Interview
with
William Jennings Bryan Dorn

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University of South Carolina
Interviewer: Joe Wider

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Synopsis: The Hon. William Jennings Bryan Dorn discusses his career in Congress in this very lightly edited transcript.

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[Tape 1 begins]

Dorn: Our committee chairman was Carl Vinson, the oldest, and, from point of service, senior member of the House; that's one plus on his side, he's a senior member, and he's Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and that means Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, all of them, and they got bases everywhere in this country; it's the biggest item in the budget every year, defense, now about $200,000,000,000, then it was uh… almost $100,000,000,000; and that's a lot of money to dispense around over the country to help people, employment, and all that, warehouses to be built where the goods are assimilated and sent to the different branches of the armed forces, and so there's a lot, an awful lot of activity going on around the Armed Services committee.

You pass there any time you want to; I used to pass there going over to other parts of the building; it's in the Rayburn building where I was, you go by there, you see a whole lot of generals, admirals in there all the time appearing before that committee. [If] Mr. Vinson wasn't there they'd be a sub committee meeting in there. That involved an awful lot of money, aircraft carriers, and all of that, and Mr. Vinson was a kind of austere, abrupt, dominating kind of a personality he's just, he's older than you, you just didn't argue with him, argue with him, and he wouldn't let his members of his committee ask a whole lot of questions, he'd say you have one minute, well they respect him, they afraid to go over that time, he'd be hurt.

Each member of that committee, Armed Services Committee, represents a certain area where there's airfields, Army airfields, Navy bases, and so he's not going to, he not going to give the Chairman much argument, he's trying to get something at Eglin Air Field in Florida, Mr. Vinson had his people around with whom he worked, Bob Sikes [Robert Lee Fulton Sikes, D-Florida, House, 1941-1944, & 1945-1979] represents Pensacola, Eglin Air Field, Pensacola Naval Air Field, Navy, he was on the Appropriations Committee, and he was one of the friends of Mr. Vinson, so they would work together. Now, Sikes wasn't on the Armed Services Committee, he [was] on the Appropriations dealing with that subject. And Vinson had a lot of people like that, and Sikes was, of a, was more
elderly than some of the others, so the young members they had a, they were put down right quick by Mr. Vinson and they couldn't get up and answer, un quest, ask questions all the time they wouldn't let them do it. So he ran the committee, he was autocratic, an' I think maybe to a degree that made him successful, as they were just afraid to question him all the time, about what he was doing, an' he would just simply, set you down, I've been 'fore his committee, a lot.

**Wider:** By the same token what might a committee chairman do to prevent a bill from getting out of his committee?

**Dorn:** [chuckle] Well, if another committee chairman had a bill he didn't want out he just simply talk to Mr. Vinson, in private or on something, an' that would be a mark against that bill, an' I doubt that a bill would come out of his committee that another committee chairman bitterly opposed, and, would be very difficult to get a bill out of out of his committee that, they'd just be a big rumpus over there. An' he'd come over and oppose it, the other committee chairman would, an'...

**Wider:** I was wondering, unless you want to continue with the Congress, basically what I was looking for maybe some examples like say something not getting out of committee. You mentioned a number of times about Judge Smith had a particular technique that would frustrate other members about not letting things getting out of committee, and that's a good story.

**Dorn:** Well Judge Smith was, of course, one of the important members of the Congress in the era in which I served, One of the most successful, and, he too was an austere, kind of a reticent, retiring individual, he didn't, wouldn't have no bombast about him at all. An' he was a good lawyer; he served as a judge, that's why they called him Judge Smith all the time. He was a judge before he was elected to Congress. An' he ran for the United States Senate once, and didn't make it, while he was in Congress. But he lived nearby in northern Virginia, just as conservative as you get and now, incidentally, that used to intrigue me a little bit just how people that close the Mason-Dixon line could
be so conservative, much more so than I was and I was in the deep South, but he was a Byrd man, Howard Smith, what made him tick was Harry Byrd; he was back in that era and Claude Swanson and those people and Carter Glass.

And Judge Smith was a, he was, well, he just did, he didn't get out and whoop and holler and go on. He would, had bills before his committee. See, that's how important the Rules Committee - wasn't one bill, like some Committee chairman would have to worry about. He had to worry about the bills from all the committees. And he could sit right on them and not let 'em out of his committee. And sometimes those committee chairmen would say "I sent that bill over there to your committee, but I'm not really for it right now. I want you to hold it up." And he'd hold it up.

Judge Smith had a lot of what they call dirty work to do. Others wouldn't do what he would do, and if necessary he'd go off to the farm. And his farm was about, I've been to his farm a number of times, it was in Virginia, and he'd go there and you couldn't find him. And that's the way he had of preventing a bill from getting through then, becoming law. Lot of the civil rights stuff; he was the key to the whole situation. And he didn't like the civil rights bills, in any shape or form. And the lynching and the poll-tax bills, he'd take off, he'd be gone, you couldn't find him; ...call down to the farm and there wouldn't be any phone down there. ... I don't know where he is, out on the farm somewhere. That could be any number of places. But he did that a lot, and it got to be sort of a national joke. Is Judge Smith at the farm? When they wanted something done, they wanted to know if he was there, and, you'd be surprised how many people, even the President of the United States.

A lot of times he was in touch with those committee chairmen, people like Carl Vinson and Judge Smith and Wilbur Mills, the President of the United States .... every other day in touch with them some way or another, somewhere down the line. He'd say "Look Wilbur, I don't want that damn thing to come up today, uh, this week; I gotta get my ducks in a row." And he'd say hold it up. And he would; he'd hold it up. Just wouldn't
have a meeting on it. And if got to ... in his own committee, saying we got to have a meeting, get that bill out, he'd go to the farm. He'd get his hat and he'd be gone.

Judge Smith was a shrewd operator, one of the best I've ever known, and a successful committee chairman. People, a lot of them cussed Judge Smith 'cause he wouldn't get their bills out, ......., but they still respected him. And he was used by presidents, by majority leader and by all the members of Congress, who wanted to get something killed, or held up, he became the key to the whole thing. And they worked with him.

Judge Smith wore a long-tailed coat when I first worked there. He was of the old South you know, long-tailed coat, and I made a lot of speeches for him. He liked the way we talked, and so I made speeches for him down at Charlottesville, University of Virginia, different places. And he liked good speaking. I got him down here one time, speak to the General Assembly of South Carolina; I got the railroad company to arrange for him; he was getting old. And they fixed up a car, with, you know, attendant in there. And all of that. Came to Columbia and took him back the same way. He spoke to a joint session of the Legislature. Now, he was just kind of old, he didn't whoop and holler much, but uh, he [had] a lot of friends down there and they were, respecting him. They were glad to see him.

**Wider:** I've been listening to the sound, and this sounds kind of gravelly. Sounds like your voice is getting ready to quit. And it's very low. I'm having to turn it up all the way, and ...

