

# Thomas L. Copeland

Thomas L. Copeland

An Oral History



*I realized that a part-time legislator would never keep up with the full-time bureaucrat. I could see that the legislative branch of government was doomed to failure if they didn't get their act together. The Founding Fathers made a very strong decision that there were going to be three co-equal branches of government, and in the state of Washington we were failing dramatically by not recognizing the fact that the legislative branch of government was an important, essential, necessary function to the entire scheme of things.*

*Representative Tom Copeland*



## An Oral History

Washington State Oral History Program  
Office of the Secretary of State

WSOHP

# Thomas L. Copeland

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## An Oral History

Interviewed and Edited by Anne Kilgannon

Washington State Oral History Program  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Sam Reed, Secretary of State

Published 2007  
Washington State Oral History Program  
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ISBN 978-1-889320-19-9

Library of Congress Subject Headings  
1. Copeland, Thomas L. 1924-present  
2. Legislators—Washington—biography  
3. Washington—politics and government



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*Dedicating this book is easy. She did most of the fine editing, which is a lot of man hours, and I am very appreciative. She encouraged me to continue when the going got tough. She inspired me to produce educational, historical and quality material. She is my truly lovely wife and I say the following with my most cherished expression: **she is my very dearest friend.** Donna I love you.*



*Donna and Tom Copeland, New Years 2006*

# CONTENTS

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## Forewords

James A. Andersen  
Warren A. Bishop  
Ken Eikenberry

## Preface

## Acknowledgments

## Interviewer's Reflections

## Biographical Highlights

## Interviews:

1. The Copeland Family of Walla Walla.....1
2. A Private to a Company Commander in the ETO.....21
3. Life-Long Learning: WSU and Farming.....71
4. Getting Involved in Politics.....98
5. Freshman Legislator, 1957.....119
6. Committed to Changing the "Back Room," 1959.....142
7. Reaching Out: Interim Committee on Education.....173
8. New Leadership, New Energy, The Session of 1961.....193
9. The Coalition Session, 1963.....225
10. "Evans for Governor" and Legislative Campaigns.....280
11. Republican Floor Leader, 1965.....300
12. Interim Work of 1966.....361
13. Modernizing Legislative Facilities.....380
14. Republicans in the Majority, 1967.....437

**15. Speaker Pro Tempore, 1967.....468**

**16. Interim Activities of 1968.....510**

**17. The Long Session of 1969.....533**

**18. The Legislature in "Full Production," 1969-1970.....595**

**19. The Last Session, 1971.....632**

**20. 1972 Extraordinary Session and the Last Campaign.....701**

**21. New Life After the Legislature.....731**

**Appendix: Richard O. White: Washington State Code Reviser**  
An Oral History with Tom Copeland and Gay Marchesini

**Index**

## **FOREWORD**

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Tom Copeland and I have known each other since we attended grade school in Walla Walla.

We graduated from high school just in time to go marching off to World War II. Tom's destiny was to command a Tank Destroyer Company in the European Theater of Operations (E.T.O.) and mine was to be a rifleman in one of General George Patton's Armored Infantry Battalions, also in the E.T.O.

We both returned from the war with Purple Hearts. Tom with more than one. I served out the rest of the war as a patient in Army hospitals in Europe and the United States.

We next crossed paths on the political campaign trail. Tom was running for the State Legislature from Walla Walla and I for a state-wide office. Our wives met and became instant friends. Tom won; I lost, but two years later we were serving together in the House of Representatives. We have been close colleagues as well as good friends from that day to this.

In the light of hindsight two things are absolutely clear. First, this was a period in our history when the Legislature grew out of its frontier mode and entered the modern era. Second, that Tom's yeoman efforts as President Pro Tem of the House of Representatives very substantially contributed to this transition; indeed, they were what made it all possible.

...but that is another story.

**JAMES A. ANDERSEN**

**Forty-eighth District Representative 1959-1967**

**Forty-eighth District Senator 1967-1971**

**Supreme Court Justice, State of Washington 1984-1995**

## FOREWORD

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Tom Copeland and I arrived in Olympia to commence our new assignments the same year, 1957, he as a freshman member of the House of Representatives and I as Chief of Staff to the new Governor-elect.

We have remained friends and have conferred from time to time, during the intervening years, related to governmental and other policy issues.

Representative Copeland was an energetic and innovative member of the Legislature, always on the leading edge of promoting technological improvements in the legislative information reporting and retrieval process with the introduction of new approaches and newly developed equipment. This aspect of his legislative involvement is discussed in further detail in this and Code Reviser, Richard White's oral examination of this period.

Tom served in the Washington House of Representatives for nine biennial sessions, including the 1970 Extraordinary Session. He served as a very active Speaker Pro Tempore for three terms, from 1967 to 1971, and was appointed interim Speaker and chair of the Legislative Council for 1970.

This oral examination and review of those years in the Legislature, as well as retracing other events in his life that impacted and shaped his views related to governmental policy and other issues he encountered in his life, is a significant contribution to the history of this state.

**WARREN A. BISHOP**



## **FOREWORD**

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Tom Copeland was a likely prospect to be elected Speaker of the Washington State House of Representatives for the session beginning in January 1971. First, of course, he had to be selected at the House Republican Caucus organizational meeting held in late 1970 at a hotel near the SeaTac airport. I was a newly elected member of the caucus and had been encouraged by Senator James A. Andersen to vote for Tom.

Tom Copeland and Jim Andersen had shared important experiences. They had each taken part in severe fighting during World War II in separate places in Europe, leaving permanent impressions on their outlook about life. They had served together in the House of Representatives. Each of them was more or less conservative, taking their legislative roles seriously, as well as their responsibilities to their families and communities. And each of them projected a sense of good humor as they carried out their duties. It was easy to promise Senator Andersen, later to become Supreme Court Justice Andersen, that I would gladly vote for Tom Copeland to be Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Tom lost that particular contest to Representative Swayze, but was elected Speaker Pro Tem, and he held other important positions in succeeding years. It was fun to attend planning sessions in his office (he had a convenient refrigerator) and work on proposed legislation. When it suited his purpose, he would occasionally (figuratively) pull on his farmer's clothes and pretend clumsiness at the legislative process, but most people quickly learned better. Mostly, he outworked and outsmarted the opposition. He would have been an excellent "Mr. Speaker," too.

### **KEN EIKENBERRY**

**Thirty-sixth District Representative 1971-1976**

**Attorney General, State of Washington 1981-1993**

**Washington State Republican Party Chairman 1977-1980, 1993-1996**

The Washington State Oral History Program was established in 1991 by the Washington State Legislature. It is administered by the Office of the Secretary of State and guided by the Oral History Advisory Committee composed of legislative officers and members.

The purpose of the Program is to document the formation of public policy in Washington State by interviewing persons closely involved with state politics and publishing their edited transcripts. Each oral history is a valuable record of an individual's contributions and convictions, their interpretation of events and their relationships with other participants in the civic life of the state. Read as a series, these oral histories reveal the complex interweaving of the personal and political, the formal and informal processes that are the makings of public policy.

The Oral History Advisory Committee chooses candidates for oral histories. Extensive research is conducted about the life and activities of the prospective interviewee, using legislative journals, newspaper accounts, personal papers and other sources. Then a series of taped interviews is conducted, focusing on the interviewee's political career and contributions. Political values, ideas about public service, interpretation of events and reflections about relationships and the political process are explored. When the interviews have been completed, a verbatim transcript is prepared. These transcripts are edited by program staff to ensure readability and accuracy and then reviewed by the interviewee. Finally, the transcript is published and distributed to libraries, archives and interested individuals. An electronic version of the text is also available on the Secretary of State's Website ([www.secstate.wa.gov](http://www.secstate.wa.gov)).

Oral history recording, while assisted by careful research, is based on individual memory and perspective. Although great effort is expended to ensure accuracy, recollection and interpretation of events vary among participants. Oral history documents present personal accounts of relationships, actions and events; readers are encouraged to analyze and weigh this primary material as they would any other historical evidence. It is the hope of the Oral History Program that this work will help the citizens of Washington better understand their political legacy and the persons who have contributed years of service to the political life of our state.

## **WASHINGTON STATE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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To an unprecedented degree, this oral history is the creation of Tom Copeland. His vision and deep sense of history guided the production of this publication through all its phases and configurations. Tom understood from the first interview how he wanted to shape his story and relate the lessons he had learned at home in Walla Walla, in the thick of battlefield action during World War II, and during sixteen years of service in Washington's House of Representatives. A strong theme running throughout his life and interview was the necessity to remain open to experience—in fact, to embrace new learning—and then to organize that experience as a teacher for oneself and others. Tom approached the conduct of his oral history as another opportunity to teach a willing listener about life and service.

This hands-on approach extended to the editing process, as Tom reviewed and reworked the interview material to hone the content of our wide-ranging conversations to their essence. His clarity of purpose shines from every page. His wife, Donna, was also deeply involved in editing and shaping the manuscript. Her sense of history and fine editorial hand is less visible, yet no less valuable. As befits Tom's fascination with computers, all of this work was conducted electronically after the Copelands moved to sunny Arizona. We thank them both for their dedication, enthusiasm and unflagging good cheer.

One of the joys of this project was meeting Richard O. White, the longtime State Code Reviser and his assistant Gay Marchesini. Again, we have Tom to thank for making the arrangements for a group interview with Dick, Gay and himself to tell the story of bringing computers to state government. This little-known effort helped transform the exchange of information which was a seminal step in the modernization of the Legislature and state government. That story has been included in the Appendix and with additional materials online at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/oralhistory/white/> We thank them for their commitment and generosity.

We also thank the Washington State Library and the State Archives for their expert assistance with research from their respective collections of documents and photographs. Both agencies help to distribute copies of the oral history throughout the state. We also thank Dee Hooper, former Legislative Facilities Manager and Catherine Young, Legislative Facilities Services Coordinator, for their invaluable research assistance on the evolution of the Capitol Campus.

The Oral History Advisory Committee recommended Tom Copeland as a candidate for an oral history for his long years of service in the House and especially for his role in upgrading legislative processes. Members of the Committee noted that he was primarily responsible for bringing data processing to the Legislature at an early date. We thank the members of the Committee for their steadfast support for the Program: Secretary of State Sam Reed; Secretary of the Senate, Tom Hoemann; Chief Clerk of the House, Rich Nafziger; Senators Jim Honeyford, Ken Jacobsen, Alex Deccio and Erik Poulsen; Representatives Sam Hunt, Mary Skinner, Beverly Woods and

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Steve Conway. Former Senators Don Carlson and Alan Thompson; Former Chief Clerk, Dean Foster; Warren Bishop and David Nicandri from the Washington State Historical Society gave generously of their time and expertise as ex officio members of the Advisory Committee. A special mention should be made of Former Representative Don Brazier, now retired from the Advisory Committee, and Senator Robert Bailey, both of whom provided indispensable guidance and support for the project.

Program staff conducted the background research, assisted by our longtime volunteers, Robert Johnson and Richard Allen. Anne Kilgannon recorded the interviews and edited the manuscript. Sandy Kerr and Lori Larson transcribed the interviews. Lori Larson formatted the manuscript and oversaw the printing process. We thank Dan Monahan and his staff at House Production Services for their professional guidance and expertise in producing the oral histories.

Finally, we are grateful for the assistance and administrative support from the Office of the Secretary of State.

## INTERVIEWER'S REFLECTIONS

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We invariably scheduled our meetings in the mornings. In the moments I waited for Tom Copeland to greet me at the door, I would gaze at the lovely Japanese garden tucked into the entryway of his home. It was my last opportunity to gather my thoughts, for when his explosive “Good morning!” rang out, we were off. The interviews were conducted in Tom’s study overlooking a bucolic golfing green, but our attention was riveted on capturing stories centered first in Walla Walla and then ranging through the battlefields of France and Germany. I felt I was with him as he flew his airplane over the Cascades to make a legislative meeting or when he orchestrated campaign events around the state. I shared his enthusiasm as he discovered the wonders and potential of new technology and explored the intricacies of legislative processes.

As I listened and asked questions, I began to sense the intense personality and drive of the man sitting across the desk from me. Tom is essentially a teacher. His lifelong pursuit of learning and broad experience was an integral part of every story. He was eager for me to understand what he had encountered and studied during a full life. There was nothing dry in his delivery. Tom often had me laughing and occasionally moved to tears, always fascinated and stimulated. Our lively exchanges would echo in my ears as I pondered each story and rethought my notions of “how it had been.”

Tom served during some of the most tumultuous years in Washington legislative history. I understood the era in a wholly new way after listening to Tom’s recollections and reflections. And I understood present-day issues better for the contrasting images he described. Tom posed—and answered—fundamental questions: What are the different levels of government best suited to address? What are the responsibilities of citizens, the press, and those who would represent the public interest? What is open government? What does it mean to represent a community of interest? Every interview was an essential lesson in civics and government.

At one point in the interview, I remarked that “there ought to be a plaque on a wall” commemorating Tom’s contributions to the modernization of electronic communication and information services. Present-day bill tracking and calendars owe their inception to “the dirt-farmer from Walla Walla,” as he was fond of describing himself. When he arrived in the Legislature in 1957, one docket clerk tracked bills in a large journal, the state budget was more a theoretical document than something everyone could study, and committee meetings were called on the whim of committee chairmen. Instead of throwing up his hands, Tom diligently set about to reform such archaic practices. During the same period, legislators worked at their desks on the floor of the House amid stacks of paper and bill books. They operated with a roll of stamps and a “pool” of stenographers. Tom led the effort to create offices for legislators, with administrative assistants and the height of modernity—private telephones. It is difficult to chart just how far and how quickly the Legislature changed under the reforming energy of members like Tom Copeland. As we discussed each session of the Legislature that he attended, he plunged deeper into the story of how he worked to transform the conditions under which

## INTERVIEWER'S REFLECTIONS

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legislators labored. Always, the goal was to elevate the legislative branch of government and to include citizens as partners in participation.

