palm of his hand? Was he humorous?

H: I don't remember that he was humorous at all. In a little book I wrote in 1968, Hotbed of Tranquility, a McMillan publication, which included the humorous thrusts of many of the famous men of that period, I found only one thing, as I recall, to quote that he had said. That was when he had to make an impromptu political speech out in Nebraska and there was no place for him to stand except on a manure spreader. He climbed up on that and he said, "This is the first time I ever spoke on a Republican platform." I don't remember hearing him quoted in any other way. He was deathly serious, generally, and was not noted at all for humor.

T: How long would he talk on an average?

H: Oh, he could hold an audience an hour or more with no difficulty whatever. There was no consciousness of time as the words fell like golden dewdrops from his lips, as they said of John Chrysostom, you'll remember--just sheer eloquence. I said something in the way of a disparagement of his theology, and now I can illustrate it, if you've got time to hear it. I think I was present when he said this in a Washington sermon. I heard him later in Little Rock, in the early 1920's, just shortly before his death. He had retained his powerful eloquence, but he was still not an old man. He died when he was, I believe, only sixty-five, and what I am about to quote was where he had just passed sixty-three, I believe. He said, "If the Father deigns to "--now let me be sure I've gotten this-- "touch with divine power the cold and pulseless heart of the buried acorn so that it breaks from its prison cell to become a mighty oak and gives to the rose whose withered blossoms float upon the autumn breeze the sweet assurance of another springtime, will He withhold hope from the soul of man after a brief visit like a royal guest to this tenement of clay." Of course, that just cannot be excelled for sheer beauty. The weakness in his theology is that the Father's hope given to us is not for the survival of the rose, the genus, the species, but to the indi-

vidual rose and its withered blossoms. It is conscious, individual survival that is the Christian's hope. The other is, of course, true; but something would be lacking in the teaching of immortality if it was only that I live in the life of my son and my grandson, which is, of course, the imagery in that particular thing. But I don't recall hearing him treat this historic teaching of Christianity regarding individual survival. Now, he would have said, perhaps, if that point were made, that no analogy is perfect, that if it were perfect it would be an identity and not an analogy. He would say that this didn't imply that that particular rose wasn't put together again, we might say. Of course, he was probably thoroughly familiar with the Pauline teachings on immortality. It is sown a physical body and is raised a spiritual body. I never sensed any imperfections in that at the time except when he reached the evolution issue and literally just appeared so foolish and so completely inadequate from an intellectual point of view. My idolatry, of course . . . then I realized my hero had feet of clay.

T: Would you say that this is a hindsight reflection or would this have been something that would have come out in the 1923-24 . . .

H: Oh, it came out with me in 1925, at the time. It almost was an issue in my race for governor, because I had not hesitated to declare myself as opposed to the state forbidding the teaching of evolution. A strange thing about that was that few Baptists agreed with me to the point of expressing themselves. This was identified with what I felt was Baptist doctrine, good Baptist doctrine, the right of the individual to bring his own interpretation, and for the State to tell him what he had to believe was wrong. And that is what they were doing indirectly. This was to me a complete violation of separation of church and state in the first place, and a betrayal of the Baptist devotion to the individual's interpretation of the Scriptures, because that is what they would be doing and using the power of the state to do it. Dr. E. Y. Mullins, I think, thought so. I have a memorandum, and I must get hold of that because I think it is a historic document. Henlee Barnette, teacher at Southern Seminary--you may remember him, you probably were in his class--gave me a memo on it because I wanted to verify what I had said in interpreting Dr. Mullins, who was president of the Southern Baptist Convention. While he somewhat retracted, that is, I suspect the pressures on him caused him to refine his statements a bit as a concession to what was almost a mania among Baptists in the South, he nevertheless, I felt sure, was not far in his thinking from mine on this matter of the evolution law. You had though some stalwart souls like W. L. Poteat in North Carolina, who was brave enough to stand and tell the Baptists in North Carolina in their meetings that this was a betrayal of Baptist principle, the use of state power to prescribe what you should teach or what you should not teach. There was all sorts of rationalizing among some of the Baptist crusaders on this point; but nevertheless, it was bad, thoroughly bad, from the standpoint of American principles, Christian principles, and Baptist principles. So this hurt me as one who had been very grateful for Bryan's magnificent crusading for the rights of the impoverished rural people of the heartland of this country. That's where he ran strong, of course.

T: Did he lose his influence in power at the end of the war after he was no longer in the Cabinet? Did his influence begin to wane and was this an attempt to rally it up again?

H: Well, I am not sure about that. It hadn't occurred to me that it had any elements of strategy in it. Of course, he was a very ambitious man. He was aware of his hypnotic power over an audience. He turned it loose. He had none of these conscious restraints that I think any statesman should have. I could talk about that a little because I remember, I had, without his native gifts, as a result of the hard practice and training that I referred to a while ago, developed some of that, because I'm a sentimental person. I have pretty powerful emotions. I turned it loose in some of my speeches in that race for governor in 1928, because I used to say that I was like Shakespeare said, I had that, "thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just." I knew I was right, and I turned myself loose.

I remember, though, seeing the wistful expression on the faces of some tenant farmers in an Eastern Arkansas audience--just speaking out in the open. Campaigning in those days was that type of campaigning, and as I rolled away from there I remember saying this to myself, "You've got to watch yourself, young man. Don't build up hopes that you cannot fill. Don't exploit a people's aspirations. Don't play on their emotions." And that became a part of my political philosophy.

Now, if I have a deep conviction about something, I don't hesitate to fortify it with colorful language; but to give it a florid character just for purposes of embellishment--and that's what Bryan was doing--to me is not a part of the equipment of the real orator. And then, too, I think that people came to see it. I don't know but that Walter Hines Page had the gist of it from my point of view. He said that "next to fried food, the South has suffered most from oratory." It's because an orator wants to get responses, and preachers do it. I heard my own pastor in Little Rock, who was a powerful pulpiteer, say to me once in going over some notes, asking me what I thought about something in his next sermon, "Now, Brooks, at this period a third of them will be crying." A third of his audience would be weeping, and he was smacking his lips over it, in a way. I was very fond of him, and he was a great pulpit orator.

T: Who was this?

H: Calvin B. Waller, a graduate of Carson-Newman College. I think that pulpit oratory, like political oratory, must have an intellectual core or it's a betrayal of our faith, because nothing is more basic in our communication standards than that it rest in the truth. If the truth is slurred, if it is not carefully communicated, then we are untrue to our New Testament faith. Jesus never talked, you know, in a florid way. There are some things in the Bible that have given me pause on this assertation. I never quite understood, for example, why He said, "When the Son of man returns in His glory to sit upon the throne of His glory with His holy angels, the nations shall gather before Him." I'd like to get some enlightenment on that because it wasn't like Jesus. His methods were more like a sower--a farmer went out to sow, a housewife gathered three measures of meal--just out of the lives of the people in a simple way; but, you see why I talk about Bryan. It excites me to talk in this fashion.

T: You made mention a little bit earlier--there may be something else you want to say about Bryan--and I suspect that at that time you would not have been in the inner circles at all of the Democratic Party.

H: No. I was not.

I hope I'm not too hard on this great man. I was moved by what Darrow said at the end of the Dayton, Tennessee, trial. He spoke wistfully of this great, good man who had gotten into a trap intellectually, but, he gave him credit for being sincere and dedicated. He was a sincere, powerful person, and no one should ever speak disparagingly of the total contribution of Bryan to our political and religious life. He was a conventional Christian in the sense that he never broke out of these barriers of dogma and of authoritarianism, though he was a Presbyterian. Maybe that had something to do with it. Presbyterians, you know, have only in modern times been willing to discard some of their narrow Calvinism--Fundamentalist. I've said all I want to say or ought to say about Bryan, and I hope I haven't been unfair to him. I'm just speaking in an impromptu way about some of these recollections.

No, I was certainly not a part of the Democratic circles in their hierarchy until 1932, when I was elected Democratic national committeeman from Arkansas. That was, of course, not too distant from this period of the 1920's, when I was way out on the edge. I had been secretary of the Democratic State Convention in 1922, so I got into the power structure, in a fashion, very early. Though I was an anti-establishment man at the state level, I became a part of the political establishment of the Democratic Party at the national level, but Mr. Roosevelt had to sort of protect me because the Conservatives, or what we called in those days the "Bourbons" of the Southern Political Society that was Democratic, didn't like me politically. They got along with me personally because I had developed a style that made it hard for them to pursue me--to punish me; but, that's the story politically.

Now, one other reference to Washington life before we leave, to round it out. I did sometimes go to the Calvary Baptist Church at Eighth and H Streets, Northwest, during the college days. As I recall, it was in the latter part of my three years here that I attended that church. I remember Dr. S. H. Greene, but just more as a symbol and as a name and a legend. He was still pastor, though. I'm not sure I ever heard him preach, but I remember very well W. S. Abernathy coming there as pastor. I remember President Harding attending the church. I used to sit in the balcony of the Sunday School assembly room, Woodward Hall, and attend a young men's class there, not with much regularity, or over much of a period; but, I came closer to having identification with Calvary Church than with any other, and it was for a rather abbreviated period. Will Abernathy was one of my heroes.

T: Do you remember if Harding attended with regularity?

H: Yes, apparently he did. Now, he was also, a sort of a sermon-taster. He would go around to some of the other Baptist churches, too. Any President will see the public relations angles of church attendance. I remember going to the National Memorial Baptist Church at Sixteenth and Columbia Road one Sunday. I didn't know the President was going to attend that church that morning. I had brought my wife here--and we'll want to talk about that a little more.

T: Yes.

H: We married in February of 1922, and along in April--I know it was a beautiful spring day--a Sunday that gave you a new lift of spirit--we went to that church; and just as we got there we looked around, and we were about twenty-five feet behind President and Mrs. Harding and two or three aids. Security in those days was nothing like the problem it is now; it was so loose that when we got up to the foyer they thought we were a part of the President's party, and the first thing we knew we were being escort ed right down the aisle with them. I shook my head at the usher so he put me opposite the President, but I caught the President looking at my little bride. It embarrasses her for me to say it, but she was as pretty then as she is now. I could tell that he thought that was a pretty girl. I know he did because when the book The President's Daughter was published, there was a full page picture of the "enamorata" of Harding's--the girl who was the mother of his child; and I guess there's no doubt about that. I think the proof is very clear. She looked a great deal like my wife, and that haunted me, you know. I couldn't help but think about that. Well, that's a little footnote. But I remember attending the church that day and sitting near them.

Harding, I think, had a certain dichotomy in his religious life. I think that religion was not a pose with him. I think it was sincere. I get some of that impression from my own observations, but also, from the book The Shadow of Blowing Grove. It is the best modern biography of Harding. It deals to some extent with his carnal nature, which was, of course, tragically too much a part of him. He was not just an ordinary carnally minded man. He must have been yielding constantly to his lustful instincts. I think he was aware of it and made uncomfortable by it. He just had no standards along that line, but he had some qualities of fidelity and rectitude that Richard Nixon, for example, doesn't have. I could see in some of the things a very sincere love of his church. He said even, and this is told in the Blowing Grove book, that he said to this--what was her name--Ann, when she suddenly surprised him by walking in the White House one Sunday morning, "I'm ready to go to church." He said, "You go on over there to the Calvary Baptist Church and just get a seat somewhere," and she did. She sat in the gallery that Sunday and looked down on her lover sitting below, the President of the United States, listening to a sermon by Dr. Will Abernathy.

He made a speech in Calvary Church at the annual banquet of the large men's class that got front-page notice. He didn't say anything of a real penetrating nature; but the fact that he would not take communion at our church, because he said he was not worthy of it, indicated that he was torn by this conflict in his nature. I think he had enough spiritual aspiration for improvement in life and for security that he didn't just remain aloof to religion. He realized that he was doing what he did at his peril, but one has a certain wistfulness about him as about Nixon for other reasons--a wish that the better angels of his nature might have spoken more effectively to him.

T: You mentioned here your marriage in 1922. I'd be interested in your relating how you met your wife and something about your courtship, your marriage, and coming to Washington.

H: Yes. I had had no sweethearts, as we say. When I was growing up, I was hardly conscious of the fact that boys and girls are different. The

glandular drive that makes a lad look at a lassie, not lustfully but emotionally, hadn't touched me very much until I got to the University; and I began to take some interest in social life. I had gone to parties in Russellville in high school and had tried to entertain the girls by showing off now and then at high school affairs. There was a histrionic side of my nature, in spite of this shyness of which one of the newsman spoke. On December 4, 1915--that was my freshman year--my Periclean Literary Society, literary societies flourished in those days, and it was one of three, had an annual gingerbread party, they called it, and served cider and gingerbread. You can be sure it was not hard cider. They always had an old-fashioned spelling bee. That was their party for the girls--the girls from the girls' dormitory and other places.

T: Tell me something about that before you go on. What was this like?

H: They chose sides, and the two leaders would say, "I'll take him and I'll take her, and I'll take him and I'll take her." Or maybe they drew numbers out of a hat. At any rate, just by accident we were called to stand by each other. I had never met her. I paid no attention to the spelling, and I think we were "set-down," as they said, pretty early because I was more interested in her than I was in spelling a word accurately. She captivated me, just absolutely captivated me. I don't think I impressed her so much except she was interested in my talkativeness. I could entertain her. I was telling her about people in Fort Smith that I knew, and as I think I've said somewhere along the line, she was a Methodist. I took her back to the dormitory. She had to be in I think, by ten-thirty or eleven, and I got her there in time. I remember sort of walking on air as I walked across the campus to my dormitory. I thought, "I must see this girl again."

T: You had never known her before?

H: No. I had seen her at the first meeting of the freshman class when she was elected secretary. She was very popular with the girls and not much interested in boys or dates. She was just interested in her classes and doing her work. She was not a butterfly. She went to the dances now, she didn't have these inhibitions or prohibitions that I did. It was the harshest thing that my father did, because when my fraternity in our sophomore year had their annual dance, one of my friends had to take her.

T: It troubled you that your father had prohibited you from attending the dances when your wife was such a good dancer.

H: Well, that robbed us of a certain outlet for our social interests. We found it in church life, largely. I wasn't sure that she would remember me twenty-four hours after the first meeting in December, 1915, but I was thinking of her right often after that. This was close to the Christmas holidays, and I didn't have any dates with her. As a matter of fact, she had a date with another man, a neighbor of mine in the dormitory, the following day. This was on Saturday night, December 4, 1915, which is significant. I pinpoint the time when I first met her. This date with my friend created a little jealousy. I remember just looking at her from a distance and thinking, "It's too bad that that's not me sitting by her." We were permitted to bring dates to the men's dining room on Sunday. So, that was one of the few times that I saw her, between December 4 and the Christmas holidays.

T: Where was her home in Arkansas?

H: Fort Smith--just sixty-five miles away. I remember though, she saw me on the station platform from the car window as she was going to Fort Smith, and she waved to me. That pleased me immensely, and I knew then that she remembered me. So, after the Christmas holidays, I began to court her. We seemed to be congenial in a lot of ways, and she could tell that I meant business. I was serious about having just one interest. In the second year of our association . . .

T: You'd be a sophomore?

H: Yes. In the sophomore year I pinned her. That was the expression. She would wear my fraternity pin. That was the way of saying, "It's serious." It meant engagement sometimes; but more often it just meant, "You other boys don't bother; I'm wearing his pin now, and I'm satisfied." So, that's the story.

I had a long absence from her in the first two years that I was in law school. Again, my father was a factor there in discouraging marriage. I was prepared to marry and let her share hardships with me, and I think she was; but the judgment was that and I just didn't want to make an issue of that. It was too serious a matter to have family friction. So, we postponed it, and in February of my senior year in law school we married. We could coast then for four or five months. I was making only about thirty-five dollars a week, but managed to get by. She had taught school in the meantime at the Fort Smith High School. So, we spent the latter half of my senior year here in Washington, and she enjoyed it. From the standpoint of living arrangements it was pretty rugged. She was always very effective in conserving her resources. She knew how to save and how to buy wisely. We have laughed about it now. She would walk three or four blocks to save two cents on a pint of oysters and things like that. She says now that I gave her, I think, maybe fifteen dollars for two weeks' living expenses and before one week was up I would have borrowed about half of that back. So, that was the history of our early days, and it was probably good for us. We went back to Russellville. While she never joined the Baptist church she could see the wisdom of our being in the same church, and she knew that it would create a family scandal for me to leave the Baptist church. I was already too prominent, you know, and it would create such a scandal that would send my father to an early grave.

T: You might also say something about her family. How did her family react to you?

H: Well, sir, I don't think that a man ever had a happier relationship with the in-laws than I had. She had only one sister. Her father had abandoned the family when she was about, I guess, five or seven years old. She never saw him again, so that part of her life was a closed episode. She scarcely remembers her father, but she had a marvelous mother. Her mother's life in the church was very exceptional. She was looked up to and admired greatly in the church. She had a hard time, of course, because there was not much to live on. She did have a debt-free house, and she kept boarders for a while. She sold magazine subscriptions and managed to get by, but she had no money to send either of the two girls to college. Both of them

won scholarships and then taught in the interim. One of the four years my wife dropped out of the university and taught and was able to save a little money. In various ways they managed to finance the education of these two girls. Both were apparently devoted to me, as I was to them. Her sister was just like my wife--a very attractive, sweet person. She and I got along fine. When I think my wife just wasn't quite sure that she wanted to go down the highway of life with me, both her mother and her sister sort of advised her not to get off on that heresy. I was the one for her. She's laughed about that time she did sort of waver a little and was not sure that it was the thing for her to do to marry me. That's just a little part of the intimate, personal history. I think her doubts didn't last long, and they were soon resolved. She's often said, "Firmly resolved after the marriage." She and I have been very happy together--very happy. Our church differences were not serious at all. She had had an idea about her own baptism that I could not deny. That is, that it was her baptism, and she wasn't going to imply that it wasn't genuine by going through the Baptist requirement of immersion. She said it would have a certain blasphemy for her to go through another baptism that was not meaningful. So she was for all intents and purposes a Baptist, but without the formal reception into our ranks. She never joined the Baptist church and hasn't to this day, but she is recognized, as they say, as a member of the congregation. It's just so much, from my point of view, an evasion of the issue, because she wants to be at home and is at home in the various Baptist churches where we have worshiped and worked. She is as good a worker as I am and a better Sunday School teacher than I am. She has taught the Burrall Class here in Calvary Church for fourteen years.

We've had a long tenure in Washington. I came here in the 1930's and spent about seven years as a member of the staff of the Department of Agriculture and much of that period was in Washington. Some of it was in Little Rock. Beginning in 1943, when I became a member of Congress, we were almost what you might call permanent residents of Washington, and the girls in her Sunday School class really were crazy about her. She made an excellent teacher. She finally retired, but I can, without embarrassment, concede she's helped me with my Sunday School work quite a bit. She didn't take to politics very well. At one time I said to her that I knew that it irked her. She had to assume a certain role that was strange to her, and she felt that maybe there was some dissembling in it--that is, smiling at people, shaking hands, and appearing to be political when she wasn't.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: July 17, 1975

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: This is the second in a series of interviews with the Honorable Brooks Hays, conducted in his home on Southeast Second, in Washington, D. C., July 17, 1975.

Thanks again, Mr. Hays, for letting me come to your home and have a chance to interview you and share these oral history tapes together. We were talking last time when we were together about some of your early days, your remembrances of your parents; and I think we had just come along to talk about the days after you got to Washington. You graduated from George Washington Law School in 1922. Tell us something about the things you did the next year or two.

H: There may be a little danger here of overlapping comments. I think I told you about the Sunday that we almost were escorted into the pew occupied by President Harding.

T: Yes.

H: That's just one of the simple recollections that I have, and I think I told you a bit about President Harding's apparently sincere interest in the Calvary Baptist Church of which my wife and I, later in our Congressional days, became active members. Even during the three years of law

school here, two of which were before she and I were married, I occasionally attended Calvary. I made no formal affiliation with any of the churches. I was what you would call a sermon taster. I was so busy with my school work and my government employment that I had no time whatever to indulge a lifelong interest in the church; but I did find considerable satisfaction and pleasure in attending some of the other churches and listening to some very able preachers. I would say, incidentally, and it certainly is incidental, as a sort of footnote, that I believe you had a much higher level of pulpit excellence in that period than you have today. Now that saddens me, and I know it is subject to many exceptions; but I would say that the superiority of the Washington pulpit life was very evident.

T: Would this be true generally of your experience of hearing sermons across the broad spectrum of the South?

H: Yes. I am afraid it is, and while I've made no study of it in depth, certainly, I think on the basis of these observations as president of the Convention , as an active participant in denominational affairs, and also to some extent as a member for six years of the Board of Visitors of the Duke Divinity School, I would say that the problem of pastoral service, of the parish pastorate's life as a prophet, social gospel leader, and as pulpiteer, is a problem that apparently is challenging all the denominations. I don't want to be too sweeping in my feeling about it. I am simply saying that I could always be pretty sure if I went to the Covenant Presbyterian Church, now the National Presbyterian Church, the Foundry Methodist Church, the Metropolitan Methodist Church, or the First Baptist Church, which has kept its pulpit excellence as some of the others may have--and I shouldn't mention these particular congregations, but should just say that in almost all of the downtown churches which flourished in that period--I could always anticipate a good sermon.

T: Why do you think from your experience here that there was better preaching then than now?

H: One is that there was no competition from some of the other areas for public attention. You didn't have the television and so on, or something that you are thoroughly familiar with. I think, too, that in the Baptist community we have, and I believe it has been a mistake, put too much emphasis on organization, mobilization, enlistment, and the rather superficial measurements of progress. I think if we could take the same energy that we have put into the Six-Point System, for example, and put it into good preaching practices and systems of instruction and professional advancement for the pulpiteer, requiring him not to preach three times a week--that is, twice on Sunday and a form of presentation on Wednesday night--if we could reduce that demand and intellectual exertion on him, we could get better preaching. I think we might well ask the Presbyterians, who over the years have excelled us in preaching. We might find that we would profit by it. But even including the Presbyterians and all the denominations, I think there is a challenge now to the churches to do something about it. We have been victims of the technological age and new and unanticipated sociological changes in life have just caught us unprepared. So, while I hadn't anticipated that I would be challenged like this when I made that simple observation, I think what I am saying is thoroughly sound.

T: How often did you attempt to deliver a major speech during your political career?

H: Oh, my goodness, certainly not over one or two a month. I'm just making a rough calculation.

T: That would require your full exertion?

H: Right.

T: Tell me something about what happened to you after you graduated from school. What did you do in Washington as a young lawyer from Arkansas?

H: I almost caught the first train back to Arkansas. My wife, I think, was happy to go back to our native state. We went immediately to Russellville. Russellville at that time, I guess, was around five or six thousand people. It's three times that now and grew rapidly in the 1920's, but nothing like the phenomenal advancement that it has had in the last few years. At any rate, it was a typical Arkansas county seat town.

T: What do you mean by "typical Arkansas town"?

H: Arkansas at that time was about seventy-five or eighty percent rural. That's the Census Bureau's calculation of rural life based on towns of less than twenty-five hundred. A town of twenty-five hundred or more was classified at that time as urban, the other as rural. Arkansas' people at that time were about seventy-five percent rural, meaning they lived in towns of under twenty-five hundred or in the open country. The county itself had about twenty-five thousand. In other words, not over twenty percent of Pope County people lived in towns. There was only one town in that county by that classification and that was Russellville. This was true--when I say typical--of all but about six to ten of the seventy-five counties. There were very few cities. There were Little Rock, Fort Smith, Pine Bluff, Hot Springs, and those were about all. Even El Dorado, which burgeoned about that time because of the oil strike, had been about like Russellville up until the 1921 oil discovery. Texarkana was more on the Texas side than the Arkansas side. There were just maybe about a half-dozen cities and then maybe another dozen towns of the size of Russellville. Arkansas was decidedly rural. Today in Arkansas only eighteen of the seventy-five counties have as many people living within their borders as lived there in 1920. It gives you some idea of how the cities have drained off the excess rural population. Of course there are many explanations of that, and it has had a terrific impact on denominational life. The implications of which only slowly dawned on church leadership and haven't yet dawned on some segments of our church leadership.

T: You described this as a typical town built on a county seat or a county square.

H: It was one of the few that didn't have a square for the reason that it didn't become the county seat until about 1890. It was one of the later towns to develop, and it got the county seat only because it was on the railroad and the old historic county seat, Dover, was ten miles off the railroad. This again is history repeating itself. The number of ghost towns in the states that were late getting railroad development is a saga.

T: I was going to ask you something about the railroads. Your church in Russellville, the first church of which you became a member, would have

had a regular minister and regular preaching, but I'm sure that churches scattered around there would have had half-time and quarter-time preaching with people probably coming in from outside or were they served by laymen?

H: Well, I think this is a good point and it fits this observation I made about rural life. The Russellville First Church was probably one of only two, at the most three, that had full-time pastors; and yet, there must have been fifteen or twenty rather successful churches, but they were all served by fourth-time or half-time ministers or by laymen. Now, describing Russellville again, if I might insert this, because I'm afraid I diverted myself when you asked about the town square pattern, I have a little classroom talk on "Life in a Quadrangle." It's a university talk on what the life of the typical rural town or typical county seat town consisted of and that was the home, the school, the courthouse or the city hall, and the church. Those were the institutional interests, of course, of the community. I lived within that little circumscribed area. All the interests I had were focused in those institutions. The school was not far from us, and that meant the first grade through high school was all in one big building. In my case there was an interruption there when I was about ten years of age in the third or fourth grade while they built the two-story brick school to replace the two-story frame. That big brick building cost us the staggering sum of $25,000. It was standing until just, I guess, three or four years ago. But that was the simple life on which the school structure was based. It served the whole community, both sides of the railroad, which cut the town in two sections--not equally. The north side was what we called the "other side of the tracks."

T: This would be the less prosperous area?

H: The less prosperous, right. That was altered, however, when the Arkansas Polytechnic College was established over on that side, out about a mile from the railroad which was still agricultural in character.

T: So your community really was independent but tied in, I suppose, by railroad with Fort Smith and Little Rock.

H: Exactly. We had quite an advantage there. Russellville was almost halfway between those two cities. Then, it had access to the very prosperous area on the south side of the Arkansas River, which was just about three and one-half miles away through the highway and over a pontoon bridge--it was said to be the longest pontoon bridge over running water in the world and was almost a mile long. That linked Pope County and Russellville to this prosperous county on the south side, which had a lot of river bottom land. So, Russellville was destined to be a prosperous community.

T: Based on agriculture primarily.

H: Absolutely.

T: Agriculture would be really the main industry of the town--feed stores, support of the farmers, and so on.

H: Right. The farm service institutions. Now, you would have to define agriculture as timber processing interests, too, because while there was no such things as independent tree farmers as in modern times, there was a

lot of forestry activity.

T: You said you were delighted to be back in Russellville. Did you immediately begin as a lawyer? Is that the first thing you did?

H: No, I did not. I never really got into the law practice up to my neck as I had anticipated; however, I was sure that somewhere along the line I would be in politics. I got into politics immediately because my father, with some encouragement from me before I left Washington, had announced for the congressional seat that I was later to hold. I got back in time to campaign for him, in fact, to join his law partner in what you would call a co-manager status to help my father campaign. He was not successful. I've often wondered about this. My father was nothing like as interested in politics as a professional outlet as I was, and I may have put too much pressure on him to run. I was very ambitious for him. I think he would have made a good congressman, in spite of lacking that inner urge; but we were frustrated in that, partly because of the Ku Klux Klan.

He and I were perhaps the only two real active deacons--active men members--of that church that did not join the Klan. That was true of the other churches of the city, and when I say others, I mean all the others, because there was no Catholic church and no synagogue. There were virtually no Jews and no Catholics in Russellville. That is somewhat typical, not altogether typical, but it just happened that the immigrant Catholic group had settled either east or west of Russellville for complex reasons or south of Russellville, so we had no Catholics. We did have German Catholics in these other communities. In time, I got acquainted with the Catholic culture. There was only one Jew, a merchant in our town. So, I say that our failure to go into the Ku Klux Klan was somewhat aberrant because the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and the "Campbellites," as they were popularly called although you smiled when you said it, if a "Campbellite" was present because they didn't like that, and I don't blame them, the Disciples, they say, all went into the Ku Klux Klan, not because they were necessarily anti-Catholic or anti-Semitic; and yet, there was a latent racism and religious bigotry in it. I regretted it and I was saddened by it. But Father and I absolutely refused to go into the Klan and that had something to do with his defeat in 1922.

That was my first activity, and the primary election was in August of that year. Then, I did settle down to a rather quiet and inconspicuous law practice. My father was partly to blame for that. He did as I'm afraid a great many fathers do. He just didn't reach the conclusion that he had a son on his hands who had matured and who was capable of doing more work than Dad was willing to give him. He and I had a little tension over that although you wouldn't find many father-son relationships that were any happier or any finer than ours. But, still, if I had any dissatisfactions at all with my paternal relationships, it was on that point. He was inclined to leave only the dregs of the law practice to me. It was just one of those incidental things. It was not a conscious minimizing of my life or indifference to my future.

He had great pride, I think, in me. I'm glad he lived long enough to see me become president of the Southern Baptist Convention. I think maybe you'll have this on the tape. You certainly got it on the tape of the speech I made at the American Baptist Convention in June of this year. I

told them about Father saying when he was asked when I was just a little tad, "Which would you rather Brooks would be, president of the Southern Baptist Convention or President of the United States?" And he said, "Well, I guess I'd rather he would be President of the United States. Brooks is not smart enough to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention." That's in the record. He had a great sense of humor and was a great kidder. However, I am not sure that he said it but he was capable of it. He was gloriously thrilled over my election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

T: Tell me some more about this campaign in 1922. You said a couple of things that kind of interested me and really tie into what we're talking about here. What would your father's platform have been? What were the issues that he felt strongly about as he ran in that campaign? Do you remember?

H: Well, actually, there were no issues that were prominent. They were hardly definable. It was more a matter of a personal appeal. There were three candidates. I believe there was a fourth candidate, but there were three major candidates. One was the Klan candidate, then, a very prominent lawyer in Little Rock got the endorsement of the organized anti-Klan group in Little Rock. This left Father with the independent vote that appreciated him as an individual. It was a personal following. Except for the Klan issue which sort of left Father in the squeeze, there was no issue. Even the anti-Klan candidate tried to hold it down for a while because there was such an electric quality in the issue that he would have been glad not to lose some of the Protestants' votes that were available if you didn't appear to be pro-Catholic or pro-Negro. One of the saddest chapters in the history of Southern politics is that everybody framed the black man. That is another phase of history in the South. But when the Populist movement offered some hope at first of invoking the strength in the Negro farm vote, some students of politics thought, "Well, at last, the black man will be consulted and respected." It didn't turn out that way. The old prejudices were fanned and the Negro was left out. Certainly the Klan built on that feeling. The black man was regarded traditionally as an inferior part of Homo sapiens, and he just had to live with that until the friendliness that Franklin Roosevelt had established at the national level (his friends) enabled him to break through the barriers and become a factor.

T: Was this articulated or was this just an underground feeling?

H: Oh, it was articulated. I can become angry right now over just recalling a speech made by a man who was on the same ticket with me--rather in the same party--and speaking at the same picnic where I was speaking in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. The appeal to race prejudice was just revolting. There was nothing I could do about it. There were no counter movements against that at the time. I was angry for hours over that speech that I had had to listen to while I waited to speak. Of course, I never touched that issue because nobody was going to find me in my race for governor, this was in 1928, either by positive action, inadvertence, or implication saying anything that would reveal prejudice on the race front. I've never had any, and I had been trying to pierce this barrier before 1928. Even then I was known as a sort of an upstart and a social radical, but not so much so as in later years when I demonstrated my concern over the mistreatment of the black tenant farmer and the denial of his other rights.

In 1934 I helped to organize the Urban League in Little Rock. By that time I was an established resident of Little Rock. I didn't live in Russellville long. I was there, if you want to go back to the 1922 situation, from June, 1922, after my graduation, until January, 1925. That's only two and one-half years, isn't it? Then I went to Little Rock as assistant attorney general of the state. So my Russellville days were very brief, however, they were lived fully. I drank deeply of the life of that little community. I was superintendent of the Sunday School within two or three months, I guess, after I got back. I was a member of the board of deacons even before my father was. I guess there are not many men who participate in the ordination of their own fathers. It was strange that he hadn't been ordained, but he had been very busy in his legal activities; and then, there may have been a little feuding in the board of deacons. It was like most organizations. There may have been some internal feelings there of a political nature that kept him off the board of deacons. I don't know. There was one other thing I think perhaps that is all right for me to allude to, an intimate, personal thing. Father had to fight the alcoholic situation. He drank heavily for a number of years. Of course, to me it is a great tribute to him that he was able to conquer it, because he never took a drink in the last forty years of his life.

T: He probably became a missionary about it.

H: Oh, yes, he did. Now, incidentally, that may have had something to do with his defeat for Congress. I think that some of the church people held it against him that he had had to fight the liquor evil. He was not the kind to set in motion any counter political advantages. Now, we had one man in public life in Arkansas, Jeff Davis, who became governor of the state and served three times as governor, the only man in our history up until Orval Faubus who served more than two terms as governor. Jeff Davis, who was of the Populist persuasion, not in the official party of the Populists but still of that character, was another type person. The difference between him and my Father is that Jeff apparently didn't fight (the drinking problem). My father did.

In 1915, Dad took the little family to Texas for three months on doctor's advice, just to get away and to follow the regimen of Mineral Wells which had a health resort reputation. When he came back I think that was the beginning of his new life. He never let it alienate him from his abstemious friends in the church. They loved him and they recognized that this was a weakness. There's a lot to be told in that story which I won't take time to tell now; but the fact that my father was able to conquer that weakness added greatly to my appreciation of him as a man of great character. So, I guess there is no reason why I should feel embarrassed to refer to it because it is very much to his credit. But that may have had something to do with his defeat for Congress.

T: They might have felt that he may have stopped drinking, but that he might lapse back.

H: Oh, yes. That's right. He had, by 1922, at least climbed toward the peak of moderation and of abstention. I mentioned Jeff Davis. I think I heard him say in one of his campaigns--I know it was attributed to him and undoubtedly he said it--"They are making much of the fact that I was turned out of the First Baptist Church in Little Rock for drinking. Well, the difference is that the board of deacons were quart Baptists, and I was

only a pint Baptist." So you can see how some politicians can get the drinking vote which, probably, from the standpoint of actual practice was as substantial as the non-drinking vote.

T: You mentioned that both you and your Dad did not join the Ku Klux Klan. Why didn't you join it?

H: Oh, well. My great goodness! I just felt that it was an outrageous violation of our standards of tolerance and of brotherhood. I'd made that decision before my father. As a matter of fact, I'm not sure that they ever invited my father to join, but he wouldn't have joined if they had. They did invite me to join. Oh, they put pressure on me to join. I was asked to introduce the state executive in Russellville when they had the big Klan rally, and I absolutely declined because I had thought it through right here in law school. You see, the movement was under way. It was a post-World War I movement.

T: As far as Arkansas was concerned it really surged up in the early 1920's.

H: Yes, but it had surged here in Washington while I was still in law school. I guess it was along about 1920. That was probably the earliest vigorous activity, but it was first a southern movement. It later swept through the border states and some of the worst eruptions of race feeling were in Michigan and Indiana. We know about that. But, in Washington, we had in my class a nephew of W. J. Simmons, who was the Imperial Wizard. I don't know whatever became of this fellow student. His name was Jim Hatcher, I believe.

I know that my roommate, later my law partner in Little Rock, and even later than that Bolon Turner, the chief judge of the tax court of the United States, sort of wanted me to join. As I recall it, he thought, "Well, this seems like a good thing and maybe we ought to go along." I think it was more the excitement of being in some kind of activity that seemed to have the right ideas, because, you see, they didn't put in their literature, "We don't admit Jews, Catholics, or Negroes." They would have spelled it "N-i-g-g-e-r." They weren't that overt, you know. I think it sort of slipped up on a lot of people, and I think this is true about my law partner's tolerance of the idea at first, because he was not a hater. I do know that a lot of our classmates thought it was all right, but I didn't. I was very emphatic about it. I said, "I won't have a thing to do with it."

T: Did you specifically speak out on this among your friends at that time?

H: Yes, I think I did. I probably was somewhat muted in my opposition to it because I was a great hand not to be militant about anything, as a young lawyer. I was trying to get along with people and hadn't developed much of a public image or character, but I think everybody knew how I felt. Now, in time, I did have some bulges of convictions. My wife tells about it in a little book she has written that hasn't been published. I hope it will be published. It has, I think, and intriguing title, How to Live Dangerously and Enjoy It. She tells about my actions one night at an evangelistic meeting. Well, of course, the evangelistic meetings in rural Arkansas, certainly in Russellville, were great events. That and the Chautauquas really were about the only outlets in entertainment that we had. We had some athletic events, high school football and some amateur baseball teams,

but the big thing was the evangelistic meetings.

One night one of these fiery preachers asked, after he had made a very militant speech against dancing, that everybody--he put it very powerfully--who would pledge that he or she would not only refrain from dancing but would promise him now "in the presence of God to fight this heinous evil the rest of your life" stand up! Well, everybody stood but me. I was the only person not standing and there I was superintendent of the Sunday School. My wife suddenly realized that she had stood. She wasn't thinking much about it. You know how people will do, and there wasn't any better Christian in that town than my wife or anyone who was more tolerant. She was just fine and free from prejudice, and she had danced at the University and I hadn't. So there it was.

She makes a good deal of that in her little treatment of my frankness about things in political life and blames some of my troubles on the fact that I didn't want to dissemble. Well, there is a certain amount of dissembling in everybody. We know that, but that's begging the question. That's not coming to the point. She thought that was as fine a symbol as she could discover of my determination not to let myself be misrepresented. I didn't believe that was right, and I was unwilling to stand up and say differently.

So, the next day a committee from the church visited me in my office, among them one of the best men in the church, Ben Tolleson, a furniture dealer, good old Ben Tolleson. I have forgotten who the other members were who came. But she tells about this. Her recollection of it is very vivid. I told them why. I said, "It would have been a dishonest action. I didn't want to pledge that. I don't believe that. I think you have committed some real offenses against young people when you proscribe their enjoyment of innocent, chaperoned dancing." I said, "You turned my roommate out of the church because he was going to chaperoned dances, and he remained out for twenty years." Some years later it was different because he rejoined the church; but for twenty years he was virtually outside the church life because of that ill-considered action. That may have had something to do with my judgement about it.

At any rate, I remember Ben Tolleson saying, "Well, now Brother Brooks, we are going to pray for you. Unfortunately, you've set a bad example for our people, and we are going to pray for you."

"Now," I said, "Brother Ben, you oughtn't to do that. That's not fair to me. You're going to take something to the Lord yourself and you've got an advantage over me because you're closer to His throne than I am. It's not fair to me for someone who's closer to Him than I am to present it to the Lord. It ought to be presented by some other route than the prayer route."

T: How did he react?

H: You know, I think it melted him down. I think that he could see that after all I might have been right and he might have been wrong. Well, I think my wife always felt that was a part of my style that others might well have adopted because it tended to preserve a pleasant relationship will all segments of the population of the church and of the town.

T: They didn't put you out?

H: Oh, no. That was the last we heard of it. The evangelist who was one of these high powered professional evangelists gathered up a lot of the coin of the realm and went on to other fields. That was all there was to that. We didn't hear any more about it and the dances went on. Now, the local preacher probably inveighed against it because that was supposed to be done, you know. That was one of those things.

But on the question of the Ku Klux Klan, in this Broadman Press publication, This World: A Christian's Workshop you will find at page three something from my diary reproduced. The person who wrote this profile of a man said, "There . . ." I'm quoting now. This is her writing before she quotes from my diary. It won't take long to read this.

T: Go ahead.

H: "There was one organization which in the mid-twenties had a wide following in the Russellville community that Brooks Hays did not join--the Ku Klux Klan. His diary for July 31, 1923, reads as follows: 'Spent the day in my office. Elsworth Coombs, head of the state Ku Klux Klan visited me in the afternoon. He was disappointed when I told him that I had been invited to introduce him at the meeting that night but had declined. I worked in three meetings. Went to a short American Legion session first; then, to the study course at the church and was even able to hear Brother Coombs speak for half an hour at the Klan meeting.'" I just wanted to see. I guess I dropped in. They didn't know I was there. I was probably out on the edge of the crowd. It was an open meeting. I'm departing from the diary entry here to explain it because I certainly didn't show up to participate. I heard him speak for half an hour, and he failed to convince me that my first impression of the Klan was incorrect. That's the first impression that was acquired here in Washington. Back to the quotation from the diary, "The high place in his speech was an appeal to prejudice and vengeance. He left me unshaken in the view that individual members of the Klan would do better to put their energy into the church."

T: This is a very interesting entry for 1923.

H: Yes. I'm glad that's there.

T: I am interested that you would be one of the few, I would think, who did not at some point join the Klan or at least nominally be related to them.

H: Yes, and they were envious of me later because that was one situation in which I was right, and the men later realized they were wrong. Every now and then that happens to you. Of course, it's the other way sometimes. I've taken certain positions that I later realized I wasn't correct on, but that's the reason we have to have a certain degree of humility. But on the race thing, and this again is a departure--I'm getting way ahead of the story--but just the other day a congressman said to me on the racial problem--he was talking about how easy it is now to be a moderate in the South--something that made me very happy . . . This would be better fitted into the later stories as we talk about the racial problem.

T: Who was it that was talking with you?

H: This was Congressman William Stuckey of Georgia. He said, "Brooks, you've

made it easier for all of us."

T: That's a good compliment.

H: Yes, it was. That was a compliment. Another congressman, Congressman Dorn, William Jennings Bryan Dorn, from South Carolina, who was a member of the Calvary Baptist Church and who was on the other side back in the fifties when we had the civil rights struggles, was telling an audience down at the Calvary Church one night in introducing me at a banquet, "Do you remember 1958? I know some of my colleagues here in the Congress would agree that we thought Brooks was wrong. But he was right."

T: I appreciate your comment here on the Klan. In 1925 you moved on over to Little Rock. You transferred your membership to Second Baptist Church?

H: Immediately. Someone introduced me sometime later, and said, "You know Brooks never was able to work up to the First Baptist." But I was in the Second Baptist Church there and still have a great interest in it. It's a sentimental interest. They still carry my name attached to the Sunday School class that I began to teach in February, 1925, almost immediately after I joined the church; but we did finally transfer our membership. I guess that was after my defeat. My name was probably carried as a member of the Second Baptist Church until my defeat. I am not too sure about that, but, of course, I'm no longer a member of the church. I send an occasional contribution, and if there are special campaigns, I'll always participate. The class name, the Brooks Hays Class, was adopted over my protest. That class continues to be a part of the Sunday School and of the church though its membership, of course, has declined. The ranks are decimated through death, but it was at one time a very powerful religious organization. I may be getting ahead of your story. You were wanting to know about the Second Baptist Church.

T: Well, I was going to ask you, why did you move from Russellville to Little Rock at that point in 1925?

H: In 1924, I had been asked to manage the campaign of one of the candidates for attorney general, and I accepted that invitation and managed his campaign. My reward was not a salary or a monetary reward for the time I put into the campaign--probably two months' hard work--but the appointment as the first assistant attorney general, if not the first assistant, at least one of the co-equals in the assistants' rank of the attorney general's office. I was in charge of the civil law division. I guess it was sort of understood. There certainly never was any reference made to the fact that my selection as campaign manager just sort of indicated that it was in the mind of the candidate that, if he won, I would be one of his assistants.

T: This would be a political job then?

H: It was. It was strictly a political reward but a very satisfying reward. Now, here's a little footnote that belongs here. It calls for a little explanation because both the man that I'm talking about, Mr. Applegate, who was elected attorney general that year, and whose campaign I was managing, and his opponent were members of the Klan. So that was a bit of a problem for me except it was not an issue, as he had begun to see at that

time, by 1924, that the Klan was beginning to falter in Arkansas. Of course, in Indiana and in other places it flourished, but by that time, certainly at that state level, it was not flourishing. It was beginning to disintegrate. Since his opponent was also a member of the Klan, it just was not an issue. But I'd rather he hadn't been.

T: Have you read Chamber's book The Invisible Empire? It's a history of the Klan. The feeling in Indiana was that the Klan was able to control the governorship and many of the representatives in both the state senate and the legislature. Would this be true in Arkansas, or did they have this kind of influence?

H: No. They did not. They never had what we would have called "a death grip" on state politics. Now, in some counties they did have firm control. It became the leading influence politically in some of the courthouse situations at the county level, but never at the state level. They may have elected some minor state offices, but the Klan was really not interested in this attorney general's race. They were interested that very year in the governor's race, but the Klan candidate for governor was defeated in 1924. So it didn't become an issue or a threat really, a major threat, as in some of the states.

T: Was the issue of prohibition coming up and down in Arkansas during this period?

H: Yes, it was and Arkansas was prohibition minded. They did have a bone-dry law, and they, of course, voted for the Eighteenth Amendment. It was a typical rural state. Its culture was of that mold.

T: What were the issues in 1924 and 1925, and I raise these in the light of the kind of conviction you have expressed with reference to the Klan. Were these kinds of things a struggle for you in relationship to your membership in the Second Baptist Church and your Christian faith?

H: No. Well, as in Russellville, so in Little Rock. The majority of the Protestant churches were found in the Klan. But the anti-Klan forces in the courthouse fights, as I remember it, were fairly successful. Now, they did elect later, maybe in 1926 or maybe even as late as 1928, I believe, some of the county officers. At any rate, it took some hard fights in Little Rock, ultimately, to break up the Klan. Little Rock was different in its politics from most of the rural counties. It was pretty much of an open county.

T: What do you mean by "open county"?

H: I mean it was not an organization county. There were some very powerful individuals who had a great deal to say about who would be county judge, but it didn't go from one office to the other. You didn't have the courthouse crowd controlling. I would say, though, for two or three elections the head of the state Klan, a man named Comer, who strangely enough had been a Republican in earlier years and as late as 1912 was voting for the bull moose candidate for President, Teddy Roosevelt, did have something to say even about the county officers there in Little Rock. But the opposition to the Klan in Little Rock never was insignificant; it was always strong and powerful. One reason is that Little Rock, of course, had a fine Jewish

community. When I say a fine community, I don't mean I'm just talking about it politically. It had a very keen and sensitive leadership that was outstanding. In addition to the German Catholic community, which in Arkansas was the most prominent group in the Catholic community, there were other Catholic strains from central Europe, even southern Europe. But it was largely German. Catholic and Jewish leadership helped the anti-Klan movement in Little Rock, but the Catholics were not strong elsewhere. I remember stating, in talking about the good feelings, good relationships, that I had with the Catholic church, that I had made a quick calculation once that half of all the Catholics in Arkansas lived in my congressional district, although there were six other Congressmen at that time from Arkansas. I did not know the Catholic leaders of the church. I knew a lot of laymen, but after I became a member of Congress one of the Monsignors said to me, "You know, Bishop Morris tells me he's never met you, and he thinks he ought to meet his Congressman." He said, "The Bishop has always voted for you and he likes you, Mr. Hays." I believe he added, "He voted for your father." He had met my father. But he said, "The Bishop would like to meet you. You're his Congressman."

I remember dropping in on the old gentleman. He was a great Irishman. That was one of these other non-German groups. I remember a very pleasant little visit with him. The Monsignor said something that could have been misinterpreted, and it may have embarrassed the Bishop just a little, but he knew how to handle it. He said, "Now watch the Monsignor, Mr. Hays. He's trying to proselytize you, and I don't want him to do that." He said, "If there have to be Baptists, and I guess there just have to be, I want you to remain one. You're such a good influence."

T: How does a church like Second Church stand on this sort of thing? Was this ever raised by the leadership, by the preacher, about the Klan?

H: No.

T: It was just not discussed?

H: No. Our pastor was not a militant person on any issue. He was a good gospel preacher. He was sort of premillennial. He loved to preach from the book of Daniel or Revelations, and he tried to add a little drama to his Sunday night sermon. He was a very lovable person, Dr. Calvin Waller, a graduate of Carson-Newman College. If he was not a graduate, at least he had attended Carson-Newman. I don't think he ever attended a seminary. He was not a profound man, but a good man; not an imaginative person and not one who supplied much of an ingredient for good politics. But he was very proud of the high "social" level of his church. He had a lot of the leading doctors, the leading lawyers, the leading merchants, and the leading office holders. Governor Charles H. Brough was a member of his church. An associate justice of the Supreme Court, Carroll D. Wood, was a member of his church. The State Comptroller was a member of his church, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction was a member of his church. It was a great downtown church. Of course, they made a good deal of the fact that the new assistant attorney general was joining their church, and so on.

T: What did you do as the assistant attorney general? What kind of things do you remember?

H: I was in charge, as I indicated, of the civil law division and wrote opinions in answer to inquiries from the other state officers. They asked, "What is the law on this particular point?" They have the right under state law to ask the attorney general for a ruling.

T: Is that true of the legislative people as well? Not only the elected officials, but the appointed officials would appeal to your office?

H: Yes. They had the right to ask the attorney general for an opinion, and I handled all of those, virtually, except in the highway area. There was a special assistant attorney general who handled highway problems. But other than that, I handled everything. I wrote all of those opinions and was also the adviser, during the time that the state legislature was in session, to the legislative committees. I had to handle a good deal of that. Then I represented the state in litigation. I argued a lot of cases before the state Supreme Court. I enjoyed that part of the work. I enjoyed constitutional law procedures.

T: You would have been only twenty-seven when you accepted that or barely twenty-seven.

H: Yes. That's right. I had passed my twenty-sixth birthday in January.

T: That was quite a responsibility for a young man.

H: Yes, and I was given much wonderful publicity in some of the interesting cases like the minimum wage case, the severance tax case, the income tax case, and, oh, my memory fails me right now. But there were a number of rather dramatic controversies that landed in my office, and I had a good deal of publicity. Then my extra official duties brought a bit of prominence. I enjoyed my Lion's Club work. I think that very year I became district governor of the Lion's Club of Arkansas.

T: Interestingly you did not join the Klan, but you were not anti an organization that was trying to do something, which I think is an interesting point. You joined the Lions. Were you a member of any other groups?

H: Yes. I was a member of the American Legion and of the Masonic Lodge. I was an organization man and enjoyed that kind of thing. You know me well enough to know that my personality just sort of fits that kind of life. I love civic club work. I spoke so often to civic organizations that Owen Cooper, you remember the first layman after myself to hold the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention, introduced me once. He said that he asked about me when I was a young lawyer at Russellville during this period, and I know it's purely hypothetical but it fits the situation. He said to an old gentlemen who was filling his gas tank, "How's my young friend Brooks Hays doing?"

"Oh," he said, "doing fine. He's got a family to support and works hard. He's up there in the office now, I guess, working on a case or across the street trying a lawsuit. But," he added, "come night, every night, he'll be out speaking at a Lion's Club meeting or a Baptist convention--somewhere every night." He said, "I put it like it is, he's a ball of fire by day and a bag of wind by night."

T: What would you say was the most important thing that you remember in that period for which you were responsible? As you look back on fifty years to the time when you would have assumed office, what kind of influence were you able to exert that you felt was a positive thing?

H: Yes. It's been fifty and one-half years since I took the oath of office as assistant attorney general, January, 1925. Now, that's a little difficult because I had some achievements in the area of social work that I think were probably as image building and probably as significant in long-range terms as what I did officially in the attorney general's office. I would point out, for example, my efforts to get Arkansas to adopt a workman's compensation law. Arkansas was one of only about three states at that time that had no workman's compensation law, and as an amateur social worker I had gotten interested in that legislation.

T: Now this is while you were assistant attorney general or would this be . . .

H: Well, my advocacy of a workman's compensation law may not have been publicly a fact until later, but it was not long after that. I was attorney for the juvenile court official of the state. There was a juvenile court officer, and I handled the legal phases of the juvenile court problems. I wrote a lot of bills for state officers. I wrote the first library law for Arkansas.

T: When you say you wrote the bill, what do you mean?

H: I prepared the bill.

T: Into legal language for adoption?

H: Right. They came to me because I was interested in library work. My concern over improving rural life was a part of my social interest. The disadvantaged people of Arkansas had really never had a movement to make more than a political vehicle out of their submerged condition in life. I was trying to give it some professionalism and became identified with the Arkansas Conference of Social Work and within a half dozen years became president of that state conference. It was my activity in this two-year period that brought some prominence to me in professional social work. That meant improvement in library services and the promotion of juvenile court procedures in collaboration with the juvenile court officers. My fight for a workman's compensation law was just beginning in this period and my advocacy, as district governor of the Lion's, of a balanced economic life for Arkansas, encouraging industry, for example, ...

T: Mixed economy, really.

H: That's right--just exactly. That was when I began to work out in my own mind an economic philosophy that flowered in what was called the Flanders-Hays Bill by Flanders of Vermont and myself. He was from a northern rural state, you see. It flowered in that legislation to promote little industries in the small communities and the Paul Douglas bill for area redevelopment. The culmination of these things I'm talking about in this period of the mid-twenties was in federal legislation. But, you see, it had this focus on the human problems. I was not interested in any of the financial or industrial phases of economic life from the standpoint of investments or

things like that. Although, later, I did take out a year or two to serve as an official in an insurance company, but that was more a matter of making a living. So my interests were in rural people. Well now, that gives you some idea of what happened. I think it is best illustrated by what my wife said. She has a quaint way of thrusting in a little interjection now and then where she is encouraged to do it by newsmen. I was introduced to the public at Rutgers University when I became the Arthur Vanderbilt professor in 1964. One of the newsmen, with typical frankness, said, "Mr. Hays, we read in this university blurb that you're a lawyer, a politician, an author, a churchman, and now you are going to be an academician. If we ask the real Mr. Hays to stand up, who would rise?"

Before I could say, "politician," and that would be the honest answer, my wife said, "Just an Arkansas social worker." You see, it's rooted in this thing that I am talking about. I don't want to make too much of it, but that has been my passionate concern.

T: You've almost become adamant as you have tried to tell me about this. What I wonder is, what is it that prompted you to be like that? What motivated you? You were raised with the opportunity of a college education when it wasn't readily available. You had to work to get some of your education, but there are others who would have been prosperous who would not have felt that way.

H: Oh, I could have had an education at my father's expense, but I think it was wisdom on his part that he said, "Make your own way through there." So I was a child of privilege. No question about that. I had two college degrees.

T: What prompted you to have this kind of social concern for the unprosperous, for the disadvantaged, which you have adamantly explained to me as having?

H: Well, you know, I think that it was partly my exposure in a rather poignant way to the conditions in my mother's family and also my father's family. They were poor people and had had tragedies in their families. Her little brothers and sisters had died because health conditions were terrible, and my father's brother had died of tuberculosis when he was only thirty-five. He was a brilliant young doctor. Then, my father's sister also died when she was about forty-four. Three of my little cousins died in infancy, two of them from tuberculosis. Well, actually four of them died in this one family, to say nothing of some of the cousins in other families. All of them were victims of bad health conditions, bad nutritional problems, and so on. So, I think, maybe, that had something to do with sensitizing me to social problems. Then, and here I approach it with some caution, I think perhaps the avid interest which my family had in church life probably accentuated this. It was a natural thing, and it was never a matter of a light on the Damascus Road--no sudden conversion to a crusading program.

T: This was not the era though, Mr. Hays, for reform legislation.

H: You're right about that. I guess you could say to some extent I was a pioneer. I don't want to claim too much, but I'm very happy to have these references made because a man likes to feel that somewhere along the line they'll find a footprint or two. I like that because I am not overdoing it when I say I loved the poor people. I was deeply concerned about them, the underprivileged country folks of Arkansas. They are my folks. Did

I tell you what Francis Sayre, dean of the Episcopal Cathedral, said about me in that connection?

T: I don't think so.

H: Well, I think it is not immodest at all. It is so relevant right at this point. I know it is not immodest for me to say it was factual when he said, "Brooks loved the plain people." Of course, when you say the plain people of the Ozarks you are talking about a different kind of plain people from the Amish in Pennsylvania. Those are the plain people that you probably would spell with a capital "P." "But Brooks loved the people of the hill country among whom he lived"; he's talking about me now. "And he learned from them that the profoundest thoughts are the least pretentious and they are best conveyed by the little chariots of story and of gentle humor."

My life with these people identified me with their aspirations. They were unuttered aspirations, and they were subject to a lot of political distortions. But, undoubtedly, I was identified with them, as you will detect when you hear what I said in response to Mr. Jenks' question of the American Baptist Communications Division. This was his interview following my speech at the 1975 Convention of American Baptists in Atlantic City. He was asking about this point and I had to actually restrain myself because I was determined not to paint goals and achievements ahead that were unrealizable. I could have become a demagogue because--again, I don't think I'm claiming too much to say--I had the potential as a sort of spellbinder. I had gotten it partly in the BYPU. I had so much practice in the informal church life. I had learned how to speak on my feet. I had had good English course instructors and good literary society opportunities in high school and in college. I might have tried to be a spellbinder, a demagogue. I'm mentioning this because I hope you will sort of watch for that answer when Mr. Jenks spoke to me about being a Southern politician with some of these concerns. I said that I remember one day when I deliberately pulled myself back when I saw the expressions on the faces of a group of eager country people, knowing that they were entitled to a better lot; and here was a young guy that apparently thought so, too. I thought, "Oh, I must be careful. I must not become a demagogue. I've got to be fair to these people. I'm one of their spokesmen and my heart is with them, but if I use their misfortunes to climb to office I'm diverting some energies and I'm betraying them."

T: What campaign particularly was this?

H: That was in 1928 and 1930 when I made two very vigorous campaigns for governor. I was probably elected in 1928, probably had that office stolen from me. A great many people think so. In fact, I've heard any number of people say they knew from the inside that it was taken from me by switching ballots, and certainly by the inordinate use of money and buying election officials. One man told my law partner later, for example, "I carried two thousand dollars just the day before the election up into the northern part of Pope County to get a few hundred votes away from Brooks." It cost just five dollars a click for the election officials to divert the vote, not necessarily to get them in the ballot box, but to buy the officials to see that they were recorded for the other candidate no matter how they were cast. One of my friends who was in his teens when I made those races for governor and was working on the highway for a crew in the state highway

organization that was dominated by the state political machine, whose candidate I was opposing, told me that the morning of the election one of the supervisors came around and gave each of them five dollars and said, "This is to vote for Parnell." Now this was the word of a man who became a public official. I said, "What did you do?" He said, "I took the five dollars and then voted for you." I don't know what the ethics would be on that, I am just quoting him. He said, "At least I took five away from them."

T: Well, between 1925 and 1928, then, you really were preparing yourself for this campaign? Or what prompted you to run for governor?

H: No. What I wanted to do was to run for attorney general at the conclusion of the traditional four-year term or two two-year terms, which would have been four years for Mr. Applegate, who had appointed me. But, one of my fellow assistant attorney generals, John Carter, who was a member of the Second Baptist Church and who had had something to do with my accepting a job as teacher of that young men's class and had been assistant attorney general longer than I, wanted to run. He was older than I. I just didn't have the heart to challenge him. I felt pretty sure he wouldn't win and I could have argued that. At the same time, he had earned the right to try; but that, as the expression goes, "horned me out" of the race for attorney general in 1928. That was at the conclusion of Mr. Applegate's four years. I decided to run for governor instead. It did open up.

Now, an interesting thing was that the opposition in 1926 to the incumbent governor, Tom Terral, who had defeated the Klan candidate in 1924, became so bitter over Terral's mishandling of the highway program and his mishandling of the pardon problem, he wouldn't give any kind of clemency. He wouldn't pardon anybody for anything nor grant any paroles. He just said, "We're going to make them stay if they are sent to the penitentiary." Well, of course, this was absolutely indefensible.

There was a great reaction that came out of the ordinary compassion of the people, and particularly the common sense and intelligence of members of the legal profession who knew that there were men in that penitentiary who should be pardoned. I felt aggrieved because I saw a young man go to the electric chair; and when I was asked to witness this execution, it seemed to become a part of my official duty. Also, there was a mixed motive. I wanted to see to what extent it was a humane way of taking a life. The young man who was executed committed a crime when he was only sixteen years of age. I didn't sleep well for nights. It did something to me. It is one reason that I am opposed to capital punishment today.

Tom Terral was a man who had mishandled the highway financing issue, a man of very limited ability--not an educated man in the true sense.

T: Did he get there by demagoguery?

H: In a fashion, yes, but not an offensive demagoguery. It was a sort of simple style he had. I think that his motives were very genuine and very good. He was a product of rural life and had a very simple and honest interest in country people who were the dominant element in the electorate. But that's what elected him, coupled with the fact that the reaction against the Klan had set in. He defeated the Klan candidate. It was his second or third race, but he had his chance and blew it on those two issues--an

adamant, no pardon program and no action in the highway financing problem. The people were being terribly mistreated in the highway bond situation.

So the question in 1926, when he was up for a second term was, "Who will be picked to oppose this unimaginative and incompetent governor?" And at least one of the spokesmen for the anti-Terral group said, "Would you consider running?" I said, "Do you relaize that here in the spring of 1926, I am only twenty-seven years of age?" I became twenty-eight that August, just about the time of the election. I was two years short of the minimum age; but, at any rate, you see they were beginning to talk about me for governor when I was only twenty-seven years of age. It even reached speculation in one of the Arkansas dailies.

T: Your experience as the assistant attorney general would be . . .

H: Oh, that's what did it. It had sky-rocketed me in the public sensitivity to a political character. So I was ready by 1928 for a statewide campaign. Now, a lot of people weren't quite conscious of it, but a lot of the knowledgeable people were. I remember some of the leaders said, "Brooks is just running as an introduction to get acquainted." Well, I wasn't. I was deathly serious about it. I remember one fellow said, "Of all things! I've never been so surprised in my life." There were seven of these men running, you see, and I was one of the seven. I came out second and got twice as many votes as the man next to me. The man who defeated me, this organization, incumbent candidate, got a plurality. If we'd had a run-off . . .

T: This is not Terral again?

H: No. Terral had been defeated in 1926, you see, and the man who defeated him resigned after a year to become a federal judge. The lieutenant governor stepped in, and I was running against the man who was running to succeed himself--like Mr. Ford, you see--but had not been elected. Well, he'd been elected lieutenant governor, but he had not been elected governor. However, Terral was one of the seven but came in third in the 1928 race.

T: Was the election or the primary in which you were involved held in the spring?

H: It was held in August.

T: So you were just old enough.

H: Yes. That's right. I was just old enough. I think I became thirty a day or two after the election.

T: So you were really under age but you would have been old enough to assume the office.

H: Oh, yes. I wouldn't have taken office until January, so I would have been of age. I was campaigning six months before I was old enough. I announced March 2, 1928, and I had just six months before that become twenty-nine.

T: Who were the people who prompted you to run in 1928?

H: Well, the backing was there. It was quite a story, and my memoirs, which I've almost completed, will tell the story. It's been pretty well publicized in Arkansas. The highway commission was able to exploit the situation that Governor Terral had created by refusing to give relief to the landowners, the big and little farmers, who were being taxed to death, because the first roads were built by taxing the adjacent land, which was the road district plan. This plan taxed the real estate (the farm lands) through which the highways ran when it should have been put on the gasoline users, the automobile users. There were the ones who needed the highways. "Well," they said, "land values will be boosted by the highways," but, it was a primitive form of financing. Terral refused to do anything about it. The man who defeated him, Judge Martineau, said, "I will lift the burden of these district highway bonds," which, of course, was a sort of unplanned, fragmented state system. They had just been built where there was a progressive sentiment for a highway linking two communities, never a part of a general state plan for a highway program. He said, "I'll transfer the burden of these district bonds to the state, and the state will pay off these bonds that are now such a burden to the farmers through a gasoline tax."

That was a promise the farmers were waiting for and why Governor Terral didn't see it was a mystery to me. Nevertheless, you see, the folks who didn't have highways and who he was counting on, would say, "That's not fair. We'll be paying that now, and we don't have any roads." But to meet that, the candidate said, "We'll immediately begin to build roads in the counties that don't have them"; and that made sense. But what they failed to see by 1930 was that on that wave of enthusiasm for highways and in the response to the promise of relief to the overburdened adjacent landowners--on that political surge--they had a powerful highway organization.

The Highway Commission was appointed by the new governor and that had a death grip on the politics of the state; they began an inordinate bond issue program. The state legislature authorized them to issue state bonds--not local bonds--but state bonds to the retirement of which the gasoline receipts were pledged, and they were now creating a problem at the state level that was comparable to the problem at the county level that Terral had failed to deal with.

So, I was fighting that to say, "Look, we're going in the wrong direction. We went in the right direction to relieve the local landowners, but now you're issuing to an inordinate amount these state highway bonds which we simply cannot pay." In a way, it all seemed out of character for me because I had come to be known as a liberal in terms of education and welfare; but here I was opposing the issuance of bonds and heavy appropriations for a good cause, which I quickly conceded. I said, "We're going ahead with it, and I'm all for assuming the bonds of these local districts. But, what's happening is that you're not going to pay these bonds, and it's unfair to the bond purchasers to say that we can retire both the district bonds and the new state bonds to make good on the state's promise that we would build some roads for the folks that don't have any." So, I said, "We've got to get rid of this avaricious state highway commission. The chairman of the commission has got to go, and these lieutenants of his, who have crept into our state organization with such power have got to go." I said, "I'm going to have a new highway commission, and we're going to be more practical and certainly more provident in our issuance of state bonds."

That was the campaign issue.

Oh, I shook them. I think there was a good deal of color to the charge that they robbed me of that election; because, you see, by that time they were surfeited with money. They had the bond brokers. The bond buyers loved this, you see. Here the bond brokers were able to go out and sell these bond buyers. They weren't telling them that their first order from a practical standpoint, the first priorities, would be these local bonds. They had to be paid off, and they weren't telling them how many of them there were. They had disguised it, and I caught them at it and told it on them. Later, when the bond market collapsed and these purchasers in other states lost money--in other words, the state had to refinance these bonds--what I predicted came true and became a reality within a half dozen years.

I remember sitting on a streetcar here in Washington one time shortly after the market collapsed and Arkansas bonds were in default--an unthinkable condition and a great tragedy to any state to be defaulting in its obligations--and a man sitting by me said, "Where are you from?" I said, "Arkansas." He said, "Oh, that's an awful state." He said, "It caught me. I bought thousands of dollars worth of those bonds, and I am almost bankrupt because of it." I said, "Brother, you're talking to somebody who had nothing to do with that." Then I told him, and he could hardly believe it. He said, "You mean you're the man who fought that?" I said, "You're talking to him."

So, I know that it brought great distress in the bond markets because of Halsey-Steward, the big bond company. I think later they were in disgrace over their mishandling of it. If we had had a Security and Exchange Commission at the time, those bonds wouldn't have been sold at a premium with the bond brokers making as much money as they did. Everybody was getting in on it. Here was a lot of lush money and the contractors were building rapidly, too fast. We didn't have the resources to do what we were trying to do. Now, that was the issue in 1928. It was again the issue in 1930. That time I doubt that I was elected. That was before the collapse.

T: 1928 was before the collapse?

H: Both of those races were before the collapse. But, if I had refused to run in 1930, when the political prize was still in their grasp, you see . . . . The results of these conditions I've described were still going strong in 1930. The condition hadn't caught up with them, but it did shortly after that. By 1931 it was just right at the break, and I could have been elected in 1932; but that's another story. I was elected Democratic national committeeman in 1932 on the basis of my position of practical good sense in the highway fights of 1928 and 1930. You asked about it and that's the answer.

T: Did they attempt to bring out any scandal on you? Did they try to pin things on you?

H: Well, if it had been there, they would have, yes. That was an interesting thing. My little aunt was sort of a novice in politics. She didn't know much about it. She said, "Well, isn't it wonderful that they couldn't find a thing on Brooks." His reputation was so good they didn't even try; and he's one, for example, that they couldn't even find involved with any

women outside his family life." Somebody who knew said, "Well, don't you think they didn't try. They combed it to find everything they could." No, there was nothing to tell. The nearest thing they had to a negative thing was, of course, that I was waging a very vigorous attack, what they called mudslinging, on the incumbent. I kept saying, "This is his public record. As far as his personal character is concerned, I have nothing to say about Harvey Parnell. I'm talking about him as an operative of a vicious highway machine; and as long as he does their bidding and becomes the operator of that kind of policy, then I'm going to make him the target of my attack. But, it is not mudslinging as they are saying. Of course, it was an effort to minimize the effect of my campaign, and I made that clear distinction. But, now here was my second fight against him, you see, and when my name was mentioned for a third race in 1932, when he was dropping out and wasn't going to run again . . .

T: So he had two full terms.

H: Yes, that's right. He said he would not run again for a third elective term, and they began to think about people to succeed him. By that time, the highway commissioner, Dwight Blackwood, who had supported him in these two previous campaigns and Governor Parnell had gotten crosswise, and Blackwood's reputation was tainted by that time and Parnell knew it. So, he was trying to extricate himself from the bad name of the highway crowd by that time. His organization became divided--the good guys and the bad guys. What was left of the highway machine we called the bad guys. But there was a lot of the Parnell organization which had been fairly progressive. Everybody was getting in on the road money, why shouldn't the school people get in on some of it? This was their specious argument. Arkansas had gone on a spending spree, so they did some things for the schools that I approved of. There were some good people in that 1930 organization who had reluctantly supported him. When I say reluctantly I mean they had had to oppose me reluctantly since they were a part of this wave of so-called progress. Well, you can see, in other words, it wasn't a clearly defined good and bad and so on.

But, at any rate, some of the group in his organization who wanted me to succeed him in 1932 went to him and said, "Governor, we've decided that Brooks can win and that he can deal with these guys that you now see have betrayed the state." "Well," he said, "is that your decision?" They said, "Yes sir." It was the respectable wing of his administration. He said, "All right, if that's the signal, I'll go with you. I'll be for Brooks." And then the fellow that told me about it said he smiled and said, "It's asking a good deal of me, ain't it, with all the trouble Brooks has given me, but I'll do it." He would have. Now isn't that a commentary? I think it reflected some credit on him that in spite of our differences he was willing to do it. But, that was the kind of impersonal fight that I was making against corruption. Later events proved that I was absolutely right.

T: And yet, in 1928, that would not have been an expectant stance.

H: No.

T: There was no expectation that the stock market would collapse in 1929. It seemed that things were going up. Now, it's true that farmers' prices were

going down, and this gap was widening, but as far as raising money was concerned, it would seem that you'd always be able to pay it off with more money that could be made as the bonds went up.

H: Oh, but, you see, what the public didn't know, but what I did know largely with the help of some close students of the inside workings of that organization, was that they had already begun to feed the bond issue into the market at a faster rate than we could afford; and that they were diverting money that should have gone into a state system of primary roads to build some roads for petty fiefdoms in that highway organization. I knew where the diversions were taking place and where the bloodsuckers were making the most out of this political setup.

T: I think you have explained this very interestingly. They weren't able to raise against you accusations that perhaps you also would have been glad to have been on the receiving end of some of these little special roads and this kind of thing. Did they try that sort of tactic?

H: I don't remember that anything of a negative character came in my direction out of their camp. They made the most out of the charge that I was an "upstart" and that I was only thirty years old; that I was a good boy; that I should have waited; "nice fellow," you know. Of course, privately, where they could get to me--and I knew it was sincere--was they'd say in 1930 as the campaign time approached, "Now Brooks, we'll go with you. We'll elect you in 1932." That was in 1930, you see, when they felt that I was going up against a tough situation. They felt much more confident then. They said, "Now don't make this second race," and my dad was on that side.

He said, "Son, we can't beat them, and they have told me that they will elect you in 1932. All you need to do is just wait and work with them and be practical." That was the hardest thing, almost, I ever had to do, to tell my father that I could not do that. I remember the day it took place. I had evaluated it, and my theory was that if I weakened in this, if I said to the people, "I am not going to take up the fight for you; the cudgels won't be in my hands anymore," they would think, "Well, is this the same Brooks Hays who told us in 1928 what was wrong; and now we know better in 1930 than we did then? You say that what you said back there wasn't true? If you weaken now on us, when could we ever believe you?" And I couldn't have gone to them later. That was an illusion.

But that was their appeal, you see. There's your old appeal of expediency against absolute integrity. So, I had to run in 1930, or else, the people in opposition would have said that in 1928 I was just being expedient myself. I was riding the wave. My own dad, though, thought otherwise. He said, "Son, it will just be too hard on you because you can't win and two defeats will sink you." I said, "Dad, that isn't it. I've got to do what my conscience directs anyway." But, ah, it nearly killed him, I tell you.

I remember, though, when I began to breathe easier about my relationship with my father. The only time that he and I both showed up to speak at a political meeting--he didn't do much speaking, there were a few little rallies where he spoke independently of me--I heard him say to an audience, "I will tell you this. I didn't want Brooks to run. I had my own reasons," but he said, "I'd rather this son of mine would go down in defeat on this

platform which he believes in than to see him win on some platform using some strategy that he didn't believe in." I remember the crowd just hollered. So I knew then, you see, that there was something about an inner peace that a guy had better have. He had better not exchange that for political office.

T: This was 1930?

H: I guess maybe it was in a later campaign. Maybe a campaign I made in 1933 for Congress. That was another tragedy. But, at any rate, it was after I had broken the sad news to him. I mean he had seen me go against him, but that made him feel prouder of me because he was able to say, "Well, if you go against me, you'd go against anybody else that you thought was wrong."

T: Did this kind of tension happen to you other times?

H: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, you bet you. And I'll tell you about that before we get out of the political realm because some of the things that have real validity from the standpoint of a man's ideals, the heavenly vision as Paul called it, are over here in the realm of politics. Now, my greatest honors have come to me in the ecclesiastical field. I have been president of the largest Protestant body in this country. I have been a member of the board of the National Council of Churches. I have been visiting professor at Baptist colleges. I have a Baptist lectureship named for me at one of the seminaries and a lectureship at a great church in Little Rock named for me. My most prominent honors have been in the religious field, but my greatest moral dilemmas have been in politics. So that ought to be unfolded and that is what I am trying to do for you. There have been some things that come later. Don't let me forget to tell you about 1942 when I made my second and my successful race for Congress.

T: Mr. Hays, I wonder, too, if you would indicate, when you were in this race and you felt, and certainly have indicated, a conviction and a moral conviction on the issue, what kind of support you got from your church and from your pastor? Was he one of your confidants or was he off in some other world in relationship to what was going on in 1928 and 1930?

H: Well, my pastor was nonpolitical in his outlook and so individualistic in his theology that I could have only the kindest feeling and most personal congeniality for and from him, but nothing that would project him into the circle of my understanding Baptist friends and associates. He voted for me and probably was outspoken in private conversations. And I was not interested in his doing otherwise, as a matter of fact, because I knew that my Baptist identification was well known and that it might invite criticism. This was the practical side. So I didn't seek to get any help from him, at least in an overt way. I presume that he would have given it if we had invoked it. He was very proud of me, I think, as a deacon in his church who had done nothing to discredit him at any time, and who had done some things to give him pride. He was a good man, but certainly not a Walter Rauschenbusch type of Baptist leader. I was fond of him. He was, at the same time, a conventionally-minded civic and religious leader. I know he supported some individuals in later years who were not my kind of leaders. So I got no help from my pastor of a substantial character, but I did maintain happy relations with him.

Dr. Calvin Waller was not an ecumenical Baptist. He wanted to be popular

with non-Baptist groups there in Little Rock. At the same time, he was very proud of his position in the late 1930's as president of the Arkansas Baptist Convention. When I was selected to direct one of the old preaching missions campaigns that had visits from visiting dignitaries like E. Stanley Jones, Adolph Keller, and other leaders in an ecumenical movement, I asked Dr. Waller if we could have one of the meetings in our Second Baptist Church. Oh, he dug his heels in. He said, "No, it will hurt me, Brooks. It will hurt me in the Baptist Convention to have a preaching mission here." Now imagine that. That was not his feeling, but he was so eager to maintain status. He was wanting to please the Baptist hierarchy in the state convention, which was rural dominated and very conservative. He was afraid to exercise any independence of it. I remember that he resisted but at first I held his feet to the fire. When I finally withdrew the request to keep from embarrassing him, although I wasn't sure we should have done that, I think we should have just let him take responsibility for it--he said to me, "Brooks, my wife said to me, 'Calvin, you and Brooks have been such dear friends, you just cannot afford to let anything happen to that relationship. Now, don't you go against him if he feels this is something you should do.'"

I think maybe I did save him from the decision. But his struggle was inside himself--not with me. I wasn't going to let anything happen to the friendship if I could help it. It wasn't going to be a matter of friendship. There was no way I could keep from carrying the hurt of his weakness, not mine.

There are plenty of other churches that we could have had, but his was a very prominent downtown church, and I wanted my church to be a part of that ecumenical movement--a preaching mission that was supposed to mobilize the whole Christian community, to shake it, and to make it realize that the churches had a lot in common which was to get an appreciation of what the Christian religion involves. It was to be very vague, of course. All of those campaigns are. It was an "evangelistic thing," and a mild kind of evangelism, I concede; but, it still had great symbolic significance. For him to be reluctant because of personal honor and because of his failure to understand independence and judgment on theology and on ecclesiology and on politics and civic progress--for him to have that antiquated view, of course, hurt me. I felt bad about it, but, at the same time, I think his feeling towards me was one of genuine friendship and appreciation. I think he was happy to see me elected to Congress.

T: In your experience as a politician, do you think that pastors have assumed a political or nonpolitical stance as a shield from having to take a stand on any particular issue? I would like to hear your comments on the wisdom of this.

H: Yes. I have some ideas, and it is going to take a while to expatiate on that because it has to be carefully documented. But I have done a lot of thinking about that, and I have some very positive ideas on the subject. Also, I must remember when you were asking you didn't use the word, but you meant just this--did they take any digs at me? They did on one interesting issue and that was the issue of evolution. I'll come back to that because I had to pay, in a fashion, for my opposition to the anti-evolution law, which was not the position that William Jennings Bryan took, as you know. I want to explain that because there is one little anecdote involving

Lawrence County toward the end of the campaign in 1928, that I must tell. It had become largely a dead issue by 1930. But in 1928 it was a hot issue.

(Second day of the same interview, July 18, 1975)

T: What did you have in mind?

H: In January, 1928, while the state was being torn by the debate over evolution laws and before I thought that I would be a candidate for governor, I had had an invitation to speak at a meeting of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. In the course of my comment I made the statement that I didn't believe the president of Washington College, which was the position Robert E. Lee held after the war, who enjoyed prestige, not only as a general but as a college man, would favor the bill being urged upon the state legislature, or shortly to be presented to the people for popular vote--a bill with such repressive measures. I may also, either in that talk or some other Baptist talk, have mentioned E. Y. Mullins, who was at one time president of the Southern Baptist Convention. I know that he discouraged the interference by legislation on the part of the state with any matters of religious content or religious policy. So, I thought I was on good ground in saying that Lee would have opposed this bill. Of course, that was entirely speculative. I was using that as a ploy to get my thrust in against anti-evolution laws, but I believed it even with no proof. I felt very strongly about it.

T: As assistant attorney general had you been called upon to rule at all on the constitutionality of bills that were being introduced in this area between 1925 and 1928? Had this ever come up?

H: You know, that's an interesting point. I don't recall that I was, and I don't believe that I was. I don't believe that it had gotten into the courts at all or that there had been any opportunity for the attorney general's office to rule on it. This was a personal thing, in other words. I had already left the attorney general's office in January of 1928. But on March 2, just a few weeks after this speech, I became a candidate for governor. Now, the caption as the headline in the Little Rock newspaper, one of the newspapers, I believe the Gazette, which was the morning paper, and went out all over the state, was "Sunday School Teacher Opposes Anti-Evolution Bill." And it stirred up a little controversy. I might have known it would happen because that was the one thing in the speech that got attention; and it indicated, as I have said to you previously in interviews, that my prominence as a teacher of a fine Sunday School class was very much a part of my public image. Now, during the campaign in 1928 for the governorship, the debate over evolution continued because under our initiative and referendum provision in the constitution the bill was being submitted to the people to be voted on in November of that year. I said nothing further about it. I was not pressing my views on this bill, certainly not making it a part of the governor's campaign, because the people were going to vote on it and there was nothing the governor could do about it anyway. But it was just one of those things that we would have been glad to carve out of the governor's campaign although I never regretted having said it.

Now the little incident that provoked some merriment around headquarters and to some extent in political circles was this. On, I guess, about Friday night--it may have been earlier than that, the week before the

election--there was a telephone call from Walnut Ridge, the county seat of Lawrence County, and our leading man up there was quite frantic. He got my campaign manager, who was my law partner, Judge Priddy, and he said, "Judge, something has got to be done about Brooks up here. We are just having trouble all over this county." He said, "I declare we are losing votes so fast I don't know whether we can stop it or not. It's just awful what's happening." And Judge said, "Well, what is it, Jim, what's happened?" "Well," he said, "You know it's just awful. We had this county by a thousand votes, and I don't know whether we can even carry it at all now." The Judge said, "Well, quit sputtering and stuttering and tell me what it is." He said, "They got it out on Brooks that he's an evolutionist." Judge Priddy started sputtering then, you know, and he said, "Well, deny that," and Jim said, "Deny it? Hell, we're denying it, but to tell you the truth, I believe the little squirt is."

T: I appreciate your relating that story, Mr. Hays, and in reference to that campaign there are probably two or three other things that would be useful to hear your reaction to, as you reflect on them. The election in which you ran for governor and in which you were involved took place in the summer, I believe, in 1928, prior to the national election in the fall. Was there any difficulty or problem, or how did a young thirty-year-old Democrat from the deep South raised in traditions of Baptist faith react to the pattern that was occurring with reference to the national Democratic Party and the possibility of the selection of Al Smith as the candidate to represent the party in the national election for President? Also, what was the general stand of the Democrats on prohibition? Were you so immersed in the local situation that this really didn't come to the fore?

H: I'm not surprised at the questions asked because, of course, the South was shaken by the nomination of a Catholic and by the raising of the prohibition issue by this nominee, Al Smith. There are two things to be kept in mind, however, about the Arkansas situation. One of the things I am about to mention as a factor would affect most of the states of the South, but particularly Arkansas. That is, the voting pattern had been so rigid and so highly respected--you voted Democratic no matter how you felt about things. That had persisted ever since Reconstruction days.

The second factor, and this was peculiar to Arkansas, was that one of Arkansas' leading men was the running mate of Al Smith. The nominee for vice-president was Senator Joe T. Robinson; and there was a pride in the fact that Smith had picked him as the running mate. So that was a mitigating circumstance and made it a little easier for those of us in the political circle to favor the ticket as usual. Now, my family felt otherwise. Both my mother and my wife voted for Hoover. I think it was largely on the prohibition issue. Neither Mother nor Marion were narrow in the sense that they had any prejudices against Catholics. I was a Smith supporter and made a speech for him. I got some criticism for it incidentally.

The campaign stirred up a lot of our Baptist people and caused a lot of dissension in the Democratic Party ranks. The Hoover support was so impressive that there was a feeling among a lot of people that it took some juggling of the ballots in a few counties where there was corruption to carry the state for Smith and Robinson. I have mentioned heretofore in my talk with you that it was a difficult situation. It is well to get this background because, you see, not only has sentiment changed throughout the

country over the prohibition question but federal prohibition was a failure. Sentiment was swung by that and not by any abandonment of the feeling of church people, particularly Baptists, on the question of liquor; but there has been a great swing in sentiment over that issue and over party loyalty. No longer is the South in the grip of this fetish of Republicanism that had disturbed the voters of the South (the white voters). Only the whites were voting in numbers, certainly in the primaries. Now, I came to oppose that very vigorously and was outspoken on it. I mean this one-party grip. In 1938, only ten years later--and that's a good long while back--I made a speech in Columbus, Georgia, attacking the one-party system. I said the South will get better politics and better government when we have a stronger, challenging party, when the grip of one party is shaken from the control of Southern states.

T: Would it be correct to say that many times in Arkansas there really were two parties? There were two groups within the Democratic Party or would that be going much too strong?

H: No. I think that's right. The differences were settled in the Democratic primary when there were dissensions, and sharp differences over candidates or policies.

T: It would be fair almost to say that the primary became the general election.

H: That's right exactly.

T: You lost the campaign in 1928, and you have spoken briefly about losing it. What was your reaction? You were thirty-years-old and this was your first major state-wide race and you lost the governor's office.

H: Well, there was little impact in terms of family disappointment. It was a blow, of course; we had put our savings into the campaign, and we were left with a bit of a problem on that front. But from the standpoint of popularity and prestige it was all a plus. A great big plus mark for us because here I had, while still on twenty-nine, challenged the strong administration and run ahead of all of the candidates except the governor who edged me out with a plurality. But among the other opponents of Governor Parnell who thought they could win the nomination were former Governor Terral, and the state auditor, Carroll Cone. I got twice as many votes as either of them. They were neck and neck for third place in the results. So, it was amazing that I had run this strong. That is, among the politicians this was an impressive race. I carried Little Rock by a good vote. I remember one fellow quipped the next day that I was receiving congratulations all over the place, and they said, "Was Brooks running for second place?" So that was the result.

T: You mentioned about your Sunday School class, too, in this period. You moved to Little Rock and joined the Second Baptist Church. Tell me something about how you got involved in teaching this Sunday School class.

H: Well, the class was a group of young men. I think we identified the Second Baptist Church as a downtown church, a strong downtown church. Of course, the other denominations had strong downtown churches too, but this was, you might say from the standpoint of support among the establishment, the leading Baptist church, maybe not numerically because some of the

others had good strong memberships too. There was a class in the church called the Baraca Class. The Baraca Movement has, more or less, passed out of the picture. The class was taught by a very wonderful woman, Mrs. Baars, the wife of a former Baptist professor at Ouachita College, and she was much beloved. She had died a few months before this, and they were looking around for a teacher. Knowing that I had been active at the church in Russellville, two of the leaders of the class came to me in the attorney general's office and put it up to me, would I become a teacher of that class? Well, it seemed a challenge, and I wanted to identify myself with the church, so I accepted. The class began to grow. I think maybe I added a new dimension. I gave it the best I had in terms of an interpretation of religion in the life of society outside the walls of the church. I gave it an informal touch, and I had in the class a very wonderful and witty businessman who helped me occasionally, Charles Evans. He helped me in the informal preliminaries to give it a light touch.

There is a good deal to be said about what came to be known as the Brooks Hays's class, as it was always referred to popularly. People didn't know what Baraca meant, and finally, officially, they changed the name of the class. I opposed it. I felt it was not wise, but they outvoted me on that. It was all right. And certainly it's all right now because I am living away from Little Rock and no one can feel there is any effort to exploit it. But I had a sensitive feeling about that. It became so well known, however, that I remember just a short time ago when I was introduced to speak at the Dallas Rotary Club the person who introduced me formerly lived in Little Rock, and he said, "And so it is now my pleasure to present to you as our speaker today the only man in the United States who was named for a Sunday School class."

I remember, too, Nevada's Senator McKarran's secretary had some information I needed while I was in Congress and when I called, his staff member came on the line and I said, "This is Brooks Hays." He said, "Brooks Hays?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Brooks Hays. Did you know there is a Sunday School class in Little Rock, Arkansas, that has that name?" He didn't know who I was.

The class became a sort of symbol of what we called "religious liberalism." Now the word, of course, is in disfavor now, apparently, an undeserved odium. They didn't have it then, I guess, but it was, at least, a sort of progressive class. We even had for a while a little Wednesday night forum in which we would talk about practical Christianity. And, always, in my talks I tried to give it a practical application. When Norman Thomas came to speak, perhaps that very year . . .

T: Now this is Norman Thomas of the Socialist Party?

H: Right. I guess in 1928. That was only three years after I began to teach the class, but it had climbed into strength, numerical strength, rapidly. I think the enrolment, perhaps, was close to three hundred. Average attendance was good. We would be disappointed if we didn't have at least one hundred fifty men out there listening to me lecture. There was some question from the standpoint of the Sunday School Board in Nashville as to whether or not these large classes were the proper thing. But they couldn't shake that class. They would have resisted any kind of pressure to break up the class that had an esprit de corps that was just out of this world.

Norman Thomas came to speak as a Socialist nominee, and he didn't know I was in the audience. I had sneaked in and I was sitting in the back of the auditorium. He said, "Well, I understand you've got a governor's race on. I asked about it today, and they said, 'Well, there are seven candidates and six of them are crooks.'" Of course this was a very cynical, improper, and inaccurate appraisal, but I am quoting Norman Thomas. "Well," he said, "what about the seventh one?" They said, "He's young yet," meaning that I might become a crook, too.

Later, I became acquainted with Thomas, after I came to Congress and even before that, I guess. I met him in some policy discussion. He told me that on that same trip to Little Rock, without identifying me as a candidate for governor--he didn't know about that--he asked one of his sponsors there, "What are the sources of liberalism in this community?" And he said, "I was utterly astounded when this fellow said, 'Well, it's a Sunday School class. The only one I can think of that has a real focus on that kind of thing. It's a Sunday School class taught by a young lawyer around the corner here, downtown.'" Our class met in a separate building incidentally, the little church building, well, it wasn't so little, but it was constructed about 1912, I guess, didn't have much of a Sunday School facility. So, we had a separate building on property owned by the church nearby.

T: Tell me something more about this experience of yours in this class. Did they tolerate your views?

H: They tolerated me, not always my views. I think I did influence many of them. It had a sort of evangelistic twist, if you don't measure evangelism in the narrowest sense. I was reaching men for the larger Christian community and not to get them on the Baptist church rolls. I remember one fellow stopped me on the street one day and said, "Well, Brooks, I was away from the church and away from religion. I had drifted away because I couldn't take some of the stodgy ideas of my church out in Kansas. I just didn't have any time for religion, but my brother-in-law urged me to come around there and hear you." He said, "I had always figured that the people I had been hearing talk about religion really didn't believe what they were saying." Then he said, "Well, I'll be damned if I'm not convinced you do believe what you say."

Well, I've used "hell" and "damn" here quoting other fellows, but there it is. Those were the two little words that showed up in Harry Truman's vibrant vocabulary, and I never minded quoting Mr. Truman. I don't think anymore that people object because your cussing can be obscene and vulgar--and that kind I abhor--or it can be just colorful language. I don't think the language is helped any by even those little innocent words--"damn" and "hell." I have told you what Mr. Truman had to say about his being able to cuss and I couldn't which was true. I had always monitored my language very carefully. At the same time, we wanted men like the man I have just quoted because he did become a regular attendant.

I think I'll tell here at this point a story, since I'm entitled to claim it as a part of my image. After I was in Congress and in the later years--the late fifties--a man who had been on the other side and had opposed me vigorously, not in a personal way because I never had very many points of tension with my opposition, came into the office one day in Washington. He was in his seventies then and I was younger, in my late fifties, I

guess, and he said, "Brooks, let me ask you something; but before I ask you, I want to say to you that at first I thought your religion was a pose. I thought it was just a pose--a posture that you were assuming for reasons that weren't too attractive." But, he said, "I was wrong and long ago I was convinced that I was mistaken. I came to see that it was a very real thing with you, and I am glad to tell you that I changed my feelings about your religion. I want you to know how I feel about you now." He said, "I have never made any profession of religion. I have really neglected the Lord, and I know that I don't have much time left. What I want to ask you is, do you think there is some way I can sort of sneak around and get in at the back door when my time comes?" I said, "No, no, I don't think there is, and I don't think you want to go to the back door, and I don't think the Lord wants you to go to the back door. I think he wants to roll out the great, big, red carpet for you so you can come in the front door."

Well, I made him feel good. I think that I gave him some comfort. We often don't realize that there are men and women in the twilight who haven't been able to fit the mold and that so often the pulpiteer, and to some extent the laymen, in interpreting the experience of conversion or the getting "right with God," don't realize that often we leave people who don't fit that pattern, and are not going to fit it rather comfortless. This means--and I am making a little observation now--there is a need to reexamine evangelism. But this thing that the man said indicated to me that there is a way to bring comfort, and, I think, to carry the spirit of Christ, who said, "Other sheep have I, not of this fold." There is a way to do it, and that is what I have tried to do. I was, of course, not a part of the traditional, the conventional, evangelist school. But I believe in reaching people with the Christian spirit, and the gospel has very real meaning to me in terms of this element of comfort.

I remember once I had a message that an old friend of mine that I had known casually in Russellville was out at the Baptist hospital and he wanted to see me. I did go by to see him, and he was silent in the bed. He lay there and he greeted me. I didn't say, "I understand you wanted to see me." I just said, "Brother Yow," Brother R. F. Yow--I remember him now--"how do you feel?" I never did know why he wanted to see and after he had died, I remembered that he had not joined the church. He came and sat in the pew with his daughter and wife and they were active church people. I think now that what he was wanting was some comfort from me in his last days. I have such a wistful feeling about it that I wish that I could go back, recall that experience and probe that element of his thinking. Because he didn't, perhaps, know how to tell me why he wanted to see me, but I hope my visit did help him. But I think, maybe, and I don't believe this is presumptuous for me to have this thought, that he came as this friend came to my congressional office, seeking comfort.

T: Was the issue often raised that you were simply a teacher of the class because it was good politics?

H: Not much. I think it was because there was enough evidence that I was putting spiritual content in it. There were not political science lectures or anything like that, and certainly, they were free from personalities. I never said, "Now, I hope you all will vote for my friend, Bill Jones, next week," or anything like that. We were pretty circumspect about that.

As a matter of fact, we used to have a weekly luncheon, and I think they still do. I think that class has maintained the idea of a weekly luncheon though never strongly attended. It didn't have much of an attendance, but sometimes you would have, maybe twenty-five men or more, a respectable group sitting around the luncheon table on Wednesday.

T: This was at the church or somewhere else?

H: No, the church didn't have facilities, as I remember it. They preferred a cafeteria because it is hard to arrange for everybody to get the same thing. So, they'd get a little room somewhere. I think they are still meeting on Wednesday. I remember when I announced for governor. Governor Terral was a member of that class, and we had a little talk about it at the business session. They were all for me, in spite of the fact that they liked Governor Terral, but I was their teacher. Some of them wanted to pass a resolution, and we squelched that quickly.

T: A resolution in your class?

H: Yes. Pass a resolution, just saying to the public, "We know this guy and we endorse him." I said, "Oh, no. Nothing like that," so they never did do that. Now, after I was finally elected to Congress, after three unsuccessful races--two for governor, one in 1928 and one in 1930, and then a tragic race for Congress in a special election in 1933, there was great rejoicing in that class. I remember they had a celebration. But that, of course, could not be regarded as a political matter. So, I think they handled themselves very well.

There was one development later that is worth a footnote. In 1948, when Truman's civil rights program and his "liberal" position on other issues created some controversy in the South--in other words, he became a controversial figure--I was forthrightly for him. I was one of the few members of Congress from Southern states who was publicly for him. I remember that there was a good deal of resentment of it in the class. In other words, the class had a conservative mold. In spite of the recruitment of a sort of marginal church group of young people, it was somewhat conventional. Except for the Truman incident, I got along all right because they knew that I was tolerant and that I didn't believe any political group had a monopoly on truth. I gave that philosophy plenty of support in my talks. In 1948 there was so much resistance, so much opposition to Harry Truman, that some of them wanted to change the name of the class. And they came close to doing it. I didn't, of course, have anything to say about that. But I was so relieved when that element backed off, or when there was enough strength for the spirit of tolerance that it was quickly dissolved. But that is an incident that belongs in this picture.

One of the leading members, not of my Sunday School class--I think he was in another class called "the old men's class" and you know that was always said with a bit of derision, and now the Brooks Hays class is the old men's class--was June Wooten, his father had been my Sunday School class teacher at Russellville. He was born at Russellville, a fine lawyer, but much older than I. He was a leading official in the Democratic Party, and when he broke with the party over Truman that was regarded as quite an event. In the county Democratic Convention he stood up and more or less denounced me. I knew, since we had been such close friends, that it simply indicated

how traumatic this anti-Truman sentiment was. He even pointed his finger toward me. He "was surprised," he said. I can hear his excoriation now. It was only a little short of a personal attack, and he was letting them know that he resented my support for Truman. He said, referring to me, "I've known this man all of his life. My father was his Sunday School teacher in Russellville, and I have loved him and I have supported him. I want him to know how I resent his trying to talk us into voting for Harry Truman." It was a pretty scorching speech and he was capable of making that kind. I had heard him make them when he was for me, and I had never dreamed that I'd some day be the target of his wrath.

I am glad to report that when my time came to say something that I said, "I know what you are expecting--some of you who don't know me real well. You're expecting me to reply in kind to my friend June Wooten's speech. I'll reply only to this extent: that I think he was a bit unkind, but that's not the point. That's all I am going to say because I can easily brush that aside because you see throughout my life he has been so kind to me. He has ridden the range so often in the dead of night to carry messages, luring people into my support. He has made so many sacrifices for me over the years in my aspirations that I can accept anything he wants to say now. I can forgive him for any castigations that he wants to make. We'll still be friends."

T: We have kind of moved away from 1928 and 1929 and moved up to 1948, but let me ask one more question about your Sunday School class and then pick up with the 1928-29-30 years. Were you able to get to teach the class on a pretty regular basis each Sunday or did you have to have a substitute very frequently?

H: Between 1925 and 1934, (except) when I was desperate for a job and had to go to Washington for a while to get employment under the new Democratic administration, I taught the class continuously and was seldom out of that class. But from 1934 up until I was elected to Congress, an eight-year period, I was in and out of Little Rock so often that I was what you would call a half-time teacher. Charlie Evans, a businessman, was there to substitute for me, and the boys loved him. Later we had another wonderful substitute, J. J. Doyne, who had been state superintendent of Public Instruction and president of the State Teacher's College. In his later years he was in a period of retirement, but a profound person and an excellent teacher. At that time he was nearly blind. He didn't have notes, but his little talks were gems. We had a platform in this building that was built for about two hundred men, and they just always rejoiced to see him walk down that aisle and stand and talk. J. J. Doyne. I wrote a tribute to him twenty-five years ago that was put in little pamphlet form. It is still being circulated. I had a request just the other day for that document. The person who wrote me is writing a history of the college of which Dr. Doyne was president, and wanted it.

T: In 1928 when you lost, you say you still had a law practice. It was before the crash and before the problems of the depression. When your election of 1930 was to take place, the stock market had crashed--did things look bleak in Little Rock in those days? Perhaps we should go back a bit before we talk about the 1929-30 era in Little Rock. I would like to ask you something about some of the pastors that you have known, and perhaps it would be worthwhile to say something about some of the pastors in Russellville

whose preaching was sometimes a little less than you would have hoped for. They, I am sure, had other characteristics besides their preaching that you have mentioned.

H: Yes. Well, I am glad to do that. I was very fond of practically every pastor we had. Some of them were extremely mediocre, few of them had seminary training. I am talking now about the Russellville group. Between 1903 and 1923, there were at least nine--I can recall the names of nine pastors now and I believe there were some there that were interim pastors--but the tenure was an average of about two years to a pastor.

T: Were you hard on preachers?

H: I think that it was more or less typical. The churches were rather feeble--the churches of that period and of that territory. I guess, we didn't have the standards that we should have had. In other words, it was not just a matter of mediocre preachers; perhaps, it was mediocre leadership in the church. I don't know. But, at any rate, that was not unusual. There was a big turnover, I think, in most of the churches in that day, but we had about nine or ten in that twenty-year period. Then there came on the scene in 1923 a very wonderful young man right out of the seminary named Clyde Vernon Hickerson.

T: Before we talk about Brother Hickerson, are there any names that stand out to you as having really tried at Russellville and didn't make it and moved on in that period of these nine or ten pastors?

H: Well, yes, there was one, early in the period of my residence there as a boy--W. C. Woods. Brother Woods was very popular, and he may have stayed three, four, or five years, and he went on to a better pastorate. Then, there was one, Mr. Clevenger, who was visiting his daughter when the pulpit was vacant, and they induced him to come. He was a very scholarly person. They liked him, but he was a Northerner and probably went back to Iowa. But I think of him. They were good men. One or two were a bit unworthy. I will have to identify one, a Mr. Jennings, who in later years was a strong Klansman; and this, of course, aggravated me no little. But even he was a man of some charm, and I wished him well. I probably did something to help him I shouldn't have done, and that was to offer a resolution when the tension became so great that he wanted to resign and get another church in Tennessee. I did offer a resolution I think, maybe, just trying to help him in a transition, thanking him, and endorsing him. I probably shouldn't have done it. But at any rate, I think of him as a bit on the unworthy side because of his Klan connections. He was a fiery Klansman and that goes in the picture. But these men were rather typical, I'd say, frontier preachers. The rural culture had left some gaps in their intellectual life. But it was really sad to see the rapid turnover. But, of course, we were able to pay so little. I think their salary was sixty dollars per month and the little parsonage--maybe fifty dollars per month--plus the occasional "poundings" that they had when the folks would bring in groceries and things. It was a terrible thing. We just didn't dignify the ministry as we should have. As an indication of how the intellectual level was disappointing, I remember hearing one of those pastors preach a sermon of a good sister in our church--she was a good sister, too--she deserved a little bit better.

T: This was a funeral?

H: Yes. A funeral service. He said, "The first meal of vittles I ever had was in her home." Well, I think maybe that's about all I need to say about the Russellville pastors.

I was at Fayetteville from 1915 to 1919, and there there were two pastors, both, I would say, superior men. One was M. P. Hunt, and I guess you'd have to say that he was about as homely a person, about as ugly as anybody that ever mounted the pulpit. Yet, he was a fine preacher. Facile and a good man and he used to say that the initials M. P. meant "Mighty Pretty." He knew his limitations as far as looks were concerned. He went back to Kentucky. He had come from Kentucky to Fayetteville. Now Fayetteville had an outstanding Baptist church. Wonderful. Still is. He was succeeded by L. E. Barton, of the very prominent Baptist family of Bartons from eastern Arkansas. L. E. Barton achieved considerable prominence in Southern Baptist Convention circles. You will find his name sprinkled through the Convention records. His position was not always appealing to me. I remember he had something to say in one of the Southern Baptist Conventions that was way off the beam. It had to do with South American politics, Argentine politics, and it was a sudden eruption of feeling on his part that produced a resolution that embarrassed the Convention. I don't remember the details.

But I was fond of my pastor, Mr. Barton, and he was apparently interested in me because he wrote to me from Montgomery, Alabama--some city in Alabama where he had a good church--telling me that he just couldn't get over the feeling that I was "called" to the ministry. I think he used that familiar phraseology--that I was "called" to preach and that I ought to yield to the "call," and that I ought not to postpone it any longer. Well, that disturbed me, because as you have known from some previous things that I have said, that if I was "called" for any profession, I was called for politics. I have never had quite the feeling of God's interventions to call people, specifically and particularly. I think we are all "called" to do something. But, at any rate, that was Brother Barton. Some of those preachers should be mentioned.

T: You were starting to say something about Brother Hickerson. I guess he would be the pastor you would remember having come back from Washington.

H: Oh, yes, yes. Now this Klansman that I mentioned was pastor of the church. He had been called while I was away in Washington, and he was pastor when I returned.

T: Now, this was Jennings?

H: Jennings. The Klansman. That was an unhappy pastorate largely because of the Klan and because of certain personality traits in him. But it saddened us when we heard later that he had had a nervous breakdown and died shortly after that in Tennessee. He resigned, I guess, about a year after Marion and I got back to Russellville.

I was put on the pulpit committee. I remember we got word that there was a young graduate from the seminary in Louisville that was going to marry Amy Compere of a famous Baptist family. Her father had been a missionary to Nigeria. She was, I think, either born in Nigeria or lived there with the missionary family as a girl. She was a fine speaker, had attended

the Women's Training School in Louisville, and that was where she had gotten acquainted with Clyde Hickerson. I am glad to be asked about him because there is so much in the friendship of the Clyde Hickersons and the Hayses including my wife and parents that was meaningful. That persists to this day, and I do want an accolade in my memoirs to him and Amy. I was happy to support him in the pulpit committee's deliberations. He was preaching what we call a trial sermon over at Dardanelle, four miles away, across the Arkansas river, and Mrs. Ruth Brooks and I went to Dardanelle to hear him. We were quite impressed, and, of couse, the crowning argument for him was that Amy would be his wife and we'd have two pastors.

So, he was called and he accepted it and came on the scene sometime in the early spring of 1923. At any rate, he had become our pastor by the summer of 1923. Then, he was married to Amy in October, 1923. I remember that very well because I was to have been his best man, but the stork was fluttering around our house, and we became parents of our first child, our daughter, on October 23. I believe they married in Little Rock on October 22. He was a wonderful man. He stayed eleven years as pastor of that church. He had the most successful pastorate in its history. Then he went from there to some good churches: Hot Springs, First Church; Tabernacle Church in San Antonio; and then pastor of the Barton Heights Church in later years. He is now in retirement. Amy Compere has continued to make a name for herself. She has been a member, and perhaps still is a member, of the Foreign Mission Board. They live in Richmond.

Now it was about that time that there was another prominent Baptist preacher, Bruce Hays Price. He was named for my uncle and a lot of people knowing of our close friendship think he was named for me; but my uncle, Dr. Fred Hays, was the attending physician when he was born, so he was named for my uncle. He was in high school, I guess, in one of the senior Sunday School classes when I was Sunday School superintendent. He looked up to me. I was regarded as one of his mentors and I took a lot of interest in him. He was a wonderful lad from a poor family. They didn't have a car and Dad and Mother would drive his father and mother home after church. He has talked about that, how our family never let the fact that his family lived in another part of town . . . my father was a successful lawyer.

T: He was a member at the Russellville church?

H: That's right. Bruce Price is almost exclusively responsible for my having been elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He was ambitious for me and believed I had a contribution to make as a layman. So, it was his idea. I had nothing to do with it. I certainly wasn't engaging in any activities to win the presidency of the Convention. I wish it could be said that no one has done that, but we do know that occasionally there are candidates for the presidency. Bruce was unabashedly promoting me, but that was his privilege, of course.

T: We want to talk more about that, but tell me something more about Brother Hickerson in terms of your remembrances in Russellville. Did he have a profound influence on you as a young lawyer? You would have probably been about the same age--maybe he was a little younger than you.

H: No. I think, actually, he was just a little older, a few months older; but, he fortified me in what were probably either the basic assumptions of

my life or the principles that I had acquired before that. I would say it was more in the realm of companionship and congeniality. To that extent there was an influence, because here was a dedicated life that could offset any of the somber results of the earlier failures of ministries that I had been exposed to. To that extent it was a great influence. He and Amy were such congenial friends. We used to go to conventions together and were often in each other's company. Clyde joined the Lion's Club because I was a member, and that, apparently, meant a great deal to him because it gave him an outlet in civic life. He was among the first preachers of any denomination that became identified with life outside the usual congregational activities. So, I am indebted to him.

T: The Russellville Church in the late 1960's became involved in a controversy with the Arkansas Baptist Convention over the issue of alien immersion. Do you remember that being raised when you were a member there? Was there ever any discussion about that?

H: Well, I do know that Clyde Hickerson was liberal on that point. I don't think he made any issue of it, but I have an idea that there might have been some sneaky admissions under his pastorate. That was easy to do. As a matter of fact there is a lot of it done, as we know, and maybe that's the way it should be done because once you bring it out and try to have an ideological victory on that score you are generally doomed to a disappointment in many churches. Not always now because the picture is changing. But here is an illustration of the fact that he did have some impact, or at least he had some views that had been regarded as aberrant at that time. At the Fort Smith Convention, I guess along about in the early 1930's . . .

T: Arkansas?

H: Arkansas State Convention. There was a motion introduced. A resolution was presented to the Convention, following a sermon by Harold Tribble, a professor at the Louisville Baptist Seminary and later president of Wake Forest University. He had made a talk at the Convention--preached a sermon. A day after he had departed a discourteous thing was done. A motion was offered from the floor, criticizing his views on, I believe, what was called alien immersion. Oh, it was going to pass and Hickerson took the platform to oppose it. He said, "I know that there is a prevailing sentiment and I know the tone of Baptist thought on this, and I am not making any point of that at the moment. What I am saying," and, of course, he was right about this, "is that here we are passing judgment on someone who has been our guest. It is a personal thing and unworthy of us. Moreover, let me say this," and here is where his foot slipped, and he laughed about it later, "I attended his classes. I never heard him promoting anything like what you all are denouncing." All of a sudden one of the brethren said, "Oh, but Brother Hickerson, if you will yield just a minute. I attended those classes, and I heard him in the classes." Well, that just knocked Clyde's breath out of him because he had taken the wrong turn on it, and probably the fellow who interrupted Clyde was closer to the truth than Clyde was. I guess it was just in his desperate anxiety to protect Brother Tribble from embarrassment that he said it. That was honest. He just didn't remember having heard it. But he wasn't thinking in courtesy terms about it. At any rate, Clyde just stumbled around then, and he never did get back into the swing. He told me later, "I declare," as we went home we got to laughing about it, "for years I had dreamed that someday I

could rise in that convention and strike a blow for progressiveness and for liberty and for righteousness and sweep them off their feet with my theological elegance, and look what I did. I fell flat on my face." We laughed for years about that. I think incidentally the motion was withdrawn.

T: So in many ways you'd say really the views of the Russellville Church were sometimes very progressive and perhaps can be traced back to this pastor.

H: I think he did have a strong influence there. However, it was not something that they wanted to make a lot of. I mean, those things come in quiet ways--the progress that is made in the emancipation of Baptist congregations from 19th century practices and views. These victories come, I think, through discrete and well, shall we say, loving and guiding the people. I don't think any pastor would ever be wise just to hammer away at it as something that is not basic in Christian living. These practices are going to change. It is already changing in this matter of alien immersion. Then, there is something to be said for those that want to preserve some things out of our past. I don't get too excited about it, but I am for open membership but I want adult baptism. I am opposed on principle to infant baptism though even that doesn't excite me anymore since I find my wife, you know, having had no other than her infant baptism in a Methodist church. But, still, certainly theoretically, I think that we Baptists have been right about adult baptism. But the kind of practice that St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, with Claude Broach--under his leadership--I think that practice is wise. Claude Broach has never advocated receiving someone from another denomination who did not have adult baptism. But, the point is, that so many Baptists were, in this period that we are discussing, made to be administered by a Baptist preacher. So, I think this is going to vanish as a disruptive issue. Now, the later Russellville practice in the sixties that resulted in their not having their messengers seated at the Baptist State Convention was just that. Charles Thompson was pastor at the time. I never knew him. I think you will find that it was under his leadership, and I don't believe the church has retreated from that liberal posture. Now, they have quieted down on it. They haven't made an issue of it. The Convention, I think, has been so impressed by the charitable attitude--what we call the Christian attitude--on the part of the Russellville Church as time went on that they always avoid any condemnation of the Russellville Church. The Russellville Church has wisely said that they will not let the stubborn position . . .

T: Just as the tape ran out you were talking about the Russellville Church; we should probably tie the end in here and then pick up the pastors at the Second Baptist Church in Little Rock. You mentioned about the charitable and Christian attitude that the Russellville Church took with reference to the Convention and the general quieting down of the issue. Was there anything else that you would want to say on that, or should we move to the pastors of Little Rock?

H: I think we had better move to Little Rock now.

T: Fine. Whom do you remember?

H: Dr. Calvin Waller had come there as pastor in 1917 or 1918, from Kentucky, and had a very successful pastorate of the Second Church of Little Rock

from this period. During World War I, I guess, he had been called to that pulpit and served until about 1943, almost to the time of his death. There might have been a year of retirement there. So, he had a long and fruitful ministry in that Second Church. He was succeeded by M. Ray McKay, who had been pastor in Kansas. He was pastor maybe as long as seven years. At any rate, he went then to the professorship in Southeastern Seminary at Wake Forest, and has just recently retired. He had a good ministry, and I was very fond of him. He was an outstanding pulpiteer. Then, he was succeeded by Dale Cowling, who is still there. Dale came, I presume, about 1952. He has had a quarter of a century as pastor. He was a very young man when he came, and he has some very progressive strains. He has an evangelistic fervor, but he also has this passion for service for the down-and-outs. I know he launched some programs for rehabilitation of former prisoners and that kind of thing. He believes in social service as a practical Christian expression. I think you would be interested in a plaque that I have on the wall which was presented to me by Dale Cowling at the dinner given by about seven hundred of my friends following my defeat in 1958. The dinner was in the Willard Hotel in Washington, December 18, of that year, and the pastor flew to Washington to present this plaque from the Brooks Hays Sunday School Class. I think I will just read it. It is very short. I know the audience was interested in it--the fact that he had come that distance just to have that brief appearance. That's all he did. "Presented to our good friend, the teacher, and precetor of many years, Brooks Hays, and to his lovely and devoted wife, Marion. We offer our congratulations on fifty years of happy marriage (1922-1972). May God bless you and grant you many more golden years together. The Brooks Hays Bible Class." Now, I am sorry Ron. This is a different plaque. They gave me more than one plaque apparently. This is the one they presented when we had our 50th wedding anniversary--three years ago, incidentally.

T: Would one here on the wall relating to the National Committee to honor Brooks Hays be the meeting that you are speaking of?

H: Yes.

T: Your library here has all sorts of different plaques.

H: This is the plaque right here. I got the wrong one.

T: I am glad you read that plaque relating to your 50th anniversary. We've got so many things to talk about and so many things to say and do. Read this plaque that you got.

H: Now remember this was on December 18, 1958, and it was Dale Cowling presenting it. This plaque that I now am holding, the right plaque, said, "Presented to Brooks Hays in appreciation of his Christian life," . . . well, you can read it.

T: All right. "Presented to Brooks Hays in appreciation of his Christian life, his leadership as a teacher of God's Word, and spiritual influence to the class which has borne his name since 1926. Brooks Hays Bible Class of the Second Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas."

H: Well, much obliged. I thought you would be interested in that.

T: Yes. Very much so.

H: By the way, Dale Cowling was chosen by me as president of the convention when we assembled in 1958, in, I believe, either May or June of that year, for our annual convention in Houston--the first of the two conventions over which I have presided--to introduce and sponsor a resolution that I had written to authorize a study of our place as Baptists as a Christian community in the effort to achieve world peace, particularly through the United Nations. His resolution was unanimously adopted. I mention that because I thought it was a nice recognition of my pastor while I was president of the Convention. He took a good deal of pride in the fact that the only president of the Southern Baptist Convention that the city of Little Rock has had was a member of his church and a layman.

T: The leadership of the church at Little Rock seems really to have revolved around three people for almost fifty years--well, in excess of fifty years with these pastors that you referred to.

H: Yes. That's right. We have had three pastors in better than fifty years.

T: What about these pastors as far as counsel and discussion with them? Were they your confidants in some of your decisions, some of your struggles? The church had a profound influence on your life, but how was it manifested? Was it a personal thing or was it tied in with certain deacons or pastors?

H: No. I can't claim that the relationship with the three Little Rock pastors was anything more than the usual relationship of pastor and constituent. But one thing must be remembered about that. You see, under two of these three--while two of them were in the Little Rock pastorate--I was in Washington most of the time.

T: Right.

H: So the pastors in Washington have been more dominant in my institutional life than the Little Rock pastors. I came to Congress in 1942, and I had spent much time in Washington in the late 1930's. So neither McKay nor Cowling had much opportunity to influence me, and Dr. Waller recognized me as a mature churchman. So there was little need of what you might call counseling or nourishment there. I would say that I derived my nourishment and growth, if it has been growth, more from the literature that I acquired myself. Not, certainly, the usual Sunday School Board's literature, because I have never been awed by its character, but I did buy good books. By the way, the Sunday School class allotted me, at my request, in order to encourage me in my lean years, twenty-five dollars per year to buy religious books. And that would buy more books then than it does now.

T: Right. The reason I raised this is that I think this is important and maybe you want to speak to this in more detail. There were people that you talked with, and your ideas were developed out of a milieu of many things. Who were the people that influenced you, that had a profound effect to your life and your decisions and so on?

H: Up until the time I came to Washington as congressman, you see, my pastors were older men, except Hickerson, in his case; and I found companionship in the formative years with men of my own age. This involved preachers

from other denominations. A Presbyterian preacher, William Hodgson--I had known him casually at Fayetteville when he was a high school student, he was perhaps two or three years younger than I--was pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Russellville when I went there to practice law in 1922, and he and I organized the Lion's Club together. He became the first secretary and I became the first president. We were contemporaries. He was a very progressive minister, and he encouraged me in my church life. He was a good speaker and a good man. Our friendship has been maintained by correspondence and even that has been rather thin because he has been in the Chicago area most of the time since about 1930. William Hodgson I would list as a person whom I was fond of outside the Baptist circle of ministerial leaders. Then, I have said a great deal about Hickerson, and I can't say too much about that. But, in Little Rock, I had three or four cherished friendships among other church leaders. Marshall Steel, in Little Rock, was pastor of the Winfield Memorial Methodist Church, a very prestigious pulpit, and he later became pastor of the great Highland Park Methodist Church in Dallas and had a marvelous ministry there for perhaps twenty-five years. He then became president of the great Methodist College in Arkansas--Hendrix.

T: At Conway?

H: At Conway. Our friendship was very close. We worked in community affairs and in sociological activities, efforts to improve social conditions and to contribute something to progressive thinking in these fields.

He was a warm friend, and I was devoted to him. We correspond some. Another friend was Joseph B. Hunter, pastor of the Heights Christian Church in Little Rock, a former missionary to Japan. He is still in touch with me through correspondence, and another, I would say in its truest sense, liberal Christian leader. I could mention others, but these were two of my outstanding ministerial friends who encouraged me and helped me. I am glad you asked that question because, you see, I am reaching out for contemporaries and really influential friends outside the Baptist orbit. There were many others--Marion Boggs, a Presbyterian minister, for example, the Rabbi Ira Sanders was another.

T: Were there other people who may or may not have been preachers with whom you counseled? You must have sat down from time to time and discussed things, reacted and thought about, and sounded out your views. Who were some of these people? Or did you not do that?

H: Well, I may have lacked humility in this area of my life. I may have felt that I had all the access I needed to the throne of grace. But, oh, I did have men and women who counseled with me, but I guess it was primarily in the realm of social work. I was president of the Arkansas Conference of Social Work for two years.

T: When?

H: In the early 1930's. I guess I was elected about 1932, and served until about 1935, maybe. It was perhaps a little over two years--maybe three years. At any rate, I was president of the conference. Well, we'll have to move that a little forward in the 1930's, because in 1935, when I came to Washington on a mission for the government, I had occasion to talk to

some of the leaders in the welfare program and in the Department of Agriculture about my work as social conference president. I invited Aubrey Williams to be a speaker at one of our conferences, and he couldn't accept. He was Harry Hopkins' top assistant, and was head of the National Youth Administration. He was a close confidant of Franklin Roosevelt. Men of that kind were not interested in my church life except as it was incidental to my work as a sort of crusader for some reforms in the patterns of Southern life. But, you will find a lot of friendships that I had were in this area.

Some of the women social workers were constantly contacting me for various causes, and I was contacting them. The executive for the Pulaski County, that's the county in which Little Rock is located, Tuberculosis Association, Miss Martha Allis, was a great friend; and Mrs. W. P. McDermott, the County Juvenile Court Officer was a confidant. She was a much older person, greatly respected in Little Rock. Well, these are two of the professional social workers that became close friends. Miss Erle Chambers was the state secretary of the tuberculosis work, and she was also a member of the Arkansas State Legislature; and she was a warm friend. I attended national conferences of social work and national conventions of the tuberculosis association--well, I have said conventions, maybe just two in that period of my life. I remember when I was in later years invited to speak at the National Conference of Social Work. It is now called the Association for Welfare--the exact phrasing escapes me at the moment. Its name was changed and social workers became a part of a federation. At any rate, when I was invited to speak at their general session in Chicago some years ago, I said, "I have waited almost fifty years to be invited to speak to this outfit. When I was a young amateur social worker in Arkansas I used to want to be on your platform so bad I could taste it, but you have waited a long time, so I am going to make the most of it." I talked about thirty minutes to them at one of their general meetings.

But this explains why I go back to social work right off. Did I tell you what my wife said when they asked me at the Rutgers' press conference when I was first introduced to the public at Rutgers University when I left the White House in 1964? Well, one newsman said, "Mr. Hays, we read in this blurb that the University has issued that you are a lawyer." I think I've got that . . .

T: Yes.

H: Well, you remember my wife said, "an Arkansas social worker." It's not bad to repeat it because that gets the social work aspect of my life in its proper perspective, I think, and it must be there as a very vital part of my life's interests. Now, one other thing before we move to another subject. You have asked about those who counseled with me and helped in the religious realm.

T: I don't mean in the term "counsel" that you were in need of help. I mean, rather, people with whom you would discuss issues that confronted you and the work you were doing and this type of thing.

H: Yes. Well, I recall in particular something that will show up in my memoirs, if they are ever published, and we can make a note of it here. A contribution was made to a political meeting of mine, a closed session of the closet friends and advisors. The morning after my defeat in 1958 by the write-in, "stick-in,"

they called it because they used stickers, this eight-day, write-in campaign that Governor Faubus launched, or rather was launched by some of his lieutenants with his approval . . . The morning after that surprise defeat we had a meeting in the office of Raymond Lindsey, who was at that time president of Gideon's International. He was a great churchman, and he had been an active member of this Sunday School class that I taught. He said to me one time, "You know, you're responsible for my activity in the church." He said, "I sat there under your tutelage, and I was moved to alter the emphasis, the values, the priorities of my life by what you had to say." This seemed strange to me because I wasn't trying to do that. It was not a counseling. It was not an effort to provide anything of that kind. He was talking about the Bible and personal convictions and the Christian life, but, he said, "You have made me a mature Christian." He said, "I was a conventional Christian. You have made me a mature Christian," which is all I need from the standpoint of reward for any effort. But he became a great Christian and a very sincere, strong, I would say a pious person in the correct sense of the word. So, when we had made the decision the morning of what I should do . . .

T: You had this meeting?

H: This meeting in his office. He had been the treasurer of my campaign. He was a good businessman and a very active leader in all of my campaigns. Well, we decided that I would not contest the election.

T: Who would have been in this . . . ?

H: Well, friends like John Wells, who was a newspaperman and had had my interest at heart for many years; Charles Measel, another member of my Sunday School class, a businessman, a druggist; Dick Emerson, who was my office manager in my Little Rock office; Marlin Hawkins, the sheriff of Conway County--he had come down to meet with us and was an active leader in the western part of the district; my cousin, Harold Sadler, an automobile dealer; C. E. Lowry, an insurance executive; and my son Steele Hays, who was practicing law there in 1958. I know I have overlooked some, but these were very close workers. Jack Stewart had been very active in my campaign, and also Allen Gates. This was a huddle to decide what I should do.

I had no trouble convincing them that I ought not to contest the election, that the city was a divided city. It was suffering from the Little Rock school controversy. We would just accept defeat gracefully. I remember, since it was such a sad thing, that it was such a sudden and unjust assault on me. You see, it was not an honorable thing they did. They didn't advance a candidate early in the campaign so we could fight it out as campaigns should be fought out on the basis of issues. They simply seized the election procedure. They influenced the election officials and practiced some dubious methods in getting the votes reported, and it was just a terrible thrust that they made and really sabotaged the honorable election procedures. At the same time, we were victims of the Little Rock hysteria, and we recognized it.

Just as we were ready to go, C. E. Lowry, a Presbyterian, said, "Men, I don't think we ought to go just like this. I think that maybe we ought to do something here that only Raymond Lindsey can do. Let's ask Raymond to pray for our man and just ask God's blessings on all of us because we, as well as

our city, are in need of prayer right now and we are needing some new foundations under us." It was a nice little statement. It wasn't parading righteousness or trying to say, "God's on our side." It was just a little sweet reference. So, I'll never forget that prayer as long as I live--a terrific prayer. It couldn't have been offered by anyone who hadn't been accustomed to praying. He prayed for our divided city, "our sick city"; and, of course, he prayed for me that I wouldn't let it hurt me; and then he prayed for the others. When he said, "amen," nobody said a word. We were all standing. It wasn't a long prayer, but it was a powerful prayer and a sincere prayer. Dick Emerson, who had been so close to me and had managed my Little Rock office was crying like a baby. Dick was a paid employee, I think maybe half-time, at any rate the salary was incidental with him as he was independently secure. He was not a rich man but he had enough to live on, but the salary was there for him. My son reached in his pocket and gave him an extra handkerchief and said, "This will help you out." Well, that broke it just a little. It was getting a bit sticky. At the same time, it was a very moving experience. Everybody thought that it was appropriate. Ordinarily it isn't appropriate, but there I think it was only because of the dramatic circumstances under which I had been defeated.

T: I do want to talk about the whole struggle of 1958, but our time is getting close to being gone.

H: Yes. Let's try to wind it up in five minutes.

T: Well, let me let you go on then speaking of that. We really do have to talk about some things that happened during the 1930's. You made reference to the fact that you had a problem of needing some place to work. Did the defeat in 1930 move you somewhat away from the political spectrum? Were 1930 and 1931 hard years for a young lawyer in Little Rock?

H: Desperately hard. The matter of survival, food on the table, just meeting ordinary expenses of living, presented a problem to everyone, particularly lawyers because lawyers, not many of them at least, have salaries. Some of the more affluent lawyers had big retainers, and they didn't suffer. We laughed over the two lawyers who met on the street during that period. Now this was in 1931, along in there. The depression began in 1929, but it was a couple of years, at least one year, before its impact was felt. So I would say this was along in 1931 or 1932. One of them said, "Well, have you had a good week?" He said, "Oh, I've had a fine week. I had one ten-dollar fee and one fifteen-dollar fee and two or three little bitty ones."

So, it was rough. I taught a public-speaking class--built it around the Dale Carnegie course--at the YMCA in Little Rock. I believe they paid me five dollars an evening, and I had maybe two different classes. Then I organized a class over at Conway, thirty miles away, and at Hot Springs, some sixty miles away. I'd drive to each of those towns and with what I could make there--maybe net five or ten dollars an evening--I managed with my father's help to pull through those lean years. But it was awfully tough because the law practice just fell in. After the second governor's race, when the depression hit, we still tried to maintain our offices in Little Rock in the Rector Building. We had a stenographer. We paid her fifteen dollars a week. Sometimes we didn't have that much, but she would

always get what cash we had. We managed, at least finally, to keep current with her. And my father sent me fifteen dollars a week. I had two children, and I had a house with a mortgage. The payments were not too onerous, but the HOLC--that was the name of the government agency that bailed homeowners out, you know--came to my rescue as they did to millions of other Americans. But this gives you some idea of the severity of the problem of politicians and of lawyers in particular.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: September 8-10, 1975

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: This is the third series of interviews with the Honorable Brooks Hays, conducted in his home at 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C. September 8, 1975.

Mr. Hays, it is good to see you again and visit with you. We were talking last time about the developments in Arkansas in depression days in 1930-33. You ran for the governor's office in Arkansas in 1928 and then again in 1930. Can you describe something of what it was like to lose for the second time in two short years, and what your ideas and concerns were? You were a young man of thirty-two then. What were you thinking about doing when you lost in 1930?

H: The 1928 loss followed a very exciting campaign. There was a lot of glamour apparently, and the people were interested in the fact that a twenty-nine year old youngster was running for governor. They called me the Boy Scout candidate, and I believe I later referred to the fact that I was elected to Congress in 1942 by the Boy Scouts who were too young to vote for me in 1928. That was an exciting experience. I felt that the "plus" qualities in that race far outweighed the minuses. But in 1930 there was still some excitement in being a formidable candidate for the governorship, and I was still very young--only thirty-two. There had not been many governors of American states that young--Dan Moody of Texas, probably; Harold Stassen

of Minnesota. It was still carrying a certain novelty, but it was hard work and the amount of money poured into the campaign against me really made it a very arduous and difficult situation. But I had to run.

T: You used that phrase, "I had to run."

H: I had to run if I meant to live with my conscience; or, from a practical standpoint, if I intended to stay in politics, because you see this is the situation. The administration in Arkansas was under the domination of a corrupt highway commission--not exactly domination but at least the corruption in the highway office of the commissioner, not the whole commission membership. I think that the governor was free from any venality. I mean he didn't participate in the spoils, but he was a weak man and the continuation of Harvey Parnell as governor meant a continuing toleration of this inordinate expenditure for highways and the too rapid construction of roads. They couldn't be built well at the speed with which they were trying to construct them, and of course, the selfish interests of the road construction industry and the bond brokers meant pressures on the administration that, if yielded to, put tax burdens on the people that should not have been tolerated. All of that, I felt, demanded an opposition, a strong opposition, to the election of the continued service by Governor Parnell. Because of my impressive showing in 1928, it appeared that if Parnell could be defeated, I was the person to do it. No one else could do it and I possibly could not do it, because, of course, he had been strengthened since the 1928 campaign. He had been in office only a little while. In the campaign of 1928 he had succeeded the governor who had resigned to be a federal judge. He, as lieutenant governor, succeeded him in March of 1928, so he had served only a few months when the campaign in 1928 was on. But he had had an additional two years and had strengthened himself and had produced some rather worthwhile things, too, in the legislature--things that I believed in and was happy to say so. Well, I remember there were such improvements as the income tax. He had vetoed the bill to permit horse racing. He had authorized a new hospital for nervous diseases and he had produced some school legislation that was good. But, still, the road situation remained the great issue.

T: The bond issue was paramount in your mind.

H: Right. That was the paramount thing coupled with the fact that the corruption that this kind of deficit financing resulted in affected other agencies of the state, too. In 1929, the legislature meeting in January following the election was a subservient legislature which did his bidding. You asked why I felt I had to run, and I have spoken of the matter of conscience--the fact that I was convinced from what the political leaders said that if there was hope of interrupting this kind of thing that needed to be interrupted and stopped, then I was the one to do it. I would have been happy from the standpoint of my own convenience and conserving my financial situation to have rested in 1930. But the pressures were very great. Coupled with this element of conscience was a realization that if I said, "No, I am not going to run," the assumption would have been, and in a negative way it would have been correct, that I had just followed the course of expediency, of opportunism; that, in other words, my campaign indictments of 1928 of the administration were sort of an empty, hollow effort to advance myself and that I had no real strong conviction about it. You see, in other words, to be consistent with what I had done in 1928, I had to run in 1930.

That's what I mean by "having to run," because I think the feeling that I had "sold out" would have been great whether there was a basis for it or not. In fact, I might have just preferred to get out of politics. It wasn't a sellout but it would have been a weakening and the people would have said, "Well, the old boy is not as strong-fibered as we thought he was." So, that was the reason--those two reasons.

T: How strong would the pressures have been on you had you been elected to carry on the "under-the-table" operations of the highway department and so on?

H: They would not have been strong. I could have handled that all right because I had an impregnable reputation. Oh, there would have been some overtures. There always are and there would have been some veiled and subtle ways of compromising me, but I could have handled it. I would have gone into office, if I could have won it, with a popular acclaim as "young Lochinvar out of the West."

T: Is this a real bona fide temptation to the Christian politician?

H: Yes, it is. While I think that more men are moved by conscience and courage than are generally credited with it, particularly at the high levels of national service and the Congress, I know that there is some yielding because to use the theological term, "We are frail creatures of dust"; and often this weakness is simply a negative thing. We just don't summon what it takes to do the right thing. It isn't very often that it is accompanied by real corruption or venality. Of course, you had it with a vengeance in the Watergate situation. But I think that this is something on which young men need all the counseling that they can get.

T: Was you father instrumental in your fighting in that campaign of 1930? I think we talked briefly about this before.

H: No. Father wanted me to stay out of that race. Father, at that time, was feeling some of the effects of fatigue. He was in his sixties. He was around sixty. He became sixty in January of 1930. But father had become somewhat tired of the battle.

T: Were you still living in Russellville?

H: I was practicing law in Little Rock. Father had high hopes for me as a success. He never did have quite the feeling of--oh, what shall I say--idealism in a way. He was an exceptionally good man, a great churchman, a great Christian, but Dad, never in the field of politics, had this adventurous spirit. He never did understand. I think if he had been exposed to the challenge that I had he would have understood, because he had the capabilities for sacrificial service. I can speak now without heroics, I think, because my public career finally gave some color to the feeling that I have never hesitated in quiet, intimate circles to express that no man ought to go into politics unless he carries the feeling, to paraphrase what Paul said in Miletus, "Neither count I my political life deal unto myself." It began, in a way with Plato, although it was more beautifully fortified by Jesus and by Paul. I think the Christian has more of a biblical direction than the secular students of politics. But whether you think of Plato as the originator of the idea or as an echo of

the Pauline idea, no man ought to go into politics who doesn't feel what I have just quoted that Paul said in Miletus. That's my feeling. I have confirmed it, and it is the thing that enables men who live by it to sleep at night and to have the inner satisfaction that no office can give.

I remember when I was defeated in the third effort to become governor, having waited thirty-six years to run. I ran--you may not know this--in 1966. I don't want to get ahead of the story too much but certainly, it was very appropriate then as I found young people who had worked in my headquarters after defeat. I called them in the room and closed the door and said, "Now, I know why you are grieving. You wanted me to be governor. I was your man and you wanted to see me ride at the head of the parade. You wanted to hear the band play in my honor. You wanted to hear me acclaimed as governor. You wanted to come to the mansion and shake my hand. You were ambitious for me and this has been frustrating. But," I said, "these are baubles. The important thing is whether we can do what public service demands of us--to find out that satisfactions come from the inner convictions regarding human service that stem from the Judeo-Christian traditions of justice, freedom, love, mercy, and compassion, and those things that are of a spiritual quality. You can relate yourself to these things without having power--that is great power."

Often, the concept of power is greatly overdone. I remember when one of my friends, Carl E. Bailey, was elected governor, I believe, in 1936. Of course, I had supported him; we had been very close. He stuck his neck out for me in my campaigns. He was sitting at his desk there in the governor's office. He was new and in the chair at that desk. He said, "Brooks, you know I used to think before I became governor that all I had to do to accomplish some good was just to will to do it, just to have the purpose of doing it. That such power would converge here at this desk, that that's all I had to do. But," he said, "I was wrong. The people need to understand that while there is power here, it is limited and that you are meeting frustrations constantly." So, there is a lot of deception about political power. Something besides willing to do good is necessary. The people must be conditioned for the good you want to do.

T: What is your view of the representative of a people, whether he be governor, congressman, or up to the very highest office as president? Did you foresee yourself as a representative of the people, or did you feel that you had been elected by the people with public trust and became a delegate to decide what was the best and wisest course for the area? Do you get the distinction there?

H: Yes, I do think I can answer that. I think that your last description meets far more accurately my philosophy and the directions that I move in much more than the first. Now, that, of course, is something to ponder because you don't want to show contempt for the idea of government by the consent of the governed. But that, I think, often rationalizes a representative out of a tough decision. He says, "Well, my people want this. I must do it."

They said that about segregation. My successor and Governor Faubus, who sponsored my successor in Congress said, "The people are for segregation. It is the duty of the representative to fight for segregation, to stand by it." Well, of course, the answer to that is that it is not his duty to

stand for it against violent people who are throwing stones in the street, intimidating the black minority or denying a minority of its rights. There are limits to what a majority can demand under our government. A majority is not sacrosanct. The rights of a minority may be more important on occasion than the right of the majority. So the representative's duty is not to heed always what the public says do. No, not unless it's right that it should be done. In the long run what is right is in their interest. So, if they want to rationalize, well there is a rationalization. But, no, no; there is no doubt in my mind about the role of a representative. Of course, it has been beautifully stated by Edmund Burke. He is one of my heroes. He said, "A representative owes the people not his energy alone but his judgment as well, and he betrays them if he yields his judgment to their passing opinion." I never sent out a postcard poll, never took a poll.

T: I was going to ask you about that.

H: No. I am against that. I think that is an insult to the people. How would they know what he ought to do in every situation? The wisest counsel is to give him the mood of the people, but trust him to tell them the facts and do what he thinks is right. And while sometimes the sentiment of the majority might have certain value--I think the Harris and the Gallup polls sometimes shed light on these public problems--if they are taken as a final determination of a legislative policy, why that's the bunk.

T: In 1930, when you lost, you returned to your law practice which you indicated at one point was pretty lean.

H: Well, it virtually collapsed by the second defeat. We had gotten along pretty well between 1928 and 1930. I had a good law partner. We had been roommates in law school.

T: Who was that?

H: His name was Bolon B. Turner. He later became chief judge of the Tax Court of the United States. He is now a retired tax judge living in Washington. We have been very close. He went through all of these agonies of the two campaigns without complaining. He handled our money for us--such money as we had. I remember once--we have often laughed about that in later years--I was starting out on my week's tour of the counties to speak. Under the conditions in 1928, you couldn't come in every night because the roads were not completed and you would find yourself farther away from Little Rock than was convenient to travel, so I had planned the week's schedule. I said, "Well, Bolon, give me some expense money for gasoline and meal money." And he said, "Well, let me see what I've got and he reached in his pocket and said, "The till's empty. Here's $1.65. That will get you to Perryville and I'll telephone some of our leaders at Morrilton to see if they can raise a little money. They'll get you through the week." I said, "Well, I'll need fifty dollars," so some of the boys from Morrilton did drive that twenty-five miles to meet me at Perryville.

Yes. The law practice suffered greatly. I used all sorts of devices to keep going. I taught evening classes at the YMCA.

T: At their law school?

H: No. In Little Rock. There was an evening law school, but I never taught in that school. I think perhaps at one time the dean did ask me if I would be interested, but that was later on. I taught these evening classes in public speaking at the YMCA. I was able to do that. My law was a little bit rusty. I had neglected it and perhaps that might have had something to do with my not wanting to teach in law school. But, at any rate, I managed. I think maybe I made ten or fifteen dollars a night, maybe five dollars an evening for some of those classes, but that was pretty good money in those days. My father sent me fifteen dollars every Saturday. And, of course, fortunately, groceries were very cheap. We could get by on ten dollars a week.

T: What was the standard lawyer's fee?

H: Well, of course, that had a wide range. We have laughed, "This is a pocket full." But it gives you some idea of how rough it was for lawyers because they were not on fixed salaries. Well, some of them had retainers. There were a lot of lawyers who didn't suffer any during the depression, but the law practice that generally depended on litigation, distinguished from the large corporation retainer type of practice, was in difficulty. I remember two lawyers met on the street at the very bottom of the depression, and one of them said, "Have you had a good week?" "Oh," he said, "I have had a fine week. I had one ten dollar fee, one fifteen dollar fee, and two or three little-bitty ones." So, they used to laugh about how the law practice was shot.

T: Did you have any interesting cases in that year of the depression?

H: Yes. Yes, we did. I wish I could remember the details of one case that really excited us. There was an old man named Thomasson, an eccentric and wealthy man, who had married in his late years. He was a widower when he married. He was very wealthy. He lived in St. Louis. I forget how we got jurisdiction of that case. But the issue was between his relatives and this second wife, the wife of his old age. The question was whether or not he had been competent to enter into a marriage relationship. He was extremely wealthy and while he had St. Louis lawyers, we, nevertheless, got in on it because the St. Louis lawyer who represented one side came to Little Rock to test his competency. I am pretty sure we represented the family rather than the widow. It is all very fuzzy in my memory because Mr. Turner handled the details largely. But, oh my, if we had prevailed in that case we estimated the fee would have ranged from one hundred thousand dollars to five hundred thousand dollars. So, we were excited about that. I forget how that case was finally disposed of but we lost. As I say, I don't remember the details. But that was one interesting case.

We had personal injury cases. I remember one little personal injury. It wasn't so little from the standpoint of the family interest. One of my close friends was a country doctor living down in an adjoining county, Dr. Niven. He sort of took care of the black families living in that little village and one of the teenagers lost his leg in a railroad accident. I think he was hopping a freight train. It raised some question of the railroad's liability to give the proper signals and erect the proper

cautions and to keep some outlook for young, irresponsible lads. He was only about fourteen or fifteen years of age. We thought they should have settled it on the basis that there may have been some direliction of duty--some negligence--but they took the position that there was no negligence and if so that it was his negligence. And that may have been strictly and legally true, but the family was hurt, of course. His earning capacity was damaged badly. So we brought suit.

Father happened to be visiting in Little Rock at the time and wanted to hear me try that law suit. So Bolon and I started out trying the case but before long Dad just took over. We have laughed about it a lot of times. He was a great trial lawyer. He just had more fun trying that law suit, trying to bail that little black boy out. It was the first time that I ever saw women sitting on the jury. It was the first time he had ever seen them. I made a little talk to the jury, and then Dad closed the argument and made a powerful plea. We got a two thousand dollar judgment out of it for the little black boy. I forget what our fee was. You always took those things on a contingent basis, you know--a third or a half. But they were happy about it because it looked as if they weren't going to get anything. But the railroad company decided not to appeal. They might have been able to throw it out because of the lack of evidence of negligence.

At any rate, we laughed about my father. He started out, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, and I pause to comment on the pleasure I derive from being able to say, 'ladies of the jury.'" He said, "It is the first time that I have ever confronted ladies on a jury. I am sure you understand the spirit in which I say this but while I have advocated this step, whether or not it is a wise provision, I think I shall reserve judgment on that until your verdict." This gives you some idea of the kind of wit he had and human quality that he displayed in handling a lawsuit.

T: Did he enjoy getting into something like that?

H: Oh, he was just like a horse at the beginning of a race, just raring to get on the track.

T: Then from 1931 to 1932, you really spent most . . .

H: Making a living; practicing law; trying to rebuild the practice; and we did to some extent. I kept on teaching the public-speaking classes. We didn't put this on the tape before did we?

T: No.

H: I even organized a class in public speaking over at Hot Springs and one at Conway. Those two I remember.

T: Now this is public-speaking classes?

H: Public-speaking classes. I did that on my own. The ones in Little Rock were sponsored by the YMCA, which had evening schools in accounting and some other things besides public speaking. It was a good service because a lot of men wanted to improve themselves, you know, and couldn't go away to college in order to take training otherwise. But I went over to Hot Springs and organized my public-speaking classes and, as I say, did this

on my own, so I didn't have to divide with the YMCA. I didn't need the YMCA there--just promoted it. I had some friends that I had made in the governor's race. Now this gives you some idea of what a great depression can do to your price structure. I paid one dollar a night for a room. It was too late when I finished my classes to drive back to Little Rock. It was about, I guess, sixty-five miles over there, and the car didn't go as fast in those days; and we didn't have as good roads as we have now. In any event, it was best for me to stay all night. A dollar a night; and if I made ten dollars there was one-tenth of it gone, and I had to buy my dinner and my breakfast. So I was just counting every nickel.

I remember giving the bellman a nickel tip. I was down to almost my last nickel, I guess. I said, "Would you mind taking a nickel tip?" He said, "You'd be surprised how many of them I get"; so it was a nickel or a dime tip--generally a dime, I guess. But that was all right. That was satisfactory. Coffee was a nickel a cup. It was in the Marquette Hotel--a good hotel, an old, respected hotel. It was not a shabby room at all, but it was a dollar a night--maybe a dollar and a half. I'm not sure, but that was the scale on which we lived, and it was all that enabled us to keep going. But that's what I did. Then, with my father's fifteen dollars a week . . . .

Also, I had been very active in the Lion's Clubs. I had organized the Russellville club as a young lawyer up there and had been active. In fact, I had been the district governor of the Lion's Clubs of Arkansas. They asked if I would be interested in organizing some new clubs. There were a lot of towns that should have had clubs. Of course, it was an awfully bad time to do that kind of promotion work. But we found enough men in maybe a half-dozen towns to organize new clubs. I think maybe I got one hundred fifty dollars out of that. It took several days to do it, but that helped. So, as a Lion's Club organizer and an evening class teacher and part-time lawyer, I managed to get by. But this was possible only because my family had very modest aspirations. They had no big ideas about social life or any kind of demands on me that I couldn't meet.

We managed to have a little vacation once a year. I had the car and we would drive up to see my wife's sister in Ohio, and there were no big expenses on that. I remember you could get in those days a room in a tourist home. Tourist homes were very popular in those days before your big motels. Tourism has changed greatly. But during the depression you could get a room easily for a dollar, and we could drive it in a couple of days. So we had inexpensive vacations by visiting the kinfolks.

T: Now, tell me something about your family just at this stage.

H: Well, our daughter, our first child, was born at Russellville in my father's and mother's home. We had moved in with them when we got back to Russellville after law school graduation, though we didn't intend to stay with them very long. We named her Betty Brooks. She was born in October of 1923. We had gone back to Russellville in June of 1922, and we had hoped that Betty would come earlier than that. Then, in January of 1925 we moved to Little Rock. So, she was very young when we went to Little Rock for me to be assistant attorney general. Then, three months after we got to Little Rock, Steele was born. So that was our family. We named the boy for his mother, Marion Steele. That's our contribution. They are both married and both are a great satisfaction to us.

Our daughter married an engineer, a civil engineer specializing in health and sanitation. He is now a health officer in Montgomery County, Maryland. They live at Bethesda. They have two children--a son who graduated at Duke and a daughter who graduated at North Carolina and then took graduate work in voice. She is a beautiful singer. She took her master's degree in voice at the University of Illinois. Betty's son, our oldest grandson, who graduated from Duke, took the law courses at the University of Maryland and is now practicing law in Anchorage, Alaska. Betty's little daughter married a doctor, and they are in Detroit. Our son has three children, two girls and a boy. The boy graduated at Yale. He will have a bachelor's degree in . . . I don't know what his major is, I guess political science. He probably will wind up practicing law. He is fascinated by my interest in sociology, and I think he is quite interested in Southern cultural movements and trends in sociology. He joined the Presbyterian church with his parents. They went into the Presbyterian church as a sort of compromise. His mother was an Episcopalian and they just loved the Presbyterian preacher there in Little Rock so that helped them. So they have been very active church people. Our daughter and her family have continued as Baptists.

T: As your children were growing up, what kind of things do you think they learned? Your daughter would have been seven or eight in the hustle and bustle of the campaigns of 1928 and 1930 and the depression days. Have they ever talked to you about the effect it had on them and your relationship to them? Have you ever talked much about that?

H: I have an idea that they were at the right age to ride it out. That is, Betty has told us, perhaps our son, too, that she was never aware that there was any great financial crisis in our life. She never felt that she was hungry. We didn't eat sumptuously, but we had enough to nourish their bodies. She didn't know there was a pinch. She wasn't dressing as well as her mother would like to have dressed her at times, I am sure; and yet my frugal wife was able to do so much on a little money. She never shopped carelessly. She was very, very wise and economical. I think both Betty and Steele managed to get through that period without any awareness of deprivation. Now, we felt it. I know there were times when I suffered a bit because there were things I couldn't do for them.

Betty was about five years of age in August of 1928 when the primary was held. Then, two years later she was around seven. I think it was in the second race--maybe in the first because this was certainly a juvenile thing to do--that I was speaking out in the open, as I often did in these summer campaigns, on a grassy plot down at Bauxite, Arkansas. All of a sudden Betty broke away from her mother and rushed out into the center of the circle of people sitting and standing on the grass and just hugged me around the knee. I looked down and she shouted, "Daddy, I wish you were a hot tamale man." Everybody heard her, and of course it produced a great roar of laughter and they have never forgotten it. We don't know what made her say it but that was her comment. She has, of course, been embarrassed about it, but she was just a tad. They remembered the campaign. I think that even the son knew well enough what was going on in the second campaign to feel disappointed when I lost. I think the sharpest pang of frustration I had was when Son rushed into the room the morning after the election in 1930 and said, "Daddy, are you going to be the governor?" Then, of course, I had to tell him I wasn't.

T: What do you think that the depression particularly did for you or against you? Did it have a profound effect on your life in later years after it was over? Do you think it had any lasting effect, or was it just part of the events that happened as you went along in life.

H: I can't claim, I suppose, that it had any great profound influence on me. I don't think it made me any more sensitive to the cause of democracy than I had been all along.

T: You had a strong sense of financial responsibility earlier than the depression days, so really it could well be that it did not have any effect.

H: That's right. It came not as an abrupt, jerking up, you see, the knowledge of the need of money. I am glad you asked this question because it reminds me of when we went to Rutgers after my White House term. Mr. Kennedy's death meant for me a change. I didn't want to stay at the White House, at least on a full-time basis. I did agree with President Johnson, after the Rutgers' offer, to come back and forth from New Brunswick, New Jersey, on weekends occasionally, maybe regularly. But at any rate, I wanted to accept this Vanderbilt professorship at Rutgers. There they had, pretty early in my tenure, a news conference to introduce me to the public. Rutgers is the state university, you know, the only one of the state universities that does not have the name of the state. I was being interrogated, and one of the newsmen had a cute question. He said, "Mr. Hays, according to this blurb"--and it was a blurb--"that the university has put out on you, you are a lawyer, a politician, a churchman, an author, and now you are going to be a professor. If we should say, 'Will the real Brooks Hays stand?' Who would rise?" Before I could say "the politician," which would be the honest answer, my wife confused them further by saying, "Just an Arkansas social worker," which was rather insightful. She had seen me divert some of my energies to deal with some of these sociological problems, economic problems. But you know, Ron, I would come up with a better word than social worker, and I think this is still somewhat my role in life. It was when I was in Congress. I don't think it is assuming too much to say that I am an ombudsman. I am interested and was sincerely interested back there in doing something for my own family, my cousins, grandmother, my mother's mother, families that were victims of rural poverty. I think maybe it goes back to that period. At any rate, somewhere along the line, I developed this concern. I guess I am still sort of an ombudsman.

T: Can you indicate some particular issue or case or individual that you particularly saw through the cutting of the red tape? Someone whom you helped achieve something they probably could not have achieved on their own?

H: Would you mean some constituent?

T: Well, constituent or individual--you said you were an ombudsman.

H: Well, I remember when I was able to get an appointment in the Roosevelt administration as legal advisor to the NRA. That was . . .

T: National Recovery Act?

H: Yes. That was set up to give some injections into the economic body. To give it some life.

T: I'd like to hear what you have to say about Johnson as the leader of that agency.

H: Hugh Johnson.

T: Yes.

H: Well, I can comment on that. You see, that was after the 1933 fiasco when I was deprived of my credentials as the elected congressman from the fifth district in a special election in 1933. I have described that.

T: No, you haven't.

H: Well, we will come back to that then. I guess it was along early in 1934, Frances Perkins, secretary of labor, called me on the phone. I remember how excited I was. She said, "Mr. Hays, this is Frances Perkins in Washington." Well, I swallowed three or four times, and I said, "Yes, Madam Secretary." She said, "Would you be interested in being legal advisor to our NRA office and labor compliance officer?" I said, "Yes, indeed, I would." She said, "Well, I am recommending you for it and you will be appointed." So, I went to Washington and got my commission with the title she mentioned.

