

This is an interview with John Seigenthaler, Publisher, Nashville Tennessean on August 15, 1974. Jack Bass conducted the interview and Susan Hathaway transcribed it.

JACK BASS: Politics and Government in Tennessee (beginning of question inaudible).

JOHN SEIGENTHALER: I think it's spotty but . . . but I'm satisfied with . . . it's not fair to say I am satisfied with our coverage. I think our coverage is better than most papers in the state have, primarily because I think we have put more people into it. Jack, just because when the legislature is meeting we were willing to put more people up there than the other papers were. Manpower is a big problem. Nobody does an accurate job of covering local and state government, but I think that our two key fellows up there, Larry Daughtery and John ~~Hale~~ ^{Hale} are better than average, tough, skeptical and energetic. Hale is more of a self starter than Daughtery, and Daughtery is more thorough. I think they do the best job they can do in terms of times available to them. After that, I'd rate Dana ^{Ford Thomas} high. Dana may be better as an individual than either one of them, also tougher, also more cynical and more energetic probably than any other reporter up there. Travis has gotten lazy up there, he knows more, but doesn't move around as much. Bill Bennett, I think, by my standards is almost inadequate. It's routine with him, the commercial (?) feeling. The Banner, I think they are spotty, very spotty. The electronic media is almost like nobody is there that cares. I think in terms of

trying to keep politicians from picking it up and carrying it away or the lobbyists from picking it up and carrying it away. I think that most people would say that the Tennessean is progressive almost to the point of being a common scold at times, and after that Dana is the toughest guy up there, but again, we just don't do enough. I go up there during the legislature sometimes and sit in the balcony. It startles me to think that all those reporters, cramed^m into those two halls, and almost nobody covering the rest of state government. It's just not an adequate job, and I suggested a couple of times informally that we try to pool some, but nobody wants to do that, but I don't know why.

J.B.: Are your wire services doing anything?

J.S.: Very little. Very little. Almost nothing. They rely on us, most of them, for coverage. You know, as I say, we have those two fellows and they are not able to do anything like the job that ought to be done; but I think that, at least I think, that they're working to keep them relatively honest, and if we get on to something, it . . . and they are tied up then we throw somebody else into it, like the whole question of strip mining. We have one reporter who is working that whole area, and he moved in and attacked state government, attacked the problem and the way state government was dealing with it; and if some consumer question comes up or some local government question comes up before the legislature . . . property appraisal was a big issue here for a while. One of our local government fellows was out, Al ~~George~~^{Fore} and was working on that.

He . . . the legislature had some hearings on it so he went in and covered that as opposed to the two reporters who were up there. He just knew more about it.

J.B.: Was he the Senator's son?

J.S.: Ummm.

J.B.: That must have been pretty rough?

J. S.: Damn right. Again he's . . . you know as long as reporters are tough enough and skeptical enough, they are going to do a reasonably good job, unless they are just lazy, and I found that most of the fellows around here . . . come in here really because they know there is enough freedom, so . . . in the government . . . either state or local level without any interference. There are not going to be that many sacred cows . . . there aren't, some, but not that many.

J.B.: How do you access the state of the Democratic party in Tennessee?

J.S.: Well it almost has no substance as a structure.

J.B.: We heard a description of the Democratic party in North Carolina as being likened to a bird with no head and many wings flapping simultaneously in different directions, and my question is would that also describe the Democratic party in Tennessee?

J.S.: I guess it does, yeah. I think that is damn good. (Laughing) Incidentally, my son is going to Duke in September, he's really looking forward to it. I'm on edge about it. So, I expect I am going to know a hell of a lot about North Carolina politics next year than I do this year. I guess you go through transition from an old South one party state to a viable two

party state, and it is difficult to know particularly when you don't have party registration . . . it's difficult to know what the hell a party is. We had two factions in Tennessee since Crump really. Frank Clement and ^{B. Ford} ~~Duke~~ Ellington were not Crump machine politicians in the boss Crump sense, but they did inherit . . . they were heirs to that wing of the party. You know, it matured some and . . . but if you go down the list of Crump machine county leaders, quite often they turn up in the Clement - Ellington faction of the party. At least a half dozen . . . some of them are still around. Not many, Howard Warp comes to mind down in Cornwall, he was a Crump man for years and years and the Postman, McCallum named him Postmaster who was fired for the Hatch Act violation, well, later on he ended up on the State School Board under Clement, later became the State Director of Education under Ellington. He is still down in that little county, still controlling 70% of the vote. His wife is now School Superintendent down there, he was for years. Clement and Ellington, when they really put it together took on most of that organization. I guess it gravitated where the power was when Frank Clement came in as the young star in '52. The anti-Crump faction, which never had any . . . never had that many identifiable bodies before Estes Kefauver and Gordon Browning about 1948. They represented really the other faction. (Inaudible) Gore, and that sort of thing, but Kefauver and Gore were strange politicians, they were basically populists . . . no tangible organization in terms of structure. There no Kefauver county leaders whose best patronage . . . because there was not that much patronage. The Congressmen got into it or he had divided

with Albert or whoever the other Senator was. So from about '52 on the Democratic party was just two sharply divided factions. Clement - Ellington organization and the Kefauver - Gore non-organization. Just sort of an amorphous group of people that centers often as not around this newspaper's positions, and we really haven't gotten used to being a party that fights Republicans, you know. We're so used to fighting with each other. They are still bitter, very bitter. You still find Kefauver Democrats who are paid out of our fund. Gore Democrats who hate (Inaudible) who is Beauford Ellington's press secretary. I don't think we've gotten used to the idea of being a party yet . . . having an organization, having a party chairman who have any say so about issues or structure organization. Jim Sasser has provided some leadership, some direction since he has come in, he probably was the right man at the right time.

J.B.: What's it going to take to do that? To make it a party? I mean this last primary doesn't indicate that there's much organization (inaudible).

J.S.: Well this, of course, this campaign could do it. Certainly the next one will. What we need is a leader around whom Democrats can gravitate.

J.B.: Is Blanton the guy for that?

J.S.: Well, he's not for me. You know, I'm going to have to decide what I am going to do about that. I supported Howard Baker over him, because of his record on civil rights and civil liberties. There was a close endorsement for Baker but we came down for Baker. It's the first time this paper has endorsed

a Republican in . . . since 1937 when Sherman had his party (?) But Blanton was a red neck congressman for a red neck district. I didn't feel like I wanted him to (inaudible)

J.B.: How is he going to be as a state wide candidate for Governor?

J.S.: When he came in and talked to us and asked for our endorsement in the primary, we didn't endorse him in the primary. Never had a candidate said so much and talked so much and said so little, so I think that is very obviously a (inaudible). Only the candidates that we might have supported were out of it almost from the beginning. But, when he came in we said look, you've lost a hell of a lot of back votes, (Inaudible) labor votes. I mean, when a man get's a higher pay check (?), how do you intend to get him back. He said something to the effect well, I'll have to make some overtures in those directions and others. I just don't know if he's deep enough to command respect that I think is very needed to attract . . . he (inaudible). to the Democratic party. I mean, the wave of the Democratic party that has been out, out in terms of state government and state party is concerned. . . I mean, they had people in office, I mean Kefauver was in office, Albert Gore was in office. There are two or three congressmen that are around that have been satisfactory; but for those people who are basically motivated, I think, by a sense of idealism, and a commitment that politics outside (inaudible). . . I am not sure even that coalition can continue to survive in the '70's here in Tennessee. But there has been a labor - black academic community coalition that found real inspiration in people like Kefauver and Gore, and even in Ross Bass, poor fellow. But he was sort of (inaudible).

