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Oral History Number: 087-001, 002
Interviewee: Tom Haines
Interviewer: Donald Spritzer
Date of Interview: February 24, 1982

Donald Spritzer: When did you first become involved in politics in Montana?

Tom Haines: In about 1932.

DS: Was that in Missoula?

T. H. Missoula.

DS: In what capacity?

TH: Precinct committee man, in precinct 12, Missoula County. I become involved, it was the primary election in 1932 and they didn't have a candidate for precinct committee man out in precinct 12. Grace Catlin called me up. She was a power in Republican politics at that time. She said, "Tom get some of your friends to write your name in." I had them write my name in and that's how I was elected to precinct committee man, 1932.

DS: You served in that capacity for about how long?

TH: Well, I served in that capacity until I was elected county chairman in 1945. I was in charge of the 1946 campaign for county treasurer in Missoula County.

DS: In Missoula County?

TH: Yes, prior to that time I delegated to state conventions at the election. The Central Committee would have an election and you would elected to be a delegator to the state convention, things like that. I was always precinct committee man. I would work at it. I'd go out and call on people and that is something that very few precinct people would do. I would go out and I would see the people who worked in the precinct. Precinct 12 was probably about 90 to 1 Democrat.

DS: What section of Missoula was that?

TH: That was south Daly addition. As far as I know there were two Republicans that ever carried that precinct and that's Governor Sam Ford and myself in an election. Sam Ford is governor. I don't know why Sam carried it, but he did.

DS: That was probably when, 1940 or 1941? You ran for the legislature first—

TH: 1950 was the first time.

DS: Was that the first general state office that you held?

TH: That's so. Only public office that I ever ran for. Well, I'll take that back. Back in Illinois, I was elected to school board back there. The perfect (unintelligible) to Montana. In 1950, before that, I had been appointed to Montana Trade Commission, by Governor Sam Ford. When I filed for legislature elective and elected to that, I had to resign from the trade commission because it was a (unintelligible) office. Of course that was just by appointment and this was an elected office, a civil office. That was in 1950.

DS: What did this trade commission involve?

TH It was primarily concerned with enforcing the old Unfair Practices Act. The Unfair Practices Act is still on the statues in Montana, but the old Montana Trade Commission was abolished in the reorganization of state government. It ceased to exist several years ago.

DS: You were there approximately from the late '40s.

TH: That's right. It was just a position where you would have meeting—I think six times a year. It wasn't a full time job. It was one of these citizen boards you might call it.

DS: You served on the legislature from 1950 to 1974. And ran every two years?

TH: I got elected 12 times.

DS: You mentioned Sam Ford. Did you know him very well?

TH Yes, very well. I always considered him one of Montana's great governors. When he left office, he had left a surplus of 10 million dollars. Today that isn't much money, but at that time was quite a bit of money. Now of course the Democrats took over the legislature and we preceded to spend it. When I went in John Bonner was governor and depleted that surplus and run the state into a hole.

DS: John Bonner was a democratic governor in 48. Did you know him very well?

TH Very well. In fact, he was the council for the Montana Association which I represent. Prior to being governor he was the council for one of the Montana state Food Distributors Associates. That is how I knew John before he was governor, when he was council for them. At one time I was the director of that organization and that is how I got to know John.

DS: Was he a very good governor?

TH: I always thought that he was a very good governor.

DS: Did you know Burton K. Wheeler very well at all?

TH: Well, not really, but I knew him well enough to speak to him and pass the time of day.

DS: Do you think that he controlled the Republican Party to any extent?

TH: No.

DS: A lot of people say he did.

TH: I know they say that, but he didn't. He didn't control it. Later in life, he became very friendly with the Republican Party, well not friendly with them, but he supported their candidates in a backhanded way. Their candidates, I think, thought that in his way of thinking. As I think back, back to the old days when he fought the Anaconda Company. I always said this that these young bucks come along and they fought the Anaconda Company. They were great enemies for them, but sooner or later the Anaconda Company went around them and brought them into camp. And that is what happened to B. K. Wheeler. He became, eventually, a stooge of the Anaconda Company.

DS: He knew Governor Ford pretty well, didn't he?

TH: Oh yes, they were very friendly.

DS Wellington Rankin is from Missoula. Were you acquainted with him?

TH: Oh yes.

DS: I heard that he was quite a trial lawyer.

TH: Probably one of the best the state ever had. There was an old story about Wellington, that anybody who had the charge of rape he could get him off for 5,000 dollars. Don't know if it was true or not. I have heard lawyers say he always went to court better prepared than any other lawyer. That's the reason he won his cases.

DS: Wasn't he attorney general for a time?

TH: Yes, he was attorney general for a short time.

DS: Did you do any campaigning with him at all?

TH: No, He ran for something when I was a candidate for the legislature. I recall we all stood on a truck out in front of the old Florence Hotel and he made a speech out there. He was pitching. Whether he was running or pitching I can't remember. He made this speech on the spur of the moment—and a good one. It was about the time Dewey ran, along in there. Was he a candidate for anything about when Dewey ran in '48.

DS: He might have been. I know in 1948, he ran in the primary for the Senate, for Murray's senate seat against Tom Davis. So it might be then.

TH: Then, that is probably when it was. Of course, I knew Tom Davis very well. He was counseling lobbyists for the old Safeway Company, that lobby around the legislature. When he ran for the Senate, that's in '48. It was after that. It seems as if there was an ellipse when he ran or something.

DS: He might of later on, but I know that Murray defeated him in 48.

TH: He didn't live to long after this happened. He came down with, I believe cancer. Last time I saw him I stopped in Butte to see him and he was sick by then.

DS: Where was he from?

TH: I don't know. His office was always in Butte. I'll tell you a person who could tell you more about Tom Davis than anyone would be Winfield Page. They were very close. Winfield Page could really tell you about Tom Davis, his political aspirations, everything.

