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John W. Fribley Memoir

F911. Fribley, John W. (1906-2002)

Interview and memoir

16 tapes, 763 mins., 2 vols., 235 pp., plus index

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Fribley, a Democratic member of the Illinois State Senate from 1934-1952 representing the 40th district, recalls his political career: legislative achievements in transportation, oil and gas regulation, and mine safety; Illinois political figures including Adlai Stevenson, Paul Powell and Henry Horner; political issues of the 1930's and 40's; and the relationship between Chicago and downstate and between the mayor of Chicago and the governor. He also discusses his life before the General Assembly: his family background and childhood near Assumption and Pana, Illinois; social activities, entertainment, and farm work; education at Illinois Wesleyan University and the University of Illinois; law practice and political interests. References are made to his family's participation in the Civil War.

Interview by Horace Q. Waggoner, 1980

OPEN

See collateral file: interviewer's notes, correspondence regarding interview, and photographs of Fribley and his family

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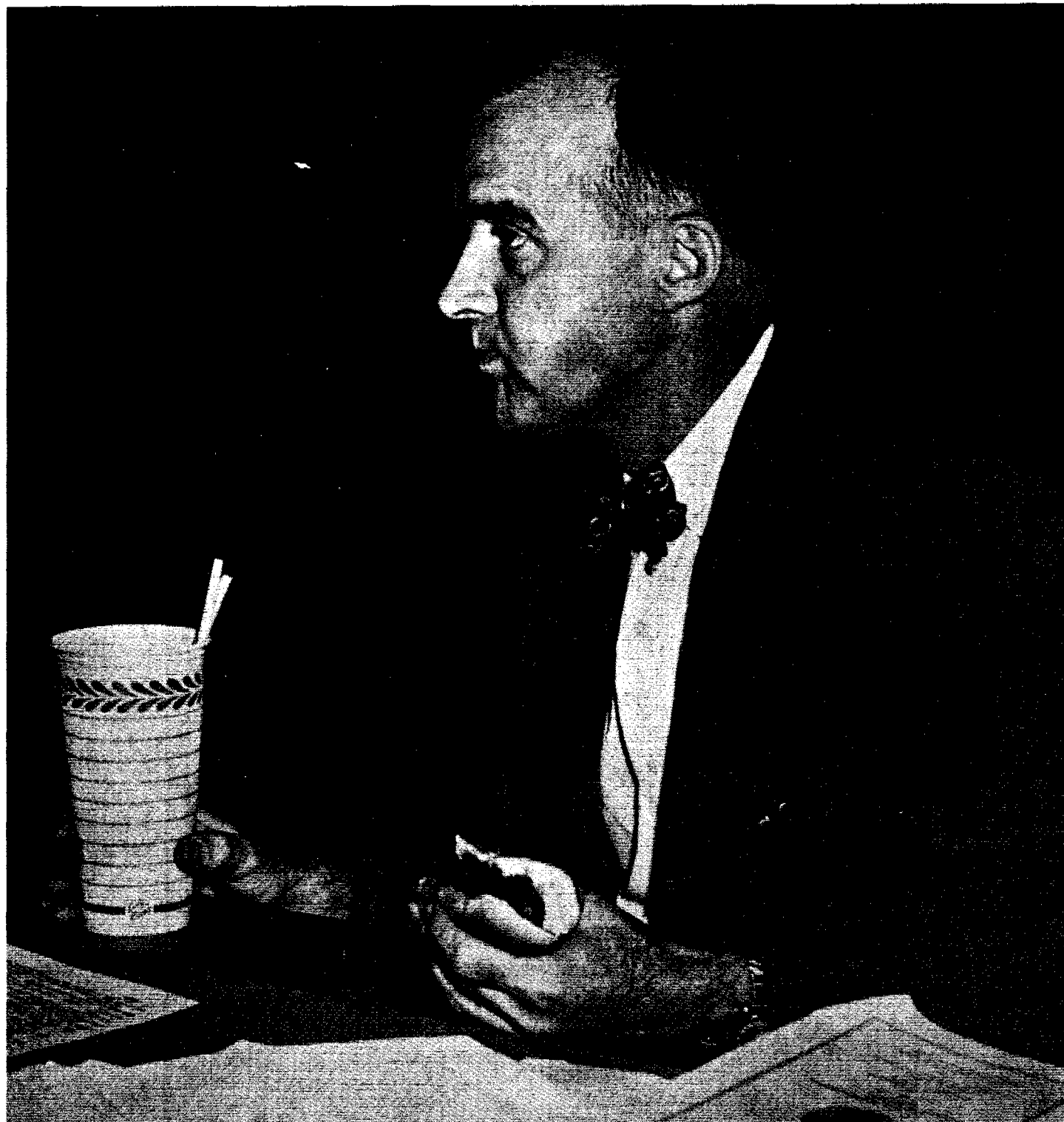
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ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

JOHN W. FRIBLEY

MEMOIR

VOLUME II



PREPARED FOR THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THE ORAL HISTORY OFFICE OF SANGAMON STATE UNIVERSITY
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John W. Fribley Memoir

SESSION 4, TAPE 7, SIDE 2 (continued)

A: Then, another rather important committee I was privileged to serve on, and I sure wanted to be on it, was when, about 1948, the Centralia mine disaster occurred and, to my recollection, a hundred and ten miners were killed. And it was just before Stevenson went in, as I recall. It happened about Christmas Day, or right close to Christmas, and immediately the United States Senate had a group that was appointed to come out and investigate, and immediately the state Senate and House had a group, that was to investigate it. And we went down there--it must have been in early January. We went down there to investigate it and they had just finished taking the dead miners out of the explosion area.

And this was a beautiful mine, I imagine it was about 500 foot deep, maybe not that deep, but the explosion occurred just as the afternoon shift was going off, and the night men were going on. And where they killed a lot of men was at an underground railroad junction, where one entryway forked off from the main entryway, and here was two or three coal cars with dead men on them who had just been removed. The odor was terrible.

The only thing they had, in those days, to prevent gas or dust explosions was rock dust on trays hung from the ceiling of the entryway. The use of Airdox or Cardox, a compressed air, non-flammable charge that broke up the coal seam, was just coming into use but it hadn't been put in use at that mine. Peabody Coal Company over at Taylorville had modern mines and were just beginning the use of Cardox or Airdox. But, down at Centralia, they were still using black powder explosives which is in the nature of a dynamite.

At Centralia, the miners would bore a two or three inch hole, five or six feet back in what they call the working face. That's the solid coal. And then they would put a charge of explosive back there, and then they would tamp it in with what they call dummies, which were long, slender sacks that was supposed to be filled with clay. They'd push them back against the sticks of black powder. They also put in a fuse, several feet, and just before they finished their shift, why, they would

light the fuse and take off. Well, apparently, what the miners were doing was, instead of packing these dummies with clay, they were packing them with coal dust and, course, when that explosive charge went off, why, it set the coal dust afire and "Boom!" The wreckage was terrible.

I remember, when we got down there, they had just finished taking the men out and I was walking down the entryway. We had to walk about two miles to get to where the scene of the explosion was and I came up and flashed my headlight down on one of these cars. The stench was terrible and here was human flesh and false teeth sticking to and laying in the coal cars. I backed off and almost heaved right then.

Q: I'll bet.

A: You'll notice I've only got about two pictures on the walls of my office, other than of my family, and one of them is Adlai Stevenson's picture and the other is on the members of that mine investigation committee. (Both rise and move to the picture.) And of that group, beginning at the right, was Livingston, a court reporter; and Senator Oldfield from Centralia; Curly Harris, a representative from the Alton area; and Bob Allison, a representative from Pekin. He lost his left arm in the mine. And next to him was Representative Bill Robinson. He played end with Red Grange at Illinois and injured his back, you know. He's kind of bent over. And next to him is Paul Powell, you've heard of him; and next to him is Senator Norm Barry, who played at Notre Dame with the Gipper; and myself; and Representative Welker from Vandalia. Every one of those fellows are dead except Norm Barry and myself. Norm Barry ended up as circuit judge up at Chicago, and he's retired now. But he and I are the only two out of the bunch that are still living.

But, at any rate, the thing got pushed around back and forth, the miners were not willing to admit that they were in any way responsible for the accident, the explosion, and they had to be because of packing these dummies with coal dust instead of clay--and the coal company was doing everything they could to lay it on the miners, and although they had a "jillion" sacks of rock dust on hand--rock dust prevents a gas or coal dust explosion, as I recall--nevertheless, they hadn't spread any of it. They too were much at fault.

In that Centralia mine, the coal dust was higher than the rails. The company was clearly at fault for allowing so much coal dust to not be cleaned out, and rock dust spread. Rock dust was supposed to infiltrate the air and stop a coal dust explosion.

Well, there got to be a lot of politics in the thing. The St. Louis Post Dispatch got all worked up on the thing and they got ahold of the report and they printed it before the darned committee had even signed it. You see, the St. Louis Post Dispatch was out to "get" Green, the outgoing governor. Governor Green was a hell of a nice fellow and a hell of a good governor. He was an honest man, I believe, but he was finishing his second term and some of his subordinates had become crooked.

You leave any administration in for two terms and in the second term, a hell of a lot of crookedness and conniving occurs. And it is the same way with either party. In their second term, it seems everybody is going to steal the state blind if they can.

Q: Well, I'll be darned.

A: It's typical. That's a word about politics.

Q: Well. (Laughter)

A: Governor Green, I thought was a hell of a good man. Nice fellow. I don't think there was anything crooked about Green, but he sure had a lot of people around that were stealing the state blind.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: And it was the same way with Governor Horner's administrations. Any governor is a sitting duck. He may not be a crook, but if one of his appointees turns out to be a crook, they lay it right back on the governor's door, whether he can help it or not. It's like Governor Stevenson and the horse-meat scandal. (laughs) He couldn't help that, but the press attempted to burn his tail about it.

Q: Yes, sir. What other kinds of politics got involved with the mine investigation?

A: No particular politics other than giving Green hell for not pushing a better mine safety bill.

Q: I understood there was something about funds going to the mayor campaign in Chicago that was attempted to be brought up during that . . . I never understood what the connection might have been.

A: If I knew that, I don't remember it. I pretty well minded my own business, pretty well.

Q: How did you come to be on that committee?

A: Well, it was logical because I, first, I lived down in the Christian County coal mining area and, secondly, immodestly, by that time, I was somewhat of a downstate Democrat leader in the Senate. Pardon me for saying all that, but I think that is the reasonably true answer. Sounds immodest as hell. (laughter)

Q: And so, who selected the members for the committee? Was this done by the House or Senate leader?

A: Yes. I don't think the governor had anything to do with it.

Q: Where did you meet, then? At the mine itself, or . . .

A: Well, the first meetings were at the mine. All the members of the committee were furnished with denim coveralls, and miners' lamps, by the mine and (referring to the picture of the committee) I drew this reasonably white canvas one and the rest of them all drew blue ones and Powell always said, "Old Fribley was just photogenic as hell!"

Q: Well, you do stand out in the photograph. (laughter)

A: Well, Norm Barry was standing next to me. Norm, of course, was a City of Chicago fellow, he had never been in a coal mine in his life, and I had been in a few times, not too many. But, see, I had the Pana mines, the two here at Pana, and then there was four over at Taylorville, four big mines that were United Mine Workers, as I said, and were owned by Peabody who had what I'd call captive mines in that regard. Their production was all sold to Commonwealth Edison at Chicago.

SESSION 4, TAPE 8, SIDE 1

A: You want to go on with my experience in the . . .

Q: Well, I would like to ask, on that mining committee, now, what was the result of that?

A: Why, we came back and introduced and put through several bills on mine safety. It shook the people up pretty much. And they jacked up federal government to also put through some federal legislation on mine safety and enforcing it. By golly, those things were enforced to beat the devil for the rest of Governor Stevenson's administration, and I think since then.

Q: Do you remember any of the particulars of the movement of the legislation in the Senate?

A: Well, I think Norm Barry and I probably handled it.

Q: Did you have hearings, then, in the . . .

A: Well, after the meeting down there, we may have had--I think we were down there the following week for three or four days--maybe two or three times--with the committee from the United States Senate. And they were very eminent people. I hate to say it, but I can't remember who all they were now.

Q: But there was a federal committee also?

A: Yes.

Q: Did the two committees work together?

A: No, I don't think so.

Q: But the result was legislation in both Washington and Springfield?

A: There was legislation and enforcement. A rather interesting thing, the committee, as I recall, went over here to Taylorville to the Peabody mines and went down below. Now, of course, they were only about two hundred and fifty foot deep, but they had a working face there that amazed me. These Pana mines, I don't think the coal thickness was more than eight feet at the most. Generally about seven. And the Assumption mine, that I went into when I was probably a fifteen-year-old kid, only had a working face of about three and a half or four feet. That's where the miners would be on their hands and knees, with a pick and a shovel and jerking out the coal. Assumption coal, being so deep--was better than a thousand foot deep, up there--it was top coal. It was like anthracite, there was no clinkers, or cinders. But Taylorville had awfully good coal. Pana never had very good coal. We had a lot of clinkers, rock in the coal, but Taylorville had a big seam.

Peabody's manager was Bill Starks. He was later head of the Department of Mines and Minerals, under Stevenson, and just an old-timer, grown up in the business, and honest and smart, and he lowered the boom on some of these fellows that weren't enforcing mine safety. Now, Peabody was just putting in--put in shortly before--either Airdox or Cardox, and that's compressed air. They ran a tube in and then you got the thing all set up and packed in the coal seam then ran for cover, oh, get about a hundred foot away, or around a corner, see, and then somebody'd sing out, "Air in the hole!" That means, "We are going to set her off," and when that thing went off, you could feel the area shake. You'd go back there and it was just as effective as dynamite, and you didn't have any flame because there was no flame to it, it was just an explosion of a compressed air cartridge. And, within five minutes, the miners would be back there working again. Whereas, if you shot it off with dynamite, why, you couldn't go back there for two or three hours, I understand.