The partnership model also permeated our interview experience. Tom was a full participant in organizing the shape of the interviews. We discussed the issues in chronological order, couched in proper context with the information concerning the make-up of each legislative session in which he served presented in charts of his own design. We paid extensive attention to his interim activities as periods of closer engagement with the public in all parts of the state. Election campaigns also received scrutiny as vehicles for transforming the composition of the Republican House caucus. The very shape of the book grew from his activities and interests.

The editing process only deepened our working relationship and engagement in the questions arising from the interviews. While still remaining true to the text of our conversations, Tom re-examined each exchange and asked how each passage “moved the ball forward.” He held to a vision of how he wanted to present his story and never lost sight of that goal. All the work of fact checking, honing paragraphs, organizing the chapters and choosing photographic materials was conducted electronically or through telephone calls. I looked forward to our daily exchange of ideas, questions and comments. He infused our days, no matter how rainy, with strong doses of Arizona sunshine after moving to that state.

Tom's is a complex story, the interweaving of the character and experiences of a man with his era. Like every oral history, this is a selection of stories and reflections. Others, no doubt, could still be told, but the essential outline of events and their interpretation is documented here. It's a big story; the times and person demanded it. The young man who was given command of tanks and soldiers at an early age, grasped his other responsibilities of running the family farm, contributing to the development of his community of Walla Walla, and the modernizing state government with equal gusto. He tells his story with the same energy and insight. I am privileged to have played a part in recording it here for all to enjoy and learn from as I have.

**ANNE KILGANNON**

## **BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS**

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Tom Copeland was born April 17, 1924 in Pendleton, Oregon. He and his older sister, Patty, grew up in Walla Walla, Washington with their parents Edwin and Delia Copeland on the family farm. Tom attended local Walla Walla schools and then, for a brief time, the Kemper Military Academy.

Tom's education was interrupted when he enlisted as a private in the United States Army in 1942. After intensive training in Officer Candidate School, Tom was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in June, 1943. He embarked for England and France in July, 1944 and was deeply engaged as a tank destroyer commander in campaigns across France and Germany until the cessation of fighting in May, 1945. Tom was promoted to First Lieutenant in April, 1945 and again as a Captain in June, 1946 during his continued service in the European Theater as a post-war administrator.

Tom returned home to Walla Walla and enrolled in Washington State College, majoring in Agricultural Engineering. While at WSC, Tom met and married a fellow student, Dolly Doble. They returned to the family farm and raised three children: Tim, born 1948; David, born 1950, and Brooke, born 1952. Tom worked closely with his father to operate and expand the family farming business. He introduced such new crops as peas, green beans, and soybeans and invested in an extensive irrigation system to support diversification.

Tom maintained lifelong ties to Washington State College, later University as President of the WSU Alumni Association. He continued to avail himself of educational opportunities offered by the University and built lasting relationships that supported his agricultural innovations. As a legislator, Tom maintained a watchful eye on matters of concern to the University.

Tom was involved in several community organizations, from the YMCA to the Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce and volunteered his time in local Republican Party activities. His involvement in the creation of the Washington Wheat Commission, however, pulled him into state politics. He first ran for the Washington State House of Representatives in 1956 and entered the House as a member of the minority party.

Tom's experiences in the House piqued his interest in reform of legislative processes that hadn't kept pace with the post-war society. As he rose in leadership positions—elected Whip in 1961 and 1963, Minority Leader in 1965, and Speaker Pro Tempore in 1967-1972—Tom focused on the modernization of the legislative branch of government through improved processes and the introduction of computers. He worked to improve working conditions and expand facilities for legislators, but he was equally concerned to involve the public in legislative decision-making. Tom was a strong advocate for citizen participation and a keen proponent of legislative activities during interim periods. Notably, he served on the seminal Education Interim Committee of 1960.

## BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

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Tom was also very active in campaign efforts to build a majority for House Republicans. He traveled throughout the state, recruiting candidates, offering advice and support, and helping prospective members connect with one another and with donors. His efforts, in conjunction with other “Dan Evans era” activists, culminated in the Republican capture of the House in 1966, a majority position held until the election of 1972. While serving three terms as Speaker Pro Tempore and one period as Acting Speaker in 1970-1971, Tom made his greatest contributions to legislative reform and modernization.

Tom ran for the State Senate in 1972, but with a newly configured district and other issues, he was not elected. He retired from state politics and immersed himself in expanding his farm operations and became involved in trade relations with Japan. His wife Dolly had died in 1970, but in 1973 Tom remarried Donna Edwards. They remained active in Walla Walla until they moved to Olympia in 1989. Tom worked for Employment Security for three years, continuing his interest in migrant labor issues. He and Donna joined a new community, Indian Summer, where Tom served as President of the Homeowners Association for six years.

Tom and Donna moved to Arizona in 2004, where they enjoy the wonderful climate and myriad activities. Tom is a consummate woodworker and keeps up his interests in politics, advances in technology and other concerns. They have three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.



## CHAPTER 1

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### THE COPELAND FAMILY OF WALLA WALLA

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We're beginning our interview series with Tom Copeland in his study in his Olympia home. I understand that your Great-Grandfather, Henry S. Copeland, arrived in Walla Walla about 1862. Still during the Civil War era. He came with his family up through the Willamette area, but where was he from originally?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Just someplace in the Mid-West, I don't know where.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a common pattern in those days. And do you have any sense of why he came to Walla Walla? Was it just opening up for settlement at that time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just some of the people were migrating to that part of the country. The family originally went down into the Willamette Valley for a short time and came up to the Walla Walla area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a wheat grower? Is that what was drawing settlers to Walla Walla in those days?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the primary crop: wheat and barely, all of your cereal grains.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been pretty

there in the early days. Not many people there yet, though?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, very few people. As a matter of fact, the whole family came up here all at the same time. I think the boys wanted to come up because they had an opportunity to pick up some land. Henry was an older man and so the sons were kind of going out on their own. That was probably a normal thing as far as the family was concerned. There were two brothers: Wallace, my father's father, and Thomas, both single, in their mid-twenties, looking for a place to make a home. They purchased some land that had been homesteaded by the Masterson brothers and another parcel of ground from a family by the name of Hood. They acquired four parcels of ground, all contiguous, which formed the Copeland homeplace—about a section of land. The brothers Wallace and Tom farmed together for some time. There were five children in my father's family: Henry, Ella, Laura, Betty, and my father Edwin, the youngest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then Wallace and Thomas really got the new place going?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I still have the original deeds for this property. The bill of sales indicated there was a loan on the property and it had an interest rate of twelve percent per annum and that the loan had to be paid in "gold coin."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It reads, "Twentieth of December, 1872." So these are really old—especially around here—there are not many deeds that old. Signed, "Ulysses S. Grant." That's interesting. And to be paid for with gold!

**Mr. Copeland:** It specifies they wouldn't take greenbacks. You had to pay in gold coins.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, you were going to tell me how the brothers paid for this land?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it's quite interesting. The two brothers started farming this ground, but they soon bought themselves a stationary threshing machine. I understand they actually had it shipped up from St. Louis, Missouri.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how it would get there. There weren't any trains yet, or roads to speak of.

**Mr. Copeland:** Covered wagons. And so they started in the custom harvesting business. This machinery became the foundation of their operation. It was used to harvest wheat and barley, the major crops in the area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They must have had some funds to begin with to be able to do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, that's what they did. So then, they would take the equipment clear down into the Tule Lake country in northern California, and started harvesting barley down there in June.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The earliest crops?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The operation consisted of about fifteen-plus men, twenty or thirty head of horses, the threshing machine, header boxes and even a cook wagon. A lot of machinery, animals and men assembled for the purpose of harvesting grain.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even getting down there wouldn't be exactly simple?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a case of where you put everything on wagons and horses. And you fed the crew—you had a cook. They were a huge custom threshing business. The stationary threshing machine was mounted on

wheels and could be pulled by horses. Once it was set up in a grain field, several pieces of machinery were hooked together. The wheat or barley was cut in the field and brought to the threshing machine and fed into the thresher by hand and the grain was removed from the chaff. This machine was powered by horses on a treadmill—a series of boards that are placed at a very steep angle and the horses would stand on it. When the machine was put in gear, the horses walked on the slope of the tread mill, like walking uphill, imparting a rotary motion to a series of large shafts and belts that drove the threshing machine. All of this was extremely hard work for both men and animals—and in some very hot weather, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you think about how you would keep such a thing going, I'm sure it would always be breaking down one way or another.

**Mr. Copeland:** But they quickly learned to be good mechanics. One of the brothers would start off at the Tule Lake country and harvest barley in late June, and then move north to new locations and harvest more barley. Later, the operation would be moved to the Wasco County area and harvest wheat in early July. By the first part of August, he would work his way back up to Walla Walla and be ready to harvest wheat and barley in this area. This way the brothers were able to harvest the grain from their own property. At this time the brothers would switch and the brother who had been at home would then take that equipment and start going north into the Palouse country and wind up into Canada, harvesting more grains. This would continue until early October and then they would return to Walla Walla. The two brothers continued this routine for several years and by then they had enough money to buy more land and pay off their loans. By then both had married and

started families and the two divided the land and set up their own separate farms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was really strenuous. The organization alone took a lot of doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Farming was really tough work. Lots of manpower, lots of horsepower. Everything you had to do—the organization you'd need to be able to put that together—the phenomenal thing is they took their own cooking facilities with them wherever they went. They had people that they'd hire. They were full-time cooks for these people. And I would imagine as hard as they were working, I bet those guys ate a lot because it just was a raw, full physical effort—you know, sweat every day. Many calories per serving. Even payment was something that was kind of interesting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People didn't exactly have a lot of cash in those days. I wonder how they set up their contracts. I mean, did they just show up in California with their crew?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't really have first-hand knowledge of how that worked. I would guess it was done by a verbal agreement and a handshake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, they paid for their farms, and then did they stay home and farm? Were they wheat farmers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, primarily wheat farms.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they began their families. Is there quite a clan of Copelands scattered about the area? Did the land get all split up among the family members?

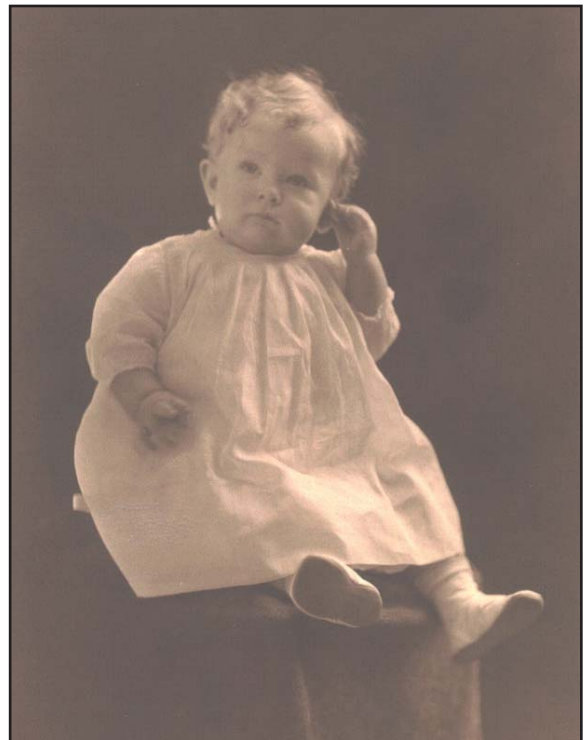
**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. They primarily stayed right there. My father inherited the land along with his brother and sisters. For some time

the ownership in the homeplace was owned by the undivided interests of the five of them. I spent a great deal of time—forty years—to get that whole place all put back together again and under one ownership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me about you father, now, Edwin W. Copeland.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was my adopted father. My mother and he married when I was a child. He adopted me and my sister Patty and we took the Copeland name.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I didn't know that. You were born in 1924. Are you the oldest in your family?



*Tom at age one*

**Mr. Copeland:** No, my sister is older.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you came into the Copeland family, who at that point were fairly well established in the area. Your Great-Uncle Grant had served in the Legislature in 1899 and then again in 1901 for that session. In the early days, just after statehood. Are there any family stories that traveled down about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know anything about him, really. Other than the fact that at that time, Walla Walla County, I think, had five members sent to the House and two senators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a pretty big-population area. The community had gone through the gold rush era and built up the town by then. Farming was the mainstay, of course, but when did Walla Walla get the penitentiary? That's another industry, of a sort. Was it in territorial days?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was after statehood. Let's see, I guess it was either the second or third session of the Legislature, they allocated a whole series of state institutions to various places. They were going to locate an agriculture college and somebody suggested it be located in Walla Walla, and then they said, "No, no, we have Whitman College." We didn't want another college. And so Pullman—someone—made some kind of a bid for the agricultural college. Yakima said they wanted to have the state fair and somebody else wanted to have this and then the penitentiary kind of got left out and it was nothing that anybody desired to have. So when everybody got through choosing what they wanted and Walla Walla didn't get a college because it already had one, and they had this damn penitentiary they had to locate someplace, so they went ahead and allocated it to Walla Walla, being the next biggest community that didn't have anything...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's your prize!

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's kind of a mixed blessing. It's a steady industry—you'll always have criminals you know and need that structure and those jobs, but still...

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, there was an interesting part in that, too. They found quite a deposit of clay in the region down there, and the very first prisoners that went to Walla Walla were working in a brick foundry. So the first things that were manufactured at the prison were bricks—yes, bricks for the walls of the prison. And some of them are still standing today. They manufactured the bricks that are currently in the original walls down there now—manufactured by inmate labor, right down on their own site.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A real self-supporting group! Yes, they didn't allow the prisoners to just sit around.

**Mr. Copeland:** Back in those days everyone was real self-supporting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They'd have to be. I understood that the location of the prison has a bit of story behind it, too. Something about the soil—that the soil was kind of soft and good for digging, according to a different story.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. They put it on some of the best farming soil imaginable. They just didn't have any rocks to put it on. But they just poured cement right on top of the dirt and ultimately the dirt kind of settled and left a big void underneath some of these buildings. They had a four-inch concrete floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Four inches isn't very thick?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they can actually dig down through four inches and get down into that crawl space where the earth had settled away from the concrete floor. Once through the concrete... A spoon from the mess hall, that was their digging tool. And so they were very successful at digging several tunnels in that institution—several.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there'd be famous break-outs? People were kind of streaming out of there?

