

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION
NUMBER
295

Interview with
Senator O. H. Harris
August 11, 1975

Place of Interview: Dallas, Texas
Interview: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello
Terms of Use: Open
Approved: *O. H. Harris*
(Signature)
Date: May 25, 1976

COPYRIGHT © 1975 THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF NORTH TEXAS STATE
UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF DENTON

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Coordinator of the Oral History Collection or the University Archivist, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.

Oral History Collection

Senator Ike Harris

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Dallas, Texas

Date: August 11, 1975

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Senator Ike Harris for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on August 11, 1975, in Dallas, Texas. I am interviewing Senator Harris in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was a member of the Sixty-fourth Legislature.

Okay, to begin, Senator Harris, let me ask you just a few very general questions about this Sixty-fourth Session. This was the second time around for Bill Hobby. How would you compare and/or contrast his performance in the Sixty-fourth Session with what it had been in the Sixty-third Session?

Senator Harris: Oh, not a good deal different. He didn't display any more or less leadership. He was the same type personality. That didn't change. He did exercise his power somewhat more. He got the feel for it in the session before, and he showed strength in the way . . . well, recognizing the powers the lieutenant governor has, he, on his second time around, recognized them, too, and in a few instances he exercised these.

Marcello: Can you give some examples that you show where he did exercise his power?

Harris: Probably the best two examples would be the teachers pay raise and the utilities commission.

Marcello: Can you expand on that?

Harris: The divergent views of the parties involved on the teachers pay raise wallowed back and forth and back and forth for the longest time, and nothing was happening. Finally, Hobby just laid it down and said, "This is the way it's going to be," and that's the way it was.

The same basic thing occurred with the utilities commission. It was in conference committee, and it went back and forth and back and forth, and he said, "This is the way it's going to be." He pulled a sneaky stunt on me.

Marcello: What was that?

Harris: Oh, it's an old gimmick that's used just on rare occasions. It ought not to ever be used but it is. Last session--not this past previous session but the Sixty-third--he used it and put himself in an embarrassing situation. He used it on me again this time, but the press didn't bother to report that. What it is is when you're going to try to employ a gimmick to stop a filibuster, just take a proponent of the issue and put

him under the rule. That means that as soon as he sits down, nobody else can debate even against. He did it to Schwartz in 1973 on whatever the issue. I don't remember. The press criticized him for it.

He did the same thing to me on the last day of the session. Now bear in mind that I never intended to filibuster the utilities commission. I spoke against it and . . . intended to speak against it and did vote against it. But they put Ron Clower under the rule, so when he sat down that cut me off from saying anything at all against the bill. But, you know, the press didn't bother to report that because they were for the bill.

Marcello: I assume this was a relatively veteran Senate this time around. There wasn't much turnover in membership, was there?

Harris: They only had two new ones this session.

Marcello: I would assume in that sense then perhaps that business moved along a little bit more expeditiously than it would otherwise?

Harris: I suppose. Oh, I guess the productivity was not any greater or less than it normally is. The two big issues that we faced . . . two of the big issues we faced, I just outlined to you--utilities commission and . . . they called it public school finance, but

it's really a teachers pay raise. It adopted to some degree the philosophy of the Rodriguez decision, so that created a controversy. But really this session was expeditious in one area, and that was the spending of the surplus--that billion dollar surplus. We got rid of that pretty quick.

Marcello: Okay, let's start out and talk about that because when the legislators did arrive in Austin for this session, there was this surplus in the state treasury. Now just exactly what influence did that surplus have upon the spending activities of the Legislature and the Finance Committee?

Harris: It put them a good deal at ease because they knew they had this cushion to ride on. The first thing, you remember, is that we had several emergency appropriations, the largest one of which was the one for public employees. Now those emergency appropriations carried them from the time that it passed on till the first of September. It was \$100,000,000 for public employees. Now that is \$100,000,000 from around the first of February to August 31.

Marcello: I remember it well.

Harris: Okay, you take that hundred million, and it's built into the appropriations bill for public employees from September 1 of '75 to August 31 of '77--the

biennium. So if the public employees appropriations, whatever that was for the biennium, is increased by another hundred million dollars . . . and any other appropriation of emergency nature was in that same category. Now we did have emergency appropriations of about a million dollars for West Texas State because a building burned. That's a different situation. There were several like the public employees emergency appropriation, but that was the biggest one.