DS: You wouldn't have any idea why he got beat so badly in 48?

TH: I have often wondered that myself. He was very popular and well liked and he was a gentleman and a very able man. Why he did get beat so bad I never did understand.

DS: It might have been the national trend.

TH: It might have been. Yes.

DS: The Democrats were pretty unified by that time and they didn't have Wheeler around anymore. Were you in Missoula when Tom Dewey came to town?

TH: Oh yes, I was county chairman. I went on the train to Spokane. Mrs. Gladys Knowles was a (unintelligible) woman here. She arranged to have Dewey stop here. There was Mrs. Knowles, and Mrs. Garlington, and myself. Chink Croskoff, an employee of Montana Power Company, drove us to Spokane and then we rode the Dewey train back. When we got to Spokane it was a warm fall day. We went down to the depot. And he was going through on a big train. Dewey was out there and he had a great big enormous coat, bundled up on such a warm day. We all wondered why Dewey was bundled up so. Blackwood, his executive said, "We don't want him to catch cold like Wilkie did four years before and loose his voice."

We all got on the train and started for Missoula. Mrs. Knowles and the national committee woman from Idaho were on the train with her...I can't remember her name. They went flying back to the Dewey car to greet Governor Dewey. They got back there and they wouldn't let

them in. Here are two National Committee women and they wouldn't let them in to see Dewey. They came back up to our car and there were two mad women. They were furious! So we rolled along. Finally we got out here to Arlee and the train broke down. We sat there for about an hour I guess. Then Dewey consented to come up, he and his wife. He shook hands with everybody and shook hands with Mrs. Knowles and the lady from Idaho. That is the first time that they had seen him since he got on that train, and here they are national committee women.

The train crew bragged later about breaking the train down on purpose so it could be delayed getting into Missoula, which is what happened. I was county chairman and we were having a reception down at the Florence Hotel before we could come out to the field house, no Dornblaser. He brought these New York police with him everywhere he went. He had a big gang of them around in front of him, all around him. They went down to the hotel there. They just has a flying wedge in front of him. They pushed the public to one side and almost pushed my wife over the balcony of the upstairs of the Florence Hotel. Everyone was mad the way they were doing things. So he got out there and made his speech and laid an egg. Then they got back on the train. I can't remember whether the train stayed here that night or went on.

Anyways, two or three days before this man, the head of the secret service...He wasn't the head, but he had been, under Roosevelt. He had been hired by the Dewey crowd to be their advance man. What was his name? I want to say an Irish name, it might have been O'Leary. Page would know. He came in and got off the plane here. They had lost his luggage so we took him to the hotel. We had a room there for him. As soon as he got here, we had things all laid out on how we were going to do things. He proceeds to change everything. We had the committee and this fellow changed everything all around because he knows he's a secret service man. We went along with what he did. He started drinking. He was drinking pretty heavily.

When we got back to Spokane with Dewey's crowd, he was gloriously drunk. Molly Glassby (?), secretary in the office, says he has been drinking all day. So Lockwood, who was Dewey's executive secretary, he fired this fellow right then and there. Well the next day he was still here, still drinking. So Harris Hogan, a lawyer here in town, and I went up to his room there and start quizzing him about this woman that Franklin Roosevelt had down in Hot Springs or Warm Springs when he died down there, his girlfriend. This fellow was there with him when he died because he was secret service. But he wouldn't give, didn't matter how drunk he got, he won't say a word. We never did get this information. Finally all of a sudden he disappeared, left town. Well a few days later the hotel presents me with a several hundred dollar bill for him. Heck if I'm going to pay it. So I phoned Gladys Knowles up and told her, Gladys was furious. She got a hold of the Dewey crowd and they got a check out here right now to take care of that. That was quite an adventure that time that Dewey came to Missoula.

DS: His speech didn't go over big at all? Was the reception bad or was it just a bad speech?

TH: Well it was a big crowd, but he just...I will tell you the trouble with Dewey is that he was so

sure of being president that he was like the king going around the county side letting people look at him. He was afraid of saying anything that might antagonize anyone. Just letting people look at the next future ruler of the United States. That is what it amounted to. I could never stand the guy. I was a delegate at the national committee in Washington D.C. The national convention in Philadelphia nominated him. I had been the Taft man. I didn't have any use for him. They ran roughshod over the eastern part of the party. They ran right over Taft and ran over Harold Stasson. I think we had seven names placed in nomination there. I stayed at the Adelphia Hotel, Berlie Bower (?) and I roomed together. Right down the hall from us was General MacArthur's headquarters. General Wainwright was the head man then. Well it was just four or five doors down and we would go down and drink their whiskey and then we would vote for Taft. Although Berlie Bower didn't, he told us he was a Stasson man. The guy didn't have a (unintelligible) and didn't have a prayer. Stasson, he didn't have as much of a chance as Taft did. But Dewey's crowd just ran over everything. I have never seen a woman quite as mad as Gladys Knowles was with how Dewey's crowd handled this thing. Of course we were all still pretty sure that Dewey would win the election. Gladys Knowles had arranged to have a victory party down at the hotel, in old Mayflower Room there. Gosh, she had tables just as long as this room, just loaded with all kinds of goodies, hors d'oeuvres of all kinds, all kinds of whiskey and booze that you could think of and a bartender. Everybody could come. Well Ted came down about six o'clock in the evening. So Molly Glassby (?), Ted, and I went into the hotel dining room to have dinner. Ted, my wife, and I had dinner. So, we get a few scattered returns and they show that Truman was doing pretty good. Ted said, "Tom, you're feeling pretty cocky about this. Watch out, he might win."

