

Orren Beaty, Jr., Oral History Interview – JFK#13, 2/20/1970
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Biographical Note

Beaty was administrative assistant to Congressman Stewart L. Udall during the late 1950s and assistant to Secretary of Interior Udall from 1961 to 1967. In this interview, he discusses the congressional committees that dealt with interior issues, including the relative power of different members of those committees and the power of committee staffers, among other issues.

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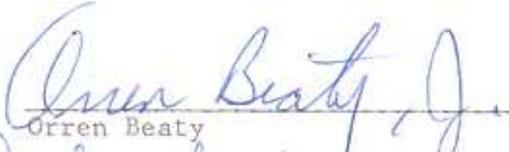
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Orren Beaty
July 4, 1979
Month Day Year


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Orren Beaty, Jr. – JFK#13
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Thirteenth Oral History Interview

with

Orren Beaty, Jr.

February 20, 1970
Washington, D.C.

By William W. Moss

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MOSS: I want to talk a little bit about the Congress this morning and particularly the individual committees that were concerned with the Interior Department, both the full committees and subcommittees. Let me ask, first of all, what the relationship was between the committee staffs and the committees? As I get the picture on the Hill, some staffs do an awful lot of work that is really innovative, that is, the staff takes the initiative. In others the committee takes the initiative, or the initiative comes from the departments and the staffs really do the legwork, the research, and so on, draft the bills, but are not themselves innovative. How would you characterize the Interior and Insular Affairs Committees?

BEATY: Well, you know, Interior has relations with several different committees.

MOSS: Appropriations, Public Works...

BEATY: Public Works.

MOSS: That sort of thing. Agriculture and Forestry.

BEATY: Merchant Marine and Fisheries. Obviously the principal one is Interior and Insular Affairs. I think comparatively they have smaller staffs than most of the

committees. At the time Udall [Stewart L. Udall] was a member of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, there was no such thing as a minority and majority staff. The top staffer the first year or two that I was working for Udall was a Republican who I think had been brought into the committee, into the staff by Dr. Miller [Arthur L. Miller] who was the ranking Republican in Nebraska, a congressman. And this man whose name gets away from me right now [George W. Abbott], later went down and became Seaton's [Frederick A. Seaton] special assistant and

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later solicitor of the Department and finally assistant secretary in the last few months. I don't think he was ever confirmed, but served as assistant secretary in the last few months of the administration. He was appointed by a Democratic chairman when he served on the committee--it just didn't make any difference. He was working as a professional staffer. There was one man on Indians, one man on Public Lands. The one on Indians, I think, handled Territories. They had a lawyer, and this was about the staff except for a lot of girls who did the secretarial work and the routine filing and printing and all that sort of thing.

A staff like that can't be innovative, they don't have time to be, I think. And Clair Engle was a strong chairman and Wayne Aspinall [Wayne N. Aspinall] was a strong, and is a strong, chairman. They run it. I think they call the signals and the staff follows through. So certainly we weren't suggesting things to them, and they wouldn't have been receptive to suggestions from us. There was a definite division. They were the lawmakers and the policy makers, and we were supposed to carry them out. Senate Interior [and Insular Affairs] Committee staff is also relatively small, but of course larger than the House. I think Senate committees are larger normally, and because a lot of subcommittee hearings in the Senate are really attended by one man or two, the staff does a lot more work over there, a lot more. They take the lead more than they do in the House. At least this is my experience in the ones we dealt with. I think the Senate committee was more innovative than the House committee. But Anderson [Clinton P. Anderson] and Jackson [Henry M. Jackson] again are pretty strong chairmen, and I don't think that the staffs moved out beyond them particularly. In the field of pollution control, I think the Senate Public Works Committee under Muskie [Edmund S. Muskie] who's still not the chairman of the committee but was chairman of the subcommittee, was way out in front of everybody on that [Water Pollution Control], and they were innovative. The staff was, I'm sure, but it was partly because the Senator himself, in charge was concerned and interested in moving ahead.

The Merchant Marines and Fisheries Committee, I don't think--I don't recall any evidence that they did anything except just process the bills we sent down. Again there was some concern about pollution. John Dingell [John D. Dingell] in the House committee was putting stuff in the [*Congressional Record*] years ago about pollution, but it didn't have to do particularly with fisheries resources or the things that we had responsibility for in Interior in the fish and wildlife area.

Let's see what other thought did I have on that? House Public Works concerned itself mostly with opposing us on the fee system for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and eventually prevailed, although we won some initial victories. Oh, I know the other thought I had. This was the House Government Operations Committee, which I think we've talked

about--John Moss [John E. Moss] and his “freedom of information” and “no closed meetings” and that sort of thing. The staff there was, I think, given pretty much of a license to operate to find areas where bureaucrats were withholding information or were not performing as they thought they should, and they'd build a case. They would come

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to us to try to get us to help them undermine some bureau chief who had been giving them trouble during the Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] administration. And I say they would; I can recall only one instance.

MOSS: I was going to ask you for a specific example.

BEATY: Well, this was Conrad L. Wirth, director of the National Park Service, and the Death Valley National Monument or national park. I forget which it is.

MOSS: Monument, I believe.

