

Interview With David Hamil

I am Lee Bahrych and with me today is Betty Cronic. We are interviewing Dave Hamil, former Speaker of the House of Representative, in his home at Sterling, Colorado.

L.B. The first thing I'd like for you to tell us, Dave, is to give us some of your family history and your education.

D.H. I was born on a big ranch right near Proctor, Colorado, and I graduated from a one teacher school in Proctor. I graduated in 1922 and came to Sterling High School. Logan County Industrial Arts High School. I stayed away from home two and a half years. The year I was a freshman. The middle of my junior year, my mother and father moved to Sterling. So I finished there. I graduated in 1926 and I went to Hastings College and I majored in English. Graduated in 1930, Cum Laude. When I graduated from the Sterling High School, I was made a member of the honor society, the first year we had it, the year I was a junior. So I was in the National Honor Society for almost two years in the high school.

L.B. What made you decide to run for office? Were you in politics before you ran for office?

D.H. When I came in out of the one teacher school to the Sterling High School, by the time I was a junior, I was president of the class. By the time I was a senior I was president of the student body. When I went to Hastings College, I was president of the Freshman class and before I was out, I was president of the student body and YMCA. I won seven letters in athletics when I was in Hastings College. I also won a letter in track in high school.

L.B. So it was just natural for you to go on into politics?

D.H. I had no more idea of running for the House of Representatives than I had of going to the moon. One day in August of 1938, I had a call from Raymond L. Sauter, who later became our district judge here in this area, for the 13th Judicial District. He said, "Dave, we had a meeting today of the Republican group and it named you as our candidate for the House of Representatives. You have ten days to accept or reject it."

B.C. Was this 1938?

D.H. This was 1938. I talked it over with my wife and my partner, brother Don and we all decided that I should run. So I ran in 1938. I have to tell you ladies, I only lost two elections in my life from my high school class. Both for the Governorship of Colorado. I lost the election to Lee Knous in '48 and I lost the primary to John Love in '62. That's the only two elections I ever lost in my life.

L.B. So for your first run for elective office, they chose you, you did not go and seek the office?

D.H. No. They selected me. I had a thousand cards printed and my wife didn't get them quite all passed out, we had enough to make grocery lists for two years. When I was elected to the

House of Representatives, the salary was \$1000 for two years and you were allowed one trip to Denver, which we generally put in for fifteen cents for the round trip.

L.B. Fifteen cents?

D.H. Yes, per mile. Fifteen cents a mile. When they got that deal, I was always good for about a page in The Denver Post and another time a page in the Rocky Mountain News. The poor guy that came from Durango or someplace over there, if he was unfortunate enough to have taken a Pullman car, he was good for damn near a full column. You know, such rabid expenditures that we made. That's how I got to the House of Representatives. I was 29 years old when I was elected.

L.B. What were your feelings when you found out you had won?

D.H. Well it wasn't a new experience for me, I had never lost you know, but when I went down there, I was kind of listed among the unknowns you know. I hadn't been around the State House.

L.B. You were a freshman.

D.H. I was a freshman. During that first term, I'll have to tell you, John Evans and Ted Herring and I, they weren't discussing things with us like we thought they ought to. We upset the boys a couple of time and listen, they began to talk to us. I found out from the very first how you handled the business. Well I should tell you during the first term, that was the time that we transferred the income tax money to the general fund. You see the first income tax money was a replacement tax on property. So if I paid an income tax, of say \$75, when I went down to pay my personal taxes to Logan County I could refer to that and the State of the original income tax money paid that back to Logan County. So when I got to the legislature, there was very little money. You see the University of Colorado and Colorado Aggies and the teachers colleges all had a very small tax levy on our entire state. They weren't getting enough money. So the first year I was in the legislature we found a few extra dollars for the education institutions. Then the next year, I was on the Joint Budget Committee.

L.B. Your second year.

D.H. My second term. Yes sir I was on the Joint Budget Committee. Fred Beuck from out at Agate was the Chairman but he liked me to do it, and I did 90% of the work for him because Mr Bueck was a wonderful person. That wasn't his cup of tea. He liked to sit in the Chairman's chair but I did the work for him and I did most of the interrogations of it. That was my first year. The third year I was up there, I became the chairman. I'll have to tell you that during the term of 1943, both parties had said they wanted, in their platforms, they wanted support for the general public schools of the entire state. So there was a bill that had been prepared, it was in the Education Committee. About the first week of March the Chairman of the Education Committee, a young man from over here in Laird, Eagle County, at Laird, Colorado, called on Speaker Pearson and said Mister Speaker this education bill

isn't worth the paper it's written on unless we have money. I move that this bill be immediately transferred to the committee on Appropriations, where I was the Chairman. So here it came. So I took the bill to the joint committee. Three members of the House and three members of the Senate. We wrote the bill in that committee. I want to tell you what it said. First place in your school district you had to be levying 6 mils and the things were very unwise prior to that time. If you lived out here at Harding and you brought all your wheat to town and shipped it on the Union Pacific, the Union Pacific didn't pay a nickel into your school district. The only district they paid were those who approached and touched the railroad.

L.B. The railheads were the only places.

D.H. Yes they were the only ones. So we decided we'd put a mil on the county, each one of the counties. Then you would divide that up by the school districts and each district would count all the people ages 6 through 21, that was the school age. One mil would be divided up and the 6 mils, if you had the levy on your district, if that didn't equal \$1800 per classroom unit then you could go to the state in Denver and get your money. So we made an appropriation the first year, first two years, see we were meeting every two years then. We made an appropriation of \$100,000 and the first year that was in effect, the \$100,000 wasn't quite all used. By the next year it was. The next time we met in '45, I believe it was in '45. One of my good friends, Al Carlson, wanted to be sure to put transportation in. I objected to that because I figured if you put transportation in that, you see prior to that time in Denver all the kids walked to school. When my wife was going to South High School she walked 17 blocks. Or she could take the street car, but there was no school transportation in Denver at all. I figured if we put it in, if we started doing it out in the country just as quick as you could get around to it, it would be in Denver too. Course look at the thousands and thousands of dollars that they spend in this Denver School District when they're hauling the north kids to the south and the south kids to the north. Well anyway that bill that we started in 1943, that's been before the....

L.B. That was a start.

D.H. That was a start. I carried the bill on the floor of the House. If I'd have told them this is for one hundred thousand dollars but I said that fifty years from now it would be a billion, they'd have probably shot me. That bill, there was hardly a legislative gathering since, except special sessions, that the school bill hasn't been among the....

L.B. Always school finance, it's always there. It will be there forever more.

D.H. You're just right. I'll have to tell you, one time when Dan Thornton was Governor. Dan was always great about having public signings. So I went to his office when he was going to resign the rewritten education bill. Dan was a great spokesman and he said well ladies and gentlemen I believe by the action the General Assembly has taken, I'm going to sign the bill. We will have solved the education problem. So when the other 49 people who had been in the office moved on, I walked over to Governor Dan, and I said, Governor do you know how long we'll have solved the education problem, I said until the assembly meets again.

