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Interviews with

Weldon Hart

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Dr. E. Dale Odom

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Oral History Collection

Mr. Weldon Hart

Interviewer: Dr. Thomas B. Brewer August 8, 1966

Dr. Brewer: Mr. Hart, how did your association with Governor Shivers begin and in what capacity have you been with him?

Mr. Hart: I have known Allan Shivers since about 1930 or '31, at the University of Texas where we were both students. Oddly enough, or interestingly enough, at that time we were both interested in politics. He was President of the Student Association, and I was active purely as a ... as a campus political follower, you might say, but we were on opposite sides of some rather bitter campus campaigns. This ... this relationship was rather vague and not very intimate. We just knew one another casually. In 19 ... in about 1945, I discontinued my career -- if you want to call it that -- as a sports writer and started covering Capitol news, particularly sessions of the Legislature.

Brewer: Did you work for an Austin newspaper?

Hart: I worked for Austin American Stateman's and became chief of the Capitol bureau. And that was about the time that Allan Shivers -- Senator Allan Shivers -- was preparing to run for Lieutenant Governor, did run, and was elected. Therefore, as the Capitol correspondent, I became rather well acquainted with him as he was the presiding officer of the Senate. In fact, we became well

acquainted, and in 1949, July 11, 1949, Governor Jester died in office and Lieutenant Governor Shivers succeeded him. Meanwhile, about eight months prior to that, I had left the Austin American Statesman and gone to work as Governor Jester's press secretary. You might say Governor Shivers inherited me, along with the office. We, with very little fanfare or even conversation, I continued to work in the Governor's office, mainly on this basis that he said I could stay if I wanted to, and he wanted me to. And I said I wanted to, and that's been about the extent of our agreement down through ever since that time for a period of about seventeen years. The ... my duties with Governor Shivers were similar to those that I had had with Governor Jester -- consisted primarily of relationships with the press, preparation of news releases, and other matters coming out of the ... reports and so on coming out of the Governor's office, occasional speeches and also some other duties such as handling appointments to office, keeping the appointment files, and keeping check on the vacancies in public office, the applicants, the possibilities, and so on. This was a job which I did for Governor Shivers for several years. To go on ahead with that story, in 1952, I resigned from the Governor's office and went into the public relations business with John Van Cronkhite. This was more or less a matter of convenience in that we had some tough campaigns coming up, and it would not have been proper or feasible for these to be conducted

out of the Governor's office; so it was agreed that we would leave...Mr. Van Cronkhite was, I believe, at that time Executive Secretary of the Good Neighbor Commission. He'd been associated also with Governor Shivers for some time. We did not agree with any...We didn't take a leave of absence, is what I'm trying to say. We left and set up in business. It turned out at the end of a rather eventful year--1952--I did go back to the Governor's office for a six months' period, during the next session of the legislature, at the end of which time he appointed me as Chairman of the Texas Employment Commission. I served in that office for three years, or just about three years, and that being an appointive office and one in which at the end of six years you more or less expect not to be reappointed, I thought I'd better look around for something more permanent if the occasion arose. And such an opportunity did arise, and I went to Governor Shivers in courtesy and to seek his advice and told him that I might want to resign as Chairman of the Employment Commission to take another job. He said he thought that was all right if that's what I wanted to do, but said if he had his preference, he'd prefer that I...if I were going to resign, I'd come back to work for him. So I said, "All right," so we resumed our relationship, and on through till the end of his term--or his third term. Since that time, our relationship has been more or less occasional. We have done several

things together. He has employed me on several occasions to help on projects that he was interested in. On even more occasions, he has made it possible for me to get employment -- jobs in public relations -- that I didn't even know about until he told me about them, and so our relationship continues close although more unofficial than ever. It's been a very pleasant one, and I can truthfully say that over a period of seventeen years, I guess it is, that I have been very close to him, we've had the very minimum of unpleasantness; only a couple of times did I feel that we were having any trouble whatever, which has been very pleasant as far as I'm concerned.

The ... to drop back now a little bit, and talk about one phase of our relationship that I didn't mention particularly, and one that I would like to enlarge upon a little bit. It relates to political campaigns. If there has been one thing that I did for him which was more important, more conclusive, more overriding than all the other considerations, I think it would be my work for him in politics. Now I think it ... if I have anything to contribute to this matter that you're interested in, Dr. Brewer, the archives of the spoken word, I ... it might be in this field of political campaigning because that's where my experience has been, at least, the kind of experiences that are different from anybody else's experiences. I gained this quite by accident; because of my work as Capitol correspondent, I attracted some

attention as a writer and also made a lot of friends around ... in and out of politics, around the Capitol. Therefore, in 1946, I was unexpectedly offered the opportunity to manage a campaign of Pat Neff, Jr., for Attorney General. I say this in all due respect to both Pat and myself -- neither one of us knew very much about it, and so to that extent, we made a harmonious team, and we ran a fairly good race. Price Daniel, who was later to become United States Senator and Governor, defeated Pat by about 12,000 votes, which in retrospect wasn't so bad, although at the time it seemed awfully bad, being my first campaign. I had worked piecemeal for several .. in several races, and did so thereafter. Right after 1947, I recall that I helped in the campaign of Jim Hart for Supreme Court. In 1950 -- by that time I was with Governor Shivers -- and I was associated with his campaign for his first elective term as Governor. Then, as I mentioned, in '52, we had three different campaigns. We had first the party convention campaign, we called it the May campaign. We had the Governor's campaign for re-election, which occurred in July, and then in the fall, as he has told you in a series of interviews, he took the lead in supporting General Eisenhower for President over the Democratic nominee, Mr. Adlai Stevenson, and I was associated in that campaign as co-director on a working basis. And to follow up this line of thought, I did not participate to any extent in '54 because I was working for the Texas Employment Commission. But in '56, there was the second

Eisenhower -- Democrats for Eisenhower campaign -- again in '60 for Nixon -- Democrats for Nixon -- and a number of other campaigns that were what you might think of as, oh, secondary statewide races. Most of my campaign experience has been on a statewide level rather than local, although I have participated in local races. But in thinking about campaigning, as I have had to think a lot, I would like to talk if I may about what I consider to be the elements of a political campaign and how you plan to utilize or resolve those elements and the mechanics and techniques of campaigning. Let me say this: I consider myself strictly a technician in this field as compared with a candidate or a potential candidate or even a citizen who voluntarily takes the lead because of his friendship with a candidate or because he wants that man elected or somebody else beaten. I, frankly, have done most of my work for pay. I am a hired man in this field. At the same time, I'd like to point out in the beginning that I don't think a personal element is unimportant in these things. I think it is, to say the least, very helpful and almost necessary for the person who -- even though he is working at a job for pay, it is necessary for him to have an interest in the campaign and in the candidate. Otherwise, it would be an awfully dull, drab sort of business to be in, and I doubt if you would do a very good job if this was simply a matter of working for money. I believe it was Mr. Churchill who said one time, "Don't ever do anything for

money alone." And I think that this political campaigning -- management of political campaigns -- might fall into that pattern.

Brewer: Could it be just as much the personal contact rather than ... than the philosophical? I was thinking particularly of what you said a minute ago about managing Jim Hart's campaign as opposed to Governor Shivers' -- the two men ideologically.

Hart: Well, this is something that possibly would bother you if you thought enough about it. I guess it is a matter of personal relationships as much as anything else, although there's probably not as much difference there in the political philosophy as might be thought from certain outward manifestations; I mean by that that the public picture of a political figure is sometimes quite different -- it has a tendency to be more extreme than the man actually is in his political views. I think you could find no better example than Goldwater -- Senator Goldwater. In '64, he ... he was sort of a monster, when actually he's a pretty nice fellow, I understand, and his views are such that ... well, they were shared to a great extent by a great many Americans. But the campaign developed in such a way that he kept getting pushed farther and farther into a position that wasn't perhaps his true -- certainly not all of his philosophy was expressed in ... in the positions he took in this campaign. I notice this, if I may digress a minute; take Governor Shivers, for example, who is a ... I'd say will go down in the records as a most conservative candidate and officeholder. I don't think this is necessarily true; I

think he was certainly conservative in nature and believed and spoke for and stood for many things that the so-called conservative side does stand for. As far as being, though, a conservative of the type that ... who is inflexible, I don't think he was at all. I think also that perhaps he was forced to the right more and more by forces which were operating from the left as well as the ones which were pulling from the right. It's always ... it's next to impossible for a politician to remain moderate, or to remain in the middle of the road. People don't want him there. The ones who are moderates, the ones who think he is doing pretty good by taking the position he is, are by their very nature, not even trying to do much about it. They just think, "Well, this ole boy's doing pretty well. I like him." But they don't <u>say</u> so. They might or might not think of voting for him at the right time. The people who really get after it are the ones who feel strongly, and the ones who feel strongly are inclined to have more or less of an extreme point of view, and they'll push you or pull you in ... one will push you and the other will pull you, and you'll soon be out of the middle -- you'll be one way or the other. I think this is something that has caused me to ... not to forget political ideology; I think it's highly important, but to place it secondary to the individual who is holding or running for office. I find myself being very friendly with a number of people who are usually on the other side politically. I find this can be done. You have to ... well,

you can't talk too much politics, but you can talk some in a reasonable sort of way. In fact, you can learn a lot by talking to people who don't think exactly as you do; more than you can by talking to people who believe exactly as you do. To summarize what I've tried to say, I have not felt uncomfortable in any of the ... in supporting any of the people I have worked for, even though they weren't all of a pattern.

The ... I have, from time to time, listed what I would call the elements of a campaign -- political campaign, and I would just like to name those. One is the candidate. That's pretty obvious -- that you have to have a candidate before you have a campaign. It's also pretty obvious that the candidate has to have certain attributes, certain abilities, a certain attractiveness, certain characteristics, and character, to make a good candidate. And there are good and bad candidates -- this doesn't necessarily have anything to do with their morals or their character. This has to do with whether they can project themselves into the minds of ... of the electorate.

A second point that I usually mention is the plan of a campaign. Careful planning is necessary for many reasons, and I would like to talk about that a little bit further in a minute.

A third thing is the issues of the campaign, what we sometimes call the platform. These can be issues which fall out of the heavens, you might say, or are just there, and you can either avoid them or add to them. Particularly the tidelands issue in

the '52 campaign was one of those things that was there for General Eisenhower and Mr. Stevenson to fuss over and for Governor Shivers and Senator Daniel to talk about. Sometimes ... issues have more or less had to be made up. Two people are quite a bit alike, and maybe their political ideology and maybe their records; and so they have to think hard for something to fight about. Usually, the ... you have a general ... you have one or more general areas of possible disagreement, then you add to those something you think would be attractive or that fits in with the candidate's philosophy.

Now, a third ... a fourth thing -- organization. This is a tremendously important item, and under that word I include both the headquarters, or leadership of the campaign, and also the field organization.

A fifth thing -- I usually put it under the head of promotion -- it means all the things you do to attract attention to your candidate through newspapers, radio and T. V., other kinds of advertising media, so-called campaign literature (I don't know where that word literature ever came from because it's far from that), but this covers all the little folders and bumper stickers and hand cards, placards, and so on which may be passed out or mailed out.

Naturally, when you start talking about those things, you come face to face with another one I have here as the sixth element, but it should be higher than that if you ranked them by

importance. That's money. It costs a tremendous amount of money to run for office. I'm thinking of state-wide office now, but it's costly enough, relatively speaking, for local campaigns. Perhaps the advent of T. V. is partly responsible, but all costs are up, and there are more people to be reached. I doubt if it's actually costing any more to reach the individual voter than it used to, but there're so many more of them.

And to make some order out of all this, you need management, and that's ... that's where I came in originally, to talk about the ... some of the elements, some of the phases of campaign management, dealing with these elements of the campaign. I'd say that the candidate ... excuse me, the manager of a campaign will never be discovered in an ideal state. You'll never find an individual who can do all the different things that a campaign manager should, ideally, be able to do. So the first thing he ... you expect him to do is to realize what he can do and what he can't do and secure personnel to fill in where he is weak. If it's a large campaign with a large organization, he may not actually do very much in the way of action, but more supervision, coordination. However, I've never been that fortunate. I've been in some pretty big ones, but I always wound up doing a lot of the work. Maybe this is just poor management on my part. I think a manager of a state-wide campaign ideally should be a man with experience in campaigns, not necessarily as manager, but in

some capacity or in several different capacities. Perhaps he's been a public relations man, perhaps he's been an advertising specialist, perhaps he's been a money-raiser, perhaps an organization man, or several of these things at different times. At least, he must know what each function is supposed to be for and what type of person he needs to fulfill this function and whether or not that person is doing the job. Now, this ... a certain amount of administrative ability, experience is indicated.

There's something now I'm going to say that is a little bit difficult to put your finger on, but it's something that seems to me is almost indispensable, both in a good candidate and a good manager, and that is a certain intuition and feel, as we call it, for politics. You ... you don't always know. Well, nobody ever knows any answer to the politics until after the election's over, and then you don't even know <u>why</u> you won or lost, perhaps. But, all along the line as you reach these points of decision, minor or major, the successful candidate's successful manager gets a feeling that one thing is right and the other thing is wrong. This comes from his experience ... out of his experience in dealing with similar things, in dealing with human nature over a period of years. And as I say, I can't define this element, but it exists, very definitely, and you've seen very intelligent, experienced business people who were absolutely worthless in a political campaign because they didn't have this

feel for it. Maybe it's a feeling for people; it seems to me that perhaps this comes nearer it than anything else -- a good judge of the probable mass reactions on the basis of past observation.

Now, I have already mentioned that I think it is well to have ... for the manager to have rapport with the candidate, not necessarily be chums, perhaps it's better not so, but a mutual respect. The manager needs to have a candidate that he can respect. Each of them has a certain amount of choice there in this regard. The manager is the number one aide to the candidate in many -- I'm going now beyond his duties as administrator, coordinator, of the physical part of the campaign -- in that he should help the candidate plan the campaign -- that's one of the early things -- first, generally; and then next, in some broad detail; and finally, after he understands what the candidate wants to do, and vice versa, he takes over most of the details from the candidate as far as the campaign in general is concerned. I say, with more or less truthfulness, that a candidate is really not much good the last couple of weeks of the campaign. He, by that time, has been ... is so tired from traveling, speaking, being under strain, worried perhaps, certainly under pressure -- maybe 15 to 18 hours a day this old boy is trying to remember names, (chuckle) and he gets to the point where he's just fagged out; he's just ... his judgment is no longer sound, and it's ... this is just true, and a smart

candidate is one who can recognize this in himself. This simply means that before he reaches that stage, he must have put into action a definite program that can be followed through during these last week -- ten days -- two weeks of the campaign, without his participation, you might say, except to go through the ... the routine that he must ... only he can go through -- only he can make a speech as a candidate, only he can make appearances which the public more or less demands, only he can go on T.V. in person (as a candidate). And by the time you get through adding up the things that no one else can do <u>except</u> the candidate, he's got about twenty hours a day of work already, so it's no time to bother him with details. And that is why it is very important for the manager <u>gradually</u> to take <u>over</u> the <u>full</u> responsibility of the campaign.

Now, the issues, once they've been decided on, must be crystalized in various ways -- in the speeches of the candidate, in the speeches that other people make, press releases, folders, reports, whatever ... advertising messages; and, here again, the manager, who by this time is fairly well steeped in the ideology of the candidate and is more or less his alter-ego, can go a long way toward handling all these things without bothering the candidate, you might say. I'm not intimating that the candidate is kept in the dark about things; he sees, though, a finished -- or nearly finished -- product rather than all the problems we went through with, trying to get it that far.

I think the manager ... another important thing the manager does is to prepare the itinerary for the candidate -- where is he going, and when is he going there. This is rather a complicated thing when you ... when you try to get around over a state as large as Texas, and I think perhaps the fact that ... that ... the population is more or less congregating in a few areas has simplified the itinerary business to some extent. However, you'll find this: that even a candidate for Governor going to a city as large as Houston or Dallas actually doesn't make much of a splash. This is just one of <u>many</u> important things that'll happen that day in that large city. Then you might go to a medium-sized city -- let's say even one as large as Wichita Falls or Big Spring or Amarillo or Lamesa -- anywhere from twenty-five to a hundred, a hundred and fifty thousand people, it's more of an occasion there, and so he gets a bigger play in the papers and probably gets on the T.V. However, you've got to remember (chuckle) he's only speaking to maybe a hundred thousand people where he might be potentially speaking to a million in the larger place, so <u>both</u> types of appearances are necessary. The schedule for a radio-T.V. tape must be made up carefully, and nowadays most of that is taped -- this simplifies it a great deal as compared with earlier days when it was necessary for this man to be at a certain place in person at a definite time and go on the air live. That's rarely done anymore. Once he got past the ... once he was accepted by the public, it was all right to have a "canned" -- so-called

"canned" speech, and then everyone in the campaign started using that message.

Brewer: This greatly decreases the cost, too, doesn't it?

Hart: It decreases the cost to ... well, you do have a certain production cost there you don't have the other way. However, ... Dr. Brewer, in the old days, if you'll come back to 1950, '52, '54 -- along in there -- in order to have any kind of a network, you had to physically link up these stations by leased wires, and there was ... it ran into a great deal of expense that way. So, it all adds up -- it's expensive any way you take it. The time -- a portion of it -- is not, by any means, the whole expense.

The headquarters is the responsibility -- the state headquarters -- is the responsibility of the campaign manager, which means he is responsible for the personnel, and that doesn't mean only clerks and typists and mail boys, but you have -- depending on the size of the campaign, the scope of the campaign -- you have some pretty important administrative assistants there. You might have, typically, a public relations head-man -- let's call him a ... I'll say a director -- then you might have a director of organization, ... and a director of organizations, with an "s", which is an entirely different thing. "Organization" simply means organizing the friends of the candidate throughout the state, either geographically or by interest groups, or both. "Organizations" means working <u>with</u> the hundred and fifty or two hundred

different types of organizations we have in this state and trying to secure special effort from some of these associations, or organizations, for the candidate. Now, I could go on at great length on how that ... how friendly associations can help a candidate, but mainly, in its simplest form, it's making the mailing list available to a candidate. A little more complicated and a little more effective way is to have the president of the association or some former president or a group -- a committee -- sign a letter to the members of the association on behalf of the candidate. Then there ... you can go on from there to several other things such as actually helping the candidate financially and in other respects.

Anyway, you have a field staff, as well as a headquarters staff, but all of this is under the general supervision of the manager. The field staff might be one man, or it might be half a dozen, depending on the money and on the approach you're using. He might be an advance man for the candidate on his itinerary; he might be a sort of mobile, poll-taking character, moving around getting information, intelligence, throughout the state; or he might be a man going out to hold meetings of friends in various areas to form campaign committees, which is ... is a type of work called organization work.

Now, the key thing in organization in the field is finding leaders ... getting leadership on a local level, and you find this ... usually, you know who you're looking for when you go

because you have the name from the candidate, the manager, or some other friend, but there is such a thing as going into an area and not knowing who you're looking for, in which case it's going to get a little complicated, and you have to follow the procedure of talking to people you do know and gradually coming to a consensus that Joe Blow would be a good man to handle this campaign if he'll take it. Then you have to get a committee together to go call on Joe, to see if he'll take it. This is not ideal; you should have better friends, more eager friends than that, but sometimes you don't.

In general the manager just takes over the campaign a little bit more and more as you go along. And I'd like to state that I believe timing is probably the most important single element in the campaign. That's a broad statement. You can't do without a lot of these things. You can't do without ... oh, the analysis ... the analysis of the situation. You can't do without the information as to how you're getting along, which you can get from your campaign people or through the professional polls. I prefer the ... I think the polls, if correctly used, are very valuable, too. It's not so much that you find out that the poll-taker thinks if the election were today your candidate would win or lose by ten per cent; it's the answers to the questions the poll-taker asks that become significant. It's the why -- why are the people for or against your candidate -- this is what you want to know. What's he doing right, and what's he doing wrong?

Now, ... but once you have these things and the money to run the campaign, I believe that you could have all these things and waste them by improper timing. By timing, I simply mean when are you going to do these various things that you've prepared to do? And one way to come to a decision on this is to work backward; to start on election day and imagine what needs to be done the last week -- or the last two days of the campaign, and then the last week, and then the last ten days, and on back, and until you've worked back to where you are today, and then you'd have a fairly good picture of at least a series of phases of the campaign with some pretty specific dates. And you'll be amazed when you start doing this how few days there really are between now and the campaign, whenever it is. Time has a ... is a matter of an elusive sort of a thing and is something that can't be borrowed or replaced in a campaign. Once it's wasted, once you've let a week go by, it's like having a hotel room that you don't rent tonight. Hotel managers say ... that hotel rooms are the most perishable piece of goods in the world because there just isn't <u>any</u> way of renting a hotel room last night, today. So, there's no way of catching up on a political campaign once you've let time go by, but you do have a little better chance than that.

The general phases of the campaign are important, as I say, but I'd say the last three weeks are tremendously important. It takes ... when you reach that stage, you go almost day by day,

hour by hour. Now, up to that point, you've got a period of three weeks in which you're concentrating on organization work, and maybe two weeks when he's going to go to West Texas and some sparsely settled portions of the state, and so on. But, once you get to the last ten days, two weeks, you must have everything very carefully planned.