BEATY: An argument over developing and extracting minerals at the edge of the park or within the park, exchange of land, water rights--there is some water there, believe it or not--and the tie-in between Wirth and the former director of the Park Service who's involved in the company or companies that were in the mineral business there. The committee staff seemed to feel that there was something wrong that ought to be exposed and kept trying to do it. Nothing ever happened on this. But it was the staff. John Moss would sign something or maybe he'd call once in awhile, but it was really the staff digging and trying to develop things on their own which in the end, if they had succeeded, Moss would have gotten the credit. He would have been the man who issued a press release and denounced the whole thing and called for dismissals or prosecution or whatever the situation was.

I didn't see any evidence of that kind of activity on behalf of the House and Senate Interior committees although Aspinall particularly talked occasionally about the committee's oversight, legislative oversight, responsibilities. He wrote lots of letters which the staff obviously had to do the work on.

MOSS: Did they get into things like the evaluation of whether or not, say, Marling Ankeny [Marling J. Ankeny], isn't it...

BEATY: Ankeny, yes.

MOSS: ...was a good administrator or a sloppy one? Was it this kind of thing?

BEATY: No, no.

MOSS: Was it strictly looking for controversial topics where there was venality and this kind of thing?

BEATY: Well, it was that, and it was also how the land and mining laws were administered. Were we being too restrictive? Were we not letting the user groups use it the way the law intended? Were we making policy, making law, by the way we administered it instead of letting Congress do this? Things to do, I'm sure, with sand and gravel; what were these theories? In oil shale, the pet phrase was the "prudent man theory" where: would a

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prudent man invest money in developing a mining claim or buying a mining claim under the economic situation that prevailed at that time? Could the oil shale be mined, the oil extracted and so on and so forth, in an economic way? The "common varieties" is the thing I'm trying to think of. The common varieties, things like sand and gravel and crushed marble or whatever the situation was.

We were more inclined to preserve the land, and Aspinall and the committee staff working under him, was inclined to favor the users, the developers, the exploiters. And I'm sure that the files have lots of letters in them, three and four pages long, listing laws, listing court decisions, setting forth the chairman's view really of what ought to be done without telling us that's the way it ought to be done, but questioning us on what we were doing in light of these prevailing legal standards or whatever you've got.

MOSS: There's a rather fine and debatable line between conservation and use on the one hand and preservation on the other, isn't there?

BEATY: That's right.

MOSS: And this was constantly fought over, was it, between...

BEATY: Constantly, the whole eight years that we were there.

MOSS: What about within the department? Was there also a good deal of controversy over this within the department?

BEATY: Yeah, I think so. But I think with one or two exceptions it was people in the mineral resources area taking the point of view of the users, oil companies, or the coal companies, or whatever it was, with Udall and Frank Barry [Frank J. Barry, Jr.] and most of the assistant secretaries on the side of preservation as against undue exploitation. John Carver [John A. Carver, Jr.] on the other hand, tended to look at it from the standpoint of the users, and felt that the ordinary small miner or irrigator or something deserved better than to be met with a lot of bureaucratic language that confused him, left him without any redress.

You know, you could make a case for either side here. There were times when I thought John was right, and there were times when I thought Frank Barry was right; and I'm sure that Udall was confused and kept in a certain state of turmoil by the continuing

arguments that prevailed between Barry and Carver. John was much more knowledgeable and is much more set in his views than people in the minerals area were, and therefore he recognized things and he could bring them before the Secretary; whereas John Kelly [John M. Kelly] or Cordell Moore [J. Cordell Moore] or people in the minerals area didn't. They might settle some things at their level and they'd never get up to Udall. But John followed the procedures and tried to make his case.

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I would say that Chuck Stoddard [Charles H. Stoddard] and later Henry Caulfield [Henry P. Caulfield, Jr.] in the technical review staff or resources program staff or whatever it finally wound up being called (after the early months it was called the "Resources Program Staff"), were on the side of Udall and Barry and were providing help and guidance, as opposed to the Carver point of view or John Kelly point of view, whoever/whatever the situation happened to be. I can't think of a lot of specific instances although I can name some cases where different--it may not be exactly on the point here, but would illustrate it if you dug them out.

One of them is the Fort Breckinridge land in--where's that?--Kentucky? I think Fort Breckinridge is in Kentucky [New Mexico]. There'd been a little bit of oil discovery, nothing to amount to anything and this was surplus land and the government wanted to sell. GSA [General Services Administration] wanted to get rid of it. It required clearance by Interior about the mineral possibilities and Frank Barry and Ed Weinberg [Edward Weinberg] were convinced that it was a giveaway to oil interests who already knew that there was oil on the property and who were going to get it for practically nothing. This was a brutal fight; it just went on and on. I couldn't tell you how it came out. I probably could work at it and find out. It would be easy enough for you to find without my digging into it. Nobody thought of my providing help, because mine would be kind of sketchy anyway. But this was one example.

MOSS: Well, this leads me to another thought, and that is to what extent was it a situation of well-intentioned, liberal, but more or less amateur people coming up against highly proficient, technically oriented people who could marshal the technical arguments, and the amateurs more or less having to do some very quick homework to find out just what their position had to be?