Then there was the teachers pay raise. Let me digress and tell you one of the interesting facts that I mentioned to you awhile ago--the divergent views on how the teachers were going to get their pay raise. Bear in mind that came near the end of the session. But we had all of these emergency appropriations little by little eating up this billion dollar surplus. Dean Aikin, who supported the teachers wholeheartedly, began to realize that that money was, you know . . . each dollar we took away from something else was a dollar from the teachers. He got concerned about that. There was a fight that occurred over where the money was going to go in the public school finance bill. Mauzy, for example, on the other hand, as chairman of the Education Committee, wanted the teachers to

have a pay raise but not as great as Aikin did. He wanted to spread it out into some of the other areas.

Marcello: What particular committees were you on this time?

Harris: Same ones--Jurisprudence, Economic Development, Human Resources.

Marcello: What was perhaps one of the most important issues to come up before the Economic Development Committee? Now is this the one that Creighton was one? Creighton is chairman, isn't he?

Harris: Yes. The committee considered a lot of insurance legislation. I guess the biggest or most important or at least the one that got the most attention was medical malpractice. We passed some legislation to sort of tide us over. It happened during the middle of the session. There wasn't a lot we could do because of the time element. We passed some stopgap measures to hold us till the next session and passed a resolution creating a rather broad-based interim committee putting people representative of all facets of medical malpractice insurance within the professions and everybody concerned on that committee with the idea in mind they would have something of a more long-lasting nature to present to us in '77.

Marcello: I assume that's going to be a pretty important issue before this committee in '77.

- Harris: It will be. We had, I guess, basically a lot of insurance legislation, securities, some banking legislation, but nothing that might really catch the imagination of . . . that got the headlines.
- Marcello: In the interview with Senator Creighton, he remarked to me that the Economic Development Committee is the one that probably handles more special interest legislation than any other committee in the Legislature. Would you agree to that?
- Harris: I agree. Now let me make this clear to you. Whose definition of special interest? Every bill we handle down there is a special interest to somebody (chuckle). But those who throw rocks at the business community in this state call it special interest because it's banking, securities, transportation, insurance. The 8th Senatorial District that I represent is made up largely of those people.
- Marcello: Well, again, these were his words and not my words, but he did make that particular statement.
- Harris: We have to watch it very closely because you're suspect. Well, it goes back to things like Sharpstown. You have to watch that close to make sure that you're not being duped. I handled several pieces of legislation for several reasons. I've been in the Senate awhile; I'm from the 8th District that

reflects those industries and businesses; and there is the fact that I am on the committee. But you can watch those bills and keep in mind the people who want you to handle them. You've been around long enough to know whether you can trust them or not and how to handle that sort of thing. There was nothing in any of the bills I handled that would give anybody trouble.

Marcello: Okay, now you mentioned awhile ago that in your opinion two of the most important issues that came before the Senate during the session was public school financing, or the teacher pay raise or whatever you want to call it, and utilities legislation. Let's start with public school financing first of all. Again, I think probably everybody would agree that that was one of the most important, if not the most important, subject that the Legislature had to deal with. Now, of course, it all goes back to the Rodriguez decision. It wasn't really implementing the Rodriguez decision because it was overturned, was it not?

Harris: Yes, by the Supreme Court.

Marcello: That's correct. But, nevertheless, is it not true that what supposedly was going to be done was that some sort of a system for the equalization of taxation was going to come out of that public school financing?

Harris: Okay, now when you said the Supreme Court overturned the Rodriguez decision, that's right. But it didn't

overturn it because of the philosophy. They overturned it because it was, as I said, a matter for the Legislature to tend to and said that Texas needed to do something about it. We did and we attempted to implement the Rodriguez philosophy or the philosophy on the Rodriguez decision laid down by the three-judge court in San Antonio. Also, in doing it with the amount of money we had, which was about \$650,000,000, they pointed out very clearly to us that that wasn't going to be adequate and they'd be back at it next session. We're going to have a tax bill in 1977.

Marcello: I think that's a general feeling among just about every legislator that I've interviewed. Talk a little bit more about this public school financing. How can Texas get an equal system of taxation or bring about some degree of equalization in taxation?

