INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: WILLIAM COCHRANE

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Cochrane's office, Washington, D.C.

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G: Let me just ask you to sketch your background briefly. I know you're a North Carolinian.

C: Well, I was born in Newton, North Carolina, which is in Catawba County, where my people had been for quite a long time. I finished high school there in 1933 at the age of 16. We didn't have but eleven grades and I didn't go to but ten. Well, I went to eleven but, you know, jumped, telescoped a couple of them. We were broke by that time. My father was in business and he lost his business; this was the Depression period.

I went down to Chapel Hill with twenty-nine dollars, University of North Carolina, and got a job at my cousin's farm five miles out of town, studied by kerosene lamp, Aladdin lamp; they are excellent, by the way. My job was to chop wood and slop hogs, cut down trees and pull fodder and that sort of thing for my board and room. My cousin was a French instructor at the university, but he fancied he could farm. I got back to town as quickly as I could get a job in town doing the same sort of thing.

That was in 1933, and I had sort of grown up in a newspaper office in Newton that belonged to my uncle. Got my fingers in a printing press when I was thirteen. So I had newspapering ties in the family and so forth and after the fall quarter of my junior

year, fall of 1935, I went back home and worked for twenty-one months in a cotton mill. Well, I'd start the day out up ‘til eleven covering the city--the county seat, Newton, for the *Hickory Daily Record*, L. C. Gifford's paper. And then at eleven, I would sell insurance ‘til about four and at four-thirty I would be due up at the yarn mill, Clyde Fabrics, where I worked until two-thirty and then I'd go home and start over. I did that for twenty-one months and saved up a wee bit of money and went back to Chapel Hill and got a degree in journalism, A. B. in journalism. Journalism was handy because all they--they had more electives than any other outfit did. My objective all along was to go to law school, and I finished law school in 1941, by which time I was on the faculty in a way. The Institute of Government was there, founded by Albert Coates, and I was there with him. My partners there were Terry Sanford and a couple of other young fellows. Terry went on into the FBI and then the Army. He was behind me in law school. He didn't--you know, he is now the senator from North Carolina. He was in the Eighty-second Airborne Division, quite a hero, and came back and finished law school after the war. But I finished in 1941 and passed the bar and joined the naval reserve and spent the war on a fleet mine sweeper, mostly in the Mediterranean and got out early because I'd gone in, had some points and came back to the university on the faculty, at the Institute of Government. Is that too much detail?

G: No.

C: At any rate, I was an assistant and then an associate professor, and in the fall--in the school year of 1950-51, I took off a year.

G: This was at North Carolina?

C: Yes. I took off a year and went up to--had one of those Sterling Fellowships at Yale. They take thirteen, then they took thirteen from the U.S. and thirteen from the rest of the world. Mostly Commonwealth countries and China--I mean Japan and Philippines and so forth. That was one of the best years I ever had. Lived up in Hamden and thoroughly enjoyed it. Only time I ever got to go to school like a gentleman. And came on back to the Institute of Government.

In the spring of 1953, then-state senator Terry Sanford stopped by my place out in the country near Chapel Hill, which, incidentally [is] where I still live. Have a home up here, too. I still vote down there and I haven't even opened a checking account up here. He asked me would I--he said [William] Kerr Scott had asked him to manage his campaign and if he did and if Scott won, Terry would be entitled to come up here as his assistant, but he was running for governor, as I knew, and would I--he'd like to have me come. I said, "I'll go for a year." So Scott was elected in the fall of 1954, the general election, November, and when he was certified by the state elections commission, on or about 27 November, he was eligible to come up here and be sworn in. So we were all sworn in on the twenty-ninth of November 1954. And he had promised his people--the Branch Head Boys, as he called them. He was known as the Squire of Fall River. He was a farmer and had been governor and before that agriculture commissioner, as his father before him was the agriculture commissioner. Anyhow, Scott had promised the Branch Head Boys he would serve them ham and eggs on the Capitol steps. We had to--it was very carefully--get around the rules but anyhow we did have a little ceremony out

there with hundreds of people [who] came up, and I have a lot of pictures of that period, of that event.