Q: Because of dust in the air?

A: Dust and heat.

Q: Was that part of the legislation, to change the type of . . .

A; No. You couldn't legislate that they had to use Cardox or . . .

Q: Airdox?

A: Airdox. But, you made it so damned rough on them that most mines went to Cardox and Airdox.

Q: Do you remember any of the specifics that you had any problems with when you were getting the legislation through on the mining . . .

A: No. It was damned easy to make a speech, you know. Talk about the horrors you saw down there. The miners, a hundred and ten miners of that community killed. One section of the cemetery, where you drove by in going to Centralia from the north, it just looks like a hundred and ten funerals with freshly filled graves with flowers on 'em. And it had to be--most impressive--I know snow was on the ground about that time.

You got up and explained the bill and, if there was any heat on it, nobody would show up. What I mean is, there was nobody going to raise their voice and vote against it and, of course, as I always said, Italian people are very emotional and all I had to do was to start describing conditions we saw down there and Senator Libonati--later in Congress--was of Italian descent--I saw him about a month ago--well, all I'd have to do was say something that involved orphans and widows and Libonati was wound up and ready to speak for twenty or thirty minutes. He would make a hell of a speech. Libonati could talk five minutes and never put a period in it.

Q: Oh, is that right? (laughter)

A: His speech was just one sentence. He might put some commas in there and colons, or semicolons, or exclamation points, but he never put a period in.

Q: I'll be darned. (laughter)

A: He was a lovable cuss.

Q: Did you work on any particular legislation with him?

A: Yes, Libby would most always help me. I don't know whether I told you, but he and I had a little hand in--you see, back in those days, they had the University of Illinois, of which I was a graduate, and then we had the Eastern normal school at Charleston and the Southern normal school at Carbondale and the State normal school at Normal and Northern at DeKalb, and then Western over there at Macomb. I think that's right. But all they could do was give a degree in education. So, they had a fellow down at Southern name of Delyte Morris--and the senator that represented that area was from, I think, Prairie du Rocher, Senator Crisenberry--and he come up with the idea of changing Southern from a normal school to a university. The University of Illinois, they just like to have had a fit over that. And he came to me, Crisenberry came to Libby and me and we sat down with him one day and we were pretty well convinced that they were entitled to it, and so--at any rate, I made a hell of a speech on it and Libonati, he made a double hell of a speech on it because Libby could talk, and he could talk emotional, and that bill went through. The University of Illinois didn't like it a bit, but--have you ever been down to Southern Illinois University?

Q: Yes, sir.

A: Well, that place started out--I don't remember when that legislation was, but it was somewhere in the 1940's and, why durn, Southern Illinois University, they just built all over everything and they've got a big school and I think doing an excellent job.

Q: They've also expanded to Edwardsville now, too.

A: Yes. Edwardsville section. And I think they've got an East St. Louis section, too, or something down there. I think that's right. Well, Delyte Morris sent me a lifetime pass to all football and basketball games. And I don't know--I gave it to somebody. I've never been there to an athletic contest at all.

I always took a lot of interest in Illinois. When I first went to the Senate, why, you had scholarships. Each senator and state representative was given a four-year Illinois scholarship each year to give away, and we could pick out anybody we wanted for it. I think, almost unanimously, not I guess unanimously, but almost always, I picked out the best athlete in my district and sent him up to Illinois with my scholarship. I'd gone to college with Butch Nowack, although in high school I played football against him. He was from Pana here and I was going to Assumption. But he was an all-American from Pana.

I had a dash man who was on the Illinois relay team from Pana, son of a school principal here. And then, I had young Diefenthaler and he was a second cousin of mine. He was the only relative I ever gave a scholarship to. And he went to Illinois and was captain of the track team, held the Drake Relay record in the high jump. And then, I gave a scholarship to a boy over here at Kincaid, and Ray Elliott used to kid me about that.

(Taping stopped for conversation with secretary, then resumed)

A: His name was Chuck Boerio, from Kincaid. He was from a Republican family and I wrote Ray Elliott a letter--Ray Elliott was coach up at Illinois--and I said, "Ray, I'm sending you the best boy I've got in my district for your football team. I don't believe he will make your team, but he is the best boy I've got." Boerio only ended up as an all-American. (laughter) And then, I had a basketball player from over in Shelby County somewhere, Windsor, I think, and then there were football players from Pana, the two Siegert boys, both captains of the football team. And there was another Siegert boy, all three of them were captains of the football team. I only gave scholarships to two of them, because they were poor boys and the third Siegert's father was a wealthy man.

And a funny thing. About a couple of months ago, I got a letter from a boy that was head financial officer of the Chicago Circle Campus and he wrote me a letter for some reason. I haven't seen the fellow in thirty years, I guess, and he told me that I had given him a scholarship back about 1935. He said it only amounted to about seventy or eighty dollars a year back there in the early 1930's. "But," he said, "that was one

hell of a lot of money." And he said, "I don't know whether I ever did write to you and state my appreciation."

Q: I understand that at one time you were wanting to get Bob Zuppke fired at the University.

A: Hah!! (laughs) Well, Butch Nowack, as I say, was a hell of a good friend of mine and he was an all-American under Zuppke and Zuppke, probably around 1937 or 1938, along in there somewhere, he was having a hell of a poor run of athletes, wasn't winning any games, and everybody was giving him hell. And Senator Peters, from over in Champaign County, was handling the University of Illinois appropriation bill and I voted for it, of course. But, when the bill came up, I made a silly little speech and I said, "Looks like for that thirty million"--or whatever it was, forty million, I don't remember--"we oughta get a football coach that can win some games." Well, the following day, a telegram came to me at the Senate from Butch Nowack, who was coaching up at La Salle-Peru, consisting of about eight words, which were "John, lay off Zupp. Vote for budget. Butch." Butch is dead now.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Yes. Last Mother's Day weekend, Mrs. Fribley and I met my daughter Judy, who teaches and lives at Winnetka, at Starved Rock State Park. She and her mother spent the time on these nature tours up there, and so on. I was looking for some place to play golf and danged if I didn't play with several people from La Salle, and every one of them--I told them I was from Pana--said, "Did you know Butch Nowack?"

Q: Well, I'll be darned.

A: Butch and I became very good friends and I settled Butch's estate when he died. Great big man and a wonderful fellow.

Pana had an all-American who went to Ohio State.

Q: Who was that?

A: Warren Amling. He wanted to be a veterinarian and Illinois didn't have a veterinary school, so he went to Ohio. Later on, I sponsored legislation to create a veterinary school at Illinois and I used that as an illustration--we lost an all-American football player because we didn't have a veterinary college at Illinois.

Q: I see. (chuckles) Were you able to get that through?

A: I think so. They have a veterinary school now.

Q: I wonder if we could go back to your first days in the Senate, when you went down there. What are some of the first things that happened in

the first couple of years there?

A: Well, shortly after the first regular session began in January 1935, one of the crying troubles was with the operation of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission. They needed an additional emergency appropriation and Representative Lyons, from up around Chicago, was a strong-voiced person and a good speaker and pretty sharp. And they had an investigation of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission. Bob Dunham, a very wealthy man, was chairman of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission and a wonderful fellow, but he was only the titular head, he was not managing it. And I can't think of the guy's name that--the man's name who was acting director of it, but I remember Representative Lyons had this poor devil on the witness stand, and he really ate him out. And the fellow, he was doing the best he could, I thought. We tangled then, but . . .

Q: You mean you tangled with Lyons at that time?

A: Yes.

Q: In what respect? Do you remember any of the particulars?

A: Oh, I . . . I was kind of supporting the fellow that was being taken over the coals, had some arguments with Lyons, but for a young fellow just in the Senate I was way beyond my depth. But we got along fairly well.

Q: Where were these hearings being held?

A: In the House chamber. It was a committee of the whole hearing, as I recall. When the legislature convened in 1935, which was my first regular session, we had, I think, 18 Republicans and 33 Democrats. Oh, it was strong Democratic as the devil. And up in the west Chicago area, why, they had elected Arthur J. Bidwill as senator, and he had defeated a man by a few votes, a Democrat by the name of Baumrucker and there was an election contest on that, and they had hearings.

Well, the election committee finally come in with their report, and, in the contest, Baumrucker had picked out some ten precincts, we'll say, where they claimed there were mistakes or fraud or something. And it went to issue on that and they counted the ballots in those ten precincts. And that was all that was done. In other words, they didn't count all of the ballots over the whole district, see, just in those few precincts. And it turned out one precinct, they had been tallying and counting the votes on representatives and they'd hit a straight party ballot and, if he was the only representative marked, why, he got all three votes, see? Well, they got down to counting the votes for the Senate candidate and, in this precinct, Bidwill was on a bunch of Republican straight ballots, so they multiplied his ballots by three. Well, when they found that out, that was enough to elect Baumrucker.

So the committee, with all the Democrats voting for a majority report, recommended to the Senate that Bidwill be ousted and Baumrucker seated. And, of course, all the Democrats voted to support Baumrucker and the Republicans all voted for Bidwill and Bidwill then wanted a recount of all precincts in the district. The election committee, heavily Democratic, denied the request. Well, the net result was that Bidwill was ousted. Art Bidwill was a hell of a nice fellow. Came back four years later and won easy.

But the Chicago mayor was down there--I think it was Mayor Kelly, whoever was mayor then--and he was down there the day they voted on it. At any rate, later on, Baumrucker--who as I recall was a jeweler by trade--was requested to support some bills the Democrats were all supporting and he didn't. And at the Senate dinner then, along in June, and, if it was Mayor Kelly, which I think it was, he was down there and the Senator from down at Lawrenceville was feeling his oats--and I can remember him putting his finger right in the mayor's face, and said, "Goddam it, Mayor, the next time you come down here and want us to kick out a pretty decent fellow like Bidwill and put in one like Baumrucker, who has been a damned disappointment, you bring your man down here first and introduce him into evidence as Exhibit A before we vote on anybody."

Q: Well! (laughter)

Q: What did the mayor say to that?

A: There wasn't anything he could say. (laughs)

Q: I understand that Mayor Kelly and Governor Horner didn't get along very well. Do you know anything about that?

A: Yes. You see, I don't know what caused that rift, but Governor Horner was a person that nobody ran and he didn't go along with everything Kelly wanted and, when Horner ran for his second term, he brought out the coroner of Cook County--and darned if I can remember his name, now--but, in the primary election, why, Horner won hands down, but speaking--what was I going to talk about here, somebody I thought you might be interested in.

Q: Have to do with the mayor, Kelly?

A: I don't remember who was the mayor then. I think it was Kelly. Oh, Kelly was a tremendous man, he was about six-foot-four and, oh, must have weighed two forty, fifty, and wasn't fat. Physically he was a hell of a man.

Q: Did you find yourself at odds in any way with the Chicago organization?

A: Oh, not particularly. I always got along fairly well with them. Course, after I turned 'em down on that Congress Street expressway, why,

there was quite a bit of bitterness for awhile.

Q: Any other instances that you can think of where you . . .

A: Oh, no. You see, what Chicago did, Cook County, they had more Democrats than downstate had and Senator Daley said to me one time, "Hell, if it wasn't for Cook County, you wouldn't have any Democrat party in Illinois." And my answer was, "If you didn't have the kind of Democrats you got in Cook County, we'd have a lot of Democrats downstate!"

Q: Well.

A: Everyone pushed us around. (pause) Daley was an awfully nice fellow. But, you see, what Chicago did, in Cook County, they would send down four or five sharp boys, and then the rest of them would be pretty much wardheelers and some not too bright. For instance, in my first session there was Senator Harold Ward. Later, he became a circuit judge in Chicago. He was a brilliant man. And Senator Maypole was majority leader once and he was a brilliant fellow. But some of them from Chicago weren't too hot. But you quickly learned, on a vote, if the first Chicago man on a controversial bill voted "Aye," you could rack up the whole Chicago group to vote "Aye." Whereas, with the downstaters, why, we weren't as dependable.

I remember one session there where the Republicans were as strong as they could be and it was under Governor Green. (laughs) I sat next to Senator Marty Lohmann of Pekin and Governor Green was trying to put some bills through and there was a hell of a filibuster going on and they tied up the Senate. Senator Tom Keane, who was later head alderman under Mayor Daley, was a sharp boy. He and I didn't get along too good, because he thought that southern Illinois started at the south edge of Cook County. Rather arrogant, I thought, but, at any rate, he was smart as the devil. And I remember in the Democrat filibuster, Keane would take an appropriation bill that Governor Green needed passed, for instance, and Keane would introduce an amendment amending the second line of the bill. And then they'd have a vote on it, and every Democrat would take his allotted time to explain his vote. And the Cook County Democrat senators--of which only a few could make a decent speech about it, and the others would read the Bible or a Tribune editorial or talk about a ballgame or something. So then, naturally, on a vote, the Republican majority amended the rules then. You could only talk for three minutes and, naturally, the Republicans would vote down Keane's proposed amendment to the second line of the bill, so Keane would follow up with a proposed amendment of the fourth line of the bill. The Democrats brought the Senate to a screeching halt. (laughs)

Q: Well.

A: But some of the fellows got a little bit unreasonable.

Q: Yes. What . . .

A: Oh, at any rate, one day along about that time, I think things had cooled off a little bit and the only downstaters that session were Senator Martin Lohmann of Pekin and myself. Only two of us. But there is an unwritten rule in the Senate that you were entitled to a ten or fifteen minute recess to caucus at any time. So everybody was sailing along and everybody was happy, and Hugh Cross was getting along fine and really running the bills through, and I got up and made a motion that the Senate recess for fifteen minutes in order for the downstate Democrats to caucus. We sat side-by-side. We could have held our caucus in a telephone booth. It caused a hell of a stink, but we took it anyway.

