

George J. Mitchell Oral History Project

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Fritz Hollings

(Interviewer: Andrea L'Hommedieu)

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Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview for the South Caroliniana Library at USC, to be shared jointly with the George Mitchell [Oral History] Project at Bowdoin College. The date is June 20, 2012. This is Andrea L'Hommedieu and today I am in Charleston, South Carolina, with Senator Ernest F. "Fritz" Hollings, and I also have with me today Herb Hartsook [Director of South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina]. We want to talk today a little bit about what recollections you have over the years, your time in the Senate and other areas in conjunction with Senator George Mitchell. What first comes to your mind?

Fritz Hollings: Oh, he was the best. I've been in the Senate for thirty-eight years, and when I think back I don't know of a better senator, in that he was just highly intelligent, he did his homework, he listened, and he knew how to get things done—which is exactly our trouble in Washington today. They don't have any idea of getting anything done. They have every idea of getting themselves the money to get reelected, that's all they do is collect money, collect money, collect money.

So you'll know that I know what I'm talking about, in my last race in '98 I—we—the senators raise each, money for everybody else for five years and then that last year for himself, but we raised \$8.5 million; \$8.5 million in 1998, that's fourteen years ago, is that right? And that's the seventh time to be elected to the United States Senate, and I had to raise \$8.5 million and \$8.5 million factors out as \$30,000 a week, each week, every week, for six years. So you constantly—at Christmas and New Year's you get behind, you're \$60,000 in the hole; you haven't raised any money during the Christmas and the New Year's holidays and so you're doubling up. And they have breaks every month, and they have fund-raisers at breakfast and noon and in the evening, they have breaks in getting the votes, so we're not going to vote until nine-thirty, come back from your fund-raisers at nine-thirty and we'll vote, let them argue it. Nobody listens to the argument; nobody cares. Everybody's mind is made up. The lobbyists run the thing. Lyndon Johnson couldn't run the Senate.

I can tell you all about the Senate; I can't remember specific things about George Mitchell, only a general memory because I hadn't seen him in a dozen years, but I wasn't a bit surprised that he was successful in Ireland, where everybody else was unsuccessful. He knew how to get people together, and he knew how to work them together and everything else. The leader doesn't do that anymore. I describe a situation where, when I first got in the Senate in '66 there were six Republicans and six Democrats and we'd meet every Wednesday night at somebody's home, and the wife who was designated, she prepared a little supper and we had drinks and ties off and were giving each other hell, kidding about what had gone on on the floor, because you had floor debates in '67, '68, '69. We had regular debates; there wasn't any TV and all that preening and prissing and everything else for the folks back home. You were trying to get the attention of the

senators, you had to get their votes, and you were working.

And we became good friends and we helped each other; when we needed a vote and it didn't hurt your state you'd give a vote, a Republican, and everything else like that. Now what's happened is that, well, the lobbyists, no six Republicans and six Democrats, the lobbyists get together every night, they don't wait till Wednesday night, and they have drinks together and everybody on K Street knows everybody else's business and everybody knows how to get Herb Hartsook's vote, I know where he gets his money, and Senator Hartsook, he gets it from textiles and that crowd in Columbia, and I know exactly who's his main man in Columbia and I know the lobbyist that handles him, and I can get his vote, and votes on important issues are made up long before the roll is called. Hell, you don't worry about majority leader. George Mitchell couldn't do it now; Lyndon Johnson couldn't do it now.

I'll never forget years back a fellow walked into my office early one morning and said, "Senator, you know about that fund raiser they had downtown last night." I said, "Well, so what?" He said, "Well, it was for your opponent. And all the Republicans on your committee, the Commerce Committee, were there except Ted Stevens." Ted and I were old time friends. We wouldn't raise money against each other. In fact, when we opened up the airport in Anchorage and named it after Ted Stevens, Danny Inouye and I were the two speakers. Yeah, yeah, years ago. But I started thinking, I said, "Now wait a minute, all the Republicans, they want to get rid of me? Hmm, I want to get rid of them." That's the partisanship. I mean, when you're raising money against each other and everything else like that, that's the partisanship. So that's it. That's a long answer, but I've learned how to filibuster.

AL: Do you have some early memories of Ed Muskie in the Senate?