Well, at any rate, in that job I had an opportunity to help a lot of people. Sometimes I helped the employers who were being harassed a bit maybe by an unfeeling labor leader. Sometimes I could help the exploited workmen and women operatives in textile plants. I did that. I remember sticking a balance of about five thousand dollars due the black women workers in a little textile plant in eastern Arkansas. That was a long hard fight. Of course, that doesn't sound like much in the way of back wages, but they had been exploited and the code wage had not been paid, although the owner of the plant had committed himself to pay it. So, it was a matter of simply making him live up to his contract. Well, I think of that.

Here's a thing that I have always sort of cherished. After I came to Washington in some capacity, I guess, as an assistant to Dr. Rex Tugwell, a year after the appointment as labor compliance officer for the NRA, I was appointed as special assistant to the head of the Resettlement Administration. Dr. Tugwell was a brilliant New Dealer. I was here then for months with him working on tenant legislation and rehabilitation problems for the rural poor. I remember one day I got an invitation to come to a dinner. Dr. W. F. Chase of Little Rock was inviting my wife and me to a dinner. When we got there he must have had fifteen or twenty people as his guests at the Fairfax Hotel. That was before it became so expensive to have a dinner. He sat at the end of the table, and when the meal had been consumed he stood up and said, "Well, this is a day of celebration for me because I secured a job today, finally. I have been appointed so-and-so." He told us what it was, and said, "I wanted the friends who had helped me get this job to be here to enjoy it with me." He went around the table introducing people. I think the mayor of Little Rock was there and others.

When he got down to me he said, "Now there's Brooks. He is wondering why I invited him because he knows that his efforts to help me were futile. Down there in Little Rock when I visited him every two or three days he had some ideas about it, but we were never able to put anything over. Then, when I got up here I got some help from various people. At any rate, Brooks

knows that while he tried hard he wasn't able to make it. Then, he saw someone else put it over. But I want him here and I'll tell you why. I always felt better after I had been to see Brooks. He didn't do anything except listen, but he never tired of listening." And then he said, "You know it's a great help to a fellow to have somebody that he can tell his troubles to and he was a perfect answer to my need for somebody to listen and to sympathize." I think on that basis that I could say an ombudsman renders a service sometimes when he doesn't bring home the bacon.

T: When you ran again in a special election in 1933, was that your only activity in politics per se between 1930 and 1933? You ran as democratic committeeman in 1932, and then in 1933 the special congressional election. Tell me something about this.

H: Now, you see, that means that I was pretty active. I don't think we need to go into the complicated reasons for my not making a third race for governor in 1932; but I will say this, just in passing. What was left of the machine, the political organization that had had their hand on the throttle a long time, particularly up in our part of the state--chiefly centered in Yell County at that time, Yell County--named for Governor Archibald Yell. Yell County was at that time, in 1933, a corrupt county. They stole elections and bragged about it. I was persona non grata to them because I challenged them. When I got ready to run in 1932, while they had supported me in 1928, that is, they didn't try to head me off or use any shenanigans because I had such a strong popular following there and they didn't want to get into an equivocal position on it. But in 1930 they had gotten some favors out of the Parnell administration and I believe I lost it in 1930. At any rate, one of the leading citizens of that county had been given a choice appointment by Parnell, and this was not an isolated case. Parnell had appointed a bunch of my friends--people that had been beholden to me, politically. This particular man, a man named Rorex, had had a very choice appointment in the Parnell administration and he was a favorite son from Yell County and for a while had been my father's law partner for two or three years. He just worshiped Dad. They were very close friends. But, of course, he went with the organization. He was eager to head me off. There was a bit of jealousy apparently. He was a little older than I, but he didn't want this young upstart. It was an alienated friendship and, I regret to say it, it revealed his own lack of depth of character and friendship. I think Father was disillusioned about him.

Neverthless, Rorex decided that he didn't want me to be governor. That was not overt. But when you found him urging my friend and law partner, Judge Priddy, A. B. Priddy, who had managed my campaign in 1928 and who had supported me in 1930, to run, that meant it was to head me off, because the close students of politics knew that Judge Priddy was not as well known as I was. I had made these two hard campaigns. My name was a household word in every part of the state. The administration that I had challenged and had indicted so vigorously had proved to be guilty of most of the things that I had charged, so the atmosphere was favorable to me. Many of the leaders did not want Judge Priddy, and he was not enthusiastic about running. He didn't want to run, but some obligations had been created. Rorex and some of his associates in Yell County had this obligation over him and they were putting the pressure on him.

One day, near noon, he called me down to the office where I had practiced

with him when I first got out of law school, and said, "Brooks, I am dropping out of this race." He hadn't announced but, he said, "I am just telling them I am not going to run." He wrote out on foolscap yellow paper--that may be among the papers that my mother kept or it may be at the University of Arkansas now--in pencil, "I have decided not to be a candidate for governor. I hope very much that my old law partner, Brooks Hays, will run. He is so able and so well equipped to be governor of the state, and he is favorably known now as a result of his other races. I will support him vigorously if he runs." He handed it to me and he said, "When you get to Little Rock, give this to The Gazette." That was the morning paper. Well, I thanked him, and I was ready to run because I knew I could be elected that year.

Another man, Judge Futrell, the man who did run and who defeated Judge Priddy and a host of others, and who had supported me in my two races, said, "If Brooks will run, I won't run." Judge Priddy called me in Little Rock and told me not to release it until ten o'clock and he said, "I'll tell you why. I have promised them that I'll talk to them one more time, but this is what I want to do. I am not going to waiver--I don't think I'll waiver." Well, there was that tentative quality in it. He called me later and said, "Brooks, don't put that out. They are working hard on me. I guess maybe I'll have to run. At any rate just put that in your pocket. Don't release it."

Well, within a day or two he did announce and, of course, I said, "Well, I'll support you." I was obligated to him myself. I just couldn't afford to challenge him. The decision was his to make. I have always been built along those lines. He had given a summer to me, and so on. I knew that it was Rorex's pressures on him. Well, Rorex probably thought maybe they could elect him. I guess he did think they could elect him; but, also, there was this other motivation. At least it kept me from running. Judge Futrell then said that he would run since I was not running. He announced, and I went into the headquarters of Judge Priddy and worked hard all summmer.

But I had my enemies, too. I had made some enemies during my two races and Rorex, was, you see, bringing into the Priddy camp some of the friends that had been alienated by me being a part of the old order; and that looked sort of like a successful setup--the Hays' men supporting Judge Priddy because he had been a part of my apparatus. But it wouldn't work. They should have known it wouldn't work because the Hays' men said, "Well, we are followers of Brooks. We would vote for you, but if Priddy is elected the old Yell County crowd would run him. We won't take him. We will vote for you but we won't go with Priddy." I just had an awfully uncomfortable summer. I made some campaign speeches for him. They were poor speeches, and it made Judge Futrell so mad he could have bit nails, and he never did forgive me. I don't know why because he was a mature man. He was, I guess, in his late fifties then.

T: Were they not good speeches because you really weren't committed to them?

H: Well, you see, I didn't have the "go" that I had had in these other two campaigns. Yes, I believed in Judge Priddy. He was a good man. I guess it was the fact that I didn't have the fire. The fire was burned out because the thing I had fought so hard was gone, you see. It was destroyed. It was in disrepute. I wasn't sure, I guess, in spite of my personal

friendship for Priddy and my admiration of him, that he would stand up to that crowd. I guess maybe that was there. I hadn't analyzed it carefully. Then, too, I didn't much like some of the selfish financial interests--the ultraconservative business interests of Little Rock--that were supporting Futrell. But that's a hard thing to lay out on a political block and say, "Now I'm against him because I think that he will be influenced by this and that." Those were hidden things, you see. That was not a visible thing to attack. I guess I tried to do it and didn't do it well. At any rate, he thought when I was criticizing some of his friends that I was criticizing him.

Then, Judge Priddy did something that I think was ignoble in his last desperation fight to retrieve the governorship, because at one time, I guess, the polls would have shown him the leading candidate. When Parnell himself deserted Rorex and came out for Futrell--it was a strange development--it made Priddy so mad he began to attack Parnell. That was ridiculous because he had gone into the race accepting Parnell's support, you see. Then, when Parnell supported another man that seemed to make a different figure of Parnell and that didn't make sense. I couldn't put my heart into that kind of advertising. I don't know that I have ever gone this far in an analysis of that agonizing thing. I must treat it to some extent in my memoirs because that was a miserable summer for me.

You can see why when some of my friends on the last day for filing for public office came to me and said, "We're going to file at midnight--just at the last minute--your name, if you will let us"; and I had to sign the form and pay the fee. It wasn't much. I think one hundred dollars to run for Democratic National Committeeman. Arkansas was one of about six states that elected members of the national committee by primary vote.

So, I went to Judge Priddy. I had to get his consent. I said, "Now the reasoning is that the friends who were alienated because Rorex, you see, talked you into running and left me out." I said, "You know, Judge, we've got that problem. This will make them feel that I haven't been mistreated." He said, "Go ahead and run." Oh, I was so glad to have that because then when the friends of the guy that I was filing against got mad, I said, "I am not doing anything. I'm just there if the people don't want this guy." He was a pretty good fellow, too, just a nonentity, a rich Little Rock lawyer who wanted the honor of being national committeeman and had played with the organization--one of their boys. He wasn't a man of bad character at all, but he was not a strong man and certainly not a friend of the rank-and-file of the people. He was just a corporation lawyer. I said, "If they don't want him, then they are entitled to an alternative and here it is." I said, "I am not going to campaign. I am putting my time in for Judge Priddy. This placates my friends." Well, it was a strange situation, and I wasn't happy about that.

One day one of Priddy's friends called me off into one of the rooms in the headquarters there in the hotel in Little Rock and he said, "I've got twenty-five one hundred dollar bills in this pocket, pointing to his pants pocket, and they are yours if you will withdraw from the committeeman's race." He said, "You can put it in Judge Priddy's campaign as a contribution if you want to call it that, or it is yours personally. I am not going to ask you what you do with it. It is twenty-five hundred dollars." I said, "Why, no. I am not about to withdraw from the race, and that makes it impossible for me to withdraw. I am not being bribed out of that race." So that was

one development that made me unhappy because I am sure they told Priddy that I had turned down a twenty-five hundred dollar contribution to his campaign. I don't know whether he ever felt it personally or not. He lived some ten years or more after that, I guess, and he never showed any hostility toward me. I guess he forgave me, if he felt that he had anything to forgive.

I remember, though, one action that I took and how difficult it was for me to take, and yet, I thought at the time I owed it to him to do it. I sat down by him along toward the tail end of the campaign, just about a week before the election, and I said, "Judge, you've got a hard decision to make here. I know what's happening. Futrell is walking off with this race." He had felt that, too. He said, "Yes, we've been losing. We've been slipping." I said, "Of course, you've got another thread there. You've got Blackwood, Dwight Blackwood"; he was the highway commissioner who had been the target of my two fights. I said, "You've got him as a factor and a possible winner. I don't think he can win it. Then, you've got this poor old ex-governor, Tom Terral, who is running." I said, "I think it would be in your interest--and I'm thinking now about Arthur Priddy, and only Arthur Priddy--that since you can't win it, it is my judgment that you drop out and support Futrell and retrieve something out of it because he would be your choice. I know that he would be your choice." "Well," he said, "I think you're right." Here he showed his political weakness because he just couldn't resist the political pressures on him. He would have made a poor governor for that reason. They would have controlled his administration because they told him, "No, don't pay any attention to that line that Brooks has talked. Don't do that." They were fighting desperately because, you see, he couldn't do anything for them. His withdrawal wouldn't help them, but it would have helped him, and I was thinking of him. They never knew I was doing that. I didn't have anything to do with the Futrell organization. I mean that I wasn't their representative. I was just thinking about Priddy, and he knew that. He knew I would never betray him. But those two conversations entered into the calculations.

Now, an interesting thing in that 1932 race is that without turning a hand, without spending a dollar, I had to qualify. We found about two days before the election when the ballots had been printed--they were printed in the different counties--that in one county up in Northwest Arkansas my name had been inadvertently left off the ballot. It required a telephone call to see how come. I called a good friend up there.

Well, that was quickly straightened out. I remember the telephone call cost me $3.65. That was the only out-of-pocket expense in that whole campaign. I ran no ads. Yet, in 1932 I carried seventy-three of the seventy-five counties.

T: I notice that you did carry seventy-three of the seventy-five. Which two did you not carry and why didn't you carry them?

H: I did not carry Marion County, which was the old home county of this lawyer that I was talking about, Mr. Grover Owens. He had moved to Little Rock from Marion County some twenty years before and was very popular as a home-town boy, so he carried Marion County. The other county I lost was Crittenden County, which I never carried in any of my races. It was a machine-ridden, eastern Arkansas county, and the courthouse machine had no trouble getting votes against me there because I was known as a radical land-reform

man and that was a plantation county. Marion is the county seat. I also lost Marion County and I lost the county of which Marion is the county seat. The name Marion was nothing to conjure with in that race.

T: You were reelected then in 1936 to the same position?

H: I was reelected in 1936 to the same position and again I lost Crittenden County but this time I carried Marion County and the county that I didn't carry that time was Hot Springs, which is located in Garland County. But I had carried Garland County in the earlier race.

T: I don't want to sidetrack, but was the gambling issue in Hot Springs part of the reason that you might not have carried that county?

H: Well, now remember I carried it in 1932.

T: In 1936?

H: No, I did not carry it in 1936. Let me go back to 1932, because the two counties that I failed to carry in 1932 were Marion and Crittenden. In 1936 they were Garland and Crittenden. I don't know exactly why I was able to carry Garland County in 1932, except that they were mad at the machine, at the organization; and Parnell, you see, had vetoed the bill to legalize horse racing. I was surprised that I carried it, but I think that was the reason for it. They were just mad at the machine because of the horse racing. They knew I would have done the same thing, but still, that was their way of punishing the organization.

T: Is there anything else you want to say about this 1932 campaign and the events surrounding the election in 1932? The primary election?

H: I think I've said all that I need to say at this time. I would add, however, that it turned out to be a great bonanza for me politically because after the defeats in 1928 and 1930, I retrieved something out of my two hard races for governor and a hard race in behalf of my law partner, all of which were frustrating. So, this opened the doors to access to Franklin Roosevelt's administration. I made full use of it.

T: Had you worked hard for Roosevelt?

H: Well, you see, the primary election was over in August, and we had from August until November to campaign for the national ticket. I campaigned for the national ticket as Democratic National Committeeman. We toured the state. Senator Robinson was not particularly friendly to the Roosevelt candidacy. I guess in that period he was still the minority leader, but he became the majority leader about that time.

T: The Democrats controlled Congress in 1932.

H: Well, then, he was the majority leader. He had been the minority leader up until 1930. That's right. He was the majority leader in the United States Senate. But the Roosevelt organization was not leaning on him, and they didn't invite him to campaign as far as I know because he told them that he would campaign in Arkansas and that was probably all he wanted to do--to be sure that Arkansas went for Roosevelt. There was no question about it, although it had come awfully close to going for Al Smith four

years before that. But at any rate, Senator Robinson and I campaigned the state together. I remember one little incident in the conversation that we had. It was just a good time. We were raising a little money for the President. I had the pleasure, along with one or two other party officials--maybe the state democratic secretary--of going to meet President Roosevelt in St. Louis when he spoke there, and he invited us up to his room in the hotel. I forget the name of that hotel. It is out on Grand Avenue.

T: Was that the first time you had met him personally?

H: No. I had appeared with him on a program once at Memphis in 1927 when he came there to speak for the Crippled Children's Campaign. He was, of course, a victim of polio and was being featured as a speaker in these campaigns to help crippled children.

T: Now this was when he was governor?

H: No--let's see. Yes, I guess he was governor in 1927. Well, I was president of the Arkansas Crippled Children's Society. Yes, it was in 1927 because I remember that Governor John E. Martineau couldn't go and he asked me to make the talk as his representative at this dinner in which Roosevelt was the principal speaker. So, I made a little speech and then the governor spoke. That was the first time I had ever met him. That was casual. I was not even an ex-candidate for governor. I was just an assistant attorney general of the state. I was a nonentity politically. Within twelve months I was certainly anything but a nonentity politically. I was running for governor, but Roosevelt didn't care about this young lawyer in 1927. That was the first time I met him.

T: Did you attend the Democratic Convention in 1932?

H: No. I did not.

T: You had not been elected?

H: No. I had not been elected national committeeman. I was, of course, busy helping Judge Priddy in his race for governor. That was in June, and the campaign was well under way in Arkansas. In fact, I had never attended a Democratic Convention. I guess I am one of the few members of the Democratic National Committee that served four years before he ever attended a Democratic Convention. Well, that was just sort of a strange result of the irregularities in my political career. The first convention I ever attended was in 1936. I had been a member of the Democratic National Committee for four years and never had attended a convention. I, of course, was in constant touch with Jim Farley from the day I was elected--not constantly--but he knew who his democratic committeeman was from Arkansas.

T: He was chairman of the national committee?

H: He was named chairman in June, when Roosevelt was nominated.

T: He was Roosevelt's man?

H: He was Roosevelt's man for chairman of the national committee. I don't believe Farley was with him when we went to St. Louis, but I remember handing

the President himself a check for four thousand five hundred dollars. I said, "That's not much money Governor, but this represents the contributions of a dollar apiece for the little Roosevelt-Garner medallions." It was a simple little thing we sold for a dollar. I said, "There are four thousand five hundred friends of yours in this check." He said, "Well that will do a lot of good." Of course, in 1932 we still had depression prices. He thought that was all right to come from a poor state like Arkansas. So he sort of patted me on the back, and Mrs. Roosevelt came in and we spoke to her. We didn't stay long. He was getting ready for his speech, his appearance that evening. But this was in his room--in the Coronado, I believe that was the name of that hotel.

T: Did he always sit down or did he rise to meet you?

H: Oh, he didn't rise to meet us. No, it was too much of an effort for him to stand. But, oh my, he had great broad shoulders and powerful hands and arms. Then I went to New York between the August primary, after Judge Priddy's sad experience and my sad experience, to see him. I wanted to see him just myself without anybody else, any incumbent.

T: Now this was Roosevelt?

H: Yes sir. He had a home--you remember a town house--out on, I believe, Sixty-fifth Street somewhere just east of Fifth Avenue. He had occupied it occasionally when he was governor. That was where he lived when he came down to New York as governor of New York. So, I had no trouble. I had written ahead of time and maybe Farley arranged for me to see him. I just went on in when I got there. The President chatted with me. There wasn't much to say. It was just a sort of get-acquainted again because these two previous contacts . . .

T: This was before he was elected?

H: I'll take it back. No, it was after he was elected in November. He was the President elect. That's the way that was. It was between November and his taking office March 4, because, you see in those days you didn't have the Norris amendment. Now, it could have been after the first of the year, but it was between his election and his inauguration. I had a nice little visit with him. I remember Mrs. Roosevelt interrupted us and apologized. She said, "Frank, Elliott's on the phone and he's got a friend of his who wants to meet you." He said, "What does he want a friend to meet me for?"--something like that and laughed it off sort of hoping he didn't have to. She said, "Well, now Franklin, it's a friend of his and it's a Frenchman, and you meet him." He said, "Okay, tell him to come on, but I'm not going to give him much time,"--or something like that. I felt like I was getting in on a little family talk. But that is all there was that I can remember about that talk except he just thanked me for what we had done for him, and I told him what I was planning to do--that is, that I would be practicing law in Little Rock.

I didn't know what was just ahead because later we became fast friends. He seemed eager to honor me. I don't think there is any point in burdening this recording with it because I know that the relationship between the President and myself the first two terms was very happy. He was frustrated in wanting to appoint me to a federal judgeship. Mrs. Caraway, Senator Caraway, blocked it. She wouldn't agree to it because she didn't like my

friend Governor Carl Bailey and the President didn't want to put her on the spot by making her stand up in the Senate and say that I was personally obnoxious to her. So he just didn't send my name to the Senate, but he wanted very much to appoint me. He had in mind an appointment for me later on, I think.

T: This was a reward for your support of him in 1932?

H: No, it was a reward for my standing by his New Deal policies, and, of course, in a way campaigning in the South for him in 1936. I debated Borden Burr, the famous Alabama lawyer, who was opposing him in 1936. I debated him in Atlanta on a regional hookup radio talk that created just a bit of a stir because the radio station tried to cut out part of my speech. I said that there would be a lawsuit for sure if they did because I could claim freedom of the air, you know. They weren't going to cut me off, but we had an awful time about it.

T: Let me ask this. You have indicated you were a supporter of Roosevelt and the New Deal program. When you ran in 1928 for governor and renewed it in 1930, your concept was fiscal responsibiltiy and a really conservative concept of financing. Was there any change of mind in your experience? Was there any reason that you could support the New Deal where you felt strongly . . .

H: Not at all. I think progressives and liberals, populists, whatever you want to call those of us who believe in humanitarian policies in government and help for the weak make a great mistake if we let that be accompanied by any fiscal looseness or fiscal irresponsibility. I think that unless we can sell the people on paying the taxes that will support that beneficence we've got no business issuing paper money and doing irresponsible things and yielding to the inordinate demands of the other side of the economic society; that is, feeding into the economic stream all the things that those at the top want. Unless you can stand up and get proper balance and the priorities we've got no business turning to the printing presses. I am a great believer in fiscal responsibilities. That means sometimes a hard line, and it means sometimes defending higher taxes, but that goes with it. So I thought what I was doing was entirely consistent with my emphasis upon more generous aid for the schools and better provision for welfare--entirely consistent. As a matter of fact, it had to do with priorities. It was not a businesslike thing that we were doing. It was just succumbing to the selfish interests that were pilfering our state. There was not shift. There was not as much of a shift as Roosevelt made when, having preached a balanced budget and having said that we have to have fewer employees in the government, he turned around and launched the boldest program that any administration had ever had. He had to have deficit financing for a while. Now I don't mean, as I have said, that fiscal soundness must always accompany humanitarian policies. I don't mean that I think you can always avoid some deficit financing in a given period. But you cannot do it indefinitely--you cannot afford to do it indefinitely.

T: So you didn't see any problem here. You felt that Roosevelt really articulated some of the reforms that you would be sympathetic with.

H: Well, now, Roosevelt didn't reveal his great spirit and great progressiveness until after he was elected. He ran as a pretty conservative, sound money man in 1932, and I didn't much like his speeches because I thought that they

lacked the boldness and the compassion that a candidate in a depression period should be exhibiting. But who was I to sit in judgment. At that time I certainly knew that he was more acceptable from the standpoint of the suffering people, the unemployed and others, than Hoover who had followed the old line of "get prosperity at the top and it will drift down into other portions of society." That was, to me, just an impossible theory on which to operate. Hoover did something that I think was entirely inconsistent with his fine record as a food administrator and as a humanitarian. He espoused legislation in his period from 1928 to 1932 that made for healthy business--that is, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and other things that indicated fiscal soundness and helped the farmers, too. There were some pretty good measures going through the Congress at that time.

I remember the senator from our state--"the other senator," as we said, Senator Caraway, who was not as well known as Robinson. That's the reason you have to say when you quote it, "the other senator," because somebody might say, "Well Robinson was the other senator." Caraway was a gadfly, but he almost wept on the floor of the Senate in depicting conditions in his part of Arkansas, and I remember how he scolded the Senate for appropriating money to feed mules but not to feed people. Hoover's record doesn't look very good on that score although he was a great and good man, and I am sure he was sincere in believing that private benevolence was the proper way to meet the starvation problems. But he was so wrong. While, I, as a bipartisan Democrat--I'm not in other words a narrowly partisan Democrat, a bipartisan on foreign policy, certainly, and I think pretty broad gaged on the two-party system--have praised the Republican party for their strong moral position in fighting slavery in the early days of its history, I have been just as loud in my praise of the Democratic Party in making this great break with the past in 1932. It was the first time that this ever got into a political platform: "Government has a responsibility for human welfare." And Republicans didn't take that position. They had a responsibility for the welfare of the economy, and it was on the theory that we would never let people suffer by private benevolence. But that is, of course, a result of blindness to the complexities of our 20th century economic scheme.

T: Some historians have suggested that part of the difficulties of the depression were magnified because of the unwillingness of Roosevelt to cooperate with Hoover between November 1932 and March of 1933.

H: He shouldn't be faulted on that. No. The time was short and there was no way in the world in which he could get his program rolling in that brief period. I don't know enough about that. I have made no close study of it. But my superficial judgment would be that it is groundless. Now, I did say a moment ago that I didn't particularly care for Roosevelt's speeches. I was not inspired by them.

This is just a little postscript, but it's worth inserting here because of Senator Robinson's response. We were in a big Lincoln car, and I sat in the back seat by myself, and he and Mrs. Robinson sat in the front seat. This was along, I guess, about the latter part of October. I leaned over and said, "Senator, I hate to say it, but, you know, I haven't seen anything in our candidate's speeches that indicate a sense of high statesmanship." I said, "I am just a little disappointed in the tone of his speeches. I haven't seen anything in the speeches that reveal a great statesmanlike

position." I remember, he just sort of looked over his shoulder and said, "You won't either," which showed that he didn't like Roosevelt. But within a few days he was the master helmsman. He was the wheelhorse of the New Deal, and he failed Roosevelt only once, and that was on the court bill but it was not because he didn't try.

T: I was just going to ask something about Roosevelt. Did it look like he was going to win? Did you think you were riding the winning horse?

H: Oh, yes. There is no question about that.

T: It was just a matter of time until Hoover would be defeated.

H: Oh, yes. You bet.

T: What happened in Arkansas when he closed the banks, when he took very decisive action very early in this administration?

H: Well, the people of Arkansas were not unlike the people, I guess, of every other state. There might have been some ultraconservative states--the Northern New England states, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire, for example. But Arkansas, as I have indicated, like the rest of the nation, thrilled to this bold action. They knew then that there was a man at the helm that would do the needful.

T: Was there a lot of talk about the bank holiday? Was it something that stood out? How do you look back on it now? Were people surprised?

H: Yes. I guess you would say they were surprised and they were a bit tense. But the thing that offset it was the mitigating factor that here was a man who did what needed to be done. He was ready to deal with the problem in unconventional ways. He didn't sail high with President McKinley's . . . . . .or even high with his cousin Teddy Roosevelt . . . . . He said, "This is it." Of course, he had good advice, but they had been working hard on these problems; and they knew the country was in desperate shape and that something of this kind had to be done. It was the old case--"A timid surgeon makes an ugly wound."

T: Perhaps you could tell me something now about your campaign in 1933, your first race for Congress.

H: Yes. Well, as Uncle Bill Collins said at Dover, Arkansas, one morning when I said, "Uncle Billy, how do you feel?" He said, "Have you got time to listen?" Adlai Stevenson used to quote that sometimes and always was eager to give me credit for it. He knew if he started talking about his ailments that he would be killing a lot of time. I could talk interminably about--well, my wife says I can talk interminably about anything--the 1933 election because that was the most depressing incident in my political life. I had had two defeats for the governorship but except for the inordinate use of money and some irregularities there was nothing like the malignancy in the theft of ballots and the use of almost every kind of corrupt method to steal an election that we had in 1933. It was all centered in one county. I think maybe I mentioned the county, Yell County. Of course, that factor came into the 1932 governor's race in which my law partner, Judge Priddy was involved. We went over the details on that.

Now, let me talk about that race in terms of my own trauma because after it was over, and I can quickly summarize it, they just went overboard in determination to elect a man that they had chosen to keep me from going to Congress. When the race opened up in 1933 we had had a very traumatic democratic convention, a special convention, to decide how the vacancy in the congressional office was to be filled. The sitting congressman, Judge Ragon, was being appointed to a judgeship, so he resigned and a special election was necessary. In 1932 I had--to use a slang expression--sneaked up on the organization, the political machine, and put through some rules at the regular state convention requiring, in case of a vacancy, that the nomination be made either by a special state convention or a special primary. This was to end the practice of a little group of the executive committee of the party hand picking a candidate when a vacancy occurred. There were only about thirty-five members that were to select a nominee, because in those days the nomination was tantamount to election, so I was trying to get a more democratic method of selecting our officials where vacancies occurred. And it went over. There was somehow or other no resistance to it since it was meritorious. The rules required a special election or a special state convention . . .

T: Convention?

H: Yes. Governor Futrell had taken office in January, 1933, and this congressional vacancy occurred in the spring of 1933. The Futrell organization was somewhat independent of the old crowd that I had been fighting so I was not necessarily persona non grata to them. We at least had communication with some of the Futrell organization that governed the party. Now, they decided not to have a special primary for a simultaneous vacancy in the office of chief justice of the Supreme Court. A vacancy had occurred there and so the rules applied to that as well as to the congressional office. They decided, however, that a special state convention would be called to decide who would be nominated. That was fixed. They were in control of the organization and a special convention would follow the dictates of the new governor.

But on the question of the congressman, you see, I had by that time gained such name recognition and such a following that they could not be indifferent to my position. Moreover, they had no stake of the Yell County favorite, Sam Rorex. They simply decided that they would play a little politics, you might say. That's not to accuse them of low motives, but they had no obligation to take care of his political destiny. They did have an obligation to the temporary chief justice who was appointed by the governor until this election could be helped. They did have an obligation to him because he had managed Futrell's campaign for the governorship. So they were determined to use every advantage within the rules that they could for him.

Well, we very discreetly approached the governor's representatives in the central committee, his political advisors in other words, to see if they would agree to entertain a motion at this special state convention to order a primary in the fifth district congressional race. Ordinarily, they would have said, "Since we are selecting a chief justice by this special convention, the delegates from the eight counties of the congressional district can have their little special district convention." That would have been the consistent thing to do and that would have been legal, but it would have been very irregular and wrong because there was no contest in the chief justice race.

But here I was fighting for a chance to be elected to Congress by the vote of the people. As far as the public knew, the governor's group was taking a "hands-off" policy on the district issue. Of course, we agreed that the judgeship matter had to be gotten out of the way before we came to the congressional issue. But they agreed, and it was a crucial backstage agreement that involved no odium. They did go along with what you would call a "gentlemen's agreement." If we would not fight for a special primary in the judgeship--and we had no reason to--they would let us offer a motion to order a special primary in the district race for the congressional office. Just as I had put these rules through on a quiet discreet approach without fanfare so in this case we just held our fire until the chairman of this special convention recognized our spokesman, C. P. Newton, to offer the motion. The other side, the Rorex people, had assumed that he would be nominated and that the district convention would be called immediately upon the adjournment of the state convention. That was their anticipation. They had headquarters in the hotel where the special convention was meeting. Flowers filled the room. The first edition of the afternoon paper said, "Mr. Rorex is being nominated for the office of congressman." Now that's how much of a surprise our motion constituted. Now I didn't introduce the motion. I was a member of the convention from Pulaski County in which Little Rock is located. But the motion was offered by a man with a fine reputation and a fine standing with the Futrell organization because he had supported them vigorously in 1932. He was my friend, so immediately upon declaring Judge Johnson their choice as the nominee in this special convention for the office of Chief Justice the convention chairman said, "The gentleman from Pulaski County, Judge Clarence Newton, is recognized." And Judge Newton threw the eggs into the electric fan with this motion to call a special primary. It called for a sharp debate. The Rorex people were taken by surprise. They didn't know what to do.

T: Why were they so surprised?

H: Because they thought they had control of the district organization and that the Futrell organization would not dare interfere with their plans. They were still pretty powerful in that congressional area, up in the western part of the district, but they hadn't figured on the strength that I had mustered in Pulaski County and across the state, you see. I had far better standing with the rank-and-file of the Democratic party than Rorex did. He depended upon maneuvering and manipulation and the usual machine methods and I depended upon a straight campaign for what I believed in. Now that's not just rhetoric. It is consistent with my whole history. So, I went to this convention in that spirit of saying, "Look, here is more than one man seeking this office. I want the office. Now, my friend Sam Rorex wants the office and there's only one way to settle it, and that's not by hand-picked delegates up here representing only a few people in the Congressional district. It must be by a special primary. Every democratic principle calls for the adoption of Judge Newton's motion." That was my appeal to the convention.

T: You spoke . . .

H: Oh, I made the climax speech and some say I never made a better speech in my life. The crowd began to warm to me. After Judge Newton made his speech in support of his resolution it was tense. I've never seen any convention that was as tense as it was at that moment because the congressional seat depended on what was going to be done right there. Newton made a fine

statement. Then Fred Isgrig, a very brilliant trial lawyer who knew how to orate, took the floor to oppose the motion. He represented the Rorex forces and the remnants of the old Parnell machine. He fought like a tiger for the district delegation to constitute a special convention to choose a nominee, which, of course, would be Rorex. He didn't put it like that because he had to pretend that it was an open convention. But, you see, they couldn't get to the district delegates until they got over this hurdle in the state conventions.

I had a popular following, and it was an advantage I pursued for all it was worth. Here was a return on the long investment I had made in two hard campaigns to establish confidence among a lot of the leadership, not merely the courthouse organizations of the party. I had put a lot of life into the young democrats and the aspirations of what I would call the "high-minded, democratic people." (Spell it with a little "d".) So, when I took the floor it was tense.

Now, my father's attitude comes in for consideration here, and it is rather interesting because I had had to convince him over the years as to the correctness of my course. He was not beholden to this organization but he was rather timid in his political actions. I think probably a feeling of insecurity had haunted him. His father died when he was only eighteen. He had to teach school to support his mother and sisters and then he had to study law at night. He had a hard time getting into the profession. So, he had none of the elements of adventure, politically, in his personality. I could understand that and, of course, I sympathized with it. But I had my own course laid out. He respected me, and in time he came to have great pride in my position. He got a great satisfaction out of my independence. I had been with him the night before in Russellville, seventy-five miles west of Little Rock. We had driven to Little Rock the next morning early. He wanted to come to the convention, but he had fought like a tiger against my taking this step. He said, "Don't oppose them. They will kill you. They will destroy you politically. You don't have to go to Congress. You can practice law. You can have other outlets and if you continue to exacerbate this political situation, you will lose the crowd that would in time be helping us rather than fighting us." He meant Rorex, who had been his law partner as I have indicated, for a little while, and the friends in Yell County where he had practiced law.

This grieved me, of course, but I couldn't be dissuaded. I knew that this 1933 situation was very much to my advantage and that I could go to Congress. So Father had been disconsolate and Mother had been unhappy because he was disconsolate. She didn't have lack of faith in me or my ability to pull things out of the fire. There was no lack of faith as in Dad's case. We had had a light lunch at home before we went down to the convention which was scheduled to meet early in the afternoon. My wife had given them a little something to eat out at our home in Pulaski Heights and then we drove down to the Hotel Marion where the convention was meeting. Dad was just miserable. He went into the convention hall, and instead of sitting there with the delegates he sat on a windowsill in the back of the hotel ballroom. He said, "Well, son, I hate to see you do this," but it was amazing the way his expression changed as we began to win. There was no guile in him and no deception. He couldn't dissemble at all. They said he was the worse poker player in the Arkansas legislature and that if you threw him an ace his face lighted up like the morning sun and if he got a deuce his chin hit the table. I saw him sitting back there on this windowsill just like he

had lost his last friend. Then, I began to make headway with my speech, hammering away at this simple principle of democracy, "Who ought to select the congressman? The people of the district! If my friend Sam Rorex is to go to Congress, let him carry his message to the people, and if he can defeat me in a primary, I'll applaud him and I'll work with him and I'll congratulate him. And the same goes for some other men here who want to go to Congress. Only one person will be considered if you have a little district convention up there in a little session when this convention adjourns." Everybody knew that.

So I made the speech of my life, in a fashion, pleading for that primary. The applause began to swell. You could feel it just increase just like the rumbling of a tornado as it got closer to you. My father's face began to rise to happiness and pleasure and I'd see him get up from that windowsill. Naturally, I couldn't avoid observing it, right in the midst of my oratory--and that's what it was. It was sheer oratory. It was a time for emotion. I'd had enough training to know how to invoke it. I wasn't on the hustings, pleading a case by fanning the emotions of the voters. These were leaders and I was trying to keep it on a high level, but it was charged with emotion--deep emotion. My father would jump up from the windowsill, and he would run over and talk to somebody, and then he would hurry back, and then he would run over and talk in the other direction. He was just running from side to side, telling them to do this and that. He was into it by that time with great and fierce pride in what was happening.

Then, they took the vote, and as the roll was called, starting with Arkansas County and Ashley County and right on down the line, it was obvious that our motion was carrying. It was the most tremendous upset that you ever saw. I saw, also, the Rorex group registering unhappiness just as Father simultaneously was registering the other sentiment. Well, if we could have had the primary the next day they couldn't have stolen it. They just couldn't have done it. But they did steal the election in one county when the special primary came on.

Now here was another complication. It is a little hard to explain because, you see, at the same time that I was putting through these reforms in the rules at the state convention in the fall of 1932, I was putting through in the session of the legislature of 1933, which had just adjourned, a provision for a runoff primary. So when we went into this primary, Rorex and I immediately announcing and the fight getting under way, there came an uncertain quantity in the announcement of a respected older person named Dave Terry--David D. Terry--whose father had been a member of Congress from that district from 1890 to 1900. He had served in the state legislature; he had married a wealthy woman; he himself had some money; but she was the heir to quite a fortune. This was very confusing because while outside of Pulaski County, the Little Rock precincts, it would be Rorex and Hays. In Little Rock it would be Terry and Hays. Terry got some votes outside Pulaski because of the popularity of his father just as I got a lot of votes because of the popularity of my father in the same area. So we got into the campaign with Terry an unknown quantity. Now it appeared, just as we had predicted, in the first primary that Rorex was second. I didn't mind the runoff because I knew I could defeat Rorex just as I had put him in second place. In other words, I emerged from the first primary with a rather impressive plurality but not a majority. Terry was third but a pretty strong third that was close enough to Rorex that the Rorex people decided they would have to steal Terry into second place, eliminating Sam by his own people shifting votes in

Yell County and perhaps one or two other counties that were beholden to them. So they thought they could defeat me in the runoff. They said, "We can shift the Rorex folds. They are deliverable, but the Terry vote is not deliverable to Rorex in the runoff." Do you follow me? So they stole Terry into second place. Thus, in the runoff it was a second theft. I was stolen out twice. There had to be a theft in the first primary to get Terry in position to be elected, and, of course, then they could steal enough to make a majority in the second race. Although that was harder than to steal him into second position, because it is easier to steal a person into second place than it is to steal him into first place. And all of this seems strange to a person like yourself who has never been a victim or a perpetrator.

T: Let me ask this. How did they do it from a practical point of view?

H: All right. Let me tell you. They had a midnight meeting in Little Rock on the evening of the first election, and it was obvious that I was leading the ticket and Rorex was second. So they said just what I have said to you. That was their reasoning and that was correct reasoning. And so they decided to put Terry in the runoff with Sam Rorex, bitterly opposing it. He didn't want to lose his chance and he said, "I can defeat Brooks," but they said, "You can't. You can't do it."

T: Who was the power behind him then? You spoke of him being the leader.

H: Oh, no. Well, he had cohorts. I mentioned Fred Isgrig. I could mention others by name--Harvey Combs, who had been secretary of the state democratic committee a long time and who worked with them, the old line politicians. There were enough of them, whoever they were--I mean whether powerful or inconsequential--and they were of one mind. They knew that Rorex could not win. And they, a lot of the remnants of the old Parnell machine, were furious at me, and they agreed, "We've got to keep Brooks from going to Congress." So often we get these negative motivations and probably is what . . .

T: United them.

H: United them. Exactly. So they made a flat decision. "Sam, you're out. We've got to put Dave into second place." Harvey Combs, who supported me in my successful race for Congress in 1942, was a part of the Rorex group in 1933. He had decided that I had great strength. He couldn't be indifferent to it. My opponent in the 1942 race was someone that he had disliked for years. So he told me in Little Rock, with my wife listening, "Brooks, I'm going to atone for what I did to you in 1933." "Well," I said, "I knew you did a lot but tell me the details." My wife had to smile because he was laughing about it. He said, "When they made this decision in our midnight meeting to steal Sam into third place and Terry into second place, I was the emissary to go up the valley"--that means go west along the Arkansas River --to the county seat towns, the seven other county seats, to reach their henchmen. They knew what counties they could shift the vote in. There were two or three where they couldn't. But in Yell County and Faulkner County, in particular, and Conway County, which later became one of my bastions of strength, they could at that time control the vote. I think you will forgive me for not calling the names of the men that he contacted, although he called their names. When he got to Morrilton, the county seat of Conway County, he went into the office of a leading figure there, and he

found him still up. He hadn't gone home. He said, "Now, look, this is what the boys have decided." That's always the way to define it, you know, "the boys have decided." "Terry has got to be put in second place so I want you to start shifting the votes over to Terry before they are certified. Get in touch with the township leaders and the election officials. Do as much of it here at the county seat as you can." You see, those were paper ballots. They had no machine voting then.

T: So they just discarded them.

H: Often those returns were in pencil. You just had a good eraser and you put in the vote.

T: How did they match your ballots up with your tally? Or did they try?

H: Oh, they didn't worry about that. Now if there had been a contest over this first election, we could have done it. But there was no time for a contest. We just had to accept that disadvantage, that handicap, because the rules required a primary two weeks later, the second primary. I don't remember that we knew enough about this midnight ride of Harvey Combs to have a basis for a lawsuit. In any event it wouldn't have done any good. The machinery was in their hands, and contest law, as we later learned in the long struggle to get a recount after the second primary, proved that. But, in any event, we found that they had this advantage.

One interesting conversation took place, we were told when the contact man in Conway County was told, "You've got to shift these votes over to Terry." He said, "What? I've been up all night stealing them from Brooks and putting them on Sam. Have I got to steal them now the second time from Sam and put them on Dave?" He said, "Yes. That's what the boys want." And that is when he laughed, you know, and my wife said she had to give him the little forced smile because we wanted his support of course. His atonement, as he called it, produced a smile, but she wasn't amused. But that happened. That's a preliminary to what they did in the second primary in September 12, two weeks later when this terrible, shocking thing took place.

T: Did you have any reason to believe early on that this had been done?

H: Oh, yes. We felt sure, but there wasn't time to explore and expose it. We knew enough about their practices and enough about the strength that I had and the relative strength that all three had to understand it. You see, this was a miserably low vote because in 1933 the depression continued; and there was a one dollar poll tax required; and it was fraught with a lot of technicalities in the manner in which it was to be paid. As I remember it, there were only 9,000 votes cast in the whole election in a district that had 350,000 people. Can you imagine a thing like that? So, just as the little convention would not be a reflection of popular sentiment, you might say that under those circumstances the poll tax registry was not a reflection, and it wasn't at all. I had to concede that. But, at least, it was an approximation of the electoral standard, and far more democratic than the way they were trying to do it.

So, it was a stolen election in the first primary, for Terry was stolen into second place. It was a stolen election in the second primary and I might insert the observation that I think he knew it. I don't think he was ever happy about it. I have learned from other people that he fought

like a steer when he found what they were doing. He didn't want to be stolen into second place. He knew it was irregular, and certainly in the second election when he could look at the poll tax list in Yell County and then compare it with the final vote as certified by the election machinery of Yell County he knew that he was not elected to Congress. At least I have been told that he had a haunting suspicion that he wasn't. He was an honorable man, but he was a beneficiary of the most corrupt election, I think, in the history of Arkansas. Now I don't have time, and there is no point in laboring it, but there isn't a doubt in the world about this. I think I can quickly summarize it by giving you the vote in Yell County. There were 1,600 and some odd votes, 1632, as I remember. I used to know the exact number because we worked on this for four months trying to get the ballot boxes open and the ballots counted, but we never could get it done because of technicalities and, I grieve to say, some dubious contacts by our opposition with the Supreme Court.

T: This was in Arkansas?

H: In Arkansas. The state Supreme Court issued these interim orders every time the trial judge in Little Rock, which had jurisdiction, would issue a ruling in my favor and get ready to open those boxes. They would rush out to the state Supreme Court and get an order from this chief justice, who had begun to work with them and who was beholden to them. That's a very unhappy aspect of this whole thing. But let me take Yell County with 1,600 and some odd poll tax payers--1,600 people were qualified to vote under the law. They had paid their poll tax and were in the poll tax book, a published list of voters. Now about 300 of them were Republicans and had no right to vote in a democratic primary. So there were about 1,300 qualified voters. They kept holding the vote back. Yell County count didn't come in. Other counties reported. By midnight it was obvious that I was elected, because I was 595 votes in the lead in these other seven counties, not a one of which showed any excess vote--all of it obviously legal. There might have been a few trivial isolated irregularities. You will always find a few little isolated practices, maybe, but of no consequence in the rural vote--maybe a few people voting there who had no right to vote. But that was inconsequential. At any rate, I was 595 votes in the lead with an obviously regular reporting method outside Yell County, and that meant that the other seven counties had made their voice heard, and I was in that position.

I knew on a valid vote of 1,300 democrats that I was elected. I knew that our strength was about fifty-fifty. We knew about what Yell County would give me. You see, I had carried Yell County just the year before in this national committeeman's race. I had carried it about ten to one. I had a big popular following but so did Rorex, and on a legal count he could have gotten a pretty good vote there. He may have carried it. The opinion that we made on the basis of our survey was that there weren't perhaps over fifty votes difference between us on the legal count, and I could justify that by just taking the township vote by vote. But what they had obviously done in the counties where they had control of the machinery and in Yell County--that meant maybe three-fourths of the precincts--was to stuff the ballot box. No machine ever has control in totality. But you can take the crooked precincts and see where they were giving them a quota of the total they needed in order to win.

Now Richland township, an outlying rural township, for example, had only

fifteen on the poll tax list--fifteen legal voters. They reported for Terry, as I remember it, 115 votes and one for me. So, you know you don't get any vote one hundred to one under these circumstances. If he had gotten them all he could have gotten fifteen. We only knew of one vote that I got in that county. One was an old man, and we don't know whether there were others or not, but he was complaining. He said, "Well, that part was legal," because he voted for me. So, if the others had voted it would have been fourteen to one. He would have had a majority in that little township of thirteen, but, of course, they didn't all vote. When you look at the register that they turned in it went like this--Mr. and Mrs. Horace Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Smith, you know, just Mr. and Mrs., Mr. and Mrs., Mr. and Mrs., down to 115, as I remember it. That is just on its face, a fraud. Husband and wife don't show up like that, or maybe if you do get a series in which husband and wife show up like that, the wife would vote first, you know--but Mr. and Mrs., Mr. and Mrs., and so on. There is a rather typical example of what was taking place. When you totaled it up in that county they returned 1,838 votes for Terry; 616 for me. In other words, they gave Terry 200 more votes than there were on the register. If everybody had voted for him, he couldn't have possibly gotten over 1,632, as I recall the figure.

T: Plus the votes you got.

H: Yes. Exactly. They weren't giving me any. You see that meant an excess of about almost one thousand irregular votes just on its face. Now that's the history of Yell County of that period.

T: Let me ask this. How did the people react to this? Did the people realize what was going on?

H: Oh, they were shaken. They were shaken. I walked into the office of the editor of The Dardanelle Post Dispatch, named for The St. Louis Dispatch, a very reputable leader in that county. He had voted for Sam Rorex since Rorex was his old Yell County friend, and he had voted for Rorex in the first primary, and for me in the second primary. But he was my friend, too, and supported me in my governor's races, but he was not a fanatical partisan in this Congress race. When I walked into his office, he wept. He couldn't talk and he reached for his handkerchief and he said, "To think that my county . . ."

T: Yesterday, Mr. Hays, we talked about the election campaign of 1933, the fall of 1933, in which you ran for congressman, and were defeated. You described it as an election that was stolen from you. What happened after it was over and how did your forces react to defeat? What happened to you in the intervening period right after the election?

H: Well, first would you mind my testing for voice level here. I am not sure that I am speaking loud enough. Is it coming through all right?

T: Perfect.

H: Well, I, of course, was suffering a loss of morale. I remember when the Supreme Court in a final ruling, which was against all precedent, told the circuit judge how to decide against me. The trial judge was a good man, and he could see on the face of the certification with 1,600 some odd registered voters with a report of 2,400 votes for the two of us that something

was wrong and he ought, in justice, count those ballots--open the box. That was the only way you were going to get justice.

T: Would the box still have been available?

H: They had been seized by court order when we filed our suit. They had been impounded and they were in custody--not of Yell County officers because I wouldn't have trusted them as far as I could have thrown the state capitol. So they were in the court to be opened. But the state Supreme Court, under political pressures, was caught talking to our opposition privately, which is against all judicial ethics. The Supreme Court was telling the trial judge how to rule against me. That's what it amounted to. When that happened, I think, was the only time in my career that I was sleepless over a court decision because so often men equally intelligent and equally conscientious can come up with different answers on legal problems. But this was a shocking miscarriage of justice, and this was the thought that kept me rolling that night: "If this court can so rule against me, twice an impressive candidate for governor--and it is fair to say that on the basis of the vote I got--and former assistant attorney general of the state--in a case in which I am a party, what chance does a sharecropper or a laborer have that has no economic standing?"

Well, I don't want to appear disconsolate about the integrity of the courts. I think that was a brief period in which there was a loss of integrity; and it didn't penetrate the whole court; but those that felt otherwise were somewhat intimidated. There were seven judges, and it, as I have indicated, was a miscarriage. I finally just pulled myself together and resolved that I wouldn't let it hurt me inside. Some years later I was asked by The Christian Century to be one of six laymen to discuss for their publication the matter of religious faith providing a buttress for a person in the traumatic game of public service, and I wrote about that. It appears in The Christian Century. I think it is reproduced in my little book that Broadman Press published, This World: A Christian's Workshop. You will find it on, I believe, page 75 of that book. I remember that John Foster Dulles was one of the other five laymen. We were asked as public men to talk about our Christian faith in terms of support--spiritual and moral support. So, I would be glad for you to take a look at that and lift out of that anything that appears to you to be a valid testimony of what faith can do for a man who is hurt.

T: Did you counsel extensively with your pastor at all?

H: I don't recall that I did. I had my pastor's warm friendship and I am sure his deep sympathy. But I believe I've said in some of the previous interviews that he was not a person with an understanding of the intricacies of political life, and he probably would not appreciate the depth of the moral forces in this situation. Of course, that is one of the great needs, I think, in our church structure, not just for Baptists but all through the Christian institution--the need of judgmental viewpoints toward the State, the need of a penetration of the political life by the moral leader. He has to know what some of these tests are, and he has to be in a position not just to bring comfort but to bring judgment. I put it like this in my classroom talks that "one of the great needs today is the political education of theologians and the theological education of politicians." And once we get that underway with some formalizing of it, some assertion of principles, then we will be making a contribution to religious literature and religious progress because

the tendency of the church now is to abdicate. It may be that it is a result of our success. We have reached the masses. We have a big constituency and that results inevitably in a grading down of the austerity of Christian morality. But it has to have an intellectual base. That is, the proclamation of moral principles by the Christian leader who really senses the sweeping character of discipleship. This has to have an understanding, a knowledge of the environment in which these principles are proclaimed. Pascal sensed that and, of course, Paul before him had sensed it when he said, "He hath not" (meaning God) "given us the spirit of fear but of love and of power and a sound mind." Pascal put it beautifully, "God has put religion into the heart by grace and into the mind by reason." So, whatever deficiencies there were in my pastor's ability to help me were due to his lack, which is fairly typical of the Christian minister, of understanding how severe this was.

T: Were there Baptist or religious leaders who spoke out strongly against this? Was there opposition or was your position articulated by anybody in this realm that you remember?

H: I don't think so. I don't recall that anything in the way of a public utterance appeared in the columns of the paper. One of the great disappointments of my life in that period was that The Arkansas Gazette, which later in the school crisis showed courage and understanding of the moral aspects of this problem, just completely kept silent in the 1933 election scandal. This, to some extent, was a result of the respect that the elite, the commercial and social leadership of the community, had for Mr. Terry. That is the reason his relationship to me is so poignant. He could have, by one sentence in public renunciation of it, helped marshall those moral forces that would have said, "This thing is shocking. It must not happen again." I think he wanted to do it. I have heard indirectly that he did. I want to be sure that I am fair, and I suppose this statement that I am about to make should be embargoed. His wife, who later, it seems, gained considerable stature as a moral leader by her independence and forthrightness on the school integration issue, is a very intelligent person. She is not an ordinary person. I think, perhaps, she was so ambitious for her husband that she may have deterred him from renouncing the nomination and that could have caused a lack of sensitivity to these moral issues.

I don't want to be unkind. That is the reason I am qualifying it as to periods in which she operated. In any event, I think if we will follow Terry's course after this 1933 fiasco we will see that there was a great reaction across the state even though it didn't have, at the time, any kind of implementation. Terry had no strong opponent in the nine years he was in the House. In 1942 he decided to run for the Senate. He was respected--not outstandingly a success in the House, but better than average. He worked hard and did develop a following in the State. I refrained from renewing the quarrel. I think that if I had run again I might have won in 1934, the regular election. But I might not have. At any rate, my financial situation was in disarray. But Terry ran for Senator in 1942 and didn't make the runoff. He ran a poor third in the full field in 1942, the year that McClellan was elected to the Senate. Then, two years later, he ran for governor and again made a poor showing. This, according to the general assumptions in Arkansas, was due to the fact that he could never shed the image of beneficiary of a stolen election.

T: Did you decide not to take it any farther than the Arkansas Supreme Court?

H: Oh, yes. There was no way you could establish federal jurisdiction because it was a primary and while under more modern decisions that hurdle could have been taken in stride, in 1933 it was different. Now it's easier to deal with primary election irregularities because the courts have done as they should. They have recognized that it's a part of the due process of law on which democracy rests. But, as I have indicated, the contest law at that time, particularly, and still to some extent, was not sharply defined. The reason for it is, and this is true in Arkansas where judges are elected, they have a vested interest in the politics of the state. If they had been appointed, I have an idea you might have had a different posture by the courts. I could have come to Washington, and we could have had a long drawn out fight. But don't forget that Senator Robinson, who was the leading power in the Arkansas delegation, was on the other side, and he could have dominated the action by the Congress.

Of course, the Constitution makes each house the judge of the credentials of its members, and the House of Representatives could have decided it. But there was a rationalization that my opposition could have fallen back on, namely, that this was a Democratic quarrel, and so you couldn't take notice of it. It was an internal fight. I think we would have lost even though I had a lot of friends in the House of Representatives, but, you see, again, the members of Congress are busy with other things. I don't believe that except in rare instances this provision over the Senate and House being judges of the credentials of their members means very much as for example, the New Hampshire case. The current situation in 1975 was one in which the two rivals for the Senate just found the Senate unable to deal with it. It bogged down in Senate rules and they are just not equipped to make judicial judgment.

T: Brooks Hays had lost in 1933. Let's say by January 1934, what kind of a man was Brooks Hays? What did he learn out of this experience?

H: Well, I think I undoubtedly learned--and you can, I think, get that spirit from the article for The Christian Century that I referred to--that I had succeeded in this resolution not to let it hurt me inside. Meaning that my faith in the fact that this is a moral universe was impregnable. My situation proved it. Second, it would not destroy my faith in democracy, the rule of the people. The people had not done this. Their spokesmen, their leaders had. It was a case of leadership failure, not (failure of) the people. The people had voted for me. They had been, it's true, rather quiet when they should have been demanding justice, just literally demanding it. They should have taken a march or some device that such men as Martin Luther King learned later how to use. If the people had been alerted to the erosion of their rights you might have had a different situation. But I resolved not to lose faith in "rule by the people" and their capacity to select their officials. So, by January I had recovered my spirit. I had recovered my confidence in my ability to have a full life and a useful and satisfying life. I came to Washington in 1934. Perhaps this phone call that I've alluded to earlier from Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, inspired my coming here. At any rate, there developed this opportunity to be the legal advisor and labor complaisance officer for NRA, and that came along in February of 1934. I continued in that job. I had approximately one year in that position. So, I was getting some new foundations under my feet. Of course, it was a wonderful feeling to realize that I was on the payroll at the rate of $4,500 a year.

T: Which was a good salary in those days.

H: Yes. Yes, that was way above the average. I was then able to give my family some things that they had been deprived of. I had to just fall back on the use of my legal talents, whatever they were, and my attachment to the public service, which was beginning to get a lot of notice in Washington. President Roosevelt knew about me, as I have indicated, and so did Frances Perkins. So, I think we should jump a year because not a great deal happened in 1934 of significance in my political life. In June of 1935 . . .

T: Let me ask you before you move on, do you have any reason to suspect that this was kind of a sop from your opposition forces? That they had put the word to Roosevelt and his staff that you should receive some sort of an appointment to take the pressure off them?

H: Oh, no. Not at all.

T: You said that Robinson had profound influence in Washington.

H: Oh, yes, but you see he had ruffled feelings about my recalcitrance. He was the kind of a man that expected . . . . well, the type of, shall we say, Mayor Daley, just to pick one example of the dominating political character. He was of that type. He dominated. He was a great man, a powerful mind, powerful personality; but he was mad at me and he showed it. I remember that it was even before the second primary. I was, you remember, Democratic National Committeeman. I had retrieved that much. The Speaker of the House, who lived only about a year after he was elected speaker, Henry Rainey of Illinois, came to Little Rock to speak. They were having a big Democratic luncheon for him, and Robinson was introducing him to the people who came, and when I filed by the entrance to the dining room, Robinson just said, "Hi." He didn't even call me by name. I think he shook hands with me. But the next thing to do as he had been doing with the others was to say, "Speaker Rainey, this is our Democratic National Committeeman." He didn't say anything; just stood there silently. He was that mad at me. Mind you, that was in this period in which I was challenging him, in a way, although that was entirely indirect. He had no business getting mad at me. It was not worthy of him. I remember I had to take that silently. Rainey looked sort of puzzled. Here was everybody else, and he just wondered why Robinson didn't introduce me. I said, "Speaker Rainey, I am Brooks Hays and I am Democratic National Committeeman for this state and it is a great pleasure to welcome you to my state," and went on. I don't know that he ever did learn why that affront, and it was an affront, had taken place.

But no, no, the organization wasn't doing anything to appease my friends. They probably, if they could have found a way to do it, would have blocked it. However, Robinson's better nature prevailed. There was a long enough period elapsing between this incident described and the appointment by Miss Perkins. But I learned this later. She, I believe, herself told me. I'm pretty sure it was Miss Perkins or else Arthur Altemeyer of Wisconsin, who became the first director of the Social Security program and who was my boss really because he had a great deal to do with it. The Social Security appointment came later. He was involved in the NRA. Either he or Miss Perkins told me that Miss Perkins said, "Now I want Mr. Hays to be the director of NRA." Robinson was the power in the Senate and in the administration. I am sure Roosevelt would have agreed with Miss Perkins that I was to be the head of it, but Roosevelt was not challenging Robinson on little things like that. That was a little appointment. The Senator said, "No. I want Jim Harris, my friend, to be director of NRA." Miss Perkins

indicated that "Well, let Brooks be the attorney." Robinson said, "All right." So, that resiliency on his part worked it out. I got along fine with Jim Harrison. He was an insurance leader, had a very prosperous insurance business, but, of course, it was really indefensible what they did. He just held on to his insurance job--private position--and gave NRA a little spare time. That was all. Yet, he drew the salary that was supposed to be paid to somebody for full-time service. And that was a weakness in NRA. I suspect that went on because people were suffering so from collapsing income in private business that they looked for every kind of political pap that they could.

T: Now you were referring here to Arkansas appointments when you said the head of NRA?

H: Oh, yes. Yes, exactly.

T: I was wondering how you would react to this as having been one of the early administrators of the NRA program. Many have said that this was dictatorial, far beyond the American pattern, to adopt NRA policies and NRA concepts. It was fixing prices and fixing wages. How do you react to that?

H: Well, I think that that criticism would be valid if it were launched as a permanent solution. It didn't take the country or leadership long to learn that it was a mere interim arrangement. That's, I think, the answer. Yes, it was a departure. But there were all sorts of departures from the norm in political and economic actions. The businessmen--and of course, no group is more conservative on the whole than the American businessmen--were including in their nights' prayers and morning prayers, a word of thanks that NRA had come. But it was short-lived and should have been. Robinson confided to me before his death in 1937 that it was the only thing in the New Deal that he thought was a failure.

T: Did it work in Arkansas the year you were involved with it?

H: Yes, but not dramatically, not impressively. These may look like inconsistent things that I am saying. The effect on morale was the great influence. It was a morale builder. You could follow through in a lot of these code arrangements designed to fix prices and wages. Of course, there your first effort was to lift the wage scale. You could follow through and find that there were results. You would have to take it industry by industry to get any view that was authentic of the total effects of NRA. I think what Senator Robinson said was probably justified by the waning condition. It was losing its influence in the later weeks of its existence. It went out on a technicality. The Supreme Court held in what they called the "sick chicken case" that there was no authority to establish this structure. I guess that was the right decision. But its work had been done anyway. It had provided this temporary relief in many industries and in many regions--the depressed regions.

The South was certainly the most depressed. There we had some fine results. But we were beginning to see that we were losing some of the values of individual initiative and individual imagination in segments of business life. I remember--and I think I have put this in some of my books, at any rate it will be in my memoirs--we had a field representative from Washington to come down to see how we were doing. It was, of course, part of the

routine of Washington's supervision of the field offices, and it happened that we had a sawmill operator--we used to have these what we call "shade-tree operations," the little marginal lumber plants that were portable sawmills--and he had a little operation not paying code wages. The code wage was probably 25¢ an hour minimum.

T: For an hour?

H: For an hour. He was paying less than 25¢ and hour and it was a part of the NRA program to bring him in line. Now, undoubtedly, there was a consciousness on the part of the big operators that this program could, if enforced uniformly, squeeze out men of that limited capacity from the standpoint of working capital and so on. But we had him on the grid in my office. I had my business compliance officer with me. I was the legal advisor and also the labor compliance officer. Then I had a field representative, and then the visitor from Washington was there along with myself. There were four of us against him--this one operator. He didn't have any lawyer or anybody to help him. He was just a poor old country sawmill operator with a limited education but a lot of native wit as is true of a lot of the men that had no economic status. I have often said that there is a native capacity in many of the rural people that never was fully appreciated by the sophisticated students of economic life. But all of a sudden he stopped and he said, "Now wait a minute. You tell me what I got to do. You say I've got to do this and I've got to do that." He pointed at me and he said, "Look, comes the first of the month you get a salary check that feeds your family." He pointed to the Washington man and he said, "You get a check that takes care of your family." "You get a check," and he went around the circle pointing at all four of us in turn. He said, "Now, you tell me what I got to do. I'll tell you what I've got to do. Comes the first of the month I don't get a check from anybody. I've got to keep thirteen families going. I've got to keep thirteen families with food. That's what I've got to do." Well, it changed the whole atmosphere of the discussion because I realized then that we could not, just as a matter of fiat, deal with these marginal situations on a categorical basis.

T: You lived in Little Rock all this time then?

H: Yes sir.

T: You were going to go on and talk about 1935. Do you have anything you would want to say about Johnson, the head of NRA?

H: Oh, no. I never met him. There was no occasion for my meeting him. He didn't come to Arkansas while I was serving and I had no occasion to visit him in Washington. I had only the same conception of him--the same image--that he had generally across the country. He was a stern person. He had been a military man, of course, and he may have been a very good choice for that type of functioning. He was never destined to be a great figure on the political scene.

T: You mentioned that you wanted to pick up June of 1935.

H: I came to Washington and I am not sure what my real mission was. I just remember that I was here in Washington. By that time it was evident that NRA would be fading out. I wasn't particularly looking for anything else, and it may have been without knowledge that its collapse was imminent. At

any rate, I went by the office of Harry Hopkins' assistant, Aubrey Williams, who was not only his assistant in the great welfare program but also the head of the National Youth Administration. Aubrey Williams and I had formed a friendship earlier. He was one that I am sure had been able to interpret my philosophy and my congeniality with the reforms of Roosevelt to the President himself. I had been honored by my fellow social workers although I was an amateur with the presidency of the Arkansas Conference of Social Work; and I told you what my wife said to the newsmen at Rutgers that at heart I'm a social worker. And that may have had something to do with Frances Perkins interest in me, too. So, I said to Aubrey, "I want you to come down and make the principal speech for our conference in the fall." He looked in his calendar and studied his schedule and said, "Well, I can't do it." I thanked him and was ready to leave, and he said, "Let's see if Rex Tugwell can do it." Rex, at that time, was head of the resettlement administration and Under Secretary of Agriculture. So, he called Rex on the phone; and asked him if he could; and told him that he was speaking for me; and probably let him know that he was second choice; but Aubrey thought it was a good thing to do if he could. He said that he couldn't. Aubrey was ready to hang up the phone, and then he said, "By the way, Rex, I think you ought to meet this young man." And I guess I was considered a young man in 1935. At that time I hadn't reached my thirty-seventh birthday. I became thirty-seven in August and was still probably the youngest member of the Democratic National Committee. I remember Aubrey said, "You ought to meet him. He not only is president of the Arkansas Conference of Social Work but Democratic National Committeeman for Arkansas." Well, I just know that that was a fascinating combination for Tugwell. He wondered how a man with social work interest in the South, particularly, could wind up on the Democratic National Committee. Well, he said, "Send him over." So I got into Tugwell's office within minutes after I got over there; and all of a sudden some of his aides poured in--three or four of them; and I was there better than an hour just talking about Arkansas conditions. Before I left the Department of Agriculture building that day I had been asked by Paul Appleby, top assistant, I guess, to Henry Wallace--I mean for his office routine work, not above Tugwell, but Appleby was running the administrative side of Wallace's office--if I would make a tour of Arkansas and give them an appraisal of the federal government's capacity to help, what I thought about conditions, and what I would suggest in the way of a mediative measure. Well, that was a great assignment and I submitted a memorandum. I got in my little Chevrolet car and rode by myself. I'd pick up hitchhikers now and then, but it was just a wonderful little jaunt.

T: How long did it take you?

H: Oh, I think a week. I took a good deal of pains with my report. I gave actual cases. I told them of what Farmer A said, and the conditions in which Farmer B lived, and what they thought the government might do, and described the hunger situations and the poverty conditions--particularly of eastern Arkansas unlike western Arkansas where you had more independence. There were more home owners and free holders and farm operators in the hill country even though they were very modest in their capitalist operations. They would never think of themselves as little capitalists at all. But, at any rate, they couldn't be evicted. So, you had a more difficult situation from the standpoint of family welfare in the tenant country. So that's what I was describing because at that time, you see, the program of reducing cotton cultivation was playing havoc on the worker's side; and we were dealing with that because there was considerable tension within the Department

of Agriculture over the eviction of tenants and the exacerbation of the problem. It was a wonderful thing for the operator--the owner, the big operator--because he was basking in a new luxury. I was picturing these conditions in their stark reality in my memo. Years later--I guess it was along in the '50's--I was given an honorary degree by the University of the Pacific, in Stockton, California, and I remember one of the professors out there said, "Well, that was a good report you gave Secretary Wallace back in 1935." I said, "Where did you see it?" He said, "It's in the archives and it's indexed," and he said, "I read it recently." I didn't know it was there.

But that led, eventually, to my appointment as special assistant to Rex Tugwell. I remember the day it happened. Will Alexander, who was Tugwell's assistant and a marvelous man, a saintly character, was a Methodist minister and pastor of a great Methodist church in Nashville, Tennessee, some twenty years before this. I guess--maybe not quite that long--but at any rate he was a young Methodist minister, and he suddenly realized that the plight of the poor people of the South was something he would like to deal with, not in terms of abstract religion, but in terms of human service. So, he left the ministry and got into interracial work and became the executive director of the Rosenwald's Commission on Interracial Cooperation with headquarters in Atlanta. Roosevelt drafted him to come up here and help Tugwell, so he was Tugwell's top assistant, and he got interested in me. He had a gift of discovering congenial spirits across the country--locating, shall we say, young men with some sense of adventurousness in political and religious life. He put me in that category, and so he took me to lunch at the Cosmos Club one day, and when we walked into the back garden--there is an open space there that's right east of Lafayette Park--he saw Tugwell going in to lunch. Someone may have been with Tugwell. I don't remember. I do remember that we joined Tugwell at a table. Tugwell said, "Let's have lunch together." Tugwell remembered me as the young fellow from Arkansas that he had told his aides to keep in touch with. So, after the lunch we went different ways. The next time I was with Dr. Alexander he said, "Brooks, Rex wants you to come up here and help him." I know it was a result of this luncheon conversation. He said, "He wants you to transfer your base to Washington, and we'll get to work on tenant legislation, and you can use your office as Democratic National Committeeman to help us with some things." Well, I was thrilled to death. He upped my salary from $4,500 to $6,500, and I was overnight a millionaire. My little family was pleased. The children enjoyed being in Washington. So I was with him then quite a while.

Two years later we saw the Bankhead Jones Farm Tenant Act a reality. It was passed by the House and Senate and signed by the President, and it launched a great movement for land ownership in the South. Some of the results were lost later in a return to land speculation practices and the failure of the farm labor population to deal realistically with their gains. But who could blame them? I said a moment ago that theirs was a failure on the part of the leadership in politics in our state to deal with the moral conditions. I think there was a failure across the South on the part of the economic leadership even during Roosevelt's administration. There was not enough idealism in the private sector of the South's life. We New Dealers, if you want to call me that, and I guess I was because I favored most of the program but it didn't necessarily mean you were a raging radical or a populist to be a New Dealer . . . It just meant that you were ready to advocate changes to deal with new problems. Let me reach over and get a

literary quotation that I like, and I believe this came out of some of Foy Valentine's literature as head of the Christian Life Commission, "If the gold rusts how can the iron be saved?" And the gold was rusting. The elite were failing. Leadership was more interested in their personal investments and their personal positions in society.

I think nostalgically of that period in my life because it was one of glamour and excitement. I wasn't among the featured New Dealers. I was seldom mentioned in the papers and not much notice was taken of me in this limited orbit except by the people that were interested in land reforms and farm tenancy, although Drew Pearson mentioned me once. I still, of course, had rapport with the governor of Arkansas, this young Lochinvar, Carl E. Bailey. President Roosevelt named Bailey--it may have been a gesture of appreciation of my work down in Arkansas--to the Commission on Farm Tenancy. It was a typical presidential commission to study a problem and make a report. Carl gave me his proxy and I sat in on a meeting. The head of the Farm Bureau Federation was an Alabamaian, for example, and he was a member of that Commission. Drew Pearson reported that he was certainly startled to hear one Southern governor's proxy, one Brooks Hays of Arkansas, stand and talk like a radical in the commission's meeting. Yet, he was a farm leader who was supposed to represent as he, of course, was not doing the whole range of agricultural interests. He was representing, obviously, the big plantation interests.

T: You were considered by many as an authority on farm tenancy in the South in that time period. What were conditions like? I know these are written out in your report, but there are surely some personal recollections you have relating to your experience of seeing the farm tenants. You said you always had sympathy for the sharecroppers and the disadvantaged. What kind of feelings did you have as you were working on it? I know you felt exhilaration that you were able to do something, but what were the conditions of the people?

H: Well, farm tenancy was more a rallying cry for human relief. It didn't necessarily have to take the form of transforming a renter or a cropper from that status into an owner. That was one aspect of it, however. But we had to disabuse people's minds about that. We were not out to make all sharecroppers and all tenants farm owners. And we were not out to make a frontal attack on the large operator. Now, we did think that the large operator had to be confronted with certain social obligations that went with power over a plot of earth--a piece of earth. But we were not radicals in the ordinary sense. We were simply trying as ethical and as compassionate men to do something about human suffering. We were concerned about the children, about the educational opportunities of these families, about health conditions, and about nutritional standards. All of these things entered into the complex of the resettlement program. Tugwell needed the point of view of men like myself because he tended to be a theorist. He came out of western New York with a fine social philosophy. There was a heartbeat of sympathy for the underprivileged, but he needed men like Will Alexander and myself, and he got us.

Now, I don't know whether I should let your statement that I was regarded as an authority on farm tenancy go unchallenged. I suppose so. I suppose I did become, to some extent, an authority. But it was a limited authority. I had a limited working knowledge of this very challenging problem. You can start though with this symbol of poor economic and social conditions--

the symbol of tenancy. So much land in the Midwest, even, had gone in through the mortgage foreclosure process into the ownership of insurance companies and banks. You could say that in the nation as a whole that two-thirds of all the farms were rented farms. So, tenancy became an authentic symbol of a collapsing agricultural structure because social conditions that go with sharecropper operations are just no admirable conditions--not tolerable. So, we were fighting this hard, but we would explain that we were not only concerned about finding farms in family size tracts for qualified families, but also to improve the status of those who were destined to remain renters. So this was, you see, far from a radical land reform movement. That's the reason that we could get so much support from what ordinarily would be a conservative political segment. It raced through the House. We had some practical ways of building fires under Southern congressmen.

T: What were they?

H: Well, I organized, for example, what came to be called the "Hall's Restaurant Group." We met on Thursday evening down at a little restaurant, a seafood place, in southwest Washington, when prices were still very moderate and you could get an excellent plate for maybe a dollar twenty-five, and there was a bar there. And while I didn't imbibe, they would kid me a good deal as a "big Baptist" being caught in this den of iniquity. We'd have a little private room. Maybe twelve to twenty Congressmen from Southern states would be there with a number from the bureaucratic side--the Department of Agriculture people. Henry Wallace even came occasionally. Rex Tugwell, occasionally. Always there was Will Alexander, who was up to his neck in it--and a very realistic person. He knew how to talk to politicians. We would sit around the table and talk about the need of farm legislation, and they all subscribed to it--men that became known as conservatives. Bob Pogue of Texas was among the members of Congress that regularly came. Bob Ramspeck, a very popular Georgia Congressman also came, and so on. It was exclusively Southern except when now and then some border state or northern state liberal would want to sit in with us. I remember Hugh Bennett was one of the men from the department. He was a great leader for soil conservation. We would get into that side of the farm problem. The dust bowl problem brought in some of the western congressmen. Several Texas congressmen used to sit in with us. Well this was one of the most practical things that was ever done. Will Alexander was very enthusiastic over the "Hall's Restaurant Group," and it is still talked about occasionally. But it disappeared with the adoption . . . . . Well, no, I started to say it disappeared with the adoption of the Bankhead-Jones Act. I don't believe it did. I think they continued to work on other problems. Some of them were very liberal in their philosophy. Maury Maverick was one. And it is an interesting thing because the word Maverick came from his family's name. The man that gave rise to the name Maverick was one of his ancestors, and he was a maverick himself. He didn't fit the typical Texas image. It was just a complete departure from that. But I think a lot of it was just for showmanship. But he only lasted two terms, as I remember. He was elected, I guess, in 1934 and was defeated in 1938. But that was a very important period in the New Deal.

T: These would have all been Democrats, of course, would they?

H: Yes. Yes, I believe they were. Yes, the Democratic Party still had its grip on the politics of the South.

T: Somebody has said that you considered this package of the Bankhead-Jones Act as one of the high points and maybe gratifying incidents in your legislative career. Is that right?

H: Yes, I think that's a fair statement. Now that's measured by actual results. But I would not regard that as the supreme interest of my political career. The supreme interest of my public life has to be stated in abstract terms. It goes to this point we were discussing. That is the tapping of the great resources that the church had been historically the guardian of, but not a good implementer of in modern times--namely, building an incorruptible state, because now you see what happens when you get a betrayal by men who were regarded as conventional Christians. Watergate . . . Why Mr. Nixon was selected as Churchman of the Year by The Religious Heritage of America in his first term. So, this has been certainly one of the supreme interests of my life in later years. But specifically, in terms of legislations, that's true--what you just said. I believe I told you that I was introduced once by a chairman as the only man he knew of in American history who had two legislative monuments neither of which was built while Mr. Hays was in Congress. The Bankhead-Jones Bill was passed before I went to Congress although if I had had what I was entitled to, I would have been a member of the Congress in the '30's.

T: You probably wouldn't have been involved in getting this passed.

H: Exactly, I'm afraid that's true. I would have been busy with routine congressional service. I would have been a member of that Hall's Restaurant group, I am sure. The other was the rural phases of the area redevelopment legislation that Paul Douglas sponsored and was the leading force in getting accepted by the Congress. And that came after I left the Congress. Paul Douglas told the Senate that the rural phases of that legislation were lifted out of my documents and my proposals for rural industries. But, you see, it is all tied in with rural life because the South was decidedly rural.

T: Who was the House sponsor of that particular Douglas act? Do you remember?

H: Well, no. It may have been Robert Jones of Alabama, who came to the House after I left and who was one of my congenial friends. It may have been Albert Raines of Alabama. I just don't remember. My opposite number in the Rural Industries Bill was Ralph Flanders of Vermont, another congenial friend in that he was charged with being "idealistic."

T: But he was a Republican?

H: He was a Republican. Yes. And he was not elected until the 1950's. He was the only man I know of who was both a Phi Beta Kappa and a Tau Beta Pi. Tau Beta Pi is the scholarship fraternity for engineers. He wore both keys. He was an amazing individual. He helped me with my little Rural Industry Bill, the establishment by federal aid of little industries, processing plants for uses of our lumber products and for uses of our farm products in canning plants, for example, so that you would have a dispersion of industry, and you could save the little town and provide part-time employment.

T: You were talking further on this aspect of farm tenancy. I wonder if something else should be said about this. In later years you came to be considered a Southern moderate and wrote the book, A Southern Moderate Speaks, in which you describe the Little Rock school crisis of the 1950's. Was your

interest in blacks at this time involved in this tenancy and in what way was it? I know they were disenfranchised by the poll tax system in Arkansas and other places. Was it just a side effect that it had impact on blacks or was this an integral part of your thinking at that time? I know it is hard to put yourself back forty years, but how would you respond to that?

H: Well, I can't be very brief on that, but I guess I should start by saying that it was a peripheral interest in this period of federal legislation that I'm talking about--my advocacy of federal help--because there, you see, we made no distinction whatever between the black tenant and the white tenant. Now when you got into the ownership phases you found, undoubtedly, that a part of the cost of racial discrimination was to leave fewer black tenants qualified for ownership than white. But, if you were to have a realistic program, if you were to follow the formula of lending money at low interest rates for the acquisition of farms and family-sized tracts, and if you were going to put any meaning at all into the element of qualification to make a success of ownership, you had to take men who were qualified, and you had to follow that formula. It didn't mean that you were to walk off and leave the unqualified black, but this was a tragic result of discrimination, because they had not been conditioned right off for the immediate acquisition of lands. Now, on the other hand, you found, outside the plantation country in the uplands, as we called it, a lot of successful farm operators in the black population. They had been driven by economic conditions to seek the less fertile soil. There, you see, they could get a little land at a low price, and the more aggressive and imaginative of the black farmers did that. That is the reason you find little "islands" in the South of black communities in which there is an ownership prevailing.

T: Where would this be noticed in Arkansas? Going into West Arkansas? Up above Russellville?

H: Well, in the Arkansas Valley. I think of Conway County, for example, which was mixed. The Arkansas Valley had some large operations in which there were black tenant farmers, but you also had a lot of black farmers in the less expensive land area. But you had them also in what we called the Crowley Ridge area in eastern Arkansas. There are places in that eastern half of our state in which land was relatively cheap in the nineteenth century. Well, I don't want to try to make a textbook out of this, but answering your question about the racial aspects of our concern, the Negroes, of course, profited greatly by the progressive policies of Roosevelt's, Tugwell's, and Alexander's forward movement in agriculture. The Negro had a great stake in this. In the loan program that had nothing to do with land there was rehabilitation of the tenant for better status--loans for mules, horses, and improved houses. Sometimes it was just a modest allowance for a new roof or plow tools. There were a number of things that the farm supervisors under the Rural Rehabilitation Agency could do for the black tenant. He remained a tenant but he had new prospects. One of them said, one time, I forget whether it happened to me or not . . .

T: You said there was a lot of folklore associated with this.

H: Oh, it is rich. There is just a world of material that comes out of the response to this vision of the men I have described. One said, for example, and this was his way of saying it, "I reckon there is been other presidents, but I has never felt one before." They had bright new prospects. It was a very practical program. Now, if we had gone out to put too much stress on lifting the status of black farmers as such, treating them as a separate

entity, we would have been frustrated right off, and they knew this. Their leaders knew that, because what you would get would be escalation of this idea: "Don't make our colored folks restless. Don't stir them up. Don't give them any new ideas."

Well, they got new ideas, but, at the same time, we had, you see, this great resource of a sane and wise black leadership that was able to patiently deal with the problem and to find a balance between justice and stability. Charles Johnson, president of Fisk University, was one of the great authorities on farm tenancy. My association with him is one reason I hesitate to think of myself as an authority. I am not an economist. I had one elementary course in economics when I was in college--four months. My teacher, incidentally, was a man who became famous as a leader in this field--Dr. E. G. Nourse, who was Truman's first chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors. He and I used to laugh about my limited education in economics. I don't think he ever really remembered me as a freshman student in his economics class, but he rejoiced to see me remembering him and talking about building a great career on that four months of his instruction. We had available some great resources here from the kind of men I am describing to you.

T: Who were some of the black leaders? Do you remember some of them? Were they in the church? Were they in black Baptist churches? Where were they?

H: The average black minister was not much of a focal point for progress in social and economic affairs. He was a comforter and an exhorter and a proclaimer and generally just beautifully equipped with eloquence. The outlet for real competence and leadership in the black community was generally the Christian ministry, but he had no doors open to him to the kind of thing we have been talking about. Now you did have in the black colleges of the South men who climbed right to the top in the field of scholarship and education. My best contact with the black leaders was the Interracial Commission--the Rosenwald financed commission. It was later succeeded by the Southern Regional Council which still functions as a great fermenting process in Southern life, and some very wonderful men and women are in it. I became acquainted with men like F. D. Patterson, who succeeded Robert Moton, who succeeded Booker T. Washington as president of Tuskegee Institute. I also got acquainted with Rufus Clement, president of Atlanta University, and Ben Mays who still lives. Incidentally, Clement became the first elected black man to serve on the Atlanta school board. So, they were beginning to marshall the resources of the black community. Now, as far as my personal relationship to the whole process of improving the South, I go back to my membership in the Urban League in Little Rock. As a matter of fact, I was one of the two or three organizers of it. The leading spirit in it was a black woman named Mrs. Amelia Ives. She was a wonderful black lady leader in Little Rock who asked me to help her organize the Urban League. So, we launched the Urban League movement in Little Rock and worked to give it influence.

T: When was this?

H: That was about 1934. I think I was still in the NRA. I remember the day she came up to my office in the NRA days to talk about having an Urban League. It has been a very useful social agency--accused with radicalism, of course, by some. Everything to help the Negro was so accused.

T: Would that have been one of the charges leveled against you then?

H: Oh, yes. Again, talking about unique things in my strange political career, and it is strange--I think I can say that without throwing in subjective elements. I probably am the only man in the political history of the period that was elected in 1942 in spite of the burning issue of radicalism, that I was a friend of the black man, and that I would upset the social patterns of the South. That was the issue when I was elected in 1942. Then, strangely enough, I went out of Congress on the same issue sixteen years later. You would have thought that it would be the other way--that I would have been defeated in 1942 and never gotten to Congress on the race issue and, having gotten to Congress, that the improved conditions would have been my insurance against defeat because of the race issue. I think that is something to explore, because you would have a deception here. I would be deceptive to think of it as deterioration. Conditions on the racial front had greatly improved between 1942 and 1958 in Arkansas and elswhere in the South.

T: 1942?

H: Exactly. Between 1942--thank you for checking me on this--and 1958 the elections results would be deceptive. Conditions had improved. It was only that in 1958 a political opposition took advantage of the hysteria over the school issue. It was concentrated there, but it was a passing aberation, and I say this in defense of the people of Little Rock. Six years later, in 1964, after I was defeated over the race issue in 1958, they held a testimonial dinner for Marion and me in Little Rock. It was held in the city auditorium building--the great civic center there--and 1,050 people came to that dinner and some 500 more wanted to attend, but there wasn't room for them. Eugene McCarthy, prior to the launching of his presidential candidacy in 1964, when he was a member of the Senate, flew down to make the principal speech. Mitch Miller flew down from New York to lead an integrated choir in the singing at that dinner. Governor Orval Faubus was there, and Winthrop Rockefeller, his arch rival, was there. Now you talk about a demonstration, you've got it there. Orval Faubus walked up to me after that meeting and said something pleasant. It wasn't a long conversation. I don't think he was particularly comfortable in my presence but when he left he said, "God bless you, Brooks." I remember that. It was a strange thing coming from someone who had given me so much trouble.

T: In this period with the Agriculture Department did you know Henry Wallace very well? Did you ever have occasion to meet him? What kind of a man was he from your vantage point as one of the people working for him?

H: Well, Henry Wallace never knew the South very well. He knew who I was.

T: He was an Iowan, wasn't he?

H: Yes. A remarkable person. A strange contradiction. He had a scientific mind and a very warm, rather mystical religious life. He was a sincere Christian. Of course, he came from a long line of corn farmers and agricultural economists. His grandfather was a great farm leader. His father was Secretary of Agriculture under Harding. He was a Henry Wallace, too, but Henry's middle initial was A. His father had another initial, so you had two Henry Wallaces in the course of less than a half-century. Henry A. Wallace was a remarkable person, but he had little sense of political realism, from my point of view, in dealing with economic and social forces. They seemed to defy him. He had a good mind, a sharp mind, and, I guess,

was the best geneticist of his time. His discovery of new genetic forms of corn cultivation was epoch making. No question about that. But that was a triumph in corn cultivation. The South was working in the field of cotton largely. Of course, we had corn, too, but it was generally just to feed our mules. We never got into the great flow of commercial corn crops.

T: Was Arkansas at this time really a one-crop economy as far as agriculture was concerned?

H: No, that is not quite accurate to say. Cotton and corn, yes, but corn for home consumption and cotton for money income, but also lumber. Of course, the trouble was that we were not yet at the stage where you had tree farming with the annual cut, which was the only sound way to deal with lumber cultivation.

T: Really, what you are saying is there was a lack of farm management in some ways. It was just a tradition that we always raised cotton and corn and let it go at that rather than systematic, scientific farming.

H: That's a good statement of it. We were mining the soil. We were liquidating our social assets in lumber. Virgin timber was being exploited, and all of a sudden we realized that we had become impoverished because we had no plan and, as you say, farm management lagged. We had inherited these 19th century forms. But let me pursue the Wallace matter if you are interested in it. He invited me in to see him one day. I think he had heard enough talk from Paul Appleby and others around his office that he wondered, "Well, what kind of fellow is this?" So, he asked me to come in, and it was the strangest thing. His questions didn't excite me at all. They didn't lead me into any of the explorations that your questions are doing. He saw my Masonic ring. I was a thirty-second degree Mason. He said, "Oh, tell me. Now you've come from the Albert Pike country?" I said, "Yes, Mr. Secretary, I taught school one summer in the same county in which Albert Pike taught school back in 1850--in the fifties before the Civil War. He drew ten dollars a month for teaching, and I taught for fifty dollars a month, but again, I suspect he was better off than I was, because he got, in addition to the ten dollars cash each month, board and room and I didn't. But at any rate he was a great frontiersman with an intellectual interest that was just out of this world." Mr. Wallace said, "What in the world inspired him to make this very comprehensive study of Oriental religion and Oriental philosophy. He was a marvelous scholar in that field." I said, "I don't know the answer to that but certainly he was a great journalist and a great philosopher--not much of a general. He didn't do much in the Civil War except lose some battles and get the Indian soldiers who wanted to fight for the Confederacy all confused and mixed up, but he made a lot of money later apparently."

But at any rate, you see, Wallace wanted to talk about Oriental religion and Oriental philosophy, then Albert Pike. He didn't say, "What progress do you make in helping these tenant farmers?" I am actually still wondering if he ever saw this memorandum that had so much attention in later years that we talked about awhile ago--the University of the Pacific memo that the professor mentioned. But I admired Henry as a Christian statesman, and his naive attitude toward party politics and toward democracy had not yet emerged. It didn't appear to me until later in his very bungling way of handling his problem as Secretary of Commerce, in which he failed miserably, and as Vice-President in Roosevelt's third term.

T: Why do you think Roosevelt tapped him?

H: I think Roosevelt had a great conception of dealing with the whole spectrum of political interests. He knew that to successfully preside over the political life of a continental nation that he had to have men that were not like himself, that didn't just fit his mold and sophisticated New York politics, so he went west to find this rural leader. Yet, in Wallace he had a weak reed because of the things that I have mentioned. It came out that that was true.

T: Now when you say it came out, are you talking about 1948 or are you talking earlier than that?

H: Well, it came out before 1948. It came out before 1944 when he lost the vice-presidency again because of his inability to deal with the simple realities of political life. He didn't make friends in the Senate as a vice-president should. He didn't know how to. You see, he never did learn how to talk to politicians.

T: Was he too much of an academician?

H: Well, he was more than an academician in the field of genetic, hybrid corn. He knew how to deal with that. But he had lived in a rather narrow area of thought and of life. He was a good man--absolutely guileless--and this was part of his trouble because he couldn't see that other men were not always motivated as he was. His motives were always good. He had a great compassion. They ridiculed his idea of "a quart of milk for every Hottentot"--that is a quart of milk every morning. But this was, I think, a reflection of this innate goodness in the man. He was a humanitarian, and there's a great tragedy. I think he later had enough intelligence to realize it, because having fallen for the Russian line in foreign policy in 1948 and letting these unrealistic and extreme radicals pull him into that tragic campaign for the presidency in 1948, he later told President Truman that he regretted his actions. He realized that he had been naive.

Now here's another illustration of it in terms of my own political career. In 1937 when Robinson died there was an opening then for the United States Senate seat, and Carl Bailey, who was a very ambitious man and Governor of the state, decided that he would disregard the principles on which I had gotten the reforms made in the Democratic State Convention of 1932 by saying that committee nominations must not be made. You see, later the conventions had wiped out my rules, so if Bailey wanted to do what the old-time politicians had done before I got my rules changed, Bailey could do it. He had the power to do it. The committee was beholden to him. So he said, "I want the democratic nomination for the Senate for Senator Robinson's seat." And, of course, he could have it just for the asking. He got it. But there was an uproar over the state, and I think I had had something to do with making that seat hot that he sat down in, because I had been opposing it. Now, he had stuck his neck out for me. He had made speeches for me in this ill-fated campaign in 1933. He had espoused the cause of Brooks Hays. He was a Hays' man and I was a Bailey man. These elements of reform in his nature had been well-known. The Department of Agriculture, under Henry Wallace and under Rex Tugwell and Will Alexander, had asked me to feed into his state program some of the reforms that we wanted in soil conservation and in the use of tax-forfeited lands for homesteading so we could find the new facilities for the tenant farmers,

and Bailey had cooperated with me. Arkansas became the first state to pass a model soil conservation law, and with my help and guidance it's fair to say Bailey had put through a Homestead Act, so he was famous for those two things in which I had participated up to my neck and was largely responsible for, though prodded by these men that I have mentioned. Now, Bailey could have this nomination, and he seized it, but there was fury all over Arkansas because of it--his undemocratic position on that. An unprecedented thing happened. One of the congressmen, John E. Miller, who was succeeded by Wilbur Mills, incidentally, who came from the same county, announced as an independent candidate. At first people said, "Well, he can't win." It's regarded as atheistic to vote against the democratic nominee. You just don't do that. You're precluded then from voting later on in a democratic primary by party rules, and people didn't want to give up their status as democrats. But, it worked and Bailey was humiliated by that defeat. Well the minute that was done . . .

T: Bailey was defeated then?

H: Oh, yes, in this special election in 1937. He should have seen, not necessarily have seen in the light of conditions I have described that he would be defeated in that special election, but he should have seen that from then on his political life would be on a very tenuous basis because of the disreputable way in which he got to the Senate. I told him so. I remember sitting there with his chief assistant, John F. Wells, and I said, "Now I hope you won't do this, Carl." That was before he made his decision and his announcement to seize the nomination.

T: Did he appoint himself to fill . . . He didn't.

H: No, he didn't do that. He didn't appoint anybody. My name was the most prominent name mentioned for a temporary successor. He could have helped himself I think, incidentally, because by that time I had climbed into a pretty strong position, politically, with my democratic membership on the national committee.

T: Here in the Washington area or at home?

H: Well, even at home in Arkansas. I had strengthened myself just in the normal course of events. I had stayed out of any challenge to the people who had defeated me in 1933. I hadn't challenged them. I worked with Robinson and worked with the New Dealers. Of course, here, as you suggest, my strength in Washington was rather impressive for one in his thirties. But I was still not acceptable to the people that operate in conventional ways in politics. So, they didn't like me to put it baldly, or perhaps I should say that they did not like my methods. The Governor had said to me, "They can't defeat the nominee." Wells, I remember said, "Oh, Governor, Brooks is not saying that. Brooks is saying that when you come up for reelection four years from now you couldn't win. They'll hold it against you then. You can serve out Robinson's term but that will be the end of it." And that is what I was saying. I didn't at that time realize how profound this reaction to the committee nomination was. But Miller sensed it, and his colleagues in the House delegation sensed it, and they rallied to his support. Bailey didn't have a friend in the Arkansas delegation. Actually, they did not pick Miller until Congressman Driver, of the eastern Arkansas district, turned it down. He said, "We're going to support anybody that can defeat Bailey, and we think one of us can do it." So they just started with the dean of the delegation, Mr. Driver, and he said, "No, I

won't run." Then the next man they asked to run was John McClellan, who wanted to be senator, but he had surveyed the situation and said, "I can't win." I think he was one of the most disappointed men that ever lived when he found that the guy they did draft to run, John Miller, could make it; and John had to wait from 1937 to 1942 to get the prize that he had wanted. But, at any rate, that is what happened.

Now I must quickly tie this together because it has to do with Henry Wallace. I supported Bailey openly while I was still the regional attorney for the Department of Agriculture for the three states of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. When the opposition realized that I was in an uncomfortable and weak position because the state had repudiated the Baily-Hays politics, they tried to get me discharged as regional attorney. I carried the onus of it. Incidentally, I made some of the Bailey people mad because in my speeches I said, "I don't approve of the method my friend Carl Bailey has used, but the point is that you are not passing upon that issue. You are deciding whether you want John Miller or Carl Bailey to be your senator, and in spite of my difference with the Governor over the committee action, I urge you to support Governor Bailey. They didn't think I should have said it. But I was determined not to get into a false position, and I don't think Carl held it against me. He was a pretty practical guy. But, at any rate, the pride in my moral position led me to say it. So, I was in a weak position politically but primarily because of the old, old opposition of this reactionary crowd. Don't ask me to call their names. Well, Homer Atkins was one. He was the Internal Revenue collector for the state and had been Robinson's right hand man. He was just an echo of the old style of politics. He kowtowed to Senator Robinson, and again, that is something that I wish Senator Robinson hadn't done, but he wanted somebody in Arkansas to be his local agent, and he thought Atkins was a good man for that. Adkins was not an income tax expert. He was a politician. He was the field man for Robinson. Adkins was very much against me. So they concluded, "Here's our chance to get Brooks out of public life."

Well, of course, if I had been repudiated by the Roosevelt people and been denied my job--if I had been fired in other words--because of the new Senator's demand that I be fired, why they would have had their way with me, and not only would Bailey have been driven out of politics, but I, as one of his lieutenants would have been driven out. They were that cruel. They demanded my scalp and they began to build fires under John Miller to get it. And did they put pressure on Wallace! Now, they had too much sense to put pressure on Roosevelt. I doubt that he knew anything about it in the early phases of this fight to get me fired. But here is the amazing thing about Henry Wallace. One day in that period in which they said, "Hays must go as regional attorney; he must be fired," Francis P. Miller of Virginia, a wonderful man and my longtime friend since 1934, when we had organized a Southern Policy Committee to support these reforms, came to me and said, "Brooks, I went over to see Henry Wallace." Col. Miller either called me on the phone or, I guess, talked with me on some visit that I had up here in Washington. I was coming and going a good deal, but it was a personal conversation, and he said, "Brooks, I heard about this fight on you, and I just went to Henry Wallace, my old friend, and I said, 'Henry, you're not going to let anything happen to Brooks, are you?' and he said, 'Well, I don't know. I may have to let him go.'" Francis said to me, "I couldn't believe it." Francis said, "Henry, why in the world would you humiliate Brooks?" "Well," he said, "he had no business getting into that Senate race. He is an employee of the Department of Agriculture, and he was subject to the rules we have against

political activity by one of our attorneys." I interrupted Francis to say, "That's just unbelievable, that he would take that attitude." He said, "Well, that's what he's falling back on, because it is the easy thing for him to do, but he actually thinks you shouldn't have made that speech." I said, "Well that's a laugh for him to make me subject to that rule. Now that's a department rule, it is not a law."

You see that was before the Hatch Act was passed. I said, "That's only a department rule, and I was not subject to that rule. I don't care how the language reads, because Henry Wallace hired me because of my political character. I was hired by Tugwell and Alexander with Wallace's approval. I had to have his approval, and I was hired to be a political adviser. It was only my membership on the Democratic National Committee that brought that appointment to me. I was hired as a public relations man with a political character in mind and a political coloration for the whole business. He didn't offer this criticism when he was using me to go to Carl Bailey to get the Soil Conservation Law passed, nor to the congressmen from the South to get the Bankhead-Jones Bill passed, nor to get the Homestead Bill passed. My political character then wasn't challenged. I was doing the ethical thing and doing the right thing in fulfilling my assignment. Now then, because we had some obligations to Bailey, and Bailey was collecting on those obligations, the most unethical thing I could have done would be for me to have said, 'Well, you go roll your hoop, Carl Bailey,'--and fallen back on this departmental rule--'I am sorry; I can't speak for you.' Why, of course, it was the ethical thing to do."

Now I don't know how effective Col. Miller was in telling Henry Wallace this, but I immediately realized that I was in trouble. Up until that time I had thought, "Of course they can't do anything with Henry Wallace. He knows what I have done for him and the department." But it took the President to make sure he would not disturb me. The thing that made my position secure was Aubrey Williams' talk with President Roosevelt. I was determined not to be fired. I was making the fight of my life to hold on, partly for economic reasons--I had my family to think about--and then, I wasn't going to be humiliated. I could have made a living, but I still needed the job and nevertheless if I hadn't needed it, I was determined to maintain my position in public life. I'll never forget the day that the phone rang and it was Aubrey Williams calling from Washington. He said, "Brooks, I have just come from the White House"--his office was about a block away from the White House--"and I had a talk with the boss."

T: That would be Roosevelt?

H: Oh, yes. Yes, sir. Maybe he said "the President," but often, you know, we'd say "the boss." He said, "when I told him what was happening he didn't say anything. He just reached for the phone, or buzzer for his aide or whoever it was attending to the chores there in the Oval office, and said, 'Get Henry Wallace on the phone.'" Aubrey said, "I sat there and heard him say, 'Henry, this business about Brooks. Don't you touch him. You leave him right where he is.' Then he hung up the phone." "So," Aubrey said, "you're not going to be fired." Well, I didn't get any letters from Roosevelt, and he didn't tell Aubrey to tell me. That was his way of doing things.

But it took Franklin Roosevelt to save me. It didn't embitter me. I continued to respect him, but it left me with a wistful feeling about the man.

Here was a man that could have been President of the United States and could have been a "man among men" in the political world, and yet, it was just as completely lacking as if he had been expected to sing and he had laryngitis. He just had no ability to deal with it at all. The thing that makes me feel good about him--and he has been one of my heroes--is his book on Christianity and politics and his position generally on religion. It fitted my ideas about sacrificial service and idealism and public life. He was a sort of an ascetic. He told President Truman that he regretted having opposed him on the Russian policy and that he realized that he had been trapped by people that were not thinking straight on this matter of world peace. But he was such a peace-lover, I think, that all they had to do was to use the regular cliches about peace and they had him. He suffered a great deal, I think, during that campaign from these men like Elmer Benson of Minnesota, who had been governor of Minnesota, but really, undoubtedly, a radical in the unattractive sense of the word.

And even my old friend, Rex Tugwell, had a role in that Philadelphia Convention--the third party that nominated Wallace. It was a role that was not admirable. I have never discussed it with Rex, but this latent radicalism in Rex surfaced there, and that was too bad. I think that it is fair to say that Rex lacked some of Henry's institutional religion. I believe Wallace was a Presbyterian. At any rate he was more of a traditionalist in religion than Rex, who was inclined to be secular minded. But the Philadelphia Convention was a tragedy. I remember the day that I realized that there was no hope for that third party movement. That is, that it was really thoroughly un-American, even though some good patriotic people were caught up in it. I don't care what sincerity there was in a lot of the good true patriots that were there, those who were misguided by others. I don't care about that. It appeared that they had capitulated to the Soviet point of view in world affairs. I remember when they were debating foreign policy in the Wallace Party platform. I was tuned-in on my car radio listening to the debate at this crucial point in the Philadelphia Convention, the third party, and they read a scathing denunciation of American foreign policy, the Truman ideas about dealing firmly with the Soviets, the Cold War position. One doesn't need to defend in its totality all of the Truman positions to see how ridiculous it was for a general indictment to be filed against our foreign policy such as they filed in that foreign affairs plank in Philadelphia. And the man from New Hampshire, whose name I have forgotten, said, "Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment." The amendment read, "Our condemnation of American foreign policy in this platform should not be construed to imply that we approve of the foreign policy of any other country," and that amendment was defeated. It was defeated, of course, because the leaders <u>did</u> approve of the Soviet foreign policy.

Now I would like to refer for a moment to my knowledge of what took place when Henry Wallace was importuned to fire me. I talked to the man who defeated Governor Bailey and who was, of course, expected to work with my opposition since he was obligated to them. I talked to him, oh, I guess, in 1974. At any rate, it was a long time after the circumstances I alluded to, and he threw some light on this effort to secure my discharge. He told me that it was true that they built considerable pressure on Wallace and on him, as the new senator and a new political force in Arkansas, to make a drive to have me fired. He took this position since he could not appear to be indifferent to what this coterie of his close friends and coworkers wanted him to do, but being out of sympathy with what they were trying to

do since he did not blame me for supporting Bailey. He felt that he could go a certain distance with them, so he finally resolved his dilemma by saying to Henry Wallace, "Now if you fire Brooks, if the pressure is on you to fire him and is such that you want to do it, I will not criticize you. I will accept your judgment. In other words, I am making no plea for the retention of Hays. On the other hand, if you feel that he should not be fired, you will have no criticism from me and there will be no incriminations from me or punitive responses by me." I think that was pretty sportsmanlike. That was the right ethical position for John Miller to take. I believe he served from December of 1937 until the fall of 1941, and he did not finish out the term because the term expired, I guess, at the end of 1942. Yes, Senator Robinson had been elected in 1936 for a six year term, so there was about a year left. It was a five-year, unexpired service that he was elected to, and he served four of that five years. Well, the point is that Mr. Roosevelt wanted me to be a judge, and the effort then was renewed to have me appointed to a judgeship that was vacant in Arkansas. Senator Miller was, of course, the junior senator. Mrs. Caraway was the senior senator.

T: She was really related to the Huey Long forces wasn't she?

H: Right. Huey Long was responsible for her election in 1932, and she was reelected in 1938 for a six-year term. So after 1938 she was theoretically in her third term. This was still though in the later part of her second term. She was actually elected for her husband's unexpired term in 1931, and she had about a year and a half, I suppose, to serve on what we call a "bobtailed term."

T: I would like to pick up and talk about her, but let me not get you distracted from what you were saying.

H: From John Miller. All right and then we'll come back to Mrs. Caraway. The effort that was made by my friends to get a judgeship appointment was responded to warmly by Roosevelt, and they were surprised when Mrs. Caraway blocked it. She said, "No, I won't agree to his appointment," and this was a part of the feud between her and Carl Bailey. I wasn't aware of it being pronounced, but it apparently was a pronounced feeling. I think it was more her antagonism to Bailey than to me.

She had no reason to be opposed to me. My parents had voted for both of us, as I remember. At least my mother had. My father had supported her husband in campaigns for the Senate, so she had no reason to oppose me; but she did, and this surprised the Roosevelt people. Ordinarily they would have put her on the spot by sending the nomination out and letting her either agree or disagree. But, you know, there is an unwritten rule in the Senate that no nomination will be approved if the member of the Senate from that state opposes. The Senate has a sort of working agreement that nominations will not be approved, or rather that Senator has a veto over it. So she said, "No, don't send the nomination out." Of course, they do require them to publicly say, "This person is personally obnoxious to me." It's a pretty good rule. They don't just let them in a cavalier way block it. So, she had a chance to agree to my appointment, because obviously I was President Roosevelt's first choice for this judgeship.

Miller was trying to work it out so that they could agree on somebody, and he said to Mrs. Caraway, "All right, I'll approve Brooks. I won't object to him. Here are six names . . ." He told me this himself in his office in Fort Smith some months ago. "I will approve any one of the following

six men," and he named the six men. I can remember three or four of them but that's unimportant. But, at any rate, I was one of six lawyers in Arkansas that he would agree to, and the Justice Department could take its pick, and she could say, "All right, I'll take this candidate." She wouldn't accept any one of the six. She said, "No, none of them are acceptable to me. I've got a candidate." That's the way it was left. But Roosevelt didn't want to antagonize her. She had really gone along pretty well with Roosevelt legislation, and they felt some obligation to her. At any rate, they wanted peace in the family, and as so often is the case, they withdrew their proposal that I be appointed. It never did get into publicity and probably never got into Senate documents of Justice Department documents. I suspect it was all just a metter of phone calls and personal conversations. But Miller confirmed that the Justice Department was ready to send out my name, or the President was. Of course, the Justice Department has to certify it to the White House.

T: Would you have liked that kind of a job?

H: I would have accepted it, because there is a degree of security that is very appealing to one who has the "bumps," the "bulges" of conviction and opinion and actions that I have. It would have been, for a while at least, a respite from the bruising legislative and political conflicts. But I have been so glad in recent years that I didn't get the appointment. I might have enjoyed security a little too much because I am much better I think in legislative, educational, and church activities than I am at judicial services. Now Eisenhower wanted to appoint me to a judgeship, and I think he ran into the same problem there--maybe from Senator McClellan. I know Fulbright would have agreed to it. But here I have no enlightenment on what took place. I only know that Sherman Adams told me one morning, "You know you are going to be offered a judgeship. I just came from the Justice Department, and Bill Rogers and I talked about you, and so you are going to be a Federal Judge." I said--I guess I can be forgiven for repeating this because it is very immodest--I said, "Well Sherman do you think I'd make a good judge?" He said, "You'd make a wonderful judge." Nothing ever came of that. I never heard of it again.

T: When was this?

H: This was in the early part of 1958 or the later part of 1957.

T: Let's go back and pick up Mrs. Caraway and perhaps you can tell me something about her and the whole phenomenon. Did you know Huey Long?

H: No, I never met Huey Long. I heard him speak in the Senate one time. I was in the gallery, and I saw some demonstrations of his powerful platform ability--his dynamic way of acting. Of course, I was close enough to Louisiana to get many echoes of his style and his method. Maybe I told you, but it is a quick comment on it. In 1928 he was running for governor of Louisiana--not for reelection because I don't think he had been elected yet. It may have been his second race, however. He was about four years older than I. He was still a young man and had made an earlier race when he was probably about the same age. At any rate, in 1928 I was campaigning all over Arkansas, and I said to someone from the southern part of the state, "How am I running in south Arkansas?" He said, "Well, you can't tell yet, Brooks, how it is going, but you sure are sweeping northern Louisiana." That was sort of an identification. Well, there were two reasons probably

for people identifying me with the Long campaign. First, there was this matter of age--here were two young men stirring up their respective constituencies. Second, it was an altered form of populism that we were both espousing. Of course, my style was so different. I held Huey's methods in contempt. I had no tolerance whatever of his autocratic, ruthless manner. I believed in the democratic process and he didn't. I believed in many of his goals. I was for straightening out the economy, lessening the power of the great corporations, ridding the states of the South of their bourbon political powers, and all of that, I was sympathetic with. But, there is a right way and a wrong way to do these things. He gave no consideration to the ethics of method apparently.

Here is an illustration of it. One of my friends told me he was sitting in a hotel room with Huey Long one time in Baton Rouge, I presume, or maybe New Orleans, when Huey was governor. It was pretty early in Huey's administration. The man telling me this was George Reynolds. His father was president of Hendrix College in Arkansas, a Methodist college. George Reynolds was, I believe, at that time in the Department of Agriculture. He was of the same political mold that I was, and I don't know how he happened to be in a room with Huey Long and with one of Huey's lieutenants. The aide was speaking for the governor to an official of one of the railroad companies, and Huey was carrying forward his attachment to the Louisiana State University and particularly his football interests. He wanted a special rate of five dollars round-trip from Baton Rouge to Nashville, Tennessee, for the Vanderbilt game. Of course, that wouldn't cover out-of-pocket costs, but this was a grandstand play that Huey was making so he could tell the students, "Now you can all go. If you don't have the five dollars, I'll supply it." And he would have. He carried great big bankrolls with him, and he had plenty of money. That was one of his methods of handling things. But George told me that obviously there was resistance to the governor's request. All of a sudden Huey turned and he said to whatever this guy's name was--Jim, we'll say, "Jim is the S.O.B."--and he didn't say S.O.B.; he spelled it out--"holding out on you? Isn't he coming through?" And he said, "No, Governor, he says that the railroad company just can't afford that. They'll do what they can. But they said that wouldn't even cover out-of-pocket expense." "All right, now listen to me," the governor said, "and get this straight, and you repeat it word for word to him. Tell him that if he doesn't, Governor Long says that at ten o'clock in the morning in Louisiana Railroad Commission"--it may have had another name, but it had jurisdiction over railroad rates and assessments--"will meet, and the tax evaluation scale"--the evaluation, in other words, of the railroad company in the state of Louisiana--"will be increased by fifty million dollars." Again, that may not have been the figure, but it was a tremendous increase in the tax base for this particular railroad. "You tell him that right now." Well, this lieutenant repeated it. He said, "The Governor says tell you . . ." And he said, "Well thank you very much Mr. Superintendent. That will be appreciated by the Governor" and hung up. So that will give you some idea of his methods.

T: Well, he gave support to Mrs. Caraway in one of here campaigns?

H: That was in 1932, the same year that I was fighting for Judge Priddy. I remember it was on Saturday night before the election on Tuesday. Huey Long had come in just a few days before that, and I think it was about a week's campaign and it was one of those hurricane like campaigns, you know. Speaking of hurricanes, Major Bodenhammer, former national commander of the

American Legion, was also a candidate, and his headquarters got a telegram from Magnolia, which is on or near the Louisiana line, a county seat town near El Dorado. The telegram said, "A tornado moved through here at nine o'clock this morning headed in your direction. Nothing left standing but the strongest trees." On Saturday night I was speaking in Northwest Arkansas at Springdale near Fayetteville, and I had been out of touch with the activities in the central part of the state and was not close enough to Huey's speaking assignments to get there to hear him. Of course, our governor's race was entirely secondary to the Senate race. I was concentrating on the governor's race, and this was a great political rally in which candidates for all offices were being given the floor for little short talks. I made a short talk for Judge Priddy, and then they called on the candidates for the United States Senate; and two or three of them were there, and two or three had representatives. There must have been seven or eight candidates that year. Mrs. Caraway was the incumbent, but at first no one gave her a chance at all. They just figured that she would run fourth or fifth in the race because she had been there such a short time and was not really prepared for senatorial service. She was a very quaint and attractive little soul, and people liked her, as they should have, but she had not prepared herself for senatorial service. But she had a certain native gift for politics. She had lived with one of the best in the state. At any rate, Huey Long bailed her out. He really rescued her because this quick smash campaign that he made got results.

Now back to my meeting in northwest Arkansas. When they were about ready to move from the Senate race to some other campaign, somebody rose up in the back part of the building--a great, huge auditorium as I remember it--and he wasn't on the program, he hadn't asked to be listed, and I remember how he phrased it. He said, "Mr. Chairman, can I just put in a short little simple appeal here for the only candidate in this Senate race that is a real, true friend of the common people, Senator Hattie W. Caraway." That was all he said. But that was all he needed to say. They nearly tore up the place because of this fellow just rising up in the back of the room. Well, that was at least 125 miles from the nearest place Huey Long had spoken. The enthusiasm, you see, had extended that far. It immediately went to the four corners of the state. I hadn't perceived it until that moment. But this quiet member of the audience just rose up and put it like that. Huey Long was apparently hypnotic in his ability to sway an audience--but utterly ruthless and irresponsible in what he said or in the actions he took. But he was one of those dynamic leaders that may constitute a very great danger to our democratic institutions. I think that we would have had to go through a really traumatic experience at the national level had he lived and decided to run against Roosevelt. He hated Roosevelt. Oh, I say he hated him. Maybe that isn't correct. I don't suppose that Huey Long hated many people, but once he found some obstruction in his way he moved to destroy that person. So, it isn't quite fair perhaps to say it was a matter of hatred.

T: You mean he strongly disliked?

H: That's exactly the point and Roosevelt knew it. Yes, he was prepared to move in against Roosevelt. That's an interesting chapter in the history of politics. I think the best and most comprehensive analysis that's been brought to the Huey Long phenomenon was by Harry Williams.

T: Harry Williams?

H: Yes. That was a structure just as you are structuring this little period by oral history.

T: Right. Now, Mrs. Caraway was considered along with the other senator from Louisiana as being his vigorous supporter in the Senate. Was her support for him tied in with the support he had given her in getting elected?

H: Oh, yes. I think that underneath, the Huey Long campaign in her behalf was really a vendetta directed toward Joe T. Robinson. Robinson was in his way. As long as Robinson was unchallenged in Arkansas and enjoying unchallenged prestige as the Democratic leader in the Senate, Long was somewhat muted. He was throttled. He had a hard time getting the attention that he wanted. So he saw this chance to embarrass Robinson in Robinson's own state, because Robinson was in no position to do anything. So there was a vacuum and Huey moved in on it. He didn't overtly attack Robinson. He didn't have to. But, of course, it humiliated Robinson terribly to have Huey Long, who had been so obnoxious to Robinson and Robinson's group of conservative supporters in the Senate, come up there and do that to him in the state. And Long had made himself offensive at times toward Senator Robinson--needling him and opposing him and showing no respect for him whatever. He was a first termer. Robinson was furious. In the campaign later, you see, after the primary in August when he and I were campaigning for Mr. Roosevelt, if anybody mentioned Huey Long's name in Robinson's presence, he would flush. It was an unhappy experience for Robinson.

T: What kind of senator was Mrs. Caraway?

H: She was not impressive. I doubt that she gave much study to the intricacies of national problems and national legislative proposals. After that I think she voted pretty much like Huey Long wanted her to. Before that time she voted the Roosevelt administration line, and that's what, of course, gave her some grassroots support. The administration was not in a position to challenge her. That may have been the source of the administrations desire not to thwart her wishes . . .

T: We were talking about the late 1930's. There is one other very important event that occurred in the 1930's, and that is Roosevelt's attempt to what was called by his opponents "pack the court" after the court had turned down several of his New Deal legislative items. What involvement did you personally have with any of that controversy?

H: I don't recall that I had anything to do about it or was asked to take any steps to help get it through. I may have been expected in some of the forums to give my open consent to it--approval--I just don't remember. But I know that I couldn't help but have reservations about it, and I was not happy about it. I think I pretty soon came to the conclusion that it was a mistake. It is a little hard since I was not a member of the Congress to recall my cerebral processes, but I know that Senator Robinson had no heart for it. I think that the President himself probably realized it later. It took some of the edge off of his image and his leadership posture. On the other hand, there was some basis for it. We had a court that many thought had lived out its usefulness because, of course, the United States Supreme Court is a terribly important part of the human family's progress toward the great goals in our constitutional government. They were obstructing progress in some segments of society, so there was some merit in Mr. Roosevelt's position, but all things considered it was a mistake.

T: Are there other items of involvement? You remained with the Roosevelt administration through 1937?

H: No, I remained with it longer than that. I was still in the Department of Agriculture when I resigned in April of 1942 to run for Congress. You are thinking of the Washington office and the fact that until 1937 I was here in Washington, then I went back to Arkansas, but I was still a part of the Department of Agriculture.

T: Well, what was your position then in Arkansas?

H: Regional attorney for the Department of Agriculture.

T: You did mention that, and that was the position you held from then until 1942?

H: Well, no. One year before that in the summer of 1941 I accepted a transfer to the Washington office. In other words, from 1934 to 1935 I was NRA legal advisor and in the labor complaisant office; then from 1935 to 1937 I was the special assistant to Rex Tugwell here in Washington; then back in 1937 to Little Rock to be the regional attorney; and in July of 1941 I was transferred back to Washington for some very complicated reasons which perhaps I should at least touch on. I was transferred back to Washington to be assistant director of rural rehabilitation in the Farm Security Administration, which was the successor to the Resettlement Administration. It had become then a statutory agency. Now, in the earlier days, in the thirties, up until the late thirties, the Resettlement Administration was established by executive order under the broad powers of the emergency legislation that was trying to invigorate the economy. All of that was done with the broad sweep of presidential powers, and it was not until the Bankhead-Jones Act, I guess, in 1937 that they worked toward a statutory status for the rehabilitation program. I don't remember just when the Farm Security name was given to the agency, but it became a part of the Department of Agriculture and not just an executive independent agency. That was when I became regional attorney for the Department of Agriculture with jurisdiction of the Farm Security Administration, whose activities consumed most of my time.

T: Let me ask here on the era of the 1930's and 1940's, what, if any involvement . . . You would have come from the Middle West and the Middle South really . . . What about the events in Europe and Japan? Do you recollect when you first began to get the feeling that the United States could be embroiled in a major war?

H: Well, in the trip that I took with President Roosevelt in 1936 . . . Have we mentioned that? When he asked me to ride on the train with him to Arkansas? One day Will Alexander said to me, "You are going to get an invitation from the President to go on his trip to Arkansas and Texas for their centennial celebration." Of course, I was thrilled over that. I promptly accepted and made my arrangements to go on the train.

T: Before you go on and tell something about it, tell me what it was like to ride on a presidential train in 1936. You got an invitation to come on the train. Was it a certain group of people? Did you have sleepers? What was it like?

H: Well, the newspaper men, of course, had their quota of berths. I don't know exactly what method they used to decide what newsmen would go, but they had space on the train, probably a couple of Pullmans to accommodate them, and then everyone else on there went by invitation of the President. That meant a great number of his staff, of course, the men to tend to the housekeeping duties, and then a number of people who had roots in the states that he was to visit--this time only two states which were Texas and Arkansas. I was invited to go with him on the whole circuit, to go with him on to Texas; but I left the train in Little Rock. There was no occasion for my going on to Texas because that was their party, and I had the pleasure of being seen with him at the Little Rock phases of the ceremony. Well, of course, it was quite a thrill to be invited to accompany the President, and except for Senator Robinson and Mrs. Caraway, I was the only Arkansas politician that was asked to go on this train. Not a one of the House members was invited. That sort of embarrassed me because I was afraid that the House members from Arkansas, including Mr. Terry who had the job that I should have had, would resent it and would credit me with the responsibility for their not being invited. Now they had been very cooperative with me, and our friendship was established. At that time there had been no breach. This was in 1936. The Miller breach, the Carl Bailey feud had not taken place. But they had worked with me for the passage of the tenant legislation, so I was very friendly with them all and was a bit embarrassed that none of them were invited. But, of course, the problem was that you either invited all of them, or you invited none; and they would have had to invite seven members of the House, and I guess they just couldn't do it. At any rate, one member asked me if I could wangle an invitation for him. Of course, I couldn't, but I did make a try; but they said the list was filled, so they would just have to go on another train. So they all did. They all went to Little Rock, and I went with the President. About six o'clock the first evening--or maybe it was the second evening--Marvin McIntyre, who was the President's top man, came to me and said, "You are going to eat supper with the President, and here's the representative of the chef. He wants to know what you want. You can have a steak. They've got plenty of steaks." I said, "Well, I'd be glad to have a steak, eating with the President." He said, "Well, you're going to eat with him. You and Senator Robinson come back at six-thirty." When we got there at six-thirty . . . .

T: What would he carry? A car for working and a car for sleeping and a car for eating?

H: Well, he had two or three private cars, or else a big section was just his. He had a great wide bed. I saw it. He didn't sleep in any narrow Pullman berth. He had tables and desks there, a working establishment with plenty of help. They had typewriters and all that. Then he had a place to talk to people, but the dining section probably occupied half of the Pullman car that we were in. It had a great big table, too. We sat out there in the middle of the car. He sat at the end, and Joe Robinson sat on his right. I sat on his left. Jesse Jones, a Reconstruction Finance man and the man who built Houston, Texas, and secretary of commerce, sat on Robinson's right. Then there were two or three lesser figures. I say lesser figures. I am comparing them with Jesse Jones. They were all from Texas. Senator Robinson and I were the only two Arkansans. There were altogether, I think, eight of us including the President. It was a nice comfortable party. When we got there at six-thirty one of the attendants was standing in the door and he said, "No, the President hasn't come in yet. You can

wait." Joe Robinson, in typical fashion, said "The President said six-thirty and it's six-thirty," and he just went right on past him, and I meekly followed him. That was his way of doing. I was willing to wait until the President did come in. So, it was a wonderful evening.

T: Did the President get around with crutches or did he use a wheelchair at that point?

H: I am just not sure. I don't remember. He got along pretty well with two canes. He didn't use crutches. He used two canes--powerful canes. Of course, he had strong steel braces on both legs. But he did occasionally show up in a wheelchair. I've seen him at White House meetings when he didn't have to make an appearance of physical normality. I don't remember whether he came in just with his two canes or whether they wheeled him in. At any rate, he sat there in a big chair at the end. We all had ordered steaks as I recall it, and I was surprised to see them bring him scrambled eggs. That's all he ate--just scrambled eggs and some french-fried potatoes. He had an ashtray there at his right. He was a chain-smoker at that time. I kept noticing how he would just light up one right after another, and that ashtray was piled inches high when the dinner was over. We were there three hours. No place to go. It was a wonderful evening for me.

Now you mentioned the European troubles forming. Yes, pretty early in that I realized that we were headed for involvement and I favored involvement. I favored the lend-lease program and favored other steps. I was influenced in those thoughts again by Francis Miller and these other friends on the National Policy Committee--this group of journalists and publicists, but mostly journalists and academic people studying public questions. They felt that America's interests were involved in the Hitler resistance, and so I was not surprised when the break finally came. We talked a little about it that night.

T: This would be in 1936?

H: In 1936. I've taken time to write some of this out and if my memoirs should be published you will find it in, I believe, Chapter Eight. I call it "Rebound from Adversity." It tells about my happier days with some security and stability following my disasters in political campaigns. Mr. Roosevelt, of course, was to be credited with much of that happiness and security. The National Policy Committee was sort of a spin-off from the old Southern Policy Committee which Francis Miller had invited me to join and to help found. I was one of the founders of the old Southern Policy Committee which started in April of 1934 to deal with these tenant and other problems--repealing of the poll tax, correcting the freight rate disparities against the South, promoting reciprocal trade, finding outlets for Southern agricultural products, things of that kind.

T: There were your objectives?

H: Right. I think the Southern Policy Committee helped substantially in getting the sentiment formed for the passage of the Bankhead-Jones Act. I don't know how much Mr. Roosevelt knew about the Southern Policy Committee. He had some people that politically were closer to him than I and had been on the ground floor when I was sort of a latecomer in 1932. But I am thinking of such men as Barry Bingham, editor of the Louisville Courier Journal, still its owner and publisher. I am talking of Barry Bingham, Sr.

His son is Barry Bingham, Jr., who is editor of the Louisville Courier Journal and probably has the title of publisher. Barry Bingham, Sr., really is a Senior now. but when I knew him first in 1938 through the Southern Policy Committee he was the son of Robert Bingham, owner of the Courier Journal, who was our ambassador to Great Britian. They had been close Roosevelt friends, and there is another story there. I had been able to get the thinking of men who were quite isolated from political situations and who were thinking about it in broad statesmanlike terms. That is our relationship to Western Europe and the defense of our Western civilization. So, I knew that the clouds were over us and favored some involvement for purposes of a total defense. I certainly had no rash ideas about a declaration of war. I hoped that we could escape that, but I knew that we owed it to England and others to help them and to help them substantially. I was all for that. Roosevelt provided wonderful leadership in that regard. He was completely committed to the defense of the West.

T: Now would this be true in the late 1930's?

H: Oh, yes. Now it came up sort of indirectly in the conversations there on the dining car that evening. This will be worth taking time to tell. He was in a very talkative, jovial mood.

T: This was the President?

H: Yes. It was so interesting. For example he said to Joe Robinson, "Joe, you remember Deming, New Mexico, when Pershing established his base there to deal with Villa? Joe said, "Yes, I remember. Our National Guard went down." "Oh," he said, "all the National Guards were called out, and Pershing was conducting that campaign to rid us of that . . . ." He said, "You remember Deming? They had one grocery store, a post office, three saloons, and sixteen whorehouses." Robinson said, "Well, Mr. President, I remember the saloons and the post office and the grocery store, but I don't remember the whorehouses." Roosevelt threw his head back and laughed. He had that little mannerism. The joke was on him, you know. We had the most interesting talk. I left that out of my chapter because I can hardly bear to say the word or even write it out. But I don't think Roosevelt would care. He had a lusty way of saying what he meant. He was a good deal like Harry Truman. But that was the comment on Deming. I don't remember what he had in mind and what point he wanted to make, because that just overshadowed everything else--that comment about those houses.

I do remember that he turned to me at one point. The question came up about the tax issue--how much to make of every advantage we had in tax reforms. "Oh," he said, "I don't think we are going to find much mileage in the tax issue." He said, "Taxes--that is a very technical matter. The problem is just so fraught with technicalities." He said, "I think we had better stay off of it. People don't understand it." He turned to me and said, "Isn't that right? You are an old campaigner, what do you say?" I said, "Well, Mr. President, I have a perfect illustration of the fact that you are so correct and so right." I said, "When I ran for governor in 1928 I really got out among the people, and I was speaking in a little rural community up in north Arkansas, forty miles from a railroad, and probably had seventy-five people--farmers and town people--sitting there under a big oak tree listening to me." I said, "I was talking about tax reforms--a very erudite discussion of it because I was the first candidate for governor

of Arkansas ever to advocate an income tax for Arkansas. Right in the middle of that erudite discussion a blacksmith standing there said, 'Hold on. Can I ask you a question?' and I said, 'Yes indeed.' He said, 'Now that talk about taxes is all right, I reckon, but what we folks here at Big Flat want to know is how you stand on evolution.'" The President laughed and said, "What did you tell that fellow?" I said, "Well, Mr. President, it'll save a lot of your time if I just say that after I was gone they said, 'If Brooks is as good a two-stepper as he is a side-stepper, he is popular at them Little Rock dances.'" Well, that was another thing that I remember out of the conversation. But this is also something that he told. He said that one of his friends told him as he was leaving for Europe that he was going to see Mussolini. I remember exactly how the President told it. He said, "You ask Il Duce what he means by this armament program of his--this stepping up his military. Who is he intending to fight? Who is all this military operation directed against? What are his purposes? Who is he afraid of? You tell him that the President of the United States wants to know, and you are in a position to tell me without having to go through any elaborate procedures." Roosevelt was quite interested in what that response would be, and he shared with us Il Duce's reply. He said this, "Tell the President that Teddy Roosevelt in warning us about the Yellow Peril was not wrong about it. He was just twenty-five years ahead of the situation," and that was all. Now, isn't it ironic that Mussolini was pretending to Roosevelt that he was getting ready to resist Japanese imperialism, and he wound up on the side of Japanese imperialism. An ironic twist to that reply. Mussolini was arming because he enjoyed being the leader of a military outfit. That could have been a rationalization, because perhaps at that time he hadn't realized that he would be a puppet of a much more powerful man and a much more ruthless man, Adolph Hitler. And that's being pretty ruthless to be worse than Mussolini. But Hitler was the great menace of that period. Oh, I just don't trust myself to talk about it--one of the saddest periods in human history.

T: Would you say there were other things you remember about the 1930's in terms of world involvement? Are there other events that stand out in which you were to a degree involved? I know you were in the Agriculture Department, and you were really in Arkansas, so you were far removed from Washington. Any of the incidents with Japan? Were you at all ever personally involved in these things?

H: No, I was not. Actually, I carried to my committee membership on foreign affairs in 1951 very little preparation in the broad knowledge of world affairs. Now you can see from what I've said that I was so deeply involved in these domestic problems, and the Roosevelt era was so significant from that standpoint, that there was no occasion for my becoming involved in the foreign policy field except here as a converging of the two interests. The South was producing exportable products, and we depended on foreign markets. Even our market for rice--I can't recall exactly the percentage of our rice production that was consumed by the American people--was infinitesimal relative to the market--in foreign countries. The great market for cotton was in foreign nations, and that's one reason we had such a stake in Cordell Hull's reciprocal trade program. I was interested in foreign policy to the extent that the trade relations needed adjustment and the South was being impoverished by a high tariff policy. And I knew a good deal about that. I had a tariff speech that wasn't so bad. I talked about it being a burden on the farmer from the cradle to the grave. And I said, "I mean the cradle to the grave because he pays more for the cradle

for his newborn child by reason of the tariff, and the grave because the stone that is erected over his grave has a tremendous increment in cost because of the high tariff charge upon the importation of foreign monuments."

T: Did you go outside the country in the 1930's at all?

H: No, I did not. I guess the first journey I ever made to a foreign country was in 1944 when I flew to England with Walter Judd while the War was still on, right after the liberation of Paris. We got as far as Eisenhower's headquarters in Paris, but the bulk of the time we spent on the other side was in England. We were guests of the English government. It was a very educational visit because Churchill took notice of our presence there. We were later joined--that was in September of 1944--by some other members of Congress, and that was when General Eisenhower invited us to be his guests at a luncheon on September 23, in Paris. We stopped at Cherbourg on the way back. We were flown over in a small military plane, and I had a chance to visit the Omaha and Utah beaches and to talk with some of our leaders. We were pretty thoroughly briefed in a secret place where the maps were not seen by anyone except a few generals were interpreted to us and the movements of our troops were described. The "Red Ball Boulevard" was the name given to the route that General Patton's men moved, and the supply lines, the great trains of supply trucks, were moving through Paris while we were there on September 23 and 24. This was an exciting time.

T: This would be just about a month after the liberation wouldn't it?

H: Yes.

T: Paris was liberated about the eighteenth of August.

H: That's right. That was the first time that I had ever touched European soil.

T: It certainly wouldn't be fair to pursue the internationalist aspect of the 1930's with you, but do you remember events such as the Declaration of War by Britain, the beginnings of the German Blitz, and then the fall of France and Dunkirk, and any of these events? Do any of these stand out to you at all? Do you remember?

H: Yes, they do. I am glad to have that question raised because these friends of mine--and I relied so heavily upon them--were knowledgeable people. I am thinking, for example, of Ed Warner, who became an official in the international aeronautical circles, he was an authority on air commerce, and Raymond Buell, of the Foreign Policy Association.

T: Did you attend any of their meetings?

H: Yes, I did. I was in a meeting at Princeton University or rather the Institute of Higher Learning which adjoins the Princeton campus. It is not an integral part of Princeton University, but it was a place where scholars met, and I was a guest there with the National Policy Committee to discuss our relationship to the war. What should America's course be? It just happened that shortly after we gathered, Hitler made war on Russia.

T: So would it be June of 1941?

H: That's my recollection. I remember listening to these wise and learned students of foreign affairs discuss the effect of that. One of them said, "You mark my word," and this was the prevailing sentiment, "The loudest cries that we have heard against American involvement have come from the left wing, the Communist echoes here in this country, you watch it change now. They will be advocating America's declaration of war against Germany." That was a complete flipflop, which shows how Russia's interest had beclouded their thinking and how it had made something less than patriots of them. And that happened, you know.

T: In 1939 and coming up to the 1940's it was time for another presidential election year. Can you relate anything about the third-term run of Roosevelt--an unprecedented pattern--that was really the only one and, I suppose, unless the constitution is changed, the only one who will ever have served more than two full terms. What reaction do you have and what recollections do you have of the events leading up to that third-term run?

H: Very clear recollection. I have mentioned Barry Bingham, Sr. In October, 1938, I received a letter from him asking me to join him and a few other friends, he mentioned two or three of them--I remember particularly Mark Etheridge because Mark Etheridge was at that time the very distinguished Southern editor of Mr. Bingham's paper, The Courier Journal--in a weekend discussion of the problems confronting the Democratic Party in 1940. This was in October of 1938. "Would you agree to be a guest in my home?" He named the weekend that we would spend there. I was happy to have that invitation and gladly accepted and we did meet. It was mostly men from the South and old associates in the Southern Policy Committee work. I can name a few that I recall: Herbert Agar, who was also on the staff of the Courier Journal--there were three, you see, out of that set up; then, W. W. Waymack, editor of the Des Moines Tribune--the Tribune Register, I guess, and a very fine, liberal leader and a supporter of the reforms of the Roosevelt era; Tarleton Collier, of Atlanta, a newspaper man and I believe he was with The Constitution at the time; and Francis Pickens Miller. We talked about the third term. That was really the main topic of conversation, because there was already a good deal of talk about Roosevelt making a campaign for a third term. We were all against it. At least I don't remember a one of that group favoring a third term, and yet, we were all admirers of him and all essential supporters of the New Deal--not just cultists. We were not fanatical. Some had reservations about a few of the measures, but generally we would be called sincere New Dealers in the choicest sense of the word. But we were all against the third term and so eager to see that mistake avoided. I still think it was a mistake.

H: We were opposed to it on principle, rather than tradition. We felt that it would make it more difficult to secure the wholesome change in political direction, and it would obstruct any concentration of political power that might grow out of what had been called the "Imperial Presidency." There were no reservations whatever on that point.

We felt that in spite of our enthusiasm for Roosevelt and his reforms and our great admiration for him, that we should do all we could to divert him from that course. Well here's what we came up with. Bingham, being the son of Roosevelt's ambassador to the Court of St. James and being closer to Roosevelt than any of the rest of us, was picked to bear this message from a group that had a known political posture. Bingham was picked to do that. That's the last we ever heard of it until Barry told us in the next meeting we had of the Policy Committee, that he did his part.

This is so typical of Mr. Roosevelt. Barry told us that soon after this Louisville meeting in October of 1938, he showed up in Washington, and of course he could always get the President's ear, but he didn't have it long because when Barry told him what he wanted to say, Roosevelt took over and did all the talking. He never did really get a chance, he said, to drive home the fact that a lot of Mr. Roosevelt's friends didn't want him to run again. But here was his rationalization: if he did not run again the party would be immediately fragmented, and it would give an advantage to the reactionaries, who would exploit this fragmentation. He adhered to that, and it was his to decide because his great political thrust had not ended. He was still the great man in charge of political destiny.

T: Do you think he chose to run for a third term for an ego reason?

H: Well, he loved power, and he was very proud of what he had done, and he was, of course, eager to complete some of the things that remained uncompleted. I doubt very much that he was thinking of the war. I don't think he saw himself as the leader of a nation in war time necessarily. But he did see himself, doubtless, as the spokesman for a nation whose sympathies were definitely with Great Britain and France and the other allies.

T: Was there fear that the Democratic Party really would split? And if it did, what were the factions that might have split it?

H: No. That's an over-statement of it, Ron. He didn't mean that, I am pretty sure. What he meant was that the party would be weakened by losing some of its cohesiveness. I don't think he foresaw what did happen with Strom Thurmond's candidacy eight years later. I don't think that he saw it in those terms, but I think he did see Farley's wing of the party and that included Jack Garner and the conservatives who had been with him often for reasons that were not too elevating. He saw the new alignment putting a strain on the program of the progressive Democratic Party.

T: Were you close to Garner at all?

H: No. I was not. I was with him only two or three times. It was a very casual relationship. I doubt that he would have recognized my name. He might have by saying, "Oh, that's the Arkansas lad." Remember I was the young committeeman.

T: I was wondering about his choosing not to be the vice-president because of his opposition to the third term.

H: Well and to some of the other things. Mr. Garner was a very able man. He knew the mechanics of legislative and political action. He was a good technician, but he was not a great thinker. He was not a great statesman. He was a good, honorable, rather typical Texan. I don't want to put any weight or prejudice on that word, but he was a product, as John Connally is, of the tough Texas school. He was apparently a pretty effective technician in guiding through the processes of legislation, tax bills, things that he could do with no cost to himself. He probably "stayed close to shore," as we say politically. I doubt that he ever risked very much. But through seniority, and it was seniority that made him, he got to be Speaker of the House, and that gave him strength as a rallying force in Texas politics and in the national democratic councils, you see. His style was a good deal the same as Sam Rayburn's. And where you had as you

did have in Roosevelt's administration, a powerful and imaginative executive with good bills and sound leadership stemming from the executive department and legislative support with majorities in both houses, and where you had that kind of dynamic leadership you had from men like Garner and Rayburn and Robinson, you had a tremendous asset.

But just view Senator Robinson's leadership for example in the Coolidge and Hoover administrations. He was leader of "the loyal opposition" and yet, you'd never know it. You can't identify him with anything in that period. Now, you can come back a little earlier, and you will find him a very elegant spokesman for Woodrow Wilson's position. Again, that proves my point. So whatever identity he had with a political school, a philosophy grows out of the fact that as a technician, as a legislator, he was espousing the creative results or the actions that were the result of the creativeness of other minds. Now that's my analysis and I think it is sound.

T: When he was nominated the third time did you or others of your friends make any effort to thwart the nomination?

H: Oh, no. Well, of course, we had no choice. We were for him. We would be for him against Mr. Garner or against Mr. Farley, against anybody particularly from that side, from the right. Mr. Farley's position was rather sad. I was very fond of Jim Farley, and he fits this type that I have described--a good technician and a very warm personality. Men don't climb to political power without something, and their personal qualities are very vital. There is an old saying, "You don't succeed in politics unless you have a quality that makes the dogs and children follow you down the street." It is a personal matter. Well, I was very fond of Jim Farley. He and I got along just fine together, but that was in the realm, not of ideas, but of actions, of procedures--raising money for the ticket and making speeches for the ticket. He appointed me, incidentally, as chairman. He asked me to preside over a committee--to chair a committee to determine contests over the national committee memberships from four of the states. It took me a while to do it. He gave me a good committee and we had hearings at Philadelphia in 1936. He approved nearly all of my findings. Of course, what he said about the committee's action was sure to go through the full national committee because in those days the chairman was pretty much the committee. He approved of my findings or rather the committee findings since the committee went along with me. I had the most work. He told me later, "Brooks, that was all good work except in the case of Puerto Rico. I didn't agree with you about that. I had to overrule you on that, but the other three I approved and we seated the men you recommended." Well, I know why he didn't agree about Puerto Rico. You see, there is a little fiefdom out there in most of the territorial party organizations. It is questionable with me as to whether or not you should have delegates from the Canal Zone or Guam or Puerto Rico, even.

T: Well, at that time they couldn't vote for the President.

H: No. They couldn't vote for the President, but they were helping select him. What you had there were a few office holders appointed by the President. So you just gave a little extra weight to the strength of the administration because they controlled. Well, there was in Puerto Rico at that time, 1936, a ferment of Democratic sentiment. The people were voicing aspirations that had never been mentioned before. They did the effective thing. They organized their group meetings, and they went through the

procedures that were necessary to take advantage of the party rules, and the first thing you know they had put the old-line Democrats in the hole. I couldn't have, in good conscience, gone with Jim Farley's "strawmen." That's what they were--just echoes of Farley's position--and they had always just enjoyed that free ride that they had. So, I like to think about that though, because not much was ever known about it. I doubt that there was any publicity about it.

T: In 1940, as well, Roosevelt chose Henry Wallace?

H: Oh, yes, that was his selection.

T: Do you have any recollections of seeing your former boss--he would have gone to the Commerce Department then--on the ticket now as vice-presidential candidate? Did you have any of the reservations that you described earlier about Wallace at that time?

H: No. No, as a matter of fact I just lost interest in the presidential election. Don't forget that in the meantime the Hatch Act had been passed.

T: When was the Hatch Act passed, in 1938?

H: No, it was in 1939. That ended my seven years service on the Democratic National Committee. I had a choice. I could resign from the Department of Agriculture and continue to be national committeeman, or if I felt that I was not yet ready to cut the moorings and had to stay on for economic reasons, which was finally the prevailing influence, I could resign from the national committee and stay on with the Department of Agriculture, which I did. That was in 1939.

T: So you really stayed on for financial reasons?

H: Financial reasons--that's right. Primarily I should say, but my heart was really in the social reforms I was a part of in the department.

T: That left you pretty well out of the ball game of politics or elected politics for a period of time. That really brings us up to the whole trauma and ferment of 1940, 1941, and 1942, before you made your race for Congress. Did you give any thought at all to the attempting to run for the Senate at any of the times when there were vacancies in the 1930's?

H: Yes, I did. I think I mentioned the fact that there was a good deal of sentiment for my being appointed to Robinson's seat when he died. I was prepared for leadership at the national level at that time. I still think wistfully about it. I remember my wife was visiting her sister in Toledo, Ohio, about the time the decisions were being made in Arkansas to fill the vacancy. My picture was on the front page of the Toledo Blade, which said, "It is believed this is to be the next United States Senator from Arkansas." Well, my wife and sister and their children were quite excited to pick up the afternoon paper and see my picture. Now let's see, that was in 1937. But carrying that interest over into 1938, 1939, and 1940, I still had political demands on me in spite of the rebuff I had from the Miller election. But, again, just emphasizing Miller's admirable attitude and his graciousness, he told me that he bore no ill will toward me and I could always have access to his office, and that word got back to my superiors in the Department of Agriculture. So I was just busy, really, with routine work down there in that Little Rock office with the Farm Security Administration, doing a lot of speech making, interpreting the Farm Program, and

trying to build sentiment. I mentioned the fact that as long as Carl Bailey was governor--and you see he was governor up until 1941 (1937 through '40) . . .

T: He ran simultaneously for the Senate then?

H: Well, he ran in the fall of 1937 in this special election. Then he hardly got his breath after that until he had to run for a second term in 1938 as governor, but he made a terrific comeback. He managed to defeat this crowd, the Homer Adkins' group. He had a very admirable attitude. He said, "I made a great mistake in accepting the committee nomination and depriving the people of their right to choose a nominee. That was a great mistake." And then he added something that was very skillfully done. He said, "It was damaging to no one but me. The people were not hurt because they found their right of choice in the general elections, and I am the only one who was hurt and that's as it should be." Of course, that just seemed to seal over the wounds. It was a great political tactic. Then, he was reelected for a second term. He had had a hard race in 1936, and he had this hard race in 1937, and he had this bruising race in 1938. He was a very powerful man except for this blunder, which revealed the same quality in him that Joe Robinson had--a sort of indifference at times to methods and procedures.

It's something that I believe has never dominated me. Now I don't mean that I hadn't had my little weak moments. Theologically, we are all "frail creatures of dust." However, I've got a good record on that point. I believe that democracy can be, really in the last analysis, defined only in the terms of procedure, if we believe in these things. Incidentally, and I am not just dragging this in, but you know what Baptists believe, and you have been disciplined in the Baptist point of view regarding democracy, and not every Baptist has, but I have, and I really believed in that Baptist democracy down in the little congregation in Russellville.

T: You never seriously were considered for any other . . .

H: Yes. In 1938, Bailey wanted me to run against Terry. He said, "Let's just have a good strong ticket in my campaign for a second term. We'll carry you along. We can finance you, and you can unseat Terry. The old grievance hasn't been forgotten." Well, this was one time that I yielded to my father and I never did really succumb to that. It was an alluring picture, and, of course you know, this political bug is pretty virulent, and he had bitten me several times. So, in 1938 I listened to Bailey and made a few soundings, but was not impressed by the response. I still was smarting under the 1937 trauma and that hurt; and Bailey's action really damaged me badly. It was the cloud over my planning and my situation, but it didn't embitter me. I think you have had all the proof you need of that in my actions and my sentiment. I had to live with it. So, Father was right this time, and I recognized it, and I was so happy I could say, "Well, let's forget it." So I dropped out of any consideration. I was mentioned in the papers as a possible candidate for Congress in 1938, and there was nothing else up, of course, except the governorship, and naturally, I would not have opposed Governor Bailey. I might have considered a race for the governorship to succeed Bailey.

Another factor that I haven't mentioned is failing health. This had something to do with my transfer from Little Rock back to Washington as assistant director of Rural Rehabilitation. I found that in the internal office affairs

of the regional attorney, I had some conflicts. I had some tensions and the need for adjustments of personal rivalries and conflicts. My first assistant didn't get along with the second man, and I let it affect my morale and the first thing I knew I had developed a stomach ulcer, and it was serious. I didn't realize that I had an ulcer. It was bleeding. I was scheduled to speak at the Rotary Club in Eureka Springs, about 175 miles from Little Rock through the Ozark country, and I drove up there for the Rotary dinner that evening at seven o'clock at the Basin Park Hotel. I remember looking at my watch as I walked into the lobby, and it was five minutes of six and I said, "Well, I'll have time to rest a little before dinner." I walked up to the register, signed my name, and that is the last thing I remembered for a while. "Brooks Hays" was signed on the register, and the next thing I remember was that I was lying on the floor looking up. I had collapsed. It was a hemorrhaged ulcer. But the poor old house doctor there had no business practicing medicine. He wasn't able to diagnose it. He said I'd had a heart attack. I had a hemorrhaged duodenal ulcer. I lay there in that hotel about four days before they brought me down to Little Rock. It was a terrible experience. They didn't even bring me in an ambulance. One of my friends drove a car up to get me, and I lay on the back seat for the trip.

I got to the Baptist Hospital in Little Rock ready for some blood transfusions, and the head nurse told me after I had recovered, "You don't know how near death you were. Your countenance was as white as the sheet on which you lay." Of course, they immediately began to give me blood transfusions. This brought the Sunday School class awfully close to me, because they had this feeling of affection for me as the prime mover in the establishment of that class and its teacher for many years. They all volunteered when the call went out for blood, and they had to test everybody. We had one member of the class that was Jewish and they said after his transfusion, "You reckon Brooks will start working in the synagogue now?" One of the leading members gave me a quart of blood, and he was the leading dairyman in Little Rock, and they said, "The doctor reported that Brooks had water on the brain after that transfusion." So it illustrates the light-hearted way in which the class operated. But, of course, there were prayers for me.

It was a great experience because I realized, facing the possibility of death, that I was prepared for it. I felt awfully sorry for my father and mother. Mother, though, I don't think ever realized how sick I was. Marion did, and it was a terrible thing for her. I nearly died. I had to begin this slow build-up. They weren't sure but that they would have to operate. However, I really cooperated with the doctors. For a month I hardly had anything but milk. I drank enough milk to float a battleship. Then I had bland food, and finally they had what they called an envelope steak--a little tender piece of thin meat. They were giving me protein through gelatin and things like that. They healed that ulcer. I guess I was out of circulation for three or four months. Then I began to go to the office an hour or two, and then stepped it up to part-time.

In the meantime, this situation had worsened. There was antagonism between the Homer Adkins man, the second assistant whose appointment they had forced before my appointment, and the first assistant. The Adkins man was a former national vice commander of the American Legion and former state commander of the Legion--a powerful figure politically in the Legion--so they forced his appointment. That was before I became regional attorney. But this was

the kind of relationship he had to Carl Bailey's archenemy, who succeeded Bailey. Homer Adkins defeated Bailey for a third term. I was precluded by the Hatch Act from doing much by that time, and then, of course, this health factor. I remember I still continued, before Bailey went out of office, to advocate measures that the national administration wanted. The Department of Agriculture wanted this improvement, certain improvements through amendments to the Soil Conservation Act--this model bill that we had gotten through with Bailey's help. So, I asked this supporter of the Adkins' administration, C. Q. Kelly, the second man on my staff I have been talking about, to help me get that through the Adkins administration--these amendments. I said to Kelly, "Now you just take the ball because you're persona grata out there, and I am not, and just say that this will please the Department of Agriculture." So he did. One day in this period in which I was recuperating during the legislature of 1941, in January of 1941--I had had my hemorrhage in November of 1940--I said, "Let's put a little pressure back of it, because we've got to get these bills through. The Washington office wants them." We had no personal problem. Kelly was friendly to me though we were on opposite sides. He said, "Yes. I'll just call him right here." So he got the governor on the phone and he said, "Governor, this is Kelly. We are getting some pressures out of Washington now to get those amendments through for the soil conservation. We assume that you are all for that, and we want you to help us." So he just motioned for me to lean over to hear what the Governor was saying.

T: You were saying that he had made this telephone call.

H: This was C. Q. Kelly I was talking about, the second man whose political alignments were so in conflict with mine. I had inherited him from the Robinson period. But the friendly relationship made it possible for us to get along. It was not so much my differences with Kelly as the differences between my chief assistant, who was really the administrative officer and who was running the office. I was doing so much public relations work, although I had the title of regional attorney, that I had to leave administrative duties to the first assistant. Mr. R. O. Denham was the assistant regional attorney.

T: And he was selected by you?

H: Well, no. But I had certainly approved of him, and I was glad to have him succeed in that office position of top assistant to me. I guess he was transferred in from one of the other offices. At any rate, the relationship between Kelly and myself and between Denham and myself was all right. But the relationship between Kelly and Denham was not. That was what was creating my trouble. Kelly wouldn't recognize him as the authority when I was intending for Kelly to recognize him as my alter ego.

Now back to the phone call. I said to Mr. Kelly, "Now let's get hold of the Governor and see if we can get these amendments to the soil conservation law passed." So, he said, "Sure," and he just sat there and used my phone sitting by me at the desk. He got the governor immediately, and he just sort of motioned to me to lean over and hear what the governor said. He held the receiver so I could hear him. He said, "Governor, I hope you are going to put a little pressure behind us now with the legislature in session and get those through because the Department of Agriculture is very eager to get those amendments passed. We want to work with them, don't we?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "those amendments are all right. I am ready to put them through, but you see Q--he called him "Q"--the problem is this, if we put them through now the way this thing is set up, just put them through at once, Brooks Hays will get the credit, and I ain't intending a minute for him to have any credit for this legislation." This assistant to me had his face only a couple of feet from mine just looking right at me, and there was his governor exploding like that in a personal antagonistic statement about me. Kelly said, "Uh-huh," and swallowed real hard three or four times, and just thanked him, and hung up the receiver, and that was all there was to it. He hardly said anything except when he got to the door, he turned around and just put his finger to his lips, meaning "Let's not talk about it." I had sense enough not to, but it was something I think belongs in the record because that shows how Adkins' mind worked.

This is a sad thing, but it is true. He made that record. He thought not in terms of improving our legislative program, but of the political effect--constantly thinking in terms of his own narrow political interest. He ran then for United States Senator after he was elected to a second term himself in 1942, the year I was elected to the Congress. He had opposition, but only nominal opposition. It didn't amount to much. He and I stayed out of each other's races. I don't know that he did stay out of my race in 1942, but we had nothing to gain by fighting each other, however he called me one day early in 1944 and said, "Brooks, we have been fighting each other for a good while. Now you want a second term in Congress, and I want to go to the Senate. I am going to stay out of your race if you will promise you will stay out of mine." I said, "I do not intend to take part in the Senate race." I think what he meant was, we won't run anybody against you if you stay out of the Senate race. In any event, I did not draw an opponent in 1944. I did not need to be active in the Senate race. My friends knew I favored Fulbright and most of them supported Bill.