**Dorn:** Where you going now?

**Wider:** Well, what I'd like to do is I'd like you to talk about some of these, let's go into this other committee chairman. I think that's where we need to go, and maybe that'll get you fired up a little bit. And, uh, basically what they represented, I mean, when they were the most effective, what they did, who they were, and you know, what their
philosophy was. You know, what, did they have a specific purpose? Things of that nature, so....

**Dorn:** Well, during that time, the Congress, most of the time when I was there, they uh, the chairmen when the Democrats were in. That's why they'd get steamed up about the President and all of that. The President of course is important, but presidents come and go. I've seen them come and go in that twenty-six years I was there. About eight of 'em. And the people that really run this country, across one administration to another, are the members of Congress. Particularly the House of Representatives, where you...they've been there all the time.

President and Mr. Vinson were the most powerful members of Congress, he had the seat, the seniority, and he represented a rural district in Georgia, and never was, I don't know of anybody ever running against him, after he won initially over Tom Watson. Tom Watson was a great populist, and probably a candidate for President of the United States, and Vice-President and all that. But Vinson beat him. He ran against Vinson in 1918 on the war issue, and Watson just ripped into him about the war; he was against World War I. And Vinson won though, in that campaign, and so he didn't have to worry, during the twenties and the thirties, forties and fifties and sixties when he was there, he didn't have to worry about election, he was just automatically returned. All the senators in Georgia like Walter George and Dick Russell and Tom Watson and those people, after he beat Tom Watson for Congress, Tom Watson was elected United States Senator. And, so he got along with all those fellows. They respected his power and his decision and all that, and he was a man of decision, positive.

He was I guess about as famous a Southern committee chairman as we ever had. And he was very much in demand by the North. They couldn't do anything in New York City or Rhode Island or Boston or the West Coast, San Diego, San [Francisco], all those places had harbors, Navy, and they had to get along with Vinson; they had to see Vinson about these things. Airfields.
And the man who succeeded Carl Vinson as chairman of the Armed Services Committee was a flamboyant type of individual, Mendel Rivers, from South Carolina. And course you could well understand how he got assigned to that committee originally, was an old naval affairs, then it became the Foreign, Armed Services Committee was Charleston Naval Yard. Twenty-five percent of all the people in Charleston area were employed either in the Navy Yard, or, the marine bases or the depots or the naval hospital, or the airfield down there that he put there. So we’re talking about THE payroll in his district. And you better not say anything about Mendel Rivers down there. They still almost worship Rivers, he got, he brought home the bacon. This is the term they used. He brought home the money, employment and all that. Mendel Rivers of course, followed in the tradition of Vinson. He was trained by Vinson. And, he was pretty…he ran the committee. And, that's one angle, they.. And it went on.

At one time Senator Russell from Georgia was chairman of the Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate, and Vinson was chairman of the Armed Services Committee, from Georgia, of the United States House. And they asked about a, a conference, conference, ever go to a conference committee. This a way ...wasn't necessary. Conference committee between House Armed Services committee in some ways just two old men sitting over in the corner, Dick Russell and Carl Vinson, making decisions. That was their conference. Both very powerful and very renowned, and, so that, and Mendel Rivers of course followed in that tradition.

Mendel Rivers and I got along fine. He kind of liked to go out and make speeches. He spoke right here at this house. I guess the largest barbecue I ever had, on Saturday, gathering before the election. He came here before he died, in January of 1971 I believe it was. And after the election spoke for me out there. He was very effective as a stump speaker, although he would speak too long sometimes. Mr. Rivers had one problem, and his wife asked me to mention it in the obituary, the tributes to him when he died on the floor of Congress. And at her request I brought it up, that he had a problem, a drinking problem, but that he’d licked that problem. Last three or four years, I don't think of his life, when he was on that, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I don't remember
his taking a drink at all. And, this was a great tribute to him, the fact that he licked the problem, and had really gotten the best of it. I know one time, they had Mendel Rivers day at Charleston. And, everybody went all out down there, .... Hanby(?) was their chairman. And the jobs all depended on him, and so we were determined that Mr. Rivers would, you know, be absolutely sober and in good shape when we got there. And so we got him off to Bethesda out there, and stayed out there a day. The day we were to go to Charleston, we got him and sent Dillard Rogers out to pick him up and told him not to stop anywhere, come right on to the plane. But Mr. Rivers said something about going to the restroom or something, but he got Dillard Rogers stopped, and when he stopped, that was when Dillard made a mistake. They got a bottle, and came onto the plane, and Mr. Rivers was steamed up, and his long hair was sticking all up like this. Awfullest sight that you've ever seen.

And [they] went on down to Charleston. Speaker of the House, Carl Albert, was on there; they had Les Arends [Leslie Cornelius Arends, R-Illinois, House 1935-1974], great Minority leader of the House. We must have had twenty-five members of Congress. Went on to Charleston, and the celebration was at Johnson-Hager(?) stadium.... football field. They had it jam-packed, it must have been fifteen thousand people, ....... on the other side, .... fifteen thousand people. And we told Mr. Rivers, .... lot of things going on behind the scenes, the public doesn't know about, and it goes on a lot of times. Different ways. We just told Mr. Rivers, said, you know, its hard for you to stand up on that particular stand, you had to be very diplomatic how you approached him, might cut you out you know. So we just tell him that when they call on you, that you just too, filled up with the occasion and all that, it had overcome your emotion, and you just would speak later and you couldn't say anything. Truth is, he wasn't able to stand up, stay there. So we, we got him kind of hoist up; he held onto that stand and he, came time for him to respond to all these eulogies and tributes and everything, he said just that. He said, well, ladies and gentlemen, thank you; he said he was just too full to say anything, and he'd see them all later; a billion thanks, something like that, and he just flopped down behind, we sat him down. And, people never did know the difference. Women cried, and said oh isn't Mendel sweet, and all of that.
But these kind of things went on all the time in Congress, these, some of those things stand out that you remember, and, but the last two or three years, three or four years, as chairman of that committee, I do not recall Mr. Rivers taking a single drink, anywhere. If he licked that problem, as bad down as he was, he deserves a lot of credit. ‘Cause, before that he'd stay gone a month sometimes, and maybe wind up in Europe, when he's supposed to be somewhere else. But he was a great committee chairman, outstanding chairman that everybody knew personality-wise; one way or another, they knew who Mendel Rivers was.

And, another one was Dewey Short, from Missouri; he was a Republican, but he was, best speaker, I guess I ever heard. He was chairman of the committee when the Republicans were in power; it was a very short while. And he came here once to Greenwood, and spoke for me. This was after he was chairman of course. And, he too had a problem with the, with John Barleycorn. And they had an Army colonel to go with him everywhere he went, try to take care of him. But they didn't always succeed; he was, he wanted a drink he took it.