FH: Oh yeah, Ed and I worked together. He and I were on the Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Commission when I was governor. The two governors Eisenhower appointed were Abe Ribicoff from Connecticut and myself from South Carolina, and Ed Muskie, as a senator, was on that. I think maybe he sponsored that resolution that organized the Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Commission, but he is an old friend, even before I got in the Senate, and then we worked closely together. He was always 'righteous indignation', *bl-bl-bl-bl-bl*, I can hear him now. He'd get his temper up and everything else of that kind. Emotional, but he was— Everybody liked Ed Muskie; everybody liked George Mitchell; everybody liked Maggie, Margaret Chase Smith. Oh yeah, she was there when I was there, yeah. Lordy, that Maine crowd, you've always— Cohen—

AL: Right, Bill Cohen.

FH: Bill Cohen, everybody likes Bill. He was a popular senator and a popular secretary of defense.

AL: He served later in the Clinton administration as secretary of defense, and so I don't know, in some ways it's interesting for me to know from your perspective, looking at Ed Muskie and then later George Mitchell, what you saw as differences and similarities in their style.

FH: Oh, I can't remember their style particularly.

AL: Well, Ed Muskie's temper, did it seem like it was purposeful?

FH: Oh, I would say George was smoother, yeah. He was more tempered, but Muskie didn't fly off the handle, he just got enthused and wrought up about what he was thinking about and arguing and debating, and those were the days of the debates. They don't have any debates; they have recitations up there, for the TV, that's all, it's getting on for the TV. Nobody listens.

AL: Do you think, from your perspective, that the money and the fund-raising is really what changed?

FH: Oh, it's cancer, yeah. We saw that—and now you're getting down my alley, because I can't remember specifically about George but I can remember specifically about Maurice Stans. Maurice Stans was in charge of fund-raising for Richard Nixon as a presidential candidate in 1968, and he had a cash-and-carry operation of money. There was a lot of cash, and there was a lot of carry.

And I'll never forget George Steinbrenner who owned the New York Yankees, I was just a freshman senator but I knew George. He walked in my office and he said, "Look, I got Great Lakes Shipping Company down there in Tampa, Florida, and I've done a lot of work for the government and they owe me ten to fifteen million. And he said, "Nixon's man came by and said I had to raise \$1 million or else I wouldn't get my money from the government if he were elected." And he said, "What do you think, I ought to do it?" And I said, "Wait a damn minute," I said, "you got to find out from one these senior senators, I never heard of this kind of thing going on." And he did. I don't know whatever happened, but I noticed, when I saw it in the paper, that George Steinbrenner and Armand Hammer and a bunch of people pleaded to a misdemeanor for money-raising or whatever it was.

As Republicans and Democrats we all worked together in those days, and we said, "Good God, the government is going to be up for buying the seats," and so forth. I can hear old John McClellan telling Bill Fulbright: "No Jack Kennedy's going to buy this seat." They had in mind Kennedy's campaign in '60, where papa Kennedy put all that money into West Virginia and took it away from Hubert Humphrey in that race. Those are the kind of things I remember. And we had a bipartisan vote, limited spending in campaigns, and in 1973 Richard Nixon signed it into law. It was totally bipartisan, and everybody was worried about you'd have to buy the seat. That's the way it is today, fast forward 2012, from 1973 to 2012. What is it, forty years almost?

And the Supreme Court, Jim Buckley, who was a senator from New York, he sued Frank Valeo, the secretary of the Senate, and *Buckley vs. Valeo* before the United States Supreme Court equated money with speech. Old James Madison never equated money with speech. You had free speech, but if you had to buy the speech that wasn't free speech. That's as basic and simple and understandable, except for the Supreme Court of the United States, and that's the culprit in this whole situation because John McCain came along with McCain-Feingold, and I put in a resolution, I could see the way the court was going that you had to have a Constitutional amendment, and just one line, that Congress is hereby authorized to regulate or control spending

in federal elections. And the governor's conference in the '80s called me, and I added the states to it, and state elections and so forth; they were worried about buying the office rather than getting elected. And we debated it, we got a majority, but we never got the two-thirds for a joint resolution and that's exactly what is needed today. All they got to do—and then you cut out all the Citizens United and corporate (*unintelligible 00:15:52*) and secret PACS and millions and billions being spent. You got to buy it.