L.B. That's right. Absolutely.

D.H. That's the way it has been, but we started making payments after we transferred the income tax money back to the General Assembly, the very next session, when I was chairman of the Budget Committee in '43. By that time, we had started helping all the colleges with an appropriation and we have hell or high water, we have one of the best educational systems in the United States.

L.B. I agree with you.

B.C. Dave, let me go back before Lee goes on to another question and place a couple of things in context. At that point when you came in, in 1938, the General Assembly was meeting every two years or every year?

D.H. Every two years.

B.C. When did you change to start doing the short session that you had money only...

D.H. That happened about the time that I became the Speaker.

B.C. O.K.

D.H. 1951. It had been put into effect just before but that's about the time that it got started, that we had the two sessions.

B.C. We were still in that period of time, two-year terms for governor and all the elected state officials. So they were still on two-year terms, but we had a Joint Budget Committee that goes back to your service in 1938 and before that the Joint Budget Committee is not a post World War II

D.H. No, no. We acted, we really didn't have any legislative ground but when Palmer Birch, after I became Speaker, Palmer Birch put in a deal that officially, legally, set up the Joint Budget Committee. Prior to that time we had been meeting with just our own approval. You'll get a kick out of this. When I named Whitman Best and Palmer Birch on the Joint Committee, all my rural friends almost went into orbit. "My land, Mr. Speaker, you put two Denver people on there, they'll ruin us". I said I don't believe they will. Well in less than two years the Colorado Cattleman's Association named Palmer Birch a lifetime member. That's probably one of the most conservative groups in the state, are Colorado Cattlemen's.

L.B. He was very conservative.

D.H. Very, very. Palmer Birch could take a ten page bill and reduce it down to about three or four pages and say every dang thing that needed to be said.

L.B. Well you are talking about the time, JBC had been meeting as a committee and it was probably staffed by a House steno or something like that?

D.H. Yes.

L.B. Then it became an entity unto itself, with a executive director and I think there was one lady that was hired to be the steno to that director. Who was the first director of JBC.

D.H. I don't recall that. That's one thing I don't recall.

L.B. I think the lady's name was Mae something. Do you remember Bette?

B.C. No I can see her face but I'm just sitting here trying to think of her name. I'm not sure there was a director for the first year or two.

L.B. Joe Kyle.

D.H. Joe Kyle was in there for several years.

B.C. But that was not the first year as I recall it.

D.H. You know the Joint Budget Committee, I can't tell you how far back, but that was in effect when I went to the Legislature in the 32nd General Assembly, but it was just established by the legislators. It had no official capacity, it used official capacity.

L.B.. You considered yourselves as an advisory committee to the legislature.

B.C. Yes, we did. I've always thought it was very good and as I told you, when I got to be the chairman, and the Speaker, you see when I got to be the Speaker prior to that time we had up to as many as forty-six committees.

L.B. Forty six committees?

D.H.. Sure, when I became Speaker we cut it down to about the same number they have now. I think about seventeen or eighteen.

L.B. Well I think there's ten or twelve now.

D.H.. Well we had forty-six. You get out one of those old books and you'll find forty-six committees. My first committee was the Penal and Reformatory Institutions. Consequently, I got acquainted with Roy Best and all the people by that time and so when I became the Director of Institutions for John Love I was familiar of all those institutions that were under my jurisdiction. Nothing gets them better acquainted with you than having your hands on the money. I got on the Budget Committee the second term I was in the legislature and from then until 1945. I wasn't, I think they thought maybe I was a little too liberal, they put another person in there. Then Carlson became Speaker and he said to me, Dave I'd like you to take over that budget committee again. I said, " Well I will Bill, but I don't want you coming over there and telling me what to do." Carl never once walked in there to tell me what to do.

L.B. Now he was with you when we dedicated the Speaker's painting, wasn't he?

D.H.. Sure, sure.

L.B. His family was there.

D.H.. Sure , see when Carlson and his floor leader, a young man from Boulder, got out over some darn reason, I can't tell you what, but the last of that session, Carlson was down on the floor carrying the bills that I was sitting in his chair as the Speaker. Carlson was always a good friend of mine. He was a good legislator. He was the one that wanted the transportation put into the school bill and I objected strongly to that. I think I was right because my god the kids in Denver now don't walk at all.

L.B. No, no. Dave do you remember the first bill you introduced and what happened to it?

D.H.. Yes. It was passed. The first bill I introduced changed the dates of the meeting of the judicial deal in the Thirteenth Judicial District.

L.B. It was passed by both Houses?

D.H. Sure. Sure. Bill Higby from Colorado Springs was the first Speaker and then my next Speaker was Homer Pearson and he was the first three time Speaker of the House.

L.B. Pearson was?

D.H. Yes, Pearson, and I'm the second three-time Speaker. Carlson was only Speaker one term. Then we were out. I ran the Budget Committee for Carlson in '47, and we lost control and the boy from Steamboat Springs was the Speaker, had all that trouble you know.

L.B. Vanderhoof.

D.H. No no, this one died shortly afterward, I can't think of his name, Steamboat Springs.

L.B. I can't think of his name either. He was a Democrat from Steamboat Springs. (Pat Magill)

D.H. That group that was there in the House didn't get a damn thing done and that's why I ran again the next time and that's when I was elected Speaker.

L.B. Dave some of these issues that you've been talking about like corrections and education, they're ongoing issues. What difference do you see today than what you had to handle when you were Speaker?

D.H. When I was the Speaker, course you see when I first started in there the amount of money that we handled at the state level was very limited by comparison with the amount that's handled there today. There's been a big increase in population and there's been a big increase in the things that we're doing. Take the penitentiary for instance. Even when I

became the Director of Institutions, we only had 2280 people in the pen, prison.

L.B. 2280?

D.H. Yes sir, that's all.

L.B. We have that in juvenile hall right now.

D.H. Sure you do, and the girls school didn't have hardly any people in it and the boys school out in Golden was limited. There's just a big change. You wouldn't know it's the same state, the amount of people here.

L.B. Well it's changed from rural to urban.

D.H. Oh sure. Well like I told you, when I became Speaker, and named Whitman Best and Palmer Birch to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Appropriation Committee, I knew those two would be on the Joint Budget Committee. Oh my land, some of my rural friends thought I had made one hell of a mistake. That's when I told you that when at the end of the second year, they named Palmer Birch a life-time member of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association. Both of them, well they lived in Denver. I didn't tell you this, and I'm going to tell you again. In 1945 I was the Chairman of the Finance Committee. I want you to remember this prior to '45 the cities didn't have a penny coming from the gas tax money except the part that we got for the state highways that went through their city. I rewrote the bill and gave the cities a cut of the gas tax, the counties a cut of the gas tax and the state from '45 on. So you see in my years up there, I never ran the thing as though Denver was a separate entity. I told them point blank, I said we're glad that you're where you are but don't worry we're all in the same boat. I get a little provoked when some people try to make the difference between city and country. We're all on the same boat and we need to work our resources and everything into that system.

