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Interview with Mr. Ben Stong and Mr. Vic Reinemer Regarding the career of Senator James E. Murray. Interviewer: Dale Johnson.
February 15, 1978

D.J. I think we'll stick pretty much to the questions— you can wander if you want—of what this graduate student wants to know regarding Senator Murray. He has gone through the complete Murray papers and formed some of his own opinions but he doesn't have any real feeling for the Senator's personality or some of the things that may have influenced him. So I think maybe I'll have each of you give your backgrounds, perhaps answering when you began work with Senator Murray, what jobs you may have done prior to that, the programs or legislation you were involved in and what the Senator considered his most important pieces of legislation. Do you want to start out, Vic?

V.R. Yes. I started with Senator Murray on March 1, 1955; that was just after the beginning of his last term. I was his executive secretary and I succeeded Dick Callahan, who went on to become the clerk of the Senate Interior Committee which Murray was then the chairman of. Before that I'd spent four years with the Charlotte News and was associate editor down there, and that takes me back to 1951. I'd been knocking around Europe, free-lancing, and then worked out in Montana some after graduating from the University (of Montana) in 1948. I first met the Senator when I was in college— I was editor of the student newspaper then and was taking a picture of him there in the old Florence
Hotel—a picture of him and some local politicians, and the only thing was the flashbulb went off about ten seconds before the shutter closed, so I never did get any picture in the paper next morning.

I suppose, to generalize, the things I was working with him on: first assignment I had had to do with Yellowtail Dam, which he was then trying to get the settlement with the Crow Indians. That became a fight that went on for several years, finally getting Yellowtail Dam built. I was hired, I think, because he and his staff thought that I might possibly be able to write in a manner that he approved of. I don't think any of his men ever quite came up to his standards or wrote the way he wanted it. Anyway, that's why I was hired—they wanted to have somebody to do some writing and to handle quite a bit of the mail, some of the case work. I did a lot of work regarding Indians and I remember, Ben, one time I guess it was in Room 113, I think, we were all in, Ben was at the desk up at the front of the room there and he'd be surrounded by a bunch of farmers—I remember when R. Lee Stacey came back there and asked Ben if he thought he'd be crazy if he tried to form a new organization—a new farm organization—and Ben assured him that yes, he would be crazy. But Lee went ahead and formed the National Farmers Organization nevertheless. Then the next desk was Bill Broadgate—he'd be surrounded by a bunch of miners and I'd have a group of Indians around me at the third desk and we had sort of a three-ring circus going on. With that, perhaps a little general background, why don't you take it from there, Ben?
B.S. Well, my background is newspaper business. Oh, I went through college at Drake and Des Moines before working at the Des Moines Register, wound up with the Scrips-Howard newspapers and in the forties I was a National Union Farmer for the National Farmers Union at Denver. Among other things at the National Farmers Union in the early forties, I was familiar out of my Scrips-Howard background with the Tennessee Valley Authority. The National Farmers Union took up the idea of a Missouri Valley Authority patterned after the TVA, which was one of the seven river valley authorities that President Roosevelt advocated; and so in the farmers Union days in the forties I met Senator Murray, Lee Metcalf, and a bunch of the Montanans in relation to the proposed MVA, which they all thought was a great idea and accepted. In that period, Murray became the principal author of a bill, in the Senate, to create a Missouri Valley Authority. As I recall, Lee METCALF INTRODUCED IT IN THE House after he got there, Originally he was on the State Supreme Court and am member of the so-called regional committee for an MVA. I came into Washington with the National Farmers Union to be post editor of the paper and legislative representative and had quite a little direct contact with Murray.