A little lady came about Christmas time, out of the Wal-Mart, and she wanted to run for the United States Senate. And I looked at her and you could tell she was a working woman, and I said, "Can you raise \$5 million?" And she said, "Raise \$5 million?" I said, "Yes, in the State of South Carolina it'll take—(it took me \$8.5 million back in '98)—it'll take you at least ten or..." Lindsey Graham put it in the newspaper somewhere, I remember, a year ago that it was going to take \$13 to \$15 million, but it'll take \$10 million. You got to raise the \$5 million yourself before it triggers in, but everybody's interested in that seat and they got all kind of committees and lobbyists in Washington that'll send you money but you got to prove your efficacy and electability by raising the money yourself in your state. In other words, you got to buy it. Do you know of a Democrat in South Carolina today, Herb, that can raise \$5 million?

Herb Hartsook: Mayor Riley maybe.

FH: Yeah, I think Joe could do it.

HH: It's a short list.

FH: Yeah, a short list, that's right. But that's what's wrong, this cash-and-carry government. That's all they're talking about. Nobody knows how November's going to come out, and all the pundits say it's going to be close. I can tell you now, the way the trend is going on the record, and I've watched campaigns and everything else, Romney will be up over Obama. Obama is up over Romney this minute, but Romney will be up over. But we just don't know who's going to buy it. We just don't know who's going to buy it, because it's that last minute—for example, I'm an old budgeteer, I was on the Budget Committee with Ed Muskie. He put it in.

AL: Yes, he did, didn't he?

FH: He did, he authored the thing and I helped him pass it, and I served on it since day one, when we organized the committee and I was in charge of the defense task force; he had different task forces and I had the 050 budget for Ed Muskie. What was I about to tell you about the Budget Committee? Oh yeah, the fiscal year ends on September the 30th, and on October the 10th the Congressional Budget Office will come out and tell you what the deficit is not only for this 2012 fiscal year but for four years of Obama, and for four years of Obama I can tell you now it's \$5 trillion, is added to the national debt. And people going to vote in three weeks will say: my God, with all the ads that they'll put on, we can't afford another four years of this unconscionable spending, we can't afford it; that'll be a drumbeat in your ears. I can tell you right now what you're going to hear. I've served fifty-two years in public office, I've seen the game develop, and nobody knows who can buy it but it's going to be bought come November.

Muskie did that. George, you got to remember the different things that George did, but he did a lot of good in the Senate. I mean, you've looked up the history of his accomplishments and you ask me about them and remind me, I can tell you about them.

AL: Well one was, Ed Muskie was one of the founding writers of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts and the environmental laws, and then later when George Mitchell was in the Senate those needed to be renewed and so there was a fairly rigorous discussion about whether they would get renewed. It was a little iffy at times, and he fought real hard. And I think also the healthcare issues were coming into play, and there was that connection that George Mitchell made between the environment and our health. Do you recall any of that?

FH: No, I don't recall that. All I recall is East Millinocket [*sic*: Rumford].

AL: Yeah, tell me about—

FH: I can see Muskie's home up there on the bank, but they were cutting too darn much timber at East Millinocket. The first prize was, in some contest, that you could have a weekend at East Millinocket; the second prize is you could have two weekends at East Millinocket. But Muskie's father was a tailor or something like that.

AL: Yes.

FH: And they were cutting all that timber and it was going down into the river and they didn't give a damn about the environment, I can tell you that. So that's why Ed probably got interested and George got interested.

AL: Yes, because we had the Androscoggin River.

FH: Yeah, you got a beautiful state. Keep it that way.

AL: And you mentioned you knew that Ed Muskie's father was a tailor.

FH: Yeah, yeah.

AL: I know that he was very particular about his clothing and with some pride that his father was a tailor. Did you all ever talk about your backgrounds with each other?

FH: No, we didn't talk about the backgrounds. My father was in the paper business but I can't remember ever talking—but I knew that because of my campaigning. See, I campaigned in '82, '83, '84 for president, and we went all over Maine. I had some powerful people that really were in behind me and all like that. What's that place, Orchard something, by Portland, down there?

AL: Old Orchard Beach?

FH: Orchard Beach, that's right, yeah. They had a lot of Greeks down there, and that's where

Bill Cohen came from or something like that.

AL: He actually grew up in Bangor.

FH: Bangor, is that right?

AL: Yes.