That happened to be during the last few days of the Joe McCarthy censure debate, and as you know, Senator Sam Ervin, who had just come to the Senate in May of that year, succeeding Clyde R. Hoey by appointment of Governor [William B.] Umstead, and then who had been elected--I mean he was appointed and then elected to finish out the term. But he was senior senator and he had been put on the committee to study the Joe McCarthy problem, six-member, three-and-three bipartisan committee, and he was a star in it. At any rate, Scott voted with the majority on or about December 3 to censure--I don't know what the word was, anyhow the effect of it was to. . . .

G: I wanted to ask you if, in Kerr Scott's election campaign or campaign for the nomination, was the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision an issue in that campaign?

C: *Brown v. Board of Education* was handed down in May of 1954 and, of course, it shook this country and particularly the South. In North Carolina we had had large numbers of black people voting for a long time, but even so it was rough, especially down in the East. Scott got along fine with the black people who were involved in politics, and I don't recall that it was any great problem because he was running against the senator who had been appointed by Governor Umstead, who himself earlier had been in the Senate and had been defeated, you know, when he got around to--he was defeated by former Governor [Joseph] Broughton. But he appointed Sam Ervin, I mean, he appointed also that same year Alton Lennon to replace Senator Josiah William Bailey and Lennon, who was a recorder's court judge in Wilmington when he was appointed, is the senator who

was defeated by W. Kerr Scott in that election. And I don't think--we didn't have too much of a problem with that thing. The full implications of it were sinking in. The governor of North Carolina by that time was Luther Hodges, Luther Hartwell Hodges, a textile man who had spent his career up in Eden or around Reedsville, North Carolina with the Marshall Field enterprises up there. He had run for lieutenant governor two years before, and he was elected along with Umstead. Then when Umstead died in November of 1954, Luther Hodges was the new governor; he had two years and then a four-year term, so he was governor for six years. Those folks were moderates and they had a plan down there that developed later called the Pearsall Plan, Tom Pearsall. We didn't go in for massive resistance, but I'll tell you after we got up here our mail was heavy on that subject for a long time. This was in--I believe it was in 1955 that the Southern Manifesto--you remember reading about that--or do you remember that? Walter George of Georgia, the great orator, is the one who developed it and most of the Southerners signed it, including--with great misgiving--Senator Scott, also from North Carolina. Several congressmen refused to sign it.

G: Really?

C: Yes. Notably, Harold Cooley, a very senior member of the House did not sign it. Charlie Dean, a congressman who had been in for several terms, and [Richard] Thurmond Chatham, of Chatham Mills, you know. Those three did not sign it. Incidentally, in the subsequent election, in the subsequent primary, Charlie Dean and Thurmond Chatham were defeated because of it. Harold Cooley, who was a very senior member of the House--chairman of the Agriculture Committee and so forth, had not signed it as a matter

of principle, but his opponent in the election was a Republican named [W.E.] Debnam, and he is the lad who wrote this thing about--he was very conservative person. I'm not sure--I'd have to check to see whether he was running in the primary as a conservative Democrat. But he wrote a book called *Weep No More My Fair Lady* about Mrs. Roosevelt, attacking her. "Debnam Views the News"--he was a radio commentator.

(Interruption)

C: I've rambled a little there. I've forgotten where I was.

G: You were saying that Harold Cooley . . .

C: Yeah. Harold said during the campaign, "I hate and despise the Supreme Court opinion!" Those were his words. He did get elected, but he was damaged by it, and he was later on defeated by a Republican congressman, after having had a couple of rough primaries in which Bill Creeks ran against him, who was one of Sam Ervin's boys on the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee. But--then a Republican did beat him with one term, but he was number six in the House when he was defeated. I'm off the track, but--

G: Did Sam Ervin sign that Southern Manifesto?

C: Yes. Now, there's a real interesting story on that. That bothered Scott a lot, that he had signed that thing.

G: Tell me about his misgivings.

C: I will. This has never been published. I'm going to mention it in my talk to the North Carolinian Society on June 3, when I've got to give a forty-five minute comment on North Carolina and Washington for a third of the century. Incidentally, I think I'll hit a third of the century on March 29. (Laughter) That's roughly about what it is.