**Mr. Copeland:** They'd tunnel all the way into the wall; they did a fine job. It took them months. They'd dig a few hours at night, and take all of the dirt out, and my understanding is they'd flush it down the toilet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, I was kind of wondering what they would do with the evidence.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they would flush it down the toilet. But the penitentiary—I never enjoyed going out there, but it was in my legislative district, and I had to spend a lot of time with them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering about that. What was the relationship of the penitentiary to the town? It sits a little ways out of town, doesn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it does. The institution itself is something that the townspeople don't pay much attention to. Anybody else that's never been to Walla Walla, as soon as they hear Walla Walla, they think about the penitentiary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I always think "onions," myself.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, well, that ought to be okay. But as far as the institution is concerned,

it's not a fun place to be. Those people that ultimately end up in Walla Walla...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are the worst, aren't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't get there by stealing bicycles, really. I mean, they're kind of the end-of-the-line stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's get back to your family story. So your father, after the homestead was all paid for, grew up there on the farm and in turn, what did he grow? Was wheat still the big crop?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wheat was the primary, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been in World War I, in France? Did he tell you about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. But he didn't do anything spectacular. He was one of those guys that was shipped over, worked as a mechanic on airplanes, spent his time and came right back and went back to school and finished school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was still quite an experience—you know, a farm boy from Walla Walla and suddenly you're in France. No matter what you are doing there, that'd be quite an experience. Being a mechanic that worked on the airplanes, that's a pretty important role. Somebody had to do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Somebody's got to do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think for every soldier in the Army, there's a crowd of people behind them making it all work?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the average was for every one that was on the line, there are



another eight supporting you that were doing something in order to be able to make sure that you stay online. I never met the eight that were behind me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was comforting to think that they might be back there somewhere?

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then he came back home after his experience. Did he go to Washington State University, at that point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. He went to school before the war and then again after the war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just came right back to what he was doing? WSU had been around for a little while as an institution, but I think it wasn't yet a university.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was Washington State College. That didn't become a university until after I was in the Legislature in 1963.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was still a fairly small institution?

**Mr. Copeland:** They probably had less than 3,000 students. None of the schools were big at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not that many people went to college.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. That's correct, because not too many institutions could handle that many either. Then, of course, the population of the state of Washington probably wasn't 500,000.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, not yet. It was unusual to go to college, then. Do you know why he did that?

**Mr. Copeland:** He played basketball. He was very talented in playing basketball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a high school star that then got recruited?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, you bet. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. So he stood out a little. And what did he study?

**Mr. Copeland:** Agriculture.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that would have been a more scientific study of agriculture? Chemistry and all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. The College of Agriculture is broken up into a whole bunch of different areas of the departments and disciplines. There's one entire section for agronomy and a whole section for horticulture. There is another one in plant breeding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The genetic side of things.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. And then of course, the Department of Animal Husbandry comes under there, the College of Veterinary Medicine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Farming is a complex thing; it's not one thing—it's a wide range of activities.

**Mr. Copeland:** The majority of vets right now are taking care of more pets than they are large animals. Truly! Right now, today, just to get into the College of Veterinary Medicine over at Washington State, boy, it's a three- to five-year waiting list. It's tough to get into the school and they are not turning out enough vets to meet the demand. So agriculture is—we have the tendency to kind

of skip over it very lightly—but it's totally an involved subject.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And just then, when your Dad was studying, the field was starting to change pretty rapidly. I mean, they were bringing in mechanization, genetics, and different ideas; he was getting in there just as things were really opening up. The seeds of change were spreading in the twenties or so, just after the war, when people were bringing in more machinery.

**Mr. Copeland:** The mechanical changes have been absolutely fantastic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were beginning to look at retiring their horses. Did you know when your farm switched over to more mechanized methods? It sounds like you came from kind of a progressive, more mechanized tradition.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was pretty young at the time. I don't remember exactly. We had horses, I know, and suddenly we switched to tractors. I was small at the time. I don't remember anything about it. We always kept a couple of horses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wasn't a clean break. Did your father raise cattle in any way or just wheat? Was it a mixed farm?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Everybody did that. But they had their own cows for milk, and they had animals: they had pigs and they had chickens, all of the farm units. You know, we were...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty self sufficient?

**Mr. Copeland:** Self sufficient. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Going into town not too often?

**Mr. Copeland:** Town was six miles out, so if you take a horse into town, you were an hour out. So, did you run back and forth into town three or four times a day? The answer is hell, no!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not like now. You'd better remember whatever you thought you needed on the first trip.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. No, the housewives did their marketing very frugally and probably didn't need it but once a week. They were pretty good-sized lists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Going into town would be an event. Now, I believe you told me your father met your mother, Delia, at WSU, is that correct? She was a music major? Singing or instrumental?

**Mr. Copeland:** She was quite a singer. Later on she did a lot with musical things. She put together a wonderful group in Walla Walla, just volunteers, kind of like a little choral group. Pretty fair-sized choir group. Men and women ran around the community and did a lot of singing and had a lot of fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she kept it up. That's great.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. She was very talented.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your mother the typical farm wife, except with a musical background? She sounds a little atypical actually, a little more educated and little bit refined.

**Mr. Copeland:** I would imagine you could call her the typical farm wife, but that's correct. I think you'd probably have to say that. That's right.



*Tom as a child, age 4*



*Tom, 4, with his sister Patty, 6*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she raise you with a musical background?

**Mr. Copeland:** She gave it her best shot! It didn't take too long!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The raw material was not quite...

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn't take too well. She always thought that I was going to be some kind of a star performer for the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, being the lead violinist or something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see! But, no? You're laughing. Well, some people just don't have it.

**Mr. Copeland:** You have that right! That is very true. That was not for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were a bit of frustration? Were you more of the outdoors kind of guy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it sounds like you could appreciate her talents? And certainly, performers need audiences.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you were growing up, did you as a child assume that you would be a farmer too—that everything was in line for you—you knew what you wanted to do in life?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was always in the back of everybody's mind. I'm sure that's the case.





*Tom with Father, age 15*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about in your mind? Some people want to leave the farm; they're always dreaming of something else, but for other people, it is the right place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, obviously it had been in the back of my mind too, but I had some opportunities to do other things and I chose not to. I chose to go back and operate the farm. And I don't know if I made the right choice or not, but everybody's got twenty-twenty hindsight. But at that time, I think obviously it was right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as a child, would there have been Boy Scouts and things like that, or was it little bit more difficult, living outside of town?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Just by virtue of the fact that you live out of town, that was difficult,

but by then, of course, we were sufficiently integrated and all the schools were in town. We had school bus services, so all the kids were in town. It wasn't as if you were isolated, and like I said, our place was only six miles from town. Some kids lived out on a farm forty miles from town. That was a lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a little bit more!

**Mr. Copeland:** From that standpoint, no. Was I integrated into the community? Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have responsibilities, though? Chores and things to do after school?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh sure, everybody did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you milk the cows and care for the chickens and that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I didn't milk the cows, but I took care of the chickens and stuff like that, all of the above.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have driven the machinery? Farm kids tend to grow up fast in that sense.

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't start driving any machinery until I was about fourteen or fifteen years old and by the time I was sixteen, I was a very accomplished truck driver. At that time, we didn't pay too much attention to whether or not you had a driver's license. Drivers training, driver's ed. wasn't even offered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it was different. There wasn't as much traffic, either, I suppose.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. But I started handling machine as a very young man and of course now, it would be just unacceptable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people just have a fascination for the machinery, was that true for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots of people have a fascination for the machinery, but I think that the opportunity to operate a piece of the machinery and then the machine dexterity is something that would come along. But with large pieces of equipment like that, machine dexterity is something that will be there in the event that you are doing it on the basis of virtually every week. I mean, you cannot become proficient in flying an airplane and walk off and not fly an airplane for two years and come back and fly an airplane again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little rusty?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are not that well-coordinated. You don't feel the machinery; you don't hear the machinery; you don't know what is going on. Same thing is true with a large of piece farm equipment, a large bulldozer...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which would be a real capital investment. You wouldn't want to fool around with it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And not only be fooling around with a capital investment, but if you do the wrong thing, this is dangerous equipment. You can get injured—and very quickly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty dangerous, actually.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, when you're talking about "fascination" is one thing, but when you are talking about people that actually got out and started running it, then it became real dexterity, being able to operate those. And that was one of the things that I found that when I started to hire people to work—people that worked for

me for many years—then they became very, very excellent machine operators. Right to the point, they put their names on the tractor and "nobody else can drive their tractor." That was "Ralph's tractor." Now, Fred didn't drive Ralph's tractor. Now, that was it; "you stay off my tractor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see that, yes. I was just wondering, because it was the coming thing and you were in that era when the machinery was getting more sophisticated over time, and you had to keep up with it. That was the cutting edge.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. More sophisticated, and it's gotten larger...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More expensive.

**Mr. Copeland:** More expensive, and it's doing a greater piece of work, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A trend that happened over time. How did your family weather the Depression? Was it a more difficult time for your father in farming?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, sure. You just cut back on everything. You didn't take any trips; you didn't spend any money, period. Most people were in the position where they, number one, could be self-sufficient; number two, were not carrying a great deal of debt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the key. Were people around you losing their farms?

**Mr. Copeland.** Oh sure, some of them were, but an awful lot of those were almost destined to go anyway because of their work habits more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would you be, say, in school and different farm families would be

at very different stages of their establishment and some would be losing their farms, but the more established farmers would be hanging in there? I was picturing some kids just not showing up as their families packed it in.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, there are good farms and bad farms. Some bad ones just could not raise enough to support a family. Either not enough rainfall or poor soil.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What happens to the community when you've got that attrition?

**Mr. Copeland:** In case of someone losing their farm, it was generally absorbed by the neighbor. A lot of people just kind of give up farming and when they didn't make it, they'd just either sell it or lease it and they'd take a job and find work as a mechanic in a garage or something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they'd stay in the area and find other work? In some areas, whole communities were devastated and people just left.

**Mr. Copeland:** That wasn't the case in Walla Walla. You're talking about what happened in the Dust Bowl. We had nothing like that at all. They went through many years and never raised a crop. Now, if you were in the agricultural position and you don't ever harvest a crop for years, you're really in a world of hurt and everybody else is, too. But no, the Walla Walla area always raised a good crop—never a year of total crop failure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That area was more productive than others?

**Mr. Copeland:** That area always has been quite productive. Like some very dear friends of mine said, "You know, this is the Walla Walla valley, the place where you have three

crops a year: the first one freezes off; the second dies in the drought; and the third one, they harvest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pays for it all! Does it get cold there in the winter? You get much snow?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It puts some moisture in the ground. Was there much irrigation there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots of irrigation now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More and more? Was it originally more dry-land farming?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I recognized that as far as the homeplace was concerned, the only value of that place was going to be if we did develop the irrigation system. So, I embarked on the irrigation system and went ahead and put it in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That development comes later, but it sounds like your family survived the Depression without too much hardship. You were in school during those years. What kinds of things did you do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just as a regular farm boy? Oh, I had lots of fun in high school and all that good stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you play sports?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I really didn't. I didn't get involved in that. I was very, very small when I was in school. I was very short.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were a late bloomer?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I didn't get any height to me until I was probably a sophomore in

high school and so then I got into all kinds of things in high school. I really enjoyed public speaking and I got into debate and into plays and things like that. I had my first brush with public speaking really as an accident. In my sophomore year, I had a biology teacher by the name of Mrs. Kenyon, and Mrs. Kenyon told the class that before the semester was over, everybody was to do a paper all by themselves with any subject that they would like, and that was going to be for virtually the entire class period and you would prepare it and then you come to her and show her, and then she would select you on one day and you would have to give her your paper. So I went ahead and selected my subject matter...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which was?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Reproduction of the Mammal." I got it all prepared. I got pictures, I got some diagrams. I needed an overhead projector because some of the stuff was coming out of books in the library, so I went to Mrs. Kenyon and asked her. And she said, "Well, let me see," and she said, "Well, we're going to give your paper right away then." So I gave her my paper on the reproduction of mammals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First presentation in the class? Well, that's a highly interesting subject for high school students.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm just a good farm boy who knew how the mammals reproduced. I gave this entire course without a smile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With a straight face, I'm sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. By then, a short time later, she wanted to know if I would give it to another biology class of hers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were a hit!

**Mr. Copeland:** Which I did. Then another teacher in biology wanted to know if I would give it to one of his classes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You sound like you went to a large high school.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, there were several biology teachers. There were several biology teachers. However, I even gave the presentation to a girls' PE class.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whew!

**Mr. Copeland:** So any rate, I did it again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your stand-up act.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it got into this whole business about conception and sperm, and genetics and all of that type of information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all those big words in a high school class of both boys and girls?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. I spoke of things like: penis, testicles, sperm, ovaries, vagina, Fallopian tubes, uterus, eggs, mammary glands, genes. What I wound up doing was giving sex education classes in high school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think of that yourself or were you trying to keep your mind on the cows?

**Mr. Copeland:** I realized the fact that this was what I was doing because at that time schools were not allowed to teach anything on sex education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you were not supposed to be thinking about that.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, the high school administration realized the whole thing, that this was a pretty good way to have sex education in the classroom. So that was my sophomore year, and I continued to do that in the junior and senior years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did it feel like to be famous? You were making your name here.

**Mr. Copeland:** I did—for a fact, I taught sex education for three consecutive years in Walla Walla High School. But needless to say, I got A's. It was kind of a back door arrangement that I got into. I gave that class to physical education classes... Everybody that went through that school sometime had my class on sex education at least once or sometimes twice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In case they didn't get it right the first time.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. My presentation was straight-forward. Reproduction was not discussed, at least not openly. My presentation was: This is the way it happens and if the following things occur, this is what you're going to get. Pregnant! How, if you breed a white rabbit to a brown rabbit, the babies will come out looking like this. And so I tried to design this to at least give areas of probability of selection of color—hereditary things like why do people have red hair versus why people have black, and what are the prominent genes, what are the recessive genes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a pretty new thing? The understanding of genetics, especially for high school students?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you are probably right. It probably would have been very, very difficult for some shy girl to ever get my report.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were not having any trouble? You were already pretty comfortable doing this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. Very comfortable. No problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that experience teach you something? Did you learn something about yourself: "I can really do this."