I recall one year we had Murray, Hubert Humphrey and Guy Gillette as principal authors of this MVA bill. I left the Farmers Union in '52 and spent about six months campaign- ing for Adlai Stevenson, with the farm committee, and then going to the Public Affairs Institute, run by an old friend
of Murray's-Dewey Anderson. At the Public Affairs Institute I did some research, ghost-writing, and work for Murray, who used the Public Affairs Institute. One of my favorite Murray stories is about the occasion when Charlie called me and wanted a speech for Murray on the general subject of recreation-outdoor recreation—he had some kind of a meeting. It so happened that we had been working on the outdoor recreation thing at the Public Affairs Institute. A fellow named Steve Roucheed (?) had discovered that in the postwar period the attendance at the national parks was going up to beat the dickens—that as a result of increased income, increased mobility of automobiles, and some other factors, that the parks were going to be overwhelmed. This had never been—nobody had ever really dealt with this tremendous growth and pressure on the parks. And I wrote the old Senator a rather learned paper about this explosion of attendance at outdoor recreation facilities and I got a call from the Senator about two hours after I dropped off this manuscript asking me what kind of a blankety-blank idiot I was? And I thought he was going to deliver a speech like that? I suggested there must be some misunderstanding and got over and Charles and I went in to see the Senator and Charles started the conversation saying he was probably guilty. IT APPEARS THE Senator was the Senator was to appear at an annual outdoor beer bust (laughter) and that was the "outdoor recreation." And he was completely right! That particular audience wouldn't have listened to him for three minutes on the particular text I had in mind. I thought it was an area dike (?) meeting, but, by God, he was correct. He did not use that text—we fixed him another one,
V.R. You know, Ben, I remember when I was still at the University of Montana, which I left in '48, I got through somebody a little packet of MVA materials which I had just been following and studying up on and as I recall, this publication, I think it was called *The Voice of the Valley* that showed you as the editor, and Lief Erickson, as I believe...

D.J. The chairman.

V.R. ...the chairman, and I'm wondering where the files of the old *Voice of the Valley* are? They certainly would be useful to Don Spritzer and the other Murray researchers.

B.S. They would be in the library of the National Farmers Union in Denver, and that's the only place I think there is a file of that of the *Voice in the Valley*.

V.R. What years did that cover mostly?

B.S. Vic, I'm not real sure. My recollection is that movement was an immediate postwar movement. I know at one period Harry Truman asked for a draft for a message to Congress... well, let's see, it was the floods of '44... the Missouri River floods of '44... and he asked for a draft for a message to Congress calling for the creation of the Missouri Valley Authority and there and I was hauled off of a plane at National Airport to spend the weekend working on that draft which was delivered to the White House by _______ Bath on a Tuesday and on a Thursday Truman had a big powwow with several of the Mississippi Valley Association and Missouri River Development Association and the Corps of Army Engineers and the following week he sent up a
message asking for a quarter of a billion dollars for the Corps of Army Engineers. Never did... never did make the Valley Authority. In connection with that, Murray made an appointment with Truman (this was shortly after Truman had taken office, which helps date this,) I went down with Murray and Truman came marching around the desk, as soon as we were in the room, grabbed Murray by the hand and said, "Geesus Murray-Jim-it's great to see you!" He said, "This is the lonliest job in the world and the most frustrating." He said, "I sent out and ordered that these God-damned guys-every succeeding level of bureaucrats changes two or three words til they've got it clear turned around and," he says, "it's just damned near impossible to get anything done." He says, "I know what you're here for, Jim, (which was the MVA-this had preceded the draft of the message,) and you oughta have it and I think maybe we can do something about it now." This was the tenor—we left believing that Truman was probably willing to go for the MVA and it was shortly thereafter that Bath ? called me, he was over at the Democratic National Committee, or actually got me off the plane. I remember I got to Denver and they asked me to come back and draft this message which was never delivered. The Army got the money instead.

V.R. I remember the senator telling me about a meeting with another president on another Montana project. He probably told you about this too, Ben. This was his meeting with
Roosevelt regarding the Buffalo Rapids project. Now, this isn't the Buffalo Rapids over on the Flathead—this is Buffalo Rapids on the Yellowstone over there near Terry. And this was probably about 1936 when the Senator would have been running for his first full term then, I suppose, and needed, he needed that project in Eastern Montana. You know, he was from Butte and he needed to have a little recognition for what he'd done for Eastern Montana lately. And the Senator told him—and the Senator told the story. Roosevelt said, "Well, Jim, you're going to have the project although it'll be over the dead body of the Director of the Budget." You know, even back in those days the Budget Bureau, now OMB, was creating all sorts of problems on the hydro projects and the water projects that they spent a lot of time on,

B.S. He gave me another story about Tort Peck Dam. Number one—well, he sat down once and reminisced with me about his relationship with Roosevelt and he said as a lawyer he had read a little document which was the forgotten man and that Roosevelt was then a rumored candidate, and he sent this to Roosevelt in August, this particular document, and he believed that that document had suggested the phrase "the forgotten man" of Roosevelt's insubsequent times. Anyway, when Roosevelt got in and appointed Frank Walker head of the National Emergency Council...

V.R. He was from Butte, wasn't he? Later Postmaster General?