But Scott, every day--he lived in the Westchester, by the way, you know where that is? Six or seven miles up from here. He walked down here every morning. He went home in a taxi, but he walked down here every morning. And on the Monday morning that the Southern Manifesto was to be read, I got a phone call from him at the office, I'd say in the neighborhood of eight-thirty or so. He was coming down a little late. Not sure about the time. This is the point: "Bill," he said, "can you talk without anybody overhearing what you say?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Well, I would appreciate it," he said, "Don't say anything to anybody else on the staff." We had one or two Easterners, probably fairly conservative on this question, on the staff. "I want you to see if you can get my name off of that Southern Manifesto." Well, that tickled my ears off. But I had to say, "Senator, they gave that to the press ahead of time. They're going to read it over there at ten-thirty, Mr. George is, and I don't believe there's any way in the world we can get your name off of it at this point, without creating more commotion than would be good for you." That was what I had to say to him. He was strongly disappointed.

G: Did he say why he wanted--?

O: He didn't think--I don't know. He said he was uncomfortable with it. Just like those other three guys had refused to sign it. That was part of his reason, the fact that they had taken that line. He didn't think that was going to be any solution. He knew that--he felt that they were going to have to abide by the Supreme Court decision; the Civil War is over. And I think I'd have to say that he just didn't feel right about the--do you remember--did you ever read it?

G: Yes.

O: See, in Virginia we had massive resistance. Now Walter George of Georgia was one of those people who had a magnificent voice. Whenever he was--if we knew he was going to make a speech even on billboards, [or] defending Coca-Cola, we would all flock over to listen in the Senate. The word would get around. That's how good he was. I remember in 1956 he was due to run for re-election. His AA [Administrative Assistant] was Colonel Jake Carlton--I believe that's right, Jake--who later was head of the Reserve Officer's Association operation across the street over here. And--you know, Lyndon Johnson, when he took over as majority leader, had changed the system considerably. In the days before LBJ the old-time senior boys could be chairman of two or three important committees. Walter George, as I recall it, was chairman of Finance and Foreign Relations. He had--you know, they could double up on those things, and Johnson ended that to pass it around a little more. That's how [William] Proxmire, a brand new senator succeeding Joe McCarthy, got on the appropriations committee, thanks to LBJ, when he first came here. Of course, later on he bit the hand that fed him, so to speak. That was the feeling, at any rate. I've had a lot of respect for Bill Proxmire through the years, but he's been an unusual loner. But anyhow, Mr. George elected to give up Finance and keep Foreign Relations, and as you know, several times in our history the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has come a cropper. It's not a big election ticket. Ask Mr. Fulbright, he's still around, when he got beat, you know. But, at any rate, Herman Talmadge announced against Walter George--who was *running*. And, of course, he [Talmadge] had the background of his daddy down there, Gene, and everybody thought he was going to be awful. He had been governor, too. His daddy was Phi Beta Kappa,

by the way. But at any rate Herman was coming up here. It was apparent [he] was going to run and Mr. George got word from such old-timers down there as the heads of Georgia Power and Central Georgia Railroad and Asa Candler's outfit, Coca-Cola, and Georgia--Trust Company of Georgia. They were going to help Herman and he backed away. I went to his farewell party at the Mayflower in 1956. See, we're off on another ramble.

G: Why do you think they supported Talmadge rather than George?

C: Well, he had a lock on the political situation in Georgia, but they--Mr. George wasn't in a spot to do them any good, and Herman and his crowd were real strong down there politically and that's why. As it turned out, Herman Talmadge was a hell of a good senator. He really was. Everybody respected him around here. He was an able--he became chairman of Agriculture, which was very important down that way. I got to know him real well and I had a lot of respect for him and still do.

G: Any insights on LBJ not signing that Southern Manifesto?

C: He didn't sign it, did he? Well, Texas was in a--he probably caught a lot of hell for that. Was that when the next time he had a real close race?

G: Well, actually he didn't run again until 1960.

C: Well, that's not long for this sort of thing. We're talking about 1955 or 1956.

G: There were other efforts to--

C: He was a populist and was moving over toward the direction he later chose, you know, helping . . . . He was the leader. A lot of times that affects--he probably couldn't have kept his leadership.

G: He said that he had not been asked to sign it because he was the leader. When you describe him as moving over toward a more moderate position during those years in the middle fifties, did you see any other evidence of his change in position on the civil rights issues?

C: Well, that was a gradual thing for a lot of people. Take [Harry F., Sr.?] Byrd, same way later. But when you become the leader, you really do have to shift a little bit. You have to represent a national attitude more than if you are just a senator. And of course, Lyndon Johnson was always ambitious. The rest of the country would never have gone along with a candidate for President who took the massive resistance line.