FH: God knows, I came out in Bangor and I slept at the airport and I'll never forget walking out right on top of the hedges and cars, on snow. I never seen so much snow banked up there, Bangor, Maine. Good God almighty. Can you imagine walking out and walking on top of the cars?

AL: Yeah, we do get a lot of snow sometimes.

FH: I'm telling you, whew, yeah.

AL: And Senator Cohen was part of the Jewish community in Bangor, and then Senator Olympia Snowe, who came in—

FH: She was Greek.

AL: She's, what maybe you're thinking, and she was from the Greek community.

FH: Yeah, that's right. That was it, yeah.

AL: And tell me your recollection of being in Waterville with the Mitchells [brothers].

FH: Well, when I was campaigning I ran into George and his brothers and all were playing basketball in the yard there in Waterville, and I got in the game for a little while. But George was always in good shape. I played tennis with him, and he beat me all the time. But I think he married a tennis coach or something like that.

AL: He married a woman that was, yes—

FH: She was outstanding in tennis.

AL: She was a scout.

FH: Yeah, a scout, or something like that.

AL: Well, she did a lot more than just scouting, but yeah.

FH: Yeah, he played, I think it was George [Mitchell] and Bennett Johnston and Paul Laxalt and myself played on the Queens court or something one time, at Wimbledon. It's just a football field and they moved the lines when you wear out where you serve and everything like that, so

they moved the lines, but it's right in behind Wimbledon, like across the street, it's that close. And we had a good time. We went on some trips together, yeah. But George was an outstanding leader, but that's about the last of the leaders because the lobbyists have been taking over.

AL: Well, tell me about your tennis playing. Did you play a lot while you were in [the U.S. Senate]?

FH: Well we started there, Allie Ritzenberg at St. Albans, we'd get out there at six thirty, twenty minutes to seven; we had to wait till seven o'clock. I remember that Bob McNamara would get his seven o'clock lesson from Allie Ritzenberg [author of *Capitol Tennis: A Memoir*], and Bob McNamara came in one morning, and he'd written a book after ten years and so forth in Vietnam and then he finally, a *mea culpa* and so forth, he wrote that book. And he's coming up the steps and said, "Allie, how'd you like my book?" He said something about, "Not much" or something like that. "So, why didn't you like it?" He said, "It was as bad as your backhand." I'll never forget it.

No, we played with John Zentay and Lloyd [N.] Hand and Lloyd Bentsen and all of us—who's from Colorado, Tim Wirth? Yeah, yeah, he's gone with Ted Turner or something like that now. But a bunch of us used to get out there early every morning, and that was a good habit. That's why I felt good all the time; you could get in some exercise.

And then Harry Byrd from Virginia taught me about walking. I was embarrassed. You'd come along and you're running late for a vote and the go-cart is all filled up with the tourists and little children or something. "Get out, get out, get out, the senator's coming." That front seat, you know, is for the senator, and they'd empty out a bunch of children and you'd take your seat and then they'd go. I said, "Baloney with this." Harry Byrd was walking, I was over in the old Russell Building, and I just walked and walked up the steps and that was a good habit. I learned to just go early enough and walk, and they got used to me and they didn't have to embarrassingly unload a bunch of tourists and children out of the first seat to get the senator to the Senate. That's the last thing I wanted to do. But yeah, we played tennis, and we played on these trips too.

AL: Oh really, when you traveled overseas.

FH: Oh yeah, stay in shape.

AL: Do you remember any of the places you went?

FH: Every one; you name it.

AL: Any one with George Mitchell that you recall?

FH: No, I was trying to think of a particular one with George, but it wasn't many with George. Old Ted Stevens and Danny Inouye and I, we took care of the 050 Budget and I can remember in 2000 it was about \$300 billion. You know, it's seven to eight hundred [billion] now? An admiral friend of mine that lives near me, he said that Bush and Obama, "They've just

been promoting everybody that could get along with the Pentagon.” He said, “They’ve got more admirals than they’ve got ships in the Navy today.” They’ve gone wild, just taking care of everybody with this questionable policy in Iraq and Afghanistan. I mean, sensitive to Democrats always being weak on defense, of all things Obama puts it up 30,000 troops. We ought to be getting out of it long ago, but we’re trying to organize an Afghan army. India doesn’t want to have an Afghan army, Pakistan doesn’t want to have an Afghan army, and the warlords who run Afghanistan don’t want to have an Afghan army. There’s not going to be an Afghan army.