Harris: (Chuckle) Well, you know, previous interim committees that I've been on, or one big interim committee that Mauzy was chairman of, came up with several plans. I believe there was nineteen different ones. We've discussed them before. You can go all the way from local control completely to all the way to complete state control and anything in between and combination in between.

Probably the best way to accomplish the end result of equal taxation is a statewide tax assessor and collector to say that the property here in Dallas County is worth so much and is to be taxed proportionately to a ranch out in West Texas, and establish it that way rather than leaving it to the local county tax assessor and collector. But I don't think there's anybody around that wants to do that.

Marcello: Why is that?

Harris: I'm not so sure that that's the right way to do it. In this state, as large as it is, if you've got one man that is in charge of equalizing the tax base--ad valorem tax throughout this state--you've got a fellow that makes the governor seem like he might be the Weights and Measures man here in the county. There's no question about it in politics. Government power goes where the money is, and he would be autonomous.

Marcello: Now are you talking in terms of the so-called true market valuation for property?

Harris: Well, now whatever method you use, our constitution says you'll be taxed equally. One is appraising the value according to this fair market thing and then assessing a percentage of that for the purposes of taxing. It varies throughout the state. It's going to vary. You make efforts from time to time to try to minimize that variance. But it's a question really

of whether it's going to be left to the local government or it's going to be done at the state level. To do it at the state level I just don't think is realistic. Take, for example, the extreme opposite of Texas--the State of Rhode Island. They could probably do it and get away with it at the state level. It would probably be more realistic to do it that way. But Texas is just not in that situation.

Marcello: How would a fair market valuation of property affect somebody like Governor Briscoe, who has a tremendous amount of land in South Texas?

Harris: Well, that depends on what the fair market value is down there--for instance, Exxon owns a lot of oil wells over the state, or the Republic bank building over there, or however you're going to appraise and assess taxes on that. Who's going to make that determination? If you've got one guy in Austin doing that, I don't think that's a healthy situation. But you might achieve the end result.

Marcello: Are there any alternatives to this one man in Austin doing this?

Harris: Yes, there's an effort to try to balance that as best you can--use perhaps a state agency or state authority to be an overseer, too, where there is within counties and cities an adjustment that needs to be made. A

certain criteria is established by that board, and if they feel like they're not following it at the state level, then they can make an effort to change it. But then you have to be very circumspect about the powers they have to change things.

Now you can talk theoretically and realistically. We're interjecting the two here. Right versus wrong is another thing. I think that, assuming the opposite, one super-nice, 100 per cent guy that does everything right and nothing wrong would probably be the best thing to do because then you could get the desired end result.

Marcello: Okay, one of the rather interesting things that I observed in the deliberations on public school financing was that after awhile, rather than try to bring about or to implement the Rodriguez decision, most attention seemed to be focused on a teacher pay raise. What exactly happened here? Obviously, we're getting into TSTA, which had its version of a public school financing bill. I gather that TSTA put quite a bit of pressure on the Legislature during that session.

Harris: That's right. Their public school finance bill had a big raise for teachers. That's about really all it was. But the other philosophies were without regard for the teachers and were to equalize the money. Then

the compromise was arrived at somewhere in between. From those two issues and with what amount of money they had, I think they probably did a fair job of balancing it out and arriving at something that did a little for both. The school districts need to have some additional money, not just to pay school teachers but for their administration . . .

Marcello: Maintenance and operation . . .

Harris: . . . maintenance and operation. Let me just make this observation. Again, if you've got somebody in Austin doing it or somebody here in the county or just how, the control of the curriculum, the control of the operation of the independent school district, is going to be dictated by wherever they collect the taxes. I'm a strong believer in the independent school district system. I think if you had a state operation, you'd have a breakdown of that because they're going to be determining what's best for the schools.

For example, the bill that passed on public school finance I voted against because it took money away from the most of the districts in the 8th Senatorial District. Now they're wealthier but a lot of that wealth is due to the fact that they tax the people in the independent school district. They're going to now have to . . . they've been cut back on their state

amount, so they're going to have to up the taxes within the district in order to balance it out. This is, and not to be overstating at all, taking from the rich and give to the poor. Now there is a strong element of people in this state who feel like that ought to happen-- that we need to upgrade the poorer school districts in the state. Okay, I don't disagree with that. But not at the expense of those who have a different and better school district--wealthier or better quality or both.