B.S. Yeah... Roosevelt told Walker of this lawyer out at
Butte had sent him this thing. Roosevelt said, "You ought to get him for State Director on the Emergency Council." And so Murray, who always was extremely modest about his personal abilities in his conversations with me, said he found himself with this job of finding public works projects and things to get the economy moving and they started a study of Fort Peck Dam and when they completed the study of Fort Peck Dam the Corps of Engineers delivered it to him. Why, the costs exceeded the benefits, and the Army said it was not feasible. And he said, "Hell, this has been in all the papers and the big subject in the State, and this 'infeasible report really threw cold water on the New Deal and Montana. So he rushed in to see Roosevelt, told him the problem, and he said it didn't appear to make him too unhappy. He (Roosevelt) said, "Jim, I'll have to think about this a day or two. Can you hang around? Where are you going to be?"

Well, he'd (Murray) be over at the Washington Hotel. "Well, let me think about it and see what we can do." And so, he said the next afternoon he got a call from Roosevelt to come over to the White House and he went over and he (Roosevelt) said, "Well, Jim, I've got this worked out. I've told the WPA to do enough of that job with WPA funds to make the rest of it feasible!" (Laughter) B.S. Yeah, the secret of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Tennessee Valley Authorities' success was to use the power they developed from dams to produce fertilizer which was used to teach the farmers of the area how to conserve their soil, how to increase productivity of their soil—it was coupled with the industrialization movement. The electricity was used as a
treasure other economic developments in the basin. What you got out of the Pick Sloan plan was some dams and some electricity and some irrigation water. You didn't have the accompanying efforts to use this as a key to economic development. I still think that some of what the TVA did in the Tennessee Valley in agriculture could be repeated up in the Upper Missouri Basin. Grazing lands up there, the bulk of that land is under productive, and the ![Image](image.png) of the University of North Dakota and some of the others has developed the fact that with just a moderate amount of fertilization and care we could greatly increase the forage produced on these grazing lands out there. This is what H. A. Morgan knew down in the Tennessee Valley—it was with phosphate fertilizer you could increase the forage and increase fertility of the land out there and start a boom in the agricultural area and they not only used the power, of course, from Shoals, but that developed triple phosphate. Up to that time phosphate fertilizer could never be concentrated beyond sixteen percent. By electric furnace process they concentrated it up to forty-eight percent. This made a whale of a reduction in the freight rates moving it around and made phosphate much more economical. Then they developed a series of demonstration farms they went out in every valley in the county and found two or three farmers who would agree to be demonstration farmers and the TVA would supply the phosphate and they would demonstrate to all the farmers in the county what could be done. And I still think, I don't know, I still think that if we'd had a parallel program on the development of the grazing lands out in the Missouri Basin you could have done some significant things on the production of
forage... possibly the production of crops. I think one of these
days it will come because the agricultural scientists, they now
know that you can do wonders with a little fertilizer on some of
that grazing land. They haven't done anything in the line of a
demonstration project... the farmer has to accidentally stumble onto
a bulletin and learns there are those possibilities. But MVA...
the Pick-Sloan Plan gave us some engineering projects-period.
V.R. One of them, of course, was Yellowtail Dam and I
remember all during that period-the Eisenhower years-how we
were fussing with the Budget Bureau and Interior over the
criteria for the justifying western water projects—that old cost-?
ratio that Roosevelt got around in the case of Fort Peck. And I
remember shortly after Yellowtail Dam was built and the reservoir
filled up there, one of the first big realizations of money to
the Federal government was from options on water leases and water
leasing... in other words, industrial sale of water out of
Yellowtail Dam. And you know there was nothing about that in the
justification for the Yellowtail Dam. Somebody should have
figured, or maybe somebody did, and it was shot down by the
Budget Bureau, but that would have been another justification
for that Dam, On the other hand, here was the Tiger Dam up at
the Marias River... it was built primarily for irrigation. Had
a few dry years up there, which is not uncommon, but then it rained
a little bit and the farmers decided they weren't interested in
an irrigation district, but a big flood came along and that dam
probably paid for itself that one night and then they went into
sales of water for municipal use and that.
B.S. What I did for Murray over at the Institute was a study of the economic return on the Salt River Project in Arizona which was one of those white elephants, you know, that couldn't pay for itself. We took the proportion of federal income tax paid out of all of the counties of that area in the two or three years before the project was built and then we took the proportion of total federal income taxes paid out of that area in succeeding years and it showed that the Salt River Project at that point, this was back in the late forties, had paid for itself forty-two times over in income tax returns alone to the Federal government—and this was in crease in proportion.