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure I did. I don't know if I ever wrote it down or not. I guess I learned something about myself on the basis of getting yourself to a point where you can outline something in your thought process. In forty minutes you can convey a lot of information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just by organizing yourself? Getting it all in place.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And then also I learned very quickly that if the major points were one, two, three, you told them ahead of time: it was one, two, three, and then you told them what one, two, three was, and then in summary, one, two, three meant the following. And so I think that was something that kind of carried over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not everybody knows how to do that. So somehow you picked up this ability. Did you have good teachers? Did you observe how they did it and then you picked it up or it just kind of came to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I picked it up from the teachers that I had. I think I had good teachers. And I just noticed their techniques more than anything else. I tried to mimic and copy that, but it was nothing original with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but there was a talent there.



**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. At any rate, like I'm trying to say, this whole experience came more as a happy accident than anything I designed. "I'm a sophomore in high school; I'm going to design a course for criminy-sake for three years, and I'm going to give it to the entire high school." That was not the main objective; I was just meeting the class requirement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But looking back, it was an accomplishment.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was an accomplishment in two ways. One was for me to learn I could teach well and two, for the school. That was in the period in time where this particular information was really very important and when certain things that caused restrictions within academia that prevented people even discussing this, and the answer was yes. But as long as the student made it as a presentation, this was fine. I just came along as a vehicle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, but you did a good job.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I did excellent!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A real confidence-builder? "I'm doing a valuable thing here and I'm being recognized." That was something for a teenager, to know and be able to present this information.

**Mr. Copeland:** It seemed that I was always running around reading books and charts, with overhead projectors and stuff like that and doing my little forty minute speech.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's kind of a niche, I suppose. Besides sex education, what else did you do? Did you have an active debate team at your school?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we did not have a debate team in high school, but I did win five out of six debate programs in college, both intra and inter-college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you got your opportunity later. What about school government? Did you have a student council of some sort?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they had a student council. I was President of the Freshman Class one semester. We had one thing called "Boys Federation" and this is something that all the boys went to. I was the President of Boys Federation my senior year. Girls went to another one, and this is where occasionally we brought in a speaker to talk to boys about boy stuff and to the girls about girl stuff, whatever that was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what would have been "boys' stuff" in those days?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they brought in some people to talk to us about crime and delinquency and stuff like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort of sociology topics?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and then we also had some people come in and talk to us about driver's education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Road safety?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and you know, we would invite people in. I remember when we had the State Patrol come in one time, all the kids were very much impressed with these State Patrol troopers who stood six feet-plus high and were very good looking, real role models. But those were standard, ordinary things. I was not an athlete, but I spent a great deal of time on ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps). Our high school was one of a very few in the

nation that had a junior ROTC program and so all of the boys...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everyone did that? It was compulsory?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, for all boys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that's what, drilling and marching and...

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. And you're already required to take it in your sophomore and junior year. This was in place of PE, a required high school course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you learn to handle a gun? Did you have live ammunition?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had a rifle range and you could make application at the rifle range and you get on it and try it out. And then we had competitions with other schools that also had a ROTC program, but I think the ROTC program was one of the better things. To take a fifteen-year-old boy and have him stand attention and say, "Yes, sir" and "No, sir," I don't think there is anything wrong with that at all. If I had my way, there would be a ROTC program in every high school in the U.S.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it forms a person.

**Mr. Copeland:** It does. It teaches discipline and many other factors the youth of today is sadly lacking. If I were the President of the United States, I would say, "Everybody is going to have a ROTC program in high school starting tomorrow morning. I think the ROTC program was one of the best programs in Walla Walla High School. It extends the discipline training beyond the family. It is good for young people to learn authority, like for teachers, policemen, judges, and the like. And to respect them at the same time. So I

guess I was blessed by virtue of the fact that my high school did have ROTC. Right now today, you go into a community and you ask the parents if they want to get rid of the ROTC and they will tell you, "No way, we love that program. The community of Walla Walla loves the ROTC program." It was mandatory two years—sophomore and junior—and then you can voluntarily go on it for your senior year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do that? You stayed in it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. For three years. And in the third year we all became officers; however, I made it to officer grade in my second year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides the physical aspects of drilling and whatnot, were there classes in military strategy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The last war would have been World War I. Would you have learned a great deal about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure did. As matter of fact, when I went into the service, all of a sudden they recognized that I had ROTC experience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would help.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, yes, it was just like I had already gone through basic training. And oh, it helped me immensely. Then, when I went into the service, of course, I was only in the service for a few months and I went right smack into officer's training school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your last years of high school were in the late 1930s. Were you paying attention to the international news? It was getting rather dark.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. I was probably paying a heck of a lot more attention to the news and the international affairs than the average kid was in school. I spent a great deal of time reading about what the hell was going on in Spain, in the civil war they were having over there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** To me it was a big shock. All of Europe was on the brink of war. That could affect the U.S eventually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it well reported? Did you feel like you could get good information that told you what was going on in Spain and other places?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, sure. Then later on of course, it was kind of interesting to see what this guy was doing in Germany, and then we just sat there and watched what Japan was doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In Manchuria and in China?

**Mr. Copeland:** Over in Seattle, we had people in here from Japan and they weren't doing anything but buying all the scrap iron they could find. Nobody could understand what the scrap iron was for. Boy, you could sure sell scrap iron in downtown Seattle. They were just loading boatloads of scrap iron out of the United States heading for Japan. And there was an instant market for them and some of these people were saying, "You know what they're doing? Do you know what they're going to be doing with all these stuff? They're going to be shooting it back at you." Some said, "Oh, come on." Really!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. People just couldn't see it coming.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I paid a great deal more attention than average kid my age to the international scene.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this have been over the radio, or other ways? Magazines?

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything. The newspaper primarily, but obviously in some of the magazines. Then, I don't know why, but I read a lot about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots of people in the late thirties were isolationists. They thought that the oceans would keep America safe and that there was no need to meddle again in such messes like World War I, but you sound like you had a slightly different idea of what was going to happen.

**Mr. Copeland:** I never took a position of being an isolationist. I think I was painfully aware that if you can have a successful aggressor in Europe, he's going to be at your back door soon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not everyone was aware.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. But there are also those people that would still paint signs today and it would be "peace at any price." Okay. Now, if that literal translation is spelled "captivity..." "Peace at any price!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you watching what was going on in Britain with Chamberlain and his forays into "the peace at any price" route? Now, it was President Roosevelt here at that time, were you listening to him? His speeches made a beginning in addressing the situation. He was "on the road" going in the direction of rearmament, but slowly, very cautiously. Did you have an opinion about his efforts at the time that you remember?





*Tom, age 17, with sister Patty, Mother and Father at home*

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I just thought that it was clever as hell being able to come up with the Lend-Lease plan. The U.S. was supplying war materials to England without violating any treaties? Very clever of Roosevelt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty fine line there, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think it's pretty fine line at all; he was just getting around that, getting around the treaty. I think he was shipping war materials on the basis that, "We're just kind of loaning the materials to England." War materials. He never expected to get it back, so how could it be a loan?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did your family think about Roosevelt? I imagine you were all Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time, we didn't have a whole hell of a lot of choice. I mean, what the heck, the country was in the bucket! Things weren't well on the farm so we just had to kind of slug it out. As far as the economy was concerned, Roosevelt did nothing per se that got the country out of the dilemma; there was a war. The big change came when the U.S. shifted to a war-time economy. The Depression ended.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He tried a lot of things. Let's finish talking about your high school experience.

**Mr. Copeland:** Me and sex education!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doing your special thing, yes. But I'm gathering that ROTC really grabbed you because then you decided to go to military school?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it did. I was quite taken with it and first, we all knew that we were going to do time in the military. It was just a matter of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it seemed like the logical thing to do? How did you hear about the Kemper Military School? Did they go out and recruit?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they really didn't. It was kind of an indirect thing. Somebody was around there and said, "Ever thought about going to military school?" One of the fellows in the ROTC department knew something about the military school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a pretty well-known school, wasn't it, in those kinds of circles?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was located in Booneville, Missouri, I understand. There are not too many of those academies in the west, I don't think.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there really aren't. And so I just thought I would be interested in doing that and I got back there and was very disillusioned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You went back there with a friend, right? Gene Struthers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. He and I graduated together and then went to Kemper Military together. Gene later became a member the Washington State Legislature. We were always very close. He passed away a few years ago.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was very disillusioned because it was geared to a much younger group than what I had anticipated. This was my freshman year in college. I was a pretty mature person. I was only there from September through November. Gene and I just said, "We're out of here!" and so we left and enlisted in December.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By then, you were what, eighteen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you came home, were your parents surprised that you had left Kemper?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it just too juvenile? Had you been writing letters and saying, "This just isn't making it?" You had already done that, you were ready to move on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then you came home and had Christmas with your family?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I went into the service before Christmas. I enlisted Dec 7, 1942, just one year after Pearl Harbor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's back up a little and talk about that. Where were you when you heard

about Pearl Harbor? Did you hear it over the radio? What did you think?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was in high school. A friend of mine drove out to the ranch early Sunday morning to tell us the news. We did not have a radio on until he came in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you immediately understand the implications?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. Oh, absolutely. And the next day we went to school and the first thing we did, everybody was told to go directly to the auditorium. And so they had radios in the auditorium and they played all of the President's address to the Congress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the declaration of war?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what the heck! There was not much you could do about it. It was going to affect everyone. Just plan on being in the service in some capacity. How does anybody feel?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a big historic moment.

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember some of the teachers were crying. Lots of the girls cried. The boys speculated about what branch of the service they wanted to serve in. This was a very big moment in history.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a feeling that it was going to be a long war?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think anybody thought it was going to be over with the next day. In

those days nobody ever heard of a short war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a sense that you had a little time to get organized? You didn't immediately go into the Army?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, one year later. The draft was in place and the "call ups" were increased immediately. Enlistments just skyrocketed. To a point the services could hardly handle them all. We were at war and many young men could hardly wait to get into the service. I was in that age group. You see, they had the selective service all set up and everybody had their number system—you didn't get drafted—you were registered with the selective board. So here's the selective service board, they had the authority to go ahead and do it and they just went down the list and said, "Everybody that is single, twenty to twenty-two," and they just wrote you a letter: "Dear friend, at the convenience of the government, you will report to Fort Lewis for induction to the United States Army and you'll be there by noon on Thursday."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any choice?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Only way to avoid getting drafted into the Army was to enlist in the Air Corps, Navy or Marines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't the Army the only one that you were drafted into, the other ones you chose? Isn't that how it worked?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you had a feeling for the Navy, you'd better jump the gun and get in there?

**Mr. Copeland:** You better take a look at it and find that out before the draft board began biting you in the butt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But for you, it was always the Army? Had you ever wanted to do something else?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I really didn't. I really didn't for whatever reasons. I truly wanted to go into the Army and get a commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you weren't quite of that age group at first. So you finished high school, you went to military school, but by then, were they starting to take younger men?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you would have been drafted whether you signed up or not? It clarifies the mind, you don't have to go through any soul searching about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** You didn't have to do any "soul searching." Every male my age knew that sooner or later they would be called into the service.

## CHAPTER 2

### A PRIVATE TO A COMPANY COMMANDER IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS



*Pvt. Tom Copeland, Pvt. Bob Swenson, Pvt. Bruce Maxon  
and Pvt. Alf Transeth, Ft. Lewis, Washington, 1942*

**Mr. Copeland:** I enlisted in the Army on December 7, 1942 with several friends from Walla Walla and arrived at Fort Lewis the next day. I spent several weeks taking tests, getting shots and going to basic classes on Army procedures. I asked to be assigned to the Tank Destroyers. This was a new unit and seemed to be exciting. They were looking for candidates for the Officer Training School. When you go into the service the first thing that you do is, they give you all these aptitude tests. Ten zillion questions! The purpose for the tests is to locate special skills the Army may need and to determine a general level of intelligence. Some of these tests were progressive, that is, if you scored very high you were invited back to take a second series of tests. Of course, the second series was voluntary. I jumped at the chance and again made still another list to take even more tests.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know that it would be like that? Did you realize you were going to be put through the grinder there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, no! We had probably a week where we didn't have anything but tests, get shots, clean the barracks, and more shots. I had no idea there would be that many tests. I apparently scored extremely high. This was the basis for being accepted into Officers Candidate School.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a good background.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I had a pretty good background and so when it came time for selection, they drew a line and said, "We're not going to consider anybody below the line." I was above the line and they made their selection from there. But first I went to Camp Hood—now Fort Hood, Texas—in the middle of December, 1942, the headquarters for the Tank Destroyer Center, to receive basic training.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What part of Texas is that? They seemed to always put those Army quarters in the middle of nowhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right in the middle of Texas. Do you know where Waco is or Kellen, Texas?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that hot there? Flat and very dry?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes! Flat, dry, right in the middle of the great state of Texas. Hotter than hell in summertime and colder than the Arctic in the wintertime.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were ready for all this? There's a lot of drudgery in the Army, too, isn't there?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Lots of work, but that's okay, you don't mind. I mean, I was caught up in the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you live in barracks? Some of those camps were set up so quickly, I think some people stayed in tents.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly, we lived in barracks just like anybody else. But they were not ready to start a basic training class because they simply did not have qualified instructors to carry on such schooling. They did as best they could and then called upon others for help. Basic training was something very familiar to me so I was "one up" on all of the others. We were asked to take a rifle apart. I did it in no time at all and I also showed the instructor how to take a rifle apart. My friends and I had taken ROTC in high school and we knew some of the things they were trying to teach: close order drill, manual of arms, and how to clean and take a rifle apart. As time progressed, I was assigned to join the group of noncommissioned officers as one of the teaching staff as an assistant instructor. Next thing I know, I am an "instructor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Instant recognition! Sex education all over again! Well, you knew how to present material in an organized fashion. You were a practiced speaker and had experience and so there you are: you're a natural.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes! I'm supposed to go through basic training, except rather than going through basic training, all of a sudden, I'm a special instructor with the others in basic training. I continued as a special instructor with the cadre of non-coms until mid-March and then I received new orders.