I don't think that Ray Blanton has said anything or done anything to make any of them want to get off their ass. So I think your answer is no. I don't think he has the capacity to provide that sort of leadership. However, I suspect that when Bill ~~Boeh~~^{Brock} comes up in two years, it won't matter who the party's nominee is. Whoever he is, the Gore - Kefauver wave of the party wants to go ~~Boeh~~^{Brock}. Whether they can get him again or not is something else. But they have the feeling that he maligned Albert Gore with a campaign that had its basis in a . . . almost anti-intellectual peer. Albert Gore is a godless man who wants to take away your guns. I mean that is more blatant than some of the television stuff was, but none the less there was the pitch as many of Gore's followers interpreted it. I think whoever is nominated is against Bill ~~Boeh~~^{Brock}, there will be an opportunity to form a strong party coalition. I think that if Ray Blanton were that nominee, for example, he could get . . . he could be the catalyst to bring the Democrats together.

J.B.: But you don't see him as the catalyst this year.

J.S.: No.

J.B.: Is anybody else on the horizon? Or do you just see the opportunity in '76 for somebody to . . .?

J.S.: ~~Boeh~~^{Brock} . . . that there is that negative factor that affects Democrats that are going to be going looking for a chance to beat Bill ~~Boeh~~^{Brock}. I think they'd take almost anybody who came out of that primary.

J.B.: Is Fulton considered a prime candidate?

J.S.: Well he is by Fulton, I think. He would have been

great this time if he had gotten the nomination. He could have won. Yeah, he would be able to inspire that sort of following. He really would . . . yeah.

J.B.: Do you think he will run for the Senate in '76?

J.S.: He told me on the phone the other day that if Baker announces that if he is going to run . . . if Baker is the Vice-President, I don't think that he is going to be but . . . but he'll announce immediately that he is going to run for the Senate this year. So I would think . . .

J.B.: If you lose it this year . . . (inaudible). The next opportunity is 1976 if you can find a candidate against Boch. In other words what you are looking at is a party that is almost leaderless and has been for four years and may be for the next two, maybe the next four years.

J.S.: That's right.

J.B.: If a Democrat . . .

J.S.: That's right.

J.B.: What if the primary law doesn't get changed . . . four years from now aren't you looking at the same situation that you are looking at now.

J.S.: Might be, might be.

J.B.: Looking at it as pessimistically as you can.

J.S.: Well I have . . .

J.B.: Is that law, by the way, a key to reuniting the party, or getting consensus within the party box . . .

J.S.: I think that having a run-off, for one thing, then having party registration for another. I think both of those will be helpful factors.

J.B.: Do you see that coming?

J.S.: No. I think that the . . . part of the . . . two facets to the problem I have . . . as I see it, I guess . . . on the one hand you have the legislature that sees itself as being the only viable identifiable agency of the Democratic party . . . elected agency of the Democratic party. They've always considered the Executive Committee effective and effectual, almost out of it . . . there has been a void.(?) See you had . . . an effective Governor has been the party. The Governor names the State Chairman, and most people never even. . . until the (inaudible) nobody even knew what the hell the party was all about. Nobody ever questioned whether anybody had any rights within the framework of the Democratic party. The Executive Committee met performed those functions required by law was (inaudible) rare occasions . . . Fulton's first election there was a vote scandal, absentee vote scandle in 1962. He was running against a man named Carlton Lodsor (?) who is an incumbent congressman, and there was a vote scandal, a vote fraud uncovered and this paper really was responsible, without question, for exposing it, and Fulton had 300 absentee ballots (inaudible). He won that night by 52 votes, without the counting of those ballots and when they were counted he lost 290 to 10. So he lost the election but the exposure of the scandal surrounding those absentee ballots was so great that when the State Executive Committee met, the incumbent refused to accept the ballot and asked them to prepare (inaudible). But aside from rare cases like that, nobody has even known that there was an Executive Committee or that

it had any function. Now the other Republican (inaudible) so everybody says what is the Democratic party. You had, on one hand, the . . . this Executive Committee, and then you had the legislators . . . they decided that the party was in debt, and that they didn't want to . . . they didn't expect any financing from the party and so they set up their own fund raising device. (inaudible). They raised the money for themselves outside the framework of the regular party. So you had the legislature which has come to view itself as an identifiable . . . they've come to see themselves as identifiable leaders of the party. They haven't really recognized the Executive Committee as being a helpful part of machinery of the party. Then on the other hand, you've had . . . tell her I'll call her tomorrow . . . on the other hand, you've had . . . they tried to pass a law which increased the number of members on the Executive Committee thinking that this would somehow give more direction to the Executive Committee. Sasser has gradually gained some respect from the legislative leadership, but not enough to make them listen to him. I think when he says he wants a run off law, those legislators worry about whether they are going to have a runoff or not. They are not really very . . . we don't have a very good legislature, I think, and we don't have very good Democratic party leadership.

J.B.: Do most of the legislators and the people who have been around Democratic politics for a while think that the 1970 election was kind of an accident or that Dunn got elected sort of accidentally and we're going to go back to the old Democratic way of doing things?

J.S.: Yeah. I think that is exactly what they think. If you analyze the 1970 election, to me it's as clear as a bell what happened. If you hadn't had a Memphis Governor in this century, you had two Democrats from middle Tennessee. Albert's not . . . is rural middle Tennessee (inaudible) is east Tennessee. The traditional districts . . . congressional districts that have been swing districts have been the third and the ninth. We have lost Congressman Phillips(?) But the ninth was Memphis and the third was Chattanooga and five surrounding counties. The third district, which was ~~Beech's~~ ^{Brock's} district and has been for about eight years. I think he was elected in '62. So he's been in eight years. So you have . . . the third district was a swing district and the ninth . . . Memphis was a swing district . . . Shelby was a swing district. Brock ^k held that seat and was elected and reelected, but there are not that many committee Republican votes in that district. I think they have a chance to knock Lamar Baker out of office (?) I hope not, but I think they have a chance. But if look what happened in the third, ~~Beech's~~ ^{Brock's} district when he was running for the Senate went for him, to the tune of about fifteen or sixteen thousand votes. Dunn's home district, the ninth, Memphis, the other swing district went for him in the neighborhood of 35,000 votes . . . 30,000 votes. So between Memphis and Chattanooga or the third and the ninth, you've got forty-five or fifty thousand votes there and that's almost the election for Gore. Gore ~~could~~ have, Gore could have . . . I think would have survived if he hadn't been running with

Hooker or against the Memphis Republican. Hooker didn't do as well here as the Democrats traditionally have . . . he carried the county against the Republicans but it was close. He carried the district against the Republicans but it was close. But Gore carried this county by 15,000 votes . . . carried this district by 15,000 votes. If he hadn't lost in Memphis, he'd of been in. I'm convinced of that . . . he would have been in. The . . . but I agree with you, many of them do think that it was an accident . . . a freak. I don't think many of them really considered the geography as being a (inaudible) but in my judgement it was. I looked at the returns and the returns every year before, every election before that, it appeared to me that accommodation of Dunn from Memphis to ~~Brook~~ ^{Brock} to Chattanooga . . . third to the ninth are what killed the Democrats . . . killed the Democrats in 1970. To go back just a little bit . . . to back again to the problem of the legislation in the legislature and the legislature seeing itself as the leadership of the Democratic party, if you talk to ~~McGord~~ ^{M. Whenter} and ~~Wallace~~ ^{Wilder}, they in affect will say . . . they have said to me well we don't have any party leadership, except what we are able to give. Jim Sasser is a nice boy, but . . . At the same time, they are not willing to provide any sort of party discipline even in their own ranks. Wilder, for example, left the Republicans to form a coalition with four really old line conservative Democrats, and collect the state Comptroller, Snodgrass. Did you all know about this?

J.B.: No.