Well, anyway, these are some of the things that I think are important in the ... in political campaigns. Now, I'd like to say one more thing here. It's just the ... some of the simplest sounding things can become real complicated when you get to multiplying it by 254, which is the number of counties you've got in the state. For example; what seems to be a very simple thing -- a bumper sticker, a strip of paper you paste on the bumper of an automobile, and we see them every election in great profusion. Now, if you were going to handle the bumper sticker business for a candidate, in the first place, what kind of a sticker would you select? How big would it be, how big would the printing be, what color would it be, what would it say, then, how many are you going to order? Are you going to order a thousand, a hundred thousand, or a million? (chuckle) Well, this just becomes ... you'll be judging to some extent by the money. But suppose you ... suppose money is not a particular problem at the moment. I think you'd have ... I'd like to take the largest county, I'd say Harris County, and estimate how many you could really distribute fruit-

fully in Harris County, then for the rest of the state, it's a scaling down of that number. A county half as big as Harris would take half as many stickers, and you add it all up and you get yourself a ... a number to print, but you still have the problem of distributing them, and then when are you going to tell people to put them on their car? Are you going to just pass them out and let them get them on as quickly as they can, or are you going to urge them to put them on, or are you going to do as some candidates advocate -- hold them till say a week before the election, and then blossom out all over the state overnight with "Hart for Governor," or something. You can see what an impact this would be, but all this time all these cars have been running around with your opponent's sticker on -- very few people can stand this. They want to get out their stickers, too.

Brewer: This was a problem in the last Presidential campaign, I think, in Texas, at least. They ran short on bumper stickers and this sort of thing. Is this ... is this the type of problem, though, that a campaign manager would delight in? I mean, if he ran short, would this indicate that support was running high?

Hart: (chuckle) He would rather run short and to have people pounding on the door, than to have several hundred thousand of them he couldn't get rid of (chuckle), I'd say. Let's take a break ....

Of all the political campaign years in which I have participated or which I have observed, I think in some respects the

year 1952 was the most interesting. Some things were taking place that hadn't taken place before. This wasn't just the same old record being played over. And as you well know, this was the year in which Texas went Republican in the general election for the second time in history, and I'd say without some of the emotional, or prejudicial, type of practice that's supposed to have entered into the Hoover victory in 1928. However, maybe it was just that I liked our prejudices better in '52 than I did some of the old ones.

At the start of the year 1952, the first thing to be decided was what Governor Shivers was going to do. He was being ... had been encouraged a great deal to run for the United States Senate against Senator Tom Connally. And, frankly, I didn't know <u>what</u> he was going to do; I felt, more and more, that he was not interested in going to the United States Senate. But sometimes a man in politics chooses a course because of ... it seems to be the thing that his friends want, or the thing, even though it's not his personal preference, it seems to be the way he can serve the best, offers the greatest opportunity for him. Since he had been Governor for about three and a half years, it would have been more or less logical for him to say it's time for me to step up. Again, in retrospect, it would have been an easy thing to have done in that Senator Connally, although he had a long record of service, and distinguished service, in the Senate, was elderly and for a number of years had not particularly paid attention to

Texas politics. He had been elected from time-to-time just on his record and his friends. His friends were getting scattered also, and he had no campaign organization. And this is the conclusion he came to himself after visiting in Texas, talking to a bunch of his true friends -- that there wasn't any use of his running. At this point, however, Governor Shivers had already announced for re-election for Governor, and Attorney General Price Daniel had announced for the Senate. It was certainly believed that Shivers would have been at least as formidable an opponent of Connally as Daniel and that he, too, would have won or that the same thing probably would have happened, that Senator Connally would have withdrawn. But ... as press assistant to Governor Shivers and to a certain extent helping him with his ... make his plans for the political future, I had been talking with him on numberous occasions and let's say had gradually acquired the impression that he was not going to run for the Senate.

It might be the point here to mention something about a characteristic of Governor Shivers -- that he was not a great hand to make announcements in advance, even to his associates, certainly not to the public, and sometimes I think he doesn't even announce them to <u>himself</u> as long as there's any possibility that there might be a better course. I've used the comparison there that he keeps the door open as long as he can; that when the time comes to close the door, he's liable to close it with

a big bang. But up to that point, you can still get in if you want to, or you can get out. He seems to feel that ... always felt, that sometimes it ... it really takes more courage to wait and weigh things and consider things than it does to make a quick decision and get it over with. You can then tell your people who object to your decision, "Well, I'm sure sorry you didn't get to talk to me about that, but I've already committed myself." And so you're through with that. It seems that it's really a more courageous -- more statesman-like -- route to wait as long as you can before you make important decisions. Get all the evidence you can. Well, anyway, this has been his trademark down through the years, and it was true in this instance that it was not until early in January that the die was really cast. He made his announcement for re-election to his second elective term.

Now this created an interesting managerial situation. As I said earlier, this was the point at which another staff man and I left the state government and went into a private office because we could not do what we wanted to do on a state payroll or from the capitol. But here ... here was the problem that you had: the first thing, and probably the most important thing, it looked like at the moment, was winning the precinct conventions in May. The reason that these were important was that the precinct convention delegates would elect the ... would attend county conventions, and elect delegates to the state convention, and these ... the state convention ... would send our delegation to the National

Democratic Convention. Therefore, this chain of circumstances would determine how Texas was going to vote in a national convention in nominating a candidate for President. Since the issue was rather stoutly drawn between President Truman as a President who held to his views on civil rights -- well, that's what he said -- we ... we say states' rights; I don't know whether there's much difference or not as the terms were used then ... our position was that the federal government ought to leave us alone, and his was that well, we're going to straighten you out first. (chuckle) So, this ... this was just more of the same down through the years.

Anyway, part of Governor Shivers' decision to run for Governor -- and he announced this in his ... he put this in his announcement -- he thought there was an important battle to be fought nationally, and he preferred to fight it from the position of the State House because he was representative of the state's viewpoint on these important things in which he disagreed with the National Democratic Party as represented by Mr. Truman.

So this ... this was one thing -- precinct organizations. This is different from organization for a political campaign for election in a certain sense, because the two systems are entirely different. The ... one is the political convention system, the other is the popular vote system. A premium is set in the convention system on attendance -- if you don't attend at a certain hour, almost down to the minute, if you're not in a certain place where you belong, you don't participate. As for voting, you have

all day and you can vote absentee. So ... and there are many other differences, including the fact that the May conventions are organized on a ... at that time, well, in a Presidential election year, on a Congressional District basis, whereas the ... a popular election campaign -- a primary particularly -- is usually organized on either a county-by-county basis or a State Senatorial District basis, if you want to go that far. That's a different approach. So, we had first these precinct conventions. Then we had to keep in mind the fact that Governor Shivers was running for re-election, not ... at that time, it didn't seem that he was seriously threatened, but we knew that there would be a race, that the Democrats who disagreed with his views, particularly the ones who supported the National outlook as compared with the State outlook, would be almost sure to put someone forward against him, if for nothing else, to keep him busy.

At this time, we didn't know that the real ... that the main event was still to be discussed, and that was the general election. We thought there were just two problems. Now, taking the first one, the matter of the organization of the precinct conventions. I mentioned in the elements of a campaign the term "issues." You have to have an issue. Well, the broad issue here was state versus federal, the National Democratic Party versus the Texas Democratic Party. But there was one element here that ... one issue that was natural because federal versus state was directly

involved, and that was the so-called tidelands issue, the submerged ... ownership of the submerged land, and without going into that to any great extent, we ... that was selected as the ... it selected itself, you might say, and we ... we certified it as the issue.

Now, how do you ... you can't just simply put up a placard or a banner and say, "The issue is so-and-so." You've got to translate this into terms of some kind of action -- you're going to do something about this thing. Well, the mode of action conceived was to ... that Texas should send an uninstructed delegation to the National Convention, not instructed in advance on behalf of any Democratic candidate -- and not pledged to support any Democratic candidate. We would just be going as the party routine called for, but without any commitments to anyone. This was immediately attacked by what they called the liberals ... I mean the self-styled Loyal Democrats -- we called them the labor liberals or something. You know, you change or swap these epithets pretty freely in a campaign, put labels on the other fellow that might be distasteful. Anyway, they immediately took the position that what Governor Shivers was preparing to do was to bolt the Democratic Party. I'm sure you could talk to some of those people today, and they'd probably still say that that was what was happening right along. I personally don't believe this. If this was true, it certainly was not apparent in anything Gov-

ernor Shivers ever said or anything he ever did. He ... he appeared to me to be a man who was feeling his way along, but he knew what he ... where he stood -- he knew what he was determined to do, but he didn't know exactly at what stage he would get it done. It would have been possible that some compromise acceptable to him -- for example, to jump ahead a little bit, after the National Convention, after the nomination, when he went to talk to Governor Stevenson about the tidelands. If Governor Stevenson had found it possible at that time to have said, "Why, I'm on your side ... I believe about this thing just like you do, Allan. I'm going to ... if they ... if Congress in its wisdom passes a bill ceding this ... these submerged lands to the states, why sure, I'll sign it," shy, Allan wouldn't have ... couldn't have done anything but say, "Why, in that case, I don't know why I shouldn't support you." And I think he would have. Of course, Mr. Stevenson was not in a position to say this because all of the people who were supporting him and backing him, and who were high up in the Democratic Party, were on the other side -- not <u>all</u> of them, either. Mr. Rayburn was in the awkward position, plus Senator Johnson and some of his people, ... because they really didn't want to take a <u>strong</u> position either way on this, but the Truman people <u>per se</u> were opposed, or certainly were in accord with Truman's two vetoes of quit claim bills ... I believe it was two -- yeah, two different vetoes of quit claim bills, and certainly they approved of the four-to-three decision

of the Supreme Court which said that the federal government had a paramount right ... had paramount rights in these submerged lands.

Anyway, the first job then that "Hart-Van Cronkhite" had was to get this message of the ... what the issues were -- what the action was going to be to accomplish the end -- out to the ... not so much to the general public -- that, to some extent, yes; but more specifically to the people who were going to be ... who wanted to be at the precinct conventions, the potential voters in this thing. Now, I was primarily charged with, oh, the commas and semicolons of the thing. I worked up a ... about a twenty-four page, as I remember, booklet on precinct conventions -- "The Neglected Tool of Democracy," I believe it was called. Actually, it was a pretty good little book. It developed some thoughts about precinct conventions, put them in context in our system of government in a way that probably had not been done in some time. Most people, outside of a little handful of politically very conscious -- politically conscious -- people, had treated the precinct convention as something you take or leave, and it's much easier to leave. And attendance was very poor.

Our feeling was that the people who had been coming to the precinct conventions were probably ... a great many of them, at least, were members of the opposition in this incident because they were closer to the mechanics, the machinery of the party than ... than the average businessman or farmer or rancher who

just probably never had thought about going to the precinct conventions. So, with that idea in mind, Van Cronkhite undertook rather extensive travels about the state, calling area--usually Congressional district--meetings of key people, as best we could figure them out--county leaders whose names we had from past campaigns, whose names had been suggested--and selling them an action program, and making suggestions as to how the issues could be presented on a local level and translated into the type of action that would result in a good turnout. We figured that the bigger the turnout, the better our chances.

Of course, there were charges and counter-charges in the newspapers by these two factions. Governor Shivers made a... three or four real hard-hitting speeches, you might say with a note of defiance in them; at the same time, a defense of the state Democratic Party as compared with the National Democratic Party, if there is such a distinction. The National Party, meaning particularly Mr. Rayburn, was quite active, but by and large, the campaign--the precinct campaign--was not as bitter as you might have expected it to be. So many people didn't exactly know what they were talking about (chuckle) at the time, but they did get interested to the extent that when the precinct conventions met on--I believe it was May the third, there was said to have been the biggest turnout in history up to that time. I don't know whether there have ever been larger ones in proportion since then or not. And the lessons we had tried to plant in the

minds of our people apparently took hold pretty good. They knew how to run conventions, and they did run them -- sometimes with a rather heavy hand, but they justified this by recalling that the year before they had been kicked out by the other side, (chuckle) so ....

Now, the Republicans meanwhile were having a similar interest in their conventions, you may remember, because they had the Eisenhower versus Taft issue going. And the Eisenhower movement took on a good deal of momentum, and the Republican conventions were held in places that hadn't had one, ever maybe. I recall a story that told of a small East Texas town where the only Republicans in town had been thought to be a lady who was postmaster and her husband and their son, who was about, to be charitable, about a half-wit -- not quite, and that traditionally, this family had held the precinct convention -- or at least, they had sent in a report every other year, but nobody else ever came -- they never advertised the place or the time. And on this particular occasion, '52, to the surprise of the boy of the family, about a dozen men showed up at 7 O'clock, which was the generally accepted hour, and wanted to come in to the Republican convention, and he is supposed to have said, "Yuh cain't have no Republican convention without Maw here, an' Maw ain't here." (Laughter) But they ... they sort of had to go out on the lawn and have the convention, which is how it happened in many, many instances.

This all added up to the fact there was a feeling of excitement in the air and a feeling of revolt against several things. One was the ... what we called "Trumanism." This was the ... actually, just a revolt against some of the things you would ascribe to the bureaucrats in Washington and that grew out of Mr. Truman's attitude on civil rights and the Right-to-Work Law and various other things in which he took a contrary position to the majority position in Texas. And the fact that he declined to run to seek renomination threw us a curve for a few hours, but we recovered quickly and said, "Well, whoever they get, well, he'll be selected by the same crowd. He'll be just as bad." We had pre-judged the ... the (chuckle) nominee in that way. He was going to be one selected suitable to Mr. Truman. I might just inject here at this point that I don't think it ever worried Mr. Truman in the least -- if so, he never did show it -- I think there were some pretty major injustices done to him. He became quite a ... more or less a whipping boy of a political fight that was really over something else besides him. It was over mainly the revolt of the ... against big government in favor of a continuation of state government in the broadest sense. It was a dissatisfaction over the Korean War at that time; there was dissatisfaction, disenchantment over some of the so-called scandals that were being uncovered in Washington. And the whole thing added up to the fact that a lot of people were unhappy about

their political situation, and they chose to express themselves in various ways, primarily and inevitably attacking the administration -- which is always true, I think.

Brewer: Well, this being ... this being true, could Governor Shivers have supported Governor Stevenson if he had agreed on the tidelands fight?

Hart: Well, this was a good question. When I said while ago that he might have, I think he might have; I might have been over-stating the case. But the reason I think that he could have and would have -- I don't believe he would have gone to Springfield in the first place if he -- I think he would have been in a very awkward position if he had gone, asked Stevenson a question, got a perfectly satisfactory answer, and then said, "Well, I ... in spite of all this, I still don't like you" (chuckle) -- I don't think he could have done this, either with his own conscience or his political security. In other words, if he ... he had plenty of room to say, "Why, there's no use in my going to talk to that so-and-so. Why, he might just as well ... we might as well mark him off to start with because he's just one of that crowd, and I wouldn't believe what he said anyway." No, he went, I think, to ask him. He felt like he had to go ask him. He had to have something more than just his own assumption that Stevenson was unsound on the tidelands. He needed Stevenson to say ... either say he was all right or he wasn't, and I believe it would have

hinged on that. It's possible that ... well, this did happen. The Governor told me about this one time -- don't believe he mentioned it in his account. After their conversation, he asked Stevenson to write out a little statement ... Governor Stevenson wrote out his points, and he didn't say very much. What it actually ... well, what it said was that he hoped that this thing could be worked out by legislation. And Allan handed it back to him and said, "Now, let's go one way or the other -- either say yes or no." (chuckle). So with that, Governor Stevenson took it and made some ... he underlined some more thoughts and injected some more words and took the position that he agreed with the action that Truman had taken previously on this. So, I say that if Mr. Stevenson had refused to make this correction, he'd just said, "No, that's all I want to say about it, go on off with that," then Allan really would have had a little harder decision. Is this sufficient or not? It probably would not have been. But if on the other hand, if he'd said positively -- if he'd said just as positively, "Yes" as "No," I think Governor Shivers would have had to accept him. I don't think at that point he was committed to support Eisenhower .... In fact, he didn't actually become committed, in my opinion, to support Eisenhower actively until late in September.

I pass over the election for Governor because it was handled more or less out of the side-pocket -- it was not a real strenuous

campaign and to some extent was handled by the same people who handled the precinct conventions; so we had, you might say, one organization, then, doing two jobs. And the overwhelming issue of the Governor's campaign was the same issue that was dominating the precinct campaigns, so, for practical purposes, you might say that was one campaign. So after we won the precinct conventions, went to Chicago and were seated, Governor Shivers was elected as Governor -- re-elected Governor, and took the trip to Springfield to see the nominee, and the results there -- all this added up, around the first of September, to a considerable state of uncertainty in the minds of all, and everyone was waiting for the State Democratic Convention in Amarillo, oh, somewhere around the middle of the month, to find out what was going to happen. Everything was being suggested, of course, from supporting the nominee to leaving Stevenson off the Democratic ticket entirely and putting on Eisenhower -- plain support of the Republican Presidential nominee over the Democratic nominee -- and putting two tickets on the ballot, one which would have Stevenson as the Presidential nominee, the other one which would have Eisenhower on the Democratic Party -- all sorts of suggestions, legal and illegal, were made. At the Chicago convention, Shivers had taken a so-called pledge, which was widely misunderstood and misinterpreted as a pledge to support the nominee, which it was not. It was simply a pledge to use every honorable means to see that the names of the nominees of that convention were placed on the general election ballot under the heading of the Democratic Party,

and Allan was determined that this would happen in Texas -- so he never listened seriously to any of the other suggestions. And there was some ... some of his friends were against him on this and they organized a ... kind of a minor revolt at Amarillo in which they put up a resolution, as I recall, to place ... replace Stevenson with Eisenhower. Now, of course, Shivers was keynote speaker and came out very strongly in saying that we had to put the names of the nominees on under the Democratic label, but we didn't have to vote for them. He made it a double-barrelled thing -- in fact, he more or less recommended not doing so. (chuckle) But so far as his personal participation in the campaign, it didn't even come then. He didn't say he was going to vote for Mr. Eisenhower but that he wasn't going to vote for Stevenson. Actually, it was October the second before he announced his support of Eisenhower.

I'd say the die was cast earlier than that, probably right after the convention or before that. He knew ... Now I won't say that he knew exactly what he was going to do -- I think he knew how it was going to come out, but not just the way it was going to be accomplished ....

Following the convention at Amarillo and in accord with the resolution adopted there, a group of Shivers' friends got together and organized the Democrats for Eisenhower. He had no ... essentially no hand in this. As far as I can recall, he didn't have any hand in it. Tom Sealy of Midland and Claud Gilmer of Rocksprings were the two people who called the meeting; they were

elected co-chairmen; and so far as the whole campaign went, Shivers was not in a line position. Of course, he was exhibit "A" and the leader, and nobody questioned this in any way. But as far as the organization was concerned, we were working with him or he was working for us -- I don't know which. He held no position in the Democrats' organization. This fell to Hart-Van Cronkhite again.

Again, in a very concentrated sort of way, we had the experience of putting together a campaign in a hurry, and a very expensive one. The two Eisenhower campaigns were the only ones that I've ever been in that ... well, we wound up with plenty of money. But even in those, there were times when the money wasn't at hand. This is one of the tantalizing, frustrating things about campaigns -- the money doesn't come in a smooth flow or so much at the first of every month. Actually, you're a little bit past the point -- emergency point -- before you start getting the money. You have to reach this point before people realize that ... that you <u>do</u> need the money, and, as a result, you're always scrambling to pay or to contract for ... to be able to contract for radio-T.V. time, advertising publications, and all this, and give yourself time to get them out. And there's always that excruciating question -- shall I take a chance (chuckle) -- on the money that's supposed to be here next week, you know? Or shall I wait until the money comes? As everybody says, 'Well, you've got to wait till it comes.

That's simple -- wait till the money gets here." If you do, you never win. Certain chances have to be taken in this thing, but it's bad business. I ... well, I shudder to think about some of the things I've committed myself for or somebody for.

Brewer: Was there ever any danger that ... or are there suppliers that refuse to make credit arrangements for political campaigns?

Hart: Many of them -- they're really pretty smart. Most of them demand cash. Newspapers, radio, T.V. people -- they ... you've got to have the money there before they'll run the ad. Now, what would give me sleepless nights was that printers and even the Texas Press Association, through my relationship with the man who was the Executive Secretary of it, now today would give credit to the campaign, if I were managing it, of almost anyone. But that (chuckle) ... the heck of it is that they're looking to me for this, although they know I'm not the man who's going to pay the money. They're ... they will state, "Well, I never have lost any money on you." Well, you know I'm going to break my neck to see that they don't. (chuckle) But it's still uncomfortable, and it's still bad business. The money's going to eventually come in most cases. It always comes a little too late, and therefore, you waste a lot. You have a lean period ... lean periods when you ought to be getting ready, spending some money, making an orderly sort of operation of it, and you're always on just the brink of disaster. The panic button is never very far from your fingers, simply because of this grave problem of finan-

cing the campaign in an orderly sort of way.

Anyway, the ... we set up headquarters for the Democrats for Eisenhower in, actually, two different buildings over on Lavaca. Our Hart-Van Cronkhite office was kind of the nerve center, and then we had another building across the street. The money was collected on sort of a bipartisan basis. There were two people named as co-chairmen of finance, and one was a Republican and one was a Democrat. We didn't examine the money real carefully as it came in to see whether it was stamped Democrat or Republican. So, to a certain extent -- or a rather decided extent -- this was a bipartisan campaign when it came to money.

However, as far as the issues, the development of issues, as far as what Shivers said, what we said in our publicity, as far as what we printed and sent out, I never saw any indication of any effort on the part of the Republican organization to censor us. Oh, we had occasional conferences. We tried to keep in touch to the extent that ... for one thing, we needed them to get speakers let's say to get General Eisenhower down here and all this. It was necessary to work with them. And it certainly would have been the height of foolishness to ignore the Republicans. But it wasn't quite the coordinated, completely synchronized operation that the opponents imagined it was or, probably, as you can read from time to time that it was.

Brewer: Well, I had wondered about the difficulties of an organization

such as the Democrats for Eisenhower, which was being run by people with wide experience in political campaigns, cooperating with a Republican Party in a one-party state in which it really had no reason to have organization of any size, that, in effect, that perhaps the Democrats for Eisenhower would really be carrying the campaign.