Q: Well, (laughter)

A: That was kind of childish.

Q: Do you remember what the situation was, what the bill was . . .

A: I don't have the least idea, but everybody laughed about it. Kooky things you put up with.

Q: Yes, sir.

A: I had an interesting experience. The Democrats had a majority, which had to be during the Horner administration. I was made chairman of the public utilities committee. We never had over three or four meetings a year. There was very few bills in those days affecting the public utilities but, whenever we did have a meeting, why, it would be scheduled and, almost every time, the attorney for the Northern Illinois Power and Light, as I recall, would come to me and ask me what was going on and frequently ask to have breakfast with me that morning and he always paid for the breakfast. At any rate, out in Kansas City a federal grand jury made an investigation of payoffs by the public utilities to politicians and legislators in Missouri, and in particular to the Pendergast organization. They indicted several people down in Missouri, sent some to the penitentiary. It may have been one of the Pendergasts.

But, at any rate, that thing flowed up into Illinois, and they had a federal grand jury investigation up at Springfield, and one of the first fellows subpoenaed was me, and I went up to Springfield and sat there for about an hour, and I said, "When are they going to call me?" And they told me it might be several days or weeks, but they wanted me there until I was called. And I said, "To hell with that. I am a country lawyer and I've got a law practice to support myself with and I'm not going to sit around here." And they said, "Well, you will." And I said, "Like hell I will." So, I went before Judge Fitzgerald, then he was the federal judge, and he told them to let me go and call me the day before they wanted me.

They had a little fellow name of Cohen from New York City, as I recall, who was the special prosecutor, conducted the grand jury investigations, and they indicted several people. They disbarred a lawyer at Hillsboro, who represented Illinois Power Company. And they brought out that there were payoffs to municipal and state officials. In those days, when a public utility wanted to get, say a fifty-year franchise to be the sole utility serving the city, why, they would pay off the mayor and city council, and what they did--that was in the days before high income tax rates--well, their lawyer would charge the utility, say a \$5000 fee, and he would use \$4000 of it to buy off the mayor and city council and the city attorneys to pass the franchise ordinance. And they indicted quite a few people. The utilities had a lobbyist by the name of Glen Walley and, as far as I knew, Glen Walley was a square shooter. I think he was from Peoria. At any rate, they got to me and called me in before the grand jury, and I was on the witness stand probably a couple of hours, and they wanted to know what connections I had with the utilities. Was I attorney for any public utility, and I wasn't, never have been other than on the REA loan to the telephone company, a case that I mentioned before.

Then, they asked me about what I knew if anything about payoffs to the legislature, which I didn't know of any, and I told them, "Not a dime," although I said I did have breakfast with the president or attorney for the Northern Illinois Power & Light every time we had a committee meeting.

"Did I know utility attorneys?" "Yes, I knew the attorney for CIPS [Central Illinois Public Service] because I was city attorney at Pana and I had dealings with him. And, well, hadn't I ever got any payoffs or favors. And I said, "Well, wait a minute," I said, "on a hot day in August a couple of years ago, our refrigerator blew up and I--" it had been purchased from CIPS. They didn't have one here but they had one at Hillsboro, and so they brought it and installed it and they charged me, I think, a so-called employee's discount, either three-fourths or seven-eighths of list price. Well, I had never been an employee of theirs. I didn't have to admit that, but I told the grand jury that.

After about two hours of fruitless work, this little prosecutor from New York stated, "Senator, what is your comment if I told you that the results of my investigation showed that within the last five years you have received approximately \$6000 in payoffs?" And I said, "Do you want me to answer that question?" He said, "Yes, sir." I said, "My answer to that is that either you are misinformed or you are a lying son-of-a-bitch." The grand jury applauded me and Cohen got all red-faced and that was the last question to me.

Q: Oh, is that right? (chuckles) Well.

A: I remember Howard Doyle, who had formerly been over in the House of Representatives, he was from Decatur, was the district attorney then, and he had been sitting there in the grand jury room and Howard was a friend of mine, sort of, and I saw him about a week after that and he said,

"John, I never was prouder of you in my life than when you told that so-and-so off."

Q: Well. (laughter)

A: And then I did have another thing that was very embarrassing to me.

SESSION 4 TAPE 8, SIDE 2

A: There was an annual Christian County fair in Taylorville; and a Fayette County fair at Brownstown; and a Cumberland County fair in Greenup, Illinois. And conditions got so that they would have harness races, trotters or pacer races, and they would only have three or four entries in the various heats. Well, there is nothing more tiresome than to watch a horse race with only three or four horses competing. It appeared that most of the horses, particularly good horses, were racing at pari-mutuel tracks in the East. You see, up to then, the only pari-mutuel betting was at flat racing tracks. Betting on running horses was permitted in Illinois. That law had been adopted some time in the 1920's.

Incidentally, when I was in the Senate and represented the Pana refinery of which Hayden Davis was a substantial owner--he asked me to stay at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel because I was representing the refinery. He, as I say, ran the Abraham Lincoln. I had a lot of confidential talks with him, and he told me that, when the legislature permitted pari-mutuel betting at flat racing tracks, that Colonel Bradley or Colonel Winn, or both of them, came up to Springfield from Lexington, Kentucky, where they ran the Kentucky Derby. They rented a suite in the southeast corner of the top floor of the Abraham Lincoln Hotel and they had a black bag he or they wanted placed in the hotel safe, and Davis said, "Has that got valuables in it?" The answer was, "Yes. Very substantial." So Hayden Davis had it taken over to the First National Bank and put in a big lockbox. I think that story is probably true because a prominent lawyer in Springfield, name of Barber, now deceased, told me the same story, and he was attorney for Hayden Davis. After the pari-mutuel law was passed, supposedly the powers that be received an approximately \$180,000 payoff. That was in the 1920's.

At any rate, there had never been a pari-mutuel law for harness racing in Illinois, and the reason there weren't any horses to fill the classes at the county fair races was that the bulk of the horses were out east in states where they permitted pari-mutual betting on harness racing tracks.

Well, Henry Knauf and Paul Powell and the county fair people made a deal with the harness racing people that, if Illinois put through the bill permitting pari-mutuel betting at harness races, that the race-horse owners would guarantee that there would be at least five or more

horses in every race at every county fair.

I didn't know anything about it until Tracy Tackett and, I think, Cliff Hunter, who ran the Christian County fair, and a big old Dutchman, who ran the Fayette County fair, and two fellows from the Cumberland County fair, or three, came up to see me and asked me to back such a bill and handle it when it came over to the Senate. Now, these men always treated me nice at their fairs. Senator Simon Lantz, who was chairman of the agriculture committee in the Senate, agreed to help me handle it in the Senate.

It was introduced over in the House by Paul Powell and it passed over there, and it passed in the Senate. It specifically provided that no pari-mutuel betting should be done at county fairs, but pari-mutuel betting was permitted at the large race-tracks in Chicago and East St. Louis. So, the bill went through the Senate in the latter part of June, just before adjournment. Well, I was not paid off anything on it and, as far as I know, nobody else was. I feel certain that there was no payoff to anyone, and none was offered to me.

At any rate, along in August, about six or seven weeks later, during the State Fair, I received a call from Representative Henry Knauf and he wanted to see me. So I went up to the St. Nick Hotel and met with him, and he told me some of his friends, including Paul Powell, were going to organize a corporation to operate a harness horse racetrack at Chicago with pari-mutuel betting--and lease Sportsmens Park, as I recall--and, inasmuch as I'd helped out on the bill, they wanted me to buy some stock. And the stock was only ten cents a share and they wanted me to buy 2000 shares. And I said, "Oh, hell, no. I don't want any part of it." "Well, we think this is going to go and you can make money at it." And, hell, I could have had 2000 shares at two hundred bucks. I finally agreed to go along with them, but like a damned idiot I only took 500 shares and gave him a check for \$50.

And then, about two or three months after that, Paul Powell or Henry Knauf called me and told me this outfit was going to rent Sportsmens Park, but they had to have \$10,000 to guarantee--it was night racing--to guarantee payment of the light bill. And would I sign the note? Well, there was about fifteen or twenty people on the note, so I signed that note. And, later on, Paul Powell--it wasn't three weeks, I don't think, until he sent me a copy of the note with my name, and other cosigners', blacked out. I don't remember who all signed it but it must have been fifteen or twenty people signed it. And I never paid any more attention to it . . .

Q: Why did he black them out?

A: Well, because the note was paid off. I mean, not used. Either paid off or not used.

Q: I see. Yes.

A: Well, about two years after that, I got a check in the mail for, I think, \$75 from a "Chicago Downs" and I said to my secretary, "What the hell is this?" If I ever knew, I'd forgotten the name of the track by then. Anyway, I got a check for substantially more than I'd paid for the stock.

At any rate, the following year or so, my wife and two kids and mother-in-law went out west. We went up to Lake Louise in western Canada for a short summer vacation and I got back--I hadn't read any papers, except western papers--and here my secretary, Betty Beveridge, had laid on my desk the Chicago Daily News, the Chicago Tribune and in black headlines they proclaimed that certain legislators were guilty of graft and accepting a payoff. And among those pictures was Senator John W. Fribley!

Q: I'll be darned.

A: And, goddam, it hit me like a ton of bricks!

Q: Yes, I guess so.

A: And, of course, a lot of people, in this area at least, thought I was a crooked S.O.B. Well, there was quite an investigation and I volunteered to be the first witness to appear before the Illinois Racing Commission. They were going to have a grand jury investigation. I volunteered to be the first witness before that, and not ask for any immunity. And I told them the facts just like I am telling you. And, hell, the only thing I am mad at is why in the dickens didn't I take 2000 shares of stock? (laughter) You see, that has been a bonanza.

Q: Did you have any problems as a result of all that?

A: Oh, I don't think so. You see, people who hate you will believe I was a crook and your friends will know better. That is life or politics. But damn, to get home here from a nice vacation and see your picture all stacked up and with the big black headlines . . .

Q: It would be a bit of a shock.

A: You're damned right it was. (laughter)

SESSION 5, TAPE 9, SIDE 1

Q: When you arrived in the legislature, you were assigned to the roads and highway transportation committee. What was it like to serve on that committee in the 1930's?

A: In the early 1930's, it didn't amount to very much. I went in to office in the fall of 1934 but, I think probably 1935 or 1937 session, there was a fellow named Mansfield promoted the forming of the truck

regulation and investigation committee, and I was appointed to that and we had meetings in Chicago and East St. Louis, and various places over the state.

Mansfield was quite a promoter and he suggested that the committee ought to regulate all trucks, and one of the things that was put in the committee's report and enacted into law was the requirement that every truck be inspected, I think, annually and that it carry on the side of it the name of the owner and his address. Now, that particular provision was designed to prevent farm thievery, namely that any truck that didn't have a local name on the side that some farmer saw parked along a dark country road was subject to suspicion as to what the hell they are doing out there. And if there was a robbery in the neighborhood and there was a name on the truck, then people passing by would remember who to suspect had performed a robbery. But that created a lot of criticism and I caught hell for it. But it was a darned good idea.

And then, it also required that all trucks carry public liability insurance and that caused a lot of hell, too.

And then, that law also created a separate division under the Illinois Commerce Commission whereby trucks that were operated for hire were required to get a permit to transport, for hire, various commodities. Trucks could only haul such commodities as they were authorized under their certificate or permit. And it also required that for-hire trucks post rates with the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Later on, why, these provisions with regard to requiring a truck to have the name of the owner and his address painted on the side of it was not enforced, and unenforced, and that is not presently the law, or if it is the law, it certainly is not being enforced.

Q: Was this Senator Mansfield, you say, that was . . .

A: No. He was not a senator. I think his first name was Charlie Mansfield and he'd always been a lobbyist for various trucking companies, and the various trucking companies wanted everybody--that were engaged in for-hire operations--they wanted everybody in the state put under the hammer, you might say. You see, prior to that time, there was no supervision over for-hire trucking nor posting of rates and so on, other than interstate operators, nothing as to intrastate. Namely, trucks that operated solely in the confines of Illinois.

Later on, shortly after the end of the second World War, there was quite a movement to have all trucks inspected, and then the question, of course, of whether all trucks would be inspected by the state, or by private garages. And there was a lot of feeling about that. It became very important then to all private garage operators as to who was going to do the inspection, private garages or the state highway department.

Rather funny thing, the second World War was just over and I'd been

operating a car about four or five years old. During the second World War, you know, you couldn't get a car unless you got a special permit from some federal regulatory office and, right after the war started, why, I wrecked my car and the only thing I could get, and did get, was a Ford that had been in storage for two years and it wasn't a very good car. You know, if you store a new car, why, there is some crystallization of metal and they are not very good cars.

At any rate, I wanted a Cadillac and had tried to get a new Cadillac at Decatur and Taylorville, and Springfield and Jacksonville, and had no success whatever. New cars were at a premium, although the regulations were off.

One Monday afternoon, I was sitting here in my office and I was going in to Springfield that evening, and, within fifteen or thirty minutes, I received calls from the Cadillac dealer at Springfield and Decatur, and Taylorville and Jacksonville, I think and they each said they could now do business with me, whereas, prior to that time, why, they weren't willing to do business with me under any consideration. I wondered, "What the hell?" When the first one called up, I told him that I'd be in to see 'em.

Well, I got into Springfield about 6 P.M. and was registering at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel and Representative John Hruby of Chicago came by and he said, "Say, John, when can we get together?" And I said, "On what?" He said, "Oh, didn't you know that you were appointed with me to draft the new automobile inspection legislation?" I said no. And I then realized that John Fribley, who had wanted a new Cadillac prior to that time, but was treated like a poor relation, had now become a rather important fellow with the dealers. (chuckles) And so, that is why I got all the fast action.

Q: They learned that you were going to be on this committee.

A: Yes. Well, I called each of them up the next morning and told them to go to hell. I said, "I was a bad boy before. I'm still a bad boy." (laughter) It was rather funny.