J.S.: Well, so you've got a new Governor in up there who is a Republican for the first time, and you've got a Democratic

house and a Democratic senate. A young guy named Kephart, Floyd Kephart, a television commentator decided to run for state Comptroller. He resigns his job at the television station, goes out and starts campaigning among the Democrats and the legislature. He beats the incumbent Comptroller, Snodgrass with the Democratic caucus. Beats him by a relatively heavy margin . . . eight or ten votes, but he beats him. So you would think that Kephart would be the nominee. That the caucus would go in and hold party lines and the Comptroller would win. Well (inaudible) and the two ~~Boards~~ ^{Bards} members of the state senate joined with the Republicans and defected, and Snodgrass wins with the legislature votes for him. Wilder, the Lieutenant Governor takes no action to discipline the defectors. He gives them committee chairmanships, treats them if . . . he would take no action to advise them of any privileges even though they help the Republicans to elect and keep the incumbent Comptroller in office. So when they talk about leadership, particularly when Wilder talks about leadership, he doesn't really understand what's required. He's a nice man and a good fellow, and these other fellows are nice guys and we like them so no action was taken to encourage members of the legislature to hold party lines . . . members of the state senate to hold party lines on through Comptroller. You can expect that on social issues, or ideological votes or any votes that were of interest to them then, and that is most of them. So the question of party organization, you'd expect that they'd hold the line or something . . . or that the leadership would take some action against them, but they didn't. So,

while the legislature maintains . . . while the legislature leadership maintains that they are identifiable representatives of the Democratic party. They're not really.

J.B.: Let me ask you this question about this election of these constitutional offices of legislature. Does each house vote separately on it?

J.S.: No, they vote . . . they vote in a . . .

J.B.: Joint session?

J.S.: Yes, a joint session. First of all there is a caucus, then there is a joint session, and then they vote . . . but it is close, you see.

J.B.: Oh I see. So Snodgrass then had the universal support of the Republicans?

J.S.: Yeah, down the lines. I don't think he lost a vote. Kephart was a Political Scientist. I think he had taught down in middle Tennessee before he became a television commentator. Really a bright young guy.

J.B.: Did he even qualify? My image of a typical TV commentator . . . hell of a background.

J.S.: I think he is well qualified. He is a little feisty you know, and he came on a little strong, and he didn't go around and solicit support from those old line Democrats. The three who defected were all, . . . well let's see, Bill Barry, must be in his 60's, Mr. Harrell was in his 70's, and Ray Barrett is approaching 60. They've been around for a long time and they like each other, and Floyd was a little . . . he came on a little too strong for them, I think. They liked Snodgrass in that they voted Snodgrass in initially and somebody saw this as an opportunity. It was a . . .

J.B.: Is that the first time that has happened . . . the nominee of the caucus didn't get the position.

J.S.: Yeah. In the past you see it's almost been . . . it has been eliminated, the position that the Governor named over at caucuses. (?) It's really unhealthy, I mean the Comptroller has as his responsibility the duty to audit all the agencies of the state government. . . all the executive offices in the state government, and that presumes that an independent legislator that's going to elect the Comptroller (inaudible) community primarily to the legislative branch as opposed to the executive so he'd be free to go in and make section audits.

J.B.: Did Dunn want Snodgrass?

J.S.: Yeah, and I think the result of that. You know, there has not really been that much change. I mean Kephart was sitting around, you know, we're going to turn these departments of government inside out. When I get in there we are going to have some searching audits of all these agencies, and . . . Federal Government has since returned indictments against some of the companies for trying to fix prices in printing. One audit that came out just a couple of months ago showed that if some . . . there were some law violations in the . . . in Commissioner Choke's Department, which is Industrial Development, and Kephart was saying, you know, this is going to be the rule instead of the exception, and he was thinking pretty obvious, you know, that he was going to stir up . . . Dunn was pretty nervous . . . nervous as hell about Kephart, they all were very upset about him. I think ~~McWhorter~~ ~~McCormick~~, Speaker of the House, held the line for

him. Wilder just let it slip away, and I never understood why, except that he is, as I said, certainly a nice man who doesn't like to hurt anybody's feelings. Well I think the legislature is . . . (inaudible).

J.B.: Did Wilder need Republican support in the senate to get elected?

J.S.: Who?

J.B.: Wilder. Did he get it?

J.S.: No. See he was elected in the caucus and the caucus held the line for him. Ernest Crouch . . . he's got tough opposition this time because Crouch is coming back now, . . .

J.B.: Is Crouch a Democrat?

J.S.: He's a Democrat . . . one of these rural county . . . but he's been around a long time, and Wilder . . . I can't remember . . . Crouch might have capitulated the night before. I can't remember . . . but Wilder headed the caucus. Now his failure to act against . . . against (inaudible) I think is going to mean Crouch is going to give Wilder a tough run for Lieutenant Governor this time in Tennessee.

J.B.: Is that going to be a real test . . . indicator?

J.S.: Could be, that's right. But in my judgement we're not ever going to have any real . . . we may not have a well structured viable Democratic party in Tennessee in the absence of Governor or in the absence of a leader who will allow present party machinery . . .

J.B.: Not apt to be in the state of Sherman, not apt to be in the legislature.

J.S.: No, that's right.

J.B.: So it has to be a candidate (inaudible)

J.S.: So it has to be a candidate running for statewide office. (?)

J.B.: So if Fulton or someone else were elected senator, and you had a Republican Governor, in effect he'd become the titular head of the Democratic party?

J.S.: That's right. That's right. I didn't mention that if Blanton is elected that some . . . I haven't studied the makeup of the new Executive Committee . . . I mean there is at least a symblance of some liberalism.

J.B.: How is that Democratic Executive Committee selected?

J.S.: By popular vote. See they've elected this time . . .

J.B.: What's their basis of representation?

J.S.: The senatorial districts.

J.B.: The senatorial districts?

J.S.: Yeah. Yeah, they are asigned according to the senatorial list at that time. That's new. I mean, this is the first time they have been elected from senatorial districts.

J.B.: Is that required by the national rules. Why did they change? Was it counties before?

J.S.: It was . . . let's see, before . . . it's always been by, I think before it was by congressional district. Let's see, is that right? A man and a woman, and there are 36 of them.

J.B.: When you had nine congressional districts that would be . . .

J.S.: There was 36 of them, so that must . . . maybe it was two men and two women from each congressional district. It seems to me that as of now a man and a woman from each senatorial district. There will be at least a minority faction on our

Executive Committee should Brown (?) win. . . depending on his capacity to broaden his base . . . they'll probably be hostile to him. Now whether it is enough to elect a chairman, I just don't know, I suspect not. I would think that if Blanton was smart, he would be willing to go along with Sasser, who really represents that other wing of the party. I mean Sasser has been identified more closely to Albert Gore than with anybody else.

J.B.: Who do you think is going to win in November?

J.S.: I think it's a toss up. I think it is an absolute toss up. I think Blanton could have won if Nixon stayed in office and fought it to the last.

J.B.: That was definitely a substantial help to Alexander.

J.S.: No doubt about it. Alexander is more polished, much more intelligent . . . I'm convinced maybe more conservative than the Governor(?) Jack. I think it is almost . . . I am almost ready to say that it depends on how willing Ray Blanton is to broaden the base, his base of support. If he is willing to broaden his base of support, I think he can be the Governor. I think he's got a good . . . Matt Lynch, who is Chairman of the AFL-CIO, and I've had a couple of conversations with him, he said, you know, I just as soon have one as the other at this point. Neither one of them shows me much . . .

J.B.: Well he ended up on the contribution list to Alexander.

J.S.: (inaudible). It's really a highly embarrassing to . . . but I think he'd be willing to do for Blanton, and I think

if . . . but Ray is going to have to make some . . . you know it's really the classic case of . . .

(It sounds like about a paragraph has somehow been omitted from the tape - perhaps the machine was turned off. Also, I now believe that there has been or is a third person in on this interview. The transcriber has no idea who this person is, so from here on out he will be referred to as Unidentified.)

Unident: Is it really going to be left between all those candidates and the organizations together?