Charlie Wilson told me—I used to handle the black program on the Appropriations Committee, I didn’t know what was going on, but you’ve got George Crile’s *Charlie Wilson’s War*, that’s the only war we’ve won since WWII—but Charlie Wilson won it and he did all kind of crazy things. He had drugs and liquor, and he got Jewish Israel to go to deliver stinger missiles to Muslim Pakistan to shoot down the Russian helicopters.

He called me, and I was leaving in 2004, in November 2004 we had lunch together, he wanted to thank me for my help, and we were talking along and everything—and by the way, he hadn’t had a drink in five years, he was remarried and sober and he looked good to me—and I said, “Good Lord, Charlie, you really cleaned up your act.” And just talking along, he said, “You know how we won that war?” I said, “How?” He said, “The Afghans don’t like foreigners, and Russians were foreigners and,” he said, “they don’t like each other.” And he said, “We had CIA money paying off the north to get along with the south, to go along on the programs and everything else.” He said they don’t trust each other. And that’s what we’ve got.

Vietnam proved that you can’t change a culture militarily. We tried for ten years in Vietnam, and I’ve been to Hanoi and it’s Communist and it’s getting along fine. I’ve seen the lake that John McCain landed in, I’ve seen the prison that he served in, I had a wonderful dinner and I walked around at eleven o’clock at night in Hanoi, and I wouldn’t dare walk around at eleven o’clock at night in the capital of the United States of America, Washington, D. C., would you? No, you wouldn’t, no. They’re getting along fine; Communist government. And we got American industry intels in there like gang busters. Oh, they’re getting along fine. Corporate America is trying like the devil to get into China and get into Vietnam. They don’t mind communism, but John McCain worries about it.

AL: I’m thinking about Northern Democrats versus Southern Democrats in the early years that you were in the U.S. Senate. What was—

FH: It’s easy to tell about the switch, because I was part of the switch. The southern Democrats have all gone Republican, and the northern Democrats, a lot of them have gone Republican too. That’s the Republican Party, until the tea party got into these extremes. I’m betting on Jeb Bush. Remember, this is June the 20th, but I think if Romney is smart he’ll talk the Bush family into letting Jeb, he’s got character and experience and friends with all the other state governors and everything like that, he’s married a Cuban or a Puerto Rican and so forth, he talks the language. He can get you more than Rubio, immigrant’s votes and everything else like that, and he, with all the governors and the Bush movement all back in. The most popular politician today in the United States is George Herbert Walker Bush, yeah. He was president of the Alfalfa [Club] when I was the vice president.

AL: In those early years when there were Northern and Southern Democrats, what were the issues that you recall that you were far apart on? Or were there?

FH: Well, they were strong labor in the North. For example, Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, he took over—if Everett Dirksen had lived we'd have gotten Clement Haynsworth confirmed, appointed to the United States Supreme Court. It was my suggestion, I suggested it to Nixon. By the way, Strom [Thurmond] wasn't popular in those days and they forbade Strom from ever saying a word about Clement Haynsworth on the floor of the United States Senate. Now, you go to the Congressional Record, he made all kind of talk, but he just filed them, prepared talks and all. I had to use Bob Dole, Bob Dole, who was a freshman senator from Kansas, came in and that's where we got to be good friends. But Hugh Scott, he just said Philadelphia and labor just don't like Thurmond and I can't be out on the Floor. He wouldn't handle it, and Bob Griffin from the United Auto Workers in Detroit, he wouldn't handle it, so I had to get Bob Dole to handle it. And we had the votes, but one of the principle issues was a federal judge recusing himself, and under the law and under the statute if there's any doubt now, Birch Bayh and I cleaned it up where if there's any doubt you're supposed to recuse yourself. But if it's a *de minimis* holding, in other words every judge has got an automobile; that means they can't, under that rule, they wouldn't be able to handle an automobile case, but every judge does, you know.