BEATY: Well, I suppose that was a part of it. All these people were well-intentioned, I think, at the beginning. Towards the end I'm sure judgments were warped a little bit on both sides, the personality frame after one conflict after another to condition them to this.

MOSS: How objective would you say the decisions really are under those circumstances? That's a very wide open question.

BEATY: It sure is, and I don't know that I'd give you the same answer day after day thinking about it. So many times you've got the legalities which are hazy

enough so that you can decide in either way, but you've got those things to consider. You've got the “what's right and wrong” standpoint of conservation perhaps to guide you. Then you've got the political thing, some powerful congressman pushing on one side, or somebody in the White House pushing. How do you do it?

We had a case in Utah. I think we've talked about this once or twice. Kane Creek was the key phrase, I think. It involved a sulfur--maybe Texas Gulf Sulfur [Co.] is the company involved. But it was getting land in the

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hands of Utah. It was transferring federal lands to the State of Utah, and the state has a claim* for a lot of land that it hasn't gotten yet, part of its statehood allotment. Frank Barry and the people at the solicitor's office were convinced this was a giveaway, that the state had a right to make selections of land, but not to pick land that exploration had already shown to be minerally rich, that this land had a value that made it impossible for the federal government to turn it over to anybody else, that the profits from this belonged to all the people and not just to the people of one state or some company that had gotten in there. If I remember it right, on the basis of Barry's findings and presentation Udall decided against it. Ted Moss [Frank Edward Moss], Frank Moss, the senator from Utah was a very determined guy looking out after his state, and doesn't give a damn for conservation efforts if they oppose economic development of his state. He's a pretty good conservationist really, but in this case he--and maybe this is not an anti-conservation decision. It's more a matter of finances and who does the profit belong to than it is a conservation question. But he was at the White House a number of times pushing his point of view, and finally a decision was made to refer it to the Attorney General [Robert F. Kennedy] for opinion. The Attorney General, I think perhaps guided a bit by White House, decided in favor of Utah, and so Utah got this land and the mineral development went on.

I may be mixing this up with some other Utah decision but I don't think I am, because this procedure was followed two or three times. It didn't always work out in favor of Senator Moss or whoever it was that happened to get it sent to the Attorney General's office. Ramsey Clark was the assistant attorney general for lands at that time. He was philosophically attuned more to Frank Barry than he was to anybody else. And when Ramsey prevailed over there, the decision would very likely be against the users and against the states and more for the federal government and conservation. I wasn't involved directly. This is more....

MOSS: Let me get back a minute to the congressional committees. You mentioned the oversight role of the committees. Did the issue of executive privilege arise very often during the...

BEATY: Yeah, I think so; maybe not often, but often enough so that it happened, and also--and this is a phrase that sent Wayne Aspinall through the ceiling—

* These are called “lieu selections,” “lieu lands” or “in lieu lands,” to be claimed for state sections lost to parks, military reservations, etc.

implied powers or implied.... It's not implied. It doesn't exist if it's not written down, and the administration doesn't do things like that unless Congress tells them they can do it. An examination of his letters to Udall...

MOSS: Of course, in the early days, he was still fretting over that C & O [Chesapeake and Ohio] Canal thing, which is a case in point.

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BEATY: That's right. Oh yes. He still is. But that's right and he never.... I have a feeling that he got along better with Seaton and with Hickel [Walter J. Hickel] than he did with Udall, or that they got along better with him than Udall was able to in spite of all Udall's efforts to woo the old curmudgeon. He looked upon Udall, I think, as the kid on his committee who hadn't been around long enough to be a good subcommittee chairman, much less the Secretary of Interior. He never said anything like that. There was great cordiality between them in personal meetings. Both went out of the way, I think, to avoid any personal conflicts, but he was an antagonist most of the time. The delay in getting things like the wilderness bill through the House Interior Committee was partly that I think; partly, of course, Aspinall's view that wilderness isn't necessarily a good thing.

MOSS: Over on the Senate side in first couple of years Goldwater [Barry M. Goldwater] was on the Interior Committee, wasn't he?

BEATY: That's right

MOSS: Do you know why he shifted off it?

BEATY: Yeah; he regards himself as a military expert and he wanted to get on the military affairs committee [Armed Services Committee]. Goldwater was a guy whose family had enough money that he could learn to fly when very few people were learning to fly, in the early 1930s. He was too old in World War II by military regulations to be a pilot, to take pilot training, but he had a reserve commission and went into the air force in Arizona, and because of his connection with the business community was able to provide a good liaison between the developing air bases and the state. He learned to fly military planes by subterfuge, became a liaison pilot or service pilot, one of these limited pilot-type things and ferried planes. But he's a very bright guy, picking up things that he's interested in. He worked at it pretty hard, and after the war helped organize the Arizona Air National Guard, became assistant adjutant general for air. When the Arizona Air National Guard was called up for duty during the Korean War, he found it expedient not to join them. He was getting ready to run for the Senate, I'm sure, a year later and didn't want to be interfered with in that campaign. But he continued to be active in it, and as you noticed, when he came back to the Senate now, this is the committee he got on, the military affairs rather than Interior. But his being on Interior didn't have any effect on us. There was very little communication; whatever there was was friendly. I think it was as I recall. He didn't pay any attention to the committee at all.