There were two boards of officers. The first made recommendations as to which applicants should be considered. The second

one made the final choice of who would be members of the Officer Candidate School class. I was among the ones chosen to move to Class 35 Officers Training School. On a Saturday morning I was called into Company Headquarters and advised of my assignment to OCS. I was also informed by the Company Commander that I had been promoted to Corporal and by mid-afternoon that day I was gone. The school was only a few blocks away. I was assigned to a platoon, a barrack, and a bunk. This is the first meeting of the other members of the class. We started classes first thing on Monday morning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So basic training, what was that like? For a non-military person like me, can you describe it? I have certain images in my mind from the movies...

**Mr. Copeland:** Basic training is where you stand at attention and say, "Yes sir, no sir."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And march in formation?

**Mr. Copeland:** Be able to march in formation and understand military law and find out if you're going to be bad what a court martial is, physical training, and how to sign your payroll and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get along?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, how to get along and understand that they're going to put a duty roster up. If you're on KP, that means kitchen police; you do KP duty for that day and things like that. That's all basic training.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it physical calisthenics and getting your body all set to go, and getting really fit?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Every unit in the Army was highly involved in the physical

portion of it; you just had to go through the whole program. However, physical fitness never stopped at any level. The Army was always programming more and more....

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd be in top shape by the time you came out of there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. Harder than nails, everybody was. If you weren't, they had you start all over again. As matter of fact, when I was in OCS, about the tenth week, the entire class was given a rifle and a forty-pound pack and was asked to move out to a special training area. We were asked to start running and then "hit the ground" upon command. We would lie there for a moment and be ordered get up and run again until ordered to "hit the ground." We knew this would continue until a few men dropped out. After several men dropped out we were finished for the day. This was the Army's way of getting rid of the weaker candidates. Also, by early evening those that dropped were given new orders and shipped out that night.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many hours did it take?

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn't take long. A couple of hours.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hot? Was it summer?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is in May and June so the weather was not part of the problem. That's what they do; they were probably determined to cut the class down in size, and they did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a brutal—but effective—way of doing it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the name of the game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you made it through that hurdle. Were there other things like that where you were tested?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, we had tests all the time. We had a full schedule of classes through the week, including homework. Tests and grades were ever-present. The grades were very important for your continuance in OCS. Every Friday we would conclude classes in early afternoon and return to the barracks to prepare for the Officer Candidate School parade. This parade or passing in review was for all classes and always held on Friday at four o'clock. Very formal. All classes would participate with the next (tomorrow's) graduating class leading the parade. So Friday was a special day. Graduation was on Saturday. But Friday was the day you got your grades. Every candidate received an envelope with their grades of the previous week and special notes from the officers at the school. Some candidates received envelopes containing a "pink slip" notifying them that their progress had been unsatisfactory, that they were being reassigned, and need not participate in today's parade, to instead pack up their belongings and move out. By the time we finished the parade and came back to the barracks these individuals were gone and their bunks had been removed. That was the Army's way of getting rid of the "drop outs" quickly. They were gone. They were shipped out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where they'd go? Would they just become enlisted men?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. They were returned to their enlisted rank and assigned to another unit. However, most of them were scheduled for overseas assignments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Presumably, you were all kind of friendly with each other in there. Was that a little hard? Or just the way it was? Was your friend Gene Struthers with you still?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Gene had been assigned to a Tank outfit and I lost track of him. He never went to OCS.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you make friends that lasted in that situation or was it just too difficult?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, never any long-lasting relations. The vast majority of the class I never saw again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So those deep relationships came later?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, especially with those who were in your combat unit. OCS was very impersonal. You are only there for thirteen weeks and then bang, you were gone. It was very demanding. I was still just eighteen and the youngest member of the class. I knew it was going to be tough and I had to do extremely well or I would be reassigned. The classes were hard and demanding and I worked like a beaver. One day my Platoon leader, Lt. Houghton, called me in and we went over my grades. The grades were all very good. He explained that it was unlikely that I would complete the school because of my age. He indicated that I must do extremely well in all of my classes if I was going to make it to graduation. Now I am motivated! As a matter of record, about twenty percent of the class was “washed out” in the first ten weeks.



*Second Lieutenant Tom Copeland with sister Patty at home in Walla Walla, June 1943*

After I got my commission, I went home on leave for one week for a short, but very nice visit and then returned to Camp Hood, Texas. This was now July, 1943. I had my nineteenth birthday while in OCS. But I didn't tell anyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your next assignment?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was assigned to the 702nd Tank Destroyer Battalion at Camp Hood. They were over-staffed with officers. This, for me, was not a bad thing for I got an assignment I would have never received under a normal situation. I was appointed Defense Counsel for a Special Court Martial Board. I had the opportunity to act as an Army Defense Counsel. Let me tell you the story:

During this time I handled one case that stands out in my mind. This soldier was accused of “striking the Sergeant of the Guard on the nose, with his fist.” My job was to do my very best to defend this soldier in the Court-martial proceedings.

The incident was that the defendant was being escorted out of the PX by the Sergeant of the Guard and the Corporal of the Guard because of a minor disturbance. The three were on the porch of the building scuffling and all three of them fell down the fifteen or twenty steps. It was alleged that the defendant struck the Sergeant of the Guard at some point during this altercation.

When it came my turn to cross-examine the Corporal of the Guard I ask the following question: “Please describe to the Court how you were holding on to the defendant during this time.”

Answer: “I had his upper right arm in a very firm grip with my two arms wrapped around his right arm.”

Question: “Did you release your grip at any time or did you hold his arm all during the scuffle?”



Answer: "I hung on all of the time until I hit the bottom of the stairs."

Then I questioned the Sergeant of the Guard: "How were you holding the defendant during the scuffle?"

Answer: "I had a hold of his left hand and wrist."

Question: "Was the left hand behind the defendant's back about at belt height?"

Answer: "About in the middle of his back."

Question: "Would you call this a hammer lock?"

Answer: "If I pull up on it real hard it would be a hammer lock."

Question: "Between you and the Corporal, both of you being much larger than the defendant, would you say that you had him quite well subdued?"

Answer: "Yes, Sir."

Question: "The three of you were on the porch for only a short period of time before you all stumbled and fell down the stairs. Did the blow to your nose come shortly after you walked out the door, while on the porch, just before the fall or during the fall?"

Answer: "About the time of the fall, Sir."

"No further questions, Sir." I said to the President of the Court. "In closing, I would like to point out the scuffle and the accidental fall down the stairs probably caused some pain to the nose of the Sergeant of the Guard. As testimony indicated, the defendant was quite incapable of striking any one at this time considering how well the Sergeant and the Corporal had restrained him. Further, I contend that there was no malice on the part of the defendant and he was the hapless party to an accidental fall down some stairs that causes some pain to the nose of the Sergeant of the Guard. It is my hope that this Court will find the defendant not guilty of any malicious wrong doings."

The President of the Court said, "At this point in the proceedings it is now time for the Court to ask the defendant if he wishes to make a statement, sworn or un-sworn, before the Court recesses to deliberate the case."

At this point I rose and said, "No Sir, the defendant does not care to make a statement." (The defendant reached up and pulled on my arm and whispered something to me.) The President of the Court again asked if the defendant wished to make a statement. Again, I answered, "No, Sir." (The defendant again grabbed my arm and pulled me towards him saying some thing that I tried not to hear.)

Now, the President of the Court said, "Lieutenant Copeland, I want to ask the defendant, not you, 'Do you wish to make a statement before this Court?'"

Defendant: "Yes, Sir."

President of the Court: "Swear in the defendant"

Trial Judge: "Did you strike the Sergeant of the Guard on the nose with your fist?"

Defendant: "You're damn right I did and I'd do it again if I had a chance."

Well, this ended my career as a trial lawyer! But in November, the 702<sup>nd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion was being relocated and had to get down to regular strength and I was reassigned. However, I did get a letter of commendation from Lieutenant Colonel Beall, the Commanding Officer of the 702<sup>nd</sup>. This was an uncommon but welcome recognition of my performance. It was forwarded to my next assignment with the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in Camp Gruber, Oklahoma, where I was assigned to the 222<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment. I was with this regiment from December through March at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. Being assigned to an Infantry Regiment was not a surprise. The Army just put you wherever

they needed you. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Division had just received enlisted men that had completed basic training so now it was time to do unit training. I was assigned as a platoon leader in one of the rifle companies. Training was vigorous.



2nd Lt. Tom Copeland, Infantry Officer,  
May 1944, age 20

After several weeks I was selected to attend Officer Communication School at Fort Benning, Georgia in March '44 for a twelve-week course, a special advanced school, in all forms of Army communication. It was very good and came in to be very valuable later. This again was a tough, demanding course. Near the end of the schooling period we learned of the invasion of Europe. I did well in the school with very high grades. Upon completion I went home on leave only to find that I had new orders to report to Fort Dix, New Jersey for overseas assignment. This was in late June of 1944.

There was a great demand for replacement troops. It was not a surprise to me to receive such orders. Fort Dix, New Jersey was interesting. It was a huge replacement depot. The place was full of soldiers getting ready to ship out. We were just hastily prepared and put aboard ship.

I was put aboard the *Il de France* with

10,000 troops heading for England. Aboard the ship, everything was under the control of the replacement depot. All were being processed in the same fashion: orders followed assigning each individual aboard to a "package." This was a major movement of soldiers. I was given orders that I had a "package" of forty men to take to a replacement depot. The forty enlisted men in the package all had the same Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 345 Infantry Rifleman.

I met these troops for the first time aboard the ship. One Corporal, the rest privates. We disembarked at Glasgow, Scotland, by climbing down rope netting to small boats alongside and then were carried ashore. The *Il de France* was too large to berth in Glasgow. We were then loaded on trains heading south to a camp. There, for the next few hours we were being readied for shipment to France. It was now early July and the invasion was well underway.

I really don't know where in England we were. We were there for such a short period of time. We arrived late in the evening and the next day were given physical exams, more calisthenics, and the men were all issued their M1 rifles. The rifles all had to be cleaned and inspected by me. It seemed that every time you turned around they issued you something else to carry. The third day we were issued suspenders, a combat pack field sleeping bag (wool) and sleeping bag cover, one shelter half, a cartridge belt, a first aid packet and a trench knife. We were really getting loaded down. In addition to all of the above, I had the records of all of the men to deliver to the next replacement depot.

But we were not finished. There was one more day of equipment inspection, fitting and calisthenics. Then next, I was awakened at about three in the morning and told to assemble the men, with all of their equipment to move to a gymnasium nearby. This took some time to get everything packed and ready.

Off we went to the dimly lit gym only to find a Major and two Captains awaiting our arrival. They were all Chaplains and we had services in that building for Protestants, Catholics and Jews all at the same time.

Then we were instructed to go out the rear doors and pick up some other materials before proceeding to the mess hall. On our way out they issued each of us ammunition, a cartoon of cigarettes and a “mattress cover.” That is what they called it. It was a light canvass, off-white in color and some referred to it as a “body bag.” We were then taken to a very large mess hall and asked to assemble in one area. Here we placed our equipment and then went through one of the largest breakfast chow lines I had ever seen. Oranges, grapefruit, ham, sausage, eggs, biscuits, toast—you name it, they had it. It was a real fine meal, probably one of the best the Army could come up with. Upon completion of breakfast, we were all issued canteens. We were instructed that these needed to be rinsed thoroughly and then filled, for we would be taking these with us. By then it was about seven in the morning and we were trucked to Portsmouth where we were loaded on a large boat for the ride across the English Channel. We had only been in England about seventy-two hours. It was a fast trip through England; the times demanded just that. During the crossing, the waters were very calm and the trip was uneventful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was happening in the war about the time you arrived in France? Were things still pretty hot on those Normandy beaches?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no. We were not being fired upon. At that time the front was some thirty miles inland. To get ashore in Normandy, we off-loaded from the large boat via rope nets and on to Higgins boats for the short ride to shore. A Higgins boat is one of

those flat-bottomed, blunt-ended boats that carried foot troops ashore. There were several piers and docks in operation but that was for heavy equipment only and anything that was ambulatory would take the Higgins and wade ashore. Things were going very smoothly. The package—one officer and forty enlisted men—just fit into the Higgins boat and once we got to shore they merely opened the front and we stepped off into the water waist-deep and waded ashore.



*Higgins boat with 40+ men aboard*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel? Besides cold and wet, I mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** Numb is the best word at this point. My orders were to take this package of forty enlisted men to Replacement Depot Number 1234 “located somewhere in France.” Those were the exact words on the orders: “located somewhere in France.” This was a bit of a challenge to say the least. It was up to me to find the replacement depot. This proved to be no problem because the replacement depot had placed small arrows pointing to the direction of its exact location.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That still seems a little loose.

**Mr. Copeland:** You talk about being impersonal? That’s impersonal, isn’t it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, rather. So you had to train yourself to be—what would be the quality? Resourceful—able to meet with anything, to accomplish what you’re just being told to “do?” But you were what—still just nineteen years old?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, this was in 1944 and I was twenty at that time, but very mature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the other soldiers would be about your same age, wouldn’t they? Still pretty raw, just kids, really?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. They were probably all draftees that had gone through basic training and a little bit more than that and were coming overseas as replacements. I think everybody had a MOS [military occupational specialty number] and an infantry rifle. The MOS number indicated what training you had, what you could do. As a Second Lieutenant, as a replacement officer, I carried five MOSs. I was the unit commander, which would be a platoon leader for infantry, field artillery, tanks, tank destroyer or cavalry. I could be assigned to any units of this type.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Calvary! There were still cavalry in the Second World War?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Better know as reconnaissance. I could be a platoon leader for any one of those five combat branches.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were pretty versatile. So you gathered up all your men and just headed off down some little road?