Then she said, "Well, it begins to sound as if you may be in trouble." Molly and I sat there and laughed and I didn't say nothing. It started about eight o'clock, it started to snowball and getting better and better and better. We got there to that cocktail party and the guys were sitting there with tears just running down their cheeks. She was so depressed and so was everybody else too. They could drink that whiskey and not even feel it! We all did. I don't know what time I went to bed that night, I suppose two o'clock maybe three in the morning. So, the next morning about nine o'clock, we got down town and Molly and I in about an hour's time. We had that headquarters all closed up, torn down, locked up, all the furniture moved out, every damn thing. (laughs) We didn't want anybody to even know that it even existed. That was quite a campaign. The '46 campaign, that is the one we won, that is the one we elected (unintelligible). We had 17 candidates in this county and we elected 11 of them. Republican—that is the best the party had ever done before or since.

DS: The party did well all over that year.

TH: Yes it did. In '48, we took a whomping. It backfired.

DS: You were a national delegate in '48.

TH: Yes.

DS: Did you know Bob Taft very well?

TH: Oh yes. I had met him several times in various things. He had been out here. In fact, I've sat down on the davenport like this and visited with him. He was a gentleman! I really liked him. Of all the national figures that I have ever seen, I liked Bob Taft the best of all. I still feel that way about him. I've met most all of them, the more prominent ones. I always felt...had more admiration for him than any other man I ever knew.

DS: He had been in Missoula?

TH: Oh yes and I had met him in Helena. I think in Billings one time. Of course, Tom Dewey lived in Helena then Billings. I met him in Billings a time or two. That was before he became too prominent.

DS: Did you. He actually ran for president I suppose two main times—Taft did, didn't he? In '48 and again against Eisenhower in '52. He campaigned pretty hard.

TH: Yes, and he didn't live to ling after that.

DS: Why do you suppose the party never nominated him?

TH: Well, it was just a case that the establishment didn't buy him. He didn't have the power to be across. This eastern gang were your enemies for a long, long time.

DS: I think he did quite well in primaries, varies primaries.

TH: But in '48, that Dewey crowd, my god they really steamrolled things.

DS: Did you go to the convention in '52?

TH: No. I think Tom Payne went to that convention.

DS: You mentioned Zales Ecton in passing. What sort of candidate was he?

TH: Well, he was a pretty fair candidate. He got elected. He ran against Lief Erickson, I think. One of the reasons he got elected is B. K. Wheeler still had a lot of friends. I think some of that friendship went over to Lief Erickson, and they voted for Zales instead of voting for Lief Erickson. Lief Erickson, I always thought, was an able candidate. I always liked Lief. The first time I ever met him was when he came into headquarters and introduced himself one day. That's when he was running against B. K. in the primary, He'd pass the time of day. Is he still in Helena?

DS: Up at Sealy Lake or Swan Lake he has a place. I don't know if he has a house in Helena still or not. When I interviewed him, he was living up Swan Lake. When we got that release form

from him, he was still up there. Ecton lost to Mike Mansfield in '54 didn't he?

TH: For that time, why, Zales was going downhill pretty well. At least I felt he slipped a lot.

DS: Did he ever really want to be Senator back then?

TH: I don't know. I wasn't that intimate with him.

DS: Didn't the Republicans use the communist issue some against Mansfield?

TH: Yes. This is when he was still candidate for the house. If you look back to in about '46 at the Missoulian, you will find a double page spread where we accused Mike as being a communist by implication. The fact that he voted the same as two Communists. There were two Communists registered at Congress (?) at that time. They were place in demareantonio (?) or something like that. We had two men elected on the communist ticket for national Congress. We did the research and Mike voted exactly the way they had voted in Congress. So that was published, that Mike voted the same way that they did. It didn't say that Mike was a communist or anything. It said this is the way he voted and that was the way they voted. I think there was a big spread in the Missoulian. Now this is the '46 campaign he ran against the general...Maginniss (?).

DS: You were not at the national convention in 52 then?

TH: No, the only one I ever attended was the 48.

DS: You probably supported Taft against Eisenhower then didn't you?

TH: Oh yes, very much so.

DS: I thought as much. Were you with Eisenhower at all when he came to Missoula in '54?

TH: No, I never did meet Eisenhower.

DS: You never met him at all? I know he was up here to dedicate that statue.

TH: I know he was. I had several chances. I can't remember why now, but something came along that I didn't or couldn't go. Something happened at the time that I couldn't get the time to meet him. I never did meet Eisenhower.

DS: That is interesting. Of course by then you were in the legislature.

TH: There was something going on or something happened when he was here that I didn't see him. I can't remember now what it was. Getting back to this Barney Rankin, he ran and he was to defeat Mike Mansfield. He was a great, war hero. He was the damnedest campaigner I ever saw. He would be in Missoula at six o'clock in the evening and at seven o'clock he was

supposed to make a speech up in Libby. Driving up there, things like that. Barney was gook looking and his wife was terribly jealous of him. She'd get around and say out loud where people could hear, "Well, I don't want my husband going before this women's club and speaking because these women all got their hands out to grab him." Making comments like that, she'd irritate all the women around him. Did you ever know Rutledge Parker who was state forester for years and years? He lived up the Rattlesnake. Rutledge was still state forester, and this is before the appropriations committee over there, Rutledge Parker knew Barney Rankin. Barney was working for him. Rutledge Parker stood up and he pointed his finger at Barney and said, "Barney you are a thief!" Barney sat there and didn't say a word. He repeated it. Later he was arrested in Kalispell for stealing lumber or timber or something. He was tried, beat the rap, and left the country. That's the kind of guy these Republicans run now. (laughs) At least in that particular instance.

DS: You must have known Hugo Aaronson pretty well.

TH: Very well, I knew him very well. The galloping Swede, great Governor.

DS: You were in the legislature?

TH: I knew him long before the legislature. He was very active in Republican politics, was back at the '48 convention, back there, delegator or something. I had known him before that at a state party convention, that is how I had really got to know him. Then when I went into the legislature, he was there. He wasn't supposed to be governor. He was the fall guy for Bonner, but he defeated Bonner.