G: There were a couple of bills that were designed to curb the Supreme Court's jurisdiction in such areas as civil rights. HR-3 was one, Jenner had some . . . Any recollections of--?

C: I have a general recollection of the efforts through the years. Our mail was very heavy on segregation. We had this solution in North Carolina, or really it was a postponement. We managed not to get involved in massive objections to it. We had the extremists, of course, who were hollering all the time, but they weren't in office. And Luther Hodges did a very able job down there, and the senators up here weren't stars in that thing. They had to have a due regard for it, but Ervin, I guess was more conservative than Scott was or than Jordan was, as it turned out later.

G: What do you remember about the 1957 Civil Rights Bill?

C: Well, I'd have to refresh a little bit to get the years, the different steps straight. Well, for example, I know that Jack Kennedy never was real strong in that direction prior to the August 22, 1963 march, you know, when a hundred thousand people in quiet dignity

gathered down here on the Mall. Lyndon Johnson was ahead of him in that sort of thing, I think, as I recall it. But I really am a little rusty on the sequence of things. I'd have to read up a little bit.

G: With regard to the 1957 bill, that was when Strom Thurmond launched a--

C: Twenty-four hour--

G: --one man filibuster.

C: Yes. Was that when Dirksen said the Civil Rights [Bill] was an idea whose time had come? Was that when Dirksen joined in with him and they put it over? No, I don't think so. I think that was later. I think that was in the 1963 period.

G: But the other southern senators decided not to join Thurmond in the filibuster.

C: Yeah.

G: Any recollections of that?

C: No. I'd have to refresh a little bit in that area. It's been so long ago. Incidentally, our mail moved from the segregation issue to the Vietnam matter and I--for a little while it was a relief, but it got to be an awful chore. I was a ready reservist all my life in the navy, and I wrote the basic line that we followed, the letters and so forth, and switched over after that Cambodian business. I'm the one that interviewed all the college kids and the other groups that came in, taped a few of them, but I switched all of a sudden; I realized that we ought to go for that Cooper-Church thing. And I had--I'll mention one little thing. Sam Ervin. When Senator [Benjamin Everett] Jordan got back from the floor, voting on Cooper-Church, two things happened. One was he came in and said, "Bill, you know what Sam said to me?" Sam Ervin: "Everett, have you lost your mind?"

The other thing is, we got a call--he got a call from Senator [Mark O.] Hatfield, who was on the other--he was one of the proponents of cutting back on that war. The senator was away, so I caught the call; you know, I happened to be in his room at the time and they transferred it to me, as they usually did on things like that. And he was jubilant. He said, "Bill, I want you to tell Everett how overjoyed we are and that we think this means five more votes for us in the South down the road," opening the door, providing an umbrella. Subsequently, this was in whenever it was, shortly after that the senator was down in North Carolina at the Jefferson-Jackson Day Meeting. Eighteen hundred were there, and when he walked in they gave him a standing ovation. He walked in with his fingers giving the V sign. And they voted on a similar resolution, and this was two years before his defeat. They voted for his position twelve hundred to six hundred. In other words, if he had run in 1970 he would have made it, but in 1971 he had cancer of the colon and a foot of it came out and he was 76 when he ran, so that little bit is what beat him. Does everybody you interview--do all your interviewees ramble all over the lot? Everything makes you think of something else. It's all a seamless web.

G: Let me ask you to shift gears for a moment and talk about the different political factions in North Carolina as represented in Washington, in the Senate?

C: Well, I don't know. I have a lot of thoughts on that, but I'd suggest that we, we're supposed to join those people in about five minutes and I'd rather get into that and deal with it without an interruption.

G: Well, why don't you tell me about the first time you encountered Lyndon Johnson.

C: Well, where would that be? Of course, you know, we were close to him. Senator Scott liked him and was the new senator from North Carolina, and Bobby Baker, we dealt with all the time. Bobby was the best--he had--when I got here, I guess, he was chief telephone page, and of course Lyndon Johnson made him secretary of the majority. So he started off there. He's one of the best illustrations I ever saw of the old saying, "knowledge is power," because he had it. He would tell them how they needed to vote in their own interest when they came in and at the same time carry out his duties to the majority leader. But--and I should say this picture, as we move toward January, was a little murky on a couple of points. Wayne Morse had left the Republican Party two years before and was winding up two years as an independent, and the Republicans had punished him by making him big dog on the D.C. committee and that sort of thing, and it was during that period that he made up his mind to vote with the Democrats in the organization of the Senate. It wasn't generally known how he might be going to perform.