Hart: I think, in a sense, they were--in the sense of the number of bodies involved. Everybody realized this, so the Republicans more or less left to the Democrats for Eisenhower the business of turning out the vote. Now, I think on this theory, well, a genuine, dedicated Republican knew about this election and was going to come out and vote for Eisenhower...there wasn't any particular point in wasting a lot of time with him. And what organizational work and promotional work was necessary with that group, was done by the Republican Party. They just kept doing what they had been doing, and they let us keep doing what we had been doing. And, under the circumstances, it worked out probably better than you would imagine it would.

I think it was more trouble <u>afterward</u> than there was during. I felt real sorry for Jack Porter, who was the National Committeeman--Republican National Committeeman for Texas. After Mr. Eisenhower took office, he was received with, naturally, with application for appointments from Republicans who had been out of office a good many years and were hungry for a little patronage; but at the same time, he had to contend with this big swarm of

Democrats for Eisenhower, who said, 'We ... we're actually the ones that won this election, and so we ought to have a bunch of these postmasterships and this-that-and-the-other." And it was pretty much of an impossible situation -- nobody was satisfied with it, because the Republicans claimed the Democrats were getting all the breaks, and the Democrats claimed the Republicans didn't appreciate what we did for them, you know.

But, during the campaign, thinking of some more of these elements, I think of the issues, the money, the managership, the planning of the campaign -- all these things were more or less in the hands of the Democrats for Eisenhower. Naturally, we didn't make any attempt to suggest or demand that Mr. Eisenhower say anything or not say anything. However, his organization was quite thoughtful when he came to Texas, for example, on a campaign tour of Texas, to check with Democrats for Eisenhower as well as with the Republicans. Well, it went to this extent -- that Dillon Anderson, a businessman and novelist at Houston -- you probably have read or heard of his books, the best known of which was <u>I and Claudy</u>. He was a supporter of Eisenhower -- I'm not sure whether he was a Republican ... card-carrying Republican or not, but anyway, somebody ... Sherman Adams or somebody ... had got him to work on the type of speeches that he thought Mr. Eisenhower should make in Texas. And so, some week or so before the tour started, Dillon had worked up a half a dozen speeches. Well, he came by Austin and picked me up, and we went to Denver

and met Eisenhower's entourage there and spent a couple of days with Gabriel Hauge and Bobby Cutler, his regular speech writers. Well, we went over these things and thrashed them all to pieces and put them back together and evolved, over the period of, say, about two days, a set of speeches which were then given to General Eisenhower and Sherman Adams for their approval, then back to us for re-writing. And then, by that time, it was time to move on toward Texas by way of Cheyenne or some ... way off somewhere else. And he did, then, deliver these speeches at the various places just about as they ... well, as they were written -- they were primarily Texas productions. I'm not saying I wrote his speeches. Dillon couldn't even say he wrote them. They were ... they were composite speeches, but they had in them what Texas people thought ought to be in them and left out those things they thought ought to be left out.

Brewer: What were you trying to emphasize in Texas?

Hart: Well, we emphasized the tidelands, of course. The primary tidelands speech was at Houston. And also at that point, he engaged in a little sarcasm about the Texas vote being in the bag, according to the Democrats. They'd always said, "The Texas vote is in the bag for the Democrats," and he asked them, "What is this bag they've got you in? You know ... do you feel like you're in a bag?" This went over real good as an appeal to their sense of independence. And it was true. Hell, there wasn't any excuse ...

there's not much reason for a brass collar or anything, in my opinion. I think that there is a ... such a thing as party loyalty, and there's such a thing as ethics with regard to your political affiliations, but there is ... I think that you just must leave a little room to vote your convictions once in a while if they differ radically from the prescribed ticket. At least, that's a point of view in Texas which has come pretty far forward the last ten or fifteen years. I think Allan probably had something to do with this, to be a part of this movement in the direction of the independent vote. I can also, like the saying goes, I can teach it flat or I can teach it round -- I can make a good argument on the other side. And there are arguments on both sides, but my personal feeling is that the party to deserve your loyalty and to keep getting your vote ought to produce some results that are at least vaguely satisfactory to you (chuckle), or you just become entirely disillusioned about them. I don't know that you have to change parties completely, 'cause you might not like the other one either (chuckle). I think you <u>do</u> have the right ... I'm getting off on something that doesn't belong here, but this was an important issue in 1952. This was the year of decision, in Governor Shivers' phrase. Well, it wasn't a new expression, but it turned out to be pretty much <u>that</u>, for a lot of people.

Now, to complete the story of the campaign. After the Eisenhower visit, Mr. Stevenson came to Texas. And some other national figures that I don't remember now -- some Senators --

came, and ... but outside of Mr. Rayburn and a rare few of the faithful Democratic party war horses, there wan't much ... as Allan said today, there wasn't much high level activity for the Democrats. Even the party officials, the officeholders -- a great many of them -- were pretty much disillusioned with some of the ... with the situation and even wanted to vote for Eisenhower ... come out for Eisenhower and were afraid to or ... were staying for Truman because they were afraid not to. But either way, they weren't making much noise about it. They weren't too proud of it either way. So this campaign took on the nature of kind of a crusade, a people's movement, and so that's why, to me, it was a ... an unusual experience and a memorable experience to which these '56 and subsequent campaign years don't compare. To some extent, you were doing it over again.

There's one difference in -- '56 I might mention. I don't know who thought this up. And if it was Mr. Rayburn or Mr. Johnson either one, they were out of character because they were smarter than that. They sent some seven United States Senators, I believe it was, into Texas to campaign for Stevenson, and <u>six</u> of them had voted against the tidelands bill. And didn't we have fun out of that! (chuckle) And it was ... and one of them was Senator Kennedy, and I don't know ... don't remember who the rest of them were, but there was very ... very fertile fields for us on the other side, and I don't know <u>why</u> these particular people were selected -- I'll never know.

Brewer: In the '52 campaign, was it ascertained that General Eisenhower would sign the tidelands bill before Governor Shivers announced his support? Were there meetings held here?

Hart: He ... he had made his public announcement public long before all this I'm talking about developed -- before it ever became an issue of whether Shivers was going to be for him or not. I think it was on the questioning of some Texas people -- somebody, maybe it was Governor Hobby or somebody in Houston ... I've forgotten exactly who it was -- but, yes, he was on record plainly and unmistakeably. He made a speech about it in Houston -- that's what it was. He came right out square, and this was ... why, it might have been before the nomination. If not, it was shortly after his nomination or before Shivers was forced to decide. And he stuck with this, you know, after the quit-claim bill was passed. Attorney General Brownell kept fuddling around, wanting to test us and see what it meant; and on about three different occasions, Eisenhower spoke up pretty sharply, said he thought he'd made himself clear on (chuckle) whether ... what the hell that decision ought to be.

Brewer: Do you think ... or did Governor Shivers feel or any of his advisers feel that the Republican strategists were simply going along here as a way to get the state's electoral vote?

Hart: Well, I expect that there was some justifiable suspicion maybe, but some of these people didn't care either way. Eisenhower based it ... based his position, on the treaty ... on the wording of the treaty between the United States and the Republic of Texas in the

annexation -- the resolution, rather. I'd say some of the other people really didn't care, didn't feel strongly enough about it to either vote for it or defend it -- they thought it was handy. It was a serious matter with us, and I think justifiably so. If ... you know ... if nothing else, it aggravates you to have a Supreme Court Justice write an opinion against you in which he just absolutely misquotes the treaty ... the annexation resolution, and refers to wording that never did pass -- never was approved by anybody, United States or Texas either, on this equal footing business. That was a portion of the thing that was never ratified. Well, it's hard to say that tidelands and only tidelands caused Shivers to be ... take the position he did. It was much more than this with everyone. But that was an important element of it -- something specific. And it's ... you do have to reach specifics sooner or later in a political campaign or not enough people understand what you're talking about. The simpler the specifics are, the better the chance ... the chances are they're grasping it or taking the trouble to grasp it. I've often thought that, let's say, that a man either did or did not steal five billion dollars through some kind of a transaction while he was in office. And he probably ... nothing would ever be done about it, but in the first place, he can't come to grips with that concept -- how did he do it? How in the world ... that surely must not be right, or he'd have got caught, you know? (chuckle) But if you say that he stole ... or that he padded his expense account $24 and bought

whiskey with it, why, he's sunk -- he's beat. I've seen this happen almost literally the way that I've described it as a candidate who was accused of broad misdemeanors that couldn't be proved has come to grief over a very small matter. I don't know whether this is good or not, but that's the way it is.

Brewer: Are there any techniques that you can ... that you can use to make what basically seems to be an unappealing candidate more appealing in his personality or looks?

Hart: Well, I can use this example. I've talked a good deal about television. If you have an attractive-appearing candidate, one who speaks well, and, to use the common expression, projects well on the T.V., the theory is that you should devote a great deal of time and money to television. And on the contrary, if he makes a sorry appearance on the T.V., you try to keep him off, and you use either somebody else or you use the type of announcement ad that doesn't require the live appearance of the candidate, or maybe you get ... if you experiment long enough, you might get an acceptable picture, and you can run the picture. You try to present your candidate, to give him every break that you can, by trying to present him in the light in which he looks best, literally and figuratively. And, on the other hand, if he is ... if he's not a good T.V. character and his opponent is, you try to avoid matching them in any sense of the word. You have to ... you just have to give the other fellow his advantage in that row, and try to figure out some way that you have an advantage over him -- maybe it's experience; maybe you have a better record. Maybe your man

has a real good record, and the other fellow is a newcomer ... an attractive newcomer. I think this went on, to some extent, in the Martin-Spears campaign last ... this year. I won't say that Crawford is an unattractive candidate, but by comparison, Spears, a very handsome, personable man, was obviously superior -- younger, more vigorous-looking type of fellow, a fine speaker which Crawford didn't pretent to be. So, Spears haunted the radio tubes and Crawford talked about experience and political ideology. I think this is the way you have to do it. You have to give the other fellow what he's got, and then take better advantage of what your man has got. As far as taking advantage of inexperience as compared to experience, that's a little hard to do, although if the incumbent ... if you're running against an incumbent and he has done something lately that you'd like to talk about, it being something real bad, the fact that your man is fresh and unscarred might be an asset. But it usually works the other way around. You've probably heard the story about the two -- about the commissioner's race in an East Texas city. The challenger referred to the fact that his opponent ought to be unseated because he had taken county money and built a road out in front of his farm, way off the highway, and this was presented as a reason for defeating this man. And the incumbent responded that it was true that he had built this road, but "I just want to remind you, when you talk about saving money, I want to remind you that I've already got my road, and that fellow hasn't." (laughter) It would really be less

expensive to re-elect him, of course. (chuckle)

Brewer: Well, you ... you mentioned also earlier timing being so important in campaigns. What have you always felt to be some sort of reasonable time table, say, for a Governor's election?

Hart: Concerning the timing of political campaigns, as I have stated, it is the most important ... possibly the most important single element in the planning of a campaign, and perhaps in the campaign itself. All of these elements, of course, are important. And I ... I think I stated earlier a possible ... the approach I recommend is working back from election day. Now, the purpose of a campaign, or the timing of a campaign is to reach a peak at the proper time, whatever your sources are -- whether you have a little money or a lot of money, whether you have a good candidate or a not-so-good, whether you have a complete organization or just a partial organization -- whatever you have to bring to bear on the electorate should be ... reach its climax approximately at the time of the election, and the expression is, "You don't want to peak too early." And certainly you don't want to peak too late because that ... that's fatal, or it could be. So, your whole plan is to reach the maximum proficiency and effectiveness of the campaign approximately the last week.

Now, with that in mind, to go back to the beginning. The time of starting the campaign would be determined somewhat by the situation in which you find yourself. Let's take first the case of an incumbent. It's an old saying in politics that the

incumbent determines when the race is going to start. In other words, until he comes forward and becomes active in his campaign for re-election, there really isn't much of a race, no matter how much the challengers ... how much noise they're making, how much effort they're putting forth to stir up interest. Of course, there'd be exceptions to this rule, but by and large, this is true. It doesn't become a hot campaign until the champ is in the ring and being challenged and is answering the challenge. Sometimes he never gets in the ring, as you well know, if he thinks his opposition is weak and that his best bet is to pay no attention -- only a minimum of attention -- to the campaign. You see races in which this happens, and they never do get hot, they never do get interesting, which is one way of saying that the incumbent does have a lot to do with the timing of the campaign.

However, the challenger can't make the mistake of <u>allowing</u> the incumbent to set <u>his</u> campaign schedule. He must take into account that there's certain stages of this campaign which will be reached only when his opponent, the incumbent, gets in. But prior to that time, he must do as much as he can to be ready for that period. So, I don't think I can speak of weeks or days or months very conclusively because it would depend on a lot ... on a lot of factors that would have to be treated hypothetically, if at all. But ... so, I'd like to say that you might divide this into phases. The phase early in the year ... the campaign year, that is, not the calendar year ... perhaps in Texas now and

starting in about September, October of the year before the election since we have our primaries now in May -- the first stage is one of exploration, of seeking the advice and counsel of friends.

Whether or not you've made up your mind to run, you usually do your friends the courtesy of talking it over with them. And ordinarily, you'll find that they will advise you about how you want to be advised if you've handled it right. (chuckle). It is potentially embarrassing (chuckle) if you've made up your mind to run, and you ask a fellow what he thinks about it, and he tells you he doesn't think you should. This is not too good because you're going to go against his advice -- you've already made up your mind you're going to go against his advice. But, by and large, it is a proper thing to do, and it's an effective thing because it gives your friends -- I'm talking now about influential people, leaders in community or industry or government, who may or may not be your <u>personal</u> friends but they're political friends or potential political friends -- it gives them a sense of participation, a sense of having expressed themselves to you. At least, if I am the candidate and I ask your advice as to whether I should run or not, you unburden yourself to me, and you feel that you have an investment in me from then on. And I think that, using Governor Shivers' example, even after he was well-established as a political leader and an officeholder, let's say when he was going to run for a third term as Governor, which <u>was</u> a ... quite a decision ... at that time; he did not announce for a third term without sending telegrams or making personal telephone calls to

his so-called leaders over the state -- the people who handled his campaigns at the county level. And he did seek their advice, their opinions, before he ... I think before he finally made up his own mind in this instance. At an earlier date, say for a second term when it was more or less cut and dried that he was going to run and everybody knew this, shortly before he announced, at least -- he still had a meeting. I believe then ... on that occasion, I remember, he actually invited in about fifty people to Austin -- I know at least on one occasion he did this, and they discussed the race in a conference. An interesting thing might be mentioned there -- this shows you what a state of mind -- and the efficiency that a candidate must develop in himself. Most of these fifty people were amazed when Governor Shivers came before them and said, "Well, now, first we'd better get acquainted," whereupon he identified every man by his first and last names and where he was from. Of course, this pleased the people, and it impressed all of them that he would take this much trouble to learn ... to know them. This is a very important element in political success, and it's a very difficult sort of thing because the ... a citizen who meets the Governor, let's say or other high official, is impressed by this fact and remembers it and remembers that man, and if he doesn't remember how he looked that day, he sees his picture from time to time in the paper. (chuckle) So then, two years later, he meets this man in entirely different circumstances; he sometimes is offended if that officeholder doesn't recognize him by his name.

Brewer: Have you run into candidates that have not had this ability to remember names?

Hart: Well, nearly all of them have some trouble, but most of the ones I've been associated with were very good at this particular thing. I suppose this is just part of a politician's equipment. A politician -- a real one -- is interested in people. If he wasn't a politician, he'd probably be a salesman or some other ... acting in some other capacity where he dealt directly face to face with individuals, and he ... he wants to know those people -- well, not simply because he wants their help -- in a political campaign; this is part of his nature. It makes him a good politician. And these people have a remarkable ability, actually, to call names, and ... but it is a difficult thing to do ... sometimes the circumstances are such that you have a hard time bringing this man back to mind because you met him in your office in Austin, let's say, and you see him on a fishing trip in North Texas somewhere. And this is a ... well, this is one of the things, though, in this early stage that a man works on. Perhaps he travels some, and he has little meetings of his friends, and he identifies himself both mentally and actually with his closer friends and supporters. And then at this preliminary stage when there is more or less a casual, relaxed atmosphere, he goes about the state and makes speeches to civic clubs, association meetings, or just simply visits, and this is the only time, perhaps, he's going to have time for that type of contact.

Also, at this ... as this first stage moves along to its close, he begins to make certain arrangements. Certainly, he tries to select his campaign manager, if he hasn't already selected him, and he and the campaign manager start thinking, at least, of key personnel, of a headquarters, of financing the campaign, and of all the many things that they know are going to have to be done in a short period of time later on. They lay as much groundwork as possible. They start working on paper, at least, with the organization over the state, selecting, or tentatively selecting, county leaders, and if you're going to break it down further, to even the city leaders, or, in the other direction, regional leaders. In the days of my active campaigning, we found that the superstructure of, say, district and regional leaders was somewhat superfluous. It really ... you didn't get much good out of those people because it was so hard to find a man who had ... was capable of being a regional or a district leader who had the time, actually, to do any more than help you in his home county. So, after some experiments in that direction, we more or less abandoned any idea of a superstructure and just had county and state leaders. Now, I think today you'd have to go still further in your thinking on this thing because of the metropolitan <u>area</u> situation, and I have thought perhaps that you would have to approach this thing from a metropolitan area standpoint with that as your base unit. Then, perhaps, pick up the rural-type counties in the old style. I know one political figure in Texas now, and he has been successful

so far, who ... who more or less ignores county boundaries and confines himself to city leaders. Now, that might be a small city, that might be a county seat of a small county, but he thinks of him as a leader in the county seat rather than a leader in the county, and it has the same effect in the long run.

But this does emphasize this growing problem of how to deal with the city vote, and when you think of four cities -- soon having perhaps half of the vote of Texas, it becomes rather frightening as to how you're going to deal with this great mass of people. And it's harder to deal with them, in a sense, as <u>persons</u> in the huge city than it is in a small county or a small city. It more or less has to be a mass media approach and an organizational approach where the candidate himself is ... is a symbol or a spokesman, a rallying point, rather than a friend, as most politicians like to be. When they say, "I want to be your friend," they ... they genuinely mean it. They like to be friendly, and they like for the people to be friendly with them. So, it's a ... it's not quite the old style campaigning that we're faced with now.

Anyway, as this first stage ends, I think you would want to be in a position to know where your headquarters is going to be, maybe the building that you were going to have it in, preferably have the ... at least, a small part of your space already rented, in a position where it could be expanded as your campaign grew. You would want to have your campaign manager and perhaps ... certainly, by all means, your finance chairman if you were going to

be able to find one, which is not easy to do. I think it's probably easier to find a campaign manager than it is to find a money-raiser, a man who can turn loose of his business and go out and devote virtually full-time to money raising. Nobody can be more valuable than he if you can find such a person, but about the best you could hope for there is to find several people, each of whom will take an area or a large city or large county, and work close to home, you might say. The reason he's so hard to find is that he needs to be a very ... a prominent man and preferably a man who either has money himself or is known as having access to money, friends and connections that have money; and he needs to be able to say to this fellow he's approaching, "I have given ... or I am giving this candidate X dollars, and I want you to do the same." Just simply having a salesman go in and call and say, "I want you to buy an interest in this campaign by giving some money to my candidate," why, I'd say it would not produce anything -- maybe taxi fare from the airport, but nothing consequential at all. Therefore, it's hard to find a person with this time, with this ability. He's busy making more money perhaps for himself, for his principals. If you're lucky and have done a good job in this preliminary period, you will have in mind not only these physical arrangements, but the personnel that you'll ... at least that you'll <u>want</u>. Now, I'd say that arbitrarily we could go in into stage two.

Brewer: When would stage one end? About ....

Hart: As I say, this would depend on when you started, and it would vary according to your situation, whether you're an incumbent or not, but by and large, I would say this would end around the first of the year, about January the first in Texas, you have used up about all the excess time you can afford to. Now, I don't mean that you're going to announce on January the first necessarily. You may have already announced, or you may not be going to announce until the first ... until the filing deadline, which is about the seventh of February, as I recall. Again, this is a matter of strategy which you have worked out in this period of free thinking and not too much pressure.

I might say this: one of the reasons for delaying active campaigning as long as I may seem to be suggesting here is simply that there's no purpose to be gained by early -- too early -- campaigning. If people are not ready to think about politics, you can't make them think about it. Now, you can say, "Well, I've got a year here to work this thing up, and I'm going to start right now. I'm going to start getting an organization together, I'm going to start raising money," and you'll find you'll waste about the first eight months of that time because nobody is quite ready to come to grips with this thing. I come to see you, and you're ... I want you to be my campaign manager in Denton County, and you like me, let's say, and you probably are going to be my campaign manager eventually. But you think well, who else is going to run, I wonder? Maybe my cousin will, or this thing may change a lot. Why, I don't

have to tell him now. So, you'll stall me probably, and you'll ... it'll probably be the first of the year before you actually accept this assignment and say "I'm ready to go." So I think that the time table is not set arbitrarily by either the incumbent or the challenger; it's set by public reaction.

Brewer: In the first phase, when a candidate or potential candidate is just going around speaking to civic clubs and things like this, would it be the job of, say, you, as a professional campaign manager, to pick and choose which clubs he should speak to and arrange for these speaking dates or do these things just sort of fall in ... fall where they may, or ...?