DS: You mean you didn't expect him to win?

TH: Well no, he was put up as a fall guy. They figured Hugo wouldn't have a prayer against John Bonner. He was a pigeon. They put up there to look good, but they knew that John Bonner would defeat him and well he just clobbered him.

DS: That was the same year Eisenhower was elected wasn't it?

TH: I forget what year it was.

DS: I think it was the early '50s sometime.

TH: Then of course he was re-elected.

DS: You served in the legislature all that time didn't you since he was governor.

TH: Yes.

DS: What do you think were some of the main issues the legislature? Is there anything that comes to mind?

TH: Not in particular that I can recall outside of the usual things you do in state government. Of course Hugo was a great hand to watch if he was stealing the money or spending anything. He was a good honest governor I always felt. Perhaps not the most brilliant governor, but they weren't pulling anything over on him.

DS: Did the sales tax become an issue then or did that come later?

TH: That came later.

DS: You were still in the legislature though.

TH: I was still in the legislature. It was later then that.

DS: Was that mostly a Republican issue?

TH: Well, the Republicans got saddled with it. Of course, it wasn't a republican issue until Jim Lucas made it one. Jim Lucas was the Speaker of the House from over in Miles City. He made it an issue. He thought it was the path of glory to the governorship.

DS: Did you ever favor it?

TH: At first, I did at that time. I supported it then which was a mistake. I did it against my better judgment. The party was going all out for it and he persuaded them to go all out for it. It was a mistake all the way around.

DS: It is kind of funny, most states have sales tax, but Montana has never.

TH: I can name three that don't have a sales tax.

DS: Why do you suppose Montana has never had one?

TH: The labor unions fought it here. Although the last session of the legislature, this democrat from Anaconda introduced a sales tax. I see that he's are not going to run again. (laughs)

DS: There was one governor candidate wasn't there that ran on that slogan, "Pay more, what for?"

TH: Forest Anderson.

DS: That was mostly because of the sales tax wasn't it?

TH: Yes. I always felt that he was the worst governor that we ever had.

DS: Forest Anderson? Why is that?

TH: Oh, the things he did. This was a personal thing between Anderson and I. I had introduced this soft premise wine bill. I am sure they didn't think that I had a chance with it, but he sent his man, Red Barret, who was his field man for the legislature they always have. He said "Tom, if you'll support this bill," which was a PERS bill, which I was interested in and the Republican Party had killed it. He said, "If you get this thing revived, why the governor will sign your wine bill, that's down at his desk." Of course Anderson didn't think it had a prayer.

I said, "Fine. I'll go along with that." So I went to work and revived the PERS bill and we got it passed. Then we got the wine bill passed and got the bill down on his desk and the son of a bitch vetoed it. (laughs) I went and told him off. So then about a year later, I had written him a letter about something and he wrote me a damn nasty letter about being my duplicity. Well then I wrote him a letter, which I accused of every damn thing in the book and told him the whole damn thing. And I spelled this whole thing out so there would be a record of it. There are files down there and that letter is in there. He never did say another word. So when B. K. Wheeler came to dedicate the bust of Joe Dixon, why they asked me—I have forgotten who else—and two or three more to go down to bring, escort the governor up to the rotunda to make the introduction of B. K. Wheeler. We went down and I walked in the governor's office, and got all the help around there. I could see right away that they all knew about this letter because they all had this funny look on their faces. Haines (third person) walking in there and they all have this damn sheepish look. I gave them the message and they went and got the governor. He came out. He had a hangdog look so just I stuck out my hand and shook hands with him just exactly as if it had never happened. We had to get this job done. Andrews got him down and he introduced B. K., and B. K. made the dedication speech. (laughs)

DS: That was right after the letter though.

TH: Yes.

DS: Donald Nutter was a Republican governor to. He was conservative wasn't he?

TH: Very conservative, yes. I always felt if he had not been killed, he would have gone on to the United States Senate or something. He was quite a power.

DS: What about Tim Babcock?

TH: So so. (laughs)

DS: He got tangled up with Watergate in some way, didn't he, later on?

TH: Well yes, but that really had nothing to do with his governorship. When he was governor we had these financial districts on the highway system. On the interstate highway, financial districts, money was allotted. Well they introduced a deal in legislature that they were going to

take all this money from the financial districts for the interstate to build that highway north from Helena on north to Great Falls to the Canadian line. We'd only had one little patch of interstate done on western 100, Helena west, and that was down here at Tarkio about two, three miles down here. And that was the only four-lane highway that had been built. I'll tell you who came to me about this. It was Joe Crosswhite, he was a great labor leader. Joe told me about this—he said, "Want to help?"

I said, "Hell yes, I'll go to work on the thing." So I went right to work on the thing and we got it killed. Babcock was mad. He called me down to his office, running his program, yak, yak, yak. I said, "I'm representing Missoula County—that northern part of the state up there." A week or two later they had some kind of a clam bake down at Jorgenson's there and I was down there that evening. In walks the governor and half a dozen henchmen like they always have hanging on. They were all drunk. They had come hot-footing over to me and they started pushing me around. Of course if I had wanted to fight, we would have had a free for all there. I just quietly sneaked out of that place, left the place because I knew what could happen. They were still mad about killing their damn interstate financial district bill. (laughs)

DS: So you always didn't get along with completely with the Republican governors.

TH: Well not necessarily. I didn't get along with all of them, any of them. I suppose I took it upon myself as to what I thought was in the best interests for the county. I represented the county, not the governor. The legislator represents his district and his state, at that time represented your county and state.

DS: Do you think this single member district was a better idea?