Strom Thurmond--who had run against Harry Truman as a Dixiecrat, carried four states in 1948; not long before, Strom previously had been governor of South Carolina--but it wasn't absolutely certain how Strom was going to go. If either one of those two had gone the other way, Bill Knowland would have continued as majority leader because it would have been 48 [to] 48. If *either one* had gone the other way. But they both voted with the Democrats, and Strom and--Wayne Morse became a Democrat. And that made it 49-47, and Nixon didn't get to break the tie. It was during this, I think that was done. I think the Senate opened on January 5 and ratified--the caucus previously had voted to make Johnson the majority leader, but we would have been undone. But [inaudible]

about Strom there, the first man in history to win a write-in vote to either House--and the second man in history who did it was the segregationist from Arkansas who beat Wayne Hays. No, I'm thinking about Brooks Hays, who was really a fine congressman and who left Arkansas and moved to the central part of North Carolina and ran for the House up there and got beat, but he did--he did run. Brooks Hays, yes.

G: Any recollections of the McCarthy censure? That happened right after you got here.

C: Yeah. Well, it broke Joe McCarthy, visibly. It really did. I used to see him around here and chatted with him a few times. He married Jean Kerr. I don't know when. Somewhere during that period and he bought a house that wasn't next door to me, but there was one house between us, and lived over there on 3rd Street for several years until he died. But I never--

(Interruption)

C: Bodyguards always brought him to his back door, up the alley, and went in. I saw him over here every once in a while and talked to him, but never saw him in the neighborhood. Bodyguards would bring him home.

G: But he was different after the censure?

C: I think it visibly--he was visibly broken by it and he just went downhill from then on.

I suggest we go join our colleagues.

(Interruption)

G: Now, do you think you have time to go back now and discuss the various factions in North Carolina?

C: Yes, I'll try. The political divisions in North Carolina have, of course, varied at different times, you know, as you go along and its very different now from what it was twenty and thirty years ago. Most of my life everything was Democratic. The factions were within the Democratic Party. We had a conservative wing and a liberal wing and a center-of-the-road crowd. We had it all in the primary. That's when the decisions were made. For example, the--at different times, different elections, you pick them, the same principle would apply. The Republicans got nowhere. They didn't even have primaries, you know, they just had conventions and picked somebody, and that somebody would run for governor, not expecting to get anywhere, but knowing that he might be appointed collector of customs or postmaster, even; we had Republican presidents a lot of the time in my lifetime, and that was it. That was what it would be. But then in 1972, for the first time in this century a Republican won the election as governor, Jim Holshouser, and it happened again in 1984 when Jim Martin was elected. Those are the only two times. Ever since about the beginning of the--well, since the civil rights fights and so forth in the South, massive resistance, the Board of Education case in 1954, we've had an increasing number of Republican votes in North Carolina, plus the fact--and that's been aided and abetted by the enormous number of people that have moved in from the North. As cotton mills moved south and other types of industry came down there, their people came along too, and the country club Republicans vs. the old--the Jesse Helms group, the congressional club--the factions there. I don't know that I'm doing much but rambling, but that was the general division. Maybe if I talked about specific times--

G: Well, did Senator Ervin, for example, represent one faction and Senator Kerr Scott another?

C: Well, Senator Ervin, really, as I said, really had an unusually--rather unique career in politics, in that he sort of eased in without much of a contest every time. He didn't--wasn't aligned with anybody, didn't help anybody much. I remember being at a YDC function in Durham one Sunday morning, and Senator W. Kerr Scott was there, and we were facing up to an election when Sam Ervin had to run for re-election, you know, [for the] first time. And Senator Scott got up at the breakfast and said, "I am for the senior senator to continue." Monroe Redden, who had been in the House--a lawyer in the mountains, I think Edisonville, had been making plans to run against Senator Ervin, and--oh, actually, this was the first time Ervin had to run, a couple of years after he was appointed. You have to run at the next general election, you know. And this shook the state because Ervin and Scott had not been close. The Scott group was sort of a faction of its own, and Ervin was over with the more conservative group--close to Hodges, close to, well, John Larkins, a number of other folks down there. And Monroe Redden did not run against Senator Ervin. It was a very surprising statement Scott made. Incidentally, when Ervin didn't reciprocate, Senator Jordan came out for Senator Ervin. Normally, in a state, the other senator does not get involved in your primary and general--primary at any event. He helps you at the general election if you're in the same party. But Senator Jordan came out for Senator Ervin a time or two in advance of the primary, but Senator Ervin never did do that himself.