J.S.: Those candidates . . . they are an interesting group. There are a couple of them that could be very tough for him. I mean, I would expect that Ross Bass, for example, will lay the law down to him on questions involving blacks. I would expect that Bass will say to him I'm going to support you, but I am warning you that unless you take some steps to convince black citizens that (inaudible) a national Democrat, you're not going to be able to get into this election. He lost something like 30% to 35% to Bailey. There were some people in that meeting who feel resentment - could be, I don't know how they finally came out, but I would anticipate that some of them will maybe make some demands on him. They may well after-words . . . but the press is there . . . they all think they are smarter than humans, they all think they have more capacity to lead than the others. They all (inaudible) They are a jealous breed. I would think that (inaudible). I had one word of advice for Jim Sasser after the . . . Sasser has his meeting two days after the primary . . .

J.B.: (Inaudible)

J.S.: I said, I think you are out of your mind. I said if I were you I wouldn't go in there. They are all from (inaudible) They'll still be suffering such pains such withdrawal pain, they'll be angry as hell at each other, it could be fun, if he has not really made any effort to lay the ground rules, and I lay out a set of ground rules and he has no committment from them that they are not going to embarrass him and show him that they are capably . . .

Unident: This is a unique experience for the Democratic party of this state.

J.S.: Sure.

Unident: Have this kind of a meeting at a press conference.

J.S.: That's right.

Unident: Who set it up, Blanton or Sasser?

J.S.: Blanton set it up. Blanton told me that . . . again he's not the brightest fellow in the world. . . (end of first side of tape)

J. S.: . . . At the wrong time . . .

J.B.: Blanton ~~had~~ had the capacity to say the wrong thing at the wrong time?

J.S.: Yeah. After the primary, he won the primary against Brady with almost no opposition, and there were a couple of people calling Don Palmer up in East Tennessee to run against him. He got about seven or eight per cent of the vote. But in the last days of the campaign Palmer was over this way and campaigned, and we gave him some coverage, you know. He was talking to the newsmen saying that Ray was not a national Democrat. So when Blanton came in that election night, into the city room, I said well you won an overwhelming victory, and

and he said yes, no thanks to your paper, and I couldn't figure out what the hell he was talking about. We had almost been outside that campaign. Later I talked to one of the book reporters and I said he is pretty bitter about a couple stories that appeared which Palmer attacked him. He did the same thing the other night with one. He came in just as the first edition rolled . . . there was a picture on page one of the first edition . . . his picture . . . under it an (inaudible) line an italic line that said something like less than spectacular. Apparently someone must have given him one just as he came in the building. When he got back there he started that same business . . . well you all don't think I am spectacular, you know . . . I couldn't care what he says but it's (inaudible)

J.B.: What do you think would have happened if there had been a run off between him and Butcher?

J.S.: I think that Butcher would have beat him. I think almost any one of the top five candidates could have beat him. I think ^{Wiseman} ~~(inaudible)~~ or Haney could have beat him, and maybe even Snodgrass. I think he went in with 22% . . . 25% . . . 20% of the vote and never really gained anything.

J.B.: Why do you think that Dunn vetoed that run-off bill?

J.S.: I think that it is obvious he didn't want to have the majority run for Governor. Another campaign, another three week campaign by the Democrats could have been somewhat unifying, it could have been . . . particularly if the loser was generous to the winner. Baker has got a pretty good handle on this party, I think, on the Republican party. There is bad blood between Baker and Brock. There is no denying that. You don't have

to scratch very deep, just talk to Wenfield's press secretary, who is Clyde Griffith. There is bad blood between them. The split in the Republican party is there. If Winston had won I wouldn't have any doubt that Blanton would beat him. I think the defection is on Baker's part . . . from Baker's people. They swept . . . they were swept over in the Democratic primary . . . the Democratic party or stayed home. They really disliked him and if you go around here and talk to committee Baker people (?) (inaudible) there is a deep seeded split in that party.

J.B.: Don't they share offices in many of the cities in the state?

J.S.: Yeah. (Inaudible) Built in here, for example, is a (inaudible) got some girl up here. In Chatanooga they share an office, over there and Brock has that. I don't think that Baker even bothers to put anyone in over there.

Unident: What is the basis of the ~~strip~~ split?

J.S.: It's just my own judgement of it. It's hard for me to talk to Republicans and fathom really that it's ideological and still they will tell you that it is ideological. The Baker Republicans in Nashville will tell you that there is very sharp ideological split between our paper and Bill Brock that has to do with moderation and conservatism.

J.B.: An ideological kind of thing?

J.S.: Based . . . I don't find it in their voting records. Sure, Bill is a little more conservative, but he is actually a more liberal. I think more than anything else it's just a sharp personality split, and I suspect, and it is just a suspicion that it relates in most ways with Brocks closeness to

Nixon. I think Alexander and the White House were totally alienated. I don't think he would tell you this, but I can remember having a couple conversations with Al Jefferson who was Baker's press secretary, and one with Alexander and pretty obviously, you know, he was probably wasting his time in the White House. He was anxious to get out of there. Again, the Baker people used to say the two closest people to Richard Nixon are John Connelly and Bill Brock . . . people on Baker's staff have said that, people on Dunn's staff have said that. If you can get Ralph Rivers in an informal atmosphere, and he'll really let his hair down, he'll come with us. There are a few other Republicans . . . the Brock people won't anymore. There was a time when they were snide and snotty about Howard, but you don't get that anymore, but you do get it from Baker people. Sam Bartholomew is a banker and a lawyer, a young guy, he managed Howard's campaign. Mark Claude Bates, almost open in his hostility toward (inaudible). Ralph Griffin, Dunn's press secretary, careful, cute, cautious, but it's there. It's there and . . . at least I sense it's there . . . I mean maybe you would not find it as obvious as I do, but in my own mind I am convinced that the split is there.

J.B.: Does the split though only between the followers of the two or is there a division between the two men themselves?

J.S.: Well, I think that . . . I just don't know. I don't have any way to know. I do know that Baker's followers considered Winston's candidacy an extension of Bill Brock's influence. They considered it a threat within the framework of the Republican party. I don't have that much contact on the other side.

J.B.: The impression that we got in Chatanooga was that a lot of the Brock people were luke warm about Winston . . . or became luke warm. They supported him and voted for him but they got turned off by him as a candidate.

Unident: Of course we talked to them after the fact.

J.B.: True, and they said the reason why Alexander won was because he ran a beautiful campaign. How did they admire him, organizationally or media, it is way out ahead of Winston. (Inaudible)

J.S.: I'll just tell you what I'd like for you to do. I'd like for you to take the time to get somebody to show you both their televisions. I'll tell you that Nat Winston had a super slick television campaign, I mean really good. It was so good it was Madison Avenue plush style. He had some spots that beat anything that I had ever seen. Beyond that, Bill Godwin, who was Brock's media man with Winston.. .

J.B.: You mean Bob Godwin?

J.S.: No I believe it is Bill.

J.B.: From Maryland?

J.S.: No, this fellow is from here.

J.B.: So you think the Winston media campaign was better than Alexander?

J.S.: I think it was equal to it.

J.B.: Where do you see that skizm (?) or that rip coming down the road and what is going to happen as a result of it?

J.S.: Well I would anticipate that Wenfield will only take far more.

J.B.: If he took Brock on, would he do it without at least support from Baker people? Or Baker himself?

J.S.: Yeah, that is what I was going to say about the first point. (inaudible) Brock put out a memo, I don't have the time in my mind, but as it became apparent that there was going to be a blood letting it dawned on Bill Brock that he was next up, and he couldn't afford to have a divided Democratic party. He put in writing a memo telling his people . . . I don't even know who his people are . . . telling his people to keep their noses out of the Governors race.

Unident: Wasn't that after a whole lot of them had already gotten involved.

J.S.: Yeah, it was just as a whole lot of them got involved, that's right.

J.B.: I said that's the sort of support that we heard. Brock really didn't turn the organization on . . .

J.S.: No he didn't. He was scared to death. He told them not to get close, and that memo is in writing. I think we probably had a news story on it at the time. I would say that's right . . . I would say . . . I think they went down the line for him, insofar as they could, that district did go for Winston, it may have been the only one that did. I don't know. He's a . . . Brock is a . . .

J.B.: Winston had some connections over there. Didn't he live there?