TH: No, I think it's a farce. I'd like to see them go back to the old county district because you get to represent a wider range of people. This way you just represent a small group of people that your interests are narrow. Like say you have a labor district or you got a school district or you got a farm district or you got a logging district or a mining district and that is all that you are interested in. You got all this other stuff. Were as if you represent a county, it has all kinds of various segments of the population. Ideas and jobs, why then you have a broad section to represent. You make a better legislator. I think that they had better legislators back in the county days than they do now because those legislators are small and narrow minded.

DS: Before that they had to listen to a lot more different viewpoints.

TH: That's right. Now days they are not interested. Well I just represent my county, why should I listen to Joe Blow over there. They can't do anything for me in an election.

DS: I suppose it is like a U. S. senator as opposed to a congressman.

TH: It is the same thing. I am very much in favor to going back to the county (unintelligible). Of course then they countered that you had to vote for too many people. Well your job is to find

out about it.

DS: I guess there was the new constitution that changed that.

TH: That's right, the new constitution changed it.

DS: Now, when you ran last and were defeated, was that as single member district?

TH: I said they had to change the Constitution to get rid of Haines (speaking in 3rd person).

DS: It was right after they had done that?

TH: Yes, that's right. They left when I was defeated in a single member district. See I was in this district out here and I knew that I had to go out and build a new base. And I wasn't going to do it. I was tired and getting to damn old to climb up and down these hills and I wasn't going to go out and build another base. Prior to this time now the county wide I had a base. One outfit could maybe be against me, take action, but I had support from so many others that I could overcome that. You see, you have to build a political base. I had people that I would go see when I would be campaigning that lord, they never turned a hand for me, but I would go see them because they might be around the crowd, or something, or said, well, maybe we should support Haines, or something like that. It build up their ego, the fact that I went to see them. They would probably never ask for anything or want anything, but you still went to see them.

DS: So in a way you were kind of reapportioned out of your base.

TH: They had to write a new constitution to get rid of the Haines. That is what it tells me. So that is a good alibi. (laughs)

DS: I think there is certainly a measure of truth there.

TH: Yes, there is a measure of truth.

DS: It did change the whole way you had to campaign and probably for everyone else that ran.

TH: That's right, for everybody else. Of course, some of these fellows when they reapportioned, it didn't make any difference to them because they had these smaller counties. They had the whole county and still had their same old base. Like Bardanouve up there in Plains County, he still was in the same old county.

DS: Yes, it didn't change his a bit.

TH: I always told Bardanouve, hell Bardanouve, you took care of yourself with that reapportionment committee.

DS: Was he a delegate to the constitution too?

TH: No, but I always accused him of sneaking around getting it done. He and I have always been great friends. When he first came to the legislature, there were all sort of backwood boys who had never been around before and he was it. Bashful, I guess might be the word. So, they put him on appropriations and the committee chairman was a democrat. One day, he jumped on Bardanouve something terrible. Bardanouve got up and walked out of the committee room. I could see that he was terribly hurt so I got up and walked out, followed him out. He was sitting in the back of the legislature then, house, so I went back there. He was crying. So I went back, sat down next to him, put my arm around his shoulders, and said to him, "Now Francis, no use crying about that. You will have a lot of that around the session here, when they will take after you. You'll have to forget it. He was upset, and I am sure he is not well. He probably didn't mean to take after you that way. Just forget it. You have got to put up with those things if you are going to be a legislature." Ever since that, Francis and I have been real close friends.

DS: Did you know Frank Dunkle very well at all?

TH: Oh, yes, I knew him. He at that time was involved with the Fish and Game. I always made it a point that I never did get on that Fish and Game Committee. There would always be somebody from Missoula County on Fish and Game Committee. I would just take their word for the bills. I wouldn't pay any attention to the Fish and Game Committee.

DS: You weren't too interested in what they were doing over there?

TH: No, because they were letting anyone who had money enough to buy a hunting license, fishing license, he was an expert on fish and game conditions in Montana. I didn't have enough money to buy those, so I wasn't an expert. (laughs)

DS: What issues were you mainly concerned with over there, what committees?

TH: Well, I was on appropriations for my first session. When I see anyone in the legislature, first session, Page had been on appropriations getting all these (unintelligible). He once went to the speaker and had got me put on, so always after that I was on the appropriations committee. Then I was very interested in the university and their budget, money for them. I did a lot of work for them over the years. Then all the other various issues, I was interested in the food business. I sort of looked after them as everyone looks after what their field is. My first great success was putting over the colored margarine bill which back in those days you couldn't buy colored margarine. It was a great victory. Page always said, "Hell Haines, you got elected on that colored margarine bill for years around here." There is some truth to that because the housewife, she was so happy because they could buy the colored margarine and didn't have to buy the old white stuff. It looked like lard. I introduced the first legislation for handicapped children. Got that through, very mild bill in those days. I remember it said it declared that the school board shall establish these schools for the handicap so that they would educate through age 11, I think it was.

The Committee of Education was going to kill it. Ralph Bricker, from Great Falls, worked with me on the bill. He was an old time legislator. I think he had been speaker twice, a real estate man over there. So the committee was going to kill it, so they said, they might want to change a "shall" to "may." I was mad and I was going to tell them to kill it when Ralph says, "Will you just wait a second." Excuse us for a just minute while we step outside. So Ralph jerks me out, he says, "Now Haines, accept this may." He says, "What we are going to do is get this bill through, in any condition we can, we get it on the books, then we can amend it at a future session." I learned one of my first lessons about legislating. So went back in and said well we'll take it with may instead of shall. Since then it has been amended many times many times and it is always a good idea to get the bill started, regardless of condition, get it on the books, then you can amend it later.

DS: The university did pretty well I guess, when you were there.

