

*SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICAL COLLECTIONS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT*

Interview

with

Marshall Parker

Interviewer:

Herbert J. Hartsook

Date:

January 25, 2002

Location:

The Parker home outside of Seneca, S.C.

Topics:

Marshall Parker [b. 1922] reflects on his life, particularly his public service as S.C. state senator from Oconee County, 1956 to 1966, and campaigns for the U.S. Senate, 1966 and 1968. Parker was educated at the University of North Carolina and served with the Marines in the Pacific during World War II. He moved to Seneca in 1947 and founded and operated Oconee Dairies from 1950 to 1981. In 1966, Parker joined the Republican Party and ran for the U. S. Senate. He polled 212,000 votes, a remarkable vote in a state that had only in 1961 elected its first Republican state legislator since Reconstruction. Democrat Ernest F. "Fritz" Hollings was elected to fill the remainder of the term of deceased Senator Olin Johnston with 223,000 votes. Parker tried to build on his success in the 1968 campaign for a full six-year term, but lost 248,000 votes to Hollings' 404,000.

Transcribers:

Carol Copeland & Katy Cain

Citation:

Marshall Parker Interview, South Carolina Political Collections, University Libraries,
The University of South Carolina

[Tape 1 Begins]

Hartsook: Tell me a little bit about your early background, what your parents did and were like, where you were educated. . . ?

Parker: I was born and raised in a very small town in eastern North Carolina, Seaboard, about 500 persons then and it still is, I think, about the same. That was in 1922. My father was a medical doctor. He was very active in the community, and had served overseas in World War I, and came back and located there, in Seaboard. He was a trustee on the University of North Carolina Board of Trustees. He also served a term in the House of Representatives. This was after he came back after World War I, as a member of the House. He died when I was five years old. He was age thirty-six. One of the reasons that he went to the House of Representatives was to help get his brother elected a judge to the bench in the Superior Court. Which they did, he became a judge. My Uncle Raymond, Raymond Parker, was at that time the youngest judge North Carolina had ever had on the Superior Court bench. He died at thirty-eight. Both [my father and uncle] had heart trouble. I was one of four children, the youngest. The baby. And of course, Mama did not remarry. But we made it pretty good. [There were] some pretty tough times, 'cause that was in 1928 when he died. And then the Depression came on and, limited income, things of that nature, but [we] got along fine. Daddy had set it up so that insurance would take care of the four children as far as their college education was concerned. Each one of us got, I think, back then it would have been about \$5,000 apiece or something.

Hartsook: You had always intended to go to the University of North Carolina?

Parker: Yes. It was taken for granted that's where I was going. That's where Daddy had gone and where Uncle Raymond went and my great-uncle had gone there, as well, for his law degree. But that's where it was assumed [I would go] and knew it would take place.

Mrs. Parker: Foreordained.

Parker: Foreordained. I guess that's a good word for it.

Hartsook: And you were happy with that.

Parker: Yes, very much. I had two sisters who went to Duke and, of course, my brother and I went to North Carolina. There was great rivalry between those two institutions back then, particularly in football, because that was in the days when Duke was a powerhouse, had the best teams in the country. They played in the Rose Bowl, then had the Rose Bowl back in Durham during the War, World War II, because they were afraid the Japanese might do something out there.

I was just a normal kid. I think this, I had a lot of people who helped me 'cause daddy was very popular. And we lived right in the middle of town, right across from both churches really. There were only two churches there, Methodist and Baptist. They kind of looked after me, gave me a lift on a lot of things that I did during my childhood. A trustee at the University [of North Carolina] at that time lived right across the street from me. I remember when he took me up to one of the meetings that they were having, a trustees meeting at North Carolina. I was in high school, and they were having at that time the North Carolina High School Athletic Association track meet. Of course, the little school I was from didn't have but about one hundred people in high school and

didn't have a track team or anything else. But I had learned to throw the discus from a person there; one of the teachers had given me a discus that he had. And so Mr. Barbee, who was the trustee, asked me did I want to enter the track meet. And I said, 'Why sure, yeah.' They's from all of the state there. We had people there from everywhere and like Charlotte and Raleigh and the big cities, at that time. And I ended up getting third place in the discus. But he got them to issue me shorts and a t-shirt and all that kind of stuff. The Raleigh papers ran it later as [a] one man track team, 'cause I had the authorization to enter the school, but Seaboard took, I think, sixth or seventh place by

Virtue of the points I got, it was crazy [laughing]. But people did things like that, I mean, with us.

I'm trying to think of some other things during the youthful time at home that would be apropos. Well, we had a lady [who] was an author as well as ran the library, and she saw that I got all the new books that came out from the time that I was in elementary school right on through. And I read a lot. People did things like that. [I] have a lot to be thankful for with persons who were in that small town because they really looked out for me.

Mrs. Parker: It was a very close-knit community.

Hartsook: It sounds like it. Now, when you went off to college, what were your ambitions? What did you think you would do?

Parker: It was taken for granted, so to speak, that my brother would be a doctor, he would follow daddy's footsteps, and that I would go into law school and become a lawyer, to get a law degree and get a combination. Back then they had a combination law degree of a BS LLB or an

AB LLB. My great-uncle, who became a guardian of mine, was my guardian as far as the funds and officially. . .

Mrs. Parker: His mother's uncle.

Parker: He was a lawyer and had been a long-term lawyer and well respected. And I was assumed to go into practice with him in Henderson, North Carolina. So, that's where I started and that was my aim when I went. But then the war overtook things and it became obvious that I wasn't going to be able to finish and go to law school. So, I decided to go for just a regular BS degree, a four-year, if I could manage it. I was very active in sports and I think it is indicative of kind of a lot of things in my life. I think I have kind of always liked a challenge; it was kind of like the track team bit. Challenges have kind of dictated a lot of the things that I've done in my life.

Our high school was so small we didn't have a football team. My father and my uncle had both been on the North Carolina football team in 1911 or 12. There weren't but fourteen people on the team back then. I've got a picture of them. And two of them were from a little town in eastern North Carolina, I mean [a] really rural area, were on that team. So it was kind of a challenge for me, even though I'd never played. And I did, I went out for football at North Carolina and Coach took a liking to me and I played. I made first team my freshman year. Jim Tatum, a famous football coach, he was a freshman coach then but later on coached at Maryland and North Carolina. The same thing happened, I went out for boxing, and made my letter in boxing as a freshman and also in track. So, I had those three sports, which is kind of indicative of what happened later on in my life in the political world [and that] is that getting into too many things, or getting into a number of things without concentrating on one particular line can often bring results that are not good.

Football, for instance, and this rings true still till today, the coaches and the hierarchy [of] the athletic group don't want you to go but with that one sport. Because then if you do, you'll miss spring practice or winter practice, things of that nature. They allow it with some athletes who are really top flight like Curry at North Carolina, and Peppers playing basketball and football. But it's very rare, because you miss out on those practices and organizations that would later on are going to be [the] varsity team. So, it hurt me on following up. I stayed with football another year. I got hurt one time doing that, with a knee injury, and [they] dropped me out. I'd say I followed it another year and a half after my freshman year, but then I dropped it. And I continued with the boxing and lettered in boxing, a varsity letter. Because the other had detracted from that, but anyway I was on campus, in a dormitory council. I guess I led just kind of a normal college life.

Hartsook: How did you get into the Marine Corps?

Parker: It was one of those things of taking a challenge. I decided that's where I wanted to go because it looked like the one . . .

Mrs. Parker: Toughest one.

Parker: . . . [laughing] I would enjoy more than anything else and so I signed up. That was in 1942. They called us up, we were in the reserves; they had Army Reserves and Marine Corps Reserves and so forth. I joined the Marine Corps Reserves and they called us July first of '43, while I was still in school. They had what was known as the V-12 program, which allowed you to

stay in school for a certain length of time, but in uniform and doing some training, you know, drilling and things of that nature, before you went on into full-time service. Which we did.

I guess I'm skipping the most important thing; I got married in my senior year at North Carolina [laughing]. Here, again, challenge.

Hartsook: How did you meet?

Mrs. Parker: At a party at his fraternity house.

Parker: I was Sigma Nu. I guess it wasn't too long after that we went pretty steady. That was in the spring of '43, and then we got married in December of '43. And that was another challenge, I suppose, a challenge to Uncle Sam on that. Because I wasn't supposed to get married. Once in the V-12 program, if you were already married, it was fine, but if you weren't, and that was my justification for doing it. . . . If this fellow could be married and be in this program then just because I'm in the program shouldn't be a prohibition as to me getting married. Anyway, so we did. They didn't find out about it until sometime while I was at Parris Island 'cause we had to go from that program right into boot camp. Even though we had graduated in '44, February of '44. . . . They'd moved the classes up and I graduated in '44 and went straight into boot camp and from there on up through officer's training and so forth at Quantico, became second lieutenant. They did not find out about this for a long time. Whether they would have kicked me out, I don't know, they always said they would if you did it, but it didn't happen, and we got along fine.

To go back to what you were going to ask me about politics – my father had been in the House, my grandfather was sheriff in Northampton County, that's up on the Virginia line in [the]

eastern part, for, I believe, thirty-one or thirty-two years, and then he was a member of the House for two terms in North Carolina. So, my daddy had been there and my great-uncle, the one who was my guardian, he had been in the Senate in North Carolina. So politically, I was kind of raised along those lines. I even voted, I think I was fifteen. I voted twice, as a joke, really. Somebody let me vote their ticket when granddaddy was running for the House. Unfortunately, [he was running] against my neighbor across the street who was a member of the Board of Trustees, but he was in the House. I was not picking my bright opportunities to do things, as I'm sure. But anyway, I'd ride around with granddaddy and hand out the cards, put the cards on the counters in these country stores, and stuff like that you know and so it just came natural with it. If you see something that needed doing, or something that you didn't like, you get in and try to fix it. I shouldn't tell about daddy racing from Chapel Hill to Seaboard, it's 100 miles. He used to race after football games. There were several of them that had Buicks. This is in the '20's. And they'd race to see who could get back to Seaboard first.

Mrs. Parker: There are several ways you can go.

Parker: Just always a challenge. I think it must have come from daddy's side [laughing]. That's the only thing I can figure it, because I don't think momma's side was that much going outside the norm.

Hartsook: Do you think your experience in the Marine Corps affected you in any sense?

Parker: No question about it. Yes. Training and devotion to duty, and so forth. That was a big thing with the Marine Corps. And then I ended up overseas for a year, but onboard ship so I had good duty really. I ended up with very good duty. I didn't have to go up on the beachhead or anything so it worked out pretty good.