Hart: If the candidate is an incumbent officeholder of a fairly prominent office, he probably gets more invitations than he can handle, and ... well, the manager would have probably ... have some say so, at least generally speaking, as to which areas he should go into, what type of people ... organizations he should see. This would more or less take care of itself; it becomes more a case of elimination rather than selection. If the ... if it's a case of a challenger, or an open race in which the candidate is ... needs ... thinks he needs more exposure, more of a name, I think then you deliberately try for the right kind of engagements at the right place. This is not real hard to do. Civic clubs have an insatiable appetite for speakers; it's just ... you can't meet and eat lunch without (chuckle) somebody speaking on a topic that you may or may not be interested in. And for this reason, it's fairly

simple to the friend, the connection, the association, a friend who knows about his association's convention, and knows they need a speaker. Almost any candidate of potential statewide appeal can get these speaking engagements, maybe not exactly as he would choose nor when he would choose, but in that case, the manager and his friends would be working on...on it. The civic club type of speech...it continues during the second stage that I'm going to mention now. Let's say it's the first of...it's the first of December or the first of January, somewhere in there. The month of December is pretty well out as a campaign month because of Christmas. People are not in the mood <u>again</u> for...to talk seriously about politics.

But there's something about the turn of the year that causes people to square away and say, "Now, you were mentioning this political race--I'm ready to talk about it now." So at this stage, typically, I think the candidate would...might or might not announce. Now, I'm going to say that there's an advantage, perhaps, generally, in not announcing early, but you let it be known that you are going to run. There are various ways of doing this. You can just say, "I...I intend to run for Attorney General or Governor or...or Comptroller or whatever, and I'll make a formal announcement a little bit later." Well, the unwritten law of this thing is, as long as you're not an announced candidate, and you haven't paid your filing fee, it's still fair for you to take so-called non-political speeches at civic clubs and that type of gathering. And the people who invite you are free of criticism

for this. This seems to be the general rule. But once you have made the formal announcement and paid ... particularly, paid the filing fee and become an out-and-out candidate, then it has to be ... you have to be very cautious about the civic clubs, that type of thing .... It's not entirely out, but it has to be ... there has to be some real good reason.

Now, if you're Governor, let's say, incumbent, almost any club will accept you as a non-political speaker on almost any occasion because it's not Weldon Hart speaking -- it's the Governor of Texas who's speaking. And this is just one of the built-in advantages of being the incumbent. But by and large, the typical candidate would, in this second stage that I'm talking about, while he would be running just as ... pretty busily and really shaping up his campaign, he is still a potential candidate rather than an actual candidate, and therefore, can continue to, you might say, use the iceberg technique. He shows just a little bit of a view there of his plans, but he doesn't reveal the whole picture. Now, at that stage, I think that the manager and this staff that's shaping up and this fellow who's raising money have really got to go to work.

For one thing, we talked yesterday about the elements ... the issues of a campaign -- I think while surely there's been some discussion and thought of this already -- a man who's going to run for office surely knows at least approximately <u>why</u> he wants to run and what he's going to run on -- but at this second stage I'm

arbitrarily talking about, you begin to put those things down on paper. You are beginning lists of things he's for and things he's against and things his opponent ... opponents are for and against and what their records are and what his record is, what his strong points are and their's, his weaknesses. And you ... you get ... you plan your advertising campaign at this stage tentatively. It's going to depend, in the final analysis, on how much money you're going to be able to raise. But you do say that if we could get the money, we're going to have so many T.V. programs, we're going to have so many radio spots, we're going to have so many newspaper ads, we're going to take ... we're going to start with an ad in the weekly newspapers, we're going to let the local people take care of daily newspaper advertising since there's ... it's so expensive, and so on. You plan your so-called campaign literature pretty carefully, and preferably, you might even place some ... begin to place some orders or at least tie up the printer's shop.

The second phase of this campaign time table -- the campaign literature, so-called, meaning brochures, pamphlets, hand cards, placards, anything that's to be handed or mailed out or stuck on your automobile like bumper stickers, should be planned at this stage to say the least. Now you may not have actually ... in fact, you're probably going to have to do some printing at this stage in order to have something ready when the third, or active, phase starts, and this would be a reason for having the full team on the job as early as possible in January in my opinion. I'd like

to point out right at this stage that moving the primaries up to May and June instead of July and August upset the time clocks of Texas voters and politicians something awful because the Christmas holiday period now intervenes in the, say, approximately six-months period that we used to have to build up to the election, or the first primary; from January 1, to July 22, would be a typical span in there. Well, that's over six months, I believe. But now if you go back six months from the first part of May, it throws you back in November and October, and you've got all sorts of complications--football, Thanksgiving, Christmas, January holidays, the January 1st celebration, and so on. So, the effect has been, I think, to compress the campaigns a little bit. Instead of taking a month for a project, let's say, you take three weeks or two weeks for a phase.

But aside from that, the same things have to be done, but you do have, in the case of printing, the preparation of things that are...require some time...have a time element in them. You do have to work ahead a little bit more, possibly, do some of these things before you actually would like to do them because you're still working...you're still formulating the wording of your so-called platform. You may even still be considering and discarding or adopting so-called secondary elements of the campaign--issues. You know, presumably, the one, two, or three major issues, of course but you're still sorking on the exact approach to these things. But you do have to come to a fairly early decision on a number of

these things in order to get your literature printed.

Now, moving to stage three, which I would say would be ... it would start maybe a month and a half before the primaries; just to be saying something, I'll just say the middle of March -- first or middle of March. You've had two months in there to announce for the office and make your formal announcement by the February deadline. You have ... you know now who you're running against, you know what the field is, and you've probably spent some time exploring their records, learning all you can about those people if you didn't already know them, and now you are ready to come out in the open. You've been doing a lot of work, but it's been mostly behind the scenes. Now, you come out in the open, and conduct, say, a two months' campaign. This might be one month, it might be three months -- you understand that a lot of factors are going to determine that. A newcomer needs more time for exposure than an old hand, particularly an incumbent, so he might start three months ... he might have three months of active campaigning. The incumbent might actually not have more than a month.

Anyway, at a certain selected stage in there, a point in there in time, you have, say, a kick-off rally, a dinner or a barbecue or whatever you might choose to have. Now, usually it's your hometown, or some other place where you should have a lot of support so there'll be a good crowd and an enthusiastic showing. And this get-ready period at least gives you a push off in your race. Correspondents come to cover this opening ... campaign opening; they see people

enthusiastic, interested, and this impresses them to a certain extent with the fact that this fellow is really going to be a factor in this race, at least, that's the theory of this.

Then, the candidates start into what you might call a ... a warm-up ... no, it's not a warm-up period ... it's a period of ... of not the greatest concentration on his part, but it's a period of decidedly more than a relaxed visiting atmosphere. He's campaigning now; he announces in the newspaper each week his itinerary. He's going to certain places, he's going to make certain talks. He announces from time to time, or his publicity staff does, the names of people who are helping him. Usually, he selects a state chairman, or maybe a state steering committee. Now, this is something apart from the manager that I've been talking about. The manager is a professional or a semi-professional. He is not in this ... his name may not be known to a great many people, actually, outside the political ranks outside of the organizational ranks. As far as a public figure is concerned, he doesn't seek to be one. In fact, every time the spotlight gets on <u>him</u>, it's <u>off</u> of his candidate, so he doesn't want this; so he directs the spotlight onto his candidate. But the state chairman, if I may make a distinction in those two terms, might be a different thing. He might be a very prominent figure -- state-wide figure -- whose endorsement of a candidate, as shown by his acceptance of the chairmanship, would identify this candidate with a ... let's say, with the conservatives or with the liberals or with this, that, or the other, depending on what the candidate is seeking to demon-

strate. His ... his knowledge of politics may be good or it may not be. It really is not too important. His name, his reputation is more important than his knowledge because the know-how is going to be furnished in another way. But he does take more of a public role, much more than the manager does. The chairman will be making speeches, announcements, and as sort of a rule of thumb, I like to think of it this way. If there's something real good and pleasant that's sure to meet with universal approval that needs to be said, the candidate says it. OK there's something that may not be quite that popular, let the chairman say it. That's more or less sarcastic or satirical, but there is something to this. There are some things that need to be said on behalf of the candidate that the candidate himself should not say. This is true when ... sometimes, of complimenting a candidate highly, or bragging on him. There's a limit to what the candidate can do along that line without creating some resentment. On the other hand, there's sometimes a ... an attack made by the opposition that deserves a counter-attack, or strategy seems to call for this. But the candidate himself may not want, or perhaps, should not be the one who picks up the hatchet and throws it back. He needs a spokesman to do this. And the chairman, or the steering committee members are useful in this respect.

But by and large, it's "window dressing" -- legitimate "window dressing" -- to have a group of prominent people identified with your campaign in this way, and I would recommend it. Now, it's

not ... it's not entirely necessary. I'd rather have the professional, standard organizational crew together than to have a window-dressing crew, if you had to choose between them, because you'd be out of luck if you didn't have some real expert knowledge working for you. This is not to intimate that the candidate himself is not capable of doing these things that need to be done; he simply doesn't have time to do all of them. I'd say that Governor Shivers has the ... one of the best records of success in politics, never having been defeated in a race, and I'd say also that he has the best intuition, the best feel, for politics, the best natural rhythm for the timing of a campaign that I've ever encountered. I don't know how ... exactly how he arrives at these things, but he does. And yet, in a campaign ... in the heat of a campaign in which he is a candidate, he turns ninety per cent of the details over to the management, knowing -- or hoping -- that they will confer with him if it's really a vital decision that he should know ... he should make or should know about. And having already established a general strategy and tone of the campaign and being in a position to contribute from time to time to the building up of the campaign, he's got so many things to do that only he can do that he must have help.

It's very, very helpful to have a knowledgeable candidate. I have been in campaigns of both types where ... one where the candidate was ... would have been the best campaign manager you could have got if he wasn't running, and then I've been in campaigns

where the candidate, admittedly, was not in his element when it came to the practicalities of campaigning. And this is ... the latter situation is hard, in a way, on the manager because it puts so much more responsibility on him than he actually should be expected to have, or there's more than it's comfortable to have. If you know -- at once that you're going to make -- you as manager, are going to make an important decision, and it must be made, and the candidate is going to accept your decision without any question, you seriously ... you think a long time about that decision. It's easier, more comfortable, as I say, to be able to confer with the candidate and feel like he will give you good advice as well as your giving him good advice, you hope.

Now, during this third stage that I call active campaigning, this involves all those elements that I talked on earlier, but particularly the candidate himself making campaign tours, making perhaps some T.V. appearances, although I personally prefer the so-called short type of T.V. and radio announcements of ten seconds, twenty second, thirty seconds, a minute -- and never over five if you can get out of it -- I think it's a terrible blunder, and a terrible waste of money, for the average, typical candidate to spend ... to have a thirty-minute television program, for example. You could ... you could think of, say, Bob Hope or Bing Crosby or some more modern entertainer on television and just recall to mind what he does during a thirty minute program. He's probably on there only five minutes -- not over five minutes <u>alone</u> -- his

program is broken up, interspersed with songs and anecdotes and gags and sight-gags and jokes and ... and so far as his being up there alone exposed to public view -- a very minimum of the thirty minutes is taken up this way. And yet a man who has never been on television before in his life will spend hundreds and maybe thousands of dollars to get up there for thirty minutes and make a speech. And why he should expect people to remain tuned in to him, other than his immediate family and people who are working for him or somebody too lazy to get up and turn the knob -- I just don't understand how he expects to get his money's worth out of this. And this is ... you do have a technical problem there in that networks and stations don't like to sell less than a thirty-minute segment, and that's why most people wind up with thirty minutes. But I've always contended that you do better to give away fifteen minutes of it, or sell it to some other candidate, or just tell the station, "Well, I'm going to use the first fifteen minutes, and you can do whatever you want to with that other fifteen. I'm going to pay you for thirty." I really believe it'd be worth the money. I've never done this and don't know whether I'd have the nerve to suggest it to a candidate, actually (chuckle), or not. But, unless you have a ... a <u>real</u> attractive candidate and he breaks up his presentation with newsreel-type shots, or has other people on a panel-type presentation, I think it's deadly to have thirty minutes. This is something, though, that this ... if it's going to be done, the candidate starts doing

at this stage, making appearances over electronics media as well as getting all the newspaper publicity that he can.

The organization director and his helpers are real busy, perfecting, completing their state-wide organization, possibly, or typically, by counties. I don't think many candidates ever achieve a complete organization, that is, 254 counties. Some counties have so few votes actually that unless you happen to have a friend in that area and you know he wants to work, you don't spend too much time trying to organize that county. You devote your time to more fertile fields. It's more or less a custom that one man in an area, which comprises mostly sparsely settled counties, will take a whole block of counties, and he will deal with his friends in those various counties with whom he is accustomed to dealing on district and local matters. Then he will be the contact man for the whole area with the state headquarters. There are two or three areas in the state where this is done rather frequently.

Now, the organization must be pretty well put together by the end of this third period. It should have been pretty well along by the time the period started, but it must be completed as far as it's going to be completed by then ... by the final ... fourth and, I'd say at least, semi-final stage. The fourth stage would begin, I'd think, three weeks before election. Now, this is the time when ... through a period of time, you've been gradually converging on your campaign climax. You've been sharpening the issues. You've now got your issues stated, put forward

as clearly and concisely and effectively as you can. You may have changed two or three times. Sometimes you start out with an issue and you think you're explaining it and expressing your views on it, and you find out you're really not, that you're being misunderstood. So, you have to change your approach. You've done this at, usually, stage two or three. By the time you reach stage four, if you haven't got it done by now, you better drop it. If people are still misunderstanding you on that issue, why, you're sunk as far as that issue is concerned. You haven't got time to experiment any more, and this is true with your literature, it's true with your speaking schedule, your itinerary, it's true with your advertising schedules. You've reached the point of no return. The only thing you haven't got is the money; you're working on that right up to ... and ... up to election night and afterwards, unfortunately. But, you do have by that time a pretty good idea of what money is going to be available, and therefore, you add programs or you subtract ... take away ... cancel programs or advertising and so on.

But at approximately three weeks before the election, you just must know what you're going to do that last last three weeks and must not be deterred or side-tracked. And I have said this to the staff or campaign organization. We usually tried to have a meeting, at this exact point, of all the top-ranking brass in the campaign and say this: "Well, up to now, everybody has been free to have whatever ideas he could; we've welcomed them, and

we've considered all of them; and the ones that we've considered good are now in this plan for the last three weeks of this campaign. We don't want to hear any more ideas unless they're real good or unless an emergency situation we haven't been able to anticipate arises. But it's just not the time for any more experimentation. The time now is for implementation. The time now is to take what we plan to do and be sure it's carried through the very best possible way." Now, I don't mean by that that the manager and his assistants turn off their brains and become obsessed with the mechanics; I just mean that you...you're taking a very practical view of it, that you have not got time now to change any plans radically. Even though you might come upon a better idea, a better way of doing things, a better pamphlet idea, you haven't got time to print it and distribute it--so why waste, or take away your time and energy from distributing what you've got? That's the theory of this thing. Now, let's call that the semi-final stage.

And a part of this last stage, what you might call the final--we like to say the last week--this is the big pitch. This is where the full effect of every element of your compaign is brought to bear--ideally, that is. Your candidate is where he should be. He is saying the things he should be saying. Your material--campaign material--is in the hands of your campaign workers. It doesn't do any good in the office or in...at the printers. Your billboards are up, if you've got them. Your

T.V. and radio schedules are completed. You've got the announcements ... the spot announcements, in the hands of the stations. Your newspaper ... final newspaper schedule has already been released; it's already in the hands of the newspapers. And, you've spent all your money and a little bit more, perhaps.

And you still have to keep in mind, of course, that, especially nowadays, more so than in the past, it doesn't take nearly so long for ... to get over a message as it used to. It used to be said, in the days before radio, that it took two weeks to get word around the state of Texas. Well, it doesn't take that at all now -- it takes, maybe, two days or, sometimes, two hours, depending on the intensity of interest. If you could catch somebody listening, you can talk to him right up to election time, or even during the election day. So, you're working much closer to the election ... actual election now than they used to. At the same time, there ... there's still a limit beyond which you can't go. Time catches you. And so, you have to be prepared during this last week for sudden changes, sudden attacks, occurrences that you can take advantage of or that you need to defend against. You need to know ... you need to have all your responsible people throughout the state alerted to this thing; and when you tell them to turn it off, you don't mean that they stop letting you know what's going on. It simply means that they don't call in with a wild idea that, "Say, why didn't we do so-and-so (chuckle) two weeks ago?" Or, "Why don't we do that now?" when it's impossible to accomplish.

I would like to point out something that happened in this last Democratic primary -- first primary. I won't ... I don't know that I could name the names -- I know the general area was, oh, west of Fort Worth in that old oil belt area. I heard this story, that one candidate, who was in the lead for a legislative position, it seemed, had been a student in the University of Texas, and while he was here, he had had some hot check trouble. He had been up in the Halls of Justice a few times over these checks that he had bounced, and including one jail sentence for ... on a technical charge of fraud in that he gave an incorrect address. Well, he ... he knew about this, of course (chuckle), and he also knew -- or found out -- that his opponent knew about this. His opponent didn't want to use it. He was just the type of fellow that this didn't appeal to him, to use this type of attack; but his friends insisted that this be done because he was losing. Finally, they got this story published in the newspaper ... by the editor of the newspaper in an editorial. Well, this was only a couple or three days before the election. Now, in the old days, this would have been too late to answer. It would have been a dangerous thing, though, for the fellow who ... for the opponent because he might have created a reaction against himself because he had attacked too late. But what happened in this instance was that the boy who had been in Austin and who had this court record was prepared. He knew what he was going to do. He apparently thought all along this was going to come out, so within hours after it ... well, <u>before</u> the newspaper got out with this ad, he was informed by friends at some of the papers that the ad was

going to run. And he was on the radio ahead of the publication, explaining it, (chuckle) and in ... in a way that was very plausible. Sure, he was a poor boy; he'd been trying to go to school, to get along. And most of you maybe have had experience where you owed ... you had an overdraft. Well, it was a little bit more than an overdraft -- it was about twelve or fifteen overdrafts, and (laughter) it was more or less a way of life; but by getting to them first, he was able to pretty well nullify the effect of the charge (chuckle) when it finally came out. And that's why I say, if he'd said, "Well, it's too late," he would have been beaten perhaps. But as it was, he won. I don't know whether ... I'm not saying whether he should have won or not or how serious this incident was or the series of incidents -- that's beside the point. The point is that he <u>did</u> take advantage and was very alert and caught the ball before it hit the ground. And this is something that any candidate nowadays must remember -- that you can get your message home in a hurry. You might recall that when Gordon McLendon was running against Senator Yarborough, that campaign slopped over into the morning of the election, which is <u>quite</u> unusual. I saw a man ... a friend of mine in a filling station near my home that morning, and I said, "Let's go vote," or some such thing. He said, "Well, I want to wait and hear that ... what McLendon says in that broadcast this morning." He hadn't made up his mind; he was waiting that late to determine what he was going to do in that election.

So, the times have changed in that respect, but I don't think they've changed in <u>this</u> respect -- that you must have a plan; you must have it very carefully timed, and at a certain stage, you must concentrate on carrying out your plan, to climaxing your plan, bringing to bear all the work that has taken place over a period of weeks and months, and not be distracted by artificial issues or artificial emergencies. You ... you'll have dozens of those. People will be calling you all day and night, saying you just <u>must</u> do something about so-and-so. Well, you <u>must not at all</u> because, knowing it would detract from something that you have decided and committed yourself to as the best way to finish off this campaign, you're not going to change now unless developments out of your control require you to do so.

Now ... then ... that's my story about timing, and the reason it's so important ... or the reasons, I say, would be that, first, it makes for an orderly development of a campaign; you can't do everything at once, either early or late. You have to do things more or less in order. This is really a schedule of first things first, down through the campaign, rather than the other method of putting out the nearest fire and hoping for the best. The second thing it does, it makes for an orderly development and use of these elements of the campaign that we discussed earlier in this ... in this conversation. And a third thing it does, it ... hopefully, it brings the campaign to a climax at the proper time, which is on the day of the election.

Brewer: Mr. Hart, you are now Executive Director of the Texas Good Roads Association. What is this association, what does it do, and how did it originate?

Hart: In order to make this thing clear, I believe I'd have to go back to the origin of the highway program -- state highway program of Texas, which was ... well, I guess you would have to use the date 1917 because that's the year the Texas Highway Department was formed. And the main reason that that year was selected was that in 1916 the Federal Highway Aid Act was passed, and money was made available for building mail routes, primarily, from the federal government, provided the state had a central agency to accept and disperse this money. And this was the primary reason that the highway department was created when it was.

Now, at first the highway program was conceived of as a series of county programs. The county had always been the road-building unit. And, so, you may not be old enough -- I am -- to remember when you could be going down a highway -- a pretty good road for those days -- and all of a sudden, run into a muddy lane. It meant you'd hit the county line and that one county had got the money together to build a road ... but the next county had not. And you had a ... instead of having a highway system, you had a bunch of stretches of road and then stretches of mud and sand and whatever. So, it was realized rather early, and I believe in 1925, the Legislature acted to make Texas a state system, a State Highway Department responsibility, which was the point at which it became

a system actually, rather than a series of more or less connected county roads.

Before the Highway Department really had time to get well-established, the Depression of the '30's came on, and while a start had been made on the highway system, although ... well, actually, there'd been a good many miles built, or put together, taken over from the counties. There was nothing like the public confidence, and interest, in the Highway Department that there is today. Ross Sterling, who had been Chairman of the Highway Commission, the so-called reform commission appointed by Governor Moody, had been elected Governor in 1930. He was Governor in '31 and '32, and certainly because of his interest in highways, the Highway Department was emphasized during those years. Governor Sterling, interestingly enough, thought the state ought to have a bond issue to build highways. Others thought that this was not necessary because we had a gasoline tax, or rather, a motor fuels tax -- it includes things besides gasoline -- and a vehicle registration fee, and that we could have a "pay as you go" program if it was properly administered.