And one time out in Missouri, seems like I forget what the college was, a college in St. Louis, the Army was telling me they was in charge of him, and he got out there and had dinner with the president of the college. On the campus. And that Mr. Short was having dinner, and it was a good dinner and all that and they were all respecting him because, you know they got military units in the college and everywhere. That he helped support. And he was having a little too much tea, and he asked the college president to go screw a duck or something like that. And so, he got mad with the whole thing and walked out. This colonel that was escorting him around was telling me all this in the Far East, when I was over there in South Korea. And he said .... had a rough time. Finally, wanted to know where Mr. Short was, he was a big man, the chairman of the committee, got up and walked out. And finally a little boy came in, the president of the college's little boy, and said Daddy, there's a man out there asleep on second base, and they wanted to get him up
so they could go on with the ball game. He'd gone out there and put his head on that bag on second base, and he'd gone to sleep.

And they have incidents of Mr. Short like that all over the world. He chased a maid down the hall in a hotel in London one time and tried to bite her on the fanny. He would really get on some rip-roaring [benders], yet he was one of the most brilliant men in Congress, anywhere. He was a Rhodes Scholar, and he went to Heidelberg, University of Calcutta, everywhere. And he could speak, I think, four or five languages; I heard him speak in German, and he was just a fantastic figure. Well-liked, Assistant Secretary of Defense later on, everybody liked Dewey Short. Incidentally, he was such a wonderful speaker; you could have a fellow practitioner of the art, when you could exceed anybody. He brought them in. He'd get on the floor for a long speech; word went around to everybody that Dewey Short was on the floor.

And they would come in. Just like Martin Dies from Texas, same thing. Word get around that old Dies was speaking on the floor, they came in out of their cubbyholes, cloakrooms and everywhere. He was a fantastic orator. Dewey Short was about as good as I've ever heard, I'd, Martin Dies was good, Charlie H(?) was good when he got warmed up, old man Keith from Wisconsin, was great; they had some speakers there that, some of them were just expert; they would have, out of that many soap-box orators you know, 435, some of them would be some of the best that ever lived. Dewey Short was one of them, Martin Dies was another, .... and they were good.

Wider: We were talking about the, the Southern committee chairman.

Dorn: Well, we just hit a few of them. Let me see. George Mahon [George Herman Mahon, D-Texas, House, 1935-1979] from Texas, was chairman of the Appropriations Committee. You didn't read much about him in the papers. He kind of worked on the quiet side, and he had a lot of subcommittees; his committee was a big committee. Over fifty members. And add subcommittees that represented the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, all the way down the line. And REA, and everybody that got
appropriated money from the federal government, they had some committee on his committee, subcommittee, that handled that appropriation. So it was quite a busy committee too. George Mahon was, he was a popular member, but he was quiet, he didn't raise so much, he was an effective speaker though. He was not an orator, but he was a speaker. He would explain these bills when he brought them before Congress, and his subcommittee chairmen sitting over there, and, incidentally, from Texas at one time, we had -- I say we, the southern part of the country -- we had five committee chairmen. George Mahon of Appropriations, which is probably as important as any other committee in Congress. We had Wright Patman, Banking committee, which is another important committee. We had Omar Burleson [Omar Truman Burleson, D-Texas, House, 1947-1978] who was chairman of House Administration. Jack Brooks from Beaumont, who was chairman at one time I think of Judiciary; anyway, he was committee chairman. Then you had "Tiger" Teague [Olin Earl Teague, D-Texas, House, 1946-1978] from College Station, who was Texas A&M; he was head of the Veterans Committee, and later on the Space Committee. When he stepped down from the Veterans Committee, I became chairman, he became chairman of the Space, Aeronautics Committee. Did a lot of great work along that line. So you, you can see these things across the nation. And I attribute it to certain members of Congress, I....

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Dorn: Southerner... You see them across the country; I associate them with certain individuals. But there was five committee chairmen from Texas, at one time. Out of fourteen, out of twenty, major committees in Congress. We had five of them from Texas, we had fourteen from the South, none from the North, at that time. And people wonder why the South made such great progress during that period.

As again, I say, presidents came and went, we didn't have a president until we had Jimmy Carter and then it was too late. Lyndon Johnson was a Southerner, regardless of what he said. If he tried to appeal to the western vote, he had a lot of cowboy pictures around, cattle and things like, he was as much Southern, more Southern than Jimmy Carter.
Jimmy Carter had spent a lot of time in the Navy, eleven years, and fourteen in an embassy so you can see he wasn't Southern, not really. But Lyndon Johnson grew up in the saddle, cotton, and poverty of Texas. His people came from here and North Carolina and Georgia. And he was straight out of [the] South... During that time, it really didn't make that much difference who was President; the President had to rely on these people. And Eisenhower said that Sam Rayburn, who was Speaker of the House, and Lyndon Johnson from Texas, who was the Majority leader of the Senate, this in addition to these people I told you about. Either one [was] capable of being President, and if it wasn't for the system, the way it was set up, would be President. And that is, they were from the wrong area. And of course Lyndon Johnson made it to the President, but through the assassination of John Kennedy.

But now, let me give you another example. Arkansas. A little state with four congressmen. They kept losing congressmen. And they got down to four, and one of them was Wilbur Mills, chairman of the Ways and Means. Another one was Oren Harris [Oren Harris, D-Arkansas, House 1941-1966], chairman of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. Tremendous interest in the textile industry and all that. Another one was Jim Trimble [James William Trimble, D-Arkansas, House, 1945-1967] of the Rules Committee. What more do you want? And the fourth one was Gathings [Ezekiel Candler Gathings, D-Arkansas, House, 1939-1969] who was chairman of a subcommittee on Appropriations. All four of them. You had more influence right there in Congress from Arkansas than you had in the entire state of New York and California combined.

In South Carolina at one time - it's just a little state -- they had Mr. Rivers, chairman of Armed Services, they had a fellow named Dorn that was vice-chairman of Veterans Affairs, and later on chairman, then you had Johnny McMillan, who was chairman of the District Committee in Washington, and vice-chairman of the Agriculture Committee. So you had a lot of power just from this little state. In other words, we didn't care who was President. We had the President where he couldn't do much if, he got wrong. He had to get the South in there. And over in the Senate you had Harry Byrd, you had Dick Russell, you had Walter George(?) at one time, and Pat Harrison from Mississippi, you
just had, and Joe Robertson from Arkansas, and, this is something that the American people have never realized. You get all steamed up, and elect a President of the United States from somewhere, and really they had the power in their own hands right here. If they could just get that party, the Democratic Party, a majority in the House and Senate, then they had the power. They had the committee chairmanships.

And, this is the way they operated. Judge, I haven't talked enough about Judge Smith, with whom I was more closely associated than anybody, when I was in Congress, that is the power structure. As Chairman of the Rules Committee, you can see how important, with all the legislation going through him, how important that was. And Judge Smith, we called him Judge Smith all the time, he was a Southerner, even though he was a northern Virginian, he represented University of Virginia, and he got along with all those people -- the redneck element of the South; and he got along with the college crowd; of course he was a very intellectual man. He had a good personality that suited ... but he was quiet, he was not bombastic. And whooping and hollering going on, and everybody like Senator Harry Byrd and Walter George and Senator Russell from Georgia. They all made friends with Judge Smith. They get on the phone and say, Judge I want so and so passed; I want you help me out on a little matter. And he would, and that's the way they worked.