Hartsook to Mrs. Parker: What did you do while he was in the military?

Mrs. Parker: Stayed here and stayed in Seneca with my parents.

Hartsook: Was he a good correspondent?

Mrs. Parker: Oh yes, very good [laughing].

Parker: Before I went overseas, we had one child. She came out and joined me in California for a little while, before I went aboard ship. We had about three months together. We ended up with four daughters.

Mrs. Parker: We were married in December of '43 and she was born in November of '44. Didn't want to wait, we wanted a child.

Parker: Yes, because back then the Marines were suffering some pretty heavy casualties. That was one of the reasons I wasn't going to wait until after the war was over to get married - those landings in the various islands leading up to the end of World War II.

Hartsook: While you were overseas, what were your thoughts about your future? Were you already making plans?

Parker: My major was industrial management. That's strange for the University of North Carolina, I don't know if they still offer that type. With a minor in accounting, and whatever constitutes a BS degree in commerce. I really didn't know what I was going to do when I got back. I did not want to come back and go to law school. A lot of my friends in my class and in like circumstances, came back, GI Bill, and went to law school, in '46, '47. I figured I better get back here and make a living. So I went back to Chapel Hill and talked to the professor who I had majored under whom I had majored, Ford Dykstra[?]. I said, "All right. You graduated me, you trained me, you supposedly educated me. What do I do? Where can I get a job?" He said, "They have openings right now in Dan River Mills in Danville, Virginia," which is right over the line beyond Greensboro, and he said, "I'll give them a call and set up an interview for you and they'll hire you next week." That quick. I said, "Fine." And so, that's what happened.

It was an old mill. They had a bunch of mills with about ten to twelve thousand employees, and they were bringing in young management trainees, which is what I went in as. I had never been in a cotton mill in my life, being from a rural area in North Carolina. I had no idea that that's what I was going to end up doing. I did time study and methods engineering there at Dan River. That was in 1946. I could tell after a year and a half, I wasn't going to do that for the rest of my life. It just didn't suit me. A lot of my friends came to work down here for Milliken. In fact, one that we shared a house with ended up head of part of Dan River. We had a great opportunity. It was too detailed work; that I just didn't like. I guess it was because I liked the political type things. We

moved to Seneca in '47. I was about to go in business with an associate of mine there, one of these trainees too, at Dan River. We were about to buy a bowling alley there in North Danville. Martha's father was in several businesses down here, and one of them was an ice plant. He had two partners; he always picked good partners in the businesses he had, to run those businesses, really. He said, 'I'll sell you my third of the ice plant and you'll become one of the three partners.' I think because he was afraid I was going to get into bowling, in that bowling alley [laughing]! I said, "All right, we'll do that." I almost went into the lumber business. But I had never been in an ice plant before. I ended up down here doing that, having to run one. And I was an active member, of those three, [among the] partners we had. They did not deliver their own ice back then. Others did, and of course I started a small company to deliver all that ice. That was back before we had rural electrification, at its height. As the poles went up and rural electrification took over the countryside, our routes went boom. Out. Because people were buying refrigerators. I knew that it was going to be very short before the ice plant. . . . We had some crushed ice business but nothing like today, where you have delivery in the bags and all. Very few people used it for picnics and things like that back then; it was mainly household refrigeration. I knew that it was going to be short-lived. I was going to be out of business. So, I decided to go into the dairy business, milk processing. Here again, I had never been in a milk processing plant in my life but I thought there was a place for one here in Oconee County.

Mrs. Parker: The only pasteurized milk coming into the county at that time was coming out of Anderson.

Parker: And Greenville. We had some from Pet. I said, 'Well, we'll have a local

[one].’ There were a number of farmers who were in the milk production business, mainly what they call "grade C" milk, for canned milk. I made the decision that I wanted to do it, and I went to Clemson and asked them about it. And they said there was no way. You can't make a living in it. The day of the small milk processing plant is out; it's gone. The biggies are taking over. This was with their professors over there that I met with. And I said, ‘Well, I'm going to do it. I made up my mind that I'm going to do it. Now, will you help me?’ And they said, ‘Well, we'll be glad to do what we can.’ So they helped me draw up my plans. [I] didn't even have to have an architect. They helped me draw up the plans and told me what I had to go through, and so forth. [They] told me about two or three small plants that I could visit, and so forth, which I did, and helped me get set up. Six months later, I was in business, November 1, 1950.

We never lost money, not a single year. I took a partner in, in '51 or '52, because I thought I was going to go in the Korean War as a reserve. I guess that plant, plus we'd already had another child, plus one on the way, I think at that stage, probably kept me out of the Korean conflict as a Marine Reserve. By that time, I was a First Lieutenant in the Reserves, but wasn't doing any active training or anything. So, I took in this partner. Plus, I wanted to get into the political arena so I needed somebody to help run it. He stayed with me until about the time that Fritz [Hollings] asked me about managing his campaign, in '58 or right along there. And then he decided he wasn't going to be the one to do all the running of the plant with me gallivanting in the political arenas, and so forth.

I became a member of the local school board, I believe it was in '53, and then ran for the city council and was a member of the city council. There again, it was kind of a challenge because we had a very good electrical system in Seneca, that the city owned, bought its power from Duke Power. The persons who were being elected were trying to really destroy that system, and so I got

into that race because I didn't agree with it at all. I went from there, I ran for the county school board. Resigned from the council, and went on the county board of trustees, which was a county-wide election at that time. So I was back in a little more politics in that stage. Incidentally, the fellow I beat for that job was a Dr. Wells, who later served on the Board down at the University. He was a trustee and was my doctor from then on, and was when I ran against him [laughing]. So you never know what you've got.

Mrs. Parker: And was always a good friend.

[Tape 1, Side 2, Begins]

Parker: . . . but then, while I was on the school board, and we were doing fine. We were consolidating some schools, but not too much, but we were making improvements, because this county had had nine high schools. You know, back in the days when about every community had an elementary school and a high school, for that matter, almost. The incumbent senator made the move to take millage that we had planned to use for school construction and put it on a new courthouse, to pay the bonds off our new courthouse. He was a lawyer. And that's what put me into the Senate race. 'Cause it really upset me and everybody else, the other board members and so forth. So, I got into it. Plus he had made some moves that people kind of considered dictatorial moves, which a Senator had that power to do, which left him open to being challenged, pretty much. I was still fairly new in the county, 'cause this was in '56. I'd been here nine years. We ended up with four of us in the race and I won. This was when we didn't have a Republican Party, it was all Democrat. I won that primary. It was a real good heated campaign, as a matter of fact. But it was a

start in it. Earle Morris, over in Pickens County, who was in the Senate, had been elected to the Senate, maybe two years before that, and later became Comptroller General for many years, Earle told me what he had done in his Senate campaign to unseat a lawyer and I used a good bit of those things in mine. A lot of it was based on returning government to the people, to make things more democratic, and to eliminate the charge or image of a dictator, that a lot of state senators had. All local legislation, of course we called it local legislation, it went through down there, would have a tag on the end of it, 'majority of the delegation including the senator to be approved,' appointments, everything almost, the majority of the delegation including the senator. Always had that word "including." I eliminated that. Of course, it was obvious you couldn't pass anything down there unless the senator wanted it. But I eliminated that and tried to keep it to where really it was a majority of the three of us, up here. We had two House members. That was one of the overriding things that I based my campaign on, and followed it for ten years, as long as I was in there, pretty much so. There were some appointments that I did not share with the other two members, that were senatorial appointments totally, that come through the Senate, magistrates; things of that nature. But I did put certain offices that had been in conflict here, county supervisor, other things, into a county referendum that the previous senator had changed. They had been elected, before he changed it. I put it back up to the people of which way did they want it. They want to elect them, or they want us to appoint them. Of course, you know they picked what we figured they would pick, the election process. You take away somebody's right to choose, it makes it pretty tough. So, they were the main parts of my program and I carried out pretty faithfully during the ten years.

Hartsook: Can you talk a little bit about your first year in the Senate and what the Senate was like? Did Earle Morris kind of take you under his wing?

Parker: He helped me a lot but I also had help from, I was a close friend, of the senator from Greenville, Bradley Morrah, who became a very good friend of mine. Again, I went in with a pretty good-sized class. I think it was about ten of us, brand new. And we were not going to follow the regular [House Speaker] Sol Blatt – [Senate leader] Edgar Brown low-country philosophies, necessarily. We challenged about everything. I remember meeting with Edgar one time and he said, you ought to go home now and don't worry about things down here, let this go. You're supposed to spend the first two years of your term consolidating your victories back home, which was good political advice. That's what you ought to work on, being sure of that. Well, that didn't work, didn't suit me.

Hartsook: Is a little bit of that kind of telling your children they should be seen but not heard.

Parker: Yes. It really was, I think you're exactly right [laughing]. That's a good way to put it. I hadn't thought of it in those terms but that is about the sum and substance of it. So, we challenged a lot of things. [There was a] time [that] they were trying to pass some improvement in teacher salaries, professor salaries and teachers in general. I was, of course, trying to get a fifteen percent. . . . I was [part of] a group, what we called the 'left field group.' We were over on one side, not all together, but the new ones and the ones that didn't belong to that hierarchy that had been there a long time, and we kind of voted together. It became that we had to be reckoned with. I'll never forget, Senator Brown, of course, was a powerhouse of the State, as far as finances and everything else in the Senate, and he'd always called the tune. We wanted a fifteen percent increase for the teachers. Edgar, wasn't going to hear of that. He said, 'No way. We got to put money here,

put money there.’ And, he was probably right on it. We had the votes to get it through. He was going for about a seven percent increase.

This was great politics, Edgar got up there and started a campaign from the floor of the Senate, every week, how we could eliminate the twelfth grade in South Carolina. He’d quote the courses they take, and he ridiculed what we had, and some of it needed ridiculing, I suppose, to the point that the education people came to us and said, ‘For goodness sakes, back off of that fifteen percent increase, and take it, or we’re going to lose the twelfth grade!’ So, we did. We had to. Edgar had gotten enough publicity statewide that some of the fellows were afraid they’d be out of the Senate with this. This was just an aside [as to] how things worked.