L.B. I agree with you.

D.H. I never forgot that. I always did it. When I became the administrator of REA, the first dang thing I did was start working with everybody in the electric utility business. Get them together, work together, as I told you downstairs. It's a lot more fun to meet in the banquet room than it is in the court room and it's a lot less expensive. I settled hundreds of thousands, I guess millions of dollars worth of lawsuits by getting together. Before I left being the administrator of REA, the investor owned companies invited me three years in a row to address their seminar at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho. I've gotten thanks for having done, well right here in the state of Colorado, the last transmission system of any consequence from Sydney, Nebraska down to eastern Colorado. Colorado Utes or Tri state representing the co-ops and Public Service of Colorado and WAPA Western Area Power all three got together. That's the way a lot of it ought to be now.

L.B. That's the way you had to do in the legislature. You had to get your Democrats, your Republicans and the executive branch all working together.

D.H. You mark it down when old Dave Hamil was your Speaker, There was always six or eight good Democrats out there if I needed one all I had to do was look at him.

L.B. You have to do that.

D.H. Yes sure. When I was the administrator if REA, I handled a billion dollars worth of money. I never asked the people I was dealing with whether they were Democrats or Republicans, that wasn't my business. If they fit the bill they got the, the biggest deal I ever made was in Georgia.

L.B. That's the one you told me about. Dave how did you handle committees. Were they always listed on the calendar. Were committee meetings called?

D.H. As I told you a few minutes ago, when I became the Speaker, I think I was the first Speaker that started cutting down committees and I think we cut from 46 down to I believe 17, I can't give you that for sure. I set up a schedule, I had a man by the name of Clay from Gunnison, an awfully smart man, a good man, he needed something to do and I said work out a schedule for me so that you can have set times for each one of these committees to meet. Now some committees will have to meet more often than others because they're an appropriation committee and your judiciary committee and things like that but I want a schedule and I want to cut this down where we can have regular meetings. They know a week ahead of time or two weeks when they're going to have their next meeting and they can arrange. So that started in my tenure, when I was Speaker.

L.B. When you were Speaker and these were put on your calendar. Now who staffed the committee? That was before Legislative Council.

D.H. Yes, that was before Legislative Council. It was generally staffed by the Chief Clerk and some of her aides.

L.B. Some of the stenos.

D.H. Yes. They did the work and I'll just be real truthful and tell you that the figuring out, quite a little of it I did, but this man, Clay, from over at Gunnison, he worked out a schedule and had the schedule and we had the date set and one committee would meet every two weeks and one another would meet every week and some like the Appropriation Committee and the Judiciary they met generally every day we were in session.

L.B. When the bill came out of committee it was sent to the Rules Committee.

D.H. Yes.

L.B. Did you consider that your committee?

D.H. You bet. (Laugh) I ran that show and anybody who was in there with me like Frank Hayes and some of the rest of them that are still around, we ran that show. Like I told you, I never

let people talk all day on a damn fool bill and when they had about forty minutes out there on that floor to discuss it, I was sitting in that Speaker's office and I walk to the door and that was a signal to whoever was in charge to Rise and Report. There's no use of talking on things if you don't have it ready for deal, get it back in committee and work it out.

L.B. That's right.

B.C. Let me ask a question here. Were you Speaker at the time, as I remember that you were, when Legislative Council was created?

D.H. Yes.

B.C. That's what I thought, that you were the Speaker at the time that came in in 1953 as I recall.

D.H. Yes, see I was Speaker from 1951 to 1956.

B.C. Weren't you also Speaker when the sales tax that had been dedicated to sponsoring only the old age pensions was created as a statewide fund?

D.H. I sure was and I first told the people that back when I was a candidate for governor, see I told them before 1947, I said if you don't know what's happening in the state of Colorado, I'm going to tell you. All the ne'er do wells from all the other states, when they get to be fifty nine years, eleven months and twenty-nine days old, they're coming to Colorado and establishing residence. I said just imagine living in Kanarado, Kansas, back there when I went to the legislature, or shortly thereafter, Kanarado, Kansas, had a thirty-dollar old age pension, we had over a hundred. I said, "you think they don't want to move across the street?" You see that's when the pension people and some of the ardent supporters just raised hell with me in '47 and said I was an enemy of the old age pension. I told them, I said I'm the best friend you've got. You just watch. Sure enough we prevailed.

B.C. You did this by having a citizens' initiative headed by Bob Knous, you also went on the endorsement list, didn't you?

D.H. Yes sir, as I told you, politics didn't bother me a bit. I was a Republican, I was elected, but when I ran the House of Representatives up there, and I ran it for the state of Colorado, not for Denver, or for Logan County, we're all on the same boat. I ran the REA the same way.

L.B. I imagine you found when you were Speaker, if you treated both sides fairly then there was a degree of comfort on the floor and you were able to work together.

D.H. Well I was challenged by two people in my six years. My friend Palmer Birch challenged me.

L.B. Oh really.

D.H. Palmer Birch challenged me once and I ran the steam roller over him. But Palmer was one

who could do it. I pointed him right back to the same deal. I forget it was a very incidental, the other one was from a fellow in Colorado Springs and when Palmer challenged me, Palmer voted against.....

L.B. Did he challenge you on the floor on a ruling?

D.H. Oh sure he did and I ran the steamroller over him. He had five renegade Democrats and his own vote and I had all the rest of them. You see there were a few people on the other party committees that I couldn't do business with but I did business with the bulk of them. I always kept five or six of them in debt to me if I needed the votes and I got them.

L.B. Well Dave, I always remembered when I was Chief Clerk, that the Speaker is the one officer of the House that's elected by the entire House. The Majority Leader is elected by their own caucus as is the Minority Leader. The Speaker speaks for the whole House.

D.H. He always wants to remember that too. That you are conducting the business of this organization for the benefit of all the people of the state. Not one little segment. I very seldom, I told you I was only challenged twice in my years.

B.C. Who was the second challenger?

D.H. The boy from Colorado Springs.

B.C. Do you remember what his name was?

D.H. I can't recall it, he's from Colorado Springs. That wasn't Bill Higby, Higby was gone, Higby was the first Speaker. But this young lad, he was a Republican but he wasn't a powerhouse. I didn't give a damn what he said. (Laugh) When the vote came he had his vote and I had all the rest of them.

B.C. What did he challenge you on, do you remember the topic?

D.H. I can't remember, I don't even recall for some reason. I thought, it was a foolish deal for Palmer to have done. Palmer always had a positive way of thinking but in this case I thought he was wrong and he got his vote and four or five renegades, Democrats, and that was all. I didn't reduce him a bit I didn't reduce him in any capacity from my standpoint of view because Palmer Birch was one of the sharpest legislators that I ever did business with. He had a facility, he could take a damn ten-page bill and put it down to three or four pages and say everything that needed to be said.

B.C. He could also handle the numbers to make numbers understood by people who weren't mathematicians.