And all these big senators, Republicans too. There were a lot of Republicans in the House and Senate; went up during the Republican times that were in power. They got along with this Southern committee chairman and Southerners in general. Of course there was a coalition, that they, that controlled… Again I want to emphasize that presidents could come and go; they got the headlines; they were in the news media; president has a conference, so and so. But the real power for a number of years, about a quarter of a century, in American government, was in your Southern committee chairmen. And they meant a lot to their districts back home. This is why they were re-elected, because they did things.

The South was an area of poverty and lack of opportunity. But these fellows helped put, Dick Russell over there in Atlanta, put the Glen Martin plant, helped them locate there,
aircraft plant. And Vinson put textile plants, because of his informal textile committee, he was chairman of it. And trade, trade's bothering them now, we should have Vinson back up there. And, they helped their people back home.

A fellow like Eddie Hebert [Felix Edward Hebert, D-Louisiana, House, 1941-1977] in Louisiana, who was chairman of the Armed Services committee for a while, you could see what that means to him. World's Fair is going on there today, and I imagine he set the groundwork for that. Mississippi River, several hundred billion dollars have been spent on the Mississippi River. Harnessing the Mississippi, making it navigable, year in and year out, all the way to St. Paul and Pittsburgh, and up there. Eddie Hebert was Representative from the mouth of the river, in New Orleans. Hale Boggs represented New Orleans; he was Majority Leader of the House under Joe Martin for a long time. He was lost in Alaska; nobody ever knew what came of him. He went up there to make a speech for a fellow in Congress from Alaska, was on my committee. Sat right next to me, and he asked me to go, and I told him, I'll go sometime. Let me know. I think he had a more, asked Mr. Boggs because this was a, more of a political thing, where he could probably benefit more, that's why Mr. Boggs went. I was supposed to go up there. And Mr. Boggs made the speech in Anchorage or somewhere, and [was] supposed to fly to Juneau over those mountains, and they didn't make it. Never heard of again.

But [the] Mississippi River was important. You see those Congressmen up and down the river, when a fellow like Eddie Hebert or Hale Boggs was Majority Leader of Congress, both of them were from New Orleans. Both served a long time. They had a powerful block, you look ..... they just represent New Orleans, so what. That [river] goes all the way to Minneapolis, to the Canadian line, Red River Valley of Montana, and the Missouri Valley, all, and the Ohio River, the Tennessee River whips around. So you've got a powerful block of Congressmen, all through, and Governors and Senators, through the Midwest that would back a man like Boggs for Majority Leader, or Mr. Hebert for chairman of Armed Services Committee. I've made talks for both of them, and this is the way the power structure works.
Wider: I was wondering, this may seem like a stupid question, but there might not be too many people in the viewing audience that have any idea as to how they get there, and how do they become chairmen?

Dorn: Well, the way you become chairman of a committee is by seniority. That's number one. Or somebody dies, or something like that. But that's the way I became chairman. I was vice-chairman for fourteen years, of the Veteran's Affairs Committee. Mr. Teague moved up; Tiger Teague moved up to the Space Committee, automatically I became chairman. And that was when they elected chairmen. They started that recently, that was the first year that they elected chairmen and I was elected. I got the largest vote, I believe, of anybody running for chairman from any part of the country. One hundred forty-seven to four. I'm still trying to find out who those four was who voted against me. No, I think they told me the reason why, they were philosophically opposed to the system or something like that. I think they voted against all committee chairmen. But I won by an overwhelming majority. And that was the year that some of them got beat. The next year, anyway, like Poage [William Robert Poage, D-Texas, House, 1937-1978] and McMillan [John Lanneau McMillan, D-South Carolina, House, 1939-1973] wasn't re-elected, and, but that would have been unheard of, twenty-five years ago, voting against a committee chairman. They didn't have elections for chairman. Course lately it's just sort of a rubber stamp affair, they elect them anyway, but you can rise up and vote against a committee chairman, which they did, if it was, liberals and, wanted to vote against a Southerner like Johnny McMillan, who they didn't really cater to much anyway. And so they just almost beat him.

But that was unheard of back years ago. You automatically became chairman of a committee because of your seniority. Why the seniority in the South? Because of rural districts. You can't go out and steam people up and vote against a Congressman who's been there any time. They automatically come back, from the South, year after year, unless he votes against that system. He can vote for civil rights in those days, which of course he wouldn't do, but if he did he wouldn't come back. And this rural thing; cotton was king. Cotton has a great influence, even all the way out; it still does. But then all the
way through Arkansas, delta of the Mississippi, Texas a big cotton state, and California. I've had some of those California Congressmen come to me and wanted help with cotton. They got an awful lot of cotton in the San Joaquin Valley. You need to know all that if you're going to work with Congress. The cattle areas, I still know that. Kansas, Nebraska, cattle country. Corn country is the state of Iowa. And hogs is Chicago, Illinois. Poultry, swine in Iowa, too.

And if you were on a committee, where the .... organizations, for instance, Veterans Affairs. Veterans Administration buys a lot of things. Run a hundred and seventy-two hospitals. It just makes sense to come to the chairman of that committee and say look, I want you to not forget our cattle association, or hog association, and ...... They do all, that's all a part of the game. The Army particularly. Army can manipulate, almost, the price of beef by what they buy and when they buy, and they do. And they have to watch it. Wheat, all of that, fruit. California's a big peach state, and if they buy something for the armed forces and send it all over the world, when you have several million people in the Army, Navy and the Air Force, it's a powerful financial, economic factor. You got to understand all that if you're going to be a successful member of Congress. Coal; coal used to come down here, and fire these boilers, running these steam plants, for electricity.

**Wider:** I was wondering, did members of Congress, when they were running for re-election, did they stress the seniority thing? Was seniority a big thing in election...

**Dorn:** Oh, that was the issue. If you were running for Congress in the South, and you were a committee chairman, about to be vice-chairman, of course you emphasized that. What you were able to do for your people. The South has been poverty-stricken since the Civil War. Not a break. Now you've got a committee chairman. I will go back and I'll do so and so. They know he's telling the truth, he can do it. All through the South you had, [Muscle Shoals?], TVA, these things that revolutionized the Southern economy. And the military bases and air bases. These fellows got 'em. And of course they get on the stand, and they had better than that, they had dinners honoring them. Put on by these associations. Savannah Valley Authority or the Tennessee Valley Authority.
Put on a big dinner honoring the congressman from that area that represented that river. And [of] course there was publicity, headlines in the paper, pictures.