Q: How did you come to be picked for that committee?

A: I don't know. I was fairly well respected in the legislature by then. Incidentally, the bill we drafted provided for inspection by both private garages and the state.

Q: I see.

A: But then, the legislation never did go through and they still have mandatory inspection of trucks but you don't have mandatory inspection of automobiles, although it probably would be a pretty good law.

Q: Back in 1934 or 1935, when you first started with the roads and high-

ways committee, how did you come to get on the committee then?

A: Oh, just being a farm boy. I mean, a fellow from the country.

Q: Who was the leadership that appointed you on the committee?

A: I think, at that time, Senator Richey V. Graham was president pro tem of the Senate and, if not, it was Senator George Maypole. But I was always on the roads and highways committee. And then, I think I told you about sponsoring the farm-to-market road law, and that naturally was heard and considered before that committee.

Q: What was your relationship with George Maypole?

A: Oh, George Maypole was president pro tem. He was from Chicago. He was then titular leader of the Chicago Democrats and, as I think I told you, when we had a controversial bill being considered and voted on that, nine times out of ten, the first Chicago man that was called on roll call, if he voted for it, you knew that you would rack up about 18 or 20 more that would vote for it because the Chicago boys, 99 percent of the time, voted the way the boss said, and the spokesman for the mayor of Chicago was the president pro tem.

Q: And Maypole, then was the spokesman for Chicago.

A: Yes.

Q: For Mayor Kelly it would have been at the time, was it?

A: I don't know whether Kelly--I think Kelly was in at that time. Yes. That's right. That's right. He was. Maypole was a very handsome man, pretty good speaker and a pretty smart fellow, I think. Although, as I think I told you, Chicago always sent down three or four damn brilliant fellows, and the rest of them weren't so outstanding, but they always had three or four fellows who knew all the answers.

Q: Who else besides Maypole at that time was on the brilliant list?

A: Oh, Senator Harold Ward, who later became a circuit judge up there. Harold Ward was a brilliant man. I can think of him. And Senator Tom Keane. And Senator Daley, who later became mayor. And Senator John Lee, who was a--pretty much of a labor representative, and very smart. Very smart and very sincere. Everybody in downstate and Chicago had a high regard for the sincerity of Lee. I am not decrying the sincerity of the other fellows, but frequently they were just a little bit tilted toward the Chicago viewpoint.

Q: Yes, sir. (chuckles) Can you remember any of the specific things that any of these--say Tom Keane, for example, what was his primary thing that he was pushing at that time?

A: Oh, I think Tom Keane was pretty much interested in the insurance code. (pause) Tom Keane frequently had special interests, seemed to me, that he spoke for.

Q: Any particular ones that you recall?

A: No, not right now.

Q: How about the others? Harold Ward . . .

A: Harold Ward, well, he just handled practically all of the Chicago legislation.

Q: In the way of introducing it, you mean, or . . .

A: Introducing and handling it and speaking for it. He was a very high class fellow.

Q: Did you ever have any problems with the Chicago bloc, as it were, any differences with them that caused you any problems.

A: Well, I told you, I think, about that expressway.

Q: Yes, the Congress Expressway. Were there any others?

A: Oh, I think even back in those days, we had quarrels with them that Chicago was getting the lion's share of the taxes, and getting the lions share of school funds and road funds. Downstate always seemed to feel that Chicago wanted more than their share, and we had to watch them a little bit. Of course, we could out-vote Chicago until legislative reapportionment went through.

Q: Oh, I see. Outweigh them, huh?

A: Oh, yes. They ended up with the majority votes. I wasn't there when that went through. That went through . . .

Q: In 1953, I believe it was.

A: I believe it was, yes.

Q: On this commission that you were appointed to. Who did that? Was that Governor Horner or . . .

A: Governor Horner might have had something to do with it, but, as a general thing, the members of any commission were appointed by the president of the Senate, as to the majority members, and by the minority leader, as to minority members.

Q: Who else was on the commission from the legislature?

A: On which commission?

Q: The one in 1937, the truck, I believe it was called the Uniform Motor Vehicle Laws Commission.

A: Well, wait just a second here. (finds clipping in scrapbook) Well, Senator Lou Menges, of East St. Louis, was chairman and Senator Simon Lantz of Congerville. From the House, there was Representative F. W. "Wood" Lewis of Robinson; Representative George Bauer of Effingham; and Representative Louis E. Lewis of Christopher, he was speaker of the House at one time; and Representative Thomas Brennan of Rock Island. I don't know--now, there were other members of the Senate but I don't think I can--George Maypole was a member, and Representative Dave Hunter of Rockford and . . . Senator Harold G. Ward was on that committee.

Q: (pause) Where did the committee meet? You named three places, I believe.

A: Well, our first meeting was at Springfield, and then there was another at East St. Louis, and another one at Harrisburg, and there may have been a meeting at Anna, and there was another meeting at Champaign, and Chicago, several meetings, and I think there was a meeting at Peoria, and Rock Island. Now, I may have missed some. That's a long while ago.

Q: Yes, sir. What were they? Hearings to have people . . .

A: At these meetings, why, Mansfield, who was secretary of the commission, would get a bunch of speakers and advertise it quite a bit and have quite a few farmers and truckers there, and he always asked this question: "Would you sooner have the regulatory body be a special body, or would you want it regulated by the commerce commission that regulates the railroads?" Of course, naturally, the truckers said, "Hell, no." They didn't want anything to do with railroads. And my recollection is that the first law that was passed created a separate commission or bureau but which was later joined on to--as an adjunct--to the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Q: Was there much opposition to being regulated?

A: No. Not at the public hearings, but when the truckers found out that the law, as adopted by the legislature, provided that all trucks had to be inspected and their name and address painted on the side of the truck, why, anyone that owned a pick-up truck, and darned near everybody had a pick-up truck, you know--well, they bitched to high heaven. They didn't like it a bit. They had a protest meeting at Assumption and I went, and I caught hell that night.

Q: Who was leading the group there?

A: Well, a couple of fellows that later became awful good clients of mine. One of them wanted to whip me that night. (laughter) But they

really singed my hide in their remarks. Well, I spoke, but my remarks were pretty much received with jeers and taunts.

Q: What were their points, main points . . .

A: Well, they didn't like to have to spend the money for having their truck inspected, and they didn't like to go to the trouble of having the sign painted on the side, and they didn't like the idea of having to carry public liability insurance.

Q: Well, then, let's see, as a result of this action, there was an act drawn up, as I understand it.

A: Yes.

Q: Who drew up that act?

A: I rather think that a rough draft was prepared by Mansfield and then everybody read it then and added on suggestions to it and probably then it was handed to the Legislative Reference Bureau to draw the final bill.

Q: Then after that bill was drawn up, who introduced it, do you recall?

A: I think all the Senate members introduced it in the Senate and all the House members of the commission introduced the House bill.

Q: I see. Then I guess committee hearings were held then on the bill itself.

A: Yes. But the committee meetings never created much of any particular quarreling, as I recall now. The Farm Bureau was in favor of it.

Later on, why, I handled the legislation increasing truck license fees and the increase in the gas tax in the 1949 and 1952 sessions.

Q: Who was representative of the Farm Bureau in Springfield at that time, do you recall?

A: Well, they had two or three men. The attorney and lobbyist for the Illinois Agriculture Association was Paul Mathias, and he was very friendly, very understandable. He knew your position or the things that would embarrass your position or embarrass the position he wanted you to take. He was never demanding. He was, I thought, a very brilliant man, but he never would indicate it, except you just had to be around him and work with him. They had a fellow by the name of Cox, and he was pretty much the same way. I never did particularly think too much of the general leadership of the Illinois Agricultural Association. I always had the idea that maybe they played politics, but probably I'm wrong.

Q: Let's see, as far as transportation was concerned, then, you were involved with the trucks in 1937 and 1938 and again in 1951 with truck

licensing.

A: Yep.

Q: Did you have any problems with getting the truck licenses increased?

A: Oh, lord, yes. You see, the road system, the primary road system in Illinois, was--history, I think, will show that Governor Frank Lowden first had the idea and I think it was under Lowden that the \$40,000,000 bond issue was first passed to build a system of hard roads, or concrete highways, and those were started being built about 1921, or 1922. But Len Small followed Frank Lowden, and he adopted Lowden's ideas. I think it was under him that they put through the \$60,000,000 bond issue.

You see, in those days, you could build a mile of concrete road, as I recall, for around \$17,000. And that got up, in Stevenson's time to \$100,000 to \$250,000 and now, I guess, it will run a million dollars a mile, or darn near, to build a road. I don't know.

At any rate, the road system was going to pot. Chuck holes and everything else. You see, Illinois is a peculiar state. Now, in Indiana, they don't have very much good, black soil that has any depth. A lot of their roads, the surface is not very many feet from bedrock. See, Illinois soil, in general, is underlaid with clay. Now, in Iowa, you get into a sandier subsoil. Michigan and Wisconsin have sandy subsoil. But Illinois, we have to spend so darned much money for a base and we have to build bridges, and they are big bridges, and that is not something the surrounding states have to worry about. We have a lot of freezing and thawing, whereas you go down south, they don't have freezing and thawing and it doesn't tear up your roads. You get up into Wisconsin and Michigan, why, then it gets cold, it stays cold. But here we freeze and thaw.

In other words, I heard a fellow from out east say that the main thing in building roads is drainage, drainage, drainage. And, in order to get drainage here in Illinois, we have to build a good subsurface, because our water doesn't sink down and dry out. Our water just sinks and stays, pretty much, at least in theory.

Well, at any rate, Governor Stevenson had wanted to raise money to build up the roads, renew roads and repair them and so on, and needed many millions of dollars. And to get that, why, we had two or three things to consider. One was increasing the truck license fees, and the other thing was increasing the gas tax from 3¢ to 5¢, as I recall. And, at that time, the state representative over around Marshall, Illinois, I believe, was John L. Lewis, or John Lewis. He was later secretary of state for awhile, and John Lewis was an auctioneer and he had a pair of lungs with which he could make a hell of a speech and make it loud. And they had quite a few hearings over the state and I was at those hearings.

At any rate, I knew that we had to get the money and, in order to get the

money, somebody had to bear the expense. And as to the major truck lines, with their bigger trucks, those that loaded weighed up to 72,000 pounds, were against any increase in license fees. I don't think any of them was paying more than a license fee of about \$350 a year and, at one time, the bill was going to push other licenses up to \$2500 or more. And, oh, they just about came sick!

And so, to add insult to injury, Stevenson was governor but we had a Republican majority in the Senate and a Republican majority in the House. The bill, as I recall, was introduced by Senator Connors, from Chicago, and myself. See, Connors was Democrat floor leader, the minority floor leader, and Senator Wallace Thompson, a Republican from Galesburg, was majority leader. And, although Wallace Thompson was very smart, and occasionally mean as hell, he was a pretty honest man. But we had a hell of a time.

Now, the Farm Bureau got into the fight. They were in favor of Stevenson's bill increasing the gas tax by 3¢ and substantially increasing truck license fees. And the first session that Stevenson was governor, why, at the time that I wanted the Farm Bureau to act, the president of it, lived over at Sullivan, was out of town. He had promised to help line up his county organizations to work on their respective legislators. I tried to reach him, and Stevenson tried to reach him, by phone. He was in Washington. The crucial vote was to come up on a Monday, I believe, before a Thursday adjournment in 1949. June 30 came, I think on a Thursday. At any rate, the president of the Farm Bureau over here at Sullivan was supposed to get back late the previous Saturday night.

So on Sunday morning, about five o'clock in the morning, I was over at Sullivan to see him. And he came out in his pajamas, and bare feet, and we sat on his back porch and discussed how we were going to put the legislation through. He sincerely promised me that he would see that telegrams went out to the presidents of the various county farm bureaus to contact their legislators, asking them to support the increase in gas tax and truck license fee bills. Well, he didn't do it. And we got beat, but two years later, why the thing passed.

And, of course, John Lewis was just fighting the hell out of it, and a lot of boys from Chicago--there may have been some "fetcher" money out on it. By that I mean there may have been some money raised by trucking companies to beat it, I don't know.

But, at any rate, it passed and, as a part of that general deal, we also had legislation that would divide up the gas tax dollar. In other words, we did away with the annual appropriation for the farm-to-market road bills, which was a general appropriation to the various townships in the state.

And we had a meeting over at the governor's mansion, in the basement, with Governor Stevenson presiding. It was supposed to start about eight

o'clock and at that meeting was the head of the County Highway Engineers Association, the Township Highway Commissioners Association, the City of Chicago representative, the Cook County representative, and the highway department, and Senator Connors and myself from the Senate--see, he representing the Chicago senators and I represented the downstate Democrat senators--and Jimmy Ryan representing the Chicago state representatives, and Paul Powell, who was speaker of the House, representing the downstate Democrat representatives. There must have been fifteen or twenty people there and the damned meeting lasted many hours. (laughs) I think Governor Stevenson had the theory that if you keep people up long enough, keep them there on the job they will eventually come to a decision. He was a pretty clever operator. The darned meeting started about eight o'clock and it wasn't till the following early morning that the meeting broke up. But, by that time, we had agreed on legislation that divided the tax dollar. So much to townships and so much to the downstate counties and so much to the City of Chicago, so much to the County of Cook, and so much to the state highway department.

Q: Weren't municipalities other than Chicago . . .

A: Yes. And municipalities, too. Downstate municipalities. I left those out. There was a representative there from the downstate municipalities. Or representatives. And I also remember that I was awfully happy that we finally finished it. But I can very well remember walking over to the Abraham Lincoln Hotel with Representative Jimmy Ryan from Chicago, at four-thirty in the morning, and the sun was coming up. (laughter)

Q: From eight o'clock the night before.

A: Yes. It was a hell of a long session.

Q: Yes, sir.