D.H. Yes, he could. Palmer was very good. You'd think I ought to remember what the deal was but I thought Palmer wouldn't object to it but he did and the only challenge in that one deal the only thing I could do was run the steamroller over him.

L.B. That's right. That's right.

D,H. Then as soon as that was done he, Palmer wasn't one who held grudges. He was back there working just as hard the next day as he had the day before.

L.B. Palmer knew the rules.

D.H. Oh you bet he knew the rules.

L.B. He was a good parliamentarian.

D.H. He was a good legislator.

L.B. Dave, you've seen a lot of changes in state government. Do you think they're good or bad, I'm talking about the legislature, the way it's run. Would you go back to doing things the way they used to be done?

D.H. I couldn't go back completely because there are too many things that have changed, but I can tell you, a few things that we need to check up on. We need to check up on welfare. Part of that is the state's business and a hell of a lot of that is the Federal's business. I see people down here getting food stamps. Good lord. When food stamps first started up and I first went to Washington, and the Secretary of Agriculture complained that they'd put that into Agriculture. Said food stamps ought to be in welfare. I think at that time the total food stamp deal was about four billion dollars and now it's about twenty-eight billion, or thirty. Now another thing, in the prison system in this state. One thing is the best thing in the world for training people, that's work. Work can't be taking a rock pile from here and moving it over there and back to there. You have to do something. When I was director of Institutions, we needed to revamp the women's prison down at Canon City. It was just an old lean-to against the prison and we had some land out there just east of the city. I was going to build a prison out there and I got three hundred thousand dollars to build the building we'd planned and my god we didn't have a bid under four hundred thousand. So I told Bob Dunham who was with me, he said, "Dave if you can get the Governor to let us do it, I think if we can hire five working foreman, a carpenter, a plumber, an electrician and a cement person, five of them, he said I think we can build it with the money we have." So I went to Governor Love. He was a little bit against it. I said, "I'll take the blame for it if it doesn't work and I'll give you full credit if it does work." So he said, "go ahead." So we did. We built the prison for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. A women's prison.

L.B. Under the amount you had.

D.H. I had fifty thousand left over. The nice thing about it, you know those working foremen came to me and asked me to get commutes, not pardons for eleven of the people that helped them build it. I got them. To the best of my knowledge, I can't vouch for this completely, to the best of my knowledge, none of those eleven ever went back to the pen. I found out that a work program, and I don't give a damn what the labor people say, we ought to have those people down there working, doing something. Not playing tiddlie winks. Shortly after

I became Director of Institutions, I told you we had 2280 people in the prison, but they were getting rid of the farm at the big hospital in Pueblo. So Harry Tingsly came to me and said I think it would be nice, we've got the buildings down there and I'd like to select about 50 people and move down there and do some things around the community. Oh my land, the people in Pueblo almost went into orbit. Land, we don't want those people down here. We had them down there about six months till we had a big flood come down there and we cleaned up the whole dag gone deal. About two years later while I'm still Director of Institutions, I had an idea of buying a big farm down there and producing a lot of the food for the institutions, and, oh, the people in Pueblo just went into orbit, you can't take our farms away from us.

L.B. What a difference.

D.H. We kept them busy down there. The best therapy that I've ever seen for any deal was a constructive work program. If I had of stayed on as the Director of Institutions, I had a plan to clean the Platte River, not to eliminate the a...but if we had another flood down this Platte River we're going to get a lot of flood down here in Sterling. Look at those trees, look at that brush and I was going to go through there and trim a lot of that out and get the channels straightened out and I was going to get...

L.B. Opened up again.

D.H. Sure. Each city that had an interest, and each ditch company, I could have cleaned that river, I wouldn't have cleaned it completely but you'd have to do that probably about every 5 or 10 years. We got the people playing tiddlie winks down there that ought to be out working.

L.B. Watching television and complaining about they don't have a big enough screen.

D.H. Yeah, and throwing their cigarettes on the floor. I want to tell you, back in the days of Harry Tinsley and Wayne Patterson they didn't do that.

L.B. Well Dave, if you could go back to the way things were, what law would you repeal or would you relocate offices? All the changes that have happened in the Capitol, what would you go back to?

D.H. There are a few things. I think our educational program is working quite well. I think we've got this deal of busing, I think the people of Denver finally decided that the Federal Government that is was better to let the people be in the areas they wanted to live. When I was in REA, we had Jim Baustic, he was a White House Scholar, Student. You know one of the others was the man that was down with Carter in..... I can't think of his name right now.

L.B. Colin Powell?

D.H. Colin Powell. We attended Jim Baustic's wedding. You know who his best man was? Colin Powell. Those are the kind of people, they're black, but my god I'll tell you when you're

around them you don't have any more feeling of any difference than between all the people. We're going to have to get all the people working together. The Blacks and Whites. Sure there's a few Blacks that aren't worth a damn but there's a few Whites that aren't worth a damn too, but all the Blacks aren't troublemakers, not all of them. We're going to have to work to get that eliminated. Right here in this state, we've got Mexicans coming in here, those Mexicans better learn to speak English. We don't need to have three languages on every ballot. That's a bunch of foolishness in my opinion. I grew up with all kinds of people that came in here. The Germans and not a damn....

B.C. Sure this was a melting pot.

D.H. Sure. Right now in one lifetime, if I didn't identify them you wouldn't know where they came from because they've integrated themselves and that's what we've got to do with all the people that we're going to let into this country. We can't let millions of these knotheads come in here in the United States. Now that's not as much a state problem as it is a Federal. I don't believe we've got the biggest....figure being in India where you can walk, one place you could walk in one day and not even know all the languages. That's ridiculous. We've got all the whole big United States speaking English and let's keep it that way. You ask me again what all I would change, well I think we've gone overboard on welfare. I think we've got to watch that. Everybody doesn't have to be on welfare. We've been keeping people on welfare and we been encouraging it. I know when we were living in Washington, my wife had a colored woman helping her and she was just waiting till she could have one more kid, illegitimate of course. The reason was if she got one more she'd get quite an additional deal to her income. I don't believe in that at all. I tell you another thing. I was helping out.... I'm for aborting kids if somebody...I sure am...I'm a Presbyterian. I think there are all kinds of these kids that are having youngsters when they're just barely getting into their teens. They can't take care of them. You know in the six years I was Director of Institutions I interviewed, along with a committee, for potential commute, eighteen hundred. See I interviewed from 26 to 30 every month. So if you figure that out by 6 years you'll see. Before the middle of the month I'd have the life history of the 25 or 26 I was going to see at the end of the month. I read their damn life history and I'd walk into my house with that life history on that 25 or 30 of those I was going to see, you know who would grab that book and start reading it? My wife. So I interviewed 1800, and of that 1800, I would say that 75% of those people that I interviewed weren't wanted in the family to which they were born. You take those kids that grow up in that kind of a setup and you can't have enough institutions to hold them. Then here we've got institutions now that it's costing as much to keep one in the penitentiary as it is to send them to Harvard. Now there's something wrong there. That's one thing I'd change.