MOSS: I was reading the nomination hearings the other day, and I noticed that he gave Ken Holum [Kenneth Holum] a rather rough time.

BEATY: Well, this would have been the only area that he would have paid much attention to, and this is because Arizona Public Service Company is a big factor in Arizona. It's a private (Investor-

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owned utility--IOU) utility and Holum was branded as a ultraliberal public ownership guy. I was on good terms with them and still am--but I don't see much of them any more, obviously--with three or four of the top executives of Arizona Public Service.

Over the years I have visited frequently with a man named Bill Reilly [William P. Reilly], who is now the president of the company. He's always been a big man in the company even though he had different titles: assistant president or vice president or various other things. He told me once that they agreed--and when he said they, he didn't mean just their company, he meant the utility companies generally (they obviously consulted each other on the Udall appointment, the designation of Udall)--among themselves not to oppose it because of fear that they'd get somebody worse like Clyde Ellis [Clyde T. Ellis]--worse from their point of view. They knew Udall was a public power man more or less, but regarded him as, I guess, pragmatic to the point of--or at least not being a doctrinaire public power man who would insist on "socializing" the whole U.S. power business.

But he told me that they were very concerned about Ken Holum, and so this was it. This wasn't Barry Goldwater. He never knew who.... Well, and another thing. Holum had opposed Karl Mundt [Karl E. Mundt] in the Senate once, and Mundt and Goldwater are great friends. I'm sure Mundt and the power people would have needled Goldwater to ask some dirty questions.

MOSS: I noticed that when Goldwater went off the committee, Hayden [Carl T. Hayden] came on. Is this a natural sort of trade off for Arizona?

BEATY: Well, Hayden, I think, felt a responsibility to do it. He'd been working for the Central Arizona [Water] Project ever since he--well, for some kind of water development for Arizona since he came to the Congress, which was in 1912. He'd been in the Senate since 1927. He had served on that committee at one time or another I suppose, but he'd gotten on Appropriations early and this tends to take the members' full time, particularly when you get to be subcommittee chairman, and later, at this point, the committee chairman. But he went on as a junior member of that committee in order for Arizona to have somebody there who could participate constantly in any water legislation. He had the seniority and the power to get himself put on it when Goldwater left it.

MOSS: On the Senate subcommittees, Church [Frank Church] was the head of the Indian Affairs [sub] committee. Now how did he operate as a chairman of that committee? What were his interests?

BEATY: Very, very poorly.

MOSS: Yeah, why?

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BEATY: I just don't think anybody on that committee really thinks you can do anything about Indian affairs. You know, they change subcommittee chairman constantly. He was subcommittee chairman at one time, Burdick [Quentin N. Burdick] was at one time, Lee Metcalf at another time. They all think about it in terms of their own local Indian tribes, and they don't see the full picture. The Senate Interior Committee has a staff man named Jim [James H. Gamble] who's been there a long time. He came in with Senator Anderson. He has very fixed views on Indian affairs, and he runs the subcommittee. It's just that simple. The senators in my mind are figureheads.

MOSS: Okay, so this is a case in point where the staff takes the initiative rather than the Senator.

BEATY: And partly because they all just viewed it as a losing proposition; you can't solve it; it's going to cost money; it won't show any results even though you do spend it. Church very much, I think, was in favor of termination, which got its big start during the Eisenhower administration, which this administration--the Hickel-Agnew [Spiro T. Agnew]-Nixon [Richard Milhous Nixon] administration--was quick to reject publicly because the Indians were afraid that--and said so at some of their meetings--- this was going to lead to a termination policy. They insisted, not true. But Church showed himself, in the meetings I attended with him, to be very much in favor of it.

MOSS: And let's see, Moss was the chairman on the Irrigation and Reclamation [sub] committee. How about that one?

BEATY: Well, Anderson was...

MOSS: First.

BEATY: ...chairman and is now. He, as a senator will do for a friend, stepped aside to let Moss be the chairman leading up to his first campaign for reelection. So he was temporary chairman.

MOSS: Oh, I see.

BEATY: And then Moss got involved in promoting this NAWAPA, North American Water [and Power Alliance] something development which would involve

bringing a lot of water down from Canada. And he had hearings and he sounded off a lot and he said things that upset an old water expert like Anderson, and he took back the committee after Moss had been reelected in 1964.

MOSS: And Gruening [Ernest Gruening] on [Subcommittee on] Minerals, Materials, and Fuels?

BEATY: Gruening, coming from Alaska, or at least representing Alaska--he didn't come from Alaska. He's a continental lower forty-eighter by birth and rearing. He just moved up there. He got appointed

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I guess, governor or territorial governor under Roosevelt [Franklin Delano Roosevelt]. That's why he became an Alaskan. But anyway, he was an Alaskan. He was representing them, representing Alaska which had great interest in gold mining and things like this. He was a constant thorn in our side, trying to get us to subsidize gold mining and to do various things with gold which [Department of the] Treasury wouldn't let us do if we'd wanted to. It was, you know.... Monetary policy was something out beyond Interior's control, and Gruening ought to have known that, and probably did, very likely did, but he was always giving us a hard time for not helping the gold mining industry. Now I'm sure he had interest in other things to do with minerals, but this was the thing that sticks in my mind most: his irascibility, his unyielding qualities, constant harassment of us for not doing something for the gold industry.