At any rate, when Governor Sterling was defeated for re-election and Mrs. Ferguson came in for her second term -- now, as I say, it was during Depression days, and the state was broke from many demands for relief, for old age pensions, for all sorts of things, Confederate pensions -- many things other than highways; and it was believed, and I believe publicly stated by either the Governor or Governor Jim, that perhaps the State of

Texas should take a highway building holiday and put off any further development of roads until some later date and use this money for more ... for purposes more of an emergency nature.

This didn't meet with the approval of several different groups. Obviously, among those were the highway builders, the contractors and suppliers and machinery salesmen and so on, who made money from highway activity ... construction activity. There were also a good many other people who didn't agree with this theory, who felt that this was an emergency, that a huge state like Texas needed roads so badly, and that it would be a terrible mistake to interrupt the building program. On the contrary, it should be accelerated; and the quicker this was done, the quicker Texas would get out of the ... this Depression.

Well, it was a serious enough situation that the people who had self-interests and the people who had made it a public interest were convinced in sufficient numbers that something other than the legislative-administrative-executive line ... chain of command ... should be brought to bear, to whet public opinion. And, so, a name was polished up and brought forward again that had been in existence for a number of years, back to, say, 1913 at least -- the Texas Good Roads Association, which was formulated originally as sort of a Gulf Coast regional road booster organization but had been more or less inactive for some years. The people who.... who had the idea of reviving, or restoring, this association decided that the man who ... to head it was Judge Huggins, who was a lawyer, a prominent Houston

lawyer, and was also editor of the Houston Chronicle -- W. O. Huggins. He as ... both as editor and a private citizen, he was very ... had been very much interested in highway building. He was a highway booster, and, oh, a prominent man both in Houston and throughout the state, and a man of integrity and character, who ... well, seemed to have been the "man of the hour" so far as this movement was concerned.

He was persuaded to become President ... first President of this new or revived association. He accepted with some reservations, or some stipulations, which are still the heart of ... of this association .... They can be summarized to the effect that this must be a genuine public association and not a tool of any industry or combination of industries; that it'd have to be open to private citizens as well as people who had an interest ... a commercial interest in roads, and that the private citizens should always be in control of this organization, that it should never fall into the hands of any industry -- oil, road building, machinery, whatever. This stipulation was accepted by the sponsors -- and gladly. If it hadn't been such a desperate time, they might have bargained a little bit; they'd say, "Well, maybe we ought to keep a little control here," but they needed so badly some help from the public, they needed the public awareness of what was involved here to the extent that ... and they had a feeling, I'm sure, that the judge was right -- that the taint of self-interest would defeat the purpose

of this association. At any rate, the stipulation was accepted, and it remained in effect in the constitution ... in effect, in essence, and there has never been any problem as far as I can tell in reading back through any old minutes and old records of this association. And I know today -- I've been with the association a year -- there is no problem. No association, no industry group or association attempts unduly to influence the road association. They accept it for what it is, and they subdue or submerge their various individual interests into one overriding issue, which is, stated simply, retain all highway-user revenues for highways.

Now, actually, this situation does not prevail -- it never has, in its entirety, because in the first place, one-fourth of the gasoline tax goes to public schools to begin with. For another thing, agricultural interests are exempt from payment of the tax if the gasoline is used off the highways -- off-highway use. You have aviation gasoline, and now we have boat gasoline -- marine gasoline -- exempt. The unclaimed refunds are turned over to the highway department for building boat ramps and otherwise improving the lakes and streams for the use of boaters.

Every session, somebody else has an idea of being exempt from the gasoline tax. Last session and the summer before, it was transit ... city transit companies, the argument being that these buses never run outside the city limits and yet they pay

a lot of gasoline tax that they shouldn't have to. I think a taxicab company could possibly make a similar claim. Some municipal cars could make the same one. As a matter of fact, some citizens I know in Austin virtually never drive their car outside the city ... the city limits. So, we take the position, the Texas Good Roads Association does, that this is not exactly an attempt to assess to the penny how many cents you owe for using the highways. This is a method of financing; this is a tax to finance the highway system; therefore, there should be no <u>further</u> exemptions. The word "further" is used so you won't disturb school people and the farmers with the idea that you're going to try to take away the exemptions. As a matter of fact, the teachers are interested in ... in this one-fourth of the motor fuels tax only incidentally. So the people who should be interested are the taxpayers in the local school district because this money is ... goes into the available school fund, and it is distributed back to the local school districts on a per capita basis. Some of us think that perhaps this should be an average daily attendance basis rather than per capita since we now have a system whereby out of one pocket we take money and give it to the schools on the number of people we counted as being in that district in the census, and out of the other pocket, we take some money and give it on the basis of how many of them are actually going to school. And it seems that both should be handled the same way and that the preferable way is average

daily attendance. This would not affect, of course, the amount of money. It might make a better ... for a better distribution of the money.

Now, this is the primary goal and objective and responsibility of the Texas Good Roads Association -- to preserve highway funds against what we call diversion or dispersion. By dispersion, we simply mean breaking down these funds and sending them out in so many little packages that the impact is entirely lost, or virtually lost. We think this is an argument against taking part of the highway fund and distributing it to cities. By the time you get through dividing this money among some nine hundred municipalities, the amounts get rather small -- or 254 counties -- the amounts get rather small; and you're actually reverting to the situation you had in the beginning which was rapidly found to be unsatisfactory, of putting use of these funds on a local -- strictly local basis. This pretty much defeats the idea of a system.

There are all sorts of arguments about what the state does for the cities now and what the cities do. Well, it's true that most of the gasoline revenue is generated in cities -- say, seventy-five per cent of it, perhaps. But on the other hand, the state already has constructed inside of the city limits, and maintains inside of the city limits, highway extensions that carry fifty-three per cent of the state ... of the city's entire traffic load. So, you can teach it flat or teach it round,

depending on which side you're on at a given moment. But our ... the Texas Good Roads Association feels that, generally speaking, that the proper way to do this is not to deny aid to the cities, but to let it come through a coordinated program from the Highway Department. We are for, on record as recently as June the twenty second (1966), as urging the Highway Department to devote more funds to cities in accordance with the need. We think that highway funds should be distributed according to the need and on ... strictly on engineering and geographical bases, rather than political.

And if you ... now, I'm saying all this to make it clear what we do. It's actually, in a sense, not very much -- we don't have a great variety of programs going. But on the other hand, a lot of work is done on the ramifications of the thing I just mentioned. The Texas Highway Department enjoys a rather fortunate public image. I think there are several reasons for this. I think the system we are using has something to do with it. I think the availability of revenue, which comes through the dedication of these funds, the non-dispersion and non-diversion of them, has something to do with it. I think most importantly, the real good job that the Highway Department has done over a period of years without scandal, without any evidence of widespread waste or bad judgment even, is the most important thing.

All of this adds up to an attitude of public confidence, which in turn is responsible for legislative confidence. I think

the Legislature of Texas has been very statesman-like in its dealings with the Highway Department, at least within my memory. So have the Governors of Texas. Their main principle is leave highways alone; they're doing all right -- just don't ... just keep it a ... the program going as it is. Now, this would not prevail if homefolks were dissatisfied, if they thought that the Highway Department was, by and large, giving them a bad deal or if large numbers of people thought that somebody in the Highway Department was putting some money in his pocket or that there was a lot of funny business going on about contracts. But, this attitude does not exist. An air of confidence exists .... Now, this is another place that the Good Roads Association comes in. It's part of the conceived duties of this organization to interpret to the public what's going on in the road business so far as the state system is concerned. It's also ... would be the duty or responsibility of this association to tell the Highway Department that, "You're out of line with public ... you're out of step with public sentiment here," or "We criticize you for this particular approach, and if you don't change it pretty quick, we're going to tell the people about it." We're sort of in the middle between these two things.

And, at this time, and I think most of the time in the past, there has been a very fine working relationship between the Highway Department and the Good Roads Association to the point that some people identify the Good Roads Association as a branch of

some sort of the Highway Department. Maybe we act like that on occasion because we're great admirers of the Highway Department, but this is not true -- we have no ... absolutely no official or legal connection. The Good Roads Association is a private ... privately financed membership organization, operating under an educational charter ... non-profit educational charter, which has been in effect since 1932. This educational thing works two ways -- to our members, and to the Legislature and the Governor, the administration.

In one sense, we are a lobby. I register as a lobbyist, interested in taxes and roads, under the Texas Lobby Registration Act. We would like to think (I guess most lobbyists do) that we're a little bit more than a lobby -- we're also a source of information that's as reliable as we with our human frailties can make it -- about what's really going on, what the real issues are, here, to blow the whistle on people who, we think, are destroying the balance or attempting to destroy the balance of this program which is one of its great assets. In other words, all kinds of roads -- we can't afford to do without any of them, and the cities do need help on the streets, particularly the so-called arterial streets which lead into and away from these great freeways which the state has built through cities and even greater interstate freeways, with the federal government paying ninety per cent of the costs and the State the remainder, so there is no expense whatever to the city or the county even in buying the

right of way. And the state maintains all these roads.

The state has some sixty-seven thousand miles designated as part of the highway system. Not quite all of these are built; about sixty-four thousand are in use. But it costs in the neighborhood of seventy million dollars a year to maintain those sixty-four thousand miles or a little over a thousand dollars a mile on the average. And this is something else that I think the Good Roads Association is called on to do -- to keep reminding people that roads are strictly perishable. You can't build a highway from here to Waco, and say, "Well, we're through with that. (chuckle) Got a good road. Now we can turn our attention to something else." You've got to watch it almost day by day, and Mr. Greer -- DeWitt Greer -- the great state highway engineer, recognized internationally as probably the best in all-round ability -- said, "It's the height of foolishness to build a good highway and then let it deteriorate, not maintain it; this is wasteful."

Another thing that people have a hard time grasping -- I do, as a matter of fact -- is that a highway, to a certain extent, is expendable and at the end of a certain period of years, you've got to build the darned thing over. But this is not ... doesn't mean you had an inferior highway, it doesn't mean it wasn't well-constructed, it doesn't mean that you haven't gotten your money's worth maybe many times over out of it; it's just been used up like you use up your car and have to buy another one. So this

is something that the Texas Highway Department stays right on top of. This is one of the reasons that we have a better highway system than, I'd say, most of the states and probably as good as any of them, and we ... in our more expansive moments we say the best in the world, and it may be, overall. I say you could go visiting, and not too far from the Texas borders, and find exactly what I'm talking about, and you could explore the political situation in those states and find it's not nearly so desirable as the one here.

So, the Texas Good Roads Association is sponsored and supported by people who, regardless, or in spite of, their own selfish or particular interests are united in this feeling of sort of a dedication to the principle of highway operation. It's a principle that's under fire now from many directions -- straying from the highway-user concept that we have here to the total-transportation concept. This is popular in Congress; it's popular in some of the Eastern states where they have tremendous public transit problems which we, as yet, don't have in Texas. We are going to have, but we haven't quite reached the stage, where there is a greater need perhaps for financial support for rapid transit, such as mass transportation facilities in New Jersey or maybe in New York -- I don't know -- than for highways, especially freeways. To say the very least, the people who sell transit transportation equipment think there's a greater need, and they're having a great deal of influence right now over the thinking. And this thinking simply is that transportation in all its facets

should be regarded as one problem -- one great problem, and that if you carry this to the ultimate extreme, that all the revenues from these different phases should be put together and that the appropriations should be made to this general purpose, and then you break it down, divide it up among the different forms of transportation in accord with what the head bureau man thinks should be done.

Highway people of the traditional stripe of Texas ... of which Texas is full, being so recently a rural ... primarily a rural state, don't agree with this concept, and for that reason, we're a little bit leery of this transportation department which the President has called for and which probably will be passed -- a new department of Cabinet level in which all of the various forms of transportation will be put. Now, if the President's announced aims and desires and reasons for making this combination are carried out, it's okay; it's logical to bring together some thirty-six, I believe, different agencies or parts of agencies which now have to do with various forms of transportation.

On the other hand, if ... if the total-concept people seize complete control of this thing, we would have a case of being rationed on the amount of ... the number of roads we could build, if you want to go to the ultimate extreme on this thing; at least to the extent that the amount of federal aid that would be supplied for such a purpose. And this is an important factor -- forty-two per cent of the highway revenues for Texas the last two or three

years have come from the federal government. A tremendous amount of it, of course, is for the Interstate program where the federal government is paying for most -- for ninety per cent -- of the cost. Texas has more miles of that type designated than any other state (3,027), has more built at this time (1,800) than any other state, and therefore we've had a big pile of money ... federal money, spent.

You might point out, though, that, first, federal aid, as I said in the beginning, for highways has been in existence for fifty years. It's not a new program. A second thing is that since 1956, it has been a highway-user tax program. In that year, Congress created the Federal Highway Trust Fund and put into it the proceeds of the gasoline tax and various other things relating to automobiles, and all the federal money since that time has come out of this fund. And so they operate now on the same basis as Texas. The trust fund has an automatic expiration date, when the interstate highway system is completed -- which was supposed to be 1972, but we're not going to be able to do that because of inflation and extra expenses. They're either going to have to put more money into the fund, or they're going to have to have a stretch-out of the building.

I mention these things simply because we do have, in the federal government, at this time, somewhat of the same viewpoint towards the proper source and use of road funds that we have in

the state, but there're also strong forces which are operating in a little bit different direction now. We ... the Texas Good Roads Association doesn't take a belligerent attitude on these things -- we just take a stubborn attitude. (chuckle) We try to drag our feet as much as possible on any trend toward a different system from the one we use. I don't mean that we insist on the <u>details</u> being the same, year to year, but this principle of the system we think is good and should be retained until we're positive we've found something better to take its place.

The Good Roads Association is not a big money organization. It operates on a budget of approximately seventy thousand dollars a year, which is not much considering that probably at least half of that is used up in postage and printing and we only have three people. And yet, I believe you could find, among the knowledgeable people around the legislature, the Capitol, that have been here a long time, that it's an effective ... has been an effective organization. It has some <u>real</u> prominent people in it, people who are ... can influence their local representatives and, at least, can get our story heard. So, in a way, it's a rather interesting type of thing. I think it's more of a Chamber of Commerce-type of operation than a trade association operation, although for convenience we're usually classified as a trade association.

Oral History Collection

Mr. Weldon Hart

Interviewer: Dr. E. Dale Odom February 6, 1967

Mr. Hart: I'd like to comment...to make a few additional comments on some of the things that Governor Shivers talked about today. One of these concerns the so-called "teachers pay battle" in 1953. I don't have anything in particular to add to what he said about it, as far as it developed. But rather, I want to comment on the aftermath--after the regular session in '53, when, as you said, a teachers pay raise bill was passed but failed eventually because there was no money to pay it, and there couldn't be any agreement reached on the tax to finance it. After that session, by a sort of a gradual process, the Governor and the Teachers Association reached a sort of an agreement that they would try to pursue this thing to some more satisfactory conclusion for both sides. And I just wanted to tell you what that device was. A three-man committee was appointed, without fanfare, to try to select a committee to work on this problem. This was the first step--who was going to make the suggestions for a compromise? I was, at that time, Chairman of the Texas Employment Commission, and Governor Shivers asked me to sit in on this conference. The other two people were Dr. Edgar...J. E. Edgar, who was Commissioner of Education, and Mr. Charles Tennyson, who was the executive head of the Texas State Teachers Association. We met over a period of, oh, several weeks, as I recall, and all very harmoni-

ous--there was no acrimony at all with this. But there was...it was a matter of finding twenty-five people that all sides could agree would make a fair committee to formulate a compromise program. And I...I think we finally divided the places between the Teachers Association and the Governor and the Education Agency in some manner; I don't recall the exact details. But each party had a veto power over the others' selections, so we finally wound up with a very strong, very satisfactory twenty-five-man committee. They had to be pretty broadminded people, or they couldn't have stood this test that we gave. And this committee did...was appointed by the Governor, and I think he announced at the time that this was a committee which...in the selection of which he had had the help of the Teachers Association. And they conducted a series of meetings and recommended both the amount that was finally voted for the teachers--$400, as I remember--and a formula of local and state support, going back to the twenty-eighty, which was the theoretical basis in the beginning--which, as Governor Shivers said, had sort of strayed away to about an eighty-five-fifteen contribution by the state. This and also some other adjustments were put in which the school people thought would be helpful, and the package was sent back to the Governor. It was, you might say, a turnkey job; the salary scale, the responsibility for financing, and the exact amount to be financed. I believe, as I recall, the committee didn't attempt to tell the Governor where the money should come from, or the state contribution; that was his...entirely within his scope and a matter for the legislature. But they did reach agreement, and the Governor then took this report and called a special session. As I remember, he recommended it <u>in toto</u>

to the legislature.

Odom: Just as it was.

Hart: Just as it was, along with his recommendation for the financing of it, and without too much trouble, or controversy, this was adopted by the legislature. And the teachers got their...about two-thirds of the amount that they wanted. Now...

Odom: Was this a new wrinkle in financing, or rather, in handling something like this, do you think, in state government, or is this a rather traditional kind of thing, anyway?

Hart: It's not typical, to say the least, and that's the only occasion I know of it's being used in exactly that format in Texas during the Shivers administration, at least. It's not unusual for the Governor to seek advice of committees or to appoint people to make recommendations to him. But this was an unusual committee in that it was tri-partite, you might say. They had all...three different viewpoints represented on it. That's about all I wanted to say about that at this time.

A second thing I'd like to comment on was your question and his comment about what happens or how do you develop such a program as he launched in '53, by appointing a sort of a study committee on coordinating higher education, which, as of 1967, they've developed it in a board which has many of the attributes that he suggested in the beginning. Of course, that's two administrations removed from Shivers. And that's about the history of all of these things. I just wanted to comment that this is not unusual. It takes ten or fifteen years for some of these ideas to bear fruit, actually. You start off, as in the case of the college coordinating board, with a lot of built-in animosity

towards the idea. The educators, the presidents, and the boards of the various institutions might, in the abstract, say, "Yes, we should have coordination." But when you get to implementing it and they see that they are, to some extent, going to lose some of the jurisdiction that they might have had...it's not purely a selfish motive; they just don't know how it's going to work. This is something new, and they just... they can be hurt by it. And it's not simply that they won't...are not going to be the final word, but they...it's human nature to trust your own ability to get what you want rather than turning this measure over to a board which may or may not agree with you on what you need.

Odom: And they're afraid of who might be on it or who might control it, too, aren't they?

Hart: It's just almost a parallel to the comments which followed the Governor's recommendation this year of a revision, a rewriting of the Texas Constitution. Very few people will disagree with his statement that the Constitution needs rewriting, but the next question is, "Who's going to rewrite it?" (laughter) And I've heard the comment many times, "Well, if I could appoint the people who are going to do this rewriting, I'd be for it." (chuckle) "But I don't know who it's going to be, so therefore, I'm afraid of it." And, I think this is a natural reaction and inevitable. And that's why it takes so long to gradually answer the fears, resolve the doubts of the affected people, and I don't think you ever reach perfection, but, gradually, you overcome objections by logic and experience. And I think that this was a good way to start out. First, the Governor made the recommendation for a college coordinating board. The legislature wasn't quite ready to go on that, but they did

go so far as to say, "We're going to try it out and test it a couple of years and formulate this temporary board." It had another name; I've forgotten what the name was.

Odom: You mean, this...Committee on the Commission on Higher Education...a Committee on...well, I don't know whether it was a committee. I can't recall.

Hart: Yes. Anyway, it was understood that their job was temporary--a two-year job--and that their principal assignment was to formulate and recommend to the next session of the legislature a permanent form of a coordinating board, which they did and which was adopted in the form of the Texas Commission on Higher Education, which has since been replaced in turn, mainly, I think, because the board gradually became subject to some of the same pressures that they were set up to guard against. (chuckle)

Odom: Yes, so I've heard.

Hart: And so, I don't know whether you can ever get completely away from that human element or not, but they didn't have, probably, enough authority to act. They didn't have as much authority, at least, as the present board. And that again is a matter of opinion, whether they ought to or not. It won't work without it; I'll put it that way. The third thing I'd like to comment on briefly--he brought up the cross-filing case of 1952. I think maybe I covered this in my remarks...

Odom: You may...I think you probably did.

Hart: I just want to add one thing--that...and just sort of a general comment about many of the things that have been written or said about Governor Shivers in 1952, or his participation in the Eisenhower campaign.

The people who didn't approve of this, and don't approve of it, have been inclined, I think, to believe...or they say they believe that all of the events of '51-'52, were part of a carefully considered, planned plot.

Odom: Premeditated.

Hart: And, to the contrary, I was there (chuckle), and I told him once... Governor Shivers once that if he did know all these things he was going to do, he could sure save me a lot of concern and worry because I didn't know from day-to-day what we were going to do and that I had a suspicion that he didn't know. And I'm...I'm almost positive--as near as I can possibly be--that he didn't even know about this cross-filing amendment that was offered on the Senate floor. It wasn't considered in committee.

Odom: It wasn't.

Hart: It was just voted; it was approved, added to the election code. And there it was. And, actually, very little was thought about it at the time. Very little concern was expressed by anybody until the next year, then, it turned into a certain advantage for the Democrats for Eisenhower campaign and then became a very bad thing with people who didn't... weren't a part of the...

Odom: You say...said a while ago that you thought that this was some of the old Texas Regular residue.

Hart: I...I'm just speculating here.

Odom: Oh, as far as that goes, you're just speculating?

Hart: I'm almost sure that the Senator who introduced this amendment didn't write it and that it came from some of his friends and constituents. And I knew some of his friends and constituents were part of the other group, which in '44, had become identified as the Texas Regulars because

they fought against the renomination of Roosevelt. And I...I think--I'm not sure about this--I seem to remember that I have verified this thing in more recent years and even to the extent of the man...name of the man who did write it, but I wouldn't want to put that on record until I can refresh my memory some way.