I even went down to Mississippi one time, with a boat. Bob Jones, chairman of my committee on Public Works, had a lot to do with the dams and water of the Tennessee Valley and the Mississippi. That's why I went to Mississippi. I flew over the Mississippi River when it was at flood tide, eighty-five miles wide. All over that whole country down there. And help do something about the, to rectify the situation. With additional dams, thousand miles from there maybe, to help that situation. I went to New Orleans when water was on the streets in places. I went to California to observe a VA hospital that had been, shaken down by an earthquake. Forty-three veterans were killed. That's my business. So I had to go. And I went there to see what needed to be done. We came up with a new hospital, and one that's earthquake-proof. You can't shake it down. No earthquake. And things can be done. You got the engineers; you got architects. It can design things. We had been negligent in building that hospital where it was, near a earthquake fault, where it would, ..... for the city of Los Angeles. Told them what we were going to do.

That's where I met Warren Dorn. He was running the city of Los Angeles, next to the mayor, superintendent of something..... That's where I met him. Head for their group. To testify. Since then he's come here [to] the house. You make a lot of friends like that in Congress, and you know, all right, that's a little thing. If you run into a fellow named Dorn, and you're a Dorn, the only one in the phone book, not many Dorns in the United States. You run into him on an occasion like that and get dinner with him, something like that, you've got a friend. He ran for governor of California. He's a friend of Reagan. Of all those people; he's a Republican. When he came out here to my house, he's a mayor of a little town out, it wasn't an important town, in California, but you see politics can be influenced by little incidents like that. Little things. If you help, that man might send you a contribution.
I got John Burns, was governor of, first governor of, Hawaii. They became free [sic], he was, he'd been right here. Spent the night with me. Got caught in snowstorm. Here. Of all places, in South Carolina. Visited Atlanta with me. Snowball with the girls up there, because snow was about that deep. And, he's supposed to speak down in Barnwell or somewhere down there, couldn't make it because, it was, the central part of the state, it was just a blizzard. Twelve inches, eighteen inches of snow. You couldn't travel at all, so he stayed here. Got snowbound in South Carolina, that was a big joke to him, as long he lived. Nobody would dream about getting snowbound in South Carolina. Especially Greenwood. He couldn't get to the central part of the state; it was a freak storm. And John Burns was the delegate from Hawaii. They were not in the Union. He was working desperately to get Hawaii admitted to the Union. And he realized that, finally, and became the first governor for his services, in Congress, to get the law passed. He was the first governor of (the state of) Hawaii.

But he never forgot Bryan Dorn. He never, he came here with, a Hawaiian, fat, heavy-set Hawaiian, he spent the night here, kind of a dark Hawaiian, and my maid, Evelina(?) she said, you know,... that man stay here is a Japanese or something, and I said, oh Lord(?) he's all right. But you talk about race prejudice; they were against the Japanese and were against Hawaiians and Orientals. The black people; at least my maid was. And I made it all right with her; I told her just don't worry about it. She ain't going to go to sleep with that man in the house, and she think about Pearl Harbor you know, all of that. But, she stayed here, and the Congressman stayed, and this is just a little thing, when I ran for Governor, he sent a contribution of a thousand dollars. Come all the way from Honolulu, for my campaign here in South Carolina.

But those things, little friendships that you form; and I didn't vote for admit[ting] Hawaii to the Union. I voted against it. But he understood that. The area down here was generally opposed to Alaska and Hawaii. Why? Because it would give them four more senators. Four more civil rights senators. That's what the vote was all about. And, so they didn't do it. Congressmen ...say they didn't support statehood for Alaska and
Hawaii. I think it’s been a good thing, since then; we all do. But that's the way things were, and you, you couldn't, you couldn't buck the current.

**Wider:** We had talked about the seniority factor, and the fact that it was mentioned on the stand. I was wondering, was there ever any coalition of a sort? Was it consciously motivated that all these Southerners would attain seniority and become chairmen, or did it just happen accidentally and they just took advantage of that fact?

**Dorn:** Well, everybody knew that if you stayed on the committee long enough you would become chairman or become ranking member, chairman of a subcommittee, and you could help your people. You would have influence in that committee, more influence. If you are, you don't always have to be the chairman. You can be, some people almost preferred not to be. But you could be high up. Chairman of this subcommittee to handle that particular thing you were interested in. That's just as important. And for your area. Yeah, they campaigned on the stand, they'd get up and tell the people on television, radio and on the platform, that they ranked on the committee, and if you send me back there, I'll be in a position to help you more than ever in the past because I've, I'll be the chairman of a subcommittee or chairman of the committee, or right next to the chairman, be in a position of influence. And this was what it was all about.

And the South, we were fighting always for every little advantage we could get, because we were poor; we, our system was destroyed after the Civil War—money, you imagine a country where money, every nickel of it was worthless, overnight. You had nothing in your pocket worth a brownie. You had to borrow to buy flour, barter at the store, you give some eggs, or something for flour and meal. That was the system. You lost all your money, every bit of it. And had to start making back, going back with U.S. currency.

It took a long time, and some of those things held over until my day. You swapped chickens and things at the country store. I remember that time, and there was just no money. U.S. currency was hard to get a hold of. You held onto a dime or a nickel, with
your life almost. I remember, having to walk two miles to pay a man a nickel that I had, he had overcharged me or something, or I had overcharged him. Daddy told me, you go take that back right now. That's the way you worked. In the old South it was your bond, meant everything. Your word. You told a man something, you better do it. [If you] don't he's liable to call you up or come to see you, and say you told me so and so and I've come to settle that thing. With his pistol. I've seen that. You say, oh I'm sorry, I didn't mean to. You get out of it; but I had to walk two miles in bad weather to pay a nickel back to a fellow at the store. That was the way we grew up, and a nickel meant something, a dime meant something. I've been months on the farm without a nickel. I mean, well I was paid ten dollars a month when I was here, and my board, but there were times when you didn't have anything at all.

This was the South; and so here were Congressmen and Senators serving in Washington, in a position to help you get a little plant, help you get an improved road. Not so much roads then, later on yes, with the highway system, but it just meant an awful lot to have a Congressman in Washington whom you knew, and could help you get these things and improve business conditions. You probably didn't know this, but when the administration would change from Republican to Democrat, I could move the federal money [from] the bank of Greenwood to another bank, and quite frequently did that. I didn't always, its partisan to some people, but you could move the federal deposit from one bank to your bank, whatever it was. And, that meant an awful lot to that little, weak, country town bank. ... your post office receipts and all that stuff. If it’s a military town, why all of that in your bank. There's a lot of little things a Congressman could do.

A Congressman had a lot of power, and if you knew the right contact, get on the phone, call the governor of Texas or something, say governor, I'd like so and so. All of that meant something. .... governor called me one time and asked what I put in my squirrel stew. He wanted to know the recipe. Right here at this place. And he was having a big supper somewhere at the mansion grounds [and] wanted to find out.
And you get along with the United States Senators too. They're politicians. They're higher up, they used to kid them about, when they walked down the corridor, their feet said "senate, senate." They had the feeling, you know, that "I'm a senator." It's funny how they go from the House; I knew a lot of members of the House, some of them get over there and they change, you know, they become inaccessible. Now a member of the Senate. And the best fellows you ever saw in the House, but most of them of course still all right, but I do know some that just don't have the time now in the Senate for the House members that they used to have. Of course, that's natural too; they represent a whole state, but a lot of things...