My opponent in my first race in 1942 was the lieutenant governor of the state, who had a working relationship with the governor. Adkins probably tried to help my opponent, Bob Bailey, though running himself for a second term in 1942. When Mrs. Caraway was up for reelection in 1944, Adkins ran for the Senate and was defeated by Bill Fulbright. McClellan had been elected in 1942, the same year I was elected to the House.

T: Now, you were ill, as you said, in late 1940 and early 1941. Did you get your health back and keep pretty healthy from then on?

H: Yes. I had a remarkable recovery. It was slow but it was complete. It was agonizing at first because my spirit dragged. You know there is something about your digestive system that affects your morale. I had to fight with depression. Most ulcer people do, I understand. I whipped it and I had a great recovery. Everybody in the staff was thoughtful. I'd go down to the office--after three or four months I began to go part-time--and at the stated intervals for my milk or for some medication my little secretary would keep tab of it, and she would also make me go and lie down and take a nap. They took awfully good care of me. Everybody did. Washington was very considerate of me. I guess they figured that I had poured a good deal into the Agricultural program, and that in a way I was a casualty. But the situation in the office was rough with these conflicts within, and I could understand why Washington felt that my usefulness as regional attorney was limited. And yet, they would never have thought of asking me to leave or to resign.

One of the dearest friends I had in this program of rehabilitation, this farm security struggle, was James G. Maddox of Cleveland County, Arkansas. He had gotten his doctor's degree, doctor of philosophy, at the University of Wisconsin. He was a brilliant agricultural economist, and he was then heading the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the Farm Security Administration. Now that's distinctive from the Land Program--rehabilitation really describes it. So he said, "Let Brooks come up here and be my assistant, because he can do some things for me that I need to have done in the public relations field. That really was my field. I knew how to talk to people and how to interpret the program, and I had become, if not an authority as you implied, at least knowledgeable enough to participate intelligently in many of the strategy conferences and many of the public meetings--particularly the church meetings. For example, I wrote an article once for The Christian Rural Fellowship that was circulated. They told me that ten years later they were still selling that little document. They published speeches and articles on different aspects of farm life, and that little folder, they told me, sold hundreds of thousands, and they were still selling them years later. It was entitled "Farm Tenancy and the Christian Conscience." I enjoyed that kind of work, and Maddox used me for putting life into the agricultural clubs across the country. I did a great deal of travel then.

T: These weren't granges were they?

H: No. Take Indianapolis, for example. Now in Indianapolis you had a lot of state and regional offices of the various agencies within the Department of Agriculture, and they had common interests, and they would organize agricultural clubs. Actually what they called them were the "U.S.D.A. Clubs," and a lot of them needed inspiriting and I would try to give them that. I would go out and talk to them about what Washington was doing and then gather up their impressions. So, I became a sort of liaison between those clubs and the Department of Agriculture. Now that must have been July or August of 1941. At any rate, it was sometime in 1941 that I was transferred. My recovery by that time was almost complete. So it must have been later in the year--maybe in the fall of 1941--because it took me a great while to get my health back. In fact, I was very careful about my diet well into my congressional service.

I remember sitting in a lunchroom one time--one of these little road-side lunchrooms where chili was the main dish--and there was a soldier sitting next to me and one of my political friends sitting on my left, and all of a sudden my friend realized that I was watching this soldier enjoying a great big bowl of chili. He said, "Brooks, you'd give your seat in Congress for that lad's stomach, wouldn't you?" I said, "Gladly." But I came to the point where I could occasionally eat a bowl of chili. I don't do it often, but I have never had any serious effects; so I had virtually a complete recovery, although I still limit my diet. This work with Maddox was very enjoyable. At the same time it was an interlude, and I knew it because I was destined to get back into politics. So when this opening came in 1942, when Dave Terry announced he was going to run for the Senate, there was an opening. We'll pick this up later.

(Third day of the same interview, September 10, 1975)

T: Mr. Hays, let me ask you this morning as we start our interview again on September 10, 1975--you mentioned about there coming an opening in 1942

when Terry decided he would not run again for the fifth congressional district in Arkansas but try for the Senate--if you would describe some of the circumstances that led him first to decide to go for the Senate and your decision not to go for the Senate and take the Congressional route?

H: Now you are talking about the context in which these decisions were made and that means 1942, the time background.

T: Right. 1942. You probably gave some thought to this in 1941. Maybe it would be worthwhile to raise a question or two about the war and the war efforts. You were in Washington when war was declared in late 1941. Is there any recollection or reflection that will be useful for us to know about during that time?

H: Well, I do remember as everyone does where I was when Pearl Harbor took place. You know it's an interesting thing the way some events are just pinpointed in the memory of every individual. You could tell me where you were when the word came that President Kennedy had been assassinated. You were not old enough to remember, I presume, when Mr. Roosevelt died, but I remember exactly where I was and the circumstances under which I heard the news. This is true of Pearl Harbor for those of us who were living at that time. I was driving from Anapolis, Maryland, with my wife, and we were in the car listening to the news over the radio. When I first tuned in, late in the afternoon, Sunday, December 7, 1941, I could hear the background noises, and there was no voice, and I knew something eventful had happened. What the broadcasting people were waiting for was a bulletin, you see, a progress report. We were able to piece it in as this fragment of news came on. Then, of course, as they always do, there was a summary of what had inspired this sudden newscast. We always remember those things. We drove by the Japanese embassy when we got in to Washington just to see what was there. Crowds were gathered in front of the great towering fence. I believe there was just one single light in the embassy. We learned from the Washington Post the next day that the Japanese attaches were seen rushing out of the back of the embassy burning papers, because, of course, then they were exposed to some hazards here in Washington with that kind of treachery taking place. I don't think of anything else.

T: You were not at all involved in any governmental affairs?

H: No, you see, I was no longer on the national committee, and I was in the Department of Agriculture, not in the State Department, where I later served for awhile. But I had no official demands upon me. I didn't know what it would do to my future. I was still rather a young man. I just had passed my forty-third birthday, and I was subject to the draft, but they were taking younger men, of course. But I sort of played with the idea, very superficially, of enlisting. Some men my age did enlist. But I had the children to educate, and I had my own niche in public service, which I thought could be just as important as carrying a gun or manning a vessel.

T: So, early 1942 passed uneventfully, or eventfully for you?

H: Well, the big break came about along in February--maybe a little later. At any rate, I know that my formal announcement for Congress in 1942 was April 12. I believe I made one trip to Arkansas between the time of Terry's announcement and my announcement, and that was just simply to gather as much information as I could regarding the political situation. I had one

fear--an understandable fear--and that was that my absence from the state from the middle of 1941 until the campaign period in 1942 might have been damaging, but I found it wasn't. People don't follow each individual's location--that is his movements, the geography of his life--as much as we think sometimes. At any rate, I found no real hazard there. But I was pretty sure from what I learned of the situation at home that I could win that race. I think we have talked about that--how I had to talk my father into it.

T: You talked you father into running for Congress in 1942?

H: Yes. Exactly. He had tried to talk me out of running for governor in 1930. He agreed to the first race. In 1928 he was for it. He was against it in 1930. He was against my setting up this special election and the efforts there to frustrate the old organization. He was against that. We always knew where he was. He was one of those undeceptive, guileless individuals. In 1942 I found him in the same mood at first. And that's quite a story. Did I tell that?

T: No. No, you haven't.

H: First, though, to comment on what you asked about Mr. Terry. You were interested in his decision--why he would run for the Senate.

T: And why you didn't run.

H: And why I didn't run for the Senate. Well, I was not ready for a Senate race. A statewide race is much more expensive than a district race. I had more devoted following in the district than I had in the state, because I had kept my district ties, and it is easier to keep a limited geographical pace than a statewide pace. Primarily, I suppose, too, there were some powerful figures determined to make that Senate race in 1942--John McClellan, Jack Holt, Homer Adkins, the governor, and Congressman Clyde Ellis. I would have been accepting unnecessary political handicaps to get into that race for the Senate. Congress was much more attractive and easier race.

T: You did run for statewide offices when you ran for governor twice.

H: Oh, yes. But there were advantages I did not have in 1942. I was young. I had issues. I had a cause. It would be largely a personal thing in the 1942 race, a matter of personal ambitions. The only advantage I would appear to have had in the Senate race was that I was younger than McClellan, Adkins, and Terry. Well, that isn't necessarily an advantage because people might say, "Well, we want a more mature man." The Senate race was not for me. I gave no thought to it in 1942. I had, as I indicated, given some thought to running earlier, and I would have run earlier if Carl Bailey had decided that I was the proper spokesman for the progressive elements in the Democratic Party. But that, as I indicated in my recital yesterday, was not to be. Terry was probably inspired to run by his wife's ambitions for him. I have no basis for that except my general knowledge of her rather imaginative and aggressive personality. I use the word "aggressive" not in a prejudicial sense, but she was a very positive character. On the other hand, Mr. Terry was more of a phlegmatic temperament. She may have done, as family members sometimes do, sort of pressured him to run. I remember in 1922, I may have had an overwhelming ambition for my father to go to Congress. I am not sure that I should have talked as much about the honor

that I wanted him to have. He may have gotten into that race against his better judgment largely because of my ambition for him. I am not sure. Of course, actually now, the Senate is not always to be preferred to the House. It was one big advantage in my judgment, and I think that it is generally the view of men who are familiar with Washington life: it's a six year term instead of two. That gives you a breathing spell and enables you to firm up your political situation. And there are some other advantages but not many. They get the same pay. That means that the House member has an advantage because a Senate member has a larger constituency to serve and his expenses are higher. So, it isn't necessarily a great advancement or improvement. Now, the senator does have more publicity than the House member. Always the media favors a senator over a House member and his name recognition is always superior to that of a House member. Well, I think that is about all on the 1942 situation.

T: So then you entered the House race in 1942. Who was your competition?

H: I made a brief reference to that, I think, in our previous recording. The lieutenant governor of the state, Bob Bailey. He was from Russellville, my hometown. I had known him from my boyhood. I didn't fear him as an opponent. I thought I could defeat him, as I did. I had great confidence in my ability, and I knew that I had more to offer than he did. He was a man of great native ability but little formal education--virtually none. He was handicapped by poor grammar and a cultural lag. All of that was well known to those of us who had watched him. He had been in the furniture business when he developed an ambition as a very young man, perhaps around the age of twenty, to be a lawyer. He studied in one of the law offices at Russellville. That was not unusual. There were no accredited law schools in Arkansas at that time. He had this handicap I mentioned, yet, his native competence was greatly in his favor.

He won a state Senate race and served in the Senate for several years then became lieutenant governor. But the man he defeated for lieutenant governor was a very powerful organization politician, but he couldn't match Bailey in campaigning methods. Bailey out-campaigned him in the race for lieutenant governor; that was about 1936, I guess. I think Bailey served three two-year terms as lieutenant governor. But he was ambitious to go to Congress. He was a native of Kentucky and had landed in Russellville when he was in his early teens, I guess--maybe late teens. At any rate, he married very young, married a very popular young lady and the daughter of a pretty important businessman there in Russellville. He had some family resources that he had brought with him from Kentucky. I think his father had been rather prosperous, and then his wife had some money. So he had enough money to indulge these political ambitions.

He had supported me in my two governor's races. I think it is fair to say that his motives were not altogether that of one wanting the best man to win. He was in my home county pursuing other ambitions, and he knew that he had to be for me. My strength at home was so great. The public wouldn't have forgiven him if he hadn't supported another hometown man for the governorship. He was entitled to exploit that. He made a friend of me, politically, in spite of my knowledge of his limitations. But he did what he was entitled to do. He made friends among my followers and created an obligation for himself. Then came this situation in 1942. Here was a wide-open race with Bailey wanting to be congressman with no incumbent to run against, you know, and it just looked very appealing to him and so inviting that I heard

some people say that Bob was going to have no opposition. He was going to be elected to Congress without opposition. He stopped me on the street when I was making just a little survey as to whether I'd run or not, and he importuned me not to run. Now the only point, as I recall, that he made in that conversation on the street--it wasn't a long conversation--was he was so eager not to have to fight me.

He knew that I had considerable strength, but he still, of course, was confident himself that he could win. But here this hope of no opposition was such that he was even brash enough to urge me not to run. The implication was that he would find some way to help me realize my ambitions. Well, that was water on a duck's back because the situation had changed so completely from the governor's races in 1928 and 1930. In the 1933 congressional race, he had supported Dave Terry against me. He had thereby, washed out any obligation I might have felt and he knew that. He had followed the expediency route in both situations. He was doing the expedient thing in my two races for governor and the expedient thing in 1933, being with Terry. We all knew that. The man he had defeated though for lieutenant governor, the man I identified as a very powerful craftsman in political strategy, Harvey Combs, called me over long distance soon after the announcement that Terry would not run for the House but would run for the Senate, and he said, "Brooks, we have been doing some conferring down here." That "we" I knew meant the key people in the political structure of some of the counties, because he had access to them. I knew it meant that he was ready to support me, and whatever his motives, I knew he would be a real help.

And then, too, he had learned about Bailey's rather ignoble campaign methods, not illegal necessarily, but just low demagogical type of politicking, and that Bailey didn't deserve to go to Congress. But there was, naturally, this personal feeling of vindication. I suspect that there was a basis for his feeling that he had been mistreated by Bailey in the lieutenant governor's race. I don't recall exactly, but there were actually newspaper articles on that theme--that Combs had been a victim of Bailey's dubious style of politics. Combs had his own style as I have depicted in telling you how he made the trip to the county seats to get the votes switched from Terry to Rorax. But here was Combs ready to support me. He said, "We want you to run. You can beat Bob Bailey." Well, I believed so myself and I came to that conclusion. I knew that this was the race. This was the crucial race. This was the turning point. I either would win an office and have a career in politics, the professional role that I thought and still think I was fitted to fill, or I would forget politics and find my contribution to society in some other vocation. It was that kind of crucial situation. I did not want to just go along as a name on the government payroll. In the Department of Agriculture I was no longer being challenged. I was doing some pretty good public relations work, I think, but still it was not the thing that I really wanted to do. I knew that there were more important things that I could do. So this was my dilemma: "Will I make one supreme final effort to have a political career or forget it and turn to a private law practice?" I might even have considered doing then what I later did--go into the academic world, because I had learned to love the pursuit of truth in political science. When I say "truth" I mean it's an absorbing profession that the political scientist has. Or I might have considered newspaper work. I had been offered two college presidencies. In time, I was offered three college presidencies, all of which I turned down. But when I was only about thirty years old I was offered the presidency of a

of a little Presbyterian college in Arkansas, the Arkansas College at Batesville, and turned it down, largely because I still had this lingering hope of a political career. And, I knew it would be diversionary and not fair to them to go into a college assignment of that kind. This is entirely abstract and has nothing to do with it, but you are sort of opening my mind as to what my mental processes were.

So, I knew that this was the crucial race in 1942. People said about the race later, after it got underway, "Bailey or Hays," "Bailey or Hays," and somebody said, "How do you think it's going?" Some wise old fellow said, "Well, I think Brooks will win. He's just running so hard. You see, it's like a dog chasing a rabbit. With the dog it's just another meal if he catches the rabbit, but with the rabbit, it's life or death. And with Brooks, this is it. With Bob Bailey there will be other races because he will find something later on to run for, but with Brooks this one is life or death." Bailey could take a defeat without being driven out of the political profession. I couldn't. Another defeat would have done it. You can survive many defeats, but there is a limit to the number of defeats you can survive. At any rate, I wasn't going to invite another defeat if Bailey had succeeded in beating me. Well now, those are some of the subjective phases of that situation.

I went to Russellville to see my father and talk to him and Mother about it. Father was then seventy years of age. He was born in 1872 and so he had just passed his seventieth birthday. His health wasn't too good. He lived to be eighty-seven, but Father was a victim of fatigue. He worked hard, and he wanted the afternoon years to be pleasant and agreeable and less controversial than I had made it for him. He probably didn't know how I sympathized with him, knowing his temperament, but still, he would have been the last man to have deprived me of my fulfillment. He would quickly accord, no matter what the impact would be on his own life, to his son and to the young people that he loved and appreciated their right to live their lives. He had that feeling about me. I think one of the sweetest experiences, after he had fought so vigorously against my running for governor in 1930, was hearing him say in a speech referring to something I had done that had brought criticism, but that I was given credit for doing because of a personal conviction, "I would rather my son demonstrate his devotion to what is right and go down in defeat because of it than to have all the honors that this state could heap upon him, if it meant winning honors at the surrender of a conviction." This was in Conway, about fifty miles east of Russellville and thirty miles west of Little Rock. Of course, that produced a big cheer.

I think that it is worth taking time to tell here of a very dramatic evening I spent with my father although this, too, will show up in my memoirs. You know this old theme of "father-son conflict" has filled books and when it's an only son that adds to its poignancy, because he couldn't say, "Well, this lad has disappointed me and defied me, but I've got other children that will give me what I want in the way of compliance." But I knew this was a delicate situation. I was so convinced of the logic of my decision that I resolved to do my best sales job. Here was a test of my salesmanship. I had had a sales personality. I had been in the life insurance business one year. We haven't talked about that, but after I left the job as assistant in the attorney general's office, I went with a life insurance company. I had gone out and sold things before that. I had sold filing systems in Washington the last months of my stay in Washington to get the law education. I had done various things that represented selling. Even as a school boy I had sold The Saturday Evening Post and had built up a pretty big clientele of Post

readers in Russellville. So here was a challenge to my ability as a salesman--to convince Dad that this made sense from his standpoint and mine. But, oh, my goodness, you hit granite when you hit him. He was a strong-willed person. Poor Mother had to sit there and listen to us. I knew either way she'd be happy. She never allowed her ambitions for me to obstruct her happy relationships with both of us. She became a sort of a mediator in this situation. But Dad was just as convinced of his ability to prevail as I was of mine. It was a battle of two strong-willed people, because I had my steel core too. If you strike it, you'll get sparks. I knew what the situation demanded, and I kept pressing him with the things that I have told you, that "this was it." "Give me one chance now and, Dad, if we don't make this one, we'll find a satisfying career." But he thought, "Well, you'll get a better chance later on." Now he was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that Bob Bailey was a powerful local political factor in Russellville, his hometown. Bob had made life somewhat miserable for Dad. He had never shown the deference to Dad that younger lawyers really should have, because Dad was the senior lawyer there, sort of the dean of the bar in that area. It could have been a little bit of jealousy on Bailey's part of my father's imminence as a trial lawyer. At any rate . . .

T: You father did very well then as a lawyer?

H: Yes, he did. He was a successful lawyer. He was never able to conserve his resources. He was not a good steward of his income. He'd spend it on books or he'd be indifferent to collections. He just wasn't much interested in building up a reserve. He knew how to make money, and he probably had as good an income from the law practice as Bailey did, but Bailey outdid him in business acumen. So Father may have had a bit of envy himself for Bailey on that score. At any rate, you had a bit of tension there between those two, and Dad was fearful of him. Dad knew that Bob was somewhat indifferent to the ethics of politics and of the profession. It wasn't so much ethics as it was ignorance. The man was not a person who understood the ethical demands upon leadership. He didn't have the qualities of leadership. He was an extrovert--the most positive undiluted extrovert that you can imagine. Bailey, I'm talking about. That was a factor in Dad's thinking, I am sure, as I took up this fight to get his assent to my running. If he had been unyielding on it, it would have posed a real problem for me. I don't know how I would have resolved it. If I hadn't won the fight on that trip, I might have decided that a little pause was needed, or I might have postponed the decision as late as I could postpone it to give him time to mellow. I might have gone ahead anyway because I doubt, under the circumstances, I could have afforded in justice to myself and my own family to have yielded my opinion to his. I am not sure. It was a tough one. He used all the tricks that were in his bag such as taking his dentures out and looking old and depressed, and holding his hand to his brow, and looking away from me and taking his glasses off, and almost whining, you know, just wanting to play on my sympathies. These were some of the tricks of a trial lawyer, and he was a master artist at it. I was the object of it this time. We must have battled over that thing for three hours. It was a two-story house, and Marion and I had lived there about six months when we first came to Russellville after my graduation from law school. He and Mother slept in a room on the first floor. I said, as I started up the stairs, "Well, I'll tell you this, Dad. You must be convinced. I am not going to thwart you." Something like that. It was somewhat reserved though. It wasn't quite an all out commitment. So after I had gotten in bed and the light was still on, Mother peeked in and said, "Son, can I tell Dad that you won't

run if he doesn't give his consent?" I said, "Yes. You tell him that." She said, "Well that will make all the difference in the world to him."

What I did there was to tie-up the language in such terms that then the responsibility was back on him. In other words, instead of trying to compose our differences and reach a conclusion based on a consensus in the family, I sort of passed the obligation back to him, and that made a lot of difference. He realized, Mother told me later, that his decision would be the crucial one; that meant, you know, a responsibility that would rest on him. He couldn't just have the luxury of talking me into it, because I had made it clear that I was not convinced by his argument. But, unconvinced though I was, I would yield because of my love for him, and that made all the difference in the world, Mother told me. It still kept the filial relationship unimpaired.

T: Was it a long time after she told you this or just a short time after?

H: I think the next day. He went on to the office. He was going to the office still at age seventy. He was practicing. He went on down to the office, and I stayed there at home to do some telephoning and studying and whatever chores I had. I just stayed at the house. He walked on to the office. Then, at noon, Mother having sort of helped me, you see, with an interpretation of the situation, I looked out and saw him coming toward the house. There was somebody with him. I recognized that it was a fellow lawyer who was no admirer of Bailey's. Dad and he didn't have much in common, but they had that in common. You see the lines in an average county seat town sometimes are pretty firmly drawn. You get rigid divisions in political alignments and this man had the awesome name of Colonel James Harrison Alexander Baker--J. H. A. Baker, but we all called him Colonel. He was a big officer in the National Guard and a warmhearted individual, nothing like as competent as Bailey, but a much more personable fellow. Well, Dad just started the conversation like this and I was utterly amazed. He said, "Son, I've been talking to Colonel Baker this morning, and he says you can win this race. And I just brought him up here, because I thought he ought to tell you his reasons for thinking you can win." Of course I knew then the battle was won and that Dad had lost--that's one way of saying it--because of two things: one, my putting the responsibility on him, and then Colonel Baker's all-out commitment to me and willingness to get in and fight. Well that meant a division in the old home county to break into the Bailey strength in Pope County. So that battle ended very happily and in a few days I announced. I think it was April 12, 1942.

It interested the Baptists because they knew my father to be a strong-willed person. But they all appreciated it because about 90 percent of the time he was right in what he attached himself to. For example, he was a sincere churchman--much more denominational-minded than his son. He didn't hold the honors ecclesiastically that I did, but he should have, because as far as denominational loyalty is concerned, he had it. He was strictly devoted to the progressive wing of the Baptist church. We had our Landmark fights back there, and he opposed J. R. Graves' position of Landmarkism.

T: What particular issue did he fight--Landmarkism? Which particular issue in Landmarkism?

H: Well, my memory is very fuzzy because I was just a boy. The strength of the Landmark movement--Mr. Graves' struggles to build a new denomination on this idea of a twisted, distorted doctrine of apostolic succession

claiming that Baptists were the first Christians--came in the late 1890's, and then the turn of the century brought the fight into this century. Ben Bogard was the leader in Arkansas. I forget how the issue was finally posed, but it was fought out association by association at first. In other words, they were beginning--before they broke with Convention Baptists and set up the American Association of Baptists--to try to take over the Convention that the Southern Baptists supported. They did that by associational fights. I remember, for example, one of the disciples of Graves and of Bogard--a very attractive individual who was a Baptist minister named Webb--came up to the Russellville Association. Dad was the moderator and was moderator for many years--some twenty years. They had a controversy over whether or not this association of about two counties would stay with the state convention or go with the new association. That's really about the way it used to be phrased: "Are you a Convention Baptist or an Association Baptist?"--meaning a state association Baptist.

Well, you are thoroughly familiar with Landmarkism, and all the folks who will take an interest in this recording are thoroughly familiar with it. But my father's relationship was that, but he was very much "a regular Baptist." They said that they suspected that he named me Brooks, not for his law partner, Tom Brooks, which was, of course, the case, but because he wanted to remind me of water throughout my life and to keep that concept of water, running brooks, a stream of flowing water, where the true Scriptural method of baptism could be practiced. One interesting thing about Father's history in the Baptist church was he got a real taste of religion when he was eighteen years old a Plumerville, Arkansas. The family had all been Methodists. I am one of the few Hayses left that is a Baptist. The Hays family is Methodist. My grandfather attended Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania, which is a Methodist institution. Grandfather was a classmate or college-mate of William McKinley. He always referred to him, Dad told me, as "Major McKinley." He died before McKinley was elected President, so I'm just sure the presidency had nothing to do with creating some fantasies about it, because Dad said he was a great admirer of McKinley. So, they call me, my Methodist cousins do, the black sheep of the family. They called Dad that. But my mother's father, Dr. William Butler--I may have alluded to this before--was a Baptist preacher and a country doctor. You know that was not uncommon because doctors were generally the educated people in a community. They ordained him. He received no pay. He was a Primitive Baptist but not by conviction at all. I think I've mentioned that also. But Mother never joined that church. She went to two colleges for a short time--Ouachita College at Arkadelphia for one year and then to the University of Nashville, which became George Peabody College, on whose board I have served since 1938 and I serve currently. I was elected a trustee before I was elected to Congress. I became a member of the George Peabody Board, and I am very proud of that and there is a sentimental tie partly because Mother attended Peabody. She was a respected schoolteacher when they married. Dad was a schoolteacher before he became a lawyer. So I come from a schoolteacher's family. I had a brief excursion into teaching myself before I became a lawyer. I've heard them tell about her becoming a Baptist because she was not baptized until after I was born. Maybe my coming had something to do with her feeling that she must have a good example for her son. The new baby had to be nurtured in church life, not necessarily Baptist faith. I think Mother would have been at home in any church. She was a very avid student of the Bible and a very strong Christian, but Dad led Mother into the Baptist church. Generally, it's the other way.

T: Well, your father then came around and others did, I suppose, in 1942. Did you come back to Washington then and someone manage your campaign out there or did you resign your job and go . . .

H: Oh, we got out of Washington as quickly as we could. There were no votes here to be garnered and we went back to Arkansas, bag and baggage.

T: Then, the primary was in August.

H: No. The primary that year was July 28, and the election was settled. I had five months, you see, of leisure. I had the great thrill of being congressman-elect. I don't recall that the Republicans nominated anyone against me. If they did it was purely token. Until the November election I was referred to as the Democratic nominee for Congress, but after that, then I was congressman-elect. Sometimes, if there were no Republican opponent, they would just say "congressman designate." But I had this wonderful experience from July 28 until January 3, 1943, of just being acclaimed and recognized. I had plenty of speaking engagements and plenty of dinners. Oh, we just had a good time. We made plans to make a good congressman. It had been a very pleasant campaign in spite of the war sufferings. I didn't permit myself to be depressed over it, and the war situation made somewhat timely my discussion of my hopes for world peace and my specific plans to help in the carpentry of a new league of nations. I followed the ideas of Woodrow Wilson. My talks were pretty good, I think.

I had something to talk about. Bailey didn't. He was somewhat abusive and personal. Then, when he finally got desperate at the tail end of the campaign, he charged me with being a radical and of being--well, to use the ugly word and I think he used it in at least one of his speeches--a "nigger" lover, a terrible thing. I had organized the Urban League. By the way, the name of the very fine black lady that induced me to help organize the Urban League was Amelia Ives. I was president of the Little Rock Tuberculosis Association, and visited colored families in their homes, and fought to get children in camps for tubercular children and tuberculosis sanatorium for the blacks, improved health conditions for them, and was, of course, unashamed of my interest in the minority race. So, my opponent made the most of that. I had attended in 1938 the ill-fated Southern Conference on Human Welfare, which had good sponsorship in Birmingham, but it was penetrated by a small irresponsible extremist group, some of whom I suspect were actual communists. At any rate, their thinking was very leftist, and they did some irresponsible things. They destroyed its potential, and I repudiated it. But it got a bad name because of that. That's an oversimplification of it because I had gone to the meeting at the behest of Lister Hill, senator from Alabama, Claude Pepper, senator from Florida, and as I recall, Mrs. David Terry herself had put her name on the list of sponsors. She was a humanitarian. She had social work instincts. At any rate, it was a respectable group, but the bad publicity over the wild resolutions they adopted had made it possible for Bailey to make that an issue. There was some coloration there, but it was a phony because I had left in disgust. Fortunately, I had a clipping from a New Orleans paper which showed that on the day these resolutions were adopted I was addressing a group in New Orleans. On the other hand, he had a clipping showing that on the first day I had served as chairman of the rules committee for the conference. So, it was one of those vulnerable things if one wanted to make the most of it, and he did because he was desperate.

He had been told by the friends of his who had surveyed the situation across the district--eight counties--that he was going to lose. They said, "Brooks has got you beat." His own brother-in-law, the brother of this attractive wife of his, told him, "Bob, Brooks has got you beat." He told me later; he was the postmaster at Russellville. Terry had appointed this brother-in-law postmaster as a reward for Bailey's help for him in the 1933 race. At the same time, this brother-in-law of his was my classmate. We graduated from high school together. I permitted him to remain postmaster at Russellville in spite of his activity for his brother-in-law, which was only technically a violation of the Hatch Act. I could have used it to get rid of him, but I thought it would have been punitive. Well, I just didn't regard getting him discharged as a proper course. It would have been strictly politics. I never did think much of the patronage adjunct of office holding anyway. So I just forgave him, if you want to call it forgiveness. I would have done the same thing if my brother-in-law had been running for Congress.

So he made this quiet survey of the district for his brother-in-law, even though that was technically a violation of the Hatch Act. He told him, "Brooks has got you beat," and he related that to me later. That was when Bailey became desperate and got out a page ad in the papers in the last issue before the election: "Brooks Hays Friend of Leftists;" "This Radical Will Upset the Social Patterns of the South;" flaming words, you know--very prejudicial and provocative. That posed a question for us because he, as ruthless men so often do, waited until the eleventh hour to put these out on Saturday before the election on Tuesday. We didn't have much time to prepare an answer. But we did get hold of it. He had this page ad reproduced before it actually appeared in the Sunday papers. It was reproduced in great volume and then quickly dispatched to the various counties for his organizations in those counties to distribute to the outlying precincts. But we came back pretty effectively with the material I have just referred to, showing that the facts had been misrepresented by him, but then doing something that was very good, appealing to the better elements of the district without putting it like that, but saying that here is a man--talking about me--who had some conception of what democracy means in terms of change. The point is that I was pictured as a person who was concerned with the welfare of the black people and had gone to Birmingham, admittedly, hoping that some brighter prospects could come out of the meeting, but that I was reasonable enough and sane enough to see that this was not the way out for the black man, and that they were really betraying him, taking this extremely radical course. Right in the middle of our answer, which showed up with a page ad either on Monday or the same issue, because we had managed to find out what they were doing, there was a little box which told the truth. This sort of embarrasses me to tell it, because they should have let me see it, I think. But it said in substance, just this: "When Brooks Hays reads this, it will be the first time his eyes have beheld these words. We deliberately refrained from letting him see it, because, knowing his gentle nature and his inclination to avoid harsh language in campaigning, we prepared it ourselves with fidelity to the record, to the facts, and with perfect consistency to his course in life. But we did not want him to veto this staff's determination to tell the public the brutal facts about our opponent." I am not sure the staff did right in running this ad without letting me see it, but they were making the most out of this situation. It sounded a bit pious, but my public image was such that they felt they'd be forgiven for that kind of righteousness. I don't like to see things like this said exactly, because I believe in avoiding the appearance of self-righteousness in discussing the issues. So a man's personality is only indirectly related to the lumber of political literature.

It was an interesting twist. But the ad was truthful.

T: How would that have happened? How would they have been able to put that off? You would have been running the campaign?

H: Oh, no. No, you don't, Ron. A candidate often executes a sort of unlimited lease when he becomes a candidate. A good manager will check the important issues and important decisions with the candidate, but you can't be there to supervise every step. No, no, I didn't have to certify to the publisher of the newspaper that I had seen this. They signed it, you see: "This ad is paid for by John F. Wells, Jack Stewart, etc." But I won that race easily. I carried six of the eight counties. His campaign failed. He had already lost it, but we were jittery because you can't tell what a racial issue will do. Often it's like a prairie fire. We saw that happen sixteen years later, but there wasn't the hysteria in 1942 as in 1958.

T: Was there a big vote in 1942 even though the poll tax was still in?

H: No. There wasn't a big vote. There had been about 9,500 votes cast in that 1933 election mostly because of the poll tax. Just imagine--I think I expressed shock over that previously--in 1942, I was elected to Congress--nominated, but actually elected to all intents and purposes--on only 16,000 votes. Now imagine a man coming to Congress to represent 300,000 people with only 16,000 people saying, "He's our man." Bailey received 12,500. That gave me a majority of 3,500, out of a total of 28,500, which was a good majority. I carried Little Rock as I generally did. In all of my campaigns I always had a big vote in Little Rock. In fact, in 1933 Terry had only carried it by about 200 votes. I carried it over the heavy expenditures of the Parnell organization in 1928 and in 1930--carried it by an impressive majority. So I got a big vote in Little Rock, and then I carried all but two of the eight counties and ran very strong in those two counties. Bailey beat me by about fifty votes in Johnson County, which was the other county with Pope County, his home county, which constituted his senatorial district, and he had represented that senatorial district for a good while.

T: Was your support not ever high in the western part of your district?

H: Oh, yes. It was all right in the western part of the district but his was strong, too, you see.

T: Well, the population would be fairly small in . . .

H: Yes. Those were not heavily voting counties. But still they had to be campaigned. They could be decisive. But as I remember it, in the 1933 election the vote in all of the counties was fairly close except in Yell County.

T: You got the vote in Yell County in 1942?

H: Oh, yes. It was not a big majority, but it was amazing how those people determined that in spite of Bailey's strong political pull in that county they were going to atone for what they did in 1933. There was a lot of satisfaction in this. Now there was one little incident here that I think is worth a footnote, and then maybe you'll want to move on to something else after 1942. On Monday morning before the Tuesday election, following

the wide distribution of Bailey's attack upon me as a dangerous radical, my first speaking assignment was at Charleston, Franklin County, one of the two county seats. Several counties have two county seats in Arkansas. One is called the district courthouse, and the other is the principal county seat. Ozark was the principal county seat, but Charleston, the other county seat, was about twenty miles south and on the opposite side of the Arkansas River. It was my first engagement on Monday at nine-thirty in the morning. Incidentally, that is the hometown of Senator Dale Bumpers, who was governor of Arkansas for four years and who had defeated Faubus for that office and then defeated Fulbright for the Senate. He was just a young man in 1942, but old enough to be interested in me, he told me. He remembered his Uncle Sam Bumpers introducing me at a little village north of Charleston. But that's purely incidental.

I was speaking out on the street. I had a little portable loudspeaker, and I remember very well getting their attention when I started talking about that ad. I said, "Let me read carefully what Lieutenant Governor Bailey says about me. This may not be done well because I'm not accustomed to talking about my opponents, and I have not attacked him in this campaign. I have talked about my program for the progress of our people and about world peace." Those were my two themes--development of the Arkansas River, rural industries, the usual economic progressive ideas that I had. I said, "I have talked about those things. Now, I must talk about his attack upon me and must answer. Here is what he says about me: 'Brooks Hays: having never won an election three times repudiated by the sound thinking people of Arkansas; this advocate of radical social theories. Will you vote for him, a man who has continually failed in life, or for Bob Bailey, who has never lost a campaign?'" Then I said, "That's how he starts this attack on me. But what are the facts? When he said he never lost a campaign, he is showing that he has a very poor memory. Of course he might say technically that he had never lost a state race and that I had never won a state race, which would not be entirely true, because I was twice elected to the national committee in a primary. But I want to face this issue squarely. I remember Bob Bailey as an ambitious young lawyer and I looked up to him. I thought 'Here is an ambitious man trying to make good in the law profession,' and I remember when he ran for justice of the peace in Illinois township in our home county. And when he was defeated. I thought, 'Well, it's too bad that the door of opportunity is closed to him,' but two or four years later in 1918 he ran for a membership in the Constitutional Convention, a county office, and again he was defeated. I thought, 'Well, he still can try again. These two defeats shouldn't put a damper over his ambitions.' And then, the third time, he ran for representative in the legislature and again was defeated. But I still didn't give up for my neighbor and friend, Bob Bailey, who married a dear friend of our family. I remember how pleased I was when on his fourth try for a county office, assuming that the justice of the peace would be so regarded, he was successful. Now, isn't it wonderful that we live in a country in which a man can win on his fourth try? He didn't tell you that in that ad, did he? He referred to himself as a 'never defeated candidate.' Then he says that I have never been elected. But I want you to remember those races which he regards as failures. They were not unsuccessful. I succeeded in alerting the people of my state to the conditions that existed. You have not forgotten that--how I came into Franklin County to ask your support, and you gave it because I was fighting a corrupt state organization, and so, I am very proud of those defeats." That was my appeal that morning. You see, I was appealing to their sense of sportsmanship and it worked.

T: So, you won in 1942. You moved the family back to Washington, and you would have come in as a congressman certainly in the early days of the war. There were many issues, I am sure, that confronted you. What do you remember as you arrived in 1943, starting your service? I am sure you remember well, being a congressman now, the first State of the Union message that you would have heard and so on. Are there any recollections you have of early 1943?

H: No, not much to be inserted here. I was disappointed in not getting a good committee assignment. I wanted to be on the Agriculture Committee. That had been my great interest, of course--to help the low income farmers. But that was precluded by the unchanging rule of seniority. Mr. Gathings from eastern Arkansas, representing an agricultural district, but a different pattern of agricultural cultivation from western Arkansas, was on the Agriculture Committee, and it was not the practice to give two seats to a state, at least one with a small delegation.

T: What choice did you have?

H: I wanted to go on Foreign Affairs then, but Mr. Fulbright wanted that. I didn't press my claim because I felt that the Rhodes scholar, one who had lived in England while studying at Oxford University, should have preference.

T: He represented what?

H: The third district. He was from northwest Arkansas, the extreme corner district.

T: Fayetteville?

H: Yes.

T: Fort Smith?

H: No, not Fort Smith. That was represented by another man. You see we had seven members of Congress then. We now have four. That is a sad commentary on the shifting populations of our country. Well, I mustn't turn myself loose on that sociological theme.

T: How long had Mr. Fulbright been a member of the House?

H: We were elected the same year. We were the only new members from Arkansas that year. He was succeeding Clyde Ellis, who had run in the same Senate race that Mr. Terry had run in and lost, and Ellis also lost. Ellis came later to enjoy a great career as head of the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

T: Were these men obliged to resign their offices to run for the Senate?

H: Well, you simply couldn't run in two races. You had to give up your House seat. You didn't have to resign, but you were giving it up because you couldn't have your name on the ballot for more than one office. That's one reason that efforts to get a four-year term for House members have failed. The Senators would oppose it because they knew that that would enable the House member to run against the sitting senator without losing his House seat.

T: In other words, you couldn't run for two offices simultaneously. So you became a member of the Banking Committee.

H: Right. Banking and Currency, and it was the best thing that could have happened to me. One chapter in my memoirs is on that period of eight years--my first eight years on Banking and Currency and my second eight years on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I am calling the chapter dealing with the first eight years, "Star Gazing and Dollar Watching," because I was known as a "star-gazer"--a dreamer, an idealist. It did not bother me. Wasn't that what they said about Joseph? Here comes a dreamer. I have often quoted in these years the words of the prophet Joel--words that were picked up by St. Peter at Pentecost, you remember--"Their young men shall see visions and their old men shall dream dreams."

After Mother's death in 1955--she was eighty-two and she and Dad had been married for fifty-eight years when she died, and that really struck me hard--my father, who was eighty-four then, said as I told him goodbye to come back to Washington, "Now don't worry about me. I'll get along all right. I've got some plans to carry out--some dreams. A man's dreams shouldn't die until he dies." A little different way of putting it, but I liked that. So I never did dodge when they said, sometimes critically, "Here's a dreamer." That was about what Bailey was saying in some of those paragraphs in that ad--that I was an impractical person and couldn't win elections, couldn't get anything done. Well, I could put up an awful argument on that, but let me finish that observation about the Banking Committee. Here I had to begin to do what I wasn't able to do in college in my undergraduate days--learn something about economics--learn more about the system.

T: Is this when you took that four-month course?

H: That was back in my college days. The four-months course was in economics I, taught by Dr. E. G. Nourse in 1916 at the University of Arkansas, and that was all the economics instruction I had had. But his caused me to deal with tough tasks, price control, the farm credit legislation, etc., and those are often prosaic. There's not much excitement about discussing for the House of Representatives the cold issues pertaining to farm policies and having to do with farm credit, and bank problems and credit, and the Federal Reserve System. Those are not exciting but they were important things and particularly during the war when we were threatened with an inflation that would make the current one look pretty juvenile. I had to do my homework and I think I did a fairly good job.

T: Who was chairman of the committee?

H: The first chairman was Henry Steagall of Alabama. There are farm bills and banking measures that are on the statute books today that are known as the Steagall Act. He was a good chairman but he died within a few months after the seventy-eighth Congress convened. He was succeeded by Brent Spence, a marvelous man from Kentucky. I got to be a very warm friend of his, and he was chairman the rest of the time that I was on the Banking Committee.

T: Did you know Wright Patman?

H: Wright Patman was second or third in seniority on the committee. You could always predict the position that Wright would take--a very forthright,

admirable person, not always sound from my point of view on money questions and inclined to be a little bit of a printing press man. He was a populist. Spell it with a little "p." I don't think he ever had been anything but a good Democrat. Well, of course, the Populist Party had died when he came on the scene. He is now the senior member of the House.

T: He is still chairman of the Banking Committee?

H: No, he was defeated. That was part of the uprising.

T: Right.

H: The "young Turks" took him out and put in Henry Ruess.

T: It is interesting that you say you were on the Banking Committee. There are two things that kind ot tie in with some of your earlier statements. One was the 1928 campaign and your concern about borrowing beyond the means of the state and fiscal responsibility, and yet, on the other hand, you had this desire for spending and improvement where necessary but tied in with the fiscal responsibility of being able to pay for what you spend. Did this come out in your Banking Committee career?

H: No. I never was particularly troubled by that. I built up a pretty good reputation, I think, with my colleagues for being sound in financial matters. I was never reckless. I never advocated heavy expenditures for any of the peripheral interests of the country. I remember, for example, voting against the new building for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. I remember supporting President Truman's veto of one of the veterans' bills that would have cost us in the final years four hundred million dollars a year. There were only twenty-five of us that did that. I was a great believer in having good, sound priorities, and I put people first. I would be regarded as rather generous or more liberal, at least, on welfare legislation, but even that I could justify, not on the basis of "lady bountiful's compassion," but sound social policy. You fail to spend enough money for nourishment of children to maintain nutritional standards through your educational system--I mean by that the school lunches and the food stamp program--and that is very costly. The argument is really on our side when you talk about economic soundness, because you pay for it later in criminal costs and institutional care--not meaning that an undernourished child becomes a criminal, but that it is related to the problem. If we neglect the provisions for nutrition in the first three years of a child's life, there are irreparable results in the life of that person. An underprivileged person, a retarded mind, and a weak physical structure in the life of the person and you get heavier costs later on. We have never quite, as a matter of national policy, faced up to this problem.

So the mere fact that I had "liberal" views on social legislation was not inconsistent with my ideas that sound financial policies have to be pursued. You can, in other words, in depression years afford to have a deficit. Our Republican friends who claim to be "sound money men" are giving us the biggest deficit we have ever had. I am not necessarily condemning them for it if they will establish that they have the right priorities. It is not easy to accept the political handicap of opposing some appropriations for veterans, although they were quite reasonable with me. I defended myself and I didn't suffer too much with my veterans because they knew that I had been in there fighting to save valuable government land for farms for them.

Under my bill they would have preference in getting family-sized tracts of fine government land rather than selling the land to speculators over my protests. The veterans knew I had done all of that and that I had been one of the eighteen sponsors of the G. I. Bill of Rights; but when it came to an inordinate allowance for non-service connected disabilities, I said, "No. Our obligation to them doesn't go that far." You have to have priorities. In the case of defense expenditure, generally the defense department can get all they want, and they want twice as much as they need in some situations. The general will admit it: "Well, we can't afford to take a chance so if we need two cannons, we'll ask for four." It's that way. But maybe they shouldn't have the four. Now that's rather presumptuous for us to set our opinion against the experts, but the experts are often divided and they may neglect the fact that manpower is a vital part of defense.

Weapons have to be carried in the hands of people. They have to be fired by intelligent and physically strong men, and soon we may say women. So manpower is the key to it, and you can't neglect these welfare interests or the Civil Rights phases either, because we have to depend on black people now as never before to help us in the manpower side of a national defense system. When Mr. Ford says, "We'll be second to none," I would say, "Well, second to none in what phase of defense?" If we are to be second to no country in manpower, then we've got to hurry up with our fertility rates to get as big a population as Red China. That's an oversimplification, of course, and those are provocative conjure words. You conjure favor for your position when you say, "We'll be second to none." Nobody is going to say, "Oh yes. We'll be second to Russia." Well, we've got to be second to China in population. So, this has been kicked around--this idea of the national budget--and yet, we are inclined to build up expenditures because of the pressures from the department, and defense interests, and before we know it problems have built up.

Let's go back to the farm aspects of legislation. I pled for aid for poor farmers. These were constructive things and were related to a sound economy. Well, I could talk at some length about that. I have mentioned Proxmire because I think that he's entitled to a great deal of credit.

There was a little incident the other day on the Senate floor that was highly significant. Muskie opposed George McGovern's understandable, but overly-generous, motion to boost the food stamp amount. Now, I might have voted with McGovern. I don't know enough about the facts although because I have been an advocate of an expanded food stamp program. I don't think the dollar amount is near as important as getting the state and federal mechanisms in proper shape and proper relationship so that we really reach people with food. There has been a very loose handling of the problem. Nevertheless, Muskie, who is chairman of the Budget Committee now, the new committee that says there has to be an overall coordination of these various appropriations, did a brave thing. He said, "Everyone knows how I feel about this program, but we simply cannot increase it any more or we'll disregard our commitment to hold this budget down to manageable proportions." That was great.

T: Was this kind of thing happening to you in your first term in Congress? Was there a lot of pressure for spending or was the issue really price control--holding the prices down?

H: The only political problem I had based on Banking Committee positions was

that of price control. I fought hard to hold the line. I can't say that our failure to do it in the present situation is to be compared with our successful handling of it, generally, during the Second World War, because a war situation does make a lot of difference. No one can argue with you then about price controls. But I am inclined to think that we are going to have to, somewhere down the road and maybe at a not too distant date, take some drastic control measures to hold the line. This is not with any indifference to the value of a free economy. I think there is a way to balance these things.

Now, here's something that I must not put off saying. I refuse to let the cliche, the invoking of the old patterns of "free enterprise," make the decision for me on these grave and basic problems. In my Baptist circles I can say this without being pietistic. I will go in any direction that a sound interpretation of the basic Christian idea of concern for disadvantaged people leads me. I will go in any direction no matter what it does to a cherished pattern of action. The accustomed ways of life often have to give way to the implications of an ancient Christian principle, and segregation is the best proof of it I know. We had to abandon segregation in the South because it did not fit our Christian commitment. That's what it amounts to, because when the nation's conscience was stirred, including the conscience of many white people in the South, you came up with an answer that said to the segregationist, "You're wrong." So I go in that same direction where, in another relationship, we find that the Christian principle leads us to discard some accustomed ways. And we are going to have to face that in the world situation. There is too much hunger in the world. There are too many starving people--I'll say peoples. There are stricken nations whose plight we've got to take account of.

Now we can't finance it all, but we've got the technology to export. We've got farm methods of increased production to export. We even have a large surplus of food to export, and we can't wait until the warehouses are full to export what we do have. This is, I think, the great priority now. The great priority now is to care for people. Alfred Lord Tennyson said, "Our little systems have their day. They have their day and cease to be. They are but broken lights of Thee, and Thou, O God, art more than they." Now here we are afraid of the Communist threat and say that all we've got to do is to maintain the Christian governments over Communism. Well we haven't yet made our governments completely Christian. Chesterton was right. "Christianity hasn't been tried and found wanting. It's been found difficult and not tried." I am going to conclude this particular part by telling you, again at the risk of appearing just a bit too prideful on this point, of my Christian convictions in politics, but I am going to do it because I don't know how many days I have left to pursue this theme. I know the area in which my contribution in now what may be the late afternoon of my life, should be.

Here is a hypothetical question. Imagine a great big area of land, and the best land is on two sides of a river. On one side of that river is land that is adaptable only to cotton, but they can't grow food because the soil is not adapted to it. This, of course, is a pure hypothetical situation, but I am trying to make a point. Imagine that kind of situation in which land is adaptable only to cotton from which clothes are made. On the other side of the river there is land that can't grow cotton, but can produce food. So, the land over here producing food that the people on both sides of the river need must be devoted to producing food; contrariwise, over

there, cotton. But there is no bridge between them so the cotton can't be transported over there so the other people will have food to eat. Therefore, the important people become the bridge builders. They have got to find on both sides of the river a way to build a bridge so that the cotton producing people can get their food and the food producing people can get the clothes. Bridge builders become just as important as the producers. Also bridges must be built between the Christian community and the political community. That's the big unfinished job for our world.

John Buchanan said something that I think ought to go into the Baptist record. John Buchanan is a Baptist minister who announced to his congregation some ten or more years ago one morning in Birmingham, "I shall resign tomorrow as your pastor to become the Republican candidate for Congress from this district." He's made a good congressman. I heard him in a talk with the congressional prayer breakfast group this morning, and, while those are generally regarded as closed sessions, I think he wouldn't mind my quoting him. He looked at me in the audience this morning. I occasionally go over and visit with them as former members have the privilege of doing, and there were about four or five of us in the group this morning that are former members. He said, "I know some of you new members don't know that Mr. Hays, who is a former member of Congress, is also a former member of the Southern Baptist Convention." He said, "He would still be in Congress except the duties that fell upon him as a religious leader led him to do something that absolutely insured his defeat. And it was because of these convictions and his willingness to assume the role of a defender of constitutional rights of the minority blacks of his district that they deprived him of the office. I, therefore, just want this in the record that it was his religious position that did it and not a bad decision as a political matter."

Now I know that often too much is claimed for me, but I would like to say that certainly that was a valid part of my actions in the late 1950's--not just in the Little Rock school crisis but in other situations. I was happy to hear John Buchanan's observations--quite aside from the accolade--that religious men must see political issues in their moral relationships. Then he added, "This is, you see, what makes me congenial with Mr. Hays as a Democrat, because in that situation, even though he hasn't been always in accord with my Republican views, he was acting like the founder of my Republican Party." I can live a long time on the momentum of that comment.

T: Did you have to make these kinds of decisions in Congress in the 1940's?

H: Well . . .

T: We were talking about some of the things that you had achieved and were successful in during your first little while in Congress. I suspect there are a few things, Mr. Hays, that maybe you had rather forget about, or you weren't quite happy with some other things. Can you think of that in your early days in Congress as you began in 1942?

H: Of course, when you get to the United States Congress you find the situation is quite different from a state legislature. A first-termer in the state legislature isn't handicapped so much by seniority as he is at the national level. I had seen the Arkansas General Assembly in action. I had been familiar with it from childhood. My father was chief clerk of the Arkansas House of Representatives for about five terms, beginning, I guess, in 1901. I recall his taking Mother and me with him to Little Rock from Russellville for maybe a week or two at a time. The sessions generally ran from January

until May. They were extended sessions. They later adopted an amendment to the constitution to provide that it should meet sixty days every two years. Somebody said, "That was a big mistake. It should have provided for two days every sixty years." But that was because of the tendency of the legislators to drag things out. A lot of the people elected to the legislature had small incomes and this five dollars a day meant the possibility of some savings. I knew of one old gentleman, who lived very modestly, who survived they said, from one session of the legislature to the next session two years later on what he was able to save out of that five dollars a day.

So, it took me a while to get acquainted. I resolved to know every member of the House, if not well, to have more than a speaking acquaintance with him and to be able to recognize him, because pretty early in my service up here Mr. Rayburn began to ask me, now and then, to preside over the committee of the whole or even as Speaker, although that was a privilege generally reserved for men beyond their first term. When I was in the speaker's chair, I wanted to be able to say, if the chair was addressed by some new man, "The gentleman from Oregon is recognized." I wanted him to know that I knew who he was.

T: Did you preside your first term?

H: Yes. I presided some in my first term. I had had the advantage of having known Mr. Rayburn while I was in the Department of Agriculture. I remember the first time that he invited the freshmen members of the House to a dinner--a sort of get-acquainted dinner--he started out by saying, "It's a great pleasure to me to see among the freshmen two old friends. The rest of you are new, but here's Jim McCord from Tennessee, the auctioneer. I've been to auctions where he was the auctioneer and nobody can do it better than Jim." Then, he said, "There's Brooks Hays of Arkansas. He is an old friend and I have been in Democratic meetings with him. So I welcome these two old friends and now I am eager to get acquainted with you other freshmen." It was a small group. I think there were about forty of us in the Democratic group. Because of that, I began pretty early to do some presiding in the House. That was one reason for wanting to know everybody. That wasn't a very common practice, however. I was surprised to find so many members of the House that took little interest in getting acquainted with the whole membership. One day Charlie Gifford of Massachusetts, who was a member of my committee, the Banking Committee--of course, in the committee you always knew each other--said to me, "Brooks, who is that old gentleman sitting on the front row on your side over there?" I had drifted over to the Republican side to talk to him. I said, "Mr. Gifford, that's Zebulum Weaver of North Carolina." He had been here twenty years. I was surprised that he was asking me who it was, but that was not too unusual.

T: Did you know Mr. Rayburn really well from your Congress days or from an earlier period?

H: Oh, I knew him very well from the earlier period.

T: Was he an active Baptist?

H: Oh, no. He wasn't a Baptist at all. He was not a member of any church until late in his seventies. I recall we used to talk a little about Baptist life. He was very sensitive about this area of life. He had an aversion to anyone who seemed to be exploiting the denominational ties or

making anything of the religious elements in life. This is a part of the problem which I detailed with some florid words this morning about the bridge between the two areas, but I hope I can always avoid overtness in dealing with the problem. I thought about this pretty early in my own political situation. I had to evaluate it because I was a rather prominent Sunday School teacher and had this great class. I had to do everything I could to avoid embarrassment of the charge that I was exploiting my faith. Nevertheless, you can see that I feel strongly that there are moral issues to be confronted. Now we may be getting to the problem of semantics here. Let me talk about that just a moment.

This is related to the general problem of religion in public life. You cannot divorce the two activities. You may say theoretically they must have nothing to do with each other and that religion must not be involved in politics and vice versa. Some might say that this is the essence of the American doctrine of separation of church and state. I don't agree with that. I think that it's subversive of good government to hold that moral influences must not flow out of the religious community into political life. And they have to flow through dedicated men and women as citizen voters or as office holders. At the same time, we come to this matter of style, and there are questions of style. A person may say "this is the moral position." I don't mean he shouldn't use the word. There is such a thing as morality in politics, and now and then you have to say, "I view this as a moral issue." That doesn't mean you regard the person that differs with you as an immoral person, but you are free to argue that the moral weight is on a particular course. I have done that with great respect for those who differ with me.

Nevertheless, I could sympathize with Mr. Rayburn's position. I respected him, and essentially he was a moral man, but traditional religion was not his life. He left that to others. He was, I think, very careful in his choice of words when it came to speech-making. I think he wanted to be broadgauged in the interpretation of morality in public life. An illustration of it is that he did not want me to press for the adoption of the Prayer Room Resolution. And he put it pretty bluntly. He said, "Brooks, please don't press that resolution for a while." I said, "Well, not if you don't want me to Mr. Speaker." I knew that I couldn't put the resolution through with any satisfaction if I had the speaker's opposition. But this was to me rather symptomatic, and then, when the Republican administration came in, they immediately put it through--the Prayer Room Resolution. Even then, he was not happy about it, but he didn't want to be in the attitude of vetoing it. I think he could have vetoed it. He could have said, "I am opposed to this," and I would have joined him in opposition, because I said, "This is the kind of thing that there must be a consensus on. We don't want a prayer room just by the majority saying, 'It's got to be.' This must be by consensus." I would have joined Mr. Rayburn if he had taken that position. But I did take the pains to make a speech on it when it came up for adoption by the House, and it was adopted unanimously. That was three years after I first inroduced it. This is related to the question of Mr. Rayburn, because he had a special feeling about religion, and I could tell from some of the side remarks that he would make about John McCormick's strong Catholic character and strong Catholic ties that he had rather John were in a little different posture.

T: Now wasn't Joseph Martin the minority leader in the early part of your service?

H: Yes. Joe Martin was the Republican leader, and then he became the speaker in the eightieth Republican Congress and then again in the eighty-third Republican Congress. They were the only two congresses that had Republican control during the sixteen years I was in Congress.

T: But Mr. Rayburn was speaker for all the other periods?

H: Oh, yes, the whole time.

T: That you were in Congress?

H: Right.

T: He was buried from a Primitive Baptist Church.

H: Well now I can give you just a little enlightenment on that. He knew that my Grandfather Butler was a Primitive Baptist preacher. I asked him one day, "Mr. Speaker, did you know any of the Webbs that went from my ancestral home in Tennessee to Bonham, Texas?" "Oh," he said, "Tom Webb and Jim Webb. Oh, yes, great Primitive Baptists." I said, "They are cousins of my mother." That interested him. He said, "Yes, they are great people and strong Baptists, Primitive Baptists. My mother was a Primitive Baptist." When he finally decided to join a church I have an idea that there were two reasons for it. One was a sense of impending severance with physical life. He knew that he was not immortal. That was in his late seventies--just a year or two before he died. He was aware of that and I think he wanted to feel that he had done that much to prepare for his passing. The second reason was a very sentimental feeling about his mother. He mentioned that to me more than once when we would have lunch together or just in informal talks. I think he rather enjoyed these references to the Baptist life. He knew that I had the same liberal position about church ties that he did; that is, while I was devoted to my institutional expression of religion that I had a tolerant attitude. He enjoyed talking about his mother. I remember he said once, "She was a little thing. She only weighed ninety pounds, but ninety pounds of dynamite." That was his mother--the Primitive Baptist mother.

I think that when he finally decided to join the church there was this element of sentiment for his mother. He did it in a very unobtrusive way. He would not permit them to have any photographers. He didn't want the congregation present. He had the preacher come privately. I think they went out to a running stream. You are familiar with the lingering feeling that some Baptists have that it must be in a running stream. At any rate, one of the Primitive Baptist preachers there baptized him, and it either was officially admitted by the speaker--maybe in answer to a reporter's question or else a short news release on it, or he permitted the pastor to announce it. At any rate, it was known that he had joined the Primitive Baptist church and had had a private baptism. I never talked to him after that.

I went to his funeral. I flew down to Dallas and was driven out to Bonham by Luther Holcomb, who was at one time pastor of one of the Dallas Baptist churches and then later became executive secretary of the Dallas Council of Churches and later, vice-chairman of the Commission on Equal Employment Opportunities here in Washington. You may have heard the name. He got into government service after he left the ministry. Luther Holcomb drove me out to Bonham to the funeral, and then I flew back to Washington that afternoon.

But that's incidental except that Lyndon Johnson, who was then vice-president, had one of his aides come to me--I was assistant secretary of state at the time--and he said, "Mr. Johnson wants you to fly back on his plane." So I went from Dallas to Washington on Lyndon Johnson's plane.

But I don't want to spend more time than is necessary on this analysis of Mr. Rayburn's religious life. But that's the story, as I know it.

T: I think this is helpful and perhaps is an experience not unsimilar to that of a number of others. Are there other personalities that you remember? I had rather take them chronologically if we can from the 1943 Congress. That was the seventy-eighth, wasn't it?

H: Yes. That's right.

T: The seventy-eighth Congress. What do you remember about other outstanding leaders? You knew them from other service in Washington, but were there any that stand out particularly?

H: Yes. In the Banking and Currency Committee the great figure there, from my point of view, was a person that I had an almost idolatrous attitude toward. He was a great hero with me, and that was Mike Monroney from Oklahoma. He had a great mind, and he was articulate and knew how to lay out an economic problem and to come up with very convincing arguments for his position. He was one seat ahead of me in seniority most of the time, that is at least for the last few years. He was maybe third and I was fourth in committee seniority. Mike and I nearly always voted together. That was partly because he influenced me and was one of my very strong friends. He seemed to be just about as fond of me. I campaigned for him when he ran for the Senate. I suppose that was in 1952. He was elected that year to the Senate. I hated to see him go, but that was about the time I was going over to the Foreign Affairs Committee. But it used to be observed that Monroney and I were in there fighting pretty much for the same strong line on price control. I remember the day--while we were resisting the effort to break the line on the price of cotton goods and it got into the raw cotton price situation too--that John Rankin shouted to the House from the back of the room, "Hays and Monroney are the greatest enemies of the South that ever came to Congress."

That was the kind of thing that we had to put up with because it took a fight to resist these efforts of the commodity interests. That is when I lost ground to some extent at home before I could go back and say to my Main Street merchants, for example, "Now here are the reasons why we can't temporize on this matter."

T: He, of course, would have been very close to you geographically in terms of districts as well. Would this have had something to do with it?

H: Well, not much, I think. Oklahoma and Arkansas are not too much alike. There is cotton in eastern and southern Oklahoma, but Oklahoma was a great oil and gas state and beef and wheat. Arkansas had no wheat and very little beef production, relatively, so they weren't too much alike. I can cite what Dr. Odom of the University of North Carolina had to say one time. "Arkansas is more like South Carolina than it is any state on which it borders." That is an amazing thing because South Carolina is a thousand miles from Arkansas. Arkansas' commodities, of course, were cotton and rice; and the proportion of blacks was about the same in both states. The

area is about the same and total population is about the same. No, I would say that there wasn't too much except this, and here is something that is on the other side of that equation. Oklahoma was filled up with Arkansans and Texans. When the Cherokee Strip was opened and land was first made available, Texans poured in from the South, and Arkansas people poured in from the east. So there were strong personal connections.

T: Who else stands out in your mind?

H: Well, one of the strongest men in the house was named Francis Walter from Pennsylvania. He was a very rugged character. He was a lawyer and member, a high-ranking member, of the Judiciary Committee. Sam Rayburn appointed Walter chairman of the Patronage Committee and appointed Harry Sheppard of California and myself as the other two members of the three-man Democratic Patronage Committee. Walter was a very powerful person and had a very strong and dominating personality. He just almost had his way on that committee. We deferred to him. Sheppard and I both did. I think you might be interested in knowing why I went on the Patronage Committee.

T: You said earlier that you weren't too enthusiastic about political patronage.

H: No, and that may have been one reason Sam wanted me on there. I was not a patronage-hungry person, you see. If he had appointed somebody that made patronage a strong interest, he would be playing politics with it instead of just trying to keep peace in the family and trying to do a workmanlike job. But the real reason he put me on the Patronage Committee was this: In the seventy-ninth Congress on the first day John Rankin put the House in an uproar by throwing in a resolution to create a new committee. He did it by a parliamentary trick; and that of itself was something to embarrass Mr. Rayburn; and it made him furious because Rankin never took Mr. Rayburn into his confidence. He always fought him, and there was a strong personal ill will, you might say, between them. Rayburn concealed it, I guess, but he wasn't too effective in concealing it. Rankin never concealed any personal feelings, so it was known that he didn't like Rayburn.

But he sneaked up on us in the first session of that Congress and threw in a resolution to establish a new committee to be called the Committee on Un-American Activities. Well, it was more witch-hunting. It was more of the Martin Dies' Committee activity. I had opposed the continuation of the Dies Committee and was the only Arkansas member that did and one of the very few Southern members that did. Only ninety members out of the 435 voted against it, that is on both sides of the aisle, and out of that ninety I would say that there weren't over ten or twelve from the South. It drew a little fire but it didn't bother me. I had decided that it was itself un-American--what they were doing. I was strongly opposed to it. So, just as I had opposed the continuation of the Dies' Committee, I opposed the creation of this new committee after the old Dies' Committee had expired. Rankin, you see, was trying to revive this committee. It was just his own personal vehicle. That's what it was, but it was the kind of thing that was hard to oppose. You don't want to be "for" un-American activities. So, we had a hard fight, and as I say, it was a coup. I was sitting on the front row when they took the vote. Walter was presiding. He told Rayburn the next day about it. He looked down there and saw me standing by myself when he called for the "no" votes. I just didn't have any of my Southern friends with me. Generally, you sat with the folks from your state and

your area--not always but it often worked out like that.

T: You sat where you could get a seat.

H: Oh, yes. We had no assigned seats in the House. They do in the Senate, of course. But Walter told him about it, and then he told me after my appointment to the Patronage Committee was announced, "You know, Mr. Rayburn was asking my advice about other members of the Patronage Committee." Walter, I think, had served in a previous Congress. He said, "Mr. Speaker, I'm going to recommend that fellow, Brooks Hays."

Well, when I stood up without the other gentlemen when the "no" vote was taken, it sort of accented my independence. It might have made some difference if I had just been one of a group in the back of the House chamber. But he said, "Just to see him standing there in that independent, stalwart fashion impressed me. I think that fellow will fit your bill." Mr. Rayburn said, "I do too. We'll put him on it." So I went on the Patronage Committee with these two men, and it was a good experience. We did all right. We got along very well indeed, largely because Walter knew pretty well what he wanted. Of course, we might argue with him sometimes, and while a strong personality, he had some flexibility.

T: Now what things did you have control of in the Patronage Committee? Postmasters?

H: Yes, the post office employees, the elevator operators, the pages and that kind of service, the door keepers, and what we called "the housekeeping staff." You might add about Mr. Rayburn that he honored me by asking me to preside now and then in my first term; by putting me on the Patronage Committee in my second term, I guess; by appointing me on the Commission on Intergovernmental Relations somewhere along the line, I guess in about my fifth or sixth term. It was a presidential commission, but the President, according to custom, where there are legislative members of a presidential commission, asks the party leaders in the House and Senate to make their respective selections, so Mr. Rayburn and Mr. McCormack tapped me for that. They put me on the select Committee for Space Exploration and Aeronautics; they asked me to serve on the Democratic Platform Committee in two conventions--1952 and 1956.

So, the great tension that developed between us over the Little Rock situation and the fact that the speaker seemed to just leave me emotionally--just sort of put me out of his life politically--after the Little Rock experience, doesn't destroy my feeling of affection for him and the recognition that he valued my place in his circle of friends in the House. But Mr. Rayburn, himself, was one of the tough Texas school. He was an honest man, but not a sensitive person in the sense that one is filled with a passion for reform or social progress or an understanding of more than the ordinary aspects of our system of government rule. His failure to recognize me and the merit of my position in the Little Rock crisis really wounded me deeply. I learned that my successor, Dale Alford, was protesting my appointment as assistant secretary of state. Dean Rusk had let me know, very tactfully and without being overt, by saying that I should talk to Mr. Rayburn, which meant that Mr. Rayburn was a part of the resistance and that the White House wasn't appointing me until Mr. Rayburn said, "Okay." The news had been approved unofficially by the White House that I was going to be assistant secretary of state, being summoned from Knoxville and the TVA Board to come up here and help Kennedy in his new administration. Here it was being held up. I

went out there after Mr. Rusk said, "Why don't you go talk to Mr. Rayburn?" I talked with him, and I couldn't believe it at first when I found that, yes, he had held it up. I said, "Why, Mr. Rayburn, I am amazed." He said, "Well, Brooks, you're out and he's in." Well, that's pretty cold, you know. I don't agree with that philosophy. I told him so, and then we really had a confrontation.

T: Was this out in Texas or here in Washington?

H: It's a long story but I suspect I'd better tell it. It was here in Washington. When Dean Rusk told me this in his office, it was about five o'clock in the afternoon, shortly after the inauguration. That was January third, wasn't it? No, January twentieth. Congress had met on the third before it. There was a lot of snow on the ground, I remember that. It was a deep snow. You remember the weather at the Kennedy inauguration. Well, the snow had not vanished. You couldn't get a cab. I walked from the Department of State to the Capitol where Mr. Rayburn's office was. I called him first and told him I wanted to see him, and he said, "Come on out now and I'll see you." That was late in the afternoon, but he always worked late. Of course, he had a car waiting for him to take him home. But he was a hard-working speaker. He loved his job and loved politics and was an extrovert with some fine qualities. When I told him the situation, I said, "I can't understand it." He said, "Alford has protested your appointment." I said, "Mr. Rayburn . . ." and I mentioned the word "confrontation." I think it was the first time he ever saw me just a little bit bristling. Everybody was so respectful of him as speaker that we deferred to him constantly, and I never had been quite in this hostile an attitude toward that position.

I said, "It's just unbelieveable that that would happen--that you would let him influence you." He said, "Well, he's in and you're out, and, you know, after all you have to accept these things." I said, "What's he got to do with the assistant secretary of state appointment? He's not on the Foreign Affairs Committee." He said, "Well, but he's a part of the political group in power, and you know that it has always been my philosophy that you have to work with them. Now, Brooks, of course I am unhappy about it, and Wilbur Mills has tried to talk him out of it." I said, "Wilbur should not have to try to talk him out of it." I said, "Wilbur's got nothing to do with it." He said, "Well, I am sorry." Then I pulled my strong card out of the deck, or however you would say it. I said, "Mr. Rayburn, I want to say this to you. You know how devoted to you I have been and how hard I have worked to help you, and you will recall that on two occasions you asked me to serve on the Platform Committee of the Democratic National Committee, and you did it because of my moderate position on civil rights. You wanted me to help hold the party together. I was one of the few Southerners whose views were flexible enough to give us any appeal at all to the rest of the nation. That was your decision, and you and John McCormack asked me to go into that fight, and I did in two national conventions. But, Mr. Rayburn, it didn't help me in Arkansas. What I did there was very expensive to me politically, and you know what eventually happened. I, at the same time, received then, after that defeat, an appointment to a nine-year term on the Tennessee Valley Authority Board, an honor at the hands of a Republican President. I was appointed to the United Nations by a Republican President and served in the General Assembly. I have never had any high honor at the hands of a national Democratic administration--none whatever. I have never asked for any. I have just been a workhorse, doing what you wanted me to do, as I did in two national

conventions. Wouldn't it be sad for me to be put out of this circle of national Democratic strength and denied an appointment which a Democratic President wants to give me? How would you feel if the record ends like that with my having received honors only at the hands of a Republican President but no honors whatever by the party I have served--at times because you and John McCormack asked me to. Mr. Rayburn, I can't believe you would let that happen."

I looked him straight in the eye. Well, it really hit him right between the eyes. You see, I had put it in a rather emotional way. He thought for a minute and he said, "Brooks,--he stood up--you go down there and tell them to send that nomination out here." You see, he made the decision right there. He didn't have to say, "I'll talk to the boys; or, I'll retrace my steps." He said, "You tell them to send it out here. That you have had this talk with me and it's all right." Well, I had stood up then because he was saying, in short, "You've sold the goods to me and I'll buy them." He walked to the door with me, and he said, "But tell them, Brooks, not to send it until after we vote on the Rules Committee change next Monday." That meant, "I want Alford's vote, you see. I may need Alford's vote." Well, that sort of let the cat out of the bag. He was letting me be a scapegoat. He was playing with Alford, because Alford had a vote and I didn't on this very crucial vote on the Rules Committee change. But he shouldn't have done that. He should have said to Alford, "Why, great goodness man, you're not going to pillory Brooks Hays. This is an act of vengeance. Why would you want to block the man? You defeated him. You got his seat. Why would you feel this way? He's done nothing against you?"

Well, Mr. Rayburn did tell me that Alford said I had written letters from Knoxville back to Arkansas opposing him. I didn't want to argue with Mr. Rayburn; I just quickly disposed of that. Mr. Rayburn hadn't done much thinking about this, you see. I said, "Mr. Rayburn, he didn't expect me to write any letters in support of him, did he?" I said, "The man that was opposing him was Robert Hays Williams, my father's law partner. No, I don't apologize to him or anybody else. He should have been man enough to recognize that I would do what I could, but really I didn't get into that race. I didn't go into the district to campaign. I might have written a half dozen letters." Now isn't that a sad thing to have to carry in mind as the last contact with a man that I had been close to? But I didn't let it embitter me. I naturally felt the bruise, I will admit that. But I had recognized pretty well Mr. Rayburn's style and his method of operating, and this was of that pattern. It certainly was not personal, and as I say, he had tried to recognize me in various ways, but I certainly was making the most of the claim I had upon the party. He saw that.

T: That would be one of the last times you saw Rayburn, wouldn't it be?

H: Yes. I think perhaps the very last time I talked to him. The thing was done that he said. The nomination was made and I was confirmed without delay. The usual routine action took place--the committee appearance, and two or three questions asked of me, and then a unanimous report for me, and a Senate voice-vote for confirmation. That's all there was to that because, of course, the House had nothing to do with it anyway. I thought it was pretty presumptuous of Alford to be getting into it. The Senate had the confirming power. I know that the administration was too busy with its chores to do anything about it. Really, a strong, politically-minded secretary of state could have handled it without me. He could have said,

"Mr. Rayburn, don't ask us to hold this one up. Mr. Hays is an old friend of Mr. Kennedy's. We can't weaken on this one," and Rayburn would have accepted it. But you see they were just floundering around. I will say this for Mr. Rayburn at that time. He was a sick man. He was dying of cancer and did die in November. I grieved over his death. Mr. Rayburn was a good man and he was my friend; but, Mr. Rayburn was not a great statesman and he was a product of this old-fashioned rugged school. I call it the "Texas school." But I can make that moderate criticism. It isn't quite that. It's just an effort to be entirely factual. I want to be objective about it.

T: Let's go back into the early period. We've jumped up a little bit more. You were a part of the legislation relating to maintaining and continuing price controls. The Republicans made some gains that year even though Roosevelt was reelected for the fourth term. Were you involved at all in the decision for a fourth term for the president. You said you were opposed and had been part of a group that opposed the third term. What about the fourth term?

H: Well, I favored his nomination for a fourth term. But the war, you see, made all the difference there, and the fact that once you broke the two-term tradition it didn't make much difference. The difference between twelve years and sixteen years and between four terms and six terms was not enough to create any turmoil in the temple.

T: Did you feel that he was ill?

H: Well, I don't recall exactly how much cognizance I had of that. I certainly was aware of it when he was inaugurated in January, which I believe was the first inauguration under the Norris amendment, for his fourth term. We stood out on the ground below the south portico of the White House, and he walked out to take his oath on Jimmy's arm. Jimmy was often his aide. Later, of course, Jim came to Congress from California. I was with our daughter, Betty. She had taken her mother's place. Each congressman gets a ticket to bring someone with him, so Betty came. We have talked about it many times since, how we both felt the moment we saw him. That look of death was on his face. I think nearly everybody else did. So, I was not surprised when he died about two months later--three months I guess it was.

T: Did they try to keep it quiet?

H: I don't think so. If there was, it was restricted to the newspapers and public utterances. Nobody referred to it in a speech, but there was no question about it in private conversations.

T: Did you meet Roosevelt very much after you became a congressman?

H: No, I didn't. I was with him far more often when I was just a humble servant in the Department of Agriculture than I was after I became a member of the House. However, I was at the same time the National Committeeman.

T: Who did the legwork for the president with the Congress? Was this done through Speaker Rayburn?

H: A good deal of it was. I might have a little trouble remembering just who the principal contacts were. Louie Howe, you will remember, died before Mr. Roosevelt had served out his third term. He had a good many fine, competent people. He had a "brain trust" and that was a little different type, and you had some tension between the old-line, practical, Farley-type politicians and the new, Tugwell, Harry Hopkins-type of "brain trusts." There was an interesting tension between those two groups. At the same time, Roosevelt was practical enough to know how to talk to Rayburn and Robinson and others. So I suspect he did a good deal of it himself. He was on the phone a great deal. You had a lot of men in the Senate who enjoyed working for him. Barkley was one. After Robinson's death, Barkley was chosen as floor leader. But I would have to go back and do some thinking before I came up with any names as to liaison work. None of them were very prominent. Except for the court controversy there wasn't much of a problem, because, you will remember, that while the Republicans did gain in 1944--incidentally, I had no opposition myself for a second term--the Democratic administration had rather unchallenged control on the things that were really vital, meaning the war program, and that made it easier.

T: Did your committee handle the rationing?

H: Yes. Talking about Mr. Roosevelt, he had, according to the usual practice, all of the freshmen congressmen, including the Republicans, down to the White House for what they called a "smoker" or a reception. It was an after-dinner affair--light refreshments, etc., in a big dining room. Roosevelt sat there and was just doing the usual thing of entertaining everybody and making them laugh. All of a sudden I looked and there was Mr. Rayburn, and he said, "Brooks, I am going to move a chair up there--there was a little space right there at the President's left--and put you in. You are an old friend and you ought to be up there close to him, which, again, proves that our personal relations were very good. He was a very thoughtful person. So Mr. Rayburn took me around there and put me at his side. I remember it was one of the most fascinating sights to look at that crowd of freshmen listening to his charming talk--very appealing talk--about politics and everything else. Oh, he had them in the palm of his hand.

I said, incidentally, to Joe Martin the next day in the speaker's lobby, "Joe, how did you feel about seeing our Democratic leader weaken your grip on your boys? You admit that he did, don't you? He said, "Brooks, I never saw anything like it. I said to Charlie Halleck, 'Charlie, it will take us sixty days to offset the effect of that hypnosis.' He really had them, didn't he?" He laughed about it. Well, that was the kind of fellow Joe Martin was. I had very happy relations with him also.

But I remember at one stage in the Roosevelt regaling of the freshmen that he made some point, and he was looking away from me to his right. I sat on his left. When I said spontaneously, "That's right," he realized that I had said something, and he whizzed around and said, "How's that?" His face was just about a foot and a half from mine, and all I had said was, "That's right." He was giving me the floor. The world was standing still and ready for me to say something, and all I could do was just give a little light nod and say, "That's right." So, the next day the boys kidded me a lot. They said, "Here was the waiting world. The President of the United States, the greatest living man, had yielded to you and said, 'What?' and you could come up with nothing but 'That's right.'" They said, "You've got to do better than that."

T: In 1944 Dewey did fairly well, but not nearly as well as he did coming up to 1948. Did you know Harry Truman well? Did you know him before he became President?

H: No, I didn't. My contacts with him were very slight. We had been together a time or two, and I think that he might have remembered that I was at a luncheon of the Arkansas delegation with him and a few friends on the Senate side in the office of Leslie Biffle, who was secretary of the Senate and a close friend of Senator Robinson and Senator Truman. Except for that, I really don't remember that we had very much contact. I admired him very much. I admired the fine way he handled the wartime contracts problem, getting into the irregularities in the awarding of war contracts. He did a very fine job on that. He was as a senator rather an unobtrusive person and a very friendly person.

T: You are referring to him now as a Senator?

H: Exactly. Then, when he became vice-president he had no delusions of grandeur. I don't think he was particularly eager to be President. I think he enjoyed his Senate work and he probably was surprised to be vice-president. He has stated that very frankly, and I think in considerable detail, in the conversations that took place before he was finally tapped for the vice-presidency. In fact, it came as such a surprise to him that he didn't know how to extricate himself from his personal commitment to Jimmy Burns, whom he admired. They were fellow senators, and Jimmy was ambitious to be the vice-presidential nominee, but Roosevelt yielded to the friends of Truman on this decision that Truman would be the man to replace Wallace. President Roosevelt didn't put any pressure on the delegates to go with Truman over Henry Wallace. I think that it was more or less an open convention, except it was understood by the inner circle that those who were really interested in what Mr. Roosevelt wanted were to go with Truman, and I guess you could say it was really a "tapping" of Truman. Roosevelt didn't have to say publicly, "He's my man." Wallace had lost a good part of his own strength, but they made a floor fight, and it wasn't one-sided by any means. I wasn't at the convention but as I recall Wallace . . .

T: You were not at the convention?

H: I was not at that convention.

T: I see. Really what you are saying is that you were not involved in any of the intricacies that led to Henry Wallace's decline although you had worked for him.

H: Oh, yes. But I would have been in no position to take up for him, because his course had been unrealistic and unimpressive. I felt that the party's destiny required a change, but I was not thrown into that fight and was glad I wasn't. I didn't welcome any breach with Henry Wallace, and his friends were still my friends. But, you see, Ron, I had shifted from the political situation to the legislative, and my interests by that time were not so much in the "nitty-gritty" of the political life as they were in the making of a contribution to the decisions in the Congress.

T: Perhaps you can tell something about the 1948 experience. Did you attend the convention in 1948?

H: Yes, for a little while. I went up to Philadelphia. I was not a delegate,

but I went to the convention some. I had the privilege of the floor and sat with the Arkansas group some and in the balcony some. I was in Chicago in 1952 and in 1956. Bill Fulbright and I were together a good deal in those conventions. We were both delegates and I recall that in the convention hall one day when we were trying to follow the action Bill turned to me and said, "Let's go back to the hotel and get the television so we can see what's going on," and we did. So the convention floor is just a place for a lot of grandstanding. You've got your podium there for speeches that are immediately heard everywhere, and the speakers are immediately seen all the way from Bangor, Maine, to San Diego. And, that's about all there is to it. The platform committee finishes its work, and then you'll have an occasional floor fight.

We had one in 1956 over the Civil Rights proposals. In 1956 I have a very clear recollection of that because we had done a very good job of making a commitment of the party to a continuation of the Civil Rights program. The party was remaining pro-Civil Rights. The Southern group was to that extent rebuffed. But, at the same time, we avoided any kind of hostility in the language and provocative phrases that would have enabled the Southerners to say, "Look, this is a slap in the face. This is the kind of insult we can't accept." We had it in muted form in the platform, and we had put down the drive for the more extreme language. We had a rather defensible position in 1956. Sam Ervin of North Carolina and I had carried some of the burden in the platform committee, beating down the extremists on both sides, standing our ground against a young circuit judge named Wallace from the state of Alabama. He was the gadfly of our platform committee deliberations. I said to a fellow member of the committee, "Who is the fellow from Alabama who keeps complicating our problem?" The reply was: "Well, that's a circuit judge from Alabama. He wants to be governor." He had been defeated for governor maybe once by that time, at any rate he was defeated on his first try for the governship by a man named Patterson, the attorney general of the state, whose father had been attorney general and was assassinated by the crooks at Phenix City, Alabama. The horrible nature of that murder was such that his son, John Patterson, could go into the governorship on sympathy for his father and the outrage over corrupt conditions there in Phenix City. Since Patterson had been anti-Civil Rights and pro-segregationist in that campaign, Wallace said, "I've been 'out-seged,' and I won't be 'out-seged' again," and he wasn't and never has been since. But, of course, the situation is so changed that you don't find him using the language that he did at that time.

T: You were not involved in the struggle then in 1948?

H: Not at all. Let me finish this statement though about 1956. Mr. Rayburn saw that we were about to have a floor fight. Paul Douglas, Herbert Lehman, and other men from the Northern delegations felt that the Civil Rights plank was a little too moderate. We had been caught in a bind--those of us who were for Civil Rights and yet wanted so much to keep the country and the party together and to keep the sections from deteriorating and falling into an internal, murderous struggle over something as important as Civil Rights. So, we were trying to get the South somewhat appeased but not to surrender to the extremists in the South. That's what we were trying to do, and there was every reason for the party trying to do that. But I respected both of these men, Lehman and Douglas, and so did Mr. Rayburn, but he felt he just couldn't let them destroy the party with what he thought was a fatal move. So, he called me off. He turned the gavel over to somebody else and called me off and said, "Brooks, have you gone as far as you can? These boys from

the North--the liberals--are not happy and we are going to have a floor fight, I am afraid. Have you made all the concessions you can?" I said, "Yes, yes we have, Mr. Rayburn." I said, "We have gone far enough to put a lot of us men from the South in a sort of an unhappy position about it--going home to defend it. I think we have gone just as far as we possibly can." He said, "Well, let me see. Let me look at it." So I handed that planks language to him. I am going to tell you exactly what he said, and we may decide to embargo this. I don't know. He said, "Jesus Christ and Andrew Jackson." That was what he said. I told the Tennessee boys later, "You all ought to feel pretty good. He was born in Tennessee and apparently he carried sentiment with him because when he mentioned our Lord he also mentioned Andrew Jackson. He could have said 'Sam Houston.'" That was his profane explosion. What he was saying in that expletive was, "You sure have gone as far as you can." That was what he meant exactly. So they managed to hold us together, and, as I recall it, our platform declaration stood just as it was.

T: In 1948 there was the controversy over Civil Rights and the controversy was led by . . .

H: Hubert Humphrey.

T: Hubert Humphrey at that time was the mayor of Minneapolis. He led the fight which finally caused Strom Thurmond to march his Dixiecrats out and start his own party. I believe there was one electoral vote cast in Arkansas for Thurmond, was there not? My question really is, as far as you are concerned, did this put you in a difficult spot as a Democrat?

H: Not at all. Not at all. I probably lost a little . . . Oh, yes, I had some unhappy meetings down there with my disaffected Democrats, but we managed to carry the state for Truman, but it was a fight. Now I know there was not just one electoral vote, because Arkansas never had any of that split. Yes, I think you may be confusing that with Tennessee. It seems to me that they had one elector voting for Thurmond, which is a shocking departure from our system because he had pledged himself to support the Democratic nominee. That presents a bit of a problem for us in the possibility of a frustration of the constitutional plan of selecting the President, because theoretically, and at time, actually it is done. His vote had to be recorded as against Truman in Tennessee.

T: You did carry Arkansas for Truman then?

H: Yes. Truman carried it. He said to me later, "Brooks"--I by that time had a happy rapport with him. He knew who I was by that time. I had gone down to the White House and talked to him about Civil Rights. He told me if I could get my program through he would happily sign it --"you're doing a good thing. I can't come out for it for the reason that, Brooks, I went all across this country telling the black people that I would stay with them, and I would fight it out on the program that I had laid out. If I weakened on that for any reason they would say that I had betrayed them. You know I couldn't do that." I said, "I see your reasoning and I agree with you and I don't want you embarrassed with them, but I do want you to know my good intentions and my strong convictions." If he hadn't known this, I'd be surprised because he was bound to have kept up with what was going on.

A year after his famous Civil Rights message to the Congress--that is, February 2, 1949--I gave my answer. I gave it one year to judge the

congressional response, and then I told the House in a long speech that, "One year has passed and nothing has been done on the President's program, much of which is admirable and which I approve of, personally. So since no progress is being made in enactment of the president's proposals, I suggest that we consider the following measures," and then I laid out what came to be called "The Arkansas Plan." It was beautifully received. Some newsmen said, "The guy makes sense"--talking about me. It had provision for the repeal of the poll tax by constitutional amendment, abolishment of segregation in the armed services, an anti-lynching bill that was better than anything the experts said had ever been offered--because I studied it carefully before I came up with it, because it kept pressures on the state enforcement people to prosecute lynchers and didn't just say, "Let the dirty Federalists come in and handle it." That was an escape, and that's what they would have said, and I wasn't of that school. I said, "The enforcement at the state level should be stimulated and encouraged." My plan was that the federal prosecuting officials were not to have jurisdiction until it was apparent through certain means of determination that the state prosecution was not effective. But anyway, I had an anti-lynching bill, repeal of the poll tax, segregation outlawed within certain limits, and then an educational program on fair employment. It was practically the same thing that we ultimately got. So I was very proud of it, because what I was saying was this, "It isn't enough for the South to say, 'No, Mr. President, we can't go with you.'" We could say, "No, Mr. President, we feel that in the light of our peculiar history and the difficult situations growing out of resistance to federal action that some modification is in order." I said, "This would be a modification of it that we can maybe sell to the Southern people." At least I was sticking my neck out.

Dick Russell, who was very conservative, said, "I don't agree with Brooks about all of it, but I will go along with a compromise if the President will meet us on this basis." But I am afraid he would have added in time that he didn't want to hear any more of it after that was agreed on. Well, of course, you couldn't do that. You couldn't say that this is the final package. What I was thinking of was a compromise in terms that would give the black man some hope of further progress, because I was restless in my own conscience. I would have been glad from the standpoint of inner peace to have said, "I'm for it lock, stock, and barrel, just as strong as Hubert Humphrey," because emotionally that was my feeling. But I was influenced by the realities, not of politics, but of social opinion. I took the old principle of Sir Henry Maine, the great law lecturer in England, that social opinion must be in advance of the law, and that was his idea about it. You've got to have a certain conditioning of the minds of the people for any progress statutorily. I knew that we had a great big educational problem in the South and elsewhere. But the Southern people are not compassionless. They are not cruel. Now, you've got a lot of racists among them, and you've got a lot of ignorance among the majority group, but the recent developments in our country show that Boston's absorption of change is less effective than Little Rock. It's going to make comparisons. You can't say that the South is bigoted and the North is tolerant. You've got different histories. You've got different ethnic structures. I felt that way about the South, and I was eager to pull them along with me as far as they would go and as far as I could induce them to go--not just as far as they would go in their present attitude. When I say "present" I mean as of 1949 and 1950. We got along pretty well in 1948 politically.

You asked if I had some resistance. Yes, I caught a lot of criticism for standing with Truman. I remember the Pulaski County Democratic Convention.

Pulaski County is the county in which Little Rock is located. It is ordinarily just a sort of peace session. A love feast is what it is ordinarily at the Democratic Convention. They ratify the primary results and so on, but in 1948 they took occasion to indulge in some polemics toward me, and I had always been sort of a favorite of the Pulaski County Democrats. I generally had been asked to make a speech, but they didn't ask me to speak that time. I claimed the right to speak after one of my closest friends, June Wooten, launched into a tirade against me for standing with Mr. Truman. Wooten had been for a long time the executive secretary and probably was then the executive secretary of the Pulaski County Democratic Committee. He was "Mr. Democrat," and he had been one of my strongest supporters in every campaign and was my lawyer without a fee in this 1933 legal struggle. That's how close we had been. I couldn't believe it. He said, "My fellow Democrats I am shocked beyond expression at this young man whom I have loved and admired from his childhood, for he is younger than I am. My father was his Sunday School teacher in that little church at Russellville. I saw him grow up. I've been at his side in every bruising battle he's ever fought, and here I find him repudiating the principles of the Southland--the faith in which he was nurtured politically--to go with these bigots up North that would upset our style of life. I am surprised and shocked, and he has embarrassed me beyond words." Well, everybody looked at me. It was worse than that. I am just quoting it as I remember it. It was that style of personal attack--"argumentum ad hominem" for sure. When he got through everybody looked at me, and I said, "Well, Mr. Chairman, I am entitled to speak now, but if you're expecting me to condemn my beloved friend June P. Wooten for a single word he said, you are going to be disappointed, because when I consider the things he has done for me over a period of twenty years--the midnight rides that he has made to get to meetings, the things he has done to advance my political ambition, and the sacrifices he has made at a great cost to himself--nothing June Wooten can say on this occasion in the way of personal disappointment in me, frustration, or even bitterness and momentary anger would lead me to say one unkind word toward him. I simply forgive him for what he said." It did the needful. Somehow or another it helped create a little different atmosphere. I said, "As far as my support of Mr. Truman is concerned, I am following the regular Democratic loyalty course, and I am hopeful that others will do it and we will carry the state for Mr. Truman." That's about all I said.

T: You didn't have any opposition in 1948?

H: Oh, again, if I did it was nominal. I don't believe I did. I had no serious opposition in the primaries until 1952. That year, by that time, the segregationist fight was underway. But they hadn't had time to marshall their resources in 1948. It was a new struggle. I just hadn't let myself be drawn into it much on one side or the other except I was supporting Mr. Truman. I was staying with the ticket and openly said so. As I remember it, Wilbur Mills was the only other member of the seven-man Arkansas delegation that said he would support Mr. Truman. I don't think he did as much as I did, but, at least, he was on record as agreeing with me. But I believe we were the only two. The rest of them just remained silent. I don't remember about the Senators. I don't believe either of them did. I know that John McClellan was unhappy with Truman. He may have bristled just a little and said something about it in a negative way, but none of them were as forthright as I was. I felt that way about it. I felt that certainly Mr. Truman was entitled to continue as President. He was a great man. I was devoted to him. He said to me, "Brooks, I notice that our vote in the Democratic column went down in Arkansas. There have always been such

good Democrats down there. What happened? Was it Civil Rights?" I said, "Mr. President, that's what they said, but you know there has been a growing abandonment of the old Democratic loyalties. It has been rather surprising to me the way they have handled it. It's a whole lot like that fellow that was entertaining his friend at dinner. They had a wonderful meal and his guest was quite impressed with the food, and after a while, as he bragged on the meal, he turned to his host and said, 'I declare you've got a wonderful cook. How long has she been with you?' He said, 'She never was with us. She was against us from the start.'" He laughed. I said, "You see, there were many who were against us for economic reasons." Arkansas was getting prosperous, and they had sort of gotten Republican in their thinking on economics.

T: There are a couple of other people that it might be worthwhile to talk about. You mentioned in 1952. That would have been the election in which Mr. Fulbright went to the Senate, would it not?

H: No, no. You don't mean 1952. He went to the Senate in 1944.

T: 1944?

H: 1952 was the year, of course, that Adlai Stevenson was our nominee, if you are talking about 1952. That's what you said.

T: In 1944 he went to the Senate. So he only served then one term in the House.

H: Yes. He only served one two-year term in the House and then left for the Senate.

T: Did you give any thought to making that Senate race?

H: Oh, certainly not against Fulbright, nor even against McClellan. No, no. I had no intentions of doing that. Arkansas, at that time, had what you would call, or rather the politicians would call, a very stable political situation. The old patterns were followed, and they didn't like for anybody to upset the applecart. In that period I doubt that a Senator could have been shaken. Mrs. Caraway was, but that was an unusual situation.

T: She did not have the kind of political base that some of the others had. Oftentimes people said with Arkansas, and it would be true in your case and certainly true with Senator Fulbright, that the congressman or the representative or the senator oftentimes did not, strictly speaking, represent the people. Certianly, Senator Fulbright is a very well-educated man, but would many times articulate a position that seemed to be quite different from what many Arkansas people would hold to. Is this true? Did this happen?

H: Well, you see, Arkansas people were not very much interested in foreign affairs. It was an area that they felt a bit unfamiliar with, and I don't think that anything he could have done or said until we reached the crisis of Vietnam would have influenced the voters' thinking a great deal. But Fulbright was an independent person. He had a lot of courage. He was among the few to fight Joe McCarthy. He was not lacking in courage. He was charged with it because he didn't take a position on Civil Rights. He didn't go as far as I think he should have, but then, that is somewhat theoretical for me to say that. I put it like this, and I defend him in a way. Fulbright never had the feel for the racial situation that I did.

He lived further from the black people. He had never been exposed to some of the inequities and injustices that I had seen.

T: Would Fayetteville be his home town?

H: Yes. He was born in Missouri but his family moved to Fayetteville when Bill was about a year old.

T: What kind of a man was he?

H: A great man, a fine mind. He took his defeat in fine fashion, uncomplaining; he was just a remarkable person. Now he had said some things in the Civil Rights thing that I think were regrettable. He said, for example, that he didn't believe in social equality. Well, that's a code word for being against Civil Rights. Maybe he didn't know it, but he said, "I don't believe in social equality," and he appeared not to favor the ballot for the black man. He never said anything that indicated sympathy for the black man's political aspirations. He was busy on foreign affairs. Now that's regrettable because if he could have had that vision, oh, my, what a tower of strength he would have been. And yet, Mr. Fulbright was a rather fortunate person to have had the easy road that he did have. He traveled an easy road until the final contest in which he was defeated. He had little trouble winning his first term in the House. He won handily, and he had never had any political experience. He had never had anything like the disciplining that I had. We were elected the same year, and he was about thirty-five, and I was forty-four. He might have been a little older than that. I guess he was thirty-six.

T: When he first went to the Senate, of course, he overturned the "old guard" so to speak. Wasn't this one of the reasons for his successful victory?

H: Well, I guess you can put it like that. Yes. But it was still a rather easy contest for him, because Mrs. Caraway had lost her following. Her poor vote in the first primary showed that. I think she was a poor third. She didn't even make the run off in 1944. He pretty easily defeated this old-line politician. It was the "old guard," and yet, Arkansas was not exactly an "old guard" state. I mentioned their fondness for stability, but you had to have something more than just orthodox ideas about manipulating the electoral process.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: March 23, 1976

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: Mr. Hays, I am glad to be with you again on March 23, 1976. We are really appreciative of you talking with us, and are glad your health permits you to visit with us. We won't go into your operation, but at least I am glad to hear that you are well. I wonder if we could pick up today and begin talking about the campaign of 1942, when you became congressman from Arkansas and came back to Washington, not as a government bureaucrat, but as a congressman. How did you come to be chosen as the candidate of the Democratic Party that year?

H: The incumbent, David D. Terry had served nine years. He got his credentials, and I put it that way instead of saying he was elected in a special election in 1933, because it was the most corrupt election, I believe, in the history of Arkansas politics. I believe I have given you some of those details. Mr. Terry was a good man. I have been very muted in my references to him as an individual. I think he was a beneficiary of the corruption rather than the perpetrator of it. We got along fairly well. There was no bitterness. We had been good friends. We had worked together in the Community Chest and YMCA and other civic activities, so it was not hard to sort of bridge that chasm and be personally friendly, because actually he was not a part of the power structure as such. He was not a political person. He was a fairly good lawyer and a rather modest person. His wife was ambitious for him, and I think maybe she pushed him into that special election, and it came out fine for them from the standpoint of winning the office. He had an income

but that's the rule in most of the Southern districts. You win the office once, and you're in for quite a stretch. The average in that district has been about ten years for an individual, and he was at the end of the fifth term. He decided then that since there was an opening in the Senate, to run for the Senate, and that left an open field.

I began to think about the congressional seat, because I never had given up the idea of getting back into politics--that is, seeking an elective office. I had a family to support, and I'd been glad to have a salary in the depression period and to have an office in the Department of Agriculture. The work was exciting and interesting and I made friends in the political circle. So, I was all set to get back into politics when the time was right for it. It appeared when he made his announcement, I believe, in January of 1942--conceivably in December. At any rate, when the Senate race was shaping up for that primary in August or July--the summer of 1942--he made the announcement and left it an open field. I made no public statement, but my name was mentioned among many prospective candidates. The most prominent candidate made an immediate announcement. His candidacy was known because he had been ambitious to go to Congress for a long time. That was Bob Bailey, the lieutenant governor of the state. He was a close ally of Mr. Terry. He had helped the Terry forces, I think, do some of the irregular work that led to this stolen office. I, perhaps, should be a little more conservative about charging Bailey with any direct activity. But he didn't raise his hand to question the activities that were going on and was presumed to have been a strong counselor and advisor to Terry. But I am not going to identify Bob Bailey, even though I didn't admire him as a man with strong political morals, with the crowd that did this terrible thing. I'll just say that as far as I know he stood and "held their clothes."

But I began then to think positively about the race and one evening, I believe in February of that year, I had a phone call from Harvey G. Combs, who had for many years been secretary of the State Democratic Committee and was a professional person in the field of party politics. He had been defeated by Bailey for the lieutenant governorship and had come out of that race with, I presume, some bitterness. At any rate, there was considerable tension between them, and he accused Bailey of some questionable practices during the campaign. He felt that he had been mistreated by Bailey. I'm simply giving you some motivation on his part as I relate the call that he made to me to tell me that he thought that I was the man to be elected to Congress and that I could win. He said, "We have been talking it over and we feel that this is your year if you ever want to go to Congress." Well, this was a surprise, and a pleasant surprise in a way, because he was not the type that I would expect to join my ranks, for he was a member of the establishment as it had been structured prior to that. I knew that meant that the political winds were somewhat favorable. At the same time, I don't think he was particularly close to the incumbent governor, who had been on the other side from me for many years, who was a part of the establishment, and who played a different style of politics from me. But, it was Harvey Combs' call that almost made the decision for me at once. It made it an easy decision, because he said that he had talked to many of the key people and that I could count on his help to beat Bob Bailey. That was his motivation, of course. I am not sure that he made any disguise of that element. So, I got on the train and went to Little Rock. I don't believe my wife went with me that time. The children were in school--at least my son was. I believe my daughter was at the University of Arkansas. At any rate, I went down to survey the land and found a rather hospitable attitude on the part of the key people and generally a friendly attitude.

T: Who would you have talked to? What kind of people would you have talked to about this?

H: It didn't take me long to find the people in Little Rock who had suffered with me in these previous campaigns--two races for governor and then the ill-fated congressional race that I have described. While I have conceded that Terry and Bailey and Combs were a part of a state structure, I had a very good investment in organized politics in Pulaski County in which the state capital, Little Rock, is located. The secretary of the county committee, June Wooten, had always been what they called a "Hays' man." He had been with me from the very beginning. Incidentally, he had come from Russellville, my hometown, which was also the hometown of the lieutenant governor, Bailey. His father was my Sunday School teacher in the little Baptist church at Russellville, so the family relationship was pleasant and intimate and long established. June Wooten was a power in politics in Pulaski County, which was one of the cleanest counties among the seventy-five. Pulaski County has always had a fairly decent, incorruptible political organization. It really wasn't an "organization"; the Democratic Party functioned honestly. That was the reason I was able to carry Little Rock and Pulaski County in my two governor's races against the entrenched Parnell forces. That nearly killed them, because they had some pride in carrying the state capitol where the state bureaucracy was centered.

Well, I talked to men like Wooten and then the county leaders in what we called "the valley." The congressional district included Pulaski County, Little Rock, which has about fifty percent of the electorate, and then seven valley counties right up the Arkansas River. Highways went parallel to the river on both sides, and I could cover the district within two or three days. As a matter of fact, I could be in Little Rock every night and still penetrate the district, the furthermost township. But it didn't take me long to contact the people in the courthouses that were entitled to be consulted--the county leaders and then a lot of the influential private citizens who were interested in good government. They would be my crowd, you see, rather than the professional politicians, although in two or three of those seven counties I had cultivated some friendships of the decent element in those courthouse organizations. They were friendly to me. I found that it was worth the fight; that I could win that race.

Then I had my father to sell, because Father was still living in 1942, and he lived for another seventeen years after that. He was seventy that year. But his health hadn't been too good, and he had retreated from much activity. He was very conservative about these matters, so when I talked to him about it, he just was adamant. He didn't want me to run. He and Bailey had practiced in the same courthouse there. They were generally on opposing sides of the same cases.

Bailey was a very aggressive lawyer, not a very well-educated person. In fact, anything but that. He had a very poor meager education. He came out of the hills of eastern Kentucky, and he really hadn't had much of a chance. But he was a man with a lot of native ability, and he studied law in the offices of the lawyers in Russellville and took the examination, which wasn't hard to pass in those days. He was licensed and then picked up a lot of business just through sheer native ability and aggressiveness--very energetic. I knew that he would run well in Pope County because he had been busy making friends. He was an extrovert. But that didn't concern me too much because Pope County, where Russellville was located, was only one of the eight counties in the district, and I knew that I could beat him in Little Rock and that he

would have to just sweep those other seven counties to offset the good Little Rock vote that I was bound to get.

There it was. So I just told Dad, "Now this is my year, and I am entitled to have one decisive showdown as to whether or not I can make a career of elective politics or go back to the law practice or seek some other outlet." I was not enamored as Father was with the private practice of law, particularly the adversary type of trial work that he had excelled in so impressively. He really understood that, but his point was that I was an only child and sort of his prop in his old age, not financially, but just somebody to have pride in and not to see frustrated at every turn. His pride was involved. So he said, "Now, son. . . ." I think maybe I told you this, didn't I, about this race and how he used psychology on me? He used the psychology of unhappiness and sadness over my abandoning his point of view and just putting him in that kind of position. He said, "Our enemies here will gloat over us. You can't win it. Bailey will rub it in. You will just make it awfully miserable for me and yourself, too. You will be a repudiated politician and here at this stage in your life you just can't afford to do that. You just mustn't be defeated again."

T: You would have been forty-four that year?

H: Yes. I was forty-four in August of that year, and the primary was about two weeks before my forty-fourth birthday. This conversation was in early spring--February or March. So, Dad sat there in the sitting room, and he really, as we say, pulled out all the stops. He even took out his dentures and shaded his eyes with his hands to indicate that he was so unhappy and it would just put him in his grave. He was working on me like he used to work on the jury in those criminal cases. Well, poor Mother had to hear that, and she was often the moderator between us, because we were both rather strong-willed individuals, although I was less pugnacious than my father and a little more pliable and a little more moderate in my decisions. I said, "Well, let's think about it overnight, and I don't want you to be unhappy. You know I am not going against you in the final analysis. I am not going to let you feel that I am defying you. You have been too important in my political posture." So, I went on up to bed.

There were just the three of us in the house. There was a second floor, and I had the usual corner room where my wife and I had lived when we first married. We lived in the house with them until after our first baby, Betty, was born in October of 1923. We had been there, in other words, a little better than a year, and then we got our own little establishment--a little cottage down the street.

So, Mother came in before I had turned out the light. I was in bed, and I remember she just put her head in the door and said, "Son, what am I going to tell your father now? You know I'd be content with whatever you want to do, but it is just about to kill him." I said, "Mother, when you go down tell him that you have talked to me and that I won't run if he says for me not to." Well, that was a very good thing to do. It probably was still subject to reexamination, and it wasn't just leaving it altogether in his lap, because I suspect I did it with the resolution that I'd fight a little harder to get him to change his mind. But I just knew that probably it was the only thing for me to do if I couldn't sell him again with another fight--that I had better not undertake it because the price would be too great. I don't know what I would have done if he had been adamant, but I think it made a difference with my father, because Mother told me later that he seemed

to change a bit because then, you see, he realized that there was a great responsibiltiy on him. If he wasn't able to sell me on not running, and I said, "All right, it's just up to you to decide then," that meant that he had a pretty grave decision to make and that he'd better not take responsibility of frustrating me. But that's the way we left it, and it was a very good way, I think, to leave it because it was an honest thing. I felt that way about it that evening.

The next morning I stayed there at the house. I didn't leave. I probably did some telephoning to people I hadn't seen. But at noon I looked out and up the walk came Dad with a friend of ours, Colonel Baker, James Harrison Alexander Baker, a lawyer there who was also anti-Bailey. Dad didn't like a bone in Bob Bailey's body. They just didn't get along at all. Colonel Baker was the same way. So they just came on into the living room, and the first thing Dad said was, "Son, Colonel Baker says you can beat Bob Bailey." Well, I knew then the fight was won. We sat there and I let them do the talking, particularly Baker. I just let Colonel Baker tell me how we could organize the district and how Bob Bailey could be "taken." And, of course, later events showed that Bob was vulnerable. Now then, let's hold just a minute until we can see where we are.

T: Did your years in Washington, being away from Arkansas, hurt you when it came time for the election?

H: Well, there are two things to say on that. I'll say first as a conclusion, "No, I don't think it did." To the extent that it cost me some votes, yes, we'd have to say that there was some damage. But on balance, I was helped. That's my thought.

T: People thought you were experienced in government?

H: Right. And I was enough of a part of the Washington New Deal operations, which were in the ascendancy, and I was known to be close to President Roosevelt. He was still President in 1942. He was planning then to run for the fourth term and was destined to win it. So, while he had lost some of his clout, he was still a tremendous factor. Now I just have a feeling that some of this I have gone over with you.

T: We may have talked about some of this. What really was your program? What kind of platform did you envisage for yourself in coming to Washington in 1942?

H: Well, couldn't you tell for sure by reading the manuscript? Was this not covered? You don't think so?

T: No.

H: We'll assume that I've covered all that you want to know as a foundation to the campaign. Now pretty soon after this conversation with Dad and Colonel Baker . . . . . We had pretty good publicity because people knew that the race would be between Bailey and myself. Now there may have been one or two others. Yes, there was a man named Ragsdale, from Russellville, too. He announced, but he dropped out and apparently favored me. He didn't take much of a prominent part in it but to the extent that he could help, because I think he was sort of anti-Bailey also. But, at any rate, the race came down to a Bailey-Hays race pretty early. I announced, I believe, on April 12, and then began to go up and down the district and finally announced some

speaking engagements, but I was doing a lot of door bell ringing.

T: And you resigned your job at the Agriculture Department and went out full time in April?

H: Yes, April 12. That was the day of my resignation. I was in Arkansas continually from then on.

T: Why do you think that Southern congressmen in those days--well, it's still true today--were able to be assured of reelection each time? Was it simply that Southerners preferred a long time incumbent? Is it really tied into the party machinery?

H: It wasn't tied into the party machinery. Really, the Democratic Party was almost like the human race. You were a member of the Democratic Party because your father and your grandfather were members. There was no opposition party that was worthy of the name. That was due, of course, to the bungling in the reconstruction days when the party thrived on the anger of the Southern whites over the disfranchisement of the Southern whites. It wasn't so much the enfranchisement of the blacks although that was not well handled. I mean the educational basis was not laid for admitting them to the franchise, but it was the disfranchisement of the whites. So the effort to establish a black commonwealth in the Southern states, to make them black states, was, of course, understandably resented. It was a cruel thing that they did and a foolish thing, because it not only damaged the Republican Party--that is shut--off its avenue of strength in the South for seventy-five years--but it hurt the South, too. We needed a two-party system. At least we needed some of the ferment that we were deprived of by reason of this situation that I have described. Now, did I answer your question?

T: Really, why do you think there was this long-term incumbency?

H: Yes. I knew there was something hanging. Well, in other words, I have answered the Democratic side. There were a few little spots in the South where the Republicans' strength remained. There was one district in Arkansas that occasionally elected Republican county officers. They always had a good, strong opposition candidate, but they never were able to take congressional seats in Arkansas after reconstruction ended. But in Tennessee and in North Carolina, in the mountain areas of those two states, and in Virginia you had considerable rootage of the Republican Party. That was a different situation. But northwest Arkansas was divided--Republican and Democrat. My district was almost solidly Democratic. There were a few townships in the mountain areas where the Republicans remained rather strong. But that takes care of the party side. Now I don't know. I have never made any calculations on this. I have an idea that the real reason for the tenure being extended is that, well, the congressman had the advantage of incumbency. He had the franking privilege. He had free garden seed. I am being somewhat flippant now.

T: He had what?

H: He could send out free seed for vegetables and flowers. That was an old practice that vanished years ago even before 1942. But the voters would get occasional little packages of garden seeds, compliments of the congressman. They were distributed by the Department of Agriculture, and that was, of course, done in the name of improved cultivation.

T: How did you decide what kind of seed the constituents wanted?

H: Well, I don't think there was any effort to do that. They'd just say, "Here's some new seed, maybe you'd like some of it." But that was just one little thing that accompanied incumbency. Well, it is something to amuse you. There was this well-established impression that the longer the congressman stayed there, the more useful he was to the district. It took time to get acquainted in Washington, and, of course, it was a rather onerous thing. Every two years he would have to run, and often he would have opposition, but he could generally put it down. I suppose that had something to do with their becoming tired after about ten years of it.

T: Is that true in your experience that the longer the man is there the more effective he is, or is that too general?

H: No, that's true. It was certainly truer then than it is today, because the dissatisfaction with seniority has finally had an outcropping, and they have been able to do something about seniority. But the man went higher and higher in the seniority roles as he stayed on. He became a chairman if he stayed on long enough, and if the mortality rates worked favorably for him, he became a chairman. Of course, there were some districts in the north also where tenure was accepted. But that wasn't true in city districts where there was a good strong two-party system where it swayed back and forth.

T: What were your real concerns? It was the beginning of the war.

H: Yes. That goes back to a question that we left hanging. I am afraid that I didn't pick that up as I should. We got diverted. You asked about what I pitched my campaign on--the basis on which I appealed to people. There were two things I talked about in the campaign, though I wouldn't say that they were issues. We finally had an issue which I will describe. But the things that went into my speech content were two things: one, the development of the river. I talked a good deal about that. And being an old Department of Agriculture man, I had some knowledge of what soil conservation and flood control and related problems of that kind meant in terms of progress and prosperity to the people of that area, and I put a good deal of that into my speeches; two, the other thing was world peace. This was not so much because the war was on and people were thinking about the mechanisms of peace so much. That is always hard to dramatize and hard to create. Our everyday word for it is "rousements." But I think people credited me with sincerity--complete sincerity on that point because I was known as "a political idealist." I had been a Woodrow Wilson idealist, and I had a passionate concern about world peace. There was a good mood among the people for this kind of appeal.

I had it all over Mr. Bailey who had made no study of international affairs. I don't remember that he made any effort to speak to that problem at all. He made the usual speech. There was considerable demagogy in his speeches. I don't remember much about them but he was sort of a rabble-rouser in a fashion, not particularly gifted at it, but he was very fluent. He knew how to speak rapidly and how to entertain a crowd in a way. But he was well liked. You see, his handicap of lack of education was not much of a handicap in places in Arkansas. Our educational level at that time, and to some extent it's still true in many of the rural areas in the United States, was slow in developing. Many voters couldn't distinguish between a person that was equipped for service and the person that wasn't.

T: You were talking about the issue of world peace that you were speaking of. Go ahead.

H: There isn't much more to say. It was largely a popularity campaign until the final break in the campaign situation over the race issue when Bailey got desperate and accused me of radicalism and being too friendly to the blacks. He didn't put it like that--he spoke disdainfully of "the niggers," and said he did not want their votes. It embarrasses me to use that expression, but that was the way his last minute campaign was conducted. He had sat in a hotel room, his headquarters in Little Rock, and done a lot of telephoning until the last part of the campaign. I would find out that he had called someone and said, "I hope you will help me." He counted on his personal contacts. He had had the advantage of me, of course. He had been a member of the state Senate for several terms, had been president of the state Senate, and, as lieutenant governor for six years, had presided over the Senate, and still cultivated friends. I don't know how effective he was in fastening the support to himself, but still he was perhaps as well known as I, although my two races for governor had given me name recognition everywhere. But that was in the last campaign I had made in 1930, and while I had been Democratic National Committeeman from 1932 to 1939, I had been in Washington part of that time. Of course, not all of my tenure in the Department of Agriculture was in Washington. I had been regional attorney for the Department of Agriculture with offices in Little Rock for a good deal of that time, too, so I was doing a bit of commuting. I had cultivated friendships also.

So, he was in Little Rock doing a lot of telephoning while I was out covering the townships and getting into the remote areas and canvassing the towns "up the valley." It was largely that kind of campaign until Saturday before the primary on Tuesday, when we found that he was distributing for circulation throughout the whole district a circular charging me with radicalism and having the intention of "overturning the social practices and patterns of Southern life." That was the substance of it. It was a violent thing. It frightened us because it came so swiftly.

T: It's a kind of parallel that occurred in 1958, isn't it?

H: Oh, exactly. I have said to political science groups interested in political history that it is a little footnote to history, I suppose, that I may be the only man--I am confident it is true--who was elected on a race issue against the charge that I was too friendly toward the blacks, and then after sixteen years was defeated on the same issue, when you would have thought the district was better prepared to accept a person friendly to the minority race. So, the explanation of that is that in 1958, when I was defeated for a ninth term, there was uncontrolled hysteria over racial integration in the Little Rock high schools. That was at its peak, and I was defeated because of it. In 1942 it wasn't possible to fan that feeling. There were no incidents and no issues around which you could fan that feeling, although it did cost me some votes. But our answer was effective. And then I had him defeated so badly anyway, even though he could take some votes away from me on that bitter racial cry. I was ahead of him by a wide enough margin that he couldn't take the nomination away from me. In 1942 the final vote was 16,000 for me and 12,500 for him--round figures. I defeated him by 3,500 votes. The total vote in the primary was 28,500. That's in a district that had perhaps 300,000 people.

T: So the poll tax likely kept them away.

H: It's a sad commentary. The two principal reasons for the low vote were: first, the poll tax; and second, the disfranchisment of the black people. You see, it was easy to exploit the race feeling because the blacks couldn't

vote. Not a single Negro voted for me. Not a single Negro voted, period. Now, how different it was sixteen years later in 1958 because of the abolishment by court action of the white primary and the abolishment of the poll tax by constitutional amendment. The difference was that there were 71,000 votes cast in the July primary in 1958, when I defeated a segregationist for my ninth term, but that compares very favorably with the 28,000 in 1942. Only 61,000 were cast in the November election when the write-in took place, which justified my assertion that the primary in July of 1958 was more indicative of popular sentiment than the November election in which I was defeated by 1,200 votes in the write-in campaign that Governor Faubus' organization inspired.

But the difference is that the blacks were voting in 1958 and they were not in 1942, and the poll tax was not applicable in 1958.

T: Now you came to Washington, and surely there were some ideas you had, and you thought now you were in a place where you could initiate some action. What did you want to see done? Did you have some specific plans on the river?

H: Oh, yes. I was greatly handicapped in fulfilling these promises, but I made them honestly and conservatively. I was handicapped because we were still in the middle of a war, and all the national energies and resources were turned to defeating the Japanese and Germans and the Italians. We had that struggle on our hands. So, I came knowing that we had to do the best we could until the war's end to control floods and to get a modest amount of river protection while we waited for a comprehensive river program, which we felt we could get after the peace came. But that was one of my first interests. I had wanted to go on the Agriculture Committee. I had gotten greatly interested in the human problems of the South--its tenancy problems, rural poverty, and limited educational advantages for rural people, and that included most of the people at that time. But in 1940, I presume that Arkansas was seventy-five percent rural, counting people in small towns as rural. Even in the cities, and there were only about six cities that had enough people to be classified, you had largely a rural culture because people had carried their culture and their political mores with them as they moved to the cities looking for jobs and better opportunities.

I couldn't get a place on the Agriculture Committee because Arkansas already had a member. We are a small state, and they wouldn't put two Arkansas people on the Agriculture Committee. I wanted to go on Foreign Affairs if I could, but again, I was unfortunate in that Mr. Fulbright, elected the same year, wanted on Foreign Affairs and I recognized his advantage. He had gone to Oxford University in England. He was a Rhodes scholar and a university president. He was the fair-haired boy, the glamour boy of that freshman class. I did not want to stand in his way. I did not object to Wilbur Mills, who was the Arkansas member of the Ways and Means Committee, picking Bill to go on that committee; I had to take what was left and that was Banking and Currency. Now that was one of the best things that ever happened for me because it caused me to get down to study, as I had never studied in college, some of the hard economic problems of the times. We had, of course, in our Banking and Currency Committee the regulation of the Commodity Credit Corporation. We had many of the things that gave me an acquaintanceship with our credit problems and the OPA--Office of Price Administration. It was good experience. I could have moved over to the Foreign Affairs Committee two years later in 1944, when Fulbright went to the Senate, except by that time I felt it would be a mistake to leave the Banking and Currency Committee.

So I didn't move to Foreign Affairs until 1951.

T: Was the Wage and Price Stabilization Board under the Banking and Currency too?

H: Yes.

T: Was this legislation passed during your first year or had it already been . . . You really didn't enter the Congress until January of 1943.

H: That's right. It had to be renewed. Of course, the war agencies were functioning at that time, but they had to come to the Congress for amendments and for renewal.

T: Was Congressman Patman at that time on the Banking and Currency Committee?

H: Yes. He went on the Banking Committee very early, I think, in his career. He was elected to the House in 1928.

T: Was he the chairman at that time?

H: No, no. He didn't become chairman until about 1964, I guess, when Mr. Spence of Kentucky left the Congress. But he was one of the senior members. As I recall he was third in seniority; Mr. Spence of Kentucky was chairman; and Paul Brown of Georgia was the senior member. Patman was the third man--second ranking member.

T: Patman just recently died. What kind of a man would you describe him to be? He came to have a reputation by the news media of being a radical type.

H: Well, that is perhaps a fair statement. He was an old-fashioned populist in a way--using the term loosely. He was hard working and knew the language of the plain people of northeast Texas. His area of Texas was cotton country, with small farms and probably some livestock, but it was not primarily oil or cattle. He was the small farmer's friend and a good man, not a man of great intellectual stature, but an honest man. Sam Rayburn and the Texas congressman all thought well of him. He was not particularly popular in the House. I think the members, while they respected him as an honorable person, were sort of afraid of him. They were afraid of this quality that some had called radicalism. He was a hard-driving person and if he got hold of something that he had an interest in he didn't turn loose. He was the driving force back of the bonus for the veterans. That was for the veterans of the First World War. He got that through even though payment was deferred. I liked him very much, but I used to wince when he would run into resistance on the floor since it tended to become personal. But his ideas represented sympathy for the little man. Also, he was always a "cheap money man." In the 1890's he would have been a member, I guess, of the "Greenback" Party.

T: How did a young congressman from Arkansas work towards getting his ideas passed? What did you do?

H: At that time, on the Banking Committee, men like Monroney and Boggs of Louisiana and myself, particularly Monroney and myself, had to dig in and hold the line against the commodity interests that were opposed to price control. We had an advantage because during the war you had to have an unbalanced budget and that meant considerable pressure on the price structure. But we resisted it, and we had some floor fights that were pretty furious.

T: Now this is in your committee or on the floor?

H: On the floor. This is something that you might tell without appearing heroic in it. I was following Monroney's lead. He was an older member of the House. He got to the Congress four years ahead of me and was well seasoned in banking legislation and price legislation when I went on the committee. He was a man of fine character and sturdiness and a good politician, too. Mike and I led the fight against the cotton interests when they tried to break the line with a special formula for the cotton price. We went before the House and said, "We come from farming districts and cotton districts, but this is ruinous. You can't make a hole in this line for cotton to move through without permitting other commodities to move through it." I remember John Rankin was on the other side, and I have an idea that Patman was on the other side, too, in that fight. Rankin was sort of an opposite Patman type but far less personable than Patman. I don't believe it was in a speech, but he was in the rear of the chamber and he shouted, "Mike Monroney and Brooks Hays are the worst enemies of the South that ever came to Congress." But we stood our ground. We were right about it. I could make quite a story of this because we were so right in our economics that time. What they were doing, incidentally, was asking that the "average" increase for commodities, based on certain comparisons of the bulge in prices, be applied to cotton. Well, I pointed out once you strike an average and lift a commodity to that average, you have established a new average, and all that were below that average could come in to complain.

T: You'd be feeding inflation?

H: That's it exactly. We won that fight. I think it gained respect for Monroney and myself. I never have occasion to think of it, but I was rather surprised to observe that, as we gained seniority and expanded friendships, there was some increase in the respect the House had for me, because I was finally identified with a position and a policy. Up until then I was a new man that had no particular identification. The old-timers knew, of course, that I had been a member of the Democratic National Committee and that gave them a little special respect for me, but they also knew that I had been a member of Rexford G. Tugwell's staff. Some of the Southern conservatives now and then would speak unfavorably of us. I remember that once in a House debate a member from Georgia made a very caustic, unfavorable remark about me. He spoke of Mr. Hays from "Tugwell's radical family" or something like that. But that was not general.

T: You mentioned the river legislation, and clearly this was one of the areas where you were able to accomplish a great deal. What particularly did you want to do? We have talked about flood control. What other things did you want to do besides that?

H: Well, I have always been wistful about the inability to get for Arkansas what the people of the seven states through which the Tennessee River flows secured, namely, an Arkansas Valley Authority.

T: Did you have that in your mind?

H: No, the day had passed when it was realizable. Mr. Roosevelt, I understand, wanted it. He never talked to me about it, because he had but one person to consult for Arkansas interests and that was the powerful Joe T. Robinson, the senior senator from Arkansas and the majority leader of the Senate, "the war-horse of the New Deal," I called him.

T: He was sympathetic to the New Deal? Robinson?

H: Well, he was its voice and its crusader. I would say that, while his basic instincts were conservative, he was rather typical of the mid-South, cotton country. Even the plantations had held him pretty much in their grip since he came from a flatland county where cotton was king. His natural impulses were of conservative character, but he was one of the finest politicians that ever sat in the Senate. He had a good mind and was a powerful orator with a driving force and was very energetic. He was a natural-born leader. He became the minority leader of the Senate before the Democratic Party became the majority party. Then he was the majority leader, and it was a great opportunity for him. The times called for his qualities. He died in 1937, July of 1937. So, from March of 1933 to July of 1937--that's four years--he had vigorous leadership for the New Deal. He put everything through that Roosevelt asked him to put through--all of the reforms in money and power regulation. Even though his firm had been the attorney for the Arkansas Power and Light Company he was able to stand off his old friends. He was justified, probably, on a pragmatic basis, but he was a powerful leader.

T: So you don't really think that there could have been in your time an Arkansas Valley Authority?

H: No. Robinson had turned it down, and that was probably the influence of the private power interests. I gather that it was. I have wanted to find out more of the political history of that development, but undoubtedly the record is clear. If Senator Robinson had wanted an Arkansas Valley Authority, he would have gotten it. I would have wanted it but mine was a feeble voice in those days. Robinson's will would prevail over mine in everything. However, I did manage to get along with him. I had to stand my ground now and then, and he came to respect me for it. He scolded me occasionally, but when I politely fought back he listened. He told me once of some of his crowd in Arkansas "carping" about me and said, "Brooks, I told them, 'You leave Brooks alone! He and I understand each other. We'll get along.'"

T: So, really there wasn't the chance of an Arkansas Authority at all in 1942?

H: Oh, no. That was a dead issue. But that was one thing I would have been glad to do. I was glad to get to Congress before the river policies became a part of the national river scheme. Of course, I was there when we won the fight to authorize the Dardanelle Dam and the other dams that made the Arkansas a comprehensively developed, multipurpose river program.

T: Now you were an integral part of that.

H: Yes. I would have been glad if I had been one of the original architects of the river program or of an agriculture program. I would have been glad to find a way to do it without some of the features that proved in the river program to be awfully expensive and tended to bulge the industrial development of the area instead of carrying certain social reforms into the remote parts of the district and state. In other words, I had a program that, while it didn't conflict with the river program, would have been more significant from a social standpoint, and we called it the Rural Industries Bill. That was offered by Senator Flanders of Vermont and myself. I put a lot of energy into that. The ideas finally got embraced in Paul Douglas' Area Redevelopment Program. There are agricultural features in that program for underdeveloped rural areas. But the river development was the best thing that could be done even though it was terribly expensive. It did give us hope of an industrial

balance in a limited area. I wish I knew what a good alternative might have been. I knew something had to be done for our people, and I plugged for it and fought hard for it as it was developed by the Corps of Engineers. So what I am saying, as I indicated wistfully, we can certainly eliminate the valley authority idea. From my point of view the Tennessee Valley has been a wonderful thing for the area east of the river. But the Arkansas River development has a great many plus factors, too. It was hard to get, but by working hard we finally did get it accepted. I am proud of it, but I don't mean that it is exactly the kind of thing that I would have devised if I were doing it without reference to what the economic and political influences absolutely required at that time. The answer to your question is that I would have preferred an Arkansas Valley Authority.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: August 23-26, 1976

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: This is a series of interviews with Mr. Brooks Hays conducted in his home on the twenty-third of August, 1976. It is good to be back again picking up our conversations, and it is good that you are improving in health, Mr. Hays. Let's pick up today and begin to talk about your years in Congress, particularly starting in the earliest year that you entered the Congress in 1943, a war year. You became very active in several important projects. One, which you mentioned particularly in your memoirs and other places, was your real concern for soil conservation and concern for the farmer. I wonder if you would just say a brief word about why or how you became interested in this. You were on the Agricultural Committee.

H: No.

T: Oh, Banking and Currency.

H: Yes, which among other things had charge of farm credit. We handled a good deal of the agricultural legislation, but I was not on the Agricultural Committee.

T: You were with the Agricultural Department prior to your days in Congress. How did you become involved in the issue of soil conservation?

H: Well, I really wasn't involved in that because the Agricultural Committee

handled that legislation, but I did a good deal of public relations work for the Department of Agriculture when I was a member of their staff. I was Democratic National Committeeman from Arkansas for seven years, beginning in 1932. I guess a little footnote that I could be forgiven for mentioning is that I may be the only surviving member of the Democratic National Committee of 1932, which elected Roosevelt. Well, I guess I would have to make an exception there. I believe A. B. Chandler, former governor of Kentucky, was on the national committee that year. But I know of no other except Governor Chandler and myself. Mr. Farley died a few days ago. He was chairman of the committee. But I went on the committee in August of 1932. Soon after that some of the national committee leadership here in Washington knew of my interest in social problems. I was president of the Arkansas Conference of Social Work. That was the working organization for professional social workers, and not only professionals but people that had a layman's interest in it. My work came to the attention of Dr. Rex Tugwell, who was Under Secretary of Agriculture and also to Miss Francis Perkins. She offered me a position as assistant to the Secretary of Labor and took quite a bit of interest in my personal career. So did Dr. Tugwell but Henry Wallace did not so much. One of Tugwell's principal advisors was Dr. Will Alexander, who succeeded Tugwell as head of the Farm Security Administration. Will Alexander was a veteran in the field of interrace relations. It was financed by the Rosenwald Foundation. The agency itself--a private agency--was called the Commission on Interracial Cooperation.

T: You were involved in this?

H: I became a member of that commission through Will Alexander's intercession. I wound up spending a good deal of time in Washington as a sort of consultant to the Department of Agriculture in this area of low-income farm problems--the problems of the low-income farm group. It was pretty well financed at first. It had an ambitious program. I think there was a consciousness on the part of every one that something disastrous was about to happen to Southern agriculture and Western agriculture to some extent. In fact, the whole structure of farm life was threatened by the collapse of farm prices and the growth of tenancy through foreclosures of mortgaged farms. It was an appalling situation. I was interested in the people at the very bottom. I had gotten interested during my practice of law there in Little Rock and my activities in the various social work organizations. I had gotten tremendously interested in this basic problem of the grievance of Southern agriculture, because it wasn't altogether the low income group that had a grievance, but Southern agriculture generally. So, I was doing some things on that front which involved Southern liberals. I know that it is a bad word now, but it wasn't so regarded in those days; and, I think that it will be restored to respectability before long, because there is nothing wrong with liberalism in the original sense. I am just pointing out that we are going through an era in which the satisfied status quo political mind finds it to his advantage just to preserve conditions as they are and to cast all sorts of doubts about the intelligence and even the loyalty of liberals. So, I look forward to a restoration of our respectability because I have to just be honest. I was a liberal and I still am, but I am not a cultist. It was in that period that I had a very happy identification with the New Deal leadership then in Washington, even including Franklin Roosevelt, who invited me to ride on the train with him to Texas one time with a stopover in Little Rock.

T: What factor would you really say prompted you to move in this kind of direction? What made you interested in these people at the bottom? Some of

them couldn't help it, but maybe some of them could have helped it.

H: Well, that's true. I was aware of the fact that you had a problem that couldn't altogether be stated in terms of income relationships. Well, I have an idea that I got this urge to try to set things right, in a fashion--that's a part of the jargon of that period, I guess--and sensitized to it in some of the misfortunes that affected our family. My mother's people were in dire straits in that period--her sister and their little family and in an earlier period even her mother.

T: But you never really knew poverty.

H: No, I didn't. We were not well-to-do people. My father when I was born was a school teacher, and we got along all right. He even had enough of an income to sort of help his widowed mother and two sisters--and my mother's people to some extent. Not until he developed quite a reputation as a trial lawyer--I guess about the time I was ten or twelve years old--did father have much of an income. But he was a good lawyer. He had gotten out of the teaching profession because he did need a better income. This element of poverty that had affected both sides of the family was fairly typical of rural Arkansas.

Now that's a strange thing, too, because my mother's father was a physician. He was a graduate of Vanderbilt University. The very interesting thing about this was that he was a combination. He was a country doctor and a country preacher. The Primitive Baptists ordained him. Mother used to be embarrassed about that because she belonged to what we called the "Convention Baptists." Then, you had the Landmark group which was called the "Association Baptists." But the old Baptists, the Primitive Baptists--that's a horrible name isn't it--were clinging to a few little congregations around, and it happened to be the only church in the vicinity where Grandfather Butler was practicing. Mother used to worry a little about that. She wanted me to know that her father was not a "primitive" person, but he was a well-educated man for that period. I like to talk about his place in the nineteenth century political battles because he was one of the few people in that part of the South who opposed secession, and he became a Republican. He was against slavery and against secession. He had five brothers in the Confederate Army. So, he was a rather remarkable person and an independent person.

The first depression that affected farm life generally was in the nineties, you know. You, of course, read about the problem that produced the Agrarian Uprising and the political crusades of William Jennings Bryan. They called them panics in those days, and it was largely a matter of credit--what little credit facilities there were collapsed. The family lost Grandfather Butler's farm eventually. They were well-to-do for a while, and then Grandfather died in 1896, two years before I was born. Mother was the oldest of the four children, and she took over the job of making collections and administering the estate. She tried hard to bail them out, but it went like a lot of other family savings did. The farm was lost through foreclosure.

T: You didn't mention what community this was in.

H: Well, it's in Logan County, Arkansas, and was the rural section of eastern Logan County. This younger sister of Mother's married a farmer in that area, and they had an awfully hard time. It was a hillside farm. They had to move away from the larger, more prosperous farm community. So, as the children came on they had more mouths to feed and more problems. I became

aware of that. Mother had told me something of their problem.

T: Did she talk with you often about these things? Do you think really it is your mother's influence as you look back and reflect?

H: Well, I would say that it was both parents. I am dwelling on her influence because there was more involvement of the farm influences than there were with Father's family. Father's generation more or less stuck to the teaching business. Now, his father died a little earlier than my Grandfather Butler. I never saw either of my grandfathers. They were both rather interesting and unusual leaders. Grandfather Hays--I may have put this on one of the other tapes.

T: Yes, you did.

H: Well, at any rate, it was the problem of poverty, really, that seemed to influence my political philosophy. I would say that it was the rural expression of the poverty situation. I was close enough to farm life that I was able to interpret some of the problems. Then, I had the benefit later, in a period beginning with the election of 1932, of membership on the Southern Policy Committee--a group of southern newspaper men, academic leaders, and some political leaders who had a vision of a more prosperous South. They wished: to straighten out such things as the banning of Negro participation in our politics; to get rid of the poll tax idea that often perpetuated courthouse political machines; to do something about the tariff; to support Cordell Hull's reciprocal trade movement; and to attack the freight rate discrimination against the South, because the South was not able to offer employment in the industrial area, because the tariff structure and the freight rate structure all favored the established economic groups of the Northeast. I lived to see most of those grievances corrected, not so much by legislation, but by political action of one kind or another. I am very proud of that.

T: Let me ask you this. When you were talking here about your concern for farm credit it is interesting to me that one of your main assertions as you ran for governor of Arkansas was financial responsibility of the state. Do you see any discrepancy at all between farm credit and financial responsibility of the state government?

H: No, and yet I am not surprised to hear the question raised. If I do interpret your question correctly, it is that my position on the matter of a bold highway construction program, my stance there, seemed not to be quite consistent with my liberalism on other issues. I guess that is what you are getting at.

T: Right. You were not an easy credit man.

H: No, I wasn't. But, of course, you can take that situation and turn it in an other direction. Say it was the profligacy of the political crowd in control of Arkansas' highway program, the inordinate issuance of bonds plunging us into a heavy debt that dried-up revenues that could have been used for social purposes--more hospitals and health programs and better education. They were issuing bonds in such volume that Arkansas became a single category in the classification of the forty-eight states at that time. Arkansas became a single category because her per capita debt, which I was opposing in two governor's races, was so great that no other state was even close enough to it to be put in the same category. So, the maps that charted that always

showed Arkansas as a single black state. I forget what the dollar terms were, but I fought that furiously partly because it wasn't good business. It wasn't good economics. To some extent, I suppose, the related problem of diverting tax revenues--money that the state government had--all into the highway program left the schools and the social interests of the state--what we call social programs--in the lurch. Now, I hope I have answered.

T: I think what I hear you saying, and if this is not what you mean, correct me please, is that you felt warm sympathy for self-help programs of helping programs, but not mortgaging the future of the state to move into a direction that did not necessarily bring a return.

H: That's right. We were blindly issuing these bonds just in the name of progress. We were just slipping into a situation of embarrassment for people who had pride in their ability to pay their debts. The state defaulted on these bonds as I predicted we would, and I had pretty good documentation on it to show that the anticipation of income--even assuming that we wouldn't have "hard times"--would not be sufficient to carry that huge debt for roads. Now that was an embarrassment because naturally roads are a part of rural progress. Really, in the condition that the farmers were in, it was of more benefit to the city people that had good cars to ride in on those roads, and many farmers still were forced by economic necessity to go to town in the usual way with a team of mules or horses and didn't have a stake in a good part of the highway program. Tourism was served, of course. You had roads linking up with some of the more attractive vacation areas in outside areas, but that was minimal.

T: This is interesting, I think. You have on the one hand talked what traditionally we consider to be the conservative line of fiscal responsibility, but you have an undercurrent with the populous.

H: That's right. There's a bit of populism in my program. While I am not particularly a student of political philosophy--whatever education I have in that field is largely self education--I suppose there is a bit of populism in my history.

T: You became concerned then for those deprived at the bottom of the strata, particularly the farmers.

H: That's a good way to put it.

T: What did you really try to do then as a freshman congressman in 1943 in this area in farm credit?

H: By 1943, we were into a global war. We had no problems in getting Congress to liberalize credit arrangements. We developed in time, under the Roosevelt Administration, a good farm credit system within the Department of Agriculture. For one group of impoverished farmers we set up the Rural Resettlement--it was first known as Rural Resettlment--and that was to see to what extent people could be moved off of the mountainsides where erosion had almost wrecked a habitual situation for farmers. We wanted to move them out of those areas into areas where the soil and other conditions assured a good living standard. That meant the abandonment of row crop farming for a certain class. I am just giving this a fleeting analysis. It meant assigning that land to forestry, and in some cases to recreation and grazing, and to take it out of row crop cultivation. Well, that was one aspect of the Resettlement Administration. That's where it got its name.

Then, we had what was called "Rehabilitation in Place." That meant that there was a good living standard if better farming methods were used, and if the elements of farm education could be stimulated. This required, incidentally, a little better coordination of our work in behalf of the low-income group with the extension service that is tied onto the land grant universities, because the land grant colleges had tended to pull away from this group I am describing and become advocates of the interest of the large farmers--the plantation owners in the cotton area and the big operators in the wheat country, rice, and so on--which required far more capital than the family-sized farm that I was interested in. Of course, we were very eager not to do anything for the little man at the expense of the big man. Our philosophy was that there's roomenough, and I still hold to that, in the American scheme for the big farmer and the little farmer.

Corporation farming--well that's another matter. We didn't even suggest that farm tenancy as such was necessarily an evil. I remember that I became a student, strictly an amateur but still a student, of farm tenure plans around the world. Britain's tolerance of the tenure system was of great interest to me because never was tenancy there regarded as a handicap. I remember talking to a dairyman in Scotland one time, who had beautiful milk cows, and after a while I got around to asking him about his farm. I said, "Do you own what we call the fee?" You know that is the ususal legal designation of title to the land. He said, "No, I rent. I have a written contract." I believe he said that Oxford University owned his farm. He said, "It doesn't run over six or ten percent a year on my income," and he said, "I'd rather have it that way than to try to carry the obligations that go with the ownership of the fee simple." So, these are some of the things that you had to keep in mind in studying the great program that was launched by Dr. Tugwell and Dr. Will Alexander and others with Henry Wallace's support but not always with Secretary Wallace's understanding and sympathy. He was primarily a scientist. He was a very complex person. He had a great interest in theology and was sort of a mystic.

T: This is Henry A. Wallace?

H: I am talking about Henry Wallace now. Yes, Henry A. Wallace. He was, I guess, about the third generation of Wallaces who were outstanding leaders in Mid-West agriculture. But they were corn farmers. Henry was a geneticist and just excited over any experimental aspects of agriculture. Of course, they had their farm periodical. I believe it was a weekly magazine designed strictly for full-time farmers and mostly family-size farmers. The farm life of the corn farmer of Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas is so different from the tenant farmer's problem on the cotton plantations. Of course, you had all sorts of things shaking the old cotton tenancy structure. The number of farms has shrunk, and it's almost unbelievable the way farms have expanded in size and where human labor has given way to the machine. All of that, I would say, on balance has been good, but it has stacked up some problems for the city. But the two are interrelated. We are not yet able to say that all of the islands of rural poverty have been destroyed. They are still there. I have gotten rather on some collateral issues, I know, but I thought you wanted me to speak of these things in terms of my own personal career.

T: How did your constituents react to your stance? Did they support you because you were a Democrat or they knew Brooks Hays or did they kind of leave you alone? What was the philosophy in those days? Some of the suggestions you are making would have been somewhat different than the traditional Southern politician was saying.

H: Well, I think I had a fairly good image in the Fifth District of Arkansas, which included Little Rock and five other counties.

T: It really went up the Arkansas River west from Little Rock.

H: Yes. So, I didn't have to carry the traditional opposition of the plantation group to the proposals for a change in our patterns of agriculture. I had a good image. People gave me credit for having made two races for governor against an administration that later was shown to be improvident and even partially corrupt. I don't mean that the man at the top, the governor, whom I had opposed, was corrupt. I think that he was simply naive in letting these things that I had condemned take place. But this had given me a respectability, you might say. The Little Rock voters seemed to feel that I had a good philosophy. Also I had a wide acquaintanceship. You see, it is interesting to remember that even in 1942, with the war on and with Roosevelt still praised as a great leader, I had to fight the charge that I was a "stargazer" and that I was a "visionary" and even possibly "a subversive character." In other words, I had to go against the charge that I was too friendly to the black people and that I was going to upset "Southern patterns." I triumphed in that campaign, and my people showed by that action that they didn't regard--if it so designated--a liberal position as subversive. So, I came down to election day with pretty good support. Of course, I had been at some pains to bring out the fact that the cities and the towns depended, in the final analysis, upon a sturdy agriculture. I tried to relate the two. I pitched my cause on the basis that these people not only constituted a human problem with our impulses of charity and compassion involved but, also, a threat to the Southern economy; and that didn't hurt me. So, I had no big election problems after that first race. I did have a problem though. When I said a moment ago that "they" looked askance at me, I was thinking of my colleagues from the South. When the race issue finally exploded and I was identified as an advocate of federal power to prevent violence and to enforce the laws, well, my name became a bad name. One fellow put it like this. He said, "Mothers used to quiet their children at night by frightening them with Brooks Hays' name." I remember when the race issue was the dominant issue in the campaign of Ross Barnett for governor.

T: In Mississippi?

H: In Mississippi. They kept bringing my name into it. "We don't want the Hays' philosophy." By that time I had been defeated, you see, in Arkansas in 1958. I guess this campaign I am thinking of came in 1960. At any rate, I was surprised when one of the newsmen called me and said, "Ross Barnett has said in his victory statement, 'We have shown the nation that we don't want Brooks Hays' philosophy in Mississippi.'" He said, "What comment do you have?" I said, "I'll just comment to the extent of saying it reminds me of the little sociable that a club--a little church society--gave down in Arkansas. They had a contest on who could make the ugliest face. The committee went out and made its decision and came in with the prize and handed it to a sweet little lady on the front row, and she said, 'Well, thank you very much, but, you know, I wasn't in the contest.'" That was my comment. I said, "I wasn't involved in that Mississippi election. But they involved me." That's the point. But I remember once that there was an effort by the real dyed-in-the-wool conservatives and how vigorously some of these men opposed any kind of civil rights. To me it is illogical for Southerns to oppose federal programs and federal appropriations to lift our people into a better level of living in the South. Judge Tarver of Georgia, who was chairman of the subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, took the floor one day, and he called my name. After I had tried to say to my colleagues

what I have said here to you and my Baptist friends, he said, "Gentlemen and ladies of the House, you don't want to listen to this man do you? He is one of Dr. Tugwell's radicals." It stung me. I couldn't help resenting it, because I tried in my relationship with my colleagues in Congress to avoid those extraneous matters of ideology, but we "liberals" did pretty well. We were able to put over some reform measures. I mustn't take so long to answer your question.

T: When you came into the Congress another thing you were actively involved in was the rivers program and help for the harbor program for the Little Rock area and the Arkansas River. What about the wage stabilization programs and your involvement in this at the beginning of the war period? Do you have any comment that you would make that would be helpful and supportive in understanding this for others?

H: When you speak of wage stabilization, you are talking about price and wages both. Here my position of support for price controls and for wage ceilings put me in what might have been interpreted by some as an inconsistent position, because when the cotton industry came forward with amendments to the O.P.A. law--real vigorous amendments to require a higher price for cotton--I had to oppose that because I . . .

T: Did that put you in some political difficulty?

H: No, as it turned out it didn't create a problem at home. It could have. On the other hand, I don't know how many people said, "Well, Brooks has shown that he is for sound economy, and he doesn't want either prices or wages to be a runaway." I didn't think about the politics of it. I just knew from the study that we had made in the Banking Committee that we couldn't afford to make a breach in the wall that contained the prices. We couldn't afford to breach that wall, to let cotton have its way, because, while you might find in some situations that there were perhaps some real inconveniences--certainly not a perfect balancing of all the interests--if you were to try to legislate in favor of each commodity that advanced its grievance, you really would destroy your price and wage controls. In this cotton matter for example, they tried to justify the amendment that the cotton industry was advancing. It was chiefly the processors of cotton--the textile people and so on.

T: Did they try to get you to sponsor this amendment?

H: No. They knew I wouldn't do that. I was on the Banking Committee. I was opposing the amendment, of course. But they worked on me as they did on all the congressman. They could see that I was consistent on this thing. As I remember it now, the formula that they were using to justify it was that they were merely asking that cotton be brought up to the average increase--the ratio of increase that other principal commodities in the nation had enjoyed. That was hard to answer. They would say, "Well, we just want the average." My answer was that the minute you bring one big commodity up to that average, you've got a new average, and if they wanted to put it on the plane of relief for the little cotton farmer--my goodness! The money that went to the producers of raw cotton became minuscule, if you follow that dollar through the different levels of production and marketing. I think there is only about 17¢ worth of cotton in a cotton shirt, and whatever relief you were giving to the distributors in that form really didn't help the producers very much. I couldn't explain that to my farmers and to my other constituents. I said, "If this iron weight, which we will call the

price of cotton on the floor, is to be lifted, and the iron weight represents the cotton producer and the cotton farmer, you're trying to lift it with a rubber band, and you can't do it that way. It has got to be lifted with formulas that won't just assume that an increase in the retail stage will be passed down automatically all the way along. We barely defeated them. It took a vigorous fight by A. S. Mike Monroney and myself. He was a congressman from Oklahoma, another cotton state. It was pretty brutal--some of the things that they were saying about us because we were trying to hold the line. We said, "Nobody has got a greater stake in holding the line against inflation generally than the cotton South has."

T: You said they "worked on you." What do you mean by that?

H: Well, the usual lobbying techniques.

T: They would call you?

H: Yes, and they would come in to talk to me, and they would send in some very prestigious Arkansas leaders. They would send men that could raise the voice of legitimate leadership for the farmers, but I don't think they were as well educated in the economics of their own businesses as Monroney was, because he and I had been making a study of all these relationships, which we had to do in looking at this complicated business of price control. Goodness knows! You have to admit from the standpoint of theory and to some extent of history that price control has its limitations, and we can't just rush in to a sturdy little safety structure called price control. You can't do it. Although, I think we have got to have some latent powers available for the President, because that's where the task would belong as an executive problem. You can't legislate a perfect schedule of price levels on the floor of Congress any more than you could build a tariff structure with the "log rolling" that always accompanies such as that. So, while I would like to give standby authority to the executives, I think that generally your Congress will be agreeable to that, and the President may find that if we don't get the present inflation under control that he will be glad to have those standby powers.

T: You have really no problem with government interference or government involvement in a program if it's, one, planned, and two, an integral part of an overall structure.

H: Yes. That's a good statement.

T: I wonder if you would say something more about the fact the Office of the Price Administration was continued after the war really was over. Would you make some comment on that?

H: Monroney and I were very congenial friends, and our thinking was pretty much in the same direction all along. I remember that we led the fight against what became known as "Black Friday," the assault on the extension of price control. We thought that there should be a phasing out of control, but the mood of Congress was to destroy it. The first thing you knew they were getting one amendment right after the other. They were rationaling and trying to depict a certain situation as unfair and unjust and that the economy ought to be taken out of control at once. And, the first thing you knew, they took so many things out of control that we had only a skeleton left. So, I think, that the bulge in prices that followed was a confirmation of the wisdom of our position--that is that it would have been better to

gradually phase out the controls and leave the executive unshackled in handling the inflation problems.

T: Now there are other pieces of legislation that bear your name from the war effort and from the time you were in Congress. Are there any that you are proudest that your name stands upon today? And, are there some that you had rather your name didn't stand on?

H: Well, I don't think of any that my name is connected with that I had rather would not be. I remember walking back to the House office building after a legislative day. I was walking with Jack Anderson, a Republican of California, and John Phillips, a Republican also from California. Anderson said, "How is the Hays' Bill coming along?" Before I could say anything, John Phillips said, "Well, now, Jack, what do you mean? You are going to have to get specific. Do you mean the Hays' Foreign Policy Bill to save the world? Or do you mean Hays' Rural Industry Bill to save the South, or the Hays' River Bill to save Arkansas, or the Hays' Transfer of Joe Robinson Encampment to Little Rock?" He reeled off about half-dozen Hays' bills. I guess if I had had to say in answer to that, that the one I was most interested in, of course, would be the river bill. That was the one of greatest importance to the state.

T: That has been borne out to be true.

H: Yes, it has. But something that I kept advancing in conversations and in some committee deliberations was the idea that the development of the Arkansas Valley called for something besides navigation and power, because each had its limitations. If the way it was charted in an unplanned promotion of industrial development merely meant bringing unemployed farm populations out of the farming areas into the cities to get industrial jobs, you were getting an unbalanced and uneconomic development. It carried great benefits but in it totality it may have been working against employment on the farms. You still were not getting the kind of sound, balanced stability and farm improvement which was what we needed to accompany the River Bill, since it was largely, from the standpoint of economics, power and navigation. What you needed to do was to have the Department of Agriculture and other agencies equipped to develop what Senator Flander--Ralph Edward--of Vermont and I called the "rural industries"--the fabrication of wood, lumber products, and food. You could have canning plants and lumber products--the little industries that could provide some anchorage at the village level--to keep it from becoming just a bulge in favor of urban life or industrial life and find no real results in terms of farm progress. We hammered away at that. We were for the river program, but hoped for a better response to the rural bill.

T: You were still feeling very strongly about preserving the fiscal responsibility for federal and state government?

H: That's right.

T: Do you see any inconsistency there or was that just the way it was?

H: I'm not sure I understand that question.

T: I'm saying that it seems to me that you, on the one hand, were promoting the element of the river and yet, by the very same token, holding the farm level down--getting these benefits to the individuals. Do you see an inconsistency there?