A: But then, we still had to look for some votes because some of the Chicago Democrats were not very strongly in favor of it because they had trucking constituents that were screaming to high heaven. So I can remember in the Senate that we needed Republicans and I met with Wallace Thompson, who was majority leader, who didn't hit it off worth a damn with Senator Connors, who was the minority leader. But I can remember of going into Wallace Thompson's office the next day or so and talking to him for probably half or three-quarters of an hour, and he was meaner than hell because he wasn't invited to this meeting over at the mansion. (laughs)

Q: Oh, he had not?

A: And I told him, "Wallace, damn it, you're so cranky." I said, "That was a meeting where we were trying to arbitrate and reach a compromise." And I kidded him along and finally he agreed with me that it was an intelligent settlement of the allocations and we shook hands on it and he

promised to throw his weight. And he said, "John," he said, "a constituent of mine sent me a bottle of--" I forget what it was, but of damned good Scotch "--and before we break up," he said, "I think we ought to open that bottle and have a drink or so to memorialize our agreement." And we did. (laughter)

SESSION 5, TAPE 9, SIDE 2

A: You know, a funny thing, at that time there was a lot of discussion about--I think it was the so-called "Pennsylvania Experiment." I may be wrong on the state but, for many years, there had been a strip of road, we'll say two miles long, and part of it was concrete and part of it was Kentucky natural rock asphalt surfaced and part of it was a sort of a monkey-mixed asphalt. And then, there were various other types and grades of road, and part of it had a twelve-inch thickness and part of it had a ten-inch thickness. And part of it had a subsurface base of a certain kind and a certain thickness. Engineers from all over the country were watching it to see which worked out the best, materialwise, thickness-wise, and base thicknesswise, but there never was a report on that. Now, that's been twenty or thirty years ago, and if that so-called test road ever had a report on it, I don't know. I just think somebody threw away the report.

Q: Was this in Pennsylvania, you say, or . . .

A: I think it was in Pennsylvania.

Q: There was a test road built up just west of Springfield. Do you recall that?

A: Yes. Was that about a mile road, or quarter of a mile?

Q: Something of that nature. Of various types . . .

A: On the road to Jacksonville, wasn't it, as I recall?

Q: Yes. Were you involved with that in any way?

A: No. I knew of it, but I wasn't involved with it.

Q: Can you think of any other occasions when you worked with Wallace Thompson?

A: No, not particularly. Wallace was a, in my opinion, was, number one, he was smarter than a hell of a lot--most of the boys, especially myself. He was very curt and abrupt. He had an awful nice wife and I enjoyed her a lot, very well educated lady. In general, we got along pretty good, I think. At least, he never chewed my tail out too much.

Q: Did he have a habit of doing that with other people?

A: Well, he could be awful abrupt.

Q: (laughs) Would this be on the floor of the Senate?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: Do you remember any particular occasions when he . . .

A: Not particularly. But the average Democrat, especially Botchy-- William J. Connors, his nickname was Botchy--and a lot of Chicago Democrat senators, and a lot of downstaters, hated his guts. I think that's true, and some of the Republicans did, but nobody could ever derogate his ability nor his honesty. He was smart. Damned smart.

Q: Why did Bill Connors pick up the name Botchy, do you know?

A: I don't know.

Q: (laughs) How was he to work with?

A: Oh, Bill was okay . . . Bill Connors always treated me nice. At the second session of Stevenson's administration, several Chicago fellows and all of the downstate Democrats, I believe, wanted me to go for the minority leader. And word got out and Senator Connors told me that he had a daughter that was blossoming out in the television industry, which was starting up pretty much then, and he begged me not to run against him. I wouldn't say begged me, he asked me not to. And frankly, I didn't think that I could have beaten him anyway.

Q: Who was this now?

A: Beaten Senator Connors for minority leader.

Q: Wasn't it about that time that Libonati also wanted to get involved there?

A: Libonati did. Well, as a matter of fact, I think Libby was one of the fellows that suggested I push for it. Maybe Libby was wanting me to throw him my vote. You couldn't say that anybody owned Libby. He was just a hell of a nice guy, very emotional, sympathetic to any cause when anybody was getting kicked around. But, to be floor leader, you've got to work like hell to be a good one or have some danged good men under you that are working.

Q: What types of things, what types of work, what do you mean?

A: Well, being able to explain properly what the governor wanted, in the defeating or passing of legislation. See, Adlai Stevenson, when he was governor, every Sunday night, generally, we would meet there at the

mansion and have dinner and then, about as soon as dinner was over with, we would go downstairs to his office and he would have there Senator Connors and Representative Powell and Jimmy Ryan and myself. Downstate and Chicago leaders in the Senate and the House, who were Democrats. And, if during the week, why, we had some major bill affecting agriculture, for instance, coming, then he would have the director of the department of agriculture, or, if highways, he would have the superintendent of the department of highways. And we would discuss how we were going to handle it and, if there was something that had to be beaten, if we knew the opposition was putting up a bill that Stevenson wanted to beat, we discussed how we would amend it and take the unlikable portion out, or what speeches we would make to beat it, see. That was all framed in ahead of time. And those durned meetings generally lasted till midnight, sometimes later.

Q: Can you think of an example of something that was discussed at one of these meetings? We mentioned the MFT here, at another type meeting there.

A: Well, offhand, there were so durned many . . . Well, I mentioned the gas tax and trucking license increases. I remember one time some school bill some nut was handling and--you see, Stevenson always had bright boys from his office that would sit up in the Senate balcony and watch what went on. And then they would also have access to the floor and bring in stuff to you. And that was the same thing in the House. And I remember some bill came up, something to do with schools, I don't remember what it was now, but we had discussed it the Sunday or Monday night before at the mansion, and I conceived the idea that by voting for a certain amendment, which I wasn't supposed to vote for, that I could get some help on killing it on final passage, which the Governor wanted done. And the idea just occurred to me the afternoon the thing was up, that if I didn't fight the amendment too hard and voted for the amendment, I stood a better chance of defeating the bill on final passage the next day. So, I went against my instructions and voted for it. And immediately one of these boys from up in the balcony came barreling down to the Senate floor and just ate my ass out. And I told him, "I think this is the wise thing to do," and he said, "Well, the governor doesn't and I don't." And I said, "I don't give a damn what you think and," I said, "I'll be able to satisfy the governor as to my position." So, that evening, I went down and talked to the governor and told him why I had changed my position, and he agreed with me that it was a wise thing to do. The next day, I was able to kill the bill which I don't believe I would have been able to do it if I had blew my stack on the amendment the day before.

You see, there could be a situation develop, enmities would develop, and just "bingo" and you had to move fast, and fortunately I moved the right way because we got our own way in the long run. Sometimes you get awfully damned dumb. That was one of the times I was smarter than usual. (laughter) I wasn't too smart any time.

Q: In regard to caucuses, were you involved very often in a caucus?

A: Yes. Caucuses would be called if the majority of minority leader, whichever--when the Democrats were in a majority or in minority--if there was something that came up that the Democrats didn't like, or did particularly like, and they wanted to count noses and see if they could get the votes to pass it or get the votes to defeat it. In other words, they wanted to line up their ranks to see what our position was going to be and whether everybody else was going to take that position. And they'd have the caucus and generally somebody from the governor's office, or somebody from the secretary of state's office--see, as a general thing, Illinois always had a Democrat secretary of state, except for a few vacancies, and then not for long. And they'd have a Democrat governor or a Republican governor. Now, if the secretary of state was a Democrat and the governor was a Democrat, they generally got along fairly well, although there were breaches between them. But, as a general thing, what would promote caucuses would be a Republican governor pushing for legislation and a Democrat secretary of state, who was theoretically titular head of the Democrat party, would be opposing it, and that's why you would have a caucus. To straighten out everybody and present a united front if you could.

Q: Did you normally get a united front from the caucuses or . . .

A: Generally so.

Q: Were there any things that were caucused on that you were opposed to the balance of the group?

A: Yes, several times.

Q: Can you think of an example?

A: No, sir, I can't. I was--well, you see, I was slightly independent, we'll say. I think I was pretty much independent, but there's two schools of thought on that, of course. (laughter)

Q: That is what I was wondering, in the caucus, was there much pressure applied to you?

A: You know, a funny thing. I was telling you a week or so ago about that super-highway bill, the expressway bill. It is rather amazing. They never did call a caucus on that.

Q: Oh, they didn't?

A: No. You would have thought they would have called a caucus on it so that they could really put me up and put the hammer on me, but I guess they knew I was pretty well set, and I might not attend the caucus. If I had attended, I'd tell 'em what I'd promised and what I was going to do and, if they didn't like it, they could go to hell.

Q: (laughs) Yes, sir.

A: You don't like to do those things, naturally, because, hell, maybe you'll be in a position where you need help from your Democrat colleagues and want the boys to stand firm in backing you up.

Q: Yes. I wonder, Stevenson, one of the major things that he was concerned about was judicial reform and he requested that a study be made over at the U. of I. Were you familiar with that action?

A: Well, you see, that judicial reform occurred after I left the Senate.

Q: Yes. But the initial study . . .

A: Yes, it was initiated by Stevenson.

Q: And I believe you were on a judicial reform study group that apparently--I'm not sure whether that was the one that had bar representative, Chicago Bar and Illinois Bar representatives, on it or not. The study that was made by Rubin Cohn was given to them for their consideration and the legislature picked it up from there.

A: I think that's about the way it was. Rubin Cohn was not in the law school at the time that I was in there, see. Rube Cohn was--oh, hell, he was ten or fifteen years younger than me, at least. Maybe, I don't know how old--but he was a pretty darned bright fellow and I can recall being on some subcommittees with him.

You see, in my graduating class--the year I graduated, Bert Jenner was a member of the class. We lived in the same fraternity house and we were pretty good friends. But Bert became probably the most famous of my graduating class. He prepared and sponsored all of this legislation on the amendments to the practice act. When they had the hearing on Nixon, down in Congress, he represented either Nixon or the Republican national committee on those hearings. Bert's a damned smart boy and one of the leading lawyers in the country. But Bert would come down there frequently to speak on proposed legislation, and I think Bert was honest and I don't think Bert ever had any nutty ideas. At least, I was happy to go along with his ideas.

Q: Do you know any of the things that he was supporting at that time? Do you recall any?

A: Well, he was one of the forerunners in judicial reform, but the actual judicial reform didn't take place until, I think, three or four years after I left the Senate.

Q: That's correct, sir.

A: Something like that.

Q: I was wondering what might have been being discussed while you were there, in the way of reform. Do you recall any discussions on this

business of electing or appointing judges?

A: Oh, yes. They had been sponsoring that, and I was always pretty much against the appointing of judges.

Q: Why was that?

A: (laughs) Well, I think perhaps I was selfish. Up in Chicago, in some districts, perhaps, you'll have some pretty light-weight judges, or did then. I think your judges in Chicago now are pretty capable men all the way through. Oh, you may have a deadhead every now and then. But, a peculiar thing, my county is one of the nine counties that make up the fourth judicial circuit and I don't think, in history, they've ever had a Republican circuit judge until the judicial reform act was adopted.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: They've always been Democrats, and I think that they were damned honest men, and capable men. Oh, I didn't get along with all of them, but that's neither here nor there. But this Representative Preihs from here at Pana, oh, he was very much against the appointment of judges, and I think the thing he was afraid of was that we would have Republican judges in this circuit. There are some Republican judges now in this circuit. The Democrats don't have any corner on legal or judicial ability, or in honesty, but we've always been very fortunate in this fourth judicial circuit to have pretty doggoned honest and capable judges, regardless of politics.

Q: One of the other things that was being discussed at that time was whether to have municipal courts or not, to continue that. Do you recall anything about that?

A: Well, you see, here at Pana we always had the City Court of Pana, which was a glorified divorce court. Ninety-eight percent of its business was divorce cases, and all sorts of shenanigans took place. I can remember that, within a week after I started practicing law, that I got down to the office early one morning--I was a farm boy--and here was a fellow from Stuttgart, Arkansas, with his wife. They'd come up to Pana, stayed all night at one of the hotels. This fellow knew one of the lawyers in the office and his brother was judge of the City Court of Pana, see. And I met him, and about nine o'clock, why, the other lawyer--I was just working for him, see--showed up.

When the lawyer got to the office, he consulted with the couple from Arkansas, prepared a complaint for divorce and the decree and an entry of appearance. And, by ten-thirty, the lawyer's brother, the judge, came in and the judge called over at the city hall and had the clerk of the city court bring the docket over with his stamp, and they docketed the case--may have sworn one or the other of the Arkansas couple to give testimony, but I doubt it--and by ten-thirty, without ever leaving the law office, this couple from Stuttgart, Arkansas, were

divorced. They could just beat the hell out of the so-called Reno divorce. (laughter) And, as a matter of fact, most of the city courts, downstate city courts, were all fast-action divorce courts.

Q: What was your position at the time regarding those, do you think? Did you think they ought to be done away with?

A: Well, as a practicing lawyer, I thought it was awful damned handy. It was my hometown. (laughs) But I certainly didn't quarrel when they did away with them. No. (pause) Because the judges we have now--you see, back before the judicial reform we had a lot of county judges. You see, in those days, they had a circuit judge--that was three circuit judges in our nine-county district--and one of them would hold court for four months here in Christian County. The other would hold court another four months and the third one would hold court for the last four months of the year. Meanwhile, the same thing was occurring in the other counties.

Then, in addition to that, we had a county judge who took care of probate matters, misdemeanors cases, and guardianships, and drainage matters and misdemeanors. And then, in each township, we had a justice of the peace and, in the cities, we had justices of the peace and a police magistrate. Well, these justices of the peace didn't know what the law was.

Q: They didn't have to be lawyers?

A: No. And the county judge didn't have to be a lawyer and we had some county judges didn't know what things were all about. On the contrary, we had some very decent ones, some very good ones. Then, of course, we had the city court judges, which occasionally served in county court.