J.S.: He did, yeah. He started a hospital over there.

J.B.: But do you think Dunn would run against Brock without Baker's tacit approval?

J.S.: No, I think that . . . This is not anything anybody told me, but if they think he can beat him, they will run him. I am convinced that it goes right to the top. I am convinced

that Howard Baker considered and does consider Bill Brock personally a threat, within the National Republican Party and within the Republican Party in Tennessee. Again, nobody tells me that, maybe I'm as Democrat reading into something I want to see.

J.S.: Would Baker not also perceive though that a Dunn and Brock fight would result in a real split in the Republican party and ending up hurting him later?

J.S.: Sure. Hurting Howard later?

J.B.: Yeah.

J.S.: And he's not that way. He's very cute and careful about what he does. Just as a . . . there was a meeting in Memphis . . . let's see Baker ran when?

J.B.: '72.

J.S.: Yeah, Baker ran in '72, there was a meeting in Memphis sometime in '71 . . . '70 . . . ~~Kerkendall~~ ^{Ruyken & all} got up with Baker and Brock on the platform and pledged his unqualified support to ~~Herkendall~~ ^{Ruyken & all}, I ~~am~~ ^{mean} to Baker in '72. In the primary against any conflict (?) he said, he's earned it, and I am going to be for him, and I'll manage his campaign if he wants me to, if I don't have opposition here and I'm asking every other Republican on this stage to join me. There was an ovation. Baker told me this, so I know it happened. So Brock was in effect by virtue of that meeting barred from taking any step that would give Howard any ~~(inaudible)~~ ^{part primary} competition. I don't remember what that meeting was about, but it was something . . . I think it was during the '72 campaign, but it could have been after that, but I think it was in '70 and it was a rally for Brock in Memphis.

Unident: It is my impression that when you talk with the Brock people, particularly (inaudible) they view the Republican party as their party.

J.S.: They do. They do.

Unident: Is that impression correct?

J.S.: They do.

Unident.: They are the ones that put it together in '60 and '62 and Brock was the man that put together the organization and was the first man in it and all that stuff.

J.S.: That's right, they do, they do. You see they got the money on their side. Pat Wilson, who really is for George Bush for Vice-President. Pat Wilson is the Treasurer of the Republican National Committee. He's the son-in-law of the late Justin Potter, the most conservative businessman in all the history of Tennessee . . . anti TVA, anti every goddamn thing. But his son-in-law, David K. Wilson, Cherokee Insurance is the National Republican Chairman, he is a Brock Republican, and he is the money in the state.

Unident: Well in a sense isn't the Baker wing of the ^[party] ~~(inaudible)~~ sort of out of step with what is happening all over the South in the Republican party.

J.S.: Yeah. Way out.

Unident: Maybe they are a little bit (inaudible) Holshouser wing carry, but if they are way out of step, than what is going on in the other southern states?

J.B.: Except they are winning.

J.S.: Except they are what?

J.B.: Except they are winning.

J.S.: Yeah. Well I don't know how they are from Virginia say. . .

J.B.: Oh God, Virginia is way out . . . I mean Linwood Holton lost out in Virginia.

J.S.: Has he?

J.B.: Yeah.

J.S.: Well that is what I was thinking . . .

Unident: You have the same basics in North Carolina. You have Holshouser and that other faction that had the party all those years, what there was of it.

J.S.: Yeah, right. Well I think the traditional Republican party, the traditional Republican party has always been factionalized. But the old guard Republicans, the old fact Republicans in Tennessee are the Brock Republicans.

J.B.: Is it true that Baker came along as sort of being the right man at the right time and the right place, and he happened to come along on that second time around just when the Brock people really put together really a state wide Republican organization . . . and then they had an attractive candidate . . .

J.S.: No, no, no, that's not what elected him.

J.B.: What did?

J.S.: What elected him was really the old line fight in the Democratic party. . . Frank Clement. Frank Clement was elected in 1952 and really was a . . . hell he was 32 years old . . . (inaudible) but he was a pretty good Governor. But the coalition with Ellington took him down. Ellington was elected Governor with 31% of the votes in the Democratic primary in 1962, would that be right, yeah. Ellington was elected with 31% of the vote

in a four way race; so, Blanton's victory is not that out of step with the past . . . that was in '60. Then in '66 Clement was elected with 40% in a three way race, which is by way of saying that there are a hell of a lot of people in ~~Westview~~ ^[out of step] with Ellington and Frank Clement. (?) Okay, Bass runs in '64, somehow I've got it backwards.

Unid: Didn't Bass run against Clement in '66?

J.B.: No he ran in '64.

J.S.: Let's see, Bass beats him in '64, the Republicans came over in '66. In '66 Baker is running against a guy named Ken Roberts. Ken Roberts was Pat Wilson's candidate. But the Republicans left that primary in droves and came into the Democratic primary and elected Clement over Bass . . . in the '66 primary, and elected Ellington over Hooker in the '66 primary. You can look at the first two districts . . . first three districts and see that the figures bare that out. When the anti-Clement Democrats got a chance to get back at Frank in November, they either stayed home or went for Ellington and that split is really what . (Break in conversation for a phone call) I think that is what elected Howard over Frank Clement. Bass didn't work very hard . . . nobody did . . . Ellington himself didn't. Ellington and Clement despised each other by that time. I think the Democrats elected Howard Baker. Now the Brock people do tell it quite differently, they do say, as you all say it is our party, we put it together, but Ken Roberts was financed almost out of pocket by Pat Wilson. That was in '64 . . . wasn't it, no . . .

J.B.: '66.

J.S.: '66. I think that is right. Whenever it was that

Roberts ran against Baker. Yeah, I think that was '66, that's right. Baker won that primary without even a race. He was the nearest thing to Brock's candidacy. But Howard was a natural to have to a large segment of full line Republican support. I mean, you know, his father and mother both held that congressional seat in the second district. He was as entitled as . . . more entitled than Bill Brock. His father was . . .

J.B.: But isn't it also a fact that Brock had put together a real organization in that third district and that his people had worked for two years expanding that organization state wide with Brock's own candidacy in mind, and he didn't run.

J.S.: I am not sure of that. I do know that they were working . . .

Unident: That's what they told. They were working on him for Governor or Senator in '66.

J.S.: Well, there may have been a few of them who were doing that but . . . I mean what sort of opposition did he have. Franklin Haney ran against him and he beat the hell out of Franklin, who had at that time no money, no wife with money, and as he tells it a reputation of being a queer. God, ~~that~~ ^{they} worked him over on that . . . terribly in that campaign. The first time he beat Wilkes Thrasher, that would have been in '62. Thrasher had gone down the line for Kennedy in '60 and so that hurt him. There is no doubt though that Brock did establish a very strong third district, but that is something quite different from a state wide organization. I don't think the Republicans had a state wide organization until Winfield Dunn came into the picture. They brought Memphis in

and they brought a West Tennessee voter in (?).

Unident: The way that Brock people tell it ~~(inaudible)~~ [Dunn won by riding] piggy back out of the Brock 1970 Senator seat. (Question inaudible).

J.S.: In my judgement, if it had not been for Winfield Dunn Bill Brock would not have gone to the senate. He couldn't have carried Shelby County against Albert, I don't believe. I wish Albert Gore would have carried Memphis . . . that is speculation, but there is no way to tell, but . . . for sure, but he's never been for Albert. Hooker carried Memphis against Ellington. Again that was the Democratic primary, but Republicans voted in it in '66, Hooker carried it by a thousand votes. What's the evidence that they built the Republican base in Memphis. I don't think they can show that. They may have done it, there may be something that I am not aware of, but . . .

J.B.: They say it was the organization . . .

J.S.: Humm?

Unid: They say it was all organization (inaudible) and all that sort of thing.

J.S.: Well, as I say, I think it has been a swing district. What it really says to me though, as opposed as to whether that is a fact or not, it does indicate to me that there is more evidence than what I know as to the split between Brock and Baker people. There are basic ingrown jealousies that exist. I think they probably know where it is coming to and they know when (inaudible).