L.B. That's true, good comments.

D.H. It's ridiculous. It's ridiculous, because as I've said to you and I think you ladies both know that work, a worthwhile occupation, is the best dang gone therapy that's ever been designed. Sure you can educate them and you can get all these things. You talk about rehabilitation, that word is wrong. If you talk about rehabilitation you would think that they had been habilitated at one time and 90 % of that's wrong. A lot of them don't rehabilitate at all.

L.B. Dave, let's go back to when you were first sworn in at the Capitol. When you walked into the Capitol and maybe your first day at being a Colorado Representative, what happened? Did they have a ceremony? Did they have a lot of pomp and ceremony or did the Chief Justice come over to give you the oath?

D.H. Yes, the Chief Justice at that time was a man from Logan County.

L.B. From Logan County? Oh. How interesting. Who was Chief Justice then? We'll go back and look it up. (Chief Justice Haslett Platt Burke)

D.H. You look it up. He was the Chief Justice and he swore me in. I will never forget, and of course that was quite a ceremony and Jen's mother and father lived in Denver and of course we had them down there for that. I had the feeling, a wonderful feeling of having been elected, I got the biggest majority of anybody on the ticket after I told you I didn't spend enough money to wad a shot gun with. But I didn't have to. There was a time in my life, I knew every family in Logan County. I'd have a little trouble today telling you who lives in my block. I knew every family in Logan County because when I graduated from High School, I graduated one weekend, the next Monday I went to work as a bookkeeper for the Sterling Hardware and Implement Company. They were down here where the Public Service is, a great big building, had a big hardware store, harness shop, a tin shop, a big government business and I was the bookkeeper. You know they had those cups where they sent the money up on wires?

L.B. Yes.

D.H. I sat up there and they left a lady with me three days so four days after I graduated from high school, I was the bookkeeper for a big outfit. I didn't have any trouble.

L.B. They gave you three days training.

D.H. Yes, they gave us three days training. Course I studied a little accounting bookkeeping in high school even.

B.C. Three days training, on the job training.

D.H. I never had any trouble. I knew how to look back on the books if there was something I wasn't sure of. I could look back on the books and find it. I trained myself. I could type the letters. After I went college, I went to work for Mr. Smith. He later became president of American National. I didn't tell you this. I shipped out of this town in the first week of Oct. 1932 with five hundred and forty five cattle to Cozad, Nebraska. I worked down there from the first of October till the middle of May.

L.B. Through the winter.

D.H. Yes sir, and I had a half interest in the cattle. I borrowed some money from my mother. I didn't vote for Mr Roosevelt but I bet on his hundred days and I bet I did something that

when I tell you it will be hard for me to believe. I came back up here and I didn't want to get any more money from my mother. Mr. Smith, this was after the bank holiday see, and he said he couldn't raise a nickel. I said do you care if I go to Colorado National Bank and see what I can do? So I went up there and went there and asked for Mr. T. R. Field, who was the secretary of the Colorado National Bank Company. I told him what I wanted to do, I wanted to borrow two thousand dollars, and I could feed quite a lot of cattle. At that time I was buying hay at Cozad, Nebraska, for two dollars and seventy five cents a ton.

L.B. A TON?

D.H. I bought corn the first day of January, 1933 for twelve and one half cents a bushel. Don't tell me I didn't get, I got a Ph.D. in experience. Well anyway, Mr Field came back in about ten minutes that it took to take that it over to the bank committee, but he loaned me two thousand bucks. Now a big bank, and he made that in four or five hundred dollar notes so you see I didn't pay anything, I was on my third note of my five hundred dollars when a fellow drove into this feed lot where I was located, and said are these cattle for sale? I said you bet they're for sale. I sold a load of.. I told you I didn't vote for Roosevelt but I bet on his one hundred days, and so I told this fellow, he said what do you want for a hundred head of those steers? I said I want six cents a pound. He just laughed. He was from the Acme Packing and Provision Company, Seattle Washington, and that's a hell of a long ways from Cozad Nebraska. So he told me he was going to drive his car to North Platte and get on the train and go back to the company office up there. I had a hunch. I've always been a pretty good judge of people as you ladies know. That guy's going to call me from North Platte. Sure enough about an hour later. The phone rang. I answered it. He said say, "would you hold that offer open on those steers until Tuesday?" I said, "yes sir I'll hold it open until 2:00 Tuesday." I'd a held it open for a month. (Laughter) 2:00 o'clock Tuesday I didn't hear but the next morning I got a wire, if the cattle are still available, I'll take them. So he came back and I delivered him the one hundred steers and they butchered them about three days later. He wired me, he say's I'm coming back, I want to buy some more cattle from you. I sold out to him. I sold out the whole bunch. I cleaned up the whole deal. Now you'll get a good kick out of this. When I cleaned up and made all the calculations and my costs and everything, I was losing a hundred and fifty dollars for myself and a hundred and fifty dollars for Mr. Smith and that's on five hundred and forty five cattle and there were a lot of people that went broke that year. They always told me look for your money before you loosed it. I was coming home and I stopped in Julesberg, Colorado, to get lunch and ran into Nell (?) a trader from the Denver stockyards. He said, "say you got cattle on your grass out there?" I said, "No I don't think we have." He said, "I got just what you need. I got two hundred and eleven head of Arizona yearlings out there." So I went out there and I bought them. Twenty-two fifty a head for two hundred and ten dollars a head. You see there's some figures I can remember.

B.C. You paid your note off and you came out with a profit.

D.H. Well my wife and I were married Christmas Eve that year. '33. By the middle of next May, the 1st of May, I had ten thousand dollars, I've never been so rich again in my life. Ten thousand bucks you know for a kid. See I was born in 1908 and that you see was '34, I

wasn't too old yet. That was the start of my business venture right there. That's why you see here, you ladies may not know this, when they established an Agricultural Hall of Fame here, less than five years ago. I'm one of the first five on the Agricultural Hall of Fame.

B.C. Dave were you in partnership in ranching with your brother?

D.H. Yes.

B.C. That's what I thought. That was the Hamil and Hamil Ranch.

D.H. The Hamil Brothers.

B.C. The Hamil Brothers, ok.

D.H. Yeah we ranched together for a good many years.

B.C. 17, 18, 20 years, before you went to the legislature?

D.H. No, Norm graduated from college in 1935 and I went to the legislature in 1938. So you see he was only three years out of college. But he was already in business with me.

B.C. So you all stayed in business till when?

D.H. We're still in business.

B.C. Still in business. See I think people don't realize that you're one of the pioneer ranchers of the 20's and 30's when you came in.

D.H. I ran the first field silage harvester in this area. Then I had the first front-end loader on the tractor. That's pretty hard for people to believe. I ran the first beet harvester in Logan County in 1943.

B.C. You were on the list of the sugar beet producers weren't you for a long, long time?

D.H. Sure, more than one year we were the biggest producers in the Sterling factory district.

B.C. I think people who served with you in the legislature knew that but the people who come along since don't realize that you're from a ranching tradition and from that sugar beet tradition which has almost disappeared out here.