Odom: Okay.

Hart: But it did go in and come out with a minimum of fanfare, considering the nature of importance. That's the extent of my comments on that at this time. I would like to make one final general comment about this whole conversation today. You asked a very shrewd, intelligent question, I thought, when you said...brought up this matter, or this impression that you had and others had that '53, '55...the sessions along that period were not as eventful or as colorful as some had been in past years and have been since.

Odom: It doesn't appear to me that they were.

Hart: I have a theory about this, that I think you could check...Congress... the record of Congress at this particular time, or the whole general climate of the political situation in the United States. This seemed to me to have been a period of more or less the status quo. Here there were things like the teachers' salary fight. There was the fight with the County Judges and Commissioners in '51. There's always something that comes up. But it was not a period when people were moving out with new, fresh ideas, new demands, or overwhelming new problems. We were...the Eisenhower administration, the Eisenhower years are often referred to as sort of a mark-time period, usually in an effort to downgrade President Eisenhower. (chuckle)

Odom: Yes.

Hart: I don't think that this necessarily follows at all. The Eisenhower rebellion, if you want to call it that, of '52, I think was indicative of an attitude on the part of the people. They didn't want...they'd had enough changes for a while, that they wanted a rest period when they absorbed and digested some of this stuff, and they demanded that this happen. And, politicians are very sensitive to this sort of thing. Even if they don't put it into words, they know that the time has come to move forward; they know when the time has come to mark time. And this was just that sort of period.

Odom: You think that this, then, affected...this was the case in Texas politacs as well.

Hart: Right. I think, also, it was the type of man that Shivers was, the type of administrator. He was conservative. He was not reactionary to the extent of his opponents' convictions.

Odom: No, he wasn't reactionary.

Hart: In fact, I expect you could go back into his spending record and prove that he was liberal in that...on a percentage-wise basis, not in astronomical dollar terms, like we have today, but in percentage of increase in things like he mentioned--hospitals, prisons, higher education.

Odom: I was impressed with that...

Hart: But percentage-wise, he moved the Texas responsibility, the state responsibility, upward.

Oral History Collection

Mr. Weldon Hart

Interviewer: Dr. E. Dale Odom July 3, 1967

Place of Interview: Austin, Texas

Dr. Odom: On July 3, 1967, E. Dale Odom interviewing Mr. Weldon Hart in his office at the Vaughn Building in Austin, Texas.

Mr. Hart, I thought I would ask you first how you came to go to work for Governor Jester in his office back in 1949 as his press secretary, what your function was, and also about your duties?

Mr. Hart: Dale, the fact that I went to work for Governor Jester in September of 1948, was one of a series of what I would call coincidences, or accidents or strokes of fate that seem to have directed me since I despondently decided, after great travail, to leave the newspaper business. I had been sports editor and later capitol bureau chief for the Austin American Statesmen for a good many years. In the summer of 1948, I was back on the sports staff and Governor Jester, unexpectedly, as far as I was concerned, asked me to start to work for him as his press secretary. Actually there's no such title in the governor's office. There wasn't then and there isn't now, but there is usually some staff member who has the title of maybe executive secretary or executive assistant who carries out the duties of the press secretary along with other duties. In this case, Governor Jester felt that he was...that he needed a press secretary or someone to look after the information phase of his office better than it had been looked after before. Actually he had no press secretary. Bill McGill, who was the executive secretary, was attempting to carry out the duties

of informing the...keeping the press informed. He simply didn't have the time to do what he should have done, and he was the first to admit it and the first to encourage me to come to work. Probably the reason that I was singled out for this purpose was that I had been active in political writing for some years and had other sports...not only as a sports columnist but as a daily columnist on the editorial page. I also had covered some campaigns including Governor Jester's first campaign...or part of it...and he was familiar with my work in that field. However, I think the real tie between us was probably sports. Governor Jester was a great sports fan, particularly baseball, and he knew me for that reason more than he did because I had wrote some politics. Anyway, he did issue this invitation, and I thought about it at length and finally accepted it on a strictly two-year basis, I thought. That was the agreement with Governor Jester -- that he was entering his second two-year term, and he would not run for re-election; he would retire in Austin and would probably go into either the radio or newspaper business, or both. Of course, this appealed to me. I thought I should break away from what seemed like a rather limited situation on a local paper where I had gone about as far as I was going in the foreseeable future. The fact that Governor Jester lived only eight months longer was...I guess the first big accident...accidental occurrence that changed my plans. In other words, this wiped out any prospects of going to work for Governor Jester in the newspaper or radio field.

But when I went to work for Governor Jester, my primary duty involved information from the Governor's office and a restoration of contacts with the...particularly with the capitol press room. It's just natural that the capitol correspondents are a little critical of the head man,

whether he be President or Governor. And they're inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt in most instances, but it's also a popular indoor sport to complain about not being able to get information they want -- when they want it. And I set myself to that task. And to some extent, I believe I achieved it. I think we improved our relations with the press, considerably.

From September the first until Governor Jester's death, on July eleventh the following year -- that would be 1949 -- other duties gradually devolved upon me, including the writing of a little bit of stuff for the Governor's speeches and press statements, certainly and so on. I also had to help Mr. McGill on special projects which he would assign me on... The legislative session of 1949, was quite lively and, I think, pretty significant, in that this was the year in which the Gilmer-Aikin Bills passed establishing a new day in the public school support in Texas; also the Colson-Briscoe Act which released psychologically and to some extent financially established the Farm to Market Road Program in Texas; creation of the Youth Council; certain reforms of the prison and mental hospital system. These were among the things I recall offhand that we dealt with in 1949 with some success. I recall that at the beginning of that session we made up a list of...seemed to me like it was forty-eight or fifty projects which the governor endorsed or called for in his message, and at the end of the session we were able to claim about forty-five of them.

Nearly all of them had been accomplished in one form or another, not necessarily <u>exactly</u> as he called for them. Not everyone thought this

was good because this involved a great deal of money to the extent that whereas we went into the session with a cash balance, estimated at about ninety million dollars, as I recall; at the finish we didn't have enough to adjourn and still get the required bills on the books. So Governor Jester vetoed the second half of the eleemosynary bill--that's what we called the state hospital bill at the time, and it was a separate bill. Later the legislature formed the habit of passing one general appropriation bill. In 1949, they had judiciary, eleemosynary, state departments, higher education, and legislative bills, I believe five separate appropriation bills--though it might not be exactly the right nomenclature, but they were split up in these different sections. And by vetoing the second year of the state hospital or eleemosynary appropriation, Governor Jester freed enough funds to allow the comptroller to certify all the other spending bills which existed. This left, of course, a hole in the future financial prospects of the state quite similar to the one we face on a greater scale now, in 1967, because we now will have to have a special session to raise the second-year appropriation for all state-supported institutions. Then it was only for the second year of the state hospital program; however, it still required a special session.

Governor Jester did not live to call this session. This fell to the lot of his successor who had been lieutenant governor. This was Shivers who became governor in July and called the session...special session for the following February 1st, 1950. I might just say in passing there in anticipation of that point in my discussion, that he did...Governor Shivers did succeed in passing an adequate tax bill and appropriation bill, adequate for that day and certainly much better than it had ever

been before. You never do catch up on these things -- you never do any more than catch up; you sometimes don't do that. But you never get ahead, and therefore every few years you hear that the state hospitals are in terrible condition and need a lot more money, and this is probably true. However, if you would go back to 1949 and early 1950, and read some of the accounts of the newspaper correspondents Governor Shivers encouraged to go on a special tour of all the state hospitals, you would learn that things were so much worse then. It was pretty primitive compared to today which might be called merely inadequate, perhaps, or insufficient.

Now, going back to Governor Jester, a lot of the things that happened during those eight months are quite vivid in my memory since I was impressed by the fact that I was working in the governor's office. However, I doubt whether any of it was of much significance. Governor Jester was an easy-going fellow to work for. He was not demanding; he was very appreciative; he was a very warm-natured person. He liked practically everyone and wanted everyone to like him. This was perhaps somewhat of a weakness for a chief executive, in that there's just always going to be some people that don't like you when you're in that position. He never reconciled himself to that fact. Almost to... I'd say to the end of his days he was still hoping that he could avoid at least any personal rancor in his relations with other people.

He had...this was also a plus factor for him, in that he had some very close, warm friends because of it. As I say, it probably was a weakness in that sometimes he might not have been as emphatic as he should have been in taking a stand on issues. But by and large I'd say the

last year of his administration was more satisfactory to him than the first two years had been, in the sense that he felt that he was at least satisfying himself a little bit better with his accomplishments and receiving a great deal of credit for it that he hadn't received before. I think this would be...

Odom: You had something to do with that, you think?

Hart: I hope so. I think I did, but I'm not boasting about it. It was simply a matter of...almost a mechanical matter of getting information from the governor's office to the press, and in doing that you have to be careful so you don't give out confidential information that you don't want or you can't afford to have printed for some reason, as premature releases. You also got to watch yourself in being interviewed by the press -- the press secretary does get interviewed...you might not call it that but you do. The President's press secretary is regularly grilled on television and otherwise. The governor's secretary doesn't have quite that exposure but nevertheless...

Odom: It's more informal then?

Hart: That's right. A correspondent gets you aside now and then and tries to pump you. And I will have to say that I did go a long way with the correspondents in giving them confidential information and asking them not to print certain parts of it; and as far as I know, was never double-crossed or crossed up on this. I had the advantage there of having worked very closely with these people as one of them. It wasn't too much of a task for a person with my background, although I had some rough moments...a series of them. One I recall that was probably the most significant happened real early. It was already

underway when I went to the governor's office. The run-off between Lyndon Johnson and Coke Stevenson for the Senate -- United States Senate -- had just taken place, but the result had not been determined and wasn't for about two weeks, even after September first. It wasn't until after the State Democratic Convention certified Johnson with an eighty-seven vote lead that this race reached a state of uneasy settlement. There was still a bunch of steps to go but as far as certification was concerned, as far as state government was concerned, that was just about it. So we had...I had to make a decision. I found out that one candidate or the other, I've forgotten which, called on the governor at the governor's mansion one night and that later the other one called and came on over, and all this was totally confidential, but I released it to the capitol press.

Odom: That both of them had called?

Hart: That both of them had called. This created quite a stir of various proportions. One, particularly, involved a correspondent who knew half of the story but didn't know the other half but thought he ought to have an exclusive on the first...on the half he knew and also have the other information. I did have some rather unpleasant...let's say tense moments over that, but nothing of a permanent nature. And I think in retrospect I probably was right to release this information. It was just too hot to hold.

Odom: Who was angry with you, or was there anyone angry about it?

Hart: Oh, the only one who was upset -- he wasn't exactly angry, but he called it to my attention rather forcefully (chuckle) -- was the correspondent who had called me and said, "I understand that Coke Stevenson

or Lyndon Johnson" -- I believe it was Coke Stevenson -- "has been to see the Governor. Is this true? Can you verify this?" Well, I not only verified that, but I verified that the other fellow had been also. And I told this man, but I also told everybody else, and he thought I had violated his confidence by using information he'd given me as a tipoff to start my own investigation. This was a close question... I'll grant you it was a close question. But this is just a typical experience that you have when you're trying to protect everyone. The question is, "When do you allow an exclusive story to be written about the governor's office or the governor if you know it? And when do you pass along the information if you know that the exclusive story is being worked up?" I tried to follow the rule of thumb that if the story is one that the reporter was developing on his own, and if it wasn't a part of the day's news...the mainstream of the day's news that he could have all the exclusives he could muster, and I would give him information about it but not release it to anyone else. I didn't think that the Senate race at that time fell under the guise of private initiative. I thought it was just a compelling current story, and anything released from the governor's office about it should go to everyone. In fact, everyone -- all the correspondents -- had asked us both generally and privately to let them know...let them know if anything did develop. So this was just one of those things there's no real answer to.

Odom: Did the thing that you concentrate on here as the press secretary... is it what you find that the newspaper reporters are most interested in, or do you sort of look over what news you have and try to concentrate on it yourself?

Hart: I think that it's the latter more than the former in that the...You don't have to release what they're interested in. They'll ask you those questions. But there are some mostly routine releases that come out of the governor's office -- appointments, clemencies, this, that and the other, resignations, trips that the governor is going to take, invitations that he has received or turned down, those everlasting eternal proclamations of special days, weeks, months. Incidentally, I consider my greatest single, individual contribution to good government was that I arbitrarily changed the procedure on "Onion Week" and "Alfalfa Month" and so on. It used to be the subject of an official proclamation in the governor's office which had to be cleared through the Secretary of State and filed as a permanent state record in the archives. We changed to what we call the official memorandum and worked up a special seal with ribbons on it, and this whole thing looked a lot like a proclamation, and nobody ever remarked the difference, so far as I know, but it did eliminate the permanent official status of this piece of paper. I think this took a tremendous load off of the Secretary of State and also off archives space. At least I consider that a worthwhile contribution.

Odom: A press secretary, then, has a chance perhaps, to influence policy to some degree, doesn't he, by what emphasis he may choose to place on certain issues, on certain things that you may decide to release or would you say that's true?

Hart: I think that would be true to some extent. You have to qualify that a little bit in that you pretty well can find that what actually happened or what the governor actually said or what he did, but you do have a

certain area of choice there. Sometimes it is a close question whether you leave something out altogether, or emphasize it, or report it routinely; you could have a little choice there. I think the greatest influence on policy, though, would be your conversations with the governor and with the press, both ways, maybe unconsciously. You shape policy by the information you carry back and forth between the two. You give the governor some tips as to what you think precedent is. He may make statements or take positions in that area that he wouldn't otherwise if you hadn't told him this. On the other hand, you can ask the press or tip the press off to the fact that the governor is going to do, or may do certain things. You are also able to explain to him, if you're on the right confidential basis with the small press room, you can explain some actions of the governor, sometimes put him in a little better light, perhaps, than would have been otherwise and maybe than they actually should be, if you're...well...let's say...willing to take the time and trouble to do.

Odom: How much influence do you think that you had on Governor Jester in shaping of his ideas or plans?

Hart: I can't say that I had very much because for one thing the time was very short in which I had an opportunity to. I never deliberately set out to do so. In fact, I was pretty green at this business at the time. I think that I had a hand in, oh, a couple of decisions he made. I know I had a hand in one that happened in the first week or two I worked there, and I'm not sure now if I was right at all, but I was instrumental... I was one of a number of people who urged him to support the Democratic ticket without reservation instead of doing it half-heartedly as he was inclined to do. He wasn't really very enthusiastic about Mr. Truman.

Odom: He was a Dixiecrat, then?

Hart: To some extent. And he had some real good friends who were Dixiecrats who put a lot of pressure on him personally...I mean friendship pressure. And he really...Governor Jester accepted quite a bit of their philosophy about that. However, he was most reluctant to break with the Democratic party, in a sense, and he did not do so and in fact, probably went too far under prodding from me and others, in going along without any particular show of independence or defiance or at least resentment to some of the things that he didn't agree with the President on. I think, overall, it was best for him to stick with the party. In the first place, that instinct was stronger in him, perhaps, than his resentment of some of the party policies. Second place, he didn't have the type of personality to lead a revolt of any kind. He didn't have...that just wasn't his dish.

Now the second thing that I think maybe I had something to do with -- I don't know whether it's good or bad, but there was a big Senate controversy over the creation of Lamar Tech at Beaumont in the forty-ninth session. This was a baby of the Lieutenant Governor, Allan Shivers, who was from that area, from Port Arthur. It was bitterly fought by some members of the Senate, and Governor Jester expressed some opposition to it from time to time. Nevertheless, by very adroit handling of the powers at his disposal, the Lieutenant Governor did get the bill passed. It had passed the House and so was sent to Jester for signature or veto. And there was considerable doubt in Governor Jester's mind whether he should sign this bill or not. I urged him to sign it, so did Mr. McGill for two reasons. One that...I thought that the most important one at the moment was political, but the second one turned out to be the more important. This did sound like a pretty good idea, for a school was

needed in that area with a type of curriculum that was proposed for it, emphasis on petro-chemical subjects which at that time were receiving virtually no attention in the state system. I don't know; I haven't followed closely enough to know how well Lamar Tech has carried out the hopes of its founders, but apparently it's done reasonably well. It hasn't been the target of any effort to degrade it in the intervening years, so I'd say that again this was probably good advice, although there are two sides to it. The Governor just really went against his own better judgment in signing that bill. But he, too, was aware that there were two sides.

Odom: So he was already not intending another term.

Hart: He had no further political ambitions, whatever. He told me this, and I'm sure he meant it. I don't know what would have happened about the United States Senate and other things like this if he had retired and lived. Once a man starts running for office, the call sounds pretty loud sometimes. A few people can create the impression of a great ground swell if a candidate is receptive. But his intention...his <u>feeling</u> about it was that he wanted to remain interested in government and maybe a sort of a kingmaker, occupy a behind-the-scenes role but not as an active candidate anymore. He would have been approaching sixty years old when he got out of office; he was fifty-six when he died. He thought that he could have a good life here as an attorney and as a... probably a radio and newspaper man...owner. At that time the matter of television hadn't come up yet, to any extent. (chuckle)

Odom: Do you think that Allan Shivers was thinking very seriously about running for the governor's office at this time?

Hart: The...My opinion about it is that he probably would have run for governor if Jester had not died, although I'm not quite as sure of it as some...most people are. He would have had to make a crossroads choice at that point, I think, between continuing his political career and going into a business career. He had a lot of responsibilities already in a business way, from the fact that he was in charge of the Shary interests in the valley -- after Mr. Shary's death -- and these were rather large interests at the time. He also was with several other companies, and it's just possible that he might have decided to get out of politics. He was not an overwhelming favorite by any means in the governor's race, that is, before Jester's death.

Odom: There was speculation, I suppose. Was there newspaper speculation already?

Hart: There was a great deal in the newspapers, and other people had already picked out the four candidates. The four leading candidates were Shivers, Attorney-General Price Daniel, Land Commissioner Bascom Giles, and Railroad Commissioner Olin Culberson. And each one of these, at that time, was quite a strong candidate, and I don't know that -- even though Shivers was a certainly on a par with these people -- I don't know that he had any advantage whatever. And the fact that the lieutenant governor's office has never been a stepping stone to the governor's office except in cases of succession to the office would have been nothing in his favor. There would have been quite a race. I might just anticipate by saying here that it worked out...that Culberson was the only one of the other three who didn't give up the idea of running. He did announce and did a little campaigning early in 1950,

but had a heart attack and had to withdraw from the race. I think that this...I don't agree with some cynics who think that this was a heart attack of convenience. I think it was proved later on that it was a genuine thing, because he later died...not too much later, of similar conditions. And the second thing is I since have learned that he was pretty confident he was going to win that race. And he was a strong candidate; he had lots of things in his favor. So I think he would have gone on through with it if he hadn't had this heart attack. But the other two, Giles and Daniel, ran for the offices they were then holding, again.

Odom: Mr. Hart, if there is such a thing, what is the routine of an average day -- if there's such a thing as an average day -- for a person in this position in the governor's office?

Hart: Well, I'd say each day is likely to be different, but there is a pattern of things that have to be done whether the day is average or not, and that's what keeps you down there nights, sometimes, or 'til you get through. Routinely, there's the mail first thing. The press secretary, or assistant in charge of press, doesn't get much mail himself, but the governor gets a lot. And the system that was used under Governor Jester, continued by Governor Shivers, was that mail was opened at a central desk and sorted by a confidential secretary into stacks to be referred to various staff members, and a few go directly to the Governor. And what was called a mail list was made up designating who received what. The form of the mail list was the name of the writer, his address or his home town, and his subject. And this mail list was made up in sufficient copies to give one to each person who had any business receiving one, which meant all the secretaries who were handling correspondence.

So by looking at the mail list, you could find out what was in the mail that day...what was going on, even though you didn't have the letter before you. I would receive, for example, maybe ten or fifteen letters to be handled. There's a certain amount of judgment involved there as to whether I should go ahead and handle these things in my own name, or whether I should handle them in the Governor's name without even referring them back to his secretary, because there were certain routine matters I was authorized to handle; or whether I should prepare a draft of the letter and route it through the secretary to the Governor for his approval and signature.

The mail would usually give you not only some letters to answer but some projects to work on. I handled, under the Shivers administration, the not inconsequential item of appointments to public office -- all the mail relating to people who wanted to be appointed; who wanted other people appointed; or who didn't want certain other people appointed, came to me for original screening. I had to keep a list of all these, what you might call, candidates, official and unofficial; also, of course, a book which had all the dates when vacancies occurred; who the people were; whose terms were expiring. This turned into quite a bit of work in the long run, when you consider there were several thousand or more positions involved at that time...and about a third of them come up in consideration each year. Well, you can see...And there'd always be eight or ten or twenty of them which would become controversial, or at least the supporters would get real prolific in their support, and I'd have a lot of form letters (chuckle) to write, you might say, in most instances. I might just say there that the volume of letters didn't

mean anything to Governor Shivers -- nothing, I'd say, whatever. The campaigns so carefully organized by the prospective appointees went for nought, as far as he was concerned. He wanted to know who was writing and would actually many times, I thought, deliberately writeoff a man who would do this type of "organizing." I guess...I suppose his thought process was, "I wonder if this man thinks I'm a big enough fool to appoint him just because he can get a lot of people to write letters?" Governor Shivers always said that you can get people to write letters for you about nearly anything. It depends on a lot of things -- how much weight you put on. Anyway, that was another thing that took up some of the time.