J.B.: Do you think that Baker would run against Dunn without Baker's tacit support?

J.S.: No he won't run without Baker's support. Baker . . .

J.B.: Do you think Baker could block Dunn from running against Brock?

J.S.: yeah.

J.B.: If it ever boiled down to that.

J.S.: Yeah, I don't have any doubt about that, none whatever. I don't have any doubts. I think that Wanfield Dunn (inaudible) I think Wanfield is really sort of appreciative of that fact. (Inaudible). I think that if you look at the people that are close to him, that becomes evident, and it seems to me too that the real power . . . the real power . . . Baker's power in the Republican party seems to me to have come from conservatives in this last election. I mean Olden is more a Howard Baker man than a Bill Brock man. You had two candidates pulling from the Baker side of the party and Alexander still manages to win. I would bet on Winston until the last day . . . that is probably just a Democratic wish (inaudible) But I have a very definite impression, because Oldman was in there and because ^{he} ~~(inaudible)~~ was pulling off Alexander and I feel that he did, that Winston will be able to win it. I suspect that Bill Brock is very unhappy with everything. (Inaudible) But if I were in his shoes I wouldn't be happy. If Dunn runs against him, that will tear the Republican party up . . .

J.B.: Wouldn't that be the primary reason of Baker to prevent that from happening.

J.S.: Yeah. I agree, it might be. You asked me whether Brock was more a threat (inaudible) than whether that sort of split united the party is a dangerous one. I guess that will be evaluated when the time comes, but if he is closer to Gerald Ford than Brock is . . . in my own head, I know that

that relationship between Brock and Nixon played a major part in building this whole conflict. (inaudible)

J.B.: With Nixon removed and Brock no longer being a threat, in so far as access to the White House and the White House papers. . .

J.S.: That would resolve in, that would resolve in, he'd go back to being the junior Senator and Howard would get the [attention] ~~(inaudible)~~ to which he thinks he is entitled . . . Brock never . . . again I get this periodically from Baker people, but Brock would never . . . and they would say, did you hear Brock last night on TV, no, I didn't hear him. My God he's been over to the White House again, hell, Nixon had him on the telephone again, or they'd say he's the worlds biggest name dropper. Nixon doesn't talk to him and every time you hear him say something, he says I just had this conversation with the President. I've got a very clear impression of the Baker - Dunn people who resent Brock primarily because of that tie. They're also aware that there was something close to a Tennessee mafia operating at the higher levels of the Republican party in Washington. (inaudible) Phillips had a piece in the New York Times about it a while back. He mentioned Pat Wilson and a fellow that helped Brock in his campaign down here in taking on some . . .

J.B.: ~~Rit (inaudible)~~. Ritz?

J.S.: Yeah. Reed (inaudible) too.

J.B.: Is Timmons considered a Brock man?

J.S.: Yeah.

J.B.: Is that Brock's link to the White House?

J.S.: I don't really know. I have never really known what his link was, and really only picked it up through osmosis

that there was a link . . . you know? You get . . . from the White House Tapes you get a clear impression that Baker . . . that they never trusted or liked Baker. You don't pick any stuff up from Brock, you do get Timmons name in there occasionally. But they really didn't like Baker, they didn't like anything about him, couldn't go to him directly. They kept saying get Kleindeinst to call him. Kleindeinst has that relationship . . . what does Kleindeinst say that Baker thinks now. Really more interesting is speculating about what is going to happen to the Republican party, and what is going to happen to the Democratic party. I have an idea that nothing is going to happen to the Democratic party in the absence of some leader with some charisma who can pull the party structure together. As I say, Blanton could do that. I don't anticipate that he will, . . .

J.B.: Have Blanton then Fulton perhaps?

J.S.: Then Fulton perhaps . . .

J.B.: What would happen if Annabelle Clement were running for state wide office.

J.S.: I tried to get her to run for the Governorship this year. Bobby Clement might do it too. I don't know . . . when he ran for Public ^{Sewice} ~~(inaudible)~~ Commission, he broke through for the first time in my memory in the traditional first and second districts . . . he lost the first three districts by a total of 50,000 votes which was unheard of. Usually we lose the first district by 50,000 votes, he lost those three by 50,000.

J.B.: What about Frank, Jr.

J.S.: He's bright as hell. He looks like a chip off the old block. Sounds like an echo of his father.

Unident: What does he do?

J.S.: Nothing that I know of . . . he was hired to come and manage Haney's campaign, and I don't know what the hell he has done since. He told me that he was going through the throu of a divorce . . . I guess both those kids are . . . boys got problems with their wives, and both of them are getting divorces, I think, but I don't know what he does. He was some representative of a pharmaceutical house from Virginia, I think . . . maybe that's wrong. Maybe he is going to work for Franklin Haney Company. I just don't know, but he was . . . I heard him make a couple of speeches during the campaign and it's there, he's got it. I think Annabelle would have been the nominee of the party and could have put it together.

J.B.: You don't share the view that we have heard from a number of people . . . several people anyway that Tennessee just isn't ready to elect a woman to anything.

J.S.: I don't think any woman . . . but I think she could have been the one exception. I had lunch with her six months ago and asked her to do it, and she said well if you go to the well once to often, she said her husband is running for Court of Appeals (inaudible). I think her father was thinking about running for the state senate, she didn't tell me at that time that she was running for the legislature.

J.B.: Maybe that got her to thinking.

J.S.: I think that Jane Hardaway has got a hell of a chance to win a state wide office (inaudible). I had a strange conversation with him about disclosure. . . we went to lunch and

he said will the paper endorse me, and I said if we get in that race, I'll be glad to have you come by and talk to the editorial board, and he said well I've talked to the Banner's editorial board and they are upset because I am not going to disclose, and I said well I am upset about that too, why not? And he said that there really was not that much money involved in this race . . . I haven't collected that much . . . he said I've got some problems about the accountings of the judicial advocates. He said I am closed eye judicial officer and accountings of ethics . . . the judges and every damn (inaudible) disclosure. I said well . . . I was very negative about it . . . about his attitude. Finally he said well, you know, I have only had one large contribution. My brother-in-law in the Phillipines came over and gave me a large cash contribution, that is about the only think I have to report. Anyway . . . I said now, well, I said it doesn't sound to me like you are going to disclose, and he didn't. I think that that hurt him. She will, she'll disclose, I'm sure. She's got the money, really she has made some mistakes . . . she talks to much about. She made a going away speech for members of (inaudible) and she went a little overboard, having done that to get them to take some of them back. The legislature doesn't really have to (inaudible). She made some claims that he was trying to get them raises (inaudible)

J.B.: How do you ~~ass~~ess Dunn as Governor?

J.S.: Fair. He's been fair.

J.B.: Major weakness being lack of political skills?

J.S.: Yeah, I think that is probably . . . you're right.

J.B.: Combined with staff that also lacks political skill?

J.S.: Yeah.

J.B.: Is that the major drawback of his staff, was lack of political skills? As opposed to lack of ability?

J.S.: Yeah. I think that early he made some staff mistakes. They were pretty frugal about firing. People they thought disloyal . . . I mean people down there should have been in the civil service ranks. I think that the people he had around him were not just laughing (inaudible) really assume that there was more power, more power there than there was . . . I think that . . . beyond that though, I think that his attitude about . . . about business involvement in government affairs is really naive. For example, to get into conversations with them, he's not just a friend (inaudible). I think his idea about the security of the business and the businessman is dangerous. (inaudible) that attitude hasn't really caused too much of a problem for him with a couple of exceptions. I think (inaudible), and he approved originally a plan to let Choke's income be supplemented by the business.

J.B.: Who is Choke?

J.S.: He is the Commissioner of Industrial Relations (inaudible) as far as I am concerned. He's a PhD from I think Arkansas.

J.B.: In effect a development director for the state.