G: Reciprocate.

C: He always was a sort of a loner.

G: Did Senator Clyde Hoey represent one faction or the other?

C: Yes, he did. He represented what they call the Shelby dynasty for a long time. It reaches back to old Max Gardner, who was governor during the Depression in North Carolina and they--Shelby was his home as it was Hoey's and the people up at Shelby sort of ran the state for quite a while until Kerr Scott beat their candidate in 1948 for governor. Scott was a little bit over on the progressive side of things. As it turned out Everett Jordan was too, but he was in the other group inside politics in the state, or he was thought to be. He turned out to have at least as liberal a voting record up here as Kerr Scott had had. For example, we'll come to that part later. I'm not--if we get going on specific things my memory is pretty good.

G: How did Kerr Scott regard Lyndon Johnson?

C: He regarded him very favorably. They were close to each other almost from the time he got here, and, you see, Scott died in April of 1958; he was here only three years and four months. He would have faced an election in 1960, but he didn't even get close to that, you see. But Scott was considered a populist, progressive type, a liberal depending--liberal was a compliment down that way. Scott, for example, is the governor who appointed Frank Porter Graham to the U.S. Senate. Dr. Graham was the president of the University of North Carolina and considered a very liberal person. Incidentally, he came--in that first primary, which was in 1950--he came within five thousand votes of winning an absolute majority in the first primary out of a field of six and one of those six was Robert Rice Reynolds, former Senator from North Carolina, from Asheville, who

had five wives, by the way, and his last one was Evelyn Walsh McLean's daughter, you know, the owner of the Hope Diamond and so forth, that young girl. He married her and they had one child. But he got fifty thousand votes, and he was over toward the right. He was so far over that in September of 1941 he got back from a trip to Germany during which he had praised Hitler, and he was subsequently involved in a thing called the Silver Shirts. I believe it was Eugene [William] Dudley Pelley, or something like that. The Silver Shirts--a fascist organization. Now Bob Reynolds, in the fall of 1941, who was praising Hitler, was also chairman of whatever the military committee was in the Senate under Roosevelt.

G: House Military Affairs Committee?

C: Senate.

G: Oh, Senate.

C: He was chairman of the Military Affairs Committee in the Senate when Roosevelt was trying to build up things. Well, of course, Reynolds six years later didn't even file for re-election. Roosevelt had to steer around him the whole time he was pushing the Silver Shirts and all the rest of it, but he didn't even try to get re-elected in 1944. Clyde Hoey did--former Governor Hoey ran against him and was elected and served until May of 1954, when he died at his desk, and Sam Ervin was appointed to succeed him. Now, Reynolds was definitely a right-winger; he had a lot of charm, all kinds of stories about him. But Roosevelt had a hard time getting ready for that war with him as chairman of the Military Affairs Committee. The other seat was--Josiah William Bailey was in it and he was--he started off life up here as a liberal. He was editor of the *Biblical Recorder*

down there. He beat [inaudible] [Furnifold] Simmons in 1930. Simmons was president pro-tem of the Senate. He had been up here for thirty years, but in 1928 he joined Bishop Cannon of the Methodist Church and others in supporting Herbert Hoover against Al Smith, and they carried the state of North Carolina with them in that election. But two years later the state--they turned around and punished him for leading them out of the party, and that was the first time anything like that had happened since Reconstruction, by the way; the Simmons departure from the party because of the Catholic issue. Two years later--that's when Josiah William Bailey got elected, came up here, served until--I don't know, I've forgotten the year, but I do know that the year Kerr Scott was elected, he was the sixth North Carolina senator to occupy that seat in one six-year term. We put in the last six weeks of it. Bailey put in the first part of it, and we had several of them in between. I'm just rambling now again.

G: Well, let's talk some more about LBJ and his role as Democratic leader. By 1955, he became majority leader as you described with those two votes, Thurmond's and Wayne Morse's.