V.R. The Salt River, pretty much—it reminds me of our old friend Eaton and . You know, one of the things about the Murray staff was that by the time he was chairman of the Interior Committee (he had been chairman of the Labor and Public Welfare before that,) he had some pretty good people placed different places on different committees and all that. Not long after I'd gone to work for him I went over to the Senate Interior Committee and there was this quiet, scholarly fellow reading some technical literature and all that and I introduced myself and he said he was Eaton and was sort of sitting in by arrangement between Senator Hayden and Senator Murray, and he was making a study of how to reduce evaporation in big western reservoirs by spreading this thin film called Hexadeconal.

B.S. It was heavy alcohol.
V.R. Right, right. (Laughter) And so we got interested in Hexadeconal. I think I put out a Montana-Washington _____ about it. My dad was then chairman of the Petroleum County Soil Conservation District and one of the Thomases lives up in the northern part of McCona County decided that he was going to try some Hexadeconal on his little stock pond. Dad and I went up to look at it and the wind came up—just sort of a typical eastern Montana breeze—you know, probably only fifteen or twenty miles an hour, when whoosh! all that thin film came over to the east bank. We'll have to check with Gene sometime. I don't know if they made any progress with Hexadeconal or if they had any alternative.

B.S. There are some uses for Hexadeconal to reduce evaporation and, as I understand it, they've never solved the problem of it blowing off the top of the reservoirs.

SIDE TWO

B.S. My role in the Murray office was principally farmers and natural resources and I handled a great deal of the work Murray had in relation to Interior and his term of chairmanship of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, which included the Wilderness Bill, and in my judgement, had it not been for Murray__________ the Wilderness Bill created a hearing record that could be used to sell the idea, this could very easily have died early in the game. It was just a bill in which no one could be interested. But Murray was interested in it. Murray said to me, "I'm probably too old to ever get up in any of those mountains myself, and it would be a great satisfaction
to know that some of those primitive areas are still up there." And Murray himself, sat by himself, presided—no other senator was present—through a great deal of the first set of hearings to build a record. On one or two occasions he had other obligations and left me presiding—a staff man presiding at a senate hearing—caused me a little problem with Clint Anderson who objected to staff people chairing hearings. But we did get a record. We did keep the wilderness thing alive the early years of the proposal.

V.R. On Murray's work in health, his key staff man was Bill Reely, over in Labor and Public Welfare Committee. His—is Bill still around?

B.S. No. Bill died.

V.R. He did? Now Stuart Miller is still around. He was over on that committee at the same time, I don't know the story about getting in touch with him. We can sure set that up if you want. He's across the way here,.

B.S. Murray was a man who'd take on—and Bill really points this out—was a guy who'd take on a wide range and a bunch of things. At one point there was great need for poultry expansion. The poultry processing industry was about as bad in the forties as the jungle at—what was Sinclair described the turn of the century relative to the meat inspection act. The Committee on Agriculture would have nothing to do with it and so Bill Reedy?) and I got up a bill which provided for poultry inspection in the Food and Drug Administration over in the Department of Health and with a little footwork that bill was referred to Murray's division in the Labor and Public Welfare Committee.
and Murray's subcommittee. By gosh, we held hearings with Labor and Public Welfare Committee on how terrible, how filthy, the poultry industry was. Among other things we had about one hundred and fifty pictures of filth in poultry plants.

V.R. Boy, I remember those! And I remember that you and Bill Relly wouldn't eat chicken for months. I don't know if you do yet any more.

B.S. Yeah. You know, pile of chickens over in the corner with rats nibbling at 'em which was going to go into the market tomorrow. And we knew very well we weren't going to get by with poultry inspection in the Food and Drug Administration, but we reported out a bill to put poultry inspection in the Department of Agriculture and meat inspections branch. We printed the hearings which had some pretty lurid descriptions of conditions and we had this big pile of pictures. We reported that the bill should be referred sequentially to the Agriculture Committee for thirty days and then reported to the floor and I took this armload of pictures over to the staff man for one of the senators on the Agriculture Committee and who had a big poultry plant constituent and said, "Now look, we've only printed volume one of the hearing record and if that bill isn't out in thirty days we're going to print volume two which is the pictures! (Chuckles) The bill came out, I don't know what the blackmail did to _______. Murray lent himself to all kinds of operations which he thought were needed and useful.