**Mr. Copeland:** You used the word versatile. The Army used the word expendable. So we started marching. And lo and behold, we came across a little sign that said, “Replacement Depot 1234” with an arrow pointing in the correct direction. Soon we found another road sign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, very good. So you just walked through the French countryside?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just walked though the French countryside.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it pretty smashed up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, is it smashed up? Big time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I mean, wasn’t that the path of the invasion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, for sure. There were a whole bunch of vehicles that had been hit and burned and they were shoved off beside of the road.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you did get to this replacement depot and what was that? Was it a village, or just a place in a field, or what?

**Mr. Copeland:** A replacement depot had a commanding officer and whole bunch of troops. The headquarters was located in a farmhouse. We arrived there very late in the afternoon. I gave them my papers and credentials and they said, “Fine, we’ll have a runner go with you and show you the area you will be located.” I was taken to an open field of about two acres and told to have the men pitch tents and remain in the area until further notice. Just kind of a grassy field. So we just pitched the tents. They had kind of a kitchen and you could get something to eat. Only two meals that day. By this time we were all pretty well dried-off. We’d probably hiked, oh, I’d say the better part of ten miles after coming in off the beach. It had been a very long and trying day and we were all ready for some rest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were putting your training into action there!



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you hear guns firing? Could you hear anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the distance, you'd get some artillery, yes. That was about it. The next morning we were again fed at the field kitchen. I was then asked to assemble the package. About two thirds of the men were assigned at that time and departed immediately. They were sent off to their new assignment within the hour to Infantry divisions. The remaining men were all assigned the next morning and I was the only one remaining in that package. I got reassigned to an officer pool to await further assignment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not you, not yet? How long did you stay there?

**Mr. Copeland:** I stayed in the replacement depot about two months. I was given the duty of transporting the replacements to their new assignments. I had trucks to carry them but I had to find where their new units were and deliver the men and their records to the new unit. I did this for several weeks, shuttling back and forth between the replacement depot and the Infantry divisions. Many times this would take several days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you kind of itchy to get going yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, "itchy" may not be the best word, but it is close.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you literally waiting for somebody to be killed—or injured so you could go and take their place?

**Mr. Copeland:** That may not be exactly the way the Army wanted to portray the "replacement system," but you are accurately describing the chain of events.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You couldn't help but realize it. Were you at all scared? I mean, you're still quite a young man.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think apprehensive is probably a better word. I mean, later on after I got into the war, I got scared on several occasions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were in some pretty awful places. Did the wounded come through there or did they go somewhere else? Did you see people that had been in action?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the evacuation hospitals were located just down the road. We had little or no contact with them. A lot of evacuation hospitals were set up. First aid came in about four degrees. First was the company medic who gave the original first aid. Second was the aid station that would be something more like a place to patch somebody up; this station was always very, very close to the front. At this point some of the wounded were patched up and returned to their unit. Next was the evacuation hospital—kind of an assembly area where the wounded were only there for a very short period of time. It was set up to do emergency-type arrangements, like to get somebody closed up as fast as you can. Also, at this point, some of the wounded were returned to their unit, but the severely wounded were sent on to a hospital. At this time all the hospitals were located in England. So by the time I got there, the evacuation hospitals were pretty well established. They were moving a lot of troops out of there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the war moving pretty quickly at this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is now nearing the end of July, early August and the breakthrough had occurred and American advanced elements were on the move. Then the entire

replacement depot was ordered to be moved, myself included, to a new location about thirty miles inland. By now the American forces had sustained about 73,000 casualties and all had been replaced. The total of American troops in France was now nearing 700,000.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have air support? How did that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had excellent air support. The air support was good as long as the weather was good. If you didn't have good weather, then, of course, you were closed off completely. It just all depends upon the weather. And of course, the Germans at that time virtually had no air support at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was decimated by then or occupied elsewhere?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just virtually. They didn't have any input from the sky.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the Germans still on the Russian front at that point? I'm trying to get things lined up in my mind.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. They were on the Russian front, too. They were spread so thin, it wasn't even funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren't they down in Italy as well, because the Italians weren't able to hold their own? Didn't the Germans go down there and run the show there, too? And then go into Yugoslavia?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, then they slowly retreated clear back above Rome. They outnumbered everything north of Rome for quite a while.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you were busy in this area, is what was called "the Anvil"

coming up from the south of France at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That was August, 1944. There were two directions: one coming in from the English Channel heading east, another coming in from southern France. We were moving towards Paris. The big push was to get into Paris which was liberated August 25, 1944. Eisenhower had his instructions from President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill: Let the French soldiers "liberate" Paris. That was the political strategy more than anything else. General Eisenhower sent out word: "Everybody stop; don't go into Paris." This made General Patton damn mad. Eisenhower had two reasons: One, let the French have the credit as we may need their help later on; two, don't get into a prolonged fire-fight in the city and create immense building damage. So they hastily shipped from England General Leclerc and a whole bunch of Frenchmen called the French First Army to France. They put them on trucks and ran them up to the outskirts of Paris. They never heard a shot fired, for Christ-sakes. The next day they had a big parade in Paris including General Charles de Gaulle and General Leclerc. Big deal!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was all sort of manufactured?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was all manufactured. So they go into Paris. Oh my god, all these French were liberating Paris. The one thing of course, they were all equipped with American uniforms, American vehicles, and with American rifles, and so on. So three days later when the Americans came to town, the Frenchmen are saying, "Why are Americans running around with French uniforms?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, no! Kind of a big misunderstanding.

**Mr. Copeland:** Earlier in the month on August 12, the Seventh Army came ashore in southern France after fighting in Italy. They linked up with elements of the Third Army on September 15<sup>th</sup>. At that time all of the Seventh Army came under the control of General Eisenhower. From the replacement depot in Fontainebleau and other locations, replacements and supplies were rushed to the very tired Seventh Army. There were three U.S. divisions: the Third, the 36<sup>th</sup>, and the 45<sup>th</sup> and one rag-tag French Moroccan/Algerian Division—more like a disorganized battalion. Assigned to these U.S. divisions were three tank destroyer battalions: the 601<sup>st</sup>, 636<sup>th</sup> and the 645<sup>th</sup>. The replacement depot then moved again, to Fontainebleau, France in early September. I was there for about a week before my next assignment, which was to the 636<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion located in the vicinity of Epinal, France.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's pause in our narrative for a moment for a different sort of question. Can you tell me, what's the difference between a tank and a tank destroyer?

**Mr. Copeland:** Ah, a great deal. A tank has as its main gun a 75 mm cannon. It has an enclosed top, a coaxially-mounted 30-caliber machine gun and one 30-caliber bow gun. We used two models of tank destroyers: M10, 75 mm main gun, open top turret, diesel motor, light armor, good mobility. M36, 90 mm main gun, open-top turret, gas motor, light armor, good mobility. The 75 mm is totally incapable of taking out a German tank.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what's it good for?

**Mr. Copeland:** Primarily enemy foot soldiers. Either the M10 or the M36 could knock out German tanks. So we were in extremely high demand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the level of technology? Were American tanks comparable to German tanks?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no. German tanks were far superior.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did you know that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you deal with that? Did yours have any compensating qualities?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had to be smarter, and quicker, and brighter. However, our tanks and tank destroyers were far more dependable with fewer breakdowns than those of the Germans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were yours more maneuverable, or did you have any advantages at all with your tanks?

**Mr. Copeland:** Our tanks and tank destroyers were more maneuverable than the German tanks; however they carried heavier armor and a larger gun. So from that standpoint the German tanks were, in the main, superior to the American equivalent. To a degree, we were little bit more maneuverable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were kind of in a bad place?

**Mr. Copeland:** We learned very quickly that a tank wasn't the answer to all problems. So we worked as a team; a couple of M-4 tanks and a couple of tank destroyers. Each was very complimentary to the other. What one lacked the other made up for the shortfall. When it came to engaging German armored vehicles, we had to find what the problems were before we started aggressive action. So that's why we did an awful lot of work on

the ground before we engaged. Many times people would report sighting a German tank and then I would take a look and see what I could do to get a gun or two in position in order to be able to neutralize it. So that is where we were smarter and quicker and faster and better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's it like inside a tank?



*Inside a M-36 - 90mm tank destroyer*

**Mr. Copeland:** When it was firing, not very nice. The noise is just unbelievable. After several rounds you just can't hear a damn thing. And this hearing loss may last for a couple of hours. Normal hearing would return gradually. That's why I don't hear very well today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it hot and stuffy? Were you kind of jammed in there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there one person per tank?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a crew of four: tank commander, gunner, driver and loader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So four people in there, and one's in charge, and is one able to look out and see where you're going, or how does that work? You each had a function, presumably?

**Mr. Copeland:** The tank commander—a sergeant—would direct the crew. The driver would take his orders from the tank commander. The tank commander would be in a position where he could stand up and look all around the tank destroyer. Remember, this was a large, open-top turret. The gunner was in a position inside the turret and had limited vision through his gun sight. The loader took his orders from the tank commander and would select the type of ammunition that was requested by the tank commander. Selection of the ammunition depended on the target. If it was a German tank, an armor piercing round would be selected. If the target was enemy personnel, the selection may be high explosive, quick-fuse. After firing, the loader would immediately reload with the appropriate ammunition. However, let me pause for a moment and give special recognition to the gunner. Here is a guy with nerves of steel. He is very patient, very methodical, very exacting. He knew he had one good moment to be "right on." If successful on the first round, he is a hero to the entire crew. If not, then your position had been disclosed. Incoming fire would be arriving soon. Now the gunner had the urgent task of getting off a second round, quickly and with some degree of accuracy. This gunner is what it is all about. Getting this equipment, personnel, and ammunition in a position is one thing, hitting the target is quite another matter. The crew is depending upon the skills of that gunner. And we had some damn-fine gunners, too. I had four guns in my platoon. We would normally support an infantry battalion.





*2nd Lt. Tom Copeland, Gunner, Shorty Dorsey, Sgt. Lester Wolf, Andy Dreveki on "The Kid," February 1945*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people make up a battalion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Six hundred. We just had the four guns often covering a front of a mile or more. Occasionally we frequently would cover a front nearly two miles wide, but that was thin—too thin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the other people are on the ground; they're infantry?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where were you located in all this mass of people?

**Mr. Copeland:** It depends upon the situation. Sometimes standing on the tank, sometimes on the ground alongside of the tank destroyer. I would be with each of the destroyers several times a day. If we were static and defensive at one place, then I would be checking on all the tank positions. Maybe we would have several roads to cover. A bridge where we don't want any German tanks to cross. A road intersection. All of these positions varied from time to time. Then sometimes we would be in "indirect fire position." This was using the tank destroyer as a field artillery gun.

Now, if we were in a very aggressive situation and moving forward, like moving down the autobahn, I would be assigned to work with "the point." This was a team of

other units, such as mobile infantry, tanks, engineers and field artillery forward observers. This "point" would be the first troops down the road. Advancing as quickly as possible, now and then we would draw some small-arms fire. The infantry and the tanks would generally take care of this situation. However, if we drew enemy tank fire, then I would be called upon to handle the problem. The responsibilities changed from time to time and no set of rules or regulations or handbook information covered every encounter. The ingenuity and imagination of the American GI was incredible. You simply played it by the "seat of your pants" and hoped you were right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Roaring along?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, with fingers crossed and all that stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can understand what you were doing a little better now, thanks for that explanation. And now you were assigned to the 636<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion?

**Mr. Copeland:** The first thing I had to do was find battalion headquarters. They were located in Epinal, France. Then I located the Company Command Post (CP) in a partially blown-out building near Bruyeres, east of Epinal. I met the First Sergeant John Fruhwirth and the Company Commander, Captain Bill Latham. My assignment with the new Company was as an extra officer—for the moment. They had six officers in the Company so I was assigned to be a Forward Observer (FO) for the Company. As the Forward Observer, I would be able to see the targets while the guns were firing indirect. Most of the time we communicated with the gun commanders by telephone. We would string wire for the gun position to the Forward Observer or occasionally we would have the

guns wired into a regimental switchboard. Using radio was out of the question at this time. I would tell them how to adjust the guns so that they could hit the target. This was tricky work. It was very demanding, but once I got the hang of it I became quite good at it. I could call on a target and have the first round come in over the target. I would call for adjustment and, let's say the second round would be short. Again I called for an adjustment and this time I would be right "on target" and issued the order: "Fire for effect." This meant four rounds per gun or sixteen rounds. We were just like artillery, except they were firing 105 mm and I was using 76 mm and 90 mm rounds. We did a lot of indirect firing, lots of it. Records indicate that in the month of October the battalion fired 9727 rounds of high explosive 76mm rounds, about 8500 rounds in November and in December 6170 rounds. It was almost standard procedure that we had one platoon from each Company in indirect firing position. The other two were on line in direct firing positions.

As Forward Observer, I was located in some tall building, on a hill, or standing on top of a tank with binoculars looking at the target—anywhere you could get a good look at the surrounding area. Frequently, we would fire several rounds on a road intersection as a target. The gun commanders would record these settings and then if a group of enemy vehicles passed by this intersection I could call on the guns to fire on this location again and have some reasonable success. This was called pre-registration and it was very effective. Sometimes we would be asked to send a couple of rounds into a building where there may be a concentration of the enemy. We would locate the building and then do a number on it. Also exciting, we were called upon frequently to remove an enemy observation post. Generally, this was a tall church steeple or something like that. If we were within range, we could take this out of

action by either direct or indirect fire.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you adjust to your new position and the men under your command?

**Mr. Copeland:** As an extra officer, this gave me a great opportunity to adjust to the conditions. When I was assigned as platoon leader, I knew most of the men in my platoon, so it was very easy. I explained to them that I had a lot to learn and they were all eager to help me. And they did just that. The advice and counsel I got from those men was invaluable. We got along extremely well right from the start. Adjusting did not really take much time. The men had seen Second Lieutenants come and go so I was just another passing through. They had no idea I was to be with them for so long. I had heard that the average time for a Second Lieutenant to be on line was about three weeks. After a while, the men began to accept me and I gained their confidence. I was making good decisions, not being reckless, and getting the job done. They realized that I was taking care of them. I never asked a man to do anything I wouldn't do and for that they understood and respected me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know you have been through extensive training, but actual battlefield conditions would still call upon you to give your utmost. How did you handle all that when the time came?