But he, Haynsworth, had holdings in W. R. Grace and Carolina Vendomatic and everything else like that, and they were just arguing and fussing about it and debating on the Floor. And '71 I think it was, or '70, because I don't remember—[p/o] in 1670, and we had the 300th anniversary and I went in there for the signing of the resolution about Charleston and South Carolina, and Nixon signed it and we filed out. I ducked and let the rest of the delegation go, and then I walked in and said, "I've got your Supreme Court justice, Mr. President." And he said, "Who's that?" And I said Clement Haynsworth from Greenville, South Carolina. He said, "I don't know him." I said, "Oh yes you do." I said, "You came down there for an investor's diversified board meeting in Greenville, South Carolina, and you stayed with Alistair Furman and the neighbor, Clement Haynsworth, had a cocktail party for you." "Oh," he said, "that little fella that stuttered." He said, "Yeah." I said, "He's chief judge of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, he's from the South, he's fifty-five years of age, you said they had to be fifty-five or lower, and he graduated magna cum laude in Harvard, and he's a wonderful judge and an individual." I said, "In fact, in 1960 he handled your campaign and I handled Kennedy's campaign, so I don't want to mislead you. I'm not any Republican, I'm a Democrat, we beat you in '60 but Clement Haynsworth headed up your campaign." He said, "Put that in a letter, Senator." And [John N. Mitchell] called me that night and he said, "You've got the Supreme Court justice."

Rhenquist and I handled it, and we had the votes. But Clement, unbeknownst to me, he used to come over at four o'clock from Richmond every afternoon and we'd work on the votes and who we ought to go see and everything else like that. And he said— The press got him before we could get him. We always kept him away from the press, and they jumped on him about all that stock holdings. He said, "I'm going to tell you right now, regardless of whether I'm confirmed or not, I'm putting it in a blind trust and that'll answer all questions from then on. I won't know anything about it, and you won't know anything about it, and y'all quit asking me questions." But he said, "I'll put it—"

Herblock [Herbert Lawrence Block], in the *Washington Post*, had a cartoon the next morning and they had the Congress sitting there as the presiding judge looking over, and the attorney general, [John N.] Mitchell, was the lawyer defending, little, Clement was a little boy with his book bag and streaming out of the book bag was W. R. Grace, Carolina Vendomatic stock and all like that, and Mitchell says, “But Your Honor, my client hasn’t done anything wrong, and he promises to stop doing it.” I lost five votes. I’m looking forward to meeting that boy—his mother, I told her walking up to the elevator, when we were going there, I said, “I’m going to lose my five votes.”

Nancy Dickerson— There’s a young fella that’s a reporter for CBS I think today named William Dickerson, he’s nice, good-looking, and he’s got to be Nancy’s boy. But I’ll never forget Nancy Dickerson was covering it and as I was walking out to the elevator she said, “You going to win, Senator?” And I said, “No, I’m going to lose by five votes.” I told Nancy. I never lied to the press, I most of the time didn’t answer. But Nancy was good, and they were going to vote and I couldn’t change it, I knew it. That Herblock cartoon lost me five votes.

AL: And it’s interesting, and I’ve heard it from other senators, that the successful senators that were in the U. S. Senate for many years had a really good sense of where the votes were and that you could count your votes, and you had a real good feeling about where people were in terms of voting on something that you supported. Can you talk a little bit about that whole piece of votes?

FH: Well, that’s all history. K Street, the lobbyists fix the vote now on the important issues, and they absolutely— Well what’s his name, Grover Norquist, he takes pledges and says not only that you can’t vote for taxes, anything that affects taxes and an increase in taxes you can’t vote for it, but he came out and said I’m against bipartisanship. “Don’t be compromising,” he says, “that’s nonsense, that’s out of the question.” I mean, they run it. They run it. It’s cash-and-carry government, it’s who’s bought. Don’t worry about fixing votes. I was in the State House for six years, I was president of the Senate, lieutenant governor for the Senate, in state Senate for four years, I was governor, and I had to work votes in both houses as governor, and those were the days when you worked votes and everything else.

I’ll tell you about working votes. Bill Clinton was probably the last one. We had the votes, and I say we, Evelyn Doobroin on the House side had the votes against NAFTA with Mexico, and I had the votes, a vote count in the United States Senate to defeat NAFTA with Mexico. Now NAFTA with Canada is good, because we got the same standard of living. They got no labor rights down in Mexico and everything else of that kind, and so it’s like China. So, I was making the point that on votes, Bill Clinton—and if you do your homework you’ll find that about three weeks later, in the *New York Times*, they had listed, because we knew it was going on, we were losing the votes, we had the votes, and then about a week before—Clinton gave Jake Pickle a cultural center (Congressman Pickle down in Texas), and another Texas congressman two C-17s, golf games with different congressmen out in California and different other places, he changed the votes. He knew how to work votes, and he beat us. He beat us. Clinton beat us, but those days are over now. The president can think he’s in charge. A president can’t do it, the majority leader can’t do it, the speaker can’t do it. The lobbyists do it, I can tell you that right now. Money talks.