H: No. I just think that the vacuum which Senator Flanders and I talked about was neglected, and it was hard to dramatize it because the river program has such visual results. The thing we were talking about is somewhat theoretical. It's hard to excite people about a little canning factory or a little woods product factory, located not in Little Rock or Fort Smith but up in the rural sections, which will do something for rural development. Now this is the human side that generally suffers when it is competing with the conventional economic movement. Now I must say this since I discussed the Flanders-Hays Bill for the development of little industries. Our essential ideas that we had were embraced by Paul Douglas, who carried the battle in the Senate for "area redevelopment." He felt that we had come forward with some sound, rural development ideas, and he was concerned about what he called, "stranded populations," that is a coal town like Scranton or some textile cities in New England. Incidentally, it was charged that the South was taking some of their industries away from them. That created a bit of confusion because Senator Flanders and I certainly weren't trying to develop the South at the expense of New England. We wanted a share in the growth of American industry. I had an interesting exchange with the then Congressman Abe Ribicoff, who is now a senator from Connecticut. He obviously was under the impression that this meant a move of industry southward. I tried to disabuse his mind on that point. I stressed the point that I wanted a share of industrial growth, not to take anything away from New England. Paul Douglas told the Senate in the discussion of the area redevelopment program that its rural phases were a product largely of my thinking.

T: Now, what about the forest industry in Arkansas? Did you play any part at all in Arkansas becoming much more of a forest state?

H: In a way, but it was a rather modest contribution. I believed in a threefold program of forestry. I believed in the support of the national forests because they had demonstrated their know-how. They were doing a good job, and they were conserving forests through the use of such policies as the annual cut--that is, never permitting the denuding of virgin timber forests. I believed in the national forest idea and reasonable expansion of it but not a wild expansion so that we would be favoring federal action at the expense of local and regional interests. That is the first. Second, though, was the support of private lumber interests and the annual cut so that we would have perpetuity in the lumber operations, either public or private. And finally--and here I did have some things to my credit in my public relations work and my support at the state level through my association with Governor Carl E. Bailey, progressive governor that came on in the late 1930's--was what we call the tree farming idea, the individual farmer owning his land but developing, if his acreage was large enough, some sound forestry practices and thus supplementing with very little cost his income from row crops.

T: Did you have a profound influence on introducing this in Arkansas?

H: I think that generally on the total agricultural picture, the rural development idea, I was regarded--if I may say it without being immodest--as an authentic voice of the best thinkers in this field. I never posed as an expert but I was a voice. I know that it was at my behest that Governor Bailey appointed a commission to study the best use of the tax forfeited lands of Arkansas. The state had acquired a great deal of land through the sale of lands that no taxes were being paid on. While we all favored restoration of that land upon the payment by the original owner of the taxes and penalties that were unpaid, we believed as a matter of equity there

had to come finally a time limit when the state could say, "If the owner hasn't come forward within this reasonable period, then the state cannot be indifferent to the abandonment of sound conservation practice." I participated in that commission. I also represented Governor Bailey in some of the sessions of the national commission appointed by Roosevelt on farm tenancy in the South. I drew a little fire, incidentally, when some of the large farmers, as distinguished from the family size farmers, criticized my anti-tenancy policies.

While I tried to avoid the tension that tended to come into conferences to promote the South's best interest, I was, nevertheless, known as the friend of the little farmer and drew fire, sometimes unjustly, from some of the Farm Bureau leaders. I remember when I was advocating some of the things that I have already mentioned that one of the eastern Arkansas members of the state legislature said, "Brooks Hays is as red as the middle of Russia." One of them, just right out, called me a "Communist." They had that feeling that you couldn't put the focus of public interest, public policy, on any but traditional patterns. However, it didn't destroy my image. The two quotations I have cited were by extremists from some of the legislators. Many state legislatures have a few extremists, and you get a little more intemperance than you would like to have in public debates.

T: You say in your memoirs that at one point you were even charged with being a Communist.

H: I remember that that charge was made by one of the representatives from a big cotton county. I put it that way because that particular area is a small area in eastern Arkansas where holdings are land ownership concentration.

T: Often absentees, probably.

H: Yes. They are often absentees and often corporation-held lands that tended to be very conservative.

T: It is my understanding that there are vast tracts of land in west Tennessee, and I presume the same would be true of Arkansas, that were purchased during depression days for very limited funds by some of the big lumber people.

Well, we have talked at some length about that. There are certainly some other involvements that you had. One, you indicated that you were among the first to work on the Space Program Subcommittee in Congress. How did you happen onto that? Seniority along? Or did you have an interest?

H: Now that's what we call a "select committee." The legislation for the establishment of a space program came out of a special committee. It was not referred to one of the regular permanent committees of either the Senate nor the House. But John McCormack and Lyndon Johnson sponsored the legislation. I believe this is true of the Senate; I know in the House it was true. With the Speaker's support, John had a special committee set up and he, himself, became the chairman of it. There were about eleven Democrats and half-dozen Republicans--first, was McCormack, then Overton Brooks, and then, myself. Over on the Republican side, a man named Gerald R. Ford was the last man in seniority on the committee. We worked together very well. It was not a partisan matter although, of course, Senator Lyndon Johnson was eager to get all of the credit he could and was entitled to receive credit because he pushed the legislation. The same is true of my good friend, John McCormack.

It was quite an exciting thing. I enjoyed it. My wife chuckled over what she heard my opponent, Dr. Alford say in 1958. This was a quick vendetta that they used against me and was designed to exploit the feeling of hysteria and bitterness of the white majority against the court ordered integration and the admission of nine black high school students to Central High School in Little Rock. They had only eight days to do it. Dr. Alford got out of that issue long enough to say, in one of his radio talks, "Mr. Hays speaks of his membership on this Space Committee." I did not hear the program but my wife who did hear it told me how he ridiculed the idea and said, "What possible interest could space be to the people of Arkansas?" It was interesting that he was quoted when the moon landing was announced as saying, "This is one of the most thrilling things that has ever happened in the history of our country." Sentiment had changed. It was not the thing that carried any wide, popular support. It was an expensive program but a tremendously significant project. So, I think that we all could take credit for lining up support in the House. It was what they called a "blue chip committee," because of John McCormack and Joe Martin, former speaker who was the ranking Republican member. I should have mentioned him as the leading Republican in the House. He was very much interested in it.

T: He served one term as speaker when the Republicans controlled the Congress in 1946.

H: He served two terms--the eightieth Congress and then the first Eisenhower Congress. He went out in 1948. He served from 1946 to 1948 and then from 1952 to 1954.

T: I suspect many times that people really don't realize the kind of relationship that you had across the aisle with other people. You mentioned several examples of legislation you brought out with fellow Democrats, but I am sure there are occasions when you worked closely with Republicans or you would not have been favored as you were by Eisenhower.

H: That's right. President Eisenhower gave me an important appointment even before I had been on his side in the Little Rock crisis. He appointed me as one of the five representatives of our government to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1955. So, I did have very happy relations. Everyone knew that I had Democratic loyalties that were not thin and that I wasn't just a fair-weather Democrat; but, at the same time, I proceeded generally in my legislative activity with a sense of respect for the minority and got along very well with them. Walter Judd became one of my closest friends. We were congenial on matters of church work and in other ways.

T: He was not a Baptist?

H: He was a Congregationalist and a medical missionary to China for ten years. In addition to foreign affairs we worked together on farm policy. This bill that I was referring to a while ago that my friend from California said was the Hays' bill to save the world was really the Hays-Judd Bill. It declared that our foreign policy should be based upon the continued effort to develop the rule of law at the international level and to develop the United Nations in such a way that it would have the power to "promulgate, interpret, and enforce world law to preserve peace."

T: It interests me so much, some of these things that you have talked about. Some of them seem not to be the traditional things one would assume would come out of the minds of people from Arkansas. I wouldn't think the folk of

Arkansas would have been strong supporters of the United Nations. Or were they?

H: They weren't. But there again, I think it is possible for a representative to cultivate a spirit of confidence in his own integrity and his sympathies, you see, to interpret a lot of these things to constituents. I took time out and exerted myself to defend these things that had an indirect relationship to Arkansas concerns, and yet, it could be very substantial. I remember that some of the commercial interests were impatient with our slowness in getting the river program underway. I remember that I had to say faithfully and honestly to my constituents when the Korean War was on, "My concern over world peace has this direct bearing on the river program because you cannot always find the money for guns and butter, too. But we must build a world that is eternally secure from the contagion of war, because we cannot have all of the things that our ambitious people are entitled to--people ambitious for a decent livelihood and for freedom against want and insecurity."

T: How do you explain Bill Fulbright and Brooks Hays in the context of leaders in international affairs concerned with internationalism, and yet with many in Arkansas who would have felt this was insignificant and unimportant.

H: We occasionally met with some heckling on that score, yes. But I think it was the confidence that we had both built that ultimately was strained, but it was personal confidence in our--if you'll let me say--intelligence and our commitments to the lasting interests of our people. I could say this about a lot of our Arkansas leaders. I think that we were always credited with contempt for demagoguery. Take the race issue, for example. I was always on the fringe of political insecurity because I had this deep concern over justice for the black people. I claim that as something that I can be proud of although it did produce my defeat in 1958. I didn't worry about that. I don't want to sound heroic but I can live with myself. I think that in Fulbright's case he ultimately met political reversal, because he had given his mental energies to the things that he thought were vital.

T: Would it be fair to say that you had mended your fences well at home and they didn't ask a lot of questions?

H: Yes. I think that's fair.

T: How did you do this?

H: By deliberately cultivating means of communication between the constituent and the congressman. I used weekly letters and put them into leadership distribution. Then I used weekly radio talks and had at least one station in every county that carried my Sunday talks. I would put them on tape about Thursday and Air Mail them to the various stations, and they were put on the air without cost to me as a public service. Of course, that meant that I couldn't just be talking about my political interests. Yet, it had tremendous impact from the standpoint of name recognition, and I was hoping they were crediting me with statesmanship.

Now, while you were talking about Senator Fulbright and myself, I was reminded that I didn't complete the answer on the matter of specific legislation and the bills that I have some pride in. At the top I think perhaps was the bill that is known in the Department of Agriculture as the Hays-Fulbright Act. Eventually certain legislation will bear the name either formally and officially of the authors, or it will get into the jargon of the bureaus.

But it was my bill, and Senator Fulbright followed my lead on it. He would be the first to say that the major part of the credit would come to me because we got it through the House first over the opposition of men like Everett Dirksen. Now that bill--the Hays-Fulbright Bill-received attention partly because 600,000 questionnaires were returned indicating that they wanted to return to farming, when they got home. I was surprised to find it was that high a figure. I knew that meant if 600,000 of these young people wanted a stake in agriculture and American farm life, we had to have more land available to them. Ironically, the land that had been bought by the Department of Agriculture in the resettlement program I am speaking of contained hundreds of thousands acres that were being sold indiscriminately in large tracts to bidders, but being sold in a very unplanned way so that the land speculators were getting hold of it. I knew that this was against the very policies that distinguished the early Roosevelt legislative program. We were thinking in terms of income through getting a high price for the surplus land. But we were letting it get into the hands of speculators and the government was helping to drive up the price of farmland everywhere. Once the men that have paid a lot of money to get this land in large tracts decide for a particular kind of development, they are going to get their money back and in few cases will that ever get into the hands of family-size farmers.

T: Under a new name--commercialism.

H: Right. The man who headed it up finally, an unfortunate choice--a former Congressman named Frank Hancock from North Carolina--was making a great deal of his record. He was pointing always "with pride" to the big income that he had gotten from the sale of the land in that anti-social procedure. I say "antisocial" because our interest from the standpoint of the South's problems was in getting this land in family-size tracts into the hands of some of these 600,000 young men who wanted to stay in agriculture. We could accompany this determination to put it in family-size tracts with demands that it go only to those who were equipped educationally to use it and who had families to support and who could, by the measurement of social values, qualify for a good, stable farm life.

So, that is the Hays-Fulbright plan. When I first advanced it, I was trying to stop the Hancock program of land sales to prevent the complete loss of good land for family farming. I was trying to arrest that sale pattern. It was interesting that some of the big farmers of the Mid-West worked through Everett Dirksen and others to defeat my bill. I would have been defeated if I had not taken full advantage of the fact that I was earmarking it for the returning farm veterans. The American Legions liked it; the Veterans of Foreign Wars liked it. And once Everett Dirksen met his match, not in me but in the Legion. I don't apologize for that. I think it was fair for me to do it because it was a valid argument that we had some responsibilities to veterans. We had taken them out of their normal life and put them into the ranks of endangered men and fighting our battles, and they were entitled to everything we could do for them. I had rather give them a chance under this plan of farming than simply to give them cash bonuses and say, "You're paid off."

T: You were talking about a land-use program before land-use became popular.

H: Yes. That's undoubtedly true. I can accept that designation with pride.

T: As we have talked about so many different things--and I suspect it is easy

for us to look back and see the things that fit into the current pattern--in many of the programs for which you worked, a good many of the times you turned out to be right. Were there times when you turned out to be wrong?

H: Yes, there were. I am glad you raised that question again because you were asking a while ago did my name attach to any legislation that I was sorry for? Well, the answer is no. But, when you phrase it differently--"Did I take some actions that I felt were wrong?"--although I think I had my share of situations in which I was proved to be right, I must not let that blind me to the fact that at least once I was wrong. Actually, I don't think of any other things really--well, there is one little minor situation that I will come back to. When I am asked if there is anything I regretted, the answer is, "Yes. I regretted that I signed what is called 'The Southern Manifesto.'" That is a misnomer. It was not a manifesto. It had no defiance in it. As a matter of fact, when the statement was first submitted to me, I said, "No. I won't sign it in that form," although I was looking for some basis of action by all of us who represented Southern districts. I mean those who were in a rebellious attitude because of the Supreme Court's sudden and sweeping decision on school integration.

T: This is 1954.

H: Nineteen fifty-four. Many of us were uncritical, I mean in a belligerent attitude, toward the court. We took it in stride, but we were surprised at it. It caught us off guard--those who had, as we all did as members of Congress, some responsibility to provide leadership. What was happening? Well, demagogues were coming right out of the ground, and overnight you were getting this blazing resentment of the Brown Decision. It posed a problem for Southern moderates like myself--or Southern liberals, if they want to use that term. When they brought this document to me, it had been devised, I think, on the Senate side and bore the authorship of such men as Bill Fulbright and Price Daniel, men of integrity and honor. There were some men on the House side that had had something to do with the carpentry of that so-called "manifesto." I never called it that. At any rate, when they brought it to me, all of the other members of the Arkansas delegation had assented to it except Jim Trimble and myself.

T: What areas did he represent?

H: Northwest--Fayetteville. He was my dear friend.

T: He would not have had nearly as many Blacks as probably some of the others. Is that correct?

H: That's right. I had many more than he. Maybe there were one or two other districts that had--because of the farm angle--larger proportions of blacks; but, you see, Little Rock had a pretty large black population. They asked me, "Why won't you sign it in its present form?" I remember there were two things. I said, "It seems to put the stamp of approval on interposition, and interposition is simply another word for nullification, and we must remain a part of the Union."

T: Interposition?

H: Interposition. It meant to interpose the sovereignty of the state against a fictitious power of the nation. That's about the way they put it--"to interpose state sovereignty as the answer to a fictitious use of federal power."

T: Which the Civil War really determined.

H: That's right. Anybody that signed that just didn't see that something was learned at Appomattox. So, I said, "No. I won't sign anything that puts respectability on interposition--another word for nullification." Then, I said, "The second thing is that in its present form, this statement of purpose lacks any appeal to the disaffected people of the South to proceed in non-violent and educational ways to find an answer--to find a pliable alternative." Now, see, I had been known to some extent by students of political science as a "states rights liberal." I am Jeffersonian. I was not indifferent to the states asserted powers, although I must concede that the failure of the states to deal with some of the immediate and vital problems of the South was a justification for federal actions, finally, where I had hoped, theoretically, it could come about by state action. I am thinking of repeal of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting for example. Now until a constitutional amendment was adopted to end this iniquitous and complicated procedure for the right to vote--until we got rid of that through a constitutional amendment--there was no honorable way to deal with it at the national level, because I respected the Constitution, and the Constitution was just as clear as it could be on the right of the states to fix the voting qualifications. So, it took a constitutional amendment.

My Arkansas plan for helping the minority racial group involved repeal of the poll tax by a constitutional amendment, and that is the way we eventually got it. Now the so-called "manifesto" was a mistake. "A declaration" would be more accurate. I wish I had not signed it, because I found it was giving me a false image. It has embarrassed me ever since because I had no such purpose. Actually, we were trying to make politically safe the role of Southern moderates in the civil rights struggles. I thought the declaration was a responsible and temperate action. It was far more temperate than a lot of people thought. I could understand why they were angered by it--the black spokesmen. For a while it created a chasm between some of black friends and myself. I have pointed out always that all of the representatives in the Senate and House from seven of the deep South states signed it, and it was partly done in order to give our people in the South the assurance that we were not indifferent to some of the valid objections to extreme federal action. We were trying to allay fears by saying, "Now just give us credit for trying to work this out through reason, logic, and through justice." But I am sorry that my position was misconstrued--understandably misconstrued. I wish Jim Trimble were here so he could fortify me in the defense I have made, because we had counseled with each other; and, actually it was a sort of a "gentlemen's agreement" that we would act together on it, and that we would either both refuse to sign or both sign it. Jim signed it first. It put me in a very embarrassing position. But I am taking more time to defend myself than I should take. I said in answer to a question in a forum recently that this was certainly one thing that I would be glad to do over again, even if it meant my quick defeat as later my position on the race question did. I would not sign. One reason would be the great inconvenience of explaining as I have tried to explain to you why I felt this was not an ignoble thing to do. It was just a simple mistake. But, I have added, and I have never said anything that was more revealing of my inmost feelings, my deliberate meditation on this thing, than to put it like this, "If my defeat four years later in 1958 in the Little Rock crisis where I was doing, to my own hurt, what I knew to be right and just, atones for the mistake I made in 1954, then I am one of the happiest men that was ever defeated for office." I think that's all I need to say. I might add, for example, since you have

asked me about things I would do a little differently, that I introduced a bill to outlaw strip mining because it was defacing the land--the surface of coal areas.

T: In Arkansas?

H: Oh, anywhere.

T: But was it a serious problem in Arkansas?

H: It was a serious problem in a lot of places, West Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and any number of states. I was influenced in this by editorials and articles in The Christian Science Monitor on what strip mining was doing to deface the land. So, I tossed a bill in, and some of the fair-minded friends of the coal industry pleaded with me not to press it until they were given more time to show that real serious measures would meet the objections. I got virtually no support, but I think if I had persisted just a little more, I might have found some support. But I didn't get popular support from any source. I would get it today because the environmentalists would have rushed to my support. I got these objections from coal representatives on the basis that quick action by the nation would be damaging to certain relationships, and they ought to be given a little more time to work out their problem. Well, some of them are. Some are voluntarily restoring the top soil. But that is one thing that I wish I had done. I wish I had pushed for popular support. Now there is one other thing. I think it is good for me to reflect on things that I might have done a little bit differently. This is really just a little personal indulgence that I will ask you to take because it involves two friends. First there was Aubrey Williams, who was Harry Hopkins' assistant and one of the finest men with one of the finest social consciences I have ever known and a gentle person--a great advocate of change. He might have voted for Norman Thomas before 1932. He was a sincere friend of the poor and the oppressed and an eloquent advocate of serious measures--dramatic measures--to provide relief for them of one kind or another. So, he became the head of the National Youth Administration, deputy administrator of the Works Progress Administration, with an office right next to Harry Hopkins and with immediate access to the President. He was a very lovable person--not loved by the people whose stake was in economic procedures with its injustices and distortions. He was not loved by them because he was serious in the advocacy of things that would bring relief. Maybe he was not always practical, but a good man--no guile in him. He was my friend because when some of my political enemies--before I was elected to Congress and was working as a special representative for the Department of Agriculture--tried to get me fired because I was not persona grata to the establishment in Arkansas, Aubrey Williams just walked across the street and walked into the Oval Office and told Franklin Roosevelt what was taking place.

To my amazement, I had confirmed that Henry Wallace was about to yield to pressure against me. He shouldn't have. I don't know of anything that proves his naivete any more than this. Oh, well, of course his running in a third party, letting these extremists pull him into a campaign against Harry Truman in 1948 that would prove naivete. But I had this proof before that, because this was before I was elected to Congress. I needed that job, and I was the man for it. I knew what I was doing, and all of the leaders in the Roosevelt administration--Francis Perkins, Harry Hopkins, and others--thought so. Aubrey went to the President, because I had called him on the phone and told him what was taking place. He said, "Why, Henry wouldn't do that." I said, "Well, that's what they are doing." I said, "Can you help?"

He said, "Of course, I'll help you," and within a day or two he called me over the phone and told me what had taken place. I guess maybe it didn't come the same day, because he called back--there was a little interval of time as I remember it--and said, "Brooks, you can relax. I have just come from the office of the President and when I told him what was taking place, he didn't say a word. He just buzzed for somebody and told them to get Henry Wallace on the phone, and this is what he said: 'Henry, don't you bother Brooks down there. Don't you let those fellows do anything to him. He stays.'" Well, that ended it, of course. Now that is what Aubrey Williams told me.

The thing that I regret is that when he was nominated by Truman later on--and I can't remember the particular job that he was nominated for, but it required Senate confirmation--Aubrey called me one day and said, "Will you talk to Bill Fulbright for me? I understand that he is threatening to vote against me." I said, "I certainly will." I owed it to Aubrey. I went over to Bill's office and asked him to vote for Aubrey, but I am afraid I did not work on him as hard as I should have. He just pleaded with me to believe that it might mean his political death if he did. He said that it would be of great damage to him. Well, I should have put more pressure on him. I should have found other ways to try to talk him out of it, but I was doing what the political mind almost invariably does--not to ask a man to sacrifice or one friend to sacrifice himself for another. So, maybe I shouldn't feel too remorseful.

T: How did the incident come out?

H: Well, they turned Aubrey down. I think if he had been confirmed without that vote I would have felt badly. But I think it was quite one-sided as I remember it. So, I had that for my consolation. It wasn't just Bill's vote that did it. Bill was a part of the solid majority from the South that was voting the conventional feeling of the people on many matters. Now, that is where I think our church convictions have got to become involved in politics. When Jesus said, "unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you won't enter the Kingdom," he was saying something to haunt all of us if we let the conventional wisdom of the scribes and Pharisees dictate our course. That is the reason the issues in this 1976 presidential campaign may have far more importance than it appears on the surface, because we have got now to deal with a resistance to change and against justice for some elements in our society. I've got a text in what I am saying quoting Jesus--the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. I am hurt every day as I read from one source or another about this inordinate adulation of the extremists on the right. It has an acceptation today that is not entitled to, because many of us who are pleading for some change have paid for it in certain ways. It is only through logical change that we can conserve the values that have come to us from preceding generations. This involves the churches. Well, I am glad I am not involved in politics at this particular stage, because I can talk to the religious-minded people about the importance of listening to the voice of the modern prophets and seeing the resemblance to the old prophets.

T: Would you say this has something to do with the attempt of some to develop a Christian political movement?

H: I don't want to see it bear an organizational label. I just want us to leave it in such shape that individuals in their Sunday School classes or in conferences outside the worship service or outside the meetings that the hierarchy provides for . . .

T: That is not a good Baptist term.

H: No, it isn't, but it is a Baptist fact. You are raising a question that involves imponderables. I don't know exactly how it ought to be done mechanistically, but I do think there is a certain value in our preserving the Baptist commitment to democracy, to leave it in its pristine purity so that there will be a home for the conservative in the faith of our fathers, so that we can provide that shelter for the conservative even in a misguided course, so that at least we can plead with him, not in the name of political power or political advantage or economic gain, but in the name of decency and justice and brotherhood. In other words, religion is carrying now a tremendous burden in this world. I don't want to destroy that, and I don't want to join any kind of movement that denies that people can be conservative in political judgments and yet be Christians. That is so also with liberals. I don't want to impute my interpretation of justice--the principles of justice--to everybody in the household of faith. You see what slows me down when I think of the pure Christian view, but, at the same time, what I am saying with conviction is that, on the whole, liberals may be closer to the Christian program than the extreme rightists. We may find some theological handles on this procedure. I am eager to read Charles Deweese's and your account. Do you touch this problem?

T: Well, that is one of the things we tried to deal with.

H: It's at my bedside now. I haven't gotten into it. I made a quick examination of it, but I didn't recall at the moment whether or not you dealt with it.

T: Really we deal with the influence of religion on culture and culture on religion.

H: I see. Well, I'll be interested in seeing it because I want all the light I can get on this. I am haunted, of course, as I articulate on the idealistic side of this problem. I am haunted by the fact that there are certain considerations of the pragmatists that have to be taken into account. I don't think that the purist is always rendering his best service by advancing a pure, uncompromising Christian position. Now, one can say what I've said without giving aid and comfort to the unchristian forces in society. I would be glad for you to help talk to me instead of me talking to you. But I hope I am getting some stuff on the tape that you would like to have.

T: Very much so. I certainly appreciate the chance to get together again today, Mr. Hays. Today is August 24, 1976. Perhaps after you have had a chance to reflect a little bit there may be some additional comments you might want to make about the "Southern manifesto," as it was called. We concluded just at that point yesterday and maybe on reflection there are some other things you would want to share.

H: Well, without having in mind taking any of the sting out of it, because I felt that the criticisms that were made of me were valid, particularly by some of my black friends in Little Rock, who had a right to expect me to adhere to my rigid course of fighting for their elevation to a higher status and to an equal status with the white population.

T: Can you think of two or three people who were involved and would have made this known to you pretty strongly?

H: Oh, yes. I'll do that. I wanted to emphasize--but I am not sure that I said

anything about it when we talked about it yesterday--that it was not of a vote on a bill. It was not a legislative matter. It was a public appeal to the power structure of the South. It was addressed to the white majority and was primarily to plead with them not to go off the deep end of rationality and turn to the demagogues and the racists in the political community. I remember that Governor Faubus pled with all of us to say something. But, that was before he had taken a very unfortunate and tragic course in later situations because, in 1954, he was known as a moderate and had appealed to the moderate people in his campaign technique. He told Congressman Trimble and myself, when he came up to plead with us to make it unanimous, that if we didn't do something of this kind that the people of our districts and of Arkansas would turn to the racists and the people that had built their whole campaign appeal on prejudice and ill will. So, I want to repeat that this was not a legislative act. It was designed to sort of hold the line. It doesn't make me look any better at all, but it does underscore what I said yesterday in self-criticism--that it put me in a false light and that was something that I hadn't weighed carefully. After I had signed, some of my friends were furious, and I got echoes of it from Virginia, Delaware, and maybe from Maryland, because they had expected more of me. They had read my speeches on the role of moderation and on doing almost as much as Mr. Truman's and Hubert Humphrey's plan would have done. They felt that this was an abandonment of that course of moderation, and I can understand that. But when I got to Little Rock, I went out to talk to the black Baptist ministers--some 30 or 40 of them.

T: These are primarily black Baptist ministers?

H: All black--black Baptist preachers. I sought a conference with them to sort of ask forgiveness. I think by that time I was in an attitude of penitence. I remember one very prominent black there, Dr. Guy. He was an awfully fine man, and ordinarily, I thought, a reasonable person. But he was brutal by frank. He said, "Mr. Hays, when I consider you and Mr. Fulbright signing such an instrument as this, I can't feel kindly toward you." I said, "Well, I don't blame you, Dr. Guy." His condemnation and the voicing of criticism by several of them publicly and audibly was something I would have profited by if the communication of the congressman and the minority group had been better through the years. I thought that I was being entirely sincere and open and frank with them. I said, "I can understand your feelings, and I have no heart to defend myself. I simply want to put it like this. I had rather turn to other things now and concede that the declaration of principles, the so called manifesto was a mistake. The thing about this meeting today that thrills me is that we have bridged a chasm. We have come to the place where the exchange of ideas between the congressman and his black constituents is just as effective as it has always been with the white constituents. I am so thrilled by what is taking place here today--the fact that there is a confrontation between us. To me this is the significant thing about the developments over the civil rights."

That impressed them. I remember one little pastor. He was a very articulate person. He was doing what Brother Guy had done. I have forgotten this minister's name, but he was a very prominent black minister. I am going to tell it just like it was. This is something I wouldn't put in print except that it represents something that is, to me, appealing about the articulateness of the black ministers. They are, on the whole, an outstanding professional group. Until civil rights and black education of comparable nature brought them a new avenue of service and new careers, the finest leaders--those of native abilities--sought the ministry as an outlet. Most of your leadership was compressed into that one profession. He was such a one. He was very

eloquent. He made some statement about moderation. He said, "Mr. Hays has been talking about moderation. Why doesn't he talk about moderation by Herman Tallmadge and Jim Eastland. Why doesn't he go after those fellows?"

I said, "Brother, I have done that. I have made my appeal of moderation to extremists in both races, particularly to my caucasian group. I have followed Paul's injunction to the Philippians." I said, "You haven't forgotten it, surely. You will find it in the fifth verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians." Well, these thirty or forty black ministers' ears were perked up at that, because I was quoting chapter and verse to him, and he was listening. He had the floor and was just listening intently. I said, "Paul said, 'Let your moderation be known to all men.' That's what the Bible says." When he could make himself heard above the laughter, he said, "Yes, it do, don't it?" His vernacular slipped in. His grammar suddenly went bad. It wouldn't have been as funny if he had said, "It does, doesn't it." "It do, don't it?"

T: Was this really the beginning? It wasn't usual for an Arkansas congressman to be very frequently involved with the black community other than in the most casual sort of way.

H: Well, you are so right. The interesting thing is that it happened overnight--just all of a sudden. The walls went down--a tremendous gain in the democratic process. I remember hearing two candidates for office at a little barbecue dinner. The women of a black church over in Marianna, Arkansas--when I was running for governor in 1966--were selling beef sandwiches for a dollar a sandwich. They had barbecued it themselves. Other things were being sold, and they were making a little money for their church. I heard one of the candidates--white--saying, "You know, Jim, just a short time ago you and I wouldn't have been doing this, would we?" These were thrilling developments for me quite aside from what it meant in terms of strengthening my position politically, because, actually, I didn't win that race in 1966, although it was under conditions that I thought were very favorable. Much of my white support did leave from me in the Little Rock crisis in 1958, six years before this race for governor. They had been mollified somewhat but there was a new tone.

I lost some votes in what I called the "pathological locations," where the feelings about the blacks were just too strong for me to overcome. But I lost very few black votes. My, my, they were with me--a tremendous development--because the Little Rock experience had wiped out any lingering feelings that might have been extended toward me by the blacks.

T: I appreciate your sharing this and tying the ends in on this. Perhaps this is maybe an example--I don't know how you would react to this. Is this an example of an occasion which, perhaps, as you look back and reflect, might not have been the wisest course but did turn out for good in the end? Or am I trying to say too much.

H: I don't think you are. I was really full of remorse over "the manifesto" because I could see the distorted image which was not justified. It just wasn't that important. I am sure that what I have said in extenuation is entirely accurate. But when I look at the language now, and I haven't looked at it in a long time but if I were to look at it now, I am sure I would find words in it that are full of inaccuracy and frustration. It wasn't worthy of me. I don't want anything I say to alter that judgment because, I guess, within twenty-four hours I was beginning to see how unfortunate it was. I

was told, for example, that there was discussion about withdrawing the invitation that I had to address the brotherhood dinner over in Virginia--a dinner sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. My sponsor for the engagement was so happy when they turned down the motion or suggestion that it be cancelled. I didn't know about it until later, or I would have offered to ease the situation by just saying that I shouldn't come. This friend of mine, who was a very prominent worker in the Brotherhood work, was highly pleased with the response that I made, and that was perhaps my first public appearance after the manifest was signed. He was so happy about it because I said to some extent what I have said in these recordings with you. I was glad to have that chance. But I had an ugly letter from a Methodist minister in Wilmington, Delaware. I don't suppose I received over a half-dozen letters protesting my action and expressing chagrin and disappointment. But those were hard letters to answer. One of the leading black ministers, who later became a bishop in the Methodist church in the A.M.E branch, Bishop M. L. Harris, said, "One thing I know, Mr. Hays. I know you didn't sign that instrument just to save your political scalp. I know that about you," which was true. I was so glad to have an appraisal of that kind. He said it forthrightly. He said, "Of course, I don't agree with it." I said, "I don't either any more."

T: Let me ask this one other thing to tie it in. Would you and Trimble have been the only two from what we consider "deep South states" that hesitated on the signing of this, or would there have been others?

H: Now there are seven states and that means Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. All members from those seven states signed. There were one or two in Tennessee that didn't sign. There were two or three in North Carolina that didn't sign. Well, there was Virginia because there was a gap. But Virginia, interestingly enough, is more conservative than North Carolina. On race questions Virginia had a warped position largely due to the recalcitrance of Harry Byrd, Sr. Byrd, you know, originated that expression that haunts Virginians even yet--"massive resistance." I know that some of the most vocal adherents to the idea of interposition were members of the Virginia House delegation. Congressman Tuck, former governor of Virginia, was very adamant. His leadership, I am afraid, was a bit provocative. I think the whites of his area were even more violent in their views than some of the districts south of him. It doesn't matter. I think I have named the seven states, haven't I? Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and Alabama. I think this whole thing to some extent--what I have called pathology--can be charted in terms of terrain of topography--the level lands, the black lands of the fertile areas of the South as distinguished from the uplands, the hill country. The flat land areas produce cotton and other crops.

T: It had a larger percentage of blacks.

H: These states have a larger percentage of blacks, and they are closer to the old historical areas of contagion. However, one North Carolina Congressman and I were very congenial and I suppose he was sorry that I did put my name on that statement. I refer to Congressman C. B. Deane, who had been president of the North Carolina Baptist Convention. He was a very fine person. He died about 1970. I know he was praised by the Baptists of his state.

T: You had also said there were a couple of other things you had reflected on from yesterday, and you had wanted to . . .

H: I want to put a little postscript to my remarks on the Taft-Hartley Labor Bill. I may have covered that.

T: No, we really haven't talked about Taft-Hartley.

H: In these previous interviews?

T: We didn't. We need to talk about that. Maybe if we can just keep that and pick up in 1945 and 1946. As the war came to an end and you were involved with the legislation for the Office of Wage and Price Control, what reaction would you say was typical of Congressmen in the latter part of the war years? You made one trip to Europe during the war--to England. What kind of personal progression or change came on you through the war years?

H: I don't think there was much change in my basic philosophy. I had always been strong for the League of Nations and had been interested in the struggle for world peace.

T: But you had not been to Europe at all.

H: The trip I made in 1944 was my first trip. I cover that rather fully, I think. It may be in fragments, but it is in my little book "Christian Workshop" that Broadman Press published. You have access to that, of course. Well, I don't think there was any change. I had confirmed the feelings of America's responsibility and of the United States' obligation as a nation.

I had a good deal to say in public addresses when I returned from that first survey of conditions. I am glad we were able to fly over to France. When we first got to England we had assumed that would be as close as we could get to the front and that we wouldn't see much of the stricken areas. Of course, there was enough to see in London. It would pull at your heart strings to see a great area of rubble and to talk to people who had known what fear of the "buzz bombs," as they called them, had instilled.

T: Was that the first time maybe you had been personally involved in air raids?

H: Yes, it was. I had been in uniform for a short time in the First World War, but I didn't get overseas. I had studied from that great distance the effects of the great conflicts in trench warfare. This was all a frightening thing.

I stayed at the Dorchester Hotel in London. I think that every night that I was there I heard the bombs. One, I remember, was so frightening and we got over the radio such warnings that I went down to lower levels of the hotel thinking that if there was a strike that we would be safer downstairs. It woke me up a time or two. It was a rugged, austere life I had while I was there about a month, including the days that we spent on the other side of the English Channel.

One sort of a crude thing that happened when I was being interviewed back in Little Rock. I told the reporter about the very thing I am telling you--about the fright that I had, wondering whether the bombs were going to strike the hotel or not and whether I could escape it. I was exposed like the London people were, of course. They had told me, however, that if you heard it, you weren't hit! It would come in that sudden strike, and so as long as you can hear it, you are all right. But I told about that and then told some of the hardships--the fact that I missed my citrus fruit. I loved oranges, and the

only time I saw an orange or a peach or something was when I was with our own troops in the commissary department that provided practically everything that they had to eat here. They were going to make due provision for them. One of the officers gave two or three oranges to me that I carried in my pocket. I gave one of them to Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, who was president of the Baptist World Alliance. He came down and had breakfast with me during this London trip. The official photographer for the armed forces took a picture of Dr. Rushbrooke peeling that orange that I had given him. He told me it was the first orange he had had since the war began. But I was telling all these things and speaking about the austerity and not having as much milk as I like because I had a little stomach problem and couldn't get milk except by certain exceptions. The doctor would order a little milk for me and things like that. I hated to have to do it. I did my own laundry--washed in the tubs or basins there at the hotel. The headline in the paper the next day said, "Hays Frightened by Buzz-Bombs; Does His Own Laundry." I never heard the last of it. It was one of those things where there was no connection between the two. I don't think that the headline writer was having fun with me. I think it was just one of those things.

I remember another headline in the Washington Post. The one I just told you was in the Arkansas Democrat. The Post comment was made after I had appeared to make a statement to one of the Senate committees. I brought in some of my experiences in the European theatre . . . No, this was after the war. This was after the trip that Dr. Clarence W. Cranford, president of the American Baptist Convention, and myself had made to Moscow. I was talking about some of their problems being similar to our problems. The problem of alcoholism was a tremendous problem in Russia. The government had taken notice of it, and Khrushchev was taking steps to deal with it. I told them about seeing two little girls trying to prop their drunken father up as they were apparently leading him home. So, at any rate, the Washington Post page one headline the next morning read, "Liquor Evil Unites Khrushchev and Hays."

T: Would you go on a little further on your trip to Britain. You said you noticed a great deal of the problems, and you had had a chance to talk briefly with Dr. Rushbrooke. Could you reflect additionally on your conversation with Rushbrooke. Was he in fairly good health at that time?

H: Yes, he was. I forget when he died. He looked like Robert E. Lee. He had a beautiful, well-trimmed white beard. He was, apparently, much respected. Now Ernest Payne was living then and had climbed into prominence in the Baptist community in Britain.

T: Dr. Payne is still alive?

H: Still alive, yes. He is probably about my age--maybe a little older. I guess he is in his low eighties. I was the one who made the first contact with the Baptists of France. They had lost touch. Of course, there was no postal service, generally, between occupied France, and there are very few Baptists in France anyway. They knew who the leaders of the French Baptists were, and those leaders had lost complete contact, so there was maybe a period of three or four years when they had just gone out of existence as far as Western records were concerned. They gave me the name and address--I wish I could recall it now. This may be in the little book on the European experiences. I remember when we went to the address that Dr. Rushbrooke and Dr. Payne gave me, a woman came to the door, and she was holding a little fellow in her arms--I guess maybe two years old--and I still had one of those oranges.

The sight of that little child just drew on my sympathy, and I reached in my pocket and got out that orange. The child nearly dived out of the mother's arms. She said, "That is the first orange this child has ever seen."

So, I was happy to bring word back to the British Baptists and to the American Baptists--that the congregation in Paris was still alive. They had their regular meetings. The war hadn't prevented their meetings. I suppose Hitler was too busy with other things to track down Baptists to suppress their religion. But, of course, Baptists in the occupied areas clung to those phases of Baptist life that had to do with comfort and Bible instructions and things of that kind. It had little to do with the political expression of New Testament faith, which I think leaves much to be desired. That is when I said about Russia, that "I'll believe there is real freedom of religion in Russia when I hear of some Baptist preacher saying in a sermon, 'I'm agin the government.'" Then, you will know that there is freedom there. But I did have a very enjoyable visit with the French Baptists and with the British Baptists.

T: What kind of man did you find Dr. Rushbrooke to be? Did you engage in small talk or pretty deep conversations?

H: I was disappointed in one thing that he said, and this came as a surprise to me because I had seen his name in connection with the British Council of Churches, which is, I think, maybe an integral part of the World Eccumenical ties. I don't know but that is comparable to our National Council of Churches. I was happy about his being eccumenical and said so to him. He just sort of whispered his reply. Maybe he thought I was like some of the other Baptists in this country who do not support eccumenical ideas. He may have thought that he needed to say something in a way of an apology. I don't know. It would be interesting to me because I didn't pursue it. He said, "Well, I think it's good for me to sit there at the table with them and see what those fellows are doing." Which, you know, took a lot of the punch out of my observation. I didn't go any further. But that is one thing that I remember. My trip gave me a fine opportunity later on to talk about the problems of Europe from a physical standpoint.

Three years later my wife and I went to the Copenhagen meeting of the World Alliance Congress, and that was a great experience, too, because even after two years it was stricken country. There was great suffering. The food shortages still brought considerable inconvenience and suffering. When I got back to Arkansas from that trip I remember one summer I was making what I called my "post office tour." I tried to visit all the post offices in my district ever so often, and there were many more in those days than there are now, because we have had a great change of policy growing out of human migration. People have left a lot of stranded villages.

T: You had a part in appointing some postmasters.

H: Yes, even at that time I appointed a lot of them. Even those that had been appointed by the preceding Republican administration were very friendly to me. So I got along just fine. I drew up to the post office in the little town of Adona in Perry County, one of the poorer counties of the state and strictly a rural community. There was a great oak tree down in front of the stores. Across the road I heard a voice saying, "Is that Brooks over there?" I looked and it was a blind man. He had his white cane, and there were a couple of men with him. They said, "Yea, Uncle Tom, that's Brooks." "Well, lead me over there to him. I want to talk to him." So, when he got to me we shook hands and he said, "Brooks, now I have been hearing about this

problem in Europe, and I have just been waiting to get it straight from you, because I can't believe everything that is in the newspapers and on the radio. I just want to know from you. Is this thing that President Truman is talking about sending money and food and everything to them"--I guess he was thinking of the Marshall Plan and other things--"true?" I said, "Yes, it is Mr. Blevins." I said, "It is all true just like he had told it and just like you have heard it on the air. I can just tell you that anything we do to help them is money well expended." Of course, they had been asked to accept rationing on some foods. I will never forget his reply. "Well, that satisfies me." I told him a little more than I have told you about it. "That satisfies me because I trust you. You can count on us. My wife and I don't have a lot to eat. As a matter of fact, we'll have our dinner"--I knew that meant the middle of the day--"and then we'll push it back, and mother will cover it up and put it in the safe. Then at night we just sort of eat what's left. Any pinching that comes I'll accept because I believe it's our Christian duty."

Well, here was my reflection on it as I rode away from there. I had been making Chamber of Commerce speeches and civic club speeches on the rehabilitation of Europe, and what we did is one of the brightest pages in the history of this country. Seventeen billion dollars was a great deal of money. But it started the wheels again. I talked about that. I had not emphasized this other element. But, that's true of political people. Political oratory is always influenced by what people want to hear. You sugar-coat it, and sometimes you are not as candid as you should be. But it just hadn't occurred to me to talk about it as this old, blind man had. He said, "It's our Christian duty." It altered some of the speeches I was making. I told it in other places. I said, "If that man whose income is, I am sure, rather limited, can produce that kind of reaction, then it ought to have the same affect on us."

T: Now your reason for going to Britain in 1944 was to see the situation first-hand, as was the case frequently for congressmen to travel different places. Was there any other idea in mind that you had in terms of going?

H: It was an opportunity to go with no expense to our government. I want to interject this observation. No one ever suggested that there was any impropriety in our going. There must have been a dozen and a half that were carried in the vacant seats of the British Overseas Military planes that particular summer of 1944. We were guests of the British government. And they were not out any money. They weren't contributing anything to us, and I couldn't find any conflict of interest.

T: Well, they were hoping, of course, to encourage you to see their situation and give them support.

H: Right. And since Britain and the United States were engaged in a tremendous effort to save Western civilization, there was no reason why we shouldn't go. All they were doing was just exposing us to the facts. It was a very exciting month. I had the best time. Anthony Eden, who a little later on became the prime minister, was host for a little luncheon for us. Our group had sort of broken up, and I was generally in the company of Walter Judd and Dick Richards of South Carolina. Later, up in the Edinburgh, Scotland area, Glasgow and Belfast, we were joined by Congressman Poage of Texas and others--Horan of Washington. But never were there more than four or five of us together until we converged at General Eisenhower's headquarters in Paris, September 23, 1944. That was my first contact with General Eisenhower. I sat by him at the table at a luncheon. I think perhaps he remembered me

later, but, of course, by the time the Little Rock experience came on, we were very close. We had gotten to be great friends. He has a beautiful reference to me in his memoirs. Probably my little book, This World: a Christian's Workshop has supplied everything that would be enlightening on that point.

T: Now you came back to America and resumed your responsibilities in the fall of 1944 and the winter of 1944 and spring of 1945. Were you aware, as a congressman, of the failing health of the President?

H: Yes. I became first aware of it on inauguration day which was January 20, 1945. You see that was just a little later--just a few weeks later. I remember my wife wanted out daughter, Betty, to use the extra ticket that we got. All the members of Congress were given one extra ticket for the spouse, and she wanted our daughter to have it. That inauguration was the first time, I guess, that inauguration ceremonies were on the south portico of the White House. The listening audience--and that included a lot of people besides members of Congress--stood beneath on the ground.

T: Your daughter did go then?

H: She went, yes, and we talked about his appearance. She had the same impression that I did. As a matter of fact, I rather think that I made the statement to her or others who saw this tragic sight that he would not live long. It was very distressing because he was pale, thin, and didn't speak with the old vigor. I was somewhat conditioned for his passing.

T: Was there much reflection in the Democratic Party caucuses about whether he should be a fourth term president? Do you remember much?

H: I was very much opposed to a third term, but it was easier after that with the precedents broken, to be for a fourth term, because of the war conditions and then the two-term tradition had been broken. The difference between twelve years and sixteen years wasn't so important. So that breech had been accomplished. We had broken the practice of the past. But I was very much opposed to a third term.

T: You did not see the President that much during 1943 and 1944.

H: No, I didn't. I'm glad you asked that question. I was with him far more often when I was in the departmental service when I was working for agriculture. I saw him after I came to Congress because, of course, he died more than two years after I came to Congress. He had served on a short time in that fourth term. But I had seen him several times between 1933 and 1945.

T: Now when you say the first term are you talking about . . .

H: I saw him more often in his first two terms than I did his third term.

T: Was this in part because of the war effort, or did you kind of move away from it--you are described many times as a Roosevelt man and as a New Dealer.

H: Well, I was not in the leadership class in Congress. I was building for leadership and working my way up. When I was in the Department of Agriculture I was Democratic National Committeeman most of the time which was during 1932 to 1939. There was more reason for my being with the President than as a freshman member of Congress. But that is an interesting contradiction of the fact that going to Congress tends to strengthen ties to the White House.

T: So there wasn't much real discussion of the possibility of his not running in 1944 even though surely some of his advisors would have been acquainted with his health difficulties.

H: Yes. But, you know, I have never seen any explanation of that. I never had occasion to hear an explanation for the fact that objection was not raised on the health factor. I don't think it was. I don't recall that there was any serious consideration given to it. Now, of course, the third term did present a problem to the leadership, but there was no health factor in 1940. He was still, apparently, in excellent health. But somewhere along the line there came this failing condition. It had been commented on the last time that he had spoken to the Congress. He had been at the Capitol for the joint session during his third term, and people commented on his health then because for the first time he remained seated. He didn't stand to give his address. He read it sitting down. That, of course, raised deep concern, and that was just a short time before his inauguration.

T: It is my understanding that he had very strict orders that under no circumstances was he to be pictured getting to his feet or being moved.

H: I think that's true. I remember how shocked I was the first time that I saw that he had to have help when he moved out of a Pullman car. It was in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1936. Really, there weren't any observers seeing this, because I was back in the living quarters with him and a few of the people that were accompanying him. I remember how shocked I was to find him having to almost crawl out of that car. He had to take hold of the banisters on both sides of the temporary ramp. He couldn't go down the steps. The upper part of his body with the leg joints made a ninety degree angle. Just to see him was a depressing sight.

T: Did he use canes?

H: He did, of course, the minute he got down from this ramp. James, his son, was generally his prop. I think James enjoyed doing that for his father. It may not have been James that time. It may have been someone else. It was someone who would sympathetically help him. He would have a cane in one hand and be on the arm of the person supporting him. But I saw him fall at the Philadelphia convention in 1936--fall forward. It frightened all of us who saw it. Not many of us did. It was in Philadelphia at the quadrennial convention. My father and mother and I had been given a choice of seats up there. We were just a few feet from him as he went to the podium. As he came in or else rose from a chair he fell forward and almost went down. He was almost to the floor before they caught him and pulled him up. It just frightened all of us. But it was in an obscure place on the platform so not many people saw it.

T: And, in those days there weren't the television cameras that would have been zeroing in today. You mentioned you ran for reelection in the fall of 1944. You must have been fairly confident of reelection after the primary.

H: I had no opposition in the primary. I believe maybe the Republicans did nominate someone. They were, probably, trying to fill the ballot. They got someone but it was not a serious challenge. They even told me it wasn't. They said, "We like the way you're doing." The Republican Party in many states in the South at that time was just purely a shell. It was a formality, that's all. The sad thing about it is that they didn't want it to change. A lot of them didn't because that meant that the patronage that came with

having a national administration in Republican hands didn't have to be spread too thinly. That's a sad commentary on the function of the oppostion party, but for years that was true. They just quit struggling and trying to build a party. Although in the border states like Tennessee they had a pretty vigorous opposition party and also in Virginia and North Carolina. They elected a few congressmen--a few members of the House in some of those states. But in Arkansas the Republican Party, prior to Winthrop Rockefeller's regime, was just a hollow shell. There are some exceptions to that.

T: Then when you came back and began to notice in the fall of 1944 and the spring of 1945 the declining health of the President, what were your general attitudes? What kind of feelings did you have as you took up your second term as congressman?

H: I had no thought of it being imminent. I just felt that he wouldn't live out the term. But you know you think of someone just having a long, lingering illness, and that did engage our thinking to some extent. But, fortunately, we had a man who was admirable and fine, strong, and relatively young, Harry Truman. So, there wasn't anything to depress us. But we just didn't realize it was coming so soon. That was a short time--six or eight weeks.

T: You mentioned previously, when we were talking about this, what is often called the dumping of Henry Wallace from the vice-presidency and moving Truman in his place. Did you know Truman at all from his days in the Senate? Had you met him?

H: Not well. As a matter of fact, I can't recall ever meeting him until he became vice-president. There was no occasion for me to meet him. But I had a very good impression of him, but it was the kind of impression that you get from newspapers and the congressional record, and knowing of his fine work in the Truman investigations of war frauds. But he did a good job there. During this period as vice-president that only lasted a few weeks I remember being in an Arkansas luncheon on the Senate side with Leslie Biffle, who was secretary of the Senate and very much of a Truman aide. He was devoted to Harry Truman.

T: This was while he was vice-president?

H: While he was vice-president in that brief period. But I think I might take time to tell you something that happened in Jacksonville, Florida, last Thanksgiving Day when I went down to address a city-wide church meeting.

T: This would have been 1975?

H: Nineteen hundred seventy-five. Jacksonville, Florida. They used me on what was called a feedback, a radio program that they called "Feedback" because the radio audience was encouraged to telephone questions in for the guest speaker. I made a brief comment or two and then they said, "Now Mr. Hays is ready to answer any questions." The phone was just kept busy. I guess they had several lines. The first question was this: "Mr. Hays, I have a question but before I ask it I must lay the basis for it. Shortly after Mr. Truman became President, I went with a resident of Florida to Washington and had made an engagement to speak to him about a matter." Now, I am not sure. I wish I had a recording of this because it was either in this period of his brief vice-presidency or after he got into the White House. "I went with a man by the name of Brooks Hays." Well, that didn't surprise me because I had heard of Brooks Hays in Florida, and, as a matter of fact, I had heard of four

or five other Brooks Hayses in the country. I picked up interest right at that point though. "When we went in, I said, 'Mr. President'--or Mr. Vice-President, whichever he was--'I want to introduce a friend of mine from Florida named Brooks Hays.' The President immediately registered surprise and shock and said, 'Brooks Hays?' I said, 'Yes, that is the name.' 'Well,' he said, 'that is interesting. You know, I have a friend from Arkansas who is a member of Congress--Brooks Hays. As a matter of fact, I think a lot of him and I am thinking about appointing him Secretary of Commerce.'" Well, this was all new to me.

I had never heard that story. I have never had any way to check back with the gentleman. I have had no further contact with him, but he said the President said, "Yes, I think a lot of him, and I am intending to appoint him Secretary of Commerce. Or, at least, I want him to be in the Cabinet."

T: But you never were approached?

H: Well, that was the man's question. He said, "My question is were there any later conversations or any developments of that nature." I said, "No, not a one, but it does confirm my feeling that I had a good name with the President. He and I were friendly." Now, I am adding this. If he did pursue it in his plans and thinking and conversation, I think I know what blocked it. It was probably the opposition of the political establishment. I had been a dissenter in politics a good deal of the time while I had a pretty good base, or I wouldn't have stayed in Congress sixteen years. I didn't very often have much influence or much strength with the real power structure. I got along with everybody pretty well.

T: Are you talking about the power structure in Arkansas?

H: Yes. I am talking about Arkansas. Oh, I had wonderful relations with Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman and with Mr. Eisenhower. I wasn't troubled by those contacts. Mr. Roosevelt considered me for two different federal judgeships. I know all about that. I know because one of the United States Senators, John E. Miller, who is now a federal judge--he left the Senate to take a judgeship--told me that he wrote my name down on the list of six men that he would approve or clear in a Senate confirmation, and Mrs. Caraway would not agree to any one of the six. I think it was because she didn't like Carl Bailey and that meant she didn't like me.

T: Now Mrs. Caraway was very closely tied in too with the Huey Long organization?

H: That's right. She, also, after Huey's death in 1935, didn't have to deal with that problem--that is of being a friend of Long's and Long not being a friend of Roosevelt. She didn't have to do that because she followed the Roosevelt line. It was just one vote. Mrs. Caraway didn't have a big influence in the Senate.

T: But she had prominent influence in Arkansas.

H: Well, people liked Mrs. Caraway. As a matter of fact, I liked her. I just have to, in all candor, say that she was not a person of strong leadership. It put an awful load on the other Senator, Judge Miller, because of the many things he had to do. He told me what I have just repeated to you, that the Roosevelt administration had asked him if he would agree to the confirmation of my appointment. He verified what I had heard through other friends. Now I never talked to the President about it. I was not an applicant for a

judgeship. I would have taken it back there because, of course, it would have meant lifetime tenure. I am glad now that I didn't take a judgeship or didn't get one, because I have been far happier in legislative work and in unrestricted political activity, which I would have had to give up if I had become a judge.

T: It could have easily put you in the position of having to make a decision with reference to the Little Rock school. Would that be correct?

H: Yes.

T: What did Mrs. Caraway have against you?

H: Well, it was just the fact that I was very close to Carl Bailey, and Carl Bailey and Mrs. Caraway didn't get along. He was the governor.

T: When then did you really first meet Truman after he became President?

H: Well, I can't remember that. Oh, I was there, of course, when he came to address the Congress. His first was a thriller. To me he made a fine impression on the country and on the Congress.

T: Was the Congress leery that he would really be the kind of man who could assume the mantle of leadership after Roosevelt?

H: Yes, they were. I think that his strong leadership came as a surprise to a lot of people, maybe including myself. I was very fond of him, but I wasn't prepared for the vigorous and imaginative leadership that he shortly exhibited. He was an amazing person. I was thrilled by the bold things that he was prepared to do, even in some situations where I didn't fully agree with him. No two men in that big legislative complex agreed on everything. But I can't recall anything of substance where I was not in pretty full agreement with him. I stood by him when very few people at home stood by him. I remember one of his vetoes was a bill increasing the allowances for veterans who suffered nonservice-connected disability. He vetoed it because of its inordinate generosity, he thought. Of course, I had never opposed and I don't know of anybody that ever opposed committee approved increases for service-connected disability. Congress was always prepared, taking our fiscal situation in mind, to be generous with service-connected cases. But this was another thing, and so twenty-five of us--only twenty-five--voted to sustain his veto of that bill. I suspect he took notice of that. He didn't forget.

I remember once when I was going down the line shaking hands at some reception he recognized me and he turned and said, "Bess, here's Brooks Hays of Arkansas. He's my kind of Democrat." That was all he said. I went on. Another time he was talking to me out at a reception in the Congressional Club, and my wife was one of the officers--that's the women's club. He and Mrs. Truman were guests, and he was in the receiving line. During the little rest period we sat there and talked. All of a sudden he turned and said, "Brooks, pardon me. I think I interrupted you," and Marion said, "Well, Mr. President if you spoke, you had to." He laughed and then another thing he said while we were sitting there, "Wait a minute. The orchestra is playing 'Way Down in Missouri.'" He said, "They play it every time. I get so damned tired of hearing it, I don't know what to do. I got to make out like I love it."

T: I wonder, too, if you would comment on something about Taft-Hartley and the development of that. In 1946 the Republicans were able to capture Congress

which was, I suppose, in part a repudiation of the Roosevelt administration and the war years. How did you Democrats of Truman react to that?

H: That was in the eightieth Congress.

T: The fall of 1946.

H: We had had a close call even in 1942. There was only a majority of about six of us in 1943, when we took office--very close. The Republicans nearly took the Congress in 1942. I don't remember about 1944. It was in 1946 that the eightieth Congress came in. The Republicans elected Joe Martin, speaker, and Charles Halleck became majority leader. He had served as assistant minority leader. Now what is your question again?

T: I was asking what the general feeling was, and why do you think that your party wasn't able to retain control of the House in 1946. Was it a repudiation of Truman? Was it a repudiation of the war effort? Was it a reaction to the war--the veterans returning? What do you see as you look back on it?

H: Well, I think it was history repeating itself. You know we lost the Congress in 1918, the last two years of Woodrow Wilson's administration. It was a letdown. I think that's all there was to it. The people were wanting something different. In that kind of an election there are seldom sharp issues.

T: There wasn't any real sharp issue that you remember?

H: No, I don't think so. I don't remember a thing. Of course, we know what happened in 1948. There were issues in the 1948 election. That was when Truman pulled the upset victory over Dewey.

T: Say something about Taft-Hartley. This was a law that Truman felt very strongly about. He nationalized the steel industry rather than invoke Taft-Hartley to settle the steel strike in the early 1940's and there was a lot of bitterness. This was an anti-labor bill. The labor unions considered it anti-labor. Can you relate your involvement in formation of Taft-Hartley? You were not from an industrial state, and there wouldn't have been a lot of union power in your area except, I suppose, in Pulaski County, which would be the only area where there would be a real union. What would you say about that?

H: Well, I think you have posed the question very well because we were an agricultrual district and a commercial district. There were few factories and union/labor was not a strong influence. All of the political factors, thinking about perpetuation in office, would have called for my supporting Taft-Hartley. I followed the developments very closely because I had--and I don't think this is just parading my conscientious feelings about the issues of that magnitude--determined to do the right things. I didn't want to just bow to political pressure. I think that some were surprised that I didn't follow the easy course. I had been demonstrating on a few votes prior to that that I was independent.

I remember I was one of only about a dozen congressmen from the South that opposed the Dies' Un-American Activities Committee. I opposed the motion to make it a permanent committee. There were two crucial votes on that, and I had taken the unpopular side on that issue. That didn't bother me. I am not over-dramatizing it. I don't think I am. I just didn't want to stay in Congress that badly.

Well, it is an interesting thing, really, what happened on this labor legislation. It originated in the House, and the Committee on Education and Labor worked a long time on that legislation. On the Republican side was Fred Hartley of New Jersey, who had become rather militantly anti-labor. Although, originally, I am told he was pro-labor. He had made a certain shift as the sentiment in his district shifted. He was for a strong, coercive kind of bill. Something I enjoy reflecting on is that the principal speech that was made in opposition to the bill as it was reported by the Committee on Education and Labor--the one who was most influential in my finally making up my mind to oppose the bill--was made by a freshman congressman, a member of that committee, who had taken a good deal of interest in it, named John Fitzgerald Kennedy. That was one of his first speeches, and it was a good speech and, really, the only one I can remember now. The mood of the country was, "Give us some legislation to deal with labor." I would have been for a reasonable bill because some of the complaints I shared. I thought there had been some excesses on the part of labor. It wasn't, of course, produced by any ideological feeling against labor. Goodness knows! I had a good record on those issues. I had what support there was, but labor was not strong in Arkansas. There was only one branch of organized labor that had much political clout and that was railroad labor. They were my suppporters. But it was not the character of support that would have trapped me or made it hard for me to go against them. Every political consideration called for my supporting that legislation.

But there were three things that were pointed out that constituted the objection that Kennedy and others had. I think I can recall two of them and maybe the third. I had three clear provisions there to cite in connection with my opposition. One was restricting the geographical area of a bargaining unit. A labor unit was not permitted to have more than a few square miles--the figure 100 miles comes into my mind. I think it was 100 miles wide. But that was the first thing because the power of management couldn't be so circumscribed. You were tying one arm behind a fighter. You wouldn't have much of a prizefight if you tied one arm behind one of the fighters. So, that was something I objected to. Another thing was that it prohibited welfare funds by the unions. Now that's ridiculous, and I wasn't going to support that. Now the third thing, I believe, had to do with secondary boycotts. I am just not clear about it, but I remember that there was a third objection.

So when it went over to the Senate those objectionable features were still in the bill. They were in the bill when I voted "No." I was the only member of the Arkansas delegation that voted "no," and probably one of a half-dozen from the South. Oh, my! If the election had been held the next day I would have been kicked out of Congress. I got maybe seventy-five telegrams and all sorts of abusive letters. Some of my best friends--it just took their enthusiasm for me away. I remember that when we were getting ready to vote on it, just before the roll call, I got a call from a man who had never abandoned me, had always given to my campaign, and had always worked hard for me. He was David Grundfest, a tremendous person with a very powerful mercantile establishment of chain stores. David was on the phone forty-five minutes just pleading with me to vote for that bill. When he read that I didn't follow his advice--he wasn't surprised because I told him I wasn't going to do it--he said, "Well, I guess I can never vote for Brooks again. I am sorry." Of course, it shook me, I will admit, not because I was ready to change, because I knew I wasn't going to change. I had already made up my mind, but I began to suffer a bit because we had been so close.

T: He told you this on the phone?

H: No. Somebody told me later--shortly after the vote had been announced and the publicity broke. The Senate took all three of the features I had opposed out of the bill so I could vote for the conference report.

T: But it is customary for a congressman to support the conference report, isn't it?

H: Yes. That generally is true. But I wouldn't have supported it if those features had not been removed. It was just another chance to record my sentiment that labor shouldn't be pilloried. But I voted for the conference report. Robert A. Taft deserved credit for taking those measures out. It is proof of the fact that Taft was a good craftsman. He had a wonderful mind. It was a photographic mind. He was articulate. He was not humorous, but he was articulate. He convinced the Senate in his generalship over that legislation that those features ought to come out. I followed it closely. I would take the Congressional Record home with me and read the debate. Then, I was ready to vote for the conference report and to vote to override the President's veto. There was a difference I had with the President, but I wasn't surprised he vetoed it. He had obligations to labor. The matter of his obligations weighed heavily with him. He was that kind of political leader. He wouldn't disavow a group or disappoint a group or treat with indifference any commitment. Now, my mind sort of worked a little differently, but we had grown up and been produced by different schools of politics. I remember when I talked to him about my moderate civil rights program, the Arkansas Plan, which I devised and authored. It was almost as powerful as his, but there were a few places where I pulled back a little on his civil rights program. When I talked to him about it, he said, "Well, Brooks, I would love to come out publicly for your plan and your program. All I can do is to say this to you. If you can get the House and Senate to accept it, I will sign it. I would sign it as a step in the right direction. But you know I went out and told the electorate that I would fight this thing through and I couldn't let them down. I have got to stand for my program. I can't weaken on that." But I had gotten him to go as far as I wanted him to, which was not to veto it if I could get it through. He said, "I'll sign it because it would be a step in the right direction." I am underscoring the fact that he was sensitive to what he had told the people. He said, "Millions of black people would feel, if I made any statement in support of you, asking the Congress to do this much, that I would be betraying them, and I would lose their confidence." He said, "It is a good plan, and I am so glad you are doing it. It takes spunk to do it. I'd be glad to see it put through. But you will have to get it through without my endorsement."

T: You think this is, in part, why the kind of philosophy and the kind of pattern? Was he the kind of man if he gave you his word, he'd stick by it?

H: Absolutely. He was very conscientious, but I am sure on the labor issue he probably didn't weigh the nature of it. He was just committed to fight any kind of coerciveness of labor, and any amount of coercion he would have regarded as a breach of his commitment; and he had rather the country would struggle without a shillelagh and accept some of the inconveniences of work stoppage and other things. In other words, he believed in economic freedom, and the arguments for freedom and free enterprise, of course, were on his side in that situation. A lot of people that were wanting labor put in a straight jacket had to answer that charge, and they didn't answer it very well on some of the issues.

T: You are making reference to Truman. Do you think that this, for you, would

explain why he went to Thomas J. Pendergast's funeral in Kansas City when his advisors suggested it might not be the place to go? Do you think that he felt he had a commitment to Pendergast?

H: I think it was all right for him to go. As a matter of fact, it is another illustration of how he felt about obligations and personal relationships. I think if it had been a matter of pardon or something of that kind, you might have had a little different posture. I don't recall in that connection just what the relationship was. I presume that Pendergast had already served his sentence and paid his fine so that there was never any occasion for Truman having to confront that problem. But to attend a man's funeral wasn't anything to condemn. You recall my explaining the statement on the so-called "Manifesto." It was not a legislative act, just a human gesture, and I think it was all right. The man was dead and by his attendance at the funeral, Truman was not saying that he thought that what Pendergast did was all right.

T: Truman was indebted to this machine for . . .

H: Well, that's right. He said that. He said, "Pendergast was always my friend, and I am not going to stay away from the funeral just because people will criticize me." I think it was a rather admirable attitude. He might have been subject to criticism if he had pardoned him, but all he did was attend the funeral. He had some obligation to the family to sympathize with them. So, I never felt that there was any justification for the bitter criticism that some indulged in.

T: In your memoirs that you have written you talked about the 1946 efforts to remove price controls and in various ways amend these, and then you make what I think is an interesting comment. That is, it seemed like the problem of reelection for the Democratic administration in 1948 was very questionable. Could you relate some of the things tied in with the vote on price controls, and then talk briefly about the general melees that seemed to be abroad in everybody's mind but Truman's about a reelection of a Democratic president?

H: Well now, I want to be sure I understand your premise. Did you say that I felt the Democrats had lost some of their claim on . . .

T: No. You made some comment that you thought that in 1948 . . .

H: Now, that was in 1946, I believe, wasn't it?

T: Yes. 1946.

H: It was prior to the election though, because again it was the kind of situation in which if you vote in accordance with the mood of the country you are not harassed in the election. You have yielded to those pressures. The person that was affected adversely in the 1946 election was one who had stood by the price control program. That was embarrassing to some of us although I doubt that my independence in this matter of price control and my resistance to these commodity interests was very costly to me politically. One reason was that by that time I had built up a considerable degree of confidence in my course--the fact that I was trying to do, generally, the logical and the right thing. I remember that the rental property owners were furious at me because I refused to go along with the idea of lifting the rent ceiling. Little Rock was, of course, crowded with a lot of military families and a lot of workers in various military installations around Little Rock--particularly Camp Robinson. It became necessary to have the imposition of rent ceilings.

Otherwise, we would have had the skyrocketing of rental costs. The small property people organized and they were very vehement. They were mad at me because I wouldn't go along and insisted that the ceilings should remain until the conditions eased and until more houses could be constructed. I remember they came up to my office one day--about fifteen or twenty of their leaders--and I talked to them and explained my position. I think there was a good deal of logic in the position that the government took, because no one is going to profit by a weakening of the anti-inflation policies in that kind of situation. The first thing you know, the dollars that they would get in letting the bulge come would be worth very little. I tried to impart that interlocking character of rent control and of price control generally. They went away feeling better.

I remember one man, who had known me in the Second Baptist Church and apparently had approved of my course. He owned a lot of rent houses and he had come to protest. He hadn't said anything until somebody kept interrupting me, and he hit on the floor with his cane. And it wasn't just one heckler. There were other people interrupting and heckling me. He said, "Wait, wait, people. This man is trying to give us a good, sensible, decent answer and I respect him and you are mistreating Brooks. I want to hear the rest of his story." It had a good effect. I don't think I would have gotten that reaction from him except that he had known me in the board of deacons at the Second Baptist Church. I put that in, not because I generally identify my church ties with decisions of this kind, but with the personal confidence that you develop in various human relations. Sometimes it would be the Lion's Club, sometimes in the party council, or at some of the charity organizations. That is one way a political person builds confidence.

T: I was going to ask, too, in writing to your constituents in May of 1945, you included a brief letter to your constituents and then you said: "The significant things now have to do with policy in general. The prospect of success in major undertakings like Bretton Woods--that's referring to the International Monetary Fund--is greatly improved. The prospects of the Democratic administration in 1948 are not good. Why worry about that. The crucial decisions as to the peace will have been made by that time." When did you come to feel that the prospects in 1948 were not good? Was it civil rights concerns? Were the actions of then Mayor Humphrey the kind of things that were beginning to come on the floor in late 1946 and 1947, before the Democratic Convention in 1948?

H: Oh, I think this condition that I referred to as the "letdown," the normal reactions of people who have had to sacrifice a good deal and who had suffered inconveniences and who could easily get "mad" at everybody when the "ins" were handicapped by incumbency in that kind of situation, following a war as costly as that war was--in many ways very costly.

T: Does that have parallels to 1976?

H: Yes. I guess it does because now you get again the mood of opposition to the incumbent.

T: So civil rights really wasn't that big of a concern in 1946 and 1947?

H: No. No, it wasn't. As a matter of fact, I guess that the solidifying of the black vote was a plus to the Democrats. Now I would like to bring this out, and I hope it isn't a diversion. I remember some conversations I had with my colleagues and it came up in connection with the labor matter. First,

when some of my Southern colleagues were exhibiting ill temper and attitudes over the civil rights program as if it were an unjust thing for the administration to do--which it wasn't. Only one or two aspects of it, I would say, had any element of imposition on the Southern people. I think there was an unreasonableness by some of the Northerners in the repealing of the poll tax by a simple legislative act. That was too clearly a violation of the Constitution. I just couldn't go for that but no one had fought harder than I had to get action at the state level to rid the South of the poll tax. It was a vicious thing, but I couldn't sincerely oppose it. That was to my political advantage but that wasn't why I was opposing it. I had a philosophy to defend. Later, the country did exactly what I had proposed in 1946 that we do, which was to repeal it by Constitutional amendment. That is the way we finally got rid of it. But that takes me further afield than I should go. But when some of my Southern colleagues said, "Now look, these people in the North have no business telling us about human relations in the South. They have got no business telling us what to do with our race relations problems in the South." I said, "Now, wait a minute. I remember when the labor legislation came on, the Northerners said exactly that to us. 'What business has a Southern congressman from an agricultural district got delving into the industrial relations. You don't have any threats to stability in labor management relations. Why are you rural congressmen telling us how to run our industrial problems in the North through the Taft-Hartley bill?'" Well, I remember my answer to that. I said, "Wait a minute. We <u>are</u> involved. If there is maladjustment in the relations of management and labor in Detroit or Pittsburg, if there is a suspension of assembly line movements, we too will suffer. Certainly the farmers of the South will suffer. They won't have the tractors and the farm implements and things that go to make up a thriving agriculture. You would shut off the manufacturing of things that the consumers of the South need. So, we do have a stake in good labor relations. Then there came the question of civil rights and the South was saying that to them: "What business have you got dipping into this?" I said in defense of the North on that in private conversation--it may have gotten into some of my public utterances, I think somewhere along the line it did--"Oh, but they do have a stake in good, friendly relations in the South and in the advancement of the black workers and black people of the South. They are getting political pressures on that side if we get it on our side because those who had gone North to find jobs are raising questions with their congressmen, 'Why can't you in national positions do something that will achieve justice for our families that remain down there--my parents, my sisters and brothers, my friends and neighbors that didn't come North.'" Here they were exercising a certain political power in the North and asking that this be treated in national dimensions and as national problems. So, I said, "You see, the argument works both ways and you can't say that in light of the national character of both race relations and labor-management relations there are wide boundaries to those problems. They might appear to be local and regional, but they are nationwide." Now, I think I have a good point there. The answer in each case, you see, was, "Yes, we do." That was not apparently and not on the surface, but when you probe the depths of these economic and social problems you run into this basic fact that they are national in character.

T: So what really happened then in 1946 and 1947?

H: Well, of course, with the Republicans in control of the House and I was almost glad for it to happen. I would be able to say to the new leaders, "You have spoken in negative terms and opposed us. Now you are in the driver's seat. Let's see how you do."

T: And you think this, in part, helped the Democrats to pull it out in 1948.

H: Yes, I think so. Again, you see, incumbency. They were incumbent. They were in charge of the Congress. That was when Harry Truman just ground them to pieces on it in his campaign for reelection, and nobody thought he would. I was among those who didn't think he would. I thought he was doomed and that the Republicans would win. Now, of course, I was thrilled. I was very happy. I supported him. I think Wilbur Mills and I were the only two congressmen--and maybe Trimble--that came out for him.

T: The others sat on the sideline from Arkansas or did they support Strom Thurmond?

H: Well, let's see, in 1948.

T: Strom Thurmond walked out of the Democratic. . . .

H: Oh, sure and so did Laney, the governor of Arkansas. That was when I took some abuse from former friends in the meeting of the Pulaski County Democratic Convention. Little Rock is in Pulaski County. I remember the leading politician--the leading political leader--a Mr. June P. Wooten, who had been a staunch friend, certainly didn't talk like a friend that day. He told me off right in the presence of the convention. He was for the third party. He was for Strom Thurmond--abandoning the Democratic Party and just complaining terribly about my support of Truman. He pointed his finger at me; he was making a violent speech. He said, "I am surprised that my dear friend through the years, the congressman, lines up with this Truman candidacy." It was vicious and powerful and he was getting hand claps from the floor. It was an anti-Truman meeting. I had resolved that I wasn't going to weaken. I knew why I was for Truman and why I was a Democrat. Now, again, talking about church relations, this man who was castigating me was one of the leaders in the Second Baptist Church. I think he made some reference to that. I think he also referred to the fact that his father, up at Russellville where I was raised, was my Sunday School teacher. He said, "And I know he loved my father. It comes as a great shock to me." Well, I did something there that proved to be pretty effective. I got up and said, "Well, I know there are some of you who do agree with me who are going to feel a little disappointed because I am not going to fight back with June Wooten. I know that he is a man of strong convictions and he feels that way about it. I am going to just accept it in silence. I will not fight back. I will not say a single word in support of my position because goodness knows we have enough emotional feelings about this, so I am just going to waive my opportunity to answer. I am going to say this, however: What he has said in condemnation of me today is not going to dimish one whit the love and affection that I bear for him, because if I were to do it, I would be sealing off a very tender place in my affections and would be destroying the memory of the marvelous friendship we have enjoyed. His acceptance of the hardships of supporting me, the inconveniences of working at night where lawsuits have been involved, trying to retrieve ugly, political situations for me, these show him to be a magnificent friend. I am merely going to say I am sorry that I have disappointed him." The crowd loved it.

T: Then did you campaign silently for Truman?

H: I don't think that there was much need of vocal action on it. We weren't expected to be partisans as far as the President was concerned. Many people just expected you to do your own thing and take care of yourself. I don't think that I was called on to say much. I did speak for Truman and gave interviews for him and did a minimal service at that time.

T: Was there an attempt to dump you from the Fifth District?

H: Well, they got awfully mad. This was in 1948. Yes, they were mad about it, but Truman carried Arkansas. He may not have carried my district. At any rate there was a shrinkage in the normal Democratic majority in 1948. I don't suppose the Republicans ever figured that they would carry Arkansas for Dewey. I think the Thurmond people with Laney, the sitting governor, thought maybe they could carry the state, but they didn't.

T: I think there was one vote cast for Strom Thurmond?

H: No, that was in Tennessee--where the man went against the mandate. That was a terrible, shocking thing that he did. He violated his moral commitment to vote for Truman, and he voted for Thurmond. I have let my memory sort of seal off those events. But I do remember Truman asked me later on about the Arkansas vote. He said, "Brooks, what about the shrinkage of our majority?" So, that is one reason I think that he carried it. He said, "We didn't carry it as big as we should."

I said, "That's right, Mr. President."

"Was it Civil Rights?" he asked.

I said, "That's what they said it was but do you know, Mr. President, it reminded me of the fellow that was a guest of a friend at a dinner party. It was such a good dinner in the man's home and the guests were so impressed by the excellent food that he just asked his host, 'You've got a wonderful cook. How long has she been with you?' He said, 'She never was with us. She was against us from the start.'"

So, he got the point. I said, "They were against us on other things too, such as economic policy, and they just weren't Democrats at heart." They were more Republican minded to the extent that this idealogy that we are seeing now in 1976 is in very sharp alignments as we were seeing it then. The conservatism of the South was beginning to express itself in political terms back there.

T: It was beginning to move out of the Democratic Party?

H: Right. It was. Eisenhower, four years later, got a tremendous vote in my district, but he did not carry the state. I think Stevenson finally carried it. But it was a pretty furious fight and in 1956 maybe again. I must refresh my memory on these votes because they have become rather significant and symbolic.

T: Did your support of Truman give some help to you? You said he was a man who remembered his friends. Did he consider you and Wilbur Mills as his friends?

H: Oh, yes. Truman was a very warmhearted person. It was a strange thing because we were not intimate friends and we had no occasion to be together. Our families were hardly known to each other. As an illustration of it, in the latter years when Mr. Truman's health was not good and he was sticking pretty close to his home in Independence, I was addressing the Washington Rotary Club and was sitting at the speaker's table. All of a sudden I looked up and John Snyder was coming up to speak to me. He was a member of the club, former Secretary of the Treasury, and he said, "Brooks, I didn't know until today that you were our speaker. I was in Independence yesterday and talked to Mr. Truman

and he said, 'John, do you ever see old Brooks?' I said, 'Yes. I see him occasionally.'" John said to me, "I didn't know I would see you today. The President said, 'Well, when you see him give him my best. I used to love to see him come into the White House. He tried never to pressure me nor to make me miserable over some difference of opinion. I always felt better after one of Brooks' visits.'" Well, I wouldn't take anything for that. This was after the Little Rock crisis. I have said this in many speeches, but it was revealing of his fine, sweet nature. That is the only word I can think of at the moment.

There were contradictions in him. Sometimes he would talk like a guy who would never love anybody. He said to me on the phone during the Little Rock crisis, "Brooks, I have been thinking of you and feeling for you down there." Well, I said, "Thank you. Mr. President, I am having to cancel this dinner engagement with you and Mrs. Truman. I am sorry Marion and I can't be with you." A mutual friend, Mr. Culpepper, was having a dinner for us and Mr. Truman was coming. He said, "Well Brooks, that's all right. As a matter of fact, I am glad you are not coming because Margaret is here with the two boys and you know I had rather talk to those boys than to talk to you all evening." Then I said, "You are wonderful." He said, "I'll tell you this, Brooks, I have been thinking of you and feeling for you down there in Little Rock." I said, "Well, thank you, Mr. President. You stood eight years of it. I can stand eight weeks." "No," he said, "It's harder on you than it was on me. I can cuss and you can't," which was a very typical thing. I like to think about that.

T: In the election of 1948, with Truman winning, were you offered another judgeship or a possibility of moving in that direction?

H: Now this is after 1948?

T: After 1948--from 1948 until 1952.

H: I don't believe so. I think on this matter of judgeships that there were three occasions when I was considered for a judgeship. At least one occasion was when Roosevelt wanted to put me in a judgeship. While I never talked to Mr. Roosevelt, I do know that John Miller--senator then, now a Federal Judge--told me just exactly like it was. He said, "The Justice Department approached me. They wanted you to have that vacant judgeship, and I was willing for you to have it." I was surprised at that because he and I had been divided and were on opposite sides of the political cleavage in Arkansas. He had defeated Carl Bailey, my candidate. I had made speeches for Bailey and John Miller knew it, but he also knew that I should have it.

There is such a thing you know as a "politicians' code" and sometimes the ball bounces in a disappointing way, but politicians live by codes. The question is whether it is a mean, foul, dirty, stinking code or whether it has good qualities. All politicians are damned for certain actions. The very critic himself knows that the guy he criticizes is doing the right thing. These men would have had no respect for me. I say "these men," the enemies who were trying to keep me from being Federal Judge. They would have had no respect for me if I hadn't supported Carl Bailey against John Miller. And here was Miller himself telling me so and revealing the developments. I was surprised. It was years ago. He said, "Brooks, I told the department that if Mrs. Caraway would go along that your appointment would go right through." He said, "There were three or four of you that I put on my list, but yours was the first name." Well, the point I am making is that that was in the Roosevelt years. That was before I was elected to Congress. I was

real happy to know that the President knew enough about me.

I told you yesterday about the Aubrey Williams' conversation. Actually, I had a very strong, sentimental reason for being a Roosevelt man. In time I developed this warm admiration for Harry Truman.

Sherman Adams told me one day, "Brooks, you are going to be offered a judgeship." That was before I was defeated. Eisenhower was President when I was defeated and later appointed me to the T.V.A But I wasn't being offered a judgeship by the thing that Sherman Adams was talking about. That had nothing to do with my being out of Congress. The T.V.A. Board appointment was made after I had lost the election in 1958. Sherman Adams said, "Brooks, you are going to be offered a judgeship. I have just talked to Bill Rogers, the attorney general, about it." He didn't say what judgeship it was. Maybe it was the U. S. Court of Appeals. It wasn't the U. S. Supreme Court, I am sure, because there was no vacancy there. I remember what I said, "Well, Sherman, that's awfully fine. Do you think that I would make a good judge?" He said, "You'd make a wonderful judge." That's all that was said. It was never offered me. Again, I am sure there was some intervention.

T: You were always a close friend of Senator Fulbright though, weren't you?

H: Oh, yes. We were very close. I wrote an article after his defeat and it was captioned, "A Tear for Senator Fulbright by his friend, Brooks Hays." Yes, I felt awfully bad about his defeat. Fortunately, he was defeated by a good man, Dale Bumpers. But Fulbright should not have been taken out of the Senate.

T: Will he try it again likely?

H: No. No, he'll never run for anything, and I'll never run for anything else. Of course, he could. He's not too old, but I regard myself as past the age when I should be running for office. Although, actually, if an office were just handed to me, I have as much vision and strength intellectually and physically as I have ever had. As far as the duties of any office, I am not incapacitated. I think you would agree on that.

T: Right--very much so. I wonder if you would comment a little more on Truman. I think it would be helpful. Truman, of course, was a Baptist or was considered by himself to be a Baptist. Some others didn't appreciate some of the things he did. There seemed to be a great gulf that developed in those days. One was either a great lover of the President or a very, very strong critic of the President. There didn't seem to be any middle ground. One seemed to be either a very close friend or very distant from him. Do you think this was his personality that prompted this sort of thing or was this the way the news media portrayed it in those days.

H: I don't think that there were any distortions in the image that the news media created. I think they were fairly faithful. He deserved the reputation he had of being a good opponent, a worthy opponent, a vigorous opponent. He was the kind, I think, if he saw a dog fight he would take sides not knowing either dog. He just naturally had strong feelings about things. But he was an honest partisan. He was not a hater in the ugly sense of the word but he spared no one where there was a contest and a cleavage. He always knew where he was. Undoubtedly, he was the kind that did build strong, unyielding friendships and heated animosities. There were, as you suggested, few that lacked partisan feelings, one way or the other. I can only think of one thing,

at the moment, that I differed with him about, and that was the appointment of a representative to the Vatican.

T: I wanted to talk about that.

H: Well, let's take just a little time because I remember how surprised I was that he was willing to do that. It would have been inconsistent with his upbringing in the Baptist faith and his obvious familiarity with the Baptist ideas on it and apparently quite aside from his church ties. He believed in separation of church and state, I am sure because we Baptists are no longer the only ones that will stand forthright on that idea. His appointee, I believe, was Taylor, wasn't it?

T: Myron Taylor.

H: He appointed him personal representative and he would have made something of the distinction, that he was not recognizing the Vatican as a political state, but sending a personal representative because of the collateral and inevitable relationships that they came into the Catholic church--peculiarly the Catholic church--so that it didn't involve any recognition of a church that had political powers. That would be the rationalization, of course. He did it in good faith. He thought it was justified. He thought he could still adhere to our philosophy of separation, yet acknowledge the need of having someone to talk to the Pope authentically. Of course, the answer to that argument is that we have an ambassador in the city of Rome, just as close to the Vatican as he was to the homes of the rulers and the secular state of Italy. That is the answer. We didn't have to have this kind of personal representative and the President couldn't get away from the charge that it was to appeal politically to the Catholics in the United States. It was a gesture that did put a strain on his relationship with the Protestant community because it is understandable why the Protestant community feels--or did feel--that his going that far was a departure from our historic position. I think he eventually saw the reason for that. He withdrew it--I don't recall just how that ended but there was a storm of protest. I forget just how he extracted himself, but I was with Ed Pruden the other day in Raleigh, my wife and I had breakfast with him and Mrs. Pruden.

T: He was pastor of First Baptist Church at the time, the church that Truman usually attended.

H: Yes. They were warm friends. I remember referring to their friendship one day when I was in the White House on other business. I just said, "Well, I was glad to see you went to church yesterday and heard my dear friend, Ed Pruden. I know he thinks a lot of you, Mr. President." "Oh," he said, "I am very happy in that relationship. He is a fine man, and they are fine folks over there at the First Church. I always enjoy it."

Ed told me in this breakfast meeting recently that somebody asked Truman if he attended First Church. "No," he answered, "my pastor and I don't get along anymore." He laughed about it. "He and I have different ideas. We've got some differences." Ed talked to him later and said that Mr. Truman had buried the hatchet or used some expression like that. He said, "We are on a good basis again, but the President just didn't realize how deep the feelings were of millions of American people--not just Baptists but others, too. I think this was sort of an eye-opener for him. I am sure if I needed convincing that it was impersonal and that I was doing what I had to do as a leader in the Baptist community, I think he gives me credit for making an impersonal criticism."

T: It is my understanding he did not frequently attend church after that. I think Dr. Pruden did make some reference to this in a sermon, as I understand it, and he became somewhat disturbed about it and did not attend. Have you heard that story?

H: I rather think that that is true. He maybe never again went back. But he had gotten out of the habit of it as a result of Pruden's criticism of this action. Now, I don't know what I would have done in Pruden's place. I think that is one of those things that only the man himself could determine. I think you could have justified silence on it by saying, "Well, after all, he is one of my flock and my obligation to him as a parishioner transcends what I think would be a theoretical obligation to speak on that side." We could avoid criticizing Pruden had he followed the course of silence on it, feeling that he had some obligation to one of his flock and counseled with him privately. His influence with the Chief could have been saved by the attitude of silence just as a wife who feels strongly in criticism of a husband's course. Her silence on some issue of that kind doesn't mean that she agrees with her husband but she saves the wedding relationship. You know that is sort of an imponderable. You follow me on this? I was very sorry that my beloved friend Pruden felt incumbent on him to say something because he was just as conscientious as Harry Truman. Both of them were two good men--wonderful men, but I hated to see them go their separate ways. My wife and our son, Steele, the lawyer in Little Rock, felt that I was wrong in signing that statement, the manifesto, but I would have felt bad if my wife or son had issued a public statement criticizing me. The other day--I think maybe we were talking to the Prudens--my wife reminded me of an argument on the east porch of my father's home between my father, who thought I did the right thing in signing it, and my son, who thought I did the wrong thing. She said, "It must have been an interesting argument."

T: Mr. Truman was invited to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1948, I believe. No, this would be the 1947 meeting in Kansas City. Apparently he declined the invitation but then arrived in Kansas City in time to put in an appearance.

H: I don't know anything about that, but I do know that some years later, I believe in 1957, the Convention met again in Kansas City, and it was his birthday and he had gone over to the convention hall to pay his respects. He wasn't formally on the program but he was introduced. Now I say he was not on the program. There may have been some formal action inviting him to show up. At any rate, it was one of those unplanned things from the standpoint of time being reserved. But they had found that it was his birthday. This, to me, was a very wonderful thing to hpapen, considering the sharp feelings that had been engendered over the Vatican appointment. He was invited to the platform and before he said anything they sang "Happy Birthday" to him. He commented on it and said something that showed appreciation of his Baptist boyhood. He said, "I was just fourteen years old when I was baptized out there in the Grandview Church and Baptist ties have meant a great deal to me." I don't think that he referred to the fact that I had mentioned, that is, that he had read the Bible through twice before he was fourteen years of age. Margaret said I was wrong about that. It was when he was twelve years of age. But I do know that he had great familiarity with the Bible.

He gave a banquet talk in Washington for one of the classes--I believe at the Foundry Methodist Church. The class was taught by Ernest Griffith, who was head of the Legislative Reference Service in the Library of Congress. He and Truman had gotten to be friends when Truman was a senator. He made this talk, I believe, after he retired from the Presidency. I was having breakfast

with Griffith and he said, "Mr. Truman spoke to my class's annual banquet last night." I said, "Well, that's wonderful, what did he talk about?" Griffith said, "His subject was, 'My Two Favorite Chapters of the Bible,'" and, of course, I asked what they were. He said, "The fifth chapter of Matthew." I said, "The Sermon on the Mount," and he added, "the twentieth chapter of Exodus." It stumped me. I didn't remember for a moment. I was contemplating it and trying to figure out what it was, when Griffith said, "I am amazed that the President of the Southern Baptist Convention doesn't know where the Ten Commandments are located." But I could have worked my way out of that by saying, "Oh, I thought that was the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy." But I didn't do that. I just took my humiliation in silence. Here is one of the most amazing coincidences that ever took place. I walked over to my office and I hadn't been at my desk five minutes until the phone rang and it was Congressman Burleson of Texas. He said, "Brooks, I can't find the Ten Commandments. Where are they?" I said, "The twentieth chapter of Exodus." He said, "I knew you'd know." He doesn't know yet how funny that was. But, anyway, Mr. Truman was an omnivorous reader.

T: I have heard it suggested that this cleavage with the Baptists also affected his relationship with J. M. Dawson, who had come to Washington with the new Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

H: Joseph Dawson?

T: Yes.

H: He felt very strongly about that.

T: Do you know anything about the relationship?

H: No. I don't know a thing about that. I wish I could recall at this moment just what Ed related about one of Truman's visits to the worship service. The security was not as tight in those days as it has become today. There was some recognition of the fact that the President was in the audience and Truman didn't mind having it referred to. Pruden said, "I just wonder if our distinguished guest would like to say something?" I am a little vague about this, but as I remember it, he did. He thanked them for the pleasure of being there and so on, and said, "I don't expect you to make anything of it," and sat down. I have got to brush up my recollection because what Ed told us was rather interesting because it is always a great occasion when the President comes. But Truman didn't want anything made of it.

But now back to this Convention in 1957 and the singing of "Happy Birthday." I think that this is apocryphal. But somebody did tell me that in thanking them and referring to his boyhood experience at Grandview Baptist Church, south of Kansas City and near Independence, he said, "Yes, I was very happy. I have belonged to a lot of things, but I think as much of the Baptist church as anything else I belong to. I think as much of that as I do any of these other organizations." I am sure he didn't intend to put us in the class with the Masonic Lodge or the Democratic Party. You know somebody told me this, and I am just sure that if he heard it, he misunderstood the President. It, too, is probably apocryphal but it makes a good line.

He had barely gotten off the platform, having thanked them for the fine reception, until some jackass got up and moved that the Convention condemn profanity in election campaigns. Of course, that was in very poor taste for two reasons. One, why should you just pick out an election campaign? We

don't approve of profanity in any relationship. But that was the motion. Well, nobody wanted to vote to favor profanity. So, the chairman wanted to get rid of it quickly and he said, "Those in favor say 'aye.'" There were a few; and then "Those oppose say 'no.'" A single voice came from way up high in the gallery and floated over the Convention Hall, "Hell, no." This fellow says that he surely heard one dissenting vote in that motion. Of course, that took all the punch out of it. Again, that's something that I would have to verify before I would give credence to it.

T: We are continuing our interviews with Brooks Hays on August 25, 1976. We have had several good days together. I think as we reflect on some of the things we have talked about you can think of some of the things that you might like to have said or added to. One thing you have mentioned to me that you would like to discuss is in relationship to land efforts you made in Congress on behalf of tenant farmers and farmers generally. Would you like to say something about that as we begin this morning?

H: Yes, I would. I think the subject needs a bit of expanded conversation because I have had an interest with broader dimensions than the Veterans' Land Bill and even this very day I had a prodding of conscience on it in some things that Bob Abernathy on the "Today" show said. He is one of their men out in California. This is an NBC program and Bob Abernathy's grandfather was pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church for twenty-two years.

T: Here in Washington?

H: Yes. Now Abernathy was talking about the problems in the Los Angeles area, and while you can't say that they are typical there is enough comparison between the problems of the California people and the problems of the nation generally because it involves the housing situation. I think that he referred to the fact that in one residential section that he was familiar with the houses were built back in the 1940's and today, even after all this period, none of those houses would sell, according to Abernathy's statement, for less than $75,000. It has resulted in a situation in which Mr. Abernathy said in a little effort to dramatize it that you have two kinds of people out there in California. You have those that live in a house and don't do anything else but live there and pay for it. They have employment, of course. Then there is another crowd that doesn't try to acquire a house because of its great cost and the eating up of their income. They go to the movies and races and shows and drive around and have a good time on money that might have gone into a house if there had been a viable situation on land values because, of course, it is the land and not the mere structure itself that has been inflated. It was assumed that the second Nixon administration would make good on the representations to the nation that something was being done about this land inflation problem. In other words, we would have a land-use policy. We have none at all now. There are some controls and some regulations at the state level or even on the local level that maybe help some. I am not too familiar with that. The administration bogged down in the Watergate situation and all of a sudden through some of the speeches that were made when effort was made to get a semblance of a bill it came out that the administration had weakened and had let the opponents of a land-use policy have their way. There was a good deal of resentment on the part of people like myself and specific members of Congress over the failure of the administration to be firm and resist the ideas of the developers of the real estate lobby. This is not an indictment of all real estate men, but there is a lobby formed by the people who have a stake financially in the development business. We are plagued with this in many ways, but nothing has been done and I fear that nothing will be done

until we can generate more support for a land policy.

T: Now what kind of programs were you involved in in terms of developing any land policy?

H: Only what I related to you in connection with land cultivation--farming as a vocation with the related problems, of course, of better farmhouses, better housing for rural people and for non-farm rural people, the people in the villages and small towns who haven't generally suffered so much from inflation but here you get an impact from the high cost of housing and of construction work. The national administrations generally have tried to keep alive something for which the Farm Security Administration primarily was responsible. That is, improved housing through the extension of credit for young farm families, liberal terms, low interest rates, and things of that kind. Now that may all be under the Housing Administration.

T: You said you took an interest in the farm situation. Do you want to go ahead on that?

H: Yes. I do need to round that out. You see, I had participated in many of the conversations with the Department of Agriculture representatives on the neglect of farm housing and was known as a friend of some programs that were designed to improve that situation. I believe this was during Truman's administration or maybe during the Eisenhower administration. I am not sure about it. The housing program began to reach culmination while I was still in the Congress and I would have been glad to sponsor the legislation, but I think there was wisdom in the decision by friends of this movement in the Congress and the sponsors of it in the Department of Agriculture to let Congressman Robert Jones of Alabama be the author. He was a prominent member of the Public Works Committee and had also evidenced as strong an interest as I had in housing problems.

T: Would he have been what you describe as a "southern moderate?"

H: Yes, that is a fair statement--not as bold as some few of us from other states, but I would say that he came close to being one of the moderate group. His interests were not in the racial problem except incidental to these physical programs of cheaper land and better homes. A program was finally worked out that appeared to have a great deal of merit and results were being achieved. The first home was built in Arkansas under the kind of program I have described--low interest rates, liberal terms of repayment (when that program finally was approved legislatively). I was asked to make the principal speech at the dedication of the first home built under that program. I am not sure whether it was the first home in the South or the first home in Arkansas, but at any rate it was receiving considerable publicity at that time as the first beginnings of the program for improved rural housing. I don't know what's happened since then, but I do know of the failure of the Congress and the Executive Department to solve this problem of land policy--land inflation and of housing inflation--and that until that is dealt with we are going to have an accentuation of this condition.

T: Do you have any particular ideas of what sort of land-use policy you tried to work for or was this an interest that has developed since you have been in Congress?

H: Well, of course, you have to begin with the problem of zoning. As it now is we have paid little attention to what is basic in the thinking of agriculture

economists that land should be used for the function for which it is best adapted. In other words, the good soil of the Mid West in Illinois and Iowa, where the soil is as fine as any in the world, should be for cultivation of food and of crops of various kinds and not for housing, and it wouldn't be for any other purpose except for the pressure from the burgeoning populations in the cities in that area. Well, that is an invitation to the land speculators, you know, and so they build houses on land that should not be in housing. Some of it should be again in cultivation. We haven't had to worry about that much because we still have enough land to produce enough food for our own people, but we haven't seen the relationship of this distortion that I am describing to the world problem of food scarcity. So, you have to begin with that first idea that land should be devoted to the use for which it is best adapted. I make that point clear, don't I? I am not an expert in any field of economics except as a sort of amateur sociologist, an old social worker.

I have had to give some thought to this. Of course, we who are in social work have been derided and ridiculed often when we shouldn't have been--they called us "do-gooders." I remember an old fellow stopped me once--I don't think he knew how funny it was--and said, "Brooks, I am against Communists and Socialists and sociologists." It represents sort of a fallacious bit of thinking by that part of the public that doesn't have to deal with these problems.

But generally now, as in Fairfax County on the edge of the metropolitan area of greater Washington, the board there has been unable--the Fairfax County they have a board of nine members--to get through improved zoning because the holders of land adapted to either crop cultivation or to other uses in village and town life naturally--and it is an understandable instinct--can't resist the temptation to sell at this inflated price that will result from housing development, you see. That has been fed by the real estate people in that class that thrive on development. I am using the word "development" not in its precise and accurate descriptive sense but as a part of the commercial forces that are bogging us down in this problem of uneconomic land pricing. What we need first of all is to get a land policy for the nation as a whole. Now you can't deal with some specific situation in a national policy, but you can set out some guidelines that follow in general the philosophy that I am trying to describe. Then, you will have, through state action and municipal action, the determination of these general principles--how they operate in the impact upon specific and local situations.

Well, this is a great big problem, and there are more elements and there is a challenge to the leaders in our denomination who are under biblical mandate to consider the conservation and best use of land. There's plenty of teaching in the Bible on this--the Jubilee Year, for example, when no matter how a man had dealt in his sale of land with a purchaser in the fiftieth year, that land goes back to the person that had held it, so you don't get more than a limited contract. We tried to follow that principle generally--not with any sense of authoritarian purposes that the Bible might lay out. In the Bankhead-Jones program and in the Hays-Fulbright Act we tried to follow that in general by limiting the ownership of the families that were given this land to ninety-nine years. That would, you see, have been a good way to deal with the problem because conditions ninety-nine years from now might differ. Assume that a young farmer gets it and it is all that he needs for the fulfillment of his hopes and aspirations, but maybe at the end of that ninety-nine years the family has changed and there are no boys in the family who grew up to be ambitious farmers. It is just better from the standpoint of social policy to work it out on a limited tenure basis, but not too limited. Ninety-nine years

is a very generous provision for the farmer and his children. Then, of course, it is a signal to the family to make plans for other activity at the end of the term--maybe buying it back from the government if the second or third generation has an interest in it.

T: Now are you suggesting really that there be nothing like basic land ownership but rather it be a kind of a rental or tenancy occupation?

H: Well, I would apply the principle that I have just enunciated and I have given it a biblical source because that was followed. It was called the "Jubilee Year." It is in the book of Leviticus and I must refresh my memory of just what it provided, but it has some signals for us. In suggesting the limited tenure I realize that this, of course, is looked at suspiciously as a sort of socialist idea by some conservatives, ultra-conservatives, but I think it is entirely sound, thoroughly sound, and I would apply it pretty much to lands that must be used to utmost capacity in order to feed the growing world population. It would not apply to all situations, no. Although I think that in some states, notably, Maryland, there are unique situations growing out of their practice. They have a peculiar land tenure in residential property in Baltimore, for example. The title to the land may be in one person's name; the title to the structure on that land in another. The person who owns the house can never entirely acquire the land on which his house stands, but he doesn't have to worry about that because the capitalist adjustments have been made and the man who owns the land is receiving an income from it. He acquired it in a normal way, and the man who owns the house rents the house; and it works out, I understand, fairly well. You see, in other words, we haven't always found what is called the fee simple estate, applying equitably and logically to all situations in real property. Again, I should be refreshing my memory on some of these things. But it was that general idea that projected me into this problem of rural housing.

Now, it is ironic that today one of the quagmires of our economy is in the construction field. Construction employment is way down. It is a high wage industry, and it is a great handicap to the construction workers because of the slowing down of building, not just residential property but plants, factories, and things on the industrial side. Now I am suggesting this: That surely there is enough ingenuity in the profession of economics to work out a plan since there is stagnation. There are unemployed contruction people and here you have people in the villages--I am talking now about the non-farm, rural population and including the farm, too--and outside the cities there is a great lag in modern housing. Surely there could be worked out a plan by which on a less expensive scale something could be done in this period of depressed construction business. I am sure that many men, workmen, would be glad, under proper living conditions, to accept a less inflated wage and adjust to it for a little while in this period of depression until a better adjustment could be made. There is no reason in the world why the construction leaders themselves couldn't apply their thinking to a situation in which there is this anomaly--rundown housing and unemployed workers.

T: I would like to explore this a little further. You said you felt this had very strong biblical injunction. What kind of feeling do you have that it would be possible for churches or denominations or leaders within churches and denominations to move in this direction? This cuts close to what we talk about as "free enterprise" and the right of the person to get ahead in the puritan ethic that we have developed. How do you respond to that and what kind of suggestion would you make?

H: Well, I think that has been grossly overdone lately as an emotional response to the so called "socialist" policies that I am suggesting here. I don't regard it as socialism any more than the Wall Street stock market. That has been what you might call--under the severe individualized economy that we lived under for many centuries--sort of a socialist thing or characterized as a sort of socialist thing. I mean the distribution of ownership in corporations. There are few corporations today where there is much concentration in single families as there was in the nineteenth century--the period that is called the "baron robbers," when you had a great abuse. That was another kind of inflated value that worked great hardships upon society. But I think that it is praiseworthy the way stock ownership has been distributed. At the same time, I think it is entirely consistent with our Christian gospel and our commitments to justice in human affairs for a church to set up and encourage its members in a consumer cooperative. There is no reason in the world why the poor people, generally in the black churches, for example, of the cities of the Northeast should not be allowed to do this. I think that has been done where their ministers or some of the well-to-do laymen with experience in this field have enabled them to buy more favorably the foods they need and other things through the consumer cooperative. I have known of actual encouragement being given to local congregations where the constituency of the church is of low income families. There is no reason why that shouldn't be done. It is done with no shock at all to our historic free enterprise system because it is freedom, and hunger and low income can be just as much a threat to freedom because it limits the movements of people and their exercise of full human rights. There is nothing like poverty to restrict freedom, severe poverty. I think this gives you my general idea.

Now, some of the best projects in the field of housing for the elderly have been under the sponsorship of churches. I talked to a pastor of a Lutheran church in Buffalo, New York. This conversation took place in London. We were both helping with the ministerial exchange between England and the United States. I made some eight or nine talks over there, sermons you might call them, three or four years ago. In the course of our association there, this fellow preacher--you would call me a lay preacher--told me about a great project his church has in Buffalo. They had land they didn't need. Strangely enough, they said they could devote it to a permanent building for elderly people. So, they organized a corporation, nonprofit corporation, and got a loan from the government.

George Romney, the head of the Housing Department (HUD), went to Buffalo to dedicate that housing project. He told the pastor, "This will succeed. It is a thoroughly sound thing and it will succeed because it is free enterprise. The people who are going to live there aren't just subjects of the government, they are your special concern. This is a good expression of the free enterprise system." That was Romney's characterization of it. I think that has been done in many places. I am talking about it here as if it were an unique thing and at that stage it probably was, but I have known of these projects, the nonprofit project.

So, here is a great challange, I think, to the churches that naturally must respond to the economic interests of their constituents. There are many suburban churches and central city churches where the constituency is a highly favored group in terms of economics, and they are not likely to be concerned in this from the standpoint of a local church sponsorship. But they can support our urban missions program. The Home Mission Board probably should be developing some thoroughly sound ideas that represent Christian concern for the poor.

T: You mentioned the formation of a corporation and then securing government loans. Do you see any conflict of interest here in our traditional Baptist stance of separation of church and state? How would we answer that from your point of view?

H: Oh, I think that would be a phony argument because the control of the project is strictly in the hands of a subsidiary adjunct of the church. The church itself doesn't become involved in the financial arrangements. Their concern is for the people who are to benefit from it. Of course, this idea of separation of church and state can be terribly overdone. It doesn't imply that we are to have no concern about what takes place on the political side of this wall of separation, to use Thomas Jefferson's phrase. It is often referred to now. But we are involved all the time, and lately it has been interesting to find Christian ministers arguing that the church should not accept any tax exemptions or Christian colleges should not receive any loans from the government for dormitories or for academic purposes. I don't think that is a good argument because the church has to be concerned with what's taking place in the society outside its own institutional life.

T: Talking about land use is not something new for you at all. On February 12, 1954, you put a statement in the Congressional Record entitled "Millions Are Going Hungry," and talked about the CARE organization. So you have been involved in this concept for at least twenty-two years. I think it is interesting to put this in: You have been involved in it longer than that length of time.

H: Well I appreciate your reminding me of that. I couldn't have determined the date or even the substance of these extensions of remarks. Or was that a speech?

T: No. This was an extension of your remarks.

H: Of course it was possible to get the columns of the Congressional Record open for some specific purpose without having to actually deliver the speech on the House floor. I often did that and hoped that students of the problem would run across it as you have. The matter of poverty and hunger has always had a great place in my concerns. I was the author with Senator Humphrey of special provisions for the India Wheat Loan legislation. I helped lay the basis, legislatively, for Public Law 480. Are you familiar with the aid given the churches? In fact, many commodities were made available by the government, without cost to the churches and the churches are expected only to provide the cost of transportation and distribution. I had a part in the special provisions for India and for Public Law 480.

T: Did you have a particular interest in India itself, or was this just simply an example of a country that was in need of help for food?

H: Well, it was the latter. I have never been to India. I had no special knowledge of the situation; but as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I heard enough of the story in detail from people who did go to India and who had had a great expenditure of energy in that part of the world. I am not sure about Senator Humphrey as to whether he had ever been to India. But he and I had gotten to be good friends and we sponsored that legislation. I ran across a picture the other day of Madam Vijaya Pandit signing the contract under which the first wheat was made available. They had a little ceremony down at the State Department, and Hubert and I went down for the ceremony. Dean Acheson and the Indian officials were there. I have forgotten the name

of the ambassador from India, but he was there for the picture taking. These occasional reminders come along.

T: In looking back on seventy plus years, if you had your word to suggest here in the area of hunger, what are the things you have learned in terms of hunger and what suggestions do you have in terms of alleviation as you think of 1976? This has become much more prominently known and considered. Last year our denomination raised a very large amount for hunger relief. What kind of thing could you say since you came into this before it was the popular issue in churches?

H: Well, you are pointing very convincingly to the severity of this problem; and today it has high priority. This was not true in the period in which I was doing some of the things that you have brought out. While we are talking here and while we have been talking this morning--we have been talking about an hour--many people have died of hunger. It is estimated by students of the problem that in other continents, excluding our own, one person dies every four seconds in its greatest severity in Africa and Asia. Sometimes we overlook the vastness of the problem here. You can spread it out in that fine detail. Again, we have to consider certain basic limitations. We could double our food production and still not meet the needs. We, of course, do all that we can for emergency situations, such as helping the victims of the Guatemala earthquake and now in other places, where there have been Red Cross operations. Naturally, our food reserves and our food surplus must be made available. That is an emergency situation and we need to get a good, sound world policy in which all the nations participate responsibly and constructively for the production of food where it can best be grown and consumed in the areas where the greatest need is. Until we get a global policy for food production and distribution we have to be busy laying the groundwork educationally for solving this problem. We must be reconciled to its eventual impact in terms of our diet. Everyone who has studied the problem knows that we get far better results from the consumption of grain by the people than we get by putting it in the mouths of cattle to be slaughtered so that people may have luscious steaks. So, you get a loss in the carnivorous habits of the industrial nations--the developed nations, the affluent nations.

I want to insert an observation here that keeps my reference to other continents in focus. Our tendency is to dismiss it as a problem in the United States and that is not strictly true, because twenty percent of our people, which would mean about forty million people, are below the poverty line. It doesn't mean that they are going to die of hunger. It means that their income problem is severe enough to create certain dietary problems. If the churches are not sensitized to this problem, then we are going to continue to find a slide toward wretched conditions; and no one knows how to predict what would happen to established patterns of economic life and social life because you would get serious problems. It should not be put on the basis of anticipating chaotic political situations. It should be put on the basis of concern for our fellow human beings such as the death of children. I knew men when I was in Congress who never voted for the foreign aid bills but who were generous personally in their private charities. They would give generously to the church or to needy families. In their private charities they were noble people. But they would oppose every kind of governmental program to get food to hungry people in the underdeveloped nations--the developing nations they like to say now. I know of one congressman who had been in that category but in the presence of a little ragged Italian boy in Rome actually wept. I think it may have made some impression on him.

T: Do you think it is really possible for Congress to act in terms of developing a policy of food that is apolitical? There have been efforts in Congress, in fact, a resolution has been proposed but not approved that foodstuffs not be distributed on a political basis but distributed in a totally apolitical way and not be used as the means or vehicle of American policy.

H: I am glad to hear you raise that question because I think I know what the answer is from the standpoint of moral considerations. No, it ought not to flow into the marketplace of other nations on the basis of high purchasing power. In other words, the nations that are willing to pay the highest price may get it and the people who need it worst are deprived of it. Food, in other words, is not a commodity that ought to be subjected in the world market to these impersonal forces. Now that is not something that I have come up with as a churchman who believes in practical Christianity. I heard it said recently by the ambassador of Canada to the United States in a little luncheon meeting we were having down at the Woodrow Wilson Center. He said, "No, we do not agree that our surplus grain, wheat, and other products should be sold to the affluent Russians." Well, relative to parts of Africa and Asia, Russia is affluent; and they are in a position because of their form of government to make some liberal offers for surplus wheat.

We are going to have to take that into account eventually if we want to claim to be a Christian nation. When I say Christian I mean biblically rooted civilization, because I don't draw the line theologically between our Jewish friends and our Christian friends, but from the teachings of the Bible on this point. I must go back and reread that reference in Leviticus to the Jubilee Year because I think it touches in a very interesting and exciting fashion what the world is running into now. The ancient Israelites had such a strong consciousness of tribal responsibility for suffering that they came up with some good ideas. They had become a nation, in other words. They were acting as sensitized people should act.

Well, it reminds me of one of our members of Congress one day who was speaking on the inscription on the Liberty Bell. He was speaking not in terms of world problems of food distribution but of the familiar passage, "Let liberty be proclaimed throughout the land." He said, "In the words of that grand old prophet Leviticus." So, we all need, perhaps, to have our sharpened memories of just what it did teach. I heard a sermon recently by Charles Forbes Taylor. Does that name mean anything to you?

T: The evangelist?

H: Yes. He was sort of Billy Graham of seventy years ago. He is still living, very vigorous. He and I went out together last Sunday to a meeting in a nearby suburban area and that was his text, "The Jubilee Year"; that sharpened my interest.

T: Does he still live in the Washington area?

H: Yes, he does. He is in the Washington suburban area.

T: Does he still preach regularly?

H: Oh, yes, and he is very active. He and I have been enjoying refreshing reminders of our friendship back in the early days when he occasionally visited Little Rock. He introduced me to the congregation last Sunday and I made a few comments about it. In introducing me, he said that he hoped I would tell the congregation what he had said to me in the White House.

He came to see me one day when I was Special Assistant to Jack Kennedy and he said, "Brooks, when we were back there in Arkansas thirty years ago (or whatever the time was) and I was called the 'boy preacher' and you were a struggling young lawyer, did you believe that some day we would be sitting here in the White House together in this happy situation?" I said, "No, I didn't believe that. I believed I would be the President of the United States at the other end of the building and that you would be the Archbishop of Canterbury." Of course that was a reference to the fact that he was born in England.

T: Is his brother still living?

H: Yes. I think there has been only one death among the eleven children, and he is about the third or second oldest.

T: Does he still conduct campaigns with his brothers?

H: No. He is doing a good deal of lecturing, but he has gone into a different type of public address. He is preaching nearly every Sunday where there is an interim service required. This church that we attended Sunday out in Temple Hills is without a pastor. Of course, he is a good supply man. They loved him.

T: But he is really retired?

H: Well, I guess you could say that, because he has given up his former evangelistic work. He had an evangelistic emphasis in the concluding part of his sermon Sunday.

T: I appreciate your sharing this as well. He, of course, is active among Southern Baptists as an evangelist and preached fairly extensively in many, many areas. I wonder if you would say a couple of things about some of the leaders that you knew in the fifties who might be of interest to us as Baptists, who were often thought of as being religious men. What about Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas? Did you know him at all?

H: I knew him very well. We were warm friends. I think perhaps our friendship began with our mutual interest in the "prayer breakfast." Now, he was not as critical as I of the plan that developed out of these "prayer breakfasts," that is, the Presidential Breakfast, which tended to become dramatic and ridden with selfish publicity, I thought. In other words, the senators and congressmen who had not been particularly interested in our little closed session breakfasts wanted to be seen where the television was playing around over the audience. They wanted credit with their constituents for going to prayer. I don't want to be too hard on them, but I am opposed to the grandiose schemes of televised breakfasts; and I think perhaps I made some headway in convincing my colleagues and former colleagues that I was right about it.

I would certainly never include Frank Carlson nor ever accuse him of any selfishness. He was a very sincere person. In economics and political philosophy he was a typical Kansan, that is, he was conservative; but a man of no guile and a man who sincerely believed in the essential things of our faith. He was a very compassionate person. I had a lot of friends on the Republican side. Friends who were certainly not congenial with some of the ideas I have expressed to you; but, our relationship was such that I could articulate on it. They often did respond. John Buchanan told me--John Buchanan is an ordained Baptist minister from Birmingham, and he resigned a

pastorate of a big church in Birmingham to make the race for Congress some ten or twelve years ago.

T: He is the son of John Buchanan who was very active in Birmingham earlier, is he not?

H: Yes. His father died recently. I knew his father when he was a pastor in El Dorado, Arkansas. John Buchanan was identified with the Republican Conservative wing; he was not an extreme conservative but that was his philosophy. He is such a good man that consequently each year with new responsibilities for national policies that were Christian in their concept he began to give more thought to the race question. He gave me a statement discussing it with me recently. He said to me, "You know, I changed my views on race because of your views and your experience. That led to a reversal of my position on race." He was referring to what I had had to say and conforming with my actions to what I had said about it. He said, "I concluded that I had been wrong, and I thank you." A Georgia congressman, not a minister but a very fine Georgian leader said, "Brooks, you have made it easier for all of us. I never have to worry anymore about the extremists in the White Citizens Council Group. The people have made an adjustment and they have brought their thinking into a balanced viewpoint of our duty towards the minority race."

T: Could you tell me something about the development of the Congressional Prayer Breakfast, the Presidential Prayer Breakfast? You were involved in that in the early stages of it.

H: There is one other little addendum on the food problem you would be interested in from the standpoint of Canada's future. The same ambassador that I quoted a moment ago added that Canadian statesmen, leaders, are having to watch the long trend in weather, because it is possible that with the dipping of temperatures in the great wheat provinces that they will not have the great bumper crops that ordinarily would be expected. He said, "It is possible that will have dire results from the standpoint of the world market. At any rate, it is a challenge to political philosophers and to moral leaders. It is certainly essential that they begin to think in terms of world conditions and world situations as affected by environmental forces." I thought you would be interested in that.

T: I appreciate your mentioning that.

H: Did you want me to speak of my friendship with John Diefenbaker?

T: I think that would be appropriate as well. I would like to pick up a couple of things from 1954 and 1955, your days in Congress. By that time you had been there ten plus years, twelve years by 1955. Were you beginning to move into the high ranks of the influential in those years? Were you close to becoming a chairman of a committee?

H: Well, I wasn't destined to be a committee chairman. I would have had to be in Congress another sixteen years to have had that because you see in 1951 I went on the Foreign Affairs Committee after eight years. The senior members, under the old order--and it is still to some extent prevalent--get the chairmanships. I know that with the retirement from Congress of Congressman Morgan of Pennsylvania there is now a vacancy in the chairmanship or will be next year. If seniority had prevailed and I had still been in the House, I would be chairman next year. Now, that's how far removed I was from chairmanship.

T: That's twenty years.

H: Yes. And I would never have been able to work up to the Banking and Currency Committee chairmanship until the same year. If I had remained on the committee, Wright Patman's death would have put me in the chair. But, I think, in answer to your question as to position of leadership, my posture, I think it is fair to say, yes, that whatever abilities and inclinations I had and whatever leadership qualities I possessed they were being responded to by the leadership. I will cite three evidences of it.

I was appointed by Rayburn to be a member of the Platform Committees of the Democratic National Committee in two conventions: 1952 and 1956. I was on the Drafting Committee that met before the Platform Committee met and hammered out a lot of compromises on the race question that satisfied me and others from the moderate side and held in some restraint the extremists like George Wallace of Alabama, on that side, and some of the equally extreme thinkers on the other side, those of the northern districts. That is one evidence of growth, that is, of a maturing leadership.

Another was the appointment, and again the House leadership, McCormack and Rayburn, did this, where I was named one of two members from the House of the Kestnbaum Commission on the study of intergovernmental relations or state, federal, and municipal relations--the interrelationships of government. It still remains one of the great problem areas in government. The federal system has had considerable resiliency. We have been able to adapt to changing conditions as the interlocking relations in economics and so on have developed until no longer is it the kind of problem that produced the Constitution of 1787. Incidentally, it was called the Kestnbaum Commission in honor of its chairman, Mr. Kestnbaum, who was president of Hart, Shaeffner, & Marx at the time. He did a superb job and was a fine leader. I enjoyed that work. Mr. Eisenhower was President, of course, and I think we took three or four years to work out some recommendations. That was another evidence of the House leaders friendship for me. My membership on the Space Committee, this special committee, was a gracious thing for them to do. So, there are three evidences of Rayburn's appreciation of whatever I had done. Another thing that belongs in there is the appointment by Joe Martin of me to be the chairman of the Prayer Room Committee.

T: Let's pick up space and then come back to the Prayer Room. The Space Committee, was that the first committee on space? What kind of responsibilities did the committee have?

H: Well, it was left to our committee to draw up legislation to establish a space agency. So, yes, that was the first committee. That was a select committee, not one of the standing legislative committees but a special committee to work out a policy.

T: Really, ad hoc?

H: Yes. That is right. It was an ad hoc committee, and we were plowing new ground as the country boys say.

T: And out of it came NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)?

H: Right.

T: Your work on the Prayer Room. Was this your idea?

H: No, sir, it was not; and yet, I am credited largely, almost exclusively, with it because it took my work on the House side to lay the foundation for it and to put it through. It might appear to some to be a bit of a deviation from my usual idea that religion has two facets, both of which are sacred and must be acknowledged as such. One is its essentially private character, the other its public character. Now, that doesn't mean that worship with your fellowmen is not the profoundest kind of worship; public prayer has its place. I'm just thinking now in terms of the individual expression of spiritual aspirations. Public prayer has great limitations. One man simply cannot adequately pray for another man, but--and this is, I think, the justification for our emphasis upon the pastoral prayer in Sunday morning services or other services--he can produce a meditation by the man who listens. The pastor can influence him.

Well, that doesn't need laboring at all. But, when you get into a governmental relation, then you have to be very precise about these matters and avoid an overtness in prayer that amounts to what I call "patronizing gestures toward the Lord." I don't think the Lord expects any "patronizing gestures." The first objection was made as I tossed this resolution in one morning and it was by Senator Gillette of Iowa who said, "Well, this is not the Bible way. It says, 'Go in you closet and pray.'" There were few objections, but this was one of a dozen maybe in the course of a three-year period during which we worked to get it in condition that we could be satisfied with it. During that time we had few objections. I said, "Senator, that is exactly what we are doing. That Prayer Room will be a closet. You won't be standing out here in the rotunda praying. You will be by yourself in there. There will be no congregational prayers, no public prayers, no uttered prayers except as the person meditates. But it ought to be a retreat for the harrassed legislator in moments of need of that kind." So, I thought it was entirely consistent with our separation of church and state ideas. You see, you can't pursue this idea of separation to its ultimate, logical end; otherwise, you would have no chaplains in the Armed Services. You would have no chaplain for the Senate and the House. We have handled that pretty well. But this idea was first suggested to me by Senator Mike Monroney of Oklahoma, with whom I had served on the House Banking Committee for a number of years.

T: You really knew him quite well?

H: Oh, we were devoted friends. He was one of the closet friends that I have ever had. We had been down to some meeting at the Washington Hotel. Billy Graham had been the "big shot." He had made a talk to senators and congressmen. As we walked out of the hotel he said, "Brooks, why don't you introduce a resolution in the morning to establish a Prayer Room out at the Capitol for individual use." I said, "That's a good idea I think." That was about all that was said. I think he waited to see what I could do with it on the House side because it was a House resolution to be concurred in by the Senate. It was passed unanimously by us and then the Senate adopted it unanimously. We didn't want a roll call on it. We didn't want to embarrass anybody, but it was obvious that the opposition had folded up. Senator Gillette withdrew his objection to it. Sam Rayburn was never happy about it. At time I thought of myself almost as in that category. I am so opposed to the parading of piety.

I was satisfied with the form in which Monroney and I finally put it. I knew that later on there were a very few who wanted to get a little benefit out of the publicity. There is a custodian who protects anybody who wants to use it for prayer or meditation. I am afraid, really, in practice, that it hasn't turned out to be just exactly what I had hoped it would be, although its symbolic value is appealing. It may also have value to individuals in distress.

One man said to me a short time after the room had been equipped and was made available, "Brooks, I have just come from the Prayer Room. I spent thirty minutes in there. Whatever it cost us, it is justified by what it has just done for me." Well, now that is exactly what I had in mind except that I would add a personal problem which I had along about--what year is this?

T: March of 1955.

H: Well, along in the fifties I had some personal problems, not severe. I mustn't make too much of it because these things tend to be blown up. But I had some kind of physical condition that puzzled the doctors. They weren't able to made a diagnosis of it. It gave me a mild depression. It didn't last long, but that is a situation where I think prayer is a great adjunct of the committed life and I think my life was committed. You can see why I had a struggle with my own feelings about it. I have never permitted my church friends, if I can keep them from it, to make any capital at all of the fact that I have been honored by my church.

I think it was an interesting thing that in the year that I was defeated for Congress for a ninth term--while I was still president of the Southern Baptist Convention--the only speeches that were made in that eight-day, quick write-in campaign by preachers were made against me and not for me. I believe all three of them were Baptist preachers who were not the kind of highly recognized and highly respected preachers, and I don't believe any were residents of my district. I don't mean to say that just because they were opposing me that they weren't respected; but the impulses to defend segregation, if it was indulged by a minister, would naturally raise the question, "Now why would he be on that side?" I don't mean they weren't good people. There were a lot of good people who believed in segregation as a way of life. But they were wrong. I know I winced when I found Baptist preachers doing that. One of them was the pastor of the Harmony Baptist Church. I thought that was rather ironic. What I am trying to say is that I have always felt that religion belongs to that area of human life that should never be exploited. I think most people agree on that.

T: What had you first envisioned in this Prayer Room? You say it was supported unanimously in the end after some had raised objection. What had you envisioned to begin with? You were part of a small committee, really an unofficial committee wasn't it?

H: Yes. That's right. It wasn't authorized but officially it was simply the responsibility of the Speaker because the physical problems of the Capitol, its policing, its custodial care, is the responsibility either of the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate. In other words, the north half of the Capitol is the responsibility of the Senate and the south half is the responsibility of the House and this is just over the line in the rotunda on the south side. Of course, the idea of one half of the Capitol in one custody, the other half in another can't be carried out in meticulous detail.

T: I suppose in practice it actually works that the two individuals have a staff under their joint control.

H: Yes. That's a good way to put it except that on a practical basis it remains for the architect of the Capitol to handle the problem. He is the one who is responsible over all; but, of course, he is going to defer to the Speaker, if it is in one wing of the Capitol and to the president of the Senate, if it is in that wing. He is looked to for the day-to-day housework, the details. He

was the one to whom the Speaker and the Senate leaders looked to equip the Prayer Room.

It was real interesting after Joe Martin found the place. This was, I guess, in the second Republican session, the first two years of Eisenhower's administration and during that two-year period when Joe Martin was Speaker that the resolution was passed. That means that it lay in "innocuous desuetude" to use Grover Cleveland's expression. It was inactive. It just lay on the clerk's desk with no action sought and no action had because primarily Rayburn objected. He had called me in one day and he said, "Brooks, you are not going to push that Prayer Room Resolution are you?" I said, "Not if you don't want me to," because, of course, I wasn't going to defy the Speaker. It was the kind of thing that answered itself, because I don't think there was a time, if I had used parliamentary procedure, that I couldn't have gotten a majority to pass it over anybody's objection. You don't vote against prayer. But I didn't want it done that way. Mike Monroney and I resolved that we would never attempt to get it through except by unanimous action.

I remember the day that Speaker Martin wanted it called up. Now, you see, that sort of put me on the other side from Speaker Rayburn. I may have been derelict in my duty at that point. Maybe I should have gone to him and told him that the situation had been reversed, but Martin, then, was entitled to have his way about the Prayer Room Resolution so I didn't take time to discuss it with Rayburn. Joe Martin said, "We are going to get your Prayer Room Resolution out of the committee. Brooks, it is going to be your resolution. Any number of our boys, or on your side, introduced similar resolutions so they could say that they had supported you on it. Some of them on our side thought that I should clear a resolution bearing a Republican name. But it was your idea, so I told them, 'Why, of course, it is going to be Brooks' resolution.' Some argued, 'After all we are in control, it ought to have a Republican sponsor.'" Joe said, "No," which I thought showed a very gracious and fine spirit.

Then, when it was passed he said, "I am going to appoint you, Karl Le Compte of Iowa, and Katheryn St. George of New York to be the Prayer Room Committee, and you are going to be the chairman." I was the only Democratic chairman of the Republican body. That, I think, of itself was symbolic of our nonpolitical character. Oh, I was quite reconciled to it going through as it did and becoming a reality, but I am not altogether happy about later use of it. I am afraid maybe the publicity side has a bit of abuse in it. On the other hand, I think it is possible by counseling with the members to use it in the way that I have indicated. Abuse can be contained.

Of course, in keeping with our pluralism, being a nation of Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant adherents, we were particularly careful of the symbols of religion in the room. The open Bible, the seven-branch candlestick, and a beautiful stained-glass window with the picture of Washington, not the figure of Washington at Valley Forge in which age was apparent, but Washington, the young man at prayer. Only one verse in the window, "Preserve me, Oh, God, for in thee is my trust," the sixteenth Psalm, as I remember it.

T: You mentioned that the Prayer Room had a stained-glass window and few other furnishings. What other items did you say were there?

H: Well, a seven-branch candlestick, a beautiful candelabra. There is a flag, of course, and that is in the appropriate place. That's all. There are comfortable chairs and subdued lights. It is the use of physical encouragement to give the mood of prayer.

T: How large is the room?

H: I would say it looks like about 15 feet by 20 feet, maybe a little larger than that. We used to chuckle over something that I don't think has ever gotten in the news. It would be all right if it did. But it was the barroom in the old days when they permitted consumption of alcoholic liquors in the Capitol. That was where the whiskey was kept.

T: Can it be used by congressmen for small prayer meetings?

H: That is a violation of the legislative history. I haven't read my remarks I don't believe since I made them, but I said this to the House in deference to Speaker Rayburn that this room was not to be exploited in any way. There were to be no photographs of one at prayer in that room or photographs of someone entering or leaving. This was to be an individual matter. I made the comparison with our physical body, just as the restaurant is to provide food for the body to support us physically, so this would be a provision for even a greater need than food, which is a person's prayerful approach to the invisible power that comes from faith. I used that comparison. The barbershop, the restaurant, all these things are for the members' benefit and this would be quite appropriate, assuming that we could prevent it being used for assemblies of any kind--no weddings, no funeral services in the chapel. It was to be strictly for individual use. Now I am afraid that that has been disregarded a bit. I think it would be well for us at the opening of every Congress to acquaint the new members with the background of that room.

T: You also served during that period on what is sometimes called the Interparliamentary Committee, the Interlegislative Committee between the Canadian Parliament and the United States Congress.

H: Yes. Well, in order to avoid any confusion about that, Ron, the Interparliamentary Union embraces all of the Parliaments of the free governments. There is a special history about our relation with Canada. Whatever I am to say now, replying to your question, has to do just with Canada, although I did attend some of the meetings sponsored by the Interparliamentary Union. There may be confusion growing out of the similarity of names. Wayne Hays of Ohio was the key man in the Interparliamentary Union, but I was the key man in Canada as far as the House was concerned. Senator Aiken on the Senate side was the key person on the Canadian relationship.

T: What was that committee called? The one in which you were involved.

H: The Committee on Canadian and U. S. Relations. Congressman Coffin and I wrote the report, with the help of our staff in the Foreign Affairs Committee. The report came to be known as the Hays-Coffin Report--Frank Coffin from the state of Maine. He is now a federal judge. We made more than one trip to Canada to study the complaints of worsening relationships. There were some problems. We brought back some findings that got a little attention here, considerable attention in Canada. We were in the press up there quite a bit. I remember there was a cartoon praising us for what we were doing to get America acquainted with the grievance of our Canadian friends. I don't know what became of that cartoon; I should have saved it.

We did some good. The one tangible thing that we produced as a result of those trips and conversations was the establishment of committees that constitute continuing exchange of ideas. It is an interparliamentary process. Of course, the State Department and our Foreign Officers have all the channels of communication they need, but this is a special thing. It may have produced some raised eyebrows in the State Department that Congress would be taking

such a step, but I think it is quite consistent with our constitutional separation of powers, because, after all, we have a residual power. As long as we work it out on an informal basis, we don't do violence to the executive responsibility for international policy or foreign policy.

T: Did your involvement on this committee come about because of your place on the Foreign Affairs Committee? How did you become involved? I can see a senator from Maine or from Vermont, close to the border, having this, but you are much closer in geography to Mexico than you would be to the Canadian line. Why would an Arkansas Congressman . . .?

H: I don't know the answer to that. I can't remember. I presume it was because of my having matured as one of the senior members of the House and by that time a senior member of the committee. That must have been in 1957 and 1958, near the end of my sixteen years. Oh, I had been a delegate to the United Nations. That probably helped. Then I got to be acquainted with some of them up there. Paul Martin from Windsor was one of the leaders of the Liberal Party in Canada. I was personally acquainted with him. He took quite a bit of interest in what we were doing. Leslie Pearson was still there, but he left it to some of the junior members. But Martin, I recall, was quite interested and so was Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Of course, their form of government gave him both a legislative and administrative voice.

T: Now Paul Martin later became the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Canada in the Pearson years after Diefenbaker. There is an extensive Canadian program--the name of the college has slipped me--the Methodist school in Conway. What is the name of the college in Conway?

H: Hendrix College.

T: Yes. They have an extensive program in Canadian studies which is an interesting aspect. You would have gone on this committee in about 1954, just after the opening of the seaway?

H: No. That was in 1957 and 1958, following my membership in the U. N. delegation.

T: So, the seaway had been opened by that time?

H: I think so.

T: You mentioned there were some issues of controversy. What particular issues of controversy do you mean?

H: Well, what they called absentee ownership of Canadian industry, Canadian factories, and then, the lack of newspapers and magazines. In other words, American periodicals seemed to be pushing out of the market place the strictly Canadian publications. Those were two of the things that we struggled with, and I think perhaps there were some compromises on cushioning the impact of the monopoly of periodicals and on the absentee ownership, the American ownership of Canadian industries. I don't recall exactly what those mechanisms were, but I think they felt that we were making some headway. However, you know, the problem still exists not in the severity that it did then but you will find that recently they have taken real drastic steps to squeeze out such periodicals as Time Magazine. You are familiar with that.

T: Now, any takeover of any business must be approved by a special committee of the Canadian government, any change of foreign ownership by a committee. In

talking with you I am constantly amazed at your familiarity of so many fields and your obvious awareness of keeping up with things in the present. Your experience of involvement with the American government did not end in either 1958 or when your days in the White House were over. You are obviously well informed and well read on these things to be familiar with the details of this particular controversy. You mentioned meeting Mr. Diefenbaker. Did you meet him in 1957?

H: Yes. I had not met him before. I remember meeting him after the work I did on solving the Little Rock problem when I led the movement to get Orval E. Faubus and Eisenhower to agree on a course of action.

T: This would be in 1957? He would have become Prime Minister about the middle of June, 1957.

H: Well, he was the Prime Minister. I remember that. I am trying to get this fixed in terms of time.

T: Would it have been in Washington?

H: No. It was in Ottawa. I believe, Ron, that one conversation I had with him was after my defeat or maybe later in Atlantic City at the meeting of the Baptist World Alliance.

T: That would be 1964. The Baptist Jubilee Advance. He was no longer Prime Minister by then.

H: That was not the Baptist World Alliance meeting?

T: No. It was the Baptist Jubilee Advance--the Southern Convention and the American Convention met at the same time.

H: I remember at that meeting Ted Adams made an impassioned speech in which he talked about me and what I had had to sacrifice for principles, some things that were almost embarrassing. He said, "I want Brother Joe Jackson and Brother Brooks to come up here and join hands and I want to stand with them and I want the congregation to sing, 'Bless Be the Tie That Binds.'" It was really dramatic. I have a picture of that, and Diefenbaker is standing right behind us and Mrs. Diefenbaker was obviously moved by the scene. She had learned from him about my involvement in the racial conflict, and she was quite interested in the fact. I talked to him several times in Ottawa, and she came in to his office once while we were talking and he told her who I was and about my position. Her father, as I remember it, was a Baptist minister.

T: Right.

H: Well, there is quite a story there about the involvement, the Baptist angle.

T: Let's pick that up.

H: On one of my trips up there, and I am not very accurate about how many trips there were, but I know therewas more than one. I know that I had this visit with him as Prime Minister and then in Atlantic City in his subsequent activity. Now, as I was leaving his office, or before I left, I said, "Mr. Prime Minister, I would like for you to be one of our speakers at the Southern Baptist Convention in Louisville next year or the next time it meets." Well, he said, "I would love to do that. I may have to make an adjustment," but he

wrote down the dates. He said, "Let me see if I can adjust my schedule. Where will you be at eleven o'clock tomorrow?" I said, "I will be meeting in Toronto with the Board of Directors of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Dominion body." He said, "I will call you at eleven o'clock tomorrow after I have had time to study my schedule." So, I looked forward to hearing from him.

We were sitting around the big table in very swanky surroundings with what I called "the Captains of Commerce and Potentates of Industry." I had said to the young lady in the front room, "Now I am expecting a call from Mr. Diefenbaker at eleven o'clock and I won't come out until his call comes through, so if you will just sneak in and hand me a note I can excuse myself and come on out and talk to him." Well, she didn't do it that way. Promptly at eleven o'clock she opened the door and just announced like the Sergeant-at-Arms announces the opening of Congress, "Mr. Chairman, excuse me. The Prime Minister wants to speak to Mr. Hays on the phone." Well, it bothered me a little and embarrassed me. Nobody said a word. I got up, and when I got to the door I turned around and they were sort of following me with their eyes. I said, "She said it that way because I asked her to." "She did it just like I asked her to." The chairman said, "Yes, and maybe you think we are not impressed." I don't think I told them that it had nothing whatever to do with the clash of ideas, the converging of economic forces, or the problems of state. I don't think I told them that. I let them think what they wanted, and all in the world it was was his letting me know he was awfully sorry he couldn't come.

T: Did you ever get a chance to invite him again?

H: That was it. That was all.

T: He had a conflict?

H: Yes. He couldn't work out his schedule to be there.

T: You think that was the reason?

H: Yes, I do because, you see, he came to Atlantic City to this other meeting. But, of course, he was relieved by that time of the onerous duties of the Prime Minister's office. But, still, I should think that would signify that he would have been glad to meet with us. I liked Mr. Diefenbaker. Of course, he is a tough politician though.

T: Did you tackle him as a tough politician ever?

H: I had no occasion to have anything except the Baptist official interest, nothing but that gave us any excuse to be together. But he did tell his wife, I remember, in very strong, extravagant language what I had done in the race problem. He said, talking to his wife, "I just want you to know the kind of man that you are talking to," which was very sweet of him. I liked him.

T: You didn't happen to make the trip with President Kennedy to Ottawa.

H: You see, this was finis to my career.

T: You know the reference that I am making where Mr. Kennedy made an apparently very negative comment of Mr. Diefenbaker on a piece of paper and it got left in the room and was picked up and passed on to Mr. Diefenbaker.

H: I didn't know about that.

T: Yes.

H: Now isn't that strange that I didn't hear it.

T: It caused considerable consternation.

H: Yes, those things often do. It is amazing, you know, how many little things like that can upset the effect of a formal document and tortured exchange of ideas. No, I didn't know about that. Do you remember what the note said?

T: No, I don't remember in detail, but he was described as some sort of an S.O.B. and apparently the President had written this. Some suggested, and I wondered if you knew anything about this, that this is why Diefenbaker dragged his feet on the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

H: Well, that is a new revelation. I had no idea that something like that had taken place. Now, when I said this was finis to my career, I meant as a congressman. I have had some of my happiest experiences following my severance from Congress.

T: Perhaps it would be useful before we conclude to get you to say a word or two about your involvement with the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. In 1955 you were elected chairman of the Commission. I have the note here that it was at the Miami Convention. The Baptist Press story said that "Hays was elected to the Commission during the Southern Baptist Convention Session in Miami. Hays is a past member but has not served on the Commission for several years."

H: That's right. I was rotated off.

T: You served earlier and came back.

H: Now I have forgotten the procedure. The Convention or the Committee on Boards, did they nominate me to be chairman or just a member and then the Commission chose me?

T: I think the Commission makes that decision.

H: That was my recollection.

T: You would have been elected previously to the Commission as it was first the Social Service Commission and then became the Christian Life Commission.

H: Much better name.

T: Were you involved extensively with A. C. Miller?

H: Oh, yes. We were very close. I admire him very much.

T: Tell me something about him. What kind of a man was he?

H: Well, Dr. Miller was a low-key operator not like Foy Valentine, although there were some similarities between them. He was a fine, sincere person as Foy is. Those were friendships that developed with Dr. Miller and even earlier with Dr. Weatherspoon who was a member of the faculty at Southern Seminary in Louisville. So, these were three wonderful friends that I had served with.

T: Now did you work with Dr. Weatherspoon then before Dr. Miller came to the Commission?

H: Yes. I don't think I had the chairmanship of that Commission in this previous time. But I did serve, maybe for three years earlier.

T: Do you remember anything of the decision to make it an agency with a paid staff? Were you involved at all in that?

H: I don't have any recollection. I do remember this from conversation recently with Dr. Miller that we had to get along on a budget, I think, of about eight thousand dollars overall. I think at that time a salary allowance was about four or five thousand dollars. Then, we had very meager allowance for secretarial work and no provision for rent because Dr. Weatherspoon--and by the way, I believe he was chairman and not the executive--I think Hugh Brimm was the exectutive during the time that I worked with Dr. Weatherspoon as a member . . . .

I know that the failure to get a renewal of the Southern Seminary's provision for our headquarters in one of the buildings there was because of their need of it for seminary purposes. It forced us out, of course, because they had to have the space. I know that posed a real problem for us, how to get a room without paying where we could operate. Well, of course, that is just so sad, but it is a good charting, I think, statistically of our problem--a budget of eight thousand dollars. I think it is in the neighborhood of one hundred thousand dollars now. Back in those days we had to fight for an annual renewal of the Commission. An effort would be made to abolish the Commission, or some effort through the budget to provide no funds for it, that kind of thing. I remember once at one of the Conventions when the vote was announced that we had survived again, Foy Valentine stepped to the microphone and said, "I thank you for the annual call."

T: Were you a part of the committee that brought Foy Valentine to the Commission?

H: Yes. That is my recollection. That was a happy day for us.

T: Can you recollect any of the workings of the Committee as it began to seek a successor to Dr. Miller? Miller was getting into retirement age and this is the reason that he left the Commission.

H: No. I don't think I can bring any enlightenment to that. I remember that there was no rivalry for it. As I recall, it was just one of the happiest developments that could take place. Foy was young and he had demonstrated ability, a very fine sense of dedication, and a social conscience that was unique and rather widely known. But, as I recall it, it was just one of those natural things. It was a very happy choice. Miller thought so.

T: You served on the committee until 1960. As chairman did you have any particular responsibilities that you remember having in 1955 and 1956? The race issue was becoming very, very much alive in the South, particularly in Arkansas, I am sure.

H: Well, as I recall it, the race problem was about the only controversial area that we had to deal with because you know the Baptist history with reference to the liquor traffic and other evils of that kind. I don't recall that we did much about tobacco, but I do recall that there was this continuing interest in struggling with the consumption of liquor and gambling and some

interest in the poverty program, this problem that we have discussed earlier today. But the race problem was our chief concern and it constituted our only resistance as I recall on the part of the Convention.

T: Did your relationship with the Christian Life Commission come to play at all in your governmental role in Congress, developing the Arkansas Plan or any of these things that you were involved in?

H: No. I was awfully glad for the St. Louis Convention--that was about 1954. I could not attend that Convention and I was thrilled to find that they had endorsed the Supreme Court decision; that took some of the sting from me, the fact that my denomination on the basis of my Commission's promptings had done what I was happy for them to do. They held that it was consistent with the Christian gospel and that they approved that decision. Of course that enabled me to say that I was happy that it was done and more or less traced my own actions as I described them yesterday.

T: Did you counsel at all with any of the leaders of the Commission? Did you struggle with what came to develop . . .

H: I don't recall that I did. You see, there was one meeting of the Convention after my campaign for the ninth term, after I was defeated in November of 1958. I presided then at the 1959 Convention which followed. The response among Baptists was just inspirational. It was terrific. There were some things that had taken place in Mississippi between 1958 and 1959, actually between 1957, because it was in September of 1957 that I arranged the meeting between Eisenhower and Faubus. We did work it out too, not perfectly, but if Faubus had stayed by the commitment of the statement that I wrote for him at his request we wouldn't have had the trouble we had in 1957. Nevertheless, what I am trying to say is that the Baptist response was terrific. When the Little Rock thing took place and I was identified with the moderate group and made statements that clearly identified me and completely obliterated any of the reactions to the Southern Manifesto, my identification made my name a bad name in Mississippi, Alabama, and some of the areas where segregation sentiment was strong. Six churches in Mississippi passed resolutions asking their program committee for the State Baptist Convention to cancel the invitation that they had given me to speak, six local congregations. The Executive Committee stood its ground and refused to do it, and told me to come on.

T: So did you speak?

H: Oh, I say I did. That was one engagement that I was determined to fill. But I followed the right course, I think. I'll never forget that evening. I was the evening speaker and the principal speaker.

T: In Mississippi?

H: In Mississippi, the First Baptist Church of Mississippi where Douglas Hudgins, who was a raving segregationist, was pastor. I went with all of the adversaries you can imagine. Nothing was in my favor exactly except the committee standing pat on the invitation. If I had been simply Brooks Hays, an individual Baptist from Little Rock, they probably would have cancelled, but they felt that since I held the office of president of the Southern Baptist Convention anybody ought to accept that and hear what I had to say. I think I did the right thing. I decided it was not the forum that I could use to advance any public policy controversial ideas. They would be implied and one

could follow the thread of moderation and tolerance through my regular discourse.

I didn't try to appease anybody. What I tried to do first of all was to get them to like me. I told a lot of stories. I knew the jargon of Mississippi Baptists and Mississippi rural culture. You see, I had been regional attorney for the Department of Agriculture and had made a lot of trips across Mississippi. I loved the people of Mississippi. They are a whole lot like Arkansas people. I didn't find any more opposition perhaps than I found in parts of Arkansas, the Delta section of Arkansas. So, I was right at home with them. But it was sort of a harrowing experience because I was met at the airport with heavy rain, it was raining cats and dogs. They had umbrellas and got me into the airport building, then got my bags and hurried me over. It was a late arrival. Probably the weather had delayed us a little. I believe that I had time to go by the hotel and register and then go to the church, but not much time. I remember that it was a close call. Of course the police were with me every minute, I was not outside a patrol officer any time.

T: Were they afraid that somebody would try and shoot at you?

H: Sure. They feared physical violence. I wasn't too comfortable about it myself. So, they got me into the auditorium, and people were standing around the walls. Every seat was taken in the main floor and the balcony. They wanted to see what kind of evil person it was who had done this. I started out like that. The chairman, I knew, was suppressing any desire to say a kind word about me. He didn't want to put his foot in it.

T: How did he introduce you?

H: He just said, "Brethren, we are honored to have with us the president of the Southern Baptist Convention." I think he told me later that he decided that was the way the President of the United States was presented and that was the way I should be presented. But I knew that what he was doing was avoiding bogging down any effort to praise me or to let them think that he was on my side. Chester Swor sat on the front seat. I remember what he said and it made me feel good. Do you know Chester?

T: I know who he is.

H: He came up to shake hands with me as a lot of other people did. They formed a long line, and I was busy shaking hands. He said, "Brooks, this is your finest hour. I was watching some of the brethren, and you just wore them down with that Arkansas folklore and your use of native wit and southern culture. That got them. Then the point you made after that needed to be made." So that made me feel good. He said, "This was your finest hour." Well, it wasn't my finest hour, of course, because I was not giving vent to the deep feelings I had about justice for the black man.

T: Then did you leave virtually immediately afterward?

H: Yes. Well, I think I stayed all night.

T: But I mean you didn't appear at the Convention again.

H: No. I think I went by the mayor's office to pay my respects to him, Mayor Thompson. I may have met with some of the leaders at breakfast the next morning. I don't recall exactly. It was a triumph in a way.

T: The fact that you did get on the program and they did listen to you.

H: But, you see, I had had few invitations to Mississippi. I had a few regional or local congregational invitations and no invitations from the Baptist colleges such as Mississippi College or Blue Mountain. I think we still own the women's college there. I think that my name had been proposed for an appearance at Mississippi College and the president vetoed it. In fact, one of the students in Mississippi College, who was an Arkansas lad, told me that he had either been elected president of the student body or had been nominated for it, and the president of the college had called him in and told him, "I want you to remove yourself from this campaign. We are not going to have any Brooks Hays' disciples presiding over this student body." Incidentally, I think this student had been keeping company with the president's daughter and he could tell that the president didn't like him being from Arkansas. He probably had heard some things that this young man had said about me.

T: Who was the president?

H: I think it was a man named Nelson, I am not sure. At any rate, the presidency shifted some few years after that, and I was then invited to come. That was after my defeat, of course. I guess, perhaps, it was while I was still in the White House. I remember very well the morning of the chapel hour--I was to speak to the assembly--I had a call from Charles Evers, the black mayor of Lafayette, saying he would love to have breakfast with me. He drove up to Clinton and we had breakfast together. I thought that was a wonderful thing. Oh, I saw a few folks look inquiringly at us there in a regular restaurant, something new.

T: Now we have talked about a number of different things, and one of the things I thought we might pick up this afternoon as we start again is that it would be helpful to have you relate some of the efforts you made in the area of racial understandings and to alleviate the trauma that was obviously coming close to the South. I wonder if you would relate first the situation that led to you arranging a meeting between President Dwight Eisenhower and Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas, before the Central High School conflict in Little Rock? Could you relate some of the involvements you personally had in that?

H: Of course, I was, at that time, getting the daily Arkansas papers and the weekly papers. I always read The Gazette, which would give me an idea of developments there in my district and in the state. I recall how puzzled I was by the apparent change in Governor Faubus' attitude. I think I referred to the fact that he was elected as a moderate and so liberal you might say that his opponent, Governor Cherry, who was running for a second term, made quite an attack upon him. He even charged him with being a Communist, or if not an outright charge, at least it was implied in the attack that he made on Faubus. I think that brought into Faubus' column of support many people who resented that and were certainly convinced that it was unfair, so Faubus won the election. He had wide editorial support from people like Harry Ashmore, editor of The Arkansas Gazette, and other liberals.

I remember when I began to see the turn that his thinking took, his actions. I thought it was out of character as I had interpreted his philosophy. It worried me because when some of my political friends said, "Now, Brooks, this is a quarrel you could stay out of, you don't want to get hurt by doing this." Then after I had done what I did they said, "Well, this was to be expected. You were playing with fire and you shouldn't have done it." Well, my answer

was that if Little Rock had been a victim of a flood or a tornado, I would have gone all out to save it from that kind of tragedy and I would have seen to it that all the help that Washington could supply would be available. I said, "This is worse than a flood or a devastating wind. This is serious because it affects human relations and is splitting the people of Little Rock into two camps." So I thought when I got down there that the thing for me to do was to see if I could get the two heads of government together, Governor Faubus for the state, and President Eisenhower for the United States. So I talked to Sherman Adams over the phone and he said, "Well, do you think the governor would come with the right attitude? The President probably would want to see him if he does, but he wouldn't want to see him under any circumstances that appeared to dilute his own commitment to rigid enforcement."

T: Now this would be 1956?

H: No. This would be in 1957 because the overaction of Governor Faubus didn't take place until September of 1957. I think it was during the Labor Day holiday. That was before Congress began to mess up our calendar. It was on the first Monday in September. I presume that what I had read about his calling out the National Guard and putting the onus on them to prevent black pupils from entering the school took place about that time.

T: Now you had not really been actively involved in the situation before that. Little Rock did have a plan for racial integration of schools.