I worked at it, being there. I was very fortunate, Senator Brown really became almost like a mentor, even though we did not share a political philosophy of conservatism. I had been a strong supporter of Strom Thurmond when he went in on the write-in vote, to the point of introducing him from a flatbed trailer here in Seneca, and so forth, presenting him. He had been governor, of course, and didn’t need any introduction. Edgar, of course, was the opposition because he’d been named by the Democratic Executive Committee. [Following the death of U.S. Senator Burnett Maybank, the Democratic Party selected Brown to be its nominee for the Senate. He was defeated in the election by write-in candidate Strom Thurmond.] So, we really were kind of this way but he ended up kind of adopting me on this, on a lot of things. There wasn’t a place on the Finance Committee for me because eighteen members were all they had and I didn’t have the seniority. It usually takes eight to ten years to get on it. They made a place for me. They created a nineteenth position on it. It’s the only time it’s ever happened. But at the time, since I wasn’t on there, Marion Gressette, who headed the Judiciary Committee, and he was the ramrod of the Senate, along with Edgar, they fought each other a good bit, too. But he said, ‘All right, you won’t take Parker on that committee, so I’m going

to put him on the Judiciary Committee. They were all lawyers. Didn't have anything but lawyers. But for two weeks I was on the Judiciary Committee, a non-lawyer. Edgar got the other done, and so I went on the Finance Committee.

Hartsook: Are there tensions between the lawyers and the non-lawyers?

Parker: Used to be. A good bit. I don't think there's as much of that now. In fact, I think the Judiciary Committee now, [I'm] almost positive, has a number of non-lawyers on it.

Hartsook: But just within the General Assembly itself during your period? I'm not talking about the Judiciary Committee but just in general. Because several times you've mentioned lawyers and it sounds like you are talking about a distinct group.

Parker: Yes. That's very true. Bradley was a lawyer and John West was, Allen Legare from Charleston, these were very good friends of mine. We always kidded them about being lawyers, and so forth. Lawyers were not popular, as such, in the Senate. I mean, I shouldn't say that.

Mrs. Parker: I think you mean they were not popular among the voters, people.

Parker: As such. But, yet, they were elected. We had almost a majority when I went down there. I don't know how many were lawyers, but it was pretty close to a majority.

Hartsook: I think it's a real significant majority. Would we have been better served by having more people having business backgrounds?

Parker: I think so. That's what I told them. That's what I told the people. And I think it was true because there were more interests represented. The legislation that was fashioned by -- and this could well apply to business people as well -- but by lawyers, for instance, generally and have in the past and since, been things that helped their practice. We've got lawyers who have been in the legislative process who do workman's comp cases. That's their big thing, and [they] make a lot of money. You have some in Columbia, too. And you have them around the state, but that's what part, and they represent different interests, but then, so would a business person, in a way. I never did vote on anything that had to do with the milk business, while I was there, the dairy business at all. That's a hard question. But there was a little bit of animosity.

Hartsook: Blatt and Brown both seem to be very fiscally conservative and it seemed like that was something that your generation of legislators had to battle to grow the state services and all. Is that fair?

Parker: Yes, on some things. That's right. I think we were conservative to the point that we wanted to see clearly that we had the funds and revenue to do something. Edgar and Sol wanted to put it where they wanted it; it was part of their conservatism. That's a hard question for me to answer, because Edgar and I got along fine, and worked together. As I said, he was the one responsible for putting me on that committee, which immediately, I became the chair of the brand new Tax Study Commission. [Richard Manning] Jefferies, who had about as much seniority as Edgar Brown, was defeated about that time [1958]. He really would have been head of this committee, I think, had he stayed in the Senate, but he didn't. So, that helped to propel me into a lot

of different things, entirely different avenues, and with a lot of different support.

Hartsook: How did you get that chairmanship? Was that something you eagerly sought?

Parker: No, it was by appointment. I was appointed by Fritz [Hollings]. I'm pretty sure that's right. I think the president pro tem of Senate, the lieutenant governor appointed. . . . I know that the chair was appointed, yes. I'm positive it wasn't elected by the members of the group, I don't think it was. That's something I don't know. Crawford [Clarkson] would know.

Hartsook: You were going to say that that propelled you into areas that you had not been prominent in before.

Parker: It did in working with various interests in the state. I look back on it with amazement and all, that I was able to get persons in of the caliber of Bill Maquire with Duke Power, McMeekin, South Carolina Electric and Gas, [and] Mr. Harris who was chairman of the board for Carolina Power and Light, all of those persons into meetings to discuss taxation and the interest of the state, together. And we were able to do some of that with some of our textile people. In other words, we dealt with a pretty good clientele, if you will, who were involved in business and other interests in the state, particularly the textiles. It was all of it, what kind of tax laws we'd come out with and what recommendations, because we were able. I attribute part of this, in the General Assembly, a lot of the members didn't know enough about tax laws to be able to really challenge what we came out with. We passed about ninety-five percent of all the legislation we proposed.

Hartsook: Were there any big frustrations though, among the five percent you couldn't get passed?

Parker: I don't think so. No, not really. Crawford and I have talked about it, it was amazing. But we were in there to make our tax system more equitable.

Mrs. Parker: You do understand he's talking about Crawford Clarkson.

Hartsook: No, I didn't. Thank you.

Parker: He was appointed as a member of that group. He became our executive director of the Tax Study Commission because he was an accountant and a lawyer himself, and really had a lot on the ball. Crawford's smart as a whip. To try to make our tax system more equitable as far as the persons and interests in South Carolina are concerned, and then to put us in a more competitive position for new industrial development for economic development in South Carolina. We were struggling badly as a state in that we were agrarian in nature. Seventy percent of the manufacturing in South Carolina was textiles. We did some studies on textiles, this Tax Study Commission did, to show how they had moved from New England, and they would move from here. One of our studies shows the prediction that they would move out of South Carolina, eventually, and move to where labor was cheap, which they have done. Which meant we had to have other industry and a more diversified economic base.

People like Senator Daniels, he later became senator, Charlie Daniels, were a moving force behind some of our legislation because he had an interest, not only in South Carolina, but then he was doing the building of the plants and so forth, but to bring our tax laws in line with some of the other more progressive states, which we did. It was the famous three factor formula that was based primarily on how much of a company's business, a national, a global company, they did in South Carolina, not on their total income worldwide, or United States wide, which some states had

adopted. There were a few that had adopted that, which was only right. And we adopted that. That was one of the biggest challenges we had and it brought in industry, immediately.

Hartsook: How interested was Governor Timmerman in all this?

Parker: Not very much so. I had very little contact with Governor Timmerman. He was only in there two years that I was there. No, I never remember any suggestions from him or anything else. He almost disrupted my career. We had a sheriff that died after he been in the office. He went in the same time I did. [He] was only in the office a year and half, and he died. I wanted to have a special election to elect another one and the Governor wouldn't call it. Timmerman wouldn't, he said, 'Nope, not going to do it.' And he had the power to say that we could or couldn't, because the Constitution gives it, I think the Sheriff's Office did, special position as the chief magistrate, the governor could call it or not call it. He said, 'You've got some problems up there in Oconee,' that we've had trouble with the sheriff who died. I didn't know it at the time myself, that he was connected with some interests in this or that. He said, 'I'm going to appoint one.' He said, this was Timmerman to me, 'You could choose it if you want to, but if you don't I'm going to choose 'em.' I knew what that was going to do back here. People were going to raise holy Cain 'cause the Sheriff's Office was just as important to the people in Oconee as the Senate race.

There used to be a lot of moonshine and bootlegging and so forth and so the Sheriff's Office always had a high . . . and they were always in the same election. I remember Edgar told me one time, never have the two in the same election. But constitutionally, somewhere or another, Oconee did. But I came back home and picked me out a good man. 'Cause I told the Governor, I said, 'No. No way. You are not going to appoint my sheriff.' And he appointed the one I gave him, and the

man did a good job and was re-elected to a four-year term after that. Boy, it was a lot of furor raised when I had to appoint one, when I named the one that [was] appointed.

Hartsook: You couldn't just say, the governor's insisted. . . ?

Parker: That's right. That was about my only experience with Timmerman, really. He didn't do a lot. Fritz [Hollings] was more the activist. No question about that. And he had been lieutenant governor. He appointed me to some of these committees as lieutenant governor and I worked for him as far as his election was concerned, or tried to do anything I could. He wanted me to come down and run the campaign, and I considered it and debated it, but did not. That was about the time my partner was leaving up here. And you're gone for several months, not [just] over the weekends, but it was mighty tough to run a business and so forth if you're down there three days and come back and do all the other. I'm not so sure on some things that might have transpired in there. It would have been a natural had I headed his campaign for governor, to then prepare for my own, for lieutenant governor, and that was a mistake on my part, I suppose, but I had personal reasons not to. But he [Hollings] was very much of an activist. Here again is where I got into trouble. You get into these interests to try and do a job, working with taxes, for instance, like with the power companies that I mentioned and also the electric co-ops.

Back then there was particularly bitter opposition to each other. It was a tough one. We weren't giving the power companies anything but we were keeping them on a level that they experienced in other states. In other words, it was an equitable situation. I did not make the moves to try to tax the co-ops or to take over Santee Cooper, which is still to this day, they do the same things. But being in this tax study thing and meeting with these men, and whatever legislation we

had that might have encouraged their efforts of the power companies in South Carolina, were reflected in my later campaigns, statewide or congressional district-wise. I did not have the support of any of the co-op persons, unless it was somebody local who knew me real well, friends. As a general rule, I did not have that support because they tagged me with the other. This was the same with Fritz's race for governor. I was tagged in 1962, with being a Hollings man. And that put Bill Johnston, who was mayor of Anderson, and [U.S. Senator] Olin's brother, who ran against Hollings, which I thought I would have a lot of the vote that would be connected with the Johnstons. And I didn't, mainly because of my association with Hollings. [This] shows how moves that you make, without knowing where you're going in the long run, can come back to haunt you sure enough. Not that you would change anything, but it happens, both in legislation and in political acquaintances, and so forth.

Hartsook: Was it hard in '58 to tell Fritz that you did not want to manage his campaign?

Parker: Yes, yes it was, because he had appointed me to these different things and we had been good friends, down there. I did not know him before I went, while he was lieutenant governor. And there were a number of persons who tried to get me to do this, John West and different ones.

Hartsook: Did he take no graciously?

Parker: I think so. Yes, because I was very active while he was governor. John [West] and I, there wasn't a week passed that we didn't get in the governor's limousine and go out

to the Mansion to discuss legislation. It seems to me there were a couple of other persons too who I don't recall, but I know John and I were very active in it.