**Mr. Copeland:** The best explanation is that I simply took the "I" out of the equation. I was not thinking about "I." I was concerned about "WE." Now, WE consisted of many ingredients. WE included the tank commanders, the drivers and the gunners. WE also included the tanks, the ammunition and the gas, and WE included also the infantry men we were supporting. WE were one big team effort with an objective, a mission that

must be accomplished. A lot of people are depending upon WE. I found that I could function very well under extreme conditions with these thoughts in mind. This gave me confidence and that confidence was realized and recognized in my subordinates and my superiors. So I learned early on that concentrating on “WE” and dismissing the “I” comforts, the “I” inconveniences, the “I” fears; this was my answer to not only surviving, but performing well under combat conditions. However, I was not there to make poor choices. A poor choice at this time could ruin your whole and entire day!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I must say I’m very impressed with your answer. More of us should adopt this perspective in all kinds of situations. I realize the experience of combat conditions would create a very special bond. But wasn’t it something of a polyglot group there? How did you relate to the other Allied members?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me tell you a story. On one occasion I was assigned to be a liaison officer with a French unit that was in position on our right. We were to advance on two parallel roads, the French on the right and units of the 36<sup>th</sup> Division on the left. I was asked to coordinate the departure times and the anticipated time of arrival at the objective, which was a road intersection about two miles ahead. The French told me they would depart their positions at 0800 and should be at the intended intersection by 0830. This did not seem difficult to me. However, when they didn’t arrive at the intersection at 0830, the Colonel was mad as hell at me. “Copeland, you said the French were going to be here at 0830 and they are nowhere in sight.” I replied, “Colonel, I didn’t say the French were going to be here at 0830. I said the French told me they were going to be here at 0830.” With that the conversation ended.

The French had three Divisions, more like three Regiments. Two were Moroccans and one Algerian. They were dirty, filthy and smelly people. Not good soldiers. They were more like a bunch of thugs or bandits. They would steal anything and everything in sight and think nothing of it. They could understand you and you sure as hell couldn’t understand them. They all smelled like camel dung. The entire French Army was just a big show, a façade, a farce, but they had to be recognized and dealt with. That is why they were given just meek and minor assignments. They simply were not dependable. So we understood and just gave them a sector in France all by themselves and left them to their own devices. I didn’t like the French very much, as you can tell. I don’t like people that will tell you lies, make excuses for their actions or try to blame someone else for their shortcomings. This was the typical French officer and their smelly troops.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like you had good cause for your feelings!

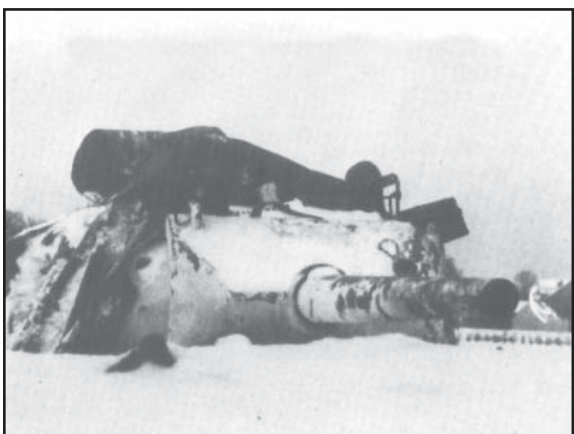
**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Now, we were moving pretty fast. This was getting into fall and the weather was deteriorating rapidly. Cold rain was upon us and the roads were getting muddy. Also, we were placed on limitations of everything: ammunition—both large and small arms ammunition, and gas or diesel. Supplies of all types were being diverted to the troubled First Army. Our rapid advances came to a slow walk and we all realized we would be in here for a long haul. The Seventh Army made big shifts in the lines giving areas to the French south and assuming area in the north. Strasbourg was taken—an open city—and the French were sent in to occupy the city. Colmar was still in German hands. The situation was changing a great deal.

This was in early winter. Later we had to go into a very strong defensive mode

and took up positions north or northwest of Strasbourg, in the Bitchwiller, Hagenau area. That's where I spent the winter of '44-45. Cold, wet, and ugly. The winter was very, very severe.



*C Company Tank Destroyer dug in Hagenau, German positions about one mile away, 1945*



*636th C Company Tank Destroyer Battalion near Hagenau dug in defensive position "hull defilade," January 19, 1945*

*Pictures like these were hard to come by. The U.S. troops were forbidden to have cameras. Occasionally we would find a German POW with a camera and feeling that the POW had no further use for it, we would "liberate" the camera. Of course, we had no source of film and no way to develop the film. We could take a few pictures and then after the war was over we would have an opportunity to see those pictures taken months before.*

The Battalion was now located in the vicinity of Harbouey for a little rest and maintenance. That lasted about three days. Then, on the first of January there were strong enemy attacks all along the Seventh Army

front. The 36<sup>th</sup> Division was put on a six-hour alert for movement to any point on the Seventh Army front. This required us to hurry and finish or defer additional maintenance to our very tired and weary tanks. The M10 tank destroyers had been on line continuously since the invasion of southern France in early August. On January 3, we were given notice that the Company was attached to the 143 [RCT] and would take position in the Lemberg, Goetzenbruck, St. Louis area about forty miles away.

The Battle of the Bulge occurred on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The plan was to have the Third Army give some ground to us, the Seventh Army, and for the Third Army to shift left or north and take new ground affected by the breakthrough of the 19<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. We got spread out very thin and the Germans started "Operation Northwind." There was an attempt to recapture Strasbourg. This would have been significant and very harmful to the French population. So we were under tremendous pressure for several weeks, but were able to turn back this advance. However, it was with one hell of a price! We spent January in a defensive position, waiting for supplies and getting ready for the spring offensive. That came in March with the warmer weather. Then we advanced and cleared all of the area west of the Rhine River.

This was a major German offensive. The best way for me to explain this is to quote the noted WWII historian, Stephen Ambrose. In his book, *The Victors*, he describes the following:

*Operation Northwind, starting January 1, hit Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's U.S. Seventh Army. Eventually a total of fifteen U. S. divisions with 250,000 men were involved in the fighting, which took place along a front that ran almost 150 kilometers from Saarbrücken in the north to a point on the west bank of the Rhine south of Strasbourg...*



*On January 21, Seventh Army ordered the much depleted 79<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Divisions to retreat from Rittershoffen. The Americans abandoned the Maginot Line and fell back on new positions along the Moder River...*

*Overall, the Northwind offensive was a failure. The Germans never got near Strasbourg, nor could they cut American supply lines. It was costly to both sides: Seventh Army's losses in January were 11,609 battle casualties plus 2,836 cases of trench foot. German losses were around 23,000 killed, wounded, or missing (Seventh Army processed some 5,985 German POWs)...*

*These newly made lieutenants and sergeants, some of them teenage boys, most of them in their early twenties, provided the core leadership that got the U. S. Army through that terrible January.*

[Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys: The Men of World War II*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1998, pages 308, 310, 311-312]



*A tank destroyer breaking through a street barrier in Lemberg, France, December 1944*

Now we were on the road again heading north. In that part of France, the roads were all very narrow and with a tank that is ten feet wide, it took a bit of doing to make much progress. The average speed was less

than ten miles per hour. Much of the travel was at night and progress was slowed, but we made headway. We arrived and took up position on line. It started to snow. All along the front there was a terrible snow storm. The next morning found us in green tanks on a white background. Hurriedly, we found some white paint and did the best we could to camouflage the tanks.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January I was checking a gun position in the town of Lemberg when heavy shelling started. I received a nasty gash on my right arm. The aid station quickly bandaged it, gave me a shot and told me to take it easy for a day or two. Oh sure! The situation wasn't getting any better. It was getting worse. The Third Army, to our left, was diverting troops to assist in the Battle of the Bulge. So the Seventh Army was taking over areas of the Third. This made us "thin along the MLR—Main Line of Resistance," and with the weather, it made movement difficult.

We were only there for about one week and the orders came down that the Seventh Army was going to pull back to the Moder River and take up defensive positions along this new MLR. Now we were on the road again, but this time the roads were icy and this presented a big problem for me. The best way for a tank to move is to have the right track on the shoulder of the road, in the dirt or gravel for better traction. Movement was at a snail's pace and going downhill required exceptional driving skills.

I took up direct fire positions near the town of Hagenau in a cultivated forest overlooking the Moder River, our MLR. The ground was covered with several inches of snow and the temperature had fallen to near zero. That presented several problems. We were issued winter clothing and additional protective gear like shoe packs to wear on our feet. They were far warmer than the standard

Army boot. Let me quote from Stephen Ambrose's book *Citizen Soldiers*:  
*Nights ranged from zero degrees Fahrenheit to minus ten and lower... The GIs, and the Germans opposite them, went through worse physical misery than the men of Valley Forge... [T]he conditions in Northwest Europe in January 1945 were as brutal as any in history, including the French and the German retreats from Moscow in midwinter 1812 and 1941.*

[Stephen E. Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1997, page 372]

Ambrose says it so well I would not want to change a word. The real problem manifested itself in the number of cases of "trench foot." Trench foot is caused by having your feet cold and wet for prolonged periods of time. Poor wet boots, reduced circulation and lack of ability to change socks are all contributing factors. *Citizen Soldiers* put it this way:  
*First a man lost his toenails. His feet turn white, then purple, finally black. A serious case of trench foot made walking impossible... Trench foot put more men out of action than German 88s, mortars, or machine gun fire. During the winter of 1944-45, some 45,000 men had to be pulled out of the front line because of trench foot—the equivalent of three full infantry divisions.*

[Stephen E. Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1997, page 260]

On several occasions we were issued additional socks and I was required to personally watch each and every man change his socks and check his shoe pack. Needless to say, this gave me an opportunity to inspect the feet of each and every man. What a job! A shoe pack was an Army-issued twelve-inch winter boot with rubber on the lower portion and leather on the upper part. The boot had a removable felt

liner that was about half an inch thick. One could remove this liner and replace it with one that was dry. Drying the shoe pack liners was accomplished by placing them on the engine of the tank. The heat of the engine would dry them out quite well. Our Supply Sergeant had scrounged around and found extra liners so everyone had at least two sets.

When we were in a static direct-fire position, we would start up and run the engines for about five minutes twice a day at dusk and again at early sunrise. This was coordinated all along the line and all vehicles would start up at the same time. That way the enemy could not hear and locate one single vehicle as a potential target. When we started the engines there was just one big roar across the entire front. It worked very well; so well the Germans would do this at the same time.

It was extremely cold with a lot of snow and it was almost impossible to take wheeled vehicles or track vehicles off a road. You couldn't traverse on anything around other than paved roads. Tanks were almost immobile if they got out in the open fields.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Too heavy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Too heavy, too wet—it would just sink at that time. So we were constantly concerned about the condition of the ground. Was the ground frozen hard enough to support enemy tanks? There was a period of almost three weeks when it was very static in one area. Every officer was assigned to a particular section of ground and had to go out and check every night to find out if freezing conditions were such that it would support enemy armor. This was most critical; if it froze hard we would have to worry about German tanks advancing into our lines.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there active fighting going on while you were doing this?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. I wore a white parka with a hood that could be pulled up over the helmet so you would blend in with the snow. I'd go out in this one sector that I was responsible for and check various places.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would you do, kind of tap the ground and see if it was hard?

**Mr. Copeland:** I actually carried just a regular single-bladed long knife with me and you could stick it in the ground and penetrate it and find out how deep the frost was. There was two to three inches of snow on top of the ground which acted as somewhat like a thermal blanket and retarded the ground from freezing, but we were concerned that if the ground got frozen hard enough, then, of course, the German tanks could roll right through the terrain just like a road made of asphalt. So that was one of the conditions that we were living under.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine the Germans were out on their side doing the same thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Doing the same thing, they were. Yes, but I'd go out and do this about every other night—go out about eleven o'clock at night, come back in about two o'clock in the morning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there the chance that you would meet Germans doing the same thing on their side while you were out there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only on one occasion we did. I met up with my Company Commander, Captain Bill Latham, who was checking an area to my right. We had just completed our rounds. He was doing a sector to my right and I'd done mine and then I joined him at this irrigation ditch as planned. We were coming back on the high road between this irrigation

ditch and the field, and as we were walking through the snow...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you kind of standing out in the light?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we were. The snow was kind of crunching under our feet. All of a sudden, we recognized that there was another crunch going on and I turned around and a German soldier was following us. He appeared to be a very large man, extremely tall, with both hands holding this very long rifle across his chest. He said, "Comrade" and he handed me the rifle. At the time it seemed that the rifle must have weighed forty pounds. It scared both of us to death. I took the rifle and pointed for him to walk in front of us. We started off for our jeep and I was shaking all the way. By the time we got this German soldier into the back of the jeep I recognized that he was just a little bit of a fellow. He probably stood no more than five feet tall and his weight could not have been more than 150 pounds. I also noticed that we had calmed down considerably but that poor little German was shaking so badly he could hardly sit. At this point he was much worse for the wear than we were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's actually lucky that you didn't shoot him. What were you supposed to do with him?

**Mr. Copeland:** I just took his rifle and took him. He wanted to give up. He could have nailed both of us instantly, but he chose not to. He knew what he was doing; the war for him was finished. We sent him back as a POW and he was interrogated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, a dangerous moment for everybody. So, did it ever freeze? I mean, what happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had lots of below-freezing weather; however that particular ground never got frozen enough to a point where it would support German armor. We did the inspecting at night, every other night for about three weeks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not your armor either, so you're just stuck there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we were just stuck there. Actually, we were nearly stationary, confined to the use of the roads. It was not what you would call a fluid situation.