H: I had not been privy to those discussions at all. I had not participated in it, but I did get a good deal of information by reading the papers and by conversations with different responsible people. A great deal of credit was due the superintendent of schools, Virgil Blossom. He had carefully worked out a plan. I presume in the light of developments that maybe some criticism of the plan was justified. There was more than there should have been in any event, but maybe his critics had a point. That is, that he had not conditioned the minds of people for the acceptance of his plan. He thought he had and I would have thought that he had. But I am not charging his critics with bigotry or intolerance on that point. There is some question as to whether the school officials had taken enough time, or had put enough energy into selling the idea to the patrons of the Little Rock schools. At any rate, it was a good plan, and it had received favorable action by the school board. I have been told by people who apparently knew what they were talking about that when it was approved in a meeting of the school board, Dale Alford, who was a member of the school board, was shown by the record to have voted with the others. It was unanimously adopted. Now he denied that later, but I have an idea that it is true because he didn't produce any records of the school board to support him in insisting that he had voted against it. So, I think they just fought back on either a false memory or a willingness to disguise the facts. But I am told that there is no question about it, that he went along.

He got into this fight against me because some of the lieutenants of Faubus' political structure who didn't like me and my style--I am referring to Claude Carpenter and I am not sure enough about others--and were figuring on a way to get a friendlier representative in Congress. Some of these things are, of course, just not available to me. I don't know what else to say except that when I did get Sherman Adams on the phone he was giving me encouragement to go ahead and see what I could do, but he was very explicit about the conditions and I didn't blame him for wanting it just that way. Faubus was initiating it, not the President. You can understand why.

T: The issue really was that Governor Faubus was going to use what forces that he had in order to prohibit the integration of Central High School.

H: Yes. And it was being done in a rather indirect and sly way, you might say, because he was exploiting for all it was worth the condition of dissatisfaction and the rather violent provocative public utterances of the White Citizen's Council leaders and others who were bitter enemies, you might say, of integration. I am quite sure that I remember what Amis Guthridge had to say about it, how violent his threats were about integration, and how vigorous he was pressing the segregationists positions. But I did all that Adams asked me to do in the way of getting an appeal by Faubus. Adams more or less dictated it over the phone. He worked on the language and said, "Now this kind of message will come from the governor, and he will get a favorable response; and the President will invite him."

T: What kind of message was it?

H: Well, he said, "because of the tension that had developed in Arkansas and particularly in Little Rock, the tension resulting from the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court and things that the federal government had generated, there was an impact that had created a problem for him as the head of the government of the state of Arkansas and that he thought the justice and peace might be served if they could sit down together and talk about their respective responsibilities." That was about the substance of it. I think you will find it in my book A Southern Moderate Speaks. It was replied to favorably as Adams told me it would be. I don't think I need to go into detail on this, but at any rate, somewhere along the line the governor invited me to go with him to Newport, and he said, "I want Winthrop Rockefeller also to go with me."

T: Now was he an influential man in the state at this time? He had not yet run for governor.

H: Well, he was very influential and he was a potential opponent of Faubus, if Faubus should make another race, which was not a part of the public political ferment at this time. The race of 1958 would have been a third term. Faubus was elected first, I guess, in 1954 and then was reelected in 1956 for a second term. It was not presumed that there would be a third term. It was only the great bulge of political support that was generated by these incidents that gave him an opportunity to win the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth terms. It is like one of his followers is reported to have said, "Boys keep this race issue alive. We can elect governors on that alone for twenty years." I suspect he said it because everyone recognized what it amounted to. It was just a volcanic action, you see.

I was thinking of peace in the community and a step forward for the black people. I have to admit that actually there were some motivations there that had to do with racial equality. That's not the kind of thing a responsible political leader makes much of, but I think everybody who knew me knew that I had certain sympathies there that the average politician didn't have. I think as a student of that problem you would agree with me that it was fair to say that I had these basic impulses that grew out of my political philosophy which was not the popular position. But I felt that I had the confidence of the people to the extent that I could go against what they might prefer but still not betray them.

Paul, oh, I've forgotten his name, was one of the NBC representatives who

were down there--they were all over the place, the TV and radio people--told me that he talked to one old gentleman at a filling station there and said, "Well, looks like everybody in Little Rock is a segregationist." "Oh, yes," he answered, "everybody. " Paul said, "Everybody except your Congressman." The old gentleman answered, "Well, Brooks is sort of funny." "Well, you'll vote against him, I guess," Paul said. "No," he said, "I am going to vote for him in spite of that because he's sort of an institution." So, I have been supported by a lot of people who thought I was too liberal on this and other issues. But that is not an exceptional situation. I mean there are a lot of cases in which men and women get support from those who don't share their temperamental and emotional feelings about everything. Well, now you are interested though in what I have learned since then or some of the impressions I have had since that incident, my defeat rather.

T: Yes, and I appreciate your commenting on some of your feelings as you went through this sort of thing. You know it's good to say, "Yes, I felt I was doing the right thing and in looking back I feel I did the right thing," but there must have been times when you really wrestled with it, whether you could have compromised a little bit or whether you could have said something that would have mollified some of the opposition and maybe pulled you through. Did you ever go through that kind of . . . ?

H: You know, I really don't think so. I can't recall that I ever thought in terms of the potential damage to myself, my political course, until it just came all at once like an explosion. The minute that Dr. Alford announced against me--and I heard it first on the radio--I could hardly believe it. It just seemed so strange. I thought that I had done such a good job actually balancing what you would call the stern political considerations with the theoretical and idealistic goals that I had been influenced by all my life. I wasn't just suddenly coming upon a mountain-top experience. I had been working in that direction and guided by that spirit all of my political life. Now I had never had occasion to put myself against this kind of, shall we say, hysterical opposition. I had, of course, dealt with the problem of an inordinate amount of money by an opponent. I had dealt with that in the two governors' races. But what I am trying to say is that there was very little exploration of my future course, step-by-step, and how I could hedge and deviate and so on for the purpose of preserving my office. I don't recall that I gave much thought to that. I can just remember that I thought, "Well this is going to be what we call a notch in my gun. When this is wound up I am going to feel good about having done this particular thing."

T: Did you expect opposition in the primary?

H: Well, I had enough opposition, yes.

T: I was asking had you received opposition in the primary. The sentiment was building in 1957 for Governor Faubus to call out the National Guard to keep blacks out of the schools in Little Rock, which was obviously a confrontation with the federal government's law. You, of course, sided on the side of the federal law and coming out of that was there opposition? Did it begin to mount for you as the primary began in early 1958?

H: Well, you see, I thought that I had come through these dramatic events unscathed. In the primary election in 1958, I was opposed for the second time by Amis Guthridge. He had made an earlier race before this contagion had sprung up, and I had defeated him by a good margin. I believe it was probably in 1952 when he made his first race against me. Then he made the

race in 1958. I had also been opposed in the 1956 primary before the thing developed and there was very little of the racial nature in the campaign against me. The man who made that race was W. H. Donhan. It was a futile effort he made and I defeated him roundly. I was winning all of the primaries. I defeated, as I said, Guthridge in 1952 and Donhan in 1956. I don't much believe I had opposition in 1954. I had had opposition in 1946 and defeated a man who had just come out of the Armed Services. Well, I had two opponents that year.

T: Well now, in 1958 was Guthridge a supporter, or a part of the Faubus machine, or . . .

H: No. He was what you would call a loner. He had had the support of the most radical members of the White Citizen's Council, and he talked about the race issue. I was a bit frightened by the virulence of that attack. I remember speaking from the same platform with Guthridge in the early summer of 1958. We had our primary, I guess, in July; and there was a big political rally in one of the county seat towns at which Governor Faubus spoke. My opponent spoke. Then I was introduced to speak, and for the first time in my life there were boos in the audience. I was booed a bit that night. That bothered me a little because I knew that this had been a friendly community, or so I thought. I had always carried it. I thought there was sort of a symptom of discontent in that. But at the same time, as I was leaving the grounds where it was held, I bumped into the governor and he said, "Brooks, you don't have anything to worry about. You are going to win your primary easy." I think I said, "Well, you will too." That's about all there was to it. And I did win it. I defeated Guthridge by a big vote. Now that was in July.

Of course, the ax fell in November of that year. One reason that they could do it was this dissatisfied element in Faubus' administration. I have used the name of Carpenter. They began to develop their strategy. Of course, it worked out as they had planned. The governor wasn't playing a very fair game, and I think that he was guilty of some duplicity because I doubt that he had much confidence in their ability to put it over and had little sympathy with them. But he had given hostages you see to the segregation element. He was more or less a captive of it, so I suspect he justified his acquiescence in it. It wasn't an active commitment so he probably told them in the final analysis, "Well, you boys pull it off if you can." He didn't make any speeches or public utterances for them. Nevertheless, though, he did give Claude Carpenter a leave of absence to direct Alford's campaign. That showed his hand.

T: How long do you think they had been planning this campaign?

H: I think it was rather hastily built up. I probably had given them some basis for it. Maybe I had spent a little time away from the district, thinking that I had some very attractive forums that I could use, and expanded my influence into the region. I always thought of the South as one of my parishes. I suspect that they exploited any discontent. Now that discontent was with making speeches away from your home. That sometimes does happen and becomes a liability. But I think ordinarily it isn't anything to bother a representative because it also has a disadvantage that it gives the impression that you've got a wide influence. But, nevertheless, I may have assumed too much, having gone through the primary campaign. I might have spent a little more of my time outside the district than I should have. I just don't know for sure how to appraise that.

T: So you really attempted to get Eisenhower and Faubus together in 1957. Was the agreement that he wouldn't send out troops? Was that what he had agreed to--that he would not call out the National Guard?

H: Well, the statement that I wrote for him is not as precise as it should have been, but it was all we had time to put together. When we left the President's office down at Newport to go back to Providence in a helicopter that the government supplied, we had been together, the four of us--Adams, the President, the governor, and myself--about two hours, a little less than two hours. I was surprised when the President indicated that it was all over and he didn't need to see the governor anymore because I felt there were some loose ends that needed to be tended to. Of course there was criticism of the President that he was eager to get out to the golf course and maybe that was true. But I was just so disappointed.

T: Was he on sort of a working vacation, the President?

H: Well, it was in September, and the summer Capitol was at Newport. That's where he operated from. He loved that place apparently, he must have had a good golf course; and he tried to carry on the work of the presidency with his recreation. I don't know how much of the summer he had been there, but this was September 13, 1957, that we were there. When we got back to the hotel room in Providence, I remember that we had told the President--it was his suggestion--that we would have a statement for the governor to release. They decided not to attempt to make a joint statement; but their statements would be read to each other and they would try to see that they were properly coordinated so that there was no conflict.

We were to call the President and read him the governor's statement before four o'clock, not later than four, and then the President was to read his statement to us. We felt that the statements were properly coordinated and as time ran by, I suddenly realized that it was getting close to four o'clock and we hadn't accomplished a thing. The governor obviously wasn't writing out anything or weighing any exchange of views with me. I finally looked over at him and said, "Governor, you know, we're getting close to four o'clock. Do you want me to go in the other room and write out the substance of what was agreed to?" He said, "Yes, I wish you would." So I had foolscap paper and wrote it out with a pencil. We called for a stenographer. The Governor made one slight change in it before the typing. It was a very significant change though.

Thinking about his political support and his political roots, I was eager not to do anything in my exuberance as a "liberal." I was thinking about the duty I had to him to weigh his political situation. So, when it was all over, he nor anyone else could say that I had been indifferent to political repercussions. So, I put in the statement this: "Whatever one thinks of the Supreme Court decision it does remain the law of the land and should be obeyed." That is the way I wrote it, maybe a word or two is not quite accurate. You know the only change he made in that statement was on that sentence. He struck out "whatever one thinks about the Supreme Court decision," and said, "I have never expressed an opinion regarding integration--the Supreme Court decision ordering integration." He put a period there where I had tied the two together. "It is the law of the land and must be obeyed." I've got the original out in my little brick house stored with some other papers because I held on to that. It is a pricelss little document. The guts of it was this reference to the law of the land that must be obeyed. That stood. He didn't change a thing about that. This was the best I could do on the basis

of the rather cavalier treatment the two chiefs of state were giving me. I felt that they weren't coming to grips with it as they should.

I admired President Eisenhower, and I was devoted to him as a fellow political person. He was a fine human being and a lovable person, but I am afraid that he was too casual about it. He hadn't given enough time to it. I was just sick about that. So that's the way it wound up. We read the statement to him and he read his statement to us and both statements were released.

We were ready to fly back to Arkansas. I think the governor was going somewhere else besides Little Rock. No, no, I am wrong about that. He was flying back to Little Rock and they dropped me in New York. You see, we had gone up in a private plane, a chartered plane. So the governor went on back and I told him good-bye at La Guardia. He flew me as far as La Guardia so I could get a connecting flight to go to Fort Worth, Texas, where I was scheduled to speak the next day. This was on Saturday, September 13. I was scheduled to speak at the First Methodist Church of Fort Worth the next morning at eleven o'clock. It was a little hard to get to Fort Worth. They didn't have any night planes that went in there that could serve my convenience so I flew to Dallas and then I was scheduled to take a little short hop over to Fort Worth.

Of course, the night was just ruined as far as any sleeping was concerned. We had bad weather and a good many bumps coming down from La Guardia to Dallas and it was three o'clock in the morning when we got in there. I'll never forget how surprised I was to find the TV men and newspaper reporters meeting me at the Dallas airport. They had learned that I was on that plane, and I had to try to talk with them. Of course, I was in no frame of mind to say much that made sense, but I did the best I could.

Then I flew on over to Fort Worth, and when I got there I found that my bag had been lost. I just had everything going against me that particular night, and I had to borrow a white shirt from the Baptist preacher that was about three sizes too big in the collar for me. I was a sorry looking individual. But they put a robe on me. The First Methodist Church in Fort Worth had gotten pretty high-church in its practices so I had to wear a robe. I remember the congressman from Fort Worth, who was a good friend. He is still in the Congress, Democratic floor leader James Wright. He is an outstanding person. He gave me a beautiful introduction. I presume that he knew that was a bit risky, that I was a bad name, but I appreciated it.

In the course of the afternoon, I talked to the governor. He had gotten back to Little Rock. I said, "Well, Governor, I go from Fort Worth to the Baptist Brotherhood regional meeting in Oklahoma City. They want me to speak up there." He said, "Brooks, don't do that. This thing isn't smoothing out like I hoped it would. Come on back to Little Rock." So, I went back to Little Rock. I don't remember just what it was he had in mind for me to do, but he was unhappy. You see that was the problem. It is too bad, too, because if he had been wholeheartedly on the side of this compliance course, I wouldn't have had any problem. I say that regretfully because, as a matter of fact, Governor Faubus is a charmer. I can understand why he had a political following. He was a product of rural culture. His father was a sort of Norman Thomas socialist. I guess you knew that, and he had acquired, apparently, some liberal thoughts. He might be called a populist anyway. His speeches at that time sounded like a neopopulist. Well, all of that, you see, created a sort of friendliness on my part because I had some streaks of populism in my own philosophy. So I very slowly and reluctantly have to agree that he was

not as forthright as I would hope.

But I finally did get over to the regional meeting. It may have been the South-wide meeting. At any rate, it was a tremendous big meeting of the Brotherhood Commission sponsored by them at Oklahoma City. Then, I was going from there to Kansas City for some purpose, I think maybe an engagement. In Kansas City, a friend of mine, Joe Culpepper, an official with the Gulf Oil interests, I believe--at any rate a big businessman in Kansas City who had been in Little Rock for a while and was a member of my Sunday School class--had asked Mr. and Mrs. Truman to come to a dinner in my honor and Marion's; so it was to be the Culpeppers, the Trumans, and the Hayses for dinner that night. That was when I talked to Truman on the phone. I told you about that. The reason was that either on my own initiative or the governor's request I had to go back again to Little Rock to try to keep that situation from getting out of hand.

T: Now was the governor just backing down on what he had said he was going to do? Is this what was really happening? Or was it just a case of his getting some pressures?

H: I think that he was getting some second thoughts because of the bitter reaction from the White Citizen's Council that were probably just giving him "Hail Columbia" for having let me influence him. I think he was in a tight spot. Of course, those men didn't like me. They knew I didn't share their feelings, and the wonder is that he let them think that he did. I guess he is a political animal. I guess his political judgment, as reflected in terms of power and following, was better than mine, but I wasn't thinking in those terms. But he apparently was. He just couldn't bear to see his following slipping out from under him, so he was thinking how to do it and at the same time about his relations with me and with Eisenhower. He didn't want to fill the role of "the betrayer." Not many men just deliberately decide to do that. They sometimes permit themselves moments of weakness; but not many governors, men that rise that high in political society, are just craven enough to do that.

Well, this, of course, involved introspection and character anaylsis that is somewhat unrelated to what we are talking about. But when the day came that fateful Monday, when we thought everything was all right and the Guard had been dismissed--the governor sent the guard home--and we were relying upon the city police maintaining order. This time on that Monday the nine pupils were expected to come to the school, and they did. They got inside and then, I tell you, it became very violent. The teenagers were running up and down the corridors, and a lot of the violent observers had crashed through the lines of police making all sorts of threats. The last word that I can remember was when the superintendent of schools called me along toward eleven o'clock.

T: You were in Little Rock?

H: I was in Room 214 of the Sam Peck Hotel. Virgil Blossom called me and said, "Brooks, are the federal forces coming?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "Get in touch with the White House and tell them to get here in a hurry." I called one of the attaches, Max Rabb, who was one echelon below Sherman Adams. He was in the White House and probably in constant touch with Adams and the President. They were still in Newport, of course. I said, "Max, for goodness sakes get the troops in here. We are having trouble. I don't know whether we can hold them or not." He said, "They will come, they will be there;" or maybe that was when he called back to tell me they were coming.

But, of course, we learned later that the troops they intended to send were in Kentucky at one of the military establishments there, paratroopers. I forget what camp.

T: 101st--Is that the division at Fort Campbell?

H: Fort Campbell. Yes. That was the military resource that they were counting on, but they didn't have it lined up quickly enough. So, Virgil called me about thirty minutes later and said, "Well, it's too late, Brooks. We sent them home. We sent the nine pupils home." It was left in that status until the troops came in, and of course, they immediately revamped. I had lost communication with Faubus. The political situation was so blurred that there was nothing to be gained by trying to pick it up. He had told me good-bye and I just had to accept my fate and my disappointment that he had allowed the situation to deteriorate. He had, in the meantime, flown over to the southern Governors' Meeting at Sea Island, one of the resort places; if not the southern Governors it may have been the nation's governors. At any rate it was a meeting. He was quickly becoming the hero of the extremists, and that included a lot of people in the South because when he showed up at a football game in Atlanta and the announcement came over the loudspeaker that Governor Faubus was in the audience, he got a tremendous ovation, I understand. So by that time, you see, Faubus had lost any reputation that he might have had as a moderate and was completely a captive of this crowd.

T: So, you really weren't able to do much more?

H: Wasn't anything I could do. But, of course, I didn't have to do anything. The military operations were sufficient and those young black people were protected.

T: Was it not true . . .

H: No, I don't think so, these were the paratroopers. There was a mistake that Eisenhower made. There were two things he could have done. He could have nationalized the Guard and let them take care of it; another thing, he could have given us the U. S. Marshalls in numbers. I think that would have been much more acceptable to the people of Little Rock. Well, as a matter of fact, the peace-loving people, the nonviolent people of Little Rock were in the great majority. The folks that want to spill blood and intimidate black people, the people who have that kind of twisted human relations, were very much in the minority. But, of course, their ranks were swollen by the raging segregationists that they had found in other counties and other areas and even in other states. I don't want to make too much of that because there was enough violence on the part of some Little Rock people to constitute a problem, but not enough to give it the dimensions that it finally acquired, because this condition of violence was fed by both groups. The people of Little Rock who were in that crowd included surprisingly a lot of people that you never would have thought would be on the side of lawlessness.

This, you see, was something like the Civil War. It brought into the Confederate Army and into the secession movement people who in their saner moments, uninfluenced by the hysteria of their neighbors and so on, never would have wanted the nation to suffer and collapse like that. Those were, of course, distressing days for me. I was a rather lonely person.

T: Did you go down by yourself, or was Mrs. Hays with you at this particular time when you were at the Sam Peck Hotel?

H: She was with me. She said to me one day, "Who is that fellow always eating at the table next to us?" I said, "Well, I might as well tell you. That's our bodyguard. That's Bob Hill, Deputy United States Marshall. He has been detailed to take care of me, to be within sight of me at all times." He even went to church with us. He wouldn't go with us. He would sit in a seat close to us. It lasted about ten days, I guess.

T: Is that the first time you had a bodyguard?

H: Oh, yes. Well, Marion said, "You should have told me. That's a lot of fun. You're very important, aren't you?" So, I should have told her, but I was afraid it would frighten her to think that I had a bodyguard. He had a room right next to ours at the Sam Peck Hotel.

Another thing that happened, you were asking about her. Sander Vanocur, I believe, was at the table with us one day for a cup of coffee and what Marion told him showed up in Time magazine much to her surprise. This federal judge that they brought in to hear cases was from North Dakota, and he was the last man they should have brought because he came in with no knowledge of the Southern mores. He really mishandled the case all the way around by barking at people and giving them the high and mighty intonations of glorious abstractions. He lectured to us and all that kind of business, a cocky little fellow. It was a terrible mistake. They just picked the wrong judge to send in. They should have gotten somebody from Alabama or some southerner, you know.

T: But they were afraid he wouldn't make the kind of decision they wanted.

H: Yes. I suspect that's right. They probably were influenced by that, but they sure picked the wrong guy. I just know there have got to be some northern judges who could have shown a little more sympathy. At any rate, his aide told me before he left Little Rock, "Mr. Hays"--he didn't like his boss and he told me so--"I am so ashamed of the judge." He said, you know why I had to quit sitting down at your table? He told me not to be seen in your presence. He said that it would give the impression that you are influencing him (the judge)." He said, "Isn't that ridiculous that I couldn't have a cup of coffee with you?" So that is the kind of judge that complicated the problem. He made it hard to sell judicial judgment to the people. Well, I am sorry about that part of the problem but that is the truth.

T: So in early 1958 you called for a committee. You made the appeal for a committee, a special congressional committee, to study the problems brought about by the decision of the Supreme Court to order the desegregation of the public schools.

H: When did I introduce that?

T: This was reported in the Religious News Service on March 7, 1958. So this would be in March when this was reported.

H: I guess I was still hoping that Congress could have some share in conditioning the minds of the country for the tremendous new changes, you see. I guess that was what inspired me to do that.

T: Yes. You indicated a couple of things calling for a "cooling off" period to enact new legislation to make possible at least minimal compliance with the provisions of the court's order; and then, you said, "I can't see why we need to get into an ideological war between sections of our country every time we

approach this problem of race relations."

H: Well, I had forgotten that I took that action, but I am sure it was with a feeling of wistfulness about the legislative branch of government. Here were great neglected spaces in the system of government, and it ought not to be left exclusively to the executive to enforce and to the court to interpret; there could be a constructive participation by the Congress in this great transition, don't you see. And I was right about it. Everybody was afraid to help me, the northerners because they would be tainted with southern provincialism and the southerners because they would be keeping company with a dirty integrationist. That's what I was the victim of, and in that kind of situation the congressional leaders should work out a course of action that is morally defensible and politically viable.

I think I used that expression in some of my speeches. My plan was morally defensible because it represented some great strides forward in equalizing opportunities and giving justice to the blacks, and at the same time it should be stablized by the political leadership. Now maybe I was wrong about that. Apparently I was wrong if expediency was to be considered or I wouldn't have found my neck on the block.

T: Then you said that in the primary you did have some opposition and you defeated it handily. How did the circumstances of the period of the fall of 1958 occur? There was a great deal of interest, of course, when Dale Alford was suggested as a possible candidate for the Congress as a write-in candidate. Had there been precedent for a write-in candidate being able to win?

H: No. They had the support of an assistant to the state's attorney general who was also playing to the mob action, the segregationists, while the attorney general was out of the state at that time. This assistant I am sure was acting with the attorney general's permission, and they issued an opinion that the use of stickers was legal. It was a completely phony opinion. There was not authority at all. They tried to represent that there was a precedent for it, but there was not a precedent. There were all sorts of differences between the case that they cited for the use of a sticker. The simple fact is that that was a situation in which there was no printed name on the ballot at all. The ballot for use in that election had no names at all printed on the ballot. The court later legalized the action of a number of the precinct officials of just having some typewritten or printed stickers to paste in so they could say that there really had been a compliance with law.

In my case, you see, there was the big difference that my name was printed on all the ballots with a blank place underneath. In the earlier case, where they did legalize what had been done, the use of stickers, as I have indicated there was no name on the ballot and there was no requirement that the voter use an "X" mark in the box, you see. The old order of things right up until shortly before this election I am speaking of was that you scratched out the names of everyone you did not want to vote for and left unscratched the name of the person you were voting for, and that had always been the rule in Arkansas until shortly before 1958 when this other plan of an "X" written in by the voters was adopted. So, it gave room for all kinds of irregularities. Whenever you had a set of clerks, election officials, who were friendly to the write-in candidate, all they had to do was just sit there and paste on those little things on that ballot; and they did that in some places.

There was an affidavit filed in support of the protest that came up to the

House of Representatives about seating Alford. There was an affidavit in which one precinct official said that they were giving out these stickers in her box to voters as they came up to register to vote. They handed them a ballot and handed them a sticker with it. She said she knew some people thought they had to stick that on there to make their ballot legal. Well, that is how ridiculous the whole thing was.

T: And, of course, there being only a week of activity you really didn't have time to speak out against this.

H: Oh, no. People were just mad.

T: What was your strategy in the last week?

H: We had to do what we could to hold our people together and give them some heart and confidence and convince them that I had been a good representative.

T: Did you think you would lose?

H: Well, the last few hours I thought it was gone from me, yes. I could just feel it. I saw friends walk across the street to keep from meeting me and shaking hands, old friends. I remember one friend that I just couldn't conceive of turning against me, denouncing me to my face and quivering with anger. I said, "Well, John, I hope you will compose yourself. You are being unfair to me about this." "Oh," he said, "you are just taking us down the road to hell," or some such expression. He was a leading member of one of the Baptist churches in Little Rock, that kind of opposition. We had gotten about twenty leaders in the community who had been presidents of the local Chamber of Commerce--that would be a good leadership group--and they met with the chairman of the school board, who was on my side; and there were only one or two men in that crowd who spoke up for my position. The whole city was victim of a poisonous political atmosphere.

T: In September, 1958, you had a conference with Governor Faubus just about the time that he had said that the federal government was planning to bring in force on the schools but not do anything about labor racketeering. Do you remember that event in which time you indicated that you had conferred with him about the Central High controversy but "that it was primarily in the role as head of his church." Mr. Hays, president of the Southern Baptist Convention said, according to the New York Times for September 3, 1958, which would be before the election. Do you remember that event at all?

H: No. I don't. Where did Faubus make this statement?

T: Well, this is by Claude Sitton, writing to the New York Times. The dateline is September 2, "The Little Rock Story." "Governor Orval E. Faubus asserted today that the federal government was planning to use force against the citizens of Little Rock while allowing labor union racketeers to go unpunished. He said he had information confirming an aritcle in the New York Times, Sunday, August 24, that federal marshalls would be employed to put down any violence that might result if the Supreme Court ordered to continue integration of Central High School. Mr. Faubus said he also understood that, as the article reported, injunctions would be obtained in advance against known troublemakers in the area. An official in Washington said the administration had two plans to carry out the U. S. Supreme Court order insisting on integration. One was the use of deputy marshalls, and a considerable number already had been recruited for possible use in Little Rock. He said the other plan

was that federal troops had been alerted in the event local police and federal marshalls could not maintain order. 'I will resist any federal force interfering with the affairs of any school in my state,' was a quote Governor Faubus declared. As to what he could do, he replied, 'I could close the schools.' He said that it was a rather sad commentary on the state of American affairs, where nothing was done to check such people as had been parading before the McClellan Committee in Washington in its investigation of labor and manage of practices; yet, at the smae time, it has been decided by the federal government to bring in federal marshalls to be used if needed in the school affairs of Little Rock." It goes on, "The governor's remarks came during a news conference before his departure for an undisclosed vacation spot to get some rest."

H: Now what is the date of that again?

T: September 2, 1958. After his press conference he conferred for thirty-five minutes with Representative Brooks Hays, Democrat, of Arkansas.

H: And that is the only reference to me?

T: Yes. It describes you here: "acted as a mediator last September 14 at a meeting between the governor and President Eisenhower at Newport, Rhode Island. A year ago today, Mr. Faubus surrounded Central High School with National Guard troops who two days later repulsed nine Negro students attempting to enter the school under federal court order. The court subsequently forced the governor to withdraw the guards and rioting broke out in the school on September 23 and the Army moved in the next day and restored order. Although most schools outside Little Rock began their fall terms today, Central High School remains closed. The school board voted five to one last night to postpone the opening until September 15." That is really the only reference to you. But this is September, 1958.

H: Well, he did close the schools.

T: Wasn't the primary in August?

H: Well, July or August. We had passed through primary, and Faubus had been elected to a third term, I guess. I had been nominated for a ninth term.

T: You don't particularly remember this meeting with Faubus?

H: No. I don't. But obviously Faubus had allowed his leadership to degenerate--it's the only word I can think of. That's more evidence of this captivity that I have been talking about. From then on you got that kind of low-level leadership. In April of 1959 it reached this point in his vocabulary: "Yes," he said, "they charged that I said it was the law of the land. But suppose it was the law of the land, it didn't have to be obeyed. The law of the land when we became a nation was the edict of George III and the Revolutionary movement produced our independence, you didn't have to obey the law of the land." Can you imagine that? Making his defiance in the same class as the defiance of the Colonies of "taxation without representation."

T: Apparently you carried all of the areas except Pulaski County in that election of 1958. You lost out by fifteen hundred votes of sixty thousand cast. So it was really a narrow defeat.

H: Oh, my, yes, and of course, it wasn't a legal defeat at all, not even if you

could prove the validity of the use of these stickers because they were stealing votes and miscounting them deliberately. The sheriff of one of the counties told me that he knew where they had taken three thousand votes from me. You see, in the primary preceding this election in November, seventy-one thousand votes had been cast and I carried every county in the district. In the November election I carried all but one county and there were only sixty-one thousand votes cast. So, the primary was far more representative of the sentiments of the people. Now that's a point that hasn't been brought out.

T: You describe those as miserable days.

H: Yes.

T: We talked about your defeat and you said it was a dismal day and a dreary time, I am not sure which words you used. Looking back twenty years now what kind of reflection can you make on those days?

H: Well, I think somewhere in the recording, maybe in this series of talks we have had, I told you of the reply I made when I had a sort of trick subject for political science lectures on "Peaks and Pitfalls of Politics." A fellow professor said, "What was your peak?" I said, "The thing you thought was my pitfall, my defeat for a ninth term, because that was one situation in which my moral position was impregnable. That was one time that I knew I was right and deserved to be reelected."

Actually, it was awfully hard for me to represent the community in the divided mood of the people. There was great division among them. Finally, they did work back into a plan for communication between the races. I think the South sleeps better today than it did when it was torn by these dissensions. I think that generally speaking the white South takes pride in the way it has adjusted to the new demands of democracy.

Now, there are moral elements that in the present framework of life I can speak of. That's a matter of style. It is a question of what is proper where you relate your own political stance to a moral position. I am entitled to speak of those things in order to interpret them. For example, I was talking about one of the men who . . .

Let me pick up here what I said a few minutes ago about a Time magazine article quoting my wife. Marion said that she had found me sitting up at three o'clock in the morning, trying to think the problem through, and that is correct, more than once. I was sleepless. I couldn't figure out just what the next steps were. That was my comment, and I think maybe that will show up in my memoirs. I don't know, but for your purposes I think it is relevant. I said, "Yes, I remember that." I wasn't just trying to think it through, I was trying to draw upon the reserves I had in the way of commitment to moral leadership. In talking with the people who believe in morality in public service, I said I remember that September morning at three o'clock, the one she probably had reference to. I was sitting in a comfortable chair. I was thinking about my duty and my course of action.

As I remember the Psalms that my sixth-grade teacher had me learn, there is a line in one of them that I am sure you are familiar with: "Would that I had the wings of a dove, I would fly away and be at peace." And then I thought, "Well, that's not very noble just to run away. That's escapism." Then I thought of another passage in the Psalms where it said--and here's where the

image of wings came in--"when I meditate upon thy law, I find peace in the shadow of thy wing." There you have wings not as a method of escape, but wings as a secure faith; and you are covered by the wings of love, duty, and loyalty. Then, there is another, "Great peace have they who love thy law." It was always that concept of law. I think the best way really, if I might philosophize to this extent, is that I think that one way, and perhaps the best way to communicate with others about God is in terms of law, not laws but law, not rules and statutes and regulations but the government of the universe. It's a universe based on law and you lead into the law of love. This is my philosophy, and I think it's sound.

T: You received considerable worldwide attention when you were defeated in 1958. There were lots of news stories, and the Fifth District in Arkansas became a well-known district. Did this have any effect on you? I know one of the things you have said is that your concern after being out of office in January, 1959, was that you didn't have a job.

H: Well, I didn't suffer. I was getting lots of invitations to speak and generally good honorariums, and that carried me through. But it was at that stage, you see, that President Eisenhower was eager to give me an appointment. I turned down two or three appointments that he offered me. One was to head up the refugee work. That would have taken me out of the country a good deal, and I didn't want to leave the country; another was a job in the Voice of America, and I didn't want that. I said to his people who were speaking for him, with his knowledge, of course, and acting under his mandate, that he didn't owe me anything. Well, he recognized that, of course. When he finally offered me the nine-year appointment on the Tennessee Valley Authority Board, I was ready to take that because, of course, I had been up to my neck in problems of the South and had been a strong supporter of TVA, and I accepted that.

You are right about the attention I got. We had had letters, telegrams, and phone calls from all the states after my defeat. I think we figured we had about four thousand letters. I couldn't answer all of them. I fear that some of them were never answered. I did the best I could. Gene McCarthy, in that year of 1958, went from the House to the Senate. He was elected as a new senator after a short term in the House. He told me one day, "Brooks, do you know that you received more lines, you, a defeated candidate for the House, and more space in the newspapers than all thirteen of the United States senators."

T: I am sure that was true. There are all sorts of pictures of you and even cartoons such as this one that appeared in the Washington Post, standing up with Governor Faubus behind your back with a knife in your back. The caption is, "I said I wouldn't stand in your way." These types of things. You were president of the Southern Baptist Convention at that time as well. Did this have any effect on your thinking? Did you react at all, or was that just simply your strategy that you were president of the Convention and it happened that you were running for reelection at that time and there happened to be a moral issue of high order?

H: Oh, yes. I don't think I would have acted any differently at all, if I had been a second church deacon or just a pew-member in the Second Baptist Church. I think that what I did--of course, you can't disregard the fact that there were motivations here that are identified with my Christian faith. I must modify that to this extent. I think I was hurt politically by appearing on the program of the National Baptist Convention, which is predominantly black.

They had invited me to speak at their Convention in Chicago, and it was at the height of the problem in Little Rock. There was a lot of publicity, and pictures were taken of me sitting there between two of the black leaders, talking to them. That was used by my opposition. They reproduced that picture in an unsigned circular, which itself is a violation of election laws in Arkansas, and they dropped those circulars by the thousands from an airplane on the day before the election. I gave some thought to accepting that invitation to speak in Chicago as to whether it would be wise from the standpoint of shaking my leadership advantage to the white people of the South who were sort of on the other side, and I am thinking of Baptists, the white Baptists. I decided that even if I were sure that a number of them were aggrieved over my going to that Convention, I thought that would be ignoble. I said, "Whatever the damage, I am going." I couldn't live with myself, if I turned their invitation down.

T: There was some conversation at this time as to whether you would possibly consider running again in 1960. Did you ever give that thought? You didn't answer the newspapers. You left them in abeyance in 1958 as to whether you would run again in 1960.

H: I guess that's right. I was asked about it.

T: Did you ever give any thought to it?

H: I can't remember that I thought of it for a moment.

T: You decided you wouldn't run again?

H: Pretty early after that I decided I wouldn't run again.

T: Why?

H: Well, I had acquired all that the office could do for me. I had had a happy sixteen years there, mostly happy. I had made my contacts. My happiness didn't depend on being a member of Congress. I was finding interesting things to do. I knew that it would be a hard-fought, difficult race to win; and it might take some of the glow, really, off of my experience in 1958. I just felt like the returns from that experience were adequate. But, if you remember, I was at the Knoxville office of the TVA and had interesting work there. No, I didn't think about it. If I thought about it at all, it was just a fleeting thought, maybe an entertaining of the idea at one time, but it didn't linger.

T: Let's talk briefly about your election to the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention. There are some background stories, I am sure, in that event. It's usually assumed that one does not campaign for the office of president of the Southern Baptist Convention; but there has to be some consideration and the willingness of the nominee to accept the office, if he is elected. Somebody has to make the nominations, and usually, for practical purposes, there are some informal arrangements as to what is done. When did you begin to think of the possibility of becoming president of the Southern Baptist Convention?

H: Well, first I want to agree with you. I think that while you are not supposed to run there have been a lot of instances in which men deliberately planned to have their name offered, and they took care of certain ecclesiastical requirements for the securing of that honor. That's not anything to

shock us.

It reminds me, however, of something I said to my Methodist mother-in-law. She was a sweet, wonderful Methodist. I was invited to speak to one of the Methodist conferences in Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. She was so proud of it. When I got back, she said, "Well, how did you do, son?" I said, "Well, I must have done all right, Mother. They want me to come back and run for Bishop." She said, "Oh, go on. Methodists don't run for Bishop." I said, "That's what you think." So, we have no right to kid them, because we run for "Bishop" too.

But I did not run, I didn't turn a hand. I didn't do a thing. I did not veto the idea that was first advanced by a wonderful little Baptist preacher named Bruce Price, pastor for many years at Newport News, Virginia. He grew up in my hometown of Russellville and remembers when I was superintendent of that Sunday School for a couple of years, when I was a young lawyer in practice with my father. I guess I was one of his idols--you know how you will have heroes; and because I was the superintendent and because our family had done some favors for his family, he was very grateful for little things he said that represented graciousness on our part. He always was interested in me, interested in me politically; and he was crushed with disappointment when they stole the congressional seat from me in 1933. That was a very corrupt election that I won't go into now, but he knew about it from conversations with old friends of his that he had been in school with. He said he heard them admit that they had literally stolen hundreds of votes from me to keep me from coming to Congress in 1933. He talked about that a lot. He had an ambition for me to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He arranged to have me nominated for vice-president in the Chicago Convention in 1951, and I was elected second vice-president. That was due to his activity.

T: Did he make the motion?

H: No. He got another man, a close friend of his, James P. Wesberry, of Atlanta, to make the nominating speech. It must have been a good one because there were no other nominees. They just elected the two of us, first and second vice-presidents. At any rate, they worked it out so that Marshall Craig of Dallas would be first vice-president and I would be second vice-president. That was due to very skillful parliamentary actions on their part. You know Jim Wesberry. He has been a good, warm friend of mine. Juliette Mather, who was a leader in the Woman's Missionary Union--she helped in their work in the Birmingham office--was leaving the auditorium in Chicago and she heard somebody being praised to the skies. It was Jim Wesberry nominating me; and she turned around and said to her friend, "Who is that paragon of righteousness he is talking about?" Another man told me that that speech nominating me was unlike an escalator. He said it was the only verbal escalator he ever saw that didn't turn to come down again. It just went right on through the roof. He really took flight.

But that's the history of the second vice-presidency in 1951. I went out to San Francisco to preside at one of the sessions because, not having been present in the Chicago Convention when I was elected, I didn't want to show any indifference to the honor they gave me. So I flew out at my own expense to San Francisco to preside at one of the sessions. Then, Bruce Price kept talking about electing me president of the Convention. I thought it was a vain hope. I didn't see how I could ever compete with some of the outstanding ministers. Here I am, a layman, and having carried the unpopular mission of

the Christian Life Commission, in a way, I felt that had not helped me. I had been in the middle of that controversy. I thought I wasn't well enough known in Baptist circles. I think from some evidence of it later, my name did have a certain recognition because a lot of people stood up that day to vote for me. They had never met me, but they knew my public image. I was convinced of that; but at the time, I told Bruce, "Well, I'll accept it, of course, if it comes to me; but I won't turn a hand. I won't do a thing." The only activity I know of were a few conversations that Bruce had with some of the leaders, telling them that he was going to see to it that I was nominated. He didn't conduct a campaign. He didn't do a thing really except talk Paul Caudill into nominating me. I heard that nominating speech. I don't recall that I had had any conversation with Caudill before, but Bruce brought the news that Caudill would nominate me.

T: He arranged it.

H: Oh, he did everything that was done, Bruce did; and I believe that's all he did. He alerted a few friends like Wesberry and Paul Caudill and then arranged for Caudill to make the nominating speech.

T: Of course, as pastor of First Baptist Church, Memphis, he was an influential pastor.

H: It was a terrific speech. I was sitting by Louie Newton and somebody else, I've forgotten who it was. When Paul walked up to the podium after about six outstanding ministers had been nominated, including Ramsey Pollard, who later succeeded me, Louie Newton turned to this friend of his and said, "I wonder who he's going to nominate." It was sort of a contemptuous reference. I said, "Me, and I'm leaving here for two reasons. One is, I won't be elected and I don't want to see myself defeated; and second, I don't want to see how you brethren vote." So, I left right there. I was standing out in the foyer of the auditorium, and all of a sudden somebody rushed up to me and he said, "Mr. Hays, quick, you are wanted on the platform. You have just been elected president of the Convention."

There was a runoff. Ramsey Pollard was the runner-up, as I remember it. Doug Hudgins had been nominated and he didn't make the runoff. I think that Forrest Fizer, of Texas, had been nominated, and others. There were six or seven of us altogether. Of course, Hudgins had a following, but he couldn't possibly have won it. He had gone so prominently into the anti-integration movement that Baptists weren't going to honor a man who had stuck his neck out on that issue to that extent. In order to keep favor with Baptists, they didn't have to say anything in support of segregation or integration necessarily. But many Baptists didn't like Hudgins' position in the St. Louis Convention. I think that was in 1954. I missed that Convention. When the vote was put to the Convention, approving the Supreme Court decision on school integration, which I mentioned in a previous conversation with you and which I was happy to see adopted, Hudgins said when the vote was taken and announced, "I want the record to show that I did not support this motion." That was to take care of people at home. He wasn't content just to be silent and go back home and tell them he didn't vote for it. He wanted it in the record. I think that sealed his fate as far as high honors in the Convention--politics, if there is such a word and if I could use that word.

Of course, there are political considerations. Ramsey Pollard succeeded me and was elected in 1959 at the Louisville Convention. Herschel Hobbs and Pollard were very close, and in fact, he nominated Pollard in this 1957

Convention. He said to Ramsey one day, "Ramsey, you know, I think the Lord's hand was in Brooks' election over you in 1957, and I think his hand was in our succeeding to the office later, because Brooks rendered a service on the race front which you and I were not capable of rendering." He said, "I think that maybe it was providential, just at that very time that Brooks came to the throne." Well, it is an interesting comment because it was addressed to Ramsey by his close associate, Herschel Hobbs. Well, I don't happen to believe in that kind of intervention by the Almighty. I think this gets back to what I said philosophically about the rule of law. I think his laws are immutable and beautiful and so evident that the idea of intervention would be inconsistent with that.

T: When you were elected president, you say after this runoff, did you have much conversation with your friend from Virginia?

H: Oh, listen. There is hardly a week that I don't get something from Bruce, a phone call; or when he goes through Washington and changes planes here, he will take time to call me.

T: You would really describe him as one of your close friends?

H: Oh, absolutely. I love him like a brother, or like a son; however, there isn't that much difference in our ages. I would say there is maybe ten years difference.

T: What did you really set out to do? You indicated when you were elected president of the Convention that you had certain basic ideas as president that you were going to try and fulfill as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Looking back on some of the things that you suggested, how successful were you, do you think, in achieving what you wanted to do? To be a mediator, to develop a new awareness of mediation in the Convention, and serve as a mediator even among Baptists, do you want to react on that now as you look back?

H: Well, it's four thirty and about this time of day, I get a bit tired of my own voice. Why can't we start with that in the morning? I'll be ready then. There are some other things I would like to cover, and I'd like to come back to this question. If you want to get here at nine, I'll be ready for you, and we will go as long as we can. I want to talk about my two years leave of absence from Calvary Church, this neighborhood church ministry. I want to talk a little, not long, about my hobbies, because there is a church angle there; and then, we will pick up this very important area that you spoke of, what I hoped to do and what I think I did do. I want to talk a little about amnesty and how my posture on amnesty has been influenced by my faith.

T: Mr. Hays, I am glad to come back again today and talk with you again briefly. We talked yesterday about some of your involvements in the political ferment over the race issue. There was one time, in 1965, you were invited to Bogalusa, Louisiana, and you might tell something about that.

H: Well, that was, I think, a significant event. It sort of dramatized the conflicting forces and influences in the South following the Little Rock incident and generally the effort of the federal government to achieve peaceful compliance with the Supreme Court decision. Now this invitation to Bogalusa got national attention. I remember my picture was run by the New York Times with the response that I gave to the committee. It was an ad hoc committee composed of two Baptist ministers, I believe; one Episcopal

minister, and then, the director of the radio station, and a local attorney there, who was president of the Louisiana State Park at the time. There was a committee of six or seven. Newspaper and radio people were both represented on this committee. The attorney, a very admirable person, was the spokesman for the group, as I remember it.

The invitation simply said that Bogalusa was threatened with violence similar to the Little Rock situation and they believed, in view of the fact that I had served two years as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and that the community was largely Baptists, that I could make a contribution in coming to Bogalusa to talk about the responsibility of the churches to lead out in the fulfillment of the government's expectation and to achieve a just peace in the community. I promptly said, "Yes. I'll be glad to come."

Now, just as promptly, the dissident elements--since I really believe that this ad hoc committee represented the majority of sentiment--composed largely of Ku Klux Klan members and the White Citizen's Council, put their mimeograph machines to work and distributed protests over my coming. It was very provocative, and a frightening thing to read. They sent me a copy. It was frightening to read what the Ku Klux Klan was saying. For example, that anyone who came to hear Brooks Hays would be dealt with accordingly. The circular misspelled two words, "delt' and "intergration." That was frightening because, obviously, it was a threat.

The committee huddled quickly and decided that it would be unfair to me to ask me to come into that kind of strife-ridden community. Now, when the Klan got in to it, naturally, the press would ask the governor, "What about it," with some of them thinking that the governor would say, "Well, we will assure Mr. Hays' safe passage, and guarantee there will be no violence. He will be fully protected"; but, he didn't say that. John McKeithen, governor at the time, said, "We don't need Hays or anybody else coming from the outside telling us how to obey the law." I would call it a moral secession that really echoed the tragic Civil War secession, to destroy the ties to the rest of the Christian community. But the committee was fearful after this had taken place.

T: The Religious News Service for January 6, 1965, dealt with this situation and the cancellation of your speech because of planned threats. They said that they were ashamed, "that fear should so engulf our community that it strangles free speech and the right of peaceful assembly." Then, it talks about leaders who circulated a publication asserting that any who attended the meetings "would be tagged as integrationists and would be dealt with accordingly." They indicated that besides Reverend H. Bruce Shepard, the rector of the St. Matthews Episcopal Church, those signing the statement were Reverend Jerry M. Chance of Main Street Baptist Church; Reverend Paul G. Gillespie of Memorial Baptist Church; Ralph Blumberg, operator of the radio station, WBOX; Lou Major, the publisher of the Bogalusa Daily News; and Bascom Talley, an attorney.

H: My contract was largely with Bascom Talley. He, apparently, was an outstanding moral leader, and president of the state bar.

T: Was he a Baptist?

H: No, a Methodist, I believe. His son was a candidate for the Methodist ministry, and I think later graduated from theological school. The father was very proud of his son. He told me one time in a phone conversation that he was looking forward so eagerly to meeting me because his views were the

same as mine on the race question. That shows you how you can get an image that is very accurate just through reading a person's comments, because he had me correctly appraised. Since he was interested, as most lawyers are, in politics as well as the church work, he wanted to meet me, and he fulfilled that desire by phone conversations. One of the sad footnotes to this story is that he died before we could get together. He died rather suddenly, I suppose at an early age. I am sure he wasn't an elderly person. That, of course, is not related to the story except that this event stands out as a milepost of the course of southerners as we work toward peace and justice.

Another little footnote: When I was invited to speak at a Williamsburg, Virginia, assembly of students from all over the South, a very large and important gathering of college students, I was asked to give one of the keynote speeches. After I had concluded, one of the students arose, identified himself as a student in one of the Louisiana colleges, and said, "I ask the privilege of speaking to Mr. Hays on the podium." He came forward and in a very interesting ceremony presented me a certificate from Governor McKeithen, declaring me to be an honorary citizen of Louisiana. Of course, it just took my breath. I wasn't prepared for anything like that, but it was a very interesting ending for my appearance in Williamsburg. I had a feeling that the bestowal of these ordinary gestures was just one that the governor threw in with a lot of others he signed and it didn't mean anything.

Some states have honorary citizenship--Texas, for example. I was given, with the governor's full knowledge a certificate of honorary citizenship of Texas. I was made the mayor for one day of Palestine, Texas, and I am a Kentucky Colonel. Arkansas has the Arkansas Traveler. Nebraska has an Admiral and the Nebraska Navy, of course, there is no water in the state hardly, just the Platte River. But, anyway, I was a little skeptical about it. Sure enough, I had a friend who had known about it and he knew of my doubt about it. He said to the governor once, "That was an interesting thing you did for Brooks Hays." He said from the governor's response he didn't remember a thing about it. So I have an idea that I shouldn't be too proud of it. But, the point is that somebody was enthusiastically for me. That was one gesture.

T: Did you ever go back to Bogalusa?

H: You don't mean go back. I never went to Bogalusa.

T: You never went later on?

H: No. It was one of the larger Louisiana towns that I have never been in. It was strictly a matter of confidence in my public leadership, not by visitation but just by newspaper and other media presentations of my attitude. I guess that's about all we can distill from that story.

T: One of the things that was talked about when you were defeated for Congress in 1958 was that you might possibly be a candidate for the vice-presidency. There was some talk that with Kennedy running and winning support that you would balance the ticket with a Baptist and southern voice with a Catholic northeasterner. When did you become aware of Kennedy and a supporter of his candidacy for the presidency in 1960?

H: Well, I believe I previously referred to the fact that he impressed me as a highly intelligent young congressman. I was there four years before he was elected. I remember vividly my first impression of him. Incidentally, he was on crutches at the time. He had had some difficulty with spinal problems.

I remember seeing him walk into the Chamber for one of the early roll calls.

T: Would that be around 1954?

H: No, 1946. I was there four years ahead of him, not four terms. I remember thinking how young he looked. I guess I wouldn't have retained this in my memory except we are constantly reminded of it. I have said that I wanted to ask him, "Are you sure that you meet the constitutional requirements of being twenty-five years of age?" He wasn't much more than that, I think about thirty. Of course, four years later, he was elected to the Senate, so, he got into the public picture very early in life. Now there was a flurry of interest in the suggestion that I would be a good running mate for President Kennedy--Senator Kennedy, he was at that time, not only for Kennedy but also for Adlai Stevenson, whose name had gotten into the discussions for a third nomination in 1960. I believe he was placed in nomination by Gene McCarthy. But he was not a candidate for it.

T: Yes. He went to the Convention and actually indicated he was not planning to be a real candidate.

H: That's right. I think it was sincere. He was not actively campaigning for it. Now he didn't get credit for that, but I believe it was his real sincere hope not to be nominated. He was not enthusiastic over another campaign, but he would have accepted it. I think I knew his inner thoughts about it as well as anybody because he had responded to my interest in the race problems. He was very enthusiastic over my course. In fact, he sent Sam Rayburn sort of a bristling telegram on what Congress ought to do about the mistreatment of me.

T: You are talking about the mistreatment of you in 1958.

H: Yes, exactly. You see, I was his advance man in the southern states, going ahead of him wherever he was to speak.

T: In 1956 or . . .

H: And in 1952. Both of them. I did a good deal of public speaking for him in 1956. The thing that you are referring to--the interest in the possibility of my being nominated for vice-president was sparked by a well-known editor who had been editor of the Baltimore Sun, Gerald Johnson. He wrote a page editorial for the New Republic, a liberal journal, as you know, in which he had a rather interesting comment to make on the appropriateness of my being on the ticket for vice-president. You can see the logic of it. He said, for example, "Suppose the Convention nominates a Massachusetts Catholic named John Kennedy. Wouldn't he find it in his interests to have a Southern Baptist with the credentials that this Arkansas former congressman has? And, if, on the other hand, the nominee should be Adlai Stevenson, wouldn't he like to have this Illinois Unitarian as a running mate, a person whose position in the South reflects the mores and the thinking and orthodox political posture of Mr. Hays?" I thought it was a rather interesting thing to contemplate. I would have been happy, of course, to be the nominee. A lot of people in my circle of acquaintanceship commented favorably on it. However, I had abandoned any thought of trying to get people interested in it and my friends alerted to it because I had no political base. I was not active and had not been active in Arkansas politics for that two-year period.

T: You were on the TVA Board.

H: I was on the TVA Board at that time, but I had not established myself and never did establish myself in Tennessee as a political person, so, it didn't get any consideration. I talked with some close friends and veterans in politics like former Governor Darden of Virginia, and he agreed that there wasn't any basis for organizing anything in the way of a campaign. There was a time when the vice-presidency went to someone very quickly, and that is true to some extent now. Someone is quickly picked, you know, by the nominee for the Presidency. Lately, though, there has been some screening of the various suggestions. It was not inconceivable that Kennedy might have thought of me, but he didn't need to think of me because of political pressures; it would just be for the general reasons that Gerald Johnson's editorial had pointed out.

T: Had you supported Kennedy for the vice-presidential nomination in 1956? Remember Adlai Stevenson threw that nomination open to the Convention and it became Estes Kefauver and . . .

H: Well, the Arkansas delegation was under what you call the "unit rule." The governor was Orval Faubus, of course, in 1956. This was his delegation. As I recall, of course, all of our votes would be cast for the same man, and it went either to Bill Fulbright--no, I believe those votes went to Albert Gore. I am just not sure. I know it didn't go to Kennedy because at that time the basis hadn't been made for a hospitable attitude on the part of Southern voters for a New England Catholic. Now that was not discussed, but I am sure the political influences that were at work were all in the direction of someone from our part of the country and someone less liberal than Kefauver, because Arkansas was a rather conservative southern state.

T: So, really, you were not what you describe as a Kennedy supporter in those early days.

H: That's right. Well, as a matter of fact, the democratic organization, this unit rule, and the emphasis that the governor and his group took in political council, was just outside of my control. I was just one member of the delegation. Now, if we had not been under the unit rule, I would have probably declared myself; and it is quite likely that I would have supported Kennedy for the vice-presidency.

T: Largely because of your sympathy with some of his political views.

H: Right.

T: What about 1960? When did you begin to support Kennedy in 1960?

H: Well, after he was nominated, of course, I was consulted by him. He asked me to come up to Washington to talk with him about some work that I might quietly do, backstage operation, because it would be resented if the TVA Board members became too prominent. But, at the same time, he knew that I was familiar with the lines of communication to Southern Baptists, and since there might be a revival of religious prejudice that had made Al Smith's campaign so difficult in 1928, Kennedy was thinking ahead and wanting me to do whatever I could for him.

T: You didn't meet him then prior to the 1960 Convention?

H: What do you mean, I didn't meet him?

T: You didn't meet him particularly to discuss anything prior to . . .

H: Not a part of the previous Convention conversation. That is correct.

T: Did you attend the 1960 Convention?

H: No. Again, that would have been improper because of the TVA requirements and the policy of TVA. Not that there is anything in the law that prohibited it. I presume that is true. I am not sure about that. At any rate, no one in any part of the political spectrum had expected me to be prominent. But it was expected that, naturally, I would be for Kennedy. It was expected that I would help in every way I could to deaden the shock to the South of another Catholic being nominated.

T: What kind of advice did you give him?

H: Well, it is a little hard to reconstruct that. First, let me say that when he invited me to fly to Washington from Knoxville, and I let his staff know that I was in town, he asked me to come on out to the Capitol and meet him and Henry Jackson, who was chairman of the National Committee, as I remember, at that time. At any rate, Henry Jackson was doing a lot to help shape up the campaign.

T: Now, was he a senator from Washington at that time?

H: Right. I had served in the House with him and, of course, with Kennedy. So, there was a very happy relationship. However, when I got into the office to talk to him and Senator Kennedy, I immediately told them what I thought I could do and how I could be most helpful. They had little to say about it because, of course, I was to give information and not receive information. So, I did a good deal of the talking. I told him this: That I thought I had in Claude Curlin, a former secretary, and a man who had a fine political mind and a great enthusiast over politics . . . .

The purpose of it was not to develop any powerful Baptist influence because there would be some impropriety there, but to deal with the problem. Well, it was a defensive operation, don't you see, to be sure that he wasn't unjustly treated as a member of a church that had considerable theological differences with the Baptists. I could do this enthusiastically because I knew that Jack Kennedy was a thorough-going churchman and had been brought up as a sincere member of the Catholic faith. I knew that he would never abuse it. So, I was glad to say that I would work with Curlin, and he would tell me just where I could put in a word or two with people. So, that's the way it was left.

I didn't want to take much of his time so I just said, "Well, you can count on my just working backstage now and doing everything I can; or keep in contact with Henry Jackson and others who would know some special service that I might render." As I shook hands with him, I said, "Jack"--that was the last time I ever called him "Jack" because that is the last time I ever saw him before he took office, because always after that the proper word was, "Mr. President." I have often wondered if Bob and Jackie, his wife, said, "Mr. President." That is the expected thing for others to do. Of course, he knew he was about seventeen years or more younger than I. "I am your elder and I am going to talk to you for just a moment as your elder." I was holding his hand. I said, "Promise me, since that you have got this great honor, and even if you aren't elected, you had a great honor just by being nominated by the Democratic Party for President and a superb experience, that win or lose, you'll <u>enjoy</u> this campaign. Enjoy it." He looked at Henry and said, "Well, Henry, we haven't had much advice of that kind, have we?" He said, "Brooks, I promise you," and

he said, "Henry, he's got guts." As I went out the door he knew that I was hearing it, but he said, "Henry, this man has guts."

You see, he had been a signer of this little declaration of friendship for me that you may have seen hanging on the wall. It was an ad hoc committee called the National Committee to Honor Brooks Hays. It is a beautiful statement. I know who wrote it. It was written by Ernest S. Griffith of the Library of Congress. It is a magnificent statement and, of course, a heartwarming statement. It was presented to me at the time of this dinner that the National Committee gave on December 18, following my defeat in November. I drew a lot of interesting people. Billy Graham made a speech, and Mike Monroney, Mrs. Mary Pillsbury Lord, a Republican from Minnesota, and James P. Richards, of South Carolina--again a "respectable" Southern Democrat--made a speech. It was just a great evening with about 750 people there. Jack Kennedy, while he was not at the dinner, was one of the signatories to that statement, and he wired me when I was defeated. He sent me a beautiful little message by telegram. It was interesting that in the first batch of telegrams--and they were coming in by the scores all day the day after it was announced that I had lost--the first two that came in, or in the first batch that was put on my desk, was one from John F. Kennedy and the other from John Foster Dulles. I thought that had an interesting bipartisan flavor. Well, I guess that's about all there is.

T: Did you do anything in the campaign in 1960?

H: On yesterday I had some things to say in response to your question about plans to run again for Congress, to get my old seat back. I indicated that I had just completely surrendered any thought of serving in Congress again. I forgot that there is this exception: I went to Wake Forest University as the first director of the Ecumenical Institute--and incidentally, that's something we must talk about later--and established a residence there in Winston-Salem, I believe in February of 1968. In 1970, after I had qualified from the standpoint of residence, the democratic leadership, some of them, contacted me and asked me if I would accept the democratic nomination, which they said would be mine for the asking, in order to regain the seat that a very popular Republican named Wilmer Mizell, "Vinegar Bend" being his popular name, held. I said, "Oh, no. I haven't been here long enough, and I am absorbed in this other work." So, I turned that off. I felt that it would be foolhardy to run within that brief period of residence.

But by 1972, with a four-year residence, there was reason for my accepting the nomination, and I did accept it. I was a resident almost as long as Mizell when he was first elected to Congress, because while he had played some baseball for North Carolina teams earlier in his life, he was not a bona fide resident very long before he ran for Congress on the Republican ticket. He was very popular and very personable, a very interesting man, but from my point of view, not a strong congressman. He voted wrong just as often as anybody. He opposed many of the welfare measures that I was strong for. He was ultraconservative in his political philosophy.

Of course, I was not opposed for the nomination. So that is an exception to what I said about regaining a seat. I got enthusiastic about it because it would have been a good thing had I been able to win a seat in Congress at that time. It would have been a good way to symbolize the restoration of the moderate viewpoint by Southern people. Arkansas and North Carolina are very much alike. The political mood of the people is alike. So, I had a good time running in 1972. I knew that the odds were against me, but I knew, too, that

I would do what I told Jack Kennedy he ought to do. I would enjoy the campaign. I enjoyed getting out and meeting people and getting name recognition for any future campaign. It was a good experience. I had a great time.

T: Did you have real problems in running at that time with McGovern as head of the Democratic ticket?

H: Oh, I should say I did. Sam Ervin, Terry Sanford, and I, I suppose, were about the only three democratic political people with a statewide acquaintanceship with a history in politics who publicly supported McGovern. Sanford had been governor and, of course, Sam was still the United States Senator. The three of us were probably the only prominent men in North Carolina politics that came out for McGovern. I think, incidentally, that Nixon's majority in North Carolina in that year of 1972 was either the highest in percentage terms in the United States or the second highest. I have forgetten just what the statistics showed.

T: You really had an uphill fight.

H: Well, it was just a hopeless undertaking. I ran way ahead of McGovern, but I couldn't run that much ahead of him. When I spoke at one of the Rotary Clubs down there, the chairman said that they had taken a poll on how they were going to vote, and he said it came out 161 for Nixon, 8 for McGovern, and he said, "We believe that that eight represents Brooks and the seven waiters." It gives you some idea of what I had in the way of resistance.

Well, I think that we might, just for purposes of having an agenda the next time you come out, list the things that should be touched upon and then, if you can let me go, I'll let you go. We could work on through a little more, but if you are going to have to renew it sometime--it wouldn't be too disappointing would it?

T: I would like for us to do that. That's helpful. I think it would be useful to talk about your presidential years, and I will brush up in some real detail on what actually happened in the years you were president of the Southern Baptist Convention. We need to pick that up. I'd like also to have you share some of the sentiments inside the White House and what relations you had with Baptists at the time of the decision to prohibit prescribed prayer in the public schools in 1962, and then, the prohibition on prescribed Bible reading.

H: I'll be prepared to discuss that. I would also like to discuss the amnesty issue, also, go into my experience as director of the Ecumenical Institute a little more.

T: Right; the organization and formation of that of which you had a profound part.

H: I would like for reasons that are a bit obscure--it might appear to you that it is irrelevant--to discuss my hobbies because, for one thing, church life if almost a hobby. I mean it is my avocation and not my vocation. But it has produced some activities in this field of hobbies, indulgence in things that do not produce money and do not make you grow intellectually. Well, those are some of the principal things that I would like to work in at the next meeting.

T: I think it would also be helpful if we picked up in the late 1950's and early 1960's that you were in the center of the seat of the United States government.

There may be some things you would like to talk about, some of them you might want to place under seal for a period of time; and we would be agreeable, certainly, to whatever seal you felt was necessary. I think it would be helpful because there are many times that you have been involved in things that you have done in part because of your strong religious convictions. I think this should be brought out. I don't mean to imply that in every instance you interpreted what you did as a religious act, but I am saying that I think this permeates into your general philosophy. So, I'll pick up on that; also, as special assistant in Congressional Affairs to the President. I think this would be one area.

H: In listing some questions you would like to raise in our next talk, you might think in those terms. When I was asked during my years in the White House what my assignment was, the short answer was, I was assigned the problems of intergovernmental relations, meaning state, federal, and local problems and the overlapping functions of these units of government. But it would also be quite in order for me to add the truth that all of my work had to do with relations. I mean by that not only this field that I have described, but congressional relations, foreign relations, church-state relations, and as one who was expected to do a lot of speech making for the President. I represented him on many occasions. He told me one day and Marion put this in her diary--her diaries are being made available to the University of Arkansas Archives and much of it would touch the interest you have. They are going over these very comprehensive and detailed daily records. It would be worth your time to look over these diaries. One of them was this, "Brooks, I am . . ."

T: This was the President?

H: President Kennedy--and I should be specific about that because I stayed on as a consultant to Lyndon Johnson for several months. He said, "I am getting wonderful reports from the meetings where you represented me." And that made me feel good because sometimes one might feel sort of left out since I was not a part of the housekeeping, I was not in the inner circle. But it was a special assignment, and you tend to think of yourself as sort of superfluous now and then. But I was anything but that. I helped him with some talks, I wrote letters for him, and I had a very happy time down there. I'll never cease grieving over his death.

T: We do need to talk about the circumstances surrounding that. That is another area that would be useful to explore, where you were during his death.

H: I want to talk, too, or make a reference to a special service that Bill Moyers had me render. Well, it was with the President's direction and authority, which was to be an associate director of the Community Relations service that had to do with building certain techniques for composing differences and conflicts at the local level and outside of the government.

T: Now was this in the Kennedy administration?

H: In Lyndon Johnson's administration. He asked me to serve as associate director and the interesting thing was that the director whom I would assist was a black man, Roger Wilkins. I was glad to do it. When Bill Moyers called me for the President over the phone to ask if I was willing to to this, he added that this would not interfere with my status at the White House. I still would bear the title "Consultant," and would have my office in the White House, and I would continue to be regarded as an adjunct of the White House functioning

also without any extra pay but doing the thing as an associate director of the Community Relations Service. There was logic in that because I had a lot to do with setting that agency up and getting the legislation through the Congress to establish the agency.

In fact, I think probably the whole idea of the Community Relations Service originated with Warren Cikins and myself. He was my alter ego and a wonderful young man from the Harvard School of Government. He had been with me about two years in the congressional office and then came to the State Department with me, having served in that interim period as a member of Senator Engel's staff, a California senator. Well, after this one year, approximately, in the State Department, he came over to the White House and had an office there with me. He and I were very enthusiastic over this agency.

I was a bit disappointed, I must confess, that I wasn't appointed the first director of it, but Leroy Collins got the nod. I believe that that was a Kennedy appointment. He was a former governor of Florida, a very wonderful man and an ideal choice. Any disappointment that I had over that was tempered by the fact that a wonderful public servant had gotten it. Just an illustration of the happy relations that I had working under a black man, which hasn't always come easy for a southern white man. I don't want to make too much of that. I have an idea that Marion was right in saying in a sort of puckish way, "Well, some of your enemies are saying, 'Well, Brooks finally got in the right spot, an underling for a black man;'" because of my history. She always comes up with something. Did I tell you about the time I couldn't locate my letter for that hotel reservation?

T: No.

H: Well, I was told when I went out to represent the President at some national meeting in Chicago--I believe this was the Congress Hotel on Michigan Avenue there. The letter had said that this would be a crowded hotel, and there were special reservations made for me, so I was to take this letter for identification. I was to come to the manager's office and not get in the reservation line. They said, "Oh, yes, Mr. Hays. Do you have your letter with you?" I said, "Oh, yes." I reached in my pocket and didn't find it there nor in the other pocket. I went through every pocket I had, pants and coat, both. Then I finally gave up. Marion was standing there in a sweat, of course. I said, "Oh, my. I have left it in Washington I am afraid." She spoke up then for the first time and said, "That is the reason he is only the Assistant Secretary of State."

So, these diary entries by Marion are very interesting, and she had put that in her diary, that is, that the President had said that he was getting wonderful reports of my talks. She enjoyed the contacts with Mr. Kennedy, and was a great admirer of him just as I was. He was walking with her there one day and passed the rose garden. She said, "You know, Mr. President, Brooks represented you out here in talking to the 'Gold Star Mothers' not long ago." "Oh," he said, "I know it, the women are crazy about Brooks." She said, "Oh, I know." He looked at her with that cute grin he had, and said, "You noticed that." So, she got a little pleasure out of that.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: August 15-17, 1977

PLACE: Brooks Hays' Residence, 314 Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: Again, it is good to see you and I enjoy being here and am glad to have a chance to tie in some of the ends that we haven't talked about. You just told me a few minutes ago that you are a member of the Board of Trustees of George Peabody College in Nashville. I wonder if you would relate how you happened to get on that Board and how long you have been a trustee.

H: Well, let me say first that I am delighted to see you again. I have enjoyed the previous recordings. I am an old hand at it. You won't regard that as an immodest statement because, of course, this is a period in which oral histories are very popular and I think very valuable. I believe it is a wonderful thing that the Historical Commission is getting into this phase, so I am delighted to do what little I can to help get sort of a photograph of some of the history. Now, as to the George Peabody College Board of Directors, I was elected in 1938, and today I am the senior member of that Board. Every member who was on the Board when I went in in 1938 has either died, resigned, or completely retired. I have not retired. I am what they call a "life member." It is their practice to make one a life member at seventy-five. I like the practice and I think this is worth commenting on as a part of college policy.

I like the practice of not just making him an honorary trustee. Some boards do that and he is deprived of a vote. He is just rather tolerated as an interloper. I can say that with some authority because I am also a member of the George Washington University's Board of Trustees, the great university here in Washington, D. C., and at whatever the age is, I don't remember, they make you not a life trustee with continuing voting privileges and with full authority as a director, but an honorary trustee without a vote. (Phone rang)

T: As the phone rang you were talking about being a life member as opposed to being a trustee emeritus or honorary trustee and the preference that you had for the life trustee.

H: Well, I diverted us by mentioning the George Washington University Board because of its different handling of this problem of age. I naturally prefer the George Peabody way. Also, I have always been partial to the George Peabody College directorship because I know I was not elected there because I was a member of Congress, as in the case of George Washington. I am sure that influenced them to make me a member of the Board there, although I am an alumnus of the George Washington law school and I might have been chosen anyway. But I was known as a congressman and they probably felt they would like to have a liaison with the Congress.

I was told by one of the educators, a member of the staff of the State Board of Education, that the board had looked with favor on the suggestion that he and another alumnus of George Peabody had made that I be elected to a member of the board in response to the president's inquiry as to who in Arkansas or west of the Mississippi River would be appropriate to be selected for a vacancy on the board. They submitted my name, and it was on the theory that I had demonstrated a great concern for rural education. While George Peabody is interested in the whole area of public and private education, still, the interest of rural education has always been very closely considered, and it has been my great concern--rural education in the South, in other words.

So, my interest in the problems of the rural schools inspired this recommendation on the part of the two I have mentioned. Their names were Howard Dawson, a member of the staff of the state's education board and Fred McCuistion, or perhaps his brother. They were twin brothers and it was easy to confuse them. If it was Ed McCuiston, he was a member of the same staff that Dawson was on; if it was Fred, he was a member of the Columbia University faculty in their college of education, which, like George Peabody College, is very prestigious. I would say, again it is diverting, I regard the three leading teacher-education institutions in the word or in our country to be Columbia, Chicago, and Peabody. So, I was very happy to accept membership on the board, and it was, of course, a matter of some prestige for me in Arkansas in 1938, before my adversaries, reverses, and political frustrations that I have had. I was still on the Democratic National Committee but that was a purely honorary office and paid no salary.

I had had the same problems that other men in public life had during the depression and also men not in public life. So, I was glad to have

something to sort of bolster my image in the field of education that I had aspired to be because of these battles that I had engaged in and some bruising contests for the governorship and one contest that you are familiar with, the fight for a congressional seat in the special election in 1933. But another reason for it bringing satisfaction to me is that my mother, a country-school teacher, had a scholarship from what was then the University of Nashville. The name was later changed, and it became George Peabody College. She received one of the first scholarships given by the Peabody Board in 1894. I like to refer to it when I am talking to the faculty, the students, or the alumni. It was a very gratifying experience for me to come to the city where my mother, a frightened little country-school teacher, came in 1894. She attended the college one year. Of course, she had a sentimental attachment for it, and she was thrilled to death that she had lived long enough to see her son a member of the Board.

T: Do you feel you have made any particular contribution to George Peabody that you would want to share?

H: I don't think there is any distinctive individual contribution really worth mentioning. I wish it were true; but I did counsel with the Board, and I have always been available for advice and counsel here in Washington when the trustees or the faculty had a mission to Washington in exploring relationships with the government and possible financial aid. Perhaps I have been helpful in that regard. I have been available for public addresses on the campus and speeches to the faculty and students and the public. I think they have had some pride in the fact that I am always identified in publicity as a member of the George Peabody Board. But those are things that are hard to put into words. At any rate, the board seems to have been very pleased to have me continue as a life member. I try to go to meetings. The Peabody Board doesn't meet very often. The executive Committee meets regularly. I get the minutes of the Executive Committee to keep in touch with the president and the Executive Committee.

T: It seems to have happened so often as we have talked that one or two other things have come to the forefront and I find out something else about what you have done. We talked in our last session carrying your career pretty well up to about 1957. I think that is where we finished. I'd like for us to talk about two or three different things that you have done, particularly, perhaps, the years you were president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

H: That was two years, from May, or June, 1957, until the same period in 1959. That was two full years, maybe a little more, because as I recall--I could be mistaken--the Chicago meeting in 1957, when I was elected was in May; and I am sure that the Louisville, Kentucky, meeting in 1959 was in June.

T: I think we did talk about your involvement with the Prayer Room in the Congress.

H: Did you complete that?

T: I think we pretty well did.

H: If you didn't, there is a little booklet issued by the government on the Prayer Room with full information about my relationship that is available. This is just for reference purposes.

T: One of the acts in which you were involved in the latter part of your congressional career was the Mutual Security Act in 1956. You spoke on the floor of the House about that particular matter, and actually offered an amendment on the act. Do you have any recollections now related to that? I don't have specific questions I want to ask you, I just wanted to put it in as a pattern of . . .

H: Now you are referring to 1957?

T: No. This was 1956, actually it was House Bill 11356. You spoke there in favor of the act. I believe you offered an amendment on some portion of it. I really was just interested primarily in your--no, I am sorry. The amendment related to another act. You had just spoken in favor of the Mutual Security Act of 1956.

H: I was probably speaking in general debate in 1956. I supported the Mutual Security measures all the way through. You see, I was on the Foreign Affairs Committee for 1951, early in 1951, from the beginning of the session of that Congress. That means eight full years.

T: Were you the senior member other than the chairman of that Foreign Affairs Committee?

H: Oh, no. I didn't reach the place of seniority that would give me that position. You see, I had had eight years on the Banking Committee. If I had gone on Foreign Affairs earlier--and I sort of cultivated the hope that maybe I could transfer without any difficulty from Banking to Foreign Affairs--I would have been chairman of the committee before I left Congress, perhaps. At any rate, I waived all that because I believed that my knowledge of the problems of inflation, price control, farm credit, and other credit measures and information that I had gathered in these fields would be useful in this continuing fight. So, I stayed on Banking until 1951. I had, therefore, little time to climb to a higher position of a senior member. However, my membership in the House, rather than membership on this committee, gave me certain standing in the committee. In other words, they could regard me as a senior member even though I was sitting at the foot of the table from the very moment I went on.

Now, the Mutual Security Act, this legislation was something that to me was highly important. I hammered away at the basic idea--and it gained strength in those years--that America cannot afford to abdicate in the role of leadership in the world for its economic rehabilitation, for the healing of its wounds growing out of the War, the inspiration that we could supply as Western statesmen believing in democracy.

T: Was that a fairly accepted position in Arkansas at that time or would it have been . . .

H: Well, I didn't find that my interest in Foreign Affairs was hazardous. I think that the people of Arkansas, while having little interest, actually, in foreign affairs, were glad to have their representatives exhibit concern over problems outside its borders. That's a compliment to them. There were some who tried to feed the fires of isolationism and the fires of prejudice against foreign countries.

I remember in one of my campaigns in the latter part of my service that was probably inspired by these speeches and my position on Mutual Aid--the security program that you are talking about--one of my opponents said, "Mr. Hays' heart bleeds for Afghanistan." That was ridicule, of course, and a repeal to whatever there was in the way of a lingering prejudice against foreigners. I was struggling to remember the year. I remember now it was 1954, because I was a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly in 1955. When I met the ambassador, a much younger man than I, I said, "Mr. Ambassador, take a good look at me because my presence here should give you some reassurance about the people of Arkansas and of the central part of the United States where we don't depend on exports particularly or world trade for an economic base. You should be pleased to learn that the people of Arkansas elected me again last year in spite of the fact that my opponent said, Mr. Hays' heart bleeds for Afghanistan." I think that's putting it a little more strongly than you would want it put, but it shows that it is not costly from a political standpoint in Arkansas, at least, to be a friend of your country." He smiled broadly. We got to be good friends. He was on the same committee with me, the Economic Committee in the General Assembly.

T: Senator Fulbright from Arkansas was chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee for many years, and Arkansas has had a prominent place in the development of American foreign policy through the lives of some of these men. I wonder if you would comment on this aspect of Mutual Security or military affairs. Was there very much raised about that at the time you were elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention? One story that came out when you were elected president, which appeared in the Washington Post of June 2, 1957, made reference to the fact that you had said, "I have voted consistently for a strong military establishment, but I would even more enthusiastically support shrinking of our army if thorough sound methods of international inspection could be devised. Lovers of peace must not give up just because the picture is bleak." Was there something raised that would have prompted that kind of comment from you?

H: I don't recall what inspired that, but it fits my memory of the general philosophy that I expounded all along. It probably got into every speech I made. That was a recurring theme in the fight that we members of the Foreign Affairs Committee had to make to hold the line for constructive, positive meeting of our obligations on the world scene. Now, I am glad you mentioned Senator Fulbright because that was a buttress for me, his prestige and the pride that Arkansas had in their young senator and his rapid climb in influence in the world. This pride helped me because any Fulbright friend would be apt to day, "Well, Brooks follows Senator Fulbright in these matters." Of course, that would be putting it, I think, very inaccurately. I didn't follow anybody but

my own convictions; however, I found that the senator and I, except in some rather narrow areas of civil rights, were very congenial and thought alike on many and most, in fact of the basic policy problems.

T: Did you know him well?

H: Oh, yes. I remembered him from my university days. I remembered seeing him scurrying around, a little fellow in high school. He was about seven years younger than I. His mother, who was a widow, lived close to the campus. The Fulbrights were great friends of the university. In fact, Bill's older brother and his older sister were schoolmates of mine. At the time I knew them the family was very prominent because they were probably the wealthiest people in that area. Mrs. Fulbright, his mother, was a very active and a very imaginative person. She was quite a leader. Mrs. Fulbright had an identification that made it easy to remember the family. One little incident that I think perhaps I have referred to in one of the previous interviews was the fact that he attended the Training School at the university. It was a sort of demonstration high school to give the education students experience in teaching. My wife was one of those who taught English classes in the high school and Bill was one of her pupils. Did I tell about that?

T: I don't think so. I don't remember it.

H: Well, I can tell it quickly because it has been a matter of amusement to the family and to the Fulbrights in a way. In the first debate on foreign policy that Bill indulged in--and it was very unusual for a freshman to be drawn into the kind of debate that he had with Clare Boothe Luce from Connecticut, a brilliant person who was on the Foreign Affairs Committee, too, as I remember it, on the Republican side. At any rate, she made a rather stinging speech one day against the Administration and Bill was chosen by the leadership to reply to it. And so, it was one of those historic exchanges.

I enjoyed this little thrust because at one point he made a statement quoting Mrs. Luce or attributing something to her and she said, "I beg your pardon, if the gentleman will yield, show me in my speech where I said any such thing." He said, "Well, the gentlewoman at least inferred it throughout her speech." She said, "No. The gentleman may have inferred it, and I may have implied it." He told me later, "So help me, I didn't know what she was talking about." I said, "Didn't my wife, your English teacher, explain to you the difference between "infer" and "imply"?" He said, "No, she didn't. At least it didn't stick."

Of course, this has gotten chuckles when we have talked about it later. But my wife had a pretty good reply, and I think this showed up in some of our Baptist publications where she was interviewed. I enjoyed taunting her about it. She said, "Well, here was a Rhodes scholar and I wasn't the only one who failed. Apparently, somewhere along the line in his undergraduate days and in Oxford University, somebody must have failed him terribly."

But, that, of course, is something that comes to mind. It's those little things, really, that you are apt to remember, forgetting some of the great, solemn, momentous, and historic instances and utterances, although where I was involved, I am not apt to forget. I remember things that I said that impressed me very much.

T: Fulbright, as you mentioned, was a Rhodes scholar and became very active in this area of Foreign Affairs and ended his career as the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee for the Senate.

H: As my friend, Arthur Schlesinger, said, "He went out like a thoroughbred."

T: Was he really beaten--and we are getting again beyond that, but I do think it is helpful to have your comment--was he beaten because of lack of keeping touch with the people of Arkansas? Or had he moved so far in the Vietnam War that he did not represent the viewpoints of the people in Arkansas? What was your feeling as he was defeated? Was his defeat similar in some ways to yours but on another issue?

H: No. There was nothing like the hysteria about Vietnam as there was about integration. In other words, he didn't have anything like the prairie fire to fight that I had in 1958. I think Bill would be the first to admit that. However, he had taken a courageous stand on the Vietnam War, and, undoubtedly, that hurt. I think that it was influential in his defeat. I would have some trouble establishing the order in which these adverse forces brought about his defeat, but I would certainly have to give great weight to the Vietnam position. I think that it was costly from a political standpoint. I don't think Bill ever was deterred where he had a real conviction about something.

I don't think his Civil Rights record reflects credit on him, but I say in his defense that he had not gotten the feel of the Civil Rights struggle. He hadn't had the opportunity to learn something about the black man's aspirations that I had. There were very few black people in northwest Arkansas. He hadn't lived near them in his boyhood. He hadn't come to sense the sufferings that they had endured and the denial of basic rights that I had seen taking place in Little Rock and elsewhere. So, I must say that in his defense. It certainly was not lack of courage. If Bill Fulbright had had convictions as strong as mine, he would have been as vocal about it as I tried to be and perhaps more so. The Vietnam issue undoubtedly was a great factor in his defeat.

T: In 1957 you were elected as the president of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Convention was meeting that year in Chicago. When did you first give any thought to becoming president? Or when did the idea of being president of the Southern Baptist Convention come to your mind?

H: Well, the idea that I was destined to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention didn't strike me until I heard an emissary from the chairman in the very session in which I was elected rush out into the foyer and said, "Mr. Hays, you have been elected president of the Convention." That's the time I first believed I would be president. I didn't think I had a chance in the world. I didn't promote it. I didn't ask anyone

to interest themselves in it. I listened when some friend told me they were determined to nominate me. I thought it was an interesting thing to speculate on, but even that was only a few weeks before the Convention met.

The one person who I think was responsible for this happening was a Baptist minister, pastor for about twenty-five years of the First Church in Newport News, Virginia, Bruce H. Price. He had been a member of one of the Sunday School classes in my church in Arkansas. He is perhaps ten years younger than I am, not that much perhaps. But any rate, when I was a young lawyer about 23 or 24 years of age in Russellville, I was elected superintendent of the Sunday School. I remember this little fellow scampering into the main room of the church, after they had been out to their Sunday School sessions. I can see him now coming in and sitting with the boys of his age, and it was either junior or senior high school. Now he had a great ambition for me. He had a very sentimental feeling about his superintendent, like teenagers often will. I was one of his heroes. He saw me elected chairman of the Christian Life Commission and took great pride in that. He asked me to preach for him a time or two down at Newport News. He would always look me up if he were in Washington and call me. He had a very strong affection for me, and I responded to it. I knew his parents and they and my parents were warm friends in this little town. So, that was when he first, perhaps, began to form some aspirations for me as well as for himself.

He became chairman of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference of about 3,500 or 4,000 members and had considerable influence. So, he told me, "Brooks, we are going to nominate you president of the Convention." I said, "It won't produce anything. You know they are not going to elect a layman, and a layman who isn't too orthodox. I don't mean on profound theological questions, but not a conventional, politically-minded Baptist." I have had little to do with the establishment. I had even felt free at times to differ with the establishment and had said so. So, I just couldn't contemplate the election of a layman. Very few laymen, as you know, have ever been elected president, and very few in modern times, particularly. So, I just thought that it was a very dim prospect. I didn't object to their placing my name in nomination. That, of itself, would have had some prestige.

T: Did he nominate you?

H: No, but he picked the man who did, who was Paul Caudill, pastor of the great First Baptist Church of Memphis. He made a magnificent address. I heard it. I remember when I told our daughter, Mrs. William Bell, living in Bethesda, that Bruce had told me I was going to be nominated. I remember her response, which I agreed with. She said, "Well, Daddy, you don't think you have got a chance in the world being elected, do you?" I said, "No." We laughed about that. My wife didn't even go to Chicago with me.

When Paul Caudill made this talk that was the last of the elections in which they voted by standing. I was sitting between Louie Newton, who is the senior former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and some other preacher, whom I can't identify now. I remember very well Newton because he said to me when Caudill was recognized to make

the last nominating speech--there had been about six very prominent and highly respected Baptist leaders nominated before I was--"I wonder who he is going to nominate." I said, "Me, and I am leaving the room for two reasons. One is, I can't stand to be defeated. I don't enjoy it. And second is, I don't want to see how you brethren vote." I did leave.

Well, just as another aside, I wish you could have read his column in the Georgia Baptist paper later, telling about it. He said, "I was sitting next to our new president and he said, rising to leave the room, 'I feel so humble.'" I had to tell it on him when I spoke in Atlanta shortly after that. He gave me a glowing introduction and I just couldn't resist kidding him just a little. I said, "Brother Louie, I didn't feel humble, I just felt unlucky."

I remember, of course, all of those details. When this person rushed up and said, "They want you on the platform. You have just been elected president of the Convention," I said, "No. Not until I telephone my 87-year-old father and my 97-pound wife." So, I went to the phone and called Marion here in Washington. I said, "Come on over. There's another thirty-six hours of the Convention, and you'll enjoy glowing in the honor of this new office," and she did. I remember how delighted I was to see her get off the plane. It was the first time she had ever flown on a plane by herself. But she was as excited as I was.

I didn't get a majority on the first ballot. I was first, however. I got a plurality and Dr. Pollard was second. He was pastor of the Broadway Church in Knoxville at the time and later became pastor of the Bellevue Church in Memphis succeeding Dr. Lee, and, of course, he succeeded me as president two years later. But everyone who was a part of the inner circle had assumed that Ramsey would be elected. I heard enough of the political talk, but this was an upset, so to speak. When I got to the phone booth to put in a call to my father, young Pollard was just coming out. He had called his mother to tell her of his father's defeat. I was saddened to think that I had been the cause of his father's defeat. I found him to be a very gracious young man. He said, "Mr. Hays, you don't know me. I am Ramsey Pollard, Jr., and I was just telling my mother the results of the election. I want to congratulate you." I said, "That's a gracious thing for you to do. I have been defeated so often. I know it isn't fun, but I congratulate your daddy on a fine race; and I am sure he will work with me." I don't believe I talked to my father.

T: Was he in reasonably good health at that time?

H: Yes. In fairly good health, I guess, failing a bit. That was about two years before his death. He died within a few days after I finished my two years as president. In fact, there was a prayer for him in the Louisville Convention when one of the members, knowing of his condition, told the Convention that he would like for us to remember Father in prayer and prayer was offered at that time for him. But he died later that very month. He died in June, 1959. But he had lived to see me two years as president of the Convention. I have often said that it should have been Father. He was a better Baptist than I and a better Christian than I. I was, I guess, happier on his account than on my

own account. I knew how much it meant to him to get that lift of spirit that comes with seeing your son elevated to an office that prestigious and that wonderful. So I was thrilled about that. I can't recall talking to him. I think it is because maybe before I could put in a call, his former pastor and my former pastor, when I lived at Russellville practicing law there with my father, Clyde V. Hickerson . . .

T: He was a close friend of yours, really.

H: Yes, oh, yes. Clyde V. Hickerson, who was for eleven years pastor of our Russellville Church, almost the entire time that I lived there in Russellville as a lawyer. I don't mean in my boyhood. He came there in 1923. I was on the pulpit committee that brought him there. But he had gotten Father on the phone to tell him, "Brooks has just been elected president of the Convention." He said, "Your daddy, who never let politics get entirely out of his orbit, said the first thing, 'What ballot'?" So, he wanted to know how many ballots it took to elect me. But he had great enjoyment out of it. I can't remember whether or not it actually happened. I think it was apocryphal, but I, somewhere, began to have a little fun out of Dad's excitement over it. I'd tell them that somebody said to Dad once when I was just a youngster, "Mr. Hays, which would you rather Brooks would be, president of the Southern Baptist Convention or President of the United States." Dad thought for a moment and he said, "Well, I guess it would be better for Brooks to be President of the United States. Son's not smart enough to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention." So, that's worth telling again. Of course, it is sort of typical of Dad. Well, so much for the election.

T: You were chairman of the Christian Life Commission. You were elected to that in July, 1955. Do you think that had any part to play in your election?

H: Yes, I rather think it did. Perhaps there were three or four influences that were in my favor. Undoubtedly, that was one because all of the ministers who were sensitive on this matter of social justice and Christian ideals in public life were aware--I am talking about the young idealists on the social scene--of my concern about it, the fact that I was not just indulging in cliches. They knew that I had a deep feeling about this, and that I had been up to my neck in the struggles for various interests of the minority and of the poor. They could give me credit for that activity as an outlet for something that was very genuine in my life. It is nor parading piety for me to speak of it as a moral element in my political structure. So, that had something to do with it.

I think perhaps--and I would be interested in knowing whether this is true or not and it probably would be a hard thing to guage--the ten or fifteen-minute speech I made at the Kansas City Convention in 1956, the year before the Chicago Convention when the memory of it would be fresh in the minds of many of the delegates, because Chicago is not far from Kansas City. I was asked to speak to the Christian Life Commission report. I feel that I was fortunate in that talk. I spoke without notes and without hesitation. It was sort of a testimony. I think the Convention was rather stirred by that talk. I can't

remember that there was ever any other time that I had anything to say at the Convention except for a very brief period in 1951, when I was second vice-president of the Convention. They met in San Francisco, and Dr. Lee asked me to preside. But I presided only about an hour, as I remember it. That had little influence. I am sure the fact that six years before I had been one of the vice-presidents had any influence. But, I am wondering if the 1956 short talk at that Convention didn't make a lot of friends for me among the leaders. Well, of course, the idea of it leading to the presidency was certainly not in my mind, because Bruce Price's suggestion that I be nominated for the presidency wasn't advanced until nearly a year later.

T: When you served as chairman of the Christian Life Commission you served in that responsibility for nearly . . .

H: Two years, I believe, and then I had been very active for a number of years, as I recall.

T: Earlier, with the Commission, do you remember some of the prominent personages of the Christian Life Commission in those days? Did you know A. J. Barton, by chance?

H: Well, no. Dr. Barton had died before that time.

T: Oh, yes. But I wondered if you knew him.

H: You see, he died when I was probably still a student in college. I do remember reading about him. His brother was my pastor at Fayetteville in the state university days. I was interested in the family partly because of that. They were an Arkansas family originally. Another brother, P. C. Barton, was president of the Arkansas State Convention. He was a Baptist from Jonesboro and a layman. The pastor I referred to was L. E. Barton, who was also prominent in the Southern Baptist Convention. He went from Fayetteville to a pastorate, I am not sure where. But he wound up as pastor of one of the prominent churches in Alabama.

It's worth a comment, I guess, a sort of a footnote. I wish I could put my hand on the letter that he wrote me while I was a student in law school here in Washington, after I had left Fayetteville. He knew about me. He was pastor of the church when I was president of the B.Y.P.U. in his church. I think maybe I can put my hands on a little bulletin I ran across the other day, one of his church bulletins: L. E. Barton, pastor, so-and-so, superintendent of the Sunday School; Brooks Hays, president of the B.Y.P.U., and so on. He wrote to me in the law school days urging me to go into the ministry. He just felt that I was rebelling against what he called "God's call to be a minister."

T: You didn't see it that way?

H: No, I did not. I never have seen it that way. I entertained it, and there was a period in which I gave it serious thought. I felt that perhaps in the law I was a misfit. I think I know partly the reason for that. It is that I had another interest which was what my wife called "the social worker's philosophy." I was more concerned about

public policy and the opposition to social ills. I wasn't happy in getting ready to be an adversary, to be an advocate with an adversary. What I am trying to say is, I wasn't interested in adversary law. I was interested in public law and public policy. I was wondering if I hadn't made a mistake in not going into the ministry or going into academic work to be a teacher, or newspaper work where I could have an outlet for the things that kept growing in my system.

T: Do you think part of your resistance to the law was a feeling that you would be walking in your father's footsteps for a long time?

H: Yes. That may have been a rather unconscious thing. My wife feels that it was, and with her it was because she was devoted to my father and she loved him. He was more like her own father. She can hardly remember her own father so it was not choosing between them. But Father was really the only father she ever had. She was crazy about him. But she used to think that he never did appreciate his son, and that in the law office he just couldn't conceive of me making the decisions and handling the major cases. So, I think she got some satisfaction out of seeing me appointed Assistant Attorney General, so at least I would be on my own. That's worth a footnote, too.

T: Do you remember A. C. Miller?

H: Oh, yes. I would mention him among those who were most prominent and most congenial with me. I was talking about the period in which I was active on the Christian Life Commission. Hugh Brimm was the executive when I was first made a member of the Commission. I believe Miller was the executive when I became chairman. But Hugh Brimm and A. C. Miller and, of course, beloved Dr. Weatherspoon . . .

T: I would like for you to tell me something about both of these men, Miller and Weatherspoon, particularly. Do you remember what kind of men they were?

H: They were both highly dedicated men and so was Hugh Brimm. They were plowing new ground.

T: Did they feel that the race issue was the crucial issue that the Commission should be facing?

H: I recall that Brimm definitely did. I am pretty sure that the others would have put that in first place. But there were other things to do, many other interests to engage them. They felt, generally, on this struggle that was taking place between the social gospel and the individualistic expression of our faith that in that cleavage there was a great deal of work to do in conditioning the minds of our people to admitting the Christian life elements of energy in our churches.

T: What do you think were the most important things the Christian Life Commission did in those years you were chairman?

H: Well, I would say in the educational work of getting people to stop and give thought to the things involving public policy and the moral climate in which the church grew. Yes, race was the dominating thing,

of course, and until we got right on that we weren't apt to be right on other matters involving discrimination against the poor, and so forth. Of course, it was related to our mission program. You couldn't touch the race issue without finding immediate response from the missionaries.

I remember when I was defeated for Congress over the race issue for this ninth term, one of the finest letters that I received was from a medical missionary in Nigeria, a young lady named Juanita Maiden. She said, "Now, Mr. Hays, I don't imply at all that I am happy over your defeat. It was a grievous thing to take place, but I think you should know that it has helped us mightily in our foreign missions endeavor here in Africa to be able to say that the president of the home convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, thought more about his Christian duty than he did his seat in Congress." That is almost word for word what she said. I am glad I had that letter because I kept hammering away at the idea, both before and after my defeat, that we cannot export that which we do not have, which is justice and Christian love in race relations. So I was glad to have that. I remember saying it, among other places, in Elizabethton, Tennessee, and at the end of the service one of the congregation came up to speak to me. She said, "Thank you for mentioning my daughter in your talk." I didn't know she was within a thousand miles of me.

T: One of the things also that was raised at the time you were elected president, and you were quoted in a Religious News Service story of June 10, 1957, "Mr. Hays said his election by the Southern Baptist Convention showed desire on its part to work in closer cooperation with other religious bodies." It said, "It also showed that Baptists 'no longer believe that the separation of church and state precludes the election of a man who holds a political office from holding a religious office. The congressman indicated that he not only favors a general closing of the division between Southern and American Baptists but participation by Southern Baptists in ecumenical endeavors with other Protestant denominations." Then, the writer concludes this paragraph and says, "The Southern Baptist Convention is not presently a member of either the National or World Council of Churches."

This has been an interest of yours for many years. Did you really think that your presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention would permit you to become involved in a wider sphere of ecumenical endeavor? Did you see this as a possibility of drawing the Convention towards supporting either the National Council or the World Council?

H: Well, I find it hard to answer that categorically. I can recall, I think, my meditations on that question. What you just read is accurate. I think there was some symbolism in my election from the standpoint of a greater hospitality to the idea of cooperation with other denominations, including the American Baptists because it was known that I was "ecumenical." That didn't keep them from electing me. Now, some of them were nervous about it. I understood that Dr. Lee turned to someone after the election and said, "That's a bad thing. Mr. Hays is one of the most outstanding liberals in this Convention. Too bad."

T: Did you know Dr. Lee well?

H: No. No, I didn't know him well. I knew that he had this aversion to what I call "the social gospel." I don't see any reason why it shouldn't be called that. It's the gospel, period. I don't want to beg the question. I happen to have been a Rauschenbusch Baptist and not a Frank Norris Baptist nor a J. R. Graves Baptist nor even an R. G. Lee Baptist, because he had taken shots at those of us who believe in cooperation.

T: Would also your membership in Calvary Baptist Church, which was a dually aligned church in Washington, have prompted your interest in an ecumenical movement for Southern Baptists or really did it go back much further than that?

H: Oh, yes. I don't think that was more than incidental. I would have had the same relationship to the American Baptist Convention if I had been in Ed Pruden's church, the First Baptist Church, which is also dually aligned, the church that President Carter attends now and that President Truman attended. So, I don't see that the District of Columbia posture was influential in that matter. Getting back to my own reaction to the item that you read in the Religious News Service . . .

T: Religious News Service of June 10, 1957.

H: Well, that probably was based on the press conference which Albert McClellan set up for me. I think it is official. I think it's done every year. Of course, there was a lot of interest in this new unorthodox president. I had a chance to comment on a lot of things. The newspaper men were doing the usual. They were probing. But I resolved that I would say nothing of a real provocative nature about the ecumenical movement. I felt that I could avoid hypocrisy and double talk by just saying, "I do believe that it would be best for us to be members of the National Council of Churches. I wish we were." I think I said that much. "But I shall not initiate anything of that kind. I shall offer no motion and shall undertake to do nothing in that regard until there is evidence of wider support for it in the ranks of Southern Baptists." In other words, there was some obligation for me to avoid saying things that were obviously contrary to what the body of my constituency believed and words that would not produce anything. If I could have accomplished anything by it, I would have taken such steps. But I think what I did was the democratic thing to do and the discreet thing to do. It is discretion without diluting conviction because I at no time said that I was anything but an ecumentist.

T: Another matter that probably was raised at that same news conference that comes out of a Baptist Press story of June 22, 1957. Comment is made to your membership in the House of Representatives. They make reference to your alluding to this. I infer from what you said that this was your feeling. "Hays said he would strive to aid the cause of religious liberty in countries abroad. In an interview after his address he mentioned Spain and Colombia. Hays then went on to say he would not try to force his own viewpoint on the denomination."

H: I don't know what the significance of that last statement is, that I would not force my views. That may have reference to membership on the National Council. I wouldn't need to force anything on the denomination about religious liberty because our views are on all fours, of course, but what comes closest to being a consensus . . .

T: I think it was reinforcing what you said regarding the fact you felt that you approved very strongly of Baptist democracy and supported that.

H: Well, now, here. That's an interesting comment. I think it's worth departing just a moment from what we were talking about. I did pursue that. There was no inconsistency with what I was saying as a believer in religious liberty and my obligations to defend my own nation's foreign policy, or to do anything that was not consistent with the interest of the United States. That presented no problem whatever. I visited Spain during my service on the Tennessee Valley Authority Board of Directors after my presidency had expired, and there I had conversations with leaders in the American Embassy. I did not get to see the ambassador, John Davis Lodge, with whom I had served in the House; but I was in touch with him. He later learned when he returned to Madrid that I had left a memorandum--or I may have written him after I got home. At any rate, he saw the memorandum and in that statement I suggested that I wanted to write something that could be transmitted to the embassy to the appropriate desk in the Spanish government, so that they could understand that my going to Madrid had not been an act of subversion of the Spanish policy nor had it been to create any instance that would be resented. I wanted merely to meet our Baptist people and to plead with the Spanish people through channels, to plead with the Spanish government and officials through channels for a relaxing of their rules against activities by Protestants and particularly by Baptists. Joe Nordenhaug told me later that he believed my memorandum reached Franco and that it did some good.

I think you would be interested in knowing that when I was with John Davis Lodge, just a year or two ago, I asked him if he remembered it and if he felt as Nordenhaug did that it had been influential. He said, "There isn't any doubt about it. It did." Now, whether his memory was clear or not I don't know, but that was the statement of Nordenhaug and the statement of John Davis Lodge, our ambassador to Spain.

T: I wonder, too, if you would comment on Colombia. Were you involved in any way specifically with Colombia, which at that time was an area that was of concern?

H: I don't think so. I don't remember any activities.

T: You are saying that you had not, to your recollection, been involved in any particular attempt to ameliorate the religious persecution or religious restrictions in Colombia. Do you want to say anything more about that?

H: I don't think I can add very much to the knowledge, generally, that our people have--I am talking about Southern Baptists--of the unhappy conditions in Colombia. That is one of the worst spots in the Western Hemisphere from the standpoint of repression of liberty. That was what I would call an ugly reactionary policy in the Catholic hierarchy which John XXIII was changing. That is often overlooked, the criticism of the Catholic church, generally, for a local situation. There is no more reason for our charging the Catholic church, generally, except as its policies in the Middle Ages when some foundations were being laid for Latin American culture. There is no more reason for our

charging Rome with those derelictions, those failures, in Colombia than critics of the Southern Baptist church can charge us with J. Frank Norris' failures and misdeeds in the First Baptist Church at Fort Worth. What I am trying to say is that there was every reason for our maintaining good communications with the leaders of the Catholic church, hemispherically and on a global scale, because John XXIII was known to have sent word to the Colombian leaders that he wanted that to stop. He wanted the policies reversed.

I think there are already signs of change in South America, generally. I give credit to Pope John XXIII for much of this, although much of it would be attributable just to the general softening of the rigidities of the Catholic hierarchy in Latin America. But this leads me to defend the steps that I took to establish good communications with the Vatican. I don't go so far as to say that President Carter's step is correct--to name a personal representative there--to undertake to lead us into an ambassadorial relationship. I think it is thoroughly bad, and it certainly is unrealistic. I was amazed, really, that as good a Baptist as President Carter would do that. But he did, and I think perhaps there is an altering of his feelings on that.

T: Did you ever meet Pope John XXIII?

H: I had an amazing interview with him of ten or fifteen minutes, a private audience, not a group audience. A longtime friend of mine, Monsignor Ligutti, was parish priest when I first knew him, working on problems of the poor, part-time farmers in the neighborhood of Granger, Iowa. I came in contact with him in the work that I was doing for the Department of Agriculture for Rural Rehabilitation. Most of the people that he was concerned with were coal miners who had time for farm pursuits and who could have what they call subsidence farming income. Their income was very low in those days in the 1930's, and he was interested in supplementing that income with subsidence farming. If that is what you should call it. He was interested in better housing for them. I came into the range of that activity as a fellow church member though I was a Protestant.

I just thought he was great, and he apparently thought I was okay because he sponsored my appearance as a speaker at the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Peoria, Illinois, in 1937 or 1938--along in there; and also, to speak at the National Rural Church Conference of the Catholic church. So, I was invited back the second time to the Annual Convention of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, meeting in St. Paul. Ligutti was a great man and is currently retired but is still very active, maintaining a residence in Rome. When he retired he had become the Pope's advisor on Rural Church Affairs. He reached a high position of one of the top advisors to the Pope. He is responsible for my having been given a private audience. My wife went with me and she just fell in love with the Pope.

T: When was this? It was not when you were president of the Convention?

H: I was either president or had just concluded my tenure. I was in that

period. I would say it was not later than 1961. Of course, I finished work as president in 1959. But it was somewhere in that period. I am sorry I can't give you that date. That becomes important, perhaps. I remember that there was very little criticism of me, however. I was the first Baptist official, I guess, in history ever to have a private audience with a pope. This was just before or near the end of Pope John's life as I remember. I am sure it was. I will try, before you leave Washington, to get that year because it would help me to place these things in correct position.

I was invited, also to have a private audience with Pope Paul, which I did have. That, too, was a rather historic thing. The Religious News Service said that I am the only Protestant to have had private audiences in the Vatican with Pope John and Pope Paul. I was the only Protestant layman. When I saw the editor, Miss Lillian Block, I said, "Lillian, you made a mistake here. President Johnson is a Protestant layman, a member of the Disciples, and he has had private audiences with both popes." She said, "They were not as important as yours. He was not a retired president of any church convention. He was not a prominent layman except as his Presidency of the United States gave him prominence." She said, "The important thing is that if you'll notice the key words 'private audiences in the vatican.' One of his private audiences was with Pope Paul in New York City and that was not really a private audience. That was a gesture of friendship and cordiality between the heads of two civil bodies because the Vatican is a state as well as a church."

Well, you could quibble over that, but you can see why I was careful to say "the only Protestant layman" and I am giving you my authority of it. I am not sure it is entitled to this much notice even, but it is again a footnote: the only Protestant layman to have had a private audience in the Vatican with Paul and John. They were two great popes although, obviously, Pope John's place in history will overshadow the place that this admirable and charming present Pope has. But I had a very fine visit with him.

I was on my way to Berchtesgaden to speak to the Protestant laymen of the chapel--meaning the laymen of the military bases. That is promoted by the chaplains' service in the European Theater. I was a lay speaker the same year that Dr. Perry Gresham, a prominent Disciple minister, was the speaker for the ordained clergymen. I remember very well that Pope Paul said pretty early in the conversation--and he spoke rather good English and had a much more satisfactory exchange really than Pope John, although, apparently, he understood most of what I was saying. He would look at Ligutti now and then to get a word when he was talking. I believe he spoke almost every time in Italian, but he could understand me in English. Now and then he would ask Ligutti a word. But Pope Paul said to me, "I understand that you are to speak to the Protestant laymen. Will you please convey my greetings to them and say that I shall pray for the success of the conference." Well, that was an interesting and I think well-timed statement.

T: How long were you with these men? About ten or fifteen minutes?

H: At least ten minutes with Pope John. He did most of the talking, and I was willing for him to. He said some significant things to me.

T: He spoke to you in English?

H: Yes, and if he lapsed into Italian, Ligutti, who was a great linguist, immediately conveyed it to me; or if I looked at Ligutti quizzically I would get a translation. But both conversations were very satisfactory. Pope Paul and I had no problem whatever in languages, a bit halting, and he would pause now and then. There I did not have Ligutti as my sponsor. I was the guest of Father Thomas Wolfe, who is now in New York as the world president of an international organization. At that time he was helping with the ecumenical activities of the Catholic church. I thought that these two conferences were historic. The Baptists were surprisingly muted in their public utterances about it. I don't think the Latin Baptists were happy about it. They have a more militant attitude toward the Catholic church because of the mixed state-church situation. They are confident that it doesn't apply very much in America.

Editor James, of the Baptist Standard, a very fine man, had a rather biting editorial criticizing me for accepting the invitation for a private audience. When I was in Dallas shortly after that I went in to see him, not to discuss this at all but just to let him see by my present friendly attitude toward him that I was not offended, nor did I raise any question about it. That was certainly his Baptist right. If we Baptists are committed to anything it is that a man has got a right to say what he believes. It was impersonal but it was pretty stinging, pretty sharp. We didn't discuss it until I rose to leave after I had told him that it was always a pleasure to be with him and commended him for the leadership he had given Texas Baptists. That was about all. Not a word had been said about this.

As I got up to go he said, "Mr. Hays, can you give me a little more time? You haven't been here five minutes. Let me say some other things." I said, "Well, I will give you all the time you want," and I sat down again. He said, "I guess you think I was a little hard on you about that editorial." I forget my response to that. It was said with a smile in any event. He said, "I wasn't through with that. I won't read it to you, but here is the second editorial that I have written on that visit critical of your visit with Pope John." He said, "By reason of the things you have said to me," which means, I guess, that it is hardly accurate for me to say it hadn't been referred to. He may have asked something about it.

I have gotten ahead of my story. It was when I rose the second time when we had explored it. That was when he told me. He had invited me to comment on the editorial, and he gave me a chance to explain why I went and what I thought had come out of the meeting with Pope John that was good. He was obviously impressed by what I had to say because when I rose the second time after perhaps thirty minutes--that's my best recollection of how long I was there. I know it was far more extended than the five or ten minutes visit full of pleasantries--but this other was an intellectual and a theological pursuit--ecclesiastical pursuit is more accurate.

When I rose the second time to leave he said, "Well, Mr. Hays, that editorial isn't all that I have written. Here's the second editorial. I want you to see what I am doing with it." He held it up over the wastebasket and just let it drop. He said, "That's where the editorial goes." That was one of the most pleasant recollections that I have of the responses, because, you see, he had written sincerely in criticism of my going and thought it shouldn't be done. That pleased me very much.

On the question of inconsistency of a political person, a representative in the Congress accepting an official church position, I want to say that nothing that happened either in my own thinking--and I tried to be open-minded about it to see if there were any shoals that might give a little vessel trouble as we passed through shallow waters--I wanted to see a response, either in that experience or in the response generally, maybe even an irrational response, by the people. I wanted to be sure that it was not a bad thing to happen. I pretty well resolved it before my election, but after two years as president and the years of observation that have passed since then, eighteen years, I want to say that I don't have the slightest doubt about it being entirely proper and you might say even helpful, because you simply cannot dissolve the shadowland of overlapping authority between religion and politics and between church and state.

I think our doctrine is absolutely impregnable, and I think there was great wisdom in what the founders of our country devised in the way of a church-state separation. Well, as one of the Illinois congressmen, T. V. Smith, said, "Government is but the political shadow of democracy. Government is not the end of democratic organization. It has to get into organized church life as well." It is just preposterous to think that there was any inconsistency in a congressman being president of the Southern Baptist Convention or in a Christian minister of voting membership in the Congress. There are six or eight of the finest men you have got in Congress who are ordained ministers both on the Catholic and Protestant side. That has been pretty well accepted, I think. You have got one lingering front, one place where the battle continues and that is in Tennessee.

That is a very interesting project, I think, that is, the lawsuit that is being launched now by a minister in Chattanooga. You are entirely familiar with it, but I don't know how familiar our church people are in the South. The Tennessee constitution says an ordained minister cannot serve in the legislature. Well, that is a violation of the federal Constitution, I think, for more than one reason. I guess I would have to disqualify if I were a member of the Tennessee Supreme Court or the United States Supreme Court, which will ultimately get that case.

I've already judged that one. I judged it when the argument was in the other direction. An ordained minister--he must have been a Baptist--said in the early days when they were working on the Tennessee constitution, "I think that we ought to write into the Tennessee constitution a provision that only a Christian can hold office in this country." They were so outraged by this fellow's bumptious tactics that they turned around and not only refused to pass his provision but said that no ordained minister should be members of the legislature.

I think I can prophesy how it will come out. That is the story in Tennessee, and except for that in our southern scene I don't know of any area in which Baptists are not, generally speaking, moving in the right direction in this terribly important matter of religion and government being properly related to each other. It is an unfinished struggle, and it isn't the kind of thing that there is a tidy answer for; but it will continue, and we'll come out at the right end.

T: You don't see any problems, then, in President Carter making his presentation to the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City in 1977, appealing for greater missionary support?

H: I do not, and while I took issue with him on the matter of naming a representative to the Vatican, they are entirely different issues. I think he was entirely within his proper authority as an individual Baptist, a member of a church which cooperates with the Southern Baptist Convention. He spoke as a Baptist and as a Christian and not as a person armed with political authority. I think it was a fine thing for him to do, and it must have represented some thoughtful hours in which he mediated on what he might say that would be helpful and constructive. He must have had some help from his pastor, Charles Trentham. Incidentally, there is no occasion for my saying this, but I was rather surprised that Charles Trentham, his pastor, defended his action in appointing a Vatican representative. Were you aware of that? I was right surprised with that. I am certainly not going to fall out with Charlie about it, but it was so different from Ed Pruden.

T: Mr. Truman really never went back to First Church after Pruden was so strongly against . . .

H: No. I don't know about what help we can get from the Truman-Pruden exchange by throwing any light or helping us much in mapping out a proper course for this new tension that we have. I am glad that President Truman forgave him and they were reconciled, and that there was a happy relationship before Mr. Truman died. I hope that is the case. I think maybe Ed Pruden told about this in his book. I wrote him a note telling him one day after I had talked to the President that I took occasion to tell the President who was in a very happy and jovial mood, "Well I am glad to see you went to church yesterday. I read it in the paper." He said, "Oh, yes, I love the church." I said, "Well, I wouldn't be surprised if you love Ed Pruden. He is one of the greatest." He said, "Brooks, he never gives me any trouble. He doesn't embarrass me, and he doesn't want me to do this or that." He said, "He never exploits the fact that I am there as one of his members." I remember he used that expression, "He never exploits me."

T: I am sure there must be a real tension of being exploited and a difficult place for a congressman or for a President as he seeks to worship. Have you sensed this yourself?

H: Oh, yes. I think Charlie Trentham, a wise person, will handle it very well. I think what I have seen attributed to him, and I am sure it is true, is that he has said, "I will not permit the office seeker or person wanting favors at the White House to channel those requests through me. It is just not proper for me as the President's pastor.

I simply cannot become an advocate to those who have a legitimate claim upon him or maybe a valid favor to ask. That is not the way to do it. It would mar the relationship." I agree with Charlie Trentham. I think that is undoubtedly true. I used to feel at times that somebody in the church would maybe take advantage of the fact that I worshipped in the same sanctuary with them seeking some favor. This is not on all fours, not quite parallel, but it still reminds me of the fact that now and then someone would exploit that happy relationship in the Calvary Baptist Church to seek something from the White House.

T: We have been talking at various times today, Mr. Hays, about some of the involvements of Baptists in political life. Certainly, one that has created considerable interest and concern has been the area of church-state. We mentioned that. Perhaps in the light of the fact that about two months ago President Carter appointed a personal envoy to the Vatican, how do you react to that and what is your general feeling about it?

H: Well, I don't know to what extent I should open my mind to the Southern Baptist leadership on this. I don't know how soon these ideas will be made available. I do agree that there should be great liberty in expressing opinion. I am glad to participate in it, but I don't want to offend anyone and I wouldn't if it were not a substantial question. In other words, I think you have to distinguish between matters of profound conviction and those that are somewhat secondary.

I would rate this matter of the appointment of a personal representative to the Vatican as one of those secondary matters that isn't particularly damaging to the doctrine that we all pay tribute to and feel strongly about, that is, the separation of church and state. I think the objections have been pretty well stated. My strongest objection is that the state, the government, has no business favoring one religion over another. This does favor the Catholic faith in maybe a rather remote and indirect way; nevertheless, it is doing something for one historic church that they are not doing and are not capable of doing for other churches. They might appoint a representative to the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but even that would not be comparable because that, again, is strictly a church and not a state. But the Vatican, although to me it is a myth and a very strained claim, does claim to be a political state because they own a few square yards or acres of land in the center of Italy and in the center of Rome. But I don't feel by this action of symbolic recognition of the Catholic church that the government should do that. It is a government that has been neutral in the great competitive situation between the churches. Our situation in America is far more competitive than almost any other country in the world because we are a new country, and the streams of migration that accompanied those migrations have converged here. I think it is unfair.

I just can't believe that Mr. Carter has studied the question very much. He is certainly an intelligent man. I don't need to pause to say that, but apparently he has become familiar over the years with the basic principles of American life. So, I was terribly surprised considering the fact that he has been the most prominent Baptist in high public office, in the Presidency at least, in our history. We had two previous

Baptists as you know, President Harding and President Truman. I don't mean that is my only objection to it.

You know, Ron, it is an interesting thing to study the different matters of concern on the surface--well, some of them are deeper. On the surface, almost every church has a focus of concern, a certain symbolic rallying cry. With the Episcopalians I would say it is divorce. With Southern Baptists it is the liquor evil or gambling. We have our strong traditions that have stamped us as a people of austerity in matters of personal vices. It does change. We moderate a bit. We have moderated a bit on the temperance question. We now emphasize temperance rather than abstinence, generally speaking. It doesn't quite fit what I was describing as a rallying cry as it once did. The Methodists were just as vigorous on that as we. Almost every church has something of that kind where there is a matter of unshakeable attachment. That is true of the Baptists. We are against having any symbolic recognition at all of the Catholic church as a political entity.

So, I am sorry that the President did that. I don't quite understand why he didn't know that there would be a reaction. Mr. Truman was surprised at the reaction he got, but he backed off when he saw that he had touched a sensitive spot. Now, Mr. Carter hasn't yet backed off. I think he did take steps to put down the debate, the controversy, that was gathering on Capitol Hill when an appropriation was suggested in the Senate to pay the expenses of this man whom the President had nominated. The President, apparently, was responsible for that being reversed so there would be no appropriation. That doesn't alter the fact that the announcement has been made and that he may take the place of the man that I suppose Nixon named, Henry Cabot Lodge. Of course, Lodge has continued as the representative of our government on that very tenuous basis. But that is different; the man who appointed him, whether it was Nixon or Ford, whichever Republican President it was,there was not the pressure on them that there would be on a Democratic Baptist.

T: Do you think that this was kind of a political move?

H: I think so. I think it is an understandable thing. Our friend, Mr. Trentham, said that we need to have some forms of communication with the great church of Rome. Well, it is a great church. I think my record will certainly bear me out as saying that I am eager to see the very friendliest relations established because we are both Christian bodies. As I have suggested in my discussion of my visit to the Vatican, I think it terribly important that there be the utmost goodwill and communications between us. But you achieve it, not in a political atmosphere but under the aegis of the church. So, the doctrine of church and state clearly is contravened when this sort of thing takes place. Still, I think we should be constantly studying this problem.

T: You mentioned, too, that Baptists rally on the liquor question. One of the things that was reported in Baptist Press when you were first elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention was that you indicated one or two things: "I am going to study my Bible more than I have before because the Bible is our chart." Then you said, "The time has come not to measure the progress of Southern Baptists only in numbers and church extension but also in depth of life of the people."

Then, talking about the depth of life, you indicated, apparently, three emphases: one, on the desire for democratic support of the Baptist viewpoints you said, "I'll be a democratic president, and I will try to support the emphasis on evangelism"; two, you mentioned foreign affairs; and then, the last matter or another matter of continuing interest, the news story went on to say, "Hays says, 'he hopes Congress, this session, will pass a law to ban serving of beverage alcohol on flights.'" The report said such a measure has been proposed in the previous Congress. Would you react to that? You said earlier that Baptists have a strong position on the liquor issue and temperance. Do you remember the context of that statement?

H: Sure, I do. I had forgotten pretty much how much of that had gotten into the publicity columns. Certainly, I remember doing what was reported at that time, but I didn't know whether it had been preserved much in the record. I went before a Senate committee, chaired by Mr. Magnuson of Washington (Commerce Committee) to give my approval. This is an important technical point; but I made it clear that I was not speaking for Southern Baptists, although if any question were raised no one could doubt that the majority of Southern Baptists would agree with that position. I was saying that Baptist polity prohibited undertaking to speak for the official body unless there had been a mandate. I don't recall now that there was a mandate. I am a little hazy about how much of an official mandate had been given. If the Executive Committee authorized me to speak, I could speak, I assume; but my recollection is that I appeared just as one member of Congress, but as an official in the Baptist church having some knowledge of the problem.

I remember that appearance very well because I had just returned from Russia and I told the committee that alcoholism was a worldwide problem, and that it wasn't just our problem; that I found in Russia, to my surprise, considerable concern over the inordinate consumption of liquor. I saw drunk people on the streets. I had signs of official concern over it. I forget just what the source of my information was, but I remember telling them that this was something that apparently Krushchev and others were deeply concerned with. They were going to take perhaps stronger measures to deal with the problem than we would like to even consider doing in our country. The Washington Post the next morning had a front-page news story with an amazing headline, "Liquor Evil Unites Hays and Khrushchev." So, you can see why I would remember it for no other reason than that little incident.

I think it came out at the time that we were in the minority on that. The country did not want that strong of a step to reduce the consumption of liquor. It didn't shock me at all because as time went on I could see the strength of the contrary argument, that is, there was no way that you could keep liquor from being carried on an airplane. It would be better, perhaps, and there was strength in this argument. I don't know what conclusion I would come up with in the present context--talking about public policy in air travel. I could see that there was a basis for some argument that there would be--as there was during the 18th Amendment days--a gross violation of it. There was something to be said for monitoring, authorizing the stewardess to serve a limited amount. By carrying liquor on the plane, which is true by regulation as I understand it, there would be more consumption.

It is a question as to whether you would get more or less consumption, and I think we can just dismiss it, because in any event, whichever side the weight of the argument would be on, the country has decided that they don't want strong prohibition.

I was in good faith advancing it. I was not only responding to the feelings of our Baptist people, but I felt that way about it personally. I haven't been greatly concerned about it. I know that the way to meet the problem of alcoholism is not in regulation anymore. I don't think it is in repression, nor in regulation nor prohibition. I think we have just got the slow and tedious problem of discipline and education so that we can make headway in preventing people from becoming addicted and victims of excessive drinking.

T: I am trying to focus on some of the things that were printed at the time. You may not remember all of them, but if you have some reaction, I think it would be fair to insert them. The Alabama Baptist published an editorial in the June 27, 1957, issue, after the Convention and after your statement of trying to work together for fellowship, sympathy, and unity between American Baptists and Southern Baptists. The gist of the editorial was to point out that it wanted no part nor parcel of supporting American Baptists with whom they theologically disagreed. The concluding statement said, "We personally hope our president will not feel it his duty to arouse controversy among Southern Baptists because we elected him president of the Convention." Do you remember that incident and that editorial? Do you have any reaction to that?

H: Yes. I didn't respond to it because it wouldn't have done any good. It was an ideological matter. The truth of the matter is the editor of that paper was reflecting the strong conservative views on the race question in Alabama. I think if he had just spoken his mind he would have mentioned race, that they wanted no part of this integration. This guy from Arkansas was just for obeying the mandate of the Supreme Court in the Little Rock situation. I remember the editor of that paper not only on that question but on other questions. He was not noncontroversial. He takes that as an interesting poke at me, that I mustn't be controversial. It seems to me that he was the one that was being a bit controversial in his negative response to what was generally an attitude of Baptists in the South and for fellow Baptists in other conventions. You can argue that, you see, Christian ideal of brotherhood and goodwill and whether there would be amalgamation or not. That is a different question.

I was pleading for that controversy on the Convention front. That was a rather interesting twist that he gave it. I didn't let it bother me. I told the Executive Committee, soon after I was elected, that I guess that was quoted more often than anything that I had ever said. I noticed that was in Mature Living, a new magazine that the Sunday School Board is putting out. I remember what I said very well to the Executive Committee, shortly after my election as president, "You may have a controversial president on your hands, but let me ask you to look at it this way, brethren, wouldn't it be better to have a controversy than for me to act in a way to avoid controversy that would give you cause to be embarrassed and ashamed of me. It would be better for me to involve you in controversy than to seek to avoid controversy and

give you cause to be ashamed of me." It took a lot of the heat off of that issue because people would say, "Well, after all, he is an individual Baptist, and we have talked a lot about freedom of speech." So, I took full advantage of it.

T: Picking up in 1957 again, after the Convention meeting, I noticed Time Magazine in their column on foreign relations had a big headline that said, "Three days after they had marched up the hill in the spirit of the President's request for authorization of a long-term foreign aid development fund, the House Foreign Affairs Committee did an abrupt about face last week and marched back down again to approve the bill seventeen to ten." Then, it talks about the turnaround by "Arkansas' hardworking internationally-minded Brooks Hays, whose plight showed how personal pressures and preoccupations can affect the voting of even a highly conscientious legislator." Do you remember their criticism on this? You indicated you moved to reconsider and got help from other members who had been absent from the first meeting and merged with a committee vote recommending the Development Fund which had already been approved by the Senate and the full House. Do you remember this incident? I think it was discussing foreign aid legislation.

H: Yes. I forget the amount of money that was involved, but we had trimmed the bill beyond the point that the White House thought safe to trim it. In other words, the Executive Department interjected their views on it and called me over the phone, the President himself. They were quite surprised at my position because I generally helped carry the fight to get more and not less in a bill that was never oversubscribed. I mean there was very little danger in Congress being too generous with the government funds. It was always a struggle to hold the line and not retreat too much. So, I guess there was a basis for surprise when I voted as I did with the chairman, J. P. Richards, who was no isolationist and who had carried many a fight for our foreign policy and who was held in great respect by the House. I suspect that he constantly watched the monetary side of these controversies, knowing that those in the House that he had to depend on helping him with major issues were conservative, and that he, in order to hold his Southern wing--if you could call it that--had to be very conservative himself. That is, as conservative as he could afford to be. He made a hard fight in the committee, and I thought that perhaps he was right.

I remember that I was aware of the fact that I had been preoccupied. One thing that bothered me just a little, was the energies diverted to church work, when the government was, of course, clearly entitled to priority of time and effort. So, when Sherman Adams called me and said the press was quite concerned about it, and wondered if I would reconsider it and take another look at it, I said, "Well, I think I ought to take another look at it." That was toward the end of the week. I spent the weekend doing my homework that I had neglected because of pressures of both political and religious activities. I thought that was a very gentle handling of my personal problems by Time Magazine. I thought those words were rather sympathetic, wouldn't you say?

T: I did not think it was vicious. I thought it was a very warm article, but I wondered if you had ever thought you would have had to do that sort of thing of changing your mind.

H: Well, I didn't do it very often, but I was not ashamed to do it if I felt convinced that I had been wrong. I did go back to the meeting on Monday or Tuesday convinced that my vote had been wrong. Now it was possible for me to get that attention because a motion to reconsider has to be offered by someone who was on the prevailing side, and my side had prevailed. So, only one of us who had voted for the lower figure was in a position in a parliamentary way to make this motion. I assume that was one reason that the White House, knowing that I had been generally a spokesman for added appropriations for developmental work, called me.

I was wrong in saying the President asked me to take some interest in reconsideration. It was Sherman Adams, my old friend, who was in the House with me some years before that and whose office was on the same corridor. We had been very close and congenial friends. When we won the fight, as Time Magazine correctly reported, the President called me personally and talked to me on the phone with a very warmhearted word of thanks. He wanted me to know that he felt that this was a vital matter and a very crucial vote. He thought it was statesmanship for me to be willing to change my mind. He knew that I didn't do it for any ulterior reason, that I really felt that we had trimmed it too much.

Chairman Richards was a little miffed at me because he hated to lose the battle and he had felt that he could go before his southern friends and his conservative friends, on both sides of the aisle and say, "Now this bill is in good shape. We have trimmed so many hundreds of millions of dollars from it." The second action we took robbed him of that chance.

T: Did it pass the whole House?

H: Yes. As I remember it, it stood up. If it didn't stand up in the House, it stood up in conference between Senate and House.

T: At your news conference around this time it was quoted by Religious News Service, August, 1957, that you indicated there were three major issues before the Southern Baptist Convention. Issue Number one was race, and the other two issues were reaching the new suburbs and fostering the ideals of religious liberty everywhere through the world. As you look back twenty years now, were you right in 1957?

H: Well, I probably would have used somewhat different language. There would have been a rephrasing of that in a different emphasis if I had known in 1957 all that I know now about the ferment in our world religious life. Come over those three again.

T: This is by the Religious News Service, August 26, 1957. Perhaps it would be helpful if I did read a little longer in it and give you a chance to reflect. "Brooks Hays, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, urged here in Atlanta that ministers be freed from economic, political, and social pressure in dealing with the race issue. The Arkansas democrat spoke to twenty-five hundred Baptist laymen and women. He outlined a three-point program that he feels could help churchmen in facing racial problems: One, the sentiment of the churches, even though completely dedicated to segregation, must be pointed toward a nonviolent settlement. Two, the rights of ministers

to raise their voices on all current issues must be protected. Three, efforts must be made to seek justice for all people in all specific situations growing out of racial tensions. At a news conference earlier, Representative Hays said he considered the race problem to be one of the three major issues before the Southern Baptist Convention. The others, he said, are reaching the new suburbs and fostering the ideals of religious liberty everywhere in the world."

H: I think that is a fair statement. As I do reflect on it, I am not sure I would change it at all. I think that probably has them in the right order. Now, I recall the circumstances under which those things were said. Let me pinpoint the date though. You have the date?

T: August 26, 1957.

H: Well, that was prior to the outbreak in Little Rock. That was in September of 1957, but the situation was heated. One thing I did stress--and I probably put it at the head of the educational process to acquaint the Baptist men and women with the urgency of racial goodwill and racial justice--was the question of a free pulpit. I think I made a contribution in this. Being a layman I could say more than a fellow minister could say in defense of a pastor's right to utter the prophetic viewpoint.

Just as an illustration of it, I recall I said virtually the same thing at a meeting of the Virginia Baptist Convention at Virginia Beach. I was making the usual circuit. As you know, the president is expected to visit most of the state conventions, and I did. It was a great experience, incidentally, because I was getting closer to the Baptist sources of influence and power, closer than you get at the great convention of the Southern Baptist Convention. But at any rate, I said to the Virginia brethren just what I said in Georgia. Later on I was told that in a church in southwest Virginia they were about to fire their pastor for expressing what they called "liberal views" about integration and racial justice. They were going to just fire him right there. The deacons were going to recommend to the congregation that his service be ended. One of the men stood and said, "Brethren, I feel as all of you do. I am not an integrationist and I don't agree with our pastor, but I was convinced by our president, Mr. Hays, in his speech at our last state convention that it is not right and it is not in accordance with Baptist tradition to seal the lips of our pastor on matters of this kind. I had rather he be free to say what he believes as his Christian point of view than to have him simply silenced because what he was saying was not popular." It prevailed. They backed off.

Well, now, no one knows how many situations like that transpired and how many situations are a result of what others and I were doing in advancing a thoroughly sound point of view, whichever side one is on.

T: We talked about this before, and we don't really need to go into the details of it. I think we have covered them. Almost immediately following this speech in Atlanta you were confronted with a rather serious outbreak in Little Rock. Some papers have called it the "Civil War in Little Rock." In any event, there was certainly conflict between state and federal authority on the race question. You had to cancel a speech in Oklahoma City that you had scheduled to Baptist Men. You

played a leading role in getting together President Eisenhower and Governor Faubus of Arkansas. A number of newspapers editorially praised you and other moderates in the South at this time. Apart from the mechanics of bringing this thing together, and you have indicated that you felt this was the right thing to do, can you share some of your inner feelings and tensions as you tried to work this thing out? What was it like to be Brooks Hays in the first part of September, 1957, when things looked like you were going ahead with the reelection for the next year? You were respected in your district, and then all of a sudden everything broke out at home and you were in Washington? What was it like to be Brooks Hays?

H: Yes. Well, I am glad to speak to that point. I am going to be very frank about it in spite of the fact that it might appear to be straining at the elements of piety in my position; but, undoubtedly, there were moral obligations on me that I couldn't be indifferent to. Now that I am off of the political scene, no one can say with any basis whatever that the words I am about to use are politically inspired, for I have no further political interest to serve and no ambitions anymore. I think there is quite an advantage in being able to speak very freely about these matters. I did fairly well in that regard right after my defeat. I tried not to withold some of the subjective values that I felt very strongly about.

Incidentally, I went back to Atlanta following my defeat for a state convention in November, 1958. I think the other was a lay conference. I spoke at the Atlanta State Convention in November or early December of 1958, very shortly after the defeat. I had spoken only at two places between the defeat and the Atlanta meeting. I spoke in DeLand, Florida, at Stetson University convocation and at Roy Angel's church, the Central Baptist Church in Miami. There are cetain incidents there that ought to be recorded because they were rather interesting events in the wake of the Little Rock experience. I flew to Atlanta and there I was met by a very prestigious group, a reception committee, which included the Chief of Police, and uniformed men were all around me, a big reception. As I recall it the mayor was there. At any rate, there were councilmen, somebody representing the governor, and all that. It was just one of those gilt-edged welcomes. They put me in the head car, a little parade, that went to the hotel.

T: Were they afraid for your life?

H: Oh, yes. That's what I was getting at. That was only a short time. I was on a narrow time margin. When we got to the church, after we stopped at the hotel to freshen up, I noticed again uniformed men all over the place. This same Chief of Police was visible more than once. When I left twenty-four hours later he went to the airport with me, and I thanked him. I said, "Chief, you know you have just really gone out of your way to add a little dignity and importance to me. I appreciate it very much." He said, "Well, I'm glad to see you get out of town, Mr. Hays. I haven't been with you all day, but every hour that you have been outside of your room in the hotel, I have had a plainclothesman within fifteen or twenty feet of you--plenty of them to take care of you because we had a rather explosive situation in Atlanta,

that is, a potential explosive situation. You became a symbol, and I have been worried about you." He was a Baptist, this Chief of Police, and he believed in what I was trying to do.

T: Let me ask a little further on that. When you heard these kinds of things that you could be shot or otherwise in danger, did you give much thought to that?

H: No. I didn't. I remember that I was inclined to dismiss it; and yet, as I reflect on it now, I have an idea that I was on a powder keg. You see, when you consider what happened, attacks on public men, you can see why there was a basis for concern by my friends. I felt for my wife's safety and after a while, even before the election, I felt for my own safety.

In other words, in 1957, when it was erupting in Little Rock a year before I was defeated and before I became a real symbol on the national scene, I remember one day the U. S. Marshall came to me and said, "Brooks, I am worried. You can't tell what a crazy man or woman might do around this place. We've got crazy people. Of course, every city has a few. This thing is pretty serious. I am not going to let anything happen to you if I can keep from it. I am detailing the best man that I have as your bodyguard here until this thing quiets down." Well, I didn't tell my wife; I was afraid it would alarm her. One day, three or four days later, she said, "Who is that fellow who is always sitting at the next table to us there in the restaurant? I saw him at church sitting in the pew right in front of us. Who is this guy that is following you around?" So, I broke down and told her, and she felt so important. She said, "Why didn't you tell me sooner? That shows that your life is worth something.

Other indications of it was what happened at Miami. You were asking me what it felt like. You see, we are talking about two different incidents. We are talking about the Newport experience, September 13, 1957, which was exciting from my point of view because I thought Governor Faubus and I--I'll put myself in a little secondary position--had pulled it out of the fire. We had rescued Little Rock. Naturally, I was elated.

T: Now there had been no real controversy then by the Congress meeting. There had just been the confrontation but not . . .

H: No. There had been incidents. There had been some ugly situations. There had been rock throwing. I am not just sure as to the time and place, but, you see, from my point of view the thing that made it serious was the government had called out the National Guard and given them the wrong orders. He told them not to let any of the nine black pupils of Central High School go through the line around the high school. In other words, they established the "off limits" location there. They admitted the white people, but none of the blacks--there were only nine out of about twenty-five hundred. I used to make a good deal of that point--the fact that nine out of twenty-five hundred could create such a disturbance. But I can see how it did because, of course, that simply was a token of what was to come. I guess I shouldn't have made too much of it; but, at any rate, what I should have stuck to was the argument for nonviolence, whatever the number. I guess in the final

analysis that if you take my words and my appeals, that is what it was: an emphasis constantly upon nonviolent settlement of the controversy and obedience to court orders.

T: Now you had called for this long before these incidences developed and also before the actual confrontation in Little Rock.

H: I hadn't been publicized very much on it. It was making very good headway in that the elements which I had encouraged privately, at least, were prevailing in Little Rock. The superintendent of schools had worked out what I thought was a good plan, and there was no occasion for my being prominent in it, because school administration is a matter belonging not to the federal government, ordinarily. In later years we have had peripheral problems that belong to the federal government, but it was a local matter and I was quite happy over the progress being made. In fact, I was very proud of Little Rock and the imaginations that were shown by the board and particularly by the superintendent of schools with support from the morning paper, The Arkansas Gazette.

T: The record is very clear that you had held this position of nonviolence long before these incidences occurred.

H: Oh, yes, though in a different context. Still, my public posture was known as a churchman and as a public figure, as one with responsibility in government.

T: When did you first hear that there was really going to be trouble in Little Rock? What was your reaction when that happened? Did people phone you?

H: Well, some, as I remember it. At first I was here in Washington. I got down there just in time to get involved. Some thought I went too soon. "Why didn't you stay out of it?" There was the counseling of friends that it would be political suicide; and, of course, they could say, "Well, it is exactly what we warned you about." That never dissuaded me, not that I wanted to display courage. I wanted to say that to Governor Faubus, but I resolved when we first began to work on it together--and I did project myself and my voice into it--that I would not let political factors prevail nor would I be indifferent to his political interest. I wouldn't knowingly sacrifice his political interests just to get my way. That was for him to decide as to the direction of his political interest. If I had been counseling with him as a close friend, I would have been able to say the things that I am saying to you now, but that would hardly have been appropriate because we were not close friends. We were not allies, but we were not enemies.

T: He really was on another faction in the Democratic Party in Arkansas?

H: Yes. He built his own political organization. It was independent of the congressional delegation. It was my feeling that I owed it to him not to project political considerations into it because I just didn't see it as a political matter. I thought of it as a great challenge to political leadership and I could see it shaping up. I had no idea until I got to Little Rock that it would balloon as it did.

T: Did you fly out that time?

H: I think we did. It was around Labor Day. I believe that I had done some thinking about it here in Washington as I read the unfavorable publicity, particularly about the governor ordering the Guard not to let the black pupils come through the lines. I know the national guardsmen were following orders. There was no deviation from the governor's strict injunction not to let those pupils in. I don't know what led him to do that. That's about all I need to say on the mind of Orval Faubus, his internal meditations, but I was worried after I got home. I found that he was adamant in that position, and things were not moving forward as they should. So, I just decided to ask on what I felt was a good impulse to see if I could get the President and the governor to sit down together and avoid a confrontation between the two units of government. The federal system you know can be difficult to make function, particularly in a period in which emotions are aroused and some of the old rallying cries are raised.

I remember calling Sherman Adams from the office of a close friend who had believed in me, a man named C. E. Lowry, now deceased, who was an outstanding businessman and not involved in politics. I was, perhaps, one of the few men that he took any interest in in public service. But he had been drawn to me when I was a young lawyer at Russellville and seemed to be impressed by my philosophy. He had supported me in the governors' races, had given a good deal of time and attention to my career and seemed to be rather proud of me. So, I went up to his office and I said, "Clyde, I have a feeling that I ought to ask the President to see Governor Faubus and then get them to sit down and work this thing out, or we are going to have trouble in this city." Well, I could see he was quite moved by that. I said, "I want to use your phone and call the White House and suggest to my friend, Sherman Adams, who was the top force in the White House, . . .

T: If he had said "yes" then . . .

H: You bet your life and we all knew that. I remember, too, that Clyde felt a sense of urgency. He said, "Brooks, let me get my son in here. I want him to hear something that I believe is going to make history." That part of it was a very remote place in the recesses of my mind, that there was anything historic about it. But I knew there was something terribly basic in the constitutional system. We couldn't afford to continue on the course that Faubus had set. I didn't know how firm his determination was, but I hadn't realized that the man I had looked up to and rather admired had these antiquated ideas. I remember I was surprised about it, but I thought he could be influenced and the situation could be saved.

Sherman said, "Well, Brooks, do you think the Governor would come?" I said, "Well, I don't know, but I think I am in a position to reach the people who can influence him. I think I can get his ear, and I know what I'll say to him. I think he ought to come, and I think the President ought to see him." He said, "All right. I do, too, if you can get him to ask for the conference." Why shouldn't the President have invited him to come? But that was very, very clear in what Adams said to me at that time. "If you can get him to ask for the conference."

Well, I wasn't going to make an issue of that. There was no point in my theorizing about which one was going to ask first, but I reflected on it later. There was no need of that being a condition precedent to his going.

I am afraid that here I must admit that I had a slightly different view of Eisenhower, for whom I came to have a very warm and affectionate feeling. I think he was a very warmhearted, fine human being. But I think this reflected a rather weak place in the administration posture. I was almost fanatical in my devotion to Sherman Adams, and our interests later were so identified that I never wavered in my friendship for him. I had the feeling that the President of the United States would be thinking constructively about the total national community and all people in the nation. The White House said to get him to ask for the conference. Well, as I have indicated, I didn't make an issue of that.

When we finished the conversation--I don't know how much time it took to wind it up--the main point was that Sherman was ready for the President to see Faubus under these conditions. So, I moved quickly on it. Clyde Lowry was giving me all the help that was needed because he was as fluttery as a debutante, seeing something take place that was history. I am not sure whether it was his idea or mine that I called a lawyer in Little Rock who was the key man in the Governor's political structure, W. J. (Bill) Smith. I called Bill and told him I needed to see him. I believe I discussed it over the phone right there without going to his office. I said, "Bill, what do you say about it?" He said, "Well, I think you've got something. I know the Governor would see you at once. Let me call him and see." So, just in moments he called back and said, "The Governor will see you now." I remember about all that was said was, "Call the Governor." When I called him he was very cordial. He was at the office, I believe. He said, "I'll go out to the mansion." He couldn't see me at the office, because he knew that would make publicity. He said, "Go in the back way. You'll know how to get there." I did know that much about the mansion. "There will be somebody there who will be told to admit you."

I don't remember now how I got out there. I remember going in by myself as he wanted me to. No one was with me. Sure enough, the folks at the mansion were ready for me. It was not heavily staffed. We had a rather austere set-up. But, I saw him at once and we talked it over. The agreement was made pretty quickly. We worked on the way he was to ask for it. I think maybe I had gotten some suggestions from Adams as to the things that should be said in the message that complied with his request that the Governor initiate this. Of course, the Governor had no objection to asking for it. I don't think the Governor would have hesitated a minute if it had been Eisenhower asking him to come. I think the Governor would have said, "Yes."

He would have been in a poor position to defend himself if he had said, "No, I won't talk to the President." But there are some governors who probably would have done it. Wallace of Alabama would probably have thumbed his nose at the President. You see, the interesting thing is that Faubus had been known as a moderate. He hadn't been an ideological extremist, and hadn't talked about states rights and that kind of thing

very much. He had been known as a moderate. So, that made me feel somewhat at ease with him though I knew it was a touch-and-go situation because of this surprising order he had given the Guard, something that I just couldn't harmonize with the things he had said and done.

T: It simply called for obeying the law and order. That is what you are saying he should have done.

H: Well, it was just the most terrible mistake a man could make. I was hoping as we went along that he would see that it was. But we worked out the language. I remember when we got to the door he said, "Brooks, if this materializes, and I guess it will, I want you to go with me to Newport." I said, "Well, if you want me to, I'll be happy, of course, to do whatever you want." I believe he added, "I want Winthrop Rockefeller to go."

Winthrop didn't go, and I don't know whether he ever learned that Faubus had had that in his mind because there was no evidence at all that Rockefeller had any interest whatever in what was taking place. Of course, Rockefeller was getting ready to run for governor. I don't know that he anticipated that he would ever run against Faubus. He was assuming, I guess, that there would be an opening when Faubus, who was very popular even at that time, would drop plans to be governor. You see, he was elected in 1954 and this was 1957. He had another year or more to go on his second term. The tradition in Arkansas politics was that you gave up the office after two terms. So, that's all there is to the Rockefeller angle except I think it belongs here again as a footnote.

T: How did you feel through all of this? Were you so busy with working out the details you really didn't have time to sense what was going on?

H: No, I was not that busy. I was excited about it. I thought, "This thing is great." I certainly hadn't anticipated that I would have the publicity I got personally. You know, it is pathetic, and it grieves me that this happened. I think the fact that I was the initiator and got credit for that, which couldn't be helped; in other words there was no way I could go to all the newsmen and say, "Now for goodness sake, play me down and play Faubus up. Don't let me be the hero or the focal point in this thing." I was sensitive to that as I could be. I was constantly on guard against getting in the front line. Look at the pictures that were made. You would always find me in the background, sometimes not even seen. I had to be very careful about that. It was not because Faubus was inordinately sensitive. If he had the normal impulses of any politician he wouldn't want to be overshadowed by someone else.

Newsmen have a way of taking the bare facts that they get through official releases and statements that come out of the mimeograph room in the White House and so on, and saying, "Well, now, what's behind that? Who did this?" The first thing you knew they said, "Well, this was Hays." They would call me and ask me certain things and I could dodge and hedge, but they would know. I remember when they got to me after it broke that Faubus was going--I think, perhaps, at the same time he said Mr. Hays would go with him, I'm not too sure about whether it was announced simultaneously with this other thing.

It got to the news that this was my idea, maybe Sherman Adams told them. Sherman was not, of course, fully sensitized to all the problems and the little difficult places. I guess that was partly responsible for it. Then, too, as I recall it, I had the counseling of Harry Ashmore, who was the editorial writer for The Arkansas Gazette. He had had a very forthright position and was very much in sympathy with my aims, and I am sure he was convinced of the quality of my motives. He is bound to have known what had happened. I don't recall telling him anything about the conversation. I remember where I was when the news broke.

We were having a late lunch. My wife and I had gone down to a cafeteria in Pulaski Heights, a residential section in the western part of Little Rock. I believe we had rented a home for the summer there, or maybe we were staying a few nights with friends. At any rate, I was having a late lunch and they just moved in on me. They just swarmed in, the photographers and the newsmen. There I was trying to eat a bite and they got out their notebooks. One of them took my picture, well, they all took my picture; but in one picture that came out I looked like a sick chicken. I guess I was just wrapped in thought trying to figure out what to do and what to say and how to handle this. My wife was sitting there. She was sort of enjoying it, it was exciting, you know. I said, "Honey, don't look too happy." She laughed at me about it later and said, "The idea of your telling me not to look happy. You looked miserable. Somebody had to look happy in our family." I had said, "Don't let them think that we are ecstatic."

T: Is that the way in which you tried to handle things many times, to cover it by both humor and a light remark to take the tension out of your family situation?

H: Yes. And I guess that the family was used to my treating things lightly. I wanted not to do it this time except where a little levity would not be out of order or would not be resented. I was excited. I could see a solution for one of the great issues of these times. I could see a great leap forward in making the federal system work for the good of all people. Then, we went on home from the cafeteria. It must have been the home of Dick Emerson where we got a little rest.

The first thing I knew, automobiles were stopping there in front of the home, they were getting out their cameras and so on and setting up the microphones right in the yard; and they asked me to come out there and speak. Well, that bothered me but you don't gain anything by saying, "Go roll your hoop." I had to do it. I answered their questions politely and again said that I thought the Governor had done a great thing and a fine thing and I looked for a successful conference. If they asked me if I were going, I said, "Well, that's for the Governor to determine but should he ask me I'll go." I think that was my only utterance on that.

We went first to Providence, which is just a short way from Newport, on September 12. These events were somewhere between September 5 and 6. So, it was just a short interval of a two-or-three-day period before we went to the summer White House at Newport. There were the Governor and I and the Governor's aide--my this shows you how names

can get away from you. He was a good friend of mine from Logan County. He was the secretary who was even more in the background than I, but he was a great help to me and to the Governor. I had this confidence. He was later appointed postmaster in North Little Rock by Wilbur Mills and dropped out of politics. He ramained my friend even in the strong cleavage between Faubus and myself later on. If I can think of his name, I will give it because he was the only other person beside the pilot who went with us from Little Rock.

We went in a two-motor plane, which I believe was leased by the state for the Governor. We had good weather. But the Governor was in a very serious, quiet, nontalkative mood the whole time. Now it took us only about five hours, as I remember it, to make the flight from Little Rock to Providence, and we stopped at Roanoke, Virginia, to refuel and to have a bite. We started on the morning of September 12. We got out of the plane, the three of us, and went into the airport reception room on our way to the restaurant to get lunch about one o'clock, as I remember it, and there were the morning papers in the news stand. My picture was all over the front page, and the Governor's picture wasn't there. I was hoping he wouldn't see it. But this, you know, is in line with what I was telling you a moment ago about the circumstances. We had lunch and still the Governor didn't talk. I am not sure about it, if I am ever free to just completely drop the guard and tell everything, I could throw some light on it; but I think he had had some second thoughts, and maybe counsel from his adamant advisors, none of whom had what I would call a high moral interpretation of executive responsibility.

I don't demean them. Some of them were men of considerable ability and had qualities of leadership or they wouldn't have been in that circle. I would look in vain for a close advisor to Orval Faubus who would understand, really, fully the depth of the moral considerations in this great cleavage. I am not sure but that they talked him out of it, or rather gave him some uncertainty about it. Because, you see, he had acted without consulting anybody. He had turned me loose on this thing. I can hear them barking at him, "Governor, why did you do it?" They were what you would call hard-nosed men, tough-minded in their course of political action. "Boys, let's keep this race issue alive. We can elect governors for twenty years."

T: Of course, that has been a traditional pattern of political campaigning.

H: Yes, yes. And this was made to order, you see. The Democrats had held power in many southern states, most of the southern states, for seventy-five years by this ignoble attack on the black man.

T: You described very clearly this sort of thing. Was there any crisis time in your own life, and I am not talking about relationship to others, I am talking about you and how you reacted.

H: No. I think I have put this in some of my writings.

T: I know you have written the story in rather clear detail.

H: The North Carolina book? You are familiar with that? I am referring to it because I think that you might find in that little opus answers to some of the questions.

T: I really was trying to pull out from you more in terms of what your feelings were and what Brooks Hays was thinking as these things were going on, and I think you have answered that well.

H: This, of course, had its harrowing aspects which were beginning when I saw the Governor so moody and noncommunicating. It made me wonder if I had lost his confidence. But since he had shown all along that he was a master politician I just couldn't help but think that this was the answer. I just believe that he was thinking, "Maybe this is an unwise step for me to take." He couldn't see down the line that it was going to react greatly in his favor. From then on I was doubly anxious to have the utmost discretion in dealing with the political angles. I wanted it to bear fruit. I wanted this to happen. I just felt that it could happen, and it would be a supreme moment in my own life to see something like this take place. No one needed to throw any laurels or put any laurels on my brow. The inner satisfaction I would get would be sufficient compensation. I certainly can't deny that I was giving some thought to that as every man in public life does if he is a rational person, that this is a great moment in my life and some of the things that I have fought for are now coming to the surface. We'll show that the federal system can be made to work and that governors and Presidents can be not only good politicians but they can be great molders of social policy and can bring peace to a torn city. Now if that throws any light on the subject . . .

T: Have you talked to Governor Faubus at all since that?

H: Yes, I have, and here's something that has not been put in any oral history, I don't believe. There has been a recording of it, and we must take a moment to refer to it. In 1976, I forget what month, there was under the auspicies of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a nine-state conference in the city of Nashville, your city, Ron, and maybe you remember the publicity. There was a nine-state conference of leaders in the field of education, race relations, and related areas of public policy. John Sigenthaler was active in that conference. Well, they had asked me to give the keynote address. Did you see any publicity on that? It was about a year ago. So, I was surprised when I got there to find--well, I believe maybe a few days before the conference I had learned by correspondence--that Governor Faubus was to be one of the panelists. He was scheduled, in fact, to preside on one of the panels. I thought that was all right and was good. It would get him back into circulation. When he saw me he was very cordial, I have never found him otherwise.