D.H. Sure it has disappeared here. Well if you folks hadn't of come this morning there was a Riddenbacks got some beets, my son has some beets out there and the Riddenbacks, it's an altogether different business than it was, when I ran the first beet harvester in '43. Leonard Jones and I ran three weeks to worry five hundred and thirty ton through that piece of equipment. Last year the Riddenback boys pulled into my son's field at midnight and by 11:00 o'clock next day they had out over eleven hundred ton of beets. You see that shows

you, when I came in here to go to high school in 1922, there wasn't another kid from rural districts who were planning to go back to the farm. Every damn one of them was going to try to get a job where they could read by electric lamps and take a bath in the bath tub. Now you see. Look at the difference. One farmer today whether this is good or bad, I'm not going to join in an argument on that, one farmer today produces as much as 19 did when I was born. See a great deal of that has been made possible by... after you got those boys in agriculture. Look I bought my first hybrid corn the year I fed cattle in Cozad, Nebraska. Now there isn't anything else but hybrid corn. That's just one of the facets that's come up in our lifetime. As you see it's pretty easy for me to get off the track.

L.B. That's all right. I wanted to ask you more questions about the capitol. Do you feel that people are more pessimistic about politicians, government, than they were, or is this just a perception that we have?

D.H. I think there's an all together different feeling, now I'm going to say this from my own experience. I handled the Budget Committee for the state of Colorado for several years and then I appointed the people who handled it for several years and I handled billions of dollars for the Federal Government. What I'm going to tell you. I've never been offered a bribe. I kept people afraid of me. They knew better than to try to buy me. They knew what I'd do to them. I didn't give a damn if it was the best friend I had in the legislature, he wouldn't try to talk me out of something. He might try to talk me out if I told him I didn't want to do that, that was the end of it. I never heard about it again. I think today they've got some of these salaries for public offices, like congressmen. Most of those congressmen never made a hundred and thirty eight thousand in their own business. I can tell you that I've made a hundred thousand more than once. I was making a thousand heads of steer deals by the time I came to the legislature. That's pretty good for an English major. Bill Sector and I are probably the only two people in this town ever shipped a trainload of cattle in since the Harris company went out. I bought a trainload of cattle with him at Canadian, Texas. I bought another train load at Emporia, Kansas. A trainload.

L.B. Then what you're telling me is that the perception is really true. That there is a great pessimism out there.

D.H. I think there is. I think some of it's true too. I think some of it's true. When you get some of those jobs and positions, do you know what the Governor got, do you know what Ralph Carr got as Governor when I was elected. Five thousand dollars. He had a mansion. Let me tell you the last thing that I did for the state of Colorado as a legislator. Governor Ed Johnson called us in to authorize a tunnel under Berthold Pass. He said we could drill one for eighteen million. Well my consultants said you couldn't touch one for eighteen million. Did you know that Winter Park is trying to get a tunnel, they're talking about it. Do you know what the price tag on a tunnel is today?

L.B. No.

D.H. Two hundred and sixty nine million. Well, any way, the Governor called us in and we decided you couldn't drill one. I could have taken the eighteen million at that time and three

laned every major pass in Colorado, with the eighteen million. We came up with the idea in the House and Senate, get your little rule book out and read it. We came up with the idea that we would put up eighteen million for a tunnel if I-70 was extended through the state. See I-70 had never been planed to go beyond the Mouse Trap.

L.B. Oh I didn't know that.

D.H. Yes sir, when you got to the Mouse Trap you headed north if you wanted to go on a Federal Highway you went to Cheyenne or you went to Albuquerque. All right. The Governor, we didn't have a mansion yet, that was the first week of May 1956, Governor Johnson was living in a little apartment over on Grant Street. So I took Johnny Vanderhoof, Frank Hayes and Ted Gill, I called the Governor and told him I was coming over to see him. We went over and he came out in his dressing gown, cause he was a little under the weather. I told him, we're not going to put up eighteen million under Berthold Pass because you can't touch one for eighteen million, but we will put up eighteen million for a tunnel if I-70 is extended through the state and a tunnel is deemed to be a necessary part of the route system. He looked at me and he said Dave do you have the votes? I said you bet I've got them. He said when did you plan on adjourning? Well I said we thought we'd give you the rest of the afternoon and tonight if you want to contest it. He said I kind of like your idea. How soon can you have it ready. I said I can have it ready in less than an hour. He said I'll get my clothes and I'll be down and I'll wish you well. I'm not going to sign the bill today but I will sign it. You and the President of the Senate can sign it, I'll sign it. He said you can adjourn yet this afternoon, so that's what we did. As soon as Johnson got on his feet, he contacted Millikin. Well they were in different parties but if there was something for the state they were like that. Eisenhower's secretary of Commerce for the Bureau of Public Roads had been in the Senate with those two. They convinced him that I-70 should be extended through the state, and that deal from the Mouse Trap to Richfield, Utah, that's almost half the mileage that's been added to that system since it came off the drawing board.

L.B. Is that right? So you got the Eisenhower Tunnel.

D.H. That's the Eisenhower Tunnel which cost a hundred and eighteen million. The Johnson tunnel coming back on the other side, what they learned on the Eisenhower Tunnel, they put that one through there for sixty-four million. Those are the two highest tunnels of their size in the world. The millionth car went through Eisenhower tunnel a year ago, last summer. Now that's the last thing I got a call to be the administrator of the REA while we were in Denver for that meeting. I had no more idea of going to Washington and the Executive Department than I had of going to the moon. I was kind of waiting for Bill Hill, our congressman to retire and run for the Congress.

B.C. Run for the 2nd. Cause I remember that because I was the secretary in the 2nd Congressional District at that time.

D.H. Well anyhow, I went back there and I'll never forget, when I came home that night from the vote, Bert Hannah was a great friend of mine. He changed his politics to vote for me in the primary. So when I got off the plane about 11:00 o'clock one night, who was standing out

there was Bert Hannah. He said Dave you going to take the job? I said I am I guess. He said what is the pay? The truth is.....(tape ended here)

D.H. (tape started in middle of conversation) control people's deal but I cut down those luncheon deals where I knew it was going to be a big drinking deal. I went up there, hell, we created a lot of alcoholics. Having it all the time. I'm not against a free cocktail, I'll have one tonight, but I don't believe in it, when I went to be the administrator of REA, they found out that I didn't drink at noon and I didn't want them to until they quit too. There used to be a lot of drinking, course that was sort of right after drinking came back into style. You know who one of my best friends was when I left there? Adolph Coors Sr., not the original one but Adolph junior was the father of other little boy. I've been a guest out there in their home. One thing about Mr. Coors, there were a bunch of knotheds in the liquor business at that time. When I first went up there, my god you see, all the time I was in high school and college, prohibition was on, you see, I wasn't involved in any drinking adventures, in high school and college. Good lord it sure is common place now.

B.C. There was heavy drinking in the Capitol building and it was special luncheons and people going out at noon and taking... how did you get them back on the floor into committees by 1:30 in the afternoon?