C: Yeah, Thurmond and Morse. Well, nothing comes to mind right off to get me started, but there is one thing I wanted to mention to you. We had a six-foot-plus newspaperman on our staff, W. Kerr Scott did, and he stayed on with Everett Jordan, named Bill Whitley. William B. Whitley. . . .

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C: Bill Whitley was an unusual person. He was twenty-eight years old when he came up here. He had been helping Scott in his campaign and he had to drop out because of

stomach problems, and, in fact, they took out a good part of his stomach, and he recovered about the time we moved up here and he came up here and served the--filled the role of press secretary. He has a connection with Johnson; that's the reason I'm bringing him in. He was living on milk and crackers almost for the first year or two, and then he resumed heavy ingestion of spirits; he could take a lot without showing it. I remember he wrote a lot of speeches for LBJ. They hit it off real well. Johnson wanted him badly to come to work for him, but he was too smart to do it. He stayed over on Everett Jordan's staff, because Jordan just like Scott before him had always cooperated with LBJ and liked him and worked well with him--was there when he was needed--each one of them was. I remember running into LBJ and somebody else in an elevator down at the Mayflower one night while he was--I believe while he was president. In any event, Bill--the Senator--I mean, Mr. Johnson said to me, "Bill, why in the world don't you talk that old long boy of yours over there into coming to work for me. I need him real bad." They really did hit it off. But Bill would respond to calls even when he was down yonder to turn out--Bill wrote a good quick speech.

G: Why didn't he want to go to work for LBJ?

C: Well, he was pretty familiar with operations in those offices [being] on a crash basis all the time, and he got treated a little more politely operating in a volunteer way than he would have if he had come on the staff.

G: Two things. One that he was a slave driver and two he was hard on his staff.

C: Yes, sometimes that was the idea, part of it. And I think the main idea--plus, he was very fond of Senator Jordan. He had a pretty good deal. By the way, this is coming up to it.

On the tenth of April in 1967 he and I went out to the ball game on the bus--the Tobacco Institute took a crowd out there. It was the first time we had ever accepted the invitation. I left after one inning, caught a taxi back, and he left after two. And I remember I came on back and worked a while and then went over to L. H. Fountain--Congressman L. H. Fountain's birthday party. And Bill came back later and I didn't see him because I was gone to that when he got back and he went on home and that is the night he died. I got a call from his wife about nine o'clock. His tubes just blew in there, as his father had before him, and he was gone. That was 1967. Johnson was very much affected by that. I mean, he made sure, I think, after we let him know what needed to be done, he made sure his wife had a job and that sort of thing.

G: Well, LBJ had a reputation for being a real wheeler-dealer as majority leader, someone who could always get together enough votes to pass a bill or defeat a bill. Did you observe him in that role?

C: Oh yes, I saw him on the floor working on people, tugging on their lapels and so forth. He was just very intense and he was very good at persuading people to go his way. And he would usually be able to figure some angle that tied in with that person's interests, you know, and he would remember people that had helped him.

G: Well, did he--?

C: And, Bobby Baker was very good at helping him marshal the support that he needed from a particular senator. Both of them understood if somebody couldn't go.

G: Was there a good deal of horse trading, of trading support on one measure for--?

C: Not per se, not open, you know. I mean, there was just a general feeling, as I saw it, a general feeling--"Well, we're together on most things, let's be together on this one." But there was a recognition always that on some things a particular senator couldn't be with you. Everybody understood that. It was much worse if somebody who, when it didn't matter either way, wouldn't go with you, although sometimes you had to try to be consistent with previous positions taken. I never had a feeling that--Johnson was very--he would push real hard, but it would be a new ball game later on; he wasn't one for vengeful retribution.

G: He wouldn't hold it against you then. Well, what about--

C: Not unduly.

G: Tell me about--

C: Incidentally, there are people who feel the other way quite strongly on that.

G: Is that right?

C: Sure. You never knew anybody that there were more conflicting views about than Lyndon Johnson.

G: Did these views largely follow a party line, or a liberal vs. conservative line, or--?

C: Populist is the best word for Johnson, and he wasn't always consistent.

G: Did you feel that he had a philosophy, a political philosophy like that?

C: Yes.

G: And it was populism?

C: Populism. I think, if you were around during that period, you were around when he had already done part of his changing, you know, from the old separate-but-equal and other

views of those times to--about the time I got here is when it started changing, after *Brown v. Board of Education*.