D.J. He had several questions regarding the last campaign, the '54 campaign. He (Spritzer) mentions that opponents
said that Charles Murray was senator in all but name. He wants to know if this was true at all.

B.S. I would say its true in the same degree that you can charge a lot of administrative assistants in being the actual senator or not. The workload here is pretty terrific and every senator has his administrative assistant, office manager, or somebody who maintains the contacts with the resources people and staff people and carrying ideas—and Charles was good at this. Charles came up with a lot of ideas and he had a lot of contacts with people like Dewey Anderson, Bill Reedy, Vic Reinemer and Burt Rosch—he had 'em all over the lot. And Charles was an understanding guy who handled those things very much for the Senator. There are people like that—administrative assistants—for senators now.

D.J. Was the senate work load as heavy then as it is now comparably?

V.R. Yeah. One thing about Charles—he enjoyed the exercise of power. He gave the people who worked in the operation a lot of leeway I thought. Ben, I thought that you and I and the others had a lot of leeway. If we wanted, in my case, to do some things on the Indian matters, in your case on wilderness, more power to you. Just go ahead, and develop the kind of a case that you can, run it up the flagpole and see if anybody

D.J. Did he seriously consider running in 1960? Or was there a...

B.S. I don't think he did,

V.R. Who's this? Charles?

D.J. Oh no, James,
B.S. I've always had the feeling that the decision to retire was made considerably earlier, I think Charles wanted to see John Bonner a candidate—a highly successful candidate—and the old Senator was kept in the race late in order to discourage other candidates. My guess is that Bonner would have filed____________________ in hopes that Murray's failure to get out would discourage other candidates. Lee had said he would not run against Murray but when it became obvious there was going to be a place then Lee got in. Of course Lee Metcalf got in the race and immediately after that Anderson____________________ said he wasn't going to stand by and let it go to the boy.

V.R. I remember I had to hastily revise a speech I was making out in Montana right in that time when LeRoy got into the race. We had what we called this Good Government Groups-weekly meetings of the staff—Murray, Mansfield, Metcalf and Anderson—it was good, these weekly meetings—we'd coordinate a lot of things. I remember one day I was at the weekly meeting and then I flew out to Montana and I was all set in this talk I was making to make reference to the close cooperation and coordination of the Montana group and fortunately about half an hour before I was to talk some guy said, "Say, I just heard that LeRoy announced." "Well," I just said, "Well, it was a shame things couldn't get together—that it wasn't coordinated at our Good Government meeting yesterday. (Laughter)

B.S. Oh, no. The Senator had six years before faced the age issue and he would do a little jig on the stage occasionally and I never felt that he was
D.J. Was his health good in '60?
B.S. Yes, yes it was. It wasn't too bad.
D.J. I know he died shortly thereafter. I just wondered...
B.S. He was not as vigorous as he once was but actually in the earlier days he was an exceptionally vigorous guy. And incidentally_________________. Hell, he was years ahead of Rachael Carson on pesticides and insecticides and he used to tell me that Grace before meals should always go, "thank you, Lord, for my daily portion of poisons." (Laughter)
V.R. Yeah. He was a fussy eater and I remember once, oh, this was probably about in his last or next to the last—he'd been living down at the Troy and had been there for years and he got disgusted with it and the reason is that they weren't fixing the oatmeal right. And for that reason, he said, "I'm getting out of this place and I'm going to move someplace up close to the Capitol." He decided on the Carrol Arms, right across the street from the Capitol, I remember dropping him off there when he was looking forward to having a nice place with good oatmeal (laughter) and it wasn't but about a week he was completely disgusted with the place. Wasn't that the oatmeal wasn't any good, but all the damned noise in the place!
B.S. And so he went back. He was a little fussy about his food____________ the maitre d' at one of the fanciest restaurants in town why he couldn't get a decent steak and this maitre d' said, "No, we've got the finest steaks in town and come over and get ahold of me and I'll see that you get a good steak," So his mouth started watering and he went
over within the next day or two to get the steak and took a table on the first floor. He ordered a steak and, he said, "What do you think I got? A piece of burnt shoe leather!" And he said he fan into this maitre d' on the street a week or two later and told him the steak wasn't worth a dang—it was shoe leather. And the maitre d' said, "Oh, there's some mistake."
He said, "Come back, give me one more try. I'm going to see that you get a good steak. So, he went back. The maitre d' put him on the elevator to the third floor which was for special guests, and proved that they did serve shoe leather on the first floor. But he got up on the third floor and he said he had three waiters and all the attention you could have and they finally brought the steak and, what do you think it was? Another piece of shoe leather! (Laughter)
V.R. You know, his opinion on other senators and presidents is something I know that Don and the rest are interested in. I recall his opinion on some of these people. Of course, Truman. Ben has mentioned going down to visit with him. I think they were always quite close. They came to the Senate about the same time and I think there was real rapport there. On the other hand, Taft, I think was ranking minority on Labor and Public Welfare when Senator Murray was chairman and they had some rather fundamental differences and he was always complaining yet after he left the committee about the way Taft was, of course, trying to get the wrong things passed but messing up the work of the Committee, He did not have too good a relationship with Taft,
B.S. Yeah. Let me jump to this Full Employment Act because I know something about it, which was an idea which originated with Russell Smith and Farmers Union staff and I was there and it was first propounded by Jim Patton. They went over and sold the idea to Murray, They had along Reuther of the Auto Workers and Murray Lincoln of the Ohio Farm Bureau Co-ops and Cooperative League, and they sold the idea to Murray who then went on a speaking campaign across the country for the Murray Full Employment Act, And he (Spritzer) asked here if Murray was disappointed in the bill and the answer is yes. They were disappointed in that they didn't get full employment. It was watered down by Bob Taft quite considerably but they did feel that it was landmark legislation and I think time has proved that. It created the Council of Economic Advisors and has focused on employment welfare in our economy and I would say he was as proud of that bill as any bill that he sponsored and it was Taft, of course, who fouled it up on the big stuff and it was Taft that was the fly in the ointment.