TH: I always thought so, but they never had enough money. They always told me so. (laughs). They always had money. Well they had one good president there...two. Newburn knew his way around the legislature and so did Carl McFarland. The trouble with Carl was, he knew how to lobby and he would work with you and stay there nearly all the time, be over there. Tom Swearingen was his leg man. He would work and get things done, but Carl...You would introduce Carl to some legislator, you would think he had things all lined up and Carl had the ability to insult him. He was good man when it came to politicking in the legislature from the university to the legislature.

DS: What about Pantzer?

TH: He was the worst we ever had, the world's worst.

DS: He just didn't do the work, or he did it badly?

TH: He didn't do the work, and he did it badly. Sort of like this library, I had this thing all set. He came over there, and he said, "Well now, we really don't need this money." We had the money all set to go on the library, then he came over and told them they didn't need the money. Well sure, they didn't give it to him. He thought was that he could get that money and replace it somewhere else, but they didn't give it to him anywhere else. Lost it out.

DS: That was to finish the library, to finish the top floors?

TH: Yes, I was so damn sure that (unintelligible). He didn't understand about the legislature. I personally, and I may be wrong, I thought he was the worst president that we ever had around the legislature. He didn't seem to understand. Nice fellow, everybody liked him and all that, but he didn't do too well. McFarland, he would you get mad at him, but he got the job done.

DS: I think you told me one time you used to read clippings about Montana State University. Or

keep press clippings on them.

TH: I did.

DS: What was that all about?

TH: I just them handy around to check on.

DS: And then would read them on the legislative floor once in a while?

TH: Well, if I had to, I would. See the big fight was between the two schools. This was back in the days when each school went on their own freewill to get their money. Something to fight fire with. I always kept a file on the opposing school and of course they had one of the ablest president, Dr. Renny. He was beyond a first name basis, calling basis almost with every legislator the next day after the legislature started. Expert, expert, always used to wish that we had a man like that at the university.

DS: And they probably did do quite well in those years, didn't they?

TH: Yes, plus it was a land grant school. He had so much more money then we had. And plus the greater amount of legislators were ranchers or farmers and actually favored that school. The thing that was always curious to me is that we would have men in the legislature, that graduated from this school out here. They cared less about it, more interested in that little 8th grade school house they back home than they were in the university.

DS: So it was kind of an uphill battle with the university always?

TH: It was always an uphill battle with the university. It didn't have a good reputation.

DS: Was that because of a lot of the things that were going on at that time with war protests, do you suppose?

TH: Well, this was before the war protests.

DS: Even before then it had a bad reputation.

TH: Oh yes, it did.

DS: I wonder why that was?

TH: Always has had. I don't know why. They always seemed to have a bunch of kooks around and of course the cow college was always put their best foot forward in the fact that they were farmers and all that. Pure as the driven snow when they sent their kids over there. I always thought that they were just as bad as the worst university, but they got the good reputation

out of it.

DS: But a lot of them thought that this one was a corrupt institution.

TH: Yes.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

DS: Were you involved at all in any arguments that they used to have over the Liquor Control Board?

TH: I never got involved in that now.

DS: They used to fight over it quite a bit though didn't they?

TH: Yes, but I wouldn't mess with it. I didn't want any part of it. I was never on the Liquor Committee or anything. We had it coming into the appropriations, but then of course all we did was appropriate the money out of the liquor fund to run the thing and that is all the contact that we ever had with it. The only other committee I had, my first session I was put on labor. Well, I didn't like that. Then I was on Constitutional Elections and Federal Relations and Appropriations. I have always felt that if you are on appropriations that should be the only committee you are on if you want to do a good job, but I still had Constitutional Elections and Federal Relations. If my party was in power, I was chairman. Sometimes we'd have a speaker giving you all the damn junk, all the bills and the kooks, introducing stuff. I would give it the ax.

DS: Just because you chaired the appropriations?

TH: Yes, I chaired it and I would get rid of it fast.

DS: There are kinds of bills that go through there, I imagine that there are probably close to as many then as there are now.

TH: Yes, of course a lot of people say that we should limit the number of bills a legislator can introduce or limit the number that people budget. I am bitterly opposed to that because I feel that the second you limit the number of bills that are to be introduced to the legislature you have taken away a right of the people. It is their right, I feel to have a bill introduced in the legislature. You sure as hell don't have to keep it, but it should be introduced.

DS: No matter how crazy?

TH: That's right! It should be introduced, they have that right, to be introduced! It is like Carl McFarland always said about the university. I don't know if it is still so but at that time, you graduated from a high school in Montana you had to be admitted to the university. Carl said you have to admit them, but we sure don't have to keep them. They'd get rid of them in a hurry. That is the way you do a bill. I have introduced bills that I didn't want to, I didn't like. Somebody would come around and say, "Well, Haines, I want you to do this," twist your arm, you had to do it.

What I would do, I would go to the chairman. I'd say, "Give that the ax." If the fellow wanted to have a hearing, we would give him a hearing, give him the full treatment, man or woman, and quietly give it the ax. You have to, you have to, or you never get anything done.

DS: I suppose as the chairman of the appropriations committee, you were—

TH: I was never chairman of the appropriations committee.

DS: Oh! The other party always had the—

TH: No. I never wanted to be because I was from a university town. I would have been crucified. No one ever wants to be chairman from Bozeman, Gallatin county, or Missoula County. No way would I have been chairman.

DS: You could have been had you wanted to.

TH: Yes, I could have, but I wouldn't take it. I was chairman of the subcommittees on elections, on elected offices, always chairman there, always had that committee, chairman when we were in power. No way would I be, but I would be chairman of the Constitutional Elections and Federal Relations when we were in power.

DS: What did the Committee of Federal Relations deal with, what sorts of things?

TH: All issues on elections, bills referring to federal government, and bills referring to the constitution like the constitution amendment, things like that. And of course they have the counterpart in the Senate, the chairman of that committee and you work together. We would get together, we had bills alike. Why we'd decide which bill would pass and who'd kill it in his committee it was the same bills you see. Old George McKenna for years was the chairman in the Senate of that committee. George and I got to be real close working on that. Then later Luke McKeon was, Luke and I got to be real...I always admired Luke because (unintelligible) were stealing from the unemployment.