But I can remember with the justice of the peace, the first thing you did, if you represented a client got sued, was take a change of venue, because it was presumed that the lawyer that filed the case was a friend of the justice of the peace before whom the case was originally filed. Why, I can remember, one time when I was a young lawyer, a case was started by Harry Hershey, who unsuccessfully ran for governor in 1940 but later served many years on the supreme court. He filed it before a justice of the peace down at Morrisonville and there were two justices of the peace. I represented the defendant and I took a change of venue to the other justice of the peace in Morrisonville. So, Harry took a change of venue from him and, under the law, the case ended up before a justice of the peace up the highway at Palmer, a very small town, and the justice of the peace there was a farmer and he was shucking corn. We took all the papers up to him and he tied his team up to the fence and sat over on the well curbing and we tried our lawsuit right there.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: And he decided against me. (laughter)

Q: Well! You say that Jenner was quite often in Springfield, how did he go about introducing his ideas to the legislature?

A: Well, he would consult with, as a general thing, Senator Ward or some leading Chicago lawyer that was a senator. Sometimes he would hook on a downstate lawyer, or maybe five or ten of them, or representatives, and the bill would be introduced and it would be referred to the judiciary committee. When it came up for a hearing before the committee, why, he would come down and speak on it.

Q: Would he lobby, particularly. Did he ever show up in bars and that sort of thing?

A: Bert wasn't a drinker. He might have been a cocktail man, but he wouldn't sit and drink two or three hours with you.

Q: I see. Was he representing the Illinois Bar Association or the Chicago Bar Association?

A: Yes. Both.

Q: One of the other things that they were pushing for at that time was some means of the judiciary policing itself, the supreme court perhaps having the ability to rule on infractions, or incompetency, and that sort of thing. Do you remember that being discussed?

A: Well, no. I think they always had that. You see, when a young lawyer graduates from law school and then he takes the bar, and passes the bar, he then has to go before a so-called committee of character and fitness, or something like that. Now, I remember, when I got out of law school, I had to go before a lawyer up at Decatur, he was a very conceited old so-and-so. And it was summer time and I'd worked like hell getting through the bar and I went up there with a T-shirt and a pair of seersucker britches, with my wife-to-be. I went in to see him and, oh, he just give me hell for my garb. But I told him I had passed the bar and had graduated from the university and my father's reputation was just as good as his any day of the week and, even though my father was a farmer, he was probably just as well-respected as this lawyer and he could do as he damned pleased--but he approved me. He was a smart old bastard. (chuckles) I always kind of hated him after that, always wanted to have a lawsuit against him. Never did. (laughter)

Q: So, not much was done in the way of . . .

A: That was done--I shouldn't ever have digressed on that. But then, each county had their bar association and, as a general thing, we always had a committee on ethics here in Christian County, I believe I'm on it, and then the State Bar Association had a committee on ethics. We county members very rarely . . . very rarely ever serve. I can't ever--I can't particularly remember anything coming up. If it did it was handled in a quiet manner. However, the State Bar Association tries to

keep the members of the bar in good condition.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

Q: All right, sir. You were on the public utilities committee from 1945 to 1946. What do you remember about service on the public utilities committee?

A: I thought it was earlier than that. We just never had anything that amounted to anything before that committee.

Q: Oh, is that right? You were chairman for four years of that time. Do you recall how you got to be chairman?

A: I believe Maypole appointed me as chairman.

Q: Did you ask for the chairmanship, particularly, or . . .

A: I may have, but it wouldn't have amounted to a damn because I was just a country boy come to town, and I sure didn't have any particular seniority, altho I had seven weeks seniority over the fellows who took office in January of 1935. My guess is just nobody else wanted it. (chuckles)

Q: Well. You say it wasn't a very active committee, then. Do you remember it meeting at all?

A: Yes, I know we had some meetings.

Q: Do you recall any subjects at all that were taken up with public utilities?

A: (pause) I just can't remember anything.

Q: What about the public utilities tax? Was that handled by that committee:

A: That would go before revenue committee.

Q: Revenue committee rather than the other.

A: I can remember of having two or three meetings, but none of them were of any earth-shaking importance.

Q: I see. (chuckles) All right, sir. Sir, in regard to industry and labor relations, you were fairly active in workmen's compensation and the occupational disease rates that were being paid. Do you recall any particular incidents in regard to that sort of thing, workmen's compensation?

A: Well, I remember about a trip to Chicago--turn it off--hold it just a second, please.

(Taping stopped for talk with secretary, then resumed on next tape)

SESSION 5, TAPE 10, SIDE 1

A: During Governor Stevenson's administration, everybody was worrying about workmen's compensation benefits. There hadn't been anything done for many years to increase the rates. Meanwhile, the economic conditions of the country were improving very fast and . . . Stevenson had pretty well left it up to the group in Chicago that was meeting, half of which supposedly represented employers and half represented labor. The session was rapidly moving to a close and they couldn't get together on anything.

So, one day, and I don't know how this thing happened, but it did. Stevenson sent for me and Frank Stransky, who was Republican, a House member from Savannah, and a pretty brilliant fellow, I thought. I always did think he was a very nice fellow and a very able lawyer. And Stevenson told us he wanted us to fly up to Chicago the next day and attend this meeting of the group that was supposed to be working on amending the workman's compensation law, adding additional coverages and increasing the amount of disability payments.

And we went up there and talked to them, and they didn't seem too excited about it. And, on the instructions of the governor, we told them that the legislature would soon adjourn and either they should get in gear and come up with a report or that the governor was going to take it in his own hands and that what we came up with might not be too palatable to either group. And they wanted to know if we were threatening them. And we said, no, we were just telling them the facts of life, that Governor Stevenson was insisting on action and he wasn't getting any of it. So, at any rate, within a couple of weeks, they came up with something that was agreeable to them and, in general, it was agreeable to Stevenson. And then, Stransky and I put it through.

Q: You handled it then?

A: I handled it in the Senate, Stransky in the House. I probably had other people on the bill with me because, you know, some people, in the legislature, why, they take themselves pretty seriously and, if they had always shown to be a friend to labor, well, one way to have trouble is to leave them out.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: You better call them up and put their name on the bill so that they are recognized and they can go back to their constituents and brag about it.

Q: Did you normally go to ask people to have them come on a bill with you, or did they usually come to you?

A: I would say pretty much fifty-fifty. Some people--in other words, if I had a bill that I thought might be controversial in some regard, and I figured that having Joe Doak's name on the bill would improve my chance of getting it through, why, you'd get it. And some bills, why, the word would get out that Fribley was going to handle a bill having to do with thus and so and, hell, there would be a regular swarm of bees over there wanting to get on, because it was going to be a popular bill. But then, sometimes, people would come and ask me to help them and I would reciprocate the favor.

Q: Can you think of any particular bills that you were introducing that a lot of people wanted to get involved with?

A: Yes. The farm-to-market road bill. Yes, after the first time it was introduced, why, everybody wanted on that bill.

Q: Is that right? (chuckles)

A: On the contrary, I can remember one that I got on to satisfy a fellow and it was very, very embarrassing. Really, about the first regular session I attended, I got on a bill that affected hairdressers. And I understood that it was--this fellow put it to me this way in substance, that the hairdressers wanted it. It turned out that they were against it and I sure caught hell for my name being on the bill.

(Taping stopped for related aside, then resumed)

Q: The next item I have is your service on the insurance committee. You were vice-chairman from 1937 to 1940.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember any particular incidents during that tenure? You had mentioned before the Lloyds of London problem, at one time.

A: Yes. I don't particularly remember any great thing that the insurance committee went through. Hell, vice-chairman is just an ordinary member. See, the Republicans were running the show and they have a Republican chairman and, unless that guy died, the vice-chairman never served. (laughs)

Q: How did you come to be vice-chairman of that committee? Do you recall?

A: Oh, I had quite a bit of seniority, and they had to put me somewhere. In those days, you went on about five or six committees. The committees that were important those days were executive, and appropriations, and judiciary, and highways, and--that is, were important to me. I wanted to be on those. After I had been in the Senate for the first two terms, after my first six years, my first partial term included, why, I don't think I ever asked to be on a committee I wasn't put on.

Q: What was service on the executive committee like?

A: Well, executive committee, why, you handled appointments. In other words, the governor would send up a list of appointments to the executive to be confirmed by the Senate, it didn't have to go to the House, and it was up to you to approve those appointments or turn them down.

Q: These were appointments to commissions . . .

A: Yes. Well, for instance, the various directors had to be approved by the executive committee, and the various members of commissions and boards and, oh, the penitentiary wardens, and all of that sort of thing.

Q: Do you remember any particular problems that arose while you were on the executive committee?

A: Not particularly. I do know that we had some strenuous sessions on that. I remember one time, when Stevenson was governor and the Republicans ran the show, the executive committee was mostly Republican. But he sent up the name of a fellow from my district for appointment and it kind of burnt me up and I had the committee hold it up--he never checked with me first. But I thought I would just point it out to him--well, that was that young kiddie-car group he had down here. It was these same fellows that tried to tell me how to run his business--oh, that is childish to talk about that. (chuckles)

Q: You mentioned that he had asked you to fly up to Chicago for this workmen's compensation meeting. Did you fly by government, Illinois, plane?

A: Yep. Governor's plane.

F: Did you know the pilot at that time?

A: Oh, I rode three or four times--I probably did, but I don't remember them now.

Q: Dell Shroyer, I believe was flying for Stevenson.

A: Could have been. The name sounds familiar.

Q: From Lincoln, Illinois.

A: Oh, they were from Lincoln. Well, I flew up with the governor--oh, I don't think I ever flew up with him over four or five times, I don't think so. Had some meeting up there he wanted me to go to.

Q: You normally went by train, then, when you went to Chicago?

A: He generally, I think, went by train. Course, I don't know. I think he used the plane quite a bit, but I just don't have the least idea.

Q: I see.

A: At least, it would never have made the public press. I don't think anybody ever knew that I flew with him.

Q: So, as far as the insurance committee was concerned, then, you don't recall any particular activity?

A: There was never any big thing before the insurance committee, that I recall, after the adoption of the code during Henry Horner's time. You see, the first year, the new insurance code was turned down and the second year, why--the second biennium--why, it was approved.

Q: Do you know the objections, or primary objections to it when it was turned down?

A: Well, the primary objection in the first session was that London Lloyds insurance company was recognized in Illinois. And that is the reason--the American companies raised money and beat the hell out of it.

Q: Do you remember any of the lobbying that went on during that time?

A: Undoubtedly there were. Now, I had in my district a couple of mutual insurance companies. One was a good one and one was a bad one. See, back in the early 1930's, oh, a world of insurance companies went broke and they had these mutual life insurance companies. That's where it's designed that when somebody dies, why, each member contributes a dollar, see, and that's the way their premiums were worked out, based on how many members are in existence when a member dies. Well, they'd start a new mutual life insurance company, mutual benefit, and they'd run good. Everybody would be happy until the class began to get old. Then you had more deaths per year and this dollar a month assessment with less members to pay it, and the company wouldn't pay off the advertised amount. So then, the guy that had the insurance company, he would just kind of fold that one and just let her sit and he would start another one, see. And all the applications that were young he would put in the new company and, if the application was old, he'd put in the old company. And these policies, as I recall, guaranteed that you were bound to get at least \$500, \$800 to \$1,000 was the top, but they were supposed to guarantee \$500. It got down to where there wouldn't be enough people pay in and wouldn't be \$500. So there you would go into receivership. There were a lot of tricks done with it. Then they were better regulated under the code.

As I say, I had a fellow over here at Taylorville, who ran one, was a damned good operator, and he was clever. For instance, somebody over along by Midland would die and his beneficiary was his widow. And this insurance man was the most genteel fellow you ever saw. Very quiet, clean, neat, handsome, and he'd make out a check to the widow for \$800, or whatever it was, and he would go out to the funeral home and walk in,

and here were all the friends around, and he would go up to the widow and say, "Mrs. Doe, I'm president of Christian County Mutual," or whatever it might be. "I don't know whether you knew it or not, but your husband had a policy in our company that pays \$800," and that was a lot of money in those days, "and I know there's things come up now you need money for, so I brought the claim form and if you'll just sign here, and here's your check." Before he'd leave the place, he would have five more applications. (laughter)

Q: I see. Make up for it.

A: But he was an honest fellow. But a lot of them weren't.

Q: So the code started to regulate more carefully this type company, then?

A: Yep. They weren't very much regulated before then. But I can't particularly--oh, I probably had my nose in a lot of things and I've forgotten most of them. Forgiven or forgotten. (chuckles)

Q: Where did you usually meet for these committees, like the insurance committee? Do you recall . . .

A: Well, you see, in those days, no senator had a private office. There was an appropriations committee room on the third floor, and then there was a judiciary committee room and then there were two or three other committee rooms upstairs. You see, on the fourth floor, they had a little restaurant up there. To the southwest of the Senate chamber, they had the judiciary committee room and to the southeast was the appropriation committee, and sometimes--and then, they had two or three committee rooms upstairs. Now, in those ones, the other committees would meet, they just shuffled them kind of around these rooms upstairs. The biggest committees were appropriation and judiciary. And then, if you had a real hot bill, why, then we would meet sometimes in the Senate chamber. But nowadays, you see, they've got these committee rooms scattered down on the first floor of the Capitol.

Behind the Senate chamber on the north, over to the left, they had the clerk's office where you would get copies of bills. And then, the telephone office there, where you could go in to the booth and put in calls. And then, next going east was the Senate secretaries and they probably had about twelve or fifteen girls in there, and that's where my secretary worked. Of course, she took care of my work and three or four other senators. Then directly behind the Senate chamber was the lieutenant governor's office. Then, on east, was the office of the president of the Senate and the minority leader's office. But no senator had a private office, other than the majority leader and the minority leader.