J.S.: That's right. When he was hired by Bronson Ingram, and Pat Wilson, and Victor Johnson . . . he wanted, I think 50 grand or 60 grand or something and there was an agreement worked out to have business supplement his income. At any

rate (inaudible) some of the legislators objected to it . . . they came off of that. I later heard that his wife had been given a job somewhere . . . that was part of the deal (inaudible) I don't know. I don't have any way to prove that, but in his conversations, he is very naive about . . . about the relationship between government and business. I think that he thinks that . . . he gives acceptance (inaudible) without thinking to a president of a company, and would doubt without thinking the word of a president of a union. (End of Tape) But yeah, I think he's . . . I think he is very much a part of Democratic Memphis, I think he is very impressed with his standing and the order of things in Nashville. I think he enjoys it, relaxes.

J.B.: What's he going to do?

J.S.: I don't know. I heard he is going to work for Hospital Corporation of America or Hospital Affiliates, one of those he says . . .

J.B.: We heard one report that he might go to work for a banking or insurance business in Nashville.

J.S.: I think that either National Life or Life and Casualty would give an arm and a leg to get him. He's a popular man, and he's handled himself well. You know, I think that most of being done is . . . it's being (inaudible) elevated two or three levels. He meets people well . . . he handles the signing of proclamations with flair (inaudible) . . . and he's got some good people in there with him . . . a few of them better than average, I think. There are elements of the government that I think have improved. I think that the State Police System has improved in this administration. There has been a symblance of discipline, they've cut some of the

rift of patronage out as it related to legislature . . . that has more to do with a Republican Governor than a Democratic legislature than anything else, but I think . . . I note some slight improvement in the State Police system.

J.S.: What do you think the two party politics has meant to Tennessee? I mean this is the only state in the south that really has a two party system that's competitive on all levels.

J.S.: Well I think it's meant that . . .

J.B.: At least from the legislative level on up.

J.S.: Right. I think it's meant the emmination of factionalism in the Democratic party. It hasn't wiped it out yet, it may never, but it certainly has brought on a deminition of factionalism within the Democratic party. And it holds out that, I mean it really is to early to weigh what it is going to mean, but if it holds out, if it continues, to develop for another couple of years, I think it holds out the potential providing healthy checks and balances that seem to me to be inherent at the national level, or in other states where it is . . . where there has been a traditional two party system, but it's going to take some regimentation. just past (inaudible), but it's going to . . . and not just the idea of a leader who can make a meaningful two party state. Beyond that I think it's going to . . . I would say we are four years away knowing whether we are really going to have a two party system. We have a two party system only in the sense that the Republicans have taken over the three major offices from the Democrats. The nearest thing we have ever had to a state wide campaign run by the Democratic party of Tennessee was the

campaign for the Supreme Court Justices this year. I know that three of the five had opposition. I am confident in my own mind that Tennessee is still a Democratic state despite the fact that all three major state wide offices are held by Republicans. I don't have any way . . . it's just my sense that tells me . . . that tells me that.

J.B.: You think that the Supreme Court races were significant?

J.S.: Only . . . I think they were of minimal significance . . .

J.B.: Symbolically significant.

J.S.: Oh yes, symbolically significant. Sasser said, we are going to run these candidates state wide, and they carried heavily Republican districts, where Republican candidates were not very good, but symbolically it showed the Democratic party was willing to one, set up a procedure for screening camps, and two, raise money and wage the campaign for those candidates . . . it was scheduled out of the Democratic Headquarters, it was financed out of the Democratic Headquarters . . .

J.B.: Who were they? Just three lawyers or any judges?

J.S.: One of them was an incumbent. Here is what happened . . . the Supreme Court found itself this year with three of its five members retiring. It looked pretty clear very early that they were going to retire.

J.B.: I'm familiar with the background insofar as Dunn's . . . with the medical school and the . . .

J.S.: Well, just a little more background. Tennessee switched to what we call a modified Missouri plan, I guess in '70. Dunn named a Commission, the first vacancy that comes up Dunn names a man named (inaudible) from Memphis to be on the Court. He gets the Chief Justice of the Court, who is a Democrat and gets an ^{en}~~in~~ camera decision from him about the legality of the naming of the Justice after the election qualifying deadline. He does that. A Memphis Judge gets wind of it, announces his candidacy for the Supreme Court, gets a couple of thousand votes . . . Dunn's man is named by the Commission, there is a major contest, which is never really clearly resolved. Finally, his man asks that his name be withdrawn, Dunn names a new Justice, the Court throws out the election of the Judge from Memphis, Dunn names a Democrat for the Court from Memphis, a man named Thorn, nobody knew if he was Democrat or Republican or anything else, but the result of that was that the first experience with the modified Missouri plan was a disaster because Dunn delayed naming a Judge until after the qualifying deadline, then he tried to name a Judge to the Supreme Court. There was a Court suit, the Supreme Court threw out the election, so Dunn withdrew the name of his candidate and so was left in no man's land. The legislature comes in, wipes out the modified Missouri plan for the Supreme Court, doesn't provide a primary for the Supreme Court and there is no machinery to elect primary candidates. Under the law the Supreme Court election, and the Judicial elections take place at the time the primary is. Now the Democratic party has got to come up with some machinery to nominate members of the court.

Dunn has named a Democrat who says I want to run for re-election. The Chief Justice says I want to run for re-election. The Democratic party went to the legislature and said set up some machinery for a primary, let's have a primary so we can name nominees, we've done away with the modified Missouri plan, they screw around with it and don't set up the primary machinery. So the State Executive Committee comes in the picture, names a screening committee . . . a judicial screening committee made up of . . . the Chairman was Dean Wave, a retired Dean of the law school at Vanderbilt, the Dean of the UT Law School was on it, a couple of judges were on it, Wilder and ~~McPoy~~ ^{McWhorter} were on it, some laymen were on it, some lawyers were on it, and about five members of the Executive Committee were on it. This Judicial Screening Committee, named by the Democratic party, went from Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and had hearings and said for all the Democratic lawyers in the state, if you want to run for the Supreme Court, come on in, we're going to have some hearings, present your qualifications, and we're going to screen you. They did that. ^[The group] (~~inaudible~~) was very representative of the Democratic party. . . respect for competent blacks, respect for competent women, ^[demand for high] (~~inaudible~~) standards, but still it was a Democratic Commission as well as a Judicial Selection Committee. They kicked out the Chief Justice, they found him not qualified. They nominated eight. The Executive Committee then met and took those eight selections, and picked five nominees, and those five nominees ran and were elected.

Now I think that it was symbolically significant in that it showed the Democratic party active as a party, they picked good men, and they showed an awful lot of courage in getting rid of the Chief Justice. What other state in its history has dumped an incumbent for re-election, particularly for Chief Justice. But they did it. That's . . . really what I mean when I say . . .

J.B.: Is he a genuine incompetent?

J.S.: Well he did have that in camera meeting with the Governor, he did give him advice on the matter, he was Beauford Ellington's Administrative Assistant before he was named to the court . . . he had almost no qualifications in law. He came from the rural west, he was a Mississippi red neck, that's what he was . . . he lived in Tennessee, but he lived . . .

J.B.: And he was a hack on top of that, is that right?

J.S.: I thought he was a hack. Now he looked like a Judge, he had silver hair . . . he was a nice enough fellow, you know to me . . . but yeah, I thought he was a political hack, I thought he was Beauford Ellington's patronage utensil, that's what his background had been, and they dumped him. So I think the symbolism of that was good. It's almost the only thing the Democratic party . . .

J.B.: Now where did the Medical School and all that fit into that?