D.H. That's why I quit, I wouldn't let one of those invitations to one of those drinking deals after I got to be Speaker. Prior to that, hell, they weren't worth a damn. I generally had awfully good people on the Budget Committee with me. Back there when we wrote the school deal I'm telling you about, you know who put that into the final language for us? Steve Hart.

L.B. Oh, really?

D.H. Yeah. He was one of the biggest lawyers in Denver.

L.B. Well there used to be a lot of drinking up on the third floor in that press area.

D.H. They had a press deal up there that had open bar setting out up there. I never went up there, that wasn't one of my deals. I'm a cocktailer but I'm not a drinker so when I got to be the Speaker I cut out those booze luncheon deals. They found out I didn't want it. I didn't want them going out there and coming back with a.... The only person that ever really challenged me on the floor, was a fellow named Brown from Jefferson County. He challenged me. We always had during my time as Speaker, whenever we had a school group up there, whoever was in the chair, I generally did it myself to start with, because it was so likeable, we always stopped and told them what we were doing and why we were doing it that way. I'll bet you I got a hundred letters back in my time from class advisors who were up there saying the best history lesson we've had was the day at the Capitol. Do you know who was one of my ardent supporters of that? Palmer Birch. He'd take them over to the Old Supreme Court room and let them grill him for a half an hour. I told you they wrote me back and said the best history lesson for the whole year had been what they'd gotten at the Capitol. That was one of the reasons my friend Brown, he went and had a snoot full, he started arguing with me. I said Representative Brown you're either going to leave the room or I'll have the Sergeant-at-arms put you out. I kept a Sergeant-at-arms, my Sergeant-at-arms wasn't a weakling, my Sergeant-at-arms would do it. You know he didn't speak to me for a year. Before he died, he came up to me one day, I was in Jefferson County, and cried at his own ineptness, he said I was wrong you were right and the poor guy died within six months of that time. I forgave him.

L.B. It comes back, Dave.

- C.B. Who were your majority leaders during that time?
- D.H. Well my first Majority Leader was from down in Las Animas and then Frank Hayes. Frank Hayes and Johnny Van worked together. See Johnny Van came to the legislature about the time I became Speaker. Frank Hayes my first one from down in Las Animas, his name slips me right now, he wasn't near as good as Frank Hayes. Frank Hayes was very, very fine and Frank and I could communicate. He was years younger than I was but that didn't make any difference. We were with him just a couple of weeks ago.
- C.B. Then Johnny Van followed and so you trained the future Speaker as your Majority Leader.
- D.H. That's right. I trained Johnny Van, he'd tell you to this day that he got his training from me. Johnny Van could run that herd and he could tell me how many votes we had on something. I never had a better person to diagnose the crowd than Johnny Vanderhoof.
- B.C. A good vote counter. I could see that on the sidelines. I could tell how the votes were going and I gained great admiration during that time for the ability of both parties to know their membership and for the Speaker to know what the mood of the House was during that time.
- D.H. You might have entered the room when Palmer challenged me. You know who was one of the ardent supporters that day? Betty Pellet.
- L.B. Oh my gosh.
- D.H. She said we can't do this to our Speaker, he's nice to us.
- B.C. You had Lee Matties as your Chief Clerk. The first woman Chief Clerk and I was trying to think who your Chief Sergeant-at-Arms was. I can remember the face but I cannot remember the name.
- D.H. I can't tell you right off the bat either but he was a good one. (Sloan Honea)
- B.C. Yes he was a good one.
- L.B. Of course the Sergeant-at-Arms worked for the Speaker at that time. He's your man on the floor. Dave for this, so I can have it taped, tell me that story about Lee Matties when you called the Rules Committee unexpectedly and she had the combination to the Speaker's safe in her girdle.
- D.H. Well you see, the bills we were holding in the Rules Committee, we kept in the safe in the Speakers office.
- LB. Why was that.
- D.H. So nobody else could get a hold of them.
- LB. Because if you lost them they were lost weren't they?
- D.H. Yes, I never had a bill stolen in my time. I guess there was some bills stolen. I know there were some bills stolen in that two years that I was out. This time we couldn't find the key, Lee had it. You see the reason we had that deal, she worked a lot of time at night down here and that's why I told you in the six years that I was the Speaker and she was my Chief Clerk all the time, there was never a bill that started in the House of Representatives, and she would be the last one to go through and see that everything was correct about it, we didn't

have a single error and that why Florence used to get provoked because Lee would come down at night and work on those bills. I said she's the one that's doing the work here, if she likes to do it lets just be quiet, don't say anything to her because she's the one that watches our bills. That probably happened because Lee had the key to the safe you know we had in the Speaker's office. She went down there a lot of times at night after we were closed and worked on those things. So it didn't take long to find the key, she had it.

B.C. But you didn't know where it was. (Laugh)

D.H. No I didn't know right at the moment.

B.C. She had it on her person. You were sure of that. The myth of the story is and I heard this years ago and had forgotten about it, is that she did hide that key in her girdle so that if your Rules Committee got obstreperous and you didn't want them to find the key she could say she couldn't reach it at the moment. (Laugh)

D.H. I would say that wouldn't be Lee's way to put it.

B.C. She didn't tell it to me that way, that's just something that came up.

D.H. If I wanted something done and I'd tell Lee Matties to do it by god she'd do it. If she thought I'd made a mistake on something she didn't hesitate to tell me. If I said no Lee that's the way I want to do it, she never argued back at all with me.

LB. That's a good relationship between a Chief Clerk and Speaker.

D.H. Yes, it was. As I told you the year I was out, we were out, dag gone it, they contacted Lee to come straighten them out. Being the old Chief Clerk there can be a lot of things that go wrong.

LB. A Chief Clerk can always keep the Speaker informed of things she hears on the floor. There's been one big change since you were Speaker. It used to be that everybody had their office right on the chamber floor. Now they have offices throughout the building. How do you feel about that?

D.H. Well when I went to the legislature the only legislative committee that had offices were the Appropriations Committee and the Judiciary Committee. About one or two other rooms that was available to us. All the rest of those committees used that deal. The only rooms that had clerks in them regularly was the Appropriations Committee and the Judiciary Committee. Most of the others had partial appointees and the girls that wrote the letters and things, we had a room right off there that....

LB. Steno room.

D.H. Steno room. That's changed so much. There's several important committees now, hell they have their own phone in there. About the only one that had their own phone at that time was Appropriations and the sub committee used that most of the time. The time we needed to get something done why we'd bring the Appropriations Committee in to finalize it. See the sub committee didn't have the power to authorize it to the floor. I think after Palmer Birch got that thing written into a legal deal it was a little bit different but in the old days we always had to bring the Appropriations Committee together. I don't ever remember in my time being on that committee that I didn't have, wasn't able to get the bill out that we wanted out.