Nowadays, you go over there and everybody has a private office and that may consist of two or three rooms and a private secretary, and a general secretary, and a couple of other fellows. Well, it is the life of Riley

over there now. And the hearing rooms now, I notice that they are equipped with fine leather chairs, beautiful chairs and beautiful tables. We didn't have that.

Q: Do you think it functions better because of the . . .

A: (pause) I wouldn't be able to answer that question.

Q: How did you handle your office work, as it were? At your desk there.

A: Well, yes. You see a secretary is not supposed to be on the floor unless she is the nature of a committee clerk, or your own private secretary. For ordinary correspondence, writing to my constituency, or stuff like that, why, I did a lot of it here at my home office. Or I might dash in to her desk there at the Senate stenographers' room and dictate standing there, or she would come in to my desk and sit in Martie Lohmann's seat. Or she would stand up.

During the session, suppose the Senate was going on and I needed to have an amendment prepared, why, I would send a page to go get her. She would come in there and she'd stand right at the desk there, sort of a rolltop desk with a flat end on it, and she would stand and take it down and she'd dash out and type it up and bring it right back, see.

She went to Springfield when I went to Springfield, and sometimes she would room with another girl, and sometimes she would have a private room, and she came back when I came back. A lot of times driving up, why I would dictate to her; coming back, I'd dictate to her.

Q: Was she from your office here, then?

A: Yes.

A: Well, was she paid by the state?

A: I paid her regular salary and then, she got, in those days, I think, about ten dollars a day, which was pretty good pay, for five days. She was paid for five days up there, so for the--I think that is right, and it was a windfall to her. But, of course, out of that, she had to pay her hotel and meals, see. But in those days, I don't think a room was over three dollars a day, or something like that, at the hotels. Times were hard.

Q: Yes, sir. Does she still live in Pana?

A: Yes. Well, I had three or four of them. I had Miss Eula Merriam, who was in love with a fellow who worked at the post office and who enlisted in the Army, and he was stationed out close to Washington and she wanted to marry and be with him and I got her a job in Senator Lucas' office.

And then, I had Norma Cheney, who was a local girl here. She almost had a lot of trouble. (laughs) She was engaged to a boy who was a . . . preaching student down at Greenville College, as I recall. And she was a beautiful redhaired girl, and the last night of the session, why, her boy friend had come up and he was sitting up in the balcony. So--this was all planned. Libonati, the durned idiot, had introduced a bill to make it a misdemeanor for anybody to take the picture of someone, such as in a nightclub, without his permission. In other words, the theory was, some fellow would be out with some woman who wasn't his wife and somebody would snap a picture and then hold him up for extortion money. So, old Libby, he was pushing his bill pretty hard but he wasn't gaining much ground on it. So, unbeknowast to me, the press and some of the Senate arranged with Norma to come in and she was supposedly to take dictation, standing alongside of my desk, or to see me on something. Well, just as soon as she came in, why, they arranged that she would go over and plop herself down on Libonati's lap and the newspaper men would come down and shoot the pictures, all a fixed up job! (laughter) And they had a lot of fun out of it. I don't think I ever knew anything about it until the thing happened, because everybody knew that I wouldn't care, because Norma was a hell of a sweet kid. And, by golly, her husband-to-be, this young preacher, sitting on the balcony, he blew! (laughter) Almost caused a rupture of their romance.

Q: Oh, he didn't know anything about this.

A: No. (laughter)

Q: Did they get the picture?

A: I don't know whether they did or not. I think they did. But it was just fixed up. She just plopped down on Libonati's lap and put her arm around him, see, and the newspapers supposedly got pictures of them. (laughter)

Then I had . . . Betty Beveridge, she worked for me for several years. Her mother died and she went down to Phoenix and worked at a law office that took care of law work for Senator Goldwater. And she came back here not long ago and I got her a job up at Assumption. A damned good secretary. And then I had Marcella Castle. And she now is a teacher over at--I think at Evansville college.

All of my secretaries were darned good secretaries. I had as good as there were. They were all local girls and damned nice girls.

SESSION 6, TAPE 11, SIDE 1

Q: Sir, how much concern was there for conservation in the legislature while you were there?

A: When I was in the legislature, we had no particular--well, now, that isn't quite right. As I recall, in the latter part of my second term in the legislature, they had legislation up with regard to strip-mining. And that legislation emanated perhaps from the Illinois Farm Bureau and from so-called conservationists in general, which were not very well organized at that time. And then it emanated, of course, from county authorities, taxing authorities, who realized that, once they strip-mined the coal, that property went out of taxation. And, as I recall, and I may be wrong on this, most of the legislation emanated from either southern Illinois around in the Du Quoin area, Pickneyville area, where they had strip mines, and perhaps up around Savannah where they had strip mines.

Bills were introduced to put a tax on strip-mined coal, which went into a fund which was then to be used for the leveling off and reclamation of the land after it was leveled off. Some of these bills perhaps may have been introduced with the idea of being a so-called "fetcher bill" for a payoff. To my knowledge, no money was ever paid by the coal companies.

I may have been on some of those bills. I don't know. I remember of helping handle bills that came out of southern Illinois which, in my recollection, were introduced by Powell and other representatives down there. And, at one time, a bill was introduced, passed and signed by the governor and held unconstitutional. And, at another time, there was a bill introduced over in the House and came to the Senate and I probably handled it, or at least made a speech on it, and it was a bill that created a tax on per-ton of coal mined, which went into the nature of a trust fund and was to be used by the state in leveling off and planting to fir trees and anything that would grow there and ultimately would be used for recreation or grazing purposes. Now, Governor Dwight Green vetoed one of these bills and the--oh, assertions were made that he was influenced by the big coal mine companies, but there was never any substance to that that I know of. But, eventually, legislation was adopted and there has been quite a bit of reclamation work done around Du Quoin, I think, the Union Electric strip mine.

At the present time, as I understand it, the law is that when you strip-mine or do quarrying work, that first you've got to get a permit and then, of course, you have to post a bond, I believe, that the topsoil taken off will be set aside and be used for purposes of filling it in later. And around Du Quoin, if you will notice, not too far from the Du Quoin state fairgrounds, south of Du Quoin, there has been a substantial amount of reclamation work, and I think they've got quite a few trees planted in--apparently the thing is progressing. It is never going to be good land, but that is just about the situation.

Q: One of the big problems with deep mining is the fact that the mines may eventually cave in or the earth settle so that there is a depression on the surface of the earth. Did that come up?

A: Well, here at Pana, our coal mines here--and we've had about five here

in Pana or within two miles of Pana--and the coal here at Pana is about seven hundred and fifty foot deep. The coal up at Assumption is about a thousand foot deep. Assumption coal mine, long since abandoned, was the deepest mine in Illinois, at least, and maybe in most of the nation. Here at Pana, we've never had any subsidence damages, but over at Taylorville, their mine strata is not over two hundred and fifty or three hundred feet deep and, in addition to that, their working face thickness in the coal seam, I guess, ran up as thick as ten or eleven feet, so you are more prone to have subsidence over there.

Here at Pana, with our mine between seven hundred fifty and eight hundred foot deep, we've got tremendous concrete and brick smokestacks that go a hundred foot in the air, and we have our city water towers that are built with no particular regard to whether they might be over a mined-out area or not, or over a partition that's left between mined-out areas and, in history, we've never had subsidence.

I can remember years ago when there was a firm that made refrigerators wanted to put in a plant here. And they raised the question of subsidence, because they had a machine that formed refrigerator doors and refrigerator bodies, and this machine would go bang, bang, bang with a tremendous amount--I think twenty-five or thirty ton weight. The company didn't come here, it located at Effingham, but I think they were well satisfied there was no chance of subsidence.

Now, you get down northwest of Nokomis, and you get over at Taylorville, and on west there for about fifteen miles, over toward Pawnee--it's in Sangamon County, I believe--and there they had a world of trouble. Farmers would have tile ditches and the land would settle. Where the pillars were--that's unmined areas--why, the tile would be normal and level but, in between those pillars, why, the land would settle and the surface would dip down a foot or so and, of course, your tiles weren't worth a tinker's damn when that happened. And, going from Taylorville on the road toward Springfield on Route 29, right there where the Dairy Queen stand is, you'll notice the dip in the pavement, a substantial dip. If you're going back to Springfield, if you'll check that, you'll notice. (chuckles)

Q: Yes, sir.

A: Now, that was subsidence! And that happened about twenty or twenty-five years ago, and there were several suits brought against the Peabody Coal Company for subsidence damages, and none of them, as I recall, were successful. The reason was that the deeds by which the surface owner had conveyed the coal rights released any rights to claim for subsidence. Well, those people were hooked, and churches, I think, and buildings, and foundations on houses, why, they would crack and had a hell of a mess and there wasn't a thing they could do about it.

Q: Do you recall any action in the legislature concerning that while you were there?

A: No.

Q: This came later, then.

A: There was none while I was there. And, as a matter of fact, I think that happened after I left the legislature. Now, I notice that insurance companies are now writing subsidence insurance. The question came up with--a bank or a building and loan here which makes a mortgage loan on a house. Are you going to require him to furnish--along with fire and windstorm insurance coverage--are you going to require subsidence insurance to protect the lien of your mortgage. Well, I've advised my bank and building and loan clients around Pana, "Don't worry about it, don't require it. If it's at Nokomis or Taylorville, Kincaid or Bulpitt, which are west of Taylorville, yes, probably you should require it."

Q: I noticed in relation to this strip mine reclamation business that Senator Harry Stuttle was involved. It was reported in the newspaper that he had put in a bill which you were supporting. Do you recall Harry Stuttle's involvement?

A: No. I don't recall it. Harry Stuttle was the senator from Litchfield, and a very able fellow. If he was the one that was handling it--and I may have gone on a bill with him, I don't know, I just don't recall. But there was quite a movement to stop strip-mining or at least put a tax on it and reclaim.

Q: What type person was Stuttle?

A: Stuttle was a good lawyer. He had been judge of the city court at Litchfield at one time. He was a handsome man, a forceful man. (chuckles) Harry spent most of his time, as I recall, protecting a big industry that he had at Litchfield that manufactured powdered milk.

Q: Oh. Milnot . . .

A: Milnot. That was it, and it was owned by a fellow name of Hauser, I believe, and his sons. And Hauser had made a fortune off of the thing. And, of course, the dairy industry was doing everything they could to prohibit it, or tax it to the extent of prohibition, and Stuttle was spending a substantial part of his time, and his influence, in keeping the Hausers in business. There were countless numbers of hearings on that. The Illinois Farm Bureau, as I recall, supported the bills to limit, or prohibit Milnot. Well, those bills came up every session almost.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Yes.

Q: And the Farm Bureau, you say, was putting the bills in or supporting . . .

A: The dairy industry and the Farm Bureau. Well, I don't know whether they were putting them in. Now, some of those bills were "fetcher bills," but some of them were sincere. In fact, most of them were sincere. And they would have long and many committee hearings and you would have a lot of testimony. They would try to introduce proof that Milnot wasn't healthy and it was a kind of a fraud on the consumer, but I don't think there was very much to that. I remember the fellows came down from Wisconsin and testified on it.

Q: Testified against Milnot?

A: Yes, and also for bills governing the use and sale of oleomargarine. I supported those bills because, in my district here, I had the Equity Creamery and the Sugar Creek Creamery here in Pana, and I was duty bound to help them out if I could. In those days, we had quite a few farmers that milked cows. Nowadays that is rather rare.

Q: What committee would be the one to hear . . .

A: Agriculture, generally. As I recall.

Q: You served on the agricultural committee from 1945 to 1951. Do you recall any particular activities during that period that . . .

A: Well, the . . . the agriculture committee, I can't remember too much that occurred before that. Old Simon Lantz from Congerville, up adjacent to Eureka, was chairman of the agriculture committee and I may have been vice-chairman once, I don't remember it, but . . . we handled a lot of legislation that the Illinois Agriculture Association, the Farm Bureau, had. And their lobbyist was a lawyer from Chicago. At that time, the Illinois Agricultural Association had their offices on north of the Loop there, and now they've moved down to Bloomington. But Paul Mathias was a very conscientious fellow, and very effective in a quiet way, nothing flamboyant about him, but just a darned square, decent fellow.

Q: You remember any examples of the bills that were put in at that time?

A: Well, I think they had--I think perhaps the pari-mutuel harness racing bills came up before the committee. That could very well be. You see, that shows the power of the speaker of the House, or a president pro-tem of the Senate, in affecting legislation. In other words, if a bill came in and it was in the nature of a "fetcher bill" or that some agriculture or other group was sponsoring, and you might want to put the bill in to a committee that you thought you could control, through the chairman and yourself. After introduction of the bill, it lays on the table for two or three days and then the president pro-tem or the speaker will assign that bill to agriculture or license and miscellany or some other committee. Now, if the speaker of the House, or the president pro tem, has personal reasons for wanting that bill passed, or killed, or to have it just scare the daylights out of somebody, he can put it in a favorable committee or an unfavorable committee, and thus

they have a tremendous power.

Now, I think I've wandered off of your question, but I'm positive that these Milnot prohibition bills, or tax bills, were considered by agriculture, and I rather think that the pari-mutuel harness racing bill that was sponsored for the county fairs were in agriculture committee.

Q: Was oleomargarine up at that time?

A: Perhaps I am confusing some of Milnot's things with oleo. The oleo bills--as I understand it, you then just couldn't sell oleo in Wisconsin in a yellow color and thus permit confusion with butter. That may still be the law up there. I may be wrong. But, at that time, why, there were several bills, I think, most every session to prohibit oleo, or tax it and other things that amounted to prohibition of it.