Hartsook: He talks about you and West, Billy Goldberg, Bob McNair. He talks about a handful of people that he counted on to help pass the legislation he was interested in.

Parker: From the House side it would have been Bob. That would have been who he had. I don't think Bob went out there too much at the Mansion. Of course, now Bob, during that time, was running for lieutenant governor. This shows lack of real political astuteness. When I ran in '62, John West and I, not thirty days before the filing deadline, had not decided who was going to run against McNair. We sat there in the Judiciary Committee room, just 'cause there was nobody in there, to decide who was going to run. I wanted him to run. He finally said, 'I'm not going to run, but I'll back you one-hundred percent. I'll help you try to raise some money and I'll do everything I possibly can, but one of us is going to run, see.' And I didn't want to run at that time either. I mean, I wasn't ready to. Bob had been running for four years, traveling all over the state, making speeches and different things. I had had a lot of publicity because of my tax study work. I had gone to the people as a good means of. . .

[Tape 2 Begins]

Parker: We had a meeting in every congressional district, and some extra meetings, for people to come in and give us their ideas on taxation. This was anybody, John Doe, didn't make any difference. And we took those and sifted them and then we compared them with all the tax

laws across the country. And that's where we came up with a lot of our recommendations. But I had a lot of publicity from all of this, see, because the media covered every bit of it. It was an excellent way to do it and that's one way we were able to get through our legislation. We had public support behind it to begin with, or it had already been there and the public knew what was going on. So that gave me a good bit of publicity. But Bob, I believe he'd spoken to every confounded Rotary Club or Lion's Club in South Carolina [laughing]. Bob'd do that even though I was a member of those clubs. I'm sure I had a lot of their support too.

It's kind of a varied history. I was trying to make the connection, emphasize the point, that what you do can do here can haunt you later on or can help to elevate you without any pre-planning. That you weren't planning on doing certain things. I had not planned to run for lieutenant governor, at the time I was doing this other work. I was very interested in the tax study work. John [West] took the Education Committee, so to speak. Earle Morris had Mental Health, that was his big thing. Mine was taxation and finance. We didn't do this deliberately, but that's how it worked out. But you don't know how that will affect you down the line.

Mrs. Parker: And you didn't really plan ahead.

Parker: No, not to that extent. Bob did. Bob McNair was planning to run for lieutenant governor and he worked it beautifully. And, he did a good job with that. Bob and I were on the technical education committee. John West headed that. John was chairman. And, I was on there. And Bob on there and Bob was a good contributing member. That was before we ran against each other for lieutenant governor. He was moving into what he wanted to do and I think it came as a shock that I ran against him. John and I felt that somebody from the Senate should be running.

Because it was obvious that if you ran for lieutenant governor, it had shown that that was the path to the governorship, and that was why you did it. And, you took your turn. And that's where I made a mistake, I suppose, but I'd probably do the same thing again.

After I lost the lieutenant governor's race in '64, John wanted to know what I was going to do. If I was going to run for lieutenant governor again, then that was my choice. That's kind of the way it was looked at. I had gotten out there and gotten the publicity and so forth and I had the right, in other words, over him or others, to run. But I told him, I think it was 1964, that I was not going to. I was tiring of the state system really, getting burned out really. So, I told him I did not plan to run it at all and for him to go ahead and I would do everything I could. Which he did. He then began to make moves to do so.

Hartsook: When he tells that story, he says not only did you say that but you pulled out your checkbook and gave him his first contribution.

Parker: Did he [laughing]? Well, I'll be dogged. Well, I'll be dogged. We were real close friends. We ended up at odds on some things later, which I think was a mistaken opinion on the part of John, when I went to the Republican Party. I think John was told that I got him opposition through [Marshall] Mays from Greenwood who ran for lieutenant governor at the same time John did. Because that was the first statewide Republican-Democrat fight. Which I didn't. I had nothing to do with that campaign whatsoever. Didn't encourage him. We traveled together. All the Republicans traveled, we didn't travel together but we were on the same platforms, everything. From Strom Thurmond right on down the whole list that was running. And which, of course, I was one. I think John understands that now. John and I played golf together, we did about

everything together, and it was a shame that he felt that I got him opposition. I think somebody egged that on. I had forgotten about the check. That's right. He gave me mine, and I gave him one [laughing].

Hartsook: Hollings does talk about you as being one of the key people that he would go to for help in pushing his legislation and ideas. How do you evaluate him as a governor? That four year term.

Parker: I thought he did an excellent job. He had enough brass and boldness. I remember one time he was talking to Charlie Daniels, and I was listening to it on the phone, and he was raising funds to run for governor. And apparently Charlie told him he could raise five or six thousand dollars. Fritz said, 'Five or six thousand? That's chicken feed.' He was talking to one of the most powerful men in South Carolina, which was Senator Daniels. But he had that kind of movement, to make things happen, and go out and get things done. So, I thought he did an excellent job, I really did.

Hartsook: Some people look at that as kind of the landmark between the old style of government and the new, much more activist. . . ?

Parker: I think it certainly was between he and Timmerman. There's no question about it. Like night and day. I did not know Byrnes, Governor Byrnes. He was also an activist on the school situation, the sales tax and so forth, getting it passed to get schools moving, new construction, what have you. I'm sure Byrnes would have been that type had he not been as old as

he was when he was governor. But he was a departure from some others who had been. . . . In my history, he certainly was. He was totally different. He had good ideas and he was willing to listen to people to get things done, in spite of. . . . We always called him a hard-headed Dutchman. But, he was the kind, we always said, [if he] walked in a room, you know they had electric clocks in all the state. . . . He'd change the clock. 'Cause his would be right. That's how cocky or conceited we used to say, arrogant, that Fritz was. I always said he could have gotten almost anything he wanted if he had not had that streak of arrogance. Olin [Johnston] beat him badly [in 1962 when Hollings challenged the long-time incumbent U.S. Senator], and that was part of it. Fritz made friends and always did an excellent job, and Olin was kind of just sitting there, not doing a lot, just the opposite of Hollings' type, but he beat him because Fritz couldn't get out there and get the vote that Olin could.

Hartsook: Was it a mistake for him to challenge Olin D.?

Parker: As it turned out, very much so. But I don't think so because it paved the way to run when I ran, when Olin died. He ran a campaign which a lot of people questioned, which hurt him. Back then, we had to go into every county, all forty-six counties, maybe skip two or three, [at the] court house, that's generally where the political meeting would be. But you had to go. You had to be there. All the candidates would speak. Every one of us.

Of course, Olin didn't show up at any of them. Not a doggone one. Fritz would pull out this chair and sit it over there and talk to the chair, address the chair as if it was Olin. It didn't suit well with a lot of people and made all of Olin's people mad as the devil. Of course, the senator said he wasn't going to dignify Fritz by being there. It was humorous in a lot of respects but it was not

good politics, not when you're dealing with people who were Johnston supporters, hoping to get part of them in your campaign. We had done a good job on setting up the technical schools, various things like that, and Fritz had a good record to run on, but Olin started these programs. They were not all achieved at that time but they were in place.

Hartsook: I've heard that Republican interests encouraged Hollings to run hoping to soften up Olin D. for the Workman campaign. What do you think of that kind of speculation?

Parker: I don't think so. The Republican interests, I'm sure, back Fritz. I'm talking about people like, Charlie Daniels would have been a Republican man. Had Strom changed parties? It was '64, wasn't it?

Hartsook: Floyd Spence had changed, and Charlie Boineau had been elected to the General Assembly.

Parker: There may have been some who felt that way. If they did I didn't share their confidence because. . . . If we did, I just didn't hear that that was the case, except it makes sense. It didn't necessarily soften up Olin, but those persons who were strong Republicans generally would have been for Hollings, with his way of doing things. Olin was an acknowledged, strong, Democrat, very strong. He represented the Democratic Party, really, in South Carolina. Sure did. So, I don't know. I really didn't get that, and I don't think Fritz did. Fritz worked hard at it, very hard, sure did. And he soured pretty quickly on that, too. He was very bitter, after being beaten like that. He had never been beaten on anything before.

I topped his ticket [polled more votes], if I'm not mistaken. I got tabbed with them on all these tickets that the unions passed out, and it was Olin, Russell and McNair. And this was in the churches. The black churches they used to have meetings where they decided who to support and they were passed out and then we got copies of them so we were 'ticketed out,' as it was called back then. Here again, my association where something I had done previously, the benefits I'd received, say, from Hollings' governorship cost me, later, because I was tagged with him. Plus, having supported Fritz, Bill Johnston did everything he possibly could against me, and I don't blame him. I had counted on some of Olin Johnston's support to get me elected as lieutenant governor because I had some good friends in that group. And they told me, said, "You're going to lose them." Same thing happened to me with the U.S. Senate race in '66. I became known as a Nixon man because I chaired the delegation in Miami in the National Delegation. I was the chairperson of that group. Harry Dent and Drake Edens kind of worked it because they thought it might help my campaign some and give it publicity, but it was the kiss of death. The Wallace people, I became, really, their target. It was a shame because they. . .

Mrs. Parker: That was in '68

Parker: '68, excuse me. Shows how one thing, if you don't know where you're going down the road or haven't really planned it out, can really haunt you.

Hartsook: Before we move on to your years in the Senate, can you talk a little bit about [state senator Marion] Gressette and the Education Committee? There is so much interest in that and so little on the record.

Parker: We had as fine a group of persons on that committee. I don't know why Marion put me on that thing. Of course, I was appointed by the lieutenant governor but I'm sure Marion Gressette picked all of the members. We had fine group. It was fifteen men; we had five, five, five. Five appointed by the governor, five in the House, and five in the Senate. We had a staff of lawyers, some of the top lawyers in the state, who worked with us going through what could be done to head off desegregation, or to make a peaceful transition of it.

Hartsook: That's a big difference between....