MOSS: On both those committees, Irrigation and Reclamation and the minerals one, what about the staff senators relationship again?

BEATY: I think.... Well, I just don't know. I think the staff pretty well followed the senators' lead in water and power reclamation.

MOSS: Okay, how about the other committee, on the minerals committee, the staff relationship there?

BEATY: There was relatively little activity. I rather imagine that the staff, if they did anything, were doing it somewhat on their own. I would imagine on this gold stuff that they were following Gruening's lead, and he was telling them to get something up on this, and they'd do that. But there must have been a lot of time on their hands aside from just processing the routine small bills that come through on mineral things. I'm not well up on this.

MOSS: How about the relationship between the career people in Interior and the subcommittee staff, say, in the minerals area where you have a lot of career

people and career appointments to the bureau level? How does this relationship, this continuing relationship over time, undercut the departmental position? Or does it?

BEATY: I think it could.

MOSS: Do you know of any instances in which it did?

BEATY: No, I think there were instances where it did in Reclamation with Dominy [Floyd E. Dominy] having his close relationships with the committee. I can't name you one, but... Well, I can. There were several things that happened in the Central Arizona project: a fight and the various developments of it over the years, where I am confident that Dominy was getting senators and Senate staffers to do things that tried to influence our position on things. But in minerals it just didn't come to the crunch on anything big. It could have happened, you know, that I'm just not aware of. There has to be. When a staffer wants to know something, he knows

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somebody at a GS-15 or 16 level down at the department. He calls them and they talk, and they get this exchange. And so I'm sure there's a closer relationship built up over the years as you implied than could ever develop quickly between some political appointees at the top of the department who may not even know the names of these Senate staffers or House staffers.

MOSS: All right now, on [Subcommittee on] Public Lands, Bible [Alan Bible] was the chairman.

BEATY: Yeah, and Roy Whitacre, I guess, was the principal staff man up there on that. A very knowledgeable guy, but he's Bible's man, and I don't think he was innovating or branching out on his own particularly.

MOSS: How about Bible as a public lands man? Did you get help from him on the parks and grazing fees and that sort of thing?

BEATY: Yeah. Well, we got a lot of help on parks. He felt like a lot of others did and expressed himself to me on a couple of occasions about, "Why don't you guys slow down a little bit?" He said something one night, "Why don't you tell that boss of yours that he's created enough parks now and let's get them operating before we get out and set up a lot more?" He was very helpful. He went ahead even though he felt this way. He went ahead and helped us with new park legislation constantly, all the way through.

He was very much in favor of a park in north central Nevada, the Great Basin national park, which was a range of these high mountains with timber and wild animals and everything going down to the desert, a very fine area. But the mineral resources were against the--the mineral industries were against it and the ranchers were against it. I think Congressman Baring [Walter S. Baring, Jr.] was violently opposed to it because he's made a

success out of going along with the user groups. Bible was never able to get unanimity on that, and Baring was in a position in the House Interior Committee to prevent any action on that. So that's one of the parks that was never created.

Bible, on the other hand, Nevada being such a big public lands state--90 percent of it or so is publicly, federally owned--has to listen to the ranchers. When we tried to raise the grazing fees, he told John Carver and Carver repeated this to Udall--well, I heard Carver repeat it; I didn't hear Bible say it, but I'm sure it's true--that he had to oppose us, that he would do so only in a token way. He recognized that the fees had to be raised, that they were going to be raised whether they had to be or not, that he wouldn't cause a lot of trouble. But as the fight developed, he got more and more involved emotionally, I think, until he was violently opposed to it, and we raised it over his last-ditch opposition. The relations were fairly cool. He's a very nice guy and good to deal with, good to do business with. He knows his state well. He's, I think, an outstanding senator from the standpoint of knowing his state and knowing what's going on there and what's needed. But relations were strained for awhile.

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MOSS: On [Subcommittee on] Territories and Insular Affairs, Jackson headed that up himself.

BEATY: Yeah, he did. And he had interest in it, and he had his own staff people on it. It's a minor part of the whole operation. There are only three territories, then the trust Territory [of the Pacific Islands], which Interior had administrative responsibility for.

MOSS: What about the problem of getting sufficient money to do a decent job of the trusteeship?

BEATY: Well, this gets back to the appropriations committees and they were never very eager to provide much money for this.

MOSS: The Interior Committee would go ahead with programs and then Appropriations would undercut?

BEATY: Yeah, well, I think the department would propose programs and the Appropriations Committee wouldn't go for it. Now, it's possible that--Wayne Aspinall and Mike Kirwan [Michael J. Kirwan] had a very close relationship. For example, the thing I'm very much aware of: Aspinall thought Bureau of Land Management had no business--this is getting away from what you're talking about but it's an illustration. There were few areas that Aspinall didn't have strong views in, but in this particular thing he had very strong views that the Bureau of Land Management had no business being in the recreation business. Its job was to manage the public lands, to lease it to the grazers, to keep it from eroding, and that's about it. The fact that people are going to go onto public land and use it for picnics or camping seemed to have no effect on him. Well, the BLM, in its management responsibility, just had to have money to clean up the mess, to build

roads instead of letting people just driving their cars all over the place. And if you're going to serve the public, we thought at least that they should develop usable water and campsites and things like this. We'd go up with a big appropriation, and Kirwan would turn it down because Aspinall was telling him, "I don't approve of this." And it just happened over and over again.