The philosophy behind the Rodriguez decision is that money is directly proportional to quality of education. I just don't subscribe to that. I don't think that's right. I think there are other factors, other elements to be considered, as to whether or not you're going to have a good school district.

Marcello: Such as?

Harris: Well, size. The Dallas Independent School District is just too damn big. Nolen Estes is a PR man. He puts out brushfires. He's a politician. He's not the superintendent of the schools. Whereas Highland Park Independent School District where my kids go . . . there's four grade schools, one junior high, and one high school. Weston Powers is the superintendent, and he is the superintendent of schools--curriculum for education, looking over principals and vice-principals

and teachers as to small classes, and community involvement as well. The little school where my kids go--their grade school--didn't take any federal money. They don't have any federal restrictions placed on them. The families of the kids work there periodically--half a day or a day a week in the cafeteria, the library. Things of this sort go to make quality education. Teachers in Highland Park are no better than they are in Dallas and vice versa. They're just working in a better atmosphere. They don't have a manual a foot thick of do's and don'ts or rules and regulations.

Marcello: Now one of the approaches taken by Governor Briscoe in this area of public school financing was the weighted pupil approach.

Harris: I could not support weighted pupil for one big reason. Weighted pupil is designed in such a way that when the child enrolls on the first day of school, he is on their roles for the entire school year, and that school gets money for him whether he shows up or not. So in the bigger and more crowded schools, it in effect is a deterrent to education because they don't mind if he doesn't show up because they're still getting the money for him. If you're trying to achieve any kind of education that gets the kid a better education than he's now getting, that's not the way to do it.

Marcello: And, of course, one of the things I think that you had to keep in mind in whatever was done with regard to public school financing was the fact that Governor Briscoe had said there would be no new taxes. You had so much money to spend for education. That was about it.

Harris: That's right. He limited us to that. There could have been more money if we would have gotten to that issue earlier and not gotten to some of these others. We got down to the wire. We started skimping on things. What we should or should not have skimmed on is not an issue. We started holding back on anything, getting very circumspect, of any bill that came out that had a fiscal note attached to it of any significance, you know, \$100,000 or more. "Wait a minute. Let's be careful about that. We've got to save this money for public school finance."

Marcello: Well, I guess ultimately what happened was that the final bill came out only after Comptroller Bullock said that there would be a little bit more money than what he had originally estimated.

Harris: Yes, that was an interesting turn of events that occurred. When the conference committee on appropriations and the governor's committee on public school finance were trying to resolve at how much money

would be available, Bullock went over to them and in effect said and did get, "For every additional \$100,000,000, I get \$20,000,000." Or was it \$10,000,000? He gave them two hundred million and he got twenty million, I believe. He got 10 per cent. So he held up the conference committee. He certified the money, and he doubled his budget.

Marcello: In other words, he was arguing that he needed more manpower and so forth and so on to enforce such things as the sales tax and what have you?

Harris: And he hired about four or five new PR people. But you see what I mean. He certified the money then, and that got them up to whatever they felt like would be appropriate for this session. Again, though, when they passed it, they said, "We're going to be back next session for more money."

Marcello: Did Bullock play a perhaps greater role in this Sixty-fourth Legislature than his predecessor had played in those legislatures of which you were a member?

Harris: Oh, yes. He played a greater role generally, but specifically in the Legislature. Bullock is not dumb by any stretch. The first thing he did was say that the old constitutional requirement is that you get one trip to the session from your home and one trip back, which is the opening day and the end of it. He said,

"That's not true. You can go home anytime you want to, and the state will pay for it." So he started in paying, you know, your roundtrip fare, whether it be by car or air or what, within the same rules whenever you went home. So that got the attention of the Legislature right off. With a few things like that, he got himself in a sympathetic view so far as the Legislature was concerned.

Marcello: Bullock, of course, has been rumored as having his eyes on the governor's seat.

Harris: That's right. I happen to subscribe to that theory.

Marcello: (Chuckle) And do you think that a great deal of his activities during the session was geared with that end in mind?

Harris: I think his whole operation during the session was geared with the idea of taking over the governor's race in 1978.

Marcello: Okay, now another one of the principal areas with which the Legislature concerned itself during this session was public utilities regulation or the establishment of a public utilities commission. First of all, in your opinion, how much of a need did Texas have for a regulatory commission, whether it be for telephones or public utilities in general?