DS: At workmen's comp?

TH: Workmen's comp.

DS: I knew I recognized that.

TH: I always liked Luke. Luke and I worked very closely together. He was a good legislator, a smart man. He got snapped up. Of course there were appropriations committees that were divided up into five or six subcommittees. They were the ones who did the work.

DS: And you were always chairman of one of the subcommittees.

TH: Yes. Sometimes it would affect me as chairman although it wouldn't if democrats were in power. Maybe it would be all the new-comers or something that didn't know anything you'd have to, more or less run it, you know. Of course the appropriations committee is sort of the big club, you didn't have any fights amongst the Republicans or Democrats. They all work very

closely together. Bardanouve and I got along very well together. Bardanouve was the chairman. He and I would get together, go through the bills and decide what was going to get the ax. Call the committee hearing and Bardanouve would say there is such and such bill. I'd say, "Mr. Chairman, I move we do not pass." Bang, bang, that was it.

DS: I suppose you have to when you are limited in the amount of time that you can spend over there.

TH: We have to do those things. No matter what, you can get it done.

DS: Did the sessions usually run the full allotted time?

TH: Always have. I never did finish ahead of time on any of them. When George O'Connor was Speaker, he finished them up ahead of time, everything done. It was a mad joy to watch George O'Connor preside as Speaker of the House. Boy, did he bang things and did he ram them. No dallying around with old George. I had the pleasure of serving with George my first session was George's last. He had one of the keenest minds of any man that I have ever seen and the damndest memory. Hell, something happened twenty years before, everybody else had forgotten about it, George remembered who it was. There wasn't any use for anybody to take after him to try and chew him out. I've seen Leo Graybill take after him, and Christ he grabbed Leo against the wall and tossed him out the window. Leo wasn't any dummy.

DS: No, he was quite an old hand himself.

TH: Quite an old hand himself. This faculty of the University of Montana found that out when they tried to take George a piece of—

[Telephone rings]

DS: Talk a little bit more here. I really don't have an awful lot more. I did want to ask you about a little about the Anaconda Company. There are always people who say that they controlled the legislature, had a great deal of influence. During the time you were into the '50s say—

TH: I'll tell you, I knew the Anaconda people very well. Al Wilkinson was their head lobbyist. I considered Al the ablest lobbyist I ever saw. Al wouldn't lie to you. He always tried to make things look good, but I never did catch him in a lie, lying to you about anything. The reason he was such a successful lobbyist, I always thought, was he'd do something for you. If you had a problem, he would move heaven and earth to help you get it solved. He'd never ask you for a favor or anything, he'd just come around and say such and such a thing. You just naturally felt grateful towards him and do him a favor or two. He was on the Republican side and on the Democrat side, what was his name, I can't remember his name now. But anyway, they had, you caught me flatfooted now about this Anaconda Company. I haven't thought about it in so long. They always maintained the waterhole on the sixth floor, the famous waterhole.

DS: I have heard of that. What was that exactly?

TH: It was the Placer Hotel on the sixth floor they had this waterhole there. They had this suite of rooms. Every evening at five o'clock they'd open up and they'd have a table of hors d'oeuvres and you could get any kind of drink of whiskey or beer whatever you wanted in there and people sit around and bs and talk and have a good time and they would close at seven o'clock. For years they didn't allow women. No women were allowed. I never heard a bill discussed or politics or anything. You might laugh about a funny thing that happened on the floor of the House or Senate that day, but nobody ever lobbied or anything. If anybody said that they were lobbied up there, I think they were a liar because I never was and I never did see any evidence of it. But, they maintained this thing and down on the fourth floor the railroaders had their lobbyists lobbying. Of course Judge Bill Jamison at that time was a lobbyist for the railroad. Judge Bill Jamison ran that waterhole there. Of course the Judge never would take a drink, but that is where the women all flocked, down there. He entertained the women and the men. They'd go there for a drink. Well, you go the Anaconda waterhole, have a drink or two, then go down to the railroader's waterhole and have a drink or two. Then you'd be pretty well organized by then if you wanted to. (laughs) All free of course. It was just good fellowship is what it amounted to. I enjoyed it. I never could see any harm to it. But of course these do-gooders, they think it is terrible. They think it is terrible that these people that are going to improve the world, save the world.

DS: Well, a lot of concern over anything that even gives the appearance of a conflict of interest. I suppose.

TH: I could never see any conflict of interest. I have seen people up there who were their most bitter enemies. They were just as welcome as the man who was their best friend. I remember old Charlie Dougherty here in Missoula who used to be editor of the Times. There is no man who hated them more and wrote more scathing editorials about the Anaconda Company than Charlie Dougherty. Yet he would go to Helena and he would go up there and he would sit there and sit there by the hours as long as it would stay open. God he was the greatest fellow there. They would entertain him and be nice to him. I said to Al Wilkenson one time, "Why are you so nice to all these fellows that come up here that are against you?"

He said, "Someday we might (unintelligible), Tom."

Something else about the Anaconda Company, they always had this staff of lawyers over there in Helena. They examined every bill introduced with a fine toothed comb. I mean examined it. Many times if they saw a bill that would affect something that I was interested in, they would tell me about it. Just do me a favor you see. But if it was a bill introduced to the legislature that didn't affect them, to hell with it. They wouldn't touch it with a ten foot pole. They never stuck their nose into anyone else's business. Now that is something that you couldn't say for the Montana Power Company because the crets (?) were always sticking their nose into somebody else's business. That is where they always got into trouble, but not the Anaconda if that bill didn't somewhere, somehow affect some of their operations, or land, or something, no way

would they bother with it.