I'm sure that there was some relationship between the substantive committees and the appropriations committees in other areas. We got a lot of help out of Interior and eventually out of the--House Interior Committee--and eventually out of the Interior [and Related Agencies] Appropriations Subcommittee because we put Rex Lee [Hyrum Rex Lee] in as governor of Samoa, and Rex Lee had an excellent relationship with Aspinall for awhile. Later on when Aspinall's son went to work out there in Samoa, this was helpful. We got money for this educational TV setup and Kirwan was giving us extra money. His son was in our Office of Territories. He was a career man. He wasn't a political appointee. He may have been years ago, but John Kirwan [John J. Kirwan] was a very competent staff man. Where he could develop some interest like that, we could get the appropriations. The Trust Territory had been starved for anything except defense expenditures while the Navy Department administered it, the Defense Department. We had an awful time getting any money to take care of civil needs, roads and water supplies and schools. It

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just didn't happen. We just didn't get those appropriations. I don't know. I just don't know right now. I think John Carver could be quite a bit of help to you on that. Udall himself could be.

MOSS: Yeah, yeah. I've skipped over again on both public lands and territories, the staff relationship. How strong a staff was it on each of these subcommittees?

BEATY: Well, I think our own staff within Interior was weak in territories and they just weren't sophisticated enough to know that you ought to develop some relationship with the committee staff. They were bureaucratic, pedantic. I was never impressed, and yet I didn't have an awful lot to do with them so it's kind of a surface reaction more than anything I could nail down. In lands there was a lot of relationship between the department professionals and the committees. Karl Landstrom [Karl S. Landstrom] had worked with Aspinall. There's a constant flow back and forth between the department, between the Bureau of Land Management and the staffs of the committees. Right now the top land man for Aspinall is a former BLM man, Milton Pearl, who used to be in BLM, went from there to Aspinall's committee when Landstrom came to us as director of the Bureau of Land Management. Then he became Aspinall's man on the Public Land Law Review Commission. This happens because there is this constant relationship between.... Committee people get to know who the knowledgeable ones are at the Bureau, and when they need to fill a spot they know who to get. The Hill can offer better salaries, maybe shorter tenure, but when a guy builds himself into a job a change of parties up there doesn't affect him usually.

MOSS: Okay, moving over to Aspinall's committee in the House and the

subcommittees. I have O'Brien [Leo W. O'Brien] listed as chairman of the Territorial and Insular Affairs [Sub]committee. On the same subject, how did he operate?

BEATY: Well, our relationships with him were very good. He and Stewart had gotten to be very close friends on the committee staff before we moved. There just wasn't much going at that time, and he was really looking forward to retirement I think. I don't think anything significant happened. Good relationship--there wasn't any reason for conflict. I forget what year he quit, but I just don't recall anything of any significance that happened except for very friendly relations.

MOSS: Okay, Rogers [Walter E. Rogers] was the man on Irrigation and Reclamation.

BEATY: Yeah, there wasn't much major reclamation legislation. It was processed in the early part of our administration. But among things that were was a big project in Rogers' district, and if you were looking at some of my early notes to Udall, you will see that Dominy had mentioned it in December before we ever went down there. This was the Sanford dam or something like this on the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle which.... Very little irrigation involved; this is a municipal water supply

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thing for Lubbock and Amarillo and Pampa and Borger and twelve major cities in the Panhandle area. Well, Rogers was there for the ground-breaking ceremony, and he was there for the dedication ceremony, and this was his baby, and he got it.

There was a small project like that in, I think, Carl Albert's [Carl B. Albert] district near the University of Oklahoma. Projects like that got a lot of attention from the committee and they're not bad projects. We were for them, but if you're going to get something done in the future on other projects, you better go along with ones they want, and we did.

MOSS: Was it difficult to get other projects that specific committee members were not interested in directly?

BEATY: It was slower. First of all, as I think we've mentioned, when we came in there were very few reclamation projects already planned and on the shelf. The new starts policy had its effect there more than in the actual construction because there were some things going on when the Eisenhower administration came in, and they had a few big ones like the Upper Colorado [River Storage] Project. That was the only big one I guess that kept things moving. But a lot of the planning had fallen to the wayside, and it took a while to get going so that these smaller projects were a lot easier to get moving on.

The big fight always is not against the reclamation project but against the power phase of it, and the private utilities were opposed. They don't want cheap power with a preference clause attached to it available in their areas. So if you've got dams with no power

attached, it's fairly easy to get it done except where it infringes on some scenic location and the conservationists then fight it.

MOSS: Another one of the arguments advanced was why have Reclamation and Irrigation to create agricultural land when we're already overproducing? How significant was this? It came from the congressmen didn't it?