Parker: But, that's the beginning of it. I'm confident it was strictly to head off desegregation, particularly with Senator Gressette. He was very strong about that. He simply did not believe. . . . He was from the old school and he didn't believe that they should be in any way mixed. We had people like Wayne Freeman, who was editor of the *Greenville News*, on that committee. They were all good people, good minds. Everybody wanted to do the right thing, to soften the blow, if nothing else. We knew that you couldn't fight the federal government. There were certain cases going on that we took part in, apparently, to support challenging the law. I enjoyed it very much because of the people I was working with. Wayne and I got along very well because we were non-lawyers. It was really a legal problem but there were repercussions of the actions we were taking and of what the Supreme Court ruled. It was a state problem that we had to face and had to accomplish. I think we helped to ease [situations] like Clemson, when Harvey Gantt went to Clemson. I think we helped to ease into it, but Marion, I don't think he ever really gave up the idea that maybe we could, some way or another, head it off totally. That's why a good

bit of the reason for passing and putting in a sales tax was that, to build two sets of schools. We did that here, in this county. We had only about eight, nine percent black here in Oconee County. And they had the best schools, really. We built them a brand new school, with county and state money. And, while it probably didn't suit, totally, I'm sure, the black persons involved, they were very proud of that school and of their football team, and things of that nature. I'm sure they resented the other parts of segregation, probably more than the schools. Wouldn't you say, Momma?

Mrs. Parker: Yes.

Parker: Code, who was the principal of that school, was a very close friend of mine. And he ran a tight school. Gosh, he wouldn't let the kids come in the gym unless they took off their shoes [and] lined them up along the wall. You were not going to mess up his brand new floors. He begged me not to run for statewide office but to stay in the Senate, in '66, because he and I got along well and worked together on the educational problems. That was in '66.

Mrs. Parker: And he [Code] really was not in favor of desegregation.

Parker: Not at that time. I think he could see it coming but he. . . .

Mrs. Parker: He said he had traveled all over the United States going to various schools and he said they don't have any segregation there, but you go in the lunchroom and they're all sitting together [blacks and white separate from one another], it's just a natural thing to do, he said.

Parker: His son is a judge over in Greenville County, Merl Code. But I've got a letter somewhere in my files, from him, asking me not to run, saying, 'I hope you won't run. I'll support you but I hope you won't run.' In other words, I want you to stay here.

Hartsook: How did you come to make the decision to switch parties and how hard a decision was that?

Parker: With great difficulty [laughing]. We talked it over a lot. To my knowledge, I never voted for a Democrat nominee for President of the United States. I came back from overseas, it was '46, I'm sure I voted for, well, I'm not sure I voted in the Truman race. Yes, I did, too. And, I voted against Truman because I didn't think too much of him. He had criticized, he had called the Marines a bunch of bellhops, and that kind of thing. And, I never was particularly a Truman person in the way he did things, his lack of knowledge. But making the decision, it wasn't as hard because I had voted for Eisenhower and other Republican nominees, right down the line. This was one time, and I don't know whether Fritz mentioned [this], but he and I kind of parted company. He called a number of persons from around the state about supporting Kennedy for president. I talked to him; I tried to get Fritz not to get out front with John Kennedy. Because I didn't think it was the right thing. I thought Nixon would be a much better president. But he was determined, because he knew he [Nixon] would be more conservative than Kennedy. As it turns out, we adopted conservative moves, or we call them conservative today, that John Kennedy espoused as well. But, at that time, he was the more liberal candidate. Fritz said, 'No, we're going to do it.' He wanted me to do this and do that and so forth, and I told him I just wasn't going to be involved in it. And I wasn't involved too much with Nixon's campaign. That was in '60 when he lost. But that's where Fritz

and I split up as far as working together. So, it wasn't so hard. I didn't do anything against him [Hollings] when he was running for the Senate but there wasn't the closeness that we had before because of that Republican-Democrat thing.

Hartsook: Who else were you talking to when you were trying to make up your mind?

Parker: I'm sure I talked to Crawford Clarkson . . .

Hartsook: Drake Edens?

Parker: Yes, Drake Edens. Naturally, Drake was init and so was Harry Dent. I met with them in Columbia. Bill Hunter. Dr. Hunter would probably tell you that he was the reason I became a Republican at that time. They wanted me to run, to announce and then run for the Senate. And they practically assured me that with their backing, of being nominated by the Republican Party. As I said before, I was getting kind of burned out as far as state stuff was concerned so I was ready to get out of the state Senate. I was finishing up a two-year term. When this segregation thing came up, we had to reapportion everything, and so we cut all the terms in half. I had a four-year term but it was cut to two years. That's why I was in there for ten years, which didn't bother me too much. I had worked hard on various things but I was running out of things to be against or for.

Mrs. Parker: Running out of challenges.

Parker: Maybe so [laughing], I don't know.

Hartsook: Do you think most people would look at that, after ten years in the Senate, as popular as you were

Mrs. Parker: He was the first man reelected to two consecutive terms in Oconee County. We had senators that had served two terms but not two consecutive terms.

Parker: I served three. I got on one of them without opposition. That was a first too. I thought the real challenge was in Washington. I had come to that conclusion.

Hartsook: When do you think the Republican leadership realized that you might indeed be a willing candidate? I'm just thinking that they probably contacted a lot of people seeing if there was interest.

Parker: I'm sure they did.

Hartsook: At some point they must have realized that you were interested.

Parker: Somebody they might be able to talk into.

Hartsook: I know at one point they approached Fritz. They approached Bryan Dorn.

Mrs. Parker: I have no recollection of when they approached you.

Hartsook: Do you remember who the people were that made the first contacts?

Parker: I think Dr. Hunter probably set it up for me to meet with Drake and Harry. Whether they had sent him or whether it was his idea, I don't know. I believe he was the first one that made a serious contact. It surely wasn't Crawford Cook. Crawford and I have always been very good friends. He blamed me for getting him into the campaign against me. He ran Fritz's campaign in '66. He says its my fault because he had asked me what I wanted to do, and that he was going to be with me no matter what race I made, because we were real close, and when I told him I wasn't going to run for anything else, then, of course, Fritz picked him up. Crawford Cook is sharp politically and it's obtained by the fact he's been in campaigns around the country. He's a character [laughing]. But he was like a little brother or son, in a way. He was not that much younger than I am but we got along very well.

Mrs. Parker: He's a good bit younger.

Hartsook: You waged a heck of a campaign.

Parker: Came out pretty good, in a way.

Hartsook: What would it have taken do you think to win. Do you look back and say if only I had done this?

Parker: There were a number of things we did not do. Same thing with Bob McNair. I talk too much. I didn't really. I said what I believed.

[Tape 2, Side 2, Begins]

Parker: South Carolina had three percent sales tax, and at a statewide conference of all the municipal association in Myrtle Beach. I predicted that South Carolina would have a four percent sales tax.

Mrs. Parker: You had already filibustered against it. You knew it was going to come but you managed to stave it off.

Parker: I don't remember that but I do remember the basis for it was, for my making this comment, was that when it comes, then you, the municipal association, should demand that a portion of that tax go to the cities, the municipalities in the state. And I cited California, in passing something similar. I did not advocate it, but I was tagged with that. Bob pulled a real good one because he came back and said I was advocating a four percent sales tax. During the campaign, I was on the defensive with that. With McNair, every place we spoke, I would have to say what I meant, but it would leave the impression that I had been for it. He even went on television and excerpted just a little bit of my talk, somebody had given him a tape, and a little bit of that talk which made it sound like I was for increasing the sales tax. Later, in his second year as governor, he endorsed a sales tax increase [laughing], which was an ironic thing and *The State* paper ran a

good editorial about how something he had been opposed to was what he ending up doing, increasing the tax.

That was one time that I got into a problem. Now with Fritz, I made the statement that I would not bring up his... He went out [of the governor's office] in very poor style, took all that stuff out of the Mansion. He took a lot of stuff out of there. Came to about \$35,000 worth of stuff. People don't know that, but that's a fact. Donald Russell inventoried everything and had all of that on a list and it was put into SLED headquarters. It was put away in there, because I knew. Al Lanier, a reporter for the *Associated Press*, saw that list and told me about it, but I couldn't use it because of how Al had gotten it. Anyway, I said, 'This is not going to be one of my campaign issues.' That was a mistake. It could have made the difference. We had various groups working for us in '66. Some of the Wallace people were shrewd politicians, I can tell you right now. They, of course, were a strong part of my support. They wanted me to get into the race issue, but I wouldn't do it. I told them absolutely not. I was not going to do it. And, I didn't. I could have leaned a little more that way, in other words, taken the segregation issue, and probably picked up a bunch of votes because it turned out, I had sixty-some percent of the white vote, none of the black vote. Two per cent would be an extreme. . . . Strom was running at the same time and Strom had about seventy-five percent of the white vote and, of course, took Bradley Morris to the cleaners. I didn't have that much white vote but I had a great majority of it, but no black. And they knew that I wasn't going to get it. I didn't, for sure, but they wanted me to really get out there and demagogue it and I wouldn't do it. He sent somebody, or his campaign did,

Mrs. Parker: 'He' being who?

Parker: Fritz, to take a tape of my message to the people, [which] was a very critical statewide television broadcast. You ever hear of a fellow named Lee Reuf? Lee got the tape of my talk. Lee was working for Fritz then, but he had worked for [Columbia television station] WIS. We saw him leave the building after we finished. We went back and re-taped some stuff. I've forgotten why we had to do it. Maybe we ran too long or something. Fritz came out the next night and quoted me as saying this and this and this, because I had been right ahead of him on the television, and I hadn't said those things. We had deleted them to shorten our program. And he gets up and says, 'You just heard him say these things,' which I hadn't said. It was obvious he had the previous tape. I should have, right then, come back and accused him of being once a thief, always a thief. That's where Charlie Wickenberg with *The State* newspaper said I lost it. Charlie said I had him cold right there, but I didn't want to go that route. That was a mistake. It would have made the difference. No question in my mind now that it would have.

Mrs. Parker: He's not mean.

Parker: I should have been a little meaner. And we had the proof, pretty much, that he was going by my tape. I don't know whether Lee has ever admitted it. I think he has. I know Lee real well, too, knew all that crowd pretty good. But that would have made a big difference. Another one I played the devil with, tell you why I lost it, was bringing Donald Russell into the campaign. That was a very bad mistake, and I don't why I did that. I jumped on Donald. Now, here he is, just been beaten by Fritz in the primary. Fritz took him for a ride in the primary. Which I thought he would. I thought Hollings was going to win it when I got into it [the race], because he had appointed himself, so to speak. [Russell stepped down as governor, and Lt. Gov. Robert

McNair succeeded him as governor and immediately appointed Russell to fill the vacant Senate seat until such time as a special election could be held.] But then, he got this judgeship while he was still in the Senate. He was appointed a federal judge. I got all over him in some speech, about this as the kind of thing that's wrong with government. He was governor, swapped out and took that job in the Senate. In the Senate, he gets beat, so he just made himself a judge. It was the worst thing I could have ever done. The Russell family were all set to support me, strong, because they really hated Hollings with a passion, never did like him, as a matter of fact, even before that race they didn't like him. But that was foolish on my part.