I have had some other experiences I could relate that might throw some light on that. I remember at one dinner they gave in Little Rock in 1964 where he was present at the head table and I was the honoree. That ought to get into the picture somewhere because the local chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews wanted to honor me and 1,025 people paid $25.00 apiece to come to that dinner. They said they could have sold five hundred more tickets but they couldn't get

them in the room where they had the dinner. Governor Faubus was there at the head table. His rival by that time in 1964 was Winthrop Rockefeller. We knew the breach had occurred by that time and both were running for governor because he didn't retire until 1966. It was before the election in 1964. At any rate Rockefeller and Faubus were both there. Eugene McCarthy was the main speaker. Mitch Miller flew down to lead the singing of an integrated choir. Now, imagine that.

T: This is 1964?

H: Just six years after my defeat and here I was being honored in that fashion by the city of Little Rock. I couldn't believe it. I just sat there. I forget who else of prominence was on the program. I remember that McCarthy made a cute speech but not only cute, it had a very profound element in it. I thought when he started talking about Thomas Moore he was really overdoing it to put me in a class with that great martyr. He said, "Moore lost his life. Brooks just lost an office." He got a little humor out of that paradox.

T: What did Faubus say to you in 1976? Did he talk at all about . . .

H: You are talking about 1964?

T: I mean 1976.

H: I had made the statement that there were some evidences that Faubus' conscience was hurting him a bit because when he came up and shook hands with me and told me he was glad to be there he said, "Brooks, God bless you." He said it like he meant it. It wasn't just tossed off as you have heard people toss it off. Now, getting back to the conference though.

T: Yes. What happened in Nashville in 1976?

H: Well, I sat in on his panel a little while just to see what his manner was and how he was acting. I was glad to see that he knew something about the subject. I forget which one of the topics he was assigned, but he was doing all right and evidencing some of the old charm and charisma.

T: Is he really financially hurting?

H: He is hurting. Incidentally, the paper, I believe either yesterday or this morning, indicates that he is going into the hospital for heart surgery. He may be ill. He may be a sick man. All of this that has happened, the contacts with him, have carried none of the surface evidences of a bruise or of a wound. All of this makes me more anxious than ever to be just and fair to the man. I don't think I could be otherwise. I have tried to develop at least that sense of sportsmanship.

In Nashville, John Sigenthaler--do you know his place in the life of Nashville? He is the editor of The Tennessean. He arranged for Faubus and myself to be interviewed on the same radio program. Well, it didn't

plumb the depth of the issue, but it was a rather interesting and certainly a friendly exchange of views. One of the editors of a small daily paper in Conway, Arkansas, an old newspaper and a good one called the Log Cabin Democrat, was there. Conway is a suburb of Little Rock of some fifteen thousand people. He asked Faubus if he would be willing to meet me, in terms of Arkansas, for an exploration of the problem of race relations. Of course, you always will have that when you get either one of us. I agreed and Faubus agreed. He sort of passed it off, I think, as something maybe he wouldn't hear of again; but when I was in Little Rock perhaps a month later—I should say Fayetteville, home of the state university which is only thirty miles from Huntsville, where Faubus lives--the editor of the paper came up to interview us. He got in touch with Faubus and they arranged the time; and one afternoon in the studios of the University Library Building we sat there for perhaps two hours and conversed in a very relaxed way, Faubus and myself.

Now the amazing thing that took place, and I am about to quote the Governor in something I never expected him to say; but this is what he said. It set a tone to the conversation that I guess was a bit disappointing to this presider and also to one of the leaders in the Arkansas Historical Society, who is a professor at the University of Arkansas, Walter Brown. He sat and listened and so did the archivist, Sam Sizer. They were both, I think, a bit nonplussed to see the thing take this turn. I don't think either of them would be of the type that is best expressed by "let's you and him fight." They might have wanted to see blood flow, so to speak, but I doubt it. I think maybe the editor did. But at any rate the thing that Faubus said that you can see was amazing was, "Well, the only person in the Little Rock episode who showed courage and wisdom is the gentleman sitting beside me, Mr. Hays." Now I would call that a capitulation. When he told me goodbye and the editor goodbye, he said, "Now you understand that I wouldn't have driven over here to give you these views this afternoon except for my respect for this man." (Talking about me.)

So, I think you were getting some of the seasoning, some of the maturing thought of the man who had mellowed. It softened my feelings. I probably was less caustic and less emphatic than I have generally been on some of these matters. But why shouldn't I be? There are plenty of historians. There are plenty of newsmen. There are plenty of political scientists who can have access to the same content that I have had. Let history fix the judgment on Orval Faubus. It is not my function, and I am not a weakling in saying that I can't help having a feeling for him.

You know, people think of politicians and politics sometimes as they do prizefighting; but even at prizefights I have seen men at the end of a fight embrace each other in a sort of a sympathy for the bruises they have had. I have developed in time a real sympathy for the men I have defeated. The man I defeated, Bob Bailey, whose conduct was not to be recommended at all--his standards and ideals were not high--I felt sorry for when he tried to win another office and failed miserably. I couldn't help feeling sorry for him, a man at that age not able to find fulfillment of his political hopes. So, as our theology says, "We are frail creatures of dust." Somewhere along the line you develop these feelings of a very human nature.

T: After this took place you were in demand as a speaker, but you were also sometimes not in demand as a speaker. At the Mississippi Baptist Convention in 1958 or 1959 several churches urged that the invitation for you to speak at the state convention be withdrawn.

H: I think the exact number was six. I believe that I kept count of the number where there was publicity. There were six churches, which is a minuscule number, of course. But that may have been closer to the general sentiment of the people than that of the churches that didn't pass resolutions. I don't want to make too much of the fact that there were only six. The point is the fact that these six that would pass public resolutions asking that I not be invited to speak was rather significant, because I had never known of it happening. I had never known of an issue like that, complaints about somebody speaking. We had it with President Ford in 1976 at our Southern Baptist Convention. There were rumblings and there were a few individual protests, but in spite of that not a single church asked the committee, as far as I know, and there are thirty thousand churches . . . . So, that signified something of the pathology in the political scene in Mississippi.

T: You laugh about it now. How did Brooks Hays feel then?

H: Well, I can't deny that I was hurt and that I was stung. I had a very warm feeling for Mississippi. I had been an attorney for the Department of Agriculture in a regional office that included Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. They were the three states in my jurisdiction. I traveled from north to south and from east to west. I had covered every part of it, and I knew something of the problems and the deep social trauma in agriculture in that state. I knew a lot of the Mississippi church leaders. Many of them were warmhearted friends of mine. Structurally, it was a highly conservative state, less so now than it was. This was at the apex of the segregationist feelings and to have this occur with me as the target when I had had this warm feeling for Mississippi and had made so many speeches there and had been so well received, it hurt.

Let me say this, and I know I was right in the strategy I adopted. They would have welcomed--I don't recall whether they gave me any evidence of it or not--my taking them off the spot by asking that they withdraw me and relieve me of this responsibility to speak. This was my reaction to that: "No. That's not the way to resolve this thing because I ought not to be deprived of the privilege of addressing the state convention. I am the president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Now if they do withdraw the invitation there will be no incrimination. I will thank them and not discuss it, and I will have no maledictions of any one person or any of the churches. I simply will not go to Mississippi." But, you see, they were not entitled to be spared that. It was their responsibility.

I want to say this for Chester Quarles, who was the executive secretary at the time. I was real proud of him, he stood his ground. The committee stood with him. They said, "No, the invitation to Mr. Hays will not be withdrawn." Here again they had a problem of personal safety. They were understandably a bit worried because just as in Atlanta, so in Jackson. They had me well surrounded the whole time. Of course, the publicity that had been generated by the action of these dissenting

churches gave me, they said, the biggest crowd they had ever had in a state meeting or convention.

I was a bit nervous there, as I recall, about the security of it. I felt relieved to find that the motorcycle police were sticking close to me and giving me safe passage. Of course, they had the television cameras and radio microphones all over the place when I got to the church. I had been escorted from the hotel over there and I presume with adequate police protection. But no question about it, it was traumatic.

T: You said there was something pathetic about it.

H: My use of the word "pathetic" was due to the chairman's attitude. Here he was, the presiding officer of a state in which I was the symbol of a hated public posture position, that of integration in the churches and you might say in the schools. Although my emphasis there had been to interpret it in terms of compliance and bowing to law and that philosophy, everyone knew from what I had written and said my sympathies were with the aspiration of the black people for integration. But I could see from this presiding officer's manner that he was nervous. I had never met him. As I recall, he was from Columbus, bound to have been a prominent man and a Baptist leader or he wouldn't have held the position of president of the state convention. He didn't leave town over me. He was there to do his presiding job, but it amused me when my time came to speak. I was the principal speaker of the evening session--of course, they didn't have anything else scheduled except some musical numbers as I remember . . .

About the only person I can remember recognizing in the audience was Chester Swor. Are you familiar with his name and his place? He was a very fine, eloquent leader and very popular among the young people particularly. I didn't know how well acquainted with my position he had been, but he sat on the front pew, I remember; and somehow or another, I felt that he was in my corner. There were expressions on his face that made me feel that he was happy to see me winning the battle.

The chairman, in presenting me, didn't do as most of them do. In fact, I can't remember when I had an introduction like this: Most of the presiding officers would say, "This young man who from his childhood was a product of Baptist life at its best, raised by Christian parents, superintendent of the Sunday School, a deacon, a teacher of a great men's class," things that they could regale an audience with in my Baptist ties. That's all they needed to do to make a nice little introduction. But what he said was, "Brethren, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention." Now, of course, you can say, "Well that's the way the President of the United States is introduced and that's how you should have been introduced." The office speaks for him. But that isn't the reason he did it that way. He did it that way to keep from bragging on me or saying anything that would make him appear to applaud my position. You can't fool me because I know that. "Members of the Mississippi Baptist Convention--or messengers." He didn't say, "I have the honor to present . . ." or "It is my great privilege to present." He said, "Ladies and gentlemen of the convention, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention." (Laugh)

T: Did you get a good hearing?

H: Well, somebody, who was either in the choir or in the side on one of the seats where you could get a fairly good look at the audience--I wish I could recall who it was--got many a chuckle out of telling people about the change of the atmosphere. Chester Swor, incidentally, said to me at the end of the session, "Brooks, this was your greatest hour." So, I felt, you know, that I had done my chore. What I did was not diabolical. It was not planned. I was simply being myself. I just talked to them about our southern tradition, our southern life, what it meant to live in this pleasant part of the Western Hemisphere and how I loved Mississippi and how I had identified myself with its aspirations. Then, I told my best yarn and the first thing you knew they were laughing with me. Some of those stories are pretty good, you know. They are folksy and they are Baptistic.

This friend who watched told me, "I knew the ones out there in that audience who were Ku Kluxers and Council members and were against your coming. "Man," he said, "they were as sour as could be." He said, "They didn't intend to smile for seven years. You could see what they were thinking internally, 'Well, old man, you've got your chance now, but you won't make a dent on us.'" But he said, "About the third wave of laughter that shook that church house they began to break a little, and before it was over, they were sliding down in their seats and laughing and joining in the crowd. They just couldn't resist it. That was when I concluded that what I did was right.

He said, "You didn't confront them; you didn't wave any flags in their faces; you didn't moralize offensively; you didn't say, 'What a good boy am I,' or 'What primitive people you all are.' You just talked about the South's noble self and the South being able to sleep better at night; and the things that we have to do as Christians." I was touching the things that should make my position palatable. I was not trying to win them to my side as participants in the struggle but at least to give them some sympathy for those of us who had to fight for justice.

T: We were talking just as we were beginning about Owen Cooper's occasion of the President of the United States visiting in his home in the summer of 1977. You were going to relate something about Mr. Cooper.

H: Well, he participated in a meeting that was somewhat similar to the meeting I referred to yesterday, the Mississippi State Convention while I was still president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Everyone knows that Mississippi was one of the states with the strongest resistance to the movement for integration and for racial equality, and this was having a terrific impact on our church life.

In the St. Louis Convention, which I believe was along about 1955--at any rate it was before my election and after the Supreme Court decision--I think at the prompting of the Christian Life Commission the Convention went on record as avowing the moral foundation, the essential mortality, of the Supreme Court decision on integration. It was passed, I recall, by voice vote. Douglas Hudgins, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Jackson, stepped forward to the microphone and asked that he be recorded as voting, "No," which shows that he really was an all-out resister to it.

At that time I knew that meant that he would never realize his ambition to be president of the Convention. He was, however, a strong contender and was nominated the year I was elected; then, immediately, was elected first vice-president. Every now and then that is done. Someone fails to get the presidency who has a strong following so they put a bit of oil in the wound by giving him the vice-presidency. Whatever the motive that inspired the Convention to act, they did, indeed, make him vice-president. But, so much for that. I don't recall, incidentally, that Hudgins figured at all in my experience at the Mississippi State Convention.

During the three-year tenure I had as special assistant to President Kennedy--it was either late in Mr. Kennedy's administration or early in Mr. Johnson's administration, and he was sworn in you remember in November, 1963--along in that period while the issue was still pretty critical in Mississippi, I was invited to speak at a conference on human relations. I don't recall clearly the name of the sponsoring body, but it was a group of people interested in racial harmony and in social welfare. They were a very good group but not politically significant because at that time in Mississippi it was almost a handicap to be spoken well of by the integrationists, and one was sort of sticking his neck out to be identified with that kind of organization. Nevertheless, they explained to me that they were planning to have an integrated dinner, the first ever held in the leading hotel in Jackson. That hotel was the gathering place for politicians and people interested in public policy. They were a bit nervous about it apparently, not only because it was an integrated meeting but also because this evil man, Mr. Hays, was coming to be the principal speaker.

I say that, of course, with appreciation of your attitude. This kind of thing now can be referred to with a bit of humor because it is no longer true. Congressman Rains of Alabama told me along about 1961, when I received an invitation to speak at the Alabama Bar Convention that he was surprised that they had invited me. He said, "Brooks, you don't realize it, but mothers used to quiet their children by mentioning your name if they were bad."

That was another experience that was very satisfying to me, attending the Alabama Bar Convention in 1961. It was in that period that I got this invitation to speak at the Tutwiler Hotel. Mrs. Hays went with me and again, I was met by the police and had a good escort of uniformed men. When we got to the hotel there were more police. Now, it had been planned that Hodding Carter, Jr., was to introduce me. He was the senior and his son, who is now Assistant Secretary of State in the Carter administration, and continues to be the editor of the Greenville, Mississippi, liberal daily newspaper. Mr. Carter and I were old friends, and I was pleased that he was going to introduce me; but just a few minutes before time for the dinner, they got word that he had missed his plane or that his flight had been cancelled. At any rate, he could not get from New Orleans to Jackson, and the committee met me at the door with the news that it would not be Mr. Carter but it would be my Baptist friend, Owen Cooper, who would introduce me.

This was significant because Mr. Cooper was a highly sensitive person on moral issues and a sincere Baptist. It just meant that Owen Cooper

was willing to be identified with me and to take that assignment of introducing me. He gave me a beautiful introduction. We just had a good time. The police were standing inside the dining room at the door and, of course, the sponsors of the meeting, along with all of your leadership of that type, those who were concerned about justice for the Negro, were quite thrilled that this was a successful meeting and a nonviolent meeting. There were no disturbances and no demonstrators at the door. It was a sort of thermometer that measured the progress that had been made in Mississippi. Of course, it brings Owen Cooper to my mind when I recall that dinner.

T: Did you know him well?

H: Well, no. We had not been as closely associated as we were later after my assumption of the presidency. Of course, this was just shortly after I served as president. I suppose that I had scarcely met him before the Convention experience. I presume that we met then in meetings where he would be expected to attend.

T: In the latter part of 1957 before your defeat for Congress in the 1958 election and in the spring of 1958--in March actually--you introduced House Bill 11219. This particular bill--and I am sure you remember it well--was to establish a joint congressional committee on civil rights to undertake an investigation study with respect to the problems of desegregation in the public schools in the United States and for other purposes. What prompted you to make this introduction and did you have other supporters? Were there others who introduced it with you?

H: I don't recall that I did have any other supporters. It saddens me to think I not only had no support from the liberal side but I had no support from those who had been historically prominent in fighting for civil rights. In fact, I had some criticism. It was viewed by them as a delaying action. I don't recall that the deep South representatives gave me any help at all. I say that that saddened me. I believe that it was about that time that Clarence Mitchell, of the NAACP, who is the leading lobbyist for that good organization, was vehement in denouncing me. I believe that was the thing that triggered his ejaculation out here in a meeting of a conference on civil rights, attacking me, if not for introducing this bill, at least for taking what was truthfully, I suppose, a middle-of-the-road course.

I kept sticking to the idea that the South's political spokesmen had to be drawn into this and that the intransigence of some senators and representatives and certain of the southern governors, was indefensible at that time. I felt, too, as one who had pride in the legislative branch of government that it should not be left to the two other branches, the Court and the President. The Court had done a monumental thing in the school case; but, of course, that was only one phase of the total struggle for civil rights. I felt it should not be left to the Court and to the President to do all the leading. I was going to take on the hard task. I had done that really because I did have convictions about it; and my early actions, my activities, my professional life as a lawyer, and as an official for the short time, as assistant attorney general for the state for two years, and as a churchman . . .

This was consistent with my longtime interest in justice for the black people. So, I felt that this would help and it would project the Congress into the struggle in a less tense way. They could view it in a more objective fashion if they had a committee which was committed to getting the facts, how we were getting along and what legislation was required. Now, by not doing that, Congress scarcely passed a bill except under pressures from President Johnson and under President Truman. But this was all under executive leadership. It was not congressional leadership. Now a student of political science with a history of national legislation could make some comments and throw some light on this, but the fact remains that Congress had abdicated and I was trying to get them to assume responsibility. Now that states the case.

Incidentally, I should mention Francis Pickens Miller, of Virginia, in this connection because he was sitting in this meeting when Clarence Mitchell sounded off about me. He stood up and said, "I resent this bitterly, the personal attack upon Mr. Hays. If this group is going to assail one of their best friends in the South, who should not be expected to go as far for reasons that should be apparent, because of their inability to subscribe to everything that we say and do, then there is no hope for the NAACP. There is no hope for their leadership in the South because everyone who is familiar with it knows they are taking great risks in political life who step out as Mr. Hays has done." Of course, this was before my defeat. It was prophetic, though.

After my defeat I had the greatest satisfaction just a few yards from where we are sitting in my home on Second Street, S. E. Clarence Mitchell was on the opposite side of the street, and he saw me and called to me and said, "Would you please wait just a minute, I want to say something to you." He walked across the street to shake hands with me and he said, "I want to tell you that I was wrong in my judgment of you. I want you to know that I admire you and that I appreciate the sacrifice you have made; and I am simply eager to atone for any injustice I did you." We became fast friends. I have seen him occasionally in the NAACP office here, and we served together on the Board of Directors of what was called the Southern Committee on Political Ethics. It was organized about 1966 to do something in a practical way to stop such spokesmen for the extreme resistance group as George Wallace, governor of Alabama; and there were other interests. We were fighting for a liberal program at the national level.

T: Did he and others within this group feel that you were really trying to go back?

H: I suppose that was the basis of their feeling of opposition to it. I could see no reason for it. It seemed to me that they should have come forward and said, "Yes, it would be good to get the facts." You know, there is a difference in the mood of crusading people. I have been a crusader. There is a difference that is a sort of indefinable thing. It conflicted with that mood of the moment.

T: Your statement that you made at the time of the introduction of this bill is in the files of the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington and parallels rather closely with what you have just related.

H: Well, I would be glad if it isn't too lengthy for that to be inserted.

T: Well, we might get you to read it if you will. This is the statement you made on March 6.

H: You mean read it into the tape?

T: Yes, if you would like to, that might be helpful.

H: Well, this is my statement on the introduction to the bill and it was on March 6, 1958, and I refer to the fact that I am introducing it. "There is great need to reexamine the situation in the South and in the light of the difficulties growing out of edicts requiring sudden change in age-old customs, and I believe that a one-year study of the problem would develop facts that would be helpful to all three branches of the government." Then I pleaded for the establishment of a committee of Congress since the Civil Rights Commission seemed to be concentrating on the question of voting rights as provided in the Civil Rights Act of 1957. You see, this, I believe, was limited strictly to school desegregation where the greatest heat was in the southern states. Then, I say the committee would be called upon to suggest to all school districts various alternative ways of complying with the ordinance of desegregation. I don't think I will read anymore of it, but it will be available if you should need it.

Here it bears out my point. I think it tends to confirm the idea that we would make more rapid progress if we could have the benefit of the study with alternatives for school segregation than just a simple court order and mandates that were proving fruitless. I think we could have anticipated by such a study the bus issue which, of course, has vast significance outside of the South, in fact, the South has accomodated itself. I think we have made more progress in the South. But we could have produced some things that would have been significant not just for the South but for fifty states. The bus issue is the best one I can think of, also, the changing of district lines. The rearrangement that has been done now under court order could have been done under guidelines that Congress asserted. So Congress capitulated.

T: Then I take it the bill was referred to committee and that was the end of it?

H: That was the end of it.

T: Did you get a chance to testify on it at all?

H: I don't think so. I perhaps just despaired, and knew it would be futile to try to do anything. I had other things to put my energies to.

T: Rather interestingly, almost as soon as you had introduced that bill you got ready to leave town and went to Russia.

H: Yes. (Laughter)

T: You had some trouble getting a visa to get to Russia that year. Do you remember something about that?

H: No. I didn't recall that there was difficulty in getting a visa. I knew that three years before I had been condemned by Pravada for some position I took in the United Nations General Assembly in 1955. This was in 1958 that I went to Russia. I don't know that there was any connection between the two things. I had even forgotten that there was some problem about my visa.

T: Apparently, you were to go to Moscow on April 19 or 20, specifically to see Baptist leaders. On April 9, the Washington Star reported that you had received your visa, although you had gone to Arkansas for the Easter vacation and you had got your visa in sufficient time to make the trip. Do you want to relate at all--again the Baptist Joint Committee file that I refer to entitled "Brooks Hays" in their library--on the statement that you prepared on your visit to the Moscow Baptist Church? Is there anything you want to add to that, or say that would be particularly of interest?

H: Well, here I would like to make a record that should not be put into any kind of news release or people involved in it identified, but I think it has a significance. I, of course, was under surveillance the whole time I was in Russia, and I was there only four days.

H: Well, I think perhaps I base that statement on what I was told by the people in the American Embassy. They would know whether this was ordinarily done in the case of a person in my relationship, that is, a member of Congress and president of a religious body. One thing that I think bore out the assumption that there was surveillance was that the phone would ring about one or two o'clock in the morning, and I believe Dr. Cranford, who was with me on this trip and serving as president of the American Convention, said that their phone rang. I think this all seems to bear out the fact that we were under surveillance. Incidentally, I would like to know if you have the information as to whether or not Dr. Cranford had trouble getting a visa.

T: Yes. Apparently they came together--both of your visas came together. "Visas were issued for Mr. Hays and Dr. Cranford"--apparently a statement from the Embassy on April 9. So, it was about a week before you were to leave.

H: Well, any fears they had that there would be any subversive activity by me were, of course, groundless. I wasn't going to go to Russia and do anything to embarrass our Baptist friends. We were very circumspect. I wanted it to have that impress, the impress of a communication between Christians, and that was the paramount thing. We were Christians first, before we were Baptists, and concerned about the great gap between their society and ours. I stuck rigidly to this resolution that I would not show any interest whatever in the Russian government. I wouldn't try to see any officials. I wouldn't move through our Embassy to make contact with any of them. I was there strictly to talk to our Baptist people and to listen to our Baptist people. I'm glad I did have that resolution.

T: Did it work out that way?

H: Yes. We were invited to dinner one night at our Embassy. I believe Mr. Merchant was our ambassador.

T: Livingston Merchant?

H: Yes, as I recall. He was our ambassador and he and Mrs. Merchant invited Dr. and Mrs. Cranford and myself to dinner. My wife did not accompany me to Russia. Then, we had dinner also with a Mr. Elliott--I believe Tom Elliott, who was one of the secretaries of our American Embassy. They lived in an apartment close by. Some of the observations that I may have made in confidential talk after I returned were based on things that Elliott had told me. He attended the church service and sat in the balcony, and I believe it was the first time he had ever attended a Baptist service. He apparently was deeply moved by what he saw and heard. He told us later that the interpreter we had was very faithful in her interpretation. There was obviously a devotion to her standards.

T: You were there only four days?

H: Of course, Sunday was the big day.

T: Both you and Dr. Cranford spoke?

H: Yes, and Mrs. Cranford spoke, also. Elliott was inspired by it. He said that it was a remarkable meeting. I was glad to have his opinion--judgment--on it because, of course, it was the only Russian service that I had ever been in. He spoke in laudatory terms of the singing, and they did have, as I remember it, six anthems. It was a two-hour service and they had not only the three talks--which were rather brief, probably about ten minutes each--but they had a full-length sermon by the pastor.

We had a very friendly and apparently well-educated little interpreter--a young lady. I am not calling any names because I want to tell about her. Oh, I suppose I might as well mention her name because it can easily be determined who our interpreter was. We were there under the auspices of what they call the In-Tourist Guide. They took care of everything but they charged us heavily. The car, as I recall it, a big, black limousine with a driver, was always available and the charge for that was thirty dollars a day. That was in 1958, mind you, when things were generally lower priced. We went to the hotel where they wanted us to stay; and while they didn't say we shouldn't leave the hotel, we got the point. I drifted out of the hotel a few times. I walked up into Red Square just looking around one morning and enjoyed just browsing around a few yards.

T: Did they ask you not to?

H: No, I don't recall. But we noticed that the interpreter showed up rather early in the day to see what she could do next. There wasn't much free time but I suppose it wasn't quite as rigid as I have made it appear. The telephone calls bothered me a bit.

T: Was there somebody on the line?

H: Well, there would be a voice saying something in Russian and I would just say, "You have the wrong number." But they accomplished all they wanted. They wanted to see if the phone was answered.

T: To see if you were there?

H: Yes. To see if I was in my room. I had a beautiful room, incidentally, far more luxurious and larger than I needed. It was an old hotel, and it was probably the hotel in the Czarist days. It was very elegant and had a lot of marble in it with marble columns. The tub in the bathroom was big enough for me to baptize any new converts to Christianity.

Back to the little interpreter. We were quite impressed. She told us the next day that it was the only Christian church she had ever attended. She was a product of new Russia and graduated from the University of Moscow and, I suppose, she was of a nominally atheistic philosophy. I assumed she had to be a communist and a part of the establishment, since she had this sensitive work of interpreting.

T: Did she speak good English?

H: Beautiful English. Now I may have said all I need to about this. We were interviewed at length when we returned, and we said a good deal about the service and how impressed we were, first, by the attendance. When we got there shortly before time for the service, around 9:30 perhaps, and it ran until noon, there was already a line a block long and people waiting to get in. The seats were already filled when we walked in so those who came later stood around the wall, in the aisles, and then between the pews. People sitting would have to look around somebody standing between them and the pew in front of them. I had never seen anything like it. It would have given an American fire marshall apoplexy to have a thing like that. Most of them were of peasant class, the traditional Russian shawl around the head for the ladies and probably wearing their best clothes. They were neatly dressed but not in expensive clothes at all. They were, in other words, of that economic and social class that made no pretension to wealth or privilege, which is a lot like Baptist life in the frontier where I grew up.

Our little church building was not on the public square. We didn't have the big, brick church. We had a plain structure on a side street. The presbyterians had the big church. It is different now, but what I am saying is that there is an identification with social and economic classifications that is very perceptible still in Russia.

Yet, I had an idea that if we had gone to Leningrad we would have seen some of the lingering evidences of a more favored class that had embraced our Baptist faith. Lord Rodstock had influenced the Russian church movement, and he had gone into Russia and apparently had made some headway. The Baptist workers in the Ukraine in the south of Russia working with the peasant class with their farm people made far greater progress, but there was a small stream of upper-class privileged group in the total Russian life. There are about a half-million Baptists. It has an awesome name, the all Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists.

T: Did you get a chance to talk to people other than through this interpreter? Or was the interpreter really with you virtually all the time?

H: I think we had breakfast by ourselves in the hotel coffee shop. I remember speaking to one Catholic, a visitor from America. He was quite

fascinated by what he had heard about the government relaxing their stranglehold on religious worship and on religious worship and said that he had attended a Catholic church the day before. He said they had very small attendance, however. I think they permitted only one Catholic church; and they certainly limited the Baptists to one church, although the Baptists wanted very much to have another church. They couldn't seat their people. I believe the church building had not been built first of all for a church, but at any rate it was leased to them. They didn't have a title to the building, it was firmly in the hands of the government. They met not by the grace of God but by the grace of the Kremlin.

T: How did you come to go?

H: Well, I am not sure that I can recall. The Russian Baptists may have indicated through the Baptist World Alliance that they would like to see us. Maybe it just came out of our conversation. I am sure somewhere in the record there is reference to the fact that one week after I was elected president of the Southern Convention, my pastor in Washington was elected president of the Northern Convention. Calvary was our church home. At that time I don't believe our membership had officially been moved from Little Rock to Washington but to all intents and purposes it was our church because of our physical location in the seat of the government. That made an interesting converging of Northern and Southern Convention activities here in Calvary.

T: Were you close to Dr. Cranford?

H: Oh, yes. He and I were very congenial friends.

T: He had been pastor at that church then for some twenty . . .

H: Not quite. He was elected first, I think, early in 1941. We got acquainted with him then. I was not elected to Congress until 1942, but I had an assignment in Washington that kept me here a good part of 1941. We got acquainted with him and were quite impressed by him and came to have a very warm affection for him. He is a lovable person, as you know, and a good preacher, great preacher. We conferred real often about our two conventions. Of course, I was instrumental in finding an important spot for him on the Southern Convention program the first year at the Houston Convention.

T: We talked about some other events in 1958 . . .

H: Before we leave Russia, though, let me complete this little story about this interpreter. I may as well go ahead and use the name, but I don't know how much of this should be given to this angle. Her name was Anna Sampsonova. She asked us to call her Anna and we did. She was, of course, very young--I would judge in her early twenties. I believe she was married. We didn't meet her husband, but I think some reference was made to him. She had a sweet face and was a clean-looking young thing and spoke very beautiful English.

She took me out on Monday or Tuesday, or one of the days between the church service and the Thursday departure, in this same big, black car to the Zigorst which was where the Orthodox Church had its seminary.

I didn't see much of Russia in that fifty-mile drive. I saw something of the farm life and had some rather clear impressions of how they operate. Then, on Sunday afternoon she took us for a drive up the river, and we saw some rather nice homes called dachaus, little recreation cottages in the adjacent territory--the open country. I think they are available for the privileged class, so they hadn't altogether eliminated the privileged in the Communist state.

When we left for the airport that Thursday she rode with me on the back seat of this car, and the pastor rode with the driver on the front seat. There were other cars, not government cars, but I suppose our Baptist people had sent a little committee out there to tell me good-bye. The pastor turned to the back and said something in Russian. She made a short, quick reply, and then looked at me a bit embarrassed. I think immediately she thought that nothing should be said in Russian as it might give me the impression things were being said that I shouldn't hear, because they could both speak English. The pastor couldn't speak it very well, but he could have said it in English. She said to me, then, that what the pastor had said was, "If one comes often enough to God's house, one might become a believer." You remember she had been in the pulpit and had served as our interpreter. He knew she had been in that service. "If one comes often enough to God's house, one might become a believer." I guess maybe that was as far as he could go and he was seizing his opportunity to say that much because he was not supposed to evangelize. That was a very significant thing to happen because she said just as I have repeated, and I said, "Well, tell him, then, that if she should become a believer I will fly back across the Atlantic to see her baptized." She smiled.

Two years later a Presbyterian minister, who had been in Russia, told Dr. Cranford in a meeting at their Massanuta, Virginia, assembly he had same interpreter. Cranford said, "Anna Sampsonova?" He answered, I don't know her name." Cranford said, "Well, how do you know that she was the same one?" He said, "You see this little cross I am wearing in my lapel. Well, I had an extra one and I told her that I would like to give her this cross. I said, 'I hope you'll become a Christian.' She said, "I have already been invited to become a Christian by a member of the United States Congress.'" That was two years later. So, that simple, little casual statement that I made--it was almost just a pleasantry--it made some impression on her. I think she was the kind of person that you meet by the thousands in our country under the influence of the church. To be an intellectual she didn't have to be irreverent or nonreligious nor antireligious, but she was blocked from taking any kind of step toward identification.

One pays a real price in Russia for being a believer. So that case to me is one of which I would like to make a study. I wonder what went on in her mind and wonder what has happened to her. When I became Secretary of State in 1961 I made some contacts with the Russians. Later, when William Tyler, who had been Assistant Secretary of State at the same time I was filling my post as assistant for congressional relations, was appointed ambassador to Russia. I wrote him a little note telling him this much and passed it through channels. I said, "Is there any way you can find out if Anna Sampsonova took any further interest in the Baptist church?" I said, "Of course, I understand this is a very

sensitive matter, and I don't want to initiate anything through the church. I want it done by people who would have some understanding of the sensitivity." He wrote back and said, "I wouldn't touch it at all. You would be running the risk of ending a career for that little girl." So, that is the way it stands.

T: What you have shared is rather profound in that we really don't know what kind of influence and what kind of witness we can make, and it becomes part of the life-style. I think that is important. You obviously weren't in Russia very long. Is that the only time you have been to Russia?

H: Yes.

T: We talked about the summer of 1958 in several ways. You were in the primary campaign and won by fifteen thousand votes, in a position to represent the Democratic Party in the November election of 1958 for the Fifth Congressional District. You were making some statements, however, in the summer of 1958 that were rather interesting. One, you appeared before the Texas Convention in May, 1958, and urged that there was a need for not only acceptance of blacks and acceptance of black-white relationships, but you . . .

The primary was in April. Is that correct, or was it in August?

H: Well, I just don't recall. From my recollection it would have been in July or August.

T: Then probably this statement that you made would have been made before the primary, May 30, 1958. This is the press service coming out of Geneva, Switzerland, actually. You spoke before the Southern Baptist Convention in May of that year and you called for "imagination that must accompany our compassion." You said, "It would be tragic for us to assume that we can function as a Christian body without assigning to trusted representatives of the Convention the task of pointing out our Christian duty with respect to social evils and current conflicts." Also, "There should be no reluctance on our part to confront controversy, nor should Christians ever flee from the duty of examining differences." My question, really, is, was this kind of statement the kind of thing that endeared you to the folks in Arkansas? Was this the beginning of some of their resistance, or did they just say, "That's Mr. Hays talking his church business and not pay much attention to it?"

H: Well, it is a difficult question to analyze, really. It is a very complex situation. I remember what Paul Niven said prior to the November election. Now he was with the radio people. By the way, this is just a little coincidence. He was the representative of a national broadcasting company. He was with one of the radio chains, I believe it was CBS, because he was in Moscow and his report on Dr. Cranford and myself was beamed to the whole country. Any number of people have said they heard him talk about the significance of our visit to the Baptist church in Moscow. In examining the situation in Little Rock, I presume in 1957 after the violence there, Niven had said, "Well, everybody in Little Rock is a segregationist, aren't they?" One old gentleman said, "Oh sure. Everybody is a segregationist." Niven answered, "Everybody but Mr. Hays, your congressman. He's not, is he?" This old fellow said,

"Oh, Brooks is funny." Then Niven asked him, "Well, then, are you going to vote against him?" "No," he replied, "I'll vote for Brooks, he's an institution." I had to get a lot of segregationists votes to get as many as I did in both the primary and in the general election. You see, I got more votes in the August primary than my opponent got in November. There were something like ten or fifteen thousand more votes cast in August than were cast in November. So, the August primary was far more a reflection of opinion about me than the November election.

T: Did Alford run in August?

H: No, but a segregationist did who was just as rampant on the subject. So, we had as much of a test on my position.

T: Did you know Dale Alford at all?

H: Oh, yes. He had fitted my glasses. He was a very pleasant fellow when he was fitting my glasses and he didn't sound like a candidate who was denouncing me.

T: Was this shortly before?

H: About a year before.

T: We have talked about the election campaign and the defeat, and certainly your book published by the University of North Carolina picks that up. After you were defeated there were a couple of things that were rather interesting. One is, you were quoted as saying that you really had to base your defeat on the segregation issue and segregation unhappiness in Little Rock. You commented on it as being very close to what your father would have said to you, and commented that you had started politics in the same way you were ending it, by defeat. You recounted his defeat in 1922, when he was opposed rather vigorously by the Ku Klux Klan. Did you talk extensively with your father about that? About your defeat?

H: Oh, yes. His mood was just fine.

T: Was he alert enough at that time to be able to talk to you?

H: Yes, he was. He was 86. He became 87 in February following the November defeat. He died in June of 1959, shortly after the Louisville Convention in which prayer was offered for him.

T: What was the flavor of your conversations together? Were they just casual conversations? Did you talk with him on the phone or stop by and visit for a while?

H: He was not active in the campaign. He had passed that point. He probably didn't leave home after the fall of 1957. His sister, my aunt, Mrs. Gibson, lived there with him; and we were providing, at least part of the time, a nurse to look after him. He had a long illness, but it didn't keep him from expressing himself in a normal way. I think he knew perhaps that the decline would produce death probably that year. He was trying to tell me something once about himself, and I said, "Dad--

I finally decided that what he was trying to tell me was that he knew he wasn't going to get well--aren't you really trying to tell me that if you don't survive this illness that everything is all right and you feel reconciled and ready to go." He said, "That's right. That is what I was trying to say." So that was sort of typical.

He was a very powerful person mentally, intellectually, and spiritually. He loved his church. I said something about that in the past. He had a keen sense of humor, and I think perhaps the funniest thing that was said about the election results in November--really, not very many funny things were said because it wasn't the time for laughter--was when Dad came up with a good one on Saturday before the election on Tuesday when he feared that they had us licked. He said as much to me. He said, "Son, I'm afraid you're going to lose this election. I think they've got too much power for us. They are going to roll over us through sheer power. I'd rather it wouldn't be that way but it's all right. You know I've wanted you to quit Congress. The only thing is, I wanted you to pick the time."

I actually had it in my mind that this would be the last term. I had wanted to have some vigorous years left to devote to things including church objectives and educational interests, which have occupied a great deal of my time anyway since I left the White House. He said, "You should have the privilege of picking the time. There is only one thing about your being defeated. It makes me feel bad the way this thing has happened." Then, he brought our opposition into it without mentioning names. He said, "It's like the old man that was in the lot looking after his donkey that he was very fond of. The donkey was irritated, and he hauled off and kicked the old man. He was elderly, and they rushed to him and carried him in the house and sent for the doctor. The doctor bent over him and then turned to the family and said, 'Well, this is too much for him. He is not going to survive. He can't get well.' And the old man looked up--the doctor had thought he was unconscious--and said, 'Doc, can't you pull me through and let me die of pneumonia a month or two from now?' The doctor said, 'Why do you put it like that?' He said, 'Well, I just hate for them to put on my tombstone, 'Kicked to death by a jackass.'"

In my press conference here a month after the election--there was so much interest in it of course . . . That one election overshadowed every other election in the congressional election and senatorial election. Gene McCarthy told me once--he was elected to the Senate in the 1958 election--"Brooks, do you realize that the space you received in the national press was equal or surpassed the space given to thirteen new United States senators?" I suspect that was true. He said, "Oh, why couldn't I have been defeated." I had a press conference, and the room just overflowed--a tremendous news conference in my office.

I can see David Niven sitting on the big table down at the end of the room swinging his leg and listening to me. Edward P. Morgan was there. Both Morgan and Eric Sevareid commented favorably on my position. But I couldn't resist telling that story about Dad; it was just too good not to share with them. I may have said something to soften it. It was a little out of character for me. One of the men said, "Mr. Hays, how did your family take your defeat?" I said, "Oh, I'm real proud of my family.

We've suffered defeats before, and we knew how to take it. There wasn't a tear shed and everyone has their chin up and are doing all right. The only thing is my 87-year-old daddy was a bit disheartened by it, but even he was able to laugh about it because on Saturday before the election he made this comment." Then I repeated the story I have given you. It got a tremendous response. The newsmen liked that kind of thing, they filled that room with laughter. That night on the Brinkley-Huntley program--you remember how they used to close out? One would be in one city and the other in another. Huntley was in Chicago, and Brinkley was broadcasting from Washington. It was on the day of this press conference. So Brinkley decided to tell that at the conclusion. He told what a wonderful press conference it was--spoke in glowing terms of it--and wound up with "that story that Mr. Hays told." Chet got so tickled he could hardly do his little part, you know--"Good-night." He was laughing all the way to the end of that broadcast. Mike Monroney, who was the Senator from Oklahoma at the time, called me long distance the next morning and said, "Brooks, Oklahoma City is rocking with laughter over your daddy's story about that jackass."

T: At the time you were defeated, and we have talked about the election, there were just innumerable news stories related to your defeat. A number of Baptist groups, for example, the Maryland Convention, which was meeting, I suppose, at the exact same week, passed a resolution praising your courageous stand. The Christian Science Monitor reported it on November 13, which would be just a little less than a week after the election. I believe the election was on November 5.

At that time there were groups of Baptist laymen in Mississippi who asked Representative Brooks Hays, Democrat of Arkansas, to resign as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. The president of the Baptist Laymen of Mississippi said in a telegram to the congressman, and I will quote the telegram: "Recent publicity incident to your campaign for reelection was most distasteful for Southern Baptists. The lack of confidence expressed by the vote of your district in the write-in election of your opponent also reflects upon the Southern Baptists. Though honest in your convictions, we believe you have outlived your usefulness as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and urge your immediate resignation. Such action would help to restore the solidarity to Southern Baptists which are firm believers in southern traditions." Do you remember this?

H: Yes.

T: What was your reaction? Anger?

H: No. I respect that from a group in Mississippi. That doesn't reflect the thinking of Mississippi Baptists. I think that Owen Cooper and Chester Swor, whom I have quoted in these interviews, are far more typical of the feeling of Mississippi Baptists. This was a militant group. I'll bet the majority of them were members of the White Citizens Council.

T: What did you do? Do you remember what you did?

H: I am not sure. I probably answered it and told them I had no thought of resigning. I was closer to the Baptist position than they were. It didn't matter what the voters of Arkansas did.

T: Then . . .

H: This is a reflection of a superficial judgment about democracy. It is an over concern for that distorted statement, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." That is just not true, of course, we know that.

T: You mentioned you received considerable publicity after this event. I think you have alluded to the fact, or I rather heard from what you said, that in many ways your influence was considerably enhanced by the defeat rather than crippled by it. People had heard the name Brooks Hays and knew what had happened to you. Have you reflected on that side of it?

H: There is no question in the world but that it was an advantage to me. It produced a name recognition and was unlike anything I had had in the years in which I was winning. When one of my fellow professors at Rutgers, where I went to teach as a visiting professor following Mr. Kennedy's assassination . . . I had a trick title for a lecture I gave, "Peaks and Pitfalls of Poverty." One of the professors said, "What was your peak?" I said, "What you thought was my pitfall, my defeat for a ninth term because that was once that I was sure of the soundness of my position."

T: During the campaign you received support from James Coleman of Mississippi. Do you remember that?

H: Yes, I remember. Governor Coleman, you're talking about the Governor. He and I had served on the Platform Committee in the 1956 Convention in Chicago, the Democratic Convention. We got to be good friends. He was a moderate, not quite as advanced in his thinking on race relations but a person who was eager to avoid violence and eager to keep the Democratic Party together as a national entity and as an influence in the nation. In other words, he never joined Truman-haters. That means he didn't follow Strom Thurman or Ross Barnett or Governor Wright, who was his predecessor as governor. So Coleman was a political moderate. When he heard I was in difficulty--and some of my friends may have brought it to his attention or I may have talked to him myself--he said he would be glad to make a radio talk for me, and he did. I think it helped. I think they had to steal some votes to keep me from being elected over this write-in candidate.

T: He is quoted by Time, May 17, 1958, as saying, "The South needs you in her great struggle." Then you replied, "I hope the people of Mississippi won't hold him responsible for my views."

H: Well, that was because he would have to have a slightly different posture in the political community. I think Time later on commented on the fact when they interviewed me--it may have been in that same article--saying that it was rather unusual, unexpected that Mr. Hays was more concerned over what would happen to Governor Coleman than would happen to him. So that's a part of that story.

T: Then there were several occasions when you received support from a large number of Baptist people for the stand you took at that particular time.

H: Maryland was not the only state that passed a resolution endorsing me and pledging their support for me.

T: I believe Virginia and Kentucky did it, and there probably were others. You did appear at the Virginia Convention shortly after this and received a standing ovation when you announced that you would not resign but would continue your term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Actually, you did go to the Arkansas . . .

H: I had a marvelous reception in Arkansas. I don't recall that they passed any resolutions. This had been worked up I learned later by some of my friends, not just political friends but greater Baptist friends who believed in me. They had said that they passed word around, "Now don't hold back when he walks in but let's raise the rafters." And they did. I couldn't believe it. I walked in the side door and the minute I showed up things began to happen, standing up and whooping and hollering. That, of course, did me good. That was really oil in the wound.

T: And this was actually in Little Rock. The first time you had spoken after your defeat.

H: Yes. Shortly after.

T: I wonder if there are other things you would want to say. One that may be of interest and I don't know if we ought to pursue it, but Richard Nixon, who at that time was Vice-President, described your defeat in a letter you had from him as tragic. Do you want to comment at all? Have you had much contact with Mr. Nixon?

H: Yes, I remember that I talked to him after that letter was sent to me. I thought maybe he might be willing to find a discreet way to influence the Republicans in the House not to seat Alford unless he could show by committee investigation that he really had been honestly elected. Vice-President Nixon indicated that he would see if he could do anything. That may have been a bit presumptuous of me to ask him to do that, and I could find no evidence later that he did do anything at all. I wouldn't be critical of that, but it is a bit of an anomaly that he wrote me such a strong letter, then sort of vanished into the wings and didn't appear on the stage again. I don't want to be sharply critical of his abdication. It was a fine letter and my appreciation of it persists in spite of the things that have happened since then.

I recall this just advice along in the spring of 1971, I guess, after he became President. I was talking with him one day--I was his guest at the White House along with some other congressmen--and he said, "Brooks, do you remember the letter that I wrote you when you were defeated?" I said, "Well, Mr. President, it appeared onthe front page of the New York Herald Tribune, November 24, 1958." He said, "You remember it." It did get quite a play, it was on page one. Of course, I think he arranged that. I saw it in the paper before I got the letter.

T: Is that the way he did things or is that the way politicians do things?

H: Well, it is often done. Every now and then a person will release a letter but generally say to the addressee, "I am releasing it because of certain reasons." I remember reading that in a letter that Norman Thomas sent me and others once on some subject. "I am releasing this before you will receive the letter because of . . . ." The Nixon experience, of course, is such a sad one that I think we just ought to leave it right there.

T: The Capital Baptist, which is a paper edited by James O. Duncan here in Washington in the D. C. Convention, published an editorial in their December 4, 1958, issue in which they suggested that you paralleled the experience of Abraham Lincoln in being defeated one hundred years earlier; and they suggested you as a possible vice-presidential candidate for the United States. Was this the first time this was raised or had others talked to you about it? What are your recollections?

H: What is the date of that?

T: The date of the editorial is December 4, 1958, which would be just about a month after your defeat.

H: That probably was, or wasn't, the first. I didn't recall that Jim Duncan had declared himself in that way. It may not have been the first, however, because Gerald Johnson, who was once the editor of the Baltimore Sun before his retirement and who continued to write for the New Republic, had an editorial, a long editorial--that was probably, though, after December. So this that you refer to may have been the first. Gerald Johnson's editorial was a tremendous thrust. He brought an analysis that my friend Jim Duncan didn't attempt to do there. But that was a very gracious thing for Jim to do and I am glad to be reminded of it.

Johnson, after identifying me as one who had been willing to do some unusual, conventional, unprecedented things on the political front, went on to say that I would be an ideal candidate for the vice-presidency. He said, "Suppose, for example, that it should be Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, wouldn't a Unitarian from a northern state be happy to have a Baptist from a southern state, like Brooks Hays, who has a standing in the Baptist community?" Well, of course, there is nothing wrong with that logic. He said, "If it should be Mr. Kennedy, a Catholic from Massachusetts, wouldn't a New England Catholic be happy to have a Southern Baptist like Mr. Hays?" So, those are the two names that they used. Of course, here you get the traditional geographical emphasis, as well as religious emphasis.

You know, if I had had a political base, so that one state could pick up the cudgels for me, it might have happened. I think I am entitled to quote something said by an observer of political events, a young political scientist, not long ago. "How different the course of our nation would have been had it been Brooks instead of Lyndon Johnson. Vietnam would have been handled differently. We know that, because Mr. Hays would not have permitted this slaughter to continue as long as it did." True enough that was an interesting observation.

Following Gerald Johnson's editorial, which got some publicity, not a great deal--and I think due to the fact that I had no point in the political scene in which I could rally my followers--it would not have

been too surprising. I am pretty sure that if Adlai Stevenson had been nominated, I just have an idea I would have been his choice. We were very close. He agonized over my defeat. I wish I could put my hands on all the telegrams that he sent and all the letters that made allusion to it. That would have been far more logical. I was not as close to Kennedy as I was to Stevenson and yet, in the years in which I was with the Kennedy administration I became very close to him, and we became strong friends. That parallels my friendship with Stevenson.

T: Now where did you first meet Adlai Stevenson? Did you know him when he was governor of Illinois?

H: The first time I ever saw him--and this is amusing and it would have amused him, but I don't recall ever having told him about it--was in 1955, three years after I had campaigned for him and had been his advance man in the South, setting up his meetings and being in touch with his headquarters and with him. But we had never met. Oscar Chapman, who was in charge of the itineraries, called and asked me if I would be available to go through the South. I was in Congress, of course, at the time, and my duties were such that I could leave my district and be his advance man. I accepted that responsibility, and I set up his speaking engagements in a number of southern cities. Adlai was bound to have known that was going on. He knew who the congressman from Little Rock was, although he had not covered this ground at that time.

But in 1955, when I was a delegate to the United Nations and we were living at the Vanderbilt Hotel, Marion and I came in one afternoon late and there was a note in the box saying that Governor Stevenson wanted to see me and that I could see him at the Savoy Hotel late that afternoon. We just had time to get over there, and when we walked in and sat down to wait, Bill--his name slips me but he later was ambassador to Denmark; he was Governor Stevenson's aide then--said, "The Governor will see you in just a minute." All of a sudden the Governor came out of his private office into the reception room where we were sitting. He stopped and said, "Hi, Brooks, how are you?" That was the first time I had ever shaken hands with him. Then he said, "Hello, Mrs. Hays. I am glad to see you." She said, "Governor Stevenson, now that I have had the great pleasure of meeting you, and that was the reason I came, you and Brooks have got some business to talk over so I'll go down in the lobby and wait for him." "Why," he said, "don't be silly. Let Brooks go down in the lobby." (Laughter) That bound Marion to him stronger than ever. It was a typical Stevenson comment. That was the first time I ever saw him. You see, that is so deceptive because I had been his advance man and had been, of course, a very devoted supporter of his.

T: Your name really never came before the Democratic Convention?

H: No. But all it needed would have been for Jack Kennedy to say, "I want Hays." But there were probably two reasons he didn't: One is the thing I have spoken of. I had no votes to contribute just to begin with. The other is that it would have angered a lot of people involved. So, what might have appeared to be a great advantage on the religious front, that is, a prominent Catholic turning to a prominent Baptist, was cancelled out by the distaste of many people in the South for Brooks Hays. I think that was the explanation. I talked to some people in the South,

I didn't talk to many, not over half-dozen. I remember a conversation, for example, as to whether or not the situation should be viewed with some thought of capitalizing on the new interest in me. I remember that Governor Colgate Darden, former governor of Virginia, who was a very congenial friend and a very close, intimate friend, said that he didn't believe I should do a thing. He said, "I don't think it is coming to you as a result of any action that your friends take. It would just have to come by sort of a spontaneous action." Oh, some one or two friends in the Convention kept in touch with me just sort of hoping, you know, that lightning might strike. That's about all there is to be said on that.

T: In 1958, after you were defeated, of course, there was a dinner honoring you at the Willard Hotel.

H: December 18.

T: There was quite a large crowd that attended on that particular occasion. You went virtually immediately from there to the TVA.

H: No. I didn't go to the TVA until June of 1959.

T: I see. Well, what did you do after your defeat?

H: Well, I established a little office here in Washington. That appears in the Hotbed of Tranquility and that's all you need. You've got that Hotbed of Tranquility, haven't you?

T: Yes. We do. The dinner that honored you, some seven hundred people apparently attended and paid at least $7.50 a person, which was a good price in those days. You received words of appreciation from several people, including Ralph Bunch, under-secretary of the United Nations at the time, Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina, Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts, and Senator Humphrey of Minnesota. All of these are good friends of yours. It would probably be worthwhile to say something about the dinner and what your reaction to it was. Then, if you want to say something about some of the people there, that would be helpful as well. It was held at the Willard Hotel, a rather prominent hotel in Washington. Do you have any other recollections about the dinner?

H: Yes. The master of ceremonies was Governor Darden, former president of the University of Virginia, former member of Congress, and a very close friend. I think I have referred to him previously. The speakers were Billy Graham, Senator Monroney of Oklahoma, and the chairman of the House of Foreign Affairs Committee, J. P. Richards of South Carolina, also Mrs. Mary Lord, a prominent Republican leader. Mrs. Catherine Graham, presently the publisher of the Washington Post was at the speakers' table, also Arthur Fleming, who was a member of President Eisenhower's cabinet. So it had a bipartisan flavor obviously. Bertha Atkins of the Woman's National Republican Committee was present. Also present were a number of prominent newspaper people, such as Harry Ashemore and others. Then, you had the whole spectrum of political philosophy there: Howard Smith, Virginia conservative, Jacob Javits, the New York liberal.

I remember Congressman Ruess of Wisconsin, who is now the chairman of the House Banking Committee, said later, "Brooks, I notice that you and Mrs. Hays smiled during all evening. There were no tears shed by you." I said, "Well, of course not. That was a very happy occasion." Ruess said, "I sat at the same table with Ken Keating and John Sherman Cooper and they both blubbered all evening." It was an emotional time for some of them. One man laughed because a liquor dealer in the southeast area was there. He was one of my fans and a well-known person in this neighborhood.

It was really a remarkable meeting. The "Committee to Honor Brooks Hays" had prepared a very beautiful certificate written by Ernest Griffith of the Library of Congress, and it was carried in the foreword prepared by Don Herzberg of my latest book. It is now an old book, published in 1968. You might be interested in the content of that certificate as a student of my place in another area of public life. I remember it started out, "We salute you first as a human being, a very human being," which I thought was very good, very clever, and wound up, "We salute you as a man of faith, which is to you the most precious of all," and it gave brief reference to the sources of my faith and the content in a capsule form.

T: Who was really responsible for getting this together, do you think?

H: Well, some of the men and women in the second echelon of congressional life. I say the second echelon because a thing of this kind requires a lot of work, and I had some loyal friends. My own former secretary, who was then representative of some industry in Washington, downtown as we say, Claude Curlin, an Arkansas who had established himself in Washington and who served several years in my office. . . He had a lot of help from Senator Fulbright's staff. They worked on the details, and then got help from a lot of offices; they had no trouble with the responses. They came in very quickly and I think they shut off the invitations when they found they couldn't seat any more.

It was a very meaningful session. My former pastor, Dale Cowling, pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Little Rock, flew up to present a beautiful plaque from the class that bears my name in his church. There were a lot of black friends of mine. Congressman Charles Diggs of Michigan, chairman of the House District Committee now, was present. Life magazine produced some pictures that were taken of it and the Washington Post gave it a good deal of prominence the next day. So it was recorded as a significant event. Not often is the man who is defeated for office . . .

T: Some of the members of the sponsoring committee, and it looks like they have been listed alphabetically on the invitation were: Honorable Carl Albert of Oklahoma, Harry S. Ashmore, editor of the Arkansas Gazette, Ambassador A. S. J. Carnahan, Dr. Clarence W. Cranford, president of the American Baptist Convention, Honorable Ralph Flanders, senator from Vermont, Honorable Albert Gore, senator from Tennessee, Philip L. Graham, Washington publisher of the Washington Post, Honorable Porter Hardy, a member of Congress from Virginia, Honorable F. Edward Hebert, of Louisiana, chairman of the Committee on Armed Services. He was a Louisiana conservative, and probably called himself a segregationist. He showed me a mean letter he got from a constituent expressing amazement that he

as conservative would join in the tribute to me. The letter that Hebert wrote back was a classic. He said, "Don't tell me how to form my friendships. Brooks Hays is my friend and what difference does it make if we might have different views." He went on to tell him something about my character and the thing that drew him to me. It really was a classic. Here is good proof of the kind of support that I had on Capitol Hill. It was not a support that depended on ideology, expediency, or on ties that are designed to promote some particular cause in politics.

T: Do you work with Hebert extensively?

H: No. His office was adjoining mine for part of the time, next door to me. We would maybe walk to the Capitol now and then. But it was a friendship based on mutual admiration.

T: Dr. Lewis Webster Jones, president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Honorable Walter Judd, Republican congressman from Minneapolis, Honorable John F. Kennedy, United States senator of Massachusetts, Mayer Kestenbaum, president of Hart, Schaffner and Marx, Dr. Frederick E. Reissig, executive secretary of the Washington Federation of Churches, Honorable Adlai Stevenson, Honorable Alexander Wiley, United States senator from Wisconsin. . .

H: He was chairman of the Senate House of Foreign Relations.

T: Of which you had been a member?

H: No. He was on the Senate. I thought the comment of Chairman Reuss about John Sherman Cooper and Ken Keating blubbering all evening would induce a smile from Senator Cooper, so some months later when I was with him I told him that little story. I said, "Senator, they told on you, that you blubbered all evening." He didn't smile. He is a very interesting person and very highly respected among members of Congress. He said, "I was not weeping for you, I was weeping for my country." But that kind of support does move you when you have it.

T: In many ways he had the same kind of struggle I would suspect.

H: Oh, yes. He had a series of defeats. He had to keep fighting to survive.

T: He also was a Baptist.

H: Yes. That is right. I had forgotten that for the moment.

T: The Religious News Service said in December of 1958 that you would not divorce yourself from the efforts of the investigation on the election with the write-in candidate and they quote you saying that you personally would have no thought of contesting the election to secure a congressional seat for yourself. It pointed out that you felt it was a question as to whether the election was legal and the election laws were maintained. Did you have a part in prompting that?

H: No. I had no part whatever. My counsel was sought by some of the people in Arkansas that were just determined if they could to get an investigation under way. It should have been investigated. Now, I have never been

sure that I was right in not contesting it. That would have absolutely assured a full and complete investigation. But I am not at all in agreement with the course which Speaker Rayburn and Charles Hallock, the Republican leader, took on this. They allowed themselves to be swayed by the unusual pressures from the segregationist South. Of course, a lot of men who would have regarded themselves as my friends joined in that. It was with them a policy matter and a matter of political strategy which they would say was outside of personal feeling. Some were rather indifferent to the moral element. The stealing of an election is as shocking as the stealing of money and property, moreso, you might say. They were determined not to open up this matter and not to let the correct judgment, according to the ballots that were cast, be determined by the House. I was surprised at that because I thought that following the decision of the leadership to allow Alford to be seated temporarily--and it was that kind of seating--when he was allowed on the second day to take his oath, having been deprived of the privilege of taking his oath the first day with the other 434 members. That was by the objection of a member from Michigan, John Dingell. He said, "I object to the seating of Dale Alford of Arkansas." The Speaker had to say under the rules, "The gentleman from Arkansas, Dr. Alford, will stand aside." Then, by the second day they worked it out so that he could be permitted under a resolution introduced by John McCormick, the majority leader, to take his oath without prejudice--meaning without prejudice to the right of the House to determine later that he was not entitled to the credentials which he presented signed by the Secretary of State of Arkansas, a routine matter when the Election Commission finds who received the greater number of votes.

Well, of course, this was a shocking thing because the House Administration Committee then, under that same resolution, language in the resolution being embraced in it to authorize the election subcommittee of the House Administration Committee to investigate it and to determine if he was legally elected. The House Administration Committee then had hearings and the man who was chiefly responsible, John F. Wells, editor of a weekly newspaper in Arkansas, appeared and told why Alford had not been legally elected, pointing out that the write-in procedure was not valid under Arkansas law, not only the legal objections to it but there were also illegal votes cast. They not only should examine whether or not a write-in should have been permitted at all under Arkansas statute but determine whether or not the votes were properly cast and counted. The House Administration Committee then said that this would be done and that the matter would be pursued, and told Mr. Wells in answer to his protest. That should have appeared in the original minutes because more than one person who was present had told me that they had heard the chairman, Homer Burleson, say, "It will be done and we will take oral testimony in Arkansas in this matter." So, they had every right to protest. Mr. Wells was the official protester. I was not a party to it at all.

T: Was he a close friend of yours?

H: Yes, he was. He listened to none of us who said it wouldn't be effective. I didn't pressure him, but some of my friends did. They thought it would be evidence of a sour note in my political course. Nevertheless, he said, "I am going to go to the bottom of this." A lot of my friends in Arkansas

outside the Fifth District that I represented were outraged by it. There were many people, actually, I presume by a partisan point of view, Democrats who felt that the two-party system was being damaged. So, it was a very strange unprecedented situation.

Now, let me mention this as to my feelings about a contest. I decided I would not contest the election. I realized that I had a divided community to represent, and I thought maybe it might be better that a new face and a new figure appear to represent the community. I have to admit that I was tired of that effort and struggle. I felt that I wanted to step aside. Of course, that was not an admirable thing to do if Alford had not been legally chosen to do it. So, I should have conquered my personal feelings, and I think I did conquer those feelings to the extent that once a select committee was appointed--no, let me make this very accurate. There was existing at the time of the election, having been appointed by the House earlier, for the purpose of determining if the November election was in proper order and where the law was said to be valid. . . . This committee, responding to Mr. Wells' action and--mind you, this was before the resolution of John McCormicks to set up special procedures after the House had convened--functioning through the election year of 1958, took cognizance of the protest and began to look into it. They decided by a vote of three to two, as I remember it--I know a majority recommended to the House--that Alford not be seated. Well, I could see that then as relieving me of any further obligation to contest it when the House did convene.

Now, here is an important point. I realize there is a lot of technical material in this. I took a position--I think it is a sound one--that the difference would be, if I contested it the committee would have to decide whether or not I had gotten the greater or less number of votes. It would be a choice between Alford and myself, and they would just have to decide. But if the protest of Wells was upheld, then the office could have been declared vacant because Alford had not been elected and I had not contested it. It was a citizen's protest. I think as a matter of procedure that a citizen ought to have under ordinary circumstances a right to protest an election where some member of the House or some member of that committee believes that the dignity of the House and its integrity was involved. Then they had a right to investigate. I think the proper procedure would have been for them to simply say that the irregularities were such that quite aside of the question as to which one got the more votes--Alford or Hays--it was not an election that ought to entitle any person whose credentials were under fire in this fashion to take a seat, and the office should have been declared vacant. Now that was my feeling about it.

T: Well, I wonder if you would comment on the fact that there was some effort for this to be a closed hearing. I notice that it was primarily the Republicans who vigorously supported an open session. The newspaper story on December 15, 1958, said the committee's three Democrats had taken no stand on the issue. Was this something to embarrass the Democratic Party?

H: I suspect it was. I think it was and should have been. I don't blame them for making it a Party matter. That would, of course, be further reason for the embarrassment of my not being entitled to be viewed as a contestant for the office.

T: You said that they substantially got nowhere on the protest.

H: Well, one reason is that Charlie Halleck, the minority leader, did not agree with Keating and Dennison who opposed the seating of my opponent. He wanted to maintain the coalition of the Republican Party with the southern democrats in such matters. He was always planning strategy based on that coalition. It was unasserted and unofficial. Well, when you get that kind of coalition and the leadership of the Republicans and the leadership of the democrats determining on a certain course to avoid embarrassment, whatever their reasons, then there was no chance for my position to be entertained.

T: You said earlier that you made an effort to encourage Richard Nixon, then Vice-President, to see if he could expedite this probe or investigation. Did you talk with Mr. Nixon personally?

H: Yes. I talked to him personally. I dropped in on him to thank him for the letter and to say that I thought perhaps they could help. It was a moral question and he had indicated that he thought my position on Civil Rights had been morally sound and that this was an outrage. He used very strong language in his letter to me because the facts, you see, were indisputable. He may have had some briefing from Keating or Dennison, I don't know, but he was familiar with some of the details. He did indicate to me that he was going to look into it to see if he could be influential in getting the Republican leadership in the House to take the right course. I don't know how close he and they were and I don't know what became of that because I never once went back to him to see if he had contacted. Our relationship was not such as for me to say, "How did you do?"

Obviously, when the final results were evaluated somebody didn't get action except the wrong kind of action. In other words, I assume that either Nixon did not follow through or else it was of no avail because they obviously stayed with this coalition. There were all sorts of signs on the surface that the understanding between the leadership was, "Now let's not have a brawl. Both sides will be hurt if we try to upset the Arkansas election." The Republicans did not want to be damned in the South for going with this integrationist from Little Rock; the democratic leadership would be split wide open if it tried. Now I was not influenced by that. I mean, it didn't matter to me who was hurt in this thing from the standpoint of political advantage. You shouldn't make decisions on that basis. But you might say, as Mr. Rayburn did say to me once, "Well, Brooks, you are out and they are in." I can tell you about that later if I haven't already. I think maybe we have made a record of that. Mr. Rayburn said, "Brooks, you are out and they are in, and that makes a difference."

Now back to the question of the House capitulating, of abdicating in its moral responsibility to determine the outcome of that election. The committee went to Little Rock to study the records pursuant to the oral commitment that should have been in written record. There should be some embarrassment to somebody because it didn't show up in the minutes. Now that means they weren't willing for that to be improved upon, and if it had been carried in the minutes as it was actually related around the table the day they had hearings, it would have been an embarrassment

to them. You see, our side could say, "Wells could scream 'you've violated your promise.'" A local lawyer was helping Wells, and he told me there wasn't any question about it that they said, "There will be an oral hearing"; and there were no oral hearings. There was no testimony taken in Little Rock, for example, to determine why one of the clerks in north Little Rock said that she saw them change the ballots. I forget just what the nature of her charge was, but she filed an affidavit saying that she saw irregularities. They could have taken her testimony but they didn't. So, there were all sorts of weaknesses in the procedure record that was set up.

Now I want to interject this point. This, you see, is now August 16, 1977, and with the fine, new leadership of the freshmen and sophomore members of the House of Representatives and the feeling of sensitivity on the matter of incorruptible elections, this would never take place. They just couldn't get by with it.

T: They would declare the seat vacant.

H: That's what they should have done.

T: And called for another election.

H: Yes. That's my thought and I think that would have been the proper procedure. I think that was my statement to the committee that I did not want the seat myself but I didn't feel that the good people of Arkansas should be denied their right, and a new election would have done that. That would have given them the right to have an incorruptible election.

T: In February of 1959 the Religious News Service ran the story that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had discovered the evidence of anonymous campaign literature being distributed in a write-in campaign to defeat you. Did anything ever come of that?

H: I am afraid I didn't get the hypothesis of that. The Religious News Service said what?

T: The FBI was investigating the distribution of anonymous campaign literature.

H: Well sir, you know that's an interesting point. It would be good to know whether or not they did go to the bottom of that because there were, in violation of law, circulars distributed attacking me, a flagrant violation of law. The Arkansas law is specific. It says that circulars distributed before an electionshall bear the name of the person who distributes them or who takes responsibility for them; and there was no name signed to it. These circulars were circulated. I think there were some ads published in the paper, but they had the name of one person. He was not a prominent person. He was not a man of any standing politically but an extremist on the segregation question. I don't know where his money came from or whether it was privately financed by himself.

I know one thing that I had a right to resent. A few days before the election I had been asked to address--well, it was in the fall but may have been in September--at any rate, between the primary and the election

been too surprising. I am pretty sure that if Adlai Stevenson had been nominated, I just have an idea I would have been his choice. We were very close. He agonized over my defeat. I wish I could put my hands on all the telegrams that he sent and all the letters that made allusion to it. That would have been far more logical. I was not as close to Kennedy as I was to Stevenson and yet, in the years in which I was with the Kennedy administration I became very close to him, and we became strong friends. That parallels my friendship with Stevenson.

T: Now where did you first meet Adlai Stevenson? Did you know him when he was governor of Illinois?

H: The first time I ever saw him--and this is amusing and it would have amused him, but I don't recall ever having told him about it--was in 1955, three years after I had campaigned for him and had been his advance man in the South, setting up his meetings and being in touch with his headquarters and with him. But we had never met. Oscar Chapman, who was in charge of the itineraries, called and asked me if I would be available to go through the South. I was in Congress, of course, at the time, and my duties were such that I could leave my district and be his advance man. I accepted that responsibility, and I set up his speaking engagements in a number of southern cities. Adlai was bound to have known that was going on. He knew who the congressman from Little Rock was, although he had not covered this ground at that time.

But in 1955, when I was a delegate to the United Nations and we were living at the Vanderbilt Hotel, Marion and I came in one afternoon late and there was a note in the box saying that Governor Stevenson wanted to see me and that I could see him at the Savoy Hotel late that afternoon. We just had time to get over there, and when we walked in and sat down to wait, Bill--his name slips me but he later was ambassador to Denmark; he was Governor Stevenson's aide then--said, "The Governor will see you in just a minute." All of a sudden the Governor came out of his private office into the reception room where we were sitting. He stopped and said, "Hi, Brooks, how are you?" That was the first time I had ever shaken hands with him. Then he said, "Hello, Mrs. Hays. I am glad to see you." She said, "Governor Stevenson, now that I have had the great pleasure of meeting you, and that was the reason I came, you and Brooks have got some business to talk over so I'll go down in the lobby and wait for him." "Why," he said, "don't be silly. Let Brooks go down in the lobby." (Laughter) That bound Marion to him stronger than ever. It was a typical Stevenson comment. That was the first time I ever saw him. You see, that is so deceptive because I had been his advance man and had been, of course, a very devoted supporter of his.

T: Your name really never came before the Democratic Convention?

H: No. But all it needed would have been for Jack Kennedy to say, "I want Hays." But there were probably two reasons he didn't: One is the thing I have spoken of. I had no votes to contribute just to begin with. The other is that it would have angered a lot of people involved. So, what might have appeared to be a great advantage on the religious front, that is, a prominent Catholic turning to a prominent Baptist, was cancelled out by the distaste of many people in the South for Brooks Hays. I think that was the explanation. I talked to some people in the South,

I didn't talk to many, not over half-dozen. I remember a conversation, for example, as to whether or not the situation should be viewed with some thought of capitalizing on the new interest in me. I remember that Governor Colgate Darden, former governor of Virginia, who was a very congenial friend and a very close, intimate friend, said that he didn't believe I should do a thing. He said, "I don't think it is coming to you as a result of any action that your friends take. It would just have to come by sort of a spontaneous action." Oh, some one or two friends in the Convention kept in touch with me just sort of hoping, you know, that lightning might strike. That's about all there is to be said on that.

T: In 1958, after you were defeated, of course, there was a dinner honoring you at the Willard Hotel.

H: December 18.

T: There was quite a large crowd that attended on that particular occasion. You went virtually immediately from there to the TVA.

H: No. I didn't go to the TVA until June of 1959.

T: I see. Well, what did you do after your defeat?

H: Well, I established a little office here in Washington. That appears in the Hotbed of Tranquility and that's all you need. You've got that Hotbed of Tranquility, haven't you?

T: Yes. We do. The dinner that honored you, some seven hundred people apparently attended and paid at least $7.50 a person, which was a good price in those days. You received words of appreciation from several people, including Ralph Bunch, under-secretary of the United Nations at the time, Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina, Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts, and Senator Humphrey of Minnesota. All of these are good friends of yours. It would probably be worthwhile to say something about the dinner and what your reaction to it was. Then, if you want to say something about some of the people there, that would be helpful as well. It was held at the Willard Hotel, a rather prominent hotel in Washington. Do you have any other recollections about the dinner?

H: Yes. The master of ceremonies was Governor Darden, former president of the University of Virginia, former member of Congress, and a very close friend. I think I have referred to him previously. The speakers were Billy Graham, Senator Monroney of Oklahoma, and the chairman of the House of Foreign Affairs Committee, J. P. Richards of South Carolina, also Mrs. Mary Lord, a prominent Republican leader. Mrs. Catherine Graham, presently the publisher of the Washington Post was at the speakers' table, also Arthur Fleming, who was a member of President Eisenhower's cabinet. So it had a bipartisan flavor obviously. Bertha Atkins of the Woman's National Republican Committee was present. Also present were a number of prominent newspaper people, such as Harry Ashemore and others. Then, you had the whole spectrum of political philosophy there: Howard Smith, Virginia conservative, Jacob Javits, the New York liberal.

I had been asked to address the Black National Convention of Baptists headed by Dr. Joseph Jackson of Chicago. They were meeting in Chicago. Pictures were being taken of the platform guests, and I was sitting between two of the black ministers. They took the picture and it was carried in the papers. It was carried as a part of the national press stories. There was a picture of me sitting between two black ministers. The provocative title about this picture, "We know you Brooks," as if I were trying to conceal something. The implication was that I was sitting down to conspire with blacks for some purpose. Well, in the emotion-charged atmosphere of Arkansas politics at the time, that was very difficult to deal with.

T: Alford made his first speech. The news story goes on and says that the congressional probe which was to have made an investigation had bogged down and showed no signs of activity although it was unanimously recommended that a full investigation be conducted. That really bears out what you have said.

H: It was just a farce. I have never made a real serious effort to determine--and maybe I should take time to do it--what transpired, through contacts with some of the friends on that committee, respected friends, good friends of mine. It just seems as if there was a vacancy there in our relationship. It had no meaning whatever. Carl Elliott of Alabama who had exhibited courage in fighting the Wallace machine was a member of that committee. I think Frank Thompson of New Jersey also would have been the kind you would expect to make a fight and yet, they didn't make a fight. I think that perhaps things were done to stifle them and to make it impossible for them to do anything, because they were embarrassed by the whole episode and preferred not to feel that I had any claim on them. I guess perhaps I didn't. But I would like to know the workings of their minds in that situation. I just didn't quite understand it. I may try to see Mr. Elliott and Mr. Thompson sometime and ask them about it and see if in the present atmosphere they don't feel they should open their minds and tax their memories with some of these things.

Now there is one other point that I wanted to interject. Let me see if I can recall what it was. Oh, yes. Probably, since John McCormick obviously felt strongly about my defeat--his name is signed to this certificate to honor me--he had intended to do all he could short of a breach with Sam Rayburn over it to see that I was seated and that this damage was not done or that it was corrected. I learned this from someone who was in the caucus that met in his office to see what they would do in working out the procedure to avoid a divisive struggle. It seems that I recall that some of the segregationist southerners sort of advanced their point of view by saying, "All right. If you ask Dale Alford to stand aside and not permit him to take his oath, we will make the same request of Adam Clayton Powell, that he not be permitted to be seated." So, that of course would sort of put the two together and northern liberals would have to vote not to seat Powell if it appeared that they couldn't seat Alford. Now, I don't know how that fits in with what actually took place, because if there was a gentlemen's agreement that Alford not be seated the first day but be seated the second day under this agreement, the committee still could investigate and could unseat him if they found irregularities. Now, either they were surprised on the first day or they had this other thing in reserve to do on the second day, to seat him

without prejudice. The interesting thing is that Tip O'Neill was shouting at the top of his voice and trying to prevent John McCormick being recognized. He wanted recognition so he could make a different kind of motion to deny seating of Alford. I assume he was going to move that he not be seated until the investigation was completed. That would have been very proper and regular, to say to the committee, "Find out if he is entitled to it but don't seat him in the meantime." That's what he was objecting to because once you seat him then you have got all of the disadvantages in the world of unseating him.

T: Even if it is without prejudice.

H: Exactly. Well, there is no truer saying in politics than "possession is nine points of the law." So that was what Tip O'Neill was doing, straining his relationship temporarily with John McCormick, his close political ally. That's how strongly he felt about me and about the situation, about the injustice that had been done me.

T: Now would that likely have forced the committee to move faster? Would they have felt that if there was no representative from the Fifth District pending an investigation, would they have been prompted to move faster do you think?

H: I think in view of the drastic character of that kind of motion, the burden would be on them to prove that he was really elected, and they couldn't do it with the kind of evidence that they assembled. It was a farce.

T: Now would part of their stick-on labels been one of the problems? It wasn't officially a write-in candidate, or can you do that in Arkansas?

H: Well, that may be an open question as to the use of the labels. It seems to me that one reason you have no case of a precedence in Arkansas. There would be no occasion for deciding that. It looks irregular that you could have an "X" printed, you see, on the sticker when the law requires you to make an "X." Then it just opens the door widely to fraud. All they have to do is take those stickers and stick them on the ballots that are left over. There you've got it. In a contest you can't examine the handwriting to see if that is John Jones' handwriting, whose ballot number conforms to the signature there on record, because there is no handwriting.

Arkansas law simply doesn't authorize it. It is the kind of thing that should have positive authorization before it is permitted. Now they tried to say that an earlier case seemed to justify the use of a sticker, because there was a case sometime before in which the Court had ruled it proper. The important distinction between that and our case was that that was a situation in which there was no declared candidate. The ballot had this vacancy. There was no name printed on it, but in my case my name was printed there, the only name that was printed there. You see that created some confusion, and could have been held legally, that if the person who intended to vote for me but didn't take time to put an "X" in the little square after my name, the ballot was illegal. They could have held that. So that complicates it. We don't know in how many cases they didn't count votes that had no "X" after my name because the person had assumed that since the other line beneath that was vacant

that would be a vote for me if he didn't put an "X" there. But with the write-in candidate the judges so minded could throw that out because nobody had "X-ed" it. How many people intended to vote for me who hadn't put--the whole thing was phony.

T: When Alford spoke the first time, he made his speech to the House. I guess it was in early February. He denounced the Justice Department angrily for what he called illegal action in probing the campaign. Then he said that political superiors of the FBI had ordered the probe and were using Gestapo tactics. He promised the House that in ten days he would produce evidence that subversive forces were behind racial integration and school integration, and other so-called civil rights programs in the South. What ever came of that? Do you remember?

H: No, I don't. You know that under the freedom of information statute that ought to be looked into. Now we can see just by demanding that the FBI tell you what they did. I am glad you mentioned that to me. I want to get that before you leave Washington. I want to get the time and the references to the Congressional Record.

T: After this investigation went nowhere it was pretty obvious that you weren't going to be back in politics and then perhaps you wouldn't even have run again if the seat had been declared vacant, although knowing you, I suspect you would have.

H: I probably would have. I don't recall that I said I would not be a candidate if a special election were ordered, but I had said that I was not a contestant. I did want a special election.

T: You produced very shortly after that what has been called an integration recipe and you offered three specific suggestions which perhaps would be worthwhile to mention. You pointed out there must be a nonviolent solution and spoke to that very strongly. Then you went on to say that we cannot afford to defy Court decisions and that massive resistance is really doomed to or leads to disaster.

H: That was, of course, suggested by the talk in Virginia of massive resistance--the Harry Byrd philosophy.

T: How did you get along with that kind of appeal? This was made in February of 1959.

H: Well, that was simply a declaration of my thought of what the South's course should be, the nation's course should be. You see, I had lost my office of congressman, and people could say, "Well, what difference does it make?"

T: Rather interestingly, several Baptist papers picked up what you had said and ran editorials related to it. The Maryland Baptist for one; even The Saturday Review, not a Baptist paper, picked up some elements of it. The New York Time Book Review picked up a review of your book, A Southern Moderate Speaks. In many ways you get more publicity than you might otherwise have gotten for that particular book.

H: What was The Saturday Review comment?

T: The Saturday Review was a review entitled "Relevant Words Between Roars." It appears on the March 14, 1959, edition on pages 19-20. There is a review of your book. You spoke a number of times in the North, in Minneapolis and other places, and very aggressively you felt to view yourself as a peacemaker. You worked in that regard a number of times.

Unless there are other things that happened in the spring of 1959 that related to your election and to the investigation that you want to raise further, I wonder if we could move on and talk something about the trip that you and Mrs. Hays made to South America. As the president of the Convention you visited several of the mission fields.

H: I don't feel too sure of all of the facts. There are so many little ripples in that big stream that I am just not sure. I suspect we have said just about all that was really relevant.

T: All right. Do you remember that trip to South America?

H: Very well indeed. Was that in April of 1959?

T: Yes. Do you want to comment at all? Again, I think we can be grateful to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. There is a summary of a running account of your trip. You recounted some of the things that you did, and it is in the file which bears your name. Are there other things you would want to add that would be helpful? This is a summary report that you yourself actually wrote.

H: I suspect that this summary is more reliable now than anything that might come out of my recollections. That was made when it was fresh. I do remember one thing that may not be in the memorandum. I had a very painful ear infection. The Baptists had a hospital there and in the dental clinic a very fine dedicated young Baptist dentist, a part of our foreign mission structure, gave me great relief. He treated me and provided medication. It may have been minor surgery, I don't remember. Strange thing about my going on missions for the Baptist church, it seems to affect my ears. I had another painful experience in Hamilton, Ontario, at a meeting of the Baptist World Alliance Executive Committee, I believe it was. We met on the campus of the college in Hamilton, McMaster.

T: Well, you then were nominated for a $20,000-a-year job at the end of April, just about the time you came back. The paper records that after sixteen years in Congress you were selected a member of the TVA Board to receive $20,000 a year, $2,500 less than your pay as a member of Congress. You were to serve off the concluding term of Frank J. Welch, who resigned to return to the University of Kentucky as a dean of the School of Agriculture on May 6, 1960, but the announcement was made assuming that the term was to last just for a year. But you were nominated for this in April of 1959.

H: I was possibly renominated for the full nine-year term and had to resign that nine-year term to accept Kennedy's appointment. So I had not only the Frank Welch vacancy, the unexpired term to fill out, but also a full nine-year term.

T: You think there would be some reason for the Washington Post running a headline in nomination of Brooks Hays and publishing the salary? Was

that a particularly crucial factor in those days? That is the headline of the story.

H: Well, if there is any significance to the point, I would think that meant, "Look what's happening to this guy that they kicked around. His friends can take heart, he is getting practically as much . . ." Well, actually, in terms of benefits, it was much better because I didn't have the expense of the congressional office.

T: What kind of expenses did you really have in the congressional office? Was there a lot of hangers-on who were always looking for something?

H: No, not particularly, but Washington life generally is expensive. There might be something to this comparison. Knoxville is probably about like Little Rock. It is certainly less expensive than Washington life. But that's a minor point. I think, however, that I have the right explanation. I think they believed in my point of view. They certainly were not insensitive to the forces that conspired to defeat me. Was Faubus' name mentioned in that article?

T: Oh, yes. "Hays, who in 1957 brought about a meeting between Governor Orval Faubus and President Eisenhower to head off violence, charged after his defeat that Faubus had supported the sneak eleventh-hour attack on him by Alford. The House Committee voted twelve to eleven to investigate the Alford write-in election." This is reported in April, 1959; then, it goes on to indicate that you had been nominated to serve on the TVA Board. Would your contact with Sherman Adams have been in part responsible for that, or were you at that time doing some work for the President?

H: No. The answer to the Sherman Adams' question is that he knew that the President felt very sorry about the development. He knew that the President was entirely sympathetic with my side, of course. He felt that Faubus had run out on his commitment at Newport; and I think so, too, as far as that is concerned. It was obvious that any number of friends on the Republican side were eager for the government to do something for me. I know that Alexander Wiley saw me in the Senate dining room sometime in November that fall. He came over and his eyes filled up and his lips quivered, and he said, "Oh, forget it. I'll talk to you when I have control of myself." I think he had just said, "I'm going down to the White House and tell them to give you an appointment." I don't know what Mary Lord did, but she told me that she had said to the President that he owed it to me since I had lost my seat over taking his side. That puts it in a very simple way, but she told him he had an obligation to give me a job.

Well, it didn't bother me. I knew I could make a living. My honorariums were increasing tremendously, and before too long a time I would be eligible for congressional retirement. That wouldn't have produced a whole lot, but it would produce a living. I don't know now how long that would have been, but I wasn't worried about the financial side. I was getting a lot of honorariums and even a little--I started to say a little law practice, but I don't remember actually that I shared much in that, if at all. I was occupying an office through the generosity of an old friend, a college friend, Richard Doyle; and he had a pretty big suite of offices in the Investment Building--Transportation Building at 17th

and H Street. So, I was getting along just fine. I was able to hire some of my former staff, Mrs. Wilbert; and Marion came down and helped me. About that time I was given the layman's award, Churchman of the Year by the Religious Heritage of America.

T: Yes. There were three people. Lay Churchman of the Year was the award.

H: That was in the spring of 1959, wasn't it?

T: The news story, Washington Post, June 19, 1959. That would be after the Southern Baptist Convention, and after you had completed your service there.

H: This was about the time, you see, that the President appointed me to the TVA Board, then, this other honor came along. The wave of congratulatory messages for the TVA appointment had not subsided when the Churchman of the Year award came along. The letters piled up and had to be answered and we had, of course, to consider the cost of all that. It was a terrific chore. Mrs. Wilbert and my wife were doing all that work. My wife was quoted on something that she had literally said, and I thought it was pretty cute. "If my husband does something else to draw congratulatory messages, I am going to go into a nunnery." (Laughter)

T: Actually, it is rather interesting, and you pointed this out that they are very close together. The Post of June 20, the day after it reported on your receiving the award, reported that the Senate Public Works Committee approved your nomination for the TVA, so they were almost simultaneous. Was there some resistance by the segregationist wing to have you appointed to the TVA Board?

H: Not a word. Not a ripple. Now there was on the House side one little discordant note by Tom Abernathy who represented a Mississippi district. I am sure that he was in an area where segregationist sentiment was pronounced. In one of his letters he said that it was a poor appointment. He may have said something in the attitude of friendliness like "Mr. Hays is a good man but he is not equipped for this job. The people of Mississippi will resent an integrationist coming." Something of that kind.

T: What kind of responsibilities would you have as a TVA director?

H: Well, the way it worked out I had some work that was very congenial. The chairman of the Board was H. D. Vogel, a retired brigadier general in the Corps of Engineers, a West Point graduate, and he had been on the Mississippi River Commission. He was well trained in the field of civil engineering. The second member was Arnold Jones of Kansas, an expert in the field of public financing. You see, it developed then that matters involving finance would go to Director Jones. Matters involving the technical engineering side of operations would fall on General Vogel's desk. Then, the human side, the sociological and human influences--education, social forces of employment and things that touched human life--would be on my desk. People commented on what a well-balanced board it was. It was very congenial. Now remember, I had not applied for anything. I would like for the records to show that very clearly. The first time there was a conversation with some of the men on the

present staff--they had asked me to come in because they had wanted to talk to me about employment--I said, "I am not an applicant. I'll get along all right. The President doesn't owe me anything.

Well, of course, it was known that the President realized that what I did was not to play to him; that I had no favors to seek. My position was explained on another basis altogether. But they kept offering me things. I was asked if I would accept the directorship of the refuge program. That would have involved moving to Europe or, I forget where the headquarters is, maybe Middle East. But at any rate, the refugee problem was something I was not familiar with certainly; but my humanitarian interest may have made them feel that would be a good appointment. I said, "No." Then they asked if I would go with the Voice of America and I said, "No." It seems to me like there were three offers that I turned aside, with thanks.

I was enjoying the friendship of the men in the White House, Sherman Adams, in particular. That was an old friendship. Then Gerald Morgan was another one of the staff assistants. He is the one who conveyed the President's wishes to me about the TVA appointment. It came about like this. Charles Bartlett, a correspondent for any number of newspapers across the country, particularly in the Tennessee area, called me one day and said, "Are you going to accept this TVA appointment?" Well, I said, "Charlie, this is the first I know about it. I haven't been offered it." He said, "Well, you will be. You mean you don't know about it?" I said, "I certainly don't. This is absolutely the first intimation I have had." He said, "It's already been determined that you are going to have to decline if you don't take it."

Sure enough, within twenty-four hours Mr. Morgan called me and said, "Can you come over to the White House." I knew then that was what it was. He said, "The President wants you to go on the TVA Board." I said, "Well, give me two or three days to think it over," and he did. Within three or four days I had accepted it. I have never regretted it. I think it was a good thing to do, and it put me in work that gave me outlets for the longtime concerns I have had for better material and physical lives for the people of the South.

T: Did this require moving to Knoxville?

H: Well, it was sort of a compromise. Of course, I had to be down there. Knoxville is where the Board meets and where the operations are centered. It wasn't necessary for me to be there on Saturday and Sunday, and occasionally I could get an extra day or two. We didn't come home every weekend, but we didn't want to give up our Washington base and our Washington home. Of course, at first this was only a one-year appointment, so we had to be somewhat conservative about picking up the whole structure of our lives and moving to Knoxville. What we did was to get a little two-room suite in the Andrew Johnson Hotel, which is in downtown Knoxville, just a few blocks from the TVA Building. It worked out just fine. We would come up here maybe twice a month on a weekend.

T: Would that be part of your own expense?

H: That would be on my own expense.

T: So, really you had not expected to be in Knoxville an extended period of time, or had you assumed that you would get reelected?

H: Reappointed.

T: Reappointed. Right.

H: Well, I didn't give any thought to it at all except that I felt, I suppose, that since it was a one-year appointment it left me an option not to appear to be running out on the President. Then, of course, before that one year was up the announcement was made that I would be reappointed, which gave me a little more time to think it over. Soon after Kennedy was elected I had overtures from the administration that I would be wanted there and that Kennedy was going to offer me something.

The first move was toward the United Nations. Adlai Stevenson had been appointed or the announcement that he would be appointed had been made, and he was already in the New York offices of our UN delegation there and was working toward making his permanent appointment. He asked me to come up to New York and I knew he wanted to talk to me about the appointment, which is the best proof you could ask for that he valued our friendship. He said, "I want you to be one of my two deputies and carry the rank of ambassador. I want you and Francis Clinton to be my deputies. I said, "I'll do it. I'll take it." That is how quick I made a decision on that. I was leaving when he said, "By the way, you had better stop in Washington and talk to Dean Rusk. He has some other ideas about your place in the structure." I wasn't able to reach Dean. We called right there from Adlai's office.

In the meantime I got down to Washington, and Dean had gotten in touch with me, I guess. At any rate, I talked to Rusk. When I went in he got up from the desk and said, "Come on over here and let's sit here in the corner and get away from that phone just to talk a minute. It won't take me long to tell you what I want. I have just come from a talk with Mr. Kennedy, and he wants you to be Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations." Well, I made a quick decision to say, "Okay, if that is what he wants." I knew, of course, that was authentic. "Well, if that is what he wants, of course, I will do it. I had wanted something else, but I won't press the point."

I wish now that I had pressed it just a little. If I could have said, maybe, without appearing to be "picking my own spot" or being indifferent to what Kennedy really wanted, or if I could have had somebody say, "Now, look, Adlai really wants Brooks up there, and you ought to let him go. I would have been very happy with that, I think, I don't know. But, of course, eventually what turned out was very much to my liking. I would rather have had, I think, the spot that I finally got after nine months. I got just exactly the thing that suited me to a tee, and apparently it suited Mr. Kennedy because he told more than one person that . . .

I became sort of a public relations man. I was technically assigned to the inter-governmental relations work, but there was a lot of conference work in it and a lot of public addresses interpreting what he had in mind. He would send me as his representative to national conventions. In more

than one instance he spoke very feelingly and appreciatively of what it meant to him to have somebody who could interpret him so well.

T: One thing we didn't mention that you were involved in. You were appointed to an observer post with the UN in late 1959 and did do some work as a part of the United States UN Delegation, did you not?

H: That must have been a very superficial assignment. Wasn't that Baptist? Wasn't that by the Christian Life Commission?

T: That's it.

H: Well, that was simply to give some official sanction to whatever I could do for the Baptist group when I could get to New York. I didn't go to New York for any extended time.

T: Now in early 1961, this was after the election, and you are speaking about this. You received a job in the State Department, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Affairs. What, really, did that job entail. You were responsible to Dean Rusk as Secretary of State?

H: Right.

T: If he had some project that he particularly wanted approved in the Foreign Affairs area in the Congress, it was your responsibility to do the leg work of getting the votes and making sure it could be . . . that sort of thing. Would you have other responsibilities too?

H: Well, I think it would be precise to put it like this: It was my job to interpret state policy to the committees and to individual congressmen where necessary . . . but to seek the sources of power and influence in the Congress, to sensitize them to the State Department's viewpoints and interest, and legislatively to sell them on bills that had the State Department's support. Now that is moving from the State Department to the Congress, but also this office anticipates that Congressional Affairs Assistant Secretary will interpret Congress to the department head. That, of course, was a desirable thing to do, to have someone who not only could get the ear of Congress but also to have someone who was persona grata to the Congress, interpreting their expectations of the State Department. So it was a two-way thing. I was a part of the communication procedure.

It was complicated because soon after I went in the office I found--and this is an age-old struggle--that the staff of the White House wanted to usurp the function of congressional relations even for the State Department. They wanted to center it all in their liaison with the Congress. Every now and then it would create just a bit of tension and a bit of friction between us because they would project themselves into some situation that I had been able to handle acceptably, and sometimes complications resulted from their indifference to what I had done and their failure to consult me. That is not unique. Other Presidents have found staff members doing the same thing. I don't think Mr. Kennedy would have wanted that done.

While I was able to maintain very pleasant relations with Larry O'Brien, he called the house here one night at one thirty in the morning. Bill

and Betty were spending the night with us, and he answered the phone. He told me later that O'Brien said, "Is Mr. Hays there?" Bill answered, "Yes. Mr. Hays is here." O'Brien said, "I want to speak to him. Get him to the phone." Bill said, "Well, Mr. O'Brien, it is one thirty, and Mr. Hays is asleep. You don't want me to wake him, do you?" "Yes, wake him. I want to talk to him now."

So he woke me up and I was drowsy when I talked to Larry. Larry said, "Brooks, do you have an appointment with Otto Passman in the morning at nine thirty?" I said, "Yes, I do, to talk about Latin American appropriations." He said, "I want you to cancel it. Don't fill that appointment." I said, "Larry, wait a minute. This is terribly important. There are 220 million dollars involved in this particular thing." I may be wrong about the amount; it was 500 million. It may have been more than that. I said, "This is a very important thing. I have got it in good shape now, and Otto and I have gotten along so well."

I didn't tell Larry this because it wouldn't have appealed to him, but Otto thought I was the greatest living Baptist and was very fond of me. We were different in our political philosophy. He was very conservative, but he never let that affect his feeling of warmth toward me. He knew that in this Latin American program there was a great deal of idealism and moral commitment, you see, that was identified with my church interests. He was a big Baptist and he wanted to get along with me. So, he had agreed to several things and had been very cooperative. Well, I just knew that they weren't going to get any better contact than I had. So, I sort of plead with Larry not to make me do that. Pretty soon it had to end and I had to call Passman the next morning and cancel the appointment, then they undertook to take over.

Once Dean Rusk told me, "Brooks, you know you and I were going out to talk to somebody this morning, but the White House wants another staff member, Mr. Tannenbaum, a very fine New York lawyer and a young friend of O'Brien's, to go with me and O'Brien. They don't want too many to go, and they intimated that maybe you shouldn't go with us. Is it all right with you not to go out and talk with the committee this time?" Well, I said, "Mr. Secretary, you know, of course, that it will be all right if that is your judgment and what you want done, but I must say this since you raised the question: If you do this, Mr. Secretary, you are just adding to the complications that are waiting for you down the road, and you are about to lose control of your legislative program by letting these fellows tell you what to do." It was sort of spunky for me to tell him that, but I owed it to him to tell him. He said, "I see what you mean. You come go with me." So I went with him. He told them probably rather gently, "that you all must not hurt Brooks' feelings by not letting him go." He probably was very tactful. He was very, very cooperative with the White House staff. Well, this, of course, is another problem that has huge dimensions, the problem of the White House reaching out for control where it obstructs good procedures and tends to really build the inferior presence that is not in the spirit of our system.

T: One of the things that really relates to what was going on inside the White House and tie in with this is, after you served as congressional liaison with the Department of State you then became Special Assistant to the President for Congressional Affairs to President Kennedy, how long did you stay with the State Department?

H: Nine months. I was sworn in on February 1, 1961, and I transferred to the White House and took my oath of office as Special Assistant to the President on December 1, 1961. That would be nine months, barely ten months.

T: You served in this capacity and on a number of occasions spoke fairly aggressively on several issues. One of them was that you spoke on setting national goals. This was one of the very vigorous things. You said that the United States should show a sense of mission as the world leader. You spoke on a number of occasions at different committee meetings, attended the United Nations, and so on. Would this really have been a better job than what you had and the job you would have gotten as an ambassador with Adlai Stevenson?

H: Yes. I think that if the choice had been at first with Adlai--that is, whether I would go straight to the White House as a Special Assistant or with him as ambassador--I might have felt differently from the position I revealed to you a while ago. But, I don't know. I rather think that there just isn't anything finer than to be a Special Assistant to the President. Of course, in terms of prestige a Cabinet member has it all over him. It is not a prestigious job, but the kind of White House job I had was a very pleasant job. It fitted my interest. I had outlets in the forums that were opened up for me, and I had enough release from real pressure of decision making to indulge the philosophical interest I had and the collateral beauties of officialdom such as my church work. Then that was a strange thing. That was a very valuable thing from the standpoint of the good functioning of the Federal system.

T: How often would you have seen President Kennedy when you were working there. Would you see him every day?

H: Well, I didn't need to see him very often, but I often saw him when I didn't need to. I would see him out in the reception room or walking down the hall. He would sometimes tell the secretary that he wanted to see me. The easiest way to communicate with him was just to send a little note to him. Maybe he would call me on the phone. I say this to show you how easy it was to get to him just to say, as a short answer to your question, no, I really didn't try to see him. I didn't see him every day. I didn't need to.

In January of 1963, the year of Kennedy's death, maybe a little later than January, they called me from the New York office of the National Conference of Christians and Jews and asked if I would be willing to serve as national chairman of Brotherhood Week. That generally carries a good deal of prestige in interfaith work. Nelson Rockefeller had served in 1962, and they wanted me to serve in 1963. I was in Fayetteville, Arkansas, when they reached me, and I said, "Yes, I'll do it. Of course. If the President agrees, and I am confident he will, but I need to clear it with him." So, I reached for the phone. I was in the home of Dr. Keith Peterson, a faculty member at the University of Arkansas, and he said I could use his phone, so I called the White House. Later, he said to his wife, "Now we mustn't ever touch that phone again. That's the phone that reached the White House. Our house was linked to the White House for just a few minutes so don't touch it anymore. We'll use an extension." I got Mrs. Lincoln, and I said, "Evelyn, I have a request I want to present or

make to the President, and would you say to him, please, that I have been asked . . . " and I told her what I would like for her to say to him. She said, "You ask him yourself. He is next door in a Cabinet meeting, but there is a phone right there at his elbow. He will interrupt to talk with you." Can you imagine that? I could hardly believe my ears because I had never had that happen to me before on a long distance call.

T: How does a Special Assistant to the President contact the President's office and reach the President?

H: The sheer title really doesn't mean much. You can be a Special Assistant to the President and be way off down the corridor without much notice paid to you. On the other hand, you can be Special Assistant to the President like Ralph Dungal, Larry O'Brien, and Kenny O'Donnell, and whether you are next door or not . . . They are part of the housekeeping operation and in constant touch with the President, at his elbow. They have the privilege of just moving through the door, back and forth. There is no one there to stop them. Well, in my case I was on the periphery from that standpoint, but I was very congenial with all of them. We just got along fine. While I would never think of crashing in to see him without his knowing about it, I had no hesitancy in walking into Mrs. Lincoln's office. She and I got along just fine. Generally, she could take care of what I wanted. I would just say, "Here's a little note for the Chief," or "Here's something I want the Boss to know." Maybe I'd have a little note from him later saying, "Okay, that's all right." Maybe he would just say, "Tell Brooks to go ahead," or something like that. I think every person who is really concerned about sparing the President from so many exertions that are unnecessary would feel as I did that you ought to do it the easy way. I did that. Every now and then I was with him where neither one of us had official duties, and he loved to hear me tell yarns, you know, and he would laugh.

T: What does one do? Does he have a special number that you would call? Is this the way it would work? When you would call the operator would you ask for the President?

H: No, no. I just asked for Mrs. Lincoln. I would say, "Give me Mrs. Lincoln."

T: You just called that number.

H: I knew what her number was and I just dialed her number.

T: Is this the standard procedure?

H: Well, there were probably direct lines. You didn't do any dialing. You pushed a certain number to indicate O'Brien and O'Donnell. O'Donnell was the front office man, and Mrs. Lincoln was the secretary--she did a lot of transcribing and things for him. O'Donnell was really his alter ego. Those two were the top men in housekeeping, and their phones probably had a straight connecting number where you would push the number and dial and not have to go through the board. Or they had one of these little extra mechanical arrangements, where you talk without holding the receiver. I haven't been a part of that kind of elaborate communication system in so long that I don't know just what is done. But I think you have those little devices where you just talk into them.

T: It wouldn't be unusual if you needed to communicate with the President that you would probably send him a note, or you would specifically talk with Mrs. Lincoln, his secretary.

H: Oh, I didn't finish the conversation from Fayetteville, did I? I said, "Mrs. Lincoln, I need to talk to the President, I need to let the President know something." Would you tell him, please, that the National Conference of Christians and Jews wants me to be national Brotherhood chairman. That's when she said, "Well, you tell him yourself. He's in a Cabinet meeting, but he will come on the line and I'll tell him who it is." Sure enough, I was so surprised; I didn't realize I had that much standing. And maybe I didn't maybe the President wanted to say, "Evelyn don't interrupt me like that, not even for Brooks." But at any rate the next voice I heard was his. What he said and the way he said it tickled me. He said, "Brooks, where are you?" Meaning what part of this terrestrial sphere are you on? I said, "I am in Arkansas, Mr. President, and I called you to tell you"-and I told him just what I have told you. I told him, "I am willing to do it if it meets with your approval." He said, "It certainly does, and you're the man to do it." That's about all there was to it.

T: Perhaps we won't be able to complete this, but you have mentioned and I want to talk about some of the things that went on inside the White House and the relations that you had with Baptists at that time, particularly in the development of two things that were really on the floor in the early Kennedy administration. One was the matter of prescribed prayer in public schools and then the next year, in 1963, the probation on prescribed Bible reading. You had had some involvement with that. Did that entail what came to be called the prayer amendments that were attempted?

H: I don't recall much about the Bible reading thing.

T: That was the second one, and it wasn't nearly as crucial.

H: That was the Supreme Court decision. There were two of them.

T: There were two of them, yes. The first one was on prescribed prayer.

H: That was from New York. The State Board of Education prescribed the form of the prayer.

T: Right.

H: That was a good decision. They had only one dissenter on the Court as I remember it. It was eight to one. It was a good decision, and it kept me busy pointing out to people that the Court didn't say you couldn't pray in the schoolhouse, but that the government shouldn't tell you what to pray and how to pray. There are all sorts of nuances of legal opinion here, and that might be an over-simplification of it. At any rate, we were right in saying the Court didn't say that you can't pray in a schoolhouse. They did say that the government can't tell you how to pray and what to pray. Everett Dirksen came forward and he was yielding simplistically again to the pressures on him; and it is understandable because men want to do what generally the church leadership would want done.

You trust them and it is a field in which a lot of legislators don't feel at home exactly. It is one field in which you are apt not to put your opinion against.

Now this caused all sorts of comments. I thought that my friend, Fred Schwengel, showed real courage in that situation because he represented an Iowa district. Iowa is a religious state; its percentage of people belonging to Protestant churches is pretty high, and it also has a rather impressive Catholic constituency. Fred Schwengel, one of our good Baptists, was able to interpret the Baptist position adequately and vigorously, but it wasn't just because he was in a Baptist position. He was a constitutionalist and he knew what the Constitution provided.

T: He is now the president or the secretary of the Capitol Hill Historical Society.

H: Right. A very independent person, and a good man. I grieved over his defeat because this shows the folly of a one-issue campaign against a man. It doesn't matter how much good he had done in other areas or how right he has been on other issues, for him to be wrong from their point of view on the prayer he had questioned was unforgivable. Again, that was history repeating itself. A lot of men who took what proved to be a more rational position on federal prohibition went down in defeat on that single issue; and often, it was someone less conscientious and following "the line" of the church people. While I was prohibitionist myself, I could see the basis for the reasoning of such men as John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who felt strongly that federal prohibition was going to prove a failure. He could see the first evidences of it failing, and he abhorred the development of the corrupt machines based on illegal liquor traffic. So, the one-issue thing is bad for good government and Fred Schwengel's defeat, I think, is an illustration of it. There are other cases. Albert Gore of Tennessee was one; Ralph Yarborough was another. They had very unjust criticism of their positions, although from my point of view, they were thoroughly sound.

T: Several of the news stories of the events that came out just at the time of your change from the Department of State to the President's office . . . There was some real question about what was happening. It was described in some of these stories as there being a "shake-up" at the Department of State. The second thing is that when you were first appointed to your job with the White House apparently it was not made clear exactly what you were supposed to do over there. Can you say something about that?

H: One person who was influential in making provision for that transfer was Philip Graham, now deceased, husband of Katherine Graham, publisher of the Washington Post. Philip Graham was very close to Jack Kennedy, and we became close friends, warm friends. Incidentally, he and Katherine were both at the speakers' table at this dinner December 18, 1958. I talked to Phil one time about the demands being made on me and the fact that I had some energies not being efficiently utilized for the President's program. Part of that is inherent in the weaknesses of the job itself. I am convinced that the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations ought not to go to somebody like myself. You tend to be a messenger boy. Your energies are diluted. I have an idea I was on the telephone maybe a third of my time with congressmen all wanting to talk

to the Assistant Secretary. I was fairly well staffed, and I had some very able men who did the leg work. I wasn't expected to go out to the Capitol very often, particularly not for minor points, but if a congressman was concerned about someone in trouble in Egypt--couldn't get accommodations and things of that kind--well they wanted to talk to me. A congressman might call to tell me about Aunt so and so; I would have to turn loose of important things, maybe, to see about Aunt. But that was all right. The only thing is, that the Assistant Secretary shouldn't be a former member of Congress with certain capacities for communications. They are frustrated by that kind of detailed work. On the other hand, a young man coming up in the scale of government service would be honored and thrilled and fortunate to have that kind of office. But it was irksome to me because I wasn't a part of the communications to the public. I just had become an errand boy.

T: Did you indicate you would be glad to have the job?

H: Yes. I told Phil Graham that, and steps had been taken to get that perpetrated before the transfer was announced. So, it was arranged that I could go to the White House. It was done on Phil Graham's initiative. Now, I am not able to say, since I was not a party to the conversation between Graham and the President and with Rusk. . . . I am sure that Kennedy wasn't going to do anything without checking it out with Rusk, but Rusk was not managing this. He was merely a part of the mechanics. He was not seeking my wishes in the thing, because we were not ever on the kind of basis where I could talk freely to him. I admired him and respected him, but I knew his limitations. I knew that he never quite felt at ease about my political relationships. At the same time, I think he always credited me with respectful attitudes and actions toward him. We had no tension between us. But Graham was working on this and pointing out, I am sure, to the President that I would be far more useful in a position in the White House where I could be given special duties and special assignments. I wanted to be a part of the Administration, but I wanted to be relieved of some of these picky little details. He saw the point. I think it would have happened anyway.

Now, on the other hand, there is some validity to these clippings that you were referring to. There was a shake-up in the State Department and I was a part of it. On the other hand, I rather think it would have happened anyway. Mr. Bowles was not doing quite the job that they wanted done and it was maybe inherent in his personality. There may have been criticisms of me along the lines of the Larry O'Brien conversation that I have detailed, I am confident that there were. Some of them might just have been inescapable because we are all, of course, bound by personality traits.

T: Now had Bowles gone to Russia as ambassador at this time, or was this before he went to Russia?

H: This was before. Now you are thinking of Chester Bowles.

T: Bowles is from Connecticut.

H: That's right. He has been governor of Connecticut. He was Under Secretary of State. He was higher up. I was in the third echelon, and he was in

the second. Apparently there was friction from the very beginning between him and the White House. Now, conceivably with Rusk, but if it was with Rusk it was a pressure conveyed from the White House, because Rusk would be on the White House team. He was not taking an independent course at any point. He was their man, and that is the reason Rusk survived so long, eight years of it. He was the kind that people in the White House ordinarily would like. That doesn't mean he wasn't technically a competent person, but that is a long story.

The shake-up that you alluded to did involve Chester Bowles and Roger Jones, a very competent detail man and a career man. He had been with the budget office and was transferred back to the budget office. I don't know why, except I would have to credit the stories that there was a bit of friction there; and it appeared that none of us were moving quite in the fashion that the men in the White House wanted. They wanted to get men in these lower echelon jobs, second and third echelon. That's where Jones was, about on the same level as me. There were a lot of Assistant Secretaries of State, maybe ten or fifteen. They wanted, they would say, a more understanding person. They wanted a more congenial person. They wanted somebody who was their man with a sort of sixth sense, the better to interpret what the White House wanted. They wanted very little independence. That, of course, is something that has happened before. So, there was some basis for the newsmen's speculations.

Your enemies gloat over a thing like that and say, "Look, Brooks has been demoted." It didn't surprise me at all that I heard that kind of talk. Wilbur Mills told me once that someone asked him, "Didn't Brooks get downgraded?" Wilbur said, "I wouldn't think that being given an office in the White House is downgrading, wherever you were before you went to the White House." That sort of answers it. Neither was Chester Bowles humiliated by it. In fact, it might have been accompanied by some dissatifaction so that really he was kicked upstairs. It still was a pretty good place to be kicked to, to be ambassador to India. Now in Roger Jones' case, I was never quite happy about that because it was sort of a return to an old abode. I did rejoice, though, when he was given the Award of Freedom, I believe it is called, the big honor for someone with distinguished public service. That is a special award carrying a Presidential signature and a White House ceremony and is limited to just a few each year. He was one of the recipients before he retired, after the events that we are discussing.

T: Was Rusk a hard man to work for?

H: Well, if I had to say yes or no, I would say yes. He was not an easy man to work for; he was sort of uncommunicative at times. He made his mediations hard to evaluate. I had those problems. He was always timid about recognizing me. I think that was a fear that maybe the White House was not happy with it then. But the White House didn't include Jack Kennedy. I think that before it was over, after I had gotten into the White House family circle, I think I made my place secure. I didn't go about it with any planned technique. I think the fact that I was not seeking to be elevated and wasn't seeking to project myself into places of power but was content with the philosophical outlets I had, and with an opportunity to serve a man I admired and an administration whose goals I was enthusiastic about. I think that became apparent.

T: You would have been 63 about this time, wouldn't you? Or would you have been 64?

H: I was older than that. I was born in August, 1898. So just add two years to the figure. I was transferred over there in December. I had passed my 65th birthday. hadn't I?

T: No.

H: Oh, this was in 1961, 63rd birthday. That's right. In August before I went in December I was 63, and pretty vigorous and pretty healthy, as I am now at 79. Excuse me for putting that in.

T: We have talked about some of the events in 1960 and 1961 when you became ready to join the Kennedy administration. You mentioned the fact that there had been some uneasiness at the State Department and your desire after you had been there a very short time to move to some other responsibility. Do you want to share some more things on that? Would there be anything in the way of additional information that would be useful to share in our thinking? You mentioned the strength of the men or the power of their personalities and then the area of conflict you talked of a little earlier.

H: Well, I might supplement what has been said by both of us. I think there was some information conveyed in your very questioning, information you had acquired about it; but in order to refine the answer a bit, let me say that what transpired about the White House attitude was confusing to the newsmen. I don't think we would have had the problem of straightening them out on the place that I was to have in the White House if my transfer had not accompanied the shake-up. I think that if it had not been done at the same time it might have been clearer to them that actually I was being promoted. I regarded it as a promotion. Whatever interpretation they might give to Bowles and Jones' transfers, I know in my case that while it was inspired by Philip Graham--I have a feeling it was inspired by him--it was a good time for the White House and State Department to get the change made. It did, of course, sort of complicate my problem from the standpoint of my image. No man likes to be regarded by the public as having been downgraded.

There was another factor that entered into this and it should have been mentioned. The newsmen thought that I was to be assistant to McBundy, who was one of the top men of the Kennedy staff and that I would go as a Deputy Special Assistant. Well, that was not true at all. That never was considered and how some of them got that idea, I don't know; but, nevertheless, that was the impression. Some of the news reports might have even referred to the idea that I was going to be a deputy assistant to the President, which would be really downgrading and would be much lower in the structure than I really was told I would have.

T: Who would have told you that? Larry O'Brien?

H: Told me what?

T: Would have told you that this position you would have would be lower.

H: No, no. Not O'Brien. I think the White House staff was clear on it all the time, but some of the newsmen got that idea.

T: Who told you that you would not be downgraded?

H: I said that the confusion was with the newsmen, not with me or with any of the White House staff. But somehow or another, if I were just speculating on it, since perhaps McBundy had been very enthusiastic about my coming over to the White House to help them, they might have gotten the idea from something that he said that I was to be his deputy. Do you follow me on that? I'm a little vague I concede. The point is that this was cleared up. One thing that happened was very gratifying to me and that is that I would take the oath of office in a Presidential ceremony, which is always a good way to measure what's happening in the way of downgrading and upgrading. I was told then that the transfer would not merely be announced as a change of location and function but it would be welcomed by the President himself in a formal ceremony. Kenny O'Donnell, who handled these matters, told me the President wanted that done. Well, that was exactly the answer to all of the speculation about being one of the subordinates in the third echelon instead of the second. At the White House that was a complete answer to this false impression that some of the newsmen had. I can't put my finger on who it was among the newsmen that had gotten that impression. The story, maybe, was just circulated a little that I was to be in McBundy's office and not in a separate office of my own with the dignity that goes with a Special Assistant to the President.

The ceremony itself was really a delightful thing. I was told to invite, as I remember it, fifteen or twenty. They didn't want too many people to fill up the little room, the Cabinet room I believe was where the ceremony took place. They asked me who I would like to administer the oath. I told them I would like for my former law partner, then the Chief Judge of the Tax Court of the United States, Bolon B. Turner, to administer the oath.

T: He was here in Washington?

H: Yes. The Tax Court sits here and he was here. He was, of course, quite pleased to be a part of the ceremony and certainly to help honor me. I had a choice group: Ed Pruden, Clarence Cranford. I think Pruden mentioned in his book that when I introduced him to the President, I said, "Mr. President, here's a Baptist hierarchy." He thought enough of that to put it in his little book, not a little book but a book of proper length. But he was talking about Washington experiences, and he had quite a bit to say about that ceremony. Paul Geren was there. I remember Liz Carpenter, who was a very popular newswoman, several representatives of the press, and several old friends that I had known in my earlier days in government were there.

T: Was your mother-in-law there?

H: Yes. I'm glad you reminded me because that deserves a comment. There was a picture in the Post the next day and she was featured. She got more out of it than the President and I. The photographer merely got an angle on us and the President's face is not even visible. She was 95 then and

that was when I told that little story that is still being reported now and then. Of course, you are familiar with the old statement that I use, an old saying about mothers-in-law. I'll jump to that right now because when the President gave me my commission and announced my appointment, he kept holding the scroll, but that was when I took the oath of office and then he made a little comment or two. Then they turned toward me for a response. Of course, everybody was expecting me to say something funny. That was sort of my style and has been for a long time. I thanked him very profoundly, of course, for the great honor and expressed my pleasure to be one of his official family. Then I said, "You are familiar with the old saying that back of every achievement there is a proud wife and a surprised mother-in-law, and she is here this morning and she is surprised. She thought I would be the President." (Laughter) So, that is the part that was circulated, the little punch line at the end which was tacked on to that old saying; however, it isn't a too familiar saying. I think I have been given credit for that, but I am not entitled to it.

The Saturday Review carried a cryptogram puzzle, where you had to work out the mixture of letters. My wife's sister was working on it one day, and she shouted, "Why here's Brooks' old saying." They carried that one week in that cryptogram.

I mentioned the fact to him that she was 95, and her presence was a tribute to him as well as myself. So, she got the attention and everybody just swarmed over there to speak to her. My wife laughs yet about what she said after they went home, "Mother, did you have a good time?" Marion imitates her. She just sort of turned her head proudly and said, "He shook hands with me twice." The Methodists got a thrill out of it because she was a regular attendant at the Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church.

I had very happy relations with President Kennedy. I remember one day I was walking from the White House mess, we called it, the place where the staff had lunch.

T: A little cafeteria?

H: No. It's a sit-down dining room on ground level, not where state dinners are held, but right below that. Everybody, incidentally, had their little napkin ring, a silver napkin ring with his name on it.

T: Was this part of your salary for working there? One of the fringe benefits?

H: No. We paid for our lunch, but it was a fringe benefit. I guess there was some subsidy in it. There were hours when you could get coffee. It was a favorite place, but your name had to be on the list to have access to that. They didn't admit the clerks and the lower grades. That was a dignified courtesy. But we did pay for our lunches. They had not only individual tables for two, three, and four, but they had a big round table where as many as eight or ten could sit. Most of time I ate at the big, round table. It was always a joyful occasion, half hour, for us. I wasn't the only one who tried to bring in some humor. Lee White was particularly skilled in that. I was glad just to be keeping up with him. But there were others. It was a very congenial group.

Occasionally I would ask somebody to come and have lunch with me. I asked Billy Graham one day to come over and have lunch. As we were walking back from the dining room, or the White House mess, on the West Wing to my office on the East Wing, Pierre Salinger, who was Press Secretary, was with the President in the Oval Office, and he swung the door open and put his head out. He said, "Brooks, the President wants to speak to Dr. Graham." So, we stepped into the Oval Room, didn't sit down but just stood there. The President got up and shook hands with Billy and said he was glad to see him. The President said, "Brooks, I read in the paper this morning that Dr. Graham is going to South America a month after I make my trip to South America. I'll be a month ahead of him, going to many of the same places. I'll be his "John the Baptist!" That was his rather clever comment. I forget what Billy's response to it was, but he, naturally, was pleased to have the implication inserted there.

T: Would that have happened rather frequently that Billy Graham would have been at the White House?

H: Oh, I think so. He went on back to the office with me. We had quite a talk. I raised a question I remember in that conversation with him. I realized that my name carried some standing with Baptists and Baptists are a proud people, you know. We are very loyal people to our pastors and leaders and officials. I never regarded myself as a Baptist leader nor a Baptist spokesman, but I found that even those who would have withheld their approval of my position on segregation, even they, most of them, were proud of their president. That is just one of the marks of a good Baptist. I said at the same time to Billy that I probably would have had a problem if they had known, for example, that the virgin birth gave me difficulty. I invited him to speak on that, and he said, "Well, Brooks, it doesn't give me any difficulty. I believe it, and I think that probably the Scriptures are so structured that we are supposed to believe it, but I do not regard that as essential to salvation. Too much is often made of it." He just said, "In other words, I wouldn't let it bother me." I had given him an honest statement about it. I was inviting him to say what he did say. But Billy Graham would hardly say on a platform what he said to me privately. I don't think he would want to discuss it at all except to say, "It doesn't give me any difficulty."

T: He confirmed very strongly his belief on that.

H: Yes. He is like R. G. Lee and W. A. Criswell; he just believes it. I am glad I did invite him to say that much, but there are some who wouldn't say that. They would say, "Well, I hope it isn't essential to salvation, but I don't know." I can just hear some of the good old orthodox brethren. I know I was robbed by one of the board of trustees in Ouachita College. I was denied an honorary degree from that college, now Ouachita Baptist University, because one of the board members had heard me express some ideas in the Russellville Church that he didn't regard as orthodox. He said that I wasn't entitled to be honored with an honorary degree from Ouachita College.

T: When would this have been?

H: That was back before I was elected to Congress, in the 1930's. My mother had attended Ouachita College for a while before she went to Peabody College, and I had been asked and accepted invitations from the graduating classes of Ouachita to give the commencement addresses on three occasions. I hardly got through with one until another class wanted me. In the course of about twenty years, I gave the commencement address at Ouachita by invitation of the graduating class and not the board of trustees, although they had to clear it. They were probably willing to hear me, but they weren't going to honor me. It didn't bother me. There is no bitterness about it. I have gotten fourteen honorary degrees, different kinds of degrees, and one of the few laymen who has gotten the Doctor of Divinity. So that didn't bother me except that I was interested in this old deacon at Russellville who thought I was unorthodox.

T: Did you ever serve on the Board of Trustees?

H: No. I served on the Baptist Hospital Board, state board, and on the Executive Committee when I was a young man and very active in church work. But it didn't bother me--not a minute. I lost no sleep over that.

If you are interested in the kinds of degrees that I have, I have two earned degrees. So, I don't think much anyway of efforts and schemes and designs to get a degree. I think that is a very, very bad practice; yet we know that it is done. I think that there has been a tendency to debase the honorary degrees because it is often given where it really should not be because of some person's big contribution or his political prominence. Incidentally, I happen to know that George Peabody College has given only one honorary degree--I think it's true--in its entire history. They made an exception of it very recently to give an honorary degree to the man who had served in such a distinguished way as chairman of the board of trustees.

T: What kind of things would have prompted Billy Graham to be at the White House that day?

H: Just that I had invited him to come over and have lunch with me. We were good friends. We have drifted apart you might say. There has been no occasion for our coming together, but I have very kind feelings toward Billy. I have a wistful feeling about him. I would wish that one who is loved and admired as much as he is around the world would have more to say about the bolder leadership that is needed in Baptist ranks and the more independent point of view. Honesty forces me to say this, but it doesn't destroy the friendship or mar it at all. If I might discuss this theological cleavage--and I suppose we will live with it as long as we are on this globe and as long as the human family is expected to live here on this planet--I have an idea that it will be here, and it may be deep and traumatic at times. I think Billy Graham has done a lot of good in the world; but on the other hand I would hope that men like Billy would say some things to strengthen those of us who feel that the Christian Life Commission, for example, is entitled to more applause and more support than it gets, and that the social gospel receives something beside a patronizing reference now and then from the orthodox side of theological cleavage. I shouldn't have gotten into that but there it is.

T: Was Billy Graham just passing through town, or would you have made specific contact asking him to come by?

H: He was just in town. I hadn't asked him to come to Washington just to have lunch with me, and I had nothing particular to say to him. But I was under obligation to him and I felt a warm feeling which hasn't been destroyed at all by what I have just said rather softly of a critical matter. He had been one of the principal speakers at this dinner December 18, 1958, and made a wonderful talk. His feeling toward me was very, very warm. He might be surprised if he were to hear what I have just said. He might feel, "Well, Brooks, there is no occasion for your feeling that way. I was pretty early trying to soften the feelings toward segregation," and he was.

But that is only one facet, don't you see. He has had to determine his course on the basis of holding as wide an influence as he can get for the very simple experience of being born again, as he would phrase it. There, again, I think that leads into an encouragement and bolstering of influence for this inordinate individualism that tends to make the problem of building an incorruptible society and an incorruptible government more difficult, because religion is related to this whole process of bringing the kingdom into existence--the kingdom on this earth. I don't think we get the support from those who keep alive this intense right wing theology and extremism of, well, we will have to say evangelicals, although I regard myself as an evangelical.

I believe very much in the individual commitment and in a spiritual experience. I have got very pronounced and strong views about the work of the Holy Spirit, but I don't even spell holy with a capital "H." I put it with a little "h" because there is no new divinity, no new and mystical force released in the world by what Jesus had to say and what the Holy Spirit and Paul and others have correctly said about it. I am not a scholarly person in the field of the Old Testament or the New Testament, but in the 51st Psalm you will notice inthe King James Version reference is made in the prayer of the psalmist, "Do not let thy holy spirit depart from me." So, it was in existence back there, and it is spelled with a small "h." Now I spell Spirit with a capital "S" because that is an identification of divine influence. That is God at work in the world in the invisible way. I am getting into theology here. Maybe you don't want me to, but somebody might be interested in this some day. "Do not let thy holy spirit depart from me," and I just happen to believe that you can hardly get an accurate transference of these ideas about social righteousness.

You cannot interpret it so that it is understandable by the average person, the great mass of our people who are good people in the churches. You cannot get that transferred into practical political and governmental terms without defining the holy spirit and without seeing it as a very active force in human lives and human society. In other words, this may be strange to some people that I, a political scientist, an amateur political scientist and a practitioner, I think, of politics with some degree of practicality, talk to political science students about this without being overt and without getting into refined theology. I think that we have failed to interpret this simple fact of Jesus' Spirit persisting and living in the world after his physical presence was removed. I think we just haven't seen that Jesus can be one of the central figures, the central figure, from my point of view, in this great vocation of building for truth and justice and freedom and democracy--the great rich word in the field of government.

I have forgotten the subject of my sentence, but I don't think we can accomplish much without a reexamination of this thoroughly sound teaching on Jesus, the Spirit, continuing to be alive as a vital force in human existence. So, I talked to my students about what the holy Spirit really means and what has to happen in the processes. This is a delicate thing for preachers to deal with, and if I can help them I want to help them. But I don't want to be stigmatized because I spell holy with a little "h," because that has meaning for me and I go back to the 51st psalm. I have my Scripture roots, too, and I go back to the 51st psalm for it.

I talked about it one morning in a political class at Wesley College. In a little cup-of-coffee session later when we went down to relax and talk, the professor--his name was Starnes and he had attended Duke University--said, "I wish J. B. Duke could have heard your analysis of the holy Spirit this morning as you gave it to my students." I said, "Why?" Now we are talking about J. B. Duke who provided the millions that built Duke University. The name was changed from Trinity College to Duke University as a memorial to this generous philanthropist but hardheaded businessman who had built a great power corporation and contributed a great deal to the development of electrical service in that area. He also built a fortune on Duke's Mixture and on tobacco production. The Duke name is prominent not only in electricity but in tobacco, too. He must have been a good man. He said one time, and this is mentioned often in North Carolina, and people chuckle over it, "There are three things I cannot understand: Electricity is one, second is the Holy Spirit, and third, my son, Buck. Those are the three things I cannot understand." Starnes said, "If he could have heard you this morning, you would have reduced his puzzlement to two: his son, Buck, and electricity would still have remained, but you would have cleared up one for him." Had you ever heard that story before?

T: No. We got to talking about some of these things arising out of your days in the White House. Let me pursue this--did your theological views present any tensions or problems when you were president of the Southern Baptist Convention?

H: I don't think so. I have given you some intimation of that in my pre-congressional days, and that was a very simple thing. I haven't identified the Board of Trustees member who made the objection. There would be no point in it. I think he has long ago passed off the scene, but he was still living when my friend, Cyril E. Bryant, who is the editor of the Baptist World Alliance newspaper . . . C. E. was born in Booneville and grew up in a small town just a few miles from Russellville, where I grew up in western Arkansas. He, at one time, was editor of the Arkansas Baptist official publication and often goes back to speak in Arkansas. He was invited to fill the pulpit in my home church while, I believe, I was president of the Convention, but it may have been before that. He said, "Well, it is an honor to be in the pulpit of the home church of one of our Southern Baptist presidents whom I think so much of, my friend, Brooks Hays. He told me a funny story recently, and I believe I will share it with you. I doubt he has told it here." So, he told maybe more than one. When they called on this same deacon I have been talking about to pronounce the benediction, C. E. told me that the old gentleman said, "And Lord forgive us for this levity when we should

have been preaching the Gospel." (Laughter) So that gives you some idea of the kind of mind that he had. He shouldn't have been on the board of the college, although I think that he was on the faculty of the Agricultural College at Russellville when it was district agricultural college before it became Arkansas Polytechnic College.

T: The days you were in the White House one of the things you mentioned is--and we didn't follow this up--that President Kennedy considered you to be in part a representative for him with the Protestant community, the religious community. You intimated this, and we didn't follow it up. How did this work out in practice?

H: It was one of those unalluded-to functions, and I wouldn't have wanted it ever to have had any place on the organization chart. I never have thought of my function as a member of the White House staff as involving church-state relations. No President is going to do well in the job of Chief Executive in this diverse population and pluralistic religious culture of ours who doesn't take account of religious diversities, and who doesn't want a proper interpretation of his adherents to the doctrine of separation of church and state, and an appreciation of the place that the Judeo-Christian standards and ideals and teachings have in the life of this republic. Those must be harmonized; and when they are not harmonized you get the tension that we have spoken of earlier in the designation of an individual as the representative of the United States at the church's headquarters in the Vatican.

T: Now Mr. Kennedy never appointed a representative to the Vatican. Was this probably because of his Catholicism?

H: I doubt that he would have done it even if he had been a Baptist. I think that he was too penetrating a student of our government and of our political structure. I don't know. Undoubtedly he was the last one to have harbored such an idea.

T: I have heard of several people who were fearful that he would produce some links to Rome, who subsequently say that perhaps he did more to affirm separation of church and state than many Presidents.

H: I think that is a fair statement. As I reflect on his campaign, I think that was the speech he made to the Houston, Texas, ministers during the campaign of 1960. That is a great state document, what he said, to disarm his critics. It was a remarkable thing. He doubtless had pondered these things, and he knew that if he were to be elected President he had to avoid the mistakes that Al Smith had made, or at least help create a more hospitable climate for a consideration of the relationship of Catholicism to our political life. Al Smith, incidentally, compounded his own problem by saying, "Anyone who raises any question about my religion is a bigot." That just wasn't true and didn't help him at all, because a lot of us in the South who were not bigots were on the other side of the theological question. I don't think I am lax at all in my feelings of loyalty to the Protestant idea, but I am also very warm in my appreciation of what the Catholic church did to keep the Christian gospel alive through some dark ages. Even the Church of Rome suffered from that darkness, I can realistically discuss it with great love and affection and appreciation of my Catholic friends. That is part of our cult. So it

is an appropriate subject for ecclesiastical dialogue. It is regrettable that now and then it has to become an appropriate subject in political forums; but John Kennedy showed in the Houston meeting that he was capable of doing it and that he was thoroughly loyal, just as loyal to the American doctrine as any Roman Catholic.

T: As any Baptist you mean, I guess?

H: Or as any other American.

T: Did you have a part in setting up the Houston speech?

H: No. I did not. You see, I was immobilized. I was a member of the TVA Board, and it would have been highly improper for me to take any part in that campaign.

T: So you really didn't take part in it?

H: No. I didn't. I had no claim on him. He didn't owe me a thing, but he appreciated me personally. I knew that, because during the campaign he had one of his aides send for me to slip up here to Washington to talk about this matter of support among the non-Catholics; and that was entirely proper for me. I wasn't making any speeches, and It wasn't in the newspapers. I didn't come for any other purpose except to respond to any questions that he wanted to raise about it. He was entitled to my advice.

T: How early did he talk with you?

H: That was pretty early in the campaign. I would judge along in September. The man I mentioned in our earlier discussion, Claude Curlin, was very active in the Kennedy campaign, and he may have been the one who inspired the President to send for me, or Senator Henry Jackson, of Washington State, who was the chairman of the Democratic National Committee for a while. That's where I met them. I met the two of them together in Senator Kennedy's private office in the Senate wing of the Capitol. They very courteously made a room available for him, and that was altogether proper, because after all the Senate of the United States, like the House, has to take notice of the fact that we have a presidential campaign every four years and one of their number was a nominee. They would have done the same thing for the Republican nominee, and I am sure they did when Nixon ran. But, at any rate, he talked to me there. I said to him that it was regrettable that I was not free to get out and make an active campaign for him; but he understood that. He appreciated my being available for advice to them. We decided that since Curlin was doing some organizational work and formally had taken notice of the need to acquaint Protestants with his official position and personal philosophy on it, I said that I would simply keep in touch with Curlin. They thought that was a good idea and would give him my day-to-day ideas about how to be effective. Well, he knew I was doing this work in the background and was not violating any of the ethical standards about a public official participating in the campaign. I think it is worth a moment to speak of the final word, I said--it was the last time I called him Jack because the next time I saw him he was President of the United States--"Jack, I want you to promise me something. It is a great thing to be the nominee of a political party

for the Presidency and you are going to have a great adventure in the next few weeks; but I would like for you to heed the words of an old man, and I am your elder, remember. I was, I believe, eighteen years of age when you were born. I have lived a long time and I have had a happy life, but one thing I want you to promise me on the basis of previous experiences. Win or lose, you'll enjoy it." He turned to Henry Jackson and said, "Henry, I think that is the first time I have ever been given that kind of advice, "Win or lose, enjoy it"; but we might lose, and I don't want the thought of losing to keep me from doing as Brooks advises, 'to enjoy.'" Then he turned to me as I was leaving, and I just have to put this in the record because naturally it was a heartwarming thing. He said, "Henry, this guy--pointing to me and putting his hand on me--has got guts." I have been told that he said to Senator Benton, of Connecticut, and maybe to Ted, his brother, that if he were rewriting Profiles he would have a chapter on "Hays of Arkansas." I don't know whether he said that or not. At least it would be consistent with what he said. I heard that myself.

T: The way you describe him in some of your contacts, you describe him as a gentle sort of man and one for whom you had considerable appreciation. He has often been conveyed, usually by his enemies, as power hungry and grabbing for power at all costs, pushing anything aside to achieve his goal, using money, influence, anything that could be done. How do you react to that and what kind of a man was he as you knew him?

H: Now remember, I can't have an objective judgment about it. I became so involved in his official life and in his politics that the subjective elements would maybe obscure any objectivity. Well, I will put it this way. I can have a degree of objectivity, but I recognize the limits of it because of my affection for him. I think this is accurate. He had a degree of toughness. All of the Kennedy people did. I guess you would have to say that all of the politicians who reached that level had an element of toughness. It is a tough and bruising business. I don't think he had an inordinate use of the family fortune or used money in an offensive or shocking way any more than rich men generally do. There have been far more shocking exhibitions of the use of wealth to influence an election than the Kennedy people were guilty of. They had money enough to publicize it before the conventions both in 1956 and in 1960. They weren't withholding money for any "legitimate" activities. The Rockefellers have had an advantage, and it certainly had something to do with Rockefeller's climb to the Governorship in New York and Winthrop's climb to the Governorship of Arkansas. I have to say that I approached that problem with some degree of criticism of it. I think that one reason I am so strong for governmental financing of these presidential campaigns is just that. We don't want to limit the Presidency only to the candidates like the Kennedy people and the Rockefellers and the rich people. I think there has been a lot of unfairness and poor sportsmanship, you might say, in some of the criticisms. You certainly couldn't indict all of the critics of Jack Kennedy. I don't mean that. But there has been an element of envy, I am afraid, in many of the things that have been said about him.

T: Well, now, he was President really only for less than three years.

H: A little less than three years.

T: You came to work with him, I suppose, really for a little better than a year, almost two years, from the time you joined the White House staff directly and left the State Department responsibility.

H: It lacked only one week of being two years before his death as I remember. You see, I was sworn in as his special assistant December 1, 1961. He was assassinated on November 22, 1963. So it was about a week short of two years.

T: Did you ever see him really use this toughness?

H: No, I never did. I was never on the receiving end of a dissatisfactory mood of his, I mean his being dissatisfied with me. I think, though, there was an element of respect for me as his elder. I was probably the oldest man around there. These young fellows were not always as reverent toward me as I might have thought at the time they should have been, but I think Jack was. That was an interesting thing that the President of the United States had a sort of filo loyalty, you see. He just thought of me in a father-son relationship. I was glad for him to do it.

T: You went to Rome almost immediately after you went over to the White House. Was that at all a coincidence?

H: No, I think that was on my own initiative or maybe the initiative of one of the other assistants. I was constantly thinking of the significance that would have, my meeting with Pope John and my ability to break through this barrier of Baptists having no contacts with Catholics.

T: You actually went when you were in the State Department. You actually were at the State Department at the time.

H: Well, I am glad to have that point mentioned here.

T: So this would have been just part of a fact-finding trip to Europe. Do you remember what prompted it all?

H: Ron, are you sure that I had not gotten to the White House when I had my audience with Pope John?

T: One of the news stories released the time. It said simply, "Special Assistant to President John F. Kennedy. Papal visit was made while he was Under Secretary of State."

H: I have a feeling that I was already attached to the White House when I saw Pope John. I wish I had before me now a letter that I saw in the Kennedy Library in Massachusetts where my White House papers are stored--many of them, a tremendous collection of stuff they have got there. When I dropped by to speak to my friend, Dan Fenn, I said, "Well, where is my stuff?" He said, "You come on back here. I want to show you your stuff." We did and he said, "Now here's a book that has some of the special letters, some of the rather interesting letters, a collection that the staff wrote to the President--memos." It shows you something of the way we did business. He said, "Let's just pick one out here." It was the strangest coincidence. The one he reached in and pulled out--and he didn't know

it--was mine. He said, "Well, what do you know. The one I opened up is from you. Let's see what it says." It said, "Mr. President, when I told the Pope that I bore your greeting of reverence, affection, and admiration, he responded so warmly and said to assure you, please, that he prayed for you." Then I said, "And, Mr. President, you will be glad to know that Baptists have received my account of this papal visit with great interest and appreciation." Now that is the substance of that letter and I can't believe that was Pope Paul because I think Johnson had become President.

T: The visit was made to the Vatican October 23, 1961.

H: Well, then, of course, I was. You see that was just before I was transferred.

T: Apparently, also, that additional information of a half year suggests that you were making a tour of five European countries in connection with your post as Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs. You mentioned, though, that you emphasized the personal visit was made in the capacity of a Baptist layman and had no connection with governmental duties.

H: That was in October, then, of 1961. Well, I still was with the State Department. But when I sent him this note, I may have been referring to something that happened weeks before. That is probably what happened.

T: I see.

H: This memo in which I told him how well the Baptists were receiving my report . . . Of course, that is subject to the exception I made in the case of Editor James of the Baptist Standard. But that means, you see, that I had had an opportunity to visit with Baptists between the time of the papal visit and the time that this letter was written. So, something must have inspired me to let him know about it.

T: The Baptist Messenger of Oklahoma also picked up an editorial about your visit to Pope John.

H: It was probably unfavorable.

T: Yes. There are some statements that way, although it is not too strongly unfavorable. The question is raised, and I will quote the story, on December 11, 1961: "Although Hays visited the Pope at the Vatican on October 23, for some strange reason the announcement of his visit was not made until December 14. At that time Hays called newsmen to tell about his talk with Pope John XXIII, almost two months previously, while he was serving as Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs during a tour of five European countries."

H: Now that's an interesting point. That's exactly what happened, you see. Is this from the Oklahoma paper?

T: This is from the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger. Yes. Well, that belongs in the record. They say, "some strange reason." What was the strange reason?

H: I don't know. It certainly shows that I wasn't trying to get a lot of attention for doing something that was unprecedented, although it certainly

was unprecedented. I may have just been trying to avoid any kind of dramatic exulting over it.

T: Now you must have received some criticism from the Baptists although you told the media in New Orleans in February, 1962, "No criticism was offered my visit with the Pope in Rome last October. The high point of that conversation was when the Pope said, 'We are brothers in Christ.'" So you didn't receive a lot of flak really from the Baptist papers apart from what you have said.

H: Yes. I am glad to have you bring that out because I did assure the President, you see, in this letter that was shown me by Dan Fenn that I just quoted. I did tell the President that the Baptists had received my report with interest and appreciation. That was, of course, very pleasing to him.

T: You also met some other leaders in Europe at that time. Did you meet Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia?

H: No. I did not include Yugoslavia.

T: On that particular trip. Now you did speak to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1962, the summer of 1962, when you were a special assistant to the President. Was this just simply a statement or an occasion that you would be invited as a former president to speak?

H: It was not a formal speech I am pretty sure. Was it?

T: Well, it is indicated as simply "remarks."

H: It must have been in one of the auxiliary meetings and not the main Convention. Which Convention was it--1962 did you say? Where?

T: San Francisco.

H: Oh, I was vice-president that year and during a period of about an hour I presided one day.

T: This is . . .

H: I was confused about the year. Sorry.

T: A little later in 1962 there was a rather interesting event that occurred in the fall when James Meredith, a black man, attempted to register at the University of Mississippi. The news story headed up, "Hays Predicts Racial Justice in Mississippi," and the lead line indicates that you stepped into the Mississippi racial controversy over the admission of the Negro student at the University of Mississippi. Do you remember that event? Do you remember very much about it and how you were involved in it?

H: What's the date on that?

T: This was in September, 1962.

H: No, I don't remember except that I have never understood why I was not asked for advice on handling that because I think my Little Rock experience would have given me some weight.

T: You didn't talk with Bobby Kennedy, then, about it?

H: I don't believe I did. I don't believe he asked me. I think I may have learned that they were using U. S. marshalls, as I recall it, what I had recommended they do in the Little Rock situation. So, they were doing what I would have advised them to do, so I didn't project myself into it. No, I can't remember that either Bob or the President sought my advice on that. I understood that Wilbur Mills for some reason was asked about the use of marshalls. I don't know why he would have been asked except, of course, Little Rock was thrown into his district about that time and he became their congressman.

T: But the Fifth District was changed then, wasn't it?

H: Right. So they may have felt that they would get from him whatever value there was in my experience. It may have been that they were eager not to publicize me. I could understand that because Mississippi politicians, with some notable exceptions, did not like me. Speaking of politicians, Mr. Abernathy was less caustic than Congressman Jamie Whitten, who said to the Rotary Club in one of the cities in his district--and this was quoted by his colleague, Frank Smith, who differed with him on racial matters and other matters and who ran against Jamie when they put both of them in the same district in Mississippi.

Frank Smith puts this in his book Mississippi Congressmen. He says that Whitten, the next week, I believe, or at least shortly after my defeat said, "Hays' defeat is the best thing that happened in the South. It will warn public people, office holders and men in politics, to lay off moderation." And that is what we have had to fight, the tendency to be moderate when we can't afford to be moderate on anything like segregation. I am paraphrasing it.

T: Rather interestingly, you made a prophesy there. You said, "I will make a prophesy. For twenty-five years I have lived close to Mississippi problems." Then you discussed some of your involvements--and this is quoted in the Religious News Service story for September 28--"that the people of Mississippi will conclude that this issue can be resolved on no other basis than the admission of the Negro student to the University; and I will make another prediction. When it does, the conscience of Mississippi will rest easier." Then, you are quoted as drawing in some references to Robert E. Lee, well known in the South, and you concluded the statement, "The fraternal kindness of the nineteenth century is not adequate for the dynamic twentieth, but we are yielding to the demands of justice, and with the patient cooperation of the minority group we are making progress."

H: That is one of the best things I ever said. (Laughter) I admire what I just said.

T: Now this reference in the news story obviously must have meant that you called a news conference or talked probably with Barry Garrett at the Baptist Joint Committee.

H: I think that is what happened. I didn't call the news conference. I have called very few news conferences in my lifetime.

T: Out of the sense of wisdom, if that is the better course?

H: Oh, I just haven't had occasion to. I called this news conference that I spoke of a day or two ago when I told about David Brinkley and Chet Huntley laughing about one of my little yarns. But that was because there was so much interest in the aftermath of the Dale Alford write-in campaign.

T: Some two months later you were quoted again as speaking at the Pastors' Conference in North Carolina, and you reaffirmed some of these things that you had said.

H: The statement that you read, "the fraternal kindness of the nineteenth century is not adequate for the dynamic twentieth," is my saying, and I have held on to it and I have repeated it, naturally, right often, because it is sort of a capsule statement. When was that made?

T: Well, the first time that reference was made to it was in the Religious News Service story of September 28, 1962. Then it was referred to again when you spoke to the Pastors' Conference in November, 1962.

H: That was a part of the same ferment; the same Mississippi situation, wasn't it?

T: Yes. It was tied into that, but you were speaking at the Pastors' Conference.

H: I still can't understand how that florid rhetoric that you used got into a news story. I wasn't speaking anywhere.

T: Well, you spoke to the Pastors' Conference.

H: I know but there was an earlier one in September, 1962.

T: It could have come out of an interview. Well, wait a minute now, let me come back. You were warmly applauded by more than one hundred members of the Washington Ministerial Association when you spoke in the sanctuary of the National Presbyterian Church.

H: I remember that now.

T: That would be in September, 1962.

H: Right. And that was an appropriate thing to say to a group of ministers.

T: There is one other thing I would like to pick up from your Convention years. You were serving as president in 1958 as the presiding officer. Let me just read what the records show, and I would appreciate it if you would comment on it. Item 4 in the opening program states, "Secretary Joe W. Burton (Tenn.) reported an enrollment of 6,439 messengers. It was moved and carried that these messengers constitute the Convention and that duly accredited messengers from churches in cooperation with the Convention who arrive later be recognized as members of the Convention when they

have enrolled on the basis of membership as set forth in Article III of the constitution," which, parenthetically, states the basis on which you can participate in Southern Baptist Convention meetings. Item 5 reads, "R. E. Milam (Ore.) presented a motion to amend the report on registration, which was ruled out of order by the president, who stated that it was in conflict with the constitution of the Convention. The president then declared that he would consider this to be a resolution and referred it to the Committee on Resolutions." Do you remember that incident at all?

H: At the Houston Convention. Yes, I remember it. Our Brother Milam, he was an acid-tongued old gentlemen and very fervent, you know. He wanted to reach out and take some Canadian Baptist churches into the Convention simply because they were members of the Oregon-Washington Convention, which was affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. He wanted them through the indirect fashion to be seated in the Southern Baptist Convention. I am surprised that it was so short. There should have been a more elaborate recording of what was really taking place, because it led to all sorts of complications. I took a moment to read to myself the constitution. I think Porter Routh handed me the constitution. It says that it shall be constituted of messengers from any churches in "the Continental United States."

T: The United States and its territories.

H: That's right. The language was very clear, and it didn't take me long to rule Brother Milam's motion out of order. He stormed out. He got as mad as a wet hen at me and had himself nominated for the presidency when they came to the election of officers after everybody thought it would be just a routine affair, you know. It was sort of an unhappy moment for me because I turned the gavel over to Doug Hudgins, the first vice-president. He called for nominations. Well, J. D. Grey had agreed with whoever was handling my interests, maybe Bruce Price, to nominate me for a second term. He didn't say much really. I thought he sort of handled it in too casual a way. That was because he did not anticipate a contest.

Then about that time a woman messenger from Texas stood up and Doug Hudgins said, "I recognize the messenger." She said, "Well now, Mr. President, I don't think a congressman ought to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention." He said, "Do you have someone to nominate?" She said, "No, I just want to say that I don't think a member of Congress ought to be president." He said, "Well, I regret to say that you are not permitted to make a speech." She said, "Well, then, I nominate Dr. Naylor." Just like that. I told him later, "You almost 'parliamentarized' me out of office." Naylor had just given the presidential sermon and it was, as usual, a good one, affluent and eloquent and a thoroughly regular sermon, you know. I thought, Great goodness, with my bad name here on the segregation front and this Convention meeting in Texas, I am going to be the first president to be defeated for a second term in Convention history. So I just listened there sitting on the side. That was the first time, incidentally, that they used written ballots. In Chicago it had been a standing vote. Here it was, they were voting secretly, all of which was to my disadvantage. Well, I didn't want that humiliation. The Little Rock election would have been the second one, but this would have been the summer before the November election. So the tally clerks went out

and counted the votes. I sat down with Jim Wesberry. I said, "Jim, what do you think?" He said, "Brooks, I don't know. I am worried." That didn't help my feelings.

They came in later, but they didn't give the vote. I doubt that they had actually finished counting them. They just threw them in stacks. They would come to one for Naylor and they would throw it in one stack. By the way, though, Milam had himself nominated, so there were three of us.

T: L. F. Minnis of Washington nominated R. E. Milam, and Mrs. Mary Odum of Texas nominated Robert E. Naylor.

H: This is the first time I even knew their names.

T: Did Naylor allow his name to stand?

H: Oh, yes. He was mad at me. Oh, you said Naylor?

T: Not Milam, Milam, I can understand.

H: Naylor was downtown in a luncheon with somebody and didn't know a thing about it until he got back and the vote had already been announced. He hurried over to me and said, "Why, Brooks, I am so embarrassed. If I had been here I would have promptly withdrawn." But his name was not withdrawn. They voted on him. They didn't announce the vote. One of the tally clerks told me, "Oh it was about fifteen to one." I doubt that Milam got any hardly, because, of course, all he would have had would have been . . . He probably knew that but he just wanted to signal to me how he felt about me. But, you know, before the Convention ended he came over and said, "Brother Hays, I am just so sorry I acted like I did. I just want you to know I appreciate you and I hope you will forgive me." I said, "I certainly do. I was doing just what I felt I had to do to preserve my integrity as presiding officer." I was happy that he said this to me.

T: I had wondered what had transpired. That is particularly helpful. You indicated, and perhaps we could just keep moving through chronologically . . . . One of the things that happened of a personal nature is that your wife was robbed in your home in the first part of 1963. A bandit broke into your home, and Mrs. Hays was hurt in this incident. I want to ask this as fairly as I can. You have always worked for the rights of minority people. One of the things you perhaps staked your life on, your career on, was working for the rights of minority people. You became the victim of someone from the minority race. Do you have any double feelings on this sort of thing?

H: Not for a moment and neither did my wife. It happened late in the afternoon. We were due to go to a Baptist dinner. I forget what the occasion was. I was not scheduled to speak, but C. E. Bryant, I believe, had us as his guests at probably the Baptist Press dinner down at the National Press offices. At any rate, I had been speaking at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and got back around four thirty. I called my wife to let her know I was in town and that I would get home in time for us to prepare to go to the dinner. She didn't tell me over the phone. She said, "Well, hurry home." When I got here she said, "Well, I've had quite

an incident." Then she related it to me. I think the facts have all been told.

There is no occasion for describing it except she nearly talked this young intruder out of the house. She was sewing in the upstairs room, and she looked up and all of a sudden there was this, I believe, eighteen-year-old lad, maybe seventeen. He was married and had a pregnant wife, just a teenager. Marion was--and she would be--composed. She just said, "What do you want?" Then, he said, "The lady downstairs told me you would give me some money." Well, she knew there was no lady downstairs. She said, "Well, all right. Let's just go down and see." So, she walked downstairs and sort of kept talking to him. He followed her, and when they got to the front door he saw she was making a fool out of him and that she was in complete control of the situation. She had forgotten to lay her scissors down or maybe she thought that might be a weapon in defense. I told her that was hardly in keeping with her wisdom and sound judgment. She got to the door and he grabbed her then, and changed his attitude. He said, "Now look here, I want some money, and I am going to kill you if I don't get it." She said, "All right. Come with me."