What else you got there Joe that we haven't touched on? Let's go while we're at it.

**Wider:** There are a couple things that you've mentioned that are real interesting. There are a lot of people who feel – you mentioned preserving the system in regards to seniority. There are a lot of people that feel that because of that necessity to preserve that system, .... you know, segregation, that the South could have, the Southern committee chairmen could have done more, if they didn't have that monkey on their back. Is that how do you feel about that? You know, could you talk about that? Did it inhibit progress in the South at all?

**Dorn:** Well they wouldn't have been committee chairmen, if they didn't have that issue in most cases. No way they could go and be for that and then retain their chairmanship. So they, that was, they couldn't do it. Today, since the Congress has been changed, with the Act that created all these hundred and fifty subcommittees, you don't have the power in the South that you used to have. You don't have a single committee chairman from South Carolina. Which is unbelievable. You don't have, one I don't believe from Georgia. But you go from state to state and you can't find your committee chairmen anymore. Mississippi has none. That's one thing about the one-party system, it gave us power. They got all…and whooped and hollered, and stirred the people up, and got Republicans in Mississippi now. And Congress, nice fellows, and in Alabama. But they've lost their seniority, they've lost their power, and they can't hardly control the
things that go to the President. To me it’s a tragic situation. You take North Carolina, used to be a, they had a lot of power, Harold Cooley(?), chairman of the Agriculture Committee throughout his lifetime, you could tell when you hit his district coming from Washington. Corn and cotton up the side of the road. Cotton acreage. Go into some of these districts where the congressman didn't have any power at all, and they didn't have anything. But you could tell when you hit Cooley's district. Agriculture.

Wider: Yeah. I was wondering if you recalled any particular fascinating or memorable legislators who had a very distinctive style and way of getting things passed or helping others to get things passed?

Dorn: Well, they had different, traits of personality. They had different characteristics, personal, individual....

BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE 1

Dorn: Yes, you were in Columbia, South Carolina, when Roosevelt was elected President, and reelected in 1936. Said you know we killed a fifth together at the Jefferson Hotel. Said that's right we did. Prohibition was over with, and we celebrated at the Jefferson; and they talked a while. And this lobbyist, Mr. Harrison was his name (friend of mine); he said I want to see the chairman of the commission, Mr. Gary. Fellow said, of course, anything you want down here. You're my friend, said come on in. And so he went in and before he, he was a good lobbyist ... the point I want to make, 'fore he sat down he said Mr. Gary, I want to say this. He said, the greatest general in the history of American history was Martin W. Gary of Edgefield, Confederate major general. Said the greatest justice we've ever had was Eugene B. Gary, of the state Supreme Court. Is there any possible relation? He jumped up and said they're my first cousins. And I'm from Indiana, but the judge was my first cousin ... some kin to the general. And he said, now what you want? What can I do for you? Anything you want. He told him about this tower and wanted the tower put up in South Carolina, so they could connect up with his
station in Georgia, and broadcast all over this area. Of course he got it. It was just as simple as that.

These are some the, could do it, or wouldn't dare touch it, from South Carolina or Georgia, this guy had confidence in himself. He went in there, he came [to the] office one time, wanted to see the postmaster general of the United States. I said, you want to see the, he said, yes I do. I said, whom shall I say is calling? Tell them Colonel Harrison. That seems to be a title that gets you in a lot of places you know. I remember the girls used to say it was the most romantic title, in the military was colonel. They'd be a little afraid to go out with a general, but a colonel is just right. High enough rank, and, low enough to be sociable and good-looking and all of them things like that. So he says tell them Colonel Harrison. So I called down there and I said well anything you want, I'll do it. I said, call down there, and they said, yeah, you send the colonel right on down. Said to him, postmaster general will see him. So he went on down there and went in and, to see him about a darn rural route. Now I talked with him about that, I said I wouldn't go down there to see the postmaster general about a rural route, there must be thousands in the United States. .....how many in my district? And he said I still want to see him; so he went down there, and saw the postmaster general about a rural route. Stayed a half hour and talked with him. About old times and everything else, the big acquaintance, I don't know as he ever got the rural route, the particular individual that he wanted, but he got in. Called it to the attention of the head man. But he was good, and there was a lot of them like that. That were absolutely superb in the field of representing the people that they worked for, associated with.

But the lobbying is an important part of the governmental processes today. If you've got good representatives, it's not necessary for you to go there and contact your congressman, senator, and try to sell something. If you've got the right man, who knows the right approach, he can do it. And, a lot of people think well, its, you know, its a question of buying a lot of whiskey and, food and all that. Well, naturally, if you take a fellow out to dinner in an expensive place like Washington, take him to some good place, that might help, but it’s not the main thing. It’s the knowing; it’s the approach; it's your
personality and whom you know. Other people that you know. You know people back in his Congressional district, that's the finest key to unlock the door, if you know someone in his Congressional district, or his state if he's a United States Senator. Then you can go in. There's all kind of things. Aircraft industry, aircraft parts, and there's coal and steel. Those people usually have fine offices, they have a good filing system; they can help you in ways that you never dreamed about. With your election, and also with legislation. ...say well, that's not the way to go. Go through .... see so and so for you. So they go see somebody and help you get the bill passed, maybe totally unrelated to the thing you were talking about in your committee.

But lobbying is a tremendous part of the thing. You have, well every segment of agriculture: oranges, apples, grapefruit, pineapple; they have a tremendous lobby. Sugar lobby, Hawaii, and all of that. And its subject to some graft too, you know, you can give tremendous political contributions to the people who help you, in your business in Congress, the House and the Senate. And it’s not necessarily crooked. You helped him on his campaign and that's their business; and your business is getting elected, they help you. It works both ways. Fishing is another big thing. Power, power lobby. Public power and private power; they have big lobbies, big offices. Merchant marine and fisheries. All of your armed forces; they don't, you know, publicly say that it’s a lobby, but they have lobbies for procurement, all kind of business in the military. Tractors, trucks, everything. Made by some company. And Lockheed used to have a big lobby up there for the, aircraft, and, you just, you really don't know Congress, or know anything about Congress, until you know something about the lobbying. And who, to whom the congressmen goes for advice, and who comes to him. But it’s generally industries of course, affected by the legislation that he sponsor or opposes in his committee. It’s just a fantastic amount of business goes on with lobbyists, lobbying.