DS: But Montana Power did?

TH: They were always sticking their nose into somebody's business. I used to get so damn mad with them, they'd get involved sometimes with university appropriations. Well, the maybe the university is getting a little too much money there so they'd have to fight them.

DS: Montana Power, but not the Anaconda?

TH: Not the Anaconda, never did because as they always said to me one time, Tom it doesn't amount to enough to mess with. It doesn't amount to enough.

DS: Montana Power probably did a lot of heavy lobbying too didn't they?

TH: Yes, this is going back to the days when these two got along very well together. Later they came to a parting of ways. But back in those days they got along pretty well. They would bring these lawyers in when they were downtown and out...I think it is the love (?) loan building. All the bills went down there the second that they got introduced. You never saw those lawyers at all. They were sitting down there with all their law books and they analyzed every bill that was introduced in there. Al Wilkenson was the father-in-law of Lloyd Crippen, Lois Crippen's daughter. Lloyd Crippen was of course...he seceded him as lobbyist. When we were in Philadelphia with the delegates of the Republican Convention in '48, why Al had a waterhole back there. It was quite a waterhole. Never forget Fred Robinson, who was national committee man for the state of Montana from up on the high line there, and the state senator. And so he and his wife of back then and they had this girl, god she was a good looking girl, their daughter. I was up there helping Al out one afternoon, passing drinks around so passed it over to Fred and the girl takes it, a big glass of booze. I thought, God, she is awful young to be drinking and come to find out she was a lot older than what she was. I asked Fred and his wife about her.

DS: I know one time we were talking and you mentioned about the Goldwater campaign in 1964. The fact that you were, practically were the only candidate in Missoula County.

TH: I was the only one in the county elected, I believe. At least I was the only Republican legislator elected.

DS: Why do you suppose that was?

TH: Because I got out and got elected. What happened was, Gene Klauswitter (?), a public county chairman, of course this Goldwater crowd, real conservative group, the radical conservative were in power and because we didn't do exactly as they said, why they wouldn't let me come in headquarters. I was thrown out of headquarters, Kitty Payne, I think they told her not to come down to headquarters, too, but she didn't pay any attention to them anyways. She just went ahead anyway. But of course when they wouldn't let me come into headquarters, well then there was just one thing to do; I went out and campaigned that much

harder. I didn't go near headquarters. I'd campaign all the time and the result: I got elected by 100 votes. I have always felt that if I had gotten out and campaigned that way I wouldn't have made it.

DS: Just on your own.

TH: I had a picture down there, they took my picture. You can see me right there, and I had never seen a bunch of people that way. Gene told me, "Haines we don't want you at headquarters."

Well I said, "Well fine."

Gene said, I won't bother you then." I didn't go back.

DS: Just because you didn't agree with them?

TH: Didn't agree with them, yes. I agreed with Goldwater most things he had to say, his philosophy and everything. But these people, these radical Republicans here, one of them is Charlie Pew (?) and all those people who, I wouldn't go along with their way of thinking.

DS: So you just didn't bother to go to headquarters?

TH: It is a good thing in the long run that it happened that way, otherwise I would not have been elected.

DS: You are probably right. Did you ever meet Richard Nixon?

TH: Oh yes.

DS: When? When he was campaigning?

TH: Well I met him in Billings, sat on the davenport and visited with him. Now this is before he, let's see, after he was defeated.

DS: By Kennedy?

TH: He was out raising money or something and he came to Billings, some kind of big meeting over there and I was over there for a state meeting. We sat on the davenport in that hotel and visited for quite a while. That is the only time I think I ever really got to talk to Nixon about anything. Of course Nixon was in Missoula here you see. That's the time that Eisenhower almost disowned him about that money, you remember? That happened, came to a head here in Missoula you see.

DS: I didn't know that.

TH: Well you get your newspapers out and start checking it out and you will find that that occurred here in Missoula. He was here at that time, the time I mentioned. When he was running for vice-president with Nixon (?). Then they got it patched up and settled.

DS: I remember the Checker's speech.

TH: Eisenhower was going to boot him out.

DS: There are a couple of other names on here. Dick Shoup, do you think he was pretty good candidate? He was mayor of Missoula for some time, you must have worked with him some time.

TH: Well, yes. He was a pretty good mayor. He build that city hall there and did a pretty good job. He was as good enough congressman as any of them, and of course the *Missoulian* is what defeated him. The *Missoulian* absolutely refused to give him any publicity. Absolutely, they would hardly mention his name in the paper. I would either take the stories down there for Dick, I would go down there and hand them to Sam or to Ed Coil or to whoever was down there in charge. You talk about controlled press.

DS: Where there any other candidate that they did that with?

TH: Well, they have done that with a lot of them, but I can't remember them right off hand. I would have to stop and do a little studying on it. Though I have firsthand evidence, because I was involved in it.

DS: I wonder why that was.

TH: Well of course they are democrats down there to start with. What do you call them, New Deal or liberal Democrats or I guess great liberal democrats. Of course I always think about Luke Wright. He was a reporter for the *Tribune*, and he was a good reporter. He knew where all the bodies were buried in Montana politics. He was a reporter over there for years. And of course he would get drunk, terribly drunk. He could always tell when Luke was a little bit drunk. He'd walk right down the middle of last chance gulch, right in the middle of the street. When he'd get drunk he'd get in that bar there, the Placer Hotel downstairs' bar. Drunk and he'd tell you to be a good reporter, a good reporter; you had got to be a sadistic son-of-a-bitch. That was another way you could tell that he was drunk because he wouldn't say that when he was sober. God, he knew more about state government, who had been in government, what had gone on, and the whole thing, better than anybody I ever saw. Better than many of the reporters I've known. Of course they've got one over there now that's about that way, Frank Adams. Now it's getting so as he knows. Now how's about fixing you guys a drink?

[End of Interview]