Hartsook: So do you think those Russell voters just stayed out or did they. . .

Parker: The family absolutely turned the other way, Virginia [Mrs. Russell] and the others. I think they probably did. They wouldn't vote for Hollings. The close ones wouldn't. But they were in position to kind of advocate my campaign to a lot of people that I couldn't reach. So, that was a bad mistake. There are two things there, and if I wanted to demagogue and get up and walk up and down the street with a cue stick to beat the blacks. . .

Mrs. Parker: The other mistake was not protesting that election.

Parker: I didn't think so; I still don't think so, Momma.

Mrs. Parker: Well, I do. There were so many irregularities in so many different places but we did decide not to do it because we underestimated the value of an incumbency. We said, 'Well, we can

go right against him in two years. Anybody who supported you this time is going to support you next time and we'll do it right. Which was a mistake.

Parker: Just like over in Camden, in Kershaw County, they recounted in one district there because we had some pretty good support around the state and those ladies demanded that it be recounted, over there. And we picked up several hundred votes. We only lost by ten, eleven thousand, something like that.

Hartsook: We talk about it as a loss, and it is a loss, but if anybody had said two years before that a Democratic candidate would be challenged statewide by a Republican and that Republican would pull that percentage of the vote, they would have said that that was insane. And no one pulls that kind of vote again, for ages, except for Strom, which I think is just a flat out anomaly. Why didn't Strom work harder for you? Why didn't. . .

Parker: I think because he is the real epitome of a politician. In politics, you're supposed to look after number one. Don't ever spread yourself too thin or you'll jeopardize your own campaign. You always look at how whatever happens is going to affect me. That's supposed to be it. I've never agreed with that philosophy, but that's what they do. It's kind of like me getting into Fritz's campaign with my good friend, Bill Johnston, running against him. You just don't do that unless you're willing to take some hurt. Strom waited right up until the last ten days before he got into it. He saw that it looked like we were going to win. I think that was part of it. He had agreed, and his supporters really criticized him and gave him a hard time on it, to go on the same billboard with me. I ran a billboard one month, Marshall Parker, it was a beautiful thing. The next

month it came out and had me on one side of the billboard and Strom on the other side and it said something like, 'If one Senator is great, two would be greater.' So that helped a lot. But people like Billy Plowden, in New Zion, just gave Strom a fit about that. "You've ruined yourself, getting up there with Parker.' Anyway, he didn't come out until the last and I think because of that fact. And his statewide campaign man, Warren Abernathy, I'm sure begged him not to get into this thing on my behalf. He told me, 'My number one thing is Strom Thurmond, not you.' He told me that. He said, 'I'll do everything I can, for him, but we're going to keep you all apart.' But Strom finally got in there at the last. Harry Dent persuaded him. The last ten days. To come out, for me. But, it should have been before then. We didn't have time to capitalize on it too much.

Hartsook: Was the national party involved at all in your race?

Mrs. Parker: Minimally.

Parker: Money-wise, minimally because they didn't think we had much of a chance either, I don't think.

Hartsook: They had promised you, according to a memorandum, a good bit of money and they gave you a small fraction. . .

Mrs. Parker: We got down to the last few weeks of the campaign and I had a stack of cards about that high, and that was it.

Parker: That's all the stuff we had left.

Mrs. Parker: All we had.

Parker: Because, I had sworn that I was not going to go into a deficit position. I wasn't going to end up with a campaign debt, to pay off over many years, which might have been a mistake too, because we didn't go on TV as much. . .

Mrs. Parker: We ended up with money because it looked like he was going to win so people started giving, but we couldn't spend it.

Parker: It was too late.

Hartsook: . . .going back to them and saying you promised us, what \$250,000?

Parker: I think we had about \$80,000. And according to Drake and Harry, they were confident they could get me. . . . I really thought it was about a half a million, maybe it was two fifty. But they were confident they could get me that. As best they could, they said, 'This is what we can do.' They didn't promise to put up the money themselves but they led me to believe that that's what I would get. A big sum of money. Fritz spent about that, about two hundred, two fifty, which was a lot of money back then.

Hartsook: Did you feel betrayed?

Parker: Yes and no, I guess. But, I had already walked into it. Blind. But I blame myself for it, too.

Hartsook: Your husband doesn't hold a grudge, does he?

Parker: No. Well, that's one thing in politics, one thing the Senate taught me. I didn't hew to one side or the other, it was whatever I thought was right, I went with. But once the battle was over with and we had given each other a fit, once we walked out that door that was it. That's not the case anymore. This is one big difference between [my days and] the General Assembly today, and I don't know if it's because of the party factions or not but Democrat and Republicans are jumping on the partisanship. But back then, once a fight was over that was it. We didn't hold any grudges or anything else.

Mrs. Parker: They came out as friends.

Parker: I don't think I made any enemies, long-term. I had some, but not real bad, because once you came out, you were friends. Marion Gressette would get up there and he'd say, 'My young friend from Oconee, he is hardly old enough to wear pants.' He'd give me a fit, right there on the floor of the Senate. He'd say, 'My young friend from Oconee [taking on a deep and booming voice],' He really gave me a fit. But Marion and I were real good friends. Martha took the election a lot worse than I did. She cried all night, pretty near.

Mrs. Parker: There was a lot of hard work gone down the tube.

Parker: She said she wore out two or three pairs of shoes beating the streets of South Carolina, going from door to door to door. Back then, you didn't have the money, and didn't have television like you do now. But we went into every little place in this state, almost. There's not hardly a town in this state that I haven't been into. We went into stores and shook hands, and she did. She'd take one side of the street and I'd take the other. If she ran into somebody that wanted to talk to me, she'd flag me down and I'd go over there and talk to them. But it paid off.

Hartsook: Did you enjoy that?

Mrs. Parker: There were times when I felt like I was two different people. Basically, I'm a homebody, and to get out like that makes you a whole different person. There were times I would get up in the morning and I would think, I just don't think I can smile again today. But once you get started, you just get caught up in it.

Parker: We'd always have somebody that would go with her. Some Republican in that county. We'd have somebody go with her and she didn't want them with her, really.

Mrs. Parker: They were too slow.

Parker: They were too slow plus the fact, their enemies. . . . A lot of Republicans weren't well liked by a lot of Democrats, who we were having to have [were needed if Parker was

to have a chance to win the election]. I mean, there weren't that many Republicans in South Carolina. So, we had to have a lot of Democrats. And a lot of these people who would parade you around, they were called fat cats and so forth, people that had some money. And, that didn't help. Politely, you couldn't tell them, 'No, don't you go with me.' I finally did.

Mrs. Parker: Oh, I remember being at the mill gate at the Abney Mill in Greenwood. And I looked up the street and who was coming down the street but a friend of mine, and who did she have with her but Josephine Abney. And here I am being ...

Parker: She almost cried. You'd have to go through it to know. I enjoyed it, though. I met some shifts back when I was running for lieutenant governor, by the way. I met a shift with Olin Johnston and I have never forgotten it. I've enjoyed thinking back on it, when Olin was standing there with me. I said, 'Senator, when are you going to debate Hollings?' He said [imitating Johnston's deep drawl], 'I ain't going to debate.' I said, 'When are you going to answer the questions he keeps asking?' He said, 'No, I'm not going to do that. It'd take a damn fool to answer a fool.' [laughter] They brought him up in a big car and put him out there at the mill gate. They [the mill workers] hadn't started [coming] out, so we had a little time to talk there. This is where he had started his textile career, working in the mill.

Hartsook: Is it true to talk about the Johnston supporters as a Johnston machine?

Parker: I think it is.

Hartsook: I've heard that from a lot of people.

Parker: I think it is. And they were very loyal to each other.

Hartsook: There are some people that say the Johnston support went to Hollings against Russell because Mrs. Johnston was so upset that she or Bill was not appointed until a special election could take place.

Parker: Yes.

Hartsook: . . . how loyal those people were. I often ask about mentors. Did any of the political wives take you under their wing? It's clear that an active personable spouse is a huge asset.

Mrs. Parker: I don't recall that any did.

Parker: Just our friends. The ones we had as friends, wouldn't you say? Everywhere we went, somebody took us around but. . .

Mrs. Parker: You just did what was put in front of you to do.

Hartsook: We hear so much about people like Tommy Workman or Millie Dorn.

Parker: Well, there was one place that we had problems. With me just having gone to the Republican Party, our friends and supporters, people who I had worked with in the Senate, like Son Roddy up in Lancaster, . . .

Mrs. Parker: Close friends.

Parker: Close friends. Of course, Son, it didn't bother him, he went with me anyway. He'd set up my mill shifts and all that. He'd go down there with me. But, most of them wouldn't. And, you couldn't blame them. They would talk to their friends for me, and I got a good vote, but they were Democrats. They weren't looking to build up a Republican Party in their counties to run against them. And I didn't try to put them in an embarrassing position. We had people like Claymon Grimes [senator from Georgetown Co.] in Georgetown. Claymon set up stuff and got me in touch with other people who would, but Claymon wasn't going to get out there and beat the streets with me. And he wasn't going to do it. And, he wasn't going to endorse me publicly, because then he would be begging some opposition. Incidentally, in Georgetown, I got zero in three precincts. I didn't get a vote. Two hundred and something to zero. A hundred and something to zero. That's how bad it was.

We had one, in Horry County, little place called Racepath. When the vote came in, it was five hundred and forty-nine to one for me. Five hundred and forty-nine for Fritz. Crawford Clarkson, after the election was over, decided he would go down there and find out what happened. Crawford's some character anyway, and we've been very close, our families and everything else, but he went down there and talked to the storeowner. This was where they had the boxes in the primary, and they would have the election in a store, because they didn't have any place else to

have it. The fellow said, 'Yeah. He got my vote. And he would have got one more, but my wife got sick.' So, that's why I just got the one vote. Because Strom got two votes, in that precinct. He almost was zeroed there. I was kidding him [laughing] and said, 'How did you get the other vote?' But, they had the federal people in there, and they were showing them how to mark them, and marking them, really, because most of the people, the black people, didn't know how to vote. A lot of them didn't. And, they didn't want them to make any mistakes. And, they helped them to vote. But, getting zero, that's tough [laughing].

Hartsook: Do you think the media treated you fairly?

Parker: I think so, don't you, Momma?

Mrs. Parker: In that race, yes. Not in the lieutenant governor's race. Do you remember the reporter, he reported exactly backwards the way it was, the reception from the audience?