Wider: They also do provide money to corrupt politicians as well, I would imagine.
Dorn: Well, I don't know of any case. I've heard of some that's been brought out. Where some politicians, some members of Congress, accepted some money that was designed to influence their vote, but it's not a, it's certainly way, far from general, or the rule. In fact, most congressmen get more steamed up about something like that than anything else. If they think it's a bribe or something, then you've gone the wrong road; you [have] hurt yourself. And so the lobbyists, ask me why they like former members of Congress; number one, because they know all that. They know the ground to walk on. And how you can upset the whole thing and ruin your whole program and your business, if they thought you were offering a congressman something. So that's a very ticklish business, but you, like everything else, you get around, there are laws; you get a fellow that really knows the law. And interpretation of the law. And how maybe you can cut a few corners; this is the man you want lobbying for you.

Also the candidate has to have money to be elected. He has to go on television; they can arrange that. And they can arrange it in such a way it's absolutely legal. Or you can contribute through his political action committee, through his, the funds, if he's raising. But all that plays a part. And it makes it sound awfully complicated. There are some that don't fool with contributions. I never did when I was up there. For the first fourteen years I didn't have any opposition at all, and I came back a second time, so they don't fool with me. No (?) used to come to me, offering campaign contributions, nor did I go to them. And there's some congressmen like that. Particularly in the South, then, that didn't have to spend a lot of money.

But that – let me emphasize – that is an important, part of the success of a congressman or a senator, and if he wants to run for President or Vice-President, this is the way he's going to start. He's going to get along with all those people, plus the media, he's going to know their names. Christmas time he's going to drop them a little present or something, a little remembrance. And that's not bribing the press. He rolled out a whole bunch of money and said, look, you've been good to me in covering me in the newspapers, here's your payoff.
Of course, that wouldn't be a very sophisticated approach. But they can give things to these people, and they do. Maybe take them on a trip. If you've got a subcommittee that's going to Florida to investigate, take your subcommittee, take your newspaper person along, who maybe is familiar with that subject, has written about it. Take them along. And of course you pay for it, the committee does; let them put up at a nice hotel, maybe go fishing. But they also write the event up; what you investigated. They go in the hotel, and you usually have a hearing in hotel room, and they're sitting there with you. And, you go around overseas, you do the same thing, you have people who are interested in that subject, who can go to Panama with you, or wherever. Wire back stories, Congressman Dorn said so and so in Panama City today. Makes the people who are interested in shipping in the United States – bananas, fruit [of] all kind[s], phosphates, all these things that come from that area in trade – they make them aware of the fact that you are interested and you are down there helping them out.

It's a hard matter to defeat an incumbent in a political [race]. Man that's in there's got all this going for him, plus the fact that he's got free telephone allowance up to a certain amount, he's got the franking privilege, he can write anybody, won't cost him a penny; and he's got secretaries to write the letters; he gets the stationery and telephone allowance; telegram allowance. How you going to beat a man like that, if he uses it properly? A lot of them are too lazy. They won't use it. But you get on the telephone, call the man, say, look, the bill you wanted passed, I did this, couldn't get it through today. I apologize, and I let you down. You think he's going to vote against you? You kept him informed. Means of communication are there at your disposal. If you use them properly, if you're not lazy, it’s awful hard to defeat an incumbent politician. Incumbent congressman or a senator. We may be going to [field] ..... but this is something we haven't talked about, nobody else talks about. Which is darned important when you're a congressman, and you've got a campaign coming up, and you've got all these things going for you, they're not going to beat you. Unless you're dumb or something like that. Course some of them do get beat. Times change. Time and circumstance happen to them all. That's what ... Johnson said in his book on politics. This is where he started. From Ecclesiastes, he said, I return from under the sun, and found that the race is not to the
swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor riches to the wise, nor wealth to men of goodwill or something. But time and circumstance happens to them all. You can do all these other things and still, time and circumstance will catch you, and you can't win. Engulf you in a landslide. But the way it is now, with the telegraph allowance, telegram, telephone, franking privileges, trips home, you get twenty-six free trips home now is the way I understand it. Back home, go to political meetings, go to parties, or whatever you want to do to keep up with your constituents. You get all that free, or a good portion of it, and it’s possible to get all that and then get beat, but you have got an advantage over anybody that's on the outside that's trying to run. Time and circumstance, you will get maybe caught in something that you couldn't help.

Classic example is the Depression. Congressmen maybe didn't cause that depression that happened in 1932, but it happened, this man's out of work, half the people in your district are out of work, or most of them. You think they're going to vote for you? No way that you could get them to vote for you. They're going to blame you; your opponent has always got to say “well he's in there.” They didn't do, all this has happened to us. Terrible thing, people walking down the street unemployed, he's your congressman. Let's get a change. Its time for a change. And so time and circumstance, or war, something that they're opposed to, happens; war comes along that you supported; people support it, they'll vote for you. Things happen, but normally speaking, are the things that I was talking about, that help you. They influence elections. Good crops. I've even heard of people voting against, a fellow because it was dry weather in the district. In fact, Herbert Hoover is estimated as having lost over a million votes in the Midwest because of the extreme dry weather in 1932. Fields were parched up, dust in the sky blowing away, they blamed it on the man in office, in power, and they voted against him. He lost a great vote in the Midwest because of that dry weather, dust bowl. That's time and circumstance. If [there had] been a big rain, a lot of rain, people had good crops, the cattle looked good, Hoover would have carried every state in the Midwest. But, they associate prosperity with the man in office. Things can happen beyond your control.
That's why Johnson, .... Johnson in that book, said something, I wish people would study it more, he said something that no President has ever been elected President of the United States, up until maybe recently, say John Kennedy, somebody like that, who started out in life to be President, not a single one. They all, time and circumstance happened. William McKinley he used as an illustration...not William McKinley, William Henry Harrison he used as an illustration. Sat on the front porch. Said I won't campaign, I'm not going to do anything, and he got clobbered. By fellows that you never heard of back in the Whig days. Right on down, Grant, Lincoln, all those people. Didn't start out to be President. Started out to be anything else, but time and circumstance happened. They drafted him. War came along, he was a general and they won. With superior forces. And he became President. There's a whole lot of things I would advise anybody – they're not going to ask you – but I would advise anybody that wanted to be a congressman or a senator to go in and thoroughly study all these angles before they went into it.

Furthermore, I would suggest that they get some money. Now, you can't be elected without money. You can't get advertised, they won't know you're running. Fellow said, well I can shake hands. You can shake a lot of hands, but you can't shake every hand in your district in time for the election. Even then it's just difficult to do all those things; you've got to spend money. Television costs money, a lot of money, four hundred for a half an hour, four hundred dollars for thirty seconds, on some television stations. You've got the other opponent maybe doing that. You’ve got to do it or else they won't know you're in the race. Radio, newspaper advertising, all of the media advertising is expensive. You can't get it without [money]. [pause]

**Wider:** You want to try to finish up Congress? You covered a lot of this fairly well. Touched on it. Yeah, I was curious; who were some of the members that you served with that you respected most?

**Dorn:** Well, you like members. I had a respect for the system. I liked and respected the leadership of both parties. Some people think it’s funny that I would like Joe Martin. Republican Speaker of the House, or the Republican Majority Leader
Charlie Halley(?). Well, that's not difficult at all. I liked them and they liked us. Sometimes they made an appeal for Southern votes, to help augment their own party policy. They would look to the South for some help sometimes. I respected those fellows, and I respected their opinion.