AL: I want to ask you this, and you may not have specific memories of the majority leader's race in '89, but I wanted to ask it because some of your colleagues that I think you were close to, like Bennett Johnston and Daniel Inouye were both part of that race for majority leader as well as George Mitchell. Do you recall the dynamics of getting the votes counted for that race?

FH: No, no; I can answer right to the point I was for George. I don't remember ever being against him.

AL: I thought maybe it would be Bennett Johnston who would be your first allegiance.

FH: No, I couldn't get Bennett Johnston. You're back to '93. That was a headache. In '92 [an aside] William Jefferson Clinton was elected, in November '92, and the first week in January I think in '93, just before he took the oath, they met down at Little Rock at the governor's mansion. Hillary Clinton and Crandall Bowles, Hugh Bowles, Bill Close's daughter, Crandall Close, were at Wellesley College together, and she brought Erskine down with all the heavy hitters from Wall Street and they met in the governor's mansion and they talked for about an hour how you're going to have to cut spending, cut spending, cut spending, and somebody in the back of the room raised their hand and said, "But wait a minute governor, you're going to also have to raise taxes." And Bill Clinton, who had run on cutting taxes, he thought he'd cut it off quick. He's the smartest politician we got on the street right now. And he said, "All in the room that thinks that I ought to increase taxes raise your hands." Everybody raised their hand. And he turned to Alan Greenspan and he said, "Alan, you think I ought to raise taxes?" And he said, "Governor, you're going to have to." He said, "All right, if that's what I'm supposed to do as president I'm going to do it, I'm going to be a good president."

And so he factored out a wonderful energy tax and we got on the Floor to increase the energy tax, we cut spending and we were going to increase the energy tax. And the farmers, the farmers never pay for anything in the United States Congress, and Tom Daschle and David Boren, good friends of mine from farm countries, killed the energy tax and there we were with our spending cuts but no revenues, and we started working with Gene [B.] Sperling cobbling together liquor taxes, gasoline taxes, income taxes, corporate taxes, Social Security taxes, we even increased Social Security, and we could get all the votes. I could not get Bennett Johnston; I could not get Sam Nunn. And I was working on Rapid Robert Kerry from Nebraska, and he and I used to meet at six o'clock in the gym and we'd get on the treadmill, and he'd take that wooden leg and flap-flap-flap-flap-flap-flap running, and I'd quietly try to outrun him over on the right and everything like that, and I never could outrun that rascal. He, with that false leg, outran me every damn time. And I went to him and Rapid Robert has run against Clinton and I said, "Rapid, you're going to have to give me a vote. I can't get Nunn and I can't get Bennett Johnston, I'm missing seven Democrats and if you can do it, I know you don't like Clinton, but if you can do it for the good of the order we can get Gore in here and break the tie." And that was the last vote. I went to Tom Daschle and I said, "We got it, call the vote, do it quick before they change," you know what I mean, and Gore came in and we broke the tie.

But Gingrich was the fella who forbade anybody in the House voting for it, and in the Senate too. It took in the Senate, and we increased taxes \$250 billion and we cut spending \$250 billion and

we had eight years of the strongest economy and gave George Walker Bush, little George, a balanced budget in 2001. That was history, but from the South, you got to protect yourself. Just like I wanted to pay for Iraq, and so in January, we went in on March the 19th, 2003, but I put in a two percent VAT to pay for Iraq and [Nicholas E.] Calio, who represented President Bush on the floor of the Senate, he went around dead on arrival, dead on arrival, the data on arrival, data on arrival, and senators protect themselves. They said, "No Fritz, you get enough senators to make it credible I'll go along with you." He said, "We got to do something but," he said, "I'm not putting my name on that thing until you get some others," but I couldn't get anybody. They killed it.

HH: Senator, that's a great way to finish the interview.

AL: Thank you very much.

FH: If you don't mind. I'm sorry.

End of Interview