V.R. And another bill of somebody else's—the act had somebody else's name on it he certainly had something to do with it at the beginning—was, of course, the Hill-Burton Act because quite a bit of that, I believe, was in the original Murray-Wagner-Dingle Bill and that was the first really comprehensive health bill, and it was a little much to get through when it was first introduced, but, as happens so often, a little bit later some parts of the big bill go through and may be known in somebody else's name.
D.J., Well, he (Spritzer) asks about Murray and Wheeler. I've heard it repeated, anyway, that Wheeler and Murray did not get along at all.

B.S. Wheeler complained to me once about the amendment that Murray put on every Indian bill which says that not more than one percent of the funds authorized in this bill may be paid to attorneys for the Indians. Wheeler said, "The Old so-and-so has cost me a half a million dollars."

V.R. Well, but I think that BK was well compensated anyhow—that was the Yellowtail....

B.S. Yeah____

V.R. ...payment—I think it was--

B.S. Well, he hung that amendment on several Indian bills,

V.R. Right, but I think in the Yellowtail case it was a five percent retainer that the attorneys were to get and the Senator and Charlie saw to it that that part was stricken from the bill. But BK and his local bigot associate back in Montana arranged to get paid a good fee out of another pocket of the Crows, so they did all right.

B.S. Well, they had their vengeance, I shall always remember Murray's eightieth birthday party, B.K. was one of the prominent participants—outwardly they got along. There was Baily Stortz and Charlie Murray too, Baily Stortz, who I did not know, but I heard quite a bit about it, was B.K.'s administrative assistant, and I think...

V.R. I think he and Charlie were as capable___________.

You know this—it's really not too unusual for senators from
the same state and from the same party to have differences and strained relations. This isn't typical only of Montana—you'll find it in a number of other places—and, also in the Republican party. It's surprising at first glance anyhow, but when you stop to think about it, each one of them has sort of a different constituency and they have different interest groups with them and relationships, very often I've found.

B.S. There's a second factor in that, Vic, that depresses me, and it is natural that two individuals would see differently on occasional issues and vote differently. And, almost invariably, when they do the newspapers pounce on that and they make a difference—they create and publicize every potential difference and this helps to fan up differences that otherwise wouldn't amount to much.

D.J. What about Murray and Zales Ecton? Did they have any relationship at all or any reason to? I've heard it said that Zales Ecton did absolutely nothing while he was in the Senate. B.S. I don't know a thing about that. I do know something about d'Ewart's relationship.