Harris: I don't think we needed one. The only place where my argument is weak is in the regulation of intrastate

long distance telephone rates. Well, let me go back and state it the other way . . . intrastate in rural areas that do not have someone to arbitrate the rate structure with telephone companies. Now there's an effort . . . I've mentioned this to you before in previous interviews.

The Texas Municipal League after the last session of the Legislature offered to, and was putting in a program, to help out the rural areas and the smaller cities that did not have the expertise to debate the issue with the phone company as to the rate structure. That really didn't have an opportunity to get off the ground. It'd take some time to implement that sort of program.

To that extent my argument's weak, but the other side of it is that the cities are better equipped-- metropolitan areas and the cities that have somebody that has picked up a fair amount of knowledge . . . this is not just big towns. It includes some small ones. They can debate those great issues with whichever utilities it may be, in this instance the telephone company. I didn't think that the telephone company needed to be regulated. If they're going to be, then you ought to put the other utilities in there. And the gas utilities in this bill was left with the Railroad Commission. Gas is a utility.

So it was a weak effort. It was a political issue in my judgement. Over here were the proponents who felt that the people wanted the lower rates. I'm sure they do. I do, too. But they took the position that--the proponents--that a utilities commission would do that. You get the utilities commission, so therefore, you get lower rates. Well, that was just not so.

If anything, I think you'd get higher rates because you've got another state agency that's going to expand itself. It's going to take up some tax dollars in going out and regulating. Where's it going to come from? It's going to come . . . the tax base is part of the operations of doing business. I don't care if you're a utility or North Texas or any state agency as well as any business. When the cost of their commodity goes up, they pass it on to the consumer. So a utilities commission in my judgement is a political issue and will not give us lower rates.

Marcello: I'm sure that there was a great deal of demagoguing going on over the public utilities bill.

Harris: It was demagogued as well as anything we had this whole session.

Marcello: Of course, the leading proponent of regulation in this area was Senator Clower. Do you care to discuss his motivations?

Harris: Oh, I'm sure he's well-meaning, and when he was debating an issue, I argued with him. I asked him several questions about just what I outlined to you. "Why do you maintain that a utilities commission will give us lower rates? Can you stand there and tell me they will?" He said, "Well, I can stand here and tell you I think they will." I said, "Ron, you know that there's going to be a lot of pressure on the brand new commission that takes office on the first of September. It has one year to get organized. Then they'll start regulating rates in September of '76." A lot of people will come down here and say, "Okay, we've got a commission. You've got to lower our rates." What about inflation and all the factors that take place between now and then?

All you've got to do is look at any reliable publication to see that utilities are in trouble. Not just phone companies, but more specifically the power companies. They've got financial difficulty. They're going to think they need to lower the rates, but yet to lower them may be to cut off the quality of service or whatever. The power companies are forced now, or are in position to be forced, because of the energy crisis to convert their boilers--their gas-burning boilers--to coal or some other source of energy, and

I need not tell you what construction costs are and the costs of converting. It's going to be really tough on them. Yet, people want lower rates. They don't balance.

Marcello: Another area that, surprisingly, the Legislature spent a very small amount of time on was constitutional revision. They spent all their time down there in Austin in a convention and didn't come up with a document, yet the document came out of the Legislature very, very quickly during this past session. Why? What happened?

Harris: Well, that is an area which I don't know how it happened in the House except that Ray Hutchison, chairman of that committee and Billy Clayton, the speaker, handled it in some way or another to get it right on out. Over in the Senate, that's where the lieutenant governor exercised his power to push that right on out. After the House passed it and sent it to us, we moved it right on out so it could be put on the ballot. That's basically what happened, and I guess the guys felt like they had to do something. The constitution that you'll see on the ballot on November 4th or 5th is really from the conservative vantage point not as good as the one that almost passed in the

Constitutional Convention. I'm opposed to it and am actively going to campaign against it in November.

Marcello: Did you personally receive very much flak from your constituency over the fact that the Constitutional Convention did not come up with a document?

Harris: No, I got next to none at all. I didn't have much response one way or the other. I would say that my opposition to it is criticized and praised about equal.

Marcello: From what you could gather from your own personal observations, were other legislators receiving any flak as a result?