- L.B. Was the Speaker the only member that had a private office. Everybody else had only their desk on the chamber floor?
- D.H. No, the Appropriation Committee.
- L.B. The Chairman had his own office?
- D.H. The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee at that time the Chairman was always a man from the House. We never let a Senator be chairman.
- L.B. That was a joint committee.
- D.H. That was a joint committee but there were three members of the House and three members of the Senate but the Appropriations man from the House was always the chairman. That changed after I was out of there.
- B.C. Was that because of the fiscal responsibility, the initiation of all the money bills with the House, is that the reason?
- D.H. I can't answer that for sure but that was probably it. The Chairman of the Joint Budget Committee was always the Chairman of the House Committee.
- B.C. Your office was right off to the south of the House?
- D.H. No, as you would be facing the Speaker, my office was on the right hand side. Like I told you, when they had argued on a bill for about forty minutes I'd walk to the door and say "Rise and Report."
- L.B. So that would be on the north.
- B.C. Where was your Chief Clerk located?
- D.H. My Chief Clerk, her deal was right there on the desk on the right hand side of the desk, right in front of the Speaker but to the Speaker's right.
- B..C. Did she have an office also?
- D.H. No.
- B.C. I thought that was it, that when she had business to do and was working on bills she worked in your office didn't she?
- D.H. She could come in there when I wasn't there. Or ninety nine percent of the stuff she did she kept right there at that desk.. If I was having trouble up there once in awhile, Lee Matties was always right there to help me.
- L.B. Well that's what a Chief Clerk is for, Dave.
- D.H. Yeah
- L.B. Well Dave are there any other things that you want us to record of your memories of the Capitol?
- D.H. Well, I think one of the most important things I helped do was the first thing we did during

the first session. We abandoned the income tax as a replacement tax on property and put it in the general fund. Then we started to have some money. The next thing we did was we started supporting the educational institutions. We did that in the second term. In the third time I was up there we wrote the bill that put every school district in the state would be entitled to federal support under certain circumstances. The next thing I did was when I became Chairman of the Finance Committee. So many people say that county people won't do things that the city needs. I'm the one that chaired the committee that put gas tax, partially went to the city. Prior to that they never did. The only part of the city streets that got any tax support at all was the state roads that went through on certain cities. That takes us up to '45 and in '47 that's when Carlson was the Speaker and I was the chairman of the Budget Committee again. I didn't have a bit of trouble that time. I had the budget all appropriated and all figured out and of course the last two weeks of the legislative session, I told you Carlson was carrying the bills on the floor and I was setting in his Speaker's chair for it. Then I ran for Governor in '48 and I was out two years. I made enough money those two years I was out that I could afford to run again. I ran again in '50 and was elected Speaker and served until June the 26th 1956 when I went to Washington to run REA.

L.B. Well, I have to add one thing. All these things meant a great to the State of Colorado, but since you appointed the first woman Chief Clerk and I'm the fourth, I want to tell you I appreciate that very much.

D.H. Well I'll tell you I think we've been making a mistake for years because, women are just as competent as men. It's like I told you, Betty Pellet was the first woman floor leader. She was in the other party but when Palmer Birch challenged me, she said we can't do that to our Speaker, he's nice to us. Betty Pellet, came to us. You know she was a former movie star.

B.C. An opera singer.

D.H. Sure. She ran against a fellow named Tommy Aiken. She had a card that said "take a little Pellet for your Aiken". (Laughter)

B.C. She was on of the original ladies of the House. I will say that there has been no one since Betty pellet, any place close to her.

L.B. I'm sorry I didn't know her.

D.H. She was a very fine lady and a good looking woman. I always liked her. I met her the day she came to the House, because the first session I was up there Tommy Aiken was in, and she ran against Aiken and beat him. Now that card, I wish I had. Did you girls either one of you ever see the book that was written about me?

B.C. Yes, I have it. Yes of course I bought a copy.

L.B. Now what is that?

B.C. Davie Hamil story.

L.B. Oh, I would love to see that.

D.H. Because you are the Chief Clerk, I'm going to give you that.

L.B. Well for goodness sakes. Thank you.

D.H. Did you see this?

- B.C. That's the one that was the insert. I saved it, yes sir. That's the one that was the insert in the paper.
- L.B. Well isn't that a beautiful picture. I'm going to put it right here in the book. David I'd like you to autograph it for me.
- D.H. I'll just autograph it, I don't write as easily as I used to.
- L.B. Like I said you have a soft spot in my heart because I wouldn't have had that wonderful job of mine if it hadn't been for you.
- D.H. One of the best lady Representatives we had, and she was from Denver. For the life of me I can't remember her name.
- B.C. Jane Woodhouse?
- D.H. Name another.
- B.C. Jean Bain.
- D.H. Yes, Jean Bain.
- B.C. Jane Woodhouse was the one you worked with on the mental health. Lucille Beck on Education.
- D.H. Yeah, I knew them very well. The lady from Grand Junction, Rena Mary Taylor. Jena never allowed any feminine or masculine you know, some masculine is good but Jean Bain was as level headed as any of them. She was wonderful. I never had any trouble with any of them as far as that goes. So you can figure I didn't have any trouble with Betty Pellet. Betty was a good legislator. She wasn't in my party but that didn't bother me. I told you I always kept six or eight good Democrats on my side of the fence because after all we were Coloradans. I get so provoked at the present Congress now. It seems like they've got themselves at so many damn crossword deals. Like I tell you, I ran that REA for 14 years and I never asked one of my employees what his party was. One year I put a man in at the head of my telephone division (who was a Democrat) and some bird from the White House came over and said you know he's a Democrat. I said I sure do but what you don't know is that boy came and handed me a hundred dollars made out to the Republican Party last summer and I said it didn't make a bit of difference to me. He's in that job because he's the best I had. He works for me and I don't need you come telling me what to do. He said I think I can get you fired. I said I got news for you I didn't ask for the damn job. (Laugh) That's the way I handled it down there. One time when Mr. Nixon, I can never understand how Mr. Nixon allowed himself to get....., and put some of those damn people over there he shouldn't have put in. Mr. Nixon was one of the best people we had down there but he let himself get screwed up. You know if one of my employees got off base I told him how the bull ate the cabbage and like one time I told you they sent some fellow from the White House over there to tell us how to run things. I told him how too. I said I don't need any advise from you, not one damn bit. Every time he met me in the hall after that he called me Mr. "How are you Mr. Hamil." I told him I didn't need any advice from him, I said I've forgotten more about REA than you know, and I'll run it. If one person can get on as a Presidential appointee, the President can fire me if he wants to. Jack Anderson, one time, my wife and I were driving in Mt Pleasant Iowa, my wife was a PEO, and she wanted to see Mt Pleasant, so we were coming in our Lincoln automobile and here was Jack Anderson on the radio we were listening to, and he says Dave Hamil doesn't know it but he's going to be fired, he's making some mistakes over there at REA and he's going to be fired. So when I

got in to Mt Pleasant, I started calling him. I said well there's only one person that can fire me and that's the President and he hasn't said a damn word to me but I said if he wants to fire me I guess you can get along with someone else. Well that's all the rest of it.