V.R. Yeah, I think the only special thing about that relationship with Ecton (inaudible). Of course, Murray had opposed d'Ewart there in the race and the bad feeling continued afterward—but it was modified. As I recall then, the Senator objected to d'Ewart's appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Interior subject to confirmation by the Senate Interior Committee. But d'Ewart did take a job then, I believe, as Congressional Liaison in Agriculture. Of course this was not subject to confirmation and Murray could not have had... he could have stopped
the thing, as it was possible for him to do over on the floor of the Senate Interior Committee. I don't recall that he was really hostile toward d'Ewart but he...some of the campaign things lingered on in Murray's mind.

B.S. D'Ewart got out a horrible tract, "Red Network over Washington", something about Murray was using communists on his staff and was associated with communists...and when the d'Ewart nomination was sent to the Interior Committee for confirmation hearings Murray raised a personal objection to d'Ewart and stepped aside as chairman of the committee and Clint Anderson, the next ranking member presided for the purposes of the d'Ewart nomination and Allen Bible of Nevada asked for a little time on it. Allen subsequently explained to Clint Anderson that back in the campaign, on his campaign, much earlier before he realized it was going to be any issue, that he had made a commitment to confirm d'Ewart as Assistant Secretary of the Interior and he felt he had to keep his word. Democrats only had one majority and with the Republicans and Bible, d'Ewart would have been confirmed. And so no committee meetings were subsequently scheduled on the d'Ewart nomination and along toward the end of that session there was a lot of heat on Anderson to call committee meetings. I can recall on three occasions going over to the floor and getting Bill Lyons to object to committee meetings were in session in the Senate and Clint would set a committee meeting for three o'clock in the afternoon and then Lyon would make an objection that he couldn't make it. Finally Knowland, Republican Majority Leader, tackled Lyndon Johnson and said, "We've never treated you like this-
refused to act on a nomination." And Bobby Baker got ahold of me and said, "For God's sake, get us up a list from the clerk of the times when we've held off for the Republicans—by the Democrats!" And I asked the parliamentarian, or somebody, who gave me a list of ten or fifteen. I took it over to Lyndon and Lyndon... Knowland was standing there... and Lyndon just held it over to Knowland. Knowland looked at it and said, "Ah, forget about it." (Laughter)

SIDE THREE

D.J., Well, I only have maybe one more question that really puzzles this fellow (Spritzer). He runs into the statements—he gets most of these out of the newspaper and such—that Murray was a millionaire and, of course, the family says "no" and there is evidence that he had money but not really that much money,

B.S. I don't know how much money Murray had. He once complained to me that he'd given all of his money to the boys and was strapped (this was for census—didn't have any taxes then) My understanding was that he had, over the years, given each of his sons a pretty liberal annual stipend and that he had given Charles $10,000 bucks a year extra for staying with him and helping him as administrative assistant, but that he'd gone about it rather systematically transferring whatever money he had to his sons over quite a period of years... and I don't know who could prove this but Judge Dub Murray at Butte___________.

V.R. I'd just like to add one thought about that scandal
sheet that you mentioned, Ben, that we put out in that last campaign, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress." Let me second the Senator's cause and damn well should of... It was a very mean sheet and almost identical to what was used against Senator Thomas of Utah, successfully. It knocked him off. (And) against Senator Pepper of Florida, whom they defeated also. Senator Murray was the only senator who survived that particular Red smear tactic. I remember Senator Murray telling me about a distinguished Montana attorney (who later became a federal judge) coming to him shortly after that last election and asking Murray for his support in the appointment for the federal bench and Murray was really appalled. He said, "Do you mean to tell me that after what you did to me with that smear sheet you have the gall to ask for my support for the federal judiciary?" And the attorney responded, "But Senator, all I did was raise the money." And Senator Murray said, "That takes golden guts."

B.S. You know, it was interesting that in the Interior Committee when this subject was up—who was it? Senator Bartlett of Wyoming and two or three of the Republican senators said, "Hell, we told you not to do that!" That is, it was over $80,000 bucks involved and circulation It was an expensive magazine putting it out wholesale and there were two or three of them thought it was necessary to say in Murray's presence, "Hell, we told them that would backfire."

He (Murray) survived it but only by about three thousand votes and he speculated to me, he said that all of his friends told him to ignore it and that he never did say anything about it—he didn't even deny it,
and he said to me, "I've had a dozen people say to me, 'Jim, I voted against you but you never denied it. When you didn't deny it what were we to think?'"