J.S.: Well the Medical School really became an issue independent of that, but about at the same time. At about the same time Dunn was naming Mr. Turley, the Justice on the

Supreme Court, this is the man that named him, Turley withdrew. But about the time that was developing, congress had legislation pending . . . Tiger ~~Teague's~~ ^{Teague's} veteran committee provided for the establishment of eight medical schools to be built (inaudible) to existing VA Hospitals. So ~~Pullen~~ ^{Quillen} who is Dunn's . . . is a Republican congressman from the third had power (?) decided that he ^(wanted it in East Tennessee) ~~(inaudible)~~ and he said I am going to do that. The Medical School in Memphis went to Dunn and said stop it. So Dunn had two hot potatoes going at exactly the same time. On the one hand, he was trying to say that he was for medical school and still stop it. On the other hand he had a Supreme Court nomination from his home County, Turley, and when it came to the legislature to decide what to do about the modified Missouri plan, they began to lobby on whether to repeal it really on the basis of whether there were any votes for Memphis School in East Tennessee. The Democrats who wanted to repeal the modified Missouri plan, take away Dunn's power to name court officers began to trade off the medical school, began to trade off votes for the medical school with East Tennessee Republicans and the medical school at East Tennessee was approved because, I'm confident, because ~~McGardner~~ ^{McWhorter} and Wilder (inaudible) both are the Democrats in the house and the senate decided that they would . . . that they would accept Republican votes on a modified Missouri plan in return for votes in support of the East Tennessee Medical School which Pullen and the first district Republicans wanted. So that's the way it figured . . . that's the way . . . that's what the trade off was.

J.B.: So Dunn ended up losing both?

J.S.: So Dunn ended up losing Turley . . . the man named to replace Turley was Phones (?) who was elected, who was his friend, but he was a good Democrat, so he lost the power to name Supreme Court Justices and lost the fight to prevent East Tennessee from getting its medical school. He maintains that he really was for it, but nobody in East Tennessee believes that.

J.B.: (Inaudible)

J.S.: Yeah.

J.B.: Now would that be an example of Dunn's political ineptitude?

J.S.: Right. It's the best example, it's the best example. And the other thing, I think the classic example of it is . . . he's arranging to have the Chief Justice . . . the sitting Chief Justice to give him advice on legal matters . . . on which the Chief Justice is ultimately going to have to rule.

J.B.: Why didn't he call in the Attorney General?

J.S.: He should have. He should have, but the Attorney General, Patton was the Attorney General.

J.B.: He didn't trust Patton.

J.S.: He didn't trust Patton, and the truth of the matter is, the issue was so very cut . . .

J.B.: Do you know why he wanted to delay it?

J.S.: He wanted to delay so he would have the right to name. If he delayed it beyond the qualifying deadline, you see, he was assuming that he had the right to name this Justice through the Judicial selection commission that he named. That's set up by law, not the Democratic party Selection Commission.

But he assumed that he could just ignore the . . . the Constitution provides that the Justices of the Supreme Court will be elected at the first general election after a vacancy occurs. Well, that's the provision in the Constitution. The modified Missouri plan didn't take that position into account. They gave him the power to name his commissioners and then to those commissioners the right to vote through the screening process. Well, (Inaudible) and then said that we just ignore the provision in the Constitution and name a new Chief Justice through the modified Missouri plan, and the Chief Justice said yeah I think (inaudible). Well, as the hour to qualify approached this Judge from Memphis threw his name into the pot . . . He had run for Governor and had been defeated and was off the bench . . . Judge Taylor down in Memphis threw his name into the pot . . . he qualified, didn't run any campaign, got a couple thousand votes, maybe three in a state wide race . . . maybe four, I don't know, he didn't get on the ballot in many counties, but he got a few thousand votes, and then maintained that he was the Chief Justice. Dunn, meanwhile has named Turley through the modified Missouri machinery. So you had two men contending. It goes to Court and comes up before the Chief Justice who didn't bother to refuse himself. So you can see with that background why the Democrats wanted to . . . and the lawyers wanted to get rid of the modified Missouri plan . . . total chaos now. Trial judges are elected, Appeal Court judges have the modified Missouri plan, Supreme Court judges are elected, and that is interesting too. Annabelle Clement, whose husband is a

Supreme Court judge, lobbied not to have him thrown out for the Appeals Court judge. She wanted for her husband not to have to run against opposition. So she managed to get the legislature not to wipe it out for the Appeals Court Judge. So we have judicial chaos, but in the face of all that, the Democratic party put together a Blue Ribbon Commission . . . conducted a series of formal hearings that really, I think, they had a sense of purpose.

J.B.: Do you think that this might result in the Democratic party beginning to screen committee . . . candidates for offices and the Democratic Executive Committee, in effect endorsing candidates in the primary?

J.S.: I don't think so. What I would hope . . .

J.B.: This is done in some states, isn't it.

J.S.: Yeah, it is done in some states. What I would hope would happen would be that the legislature would get (inaudible) and maybe build into the laws a screening process for cabinet officers. You know the advise and consent of cabinet officers (inaudible) and Judicial Officers . . . you know the problem with the selection of judges of course in a state, and with the selection of cabinet officers is there is no investigation of their background by anybody. I think that McCorder and Wilder are (inaudible) all this time, they could provide some machinery where they could have at least an opportunity to screen . . .

J.B.: Is ~~McCorder~~ ^{McWhorter} considered a potential state wide candidate?

J.S.: Yeah. He considers himself one, I don't consider . . . he looks like Hoss Cartwright, talks like Hoss Cartwright.

J.B.: Is that a liability or an asset?

J.S.: Well I hope it is a liability. In addition to that he runs a (inaudible) show . . . I hope it is a liability. Although he could be that charismatic personality we need to marshall the forces of the Democratic party when they go in against . . . Bill Brock.

J.B.: But he apparently has a pretty shrewd, sound political mind.

J.S.: He does, yeah. Much more astute than Wilder.

J.B.: How about Darrott (?) Blanton?

J.S.: I think that Blanton (inaudible). I think Ned is a shrew . . . cautious, but, well, I think he is cautious but when he knows he is on firm ground he can be quite bold. I was in a couple of meetings . . . they called me one night to go up to talk to him about . . . I don't know, they were in session, they had been in all night and all day and they were trying to get some legislation through on . . . I think it was welfare or minimum wage, and they had some black legislatures who were holding out. They were holding out largely because they didn't trust ~~McCorder~~ ^{McWhorter}. This may have been during McKinney's term, I guess it was. (Inaudible) They called me and said would you come up here and sit in on the meetings, and I say why. They said well there is nothing secret about it, it will be open to the press, but these black legislators don't trust some of the white legislators, and the feeling is that if the whites give their word in front of . . . if you're here and hear them give their word then they'll know ~~McCorder~~ ^{McWhorter} can't go back on his word. ~~McCorder~~ ^{McWhorter} was one of them, there were some

others too. So I went, and as I said, the meeting was an open one, sort of a mini caucus . . . some of the leadership and four or five black legislators and whatever it was, they agreed to do it and stood behind it. But I was impressed with him, and one point in that meeting he said something . . . he was whipped, that's what he was . . . and he said in effect, look fellows, what you are talking about is suicide in my district, but I'm telling you that I am going to stand behind my word on it, that I think it is the right thing to do. I think that this legislation is not the way out, and I'm with you. Since that time I . . . (telephone) I think he . . . as Speaker, I think he has shown growing (inaudible) to compromise . . . as Ford said the other night, I no longer account (inaudible). I think Ned has shown some leadership, not as much as . . . I would just guess that the limits really are related to his inability to see beyond the surface. I think he is a man of limited vision, and within his ability to understand, he is able to lead. Wilder, on the other hand, mainly has farther vision but no ^guts, maybe no understanding of party politics. You talk to Ned ~~McGordon~~ ^{Mewhelter}, you know, and you get . . . there is some steel . . . you talk to Wilder and you get the feeling of a good bit of mush. Wilder is a more intelligent man, but I think that there is not . . . having (inaudible) leadership. That is not saying that either one of them is a very good leader, but in terms of whether he is . . . has state wide potential, I don't see it but I think he is thinking of it, and Albert Gore does incidentally. Albert Gore has told me that he thinks Democratic (break in conversation). (Pick up is inaudible)

J.B.: Can you think of anything else? Anything else you'd like to add?

J.S.: No. (Inaudible)