BEATY: Oh, yeah, it's used constantly, and it's used by guys who ought to know better, but it's a good argument, a good emotional argument. The silos are full of grains and so forth. But the real answer, and it's one that's believed by enough people to allow these projects to keep on being approved, is that most of this water is being used for specialty crops, things that don't go into storage or are not in surplus, particularly in the Southwest: winter-grown lettuce and broccoli and early spring cantaloupes and, you know, all these things. Well, that's the counterargument. You examine the total acreage devoted to one thing or another and you may [find] that an awful lot of cotton is grown on irrigated land, and cotton is in surplus from time to time. So it just depends on whose argument you're listening to. There are arguments against it. But when people think of surplus, they really think of wheat and corn and stuff piling up, and these

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aren't grown really to any extent on irrigated lands of the reclamation area.

MOSS: Okay, Haley [James A. Haley] was the chairman on [Subcommittee on] Indian Affairs in the House. How did he operate?

BEATY: Well, he takes this very seriously. He really works at being a commissioner of Indian Affairs. I don't mean commissioner...

MOSS: Chairman.

BEATY: ...chairman. Well, in effect, the commissioner better listen. He's an ultraconservative. He's against reclamation. I don't think he ever voted for reclamation in his life. I just can't believe he ever did. He's against public power. He's against a good many things that any Democratic administration will do, but he takes a very enlightened outlook on Indians. He studies it, travels around and visits the reservations and talks to people. The staff people who worked with him, I'm sure, had not had time to exert any initiative. He's got ideas and they're working on it all the time. He's not the kind of a guy I admire particularly, but in this field he's worked at it a lot harder and a lot more seriously than anybody in the Senate, I think.

MOSS: All right, now [subcommittee on] Mines and Mining, Ed Edmondson [Edmond A. Edmondson].

BEATY: Again, I don't remember. There was relatively little activity here. He and

Stewart had grown up in the House together. Maybe Ed was there one term before, but I think they came in about the same time. Well, I think he must have come in a term or two before Stewart did, but they had a commonality of interests, Indians and minerals. You've got some lead and zinc up in his district. The relations were good, and I don't recall any real problems. Where he gave us problems was in his position on the Public Works Committee and opposed to the fee system on the Land and Water Conservation Project. But he's been a good one to work with. In this way, I mean he's been constructive; he's been willing to listen to what our point of view was. He worked at being a chairman, but I just can't specify anything.

MOSS: You've already mentioned Baring on [Subcommittee on] Public Lands. Is there anything more you want to add on that?

BEATY: If I were rating them, he'd be at the bottom. He did absolutely.... I don't know whether he gave us any trouble. I don't think he was competent enough to. But in all these cases, it didn't make much difference what the subcommittee chairman--whether he was competent or incompetent, or whether he was motivated by greatest good for the greatest number of people or to very narrow, local, selfish interests. Now Aspinall was the chairman, and he was the chairman of each subcommittee. He was present at every hearing. No subcommittee chairman, I think with the exception of Haley, ever got away with anything that Aspinall didn't agree with. I think probably Aspinall felt that the Indians were in good

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hands in Haley's case and he didn't bother too much. I may be wrong. He may have given him just as much trouble as he did the rest of them, but he was the chairman. I'm sure he ran Baring's subcommittee. It wasn't Baring. So things didn't go bad there because of Baring. I just think Baring personally was not a very good one. He's not....

MOSS: Morris [Thomas G. Morris] on [Subcommittee on] National Parks.

BEATY: Well, they didn't set up this National Parks Subcommittee until after Udall left the committee. J. T. Rutherford was chairman I think at first, and then Tom Morris later. Tom was very helpful. He's a hard-working guy. He's a lot like Aspinall to the extent that he knew his district very well, like I described Bible a few minutes ago. Tom Morris was that kind of a guy. He had limited vision. You know, I don't think he really understood what Udall was talking about, combating the ills that afflict the environment, but he was willing to listen. I'd rate him pretty high.

MOSS: On the minority side, Saylor [John P. Saylor] played a pretty big role in the committee, didn't he?

BEATY: Aspinall runs the committee in such a way that he would deal with the ranking Republican before he'd deal with members of your own party if they weren't

subcommittee chairman. They worked together very closely. They'd decide what was going to come up and what wasn't going to come up. Saylor, very much a conservationist; on matters like that he was extremely helpful. He took the lead; he pushed on a lot of things. On reclamation matters, he was against public power, and he's not really for reclamation; and he and Dominy developed a real feud, and he caused us lots of trouble. He's a likeable guy, and yet he appalled me with his insensitivity to what ought to be said. There were some very sensitive things and I can't recall any of them right now. Briefing in the White House--was probably on the transfer of water pollution control administration to Interior.

MOSS: This happened later, of course.

BEATY: This is after. That's right. But things were said and done there that made it clear that he didn't know how sensitive they were, and yet the next day in the committee before it started, or sometime, he was sounding off and revealing things that shouldn't have been revealed in front of people who shouldn't have heard them, and laughing like it was a great big joke.

MOSS: What kind of things?

BEATY: I can't recall. I just remember the incident. But he jokes a lot and doesn't know where you should stop, I think. But he's really been an extremely valuable guy on parks and conservation generally.