V.R. Well, it probably would be interesting to talk to Bob Yellowtail about Senator Murray. Bob is probably up in his eighties, but he was admired by the Senator. They differed on a lot of things but the Senator and Charlie, both admired Bob Yellowtail as an operator, as an Indian politician and a very good one. I remember Murry's telling me about an episode back when Ickes was Secretary of Interior. At that point Yellowtail was the Superintendent of the Crow Agency and in some plight he submitted his resignation and they figured this was just a tactic and they told Ickes—the Murrys told Ickes—to be sure and accept it because sure enough the next day Yellowtail wanted to change his mind and Ickes, as a favor to the Murrys said, "No, we won't do that." Another time, in a move to get support from Yellowtail, he was so influential, they decided to name Big Horn Dam "Yellowtail Dam" which, of course, was done. But Bob Yellowtail opposed the dam even though it was Yellowtail Dam. And this matter of admiring a political operator even though he's of another party I think also applies in the case of Wellington D. Rankin. You know, Rankin was a remarkable political operator. I remember late in his career when he was, well, I don't know but what his age was, but this was at a testimony by the Corps of Engineers on Paradise Dam. They were having a hearing out in Missoula in the big auditorium in the old Student Union there and that hearing started at nine o'clock in the morning and it was still going on at 2 a.m. Well, now, the stories got a little bit bigger, you
know, as the day and the night wore on, During the morning hearing, why about one-tenth of the Flathead Indian Reservation was being flooded, and by afternoon it was about half-flooded. And I'd gone out for a break and I came in about 2 o'clock in the morning and here was Wellington D. Rankin who had that juggling jaw, that sort of muzzle eating profile and he had that audience spellbound. He was telling them about the waters of Paradise Dam rising higher and higher and here was that old white buffalo that everybody prized there at Moeise... here he was on the highest peak (laughter) and the water was coming up to his tail! (Laughter) He really could handle an audience and tell quite a story,

D.J. D.J. Well, I guess that probably about covers most things anyway that were mentioned in this...

B.S. Well, I'm sure Vic and I, given an opportunity, could sit and write a list about him for a couple of days.

V.R. Yeah, he used to tell a lot about the work on the small business committee... back in the early 40's. He was proud of the fact that he was the author of the Federal Reports Act and it was important legislation back there in 1942. And the way that came about was the OPA was sending all sorts of questions around to small businessmen and other agencies were too... the same small businessmen who were trying to make messkits or whatever had to spend half their time answering duplicate questionnaires or triplicate from different agencies. So Brian Sommerville who was, I think, a three star general in charge of supply came to him and said, "This is messing up production!"
And Murray had this hearing to hear the military side of it and
and got a lot of small businessmen around and got through this legis-
lation which set up this clearance process over in the Budget
Bureau so that any agency that wants to send out a questionnaire
to ten or more firms or people have to coordinate it with the
Budget Bureau to see that somebody else isn't already doing it
and to check on the burden, especially, the statute says, the
burden on small business. Of course, the irony of all this is as
Senator Metcalf and I found out subsequently, is that within
three months after that act became law Big Business, not small
business, but Big Business set up an advisory council and
screened a lot of these agency requests for information and saw
that the agencies such as the Federal Power Commission and the
other regulatory commissions didn't ask the questions that Big
Business didn't want to answer,

D.J.: I think that Senator Murray and his staff got along
well with the Mansfield shop and,...
B.S. Yeah, Vic referred to the so-called Good Govern-
ment meetings. Murray was always close with Metcalf, Mansfield
and Anderson...
V.R. Right. Right. We had a good working relationship.,
B.S. Our luncheon meetings pretty regularly and personal
relationships among the group were the best, I don't remember
any friction at all myself. They voted differently occasionally
and occasionally the newspapers would climb on 'em and they shrugged
it off. Naturally we never see exactly alike on things, but
except for that...they never fell into the trap of criticizing
each other...like they might have on a vote....(several sentences
inaudible,)
V.R.    He was a modest person,
B.S.     A very modest person. He had one year of which he was very proud and I can't remember when it was... it was in the late 30's... he had a hearing of some of the big bankers and industrialists and he had a set of figures that showed that their profits in '33, '34, '35, '36, and '37 had increased almost exactly in the same amount as the Federal government had pumped into the economy to try to speed it up. (Laughter) And he was accusing them of skimming off all of the money the government was putting in to try to stimulate the economy. He was really prepared for it. He did a whale of a good job---he kept a copy of that particular hearing. He pulled it on me one day and indicated that he got more satisfaction out of that hearing than most any other.