Harris: No, I didn't get any indication at all that it was any big deal one way or the other. Most of the people that I asked . . . I made several speeches after the Constitutional Convention. Most of the people I visited with said, "You were there. We don't know what it was. We're leaving it to your judgement." That's the attitude and response that I got. I never did get any flak to speak of during the session when we passed what we passed. I bet you I don't have total from the Constitutional Convention and this last session on the revision of the constitution . . . I bet you I didn't have twenty-five or thirty or maybe fifty letters maximum either praising or criticizing my stand.

Marcello: I thought it was also kind of interesting at the beginning of the session, and when the whole subject of constitutional revision came up, that Hobby was at first interested in a new convention calling for citizen-delegates. Apparently, he changed his mind rather quickly on that particular issue.

Harris: This is the pitch that they sold the idea on--I should have mentioned this awhile ago--and what caused it to come out with so much ease. Ray Hutchison tried to sell me on the idea. He'd sell others, and Hobby did, too, that "you'd better do it this way or you'll get a citizen's committee!" So I don't think the people of the state would be too happy about knowing that because a lot of people in this state wanted a citizen's convention even before the Constitutional Convention in '74. After we didn't do what we did, I don't think they wanted the Legislature writing it at all however they wrote it. And so I think they'd better guard their position because that's the pitch they used.

Marcello: Okay, now I started off this interview by asking you to compare and contrast the activities of Lieutenant Governor Hobby in those two sessions. Now let's do the same thing with Governor Briscoe. Could you see any change one way or the other so far as the manner

in which he conducted himself during this Sixty-fourth Session?

Harris: Yes, he got a little more active. He got into it and played a role a little bit more than he did in 1973, particularly near the tail-end on the question of public school finance. He was active in that. They tried to get him active in the constitution. He's indicating he may not support it at all, which I'm strongly for. Just in the general day-to-day activities and things that affected the governor's office or he had an attitude about, he was there and more readily accessible. But not to a great degree--don't misunderstand me--but more than he was in 1973. He had a better feel for things.

Marcello: Let's talk about some of your personal legislation. Would you care to discuss any of this that you were successful or unsuccessful in getting passed during this session and that you think ought to be a part of the record?

Harris: Well, I had a pretty good session. I introduced thirty-five bills. Two or three of them were not ever calculated to pass in the first place. I had one bill that affected the metropolitan areas in taxing in relation to the Chamber of Commerce and using that money for attracting conventions. I introduced two separate bills and then

subsequently abandoned them and introduced one combined bill of the two--a compromise. So I really had about thirty bills that I was trying to pass.

I passed twenty of them out of the Senate, so I felt like I had a pretty good track record. Not all of them passed the House, but--oh, I've got a report around here--something like eight or ten of them ultimately became law. I was generally pleased with my own personal program. One of the bills that I've always supported, you know, and carried in the past is horse racing--parimutuel betting. I got it out of committee in the Senate this time. That's the first time that's ever happened. We're making headway on that.

Marcello: Another question concerning appropriations comes up. For example, you mentioned awhile ago that come 1977 there is no way that the state can avoid a tax increase. Now the financial plight and the financial woes of New York City have been in the news media recently to a great extent. Is something of this nature, do you feel, going to have a sobering effect upon state government as well as municipal government in the future?

Harris: Yes, but that's because we've been riding the boon of this decade, which is the revenue sharing program. Also, inflation helps political entities that have a

sales tax because costs go up and there's more taxes that go along with it. So they have an increase in revenue coming into that particular taxing authority. So we had that surplus, and those two factors plus reserve from oil and gas were responsible for it. But those are going to be gone. For example, the first quarter of this year, a friend of mine with Sears and Roebuck told me that their sales were off 20 per cent. So what? But that does affect the sales tax income to the state. What if Montgomery Ward, etc., are in this same category?

Marcello: Especially since Sears is probably the biggest contributor to the state in terms of the sales tax.

Harris: If I'm not mistaken, I think they are the single largest. But in any event, you can see what I'm talking about. If the sales tax is notably off and you add to it our other woes and spending of the surplus, they cannot help but have some variety of tax increase. It's a question of how much.

So all I'm saying to you is that we're going to find that the management of money in government is going to have to be viewed with the idea in mind of what can happen to you if you continue to spend. You can't mint the money in Texas or the City of Dallas or New York City, and you can't keep turning to the federal government to bail you out. Even though they print the money

and got this huge deficit, you can't keep spending. You're just going to have to cut back on your expenditures at the state level or the national level or whatever.