In those days, you couldn't sell yellow oleo--under our law, it had to be sold in a plain, white condition. And then, they had a little plastic bulb with the yellow dye in the oleo package. As I recall, it was a reddish dye but, when it got mixed, it turned the oleo yellow. The housewife could buy white oleo, which was sold cheaper than natural butter. She had to soften up the oleo, it looked like lard, and then try to uniformly mix that dye and work it over and finally hope to come up with something that had some semblance or appearance of butter. And, of course, the housewives association, they were against anything, as I recall, to limit the sale of oleo. They were against any legislation that would have limited or prohibited the sale of oleo, and they were diametrically opposed to the dairy industry that wanted to prohibit it, and they had some battles.

Q: Do you remember any of those in particular?

A: I had an aunt who was head of the Chicago Housewives League, Doctor Wilbur Fribley's widow, her name was Gwendolyn Fribley. She came down and spoke against it once at a hearing, as I recall, before a committee of the whole, that's where the entire Senate acts as a committee. (chuckles) The boys in the Senate knew that she was my aunt--and she was a rather prominent lady--and somewhere in the meeting, why, some remark was made as to how long she had known me, and she made the statement that she had known me since I was in three-cornered pants.

Q: Oh. Well! (laughter)

A: It was kind of funny. But . . . I don't know when the law was passed that--I think it was probably when I was in the Senate--that they didn't have to sell oleo in white form. You see, they used every argument in the world and I think that I can recall an exhibit where they supposedly had some scientist who was a professor from some university conduct tests and I think he may have testified that he had tried oleo or Milnot on white rats and they didn't fatten up like they should. Every durned thing under the sun was used as arguments for keeping oleo out of

Illinois. But people get sort of wild-eyed over those things.

Q: Yes, sir. Was there any other items of agriculture . . . let's see, there was an elevator bonding problem came up at one time. Was that during your . . .

A: I don't recall that it was. It was a darned good idea. It may have been. I had some little business with that, but that has been since I've been out of the legislature, where elevators went broke and--but I know you have to get a warehouse permit . . . if you stored corn, or bought corn, or if you conducted a storage business, and see that corn stored under a warehouse receipt didn't get mixed up with the other elevator's corn.

Q: Who else served on the agriculture committee with you?

A: Well, the fellows were probably from farm districts. Senators Simon Lantz and Charles Baker of up in, I believe Lake County, in that area, and--oh, I'd darned near have to--will you hold it a second till I go get a Blue Book.

Q: Well, all right sir.

(taping stopped to obtain copy of Blue Book, then resumed)

A: Well, you see, after my first six years in the Senate, until Adlai Stevenson came in--well, while Adlai Stevenson was in--roughly thirteen years, twelve or thirteen years of my time in the Senate, of the eighteen years plus, the Republicans ran the show, there was a Republican majority in the Senate. But I note in the 1949 session, why, they had Senator Simon Lantz and Senator Mueller--he was from around Highland, Illinois--and Senator Baker--he was from up northwest of Chicago. (pause) Senator Cash was from over at, I believe it was the Bloomington district; Senator Dennis Collins, from the DeKalb area; Senator Little from Aurora; Senator Victor McBroom from Kankakee; and Senator Paddock from up around Chicago, and Senator Thomas was from the East St. Louis area, and--those were Republicans--Senator Donnelly, he was from down around Litchfield; and Senator Lewis, he was from Robinson, Illinois. And Senator Lohmann from Pekin, and Senator Waters, I think he was from around Quincy. Now, of that whole bunch, Lantz and Baker were the only fellows who were actual farmers. I owned farm land and I imagine the other fellows did, too.

Q: You remember any particular work you did with any of these individuals?

A: Well, let's see. Senator Simon Lantz, I was on a lot of sub-committees with him. Senator Lantz was quite a character. He was a farmer from Congerville, adjacent to Eureka, Illinois.

(taping stopped for consultation with secretary, then resumed)

Q: Senator Lantz you say . . .

A: Senator Lantz was several years older than I, a handsome, intelligent man. He got into the business of Angus cattle breeding, and he was very set in his ways that there was no animal in the cattle kingdom that was better than an Angus. I can remember, I was with him on trucking legislation, and on road legislation. We talked about cattle breeding a lot. I got a kick out of the old fellow. May I digress a minute?

Q: Yes.

A: My grandfather was a Scotchman and he thought there was nothing finer than a Clydesdale horse or a Shorthorn bull. And Simon Lantz was frequently a judge at the Canadian Royal Stock Show and he also judged at the Chicago International Livestock show. And Simon was deaf in one ear and I don't know why, but frequently I sat on his deaf side and I would join in with some people discussing cattle. And I would tell them this: that you could take a piece of beef and, if you look at it, if it was lean, stringy meat, it probably came from a Jersey or a Holstein. But, if you had a cut of beef where the fat was interlined, marbled into the meat, why, that had to be, and I'd drop my voice and I'd say, "a Hereford or a Shorthorn." And Simon would be turning his good ear around to listen. Just as soon as that would come out--Shorthorn or Hereford--he would say, "That's a goddam lie! You are talking about an Angus." (laughter) He was a lovable cuss, but he used to kinda drive you nuts on that subject. I knew he was touchy; he thought there was nothing greater in the animal kingdom than an Angus bull or cow or calf. (laughter) But he was an honest fellow, I think, and a perfect gentleman, and a bright fellow. It was a pleasure to serve with him.

Q: Did anything come up regarding the fairs? Like the State Fair, for example.

A: Yes. Whenever there was any committee that had to do with the State Fair, Simon was automatically on it. I can't particularly recall that I was ever on any committees with regard to the State Fair. Now, county fairs, why, Simon was very much interested in those, and I was always on county fair stuff.

Q: What types of things would be involved?

A: Oh, one thing, of course, was the appropriation, matching appropriation, that the state gave to help furnish prizes for livestock and farm product exhibits at county fairs. You see, these county fairs just couldn't exist if they didn't get money out of the state. And then, when we had the harness racing legislation, pari-mutuel betting on harness races, why, Simon was on that committee. After the House passed that, I handled the bill in the Senate and Senator Lantz joined with me in handling it. He was very careful, and I was too, that no amendments were introduced for legislation whereby pari-mutuel betting at a county fair would ever be allowed. There was some movement to amend the bill

to permit pari-mutuel betting on harness racing at the Cook County county fair. No sir! Simon wouldn't stand for that. I backed him up.

The only pari-mutuel betting allowed is at a pari-mutuel licensed track, and the only place they've had it is down at Collinsville, and the Cahokia track south of East St. Louis. They call it Cahokia Downs, and I think it lost money. Now, up at Chicago, they've got Chicago Downs, and it's a money maker, and I think most of those tracks--they've got three or four tracks up there where they have pari-mutuel harness racing. Course, they've had, as I say, the pari-mutuel running racing, flat racing, at Collinsville and at those Chicago tracks, I guess, fifty or sixty years.

Q: Do you recall any particular problems concerning the State Fair? That were taken up during that time?

A: Oh. (pause) Well, there always was and always will be a perpetual gripe as to the best way to run it. The State Fair never made any money in good days or bad days. When Horner went in as governor, why, he had a State Fair manager, I don't remember his name, but you were supposed to pay a dollar, I think, admission fee and, by golly, after I was in the Senate, why, they just printed up thousands of passes, or free tickets, and each--I presume the Republicans got some too--but each Democrat senator and representative and county chairman--why, I would get a shoe box full of those. And I am positive the Republicans had 'em too. The State Fair was always in financial trouble and there perhaps was grafting done up there, I presume the concessions always paid off, and so on. I presume, I wouldn't know, don't have the least idea. But I can remember one time we were on some bill that had to do with appropriations for the State Fair and Senator Peters, from over at east of Champaign, Pete had the floor, and he made this remark, which was true as it could be, he said, "You know," he said--talking about these free passes to get in the State Fair, free tickets--he said, "You know what" I'd like to look at the dumb so-and-so that pays to get in that there fair!"

Q: Well. (laughter) No one was paying to get in.

A: That's right.

SESSION 6, TAPE 11, SIDE 2

Q: Do you recall any other problems with the State Fair other than funding?

A: Well, there was always quarreling with the management of it, that they would neglect this and overdo this. And I remember during the Stevenson administration, Stevenson tried to restore it so it would

maybe be a better fair, and to do away with the free tickets. So he had a fellow as manager out there. Stevenson was very economical. He cut down on a lot of silly expenditures. And economy was a watchword. Well, it so happened that the fellow that was, as I recall, head of the department of agriculture then, had rooted the State Fair manager out of his house, a pretty decent home out there, and the director moved in.

Q: Oh, at the fairgrounds?

A: Yes. Got to live there, I presume rent free, I don't know. But, about two weeks later, Stevenson came out with a blast on economy, and doing away with this free business and heavy expenditures, and Senator Wallace Thompson brought up that, at that same time, the director of agriculture had just spent several thousand dollars for some new carpeting for the whole thing, and it was very embarrassing to me, trying to defend Stevenson's program and, naturally, it was embarrassing to Stevenson when that thing was brought out.

Q: Were they able to economize the way Stevenson wanted it done?

A: Pretty well. Pretty well.

Q: What types of things did they do to economize?

A: (pause) Well, I don't particularly recall anything in particular, but Stevenson eliminated a substantial amount of payoffs, grafting. But I think that anybody that has ever been in politics will agree with this statement, that you put a governor in and, his first term, he is a pretty square shooter, and everybody under him is pretty square, but his second term, look out cats! Everybody figures that this is going to be the last time this boy is in here, last time I am going to be in here, as director of this or superintendent of that, and I'm going to get mine. That just seems to be the history of every governor. You see, Dwight Green-- personally I always thought that Dwight Green was a darned square governor and I don't think there was any grafting, I mean any payoffs, that ever reached his pocket. And, his first term, his administration was excellent. But, his second term, just a lot of his boys, his appointees, were shaking them down. That seems to be the history of every governor, of every administration.

Q: What types of things occurred in the Green administration of that nature?

A: (pause) Oh, I am too old to remember too much about it. But, you see, Green fell out with the--the St. Louis Post Dispatch was on Green's tail all the time.

Q: Oh?

A: But they never, I don't think ever--well, you see, first, the newspaper is trying to sell papers and the only way you can do that is to raise

hell with somebody and they raised hell with Green and raised hell with his administration, his second term, but as far as ever bring out that Green was personally implicated--and I don't think he was.

Q: In regard to Green, what type relationship did Green as governor have with Chicago? I believe it would be Mayor Kelly at that time.

A: Generally pretty fair. They had to live together. I think I told you about the expressway bill that had the trouble.

Q: Yes, sir.

A: In general--you see, Chicago and Cook County was Democrat and you've always got to contend with them. And any governor thinks he is going to clean up Chicago, he is just going to have a hell of a fight with them because you've got such a large number--especially since redistricting, boys from Chicago--which didn't exist then. Chicago was in a minority. But Chicago boys would dig around and pick up a bunch of downstate friends and they still had to be contended with then.

Q: How did they go about picking up downstate friends?

A: Well, supposing I had a pet bill, or any other downstate senator had a pet bill, that I might have trouble passing. All the Chicago boys would vote for them on the implied promise that you would return the favor. Now, the Chicago boys helped me out of trouble with bills I had that were peculiar to my area.

Q: Can you think of an example of that?

A: Well, I remember . . . Dwight Green--I think I referred to this, this was about the time that Pana had a water-impounding lake system and we bonded the city in excess of a million dollars, which was a lot of money in those days. And to help out on the project, I sold Dwight Green on the idea that the state could legally contribute to the cost of it. At that time, it was a popular thing to put lakes in various areas. They would be conservation lakes, and that would be where the people would go fish and picnic and so on. They had them in, I would say, probably a fourth of the counties in the state, and Christian County didn't have one, and instead of the state appropriating a million dollars to build this lake for, say, over in eastern Illinois or southern Illinois or so on--you see the state would build it and manage it and so on. So I worked out a deal whereby the state would give us a hundred thousand dollars contribution to the lake cost in consideration of the City of Pana agreeing that the department of conservation would have supervision over the lake. And Dwight Green agreed to go along with it, and the bill was passed. And in the melee--it passed the Senate, and I didn't have too much trouble--and in the melee, why . . . I just don't remember what happened on that, but it didn't finally go through.

Q: It lost in the House, did it?

A: Yes. As I recall. At any rate, I went to Adlai Stevenson and explained the whole situation to him. And I put the bill in and, when I showed that it was all agreed and understood and through a technical matter it didn't go through, why, the Chicago boys all went along. Wallace Thompson went along, the Republican leader, and I think it got every vote in the Senate, and I think it got practically every vote in the House.

Q: Now, this was a second time. You had put it in the first time . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . and it failed, and then the second time it went through, then. How did you go about approaching the Chicago group to request their votes?

A: Oh, you talked to them occasionally, talked to the leaders, talked to the other boys, and they was expecting me to help them out sometimes, and naturally I would repay the favor. That was personal to me, because, by golly, it was my home town and my home district. It meant a hell of a lot to me.

Q: Who did you approach? Who was leading the Democrats from Chicago at that time?

A: Well, Senator Connors.

Q: Connors.

A: William J. "Botchy" Connors. And Wallace Thompson was the Republican leader, Senator Wallace Thompson.

Q: How did Thompson and Connors get along together? Did they . . .

A: Oh, they got along fairly well. You've got two different characteristics. You've got Wallace Thompson, who was independently wealthy, excellent lawyer, very intelligent in every regard, and you had Senator Connors who was from the so-called Gold Coast area, north of the Loop there, and an insurance broker, and had had several political jobs, and was not a college graduate and was fat and pudgy. He wore about a seven carat diamond. And Wallace Thompson, I think, sincerely felt that he was just a dumbbell, and so on. Now, Connors wasn't well-educated, but he had a lot of--in fighting his way up through ploitics, why--he had a lot of innate ability, you might say, to get legislative situations or problems figured out. Connors had a sort of a maybe questionable record but, when he became minority floor leader in the Senate in the Stevenson administration, I agreed with Wallace Thompson who said, "Well, Stevenson made an honest man out of him."