So they went back upstairs, just right on upstairs. She knew there were a bunch of empty purses on the shelf in our closet. She said, "Get those purses down, I can't reach them." She was thinking all the time about what the next step would be for she knew he wasn't going to find any money in those purses. Maybe it was at that point that he jerked her. He had been holding her by the wrist. She had led him downstairs and he had pulled her back upstairs. He jerked around and it threw her off balance, and she feels that is when she sprained her wrist. It was not a break, but it was enough of a sprain that they had to put a cast on it. It hurt her. It had begun to be very painful before the dinner was over. I noticed her holding her wrist. Well, she had told me that it was a bit painful, but she didn't think of it as a break. When we got home from the dinner I said, "Now we've got to have this wrist taken care of." So, at that point, too, we called the police. I don't believe we talked to the police before. Yes, maybe we did. Maybe we got the police here before we went to the dinner, surely we would have. But we didn't go to the hospital until after we got back from dinner. I think that is the proper order. The police came, and she showed them where he had broken a window in the kitchen, reached in and unlocked the window, and came in through the window. Breaking the window in one of the panels enabled him to put his arm through.

It developed later that he had been doing that right along, and two weeks after this incident in my house he did the same thing in a newsman's home in this same part of the city. The wife, then, was able to report him before he could get far away. The police hurried over and caught him. Marion identified him as the same one. He plead guilty to both charges. Anyway, there was a good deal of publicity on it and it produced a nice little note from President Kennedy commending her for handling the thing so courageously. She got a lot of praise and just reams of publicity on it. I think she was entitled to the praise because she was so calm.

T: I guess we all wonder what we would do under certain circumstances.

H: Well, I wouldn't have been as calm, and I wasn't as calm when we had another incident. We were mugged right up here half a block away two or three years after that by a black adolescent--black teenagers were the culprits in that case. The next morning I got some ugly telephone calls about it when I was quoted as saying . . . The newsmen just hopped all over the story about my wife being involved with the background, as you said, that I had. "Now will you move out of this area?" I said, "We won't give a thought to moving. We wouldn't consider leaving this area, it is our home." It sounded sort of grandiloquent, but I said it spontaneously. I said, "We are not going to run away from problems. We are going to stay with our community and live with its problems and try to solve them." Well, that called for some ugly anonymous calls. One was from one of my fraternity brothers. He identified himself, but I have forgotten his name. He just gave me "Hail Columbia" for not making a strong statement denouncing the minority group, you know, by saying, "Look here what these blacks are doing to us"--that kind of thing. At that time the black population was much larger in that immediate area than it is today. That, of course, hurt to have his kind of comment. Then, some woman living in northern Virginia, abused Marion over the phone. I had an ugly letter or two, but not enough to worry about.

T: These sordid things, this kind of mentality, did you feel that this could have happened to anybody else?

H: That's right. The problem is not racial primarily. There are racial aspects, of course, but the problem is juvenile delinquency which cuts across race lines. The fact that there are more black people involved in this kind of criminality is that there are more blacks in the total population in the city of Washington. We kept our cool. We didn't get excited. One of the interesting little postscripts to this is, and it might surprise a lot of people, how many of our black friends came by or got in touch with us to say how tragic it was and how sad they were that one of their race would treat someone as he did, someone they loved and appreciated as they loved my wife. That made me very happy to find that any sense of racial identity didn't obscure that larger tie of neighborliness.

T: The Washington Post quoted you in a story of January 29, 1963, and the headline story is, "Immediate Action to Curb Crime in District Urged by Brooks Hays." You, apparently, wrote a letter to a friend, who was the member of the House District Committee and said that you hoped that the incident that involved your wife would add to the growing concern regarding the seriousness of the crime situation in Washington. You said, "We need, along with the spirit of calmness and faith, to work toward solutions and awareness of the existence of the extent of dangers that exist in the Capitol Hill area and the related problems of law enforcement." Then you called for adequate facilities to cope with the growth of crime in the District. Did anything come of that?

H: I don't believe so, except that it probably was helpful in developing a sense of anxiety about it on the part of the city generally. It might have helped sensitize the Congress. It might have helped the District Committee to consider more sympathetically increases for additional police, juvenile unemployment, or things that tend to reduce the crime rate.

I had forgotten about it. In fact, I had forgotten a lot of these things that you have unearthed in your examination of the Baptist Public Affairs Committee files.

T: The Committee chairman released it, and he also was a resident of this section of Washington.

H: It may have been helpful for the reasons I have just given.

T: Did anything substantial come of it, any more than what you have just said?

H: I don't think so. I don't think it called for much legislation, but it did call for increased appropriations and a continuing study by the District Committee. You see, the District Committee never has been distinguished until recently, or maybe in modern times you could say; but in the old days, the District Committee was not distinguished by a vigorous record.

T: Have things improved? That was some fifteen years ago?

H: They have improved very much not only in this section but in the city generally, I think, though far from solved; but Washington is experiencing, I think, a gradual improvement in the crime situation. It never has been as bad as it is pictures in various stories. Naturally, events in the Capitol City get attention that wouldn't be gotten in other cities. The newsmen are going to publicize it, as they should.

T: A number of things that you did in the period of early 1963 were that you spoke to a number of religious groups. You spoke to the First Friday Club on "The Man and the Church." This was not a religious group, but your subject was a religious one. You were to be honored for community service and then you addressed a group of Roman Catholics as well. The First Friday Club would be the Catholic. This is the same meeting. You were invited to speak to this meeting as well? Do you remember that?

H: The First Friday Club. This was February 8, 1963. I was on the White House staff at that time, wasn't I? Well, I don't recall this.

T: They gave you some award at that meeting.

H: Oh, yes. I do remember this meeting. I was glad of it because it was a good place to speak of the ecumenical spirit and the common interests of men of both Protestant and Catholic churches and of both races.

T: You could relate your visit to Pope Paul.

H: Right. What was the date of my visit with Pope Paul? Do you remember?

T: That would be October 23, 1961, I believe. You did speak on a number of occasions in the spring of 1963. You spoke to the students at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas, which is a Methodist school. You also spoke to the Military Chaplains' Association in the same month. You received an award from Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, which named you a distinguished world citizen. You were making a number of forays down into the area of Arkansas again when you were speaking on these occasions. Do you remember any of these events? Are there items

that are related to them that would be worth drawing in?

H: I don't think they would add anything to the lumber you have already accumulated. I do remember the Hendrix College visit. I think that was a series of talks. I think I made more than one. Marshall Steele, the president of Hendrix College at that time, wanted me to speak three or four times on the campus. They were set up for the purpose of giving some continuity to the college man and the world in which he was living, the changing world, you might say, and how one politician might help them get a conditioning of mind and an adequate dedication to political progress for the religiously trained persons. It is a wonderful college, incidentally, one of the very best of the church-related colleges in the country. The Arkansas Gazette, published in Little Rock, the morning paper, sent their reporter up every evening for the three talks that I made. There was beautiful publicity on it. There were lengthy quotations from what I had to say and intelligent quotes tied together very well, so that was very gratifying to me to have the interest of the newspapers and of the public in it. Was this in 1962?

T: No. 1963.

H: 1963. The last year of Kennedy's life. Yes, of course, I should have remembered that. Shortly after that Dr. John O. Gross, head of the Board of Education of the Methodist church with headquarters in Nashville, whom you might remember, although he probably died before you went to Nashville, came in to see me in Washington. He said, "I would like for you to do in a more formal way a series of talks and visits to all of the Methodist colleges across the country, to do for them what you did for Hendrix College." Are you familiar with this?

T: No.

H: So I went in to see the President and had a personal talk with him. I didn't just send a memo. He said, "Of course, I will give you a leave of absence." I said, "Now it's only fair that the Methodists, who are interested in this, pay my salary, so I would like for it to be leave without pay." He said, "Okay." I remember he smiled and he said, "Brooks, you've already got the Baptists. Are you trying to take over the Methodists?" I said, "Mr. President, nobody ever had the Baptists, and I think the Methodists are just as stubborn." I remember that little exchange. He was always good at that, you know, saying something of that nature. So, I got the leave of absence. It was a thirty-day tour, and I was near the end of it and speaking to the Southern University--that isn't quite the name.

T: Southern Baptist College?

H: No. These were all Methodist schools. It was the Methodist College in Lakeland, Florida, and it has the word "Southern" in it. At any rate, I had taken time out from the college activity to go down and speak to the Kiwanis Club in Lakeland and had come home about two o'clock in the afternoon, three o'clock Dallas time. I walked into the room--Marion was attending a luncheon herself and hadn't gotten back. I turned on the television set and there was Cronkite's face and voice. Of course, I thought, Well, this is not time for the news reports, what is this? I

heard him say, "President Kennedy has been shot in Dallas, probably seriously hurt and possibly fatally hurt." I remember the words. Well, of course, it just collapsed me. I hadn't had a shock like that in many a year. I sat glued to the television. I don't remember exactly the hour that he died, but before long the word came that he had died. I immediately cancelled plans. I was due to speak in Greenville, Mississippi, the next day, and I immediately called and cancelled that, and got reservations from the Orlando airport for Marion and me to return to Washington. When I arrived in Washington I believe I went on to the White House that night. It was not too late in the evening.

From that moment on, there was, of course, grief that is indescribable. It was one of the few times in my life I couldn't fight back the tears. I remember, as I walked down the stairs after viewing the body, one of those tense moments when Marion stood by me. She knew how devoted I was to Mr. Kennedy and what a shock this was to me. I could feel her sort of hugging me and holding my hand because she didn't see me weep very often. I have never seen her weep. She is as strong willed as anybody and yet, she has been hurt inside just as often as I have. But as we walked down the stairs, I met Ed Murrow, who was dying of cancer. He was with his wife and walking upstairs, neither one of us said a word, but I was next to him as we passed, and he grasped my arm and I grasped his and there was a firm squeeze. I knew we were each transmitting to the other the deep feeling that you just don't put into words. I was asked to be an honorary pallbearer, well, every member of the staff was asked. I think I have made it clear the folks that really were around the President to sense his mood and his wishes, and take care of the routines, that means Kenny O'Donell, Larry O'Brien, and so on. At any rate, the rest of us were asked. There must have been fifteen of us--Arthur Schlesinger, I must pause to refer to him.

The proximity to his office was a great, good fortune for me. I developed a friendship that has persisted and grown and matured since then, even after it was over. I stood by him in the rotunda service when the first ceremony took place in the Capitol. I remember while we waited for Mrs. Kennedy to join us I whispered to him, "Are you going to stay on?" Mind you, this was the second or third day, November 24, I guess. He said, "Well, I don't know whether Lyndon Johnson wants me." Ted Sorenson, who was standing just in front of us heard him say it, and he just looked over his shoulder and said, "He does want you. I heard him say so."

The only effort I made to find out whether he wanted me to stay on was through Bill Moyers. Bill came to be the, you might say, Larry O'Brien of the Johnson administration or the Pierre Salinger, whatever you would call him. At any rate, he was very close to President Johnson. He said, "Yes, I think the President wants you to stay on. He wants all of you to stay on at least for a while; don't do anything except write a letter of resignation and offer it to him." I sent it to Bill and told him I was submitting my resignation with the termination of my service to be left for him and the President to decide.

T: In other words, your position was simply for the pleasure of that particular administration and you had not had any commitment beyond that.

H: Well, all of us were held subject to the pleasure of the President. It

was not a fixed term like the power commission membership and that kind of thing. This was a Presidential appointment that was subject to the President's wishes.

T: And financed from the Executive Branch budget.

H: Right. Exactly. So, I did stay on. I could have stayed on as Special Assistant, I am sure for the entire tenure of Johnson, but this Rutgers University offer came, you see, so I asked Mr. Johnson to release me. He said, "I will release you with this understanding, that you will be available as a consultant. We will keep an office here for you. You will have staff help for clerical work, but I want you to come in on weekends, and when you can subject to my requirements for you for special services." So, I would spend maybe two or three days a month down here and was in constant touch with them. I was classified as a consultant and drew no pay except a little later on after my Rutgers service was pretty well over. As I recall it, they had a classification as far as your pay is concerned: W.A.E., that means, "When Actually Employed."

T: You were, of course, asked to comment on President Kennedy. There are two or three Baptist Press releases that came out of this particular event. I would like for us to talk about your involvement with some of these other leaders in the Kennedy administration, and perhaps, also, you can talk briefly about Bill Moyers and his involvement.

From the things we have talked about there are some comments that we need to deal with. I wonder if you would relate something about another famous Arkansan who served in the House with you and whom I am sure you knew, Representative Wilbur Mills. Now Mr. Mills was chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. Would you relate something of your acquaintance with him? Were you close to him? Did you know him well?

H: I would characterize our relationship as one of closeness. We had, I think, mutual respect for each other and, of course, a common devotion to the interests of Arkansas. I knew him first when he was County Judge of his home county, and a very young county judge. I think he was elected when he was barely 26 or perhaps around 30. At any rate, at the time, I viewed him as having the potentialities of Fulbright as a national statesman. I mean by that that he had come out of Harvard University well-trained, intellectually and scholastically. He received a law degree there. He had gotten a Bachelor's Degree at Hendrix College. He is a Methodist, incidentally. Hendrix College had some pride in his prominence. They gave him an honorary degree some years later. I found pretty early in my congressional service up here that he lacked the perfect independence of action that I think is desirable but not always attainable. He tended to think in terms of deep roots in the political soil. He worked with the governor of Arkansas. If the situation changed so that one faction came in power and then out of power, he immediately transferred his lines of communication and became vocal for the new governor. So, you could take in some periods a rather liberal posture and say this is the real Mills; but in another situation, you would find that as the political climate changed in Arkansas his posture was a bit different and they would say, "Well he's a conservative." Actually, I think he was and is a conservative. I think all of his basic inclinations . . .

T: He was opposed to certain tax reforms in recent time, was he not?

H: That's right. I respected him as a man with a good mind. I think he was an honorable person. His legislative career, of course, was untainted in the sense that there were no embarrassing events in his career until the Tidal Basin incident when Fanny Fox showed up on the scene. This was tragic because I think that it hurt him politically and shut off further opportunities he might have had for prominent and spectacular public service. But I think he had lost that anyway because his legislative course through the years had robbed him of a chance to have a national character, you see. He had not displayed any great sensitivity on the civil rights front; and while our voting records were quite similar, being from the same geographical area, there was sort of a divergence in our philosophy and our manner of conducting ourselves, legislatively speaking. I want to say this for him, however. After the Fanny Fox incident, and after it came out that he had a battle with alcoholism, I think his resolution to redeem himself was rather quickly made; and it did reveal a strength in character that had hardly been tested before that. I was pleased about it because I certainly had good relations with him, and there was no occasion for us having any feeling of hostility toward each other, even though, I think, for expediency reasons, he helped strengthen the Alford wing of the party and worked with the governor. I didn't find that greatly different from some of the southern colleagues that I kept on good terms with.

I saw him some months after the experience when he was gradually fighting his way back to "respectability." It was in the Speaker's Lobby at the Capitol that he saw me before I saw him, and he got up and walked over to me rather briskly and said, "I want to talk to you, and it won't take me long to tell you what I want to say. I just want you to know, as my friend, that I am on top of this situation, I am conquering it. I have got it whipped, so don't feel uncertain about me. I am going to be all right." Well, that was a compliment to me in a way. He knew that I would be glad to have that information, and I certainly was glad to have it because this was one of the most tragic things in American political life. This leads me to a contrast with a man that has the same surname I have. His course was much more admirable than Wayne Hays.' I think that Alcoholics Anonymous was a great help to Mills.

T: Now what about Wilbur Mills' wife?

H: Mrs. Mills is a very fine person and everyone was sympathetic with her. I think she was ready to forgive Wilbur for his excesses. It stands like that now. I think that he has won over a lot of people that were not won over at first.

T: You are saying that Wilbur Mills has made an effort or has tried to make an effort to redeem what he can.

H: Yes. And I think he is succeeding in it. I think it speaks well for him that the newspaper in Little Rock, The Gazette, which had been rather critical of him, has paid him the compliment of fighting back to reestablish his good name. I think that is all that he has in mind now. He has no further political ambitions, I am sure. He doesn't intend to run again. But the people of Arkansas, with some exceptions, seemed of just one mind

to give him a chance. I think that you will find in the Congress, that is, in the House, that this feeling of goodwill is very general. He didn't have any enemies, all-out enemies. Of course, he had been in a position of power. He was able over the years as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee to make a lot of friends and to create a lot of obligation. He had a lot of IOUs to collect on. He found that those friends were wishing him well.

T: I have heard it said that at one time in Washington there were two things that were not publicized. One was the involvement of a person with the problem of alcohol and also indiscretions with women. These were not publicized, but since Watergate this has come very much to the fore and you see a great deal of publicity on Wilbur Mills and even some other people including high officials. Is this true? Was this kind of hushed up, or was it just not reported as a rule of thumb? And is the change a good one, or is it something that really doesn't pertain to the necessary public knowledge?

H: This is a hard situation to generalize about because you have 435 members of the House, 100 members of the Senate--535 men and women with different, highly individualistic personalities. I would say this in an effort to give a simple answer. The composite character is about what you would have if you had 535 Baptist deacons or Methodist stewards or Presbyterian elders. It is a leadership group, and some of them would not have the highest ratings. As to the use of liquor, yes, some of them overindulge. I have never seen in the House--and I was there sixteen years--many men who indulged inordinately. When they did, there might not be publicity on it unless they were in automobile accident or some occasion to say that the questions had been raised. I have not seen many, and I would say that I couldn't name now a dozen out of 435 who were regarded as drinking men in the bad sense. Now, I could name some--and this was known by the other members . . . If a person is intemperate there is not much chance to keep it covered up in the House of Representatives. A few might start drinking in the morning, I guess, if they are victims of it. They are on the House floor at noon and it is visible, often, the talkative ones find they can't put brakes on their vocal cords and the first thing you know they are talking too much. I never heard men want to capitalize the weaknesses of a person on the other side of the aisle, in other words to say, "Well, look what drunkards the other side is producing." That kind of thing. As a matter of fact you would find about the same ratio because that is a human weakness.

T: Do you think we are publicizing this kind of thing more than was done before?

H: Yes. I think that is probably true now. There has been sort of a lifting of that blanket, if there was a blanket. I think that what they used to call the drinking habit is now viewed with more tolerance. I think there has been really an improvement in the composite character in late years. I think there are probably fewer men now who overindulge; and as to the sex question, I don't know. This is something that is fraught with such great privacy and secrecy. I can't believe the ratio of men who are guilty of marital infidelity is any higher in Congress than it would be for any other selected group of leaders.

T: This perhaps answers some questions that have been raised with me, and I appreciate your sharing that.

H: Of course, you can get into a question here that is sort of imponderable. A man in public office ought to be measured by some other criteria before you get to the matter of his drinking or his sex life. Now, I would never agree that that is not relevant. I think that a person who is disloyal to his wife is more likely to be a little less loyal to his stewardship obligations. I rather think I am right about that. But there are qualities that are lost sight of sometimes by the fervent voter who is so militant on the question of drinking that he would see any breach, you see, as the important thing, and vote for a dishonest abstainer over a man of great integrity who drank.

Now, I'm moving over to the sex question because the illustration I am about to give has to do with sexual irregularities. Grover Cleveland was accused of being the father of a child born out of wedlock, and it came out while he was a candidate for the Presidency after he had been nominated by the Democratic Convention. It was his first campaign. That is when the Republicans were having a good time throwing it up to the Democrats. That was when that song originated, "Maw, Maw, Maw, Where Is Paw? He's Gone to the White House, Haw, Haw, Haw." You remember that reference to Cleveland. The committee managing his campaign in New York was, of course, thrown into an uproar about it and just didn't know what to do. He was out in the field speaking. They sent him a telegram telling him what had happened and said, "What shall we do?" The single sentence that he wrote or wired back was, "Whatever you do, tell the truth." He was a truthful man and a man of honor. He said, "I have never failed in my obligations and I will not fail in this," meaning that he would support the child. He said, "I could be the father of the child," meaning that he had had relations with the mother. I understand that he later said, or complained, that she had had relations with others, so he wasn't sure he was the father; but he was eager to do what was right--as he said, "my obligations." Now that was a very unusual situation, of course; but I am using that as a sort of pilot study inthis matter of sex. You see, at the time this happened he was not married. He later married a very fine person. By the way, the child of the unmarried mother grew up to be a distinguished surgeon, I am told. I don't think he is living now. I became well acquainted with and a fast friend of the son that was born to him, I believe in the White House, by the woman he married after he became President.

His name was Richard F. Cleveland. He was a lawyer in Baltimore and I have been a guest in his home. My wife and I were their guests some years ago. He died maybe a couple of years ago. He was a fine man. Well, you could talk at length about this matter of private and public morals. My point is, and I think this is true, I feel better about the improved standards of Washington life. I think one thing that gives us a little better assurance in the future is this white light of publicity. I think it is all to the good.

T: This does cause some difficult times, I am sure, when publicity becomes involved in things that border very closely on gossip rather than related closely to the person's commitment to public life. I wonder if you would comment on something else. We have passed over it more quickly than I guess we should have. In the first part of June, 1962, the Supreme Court

did what it often does with the crucial decisions. It brought down the decision and went home. The crucial decision that year was regarding what is called the "Regent's Prayer" for the state of New York in public schools. The Supreme Court ruled that this prayer was an unacceptable requirement for the students to recite. Shortly after that in July, you went to Lake Junaluska, which is the Methodist Conference Center, to speak to a group of Methodist lawyers. I wonder if you remember speaking to them?

H: I remember the occasion. I don't remember what I had to say.

T: I wonder if you remember any particular discussion related to your feelings on the Supreme Court decision? There was a real strong hue and cry from some quarters that the Supreme Court was taking God out of the schools. You are quoted as having said that it could lead to one of the most historic and helpful dialogues in American history. This contrasted with another opinion by a Methodist bishop who said the church and the state are so locked up together that the two are inflexible and it is very difficult to draw any line between one and the other.

H: Which bishop was that?

T: That was Bishop Nolan B. Harmon of Charlotte, North Carolina. He said, "The church and state are locked up together in modern society."

H: I don't see that he was saying very much. You can construe that in any number of ways. I don't remember him in that meeting. I am afraid that when they said I believe it could lead to a historic debate, that was lifted out of context and was not related to the more important thing which I said, which was that it was the correct decision; but that I thought it was good if we could have an unemotional and real detached analysis of the problem because I wouldn't want prayer to be viewed as out of the pale of governmental notice, and I don't think it would be. That is the reason there was more misconstruing of that decision than almost any decision we have had in modern times. We have prayer at the opening sessions of Congress. We have prayer when the President is inaugurated. Those are public prayers. No one would think of attempting to rule out the offering of prayers in situations like that. But if the Senate said when the President is inaugurated next January the prayers offered shall be as follows, that would be an entirely different situation; and that is what you have in the New York case. Now, it may have been unfortunate that the issue was raised under those conditions because it was a harmless little prayer.

Here, my bulge of conviction is visible, meaning that I think that prayer is very seldom helpful when it is a public prayer because I think that prayer really is, as many have said on this point, a highly individual matter. In public prayers the minister who vocalizes the prayer needs to plan carefully and very skillfully phrase it, so that the mood of reverence and submission by the worshiper is established. Also, the spokesman for the group needs to acknowledge one's humanity and reliance on God. I could say it needs to be professionally phrased, meaning that it isn't something to be thrown together with a series of cliches and often a parading of piety with language that sounds beautiful and eloquent. I think there has been a sort of amatuerish approach to the problem of

prayer. The prayer that was prescribed in that New York situation--I spoke of it as an innocent prayer--was pathetic. The dismissing of it as illegal or as ineffective by the Supreme Court shouldn't make a Christian mad because the name of Jesus didn't show up in it. I am sure our Jewish friends wouldn't find anything in that particular prayer to warm their hearts. So, what it actually was, I am afraid--and I say this rather reluctantly because I have no way of knowing--seems to have been just a gesture.

I made the statement at the time that God is not interested in our patronizing gestures. My wife, incidentally, gave me a quiet rebuke on that. Well, she wouldn't have called it a rebuke, but she has a way of making me take second thoughts on some things. She said, "Now aren't you a bit presumptuous in saying what God expects? How do you know?" Well, I said, "Yes, I think you have got a good valid point there." So, what I should say is that I doubt that God views with calm feelings or with approval this parading of piety, these patronizing gestures that say, "Yes, Lord, we acknowledge you." But the finest prayers are often the unuttered ones, as we know. I just feel like we ought not to abandon the periodic public prayers that fit some kind of standard that is defensible by our historic Judeo-Christian literature and faith. I just think that it has been overemphasized and too much time has been spent in these polemics of the Court. Particularly this should be related to what I feel about the one-issue vote. You vote against a man who doesn't suit you on one issue.

T: You were at the White House at the time. Was there a flood of calls or a flood of activity about it at the White House?

H: No. I don't think there was. I think I would have been brought into that if it had gotten to be something to give the high command real concern. If there had been a flood of mail, I think he would have called me among others--not just me because I wasn't the keeper of his conscience. I think the President would have questioned the reasons for the flood of mail. But he would have relied on me to help with some of these nuances of Protestant people. He knew what the Catholic view would be.

T: Did you work with Fred Schwengel about the prayer amendment at all?

H: Well, I used to see Fred at church and we would exchange views sometime just in passing. We attend the same church.

T: He is a Republican.

H: Yes. But no Democrat ever spoke more feelingly about me and my views of the race question than Fred. Of course, I have had some other Republican friends. I think I am entitled to tell you that one of the most useful men on the Republican side in the present atmosphere of examination of this church-state problem is John Buchanan of Alabama, a Republican, who just announced one morning in his church service that he was resigning as pastor to become a candidate for membership in Congress. He was elected. He was a young man.

T: He was the son of John Buchanan who was very active in denominational life.

H: Oh, yes. He came close to being elected president of the Southern Baptist

Convention the year that J. W. Storer was elected. He was the runner-up in that campaign, I remember. That was about 1954 or somewhere along there. His father was pastor of some great churches: First Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, and First Church, El Dorado, Arkansas. I think John, Jr., was born in El Dorado, Arkansas. He remembers me, I believe he said, as a youngster, maybe a teenager, when I was getting interested in politics and running for office and making a nuisance of myself every two years. He remembers it, and he told the Prayer Group--the Prayer Group meets every Thursday on the House side and they make former members feel at home--"I want to tell some of the members of the Congress who didn't know this man or who don't know this man--and he pointed to me--as well as I do that his position on the race question influenced me greatly." He was talking about my influence on his thinking. It should have been the other way according to some, that is, God's prophet should be telling his laymen how to act. But what made me feel good about his statement was that he said, "The beautiful thing about our bipartisan approach to the problems of moral judgments and legislative leadership is that men can have different views about some basic legislative policies and problems. Mr. Hays and I often have different views on things; we approach them from a different partisan background. But speaking as a Republican, just let me say that I have this great feeling toward him because he reminds me of the founder of the Republican Party." It was a very nice compliment from one on the other side of the partisan line.

T: This Prayer Group, is it just an informal meeting?

H: Yes. They do have officers. It is bipartisan and closed to outsiders. I think maybe I was a bit influential on making that rule. When we first started, everybody was bringing guests and their pastors--they wanted credit for being a prayerful man--and bringing constituents so they could see that there was such a thing. I knew it would have been taken out of our hands and would become just a showcase. That wasn't good, so I suggested that we have it understood that except for one or two--like Douglas Coe of the parent organization which promoted its establishment some thirty years ago and who succeeded Mr. Vereide . . .

T: What organization was this?

H: International Christian Leadership, ICL it is called--except for Douglas Coe and one or two others in the national office who had a right to maintain that tie to the local group. But that was a fine policy decision made by the group that it was to be strictly a private prayer group by members of Congress. These others were there through the tolerance and through the grace of the congressional group. They adopted my thinking on that. There were others who joined me on it. But that was done some twenty years ago.

T: What did you do, speaking generally? What was the meeting like?

H: The format is that the chairman designates someone to lead, or maybe he appoints a committee to designate someone to lead, the discussion. As it is unfolded, it is pretty much the same format week after week. It is a sort of a testimony or a dissertation on something supposedly related to one's religious life or related to the religious aspect of public service. There is often just a talk that consumes the whole thirty-minute period. There is prayer and then they adjourn. Often, time is saved for comments and questions raised by the listeners on some clouded phase of the presentation, or clearing up of some reservations about the comments. But it is really designed to be inspirational rather than an expository talk.

T: Do you get somebody from the group to speak?

H: They don't invite any outsiders. They used to, but I think that has been done away with. There might be some special occasion where an outsider of great distinction would be asked. I suspect if Billy Graham showed up they would clear it with the committee and say, "Can I bring Billy in the morning?" In fact, I think I have seen him there. But that is an exception.

T: How many people attend?

H: Oh, I understand it is pretty well attended at times. I heard Wilbur Mills, following his new resolutions and his readmittance to the "Society of the Saints." I saw him there one morning and he made a little talk. It was beautifully received. They gave him an ovation when he finished. He said what I reported to you he had said in substance to me individually and personally. The group was happy to have that testimony. Most of the time these are testimonies. When I show up invariably the president will say, "Well, before we have the talk, I hope Brooks has a new story for us, or will tell an old one better than he told us the last time." They kid each other a good deal. I always carry a joke with me, something that I hope is new and generally on the theme of politics. I don't mind poking a little at them if there is something to justify it. Well, I think maybe I related this one. It is a quickie. I think I said, "Since this is a quickie, I'll tell a second one. I said to an old man down home who was very regular in his attendance at church service and very politically minded, 'Uncle Johnny, how was the church service out at Shiloh yesterday?' 'Oh, it was very fine, Brooks, had a good meeting.' I said, 'How was the attendance?' 'Oh, very good. I figure we had about a hundred voters--uh, worshipers.'" That kind of thing would be regarded as relevant.

T: Do a lot attend? When I say a lot I mean is there a pretty broad spectrum?

H: It is not large, but it is representative. That is an interesting thing in that they have managed to give it a rather representative character. I have seen Morris Udall there; Andrew Young has been there. Udall would certainly be regarded as not having much in common philosophically with his fellow Democrat, Sonny Montgomery, from Mississippi. A Catholic from New York with an Italian name is very good in attendance. You have got conservatives like John Hunt from New Jersey. I would say this. Its prevailing ideological mood is conservative--very much so. Crane from Illinois is very conservative. He is a regular attendant. There was good-natured kidding of each other. The cheerful banter--that is my own phrase--is good and tends to break down some of the rigidities of congressional debate. But it is not representative of the whole Congress or not as representative as I would like to see it, although in this more limited sense I think a man of any political philosophy could feel wanted. He wouldn't feel out of place. If he looked around he could find that if they took a vote on an issue that he would be out-voted. On conversative-liberal relationships it is out of balance in favor of the conservatives. But it is a good thing to keep going. I am convinced of that because it does encourage some formal acknowledgment of the importance of what I call "the biblical faith." If the spiritual undergirding tends to be disappearing, this group would naturally be concerned about it. One of the great by-products is this personal goodwill that is obviously manifested in these meetings. Now the chaplain always comes. Chaplain Latch is always there. I have never attended a meeting of the Prayer Breakfast--and for a while my attendance was fairly regular--but that I saw Chaplain Latch. He was always asked by the presiding officer, "Chaplain, who among us is sick,

or have you anything to report?" He would say, "Yes, I have Mr. Chairman. I went out to Bethesda last week to see Congressman A and Congressman B. Incidentally, Congressman C is recovering and back at home, and he will be here next week." That kind of thing is good because for a while the chaplain was never expected to do that kind of pastoral work.

T: Now he is employed by the House?

H: Yes, and he now is paid much more generously than he used to be paid. He was given an office. And that was at the behest, I think, of the Thursday Morning Prayer Group. I think they just put it on the Speaker to give the chaplain an office. Now that was done, I think, while I was still in Congress. Then the Prayer Group--and this is the only time that I can recall that they took notice of anything legislatively--made it the topic of conversation in more than one session before the establishment of the Prayer Room Resolution was adopted. That was one legislative action that they felt they could participate in without violating their nonlegislative character. Then there were some aspects of its being monitored, regarding how it was handled and how it was used. For example, this was a little forum that we could use to say, "Now there is not to be any exploiting of this for political purposes. There are to be no assemblies there. It will not be a place where weddings can be conducted or where prayer meetings can be held. It is a place of retreat by an individual member of the Congress who wants a quiet place to meditate or pray."

T: And that rule is rather strictly enforced?

H: I rather think it is. I think it has been violated a time or two. It seems to me that there was something done by some member's edict--a little meeting to be held. I thought when I heard about it, although the event had passed, "I may have to remind some of my brethren that that is a relaxation of the understanding. When it came up for discussion and action on the floor I gave Mr. Rayburn an assurance when he raised the question that these standards would be imposed. I had a right to be heard on that because I was the author of the resolution that was adopted when the Republicans came into power. Mr. Rayburn had asked me not to push it and not to ask for action on it. That is the only thing he knew to do because once it came up for discussion, it was going to pass. Nobody was going to vote against prayer. No political person is going to vote against prayer. Yet, I was determined that when it was adopted it would be by unanimous agreement, and by resolving any reservations or any views that were apparently negative on the subject, everyone would be convinced that it would be consistent with the American doctrine. We succeeded.

One of the objections I remember that was raised was by Senator Gillette of Iowa. He said, "Why, Jesus said that prayer must be in your own closet and privately done." I said, "Well, that is exactly what we are providing here." That is the reason I could say, "There will be no public prayer. It is a closet that Jesus said retire to where prayers can be offered. This is a closet in the Capitol House. This is a private matter." He was reassured on that point. One member had arranged, we understood, to have a picture made of himself standing in front of the alter; and we said, "Buddy, you are not going to do any such thing." There is now an employee of the House who sits there at the door to see that doesn't take place.

I don't know of that ever having been violated except--and this involves me and I am a little embarrassed about it. Mike Monroney asked me to meet him

over there one day after, I think, the defeat of both of us when we were no longer in the Congress. He wanted one of his newspaper people to have a picture of the two of us, who had sponsored it, not inside but at the door just talking to each other. I saw no reason why I should turn down that request. He wanted it for personal reasons as one who had sponsored the resolution in the Senate. Well, that was all right but if he asked that we be photographed sitting there in the attitude of prayer, it would not have been all right. What we did gives me pause; I am not sure it was the right thing to do. I have something here that symbolizes my identification with the Prayer Room. This embarrassed me a bit because I didn't want to be viewed in the light of history as one of these pious people who has got to have something in this way to hang to.

Really, this was not an easy matter for us to handle. I took three years to do it and then sharing in the decision that was made by the floor leadership--Joe Martin, particularly, and John McCormick; that is, that there would be a committee appointed. It would be called the Prayer Room Committee, and we would then follow through on it by having reliable and prestigious representatives from different viewpoints. We would also select someone to advise the architect of the Capitol, who was given responsibility for its furnishings and decoration and so on. We came through with the idea that the committee would include a Catholic priest, a Protestant leader--one of our faith--and a Jewish rabbi, so that all the symbols that were installed in that room would be acceptable to all three faiths to the extent that they could speak for their faith. In other words, the open Bible there, which is the King James translation of the Old and the New Testament, would be something that our Protestant leadership would insist upon--the New Testament as well as the Old, the Jewish faith willing for the New Testament to be included; the seven-branched candlesticks at the side of the open Bible which would be particularly symbolic for the Jewish people; then, the prayer stools for the Catholic faith and the deep concern for them. The open Bible with the New Testament would be equally appealing to the Catholic faith as it was to the Protestant faith. Really, no differences between us stalled the discussion, and it became acceptable to all three faiths. The prayer stools were primarily for the Catholic and Episcopal faith. I have never used the prayer stools but many do. But there was a place for kneeling if one wanted to use that. We were never accustomed to it in a Baptist church.

This was given me and I want to exhibit it here to you now, and I wish the recorder who is writing this down could see what I am about to show you. This was given me by the members of the First Baptist Church of Rockville, Maryland. It is a reproduction made by a very fine skilled woman worshiper and a member of the Baptist church. By the way, of course, there is the flag. The stained-glass window is a beautiful work. The reproduction about two inches wide of the Prayer Room is there.

T: The total area is not more than two inches wide and in the shape of an egg which opens out to show the altar and the appearance of some of the items that are in the Prayer Room.

H: As I described them with the stained-glass window in the background with Washington kneeling in prayer. Then there is a figure before the altar

which could be anyone standing there in a prayerful and reverent attitude.

T: How did you come to have this?

H: I made a talk out there at one of the Rockville churches and that was my honorarium. Isn't that a beautiful little thing?

T: She did this specifically for you? It is the only one that you know about? It is very, very attractive.

H: They couldn't have given me anything that would have pleased me more. Now this can be turned on and off. There is a little battery in the base of this reproduction to light the stained-glass window. It is a perfect reproduction of everything in there except that the candlesticks are only three-branched instead of the seven. But that would have been awfully hard to reproduce. Even the prayer stools are reproduced here, two of them; and there are two. It is an amazingly faithful reproduction with the exception that I have noted. The flowers on the altar have a certain symbolism, the element of life and of growth.

T: Are they replaced every day?

H: Every day. I think it is done by the botanical garden.

T: That is really interesting. In 1962 you said that the prayer issue didn't really raise a lot of questions for the White House. I suppose the big issues were the struggles for integration that were coming, pushing for Civil Rights legislation, and the promise of the Kennedy administration to move in the direction of Civil Rights. Was this really one of your responsibilities, or did you deal with foreign affairs?

H: Well, mine was a wide range of assignments.

T: You did what the President asked you?

H: I did what the President asked me to do. Now, officially and primarily my assignment was intergovernmental relations. That tied me officially to the Advisory Commission of Intergovernmental Relations which had the deep interest of Senator Muskie and of Representative Fountain from the House. The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations was a continuing and statutory body, and it was chaired at that time by Frank Bane of Virginia, but living in Washington, who was a great authority on state-federal relations. He had at one time been director of the Council of State Governments with headquarters in Chicago. This body that I have spoken of, the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, was a statutory body established as a result of the studies made by the Meyer Kestnbaum Commission. The commission bore his name because of that. It was known as the Kestnbaum Commission but officially it was the Commission on Intergovernmental Relations.

T: He has been very active in this area of work up to this time?

H: Yes. I was a member of this Presidential commission. I was one of the House members. You didn't know that? Clarence Manion of Notre Dame

University, a very zealous advocate of decentralization and an opponent of "bureaucracy," induced President Eisenhower to ask authority of the Congress by legislative action to appoint such a study commission. The proposal moved through the Congress that he was to be the chairman, but it was out of balance because he was so fervent in his anxiety about growing federal agencies and the increase in the authority of federal government that there was no possibility under his chairmanship to get the mood of temperate discussion of these issues. It was, of course, destined to be a very militant statement under him of state authority vis-a-vis federal authority. So, he had hardly presided over one or two sessions until the White House asked for his resignation. There was so much resentment of his militancy on this matter. You had to get a judicial point of view if you got anything worthwhile coming out of that. Now it was structured so that there would be from the House, I believe, three members--I am not sure as to the number--and an equal number from the Senate and there would be a majority of the prevailing party and the minority would be represented. I can only remember that Representative Dolliver of Iowa and Representative Ostertag and myself from the House side-- I declare at the moment I can't remember any other members of that body. Maybe we were the only three. On the Senator side there was Senator Humphrey, Senator Muskie, and then there was a Republican serving part of the time on the Senate side succeeded by Senator Butler of Maryland, who never came. But that is unimportant. The point is that then the President appointed a number of people and the statutory directive was that there would be governors and county officers and then public-spirited business interests represented so that there would be a good cross-section of American life. I remember that the governor of Colorado served. I think he is dead now, and I have forgotten his name. Some others were Governor Petersen of Nebraska, former governor at least, and Governor Driscoll of New Jersey.

I remember the vice-chairman of Cornell University, John Burton, whom I talked into abandoning his opposition to federal aid for public schools. He dropped his pencil after one of my talks. I had held forth for an hour telling why there should be federal aid for education. There wasn't any at all in those days. The South was opposed because they would say, "Now we are going to get nonsegrated schools." I didn't care about that because what I was driving for was some new sources of money, because the figures showed that the South was exhausting itself by taxing itself to the hilt to get money for public education. All they had to do was just boost the scale a little if they needed more money. I remember John Burton laying his pencil down and saying, "I never thought the day would come when I would say, 'I favor federal aid for education': but this man has made a case for it and I am going to vote for the resolution to recommend federal aid for public schools." That was one of the most gratifying things that ever happened to me. Governor Driscoll, I think, did the same thing. He and I got along just fine because he finally had to admit that his state would profit by better education in the South because he said, "Where are the migrants coming from? They are coming from southern states and from the rural sections because mechanization and other changes in rural culture, the cultivation of crops, the changes in farm situations have squeezed them out of the southern economy; and they are coming to my state and they are not coming as well equipped as they ought to come, and it is partly because we haven't supported the school system under which you could have better training vocationally."

T: It wouldn't be unusual if you needed to communicate with the President that you would probably send him a note, or you would specifically talk with Mrs. Lincoln, his secretary.

H: Oh, I didn't finish the conversation from Fayetteville, did I? I said, "Mrs. Lincoln, I need to talk to the President, I need to let the President know something." Would you tell him, please, that the National Conference of Christians and Jews wants me to be national Brotherhood chairman. That's when she said, "Well, you tell him yourself. He's in a Cabinet meeting, but he will come on the line and I'll tell him who it is." Sure enough, I was so surprised; I didn't realize I had that much standing. And maybe I didn't maybe the President wanted to say, "Evelyn don't interrupt me like that, not even for Brooks." But at any rate the next voice I heard was his. What he said and the way he said it tickled me. He said, "Brooks, where are you?" Meaning what part of this terrestrial sphere are you on? I said, "I am in Arkansas, Mr. President, and I called you to tell you"-and I told him just what I have told you. I told him, "I am willing to do it if it meets with your approval." He said, "It certainly does, and you're the man to do it." That's about all there was to it.

T: Perhaps we won't be able to complete this, but you have mentioned and I want to talk about some of the things that went on inside the White House and the relations that you had with Baptists at that time, particularly in the development of two things that were really on the floor in the early Kennedy administration. One was the matter of prescribed prayer in public schools and then the next year, in 1963, the probation on prescribed Bible reading. You had had some involvement with that. Did that entail what came to be called the prayer amendments that were attempted?

H: I don't recall much about the Bible reading thing.

T: That was the second one, and it wasn't nearly as crucial.

H: That was the Supreme Court decision. There were two of them.

T: There were two of them, yes. The first one was on prescribed prayer.

H: That was from New York. The State Board of Education prescribed the form of the prayer.

T: Right.

H: That was a good decision. They had only one dissenter on the Court as I remember it. It was eight to one. It was a good decision, and it kept me busy pointing out to people that the Court didn't say you couldn't pray in the schoolhouse, but that the government shouldn't tell you what to pray and how to pray. There are all sorts of nuances of legal opinion here, and that might be an over-simplification of it. At any rate, we were right in saying the Court didn't say that you can't pray in a schoolhouse. They did say that the government can't tell you how to pray and what to pray. Everett Dirksen came forward and he was yielding simplistically again to the pressures on him; and it is understandable because men want to do what generally the church leadership would want done.

You trust them and it is a field in which a lot of legislators don't feel at home exactly. It is one field in which you are apt not to put your opinion against.

Now this caused all sorts of comments. I thought that my friend, Fred Schwengel, showed real courage in that situation because he represented an Iowa district. Iowa is a religious state; its percentage of people belonging to Protestant churches is pretty high, and it also has a rather impressive Catholic constituency. Fred Schwengel, one of our good Baptists, was able to interpret the Baptist position adequately and vigorously, but it wasn't just because he was in a Baptist position. He was a constitutionalist and he knew what the Constitution provided.

T: He is now the president or the secretary of the Capitol Hill Historical Society.

H: Right. A very independent person, and a good man. I grieved over his defeat because this shows the folly of a one-issue campaign against a man. It doesn't matter how much good he had done in other areas or how right he has been on other issues, for him to be wrong from their point of view on the prayer he had questioned was unforgivable. Again, that was history repeating itself. A lot of men who took what proved to be a more rational position on federal prohibition went down in defeat on that single issue; and often, it was someone less conscientious and following "the line" of the church people. While I was prohibitionist myself, I could see the basis for the reasoning of such men as John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who felt strongly that federal prohibition was going to prove a failure. He could see the first evidences of it failing, and he abhorred the development of the corrupt machines based on illegal liquor traffic. So, the one-issue thing is bad for good government and Fred Schwengel's defeat, I think, is an illustration of it. There are other cases. Albert Gore of Tennessee was one; Ralph Yarborough was another. They had very unjust criticism of their positions, although from my point of view, they were thoroughly sound.

T: Several of the news stories of the events that came out just at the time of your change from the Department of State to the President's office . . . There was some real question about what was happening. It was described in some of these stories as there being a "shake-up" at the Department of State. The second thing is that when you were first appointed to your job with the White House apparently it was not made clear exactly what you were supposed to do over there. Can you say something about that?

H: One person who was influential in making provision for that transfer was Philip Graham, now deceased, husband of Katherine Graham, publisher of the Washington Post. Philip Graham was very close to Jack Kennedy, and we became close friends, warm friends. Incidentally, he and Katherine were both at the speakers' table at this dinner December 18, 1958. I talked to Phil one time about the demands being made on me and the fact that I had some energies not being efficiently utilized for the President's program. Part of that is inherent in the weaknesses of the job itself. I am convinced that the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations ought not to go to somebody like myself. You tend to be a messenger boy. Your energies are diluted. I have an idea I was on the telephone maybe a third of my time with congressmen all wanting to talk

to the Assistant Secretary. I was fairly well staffed, and I had some very able men who did the leg work. I wasn't expected to go out to the Capitol very often, particularly not for minor points, but if a congressman was concerned about someone in trouble in Egypt--couldn't get accommodations and things of that kind--well they wanted to talk to me. A congressman might call to tell me about Aunt so and so; I would have to turn loose of important things, maybe, to see about Aunt. But that was all right. The only thing is, that the Assistant Secretary shouldn't be a former member of Congress with certain capacities for communications. They are frustrated by that kind of detailed work. On the other hand, a young man coming up in the scale of government service would be honored and thrilled and fortunate to have that kind of office. But it was irksome to me because I wasn't a part of the communications to the public. I just had become an errand boy.

T: Did you indicate you would be glad to have the job?

H: Yes. I told Phil Graham that, and steps had been taken to get that perpetrated before the transfer was announced. So, it was arranged that I could go to the White House. It was done on Phil Graham's initiative. Now, I am not able to say, since I was not a party to the conversation between Graham and the President and with Rusk. . . . I am sure that Kennedy wasn't going to do anything without checking it out with Rusk, but Rusk was not managing this. He was merely a part of the mechanics. He was not seeking my wishes in the thing, because we were not ever on the kind of basis where I could talk freely to him. I admired him and respected him, but I knew his limitations. I knew that he never quite felt at ease about my political relationships. At the same time, I think he always credited me with respectful attitudes and actions toward him. We had no tension between us. But Graham was working on this and pointing out, I am sure, to the President that I would be far more useful in a position in the White House where I could be given special duties and special assignments. I wanted to be a part of the Administration, but I wanted to be relieved of some of these picky little details. He saw the point. I think it would have happened anyway.

Now, on the other hand, there is some validity to these clippings that you were referring to. There was a shake-up in the State Department and I was a part of it. On the other hand, I rather think it would have happened anyway. Mr. Bowles was not doing quite the job that they wanted done and it was maybe inherent in his personality. There may have been criticisms of me along the lines of the Larry O'Brien conversation that I have detailed, I am confident that there were. Some of them might just have been inescapable because we are all, of course, bound by personality traits.

T: Now had Bowles gone to Russia as ambassador at this time, or was this before he went to Russia?

H: This was before. Now you are thinking of Chester Bowles.

T: Bowles is from Connecticut.

H: That's right. He has been governor of Connecticut. He was Under Secretary of State. He was higher up. I was in the third echelon, and he was in

T: Now this committee you are talking about was prior to when you were in the White House?

H: Oh, yes. That was while I was still in Congress representing . . .

T: The Fifth District.

H: Well, I was representing Mr. Rayburn. He asked me if I would serve on the Commission. I think maybe I had let some of them know I would like to serve. At any rate, he picked me as one of the members from the House. Joe Martin picked the two Republicans I have spoken of. It was a Republican Congress. I believe that was in the 80th Congress. The 80th Congress was elected in 1946 and went out in 1948 when Truman talked about "the do-nothing 80th Congress." I am not sure that was quite fair because I think a careful examination of the record will show they did a pretty good many things, but they did it under the prodding of the Democrats partly.

T: They may not have done what Truman wanted done so from his point of view they did nothing.

H: That's right.

T: But when you were in the White House you did several different things.

H: I am afraid this was very diversionary, but it needed to be said because it was a great big part of my attempt to render public service. We needed more light on this question of how states and counties, cities and the federal government can get along together and promote common welfare. This was a tremendously important thing, and it was my first assignment.

I represented the President, I remember once, at the Miami National Convention of the Conference of Mayors. He sent them a telegram saying, "I am asking Brooks Hays, your good friend, to represent me at your conference." So, I was invited to speak at the luncheon of the Conference of Mayors. Then, I often attended the County Officials conventions. There is a national association of County Officials; also, I attended the National Municipal League. I was busy working out addresses, meetings, and conferences. So I would say that intergovernmental relations was my prime obligation and interest. But then there was this unofficial thing. I would get a call from Evelyn Lincoln saying, "The President wants you to receive a group of Methodist bishops today." That kind of thing. They would come to my office. The President simply said, "I cannot go into the problems that you are concerned with, but Brooks will do it and he will let me know what the problem is, and so on." That experience was repeated over and over again. There aren't enough hours in the day to see everybody that wants to see you. So I was busy seeing church representatives, and making speeches at church meetings; but primarily it was intergovernmental relations, and every now and then something touching a congressional problem that I had special expertise in.

T: This intergovernmental aspect was really different governmental levels in the federal system.

H: Right.

T: Did this take you outside the country too?

H: Yes. I remember one trip that I made to the English-speaking nations of West Africa to talk to some of the leaders about how our educational aid was being used--whether or not we were making friends of the officials or even the private leadership in those countries. I only had time for three, but I spent a week or ten days in each of the three countries. I was gone about a month. It was on that trip that I came back by way of Rome and saw Pope John. Now that must have been in 1962, wasn't it?

T: This was 1963?

H: The summer of 1963.

T: And that would have been just after Pope John had died and Pope Paul would have been Pope then. Would that be right?

H: That's right. That is correct. I am trying to think when it was that I saw Pope John. That was in 1962.

T: Pope John was the year before--October, 1961.

H: That was when I saw him.

T: He died in late 1962.

H: I haven't thrown much light on this as to the time sequence, but I do know that I made that trip. I remember clearly the fine experience we had, because it was a great experience to go into Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Nigeria and meet with the leaders there and to study conditions and bring back some comments that I hope were relevant and helpful on matters, particularly of education--private and public. In Liberia I found a Baptist constituency. It was very impressive, and they were quite interested in meeting me because they knew about my place in the Southern Baptist Convention. Unfortunately, Vice President Tolbert had to be out of the country at the time. But President Balewa saw me. I had dinner with him, so I saw the big man. Of course, Mr. Tolbert became the top man after the president's death. But Mrs. Tolbert was there and she made little trips with us. We went out to the Lott Carey School and she went with us. Our ambassadors in all three countries dropped everything to help us. We stayed in the Nigerian embassy for a week. Joe Palmer and Mrs. Palmer--we just had the best time with them. They saw that I got around in Nigeria. I went up as far as Ogbomosho, where our seminary is located and came back by the training school for the Woman's Missionary Society. And we stopped at Ibadan, where there is a Baptist clinic. We got a good view of Baptist life in Nigeria. I have an idea that half of our mission money that went to Africa went to Nigeria. There is a tremendous investment there. I had some comments to make on it. This is in answer to your question about foreign trips.

T: Interestingly, when you made this trip you made it on behalf of the President and to study higher education. You did indicate, though, that you were going to make it an extra official and nongovernmental assignment to view Christian missions.

H: That's right. I had to be a bit careful. I was really wearing two hats.

T: One of the things that the news story reported at the time was that one question you faced was, "Would your country be helping us if you were not afraid of Communists?" Your response was to refer to a person who went to Nigeria in the 1850's. He wasn't coming because he was interested in fighting Communism but because he felt a sense of love and commitment to these people. You must have commented this in a news conference. Do you have any particular recollection about what would have prompted that? Was there considerable feeling that the United States' contributions and your coming was just to try and induce them to support the United States?

H: I am afraid to some extent that was true. I hoped that I could help dissipate that, because we would have been doing a great many of these things if there had never been a Communist Party or a Russian Revolution. I think there was enough in our history to justify my saying that. I wish I could be more clear in my recollection of that. You say that my response was just about what I have said to you?

T: Your response was that Bowen came long before Communism existed, and that he did not come just to . . .

H: Oh, yes. I faintly remember now that I had that little historical incident to hang the idea on.

T: He was one of the first missionaries in Nigeria in the 1850's.

H: You see, that's where my Baptist upbringing was helpful because there is one of your situations in which there is an overlapping of church history and political history. By the way, while we are talking about Nigeria. The first thing that President Kennedy asked me when I walked into his office to give him a quick running account and to say that I was back was, "Did you see Balewa?" He was president of Nigeria. He was assassinated within a short time after Mr. Kennedy was assassinated. Those things just shake me when I recall the things that took place. Balewa impressed me very much, and I know that Kennedy had been impressed with Balewa. He pointed to his picture and said, "There's his picture," and it was right behind me. He said, "I am glad you saw Balewa." I had quite a talk with him. I remember some of the things that were said in my talk with him.

T: What did you talk about?

H: We talked about the progress being made by the black people in this country. They wanted to know how "their people" are being treated. I remember a little anecdote I told him. "Well, there are two reasons, Mr. Prime Minister, why I believe there is hope in the American scene. One is your people, and I am talking about the great minority people that I love and have tried to help in America. You know, you can't find many of them who don't retain their sense of humor, and to me that is the saving grace."

It was obvious that was what he wanted to talk about. I found that was true in the whole area. The great interest was this quiet revolution

that we were experiencing in America over Civil Rights. I said, "Well, Mr. Prime Minister, there are two things that I think give us heart. Your people hold on to their sense of humor, which is an inspiration to us. Here's an illustration of it. In a Mississippi town--or maybe I just said in one of the American towns--the school board found that they had money enough to build one new school building and that would be for the whites. They didn't have money enough to build a new school building for the black people. So they wanted to do it without creating any real ill will and thought one thing they could do would be to call in one of the trusted black leaders and he would advise them. They said to him, 'Tell us, since we have decided to build this school for the whites and don't have money for your people, how your people would feel about this. What is your reaction to it?' Oh, he said, 'I think that is fine. I can think of nothing that would benefit our people more than having more educated white people.'" Then Balewa laughed for me to tell it, you know. I said, "They are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. I see it." He seemed to be real pleased that I came to see him. Joe Palmer, the ambassador, was with me. I believe I saw all of the heads of government in the three countries.

T: You went to Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. You didn't get to Ghana?

H: One of the Ghanest officials came in for a dinner that Ambassador and Mrs. Palmer gave for us. He was a judge so I got some echoes from that. We picked the English-speaking countries. I don't know what Ghana is but at any rate we didn't go there.

T: You would have been in Washington at the time of the Civil Rights March in 1963.

H: Martin Luther King made that famous speech, "I Had a Dream."

T: What was the feeling of the White House about that march?

H: We were as nervous as we could be. We didn't talk about it much, but I was just scared to death.

T: What were you afraid of?

H: I was afraid there would be violence and that there would be extremists who would come into Washington to try to break it up, throw bottles at them, eggs, and that kind of thing.

T: Were you involved in any special preparations?

H: No. I don't remember that I came into that much. I think it was more a matter of the District of Columbia police department, and they were just counting on the usual thing. The President made a statement or two. He probably was doing all that the Chief needed to do, to be sure that everybody was alerted and all the people were brought into it. I went to the White House and was right there when it was going on just to be available if I was needed. I wasn't. Of course, it turned out to be a tremendous thing. It was a great victory for a nonviolent handling of the problem. I don't remember again the time sequence. I am not sure. But Dr. King knew me. He saw me going through the

White House at a reception there one day while he and Walter Fauntroy were . . .

T: Fauntroy was the district member . . .

H: He hadn't been chosen. This was before. Fauntroy has served only about six years if I remember correctly. This was in August of 1963. But he was very active in the Civil Rights Movement and very close to Dr. King, and he had been one of his workers and one of his real friends.

T: Would Martin Luther King have gone to the White House to see the President?

H: Yes. He was waiting to see the President. He had an appointment with him and he and Mr. Fauntroy were sitting in what we call the Reception Room. At any rate, he was in an anteroom, and as I walked through or maybe past the door, he stopped me. He recognized me.

T: Where did you know him from?

H: I don't remember. I don't know how he knew me. I can't remember ever having talked to him prior to that. Now maybe he just recognized me from a picture, I don't know. Or maybe somebody just said, "There's Brooks Hays." At any rate, he called out, "Mr. Hays." So I walked over to him. Of course I said, "Hello, Dr. King." I recognized him from his pictures. I probably had met him somewhere. He introduced me to Fauntroy then. But the thing he said and I can't remember anything else that was said, "Walter, Mr. Hays has suffered with us," as a reference to the Little Rock experience and my defeat. Of course, I never could forget that. I was with him again once, and these are the only two occasions that I can remember being with him. They asked me to sit at the head table, and I was introduced the day he spoke at the National Press Club. The picture was made of the two of us. I forget just what the comments were, but the newsmen were saying something about Brooks.

T: That would have made even a better picture than the one when you were on the platform at the National Baptist Convention.

H: Yes. I don't know that I have that picture. I should make some inquiry about that to see if I can get a copy, because that would be quite a thing. I must do that.

T: I was going to ask you a little more about the march. Would the administration really have been behind the march in terms of having . . .

H: I don't think so. I don't think that they viewed it with much pleasure, but of course, they would never think of discouraging it. We were nervous about it. You see, you don't know what elements will move in from a distance. You could have things in good shape, but if a bunch of folks from Richmond, for example, wanted to come up here they could get up here in an hour.

An illustration of that is, I guess it was in the spring or summer of 1959, following my defeat--I was no longer in Congress and the news and

and the talk about my being turned out of Congress was still fresh in the minds of a lot of people, particularly in Virginia, which was just seething over this massive resistance--I was invited to speak at William and Mary College. I spoke there to the students and they gave me a tremendous reception, just a great ovation; and reference was made to my sacrifice--I believe they used that word. Generally, college kids have a sense of idealism, the love of a fight for what's right. You can count on them, generally, even with their long hair and their blue denims and all that business, which I wish they didn't do; but, nevertheless, it doesn't disguise the fact that they have good hearts and good purposes. I am never going to sell them short myself. They gave me a tremendous reception, and after I had finished and they were pouring out of the assembly room out on the campus, there was a crowd of White Citizen's Council members carrying banners. They had gotten into the campus and they were marching toward us.

There weren't very many of them--several cars. They had driven up from Newport News to Williamsburg to heckle me and to picket me. Their timing wasn't good, so I had finished my speech. These kids from William and Mary were just good-naturedly kidding them. One of the placards said, "Leave Virginia. We Don't Want You Any More Than Arkansas Did." Oh, it was insulting. You see they had that frustration. They didn't get there in time so they were just trying to save face, but the kids weren't letting them. I wasn't saying a word. I was just standing there smiling and they were circling me. All of a sudden I realized--it just took place so quietly--that without saying anything or threatening them the students were moving in between them and me--just walking toward them--and there wasn't any way they could go except to back up. There weren't enough of them to take these kids on. But the students didn't do anything to them, they didn't touch them, they just moved toward them and ushered them out. That was one of the most interesting and quiet dispositions of a problem that I ever saw.

T: You said after the march that you thought the demonstration presented the finest American spirit of presenting grievances and rallying those who have aspirations not fully realized under the American system. Was this something you would have said on behalf of the administration, or were you expressing your feelings?

H: I think that was what Mr. Kennedy would have said. I didn't say it because he asked me to say it, of course, but I think he would have said that.

T: You published also your book, The Baptists Way of Life.

H: Well, I feel a little embarrassed about that. That is really John Steely's book. What happened was that Prentice Hall asked me to do the book by myself. I said, "I am not prepared scholastically to do that. You have men who are much better prepared from the standpoint of knowledge of Baptist history and Baptist positions." They said, "Well, of course, we want to sell them and your name is well known." So I was weak on that. I said, "Well, I do have some things I can say, and I can do some of it." I figured it was not being dishonest for me to seek a co-author, not a ghost writer but a co-author.

T: Both of your names appear on the masthead as authors of the book.

H: I asked Sid Stealey to be co-author and he said, "No, I am too busy, but, Brooks, I have a perfect man for you, John Steely."

T: Did you know John Steely before?

H: Yes. But not well, I remembered his father as what we called a "country preacher"--a good representative of that fine stock of country preachers in Arkansas. Steely himself told an audience not long ago, "I remember when I was a little boy my father said, 'Son, I am going to take you to the courthouse today. I want you to hear a man that I am going to vote for for governor. His name is Brooks Hays!' So I went down to the courthouse in Heber Springs, Arkansas, and heard this man speak, and I have been a Hays' man ever since." That was John Steely. He was introducing me, incidentally, as the first speaker in what they called the "Brooks Hays' Lectures" at Southeastern Seminary. I couldn't resist throwing that in, a little plug. My wife said she had rather have something like that named for me than a bridge or a highway or a building. The building will fall down sometimes or the bridge will collapse, but those lectures are going to be remembered by people. Well, at any rate, John was introducing me.

I advanced the idea to Steely and he said that he would do it. I said, "Well, John, you are going to have to do most of it, I know. I'll help and we can collaborate. I want you to have two thirds of the royalties, and I'll take a third." I probably earned a third. I talked with some people in England when I was over there shortly before we wound up the manuscript, and I put in some reports on that. The Christian Century Review wound up by saying, "It appears that Mr. Steely provided the scholarship and Mr. Hays the salt."

T: Did it sell well?

H: Yes. It is out of print now. It was part of a series. The book was What Baptists Believe and this was about the fourth one of that series on what the different denominations believe. It was a prestigious group to be tied in with. John MacKay's What Presbyterians Believe; Bishop Gerald Kennedy's What Methodists Believe; and so on. It was a Prentice Hall publication series.

T: Do you want to say something about the Brooks Hays' Lectures at Southeastern Seminary? How did they come about? How did they start?

H: I don't know exactly, except I believe the first information I had about it was from Jim Duncan, who at one time was editor of the Capital Baptist. That was the official publication of the District of Columbia Baptists. Jim is now a businessman and commutes between North Carolina and Washington. Jim, I believe, told me that the Board had voted to name this lectureship for me. They wanted to establish a center for urban studies here in Washington. I was fascinated by that. It was the first time that had been done to my knowledge. So, Jim promoted it and he established a good Advisory Committee. Dr. Clarence Cranford and another minister on there--I should be able to tell you--Representative Preyer of North Carolina, and Senator Bumpers of Arkansas. Mr. Preyer is a Presbyterian and Mr. Bumpers is a Methodist and Dr. Charles Trenton--oh, Dr.Trentham was the other member--and Duncan himself. Those were the

three clerical members; the two men that I have mentioned are both laymen. So there is your Advisory Committee of five.

They asked me to give the first of those lectures. I remember how happy I was one Sunday morning when I showed up at the Calvary Men's class. Suddenly, before they introduced me to speak, they had a little ceremony and they asked Jim Duncan to come forward because they wanted to give him something. The president of the class said, "I want to hand you, Sir, a check for two thousand dollars as a contribution from this Calvary Sunday School class to the Brooks Hays' Lectureship. So, they had gotten some nice generous contributions, I think. By the way, the little replica of the Prayer Room that I said was an honorarium from the Rockville Baptist Church was hardly accurate. That was in addition to an honorarium of one hundred dollars which was made out to the Southeastern Seminary for the Brooks Hays' Lectures. They said that was in honor of me. So, that was the first contribution. The second contribution that I know of was this class contribution. Then Marion's Bible Class gave them one hundred dollars. So, they have gotten some money out of Washington for it. Then, they asked me to make the first series. I spoke only twice about a year ago. I don't know who is giving the lectures down there this year, but it is a fine thing and the name of the lectureship pleases me very much. It is called "Religion in the Life of a Nation."

T: What are the criteria for the presentations? Any particular criteria or just as you have expressed it?

H: I think that is just the broad dimensions of the talks. They wanted a layman for the first time, and it was, of course, natural that they would ask me to give the first. Nothing that I did was particularly noteworthy. I had so much to say out of my experience that the best way to use the time was to speak in terms of a personal experience trying to relate this problem of religion in the life of an individual as he lives with other individuals. That's what politics is, what government is, our getting along together as children of God, even if Dr. Lee did say that Lyndon Johnson was a liar when he said that the heart of religion was "God's fatherhood and man's brotherhood." I don't know why he put it like that. I don't want to take out after Dr. Lee, but I am ready to defend this posture that we still have not made strides in solving the great problem of brotherhood. We sometimes think we have merely because our constitutionalism is pretty well fixed. I mustn't expatiate.

T: I would be glad for you to go on. You are speaking about Lyndon Johnson?

H: Yes. And that was wholly unnecessary for me to insert that. Now I want to say this, I would like for you to leave Dr. Lee's name out of these records because I am trying, in my talk with you, to convince you that I have reasons for feeling a bit sensitive about the things that my conservative brethren feel about me. Yet, I want to say that I can't think of any other that has been quite as biting as Dr. Lee's statement, "Well, this is the worst thing that could happen. Brooks is the biggest liberal we have got in the Convention." He said that when I was elected. Well, I had rather he not know that I know he said it. But he did say that about President Johnson, which shows that I am right in saying that there is this attitude that has to be faced. Why would he say that

because Johnson said, "The heart of the Christian gospel is God's fatherhood and man's brotherhood?" That is one way of saying it. Others would say it differently; and Dr. Lee would be quite within his right to say, "Christ's death and resurrection which gives us hope of eternal life"--that kind of thing. But that is God's fatherhood, that's what a father would do for a loving child--save him. Then he said, "Well, Johnson didn't know he was a liar." But you see, I was entitled to say that to defend the fact that we so-called liberals have got work to do. I don't run away from the word. I spell it with a little "l," and I say since its root meaning is freedom that we ought to exhalt the word instead of demeaning it.

T: How did he come to be saying this with reference . . .

H: Well, I don't know. I just saw him quoted to that effect recently in one of the Baptist papers. It hasn't been a month since I read that.

T: Okay.

H: Now he may have said it sometime ago. Then, I think he softened it. He said, "He didn't know he was a liar, but he was."

T: In November, shortly after the President was killed in 1963, you were quoted in a religious news story recalling the dedication that you felt President Kennedy had toward religious freedom. In fact, you said you received from Mr. Kennedy when you returned to Washington a note of thanks for The Baptist Way of Life in which you inscribed a message for him. "My inscription," Mr. Hays said, "paraphrased a statement used in Catholic literature. I referred to him as 'belonging to the soul of the church'--Baptist that is--and it was true, for his devotion to freedom and to the biblical idea of universal love linked him to us as well as to the Catholic people." Do you want to relate some more about that? This would have come out, I am sure, in some of the questions you have been asked about your relationship to Mr. Kennedy after his death, that is, three or four days after his death. Do you want to elaborate on that, or do you remember the incident that is being quoted here?

H: No. I don't. The inscription that is quoted, did I put it in the book?

T: You quoted the inscription and then you went on. The inscription was something like "belonging to the soul of the church."

H: That's what our Catholic friends say to us sometime. "You belong to the soul of the church." I remember one time John McCormack said, "Why, Brooks, I just feel like you're a Catholic because you belong to the soul of the church." That's what enables them to say that we shouldn't take too seriously that old Latin expression. I think I can quote it, "Ex Ecclessia None est Salus." "Outside the church there is no salvation." At one time they believed that, too. You had to be a Catholic to have any hope of salvation. And some Baptists believe you have to be a Baptist with all that it requires, immersion and things of that kind. So, if they could say that we belong to the soul of the church even though we haven't been confirmed, I can say to a Catholic in the

same Baptist spirit that he belongs to the soul of the Baptist church. I don't remember just how much of that was in my mind, but I do know we had the happiest relationship. I think the little taunt that he gave me about the Methodists indicated that he had a sense of banter.

In another conversation he said to me once, "Brooks, what kind of Baptist are you?" I said, "Well, Mr. President, you might say I am an ecumenical Baptist." He said, "How's that?" I said, "Well, just say I'm a Catholic Baptist and spell it with a little 'c.'" Marion said, "Now the next time you discuss it with him say,'I hope you are a Protestant Catholic and spell it with a little 'p.'" I was sorry I wasn't thinking that fast. I don't think it ever came up again. I thought I gave him a good answer when he asked what I meant by ecumenical. I said, "Just spell it with a little 'c.'" I am also a Hebrew Christian. I couldn't any more define and proclaim my Christian experiences--and I think they are pretty deep and pretty profound--without reference to the roots of Judaism than I could speak of my biological heritage without mentioning Father and Mother.

T: You related this morning the events that happened to you personally surrounding the death of the President. You were on a two-months leave which I presume was to run out the end of November.

H: Yes. I was nearly through. I only had two more speeches to make. On November 22, I was to speak in Greenville, Mississippi, and then in Little Rock, Arkansas, at the Methodist College, traditionally a black college--Philander-Smith College. There was one other, too, the Tennessee Wesleyan College at Athens, Tennessee. The speech at Greenville, I believe, was not a college speech, so I was right in saying I had two more to make, but those two were Philander-Smith and Tennessee Wesleyan. Then, there was a third college brought in, if it wasn't already scheduled, and that was California Wesleyan at San Diego. So, after President Kennedy's death, Marion and I went to these other colleges, and I made at least three more Methodist college talks after the President's death.

T: You said there are other things you have thought of, as you've had a little time to reflect, that you would want to share with reference to the President's death--cleaning up your office, relationships with the new staff, and so forth. We will want to pick up later about your relationship to Bill Moyers, but I wondered if there was anything that particularly related to the last days of the Kennedy administration. You obviously had given no thought to the fact that he would not survive to the end of his Presidency. One would hope that he would have been able to live and not be killed in the midst of the Presidency. What kinds of things were you called on to do then? Was your office moved? Did you stay in the same place?

H: Well, I have to get into the Johnson relationship to delineate that, but there are some things to say about that that really we are not going to have time to discuss. We are going to have to have another session, aren't we?

T: Yes. I think we need to. We last time put together on tape some things that we wanted to discuss. We have talked about your presidential years and what actually happened the years you were president.

You shared some sentiments inside the White House and what relations you had with Baptists at the time of the decision to prohibit prayer in the schools and Bible reading.

We have not talked about these things: amnesty; your experience as organizer and then director of the Ecumenical Institute; some of the hobbies that you have been involved in; your individual church life; your local church. We talked, I think, about your years in the 1950's and 1960's when you were involved in the center of government up to the time of the Kennedy administration. We have talked about the circumstances surrounding Kennedy's death; then, the special services that Bill Moyers had you to render. These are some of the things we want to talk about. We have not talked about the amnesty issue; we have not talked about the Ecumenical Institute; we have not talked about your hobbies; your individual church life; the service you rendered for Johnson and for Bill Moyers.

H: Those are all provocative themes.

T: Are there others that we should talk about?

H: You might want to make a note of this. I want to tell you about some correspondence I had with Ted Kennedy at the time of the Chappaquitic incident. Then I want to tell you about some contacts I had with Nathan Leopold. He and Dickie Loeb killed Bobby Franks in Chicago. There is, I think, an interesting story about it, and it has something to do with my opposition to capital punishment. I want to defend my position on that. This letter I'll read into the records when we meet next time, but just to show you how moving it is, he says, "Like you, I am much interested in social implications of religion, and here I must say that the Christians I have known best are the most devoted, most dedicated people I have ever met." I believe that Christians and the Jews are heading toward the identical destination, if by very slightly differing paths. I share your hope that we may meet some day."

T: I would like to hear you talk about that. Are there some other things?

H: The correspondence with Schlesinger, which tied Ted and me together in a little more firm relationship. I think that is important because I just said to Arthur that I intended to pray for Ted and told him why. I don't often venture into a thing that is so individualized and delicate as prayers of intercession, but this was a sincere thing. I hope I've said nothing ever that isn't sincere in my public life. I have tried not to. It wasn't easy to write out what I thought about Ted's challenge following Chappaquitic. I felt like an older brother because I had loved Jack so much. I have gotten through the years a lot of new insights as to the place that religion had in the family's life. I was talking to the archbishop of the Catholic church in Louisville one day. He had been at Palm Beach when he was a parish priest of the Kennedy family when they were little boys. He said, "The great influence in Jack's life was their mother's. She drew them into the influence of the Christian faith in a very effective way." Now, I think Mrs. Kennedy is a great soul. This was a man talking as a parish priest. He said, "I know the genuineness of her faith and her religion because I was her priest."

T: Are there other things that we ought to talk about?

H: I guess not. Obviously, Ron, I am given to--if I was out hunting a bear I'm liable to take out after a rabbit if he crossed my path. I'm a great hand at that. I can get diverted very quickly.

T: If we can pick up with those things . . .

H: Leave it just long enough for me to say . . . This is a Bible in the German language that I discovered in an old military headquarters in Cherbourg. There is quite a story. I eventually discovered its owner who was a chaplain in the German Navy.

T: I'll get these last items typed out and then we can share them when we meet again.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: September 15-16, 1977

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: Interview conducted at the home of Brooks Hays, Washington, D. C., [illegible] September 15, 1977. Mr. Hays, I appreciate the chance of meeting again with you today. Your schedule has been such a busy one; I hope when I retire I can keep as active and busy as you do. I wonder if we could pick up a couple of loose ends from our last conversation and then, share some things from the 1963 era, just following Kennedy's assassination. You related your recollections of that. You made some reference regarding some of the activities in the 1960 campaign. You were working with the Tennessee Valley Authority at that time, and did not actually participate in the campaign in a formal, speaking way. Are there recollections you would like to share about that experience after Mr. Kennedy was nominated? You were considered for the vice-presidency and then, Mr. Johnson was selected. Are there any events related to that you would like to share?

H: Well, I think for the sake of preciseness we ought not to say that I was considered for it; but there were some people of prominence who advance the idea, and those suggestions were published by some prestigious publications. There were some who thought that I would be an ideal running mate in the 1960 campaign. I think maybe we have said all we need to about that. But I am simply putting that in as an addendum because I am not sure that Mr. Kennedy ever considered me at all. I never did discuss it with him, and I am glad I didn't. At any rate, he did, as I think I indicated in the previous interview, seek my advice on the religious angle, but that was a

private conversation.

T: Did you suggest the Baptists or someone of the right wing of Protestant tradition from the South?

H: For the vice-presidency? No. That didn't come into our discussion. I think that he probably didn't give much thought to it until the nomination was in the bag. They were too busy getting the nomination for the top spot to be thinking much about the second spot.

T: When would the conversation have taken place? Before the Convention?

H: Yes. Didn't I speak of that when I met with Mr. Kennedy and Senator Jackson?

T: You spoke of a meeting. This was the occasion?

H: Yes. That's what I am talking about. It was the time when Mr. Kennedy turned to Senator Jackson and said, "Henry, this man has guts." I remember I was interested in his use of the word. He was basing it on what I did in the Little Rock situation, which I think was considerably inflated. I could make a little speech about that--how you get credit for things that you feel you don't deserve. I never did think of it as any courageous thing or "guts" being involved. I will add this. There is a beautiful compensating influence in life. While men are often denied credit for what they do and while they are often credited with things they don't deserve, they are also damned for things they don't deserve. So, it works out, I think, perhaps with a beautiful equity. But if you find that needs any elaboration, let me know.

Now, on the matter of Billy Graham--you were interested in that. I think maybe I refer to the fact that I had a conversation with him during the 1960 campaign.

T: When would this probably have been? Do you remember?

H: I think it was perhaps in the latter half of October. It was getting somewhat close to the election. I had not been asked to do anything for the ticket, and I tried to be very circumspect about it. It was rather painful to me, too, because it was the first time I had ever been completely immobilized. I just could not take a part in the campaign. Well, I say the first time, but in the 1940 election I was under the Hatch Act as a member of the staff on the Department of Agriculture; so I was immobilized twenty years earlier in that election. But except for that, I had never been as cramped as I was in the 1960 campaign. Actually, I don't know what the law provided at the time--whether we were legally prohibited from taking part in it. A lot of high officials in government were not prohibited. I just don't know what the law said. It didn't bother me because as a matter of policy, if not of law, I refrained from saying anything publicly or being active in the campaign.

T: Now when you say that you were immobilized, you mean simply that you would not make a public speech? Or make a formal, public effort?

H: I wouldn't do any campaigning. Oh, well, of course, no one can be criticized for expressing a private opinion. Even the Hatch Act doesn't go that far, that is, the expression of a private choice which I would have done and probably did do. I felt that my conferring with the President at his request

was entirely proper, and I am confident it was not a violation of any technical rule of government. It is a good policy for the directors of an agency with the vast responsibilities that the TVA has to prohibit any overt political activity. I respected that.

So, I had to think it through when my friend, Philip Graham, publisher of the Washington Post, called me long distance in October and said in substance that they had understood that Billy Graham intended to make a public statement for Nixon. Graham said, "I know that you and Billy are good friends, and I have got a round trip ticket in my pocket to send you to Germany to see him." He was over there on a European tour holding some meetings. He said, "This is very vital because we just want to present to him our side of this thing, and urge him not to do anything because I think it would hurt." Well, I think he was right about it. I said, "Let me check into this matter of his location, of his movement and schedule because I might miss him. I'll call you back." So, I checked with the office in Black Mountain or Montreat. They said that Dr. Graham would be back in just a few days. So, I called Graham back, and I said, "Now, the minute he hits his home base I am going to talk to him on the phone. I don't think that it is so delicate that I can't discuss it on the phone."

And I did. I think I adopted pretty good strategy. I started out by saying, "Billy, you know you and I are in a rather peculiar position in American political and religious life. The people view us as having certain political responsibilities and--using the word very broadly--at the same time you and I are viewed as mediating influences in the tensions that sometime develop between religion and politics. I think of myself, not so much so as in your case, as having a responsibility to soften the tensions and to prevent any conflicts of that kind. Now in view of that, don't you think we both should refrain from saying anything as we go in to the home stretch? I promise you not to say anything on Kennedy's side if you arewilling to refrain from saying anything for your friends. I know that you have been closer to Mr. Nixon than you have Senator Kennedy. But if we can just have that kind of informal agreement, then I think we will both feel better when the race is over."

He agreed and he did not make a statement. I think after that he did show up at one of Nixon's meetings in one of the Southern communities, but he didn't make any statements for Nixon. I think he did make a statement when asked by a reporter that he . . . well, he said about what I suggested he say. He may have opened their meeting with prayer, but I don't think that would have been a breach of the informal understanding we had. Well, I called Philip Graham back and told him, and I think he was rather pleased with what I had accomplished. And I know that was all I could possibly have accomplished.

T: Would Philip Graham have been actively involved with the Kennedy campaign?

H: Very active. He probably was in touch with Jack Kennedy by phone or by personal contact daily. In fact, he had something to do, I believe, with my appointment to be Assistant Secretary of State. Philip Graham and his wife, Katherine, had been sponsors of the dinner that they gave for me, and they sat at the head table. I had a call yesterday from David Halversham who is doing a book of the history of the Post. He knew about my friendship with Graham. The relationship of Graham and myself was well known. As a matter of fact, Graham talked to the President along in the fall of 1961 about moving me over to the White House where I could be more helpful to him in interpreting the administration policies and public addresses, and also in dealing with some of the complexities of state-federal relations and state, county, and

city governments. It was a very happy change as far as I was concerned. I give Philip Graham and Mac Bundy credit for having accomplished that.

T: You were on the TVA Board before you went to the White House and as you probably very well are aware, there now is considerable antagonism to TVA because of the increase in rates, electricity, and so forth. Did you sense any of this when you served in Knoxville?

H: Oh, my, no. The situation is completely changed from the standpoint of the public sentiment. This is purely speculation, and I base it on the newspaper reports; but I would judge that a great majority of the people are still friendly to TVA. They might be griping about rates and other things that have troubled them, such as the environmentalists' complaint about that little fish. No, I think TVA at that time was just utterly impregnable. Nearly everyone was for it. Eisenhower found that out in the campaign in 1952 when he spoke of it as creeping socialism. The Southern Republicans just "went crazy." They said, "This won't do General. You are going to have to back up if you want to get any states in the South," and he made an apologetic statement. They wouldn't call it that, but he backed off mighty quick when he found that all seven states in the Tennessee Valley were favorable and would tolerate no thought of TVA being abolished.

T: You spoke at one time when you were asked, about TVA being an example of Christian ethics. Do you remember talking about that point?

H: I don't remember the extent that I went in discussing that. I certainly would say this, categorically, that it is not socialism. At one time I was able to speak in great detail about the impulse given the development of private enterprise in the Valley. Well, we will start with the concept that TVA didn't distribute electricity, they sold to distributors. They sold to municipalities and to rural cooperatives. But that is private enterprise. The cooperatives were owners of the distributive system and the municipalities. They were owned by the people and not by the regional authority.

T: I guess it was the occasion when you were speaking at the fifteenth Methodist Institute of Higher Education in July, 1960, that you said, "Society finds it possible to have TVA to conserve God-given resources and meet its obligation to succeeding generations. TVA utilizes these resources of all the people and spreads the benefits to the life of the whole valley." This was not a quote.

H: I think that is a good statement. I think I said something that is very truthful, and I don't think it was invading the theological area unduly. I think that is a good application of theological principles and biblical faith to existing problems of government. No one could be criticized on the basis of getting the government into church affairs in making such a statement. As you have heard me say, and I think more and more people are aware of it now, the doctrine of separation of church and state--one of the most valid principles of government anywhere in the world--is not blind to the fact that the politics and religion are bound up in certain relationships. You can't separate them at times. We wouldn't have it otherwise, actually, when you look at the history of this republic. I think the Bicentennial made us more aware of that. The founding fathers were simply giving this grand idea of humanity's responsibility for the government of human life a new thrust and a new mechanism. If they had proceeded in any other spirit except the spirit of reverence for the Judeo-Christian tradition . . . I call it our biblical

faith to avoid any kind of sectarianism. I could say Christian because, of course, it is a Christian concept. I don't think that the environmentalists need to go any further as a text, or as a basis for the advocacy they have for certain profound changes, than the Scriptures themselves. "The earth is the Lord's," and that is the beginning of the insistence of man's responsibility for conserving the physical base for human life. This is a theological thought and what I said to the Methodists, I think, is entirely true.

T: I thought you might like to . . .

H: I am glad, Ron, to be reminded of this. Apparently, they quoted me pretty fully on it. Now, of course, sometimes in these conferences you get into some nuances of thought and belief and doctrine. One the other hand, sometimes it brings it right down to the grass roots to get people to talking about the statistical and economic faith for a good life for society. You have heard me talk about the old fellow who said after one of our conferences on the matter of improving rural life and getting a better base under the life of the stricken countryside and in the villages, "I am going home and preach less hellfire and brimstone and more phosphate and limestone." I think that sums it up.

T: You really didn't remain with TVA too long.

H: I was there twenty-one months, nearly two years.

T: Was it really much of a struggle to come back to Washington, or were you glad to get back when the offer came. You apparently didn't get any increase in salary.

H: Same salary.

T: So there wasn't any economic . . .

H: No economic advantage. I found the scale of living in Washington a little higher than in Knoxville, but that was inconsequential. I would say that it was an easy transition, it was sort of a homecoming. My wife was very enthusiastic about coming back to Washington. I was entirely happy about it because it brought me back into the circle of politics. The other was more of an economic and sociological--well, a nonpolitical contribution. This other assignment with the State Department and then nine months after that the transfer to the White House was more in line with my background.

T: It was what you enjoyed doing.

H: Exactly.

T: As a member of the Board of Directors of TVA, what kind of real responsibility did you have? Oversight of administration?

H: We had a general manager. The Board was a policy-fixing board. I had few administrative responsibilities. There were, of course, high-level decisions that had to be made when the general manager felt that new guidelines were needed. He worked within his guidelines and, incidentally, was a very dedicated person--Aubrey Wagner. He succeeded me. He was advanced to the Board, and no man has ever gone on that Board better equipped from a technical or intellectual standpoint than A. J. Wagner. He was universally called "Red," and Red Wagner was a very popular person and a tremendous source of

strength for the directors. Now and then we had to make some decisions that involved administrative understandings. You had to have some grasp of the problems of the administration because it was a gigantic operation covering these seven states. I enjoyed it. I found it not too hard to adapt to these things that I had been on the periphery of earlier.

General Vogel was a graduate of West Point, an engineer, and he was expected to deal with the engineering problems. Arnold Jones, from Kansas, who had taught, I believe, at Kansas State University, was a financier. He was an economist and had a very fine grasp of fiscal problems and procedures. Then in the humanitarian or the sociological or human side, they regarded me as sort of an expert in that field. That was a very logical allocation of the functions.

T: So you would meet what? About once a month?

H: Oh, no. We met right often. We didn't try to have, as I recall it, any stated meetings; but our offices adjoined each other and we could meet on thirty seconds call.

T: In other words, you did have responsibilities of being in an office?

H: Oh, yes. I have an idea if you would look at the calendar when we were all three in town, sometime during the day we would be talking informally about these things that had come up and then, often we would have public meetings. Now what I have been talking about are the daily informal conferences.

T: Your public meetings would be open?

H: Open to the public. Minutes would be kept and testimony would be recorded, et cetera.

T: The day-to-day meetings you are describing would be just simply some difficulty or problem that would come up in an individual situation and how it would apply.

H: Or exploring with each other through exchanging views some of the anticipated problems, or as problems began to arise as situations unfolded. We would be anticipating them by exchanging views, and that was extremely helpful. It was a very happy relationship. We were very congenial. There were no bumps of personal conflict at all.

T: So when you left that and came back to Washington you joined the State Department. We have talked about your involvment there and then, subsequently moving over to the White House some nine months after that.

H: I might say this on the question of there being no bumps of personality conflicts. That is true. At the same time, I think it is worth a little postscript. You get some ideological insights by my pointing out that when I decided to send a letter to a dinner honoring Norman Thomas, the chairman didn't much want me to do it. Of course, I was never indifferent to Chairman Vogel's ideas. He was a very genial and a very admirable person but extremely conservative. His economic and social ideas were on the conservative side.

I don't think anyone ever regarded me as being a conservative. There might be some who question the inaccuracy of calling me a liberal; and I think often that is amusing, because I just don't believe that you can classify me

on the whole spectrum of my political life. There are a lot of other men in public life who are hard to classify. This is unimportant except along with my liberal race views and to some extent my liberal economic views, there was a great strength in some conservative ideas. So when I am asked about it I say, "Well, it comes out in my faith in the institutions of American life, of its religion, of education, and of government. I am conservative in that I feel that the heritage is great and thrilling, and along with my belief that change is inevitable and my willingness to advocate change, I think that we have to conserve some of the things that have come down to us."

Well, I went ahead and sent the letter to Norman Thomas. The general didn't criticize me, but he didn't much want me to do it. He felt, you know, that it might embarrass the Board because Norman Thomas was an avowed socialist; but I thought he was a great American and that he had done a great deal for humanity.

T: Did you know Norman Thomas?

H: Oh, yes. He came to Little Rock in 1928 when I was candidate for governor. It was in the early stages of the campaign, so I was in Little Rock at the time. I just sneaked around and took a back seat to hear his speech. I had never met him. In the course of his remarks he said, "Well, I understand you've got a governor's race." This was sort of typical of Thomas, he just said whatever was on his mind. "I said to somebody, 'How many candidates for governor have you got?' This fellow said, 'We have got seven candidates--six of them are crooks.' I said, 'What about the seventh?' He said, 'Well, he's awfully young yet, he may become one.'" Well, everybody knew that it was me, you know, because I was only 29 years old. I think on that trip I was introduced to him, and he laughed about it. He said, "Yes, they told me about you." But he said, "Here's an interesting thing. I asked my sponsors for this appearance, 'First tell me what are the sources of leadership in this community? What are the liberal influences?' They said, 'This may surprise you. It is a Sunday School class in a Baptist church. It bears the name of the teacher who is one of the candidates for governor--the Brooks Hays' Bible Class.'"

I complained about their naming it for me, but I am happy now that they did because I like to be remembered by that phase in my work. I worked hard on those Sunday School lessons. I estimated once that I put in about ten or more hours every week. I know that I spent, on the average, three evenings a week getting ready for my lecture. I used the lecture system with a class as big as that. We had over 300 enrolled, and the attendance would run from 150 to 200 every Sunday. We had a great big room. As a matter of fact, we had a building all of our own once, and it used to get quite a bit of attention. They had a sign out in front, "Brooks Hays' Bible Class" and some words of welcome. It was a very satisfying aspect of mine.

T: Now you were talking about Norman Thomas. Did you meet him again--you were talking about 1928 and then, the time he was honored would be what--1959 or 1960?

H: Yes. It was either 1959 or 1960. I believe probably in 1960.

T: That was thirty years later. Did you meet him much?

H: Not often, but I was with him--probably while I was in Congress at some

conference or maybe some important luncheon.

T: Did you get the impression he ever expected to win?

H: No. I don't think Norman Thomas ever expected to win, but he just had the best time of anybody I ever saw running for office. He could count on having good audiences, you know. His supporters were wild about him, which is, of course, a great stimulus, because you don't feel that your efforts are wasted where you are building up growing sentiment for some cause. He was completely uninhibited. He was one of the most forthright men I ever knew and generally right. Many of the things that he advocated were picked up by the New Deal. He was, from the standpoint of integrity, impeccable.

T: Was he before his time?

H: Well, yes. I don't want to say too much about that because I was not a close student of his philosophy. But I think he was a great American and that he did a lot of good. I think it is in line with what I say to these students, that a man who runs and loses often renders a greater service than the man who wins. Many a losing candidate sees the things he advocated sponsored later by the people who defeated him. I could document that with the history of Arkansas politics, but I think it would unduly weight this record. I know it is true.

T: Would you mention the inability to campaign in 1960? You mentioned writing the letter to Norman Thomas. Were there other kinds of restrictions that you felt, either self-imposed or imposed by your position, that you were not able to do.

H: Well, I think I have previously commented on the fact that I was under raps when I was in the State Department. Not so much so in the White House because there I knew where the boundaries were.

T: Were these spelled out to you when you took the job or did you just know them?

H: A man just knows them. Few people are appointed to a high position in the government who do not know what is proper and improper. Now and then, maybe, the man at the top has to caution somebody or has to define his position so that he is not misrepresented.

T: You were confirmed for the position as Assistant Secretary of State the same time as Livingston T. Merchant was confirmed as ambassador to Canada. Did you ever know Livingston T. Merchant?

H: Yes, I knew him well. I believe that he was our ambassador to Canada when I was working on improving Canadian-U. S. relations as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Congress. I think that my wife and I were the guests of Ambassador and Mrs. Merchant in Ottawa. At any rate, I knew him. I ran across an old letter from him. I knew and admired him. He was one of our best career men.

T: You did have some run-ins, particularly in the early 1960's--perhaps you were involved in it over the Bomarc missiles.

H: I don't recall that.

T: One thing that we didn't cover in this period--and you may want to say something

about it--is about the Hays-Coffin measure that was really an attempt at reconciliation and warm relations between the two North American countries.

H: I am awfully glad to get something into the record on it.

T: I think it would be useful. How did this come about?

H: Well, it never became a bit of legislation. It didn't require it. It was called the Hays-Coffin Report, and it got a good deal of attention, particularly in Canada, and among the students of this problem of erosion of goodwill between the two nations. I think that the students of the problem could see a much greater interest north of the border than south. The fact that many of the things produced in the United States could flow into Canada's markets easier than the Canadian producers could put them on their market. Well, we have seen that illustrated in the way Japan can bring stuff even a much farther distance and do a job that gives them an advantage. We had that natural advantage partly due to the size of our economy and so on. But there were some other things that troubled the Canadians and they were understandable; and so we did a great job, I think, just in the symbolic conveying of goodwill and concern. In other words, we were saying when we first went, "Now look, we think too much of our Canadian friends--not just as our consumers but as our historic supporters in the defense of free institutions. We are too concerned about the complaint that you have to just leave it unnoticed." So, we conveyed back to the Congress the complaints and spelled it out.

T: Now Coffin was the senator from . . .

H: No. He was a member of the House. This was a House study. Incidentally, the Senate did make some study that paralleled ours, but it didn't have quite the support by the Foreign Relations Committee that our activity had by the House Committee. It is now known as International Relations Committee, but then it was called the Foreign Affairs Committee. Coffin was a member of the House from the state of Maine. I think that I should mention, too, the Prime Minister's special appreciation of my part in this, because to my surprise when I visited him I found he was familiar with my Little Rock experience. He called his wife in--she was in the reception room--and he wanted her to meet me because her father was a Baptist minister. She just almost genuflected. She had heard of me too. I was the head of the Southern Baptist Convention at that time. I could tell that the Diefenbakers were quite responsive to my position. In fact, he made a warm statement about me when he and I appeared on the platform at the same time to address the International Convention of the Kiwanis Club in Toronto. He took time out to refer to my . . .

T: He spoke at the same time you did?

H: Right. And then again in the joint meeting that the Southern Convention and the American Baptist Convention had in Atlantic City, along about 1964 or 1965. He was there and very warmly greeted me when we met on the platform.

T: You mentioned occasionally speaking in Toronto. It was actually July 2, 1961. It is the date of the news release on your speech. At that time you were with the Department of State. Was there some effort to get you on the program of the Kiwanis Convention to make the speech that you did? You delivered some rather strong statements. In reading the release, I wondered it if were an attempt to have these statements made in Canada.

H: No. I don't think that the State Department had any interest in the content

of my speech except they trusted me to know what I was talking about and to be sensitized by Livingston Merchant or whoever was our ambassador at that time. I believe it was Merchant. I know the whole staff of the embassy was quite interested in my trips to Canada not only for the Hays-Coffin study, in which we had a very brilliant staff member who is entitled to most of the credit for the fine report. I am entitled to say it was a fine report that was turned in. Not many copies of that report are extant now; but the Library of Congress, of course, has it, and I am sure the State Department could locate it. But any students of Canada-U. S. relations--which occasionally deteriorate and maybe there is a regaining of the ground lost--but any student of that problem would find this very helpful. We spell out the sources of discontent on the Canadian side. Well, I should say this. The one practical thing that resulted was the establishment of a standing committee on consultation. In other words, there is a joint Canadian-American Committee. Now whether that has been kept up or not, I don't know. I know for a while it was a form of reaching common ground by the two parties.

T: Of course, this was beyond the International Boundary Commission.

H: That's right.

T: It usually deals with the technical difficulties between the two countries.

H: Now this presented a bit of a problem; and here again is something that the academic people and the legislators, both Canadian and American, will be thinking through. That is, just to what extent, under the American separation of powers, is it permitted to bypass your Executive Department. I would have been very uncomfortable about expressing views of that kind as a member of the State Department; but as a congressman, I could pursue it vigorously, that is, not to bypass them but to have contact with the legislative officials. That, in my judgment, does not do violence to the American system. It simply--and this is a word of acknowledgment of the wisdom of the American plan--is that the President is our chief performing officer. He is responsible for it. But certainly to hold that the Congress is out of line with that doctrine in consulting with fellow parliamentarians of all the countries that are an Interparliamentary Union, as we know . . .

Now, of course, there are varying views about the extent of their agreement upon something. I think that the tendency in the past has been for the State Department and the Executive Department to be a bit resentful of penetration by the legislature of any of those functions. I think it is wrong because the State Department, while entitled to have this preeminent position in policy making, must not forgive that the Congress is an integral part of the decision making.

T: In this speech you made there were a couple of statements. Here is one, for example, that I was interested in. You described several people having visited Washington and the concluding part of the statement was, "I am confident that our Canadian visitors were convinced that the United States does not take Canada for granted; on the other hand, they doubtless can see that finding a remedy also requires imagination and statesmanship on both sides of the border." I wonder if in that statement, for example, and the number of others that you speak of where you paralleled the situations in Canada with the situations in the States, you had been instructed to speak in some particular way in Toronto.

H: I don't think so at all. I think that this was my own product. I don't recall that I had any substantial help from the Public Relations Office in the State

Department. I know very well the origin of the idea that I would be one of the speakers. The president, at that time, of Kiwanis International was a North Carolinian, a Mr. Talley from Fayetteville, North Carolina; and he had heard me speak at a district convention of Kiwanis. He felt that I could have a certain . . . Well, he would classify my style as an inspirational style and it was; but I tried to put some flesh on the bones.

T: I think many Canadians would have identified very warmly with your speech. You were either very well informed before you went there or had studied it rather carefully in making your speech. As you and I know, there are occasions when efforts are made to secure a certain speaker to make a certain statement in a certain place.

H: Now that didn't occur.

T: I simply wondered on this incident.

H: I would say this, though, that the American staff in the Embassy at Ottawa were very happy that I had this forum. I had a number of very wonderful contacts there. The Baptists will be interested in this: I said to Mr. Diefenbaker since he is a Baptist, "Now we want you"--I was president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the time--"to be one of my speakers at the next Convention." That must have been looking forward to the 1959 Convention. Now this antedated the Kiwanis meeting. This was one of the visits on my congressional study. I went in to see him to ask him if he would speak. It was either for the Louisville in 1958--no, Houston in 1958 or Louisville in 1959, one of those two conventions. But that is unimportant because he said, "Oh, I would love to do that. I have got a bit of a problem, though (he looked at the schedule), but I am going to see if I can do some adjusting and work this out, because I would love to go down and speak at your Southern Baptist Convention." It was obvious he was quite sincere in that feeling and eager to do it. He said, "Give me some time. Where can I call you at eleven o'clock tomorrow?" I said, "Well, I will be meeting with the Board of Directors of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce." That is a pretty powerful group, you know. It was a small Board, maybe ten or fifteen. We were sitting around the great big table. I said to the receptionist before I went into this closed session--it was just a heart-to-heart talk by the people that could give me a lot of information. "At eleven o'clock Mr. Diefenbaker is going to call me. This will be important, and I'll want to be called out. Just hand me a note." She didn't do that. There we were just sitting there, and she opened the door and said, "Mr. Chairman, the Prime Minister wants to talk with Mr. Hays." So I got up and everything just grew as silent as death. I walked toward the door, and they were just looking, wondering what was up. I said, "I told her to do it like that." They just roared. Well, they knew I hadn't done any such thing. But that was my way of relaxing them.

T: We are talking here about the Hays-Coffin report and you said the committee received it with appreciation. You want to go ahead?

H: Well, that was the end of that chapter in my legislative life and my congressional experience except, you know, I made some addresses--important addresses to important groups--later on and maintained ties with some of the leaders on both sides of the aisle. Prime Minister Diefenbaker became a friend, and I think he approved nearly everything that I did in the way of promoting better relations. Paul Martin, the opposition, was a friend also, and he liked what we were doing. I forget the names of others, but the leaders, both the

liberal and conservative parties, applauded what we were doing.

T: You would have been defeated for Congress just about the time this took place and was completed. Was this the reason for your not continuing to be involved in the issue?

H: Yes, that's right. In fact, I kidded Frank. I said, "You know you are really to blame for my defeat. There was something so ominous about "Hays and Coffin." That word tied on to my name just put ideas in the heads of my enemies."

T: Was Coffin a Republican?

H: No, he was a Democrat. There were no Republican members--well, there were originally but we couldn't recruit anybody from the Republican side in that election year to go with us. The committee had no problem with that because it had been largely bipartisan and the Republicans made no point of it. I think that, generally, they applauded it as much as the Democrats did.

T: It is interesting that someone from Arkansas would be on that committee with a congressman from Maine. I can understand a congressman from Maine and Vermont and Washington, but for you as a congressman from Arkansas to be included. Was there some reason? Were you interested?

H: No, none at all except my interest generally in hemispheric solidarity. I was chairman of the Subcommittee on Latin America, and, of course, that was unrelated to the problem except Canada's interest, while primarily in the North Atlantic area, still Canada is looking at South America. There is such a thing as hemispheric solidarity. At least, there are hopes for developing and including Canada, and in that connection I was amazed to find by studying the maps that the mouth of the St. Lawrence River is closer to Rio de Janerio harbor than the New York harbor is. So, it is just one of those configurations that come out of the fact the earth is round. That is true. So you see, there are reasons for the whole hemisphere being interested in a good strong Canada.

T: Were you involved at all when President Kennedy visited Ottawa in 1961 or 1962?

H: No, I am sorry I wasn't. I think if he had been aware of the fact that I had been involved he would have asked me to go. But I was pretty cautious in those matters because I didn't want to intrude, and those things are generally structured on some formula that is made up by the State Department. So, I didn't make any effort to accompany him. I had my assignment by that time which was taking just all the time I had; in fact, these speeches and conferences on intergovernmental relations and congressional relations and to some extent church-state relations . . . We were very cautious in handling those matters because officially I guess you would say, there is no such thing as church-state relations but that is not true.

T: I have read in several instances that Mr. Kennedy did not have high appreciation of Mr. Diefenbaker as you have expressed. Did he ever talk to you about that?

H: No, but I am not surprised that report circulated a bit. I can't put my finger on the source of my impression that it was true.

T: It supposedly was a statement that Kennedy doodled on a piece of paper that was left in the room, and Mr. Diefenbaker found it and used it in the election

campaign of 1962.

H: Yes. I had heard about that. I had forgotten until you mentioned it, but that revives it in my memory.

T: I just wondered if he had ever raised anything with you on that. In the early 1960's, 1962, when you were at the White House, one of the major issues that occurred during that time was the rise of Castro in Cuba and what is called the Bay of Pigs invasion. Were you at all involved in any of that?

H: No, I was not. Now, I believe it was in 1954 when I went as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee not on an official mission, though I believe my expenses were borne by the Foreign Affairs Committee, but it was sort of an ad hoc thing. Congressman Burr Harrison of Virginia and I went to Havana largely for our personal information about the conditions in that part of the Caribbean and we picked up a lot of information. Here again is something that confirms my feeling that often the missionary elements in international relations are overlooked. I wanted to get out of the city of Havana and meet some of the people out in the rural areas. I wanted to meet, primarily, some of our Baptist missionaries because the Baptists have been in Cuba for a good while. As a matter of fact, I guess you knew that one time it was a part of our Home Missions assignment rather than Foreign Missions. The Home Mission Board was given jurisdiction over Cuba for some strange reason. I think that has been changed.

T: No, it actually is still. Panama has been changed. Cuba has not because of the financial difficulties with the current government. That goes back, I think, to when it was a protectorate of the United States, and it never was changed after the amendments in 1934.

H: I remember now. But I did get as far as Camaguey, and I remember talking to a Presbyterian missionary there.

T: Was he an American?

H: Yes, a Presbyterian missionary. He apparently was well informed. He said, "Mr. Hays, you are going to parties and receptions in Havana and you will be hearing what the boys on the cocktail circuit are saying. Please don't let them convince you that everything is stable and fine and that Batista is secure." Then, I remember the rather startling statement he made. I guess I needed to hear this because it was a signal to me. He said, "This island is seething." We needed to be concentrating on preventing this thing from happening, not necessarily by following the whims and the wishes and the ideology of Batista, because he probably had nothing to offer that was superior to Castro. At any rate, in the choice between that government and Castro's the natural inclination of the American people would have been to sustain Batista in power. Of course, the thing that we shy away from is creating some options and finding another alternative because it didn't have to be Batista or Castro. If we could have protected the free election system and gone in with an enlightened good-neighbor policy to help relieve the pressures on the poor people of Cuba, we might have had a different story altogether. I do remember that missionary's statement.

T: Did you make any other trips?

H: I believe that was the only trip I made. I did meet some of our Baptist

missionaries. I remember asking them to take me out into the area where I would see something besides seventeenth- and eighteenth-century cathedrals. I saw some of the little buildings where the poor people worshiped; they were Baptist churches but they were pathetic in their appearance.

T: We have talked about your involvement in the last days of the Kennedy administration, and you said you didn't have anything to do with the Bay of Pigs. What were your feelings at the White House at the time? Your office was next door to Arthur Schlesinger.

H: No wait. The Bay of Pigs occurred while I was in the State Department.

T: I'm sorry. I thought you were over at the White House.

H: The reason I remember it so well is that I was with Mr. Rusk, Secretary, and it was my practice to go with him generally when he made appearances before either the House or the Senate Committee. I would sit behind him and be available if he wanted me to get on the phone and contact anybody. He never needed to consult me because, of course, he was the expert and I was not. I was a leg man. All at once some courier came in and said, "Tell Mr. Rusk that he is wanted on the phone for a very important matter." So he asked the committee to excuse him, and it was obvious that it was important. When he came back he said, "Mr. Chairman, I must return to the White House. The President wants to see me, and I trust that you will permit me to leave now." Senator Fulbright said, "Of course." So we rode back together in the car and he was in a deep mood. I could tell that he was troubled. He often was in a rather noncommunicative mood. I think that in some respects it limited his usefulness because he gave the impression of being . . .

T: Aloof?

H: Yes. He wanted his own thoughts. It troubled me because Mr. Rusk had a good mind and he was an honest man, intellectually honest, and I admired him. But I thought that his methods, his style, left something to be desired. I could talk at some length on that, but I don't think it is relevant for our purposes; and what I have said certainly does not mean that I lacked admiration for him. But he sat there obviously troubled. Finally he looked over at me, and he said, "Brooks, we are in trouble." Just like that. He said, "I'll know later this afternoon its extent; but I believe we are in trouble in Cuba." I don't believe he said Bay of Pigs, but he said we were in trouble. Then he went to his office. I suppose that he either went quickly to the White House or someone met him because that was the end of my connection with him that day. I did not need to be in on the Cuba thing. That was not a part of congressional relations.

T: So that really was your only involvement?

H: That's right.

T: Were you involved in any other similar types of concerns?

H: No, I don't believe so. I can't remember what I did with the information I brought back from Cuba that I just related.

T: In 1954?

H: Right. It was beyond redemption then anyway. Apparently Castro was on his way. But this is something that America should ponder. If we don't ponder it in the Panama situation, then, as a people we have not fully matured at the national level in matters of high statesmanship.

T: What I hear you saying is that in many ways Panama could be in a similar type of situation, and careless handling or rejection of the treaty, for example, . . .

H: No question about it. This is definitely a matter to engage Baptists because every church, every religious organization, is entitled to pursue policies that are honorable and constitutional to protect their institutional interests. My own feeling is, based on, I think, reliable information, that we might as well bring our missionaries home if we don't adopt this treaty. I am talking about our missionaries in that part of the hemisphere. It is that serious. It isn't a matter of country by country, attitudes differing and governed by political complexion of the separate state, it is that way throughout the hemisphere. They want that canal transferred to one of their own countries--Panama. It is the last vestige of Colonial system, and it would be ironic if we who have been against colonialism and have been for free government should now fail to sense that mood of the people of the area involved.

I wrote to Jimmy Allen the other day and sent a copy to Jimmy Dunn. Now you know who Jimmy Allen is, of course, the current president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and James Dunn is the head of the Christian Life Commission of Texas. Being a fellow Texan Jim and Jim Dunn worked together. They were in town. They called me, but they couldn't work into my schedule a time to see me. I didn't get to talk to them except on the phone. I wrote Jimmy and told him I thought he ought to prepare a statement and do something about the Canal.

T: This is Jimmy Allen?

H: Right. I hadn't heard from him yet, but Jim Dunn acknowledged receipt of my carbon copy of the letter to Jimmy Allen. I shared some further thoughts with Jim Dunn. A letter came from him yesterday saying that both of them agreed with me fully and that Jimmy Allen was planning in his speech in Nashville on September 14, 1977, to make such a statement on that Tuesday. I haven't seen a copy of it, but I think there will be publicity on it. Of course, that is just scratching the surface, but it means that Jimmy Allen is convinced of the soundness of the position which I was expressing to him. I am sure that others would have expressed the same opinion to him, and maybe he had already decided to do it; but I am going to pursue it because we can be a real influence in this matter. It will be entirely in accord with our traditional policy not to meddle in personal politics or personal matters but in matters of high policy where the security of the nation and the cause of peace and goodwill are involved. Why, we would be derelict if we didn't.

T: Now you see considerable opposition of this coming from the South, do you? Or do you think the opposition is going to come from a much broader spectrum?

H: It would be hard to define geographically because I think that the present mood of the country is negative. I think that they have succumbed momentarily to the cry, "Don't give anything away. It is ours. We paid for it. We spent millions to get it." Of course, that overlooks the fact that the millions we spent has long ago been repaid with the tolls and income; moreover, the morality of the methods used to acquire is at least dubious. But that is going

to be the cry.

They said that about the Marshall Plan. They said, "We are giving money away." Well, my father wasn't giving money away when he spent what he did to put me through college, because in his later years what I was able to contribute to him because of the money he spent on me more than compensated, if you are going to put it on that basis. Of course, there were higher considerations in our helping the continent of Europe; the prostrate nations of western Europe were higher motivations than just what we would make back in commerce; but my, my, the seventeen billion dollars that we paid has been repaid. If you want to say that was giving it away, all right; it still was a good transaction on our part. It is a good time to say that because this is the thirteenth anniversary of the Marshall Plan.

I remember what an old man said to me in Adona, Arkansas, about 1948--somewhere along there, the postwar period. I had been to Copenhagen and I spoke at the Baptist World Alliance, and I had been quoted at home more than once on the matter of helping the distraught people of Europe and other parts of the world. It was my practice to visit the post offices every so often, maybe every two years--every post office in my district even the smallest, and I mean some of them were very small. Of course they have all been abolished now. In Lost Corners, Arkansas, the postmaster told me he had his receipts for the year--seventy-five dollars. That means stamps sold, money orders--that was how much money he took in. At Adona I was with a friend of mine, and I stopped the car. I can just see it now, a great oak tree in front of a little country store. There was a little crowd. I had advertised that I would be there, and there were maybe a dozen people sitting there on the front steps of the store. I looked across the street, and I heard some voices over there--just a little narrow street. I heard somebody say, "Fellows, is that Brooks who just drove up?" They said, "Yes, it is, Uncle Jimmy." Well he said, "Lead me over there. I want to see him." When he said, "Lead me," I noticed that he was blind. He had a cane. So they brought him over there. I guess I had met him before, and he gave me a good handshake. He said, "Brooks, I want to ask you this. I have been reading what was said about the conditions there."

You notice the blind people use those expressions--"Glad to see you," and "I read this." You know what they mean by that. Somebody read it to them or "I know who I am talking to." There is something wonderful about that. I have a very sensitive streak in my nature about the blind. I have only written about a half-dozen poems in my life, and one of them is "To a Blind Cousin." I must remember to send you a copy of it sometime.

But this old blind man said, "Now Brooks, tell me." I said, "Well"--maybe I said Uncle Jimmy. A lot of our colored people think that we only use that expression for black people. Understandably, they resent it, and I have long ago abandoned saying that to colored people; but this was a white man. So, I said, "Well, Uncle Jimmy, yes. I've got an answer for you." He said, "I want to know whether they need it or not." I said, "Oh, my, of course they need it. There is real distress. There is a great hunger even in Europe and in other parts of the world. We just must help these people." "Well," he said, "you have answered, 'of course.' There is just my wife and me there at home. We don't have much. Actually, we just really eat about one good meal a day and we have dinner." That meant the noon meal, you know. "Generally, we are able to push back what we have left. We roll a little table over against the wall and put some of it in the safe there--you know what a safe is--and then we will have a little bite at suppertime. I would be willing to help any way I can. If it means poorer rations for us, it is our Christian duty."

Well, I rode away from that little town quite impressed with that because, you see, I had been making speeches and I had gone the luncheon club circuit speaking to these specific clubs--Lions, Kawinis, Rotary, and so forth. In fact, the Marion Hotel there in Little Rock where they all met threatened to put up a sign that said, "Brooks Hays ate his one millionth potato here." I had been talking to the Chambers of Commerce and so on about the advantage from my point of view, which is a valid statement, of course, and nothing to be apologetic about; but here the old man was talking about what our Christian duty was. So, that made quite an impression on me.

T: One other thing about the 1960 era. There has just been a new book published which is a biography of Robert Kerr of Oklahoma on his Senate Years. One of the statements that is made in there is with reference to a very strong support of the Kennedy-Johnson ticket in 1960 and how he had his closest call electorally at that time when he lost some counties that he usually carried. Did you know Senator Kerr? Do you know him well?

H: Very well.

T: Could you tell me something about him?

H: Bob Kerr was a great deal like Burt Lance, a rich man. He had a Midas touch and probably used the same method to acquire wealth. He was a speculator, he risked investments. Of course, he struck it rich with oil, but there is not a whole lot of difference as far as the kind of business he had become wealthy in. There are a lot of risks in every kind of enterprise, but Bob Kerr's wealth was from oil. I suspect that he would have made money in any business. I will say this. Bob was not a great statesman. He was a very lovable type. He was one of the sparks in the fight for a full development of the Arkansas River.

T: You were involved with him on that, of course.

H: Oh, yes. We were barnstorming a good deal of the time. He always had a good time in introducing me. He talked about the Baptists, you know. That was his excuse. He was talking about himself, too, when he talked about me as "Mr. Baptist." Everybody knew that Bob and I were just about the two biggest Baptists in that part of the country. Well, people think in those terms about Baptists. I don't suppose that any of the other churches outside the Catholic and the Baptist churches have anything like this aspect of gentle humor, because you can always count on somebody when they introduce me to make use of the Baptist angle. I turn it on them. I have learned a little defensiveness about it. I don't think I have ever damaged the Baptist reputation. They are not sensitive about it. But Bob Kerr was a big Baptist.

T: You said that he was a speculator and would probably have made money in any area. I have not read this entire book, but in describing his struggle he apparently went back to Oklahoma. I take it he had been a Johnson supporter in the Convention.

H: I don't know. You see in 1956 he ran for the nomination. Was it 1956?

T: I had forgotten that.

H: Oh, he made quite a fight. He entered some of the primaries, but he saw that he couldn't make it when Nebraska, the state pretty close to him. . . . I guess that was when he dropped out. At any rate, while at one time he looked like a formidable candidate, it was apparent after the Nebraska primary that he wasn't.

He had some very good points of appeal. He used the log cabin. He was born in a log cabin. He was the first native of Oklahoma to be elected governor which shows how close to the frontier he was. He was a good campaigner. But, you know, it is the strangest thing about the way the ball bounces in national conventions or in election campaigns. Who would have thought of Calvin Coolidge who was so quiet and such an introspective person becoming President of the United States. So, here was Bob Kerr, on the other hand, who was outgoing, a fine mixer, and a very fine speaker from the standpoint of mass appeal. He knew how to establish rapport with the average audience. I was very fond of him. I didn't measure his greatness in highest terms as a statesman; but as an individual, I did.

T: This book indicated that he apparently had a very difficult time that year supporting the Democratic . . .

H: Well, that was because of the mood of Oklahoma, I guess. That's to his credit. He was willing to campaign for the ticket. Oklahoma has become a very conservative state. It had become a conservative state by 1960, as you know.

T: Would there have been a parallel position in Arkansas?

H: Yes, a whole lot alike, even going back to the Truman days. I remember when Truman was running I was castigated at times unmercifully. You take this Sunday School class of mine. I would surprise you when I tell you it was made up of young people, in a sense. By 1948, twenty years after I became the teacher, they had gotten to be middle-aged. But they were a typical group of Baptist laymen--very successful, middle-classed kinds of people who lived in a nice residential section, generally speaking. But on the other hand, it had a wide spectrum. They used to laugh about our class. They said it was composed of millionaires on one hand and WPA workers at the other end, and that we had a lot of Ph.D.s and some illiterates. But it really was a fine democratic cross section. That class came close to changing the name because they were mad at me for supporting Truman. I couldn't believe it when I got home. But I was the only congressman who made a public declaration. I believe maybe Wilbur Mills let it be known privately, but I don't recall that he made any public appeal for Truman. I guess the record will show that Mills and I did stick our necks out for Truman.

T: Arkansas electoral votes that year did go for Strom Thurmond, didn't they?

H: No. Mr. Truman saw me later and said, "Brooks, I notice our margin in Arkansas was pretty thin. We lost a lot of votes down there." He said, "Was it my civil rights position?" "Well," I said, "Mr. President, that's what a lot of them said," but I said there were other factors, largely economic and ideological. I said, "It reminds me of the fellow who was a guest of his friend at a beautiful dinner the friend and his wife had put on, a wonderful meal. The guest was quite impressed and turned to his host and said, 'This is a marvelous meal, you must have a fine cook. How long has your cook been with you?' He said, 'She never was with us, she was against us from the start.'" That is what I told him. I said, "They were just finding a chance to express themselves, and they have been against you and me all along."

T: In 1963, just after the assassination of President Kennedy, you stayed on for a short period of time with the Johnson administration. You were the first of the Truman people to leave the Johnson administration. The Washington Post on January 18, 1964, ran this editorial. I'd like to read it and then ask you some questions about this.

The editorial was headed "Hays to Rutgers." It reads, "The first of President Kennedy's men to leave the White House is one of the gentle spirits in this hard-boiled town. Rutgers University will not be easily forgiven for abducting Brooks Hays from us even though he is getting the title of Professor and Lecturer at the Rutgers Institute of Politics. Mr. Hays first came to town as congressman from Little Rock in 1943, and he remained in the House until his determined opposition to racial fanaticism cost him his seat after the battle over Central High. Since 1961 he has been one of the pleasantest and most unsung of the special assistants to the President. An aide whose formal job was to advise on federal-state relations but who also was able as an imminent Baptist laymen to advise the Catholic President on touchy aspects of church-state relations. His office has been next to that of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in the East Wing. He has tried, as he once put it, to offer an answer from an Arkansas cornfield to the cerebral questions that preoccupied the President's staff. A year ago a documentary record on Washington was issued, and excerpts were contained from the speeches of two White House officials; one, of course, was John F. Kennedy, the other was Brooks Hays. We envy the students of Rutgers their opportunity to enjoy Mr. Hays' rare and rewarding qualities."

The Washington Post was not one readily to commend too many people, and I think it speaks well of you that they were aware of your contributions. My question is: You were the first of the Kennedy people to withdraw from the Johnson administration. Was it just too difficult to work in the Johnson White House? Or were you no longer of much use to them compared to your usefulness to President Kennedy?

H: Well, you can't answer that without regarding the collapse of the morale that resulted from Mr. Kennedy's death. It just took the heart out of me. That has to be kept in mind. It had nothing to do with any clash of temperament between most of us on the Kennedy team and Mr. Johnson's. Although, ultimately, that meant a big exodus. There were hardly any remnants left when the process was over. But this has to be kept in mind, too: The Rutgers Board, particularly the group that was responsible for the Eagleton Institute, which was an integral part of the graduate school, had been after me for a long time. They tried before I went to the TVA to get me to come up there.

T: Did you have some contacts with New Jersey people?

H: No, I knew none of those men. I knew, of course, the delegation from New Jersey. Many good friends of mine were on that delegation, but that had nothing to do with the academic policies. The man who was largely responsible was named Don Herzberg, and he was supported in that by the dean of the Law School, Willard Heckel. Now there is an important point there. Dr. Heckel was not only dean in the Law School but he was, in time, later on, the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, now the United Presbyterian Church. I think he felt a certain affinity for me as a churchman. But Herzberg, of Jewish faith, was an outstanding political scientist. He was really the dean of the Eagleton Institute, and they had obviously kept their eye on me and had been hoping that I would eventually come because I had, in 1959, in turning them down for the TVA job, told them that it was exciting and that they had shaken me; but I was not ready to leave the South and not ready, really, to leave government. That was the way that it stood.

I was glad to have the offer renewed, because by January I had decided that I wanted to leave the White House. I was never particularly close to Lyndon.

Johnson. I don't know what his feeling about me was, how it could be described. I think, probably, he had a rather friendly feeling for me; and my feeling for him, you could say, was friendly in a personal way because Lyndon Johnson had some very fine qualities. He did a lot of good for our country. On the other hand, he was not as unyielding in matters of political ethics as he should have been, but I appreciated his good points. We had no differences at all, but I was glad to get away.

I can illustrate what I am talking about by something that happened. I mentioned his being of the tough Texas school. He said, when I asked him how he felt about my going up to Rutgers, "That's all right if you will promise to give me twenty stories and to come back--to commute. Leave it so I can have you to come on weekends for special assignments." And I did work it out on that basis. He said, "Just keep your desk there." Then I talked to the custodian, the brother of Alfred Gruenther, who was the head of Red Cross and one of our distinguished generals. His brother, Homer Gruenther, was in charge of the housekeeping for the White House. He said, "Now you are to stay right here. Your papers are quite secure in this office. If anybody needs it, it will be a sort of an auxiliary office for extra service. But just don't worry, just come and go as you want to. You will still be here on an official basis." They have an expression--WAE (when actually employed). I don't remember that I even drew all the money for all the time that I spent on special assignments, but I would come back and forth occasionally. We were down here a lot of weekends because my work at Rutgers was not so heavy but that I could spend Friday and Saturday, a good many weekends here--not all of them.

T: Did you go over to the White House then?

H: Oh, yes. I would be there. I had the services of Warren Cikins, whom you may have met. He had been my legislative assistant the last two years of my congressional life, and then was with me in the White House from the first day I went there after the State Department. He had been in the meantime in other offices. I helped get him a job in the office of Senator Engel, of California. But Cikins, I guess, occupied the office. So, they didn't lack work to do. Rutgers was glad for me to have that tie to the White House because it meant that I was continuing to get a good bird's-eye-view of Washington political life.

I began to have a little strange feeling about Mr. Johnson. He didn't know it, I guess, but he really stirred my anger a bit when I came back after one absence up there and found that my office had been assigned to somebody else, a stranger to me. I am not sure who it was. But at any rate, my stuff had been moved over to the Executive Office building. When Mr. Gruenther heard that I was there he rushed in to tell me, "Brooks, I am so embarrassed. This will really knock you. The President was calling in another assistant, somebody to help him, and he just strolled over this way and said as he was showing this new man the White House, 'Whose office is that?' 'Well,' they said, 'that is reserved for Mr. Hays.' He said, 'Move him in here and take Brooks' stuff and move it over to the EOB.'" Mr. Gruenther, I think, told him that he shouldn't do that. He said, "Now Brooks has a lot of papers here, and I told him that they wouldn't be disturbed until we notified him so he could make some decision about where to put all of this." "Oh," he said, "move it over there."

So he just high-handedly made that decision himself. Ordinarily, an administrator would leave that to somebody who was responsible for it. He paid no

attention to that whatever. It was unfair to me. Some of the stuff I never did get back in proper place. It was agonizing to have my stuff carried out like that. Some of it I could have disposed of if I had known where it was. So I never did, you know, have quite the same feeling about him as someone who was sensitive to the interests--not just of me but of my staff. That is the way he did business. I think that maybe the way to do business if you want to run a ranch, but not the government of the United States. As I have said, he belonged to that tough Texas school. It wasn't my school. We just had that difference.

I want to say this for him. His position on the race question was inspiring. It wasn't costly to him politically. It was the thing to do from the standpoint of political expediency; but when it was not to his advantage to do, he hadn't been so admirable. He had made some pretty strong references against civil rights when he was having to face that element in Texas. So, I view that with mixed feelings, willing to forgive a great deal because of his monumental work in the field of voting rights for the black people. He showed an appreciation of my place in the political spectrum, and this should soften any harsh judgment, and it does. I am only speaking as I think with some objectivity about him. What he did about my office I threw in more as an illustration of his positiveness and his rather strong dictatorial way of handling problems.

Anyway, he had Bill Moyers call me one day after I had finished my work at Rutgers and had come back, not to take a salaried position, but still to work as a consultant. I had two years at Rutgers, one year beyond what they told me I would have. A one-year professorship is an interim appointment, obviously. That was their policy. They like to have a Vanderbilt professor rotate. But at the end of one year they made an exception; they liked my style and asked me to stay on another year. At the end of those two years I was back in the White House but continuing as a consultant, not with any specific assignment but just finding plenty to do. By that time, being about 68 years old I was sort of "a senior citizen and an elder statesman." But Bill Moyers, who had always looked up to me as his sponsor . . .

Incidentally, the President introduced Bill one time to somebody and said, "This is Bill Moyers, he is my protege." Bill said, "Yours and Brooks'." Bill and I were very simpatico. There is quite a story there. I gave the commencement talk at the Fort Worth Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1958 while president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He was a member of that class. I had never met him, but he came to me and said, "Can I drive you to the airport?" I said, "Of course." My wife was with me and heard the conversation. He told me that Senator Johnson had invited him to take a position on his senatorial staff. He said, "Here I am, now the holder of a degree in theology and committed to a pastoral life in a church. I have prepared for that kind of ministry. Would I betray some commitment if I went into this work?" I said, "Well, you wouldn't go into it as a career necessarily, but don't forget that politics is a pretty important parish itself. I think maybe you could be more useful touching the sources of political power in a dynamic age like this and with an important senator like Lyndon Johnson." Johnson was, perhaps by that time, the majority leader. I said, "I think, yes, you are entitled to do that with no feeling at all of abandonment."

He took my advice. But he never forgot that conversation, and I never forgot it. He also called me after Mr. Kennedy was elected and asked me what I thought about his accepting Sergeant Shriver's invitation to join his Peace Corps. Well, I am not sure about the time of that, but I guess it was after--yes, it had to be because Shriver didn't become head of the Peace Corps, of

course, until Kennedy was elected. But I advised him to take the Peace Corps. The point is that in some important decisions in his young life he sought my advice. Again, I advised him to accept the offer.

T: Was driving you to the airport the only occasion you ever had met him?

H: I had never met him before. It was the first time I had met him. Of course, after he came up here then and I was in the White House, I had some occasion to talk with him.

T: Because he was on Senator Johnson's staff?

H: Yes. Exactly. It wasn't a day-to-day relationship at all; but I admired him--a brilliant mind, fine spirit. I never thought of it as a father-son relationship but more like a big brother-little brother relationship. He called me one day. I remember I was out in the field somewhere. You use that expression when you are out on government business. He said, "The President asked me to call you and see if you would be willing to accept the office of Associate Director of Community Relations Division of the Justice Department. Well, now, the Community Relations work was in the field of civil rights, and it had to do with mobilizing sentiment for nondiscrimination and for advancing the situation that the minorities had in various communities. I had helped write that legislation and helped put it through. I had the help of Ramsey Clark, who was Attorney General at that time, and others. Bill said to me in this same conversation, "You would bear the title of Associate Director. The Director would be Roger Wilkins--Roger Wilkins is the nephew of Roy Wilkins and a fine young black . . ."

T: Now Roy Williams you are speaking of is the NAACP?

H: That is the uncle of the man under whom I was working. Bill just added, "By the way, it won't change your relationship at the White House. You will still have your office in the Executive Office Building, and you will still have the facilities here of a secretary. You'll be right with us on the same basis, but you will have this title to help Roger." Now that was an interesting decision because, of course, there would be some tendency among some of my enemies to say, "Well, Brooks is where he belongs, helping a black man and working under a black man." That's not fanciful. You know enough about the South at that time. That would be rather unlikely today, very unlikely; but at that time this was a rather novel thing for a white man who had been a member of Congress, Assistant Secretary of State, and Assistant to the President taking a secondary job with a much younger man as his boss. It didn't bother me a minute. Bill appreciated it. We had a good relationship.

My wife invited Roger and his wife to come over and have dinner with us, sitting just a few feet from where you and I sit now. My wife did our own work, cooked the meal, waited on the table. You know what a tough job it is to get help in Washington. I was real proud of my wife because it might surprise some fastidious people to even mention it, but here was a little white wife waiting on a little black wife and her husband. She has always been very sympathetic with my ideas about racial equality, but it was a novelty at that time. Roger and I got along fine together, and I was glad that Johnson had given me that opportunity. I remember getting a note from him one day.

T: Did you take the job?

H: Yes, I did. I would have been glad for it to continue longer, and I'll tell you later why it didn't continue very long. I got this note from him one day asking me for certain information, and he signed it, "Your little brown friend in the front office." I got the information he wanted and sent it with a cover note, and I signed it, "Your colorless pal in the background." I don't know whether he appreciated that or not, but I thought that was pretty cute of him to say, "Your little brown friend in the front office," and I said, "Your colorless pal." Some blacks might not appreciate that, but it is the kind of informal, and what I call gentle banter, that should exist in all kinds of relationships--Republican, Democratic, Catholic, Protestant, Jew, and Gentile, black and white. It ought to go through the whole society, and I think it would help if we had that feeling about it.

Now, as to why I didn't continue long, you will remember along about May, I guess, of 1966, I decided to run for governor of Arkansas; and I went back home to campaign there. That is the reason I didn't continue any longer with Roger Wilkins and with the Johnson administration.

T: Did you have anything to do with getting the crowd when Mr. Johnson spoke to the group of Southern Baptists in the Rose Garden at the time of the passing of the Civil Rights Bill, when he urged them to support civil rights legislation?

H: No, I don't think so. I don't have anything more than a very faint recollection of that taking place. I think that you will find, though, in his official state papers this statement, "I know that you all expect Bill Moyers and Brooks Hays to supply all the Scripture that gets into our papers here at the White House. They both know the Bible so well, and they are always quoting Scripture." That was hardly true, but he was going to make a good point, you know. I am getting some of my own medicine now, the cheerful banter. He said, "Bill and Brooks. I know a little Scripture, too. The Bible says that the beauty of the young man is his strength, and the beauty of the old man is his gray hair. Poor Brooks is losing his beauty."

T: We have been talking about the year of 1964 when you left government service and became a professor at Rutgers, which is the state university of New Jersey. In April of 1964, there was a dinner honoring you at Little Rock. The speaker at the twenty-five dollar-a-plate dinner honoring you was Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. I wonder if you would comment at all on Senator McCarthy. Did you know him well? He was a Roman Catholic and came in the late 1960's to be tied in very closely with the antiwar efforts. What are your recollections of Senator McCarthy?

H: Well, he had served in the House when I was there. I was his senior, of course, and he was elected to the Senate the same year that I was defeated for the House seat. Incidentally, I remember he said to me before this dinner just in a casual conversation here in Washington after he had been elected, "Brooks do you realize that the newpaper space that was devoted to your defeat exceeded the space devoted to thirteen new United States senators?" I hadn't thought of it and I hadn't realized it; but it must have been correct because he said, "I know what I am talking about. I wish I could have been defeated." But the circumstances connected with my defeat, of course, were such that there was an element of drama in it that no other candidate for office, either Senate or House, had. He was impressed by it. He went to Little Rock and Mitch Miller went to lead an integrated choir. This was only six years after the powerful feeling of bitterness and violence. The tone of Little Rock's political life and public life had changed entirely, a complete reversal. Orvil Faubus came

to the dinner. Winthrop Rockefeller, his arch rival--Mr. Democrat and Mr. Republican--were there at the dinner sitting at opposite ends of the speakers' table. They had that much foresight not to let them sit close to each other. But it was a friendly gathering.

T: Mr. Faubus was still the governor?

H: Yes. I believe that was the first year that, yes, it was, that was Rockefeller's first race for the governorship. Then he was elected in 1966, when Faubus stepped down and he had an open field. I remember very well McCarthy's speech. Incidentally, Ron, I have a tape of it there in the hall and I would be glad to lend it to you if you could help me unwind it. I am not as good with the mechanics of this recording as I ought to be, so if it doesn't take too much time you can show me how to unwind it and get it on the right track. It is one of those tapes that I believe is recorded on both sides.

T: Yes. One of the newer tapes.

H: I didn't understand that, so in rewinding it I let the thing get wound up, so we will lose some of it; but I don't think we will lose any of McCarthy's speech in the tape that got twisted and broken.

In this speech--and this helped me recollect some of the references he made--he said, "Brooks reminds me of Thomas Moore because he seemed to have a certain indifference to the price." He said, "Of course, Thomas Moore lost his head, and Brooks just lost his office." He said, "I want to say this about Brooks. If he has a fault and he has, he's soft on people. He never displays anger, and I think sometimes he ought to display it. I will even go so far as to say he ought to display it when he doesn't feel it, because people like to see a display of anger on certain occasions; and he was entitled to be angry this time." It was that type of wit with which he kept the audience entertained for twenty or thirty minutes. It was a good speech and there was a lot of good philosophy in it.

That was before Gene had given his image a bit of a mixed-up appearance. He seemed to lack--the politicians would generally conclude, and I am sure there would be consensus on this point--he seemed to lack a practical approach to some of the problems of party politics. But I have never lost a feeling of affection and admiration for him because his position on the Vietnam War turned out to be right. It took courage to do what he did. I think he is a statesman. I didn't understand his refusal to support Humphrey then, or his failure to support Humphrey in a positive way. In other words, he seemed to be "sulking in his tent," and that was unfortunate because maybe Gene could have been the difference between defeat and victory for Hubert Humphrey. At any rate, I thought McGovern, of course, was a little more attractive and a little more admirable.

But while we are talking about McCarthy, you might be interested in knowing that--I believe it was in the early part of 1976 when he was thinking about running for President . . . Do you happen to remember whether he announced for the Presidency in 1976 or not?

T: He was on the ballot.

H: In some areas. Was he nominated in the convention?

T: No, he ran as an independent.

H: Of course. That's right. Exactly. I had forgotten. That shows you how you forget some of these personal aspects. He called me on the phone one day and said, "Brooks, would you consider being my running mate in this presidential election?"

T: This was 1976?

H: Yes. I said, "Gene, you are bound to be kidding. I'm 78 years old." "Well, no," he said, "the vice-presidency is not the kind of job that an older man would have any trouble filling. Jefferson said about it you know, 'It is the only thing to do. In the summertime you sit under the shade of a tree and enjoy the birds and nature and in the wintertime you can sit by the fire and philosophize.'" I said, "Oh, you were figuring on my taking the second spot." I kidded him.

T: Why do you think he called you?

H: Well, I think he was serious about it. My wife questioned that. She thought maybe it was just a pleasantry. But we ran into each other maybe a month later at the airport. Marion was with me at the time, and he brought it up the second time. He said, "Have you been thinking about my proposition?" We laughed it off. I think that I convinced him that whether he was serious or not, I certainly wasn't going to be serious about it. I guess I never would have been willing to link up with Gene as much as I appreciated and admired his genuineness. You know, he's a poet of some ability. That, I think, is rather revealing because of his "idealism." It is a rather fascinating thing because politics doesn't have enough idealism in my judgment.

T: Did you meet him during his struggle with the Vietnam War? Do you feel he got caught with cause and then just went further and further?

H: He stayed with the cause rather than retreating back to a practical political power leadership. Idealists have to have power you know, although many are content to act as Norman Thomas did without power. But Gene was and is an idealist, and while he could say, "I was practical enough to win a House seat and then a Senate seat," he also could say, "I was powerful enough to get Lyndon Johnson out of the race in 1964.

T: That was 1968.

H: It was 1968, you're exactly right. We have been talking in the framework of 1964 up until this time when we got on McCarthy.

T: Did he talk to you at all about his decision to run for the Presidency in 1968?

H: Yes. We found ourselves on the same plane once that year, and he indicated that he was hopeful. Of course, he was in the New Hampshire Primary. It was Gene McCarthy who dealt a lethal blow to the Johnson . . .

T: Let's go back to 1964 and the events surrounding that. You became the professor at Rutgers, as we have mentioned, and continued a consultant relationship with the White House and President Johnson. About that time there came a very important issue for Baptists, and that was the relation to the Supreme Court decision regarding prayer in public schools. There was an attempt made at that time to amend the Constitution; and the House Judiciary Committee headed by Representative Emmanuel Carlson, of New York, was holding hearings on what came to be known as the Becker Amendment. I wonder if you would comment on a couple

of things. Were you involved with the Baptist Joint Committee in formulating a statement? You did appear before that committee at one point with a statement regarding Baptist position of separation of church and state, and you made a statement something to the effect that you thought it was unnecessary because God did not need any patronizing ceremonies.

H: Did I use the word "need?"

T: Well, you are quoted as having said that in a Baptist Press story.

H: Well, that is immaterial, but I didn't recall exactly how I said it. My point was that it ceases to be a prayer if we are simply attempting to please God with a mood reverence or adoration. It isn't necessary for us to do that in order to establish and maintain the childhood relationship.

T: You said at the time--someone raised the question whether you would be concerned about, or whether President Johnson would be concerned about, you making a statement about prayer amendment. What prompted you to say that? Do you remember?

H: You mean what prompted me to make the statement you have just read?

T: No. What prompted you to--the story quotes you as saying, "Although I have not discussed the problem with the President," Hays said, "I am confident he would not object to my submitting these observations."

H: Well, I would say that today. Nothing happened to change my feeling that he would give me the freedom and extend me the right, but not necessarily agreeing with me.

T: Did you have any consultation with Dr. Carlson of the Baptist Joint Committee or others in this matter?

H: No, I did not.

T: Did you appear before the Committee?

H: Well, I had forgotten it apparently. What you read was a formal appearance, wasn't it?

T: It simply indicates that you attacked efforts to change the Constitution. It doesn't exactly say that you appeared. You may have simply affirmed a statement made by the Joint Committee.

H: In an interview. That is my recollection--very vague so I could have appeared before the Committee and have forgotten it.

T: You weren't involved extensively in this struggle were you?

H: No, I was not, but I knew what was going on. As I recall it, I had conversations with Carlson but no formal participation. I admire Fred Schwengel's attitude. I have used him as an example of the folly of an electorate adopting a single-issue approach to a choice between candidates for Congress. He was defeated on that issue. He is one of the best men that I have served with in the whole sixteen years I was there.

T: Had he been a longtime congressman?

H: Yes, as I recall it. He had had one interruption. Well, maybe he came back after this defeat over the prayer issue, then was finally retired by another defeat; and he didn't attempt to come back. I know, whether it was the prayer issue or not, it took him out for a two-year period, but he did come back.

T: Did you feel when you moved up to--well, you didn't actually move, did you, to New Jersey?

H: Yes, we did. We maintained two homes. We didn't rent this house, but we did rent an unfurnished apartment and bought some furniture for a little three-room apartment in New Brunswick.

T: You lived up in New Brunswick most of that time, but you would come down on some of the weekends to Washington. Did you feel as you began to get into the academic sphere--you were, I am sure, feeling you were nearing retirement. Did you miss the involvement in Washington when you were up teaching?

H: Well, I was close enough to Washington with these occasional trips back to the Capitol to maintain a feeling of participation, so at that stage I would say I did not. Now, later, as I moved further from the center toward the periphery, I did feel it. I missed Congress. I think that every normal person would have that feeling.

T: You made several statements during that period, and one of them was a very strong statement regarding independence in the pulpit. You called a warning against social, economic, and political pressure to silence the utterances of clergymen when their conscience inspires. Did you get any feedback from that? That is an issue that has affected Baptists for many years. We talk about a free church with a free pulpit and then sometimes practice something a little different. From your experience is this what you found? Or what prompted you particularly to make that statement in 1964? Civil rights?

H: Yes. Civil rights was still the focus of concern from the standpoint of the church expressing itself over social injustices and social wrongs. My recollection is that it was well received. Of course, among the clergy it would be well received. Of course, it raises a sort of complex problem. It is an imponderable in a fashion, because I might say, in a congregation in which a preacher became so bigoted as to utter threats to freedom, that is, if that point of view prevailed, well, he has passed the boundaries of freedom. If the preacher were voicing things which shocked me, I might be moved to say that it is not an unfair restriction to say that the minister must apply the test of truth and of justice and of all the standards that you are entitled to apply. Well, you see the point that I am making. It is not an unlimited right. In any event a congregation, having the ultimate decision as to who occupies the pulpit, would doubtless, in any situation, be entitled to take all factors into consideration. But, applying it to the race questions, I was on good ground. I may have used the illustration--it may be somewhere in the conversation that preceded this one--of Blake Smith, the very eloquent pastor of the University Baptist Church in Austin, Texas. He had pretty much the same viewpoint that I had regarding racial justice, and he preached a pretty powerful sermon one morning; and one of the conservative old deacons moving out of the church took him by the hand and said, "Pastor, I didn't like that sermon, but I think Jesus did." That was, of course, a very reassuring thing from Smith's standpoint.

Did I also tell you--if I did you can cut this out--that I made a similar one

to a Virginia Baptist associational meeting, their annual meeting at Virginia Beach, right after my defeat. I presume that must have been just a short time after it--in November of 1958. I was still president, of course. I remember hitting it hard, and it was maybe one of the sharpest points that I made; but a year or two later someone told me about a congregational controversy over in southwest Virginia in which the congregation was threatening and about to carry out their threat to remove a pastor for views on the race questions that they regarded as too liberal. In the deacons' meeting they were deciding on it and about to recommend that he be relieved as the pastor. One of the deacons got up and said, "Now I can't vote with you. I happen to be a segregationist. I've got the view that most of us have around here about segregation and segregated churches, and I don't agree with our pastor; but I am very much impressed with the logic of Mr. Hays' view that he expressed to us down at our state convention, and I am going to stay with that standard that we should not apply pressure on the pastor to echo our views." Now that is a better statement of the ideal; that is, that the pastor must avoid letting the common denominator of congregational sentiment rob him of his prophetic voice, and this view prevailed.

T: How do you see that as working out in our Baptist tradition where the congregation, shall we say, has the power to remove or declare the pulpit empty?

H: Well, that is the principle we have to live by, and we can only fall back on the faith in human justice, in human reasonableness and tolerance. That is the only equipment, really, that the pastor can carry with him through his ministry--that reliance upon the congregational willingness to allow wide latitude.

T: In 1964, as well, during this period of getting ready for the civil rights acts--the Voting Right Act and then, Public Accommodation--you appeared and were the main speaker at what is described as the 14th Annual Washington Pilgrimage sponsored by the Religious Heritage of America. One of the things that this group was seeking to foster was to reaffirm the religious traditions of America. One of the things that they talked about and gave consideration to was to establish a special monument towards Religious Freedom Centers. Had you had extensive involvement with this group, and how did you react to their proposal for this Freedom Center?

H: I wish I could remember exactly how I felt about it. Nothing came out of it, but I may have had a negative reaction because I felt that the idea in the pilgrimage had merit; that is, it brought people to Washington for contemplation of this grand idea of freedom. It gave them a better grasp, if they used their time profitably and if the programs were skillfully approached, and an opportunity to be recommitted strongly to the idea of freedom and to the pluralistic character of our faith. That had real value and the founder and leader at that time was Mr. Harold Dudley, a very fine committed Christian leader, and he did a good job. It was a sort of low-key operation. They didn't have a big budget, and it didn't take a big budget to plan that kind of pilgrimage for a few days. They had the cooperation, he and his wife, of the members of Congress and the leadership in Washington.

I don't recall how much they utilized the White House for their idea. But after Dudley's retirement, I felt that it lost some of its usefulness, a conclusion that I am still standing by. Until the Religious Heritage of America proves beyond any doubt that they are not identified ideologically with the ultra right wing and that they are living by this tradition of diversity, I shall have no further interest in it. That is said in great goodwill

for my conservative friends in that theological school, but I hope in the days that are left to me in this earthly pilgrimage that I can give a little more study to the problem of arresting this trend toward what we used to call fundamentalism. Again, we have this problem of semantics. I think I am a fundamentalist in the sense that my theology is biblical. I am a Baptist, but I am not the kind of Baptist that fits the narrow mold. I do not believe that the Bible is true in every literal sense, and I think it is a great mistake for us to insist that the Baptist tradition requires that. Of course from the standpoint of logic it is just preposterous to say that every word is true. They can't all be true because there are so many contradictions in it. Whenever you find language that is interpreted as giving God a human character of wrath so that he orders babies to be slaughtered, then you know that something is wrong; and you can start with that because if he isn't a loving God we are worshipping the wrong kind of Creator. Well, I don't need to go into that but that explains something of my feeling. I think that the threat to the tolerance--there is a better word than that--the threat to our diversity, our sense of brotherhood, our willingness to trust others to live by the essentials of faith so that we feel that as we continue as a nation and as a denomination, we approach ultimate truth.

T: The year of 1964 was a mixed year for you. You served first in the White House; in January you moved to New Jersey and became a professor in political studies; and there were two other things that happened. I wonder if you would comment briefly on one. You were invited to be a part of Meredith Wilson's CBS special on humorism. You made an interesting statement. You said that you didn't want to be remembered as a funny man but rather the kind of public person your wife regarded you as being. Do you want to tell me something about that experience? How did you come to be involved in that and what happened?

H: A former minister, a Baptist minister in Washington, had been elected and was then serving as executive secretary of the Los Angeles County Federation of Churches. He invited me to be the speaker at the annual dinner of the Federation, and Meredith Wilson was the master of ceremonies. I sat on his right and my wife sat maybe one place beyond his left. My wife and I both came away enthused over both Meredith and his wife as human beings with a great, outgoing feeling for their fellowmen and women. I tried to do the usual thing, dividing my speech into two segments--the funny part and the philosophical part; and Meredith was tremendously impressed, apparently, because he told me at the end of the service, "In the morning I am sending out a number of telegrams that will read in substance, 'If ever you are invited to be on the same program with Brooks Hays, don't risk it. Pretend to have an attack of appendicitis and stay away from him because he will put you in such a place . . .'"

Not long after that, Meredith asked me to come to Hollywood to help him with a Texaco-sponsored program. It was a great experience. I spent a couple of days out there just for my ten minutes on the program. I observed the meticulous way in which they allocate the time, the way they use their technical facilities for the greatest advantage and for audience reaction. It was a marvelous experience from the standpoint of exposing me to their techniques. I got very well acquainted with Meredith. He and I had had some correspondence and his enthusiasm for me continued.

In introducing me--his program, incidentally, was largely a young people's program. He had a choral group--the hour's program was not all with this rule--but they were central in the planning for his weekly program. He was telling them about me in the little preliminaries where we were briefed on what was

expected of us. He said, "You are going to like Mr. Hays. He has the youthful view still. I want him to talk to you without much planning. We are going to have a blackboard here and a number of his favorite stories will be on the blackboard. We may shift around and give him a chance to tell this one or that one and then to provide the kind of talk that is needed to bridge one story to another. So, the young students sat on the floor and I sat on a low stool right in the middle of them. They did seem to react very spontaneously and sympathetically to my efforts to entertain them. Meredith liked it. He was quite interested in the fact that I wanted to continue the relationship, not for any commercialization, but just as two men who appreciated theatrical life, because every politican has to carry a certain amount of theatrical equipment with him.

I remember, for example, Ron, the phone rang one night, and he said, "Brooks, this is Meredith. I just wanted to talk to you. I was sitting here thinking I hadn't seen you lately. I haven't got a thing in the world to talk to you about, but I just wanted to see how you and Marion are feeling." So, he had responded warmly to my friendship.

When I spoke at Mason City, Iowa, I remember something that he had told my wife. He talked to her a good deal during this banquet program, and she carried a clear impression of some of the things that were said about his church life when he was a boy. He was a member of the Congregational Church in Mason City. It was a whole lot like my wife's hometown. Most of the people in that city were like most of the people in her home city of Fort Smith, Arkansas. They were church people. The life of the church in Fort Smith was probably very much like the life of Mason City. Methodists are close enough to Congregationalists to be sympathetic. I was speaking at the Kiwanis Club--it was a noon luncheon club--and I said to the presiding officer, "Did you know this?" I remembered it was the home city of Meredith Wilson. He said, "Oh, yes. Mason City is very proud of their native son and his success." "Well," I said, "I would like to step around, if it's close by, to see the church where he was trained as a Sunday School lad," because he had told us in Los Angeles something about his mother's class. I don't remember some of the ancedotes that fascinated my wife. But the chairman of this meeting said, "Well, his pastor is sitting about fifteen feet from us," and he motioned for the pastor to come up and shake hands with me and said, "Mr. Hays wants to go around and see Meredith's boyhood church." When we got around there after the luncheon, the pastor showed me a little brick annex to the central building, and it was dedicated to Meredith's mother. There were proper inscriptions about her, and I went inside and felt, you know, that I had made a gesture that indicated that I had more than a passing interest in my friend Meredith Wilson. I wrote him about it. It seemed to move him. I think that it just created a little added warmth to what was a little more than a passing relationship.

We haven't been in touch with each other lately. His wife, a little Italian lady, died of cancer shortly after that; and we knew what he was going through because obviously they were a devoted couple. He later married the young lady who worked in his office that I met on this trip, Rosemary Sullivan. I was glad that his period of loneliness wasn't greatly prolonged. He sent me a video tape recording which I hope I can put my hand on because it contains the whole program. He sent me that and wouldn't let me pay for it. I figure it would cost about two hundred dollars to do what he did for me. I am not sure that I can locate it, but I am glad to have it. That was his contribution to my governor's race in 1966.

T: You were on TV telling and sharing these yarns and stories. Was a script written for you?

H: No. They had some suggestions, but they perhaps had asked me to write out some of the things I wanted to say, and I maybe had regaled them with some of my choice of stories. I hope they were regaled by them.

T: Do you remember any particular one that you told that comes to your mind?

H: That little quickie that Tom Wicker headed one of his columns with in the New York Times, in which he made a rather complimentary reference to my alleged humor, about the little lady who was asked in England how she voted and she said, "Oh, oh, I never vote. It only encourages them." Then I tried to demolish that cynical view and pointed out that people can sometimes use false criteria, inadequate criteria, in determining their choice. I told again about the British woman. It's awfully pleasant to transfer what you want to say to another country so that the home folks don't have their feelings hurt. She was asked how she voted, and she said, "I voted for the Conservative. He was such a poor speaker. I felt so sorry for him." So he got the sympathy vote. Well, that kind of thing and then, I gave them a bit of my philosophy about the sacredness of political life and the moral and the spiritual elements in a political career. I think that Meredith Wilson was really pleased with what I did.

T: That same year you moved into show business as well and appeared on the Jack Paar and the Johnny Carson shows. Do you remember either of those?

H: Oh, yes, indeed. I remember both because both were, I believe, people with no bias to any degree and were exceptional, and I will tell you why. Jack Paar refused to talk to me beforehand. He didn't have to refuse but rather when I suggested to him once that we ought to talk about what we were going to do and how he would lead into something he said, "Brooks, let's just let it be completely spontaneous. Just leave it to me. I know enough about your style to pull you into it." Well, he gave me a lot of time on that program and obviously was enthusiastic about it, because he started out with a nice compliment for me, "A man who had served in both the legislative and executive departments."