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MOSS: Somewhat of a digression. You mentioned the shift of the pollution control business from HEW [Department of Health, Education and Welfare] to Interior. Now, early in the Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] administration it was shifted from the Public Health Service to the Office of the Secretary of HEW. Now, how did Interior relate to that at that time when it was in HEW?

BEATY: I don't recall.

MOSS: Okay, okay. Do you know what moves were underway during the Kennedy administration to get it shifted over to Interior from HEW?

BEATY: If there were any, I don't know about it. But I do know that Jim Quigley [James M. Quigley] who was an old friend of Stewart's.... They'd been in Congress together. We hired one of his girls when he got defeated in 1956. I knew him as well as any of Udall's friends in Congress, and I would see him occasionally in 1962 and '63. He was always upset that Udall was trying to get his hooks on that bureau and take it over to Interior. Well, I wasn't aware of this myself. If we were trying to, I certainly didn't know about it. I know Stewart was speaking constantly about the need for clean water and this sort of thing, but the bureaucracy at HEW was convinced that Interior was trying to

take it over, and Quigley was reacting in their support that it was best over there and that it shouldn't go to Interior; and I think he probably developed some strong feelings against his old friend because of what he thought we were trying to do. And, of course, it eventually worked out that way. So I don't know. This is the only thing I know, that I recall from the Kennedy period there, that would relate to that. I don't know of anything that happened officially in the meetings or dispatch of letters or memoranda or anything else. Maybe Stewart was thinking about this. You might ask him.

MOSS: Yes, I will. I don't think any discussion of Congress in this period particularly with regard to Interior would be complete without some mention of Bob Kerr [Robert Samuel Kerr].

BEATY: That's right.

MOSS: Now, just what made him so big?

BEATY: When did he die?

MOSS: It was after the Kennedy administration, if I remember correctly. It was in the early Johnson [Lyndon Baines Johnson] years.

BEATY: Well, if he wanted anything, he got it or he made things awfully uncomfortable for the people who stood in his way. I don't recall what he wanted from us in a legislative way. I recall what he wanted in personnel.

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MOSS: Such as?

BEATY: He wanted to name the people who were working for all of the offices in Oklahoma, the Southwestern Power Administration, deputy administrator, the lawyer, you know. There weren't many jobs, but whatever there were, they were going to be Kerr people. I have a feeling I'm repeating myself.

MOSS: A little bit. We talked about him a little bit before.

BEATY: You probably will find in comparing this tape with the previous one that I've said it differently. With one of the deals, we had Kerr and Monroney [Almer Stillwell Monroney] to deal with. And I forget what year it was that Ed Edmondson's brother [James Howard Edmondson] got elected governor and surprised everybody, maybe 1960; probably was. It could have been 1962. It must have been 1960. We were beset by three or four conflicting factions of the Democratic party in Oklahoma. The [Democratic] National Committeeman I think was an Ed Edmondson or a Howard Edmondson man. He would come back here and talk to Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] or John Bailey [John Moran Bailey] or somebody, and we'd get the word to see him and talk

to him about some job, and they'd send somebody back that he had recommended, I recall this one. I took him down to see who it was, down to see Frank Barry, the lawyer. He wanted this job as the legal man for the Southwestern Power Administration. We checked it out a little bit. I or somebody else misunderstood Kerr, saying, "Well, if that's what you want, go ahead." But what he really said, I'm sure, was, "Well, if you want to appoint him, you just go ahead and take the consequences." Because he was endorsed by the national committee and because I understood Kerr to say it's all right, we did it. It hit the fan. It was murder.

MOSS: Well, what did he do?

BEATY: Oh, he was just outraged. "It's not going to go through. You'd better talk him into withdrawing." It was a tremendous show of indignation and determination. We went ahead with the appointment.

MOSS: Yeah, I was going to ask how much substance is behind all that?

BEATY: Well, he worked in a different way. And pretty soon this guy resigned or something, and Kerr got his man anyway. I don't know how he did it, but it happened. He had a man working on his staff who was generally referred to as the third senator from Oklahoma. He was one of these guys who really worked at Oklahoma problems and worked for both senators. I mean he was on Kerr's payroll, but he was digging in and getting the facts on things, projects that they wanted. Kerr had his own stock of steaks in the freezer up at the Senate office building from his own cattle, and on a couple of occasions he invited me up to have lunch with him and this other man I'm talking about. I can't think of his name. Really wonderful steak. He was very confidential, and he'd tell me what he wanted. I don't remember any of these things, what he really wanted,

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mostly personnel. Very seldom was there any policy. He had an annual party. I went to one of these in the basement of the Washington Hotel. The same sort of thing--Kerr steaks. He invited staffs from the committees and all the departments. It was a big thing, you know, two hundred people. And Kerr was the host for this. He worked it from all angles. He worked it from his power as a committee chairman. [Interruption]

MOSS: We're at the end of a tape and let's see, we were talking about...

BEATY: Senator Kerr.

MOSS: ...Senator Kerr.

BEATY: I've already told you probably more than I know.

MOSS: All right, well....

BEATY: It's conjecture.

MOSS: As a matter of fact I'm sort of coming to the end of the congressional business here anyway so why don't we go ahead and wrap it up. I have a couple of things that we can still go over, the lobbies and interest groups area, and perhaps we can do that next time.

[END OF INTERVIEW #13]

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