Parker: You'd have some problem with some of them.

Mrs. Parker: In the Senate campaign, I don't remember any unfairness in the Senate campaign.

Hartsook: Let me go back and ask you one last question about party switching. When we talked to Floyd Spence, he told this wonderful story about the next day. They had front page coverage of his switch with the full text of his announcement. He said he was walking up to the courthouse the next morning, just like he did every day, and he got close and [saw] there was a little

clump of people out in front talking. He said he could tell something horrible had happened. He got closer and decided they must be talking about somebody who had died. And then he got right up to them and they were talking about his decision. He said people would cross the street rather than have to greet him. And he got choked up. You could tell that here, almost forty years later, he still could not understand how people would treat him. . . . Did you experience anything like that?

Parker: Yes I did. I had a lot of that. I had it both financially and otherwise. When I changed parties, we had a lot of retail milk customers, trucks going out house to house. The drivers would come in and say, 'Please Mr. Parker, don't get into anything else. We're losing all our customers.' We'd lose customers, actually. People didn't want to. . .

Mrs. Parker: Every time he did something in the Senate that they didn't like, they'd say, well, we won't take his milk anymore.

Parker: I came out, one of the strong ones, actually, for the drivers license, have a test of some kind, for it. Very strong. And, boy, we lost customers everywhere. And, how we got that through, we were able to demonstrate that the aid to the blind, there was a list of about a hundred or something. . . . Because you used to just send in a little thing with fifty cents, and you got your license. You didn't have to do anything, little metal tag they issued. But that's what did it, when we showed the blind were getting brand new licenses.

[Tape 3 Begins]

Parker: 1968. This time we had funds come in because we had run so close before. It wasn't so hard to raise the money that we did before. We had more money and we had pretty good support, as I recall, from the national [party]. They sent somebody down here to help, I think.

Mrs. Parker: Crawford Cook's comment was, 'You just have no idea the power of the incumbency.'

Parker: Crawford Cook had gone to Washington with Fritz [as Hollings' administrative assistant] and he said, "I hated to see you work that hard, Marshall. I knew we had you beat.'

Mrs. Parker: Before you started.

Parker: Before you started. Because of the number of people they could get to from up there. And they did. It choked back some of our contributions but, of course, national helped to replace that. One of the main things, and I guess it kept it from being as close, it was not anywhere near as close in that second race, was the Wallace faction, chairing that delegation then. I could have gotten over that. But Harry [Dent], and this is where Harry really hurt me, Harry was coming out lambasting Wallace, not so much pro-Nixon, but giving Wallace a fit. Which was good politics, I suppose, because, in South Carolina, Wallace had a strong support. And, we had had a lot of that support the previous time, in '66. But he gave them a fit. And, they told me, 'You're going to lose all of the Wallace people. We're going to go against you if you don't stop Harry Dent from making these statements.' A fellow who owned a radio station down in Orangeburg, he was high up in the

ranks of the Wallace people, the Independents, in South Carolina, and a real key to that group. He called me and told me, 'You're going to lose it unless you can get Harry stopped, because it's infuriating everybody. He said, 'I'll do all I can to help you, personally, but it's not going to help. You're going to lose it.' So, we lost that group. When you say, 'Did it have an effect,' it was devastating. I don't think it would have made the difference probably. Might have. Who knows? Of course, there were more people declaring to be Republicans by then. But, it made a big difference. You would just cringe whenever Harry would make one of those statements giving George Wallace a hard time because you knew what it was doing to your support. But it was one of those exterior things you had no control over.

Hartsook: Is it better for Thurmond that you lost?

Mrs. Parker: I don't think it would have made any difference one way or the other to him.

Parker: This state was split up a long time [in the party affiliation of its senators]. It's had one on the ultra-conservative and one on the liberal [side], Olin Johnston-style. We had had that with [Senator Burnet] Maybank and Olin. There's something to be said for it.

Hartsook: It certainly would have diminished his stature as the number one Republican. . .

Mrs. Parker: That's true.

Hartsook: To have a younger politician. . .

Parker: I would have been the junior. . . . I would have been what Hollings is now, junior senator [laughing]. Fritz hates that term.

Mrs. Parker: He's the oldest junior Senator.

Parker: [In the] history of the country. Oldest, longest serving junior senator. He wouldn't like for you to say old. He and I are only about three months apart, Fritz and I. He'll be eighty this month, January. I'll be eighty in April.

I don't regret it [his career in politics]. I regret not going [to the Senate]. There were a lot of things I'd liked to have done. I look back on the history of the country, like the Panama Canal, where it was a one vote difference. . . . We would still have the Canal [had I been in the Senate]. There are a lot of things he voted for that I would not have. He's a strong true Democrat, that's all there is to it. Despite all his good characteristics, he's got some things that he's very liberal on, that I would be different on. But I look back on it, and it might have been the best thing.

Hartsook: One last question about '68. Do you think the Vietnam War played any part in that campaign? I know in your acceptance speech you talk about fighting the war with one hand tied behind your back. One of the very first things Hollings does when he's elected to the Senate in '66, is he goes to Vietnam for ten days.

Parker: It played a part in that my speech writers, I say speech writers, the person who helped me, Tony Jurich, who worked for the Senate Armed Services Committee. He came

down and helped me to understand a lot of the workings of the military, and so forth. We thought that was going to be one of our best advantages, was the fact that, President Johnson, we could give him a fit for some of the things that were happening, as Republican-Democratic differences. Fritz out-cussed Johnson, in other words, he called him things I would never call the President of the United States. He called him a political rat or something. . .

Mrs. Parker: Political animal.

Parker: Political animal. The President of the United States, there in his own Party. I couldn't do that. But, he did. He out-Johnstoned Johnston [commenting on the 1966 race].

Mrs. Parker: He just outdid you.

Parker: Yes, he did on that. He sure did. But that took that issue. And, that was one of our big issues, was what we should do. And again in '68, that we were not fighting with all we had. We were fighting a war of escalation. Up, up, up, it kept going up. Instead of committing all the might of the United States to it, ending that thing, which I'm confident of. I still believe it. We could have in the first two or three years, but we didn't. I think it had a marked affect on our campaign, I'm sure, but that's what I had reference to, when I said, 'one arm tied behind my back.'

Hartsook: Do you think the Republican Party was able to build itself through your two strong campaigns in '66 and '68?

Parker: They say so. They have introduced me a lot of times as one of those who did [build the party]. There were several of us who left [the Democratic Party]. Joe Rogers, from down in Clarendon County, who was high up in the House, he was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee at that time, next in command, he changed. But none of them ran close. I guess I was the only one that ran close. But they've said so. And, I think it helped it along. I made a good credible showing, and we certainly took some Democrats with us, I suppose. I made a lot of enemies, too. I made some up here [in Oconee County] who didn't walk across the street to avoid me, but disliked it intensely, that I switched, some of those real strong Democrats who were good supporters of mine.

Hartsook: And are they pretty much Republicans now?

Parker: Yes. Up here we go now at least seventy [percent], three to one. . .

Mrs. Parker: [State senator] Allen Legare in Charleston defeated himself by getting really, really angry with Marshall when he changed.

Parker: Allen and I had been very close friends. It was John [West], Allen, and myself on everything. Earle wasn't really part of our group. We had a place down at Kiawah. [Parker and several other legislators went in together to purchase a second home on Kiawah Island while it was a fairly new resort community.]

Mrs. Parker: Earle was in there.

Parker: He was in it, but the three of us were real close. Allen blamed me for his troubles. All of Allen's friends, people he had introduced me to when I'd gone down there [to Charleston] for something, to the Hibernian or to make a speech down there, or something. People he'd introduced me to, and he was a strong Democrat, they all came to my campaign. I only lost, with Hollings, I lost Charleston County by about 2,000 votes, I believe. It was very close. [I] carried it out in the county; lost it in the city. Allen blamed me for the people he had introduced me to; here they were working for me instead of him. Yet, he was running in a different race, but he acted up so much about it, that I think they took it out on him, too.

Mrs. Parker: They kept telling him that if he didn't hush, that he was going to get beat. And he did.

Parker: We're good friends now.

Mrs. Parker: It took about ten years.

Parker: Yes. A shame. You just can't hold those kind of things.

Hartsook: I think it takes a particular kind of person though to be able to. . . But, you have to, to be successful in politics. . .

Parker: That, plus the fact you're not gaining anything by going too long. I think about it occasionally, but it really doesn't bother me now. When I ran against Butler Derrick [to succeed Bryan Dorn in the House in 1974]. . . . We didn't have a chance in that one either, as it turned out. I thought I had that race won.

And with Fritz, I thought I had that first race in '66. I really was not that optimistic until everybody, and everywhere we went the last two weeks of that campaign, told me, 'You don't need to be here. Go somewhere else. You've got it.' Well, this was all white people, talking to me. It never factored in, really, in my own thinking, that we would have a solid black vote against me, because the black people up here had been my supporters, and I got along fine with them. I hadn't said anything different out on the stump, but politics being what it is, they weren't going to vote Republican. When I came back to run for Congress in '74, I had been in Washington for four years with Nixon. Here, I come back in April. I had let it be known I was going to run. Bryan had always figured I would take his place when he got out of it. Of course, he ran for governor, and left his seat open. So, I came back to take it. Butler Derrick gets into it. I had been gone to Washington too long, plus the fact that Nixon ends up resigning.

Every news conference I had in this district, the first question, 'What's going to happen to the president?' Not what, [asking about] these things I had planned out, or be for this or against this, it was always that. We were still running tight and the press had us ahead, one time about the first of September, I was supposedly about a point or two ahead. I must not have been, but that's what the poll said. And then, and this was a mistake too, I had Gerald Ford to come to the district to dedicate the *Anderson Independent* [Newspaper] Building, a brand new building. They wanted to know if I could help them get him down here and I told them I would work on it. Between Dent, and so forth, we got him to come. They ended up endorsing me, it wasn't a quid pro quo, for they

were about as Democrat as they ever come, the *Anderson Independent*, still is. But he was at his very worst time in the world, because he had just pardoned Nixon. People really disliked Ford for that. They just wanted to see Nixon in jail. And Ford having done that, and then he comes down here and we're on the platform together down at Anderson, and he gets up and really endorses me. Gerald Ford's a fine person, but [laughing] it was the worst thing that could have happened about that time. It was sometime in October. I got beat sixty-four, about that, so I don't think I ever was ahead, probably, but I was close at one time. Too much Nixon and Ford, at the end, because I had carried this district against Fritz.