Of course we all liked and respected Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House and Majority Leader. Sam Rayburn served as Speaker of the House longer than any man in American history. He's from a poor district in Texas, a cotton area. He grew up himself picking cotton and chopping cotton. We respected him. During that same time, the Majority Leader of the Congress when Rayburn was Speaker, most of the time, was John W. McCormick of Massachusetts. An old politician, knew the Fitzgeralds and all of John Kennedy's people. And he was a respected; he was a Catholic, and he used to just have a fit when I wanted to put something in the record about Pope Paul or Pope John or some[one]. I'd say Mr. McCormick, let me...he'd just love to see a Baptist, Southern Baptist, put something in the Congressional Record, a speech, about the Pope. I did that several times, which he liked. We liked Mr. McCormick; I did. He smoked cigars a lot, about fifteen a day, fine cigars, used to love to be around him, smell those cigars.

Carl Albert was an outstanding leader of Congress that I knew real well, he was about five feet tall, very small fellow. Was a Rhodes scholar. He'd gone out and gotten educated before the war, then he got to be a colonel during the war, and married a girl from Columbia, South Carolina. He was a very, a very popular member. He got to be Speaker; by then he had some pull. Lot of times you've got to have a little help. His district joined Sam Rayburn's, although he was in Oklahoma, his Congressional district joined the district of his friend Sam Rayburn over across the line in Texas. In this way he kept in touch with a lot of the powers that be. Mr. Rayburn helped him all the time put him on certain committees that would give him prominence, and recognition. That's another thing, you know a powerful member of Congress, and he likes you, [he'll be] willing to help you up the ladder a little bit. ... give you a committee or position that'll build you, help you get to be speaker. So he helped. I would get to be speaker, in that way.
Hale Boggs was another crony of his. Of Mr. Rayburn's. He helped Mr. Boggs, got to be leader, Majority Leader. But then he got killed and he didn't reap the fruits of his position or his contacts, because, again, time and circumstance. He got killed in an airplane wreck. Oh, there were so many of them. Tiger Teague, they called him Tiger. His name was Olin Teague, chairman of the Veterans Affairs committee. He did more for this country than a lot of people realize. He was the chairman, author of the G.I. Bill. Along with the rest of us. I was one of the co-authors, but he was the chairman. Fought it through, got the legislation on the floor, and handled everything. Went to the conferences with the Senate. His ideas a number of times. Got that education bill. People were a little skeptical of G.I. education in the beginning, because they figured it [would] put the federal government...people were scared to death, a lot of members were, people were scared to death the federal projection into the education field. They didn't want the federal government to take away, or religion. So they just lived with a constant fear of that, and so it was hard and difficult to get these bills through, but Mr. Teague did get it through, and the G.I. Bill now is generally acknowledged by everybody as a great success and a great investment. Wasn't spending money at all. Was investing money, that has come back in a higher income, more taxes. People [paid] by getting an education. So it’s easy to see now that it’s a great thing, but then to begin with, you had to fight for all this business. Tiger Teague was one of the keys in getting that through and fighting for it. Course he had friends from Texas, had finance [it] like George Mahone(?), and his ..... committee. He cultivated those people, and some of them served in the state legislature together way back yonder. They didn't, but some did, so it’s who you know a lot of times. Play poker, or cards, or go to the, show downtown.

And agriculture is another one that affects us down through here a lot; in fact the agriculture committee has been an important committee for many years, ever since the Roosevelt program in the early 1930s. Killing hogs and buying up wheat and burning up corn fields. .... create scarcity in order to create higher prices. I disagreed with that policy at home here. My daddy did. I think he voted for Wilkie in 1940 because of it. He couldn't vote down here though because he didn't have a [Republican ballot], but he
just got a Democrat ballot and struck Wilkie's name in there. Wasn't going to keep him from voting. Put it back in the box. Course they probably threw it out when they went to count, but anyway the agriculture committee has been an important committee. They've done a lot. Forest Service. In this particular area, they bought up – the government did – over three hundred thousand acres of eroded, washed off land, rehabilitated it, put pine trees. I could take you today the [Oncain] forest and Sumter National Forest. You'd never know you couldn't grow a stalk of cotton in there, forty years ago, fifty years ago. You couldn't grow a pea. Just washed off, it was blood red. Now it's solid forest. Thousands of acres like that. They did a good job on conservation. They built in this area of the United States, in my district, ten thousand farm .... while I was in Congress, more since then. That conserves water where it falls. But these are the things that your agriculture committee had to deal with. So that was an important committee.

Armed Forces of course, we've gone into that. If you touch on it again, where military installations in your Congressional district that you represent, why you can imagine what a great thing that was. Being dedicated. A new barracks or new building in your district. Where the boys went, the military boys. Music going, band and all that; you sitting on the stand, you're the congressman, you're the proudest man that ever lived. You've got that installation, they give you credit for it; you sitting up there and you've got a thousand people out there listening. Just like in my own time when they dedicated the new V.A. hospital in Columbia, they had fifteen hundred people, had bands; they had music; they had a crowd from Washington; and they got up and praised Dorn. He was the greatest, according to them; now I'm not. You see that's all in the game. That's not in my congressional district. That's in Columbia, the state capitol area. The governor was there and all these people. So it adds up to, you get known, and that's a good way to be a United States Senator. You get things done like that, enough of them, and the people will say let's run him for the Senate. You get elected. That's the way it is.

Incidentally, I think sometimes there's a lot in tradition, and maybe perhaps heritage. In this particular district, John C. Calhoun served in Congress from this district. Why am I taking an interest in foreign affairs? Almost two hundred years later? John C. Calhoun
educated the people to look abroad. Things that happen over there affect you here. Cotton. Prices of cotton. Cotton was king. But he was chairman of the foreign affairs committee, and led the United States in the world, into [the] second war with England. Because [world] traffic and trade was being interfered with, so he wanted to give the United States prestige and respect and so he was one of the leaders; a war hawk. Helped lead this country. A nationalist. Led this country. He wasn't talking about states’ rights and all that stuff then. He was a nationalist. There's a book on John C. Calhoun the nationalist. He helped get the United States, and declared the ..... war on England. He was helped by [Henry] Clay and a lot of others in the House. From this congressional district, John C. Calhoun helped educate the people to look to, to foreign policies. Chairman of the foreign affairs committee. And then another one later on that was on the foreign affairs committee, Hugh S. Legaré, from Charleston, came up here and was elected to the committee. Served an interim appointment as chairman of the foreign affairs committee. Later on, Jimmy Byrnes, from South Carolina, from this district, served on the foreign affairs.

I remember telling Secretary [Dean] Rusk, made a speech at Erskine College in my district, in our district, in 1971, or somewhere in there, it might be sixty-nine. He got off the plane in Anderson. We took him down to Erskine. He was....

[Interview ends]