G: Hubert Humphrey emphasized Johnson's ability to always make sure that when a vote was taken, he had the maximum number of senators present on his side and maybe a reduction in strength on the other side. Any--

C: He had a better count. He had a good count always. He would be able--he would know ahead of time where he stood better than Mansfield, for example, who never kept track of much of that sort of thing. For a long time [Alan?] Cranston used to be very good at that. His people were. Before he got elected assistant leader on his own he was over there keeping track of votes on the floor. But Bobby Baker was an enormous help to Lyndon Johnson. He would always know how something was going to come out.

Incidentally, Bobby Baker never got too big for his britches until after Johnson left the Senate, in my opinion. You see, we had to do the investigation of the Bobby Baker case. Everett Jordan was chairman of the Rules Committee. Tried to play it by the book. He wasn't a mean person. He called things the way they were and turned over everything we had to the proper authority. Bobby's book is not very truthful in that respect.

G: Is that right? How so?

C: Well, he was very critical of--made fun of Senator Jordan on some things [inaudible]. But what Senator Jordan was was fair. We played it by the book. It cost us fifty thousand votes at the next primary. So we just won by a quarter of a million. (Laughter)

We lost a lot of--because everybody assumed we were pulling our punches on Bobby Baker but Bobby Baker. He didn't assume it.

But none of the--nothing we found reflected on LBJ, really. Bobby stayed in line as long as Johnson was over here in the Senate with him. When Johnson left, he got arrogant. Actually, you know what crossed him up was he gave the back of his hand to some of his former buddies. They were the ones who peached on him, got him in trouble. I think he was one of the ablest people I ever knew in my life.

G: Really?

C: Yes, I do. First class mind. And again, as I said earlier, he is a good exemplification of the notion that knowledge is power because he learned his lessons. He knew what he was supposed to do and he knew each senator's interests--he was totally devoted to it and he never had any problem until he got on his own. Senator Mansfield didn't run the Senate the way Lyndon Johnson did, so there was sort of a vacuum and Bobby filled it. Also, Bob Kerr died on New Year's Day in 1963 and he had been very close to Bobby.

G: There were some questions about a hundred thousand dollars that Baker had supposedly gotten from Senator Kerr--

C: I don't remember that sum.

G: --to this campaign money.

C: I never had the feeling that Bobby would take anybody's money or any of that sort of thing, but I had forgotten a lot of the details of that. That's all in the files, the hearings and everything else. Are you familiar with that?

G: Oh, yes. I have seen that. Any specific recollections of LBJ flying senators back for a vote, or making sure that his people were there on the floor when--?

C: Well, I do know that he did that. That was fairly common, but I don't have any specific ones in mind.

G: How did Johnson and his counterpart Bill Knowland compare?

C: Well, they were very different people. I didn't get a chance to know Knowland as leader but six weeks, and I didn't see much of him then, I mean, we were just opening up an office so I'm not a good judge to answer that question.

G: Well, but he was--

C: Knowland was Mr.--Taiwan was his chief interest during a long period there. Let's see, the main thing I remember about him plus the fact that we got back--he went to Oakland and killed himself in a few years. He was a likeable sort of person, I thought, but that's--my impressions of him are very vague because he wasn't here long.

G: Some have suggested that Knowland was not very subtle whereas Johnson was.

C: I don't remember well enough to make an intelligent comment on that, and I might say some of the other things I've said would have been better qualified in that way. I just feel that I've done a very poor job for you today, at this point anyway. Sometimes it comes out better than it does at others.

One of our big issues was tobacco during Scott's time here, which as I said was late 1954 to April 1958, three years and four months. Scott was on the Agriculture committee and he was chairman of the tobacco subcommittee and this was the time when they were beginning the drive against cigarette smoking. I remember we had lots of

hearings both here in town and around the country on this. The effort was being made to discourage cigarette smoking. There was a lot of discussion of what they call homogenized tobacco. It was sweepings and so forth from the floor at tobacco plants. It was supposed to be bad for you. I remember, of course, Texas wasn't terribly involved in that, but we usually won about--one vote we won ninety-something to ten, or ninety to ten, something like that. [Inaudible] on the other side about labeling. What else do you have on that list?

G: Okay. Cotton acreage amendment in March 1955.

C: I remember that, but I don't remember much about it. I've got to brush up a little.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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