Hartsook: That was a wild campaign year.

Parker: Oh, brother! We lost, -- I say we -- the Republicans lost people in North Carolina that had been in office for eight, and ten, twelve years. Good Republicans got beat. It was terrible.

Hartsook: And all the Ravenel business. [Democratic gubernatorial nominee Charles 'Pug' Ravenel was forced by the court from the ticket, late in the campaign, for failing to meet the residency requirement. Last minute substitute Bryan Dorn was defeated by Republican James Edwards.]

Parker: Gosh, that was terrible. Between Earle [Lt. Gov. Earle Morris was defeated by Ravenel in a crowded Democratic primary] and Bryan and Jim Edwards...

Hartsook: Did you link your campaign in any way to Dr. Edwards?

Parker: No. We spoke at different things that they had in this district but I did not have anything there. Jim was a real character. He asked me to accept an assistant secretary position, . . .

Mrs. Parker: When he went to the Department of Energy.

Parker: It was something about research. I went up there and interviewed with some of his staff for two or three days and I came out of there, and I told Martha, 'Absolutely not. I've done a lot of things that I didn't know the heck what I was doing, but this would be one that I really was totally ignorant of what was going on.' And, I really felt that, too. It was all about the nuclear plants around the country and all this stuff. Jim said, 'Oh, you'd do fine. You've got all these good people. You'd have all this staff.' I said, 'No way.' So I didn't [laughing]. I did go as associate administrator to the Small Business Administration, twice.

Hartsook: Did you enjoy that?

Parker: Yes, I did. I enjoyed a lot of it. I traveled a lot, all over the United States, and got to push the programs that I thought were excellent, for small business. I was not in the lending end of it, I was in the procurement end. It was tough getting all the agencies in government to contract with small business, to set aside a certain portion of their purchases for small business. You could demonstrate that the prices were going to be almost equal. You could get them to do it.

And, they had quotas. We'd work it through Congress to get them almost a quota that they had to do with small business. I enjoyed that. I would call on different bases and the generals would trot out there and have to report on what they had, how much they'd done with small business, and what they would do next year. Of course, they knew we could get them brought into Washington to testify if they didn't do some of that.

I did not enjoy the affirmative action part of it. It didn't have anything to do with my previous races. But, we had an affirmative action program for minorities, and it was fine. I took it from almost nothing, it was started under Lyndon Johnson's time, but when I went up in '70, I took it from almost nothing to hundreds of millions of dollars, for them, in this affirmative action program. But my desire was that they should not live on it. In other words, they would have it for two or three years to get started, as a company, not to exceed four years or something of that nature, but Congress wouldn't let us do it, get by with that, but that's what it should have been. This program has kept in trouble ever since it's. . . . Fact is, some of them get on it, and never get off. They can't go out and be competitive with anybody. They count on the government to award them a contract, and this was not good. You don't build a good businessman that way. But I had a lot of different experiences. I enjoyed it, and working with people, Indian reservations, a little of everything.

Hartsook: What led you to come back and run again in '80? What made you think you had a better shot. . . ?

Parker: I didn't think I would, really and truly. I did not think I was going to have a better shot then. I was a strong Reagan person, but I never felt real comfortable that we were going

to win. In fact, Lee Atwater sat me down and Lee said, 'You're going to lose it. You haven't got a chance in the world.' This was before I got into it. 'You haven't got a chance in the world of winning that seat.' He knew I was getting ready to get into it [the campaign]. He said, 'They're going to beat you.' I said, 'Well, I carried District Four,' and so forth. I kind of felt like I was doing it just as part of Party work, that they needed somebody in this seat to run. Neither the president nor I carried this district. Jimmy Carter carried it. So, we were behind the eight ball all the way and, plus, Butler Derrick, by that time, just as she said about Fritz in Washington, once you're there you've got a lot of avenues, you're touching people all the time, and getting obligations from them. I never felt really secure in that race. Money was short and I had already lost, you can't lose but so much. Already lost for lieutenant governor, twice for the U.S. Senate, and then for Congress, too. I never lost up here.

Mrs. Parker: It's a difficult district to run in because of the television coverage, it's terrible. [Due to the disparate stations whose signals reach the District's constituents, it is very expensive to have district-wide television coverage.]

Parker: I had to use stations like Aiken, Augusta, Greenville, Spartanburg, nothing in this district. Had to use Columbia, too.

Parker: That race, I kind of regret in a way, in '80, because I don't think I had that much. . . . We went to that convention, too, didn't we?

Mrs. Parker: Was that the one in Detroit?

Parker: Yes. Sure did.

Hartsook: How do you merge your business activities and interests in a political lifestyle?

Parker: It was tough. What I would have gotten into business-wise, I don't know, because there are a lot of challenges in it as well as in politics. It certainly took a world of time from us. I sold it [the dairy business] in '81, before I went back to Washington, after thirty-one years. I sold my business to Biltmore Dairy, out of Asheville. They promptly closed it, which I knew they would. They wanted my routes and personnel. But I spent a lot of time gone. I had some pretty loyal employees who kept it running while I was in Washington the four years I was there with Nixon. But they had been very loyal to stay with it. And Martha came back and forth some to check on things, from Washington. I didn't. I was pretty loyal to that. I did not come back to my bailiwick because. . . . This was one of the charges people made against a lot of office holders or appointed persons, that they would spend as much time back home. I may have come back and made a couple of talks but that was all, Charleston and other places.

Mrs. Parker: I came back about once every month to check on things.

Parker: But it's [been] like a merry-go-round. Been a lot of places, a lot of things, and [have] very few regrets.

Mrs. Parker: Never been a dull moment.

Parker: And I still feel that way. I'm active in church and I challenge about half the things that go on. I get on the radio or appear before our county council still, on things I ought to leave alone. I got embroiled in a hospital fight, and won. It was on county-wide bonds. We were supposed to get beat, badly, but we won. But I got into things I probably should have stayed out of. The reasons of why I got into them are still valid, I should have from that standpoint, but personally, I probably shouldn't. You make a few enemies every time you get into something.

Hartsook: Have you taken any political figures under your wing? Have you helped [then current Congressman] Lindsey Graham or. . . .

Parker: I haven't done much for Lindsey, partly because he was the lawyer in a case that [involved] Martha's brother, who is a surgeon. He and I get along fine and he's always been highly complimentary of my efforts in this and that. He has apologized for the way he talked in that trial, but I guess that's part of the reason I haven't been as active in his campaign. . . . But he's done a good job.

Mrs. Parker: He's done an excellent job.

Parker: I can tell you this, he is a good, I won't say actor, but he portrays his beliefs so that the average person can pick them up. He's good, on TV, on getting his points across. He was good in that trial.

Hartsook: I think the political story of last year was lining up that nomination without opposition. [After Strom Thurmond announced he would not seek another term in the Senate, Graham received the Party's nomination without a challenge.] Can you imagine? If you had said that two years ago, you'd never believe that.

Parker: You sure wouldn't, but he did. We get along fine now, and he says that I laid the groundwork for him to do it. He's good at what he does. And I think being a lawyer in that case has helped him. I mean he's used to having to take whatever case he's got and portray that side and that makes it hard on people like us to accept how a lawyer acts at a certain time, because he is, really, an actor. He's just running a different drama, depending on what the case is. And they're good at that, and that's part of their business. He's excellent.

Mrs. Parker: I certainly have approved of the stances he's taken. . .

Parker: I do, too. And he's prepared himself for Strom's seat. There's no question about it. And I think he's got no problem there. Do you, Momma?

Mrs. Parker: No. I think he'll be successful, and I hope he will be.

Parker: The governor's race is going to be something because there are a lot of them in that. A lot of Republicans. Who would have ever thought there would be many people running in a Republican Primary? [The field eventually became a group of seven.]

Hartsook: It could be a real vicious campaign.

Mrs. Parker: Yes, it could be.

Parker: I like the fellow down in Charleston. [Former congressman Mark Sanford, the eventual primary winner.]

[Tape 3, Side 2, Begins]

Parker: I like what he stood for.

Mrs. Parker: We have another nice young man from up here who is running in the Third District, Gresham Barrett, to take Lindsey's place.

Parker: He's got his work cut out because he's from here. Gresham is a top-flight person. Citadel graduate. Good, honest. Good public servant, businessman. But he's got Klauber [opposing him], who's sitting in Greenwood, and that's a tough one to fight because from there down [geographically, it] feels a little bit kin to that. It's kind of like when we ran with Butler Derrick, the first time we ran with him.

Hartsook: I went the other day and heard Mark Sanford make his press announcement about repealing the state income tax over an eighteen year period.

Parker: I haven't seen that, so I wondered. . . . Was it a good. . . .

Hartsook: It was a great presentation. I think he learned a lot working for McCain. You'd think after his Congressional campaigns that he would be comfortable addressing large groups. I think he matured a lot in that [McCain campaign]. It's a hard story to report in a little short article that people can read and understand. I think some of the press things I've seen have simplified it so much that you lose what he would like you to know that he's talking about. I think you would really appreciate it, because he's taking a real long view about trying to develop business in the state. He argues that if you kill the income tax over a very extended period, you're going to generate long-term significant growth in the wealth within the state. But, it's a difficult story. You can't just take three sentences and explain and make it sound reasonable. In fact, Condon has shown that in two or three sentences you can make it sound really silly.

Parker: What is Condon saying?

Hartsook: Condon's saying that you can't take. . . . What is it, forty-six percent of the state budget right now that is based on the income tax? And so you can say, if we're having this hard a time with one-hundred percent, how are we going to get by with fifty-four percent?

Parker: Mark may have gotten into it at the wrong time.

Hartsook: But isn't that interesting though, that you finally have somebody that's willing to say something unpleasant?

Parker: And he's right.

Hartsook: Fritz will say what he thinks is the unpleasant truth, but there aren't very many others. Hodges certainly does not. I always like to end interviews by asking is there any question I should have asked?

Parker: [Laughter] Well, I've talked so much, I don't know. . . .

Hartsook: We didn't talk about what you did with Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation...

Parker: I chaired it for a year before I went to Washington. That's when Strom called me and wanted to know if I wanted to come up there, this was the Small Business Administration. I did not seek that position. He called me, to see if I wanted to do it. There was going to be a vacancy. That's one thing you could say about the senator, if he heard of a vacancy, he'd look around real quick and find out if some South Carolinian could go in it up there.

Interview ends