The press relations proper, the news releases which I prepared and took to the press room, the questions I got from the press room to check up on -- that was always an essential part of the day. We had a bunch of, nearly every day, a bunch of proclamations...so-called...official memoranda to write, and these nearly always involved a picture. The less significant the occasion, the more people came to be in the picture, as a rule. And these...this was quite a chore to arrange to get the Governor and have his picture made at the same time the people were there to get their picture made. We followed a policy on that of setting the hour of eleven thirty each day, when the Governor was in town, as the time when such business as that would be accomplished. He would...routinely, he would come out into the reception room at eleven thirty for the purpose of signing bills or proclamations, or memoranda, or having his picture made and shaking hands with people who were just there for that purpose, who had dropped in and wanted to say they'd seen the Governor and shaken hands with him. This was a...seemed to have been

a custom inaugurated by Bill McGill when he was working for W. Lee O'Daniel and was continued since that...has been continued since that time, possibly is today...I don't know. But I do know...It seems to me that Governor Connally, for example, usually appears in the reception room, if he's going to appear that day, around eleven or twelve o'clock. It's just a convenient time, and it's a convenient way to get rid, if I may use that expression, get rid of a lot of visitors who, if they had to be ushered in separately for a little visit, would stay fifteen minutes, perhaps, and create an impossible demand on the Governor's time. And really all they want is to shake hands, and this is accomplished as he goes around the room. He usually has a secretary trailing him with a notebook, notepad to jot down something that needs to be looked into or followed up on or letter written. The Governor's secretary will make a note: "Send Mr. Odom a copy of this memorandum of Bigger Tomato Week," or something or...whatever.

Now this is a part of the press secretary's duties as well as that of the appointments secretary, and the Governor's private secretary, to work out when all these things are going to take place. And that's why we found it good to agree about a specific time daily unless something unusual was going on. This plan prevented having to have a summit conference every morning as to when the Governor should participate in such things.

This was also akin to, although not quite as difficult as, calls the press secretary got for private appointments with the Governor. In my

instance it might have been either about press matters; it might have been from someone who knew me in some other field and used that acquaintance as the easiest way to get in, and quite often it was about appointments to offices. So there again, I had to be careful not to promise...not to schedule the Governor without clearing it with...at least with his secretary--preferable with the Governor himself. The practice was to tell the secretary in the reception room that such a request had been made and get him to take it up; or write the Governor a note which would be received by his private secretary and cleared.

Odom: All this then took time, doesn't it?

Hart: Yeah. One of the greatest time consumers was talking to the people who either had some business or some time to spare, and came into the office and wanted to see somebody. I recall one particular afternoon, late, after five o'clock. The Governor, not according to his custom, wandered out into the reception room after he apparently had finished his day's work. There were three people sitting in there, and he knew all three of them, so he asked each one if they wanted to see him about anything. They all said, "No." They were waiting on me. (laughter) It just happened that this was true. This does save the Governor a great deal of time. If a staff man can become established as a person who handles a particular type of question, then those people with experience know that nothing is going to be handled unless it does come through that channel. That is, going directly to the Governor means simply that he'll more than likely send him to the secretary, his executive assistant, before he leaves. The experienced contact people learn that the easiest, quickest way to get your message in to the right

place is to see the fellow who is going to send the message in. And so actually there was nothing strange about what took place, but it was a little bit humorous under the circumstances.

On members of the legislature I also, as did all the other assistants, dealt with the legislature on various matters--not only legislation during the session, but they always had projects of various kinds between sessions. It was good business and pleasant to meet with these people. Sometimes it was not too pleasant (chuckle), but most of the time it was; you enjoyed the visit. But it took up some time. The funniest instance I had of contact with a member of the legislature involved a new member who hadn't been sworn in yet, even, as a matter of fact. He had been elected, however, and all of the newly elected members had received a letter from the Governor--it was a form letter--congratulating them on their election and expressing great pleasure at the anticipation of working with them and urging them when they came to Austin to drop by and see him. One day I was in my office doing something else, and I got a frantic call from a girl who was handling a desk in the reception room that day. She said, "Please come out here. There's a man out here who says he's a member of the legislature, and he wants to see the Governor. We told him the Governor was out of town, and he was mad. He said that the Governor sent for him and now he's not here." And I came out and sure enough, there was a mad little boy there from east Texas. (chuckle) He had taken the Governor's letter a little too literally. The letter itself was sincere, but the Governor didn't set any time, and this boy was inexperienced, and

he didn't realize that he should not be disappointed if he came in unannounced and found the Governor out of town, which was literally the truth. So I had the job of soothing him and explaining to him what happened, and I'm not sure that I did so to his satisfaction.

But this is just an example of the really odd things that happen to you. You never did know what was going to happen, but you were almost sure that it would be something that had not happened before in a typical day at the Governor's office. People with problems, no matter what the problem is, whether it involves state financing or marital troubles at home, seem to have the impression that the Governor can help them some way or another (laughter), and they call on him for a great many things that you, Dr. Odom, would not expect them to ask for. But you do know that the Governor does not operate in some of those areas.

Odom: I have experienced that, or found that out in some of this interviewing that I have done. I didn't realize that people expect that the Governor do some of the things (chuckle) that apparently they do.

Hart: I have a list somewhere; I don't have it with me. It is in the files somewhere. I made a list for a week, I believe it was, of odd-ball things that...(laughter) of different things, I better put it, that were requested of the Governor; and some of them are pretty far from his field, actually.

Odom: I'd like to see that sometime.

Hart: I have it somewhere. I'll try to pick it up.

Odom: Before I forget it I'd like to ask you, is Mr. McGill still living?

Hart: No. Mr. McGill is dead. He died about five years ago. He was a great

man. He was very much behind the scenes as far as the Governor's office was concerned, but he was active in several administrations. He and Beauford Jester were from the same town, Corsicana; this was their tie. And Governor Shivers inherited him just like he did me. However, soon--or maybe at the end of the year...'49--Governor Shivers placed Mr. McGill in charge of civil defense...What is the name of that organization? It was the civil defense branch of it...Emergency and Civil Defense Department. And he moved out of the capitol to a separate building. I've forgotten what building it was now, but this division of the Governor's office operated that way until...I believe the Connally administration. He transferred this duty to the Department of Public Safety.

Odom: Did Mr. McGill continue in that office?

Hart: He did until his death; this occurred sometime during the Daniel administration.

Odom: Would you like to take a break for a minute or two?

Hart: I'm just ready to keep on going.

Odom: Let's go ahead; we've still got plenty of tape. Was there a good deal of difference assumed in your duties and your responsibilities as secretary here or executive assistant after Governor Shivers took over? Was there a good deal of change?

Hart: Yes, there was, and I may have a little difficulty explaining just exactly what it was. In the Jester administration, you had an instance of where the Governor, Jester, depended a great deal on McGill to plan his everyday program and schedule. This was a matter of his choice and a result of both his personality and the fact that he had utmost confi-

dence in McGill, having known him all his life. And Mr. McGill was the kind of a fellow who was pretty meticulous and thorough in everything he did. If you wrote him a memo or asked him a question, say for example, "Do you think we should put out a press release on clemency policies?" he'd write about three pages in reply. This was... They were real interesting, (chuckle) too. This was sort of his hobby; this was his release. He was a bachelor; he had no other hobbies that I know of and worked from early morning until midnight practically every night. And sometimes he would just get tired of routine business, unbutton his collar and write a memo. (chuckle) They were usually pretty funny; he had a good sense of humor. But that's a side issue. McGill did believe in putting things on paper and getting organized. He was pretty good at it. Therefore, that was more or less the Governor's office to me, in the position I was in. There was organization on paper--not always in actuality because Governor Jester was a hard man to organize. I recall (chuckle) one day Mr. McGill and I decided we would just have it out with him because he insisted and persisted in making engagements, out of town engagements, and not telling us about them. And we would find out a day or two ahead of time, when we had possibly scheduled a bunch of in-the-office meetings, that he was going to Cuero or Waxahachie or somewhere to make a speech. And so we went to him and said, "Now, Governor, we've just got to get this settled. You've got to quit making these independent decisions about where you're going; at least you've got to let us know." And he was like a little child. He was chastened and hung his head and said, "I know. You're as right as you can be." He said, "I guess my trouble

is, I will agree to go anywhere if it's as much as two weeks off." (laughter) We had our problems, but by and large we tried to be organized.

Well, Governor Shivers was a man who believed in organization, too, but he did the organizing. He did it in his own way which was by... the nucleus of which was thinking of the work to be done in various categories and expect particular things to be done at a particular time or by a particular time; and not bother about it or bother the man about it as long as it...'til the time came that he wanted the results. Now, in other words, there was very little business of... none, whatever, of checking up on him to see how he was coming along, unless for some reason he wanted to speed it up. But if you didn't have it at the time that he expected to get it, he was plainly unhappy about it. But, I'd say that you had to usually see this from his expression or his voice, not from his words, because he very seldom reprimanded. He showed disappointment rather than anger, and it was very effective. (chuckle) You felt like sometimes he...you would feel better if he would just let you have it and get it over with instead of being just disappointed, you know. (chuckle) Anyway, he was very brief about his instructions to his staff, about his note-keeping, memos--these big, long memos baffled him; he'd shake his head from time to time about them. He never wrote any long ones. In fact, he very seldom wrote any. And his notes would consist of maybe one or two words he'd written down. It might be that he had an appointment or

wanted to work a little bit on one of these interviews; he might write down, "Odom Interview." This was enough for him to recall what was on the docket.

Anyway, there seemed to be at first a sort of an absence of a written framework, or framework of reference, for my job. I soon learned to accept this and find it was not to be carried to an extreme; if you have something to write, put it down. And I've written, I guess, thousands of memos to Governor Shivers. And he liked them--at least I think he did. I tried to frame them in such a way that he could make a quick answer, if an answer was indicated, if it wasn't just for his information. He would make an answer in one of three ways: He could say "yes," "no," or "see me." That's all he ever had to write on a memo, if I phrased it or made it up correctly and gave him the proper alternative. If I didn't, why he would sometimes write a few words of instruction on there.

I will never forget how amazed I was at a man who had just come in to this office and faced a whole lot of work that had been left undone during the session--certainly nothing done for two weeks while Jester was being buried, and all this routine of change-over was taking place--and I could just see a full summer of real hard work to catch up. And I was somewhat amazed, as I say, when after getting off the essentials, Governor Shivers announced he was going to Woodville to spend the rest of the summer--I think either a month or two months--which I thought was impossible. I told him so. But it turned out it was possible. I

did go down a time or two to carry some things I thought needed to be attended to; I also sent him some things by mail which didn't have any particular time element to them. But this turned out to be a trade mark of his. He doesn't believe in just sitting around shuffling papers or looking at things or talking to people unless they are people who really need to talk to him or he needs to talk to them. He gets that over as quick as he can. He doesn't take...He said he was not going to carry problems home with him at night. Now, he was not able to keep that up; nobody can really. But he did try to be efficient and save time. He did not knock himself out with a lot of futile gestures that didn't have any real meaning. So I'd say that temperamentally, aside from the fact that both of them were real considerate of people who worked for them, there couldn't have been two greater opposites as far as running the Governor's office was concerned.

The firmness that I might have intimated Jester lacked because of his temperament, Shivers had in full measure--an ability to make unpleasant decisions and to say "no," and this saves a man a lot of trouble in the Governor's office. If he says "no" instead of "maybe," that's what he means. However, Shivers was not as tough and cold about these things as he's sometimes pictured to be. He's very...He says "no" very well. (chuckle) He can...I've heard him say it so there was no mistaking what he meant. And yet, the man to whom he said it would go away with the feeling he'd been treated fairly; it was just maybe the right thing for the Governor to say. Or if he didn't think that, at least he hadn't been insulted about it. He is very diplomatic. I think that's one

phase of Shivers that's been overlooked in the zeal people have to talk about his agressiveness and firmness and even ruthlessness. They leave out the fact that he was one of the most diplomatic fellows I've ever been around, in a real high sense of that term.

The ability to say unpleasant...give unpleasant news in a pleasant manner is something that's very handy for a governor to have; and not all of them have it, by any means. Governor Jester's weakness there was that he was so eager to avoid insults or offense, that his "no's" sometimes sounded like "maybe's" or even "yes's." And I've known of people who were sincerely convinced that the Governor had told them that he would do certain things or that certain things were all right when I had heard the conversation and knew that he didn't say that. (laughter) But he said "no" in such a roundabout way that the man sitting there wanting to hear "yes" heard it.

Odom: You've...Have you heard...You've heard the story about President Harding, haven't you? I'm not sure whether it's true about what his father said.

Hart: No.

Odom: He said it was a good thing Warren wasn't a girl or he would have been in the family way all the time, because he never could say "no."

Hart: This is...you might say Governor Jester had that speech impediment. (laughter) He found it real hard not to do what people wanted him to do. Well, I'd say that was the big difference in...I think that Governor Jester will be viewed in history as a reasonably good governor but an uneventful sort of governor. The circumstances were not such

that...or he didn't create any circumstances to be controversial or to show strength in the sense of accomplishing great things. I think he showed considerable leadership in a legislative way in his second term. He'd kind of got onto the knack of it. And I think he had a stronger staff--not only to give myself a little credit there, but there were other persons who worked for us and had not been around in the first term. Then largely, it was up to McGill to do the whole...McGill had everything to do...literally in the first term.

Odom: You implied that under Governor Shivers you more or less assumed Mr. McGill's task to a certain degree after he moved to the other office?

Hart: Well, if I did, I made a misstatement.

Odom: Well, I didn't...You didn't say that but...

Hart: I left the wrong impression. I was thinking of things that I did... I'll say that I moved into <u>part</u> of the McGill role. Nobody could have moved into <u>all</u> of McGill's duties and stayed sane, except McGill, possibly. (chuckle) It had to be split up. So under Shivers, McGill's duties, as they existed before I came in, were divided between Maurice Acers and me...just about...I guess you could say that. Maurice occupied the position of executive secretary, and that's the title McGill had. He handled a lot of the things that McGill had done, but he did not handle appointments for public offices or press or civil defense. He handled confidential matters and official matters and also clemencies. He had enough to do, in other words, a full time job...But the things had to be broken up from what it was before.

Odom: Did you assume a good bit or did you assume any more of the tasks of dealing with the legislature, especially when it was in session, with

Governor Shivers than you had earlier?

Hart: Well, certainly I did, but I'm not sure whether this was just simply because I'd been there longer and knew better what I was doing, or whether it was because he depended on me more. I'd say that in all candor, without modesty being involved in it, that I became pretty close to Governor Shivers in several different capacities--not only the press. I started writing his speeches which I had not done except in a very minor way for Jester, and I occupied somewhat of a position of political advisor. There's a good deal of question in my mind who was advising whom. (chuckle) Most of my knowledge...so-called knowledge of politics came from Shivers. But let's say we worked at it together and evolved a procedure, approach, philosophy of this thing that made it difficult to distinguish, actually, who said what--whether it was Shivers, or me speaking through him, and whether it was a campaign manager, or me, or Shivers, who was doing something in political campaigning. There's no question about it, Shivers would have been his own best campaign manager if he had time. There's no doubt about this in anybody's mind. And he would today be a great campaign manager if he had ever accepted any of these opportunities. (chuckle) He had the best sense of political timing and the best intuitive sense, as far as political evaluation of different positions is concerned, far and away of anybody I've ever known or observed.

Odom: What sort of task did you take on, or did you take on any unusual ones in the 1950 Governor's campaign?

Hart: I wouldn't say that I had any particular extra duties there. But we had...

Odom: You had to write some speeches, I suppose?

Hart: I wrote some speeches, and I was available, did confer with the people who were actively running the campaign and I...At that time it probably seemed like a tough assignment but in retrospect it seems like sort of...

Odom: A minor one? (chuckle)

Hart: A game of pepper before a baseball game...just a warm-up.

Odom: Are you about ready to move on to talk some about your years at the Texas Employment Commission?

Hart: Yeah...I...

Odom: You have some other things you'd like to say about your position here? I think you didn't do that in any chronological fashion. You've been doing it here before. So if you would like to keep talking about the developments there in the early Shivers years it would be fine.

Hart: Might just kind of conclude that...try to tie this in to what I said before. After 1950, this series of, might say more or less fortuitous, accidents, incidents kept occurring. In '52, for example, the Governor decided, made his decision to--I don't think all of a sudden--revolt against the Democratic party, against what we called "Trumanism." This was a position he finally arrived at after a rather agonizing appraisal day-to-day of the issues involved. But he knew that in '52, there was going to be a lot of political activity which was...He had a race for re-election; he wanted to be active in the conventions of the Democratic party in order to have some influence in the national convention and in the elections to come. So we talked a great deal about employing or finding the proper person or persons to head up such a

year of activity. At that time we knew at least it would be that it was through the second primary and the state convention, a campaign that had a lot of facets to it. We were never able to think of this person or if we thought of him, we couldn't get him. I've forgotten just what all the prospects and possibilities were. Anyway, it wound up that he decided I and John Van Cronkhite, who was at that time director of the Good Neighbor Commission, would have to quit our...should quit our state jobs and handle these things; and to do that we formed a political public relations firm called Hart and Van Cronkhite. We had offices in the Bolm Building.

And though we were pretty fluid about our future plans, we wanted to conduct ourselves in such a way that we could continue this office if we wanted to. We had no commitments or offers or assurances of going back to the jobs we had just left. In fact, I would say that it was about eight-to-five that we would continue this publicity office, or try to, even after the campaign year of '52.

It turned out to be a more eventful year even than we had anticipated. What with the May convention, the precinct and state conventions, the campaign for re-election which was the first appearance in the governor's race of now Senator Ralph Yarborough...and he stirred up a good deal of talk although he didn't run a very close race that time. Then we moved on into the September state convention and on into the national Presidential race on the side of the Republican candidates, Eisenhower and Nixon. That I don't think was contemplated at the start,

but that's the way it happened. So this was one thing that I'd say was not exactly on schedule, that is this particular experience I had which lasted until November the fifteenth, at which time I made up my mind I did not want to continue this type of work.

Now let me back up a bit...I had...this ties into the Texas Employment Commission. Sometime during that year, a member of the Employment Commission, Dean Maxwell who was the labor member of the Commission, had come to me with a request, a proposition or a suggestion that I get Governor Shivers to appoint me chairman. The term or the incumbent chairman had ended last...somewhere about November before that... But no new appointment had been made. No. It was coming up in November, excuse me, November eleventh of '52. Harry Crozier was the chairman, had been for some years...I believe ten years he'd been on the Commission. There seemed to be some friction between him and Maxwell. Although Maxwell wasn't just emphatic about it, or ugly about it, he seemed to think there ought to be a change.

The reason he was interested in me, or felt interested in me, was that probably I more than anybody else had saved his reappointment after he had served two years of an unexpired term. He...Shivers didn't feel like the political record was such as to justify the reappointment. Maxwell himself wasn't actually involved; it was the AFL of which he was a member, that had a rather spotted record as far as Shivers was concerned. In fact, they had no record in his behalf, that he could think of. (chuckle) He was not inclined to appoint an AFL man to

this position again. Therefore Maxwell, although he had performed okay, was about to get the ax because of the other involvement. Well, to make a long story short, I and other people, but I more than anybody else, convinced Governor Shivers that Maxwell was a good man and ought to be reappointed and this reappointment had been made. At any rate, I went to talk to Governor Shivers about this chairmanship business, and he said, "Well, I don't think you would like that." So I said, "Okay, forget it." And I never heard any more about it for a long time. After the general election, the early part of November, I went with Governor Shivers on a trip to Nassau--post-election unwinding, time to unwind. On the way back, we landed at Houston and we found out that for some reason we didn't have airplane passage on into Austin that night. So we had to come back to Austin by automobile. I was riding in the car with Governor Shivers. Out of a clear, blue sky, he said, "Don't you think maybe you better...we better announce that appointment as chairman of the TEC pretty soon?" (chuckle) Well, this was the first time I knew that I was going to be appointed. In fact, I thought I wasn't. I wasn't considering it and I didn't think he was. I said, "Yeah, I guess so." And this, believe me, was the extent of our conversation which resulted in my quitting the public relations firm, going back to the Governor's office for the session, legislative session of 1953, but being appointed early in that session to become the Texas Employment Commission Chairman on the first of July and was confirmed by the Senate during the session so I...

Odom: Do you think this represented any financial improvement or what sort of thing did you foresee this...What effect did you foresee this having on

your career?

Hart: Well, as I say, I've had a feeling since I made this decision to go to the Governor's office in '48, that powers beyond my control were operating. (laughter) I really didn't have much of a choice here...

Odom: You didn't have much choice?

Hart: In a way, I guess I could have said, "No, I don't want it." But then I would be faced with a...with having to go ahead with this public relations work which I feared would fall off to some extent since there weren't any elections the next year, or go looking for a job. And I had kind of talked myself into interest in this TEC job at one time and so it wasn't hard for me to do it, but I didn't expect it. Anyway, I did go to the Employment Commission on July the first. I stayed there the next approximately...let's see, July the first, '53, to February of '56, I believe was the time I spent. I went into the particular term with two thoughts concerning my future. One was that this was a sort of a sidetrack for me; this wasn't in the line, in the direct line that I was pursuing, and that I would not seek reappointment. I've seen a lot of people make themselves very unhappy wondering if they were going to be reappointed, <u>trying</u> to be reappointed, bothering their friends and the Governor about reappointment. So I just made a decision, "That's out." The second thing was that along toward the last of the six years I would start looking for a more permanent type of work. (chuckle) Well, this came along earlier than I expected. I was offered a job by the Texas Railroad Association at an increase in pay over the fifteen thousand which was then the TEC Chairman's pay. Also it was a permanent type employment. I went and talked to Gover-

nor Shivers about whether or not this was a good thing to do. He said, "Well, it's up to you." He said this was a good organization to work for, that they had a good reputation. He said, "If you want to quit, though, if you want to leave the Texas Employment Commission, I'd rather you'd come back to work for me." So I said, "Okay." So that was the extent of the conversation.