I remember he said something that I should be entitled to quote in spite of its indicating that I am an immodest person. He said, "Mr. Hays, you know Arkansas has been regarded at times as a sort of backward state, a frontier state, and I don't quite harmonize that image of Arkansas, as someone has referred to it, as an untamed state with the fact that they produced men like your two senators, McClellan and Fulbright, and Brooks Hays." He said, "What is your comment on that? What is your explanation?" I said, "Now, Jack, I try to be modest, and I never said anything about Arkansas more glowing than that it is the greatest commonwealth in the galaxy of sovereign powers whose star shines out from our flag like the brightest orb of celestial night." I can see him now. He slapped his knee and looked at the audience, "What did I tell you? What did I tell you?" So, then he said, "Are you and Mr. Kennedy close?" "Well," I said, "philosophically and politically we are good friends, warm friends, but in the White House remember it like this, 'from a physical standpoint he is on the West Wing and I am on the East Wing'; and it is a good deal like a little lady said in Arkansas when I asked her if she saw Haley's Comet and she said, 'Just from a distance.'" So, he laughed again at my efforts along that line.

It was a very delightful experience. He referred to my wife in a sweet way, and I appreciated that. He said, "Mr. Hays and his darling wife are leaving now. They are going to have to leave the studio right now in order to get to

the airport to catch a plane for Africa on a tour for Mr. Kennedy." Incidentally, again on Mr. Kennedy, he said, "I see a rocking chair there on your lapel. What is that the symbol of?" I said, "Well, ordinarily, you might think that it is the symbol of laziness, of lethargy; but it isn't that at all. It's a symbol of faith, confidence, and peace of mind."

So, when I got back to the White House, after the African trip, Mr. Kennedy saw that on my lapel, and said, "Where did you get that?" I said, "Why, Mr. President, you mean you don't have one?" I said, "A friend gave me this one." He said, "That's the first one I have seen." Well, I just reached up and started taking it off. I said, "I'll give this one to you." He said, "No, no, I mustn't take yours." I said, "Yes, you are going to take it." Well, he said, "Then I will give you a PT boat tieclasp." So, he did. Oh, my, I hope I can locate that clasp because while there were hundreds of thousands of them distributed in that election year, none of them had that. This was one that the President wore and gave to me. But he did carry my rocking chair lapel with him probably the rest of his life.

T: Where did you get it originally?

H: I can't remember. Somebody gave it to me. Apparently, it didn't catch on from the standpoint of salability because you didn't see many. There were a few.

T: How did you come to be on Jack Paar's show? Did he invite you? Did you know him?

H: I will tell you what I am sure induced it. A man named Tait Trussell, who worked for The Nation's Business, I believe, liked my style of humor. He got out a record called "The Best of Washington Humor" and he had several men on it including Mr. Kennedy--he took a little portion of one of his speeches. Those things were all in the public domain--speeches that men like Charles Halleck, Barry Goldwater, and Sergeant Shriver made. So Tait gathered all those up and took some of these speeches from a recording. He took portions of those and put them on a record. It was a composite. I had more time than any of the others. The most prominent one was my offering. I forget how many minutes it ran; second, was Barry Goldwater, and he was in excellent form. So Jack Paar heard that, and he liked the stories and wanted me to come. I am pretty sure that was the source of it.

Apparently, the Jack Paar program was a big hit. We didn't know whether it was or not because as he had said, we had to make this trip to West Africa. I was going to the English-speaking nations on the West Coast of Africa, about three or four of them--Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Liberia. We spent three weeks over there making some contacts and trying to appraise some of the efforts in the field of education and also, it was a goodwill tour for the President. We stopped in Rome, incidentally, for the visit with Pope John. When we got to Rome we found a number of my colleagues on a congressional tour, and the Ambassador to Rome was giving a reception for them. When we showed up there they swarmed all over us and said, "Oh, you ought to have heard yourself. Loved your program." So, that got as fine a reception as anything I ever did in the way of a studio performance.

T: You never did actually see it then?

H: No.

T: Then you appeared with Johnny Carson later.

H: Well, now that, in contrast, is a very sad memory because we had hardly gotten into the program when there was an interruption. It was the same format as in Jack Paar's program. Johnny had asked me a question or two, and I looked up to see what was happening and Johnny looked back. I thought it was staged. I thought it was a part of the program. I remember that the fellow said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am operating a dating service. I've got some beautiful and attractive girls who are available, and I can arrange for you to meet these girls if you are lonesome and would like to have company. Call me at--and he gave a certain number." When he got through with that announcement, he said to Johnny Carson, "You said I couldn't get on your program, but I did. I made it." He had crashed through the barriers and just came out of the woodwork, apparently. We learned later that he had hidden for four hours among the props back of the studio; and then, at that moment, he crashed through the guard and before anybody knew what was happening he stood there in front of the camera. Well, they kept turning it. So Johnny turned to him and said, "Okay, now that you have made it, Good-bye." He said, "Now wait, Johnny. Let me say one other thing. Maybe you would like to have a date, I can make some dates for you if you would like." Of course, it infuriated Johnny. He was probably as mad as he could be even then, but he was keeping his cool. I can remember how he screamed, "Somebody get this knucklehead out of here." All of this was going out on the video.

Well, we never did get back on the beam. It fell flat. I thought he should have given me another chance. I didn't make any effort to invite him to call me again. I did, hopefully, though, wait for a second call because I was certainly entitled to it. I, incidentally, was a part of the prerecording. It was to be broadcast two hours later. So I was able, by catching a plane, to get here in time to see it. I walked into our library where the television set was just as they were starting, and I saw the whole thing. But I thought, as I flew back, "Well, they will cut out this particular thing, and we will see the rest of it." But, the references later to this thing and the quips and comments about it wouldn't have made sense if the viewers out across the country hadn't seen the incident on which these comments were based. So they had to run it in that very ragged, unhappy form. Well, that is the Johnny Carson episode.

T: So you never got back.

H: Well, I guess one learns from these experiences that just like baseball the finest hitters can sometimes strike out. While I would never be regarded as a hit in the field of television, I am just saying that if the men of great skill and talent fall on their faces, why should I, an amateur, feel saddened by this thing? But I have had my share of notice as a humorist. But I want that word quoted "as a humorist" because while some of my southern friends feel that I authentically reflect the forklore of the area, I have never attempted to be a professional funnyman. I think you read the quote there saying that I didn't want to be known as a funnyman. Ron, I turned down invitations sometimes--don't get them anymore of that kind--because they said, "We don't want you to say a serious word. We know you can entertain an audience for thirty minutes and just be funny." I said, "No, I won't come under those circumstances." I said, "It is not fair to an audience in the first place to leave them nothing but a memory of laughter. They must have some philosophy because humor of itself, is not meaningful unless it is woven into the element of philosophy and inspiration." I said, "Now if you will let me mix it, maybe as much as fifty-fifty, I will do what I can in that kind of format"; and they have always accepted it. I have always done far better in my efforts as an after-dinner performer. I have always done

better where I take the major part of the time for philosophy. But it is amazing how the softening process of laughter helps you with the thread of serious thought that comes later.

One of the introductions that I had once, again, at the risk of being regarded as immodest--well, I don't know that it is either, it is just a characterization that I guess it is all right for me to feel was justified--Francis Sayre, dean of the Washington Cathedral, grandson of Woodrow Wilson, introduced me to a Philadelphia audience once like this. He said, "Brooks comes from the Ozark Country, whose people he loves; and he learned from them that the profoundest ideas are the least pretentious and are best conveyed by the little chariots of humor"--no, "the little chariots of anecdote and gentle humor."

T: Again, 1964 was a very varied year for you. At the end of the year you made a trip to Europe. I should say, really, in the middle of the year, August, 1964. You spoke at the Protestant Chapel, and then you had occasion to meet Pope Paul, VI. We talked about your visiting with Pope John. I don't think you have related going to the Vatican Council. The Vatican Council was meeting at that time, was it not?

H: Yes.

T: We haven't really talked about that. You shared your experience of meeting Pope John.

H: But not Paul?

T: I don't think so.

H: Well, did I tell you that the Religious News Service said that I was the only Protestant layman to have had a private audience with both Pope John and Pope Paul? Well, they did say that. I said to Miss Lillian Block, the editor of the Religious News Service, "Lillian, you made a mistake because Lyndon Johnson is a Protestant layman and he had private audiences with the popes." She said, "No, if you will read my sentence there, you will find that I was very precise and very accurate. What I said was, 'Mr. Hays is the only Protestant layman to have had private audience in the Vatican with both Pope John and Pope Paul.' The reason I regarded Mr. Johnson as not meeting that standard was that he paid a courtesy call on Pope Paul in America and New York. That was not the kind of papal audience that rated what you rated as an invitation from the Vatican to visit the popes." She made a point. You can take it either way. I shared honors with Mr. Johnson; or the other way. You can say this accurately. My meeting was as a fellow Christian. His meeting was as a fellow head of state. At least, that's the way one branch of catholicism would view his meeting Pope Paul.

Well, I remember many of the details, and there were some significant things said. Cardinal Willibrandt was in charge of the ecumenical endeavors of the Vatican at that time. Father Stransky was at the time a Catholic worker without rank, currently, though, the head of one of the orders with offices in New York State. Father Stransky and I got to be good friends. He went to serve not only as the person to introduce the two of us but to interpret if we needed it. Pope Paul's English was much better than Pope John's, so we didn't need an interpreter. It was a very pleasant, happy conversation. He was told that I was on my way to Berchtesgaden for a meeting of "the Protestant men of the Chapels" of the European area.

T: You went to the General Walker Hotel in the American recreation facility? That is Hitler's former headquarters.

H: Yes. We saw the ruins of the retreat that he had, and I can understand why he was eager to get out to that high point--in complete isolation from the worries of the times, if one wanted to be isolated from them, as he did at times. I remember Pope Paul said, "Please say to your brethren at the meeting that I shall--I am--praying for the success of your meeting." Well, that is comparable to the statement that Pope John made to me. "We are brothers in Christ." That was a historic statement, I think, because I probably was the first official of a large Baptist Convention to have been in the presence of a pope in his private quarters.

T: You described the trip as being an unofficial trip. How did you happen to go?

H: Do you remember the year of my visit with Pope Paul?

T: It was 1964. The report of it came out through the New York Times service that you had visited the Pope on September 19.

H: I don't recall whether I told President Johnson that I would bear his greetings to the Pope or not. I doubt that I did. But I do vividly remember . . . .

T: You were talking about making this trip. In the report in August you indicated that this trip was entirely unofficial, that you were going in the capacity of a private citizen.

H: That was after I had gone to Rutgers, of course. It was necessary that I make that trip because utterances by private citizens--and that's what I was at the time. I was a consultant at the White House, and because of that rather loose relationship it was necessary for me to indicate that nothing I said to the Pope had any White House authority. I remember in contrast with that relationship I made it clear that when I met with Pope John that I bore the greetings of the President of the United States. I was glad to see in the Kennedy Library recently that they could put their hands on the letter or memo that I wrote to President Kennedy telling him--I believe this may previously have been on a tape, that is, that the Pope was happy to respond and to say he would pray for the President. I added that our Baptist people had received my report warmly. I believe that was very pleasing to Jack Kennedy.

Now, back to Pope Paul. He said to Father Stransky, "Father Stransky, I want Mr. Hays to be my guest at the Ecumenical Council this afternoon. Please see that he gets a good seat at the meeting." He said, "Yes, your holiness." When we left, Stransky said to me, "You know, the Pope doesn't realize how much he has put on me to take you into that meeting." He said, "It is going to take five signatures and it's an awful job." I said, "Now listen to me, Father Stransky, you heard the Pope say it and I heard the Pope say it and I believe in papal infallibility; and I am going to go to that meeting." An ecumenical meeting, by the way, is sponsored by the ecumenicists of both the Baptist and the Catholic communities. He said, "Of course, I'll get you in." I told the Charleston, South Carolina, audience that story. Father Stransky was in the audience, and he laughed as loud as anybody. I told him I was going to that meeting.

T: What was your reaction to the Ecumenical Council? Was there translation service? You said you were to get a seat at the council. Did you get that seat?

H: Yes, I did, and I appreciated it. I found it a rather interesting experience. It is an amazing sight, really. Either side you would sit on you would be opposite half of the number of bishops and high officials.

T: It was held in St. Peters, wasn't it? Or was it held somewhere else?

H: I don't much believe it was in St. Peters; but I am just blank on that. It was an impressive room.

T: It wasn't the church?

H: I don't think so. It seems that there must have been a thousand or fifteen hundred of these bishops in very ornate robes, colorful costumes, and with the special hat that bishops wear, the tall kind. They were clad in the same fashion so they lost all distinctiveness and individuality, just as if you saw a thousand or fifteen hundred soldiers of the same rank. That part I was not impressed by because it just destroyed any sense of diversity and individuality. But there were some good talks made. The embassy asked me to hold a little press conference. They thought it was newsworthy, the fact that a former assistant to President Kennedy and a former member of Congress should be in that company, particularly since I am a Baptist. I am glad they did want me to meet with the newsman. I could give them some insights and some interpretation. I tried to say something funny once that went over in a fashion; but not with the Italian newsmen. I guess that one should be pretty sure of his humor before he tries it. I have to agree that the pun is the lowest form of humor. It is one of the few times that I ever tried to induce a smile with a pun.

One of the first questions in this little conference assembled in the embassy by the press people of our Embassy staff was, "Mr. Hays, what was your impression and how did you feel about the program at the council?" I said, "Well, I had different moods. When Cardinal Cushing spoke about religious liberty with fervor, I felt that I was in an old-fashioned Baptist meeting because we Baptists place a great deal of emphasis on religious liberty; and then, there was the mood of mediation and prayer, devotional moments, when you were moved into the attitude of worship, and it was like a Quaker meeting." I said, "Now, Gentlemen, don't misunderstand me, I am not catering to the Quakers. When I was a member of Congress, I didn't have a single Quaker in my district, and in 1958 not enough friends." Some of the newsmen laughed, but the interpreter just turned to me and said, "I don't think I will even try to translate it. It is too big of a play on words." But that was actually factual.

I had a feeling that a good deal of skill had gone into their program planning. Of course, in time, as our observers there from the Protestant side interpreted what was happening, it was obvious to the world that some significant things were taking place in Catholic policy. This was attributable, obviously, to Pope John's decision and his leadership because he was a strong man, which was a surprise to a lot of people who thought he was just an interim Pope with maybe a very short period of tenure. As it turned out, of course, this was the case, except they didn't know that the half-dozen years or so that he was in that position that he could produce some tremendous revolutionary ideas. I am just so glad that I had an opportunity to be in Rome for a while.

T: One of the things that came up during the time you were there was the question of whether the Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. Do you remember any involvement of that?

H: The only thing that I recall there is that apparently under the stern, firm hand of Pope John some offensive passages were removed from the literature of the Catholic church. For example, reference was made to "the perfidious Jew." I think that came out. And yet my friend, Monsignor Legutti, who favored this removal as I recall, told me that it never had been quite as offensive as it appeared to be. It meant the "unbelievers." The Jew is not a member of the Christian order--the church in other words. But "perfidious" has a connotation that would be offensive--well, even the other word would be offensive because it sets the Jew apart from the human family. So I was awfully glad he did that.

Are you familiar with the incidence in which the rabbis visited him? You know his Italian name was Angelo Geseppi Roncalli. When the rabbis came into his presence he turned to them in a very friendly gesture, holding out two arms. His first words, I am told, were, "I am your brother Joseph." He was a tremendous person.

Another incident that involved his peasant background and life in the northern part of Italy under rather rigorous conditions and circumstances--they were farm people--was that he was being carried in one of these sedan-like chairs; and on one of these trips through the crowd he saw some of his old neighbors from northern Italy, the farm village where he had grown up, and he stopped and talked to them. He said, "I want to see you inside. Please come on in." They did go in, and they said that he said this to them: "It embarrasses me to be carried on the shoulders of other people as if I am elevated above them. This is embarrassing because we are equal. I am embarrassed particularly to see you, because to see you brings back wonderful memories of my boyhood, but it particularly reminds me of the time when I was helping my father in the field. I was a little tad, maybe five years old. I was not doing much in the field except just to follow along with him and maybe do some chore that I might be able to do." He was just a boy. He said, "I would be so tired that father didn't require me to walk back home. He would put me on his shoulders and carry me." He said, "God is putting us all on his shoulders and carrying all of us at the same level, all brethren; and I am sorry you saw me in that elevated seat." That is like him.

T: After you were at Rutgers in the latter part of the year of 1964 you were involved in a legislative item which is of some interest--the Advisory Committee on Rural Areas Development. You had given some testimony relating to the Economic Opportunity Act that had been passed by that Congress. Do you have any recollection about having been involved in that? You dropped a note to the Baptist Joint Committee indicating that you had been involved in that. I just wondered it you had any recollection.

H: Was that while I was a member of the Agriculture Department? Advisory Committee on Rural Development?

T: Perhaps you were on that committee.

H: I was on the committee. I may not have the name.

T: Yes, you were on the committee--National Advisory Committee on Rural Areas Development.

H: That was the Department of Agriculture advisory committee.

T: It was not a congressional committee.

H: No. By the way, Mr. Carter has indicated recently that he is for the abolishment of these advisory commissions. There are a lot of them, and they get in each other's way; and probably, though their purposes are good, the practical results are hardly worth the exceedingly high expenses of operating them--calling the members in for a day or two at a time. The experiment, if it was an experiment to begin with, has not worked out, so I am inclined to think there is a lot of merit in what President Carter wants to do. However, this might be an exception. The Agriculture Advisory Committee might be an exception because of the special problems of low income.

T: Now this committee advised the Department of Agriculture. To whom would this committee report?

H: To the Secretary.

T: When they reported was the report then processed, or were they simply advisory in the sense it made suggestions that if the department chose to do something it might do it?

H: Purely advisory. It had no authority at all other than to advise.

T: Well, sometimes if it got a lot of public notice perhaps they would implement it, but not on a majority basis.

H: That's right and I don't remember really that we got much publicity, that we got much notice for our efforts. They were very stimulating discussions and very helpful to academic people, for example, who wanted to keep up to date on things affecting the farm population.

T: The year 1964 was really an eventful year for you but the beginning of the next year was perhaps even more eventful at the start. There was some attempt by the Klan to exclude you from speaking in Bogalusa, Louisiana. Do you remember some of the events surrounding that?

H: Yes. But I thought we had put that on tape.

T: Have we talked about that?

H: I thought we had. Maybe I am wrong. You remember that I said that they started the mimeograph machines when they heard that I was coming and the mimeograph said that anyone who goes to listen to this I-N-T-E-R--that's the way they spelled integrationist will be dealt (D-E-L-T) with. So it was the work of an illiterate leadership of the White Citizen's Council, and there were all kinds of people in the council but from my point of view all of the groups are unworthy as opposed to equality. But some were rather inoffensive and merely a symbol to discuss ways and means of slowing down integration. This was really not a Citizens' Council. I believe this was strictly Ku Klux Klan.

T: That's what the story suggested.

H: Well, that's correct, too. I remember now the literature that I saw was planned literature; but, undoubtedly, the White Citizens' Council got into this operation.

T: Then there was an attempt to say something to the people because of the cancellation of this particular event. I wasn't sure if we had a record of it.

H: I believe you will find it is in our record.

T: There was, of course, extensive discussion and a write-up of it in the paper.

H: This had national publicity. The New York Times, I remember, carried quite a story and a picture of me. It got quite a bit of attention in New Jersey where I had lived for those two years.

T: Well, after 1965, of course, you were beginning, I am sure, to give thought to reentering political life. You did run for governor in 1966.

H: Yes, I did.

T: Perhaps you can share something more on the experience in Bogalusa, Louisiana, when your speech was cancelled down there.

H: Well, it was in that period when some of the deep South communities were encountering, still, a continuing resistance to integration and to the enforcement of other phases of the Civil Rights laws. I was quite impressed when they called me, or wrote me--I forget which came first, the call or the letters. I thought that this local group, an ad hoc group led by the president of the Louisiana State Bar Association, Mr. Bascom Talley, did a very admirable thing.

T: He was the segregationist?

H: No. I don't know that he was identified as being on either side. He was a civic leader. He was a lawyer. They were trying merely to do what most of the real leadership in Little Rock was doing; that is, to have a peaceful transition into the new order of things. He had associated with him some ministers, as I recall it, two Baptist ministers, maybe an Episcopal minister, the editor of the local paper, and the owner of one radio station there. They took the position that one thing that would be helpful in Bogalusa was namely, mobilizing the sentiment of the churches for a peaceful integration process all through the community.

T: Now would you have gone as a private citizen or really at the instigation of the White House. You were described as troublemaker or troubleshooter. Troubleshooter, I guess we had better make it.

H: Well, in 1965, my connection with the White House was very tentative, very loose. I would not have gone as a White House representative. There is too much involved in protocol to have set up any kind of bridge at that time, but I was the former president of the Southern Baptist Convention. As I recall, two of these ministers were Baptists. The community was largely Baptist. The invitation was a very appealing thing because it said, "If Mr. Hays who holds some respectability here as a churchman can come and counsel with us on ways and means of preserving the peace of the community and doing what the Christian community ought to do, then we will have taken some leads forward in building a peaceful community." So, I was glad to go. I said, "Oh, yes. I'll come." Then, as I said, the mimeograph machine started turning and the Ku Klux Klan got out these illiterate circulars, and they were pretty provocative. One statement was, "Anyone going to hear this integrationist will be dealt with accordingly--D-E-L-T"--which was pretty threatening. So the community began to worry about it and have second thoughts about the wisdom of my coming. If that was their only intention, they had their way because the committee met and decided they could not afford to take a chance, that it would be a terrible thing if some physical violence was done to a visitor from the outside. They

were eager for me not to be exposed to bodily harm.

About that time, the governor of Louisiana, John McKeithen, got into the act. It was too pretty a political plum not to reach for it, so he said, "Yes, he thought Mr. Hays ought not to come into Louisiana." One of the newsmen asked him that same day in a later press conference, "Well, Governor, you don't mean that the president of the Southern Baptist Convention and a former member of Congress wouldn't be welcome in this state to talk about anything he wants to talk about, do you?" "Well," the governor drawled, "Oh, no, Mr. Hays would be welcome, of course." But that was exactly what he wasn't saying in his announcement that was issued before that.

T: Do you think you got more publicity because the speech was canceled than you would have gotten had you gone down from Louisiana?

H: I think so. I rather think that from the personal standpoint I had far more attention and more publicity and it gave me again a restored forum for expression of my own views. I was terribly disappointed, though, because it would have been a nice pilot project to see what could be done when church people try in some organized way to meet a challenge like that. The one man in that situation who gave me this feeling of wistfulness about aid to a distraught community was Bascom Talley. I am sorry to say that within a couple of years he died suddenly before he and I could meet. Our only friendship was by phone and letter. In the last conversation I had with him he said, "Mr. Hays, I am not a Baptist, but I am the father of a Methodist seminary student.

T: You are saying that Mr. Talley was going to be contributing through his son. Well, I appreciate your sharing this about Bogalusa. I don't think we had talked about that. Another matter that came up in . . . Did you want to say something?

H: One other thing. I was invited, then, to speak at the annual meeting of the New Orleans Federation of Churches, perhaps the following year, and I think I have a record of that speech if not a tape of it. Oh, I know, I know exactly what happened. My speech, together with the introduction by J. D. Grey, was made into a record by Word Records, Waco, Texas, Gerald McCracken. He made that into a record and sold a good many. Again, I don't know where my record is located, but it is on a disc. That has nothing to do with Bogalusa, except--and I wish this had gotten on record--the mayor of Bogalusa was in the audience, and he asked for the privilege of the floor to tell that group of New Orleans churchmen, the very cream of the Protestant leadership of New Orleans, that Bogalusa was now a peaceful community. He apologized in effect for what they had done to me, and he wanted to bear the greetings of his city to "this fellow Baptist." It was really a moving thing for the mayor to travel for that distance down to New Orleans.

T: This was just about a year later?

H: That's right.

T: A little later in the year there was some conversation, and I don't have information where--you can perhaps help me here--that Johnson was considering making an appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican. Do you know anything about that?

H: No. I have no information that wouldn't have gotten into the wire services.

T: To the best of your knowledge you really hadn't talked about it.

H: I doubt that he gave any serious consideration to that. He was rather prominently identified with the Disciples church and was proud of the fact that his Grandfather Baines--and his middle name you will remember was Baines--was a Baptist preacher who had something to do with the founding of Baylor University. At any rate, President Johnson was rather proud of the family tie and regularly attended the National Memorial Christian Church here in Washington. I just can't believe that he would have taken that request seriously if our Catholic friends were importuning him to do it. Then there was Bill Moyers, an ordained Baptist minister, who had something to say.

T: Then you became the assistant director of Community Service Relations, an agency which was a part of the Commerce Department working under the Civil Rights Act?

H: Yes, I think I described that, perhaps, and told about accepting the associate director's job with Roger Wilkins, the brilliant young black.

T: You weren't in that position too long until rumors began to fly that you were considering the governorship in Arkansas. What prompted these rumors, and what happened as you began to get closer to that event?

H: Well, I remember the circumstances very clearly. I had, in the meantime, been elected one of the vice-presidents of the National Council of Churches, which shocked some of my Southern Baptist friends because of the traditional opposition among Southern Baptists. I think there is no question about the majority of Southern Baptists being opposed to membership in the National Council of Churches. But it is often overlooked that membership in the Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, or most any church in Washington--any Baptist church or other church--involves a tie to the National Council. But Baptists have what we call dual alignment. So, I was eligible to be a vice-president in the National Council of Churches. At first, after they had asked me if I would accept the vice-presidency and I had said yes, they were a little agitated because they thought they had found that as a member of the Wake Forest Baptist Church in Winton-Salem that I was not eligible, since the Southern Baptist Convention is not a member of the federated Council. So I quickly put them at ease. I said, "Well, again, our Baptist structures are very loosely knit organizations, and I am a member of two Baptist churches. I am not only a member of the Wake Forest Church but I am a member of the Calvary Baptist Church, and if the local congregation wants to do it they can do it." So, I didn't have to cease to be a member of Calvary Church, which I had belonged to for quite a while, to become a member of this other church. The thing that really preserved that vice-presidency position for me--and I was happy to have it--was my membership in the Calvary Church.

President J. R. Scales was delighted when I was made one of the vice-presidents of the National Council. Probably he received a little flak from some North Carolina Baptists because, as is the case in every southern state, Baptists are divided on many things. There is always a liberal element, you might call it, and a conservative element, that are very vocal. He has had to take a lot of criticism for various educational policies that represented departure from some of the old established ways. Well, I don't think that calls for any further discussion.

T: Had you gone to Wake Forest by this time, or were you at the Ecumenical Institute then? This was later, was it not? About 1966?

H: You are right about that. Now why am I jumping ahead? I think now I can retrace that and get the chronology in proper order. Before I became the vice-president of the National Council of Churches, I had accepted the special mission to go to Mississippi and make a study of the Delta Mission, which was an arm of the National Council of Churches.

T: The Delta Ministry.

H: The Delta Ministry. I had accepted the chairmanship of that committee. I did not go as vice-president. I jumped ahead thinking that my service to the National Council was based on my official position. That is not true. You are exactly right because I did not become a member of the Wake Forest staff to launch the Ecumenical Institute until February, 1968--two years later.

T: We are talking about January and February, 1966.

H: You see how easy it was for me to get confused a few moments ago because I was in Jackson, Mississippi, with some of my staff members from the New York National Council offices to study the problem of giving this help through the National Council to some of the minority group. It was while I was there that I had a telephone call from a young lawyer in Jonesboro, Arkansas, Bill Penix, who wanted me to consider running for governor. He said, "With Faubus retiring it is an open field, and there is going to be quite a scramble. From my point of view none of the men mentioned measure up, and I think the sentiment has swung back toward you in a substantial way. I believe you could be elected governor." Well, I said that it was probably worth surveying and that I didn't want to express myself one way or another because I had no judgment on it at that time. I did find time to make a trip to Little Rock to survey the situation. Some of my friends had been told that I was coming, so some of them came to Little Rock to talk to me from other points in the state. Then, there were a lot of friends right there in Little Rock who were knowledgeable, and they gave me their advice.

One of the most interesting things about that decision I did make not long after that to announce my candidacy was the advice that I got from the sheriff of Conway County. His name was Marlin Hawkins, who had been sheriff for a number of years and who was a warm supporter of mine. I thought he was on the right side, and I still think he is on the right side of Arkansas politics, although he had supported Faubus in most of his races. But Marlin, in a burst of confidence in a conversation with Faubus, along in the spring of 1966 when they were having a cup of coffee together in a little lunchroom, Marlin told me that the governor said, "Marlin, who do you think would be a leading candidate for governor to keep the Republicans from taking over?" Marlin said, "Well--he pointed to the glass of ice water in front of the governor--now don't douse me with this glass of water when I tell you. Brooks Hays is the man who ought to be governor." Faubus said, "Well, it may surprise you for me to say that I won't douse you with water and that that might be a very sensible thing. It might be the proper thing for the people to give Brooks a chance to speak up."

Well, that, of course, was significant because he had said some rather ugly things about me in the integration controversy. I thought since everyone respected Hawkins as a very fine judge of political training--I am disregarding philosophy or identification of any kind, just as a powerful political figure who was capable of judging situations--I thought that meant that maybe the mood of the people was cordial and that I might win it. I hadn't given much thought in congressional years to being governor. My interests had become

somewhat national and international and centered in legislative rather than in executive problems. I didn't have any burning desire to be governor. But one thing that influenced me--and I got some encouragement along this line--was that it would give a lift to a lot of young moderates in the South who would regard my election as governor as a reversal of the political trend, and it would give me a forum for proclaiming in the South as an authentic Southern political leader which would give me a forum that I had really never had. I had had the church forum, but to be governor of a southern state, particularly a state that had had the dramatic drift in public sentiment that we had had, would be a rather exciting thing, I thought. So, I made my decision to run, made the campaign, made a quiet campaign. . . .

T: It was my understanding that a poll was conducted to see what the possibilities of your support would be. The Washington Post reported that in March. Who paid for that kind of thing?

H: This was paid by my friends, and they quickly raised the money for it because these friends were tremendously concerned about who would succeed Faubus--there was no problem raising it. I had nothing to do with it as I recall. I don't recall asking, oh, maybe I did ask one or two friends for a check to help pay for it. As I recall, it cost us fifteen hundred dollars, and it was made by a professional pollster, John Kraft. I believe he is dead now. He was a professional, and his study showed that I had good name recognition; that I had a good image in the state; that it was apparent from that study that I had the best chance to defeat the Republican nominee, and of all the people who were being mentioned I had the best chance.

T: By this time the Republican party had gained some stature.

H: That's right. Winthrop Rockefeller, personally, than the party he was identified with; but there was to be a campaign in the fall, and the old days in which the Democratic Primary settled everything are gone forever.

T: Were there many in the race with you?

H: Yes, there were seven as I remember it for the nomination. I think I would have won the nomination and gone on to win the governorship--I could have defeated Rockefeller; and the general thought was, I think, that the wise observers were quite correct in that I was about the only Democrat who could defeat Rockefeller. But, you see, the problem was to head off Jim Johnson, this raging segregationist, who was determined to be governor. He launched a well-financed campaign. The assumption is, and I suppose that there is no doubt about it, that a lot of Republican money got into his coffers because they thought the Republicans would have the best chance of defeating him. He would be an easier candidate to defeat than most of the rest of us. Now I would have been able, I think, to have defeated Johnson in the primary except for the sudden emergence of a third figure, a member of the Supreme Court, a justice named Frank Holt; but his getting into the race changed the picture a good deal. I even thought of withdrawing after that because I could see that the nonsegregationists' vote in the state would be split; and that Holt, having a good name and reputation--but not a colorful person or exciting or imaginative leader--would have a pretty good chance to edge me out, particularly since obviously some of the old Faubus organization was going to support him. Now Faubus didn't come out for anybody. I certainly wouldn't have wanted him to come out for me, even though as indicated by Mr. Hawkins, he felt no sense of vengeance toward me because of the different ways that we moved. Well, some of the . . .

T: Did you talk to Faubus about the race?

H: Yes, I did; and I did it after a good deal of reflection on the situation. I talked to my son in Little Rock, whose general philosophy was the same as mine. I talked to friends here in Washington; and our judgment was that since Hawkins just said, "If Brooks is going to run for governor, he must at least let Governor Faubus know he is going to run." Well, that was an act of courtesy because Faubus, you see, was the head of the Democratic party; and I had no right to make the race as a defiant opponent of Governor Faubus. I knew that if we healed the wound the segregation fight had created, there would have to be some moderating influence. I was still in a position, I thought, to supply that political moderating influence. Now, I had some unfinished things that I wanted to see done in Arkansas. You see, I had made these two earlier races and they were bruising races, and I had invested a good deal, you might say, into these hopes of the governorship. So, I had worked up a good deal of interest in it by that time. When I suggested to some of my friends, after Judge Holt's announcement, that maybe I ought to retire and just leave it to Johnson and Holt, they said, "No, you ought not to do that, run it out." But it changed the whole style of campaigning. It had to be what the New York Times called, "the lackluster campaign." I don't think that was quite fair to me to dismiss me as having a lackluster campaign. But you see, if we entered that primary fight with a divided Democratic constituency there would be no hope of defeating Rockefeller; and I wasn't going to add anything to the wounds. So, I made it entirely a quiet, personal campaign. On the other hand, Jim Johnson, the segregationist who did beat Judge Holt in the runoff . . .

I ran a good race, I was third and came close to winning a place in the runoff. I think I have said this to you, if I had made the runoffs I believe I could have defeated Johnson; Holt couldn't. He lacked the acquaintanceship that I had, and I think he lacked the drive that I made in the campaign.

T: Did you try to talk Holt out of running?

H: Oh, no. There wasn't a chance of that. I think maybe one of my friends implored him not to run, but I made no overtures. I don't recall that I even talked to him except maybe when I just bumped. I said, "Well, Frank, it will be a friendly race." I knew that whichever one of us landed in the runoff that the other would be for him. Neither of us could go with Johnson. So, there had to be a sort of armed neutrality.

T: And you came third?

H: I came third with a respectable showing considering the fact that I had been out of office for eight years, and it had been thirty-six years since I had made the second of the two earlier races. I suppose, as a little footnote, I am the only man in the history of American politics who waited thirty-six years between races for governor. I was 32 when I made my second race back in 1930; and I was 68 when I made the third race. Now there were some other minor candidates, but I think that is the gist of the political situation.

T: Now, you didn't win. You came third, and Johnson went on to win the Democratic Primary.

H: He was defeated by Rockefeller. I think he has made two races since then, one for the Senate; and his wife ran for the governorship two years later.

T: Have you met Mr. Faubus recently?

H: Yes. I was with him a few months ago on two occasions. I was with him in Nashville at a nine-state conference on human problems.

T: Who put that on?

H: The National Endowment for the Humanities. Governor Faubus was there as one of the panelists. He chaired one of the seminars on land problems in the South. When the editor of The Nashville Tennessean, John Siegenthaler, heard that we were both there for the program he immediately asked if we would be willing to have a little radio program with him as the master of ceremonies with just friendly questions about the various problems of the South. I agreed. So, Faubus and I had a very pleasant studio experience there.

Then, a little later when I went to Fayetteville for some appearance there, the editor of the Conway paper, John Ward, asked if we would be willing to sit down with him to do the kind of thing that you and I are doing--recording some of our recollections of the Little Rock Central High School experience. I agreed and Governor Faubus agreed. So, we sat there for a long time--maybe two hours--and talked about it. The most amazing thing was said by Governor Faubus. He said, "You know, the only person who showed courage and wisdom in the Little Rock experience is the gentleman sitting here by me, Brooks Hays. I want that to show in the record. I think that his wisdom and his courage . . ." He used those two words, and I could hardly believe my ears. But it somewhat affected me. I didn't like then to appear too militant in my exchange of ideas with him. I tried not to gloat over the fact that this represented a shifting of sentiment by him. I did say, in answer to Ward's question, that I wished that I had been able to talk Governor Faubus out of his position of resisting the Supreme Court decision, but that I had not been able to do it.

T: Did you see Governor Faubus when he appeared on "A.M. America" about three or four weeks ago? He appeared to be saying that Arkansas had been solving the race issue and he seemed to be trying to justify what he did in calling out the National Guard.

H: Yes, he does. He tried to do the same thing in this radio record that I am talking about. But I just have a feeling that if it were to be done over again that he would wind up on our side. I think he realizes that his name is not as good a name in American politics as it had been and the reason for it was that he was on the wrong side at one stage and that history is judging him rather harshly. That is because he might have been a symbol for another trend, another course in American politics. I have had the theory all along that he wanted to go either way, that he had protected his options prior to the violence at the Central High School. He had protected his options because if he could preserve the quiet integration process, he would have been hailed as the great innovator of a new South. He would have gained national momentum. He would have come to be a national hero overnight. But you see he knew that the price of doing that would be the loss of the governorship. I suppose he was right about it politically. I guess that he could not have been reelected for a third term in 1958, a year later, if he had done that; nevertheless, he would go down in history as a great public figure--without the governorship.

T: When you lost the governorship in 1966 what was your reaction; or at least lost the primary?

H: It didn't depress me, but I was somewhat disappointed. I had made a lot of new friends, I had reestablished some contacts, and the state had been reminded

that there was such a person living, and that while I was 68 years of age, I was vigorous.

T: Was your age considered a factor?

H: Very much so. I think that was, perhaps, the largest single factor coupled with the fact that I had been out of the state a good deal and had lost a lot of contacts.

T: Had it been a two-way race you probably would have beaten the man? Was this Holt's argument in coming into the race? You were too old?

H: No, Holt's argument was that he had waited a good while to be governor himself. He had the same ambition that we had, and he just wanted to be governor. That, coupled with the fact that leading figures of some of the special interests of Arkansas went to Holt and apparently talked him into running, I have been told. Here I would have to say that is pure hearsay, but later events tended to support it. These were bond interest which had been authorized under the new order of things; also printing interest, the utility interest, and even one liquor interest. Now I can't help but believe that occurred; I am rather convinced that it did occur. I can't help believing, also, that one of the motivations was that they were a bit afraid of me. They knew there would be a new style in the state politics, that I would not be calling them in to see what I might do for them and in return receive financial help and so on. It was sort of a discouraging thing because while we are seeing the new type of congressmen--these eager young men coming in to Congress who are crusaders . . . We are seeing some results at the national level in government financing of campaigns. This means that this old order in which selfish interests can have greater weight in political affairs than they should have on the basis of ethics and merit is gradually disappearing. While that is true at the national level, we are still, I think, suffering in most of the states from inordinate political power by limited selfish interests.

T: Was money a problem for you in that campaign?

H: Not much. It might have been a little tough for me after the runoff. I mean we might have had a little trouble getting enough to get down to the wire, but I made it all right. I had a bit of a debt left hanging over me, but some of my friends came in and made up what was necessary to pay it off.

T: So you never really moved back to Arkansas? You just moved back for the campaign?

H: Well, my son and his family, of course, have continued to live there. My name is on the letterhead of his firm, Spitzberg, Mitchell, and Hays, with my name "Brooks Hays," appearing, "of counsel." My wife and I lived at the Sam Peck Hotel when we were there for the 1966 campaign as we had lived in other years and other visits to Little Rock. That was our home for most of my sixteen years in Congress. It is right across the street from the Federal Building. We generally had the same room, Room 205 in the Sam Peck Hotel. It was in that room, incidentally, that I made my first calls in setting up the Newport Conference. Sherman Adams, President Eisenhower's assistant, and I spent hours on the phone trying to work it out.

T: This was 1958?

H: That goes back to 1957. Incidentally, next Tuesday will be the twentieth

anniversary of the outbreak at Central High School, September 20. September 13 was the twentieth anniversary of our meeting in Newport. You see, the Little Rock High Schools were integrated under court orders and with military protection when the nine pupils were admitted. The only one of the nine black pupils to finish was Ernest Green. The others either went to some other school or dropped out. It was, of course, a very unhappy experience for both races. Ernest Green was in the class of 1958, which was the first class under integration orders; and on the tenth anniversary of that class--that would be in 1968--they invited me to be the speaker at that class reunion of their tenth anniversary. I thought that was interesting, particularly since they did not invite Orval Faubus. He was their governor, you see; but the class voted to invite me and Ernest Green, who was employed in one of the government agencies in a rather responsible office, I am told, in New York City. He and I got the attention. I was glad for him to get more attention than I could ask to get because, naturally, there was a good deal of novelty in his graduation. It was pleasing to see him get a lot of attention at that tenth reunion. Newsweek, this month, carried an item that it was rather remarkable that now, twenty years later, he has been appointed Assistant Secretary of Labor.

T: Oh, he has been now?

H: Yes sir, he is now in a top spot in the Department of Labor. He told a friend of mine the other day that he wanted to see me. So, I am going to get in touch with him and maybe have lunch with him and this friend that he is working with on some things. I think that is worth noting.

T: Are you still a partner in the firm of which your son is involved?

H: No. I never was a participating partner. I have had no share in the income of the firm; but what "of counsel" meant was that on occasion or in some special situation I might be available for consultation, if they wanted to write me or call me. That is the implication in the words "of counsel." That means I am not a member of the firm, but I am available for consultation.

T: Do they call you from time to time?

H: I only remember one occasion in which I was asked by the firm to do some things here in Washington, to advise some of the officials or get some information for them. It is amusing that it was Winthrop Rockefeller who was their client. I was asked to do something in the way of picking up information or performing some chore.

T: That is paradoxical as these things happen.

H: I have managed, as you know, to keep on pretty good personal terms with my political enemies. I think I will tell you one thing that illustrates that, and it was a matter of great consolation to me. One day when I was still in Congress a Little Rock friend walked in. He had never been a political friend, but we had always spoken pleasantly to each other. He had been the secretary to one of the governors and had always been on the other side. The lines had just fallen in that direction. This has been twenty years ago, I guess, near the end of my congressional service. We were on a first-name basis. I suppose he must have been fifteen years older than I. He said, "Brooks, I am at the age in life now, being in poor health too, that I know I don't have much more time. I want to talk very frankly and personally with you. I want to begin by saying that I once regarded your religious posture as a pose. I felt that it was a matter of exploiting the Baptist relationship, and I just had that feeling about you. I have become convinced over the years that I was completely

wrong. I respect your religion, and I know it is a sincere part of your life. I want to ask you this: Since I have never been a religious man, have never had any connection with a church, and have never made any protestations of faith, do you think maybe there is some way in which the Lord can let me sneak in at the back door when I pass over into the other world?" I said, "No, Joe, I don't think that can be done in the light of your situation, but I'll tell you this: I think he will roll out the red carpet at the front door and have open arms for you." We had a fine little talk. His name was Joe Schneider.

T: After you were defeated you came back to Washington in the spring of 1966. What did you do then? Go to Wake Forest?

H: No, you see there is a year you haven't accounted for. I went to Wake Forest in February, 1968. You've got a year and a half there, haven't you?

A man named William C. Havard called me on the phone here in Washington. We had come back to quietly watch the runoff from a distance. He called me from Amherst, Massachusetts, where the University of Massachusetts is located. He was the head of the Political Science Department, and he said, "My wife and I will be in Washington--or maybe it was New York--and I've got a job here for you, a visiting professorship for a semester. If you are not committed for the fall term, I can take care of you with a salary of twenty thousand dollars a year," which was what Rutgers had paid me, "and pay you that for the fall semester until about February 1, 1967." We accepted the invitation. My wife and I moved to Amherst. When I say move, all we had to do was take our clothing and a few personal items with us because we had this home.

T: You kept your home?

H: We kept the home all the way along.

T: When did you first move here? (Referring to the Second Street Southeast house.)

H: In 1951.

T: The year 1951 when you were in Congress.

H: I could walk to my office in the House office building in five minutes. That was a big factor in our acquiring this place. I am awfully glad we did because it is worth several times as much as I paid for it. It is free from debt and has been my hedge against inflation. But we went to Amherst, and we were a little afraid a New England winter would chill us, but it didn't. It was a dry cold, and we got used to it. I got a good pair of galoshes, and I do believe I got out my heavy underwear; but, at any rate, we didn't suffer from the cold. We just had the finest winter. We lived in the oldest house west of Worcester, built in 1728. It was sort of like my father's butcher knife, though. He held it up and said, "That butcher knife has been in the family for seventy-five years. Of course we have worn out two handles and three blades, but it is the same knife." It was really the same house. Of course, in the old days, they had what they called heart timbers, you know, the very heart of those great rugged oaks and other types of sturdy trees. The frame was there, and the same beams and rafters, and so on.

T: But it had been refurbished.

H: That's right and on the same foundation. We had the second floor apartment,

two rooms, and we ate downstairs at the faculty club. The faculty club had a little kitchen with a very modest cuisine. The bathroom had been put on as an afterthought and the rafters were slanting and low; and I never went in it for two or three months that I didn't bump my head. I think, finally, after two or three months, I learned to dodge those rafters. My wife had a special ointment she'd rub into my head. But we loved it.

Along toward the end of the year, Dr. Harvard said, "I've got news for you and I want to put up a proposition to you. This special professorship was given to us through a Ford Foundation Grant, and you were designed to be the last man of the series. I have scratched around and have found some more money, so I can pay you for another semester. Would you stay for the spring semester?" Well, we were delighted to do it. So we had two semesters and I taught graduate students. It was an easy teaching service. I had one class for two hours on Wednesday and another class for two hours on Thursday; and that is all I had except that I was expected to do some writing and a lot of public speaking interpreting the university's purposes to various groups, educational groups. But it was an easy assignment, and I got very much interested in politics in Massachusetts.

I was invited to speak to the state legislature in Boston. My, that was thrilling to me because my own state legislature in Arkansas in the whole sixteen years that I had been a member of Congress had never asked me to address either the House or Senate. I was on the wrong side politically. I had some friends in the governor's office, but not close friends, and no political alliances at all. So this invitation to speak to the legislature in Boston was a very warm invitation. I was glad to have it.

T: That would bring you up to the spring of 1968.

H: No, that was 1967.

T: Okay, 1967.

H: We came back to Washington. However, my relationship with Dr. Havard was a very wonderful relationship. My wife and his wife were so congenial. She was a British girl. I called her Bill Havard's "bundle from Britain." They had met when he was a student at Cambridge University. He was a very distinguished and scholarly person, although he came out of the Louisiana population without much of this world's goods. His father was, as I remember it, a locomotive engineer. At least, he was a railroad man. They were not people of great means, but he had a distinguished record in college. The four of us--Mr. and Mrs. Havard and my wife and I--have been very congenial. We visit each other, and he has taken a lot of interest in my writing. He is now, I think, recommending to the Louisiana Press that they publish my memoirs. I don't know whether those memoirs will be published or not, but they are practically finished. That is the story of Bill Havard.

T: Then, after you had finished at Amherst you returned to Washington?

H: Yes. I began to look forward, then, to the campaign of 1968 because Wallace, of Alabama, was on the horizon. I felt that he should not capture the Democratic Party. We organized that fall what was called the Southern Committee on Political Ethics; the acronym was SCOPE. I was the chairman of it, and we had a rather prestigious Board of Directors--men like Hodding Carter; Hugh Patterson, publisher of The Arkansas Gazette; Ralph McGill, The Atlanta Constitution; Frank Smith, former congressman from Mississippi; and several

outstanding black leaders, Vernon Jordan among them. We had a few meetings and managed to get enough financing to do some research and be able to show a lot of the leaders in industrial states that Wallace's record was antilabor, antiminority, anit-intellectual, and so on. So, we helped in some close states, I think, to keep Wallace from throwing the election into the House of Representatives. Well, I was giving a good deal of time to that back in the fall of 1967.

I believe it was after the first of the year, maybe in January, when Dr. Scales, president of Wake Forest University--and he had been in the presidency only a short time--walked into my office, this little temporary office we had over near the Senate office building in one of the apartments there, and came right to the point after we had had a few pleasantries. He said, "I want you to come down to Wake Forest and be the first director of an Ecumenical Institute." It didn't take me long to tell him I would. He wanted me on a half-time basis--again, the figure of twenty thousand dollars, ten thousand dollars for half-time. It seems like I couldn't break that barrier. That was about all I needed, actually, because I had my congressional retirement. So, I was glad to accept it. I am doubly glad now as I reflect upon its significance, what we have been able to do. My wife and I had a two-room apartment in the alumni house there in Winston-Salem. We could have our breakfast there, but we had to drive to a little restaurant a few blocks away for the dinner hour. We had a car provided for us. I called it "Old Ironsides." It was one of these great big old gasoline guzzlers. I used it until it almost fell apart. They told me they had paid three hundred dollars for it at a government surplus property sale, but it was at least transportation. We got along just fine. There I began to make these modest first steps toward a program of acquainting Baptists of North Carolina with the new demands of Christian brotherhood and of interfaith activities. It was just a great thing.

T: Was it hard to break in, to do that?

H: No, it wasn't. I am not, of course, a theologian nor a scholar. I regard myself still as a lawyer and a politician and an amateur social worker, we mustn't forget that. I had the help of some very scholarly--Dr. Scales himself is quite a scholar, and his wife is also a very learned person. She's a political scientist.

T: His area is political science, isn't it?

H: Yes, and he married a political scientist. He had been president of Oklahoma Baptist University, also, president of, I believe, or maybe dean of Oklahoma State University. So he had had those two academic assignments, prestigious ones in Oklahoma. The Baptists received him well. He has a marvelous way of communicating, a very personable guy. I got to be just so fond of him. I admired him very much. He said to me shortly after I got down there, "Brooks, how would you feel about our changing the name of the Ecumenical Institute. I am getting some flak and some criticism, and I think if we used the words 'Cooperative Christianity' it would be a little better." Well, that is, of course, what the Baptist World Alliance did. It didn't take me long to decide that wouldn't do at all. In fact, I think I told him, "Dr. Scales, I don't think you can afford to do that. Maybe if it were a matter of first impressions we could do it, but now you would be lowering the flag if you changed the name of it to give our enemies the comfort of saying we weren't such good advocates of the idea in the first place." Within a week or two he said, "You know, I am convinced you are right. We just mustn't change." I think that conviction has grown on him since then that he made the right decision.

T: You worked with Claude Broach?

H: Well between Claude Broach's election to the same job I had--I don't think they changed the title at all. I think they still call him Director of the Ecumencial Institute. There was another director, J. W. Angell. He thought I was kidding, but I really meant it when I said, "You are well named, son, you are well named." He is a fine person and a very human type.

T: You worked on this half-time you say. What did that mean?

H: It meant that they paid me ten thousand dollars a year for half-time. It meant that I was expected to be on campus and if not on campus to be devoting at least half of my time to the work. I suspect I did a little better than that when you consider that when I was here there was work to do.

T: Did you keep working with this SCOPE Committee?

H: Yes, but that didn't require much time. We had an executive secretary. My job was more advisory and to preside at the meetings of the board and sort of keep my hand on the throttle.

T: The Ecumenical Institute, then, really began under your leadership. What did you have to do?

H: Well, let me finish about Angell. He was not paid anything. But since he was willing to do it they made the directorship a part of his duties as a professor of religion. He was on the faculty. I was not. I had no academic duties at all. He did. He had tenure and he was glad to do this. I think, as a matter of fact, instead of adding to his compensation they merely reduced his work load as a teacher.

T: So yours was more promotional, getting it organized, funding . . .

H: I didn't succeed much at the funding. I tried, but Scales was a whole lot more effective than any of us. He had a friend over in Durham who seemed to warm to my point of view and my attitude in the religious world, and she was always ready to give him a check if he needed funds. He would go there or else call her on the phone, and she would send a check. I know he told me once, "Well, I got a check for six thousand dollars from our friend." He was very good at that. That, of course, is the great function of a president, he's got to raise money. But he is good at it, and Winston-Salem is a good place to get money. There is a lot of wealth there, and they are very proud of that university. He has had a hard row and runs into these difficulties now and then. He is a great believer in student government, for example, youngsters having the right to make decisions that their elders would rather make themselves, such as selecting people to come to the campus and make speeches, people whose views might be offensive to Baptists. They want to fall out sometimes with the president because he is given that right. He did it because of his devotion to the principle of student democracy. He held his ground. They are not going to embarrass him but the extremists and you know the type that always try to do that sort of thing . . .

Now that is about the story. Claude Broach is doing a grand job. Oh, one other thing. Broach was very influential in bringing in the Belmont Abbey Brothers, that is, the Benedictine Order. He was very influential in getting a merger of their ad hoc committee on ecumenism into the Ecumentical Institute. So it is now the joint venture of Wake Forest University and Belmont Abbey College--the only thing of its kind, I am pretty sure, in all the world.

T: Between Baptists and Roman Catholics?

H: Right.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Southern Baptist Convention Presidents

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Lawrence Brooks Hays

INTERVIEWER: A. Ronald Tonks

DATE OF INTERVIEW: October 5, 1977

PLACE: Brooks Hays' residence, 314 S.E. Second Street, Washington, D. C.

T: Mr. Hays, it is good to see you again and good to see you in such good health.

I wanted to raise some things just about where we cut off last time. We were talking about your involvement in the years 1965-66. We were beginning to come kind of close to the present, so I hope it won't be so hard to remember these things. You received an honor from the Christian Life Commission in 1955. Would you give me some recollection of how this came about and some of the involvements in receiving this award?

H: Well, actually, Ron, I don't remember a great deal about it. I have the plaque. It is a very cherished part of my memorabilia, but I don't recall, exactly, the statement on the plaque. It was designed to make me feel good about some of the energies that I expended in the early days of the Christian Life Commission. I was the first, I believe, to be given the Commission award. You would know about that.

T: As far as I know that is correct and it was while you were at Rutgers. I think one of the statements was, "for your contribution in the interest of world peace, racial justice, and Christian citizenship" during the annual meeting of the Christian Life Commission.

H: Well, I am glad that you had that because I tend to forget. It really took

a bit of stirring of interest on my part to get the Baptists to acknowledge this problem of world peace and to concede that they had a contribution to make. In 1958, in the Houston Convention, I had recommended in my president's address that there be set up a commission to study the possibility of Baptists making a continuing and imaginative and Christian contribution to the processes of peace. It was adopted, of course, without opposition. People were ready to work with me on it. I had asked my former pastor, Dale Cowling, Second Baptist Church in Little Rock, to offer the resolution. He offered it and then I appointed Walter Pope Binns, who had been pastor of the great First Church at Roanoke, and at that time was--no, he had retired as president of William Jewell College. I am not quite sure about the sequence. But at any rate he did become president of William Jewell and rendered a great service in that educational field. I don't recall some of the other members but it was a working commission; and he reported the recommendations to the Louisville convention and those recommendations were approved. It resulted in setting up a sort of what we would call a listening post and an active continuing contribution to the sentiment-forming side or the decision-making side of the UN, in other words to interpret the Baptist position to the delegates. There are all sorts of facilities in existence at the UN headquarters to aid all of the churches and what are called the nongovernmental organizations in this respect. So, the Christian Life Commission, I believe, was designated as the agency or the arm of the Convention for carrying out the purposes of that resolution. I think that is all I need to say on that. While little money was available for it, Foy Valentine, who has been for a good while the executive-director of the commission, did a very fine job in stimulating interest on the part of Baptists in the United Nations and in other problems of peace.

Well, I would say, and I have said, actually, when I have been asked, what are the things that have happened during my administration that were attributable to my leadership in the two year period? I have always said that there were two principal contributions, that is, the two that give me greatest gratification: what I did to promote racial justice and harmony and then, secondly, in the cause of world peace. There were other contributions. I tried to do a good job in the field of church-state relations: interpreting particularly to the young preachers and young politicians the relationship of these two communities--the religious community and the political community; and breaking down some of the rigidities of the American doctrine of church-state separation. I am rather proud of that. In other words, what I have said, I guess, is that I had three principal interests. Well, I was, at that time, a member of the Congress. I didn't give up my seat in Congress until the election in November and then, of course, my successor was sworn in in the middle of January, or rather on January 3.

T: I was going to ask you. You said the breaking down of the law of separation of church and state. What do you mean by that?

H: No, I think if you will examine the language, Ron, I said breaking down the rigidities or dissolving or softening the rigidities. Not the wall. I am for the wall. I put it like this: that wall should be impregnable. That wall, incidentally, I believe was Jefferson's expression. I have started sometimes in my little discussion of the problem with the students with the idea that the wall is impregnable; but, that to be impregnable it does not have to be impenetrable. Just as the Chinese Wall had openings, or any wall has openings, there must be a commerce in ideas between the two. The important thing is that the sources of power be on opposite sides of that wall; that the ecclesiastical authority not undertake to exert political authority, that is,

institutionally, and that, contrary-wise, the politicians not exert ecclesiastical authority. The plan has worked in our country. It is a good doctrine, and I think that the older countries observing it rather envy us. Country after country are attempting, rather deviously at times, to imitate us. So, I always speak with great respect for the idea of separation and with great pride in it.

You see, sometimes it is misconstrued. Those of fragile faith in political righteousness or in political progress use that as an excuse not to interest themselves in the problems of state. I put it like this using some rhetoric for you--but that is inevitable when you have made as many appearances as I have in these forums--that the Christian and the patriot may inhabit the same heart. That is possible only if the patriot heeds the words of insight and perceptiveness that the prophet can give him; and the Christian's attitude must be one of sensitivity to the problems of the larger community, the whole community. Because while it would be fine if the world's population were made up of believers, Christ's disciples, it isn't that way; and we must live in this world with those who do not share our devotion to the Christian gospel.

Roger Williams said something that I ran across recently. It is something interesting for him to have said. I would not be surprised at such words from a prominent ecumenist. But Roger Williams said to his contemporaries--and that was a period, of course, of intense individualism and intense sectarianism--"Now we must get along with those of other faiths. Remember, we are riding in a ship which also bears"--and he used language that seems a little strange to us today--"Turks, Jews, infidels, atheists," and, I think, he said, "Mohammedans." You don't hear that any more; when he spoke of the church I suppose he was speaking in generic terms. When I was a boy I used to hear the orators speak of . . . So, Roger Williams was saying that we must get along. He said, "We must avoid the kind of controversy that produces violence and thus, in a fashion, threaten the little ship that has to move peacefully across the sea."

T: You are saying that you see the contributions you made when you were president of the Southern Baptist Convention in the area of world peace, racial justice, and the third thing--this mellowing of resistance between participants on the state and the church side, not tearing down in any sense the distinctions but rather an awareness of one of the other.

H: Right. I think God committed the governments of this planet to the human family, not just to us, because we are free. We are free to be nonbelievers. That was his plan. There is no question about that. Since he created us, as the eighth psalm says, "to have dominion," that must be wisely exerted. We are feeling that now, I think, more emphatically than we ever have in the past with the diminishing resources that sustain life. The environmentalists have made a contribution to us. When you get into that area of political thought, you have to resort, consciously or unconsciously, to the teachings of religion. "The earth is the Lord's." It is only as we acknowledge our stewardship that we can really make headway in laying out world policy, and particularly national policy, to conserve our heritage. So, I don't think that Christians can afford to be indifferent to these moral and spiritual aspects of political life.

T: We were talking about eighteen years ago. Do you see that there has been any change as a result of the emphases that you placed in this area of church and state?

H: Well, I think that perhaps progress has been made.

T: In what area specifically? Can you think of some specifics where there has been progress? Building on what you have done?

H: Well, I wasn't thinking so much of progress attributable to me, although if you are interested in that, our friend, Congressman John Buchanan, a Baptist minister who was pastor of that great church in Birmingham, Southside, said to me one time, "You've influenced me. I altered my views about national policy on integration as a result of studying your addresses and articles and what you have had to say." Then, I think, actually, Ron, that my willingness to risk my congressional office sort of helped. They could say, "The guy isn't saying what he has said about racial justice just to gain favor," because, of course, it was a hazard. But, then I have had other comments. For example, one of the Georgia congressmen said, "You have made it easier for all of us." I think of the introduction I had by a South Carolina congressman once at a Baptist meeting. He said, "I know some of you agreed with me at the time, 'Brooks is wrong' and now we see that he was right." So, I have had a lot to make me feel good; an ointment in my wounds.

T: What do you think in this area of world peace? Do you think you made Baptists more aware of this?

H: I think so. Of course, I never tire of singing the praises of our Christian Life Commission. I hope to see it a larger adjunct, and I hope to see it even more generously supported by Southern Baptists. I hope to see the various state conventions set up the effective mechanisms for gearing the great political power we hold to the actual problems of society. We have had an ideal executive there in Foy Valentine, and he had some wonderful predecessors. I won't take time to enumerate the great things that they did, but I loved every one of them. I am very proud of our commission, but Foy Valentine had to fight for a while every year for life itself. They were prepared several times just to completely abolish the commission. You don't hear that anymore. I remember one time after we had won a fight he stepped up to the podium and said, "Thank you for the annual call." Baptists know what that means. But Foy lately has been given a little larger staff, and he has been helped by the establishment of state commissions. I don't know how many; but I have seen the Texas Christian Life Commission grow and prosper and make an impact. I am not prepared to say anymore about this contribution to peace, but there were some very helpful seminars held under the auspices of Baptists in the auxiliary building at the UN.

T: Were you involved in some of these meetings? Did you speak at some of them?

H: I don't remember that I spoke, but it would be a rare meeting if I didn't speak. I wasn't a formal lecturer, but I loved to attend those meetings.

T: Did you ever have much involvement in this area with what is popularly called the Baptist Joint Committee?

H: Well, I took a good deal of interest in the Baptist Joint Committee when I was president of the Convention. I think before that--I am not sure about the date--I was a member of the committee itself, not exofficio or not just given the courtesy of the floor by reason of being president of one of the big conventions. I had been officially designated as one of our . . .

T: On the Public Affairs Committee?

H: Yes, and that's a great organization. Of course, it parallels at many points

the work of the Christian Life Commission. I am enthusiastic over that.

T: Do you see some distinctions or emphases one is concerned about as opposed to the other between those two?

H: Yes. I think the Baptist Joint Committee tends to restrict its activities to the sort of defensive operation that protects the Baptist community against the breakdown of the public school system and the tendency of our historic Catholic friends of the traditionalist philosophy to breach this wall. This troubles me, and I don't mean Baptist activity in this field, because we have to have a defensive operation; but the fact that there is such a problem distresses me. I find on this matter of tax money for the aid of parochial schools that I, like most Baptists, have a strong feeling of being very much opposed to it. I think this will threaten the existence of the public school system, which is at the very core of democracy's strength and structure. I think it is something we have to continue to work on. James Madison said, "Popular government without popular education will be a tragedy or a farce, conceivably both." So, when we are defending our public school system against the diversion of tax revenues into parochial schools, we are rendering a real service.

Now a great many Catholics have begun to see that. But the traditional point of view of first the Vatican, and then, of the hierarchy in this country, has seen it otherwise. I just think that it isn't true, that it is a matter of equity and a matter of justice. I am not influenced at all by their rationalization that they pay taxes, why shouldn't they have some of the tax money when they are rendering a service that otherwise would be borne by the state? Well, you could multiply the situation in which an individual could claim that he is entitled to render a certain function, or any other group of people, who could say, "Well, I am a taxpayer, give me some of my money back. I could do it better than the state is doing." So, I am not impressed by any of those rationalizations, and I am not impressed by the plea sometimes made that in the interest of harmony we should be allowing them to have parochial school money. I wish they didn't feel that way about it.

I wish they would exhibit some imagination in finding a way to, under the Constitution, help us in the public school curriculum to advance the purposes of religious education. I think there are ways by which it can be done. I have to guard against any loose thinking or any generalizations at this stage on that point because I haven't had what it takes in the way of research efforts to figure out the first steps to achieve that. But I know the University of Florida has done some good work in that field, and Wayne University, I believe, at Dayton, Ohio, has been researching the problem. A great many thinkers in the academic world are of the opinion that there is a way to see that the people in the public school system are given basic instruction, not about any particular faith, but have ingrained in their thinking the sense of reverence and curiosity, you might say, about man's relationship to the divine elements in human lives. So, this is just an example of what the problem is like.

T: Did you know Joseph M. Dawson?

H: Very well and admired him very much.

T: Tell me something about him. He was persona non grata at the White House--against President Truman. What kind of man was he?

H: Well, I regarded him as a gracious person, a man of broad sympathies, strong

convictions, but not a bigot, not at all.

T: He was accused of being anti-Catholic.

H: I don't think he was. I think he would have agreed with everything I have said in little dialogue. He was not a man to yield easily a point, but he was not hard to talk with. He never exhibited ill will or bad temper. He had a fine mind.

T: Did he ever put pressure on you as a congressman?

H: No, I can't remember that he ever did. They loved him in the Waco area where he was, of course, a longtime pastor of that great church close to Baylor campus.

T: He retired and came to Washington to be the first secretary of the Baptist Joint Committee.

H: Yes.

T: He came at age 65, I believe.

H: Oh, he was a man of great physical vigor though he was rather small in stature; not a large man physically, but he was rugged. Mrs. Dawson was a very attractive person and was also much loved. She preceded him in death. I have an idea that he was very lonely after that because they had a long and very happy life. I guess his pastorate at the First Baptist Church in Waco and his assignment here were the two chief professional contributions that he made.

T: He just died within the last two or three years, and was well over 90. Did you know C. Emanuel Carlson?

H: Yes. Now he was a great scholar. I know of no one in the Baptist leadership field who could be said to excel him in just pure scholarship. I think he was an ideal man for the job just as Dr. Dawson was. We were all very fond of him. He was a rather reticent person, retiring; and he came from the academic field rather than ministerial. But we were quite impressed by his insight and his ability to communicate. He was of Swedish descent. Joe Nordenhaug, who was in the Baptist World Alliance position, was from Norway. Swedes and Norwegians, while both Scandinavians, were sort of longtime rivals. That always interested me. I said to him one day, "Manuel, has Joe ever talked to you about the Battle of Copenhagen?" He said, "Far too often, far too often." You are familiar with that little rhyme. It is given in the Norwegian tongue: "Ten thousand Swedes lay in the veedes at the Battle of Copenhagen; ten thousand more lay on the shore, killed by 'vune' Norvegian." (Laughter)

T: Well what do you think was his contribution, and what kind of contact did you have with him? You said you had lunch with him on this day. Did you meet with him frequently as a congressman? occasionally? or what?

H: No, actually, I didn't. That was a social meeting. There may have been some particular issue that inspired him to call me and ask me to eat with him, but we were a congenial group. They could always get my ear. By the way, I am glad you asked that question, because one of my Republican friends, who was on the Education Committee in some of the rather divisive legislative problems that we had, told me something that has passed out of my memory and had passed out then. I wish I could recall it because he said, "Brooks, we put through

a bill that the Education Committee was very eager to see the House pass, partly because you were willing to project yourself into it and interpret the Baptist position to a number of your Baptist colleagues. We made some changes in the verbiage and did what proved to be a very workmanlike job on that legislation and you should have glowed in the praises that were offered." Now, I am sure that if that were true it was because of the equipment that Carlson and Nordenhaug, and others gave me. In other words, they and others who were familiar with some of the technical points of our educational policy . . . Of course, we have seen a great unfolding of federal participation in education from the kindergarten to higher education.

T: I have heard said that Dr. Carlson was one of the authorities on the whole question of education and free society.

H: No question about it. He was really a great man. I was saddened by his death.

T: Are there particular things you want to talk about?

H: Well, I couldn't piece them together very well. I do want to clear up something that seemed a bit vague on the use of federal troops in the Little Rock situation. I think I repeated what I said in my book published by the University of North Carolina Press to the effect that I had not favored the use of the federal military power; I say it because I pressed for use of the U. S. marshalls, but they didn't follow that course. I am of the opinion--and I might not be able to prove it, but I do have some basis for speculating on this--that Brownell, the attorney general under Eisenhower, was the obstacle, that his thinking was in another direction. He didn't want, apparently, any federal participation at all. Well, of course, that is inconceivable. That's capitulation. You couldn't enforce the Constitution if that were to be followed, and that is an inaccurate interpretation of the federal system. You found people in the time of the Little Rock violence who still held to the pre-Civil War view. They didn't learn anything from Appomattox. Their thinking just seemed to assume that nothing did happen. I heard Senator Russell, who was, of course, regarded with great respect by Southern people . . .

T: He was a senator from Georgia.

H: He was from Georgia and very popular in the Senate. But I heard him say in a speech once in the Senate, "I am not a U. S. Government official. I am an ambassador from a sovereign state." This was shocking to me. The Articles of Confederation provided a system under which that could have been said, but not after the Constitution was adopted. We had to go through the agony of the Civil War with all the slaughter that it produced before we realized that we have a national community and a national government; and the federal system was so often misconstrued. I think the national concern helped us in many respects, not only in the school case of 1954, the Brown Decision, but in other cases; and, prior to that, the Roosevelt administration and the Congress gave us other influences.

T: Coming out of the New Deal.

H: I did want to make that statement because I did favor the use of federal troops after we found we couldn't get the marshalls and after President Eisenhower failed, at least in the early stages of the struggle there, to federalize the state guard. Now they didn't make that mistake in Mississippi. I was surprised, really, that they didn't ask my help in Mississippi. Somehow or other I think they sort of forgot me. It may have been because it was in the previous

administration. Whatever I contributed had a Republican impress, maybe. But as close as I was to Bob Kennedy and Jack Kennedy, and I admired them both very much, they didn't call me in to talk to me about Mississippi. Of course, I was not in Congress and they were probably consulting . . .

T: But you were in the White House?

H: I was in the White House, but that was not one of my assignments. I guess it was best that it wasn't.

T: You said you favored the use of U. S. marshalls. Was that really viable in the light of the fact that U. S. marshalls are really not in the strict sense of the word even police force or a military, that they normally do not carry what we think of as traditional police methods. Now they have the power to arrest and so on but not in the traditional sense that we think of, enforcing law and order.

H: That is a relevant point, and it belongs in this discussion. I want to point out, though, that we were trying to project the federal authority in as mild a form as we could. I must admit that these are post-event observations. This is after the fact, that they couldn't have handled it. What could have been done . . . of course, we must never forget the basic point, and that is that Orval Faubus could have controlled it from the outset if he had simply said to the National Guard that he called out to police the situation, "Don't let anybody interfere with these nine black pupils coming into that schoolhouse," and that would have done it.

T: He was surely trying to make some political hay, wasn't he?

H: Well, I sadly admit that that was probably a factor.

T: How many U. S. marshalls would there have been there in Little Rock?

H: Oh, they could have gotten a number. Now it seems to me that they did use them effectively in Oxford, Mississippi. I should know that.

T: Wasn't it Tuscaloosa? When George Wallace stood in the schoolhouse door?

H: That's in Alabama, of course.

T: I remember the U. S. marshalls appeared in that instance.

H: Yes, they did, and I think were sufficient; but there had been two very traumatic experiences before that--Little Rock and Oxford, Mississippi. That was the university, not the public schools. You see, the James Meredith case was the one involved in Mississippi and Autherine Lucy in Tuscaloosa.

T: Did you know the U. S. marshalls in the Little Rock area personally? Did you have some feeling as to why they could handle it?

H: Well, I don't think the Arkansas marshalls could have done it by themselves. I think you would have had to import some marshalls from other places, but the authority of the Justice Department extends to that. Oh, yes. It was the U. S. marshall stationed in Little Rock who provided a bodyguard for me for a week when it was at its height. I think maybe I have told that. Well, I just wanted to make that point because I felt that maybe I had slurred the point in saying that I didn't favor the use of the federal troops. I certainly did favor the

use of federal authority when it was obvious that the local police . . .

T: Now you say local. The Little Rock police? You are not talking about the Little Rock State Police?

H: No. They were never moved in. I am talking about Mayor Mann and his local police, acting under his instructions, and the Chief of Police, Eugene Smith, to maintain order. They did everything they could--well, I guess that is subject to observation; a lot of the policemen, as in every city, have a sort of racial consciousness. I say a lot of them, but I mean they have the same assumptions on race matters that the population generally has. There is nothing about being a policeman that gives you any special aura.

T: Did you ever talk to these men about the possibility of using their authority, or had Governor Faubus overridden what you could possibly do?

H: Well, I was so busy interpreting it to the White House that I didn't have time to take on the local situation. I did talk to the superintendent of schools, Virgil Blossom.

T: He would be Jewish?

H: No, he was a Methodist as I remember. He died some years ago. By the way, on this matter of the nine pupils, there was an interesting development--again, I may have told this. One of the present Assistant Secretaries of Labor was in the group of nine and went on to graduate. I believe you got that.

T: Did you talk with him much then?

H: No, but he told one of my friends the other day that he wanted to see me, and I am inviting him to have lunch with me just to talk over old times.

T: There was something else you wanted to raise?

H: Did I make reference to the fact that I loved to talk to South Carolina Baptists about the little group that went down from Kettering, Maine? Are you familiar with that? Well, you remember that incident, and there's not much I need to add because, of course, you will find it in the book. I'll put in a plug for the book that John Steely and I produced, The Baptist Way of Life. It is in there. That's an interesting little bit of history to think that a group of northerners came down and settled in Charleston; that was the first Baptist congregation, I guess, in all that area.

T: Yes. Before the turn of the 1700's. In 1965 you spoke to the Baptist World Alliance. Were you at the Baptist World Alliance for long in Miami?

H: No, I don't think so. President Lyndon Johnson had asked me to go and he sent a letter by me which I read. I may have supplemented it with a few words of my own, but it was a very brief appearance. I would not have been asked to appear at all, I guess, except for the fact that I was on his staff. It was before I had severed final connections with the White House.

T: One of the things that you mentioned saying, speaking as an individual, made reference to the Russian Baptists. You said, "I have worshipped with Russian Baptists, and I know that the spiritual tie which binds the Baptists in Moscow to those of our faith in other lands is deep and genuine." And then you said, "God grant that two mighty nations might build a lasting peace upon the concepts

to which both Russian and American Baptists are dedicated." Did you have any contact at all with Russian Baptists that would have prompted you at that point? I know you were in Russia some fifteen or twenty years sooner, in the late 1960's. This was 1965.

H: Was this in Miami?

T: This was in Miami.

H: I didn't remember that I spoke there. I guess I was asked to say something after giving them President Johnson's message; I might have been expected to say some things. Well, that will stand up. That language is all right. I think, of course, that was inspired by the knowledge I had brought back from Russia that they are a great deal like our American Baptists. They are individualistic and they are, as I say it, "of the people." And, of course, more than in our society they are what we would call a "rural" people even with a peasant aspect. That saddened me. I noticed in the congregation in Moscow that most of the women wore the traditional Russian shawl, and the experience of hard work was written in the lines on their faces. It was a very dramatic thing for me. I know that theywere obviously moved by the exhibit of Dr. Cranford and myself of a warm feeling toward them personally. Russia suffered so much more than we did in the second world war and lost so many more men than we did. It isn't true, as a French woman said to me once, that we couldn't understand France because we hadn't suffered. That just is not true. We have suffered and we have suffered for them.

I know that one of the most poignant things that I observed on this trip to Berlin--which I think was another trip--the thing that moved me deeply was a great statue in Berlin of a Russian mother and of the brooding of posture. The lines underneath said, "Mother Russia Grieving for Her Dead"; and grief was in the whole statue--just one of those deeply moving experiences to stand there and look at it. I was very impressed by our guide assigned to us by the government in Russia, (Mrs.) Anna Samsonova, who was a very brilliant young woman, graduate of the University of Moscow and spoke beautiful English. She told us, for example--reminded us because I didn't know much Russian history--that in the last hundred years Russia had been invaded fourteen times. A country that has been invaded can appreciate the horrors of war like the country that has been spared from invasions never can.

I said that to Chancellor Adenauer one time. Have I ever told you that? Well, I was on a subcommittee in 1951 studying the occupation policies--that was of the Foreign Affairs Committee. It was chaired by a fine little congressman from Wisconsin named Clem Zablocki, and there were about six of us. We were ushered into Chancellor Adenauer's office--he was a fine, powerful-looking old gentleman, and about 85 then. I had great respect for him; he had done a terrific job, you know. He had fought the Nazis and then was called to service in the resurrected German government, and there he was, and it looked to me like he didn't intend to smile for seven years.

Clem Zablocki said, "Mr. Chancellor, I am going to ask Mr. Hays to begin the discussion." He hadn't told me--just like that you know, "I am going to ask . . ." He said, "Mr. Hays is the senior member of our team, and he will start." Well, on impulse, I said, "Perhaps, Mr. Chancellor, there is some logic in this request because, you see, I am the only one of this committee who comes from a state that was once occupied by an invading army. I know that an occupational army just cannot be popular." But, I said, "If you assume that you can never love us, just look at this scene. Here I am traveling with these five Yankees, and I've come to love every one of them." (Laughter)

I started to tell that to a newspaper man one time in the White House, a German, Peter Pechpel. He came to interview me some years later, and I started to tell the story. He said, "Mr. Hays, you don't need to tell that story, I know that story. It's a very interesting little incident, and I want to tell you who told it to me. Mr. Adenauer himself." He said the chancellor added, "and the Congressmen relaxed us."

T: Let me ask something else about the Baptist World Alliance that year. Were you involved in any of the inside discussions relating to the presidency in the World Alliance that year when the president of Liberia, Mr. Tolbert, was named as president and Herschel Hobbs became one of the vice-presidents?

H: I was not present at that convention.

T: You just stayed a short period of time. That was 1965.

H: No, Ron, I believe--well, perhaps you are correct. Mr. Tolbert was elected in 1965 in Miami.

T: Right and served through to 1970.

H: You are right, of course. Well, I was thinking that Hobbs was nominated for the presidency and was defeated by--well, maybe he was nominated again.

T: He was nominated in 1970 from the floor.

H: Was that in Tokyo?

T: In Tokyo, right. Were you at that meeting?

H: I didn't attend that meeting. Who was elected that year?

T: Carney Hargroves from Philadelphia. The reason I asked was that there was some discussion about the possibility of his name being placed as president, and there has been some discussion that it was suggested that if he would step aside in 1965 he would be nominated in 1970. I didn't know if you were in any discussion--that if Mr. Hobbs would step aside, Mr. Tolbert would be elected, and then Mr. Hobbs would be elected in 1970. I didn't know whether you knew anything about that at all.

H: No, I don't. I do know this: that some of my enthusiastic friends were doing some talking about my name being placed in nomination in the Nominating Committee.

T: It was handled by a Nominating Committee.

H: Yes, and, of course, with this reserved power to nominate from the floor; but I don't think it has been done very often, if ever, till Tokyo, and it didn't prove successful. I rather think that there is a feeling, generally, through the power structure of the World Alliance that--well, it's not exactly hostile to the Southern Baptist Convention--but there is a bit of a suspicion that if the Convention is not checked from time to time it would dominate the World Alliance. It's not the kind of thing that is talked about.

T: Have you heard that ever expressed?

H: No, come to think of it, I haven't. I haven't ever heard it expressed. But,

of course, we have had some Southern Baptist presidents.

T: There has been only one who has been solely a Southern Baptist, and that was George W. Truett. The others who have served were people who have been raised in the South or served in the North, but they have been in both the Northern and Southern Conventions.

H: You are exactly right. I thought of Ted Adams, but he would not fit that.

T: That's right, and there was some discussion in 1955, as you probably know, about who would become president.

H: Some of my enthusiastic friends at Miami were eager to see me given the World Alliance presidency because of what I had done for the minority group in the South. They favored it very warmly. I could call the names of some black ministers from the North who were eager to see me named. But, of course, advancing the name of my good friend, President Tolbert, sort of fenced that off; and it didn't disappoint me at all. I had no thought of further honors in the Baptist community. By that time, you see, I was 67 years old; however, that was not a factor--age was not involved. I felt that I had made my contribution, so I somewhat discouraged it. I do happen to know, and I suppose there is no reason why I shouldn't say, that Brother John Williams, a black pastor, I believe from Kansas City and very active, would have liked to have seen me named as president. But I am sure that the prevailing sentiment among the black leaders was to have one of their own, and I had to agree that the time had come to jump back across the Atlantic Ocean and get someone from the other side, so I was quite happy to see Mr. Tolbert elected.

T: But you weren't at the Baptist World Alliance nearly long enough on that occasion to be really involved.

H: No. Really, I have never been involved in Convention politics. It is amazing. You have heard me tell about those two preachers who were talking once. One of them said when my name was offered, "We don't want a politician for president do we?" and the other one said, "Well, Brooks ain't enough of a one to count." I certainly am not enough of a Baptist politician. I never had much to do with what you would call church politics. We laugh about it, but sometimes there is a basis for it, for that feeling that there is--well, politics is an ever present influence.

T: I suppose it's how you interpret the word "politics," whether you interpret it as being something negative or whether you interpret it as influence for a position that you hold. I suppose anyone really worth his salt is going to try and get his position favored if he believes it's right and thinks it is in the best interest of the total group.

H: Well, I said to my wife once after we were married--I could see that she was not conditioned by her early training in school and home life to understand state politics. I was running for governor within six years after we were married. She didn't understand it and I was sympathizing with her, and I said, "Honey, you shouldn't have married a politician, you should have married a Methodist bishop." She said, "Well, I would have had more politics there than I have had with you."

T: You said there were a couple of other things you wanted to . . .

H: I think maybe I have passed over a few things that I did that were not prominent

or not important particularly, but my name is attached to them. I introduced a bill that resulted in changing the name of Bedloe's Island to Liberty Island in the harbor of New York where the great Statue of Liberty is. Some of the PR people in New York--maybe it was a part of the pre-Bicentennial activities. At any rate, an advertising leader there, and a very wonderful civic leader, too, came to me and asked me to do it for him, so I introduced the bill and we got it through both houses. Incidentally, I remember once when I was listening to one of those quiz programs, and the question was, "What is the name of the island on which the Statue of Liberty is located?" The panelist couldn't answer it. I said to my wife, "Oh, that's easy and worth five hundred dollars to me if I could sit in on this, because I know what it is." I had to know.

T: When was this changed?

H: About 1955, in the latter part of my service in Congress. Another thing that came after I left Congress was the blocking of a power company's effort to build a dam on a river in Virginia. That is an illustration of the fact that you can influence legislation. I was a candidate for Congress in North Carolina in 1972, and the incumbent congressman was not taking any interest in that struggle and hadn't studied himself on it; so I began to make an issue of it. I said, "If you will elect me to Congress we are not going to let four thousand acres of our best land in Ashe and Allegheny Counties be flooded. We are not going to let that stream be made into a commercial river. I am going to do all I can, and with my seniority I can block it." This aroused a lot of sentiment for me in western North Carolina. I asked Senator Jordan, then, to introduce a bill, and he was kind enough to say, "I am doing this after consulting with Mr. Hays." But it was not my bill. Then, later, in the next Congress . . . what I had to say induced my opponent to join me. So you can often influence things without holding an office. That came after I left the Congress. Well, those are just some of the things that I thought ought to go in.

Talking about North Carolina, in 1962, you will remember, when the missile crisis came and Khrushchev had to pull his missiles out of Cuba because President Kennedy served notice on him. He had to. Well, that presidential pronouncement broke during the campaign, the congressional campaign of 1962. We were trying to help three or four of the House incumbents in North Carolina who had opposition to be reelected, and I was asked to be the speaker. I was interested at that time, not as a resident of North Carolina because I didn't become a resident until six years later, but I was a good friend of all the Democratic incumbents.

T: You were working for the White House then.

H: That's right. I went down to make an appearance and to make a short speech. I was one of the principal speakers in this big rally of several counties--maybe a dozen counties were involved--and it met at Concord near Charlotte. Both senators were there--Senator Sam Ervin and Senator Jordan. They were supposed to speak. But after Mr. Kennedy's dramatic actions that very day, just a few hours . . .

T: He spoke at six o'clock, eastern time, as I remember it.

H: It was that close to the hour of the rally at eight o'clock; and all of a sudden the situation changed, the political climate was altered. They came to me and said, "Look, there are not going to be any other speakers. All of

the members of the delegation will be introduced; they will take a bow; and the entire time is yours and we want you to speak." Well, there was some logic in it for the reason that I was working with the man who had done this dramatic thing, but it was a tough one because I had not been privy to the discussions.

T: You hadn't been briefed on it at all?

H: No, but I quickly put together this idea, and it was picked up by the newspapers: Just as James Monroe had given his name to a doctrine that fitted the time, so in the twentieth century President Kennedy will be identified with the doctrine that is just as important, because the Kennedy doctrine having to do with the threats of aggression by a powerful nation in the Eastern Hemisphere constitutes the same kind of threat to the hemispheric solidarity and freedom of our nation that Monroe recognized. That was about all that came into it except there was a general discussion about our relationship with Latin America. This, incidentally, will bear reviving because the Panama Treaty problem raises the same kind of issue: namely, will we recognize our responsibility as the leading power in the Western Hemisphere with a corresponding duty to have, as Jefferson called, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind, particularly the men and women who live as our neighbors to the south? So, I've got to do some studying about that in a new framework.

T: Do you envisage that--do you have any idea whether President Kennedy had in mind specifically to invade Cuba had that not been fulfilled? Do you know anything about that?

H: No, I don't. I can only speculate about it, but I think he meant business. I think it is a very fine thing from the standpoint of stopping any of the carping, you know, about what many Presidents have to suffer, that is, that he is not exhibiting his strength. That grows out of chauvinism, and every President has to put up with it. Of course, sometime there may be quite sincere criticism that has to be met. I think he met it, and I think that at that time people recognized there was a firmness in his personality that was admirable. That is about all I guess.

One of the things that passed off the scene of action that I had been identified with--when Ed Gossett, of Texas, left the Congress he asked me to take his place in the fight to change the electoral college system. It was, of course, by a constitutional amendment, and he had sponsored it in the House. Henry Cabot Lodge had sponsored it in the Senate, and it was known as the Lodge-Gossett Amendment. He selected me to replace him. I introduced the bill for the amendment, slightly different from his, so it became known in a very narrow circle--wasn't widely publicized--as the Lodge-Hays Amendment. I had never been militant on the subject, but I do think that something needs to be done about freeing us from this danger--theoretical sometimes--that the members of the electoral college will not vote in accordance with the mandate they bring to Washington or to the state capitols where the votes are cast. In other words, the electoral college is no longer a functioning agency. It is a mere appendage, and it is an administrational duty. They simply report the votes. We have to all effects elections by popular vote with a weighting in favor of the smaller states. For example, little Delaware, only three counties and one of the smallest populations--according to an old saying there are three counties at Low Tide and one county at High Tide--gets three votes in the electoral college when their strength in the popular vote would certainly not be that. But I think there is some argument in favor of letting that part of the electoral college

stand. I don't mean that any longer you have chosen electors whose names appear on a ballot and they go and vote.

T: Now some of the states still have that practice, don't they?

H: Yes. You don't see the name of the man you are voting for for President; and that, incidentally, presents a difficulty, too. It is just a whole lot better to say, "I am voting for Richard Nixon, Hubert Humphrey, and so on." I don't need to go into the technicalities, but I did favor leaving the weight of the states as now constituted in the structure of the House. I think that has some value in symbolizing the federal system and that the states are not nonentities. Of course, there is again that danger that they . . .

T: Let me ask this. You said that the balance of the state support there--it is my understanding that there cannot be fewer electoral votes in a given state than the two senators and a single congressman.

H: That's right. You cannot reduce the electoral college vote to less than three.

T: Less than the representation in the legislative branch.

H: We are stuck with that plan, and there are objections to it, theoretical and otherwise, but we are stuck with it. I think that it is a sort of compact of another century that we have to recognize.

T: You don't see it as a check and balance in terms of the considered mind of the small against the oppression of the mass?

H: No, I don't see it that way, and what I said about its value as a symbol mustn't have too much weight, I suppose. The real reason, I guess, that I favor it is that if you did not have some ceiling on the vote of a given state, you would conceivably have corruption in the populous cities. I don't mean to impute anything to Chicago, but that city is often suspected of having corruption on both sides--going back to the Republican machine of Thompson and the Democratic machine of Kelly, and so on. You would have a tendency, conceivably, to go right out the top. In other words, you would get individual votes there that exceeded the actual vote, and you would distort the results. But, you see, there's nothing that Chicago can do now, or Illinois can do now, to get more than their constitutional votes. Do you follow me on that? While there might be a little internal bout between Chicago and down-state--to use their jargon--you could have some distortion, but you would have a ceiling over it if you use the electoral college.

But there is another reason, and these are the only two reasons I want to take time to advance now. I am giving more time to this question than I should. The other reason is that I think it is a lure to the candidates to go into every state then; and they wouldn't be discouraged by the fact that the weight in a popular vote plan would be . . .

T: A popular vote plan would prompt them to go into every state?

H: No, the reverse, because why would they worry about little Delaware here when one precinct in Philadelphia to the north would take care of it--would wipe it out. But, with three votes down here in Delaware you have an attraction; and that happened in Alaska. President Nixon campaigned and said, "I am going into every state." In Alaska that is a pretty inconvenient thing to do, to

travel all that distance just for three electoral votes and a very low popular vote, as far as that is concerned. But the point is that it is a ceiling over corruption; and it does spare us this possibility of betrayal of an elector's duty to vote as he said he would vote. Now we have had about three instances of that in the last few elections. One man from Virginia, I think, four years ago, voted for Harry Byrd instead of whoever the state had told him to vote for and who he had said publicly that he would vote for. An Oklahoma delegate voted against his state vote, and Tennessee had one. So you have had maybe a half-dozen in which that has occurred. Well, if you had that taking place on a big scale you would utterly destroy the Democratic concept.

T: Would you feel this extremely important?

H: You bet. I attach great weight to that, and that is the reason I was glad to take Judge Gossett's place in that situation to sponsor the amendment. But we never did get it through.

T: Now isn't that a perennial amendment that comes after every presidential campaign?

H: Yes. Birch Bayh, of Indiana, the senator of that state, is the most vocal advocate of it now. I suppose eventually he will get it through. I don't remember who joins him on the House side in support of that. I am confident they will do as he thinks they should; namely, make it strictly a popular vote. And he may be right.

T: That is his amendment, I believe. Yours was not strictly popular vote? Was it a binding of the electors to vote for who they said they would vote?

H: I think it simply removed this danger of which I have spoken.

T: Was the argument ever advanced to you, and how did you respond to it, of whether there was a degree of protection since there is a time lag between the time that the popular vote is cast and the electoral vote is cast. There is that time period which intended in the early days out of necessity and now, of course, is perpetuated by Constitution decree that the electors could reconsider in the light of other circumstances--you don't see this, then, at all as a viable thing.

H: No, I don't think so. I think that we have moved out of the eighteenth century concepts of democracy, which had a good deal of economic theory in it, into a situation in which the assumptions are that everyone, regardless of race, color, and religious affiliations, or status economically, is qualified to vote. So, I am glad to see us moving in that direction. We have had to straighten out some things. For a while, you know, we were having some states pass these lower-age provisions, and the first thing you knew you were getting a distortion there. So that is the kind of thing that calls for uniformity.

T: Such as happened in the occasion of President Johnson in the 1964 election when he was not actually on the ballot in Alabama.

H: That was outrageous, just utterly outrageous.

T: The people of Alabama were really disenfranchised from even voting for a major candidate.

H: Yes. There was no way they could vote for him. Well, now this amendment, I assume, that Birch Bayh is working on would change that. I had a little talk that I used in classroom discussions on "Due Process," and it breaks down into three kinds of process: the due process of law; the due process of lawmaking; and the due process of electing lawmakers. And that's what we have been talking about. But there is also this matter of due process of lawmaking which has to do with congressional procedure--the work in the legislative field. Due process of law, of course, is the great guideline for the courts' actions. One is judicial; the other is legislative.

Of course, the electing lawmakers take us into the executive field, and we say to Richard Nixon, "You have shocked us when you allow two hundred thousand dollars to be taken in a briefcase in cash on behalf of the mill producers--or whatever economic goof it was. I am sorry mill producers came into the situation in that, or some other incident, because maybe they were entitled to a little increase in price, although the Department of Agriculture had a few weeks before said they were not entitled to it. But whether they were entitled to it or not depended not on the two hundred thousand dollars to get it done but whether or not they were entitled to it on basic economic factors.

It is the same way now with our cargo preference in which the maritime industry, supported by the Maritime Union, which they are claiming something since they gave, apparently, the Democratic candidate, Jimmy Carter, $175,000. That is shocking. In other words, maybe they ought to have some cargo preference, but not because they gave $175,000.

Now these are moral aspects. No need of shying away from the use of the word "moral." You can't do it. I read in Everett Dirksen's book one time--and I knew him to be an honorable man--"I am not a moralist, I am a legislator." Then he proceeded in the book to dwell upon some moral problems and speak as a moralist but not moralistically. Now there is the important point, of course. We could spend another afternoon talking about this. My point is that we must interest these eager young people in the colleges who have an apparent new and avid interest in politics. We must interest them in the moral aspects of political life, and you have to use the word.

I heard my dear friend Senator Fulbright say about the same thing that Dirksen said. They asked him, "Well now do you think that represents a moral judgment?" He said, "I don't ever use the word 'moral'; that is subjective." But before the panel discussion was over he was speaking about moral influence, and why shouldn't he? He is a moral man. So was Everett Dirksen. He was not a corrupt person. But there is that concern about appearing to be pietistic--that is a wholesome thing--but we have got to make it possible to recognize that the roots of our national life are in a religious philosophy and a religious culture; but you don't have to wear it on your sleeve. I constantly urge the students who hear me to avoid overtness. But this, to me, is a relevant thing. Am I right? Have I said enough on that?

T: I was going to ask you something else that is related to this, and really, this is a question of opinion, which I hope you will understand is something we would like to share in the record. Several have raised a question about Mr. Carter's coming to the Presidency of the United States in the 1976 election and inaugurated in 1977 with a very strong feeling of a moral, that is, setting a moral tone or urging a particularly high moral tone. Is it possible, one, for him to follow this; and two, does it mean that if he does follow it that he is setting a standard above which most people can conform in Washington politics?

H: Well, this is, of course, the test of statesmanship. I was like Thomas Jefferson. He said, "I seldom speak of religion, and I never write about it at all." If he were sitting in my presence now I would say, "Well, Mr. President, you have forgotten that you were interested enough in what Jesus had to say about human government. You used the scissors and the paste pot to put together a lot of his sayings in what came to be known as 'Jefferson's Bible.'" But he at least avoided exploiting religion.

Now that is the thing that we must avoid. I hope that I never exploited it. I am not saying that I am more consistent than Mr. Carter; but after all, I spent many more years getting ready for national participation in politics than he did. That is one of the unhappy things about his leadership now. He had very good experiences in the field of state politics, and I wouldn't preclude the state activist from participation in national honors; but he did come on the scene without a whole lot of maturing in national matters.

As an illustration of how it can be exploited, I remember I was the teacher of a big Sunday School class in Little Rock. One of the deacons there said to me the day before the election in my first race for governor, "Well, I have prayed many a time that you would win this election tomorrow." I said, "No, you shouldn't do that." He said, "You believe in prayer, don't you?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Don't you pray?" I said, "Yes. My prayer is that if I am elected, I'll be a good governor; and if I am defeated, I will be a good loser. We have no business putting God on our side." It's like Lincoln said, "The question is not, Is God on our side but are we on his side." So, this is a very complex problem on how to avoid piety.

I am not saying a thing about Carter's performance. I am just saying that all Presidents will have to be a bit cautious about it. But there is no reason in the world why they cannot, without offense to anyone, invoke Bible teaching, the lessons that come out of the Bible. That is a matter of statesmanship as well as religion. It belongs to the statesman as well as to the religious person. Harry Truman did it without anyone saying, "Why that pious old fellow, what's he doing talking about Solomon?" You remember his opening speech, the first speech he ever made--I sat there and listened to him. I was deeply impressed by him. He said, "My prayer is that I may be a good and faithful servant of my people." He had read the Bible through twice before he was fourteen years old.

T: Are you saying, then, you think Carter has set a higher standard than is meaningful; or are you saying it is being used for political purposes?

H: I don't believe, Ron, that I am saying either one of those things. First, I see no reason why he shouldn't have a high standard. He would say in asking Mr. Lance to resign that he lived by that standard. Of course, the other side on that question is that he didn't live by a moral standard if Lance should not be fired, because I think an uncompassionate person who makes a scapegoat of somebody who doesn't deserve to be fired is doing something immoral, just as if he failed to fire him if he deserved to be fired. Do you follow me on that? There is no way in the world that the public can decide that question. Some of these issues are bound up in his own conscience and in his own heart. In accordance with that idea I myself should avoid harsh judgment.

Now we have had some things learned after Lance's resignation that throw a little light on it. There was a statement in the Washington Post in which a man named Lawrence Davis, whose father himself was director of the budget in the Roosevelt-Truman days--Harold Smith, I said Davis, but it was not Davis,

it was Smith. I would have made that mistake except I remembered that his father was Harold Smith. So this was Lawrence Smith. He said, for example, on the criticism of Lance's selling a plane that had cost him $80,000 to his bank in Atlanta for $120,000, this was viewed as very shocking and a breach of banking standards and of official conduct. Now, Smith tells in this article on Monday the fact that Lance had put $33,000 into some new motors for that plane had been overlooked, and that it had been appraised by the directors through an appraising agency at the price they paid, and that he was not guilty of filching them or making any demands on them for the higher sum. Now, I assume that is a fact and it would be thinkable that he would come out with figures like that. They said they had overlooked things like that. Then he had some other facts to make it look as if there was a bit of adventuring by some of the newsmen.

No, I don't want to get over on the side of those who carp always about the media, you know, crucifying somebody. The "crucifixions," the criticisms that you get in public life have to be accepted as a part of its inconveniences and imperfections. I've had mine, but I hope I never allowed it to cause me to weaken one moment in my appreciation of the press as a very important part of the democratic process. If they did do Mr. Lance in, or if they were a bit unfair, I think, still, that the avenues were all open to him and to his friends, including the columns of the Post for this later statement. Of course, he would say, "Well, it didn't come in time to help me."

On that point--and this may be relevant--I thought that his lawyer, Clark Clifford, made a great mistake in planning the strategy he did of having Lance attack the two senators and the press and appear in that fashion to carry the fight to them to make it appear that they were the real interest in this whole controversy. The important point is, What was his record and what were his answers to these specific charges? While he gave some fleeting appearances of defending himself, he didn't bring out this thing that I have just mentioned. That was left to Lawrence Smith. Clark Clifford said, and it worked that first day, "Let the people see how terribly they have persecuted you." Well, that is good psychology and maybe, good "courtroom" technique; and it won the first day's battle, but it lost the war.

I think he would have stood in better light if he had gone in there and said, "Gentlemen, I have been unjustly accused of things. I recognize the public has been entitled to hear some of the things that have been said, but the whole truth hasn't been told. Here are the facts." Then I think he should make himself appear as this man made him appear. It made me feel quite differently reading this article. But Clark Clifford gave him the other advice so that the first day he scored a great victory; but he didn't show up so well in the second, third, and fourth days, because he thought he had won the battle. He didn't make the case out for himself that I thought he should have.

T: Are you really saying that there is a danger in saying when you win one battle, you have won the war?

H: There certainly is. But, of course, while we are commenting on the government by the consent of the governed, interesting experiment in human government--when we are commenting on that we have to recognize that people are fickle in their attachments and loyalties and they can turn, as I found in my Little Rock experience. The next day they forgave me, some of them did; and the next year many more forgave me. So, you have to accept that. I remember one old lady was reported to have said--and I think she said it, the man who told me,

I think, was the one who heard her. He said that she said to him the day after my defeat, "Well, my goodness, I didn't know Brooks was in any trouble. If I had known that I wouldn't have voted against him." So, they can get at you. Well, we have spent more time than you want to on . . .

T: No, I appreciate that. I have been asked several times by people questions that I might put to you, would you respond to the concern of the Carter administration toward developing a particularly moral climate or a moral emphasis, and whether it is possible rather than even viable. Is he placing too hard a standard?

H: Well, I don't want to say he is placing too high a standard on public performance. I don't think you can have too high a standard. I think that you begin with decalogue, the Ten Commandments still apply, and then, you recognize that the complex industrial society in which we live carries some new demands in the field of ethics; and you can't have too high a standard. I think there are situations in which we have to probe the question of adherence to those standards. I think that one in the highest political office of the land--this doesn't necessarily apply to members of Congress because they are not in the limelight constantly and they are not charged with the overall responsibility--one in the Presidency has to be very careful not to substitute rhetoric and beautiful generalizations about morality for a hard, determined technique and method of ridding the government of its immorality. He can do that without appearing to be the knight in shining armour, and he must do it that way.

Just as I said to my friend, "Don't pray for me now to win the office and don't go out to say that Brooks is righteous and God is on his side." Like one of the prizefighters said when they asked if he was praying for victory in the ring, "No, that is not good sportsmanship. The other fellow wouldn't have any chance if God was on my side in the ring."

There has been a lot of that kind of thing, praying for political or other goals of that type. This is my judgment on the theology of that: the Lord has left us free to make mistakes and to be immoral, but he has endowed us with a mind to determine what is right and his grace in our hearts to do what our mind tells us is right; I think it leaves the issue largely in our hands. We have no right to ask him to intervene to save us from our folly and from our immorality.

That is the reason I am afraid of a lot of these spin-off organizations that are invading the function of the church in setting up Christian Businessmen's Associations, Christian Athletics--things of that kind that turn the great forces of religious power into personal advantage and personal interest instead of concerning themselves with the pursuit of what is right in the social relationships and to see religion not as an exclusive thing but as an inclusive structure. All of this plays into the hands of the extreme group on the right. That doesn't help us a whole lot in every situation. But the left and right imagery does help us a bit, because if you will notice that the people who call themselves Christian activists or Christian politicians are nearly always either by subtle methods or open methods favoring ultraconservative positions rather than that of the moderate course to determine whether you should go right or left. They start by the assumption that the right is right. Well, the important

thing is not whether to go left or right but whether we are wrong or right. This is going to have to have some examination. I have said it very poorly, but you see what I am trying to say about this modern question.

No, I have no criticism at all of the Presidency so far. I am probably revealing a bit of anxiety about it. I don't see how he has time to prepare Sunday School lessons. He is a busy man as head of our government, and I think the mere presence in a Sunday School class occasionally is all that is needed to give moral support, an outward symbolism, to the need of Christian education. I think that is all that is needed. So, I am not sure but that it was a bit awkward what he did in the campaign, and that maybe it will haunt him in the future.

I much prefer the Harry Truman technique of studying the Bible and going to church. Harry was pretty regular at that First Baptist Church. Whenever he was called on to speak of the Bible and his faith he did it with grace. I am not saying that Mr. Carter doesn't, and I am certainly not saying he isn't sincere. I have the impression that he is a very sincere person. Apparently, he does know the Baptist polity, he knows what our requirements are. Although his appointment of that man at the Vatican shocked me, again, I wouldn't have him be a sectarian President. Harry Truman made that same mistake and backed off when he saw it. I don't know how much Mr. Carter has backed off in the Vatican. I don't believe he has withdrawn it. Harry Truman admitted that it needed to change so he withdrew it.

T: Mr. Hays, there are a few things you wanted to pull together from our conversation. Do you want to raise these matters?

H: Well, it is just in the interest of clarity and completeness of thought. I had some things to say about the spin-off organizations and my negative attitude toward them because it diverts energy of dedicated people and distorts the program of the churches in spreading the gospel of love, promoting the basic historic purposes of the church. When I speak of the church I am certainly not talking about the Baptist church, I am talking about the church at large. I said some things about the spin-off.

T: What are you thinking of here? What do you mean by the spin-off?

H: Well, I mentioned some of them in order to be very specific: the Christian Businessmen's Associations and the Crusade for Christ. Those are right-wing movements, and if they were built on the commitment to the democratic process which the understandable differences between people could be promoted, in other words if they included the voice of labor, the voice of the working man not in organized labor, the voice of the black man, the voice of the poor, and the varying remedies for the evils of the society, I would be all for it because some spin-offs are wonderful. Then, certainly, there are the noncontroversial spin-offs: the health movements that are doing a monumental job and which are generally supported by the church. In other words, the spirited generosity and compassion that a lively belief in Jesus produces, this is an indispensable quality; and there is that rather indirect tie between Christian discipleship and the practical things being done to make man more healthy and to deal with his enemies.

So, I don't want to be too hard on spin-offs because they are creatures of freedom. Even the church--this could be misunderstood by the close students

of history--and it isn't to disparage the great doctrines of the Christian church that have been produced and matured by 20th century, it isn't to disparage that at all; but the church itself is really a creature of freedom. You have to remember that. But this has been greatly abused. I have gotten a little more tolerant of the Jesus Movement because I could see in it sometimes a real winsome reaching out for something by these confused young people.

My wife had a cute answer, I thought, to one of them. We were waiting for a bus, and one of them stopped at the red light and stuck his head out the door and said, "Are you thinking of Jesus?" My wife said, "Yes, I am. Are you?" He didn't know exactly what to say. I think he was glad to have the light changed. But one of them approached me down in Lafayette Park one time, across from the White House, and she was a sweet-looking little thing. She didn't believe in what I call "cosmetic salvation." That is a little paraphrasing of Dr. Kellar's "cosmic salvation." She had freckles and had her hair plaited down her back. She looked clean, and she wasn't wearing these terrible blue denims. She had on a calico dress that went clear to the ground and all that. She was a moderate you could see; but still a clean, attractive little moderate.

She came up to me--I was walking through the park on my way to the dentist, I guess I had a mission and wasn't just strolling--and she said, "Are you thinking of Jesus?" Well, the old devil was in me, and I started to say, "Well, actually, I wasn't. I was thinking about the schemes and stratagems whereby I might fall upon the unwary and gather in a little coin of the realm." I am so glad I didn't say it because that was a very evil thing to do. I didn't say it, but I wondered later how that kid would have reacted if I had said that.

But what I said was, "No, actually I wasn't; but I often do." She saw that I wasn't irritated and that I was willing to talk to her a moment. I said, "Wouldn't it be great--and I made a 180 degree sweep with my arm--if the people in all these buildings, the Court of Appeals, another court, and a lot of the government agencies on the left side of Lafayette including the White House could give a little thought to Jesus' plan for the governments of our planet and our world. I didn't say the little East Wing where I had an office; I think she would have been fascinated if I had, but that would have been showing off; but I was anonymous and am today--it may not have been impressive anyway. I could tell that she really was responding to what I was saying. She was entitled to have a little homily like that. When we got through she walked away smiling, and she looked over her shoulder and said, "God bless you, Mister."

So, I have to be somewhat guarded in my judgments. I don't identify them with these well-financed and well-promoted organizations that are promoting a political idea and a political philosophy. They are not welcoming the kind of dialogue that gives us all the thrill of searching for and finding the truth. That is the reason that I think our hope is really in historic Christianity in the church if we will adhere to that basic thing; and we will know the truth and the truth will make us free. One of my friends, a Pennsylvania scholar and a student of these philosophical conflicts said, "Freedom is not the ultimate; it's the penultimate; the ultimate is truth." I believe that and I think the world needs to understand that, well, here again, like the emancipated slave.

I heard a Baptist minister tell this, and it shouldn't be an affront to the blacks because it represented the real responses of a slave woman who was so happy when she was told that she at last was free. She ran out in the road and was throwing up handfuls of dust out of the street, jumping up and down, and reaching down and getting more dust and throwing it around. She said, "I'm free, I'm free, I'm so free I am a plumb fool." I have heard black preachers tell that kind of story with the same point. That should have been a white person saying it because we have been really freer than the blacks since the Civil War. Well, always we have been freer because the poverty and segregation and other evils just simply tended to replace slavery. But the hope of the healing of these wounds is in the Christian church. So that is the reason I am a great proponent of the Christian Life Commission.

T: These para-church groups is what they are sometimes called.

H: Yes, that is better than spin-offs. I also wanted to round out just a little our references to the matter of the politician having a voice in the concerns of the church. Now there is no reason in the world why we can't solve that problem. The answer is not to say, "Well, let the politician keep out of religion. He's got nothing to do with religion." That simply is not true. Of course, the contrary idea is often advanced by the very conservative religious leader, the churchman who doesn't want anything to do with politics. I am afraid I slurred this point. I wanted to make these remarks to round out that thought. I've said for years that I wish we could come to the place in modern times where anyone, particularly the person in places of political responsibility, could speak naturally without parading his religion or his faith, without embarrassment of the valid things in his religious life, and without the suspicions that so often attach to an utterance by a politician. Now I know that politics is vulnerable at times. I heard a public officer holding an elective office say one time--he was in the same meeting with me and talking to preachers about these problems--"I want you to know that I have never tasted liquor and alcoholic beverages in any form; tobacco has never stained my lips; and I have never uttered an oath in my life. He went through the inventory of the secondary vices and we would call some of them primary vices. Five years later the guy was in a penitentiary for stealing forty thousand dollars from his government. So, we may be vulnerable on those things. I have seen it done.

I remember in the 1928 campaign, though, when some of the politicians were so simplistic in their handling of the preachers' fight on Al Smith, who was advocating repeal of the 18th Amendment. There were things to be said on both sides. I think Al Smith was wrong when he said, "Anybody who questions my religion is a bigot." Well now, that isn't true because there were some things that the Catholic hierarchy in America were advocating that formed legitimate objects of discussion. John Kennedy recognized it in 1960 when he was running. He didn't say that. He said, "Well, people are entitled to know where my loyalties are and how I would harmonize the conflicts." I think the greatest speech that he made was at Houston when he disarmed his critics. He disarmed them by telling them exactly how he felt that these differences could be resolved, what the democratic process meant where church-state relations were involved.

I remember that Joe Robinson, who was our senator from Arkansas and Al Smith's running mate, got real angry over the preachers, as he said, "Getting out

of their role, discarding their real role." Of course, I would agree that the pulpit was not the place for them to exercise their freedom to discuss political matters. It is a matter of style. I would never say he shouldn't say that in the pulpit, like Dr. Criswell did in having Jerry Ford coming to the pulpit on the Sunday or two before the election. I thought that was a questionable manner. But, even that, I'll say, is a matter of personal choice. It is a question of taste and style. I did not agree with Joe Robinson when he said, "Let the preacher preach Christ and him crucified and not Al Smith and him crucified." Joe Robinson was saying of the preachers that some of them were intolerant, and I suspect there was an element of bigotry in some utterances.

I supported Al Smith, incidentally, and I did sort of strain some friendships with some of the Baptist leaders. Feeling was very strong in Arkansas. They said it was prohibition, but I am afraid that underlying it for some was an element of anti-Catholicism, too. That grieved me. But I still thought that Al Smith would make a better President than Herbert Hoover, and I think history sort of sustains that. I don't mean to condemn Herbert Hoover, and I think he was a far better President than he was credited with being. I might make a partisan statement. I think that if he had been the nominee of the Democratic party, and if he had had a party committed to popular feelings and interest of the common man, we would have had a different result of that political speech. But what Joe Robinson said was this: "Let the preachers start to preaching Christ and him crucified, and not Al Smith and him crucified." Well, he would get a cheer from the loyal Democrats; but it was not worthy of him. He was a Methodist. He was doing what men understandably do when they are in a fierce political campaign. He was reacting in a human way. I don't know whether he could have been counseled with on that point. He was conventional, and that doesn't mean he was anything but a good man. I am sure he was a man of conscience.

T: Was Robinson an asset to the ticket in Arkansas?

H: Oh, yes. There are many of us who were dubious about the votes being accurately counted. There were elements, I am afraid, of irregularity; the votes were not recounted. They were determined that their favorite son, Senator Robinson, would carry the state; but there was a tremendous vote for Hoover. Well, my wife voted for Hoover. Like a lot of other good church people they didn't see at the time that there were strong arguments for repeal. Well, I guess that is enough on that.

I wanted to come back to Mr. Carter to say this: That perhaps in time his style in this matter can be improved. I was sorry to see him use the cliche "born again." I don't have any time for that kind of thing. We simply cannot sloganize ourselves into a Christian society. I don't think Jesus in talking to Nicodemus would have had that in mind in giving us a rallying cry. They ask me if I am a "born-again" Christian. My answer is, "Yes, I have been born again, and again, and again, and again. I am born again every day when I have a good impulse that is responded to and I see that the burden of a Christian commitment is pretty heavy."

T: Are there some other items you had there?

H: I wanted to defend myself, too; and consequently, I ought to defend Mr. Carter, and I do defend him. I am just simply skeptical at the moment

about language. I am so eager for him to exert the right kind of powerful dynamic leadership that I must reserve judgment. I will be very happy when the day comes, if it does come, when I can say that all of my doubts have been resolved. I certainly think it strengthens a man to be a sincere Christian and churchman, and I think he is. As I said, it is a matter of style.

I remember the day that the man who had been on the other side of me--had been opposed to me every election and he was in his seventies--came in and said, "Brooks, you know I am not a religious man, but I realize that I am in poor health and I am not going to live long and I wanted you to counsel with me because I want some comfort in these hours. I want to precede what I say by assuring you that while I used to think in the early days of your campaign that your religion was a pose, I came to the conclusion that it was anything but that. You were not parading your religion, you never did that. I just was suspecting you of it, and I couldn't have been more wrong about it. What I want to ask you is, For a man who has made no pretenses of religious faith and has had no interest in the church and its objectives, do you think that maybe since I have no right to go in at the front door that the Lord will let me sneak in the back door?" I said, "No, he won't do that. He will just roll out a carpet for you at the front door." And then we had a fine talk.

So, I think perhaps there has been little basis for criticism of me on that score, and if I am right in insisting that I was not vulnerable on this point, it is because I made a conscious effort to avoid it. I told you about the man who said he was praying for me and I said, "Don't do that." I think maybe that is enough on that point.

I did tell you that I wanted to talk about some of the visitors who came to see me while I was in . . . You don't have any other questions?

T: Well, there are some things I would like to ask you, but go ahead with that. You also wanted to say something about one of your meetings at the Church of the Brethren. Who came to see you? What do you want to talk about first?

H: Well, I think this is a good point to bring that in because we must move on and we had better work on it. This little Church of the Brethren around the corner here from our residence where we are sitting now asked me to take the place of the pastor one Sunday morning last summer. I was glad to do it. I have great respect for these Church of the Brethren members, and I believe you told me that you agreed they were known in some places as German Baptists.

T: That's the name that was used in early days.

H: Well, my knowledge of church history is not monumental by any means, but they are very sincere rural people. They are essentially like our Southern Baptists. It has only been in modern day that we were anything but a rural people. We were children of the frontier; and so are the Church of the Brethren. I had some visitors in the first days of my congressional service, during the war, from Church of the Brethren ministers who wanted me to know what they were doing. I think they sensed that there was a congeniality

between their faith and mine. After the war some of them came and gave me a chance to contribute to their movement which was designed to get breeding stock into the hands of Polish farmers. I contributed a hundred dollars. That was a lot of money to us in those days. Congregational salary was not $57,000, it was $17,000. But still that hundred dollars was one of the best hundred dollars spent for a Christian cause. I bought a young bull, and they told me later where they had sent it, and who owned it, and the understanding that they had in that community and among the Polish farmers. They told me that it was understood in the community that the bull was not just the individual farmer's bull, the man who was keeping it, but it belonged to the whole community; and everybody would have the services of that bull. Oh, a month or two later I got a letter from the owner, this Polish farmer. I don't remember whether it had been translated by someone; but at any rate, it was addressed to me.

T: Now this was a community in the United States?

H: No. It was a community in Poland, and he was writing to me to tell me that they were so grateful.

T: It was just after the war?

H: After the war, yes, when the communications were good and before the Russians had complicated communications. I doubt that the Communist government would have taken kindly to it if they had known what was going on; or perhaps there had been an adroit handling of the problem. At any rate, why shouldn't they let the contributions flow in? It meant rebuilding their society, and that is the duty of every conqueror.

It is a great tribute to our government that we helped rebuild Germany and Japan, a marvelous thing. It saddens me that our Yankee friends didn't see that they were leaving unfulfilled some of the requirements of a Christian nation in the Southland. We had acted very sinfully in resisting the efforts to free the slaves and to keep the Union together--that was, of course, Lincoln's primary purpose. We were wrong about that, and we should make that clear. It is a matter of religion with me and with my grandfather of Tennessee, who opposed secession and opposed slavery, and whose five brothers joined the Confederate Army. He just couldn't join the other army because he couldn't bear to think he was sending bullets in the direction of his five brothers. And they loved him. They said after the war, "Uncle William was right."

Well, that is another subject. I am talking now about this bull. I want to tell you, too, about visitors I had. These were the Church of the Brethren preachers visiting me, and I thought I could share that with the Church of the Brethren congregation--my neighbors here. I then told them about some people who were not members of their church. Do you remember as a student of history the story of Coxey's Army? That got into the language, you know. It was often said, "He is as numerous, or they're as unreasonable as Coxey's Army." Well, Coxey's Army was an army of unemployed, poverty-stricken people of the . . .

T: It is probably worthwhile to say it really wasn't an army in the strict sense of the word. It was a demonstration of some who had been in the army in the first war.

H: Exactly. It was a civilian group of impoverished people, and they called it Coxey's Army. The leader was General Coxey--Jacob, I think, was his first name, Jacob Coxey; and he later became in his eighties the mayor of Massilon, Ohio. He was still living when I came to Congress. I think he had just passed his ninetieth birthday. The movement that he was identified with was in the late 1890's when they had what they called "a panic." We call it "depression." The panic in those days was more serious than with us because there was no government around with food stamps and surplus commodities--that kind of thing--or unemployment insurance. So it was a real serious situation, and these men were desperate. I don't know how they lived or how they financed it; but at any rate, he came in to see me in my first term in 1943. I was not there, and the staff was so excited when I got back to the office. They said, "You can't guess who came in to see you." Then they said, "General Coxey." "Well," I said, "It was a good thing that I wasn't here. I am afraid impulsively I would have said first thing, right off, 'I thought you were dead.'" That wouldn't have been a proper greeting. But I have been on the receiving end of that kind of thing.

You know, I am 79 years old, and a year or two ago they proposed my name in a program committee for a nine-state humanities conference at Nashville. So, when someone advanced the idea that former Congressman Brooks Hays should address the conference, one of the Mississippi delegates said, "That old man?" It amused my wife and me when the husband of this delegate who said it told us, "I think I have just got to tell you what my wife said after they overruled her and you did come and speak to us in Nashville." She went back home after the banquet where I had been the keynote speaker and she said, "Oh, I am so ashamed. I made a terrible mistake. I don't care how old he is. I couldn't have been more wrong, and I want him to come to Jackson, Mississippi, and give the same speech that he gave at Nashville." So, that was sweet response.

Well, age has its advantages. I think we have to remind our young listeners like yourself that now and then there is something for the old fox hunters' chant in Arkansas, "The young fox for running; the old fox for cunning." Cunning means experience, but if senior citizens are not imaginative enough to share the things that produce some degree of wisdom which only experience can produce, then, we, of course, are not entitled to bask in the reverence that is often expended for the old people. Well, I don't want to get off on that.

What I am talking about is to remind myself that I had some interesting visitors. Martin Niemoller came to see me; fortunately I was in my office, and we sat in my private office without interruption. I forget who brought him. It may have been Stanley Jones who was a very dear friend of mind. In fact, you would be interested in knowing that I was asked to give one of the six talks at his memorial funeral service in Baltimore. They wanted me since I was his personal friend and not a Methodist. I think they wanted a certain symbolism of his ecumenism. They wanted someone to typify that on the program so they selected me.

T: How long ago did he die?

H: Oh, about four or five years ago. He was in his eighties. His widow survived him. She was, I think, about five years older than Stanley and she

has outlived him. She is still living in Florida. So, he should be enumerated. But I am thinking about Niemoller, also.

T: When would he have come to see you?

H: It was in the 1950's. He was on a trip over here after his agonies of imprisonment in a Nazi camp were ended. He said one time--he didn't say this to me in the conversation that we just had--it wasn't a very long visit but it was an inspiring thing for me. He said one time--and this is in one of his testimonials--"When first the Nazis assailed the Jews, I did nothing. I was not a Jew. When they then attacked the Catholics, I did nothing. I was not a Catholic. When they attacked the academic people, the universities, I did nothing. I was not a member of the academic community. When they attacked the industrialists, I did nothing. I was not an industrialist. Then, when they attacked the Christian ministers, I didn't have anybody left to help me. None of us in the ministry were free; that is, those of us who were vocal on this thing." So, he said, "I had made the mistake of not recognizing the interrelationships, the interdependence, of all the groups in a free nation."

Well, another person who came to see me was Reverend Tanimoto. He was pastor of the Methodist church in Hiroshima. He was one of those who was spared. He suffered some. His church was virtually destroyed, but he was an apostle of forgiveness and human kindness. I was quite inspired by his visit. I don't know that he had anything to do with the Japanese inviting me to plant a tree on the Japanese Embassy grounds here in Washington to be dedicated to a peaceful and Christian course by the two nations, Japan and the United States. I was the spokesman and I gave a short talk and helped spade some of the dirt in that little ceremony. But Tanimoto's visit was meaningful to me. Now Kagawa. You are familiar with his history, of course.

T: Did you meet him?

H: Yes, I met him except I went to see him. He was speaking at a luncheon along in the 1950's. I have forgotten just when. Of course, his career gave great impetus to what there was in the way of a Christian strength in Japan. He was outstanding. I wish I could give you the exact time that this happened because relationships between Japan--now wait a minute, I must go back. I am slurring this account because it was not while I was congressman. It was while I was in the Department of Agriculture; and it was shortly before the war. That gives me a better sense of what was happening at this point in time. But I was wrong about the point in time. I was assistant to Rex Tugwell who was the head of the resettlement administration, and I was, of course, trying to help him with these problems of rural poverty in the South. Some of the churchmen were sponsoring Kagawa's trip over here, I think about 1937. It was between 1935 and 1937, along in that period. At any rate it was before the war.

The relationship was strained, and they invited the Japanese ambassador to come to this luncheon for Kagawa. I am sure he didn't want to. He probably couldn't stand him because he was against the Japanese war policy, and the militarists of Japan didn't like him. But they had to come, courtesy demanded it. They wanted to put up as brave a front, perhaps, to the American people as they could--doing their best to deceive us as to Japanese

unity. Although it seems to me they had unity to a high enough degree that they didn't have to worry about a lone dissenter. Well, I didn't know too much about that, but Kagawa in the course of his talk made a reference that confirmed the feeling that I had on this point that I have just described. He said, "I hope I do not embarrass my ambassador," and then, he sailed into the war policy, and the ambassador made no audible response to it.

I had said to Dr. Tugwell, "Would you like to go hear Kagawa?" Well, as I recall my conversation with Tugwell, who was a great proponent of the Cooperative Movement in America, he didn't know who Kagawa was. I think he was that far removed from official church activities in America. He was an academic person and, of course, at that time, a governmental leader of great prominence, great power. Well, perhaps he knew enough to know that he ought to go hear this proponent of the Cooperative Movement in Japan. At any rate, when I identified him, he said, "Yes." I watched him. I was sitting sort of behind him, and I could see that he was intent and greatly impressed by him. So, when we got back to the office, he said, "Do you have contact with his sponsors and him?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Get in touch with them and see if he can come down to the office in the morning to give us some further insight into the Cooperative Movement. You come with him, and we will meet here in my office at any time that is convenient for him."

T: You invited Kagawa to meet with Dr. Tugwell and yourself?

H: Yes, and he came, and we enjoyed him very much. It was one time in my life that I put the brakes on any temptation I had to do the talking. I listened. It was an amazing thing to see this profound scholar, Rex Tugwell, listen to a tuberculosis victim--in other words, a frail body but a very powerful intellect and a great heart--to listen to him speak with apparently technical precision about the cooperative idea. Of course, they were a bit different because he was talking about the Japanese situation and their peculiar needs of consumer co-ops. Tugwell was more interested, of course, in the production co-op that would help the poor farmer. Nevertheless, the idea is that it flows right across that chasm between producer and consumer if you adopt the concepts of the Christian ethic as work in the economic community. Kagawa spoke with a decided accent, with the Oriental accent; and I can hear him now as he talked about what the cooperatives were doing and what Christianity could do for the poor of his native city, which was Kobe. That is where he did his finest work. I remember how he said so feelingly and with obvious sincerity, "I love those people; my heart is just now in the slums of Kobe."

T: Well, I think, perhaps, that is all that had much significance from the standpoint of the church. Men like Peter Marshall would come to see him. I helped him make a decision when they asked him to be the chaplain of the United States Senate. He was not sure he wanted to accept so he picked me as one to advise him. I suppose he talked to others, but he came to my office soon after the Committee acted.

T: Did you know him well?

H: Yes. We were together on the old preaching mission teams. You remember some years ago they were rather popular. It was a National Council of

Churches idea. They would assemble a group, maybe of a half dozen, most of them ministers--some women; Martha Applegarth was on the team, also Peter Marshall. I was often a lay member of the team, and that was where we got acquainted. The last picture of him was in the Post with another minister and myself. I was also asked to give the memorial address for him a month or two after his death. It was in his own church.

T: He died of a heart attack, did he not?

H: Yes.

T: When you say he counseled with you on becoming a chaplain, what was his real reluctance do you think?

H: It was because they were replacing a fellow minister of his, Frederick Brown Harris; and he did not want to be guilty of profiting at the embarrassment of Dr. Harris.

T: Any particular reason they did not want him?

H: It seems to me that it was a partisan matter. Harris had been chosen by the Democratic majority for an unknown reason, but the Republicans were in control of the Senate. That must have been in 1957--it would be earlier than that, 1947--because the Senate Republican strength peaked along in that period. In any event, quite aside from these partisan considerations--and he was certainly not a partisan--he felt that maybe Dr. Harris would be embarrassed by it.

Well, I said, "Peter, you've got to face political realities. The senators are not going to choose Dr. Harris, and why wouldn't he be pleased to have a friend as his successor, since it is obvious that he will not be in the picture. If he should be hurt by it, in a personal sense, it would be unworthy of him. In politics where there are two men to be considered, somebody has to lose, and it seems to me that he would understand enough the political realities by reason of his experience on Capitol Hill. He would know that you haven't been responsible for it. You hadn't made any campaign. It was the senators who had taken the initiative. You are merely accepting something that they have done, something that you hadn't asked for. I think he would be reasonable enough to see that and if he shouldn't, I think you would still have a clear conscience. There might be ways in which you could disabuse his mind of any of those suspicions.

T: Are there any others that we haven't talked about? You haven't said much about your association with Eisenhower.

H: Before you move to that and on this matter of people who came to me, there was a German minister, too; and that belongs in this category. Are you familiar with an article that I wrote that appeared in some publications on the friendship based on a lost Bible?

T: I know what you are talking about, but relate that experience. You visited an army camp?

H: Right. It was the American headquarters in Cherbourg, France. We had been

to see General Eisenhower in his Paris headquarters, about a dozen of us, on a congressional trip to look at army operations there in the European Theater; and that was before the end of the war, September 23, 1944. The invasion had been completed and the Patton army was moving through Paris and Northern France into the heart of Germany. They had what they called the Red Ball Boulevard because the movement of supplies and weapons was right through Paris. It was going on when we were there. We saw some of the trucks moving rapidly, filled to capacity with the sinews of war. Coming back we stopped at Cherbourg for one night, and General Eisenhower himself said, "I want you to see the battle scenes of the beaches where the furious fighting took place on Omaha Beach and Utah Beach.

I could talk at some length on that point, but I must move to the real story that has to do with this lost Bible. The next morning after I had completed my morning toilet and was getting ready to leave with the others, I noticed there were some books lying in the corner of the room where I slept. I went over and examined them; they were in German. There is the Bible; I was fascinated by it and I brought it home. There it is right there. You can take it in your hands and take a look at it. That is the first time you have seen it, I guess.

T: Yes.

H: But you knew I had it. Well, I didn't think much of it. I brought another book back with me. It is entitled "Do You Know Jesus?" I could read the German inscription on that, but there was nothing on the Bible. There was no writing on the flyleaf of the Bible, but on this other book were these words: "Presented to our beloved pastor, Alvin Hahlbory, by the Ladies Aid Society of Dueselburg." So that was the only clue I had to the ownership. I brought the two books back home to America, after asking the captain in charge if I could have them. He said, "Oh, yes. They haven't been inventoried and it is strange loot, but take them along." He said, "No one would ever be suspicious of any impropriety in your taking them."

So, I thought little about it except that I read it. I had had two years in German at the University of Arkansas and maybe a couple of years in high school, but I was never a good scholar; but I was able to read it. I even memorized the Twenty-third Psalm.

One day, a German friend whom I had met in church work, Gustav Adolf Gedat, was in my office. As he was leaving, I said, "By the way, I ought to locate the owner of these books. The Bible doesn't indicate it, but it belongs to the same man who had this other book, because they were together." He said, "Why Alvin Hahlbory. I know him. He is a friend of man, and he is still preaching." I said, "Well, when you see him tell him that an American congressman, a politician; has his Bible and I will send it to him."

In the course of time I got a nice letter from him, and he told me in the letter that it had been transcribed by his little sister and that he did not want me to send the Bible. He said he wanted me to keep it as a symbol of friendship and the hopes for a Christian peace--or maybe that was my expression. I wrote him, "All right. I will keep the Bible, but I will send you the little personal book that the Ladies Aid Society at your church gave you. You'll have a symbol of your expectation of a Christian occupation policy, and I will have a symbol of your hopes that your country

will never be a victim again of this pagan philosophy that has been such a tragedy." So, we wrote in that vein. I don't know what has become of that correspondence. It is buried somewhere, I suspect, in the papers that I gave either to the University of Arkansas, which is the depository of my political papers, my congressional papers, and political affairs in Arkansas or the Kennedy Library, which is the repository of my White House papers. In one or the other of those archives you will find this correspondence.

Well, one day I got word that he was coming to the United States. Friends there wanted him to see Washington and part of America. He walked into my office and the first time I saw him I felt as though I was meeting an old friend, of course. No, that was not the first time I met him, that was the second time.

The first time I met him was in Frankfort. The Conference of Christians and Jews in that part of Europe similar to our national conference here--Brotherhood Conference--gave a little dinner for me. It was a marvelous experience. I sat next to one of the distinguished professors at Frankfort University, Professor Adorno, an Italian. Incidentally, I found people who are quite familiar with his distinction as an academician. That very day a new president of the University of Frankfort had been elected, and he was Jewish. So this group was quite thrilled over that. A representative of the Frankfurter Zeitung was there. I thought my name would be on the front page of the paper the next day talking about foreign policy.

But this is what happened: They had asked me that afternoon if there was anyone I would like to invite to the dinner, and I said, "I don't know anybody in Frankfort, but there is a minister up at Duesseldorf that I bet would come." They said it was a pretty good journey, but they offered to get in touch with him. He rode five hours on a train to get there, that was how much it meant to him. The newsmen had been told that he was coming and about the Bible that brought us together. I was speaking when he walked in, and there was a bit of drama. He came up front, and they tugged at my coattail and said, "Your preacher friend is here." We just almost embraced, as he took hold of my elbows and looked at me.

He had been a chaplain but he was not a Nazi. Now that was a strange thing. I am confident that he never blessed the war. I had enough insight into his philosophy not only in what he had said in letters but in the conversation with our Library of Congress German experts. I invited them to talk to him. One of the experts, a highly educated lady, said to me, "Mr. Hays, your friend is a fine person. He is a gentle soul."

One thing interested me and it gave the others a laugh. We had a German interpreter of my English and then an English interpreter of his German, but I confounded them all of a sudden. When he said, "Mr. Hays, I wonder if you have read my Bible," I said, "Brother Alvin, as proof that I have you will find in one of the Psalms these words: Gutes und Barmhelsigheit werden mir folgen mein Leben lang und Ich werden bleiben in Hausen des Herren immer dar. The transcriber just passed over that. He gave in German these words from the Twenty-third Psalm: "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Getting back to the story I was about to tell, he came into my office on a trip to the United States. We knew he was coming and when he came my staff was just thrilled to see him. The young ladies in the office were both church girls and they were interested, and so was my top secretary, a man. He was an active Presbyterian. So they were quite sympathetic with these religious interests. They just fell in love with him. He was such a gracious person, and he spoke fairly good English. Now and then he would slip up a little, and I would help him out some from my limited knowledge. He came over to our home a time or two and had coffee with us and was sort of fascinated with our little home here and my Methodist wife. So this Bible has been on that shelf ever since. The American Bible Society had it written up for one of their magazines, and I believe the Baptist Press picked it up.

A short time after that trip he died. When I was in Germany a few months later I went to see his wife. I saw his church, a rather substantial church; I think it must have been Lutheran. I was saddened when I first heard that he had died, in his forties. I just felt, you know, that a good friend had passed on and it was such a premature passing. Well, that's the story.

T: Are there others that you would want to share? You started to mention your contacts with Eisenhower on that particular trip. You obviously must have known the general somewhat well for him to have appointed you to several offices when he was President.

H: Oh, yes. We got to be very warm friends. He was eternally grateful to me for standing with him in the Little Rock situation and trying to spare him the ordeal of sending troops into the city. I think it was an area of social action and social ferment that he was unfamiliar with, and he needed help. His responses were prompt and they were effective.

His boyhood was spent in the West, chiefly in Kansas, though he was born in Texas. He graduated at West Point, of course, and his army years were spent in many places. His warm friendship for me was largely a result of the school crisis. Oh, he said some passages that are possibly embarrassing. He inserted in his biography some passages about what I did and the personal cost to me advocating the acceptance of the Supreme Court decision in Little Rock. So, we did have a very warm relationship. No, he never came to see me, but I went to see him. He had invited me down--other congressmen were present--for breakfast or for dinner or things of that kind.

One day I had done something in support of his position which had met great resistance in the House. I helped pull it out of the fire. He called me the next day. It was something that Time Magazine took notice of, and my picture was there. We like to think of those things because it was not just a routine action; it was something that represented a little exertion on my part. The article read, "Mr. Hays acknowledged that his support of the administration measure had represented the shifting of his position"; but he said in explanation that his duty as president of the Southern Baptist Convention has meant a diversion from his legislative life and that he realized that he had not done his homework, but over the weekend he had done some reading and studying that convinced him that his vote earlier had been wrong, and so he moved to reconsider.

That got notice in Time Magazine and in other publications; but that was what induced the telephone call. Of course, a call from the President is exciting to the staff, they used every extension to hear. The girl who answered my phone said, "It's the President! It's the President!" They all got on the extension while he thanked me and called me "Brooks," of course, and said, "You did a great thing for us." I said, "Well, I was convinced of it, Mr. President, and I appreciate your taking personal notice of it." That's about all there was to that conversation. The telephone call was the equivalent of a visit.

T: You have related your experience in meeting Faubus and Eisenhower in Newport. Were there other occasions? Did you work through the staff on these things, or did you talk directly to the President about some of these matters?

H: Oh, I generally worked through the staff. But I would choose a staff member, if I could, who was close to him in the next office. I didn't choose someone in third or fourth echelon.

T: I see. Okay. You ran for governor of Arkansas in 1966, and you were the third man to announce for that race. Among those in the race were Dale Alford who had beaten you for the congressional seat in Arkansas in 1958. Did you really think you had a chance of winning when you went into it?

H: Oh, yes. I had a good chance of winning, no question about it. I would have been elected had it not been for an announcement of one of the associate justices to the Supreme Court, an announcement that followed mine. I might not have run had he announced before I had. But it is not an easy thing to withdraw from a race after the ticket closes. You embarrass your friends. I remember I said in council there in our conferences, "Perhaps I ought to ease out of this picture. We've got a complication now that Frank Holt is in the race because he will take a lot of the votes that I will need to defeat Jim Johnson, the segregationist--a raging racist." I said, "We just must defeat him at all hazards." The poll had shown--and we paid a thousand dollars for a professional poll--that of the people being mentioned for the governship that I was better known and had better name recognization and a better chance to defeat Johnson than anyone who was being suggested; and that I was probably the only man who could defeat the Republican in the fall. So there was every reason for my running from my point of view.

T: Rockefeller would have been the Republican.

H: Oh, yes. While I was personally friendly to Rockefeller, I wanted to help clean up the Democratic Party after the Faubus years. I wanted to heal the wounds. That's a better way to put it rather than to clean up the Party. I don't think the Party had gotten corrupted, but I did want to--well, I had in mind not only doing something for Arkansas but giving some encouragement to the young people of the South. I would have had a stronger voice in regional political councils. But many of my friends thought it was a mistake for me to run, and they may have been right. It was just one of those questions.

T: Did your staff talk to the man who talked to Holt when he came in about the possibility of his not announcing?

H: Yes, one of the men who had been very influential in inducing me to run--a young lawyer from Jonesboro named Penix. His family was close enough to us to have a daughter named for my wife--a very warm relationship extending over the years. He called me long-distance and said he thought the time had come for me to make another race for governor and that I could win. There is quite a story here, but I think since you have asked that question, we ought to deal with it. Some of my friends thought it was a mistake to run, like Governor Darden, former governor at the time--perhaps he was still president of the University of Virginia--a very close friend, too. When my wife and I walked into their home one day for a visit after I had announced, his first words were, "Marion, you are going to have him committed?" Oh, several of my close friends thought I shouldn't run, that I had an image that didn't need an office to add to my strength as a spokesman.

T: You had been defeated twice for governor and had served only as congressman, so it would have been a cap on your career.

H: That was my feeling, and I guess a person should not be apologetic about continuing to entertain ambition to hold office. It may have been that lingering feeling, you know, that this is a prize I would like to grasp. Different people have different prizes. The governorship is not a thing that appeals to many men in public life, and it might not have been in my case had it not been for these early experiences--the campaign in 1928 for the governorship and another one in 1930. Then I did something that I am sure is unique, and it is worth a little footnote in politics. I doubt if any candidate for the governorship of any state ever waited thirty-six years between races. Wouldn't that seem logical?

T: I would think that is probably true.

H: Of course, in my earlier races I was 29 in the first race and 31 in the second. Well, I became 30 shortly after the primary. But the cry then was, "Oh, Brooks is too young." I said in 1966, "Oh, how I would love to hear that again." But I had some good statistics to put into the advertising on the age of governors in both races, that is, Louisiana had a governor once who was only 26. Any number of states have had governors 30 and 31. Oh, I say any number; that is hardly accurate, but maybe a half dozen.

T: Were you not able to persuade Holt to withdraw or not to announce? Did he think he had a real good chance?

H: Oh, he knew he had a good chance; and he was the second man in the first primary so that I was squeezed out of the run-off. I think I would have been defeated in the run-off by Jim Johnson, just as Judge Holt was defeated. I think Jim Johnson's strength grew as he practiced his demagoguery and revival of the race issue, and saying all manner of mean, foul personal things against both of us. He called Frank Holt a pleasant vegetable; he called me an old quisling. Of course, that meant once he used that kind of thing I could never be on pleasant terms with him again. You don't accept that lightly, you know. They used to fight duels over things like that. It was so ridiculous for him to say that of me because I, of course, was loyal to the flag and to the country. He almost had advocated secession again. But Holt was encouraged to get into the race by certain selfish interests that wanted to hold together in a cohesive,

political organization those who had elected Faubus all those years. It was the remnant of the Orval Faubus organization that went to Holt. They were a little suspicious of me. I had always been a disaffected politician, in other words, a nonestablishment candidate.

T: But you had been out of the state for a number of years.

H: Oh, yes. That had something to do with it; and my age had something to do with it.

T: How old was Holt?

H: I suppose he was in his early fifties, much younger than I, and, of course, he had no real handicaps.

T: Faubus, of course, would not have given you any support. The Faubus organization would not have been interested in you.

H: He had promised, though, to be neutral, and I doubt that he kept that promise after these special interests, some of the bonds people, some of the liquor people, and some of the men in the printing business talked him into running. They were what you called a special-interest group. Of course, there was nothing shocking in the way of political ethics in that taking place. You have to assume that men who have businesses would have certain advantages in mind by supporting the winner. I had a man in the mercantile business, for example, and a few in the building and loan business, just taking a few limited interest groups that might have supported me; and I certainly had some strong friends in agriculture. I could never have been indifferent to farm legislation. This is an imponderable: just how to evaluate the presence of limited business interests in political situations.

I think that history will sustain me in this observation; and it is not meant as a condemnation of Holt, or at least it doesn't bear any strong feeling that there is a lack of ethics in it, because I think essentially he was an honest person. But history will sustain me in saying that special interests talked him into running. I think it was largely because I had not been identified with any strong, special or selfish interest. But we were on good terms.

This friend that I mentioned, Mr. Penix, pleaded with him not to announce; but he said, "I want to be governor. I have had that ambition for a long time, and this is an opening that I can't pass up." But he hadn't announced in time, from my point of view, to prevent the development of some cohesiveness among the "Andy Johnson" people. It was a tragedy from the standpoint of the Democratic Party that Johnson led the ticket in the first primary. Now I had advocated and put through, really--it was my influence that put through the run-off primary through the Arkansas legislature. I had great pride in it, so I believed in the run-off.

I had thought that perhaps I would be in the run-off. As I look back on it now, it was a good thing I wasn't. Johnson would have defeated me just as he defeated Holt in the run-off. But the thing he didn't see was this: Since he was defeated in the fall by Rockefeller, what he didn't see was that in fighting me and attacking me as he did he was sloughing off support that he badly needed to defeat Rockefeller. So while it was good strategy

to get the nomination, it was fatal from the standpoint of winning the office. And that's the reason it was said of me that I was conducting a "lackluster" campaign. And that was true. I had to have a moderate approach to this problem; otherwise, the party would have gone into the fall campaign without any cohesiveness.

Now, I was very sorry about appearing to fight with Rockefeller. I had no hostility to him, but he had no political organization. The Republican Party could not give the state what it needed in leadership at that time and events proved it. He was personally popular, and I had a warm feeling for him, so much so that I called him over the phone before publicly announcing to tell him what I was going to do; and it was a shock to him. He was in Texas buying some cattle. I said, "Winthrop, you and I have been good friends, and you are going to be disappointed in what I am about to tell you. I will announce for governor tomorrow and I want you to be one of the first to know it, because I don't want it to damage our friendship. Let me say this: that I simply want to do for my party what you want to do for yours." He said, "You can't do it, Brooks. It is past redemption." Well, I said, "We don't agree on that point." Of course, I didn't blame him for saying that, but I said, "Let me suggest this: that we put on a campaign like the Taylor Brothers. Two brothers were nominated once for the governorship of Tennessee, as you know--Bob and Al Taylor. Let's put on that same kind of campaign in which personalities will be relegated to the background. We will talk about policy and about our common devotion to Arkansas. I just want that kind of friendship that will survive a campaign." He said, "That's a deal." I don't think his heart was in it, although after that we did renew the friendship; and the wound, if there was a wound, was healed.

I went to see him a few times, and in the later years when he had become a victim of alcoholism, I was asked by some friends in the East, who knew and loved him and admired him, to go and counsel with him to see if there wasn't something his friends could do to help him conquer that illness. He told me to come to the mansion at four o'clock, and when I got there he was in no condition to hear any advice on that. He had already done his late afternoon drinking early in the afternoon, maybe early in the morning, because he was swaying when I walked in. So, this was a tragedy, and then, of course, he was a victim of cancer and died early with a tragic ending. But he did a lot of good things for our state, and like the Rockefeller brothers, generally was committed to a good political regime, an honorable regime.

I want to say something about his lack of equipment to lead a state in the economic condition that many of the states are in, particularly in the South, not so much so as was true in earlier years. He was unable to lead the state by reason of not having been identified as I had been with the aspirations of the poor people and the working knowledge of the remedies that are available to deal with poverty, because his interests were identified with men of wealth, men of "success." On the other hand--and this saddened me that the people I wanted to help were not responding to what was an authentic and strong program for them--they were going off after this false leader, the "Pied Piper of Hatred," Jim Johnson.

T: There was, apparently, someone who announced for the Republican Party--James T. Karan?

H: Well, that was not a factor.

T: There was some question mentioned in the Post or New York Times article in April, the fact that this would force a primary in both the Republican and Democratic parties which would prevent many Republicans from voting in the Democratic primary. Do you think that had there not been this there would have been some votes cast, some Republicans who would have crossed over in the Democratic primary.

H: As I recall, Karan didn't go through with that.

T: Oh, he didn't carry through. Okay. I didn't have that. So there was no Republican primary. There was just the Democratic primary.

H: That's my recollection.

T: Do you think you could have beaten Johnson had you been in the run-off?

H: I am doubtful about it now. I think that the contagion of the race question was still present. Now I don't think that is true today. Remember, this was in 1966. I think it began to fade perceptively. It had already begun to disappear, but there was still enough of it left to keep me from being elected governor. I still cannot believe it was the wrong decision. I recognize that there was some logic in the other opinion that I should not have run; but considering the fact that victory would have given me a wider voice after a while in some things that remained to be done on the racial front, I think I made the right decision.

But my little wife--I could tell all through the campaign that she was miserable and probably was never entirely happy about my decision. Ordinarily, we agree upon a course of action and go together, but in matters of politics she has tended to accept my reasoning. Of course, it is true that on many matters I yield to her, but I never asked her to open her thinking to me completely. I just respected her and tried to make it as easy on her as I could. But it certainly is due to be said for her that she never interjected any strong personal feelings to dissuade if my judgment was strong on the other side.

T: Well, certainly after this you went on over to North Carolina, didn't you?
H: No. There was a year in between before I went to North Carolina. That was in 1968. Remember, I was out of the picture in the summer of 1966. The election didn't come on until November, when Rockefeller and Johnson fought it out. So here were some valuable months for me to take a look at my professional posture. I had had these two wonderful years at Rutgers as the visiting professor of practical politics.

T: You were 67 then?

H: Yes.

T: Had you thought about retiring?

H: No. No. I'll never retire. Father Time may just give me a terrific blow with a sledge hammer on the head, but I won't retire. I felt as vigorous as ever and much better prepared at that stage in my life to be a good classroom instructor than at any time in my life. The two years at Rutgers had given me a seasoning that I was glad to have. Then, I had a call or a letter from W. C. Havard, a scholar from Louisiana and a graduate of Cambridge University in England, who was head of the Government Department at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. He said, "I have got a semester's visiting professorship for you."

T: You mentioned that. We did talk about that and you served and kept your home here in Washington.

H: I served two semesters, then, I had an office here and did some work in the campaign of 1968.

T: With Hubert Humphrey?

H: Yes. I was supporting him.

T: Who was your favorite early in the campaign? Hubert Humphrey or someone else?

H: Now you are talking about the campaign of 1968?

T: 1968. Right.

H: Well, I would say it was Humphrey. I don't recall now as I reflect on it that I was very active. But I got back here in the summer of 1967, and then, was free that fall to do preliminary work in politics. I think it was about that time that they organized what was called "The Southern Committee on Political Ethics"; and undoubtedly, our fear of George Wallace and a position in politics that we didn't consider ethical had influenced some of us to set up this little ad hoc committee. I did give some time to that.

I think maybe I can shorten this by simply saying that in January of 1968, the president of Wake Forest University, Dr. J. R. Scales, came into my office--the office of this committee I am talking about over near the Senate Office Building--and without losing time he said, "I want you to come down and be the first director of an Ecumenical Institute we are establishing at Wake Forest University." It didn't take me long to accept it on a half-time basis, ten thousand dollars a year for half of my time. I probably gave more than half in that activity and related activities which at least were helpful indirectly to what he was trying to do. It was a surprise to me that such a thing was being considered by a leading university, particularly a Baptist university, because Baptists have never been very hospitable to ecumenism.

Ron, later, within the month, Dr. Scales had second thoughts about the name, not the idea, but the designation of the idea. He found that a lot of Baptists were turned off by that name, and he asked me one day what I thought about it. It didn't take me long to make up my mind it would be a great mistake to take another name. I talked him out of it, and he was very

grateful to me later, because he said that it would have signaled a retreat, you see, to have changed its name to the name used by the Baptist World Alliance--The Commission on Cooperative Christianity. Well, that doesn't mean anything.

T: You still kept your house in Washington? But you moved down to North Carolina and established residence down there.

H: Well, yes. Since I was on a half-time basis, they couldn't feel that I was slighting my duty if I spent some time in Washington. So we commuted in a fashion, although we were there often a week or two at a time. This house was always available for the periodic visits we would want to make to our base. It was a delightful period, and they made available for us a small apartment with a kitchen and a large bedroom. The quarters they provided were adequate for us because we had access to the business district. This was in the Alumni House. I should have said that. The university owned a great building that was given to them. It was a mansion built by some member of the Reynolds family, a very wealthy family, the tobacco family. We were very comfortably located.

T: You became active in North Carolina politics pretty quickly when you were down there. One of the things was capital punishment, and you gave testimony on capital punishment before the state legislator.

H: Yes. Do you have that statement?

T: No. I am sorry I don't. Simply the fact that you gave testimony.

H: I saw it recently and I think that it is true today; but, of course, that was before the Supreme Court rendered some rather significant decisions on capital punishment.

T: You also gave a speech in August of 1969 on the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention. Do you remember that?

H: Yes, I certainly do, and I have been awfully disappointed that I haven't had some support from some of the Baptist leaders, but we have in the Baptist community something that resembles the political community. We do have such a thing as an establishment. There is such a thing as a hierarchy. You simply cannot shake those who are quite content with the existing order because it provides outlets for them and certain status for them; and they are just not about to take time out from enjoying them. I believe that the work is tremendously important. They are not about to take time out to think about a new formula for selecting our leader. But there is no question about it, I was undoubtedly right.

I took the figures--I haven't done any late research on it--on state delegations in both the Houston and Louisville conventions. I showed in the meeting at Houston that Texas had multiplied strength in the Convention that they were not entitled to, and it was because the formula that we have for resident voting is so constructed that the state in proximity to the meeting place is a strength out of all proportion to basic Baptist strength. I showed, for example, in comparing Texas with North Carolina that Texas had at least three or four times as many Baptists, but only

that, and they must have had ten times the strength at Houston. Now when the Convention came to Louisville--North Carolina, you see, is much closer than El Paso and Houston, Texas, to Louisville. Then I took Virginia, which is also very close and the figures are very convincing on it. I have shown, I think, how it affects the decisions.

When the Convention met in Denver--I forget which year it was--there was a motion put through which placed the Sunday School Board and our dear friend, Jim Sullivan, in a difficult position, telling him not to sell those Bible commentaries into which a great deal of energy and sacrifice had been poured. Clifton Allen and others had worked hard on it and yet, they said it doesn't quite fit our concepts; and those concepts were very narrow then from my point of view. They get over to Philadelphia the next year and out of the range of what I think is much more representative--how can I state this? Fundamentalism probably is the only word that would carry the idea. While Baptists might go "liberal" on separate issues, I don't like to say that we are not Fundamentalists. I think I am, but it is not quite the same definition of fundamentalism.

My point is that the Southeast as distinguished from the Southwest is far more tolerant of free interpretation and enlightened interpretations. Accepting scholarships and accepting results of research on what the Bible means doesn't mean that we are less devoted to its truth than the literalist. But on this philosophical point in question of decision-making you will have a different decision in Philadelphia because the Southeast could send more messengers to Philadelphia than from the distant states of the Southwest. Now you get my point.

T: But you didn't get very strong support for this in the 1960's.

H: No, I didn't. It was just more than I had time to carry. I did have some of my colleagues in the fraternity of former Presidents pat me on the back and say, "You're right"; but none of us had time to do it. Now, W. C. Fields was glad to publish my letter and I had hoped it would stir up interest, but it didn't.

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