Odom: This was when, now?

Hart: This was along about January of, as I recall, January of '56. So I resigned and went back to the Governor's office and it was rather amusing. I came across the other day, some clippings in an old scrapbook. Some of the metropolitan papers actually ran banners about this change. The Houston Post ran two or three front-page--one clear across the page, the other was just four columns--about "What Does This Mean: Hart Returns to Governor's Office." "Does This Mean Shivers is Going to Run for a Fourth Term?" "Does it Mean That He's Going to go into National Politics?" It's bound to mean something. It did, I suppose but those people would have been amazed, I guess, at the offhanded way in which it took place. And that was the year, of course, '56, that Shivers challenged Lyndon Johnson for control of the Democratic party in Texas and lost. We knew we were going to lose in the first place before we started, but he felt that this was what he had to do to be consistent with what he'd done before. Then to make up for that to some extent Eisenhower was re-elected with Shivers as his principal supporter in Texas. In both '52, and '56, as well as in '60, I was more or less the director of the Democrats for Republicans or something like that... (laughter) And so I found these to be very busy and fairly enjoyable

campaigns. That in brief winds up my connection with the Governor's office.

Now, about the Texas Employment Commission...

Odom: Let me here, before you start, ask you about...ask you for the benefit of anybody who might not know, to briefly give the background of the establishment of the TEC and how it's organized and what its functions are...talk some about your reaction or position and some of the problems you had.

Hart: The Texas Employment Commission had its origin back in about 1935, as a state manifestation or a state-federal manifestation of a New Deal program, a new concept of, what opponents called, "paying people not to work," (chuckle) and what proponents said was "jobless insurance." It was called at first the Texas Unemployment Compensation Commission; its basis was a law passed by the Texas legislature which was pretty much of a model law recommended by the national administration and I'd say probably the Department of Labor, if that's what it was under... No. It was under the Federal Security Administration or something to begin with. Anyway, this model law came down and...incidentally, the sponsor of this law in the Texas legislature was Senator Allan Shivers. And this law created the Unemployment Commission and the first director was Robert B. Anderson, who later became--among other things--Secretary of the Treasury of the United States; he was the man who set up the first offices. And it involved, of course, setting up a system with federal supervision of...a system of paying...rules and regulations under which payments should be made to unemployed people. This was

the middle of the Depression and this...probably the impetus that the program received stemmed from that fact. Anyway, this was quite a new thing and quite a complicated thing and it's still quite complicated and they're still working on it, but it did get started. There was also another federal program, the Employment Service, and this was operated for a good while as a separate function but eventually they were combined into one office called, and renamed, the Texas Employment Commission. During World War II, the federal government took the Employment Service back and operated it as part of the Man-power Program, then returned it to the states after the war was over.

Actually this was more of a federal than a state program even though much lip service was given to the state part of it and the state does have responsibility for naming the board which hires the people, theoretically those who run the program. And the state is not without authority and influence but it's just pretty much a fact that the... if you have a partnership and one partner controls the money, he's likely to be more influential in the partnership than the other fellow. The money for this, these two programs, comes from employers--an assessment on employers based on their payrolls--and in Texas, as in some other states, also modified by what you call an experience rating, a factor which takes into consideration whether not this firm or individual loses a lot (chuckle) of people who wind up on our unemployment rolls, or whether he has a very consistent, steady employment. The steadier...the better his personal record is or the firm's record is for steady employment, the lower his rate down to...when I was working

there it was down to four-tenths of one per cent of the payroll. But the state minimum is still point one per cent. The maximum is three point seven or three point eight now, I guess, per cent if you have no credit for...no credit rating.

The federal government collects the money from Texas employers and, as we say, takes it to Washington and sends part of it back. (chuckle) All the money for operating the program and for paying the claims comes from the federal trust fund--not trust fund. I said the wrong thing--from the federal funds. There is a trust fund involved but this is an emergency backlog for states that temporarily got into trouble or have a long run of unemployment due to local factors. And they have to, in effect, borrow from the trust fund, and either pay it back routinely or raise their rates in order to get their accounts back on schedule.

But since the federal bureau under the Department of Labor, the Employment Security Division, does establish the ground rules and the detailed rules under which the money is allocated, it retains a real heavy hand in this thing. A state does, to this point, retain the right to set, to a certain extent, its own standards under which compensation will be paid. For example, one that Texas has is that the applicant must be actively seeking work at the time he receives compensation, and there's also one which sets the standard rate of pay for Texas--the maximum of so many dollars for so many weeks. Now the... so you have to say that states have retained some influence because the federal pressure has been all along, to set federal standards, in

other words nation-wide standards for these things and to set rates of compensation and tax rates and to eliminate merit systems...the rating that...which credits the employer because of his employment record. Prodded by the national labor unions, the federal bureau would like to see this thing on a common basis all the way through over the country. It would be easier for them to administer, for one thing. But of course the states prefer to keep, to some extent, their own policy-making power at the local level--first because local conditions do vary from state to state; a good salary, a good going salary in New York would be different from one in Utah or Texas or Alabama and it would be difficult to set...to think of a minimum or maximum of compensation that would fit all of these things perfectly. Then I guess there's also a matter of pride, wanting to keep some of the power involved here.

I found from my experience during approximately three years on the Commission that the federal government is eventually going to win this thing but states are fighting a pretty good rear guard action. I might say that the administrators have a national organization which is condoned by the federal bureau and the expenses of participants are paid to attend meetings. Sometimes the federal government seems inclined to wish they hadn't ever started this. But anyway, this is the...these administrators of whom I was one, being the nominal head of the Commission, are the ones who--although they occupy a kind of an equivocal position since they're talking to and against people who have a lot to do with the money that they receive or don't receive for their

Commission--are the ones who fight to make these rear guard charges from time to time and slow down what I think will be the eventual result--complete federal domination of the program. When I was in the program I became legislative chairman of this administrators group and as such, appeared before the Secretary of Labor with a request for passage of a bill...support for a bill which would allow the state agencies to appeal from decisions made by the Secretary of Labor; they cannot appeal, now.

Odom: Appeal? Judicial appeal?

Hart: Judicial appeal. There is no judicial appeal now. There's no appeal period; there's nobody to appeal to past the Secretary of Labor. His work is the final law. And we felt and the administrators still feel and I still feel that this is wrong. That there should be an avenue somewhere of pursuing this matter judicially, for one thing to eliminate the possibility of a completely arbitrary decision on the part of the Secretary of Labor. It doesn't say that he must make the right decision; it just says he decides. And when I became chairman, I inherited a situation which illustrated the point very well. I won't try to go into details on it because I never did completely understand it, since it happened before my time and I've forgotten what I did know about it. But it was the so-called Todd Shipyards Case in which the Texas Employment Commission had made a ruling that certain charges against Todd Shipyards--the company--were to be made which affected its experience rating adversely. Todd Shipyards had appealed to the courts on this rating (and they could do this at the state level) contending that the TEC had made an erroneous finding and that these

charges should not be made. And they won the case in court. Todd Shipyards won the case in the Texas Supreme Court.

In other words the TEC had been charging them erroneously for a certain period of time and this wasn't too much of a problem. But what created the real problem was that these over-charges had all been worked into the experience rating system of the state in such a way that, the federal bureau pointed out, our experience rating data were no good. They were warped by the fact that a lot of charges were in there that shouldn't have been. Therefore, it was contended that our whole experience rating system was on the blink and that the only thing they saw to do was for our Texas employers to pay three point seven per cent instead of point four per cent many of them were paying until three years of experience had been accumulated and we could have another experience rating system. Well, this to us was patently ridiculous but nevertheless, this was a real threat and the duel was pretty well along toward at least making us think they were going to carry this out. One of my first official duties was to go to Washington and try to get it...get a pardon. (chuckle) There, with the help of Bob Anderson who was Secretary of the Navy at the time and quite familiar with all the issues involved, through his interceding for us with the Secretary of Labor, I believe with somebody...it might have been with the White House...anyway whoever he thought would be helpful in making the decision, we were excused and not held out of conformity. Now being held out of conformity is the ultimate tragedy as far as the state's concerned; for that means you have no experience rating. Now this was

the basis on which we...I got the feeling strongly that we should... the higher courts should be able to look at whatever decision the Secretary of Labor made adversely. Otherwise we were completely at the mercy of a bureaucratic decision. And I'd say this was one of the few significant things I was involved in when I was on the TEC, was this pursuit of this rather elusive provision of the law and we didn't get it done then and I noticed it still hasn't been done. It was in the bill that almost passed the last session of Congress. It did pass both houses but they never got together on the conference report, as I recall. This was a replacement for House Resolution 8282 which would have almost completely federalized the system. So the issues in 1967, are still the same as they were in 1953, '54, and '55, with the federal gaining just a little bit all the time, but they haven't completely won, yet.

Odom: Do you think that this problem involved here, has anything to do with Governor Shivers' decision to appoint you as chairman of the Commission, in that respect? I know you said there wasn't any further conversation there. Would you hazard a guess, perhaps, that it may have been a part of his reasons for oppointing you?

Hart: This is possible; I doubt it, though, because actually one of the difficulties about solving TEC problems is that frankly nobody much seems to give a damn (laughter) until it's too late and then they might be displeased. But I think among the people who know there's this feeling of frustration over the fact that there's actually very little that the state can do anyway, so they more or less have to take the federal decision. This is not literally true. The governors could do a little

more politically than they do, but they don't really want to involve this program in politics if they can keep from it. They think it doesn't belong in partisan politics, as such; I'm not sure I agree with that wholeheartedly.

Odom: Do you think that Governor Daniel's appointment recently as the consultant here on federal-state relationships might help some in ironing out some of these...getting some delay in some of these federal-state conflicts such as this?

Hart: Well, I'd say this knowing him and knowing of his views: I think he'd be a strong advocate of the state's viewpoint. How much opportunity he will have on an issue like this, I don't know. This is one of those iceberg things, you know. You just see a little top of it now and then and I don't know how much the White House worries about this thing. You just operate and go along...

Odom: Well, you said that it was obvious while ago that the federal government is going to win in this?

Hart: To say the "federal government" here is being guilty of a gross generalization. To me, this as well as other programs, I'm more or less convinced that it's the so-called bureaucracy--not using that word necessarily as one of opprobrium--that really determines in the long-run what's going to be done. Now, I observed the bureau operating under the Department of Labor. I would call it by its right name except I've forgotten what its exact title is...the Bureau of Employment Security. Now, there are some real good people, real capable people working in this program. Some of them had state backgrounds; some of them didn't. But by and large, they were all a part of the federali-

zation program. You catch this fever up on the Potomac and you become convinced that's the way to do it. You can see the whole picture there warped in favor of the federal participation and all you have out of the states is trouble, so you pretty easily assume that you'd be better off if the states didn't have anything to do with it. I could see... you could almost see what was happening and what was going to happen is that these people, the bureaucracy, move carefully sometimes, faster then at other times, in the direction of federalization, not only because of personal desires for power but because they were convinced that was the way to do it. They're, I say, abetted by some real smart labor people and these are top operatives of the labor movement. These are not goon squads or anything like that; these are slick polished lawyers and they work...they're very helpful to the bureau, but they're always pushing toward this federal standard thing. And then so they move along. Well, something unexpected happens such as Eisenhower getting elected President and an administration comes in determined and publicly committed to stopping a bunch of this trend toward federalization and going back to a more conservative stance on such matters as employment security. Well you can almost literally see these people back up some and readjust themselves and they start talking a little differently and their approach is just a little bit different; but their fundamental aim is no different and they're just biding their time until either the new broom wears out or the administration changes. Then they'll start again moving forward. There is such a thing as... Talk about the pendulum swinging back and forth. The pendulum does swing on matters such as we're talking about. It swings to the...on

the advanced side of the clock to a point and then it swings back. But you notice it never swings back over half way; it never does swing back behind where it started from. And so it stops there at the middle where it started from. And so it stops there at the middle and then when it starts swinging again it swings still farther toward the so-called federal or liberal or whatever...social or socialization, whatever you want to call it...away from the so-called conservative stance. In other words the pendulum swings only one way on a permanent basis, in my opinion, after watching some of it going on. Now I understand a little bit...That's about all I got out of this stretch on the Employment Commission. It was enjoyable.

Odom: What sort of routine did you follow here?

Hart: The chairman of the Employment Commission is absolutely his own supervisor. He's the one fellow in the state setup whose expense accounts are not questioned even by the federal authorities. Oh, the state comptroller might if he put down the wrong things, but by and large you don't have any limitation on how much you spend; you don't have anyone giving you directions. You're completely a free agent. I guess this could be abused. At that time, at least, I felt I should be doing something all the time. And I was calling for this and that file and asking this and that department head to come to see me and I guess, in general, making a nuisance of myself because I've since realized that they usually had to go through this with every new... they have to break in every new appointee, you know. This is a bureaucracy too, at the state level and they're very nice about it but they question the value of wasting their time in this way (laughter) know-

ing that very likely it's not going to last.

Anyway, I guess I persisted longer than most of them because finally the administrator, Bill Farmer at that time was administrator--we got on pretty good terms as far as understanding each other was concerned--he finally had to take it on himself to go with me to Washington and get me in a hotel room and give me a little lecture about it. (laughter) He felt that he could at this time; we knew each other well enough. And the gist of the lecture was this: "Now, you're the chairman and anything that happens is your business; you're responsible and you can find out anything you want to, as far as what the Commission is doing or is not doing is concerned. You can talk to anybody you want to with no restrictions, no limitations, see all the files you want to. You can do anything you want to; you can do my job if you want to; you can work eighteen (chuckle) hours a day if you want to. But there's no sense in any of this. Why don't you relax a little and let some of these people handle the business. They have been doing it for years and let me be the one that advises you whether or not they've been doing a good job," all of which made a lot of sense. But it created an impression on me that led me to say to a fairly recent appointee to the Commission, Sherman Birdwell--I said, "Sherman, have you been there...how long you been there?" He said, "Three months." I said, "Have you been there...you haven't been there quite long enough then, to find out that you don't have anything to do with running it, have you?" He laughed and said, "Well, I'm beginning to catch on." (chuckle) I said, "Well, you'll learn."

I saw him a year later and he said, "You know, I've found out that what you said was true, but I'm still a big enough fool that I keep working." (laughter) So you see generally the routine of what I did was more or less up to me. I did go to the office fairly (chuckle) regularly and have a certain amount of correspondence. We had a meeting of the Commission at least once a week to pass on matters set before us.

Odom: How many members are on the Commission?

Hart: Three. One represents labor and one represents employers and one represents the public--the chairman. Most of our decisions involved appeals from the...on rulings in compensation cases and these sometimes would be ridiculously small matters to be taking up the time of so-called important people. (laughter) But nevertheless, that's the only way we could do it. And we tried to...even though we had all the recommendations before us, we reversed a number of the decisions. And I tried to set a policy of paying attention to precedents a little bit more than had been in the past, and in activation of that policy, I ruled--held--directed that anytime the Commission reversed a finding of its staff, that a written opinion must be handed down stating why, the basis upon which the reversal was made, thereby gradually accumulating for the information of the staff, a set of rulings, you might say, regulations, in effect, like case law in court. Also, I encouraged dissent...minority dissent. I encouraged the person who did not agree wholeheartedly with this thing to write a dissenting opinion or a modifying opinion to go with the majority opinion also to become a part of the case history. This showed up which questions were close and which questions were not close and which questions were actually

unsettled in the minds of the Commission.

I spoke of Dean Maxwell as having been the first one to mention the TEC job to me, and I had an interesting experience with him on the Commission itself--he was still on there all the years I was chairman. If I were going to have trouble with someone, you would expect it to be the labor representative--in that labor, Shivers, and to some extent Dean and I were not...didn't see eye to eye on everything. But he was...he was a real good fellow, a real smart fellow. At least I thought he was smart because he usually agreed with me. (laughter) And the only trouble I had with him was getting him to disagree with me when he ought to. In other words, he would argue a case, a point on one of these appeals in the Commission itself; but after the other two of us had voted against him, he'd say, "Well, okay, I'll sign it..." And I had to say, "No, Dean, don't sign it. This would be bad for you. If you do sign it, it will hurt you and it would hurt the Commission, in the longrun, because you have some good points and those points ought to be put down and put into the record along with the points upon which we're deciding the issue the other way. So you write a dissenting opinion." Well, I'd have...He'd do it if I ordered him to. (laughter)

Odom: So in this...

Hart: That's because I was trying to...I got side-tracked there in describing what I did with the Commission. This was probably routinely the most important thing, day-to-day, week-to-week decisions which caused the claims to move along. Of course, there were other...there were

important questions involved with the Employment Service. I haven't said anything about the Employment Service because it's pretty much explains itself, just by the very sound of it. I did have one...I temporarily won two fights. I think I've since lost them. Really they shouldn't be dignified with the work "fight." They were...I made two points. One was that it wasn't the business of the Public Employment Service to find people better jobs, but to find jobs for people who were out of jobs. I found that we were getting pretty much into the business of <u>improvement</u>, handling improvement situations. A man who was making five hundred dollars a month, wanted to make eight hundred; if he made three hundred, he wanted to make five hundred. And so he would apply to the Texas Employment Commission for a job--a better job than the one he had. And we were spending a good deal of time and money--public money--looking out for this fellow who wanted to enhance his position. I thought and still think that this is an erroneous application of public money; I think that this falls more in the category of the private employment agencies. And I so held and I don't know...I really don't know how much good I did at the time. But it proceeded merrily after I got out of the Commission and there was another one...

Odom: You got some opposition from...?

Hart: Oh, they didn't like it. They were very nice about it but I'm sure there was enough opposition that they didn't really do it very hard. I did get it de-emphasized, the enhancement features of our employment program. Another minor fight was whether or not we should buy supplies and equipment through the Board of Control. The law was written in

such a way that it had been interpreted we didn't have to do so. I insisted that we do so and we did so put ourselves on the same basis as other people. They didn't like this, either. They were very pleasant about it. They were a (chuckle) pleasant bunch of people. I'm sure they went right back after I got away to buying...taking their own bids rather than asking the Board of Control to take bids for them. Oh, there were a few things like this that I took a position on, but actually I seemed to either have done things right or was lucky or it was a rather uneventful period. There had been dissension on the Commission before I got there and there was considerable after I left. I can't rightfully say there was any during my years there. And I can't say that I improved it; I hope I didn't set it back any but I can't say that I improved the program very much.

Odom: Did you feel you were sort of outside the mainstream of Texas politics during these years there?

Hart: Yeah, I felt that way and I was. Yeah, I was outside and technically, at least, I was unable to participate at all because of the Hatch Act.

Odom: Yes.

Hart: This money, all of it, comes from the state but it came back through the federal government and thus whatever activity I took part in in '54--that was really the only year that I missed--had to be informal.

Odom: Very informal. (chuckle)

Hart: Yes. Have lunch with people and talk to them about it...and really I was pretty much out of it, as I said before. And I like to think that's why Shivers had so much trouble getting re-elected (chuckle) for a third term. I know that's not true, but it makes me feel good.

Odom: Did you continue to have a fairly close relationship with Governor Shivers during those years or did you see him rather infrequently?

Hart: I saw him frequently, at least once a week. He invited me to continue to come into his staff conferences and I did from time to time. But actually I was a lot further removed than I was when I worked there every day. You know how it is--you intend to keep real close but you... I felt like I was out of...I was in a sort of an eddy...a backwash during these years. It was a job and I tried to do my best but it wasn't exactly what I was suited for. I did try to improve the image, so-called, of the Employment Commission by making speeches here, there, and yonder when invited. I'm not sure that was (chuckle) any improvement.

Odom: Relations with the press also, I suppose. With your experience there you should help some.

Hart: The press is one of those groups that doesn't get excited about employment. They couldn't care less about the details of TEC's operations. This might interest you since we just had passage of an open meeting bill which throws open all, even the most intimate meetings, theoretically, to the press. We had our (chuckle) own open meetings arrangement at the TEC. If a question had ever came up, we would have invited the person inquiring to attend our hearings on the theory that if they ever attended one, they damn sure wouldn't come back (laughter) because it was so dull. (laughter) But they knew this instinctively and never did come in the first place, so we never had anybody <u>wanting</u> to come to any of our meetings in my years with the Employment Commission; but they could have come if they wanted to. (laughter)

Odom: Do you think this open meeting business will result in some of the intimate things being discussed in informal meetings prior to the time and really be pretty much cut and dried, the open part of it?

Hart: I don't think there's any question but what that will happen. You know it will. You know that there are certain things that probably shouldn't be said in open meetings, when they involve personalities and situations. You take one position that everything that happens in a public office is the public's business. I want to prove to you that's not right. I've been going through, for a period of years since Shivers got out of office, some of his files--correspondence files. Well, these letters are from people addressed to him...who addressed letters to him as Governor of Texas and they were helping him decide who to appoint to public office, to use one example. And there're some letters in those files that if they were released to the public <u>even</u> <u>now</u>, ten years later, would probably cause a shooting or at least a lot of hard feelings among people who are probably now over whatever the trouble was between them at the time.

I may be exaggerating; there are not too many of these, but I can think of some right now that I've seen that sure would sound bad, and they were written by these people in the utmost confidence to the Governor for his information. They thought they were doing him a favor and it seems to me that these are confidential letters in the sense that they should not be released until twenty-five years or something like this--'til everybody is pretty well dead. (chuckle) They're really insignificant historically. They don't have any bearing upon government. So

I say that you simply shouldn't say that everything that takes place in a public office should be public business. Now there is a tendency of course, to hide behind the fact that some of the things that I've described do exist. There is no substitute in the long run for a reasonable interpretation. I don't believe in star chamber proceedings and being too secretive about these things. But it's just impossible to keep a certain amount of talk, and even decision-making, off the record.