On another occasion, I was about to complete the ground inspection and I heard an incoming round and I hit the dirt. The round was white phosphorus and it landed with a muffled pop, not a big bang, about twenty feet from me. When it went off, the bits of phosphorus flew into the air and completely over me. As soon as these particles hit the snow it caused a steam vapor to rise. I was not touched and got up and quickly jumped into a nearby irrigation ditch. Once in the ditch I moved to the north, away from the area being shelled. Captain Latham was about one hundred yards away and saw only the cloud of steam and smoke. The shelling continued for a brief period of time, but when it stopped Captain Latham started looking for me. By then I was a couple of hundred yards further north so he was unable to find me and returned to the jeep. I retraced my steps back down the ditch towards the location of the jeep but upon arrival to find the jeep was gone. Luckily, I found some signal corps men and they gave me a lift back to the Battalion Command Post. When Captain Latham saw me, he said "Damn, Copeland, I just reported you as missing in action."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All that paperwork for nothing! I'm sure everyone was just as glad

to see you! Soldiering in the depths of winter sounds really tough, on top of everything else.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was a hard winter. We were kept on line too long. The troops were tired and if put to the challenge would not have been able to perform at full capacity. We would get off line for three or four days and then right back at it through January and February. The weather moderated slightly. It was now just a cold rain with occasional snow flurries. Then on the 23 of February, we relieved the 506<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 101<sup>st</sup> Air Borne Division in Hagenau. The only good thing about this was we got to go inside buildings rather than be out in the open. That was some relief for the troops and we took every advantage we could. We were there only about a week and the entire Company was pulled off line, destroyers and all, to a location about ten miles to the rear. Here we did get some rest. Sleep, hot showers, clean clothes, hot meals, more sleep and even a can of beer. Man, did we have it made!



*Left to right: Sgt. William Rutledge, T5 Nick Cardisco, Cpl. Henry Lucas, 1945*

Then came the real good news. We were getting new tanks, the M36 with the big gas engines and the larger 90 mm guns. So after several day of training, we went out

on a makeshift firing range to shoot the 90 mm guns. The gunners loved them, the tank commanders were just so-so and the drivers were not impressed with the gas engines. But that is the way it goes.



*90mm Gun Motor Carriage, M36 Tank Destroyer*

However, during this rest I was given a special assignment. I was asked to assemble some tank drivers and report to the 12<sup>th</sup> Armored Division sector. Upon arriving there I was informed that there were some abandoned M18 tank destroyers that were to be moved immediately and taken to a location for Ordnance to pick up. We found the equipment of the 729<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion abandoned as stated. About ten or twelve tank destroyers were scattered over a half-mile area. I got the drivers to check out the first ones and found they were operational so we drove four of them to the appointed assembly area where Ordnance was waiting with a large tank mover. We went back and repeated the operation again and again until all were accounted for. In the process, we came upon a jeep stuck in a small ditch. My driver found it had a broken rear axle and put it in four-wheel drive and drove it back on to the road. When I returned that evening we had two jeeps, not one. I kept that vehicle as my jeep until I left Germany in 1946. That was my personal jeep from then on.



*1st Lt. Tom Copeland, C Co. Commander, 774 Tank Battalion, Bad Aibling Germany, January 1946*

We made some modifications to the new M36 destroyers. Our maintenance troops were great. They welded mounts on the left front corner of the turrets for a 30 cal. machine gun. We had these on the M10s so we simply removed the machine guns and relocated them on the new M36s.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In war, was it the situation that you've got to be quick, you've got to assess the situation and not pay too much attention to what they told you to do, but what needs to be done?

**Mr. Copeland:** True, and the situation varied from day to day and location to location. I have to say something about the GIs and how innovative they were. I had a platoon leader by the name of Jones. He was assigned to an area with a series of irrigation and drainage ditches directly in front of him. So there were all these areas of elevated dirt. Well, the German infantry was proceeding to come in from behind all of these...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perfect barriers to help give them cover?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, under a normal set of circumstances, you may want to try to get some

artillery, but at night it's extremely difficult to give directions to the artillery. So Lieutenant Jones decided that he would try something. He took his tank destroyers with these high explosive rounds and set fuses for a one- or two-second delay and shot into a bank of the irrigation bank. The round went through the dirt, out on the other side, and then exploded about two to six feet above the ground. This was most devastating. Far more accurate than any artillery. The results were so impressive that this became a standard practice when conditions called for such actions. We all started doing the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you more or less figure out where the German troops were coming through?

**Mr. Copeland:** You could even hear them; you could even hear them talking.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's real close.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can take and put these rounds about two or eight feet on top of the German infantry that are lying on the snow. It really changed the attitude and aggressiveness of the German infantrymen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they retreat?

**Mr. Copeland:** Those that could get away did! This was GI ingenuity and that was commonplace. Every time we turned around, some GI had thought of something that was new and innovative. I must comment at this point: the German soldier was not trained to be innovative, not trained to think for himself—just follow orders. The U.S. soldier was encouraged to try something that would work. The German soldier would do what the officers told him to do. Nothing more and nothing less. They were like numb robots. Give proper credit to the innovation of the American GI in all areas of combat. They were outstanding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read somewhere that the best American GIs were farm boys who were used to tinkering with machinery and could just get out there and stick things together with bailing wire and make things work.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. I don't think there is any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were used to facing whatever there was.

**Mr. Copeland:** But at the same token, counter that with the training that the German soldiers had. The Germans were far more disciplined, but the German soldiers were trained and disciplined right to the degree that they didn't do anything unless an officer told them to. However, if all of their officers had been isolated, killed or incapacitated, those German soldiers were worthless. They never wanted to assume leadership or command, so they just put their hands up in the air and said, "I don't have any officers, I quit," and they did this time and time again. We didn't really quite understand that—why a whole company would just quit. They would never assume any responsibility, never assume any leadership; they had no officers so that's it, "the war is over."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Different mentality.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's it, different mentality, different type of discipline.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that German soldiers by then were ready to pack it in? I mean, they had been at war for many years and they're not winning. Do you think they were getting discouraged? Were they more prone to give up?

**Mr. Copeland:** This would vary from day to day. If the German soldier was cold and wet for several days he was apt to walk in and give



up. However, if he had been comfortable and well fed, probably not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't make them more fierce to protect their fatherland? They did the opposite?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just the opposite. I think as soon as we crossed the Rhine River, they understood that the war was over. As a matter of fact, the Germans that died after we crossed the Rhine River really died in vain. We got our new M36 tank destroyers on March 4<sup>th</sup> and were back on line that spring for the offensive operation "Undertone," which began on March 15<sup>th</sup>. We rejoined the 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment on the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> and took up a position ready for an early morning departure. They really hurried us along.

The next few days took us due north through several towns: Bitschhoffen, France and Mietsheim, France and into Germany. The next day it was Griesbach, France and Forstheim, France and Gunstatt. While I was attached to the 143 Infantry Regiment, we captured Bergzabern, Germany on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Then, early in the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> infantry troops loaded on our destroyers and we veered east and made a direct run to the Rhine River, cutting off a large number of enemy and their equipment. Within a short time German troops came in and surrendered in great numbers.

Our new 90 mm guns performed beautifully. We were taking out targets one mile away. This was the first time we had the ability to keep the shooting war as far from our troops as possible. The Regimental Commander liked this and he recognized that it was reducing his casualties a great deal. A new sense of appreciation came to the tank destroyer at this point. We accomplished our objectives on schedule for Operation Undertone. At this point, on March 29, we became detached from the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and were ordered to assemble in the vicinity of Arzheim. There we were placed on

a four-hour notice to be prepared to move to the vicinity of Worms, Germany. Orders came down on April 1<sup>st</sup> and we departed Arzheim at 0700. This move required fourteen-and-a-half hours to cover 120 miles. We maintained an average speed of about twelve miles per hour with a twenty minute halt for fuel and rest every two hours. We arrived in the assembly area at 2130. That was quite a move—and were we pooped when we arrived!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you made it to the Rhine River at last. How did you get your equipment and troops across? Weren't most of the bridges destroyed by this time?



*Crossing the Rhine River in Germany on a pontoon bridge, April 1, 1945. The haze is caused by smoke generated by U.S. Engineers to prevent enemy aircraft from locating the bridge.*

**Mr. Copeland:** The combat engineers that were supporting the entire operation were simply magnificent. Call upon them to "build a bridge" and the next day it was in place. I researched a little history of the 85<sup>th</sup> Engineer Heavy Pontoon Battalion and it is quite amazing. At 1400 on March 25<sup>th</sup> this outfit, along with the 283<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion were asked to move to the vicinity of Worms for the purpose of one, ferrying infantry assault troops across the Rhine River and two, constructing a pontoon bridge across the same river. At 2300 hours twenty-two storm boats and motors arrived on the banks

of the Rhine. The first wave of two battalions of the Third Division started loading at 0230 hours. Seven men and two boat handlers in each storm boat went across the river to unload the men and the handlers came back and reloaded with seven more. Artillery firing was lifted when the crossing began. At 0320 hours, this phase of the shuttle was complete and the storm boats moved down river and started another shuttle service of the reserve battalion. At 0600 hours construction started on the "bridge." At 1000 hours the near and far-shore abutments and trestles were completed. At 1505 hours the last reinforced pontoon was floated into place; by 1511 hours the decking was complete. At 1512 hours the bridge was open for traffic. The completed bridge measured 1047 feet and consisted of one hundred and thirty-one pontoons and two trestles on both the far and near shores. The total construction time was nine hours and twelve minutes. The bridge was named "Lieutenant General Alexander Patch" for the Commander of the Seventh Army. A vehicle count was taken and 3040 vehicles crossed during the first twenty-four hour period going east from Worms, Germany. Now, that is one hell of an accomplishment!

During the last two weeks of March the new tank destroyers fired 2426 rounds of high explosives and 816 rounds of armor-piercing rounds. How is that for being busy?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Impressive! Exhausting!

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just that. Now, we were attached to the freshest division in the Seventh Army that was coming off two weeks rest, the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division. The 36<sup>th</sup> Division was pulled off line and remained in reserve and resting for about a month. Replacements came in but not enough to have us at full strength. I have spoken before about the use of troops and exceeding levels of efficiency; well, this is one example where we should have been

given some time to rest and recuperate. But we just sucked it up and kept on going. Let me pause here and read you this passage from *The Victors*, by Stephen Ambrose where he comments about the replacement depots and keeping troops on line for such an extended period of time. His summary is so accurate it deserves repeating:

*In an article in Army History, published by the U.S. Army's Center of Military History in 1994, Professor Francis Steckel indicts the Army for two reasons: 'First, the replacement system rushed men into combat without adequate preparation and created an unnecessarily arduous challenge of adjustment on the field of battle. Second, the small number of divisions required units to remain in the frontlines without rest and beyond the limits of individual human endurance, thus causing an earlier than necessary breakdown of veterans whose invaluable combat experience and skills were lost prematurely.' I'd add a third indictment: failure to pass on even rudimentary information. It was not the job of the front-line machine gunner or tank destroyer (or tank destroyer) to train replacements. The army was supposed to do that and it failed.*

[Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys: The Men of World War II*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1998, pages 293-294]

The Seventh Army didn't want those 90 mm guns off line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I really don't know how you did it! It's as if you were considered part of the equipment rather than as soldiers like the other units. I confess to still being a little confused by all the different units you fought with. Can you explain for me what a division is compared to a regiment?



**Mr. Copeland:** It is very easy. In the Army most things come in threes. There are three rifle companies in a battalion. There are three battalions in a regiment and there are three regiments in a division. Just one difference, an armored division is made up of three combat commands. This is the equivalent of an Infantry regiment. One tank destroyer battalion was assigned to a division. And one company of tank destroyers was assigned to a regiment or a combat command. And one tank destroyer platoon would be assigned to a battalion.

When we arrived in Worms we were assigned to the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division and simply got into our assigned positions to cross the Rhine River and on to our next objective. Being attached to the 14<sup>th</sup> was a new experience for all of us. They were very accommodating to work with and really had our interest at heart and understood that we were a bit fatigued. They also knew the value of the “big gun” and granted me a great deal of latitude in its use. The commanders I worked with never gave me any restrictions or limitations, and for that I, as well as my platoon, was grateful.

After we crossed the Rhine River with the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, our first objective was to take the airport at Frankfurt. Not the city. Bypass the city, take the airport and then turn east and continue on the main road. We only wanted the airport and then we could get fighter planes in there. Elements of the 14<sup>th</sup> moved toward the airport and we turned east heading up the Main River.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there much resistance?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, you bet. All of the bridges were blown. But we just roared right out of there and headed towards Nuremberg, building bridges along the way. We had to take every little town and village and secure

them one at a time. This took days. We advanced every day; however, some days only a limited distance. The progress you could make in a day was slowed by how fast your support units could keep up with you. These were: one, artillery; two, ammunition and fuel; and three, medical support teams. Should you outdistance these support units you were in a world of hurt.

The next few days found us on the Main River and confined to roads because of the steady rain. Progress was a little slow but we passed through the towns of Lohr, Gemunden and into Hammelberg. When we came upon the town of Gemunden there was some heavy resistance in the center of town. Several enemy machine guns were set up in the town’s city hall. This was three-story stone structure with massive walls and small windows. Some of the officers wanted to see what the 90 mm guns could do so I was asked if I could help in this situation. I brought up one gun and explained to the tank destroyer commander that I wanted three rounds of high explosive with a delayed fuse. (The round would not explode until one second after impact). With these instructions, the tank commander readied the destroyer with the gun pointing to his right and pulled into position and let go with round one. Well, the dust was so bad we could not see the building. The gunner, however, turned loose two more rounds before pulling the destroyer back to a safer location. When the building did come into sight there was not much there. It was very quiet, no enemy machine guns. The members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division were duly impressed. As the dust settled we continued our advance without much interference.

Several years later my wife, Donna and I toured that town of Gemunden and I looked for the building only to find a town square with a monument placed in the center that read:

HEIR MITTEN AUF DEM  
MARKETPLATZ STANDS  
DAS ALTE RATHAUS  
DER STADT GEMUNDEN  
A. MAIN 1585 BIS 1896  
UTER FURSTBISHOF  
JULIUS ECHTER ERBAUT  
GESPRENGT NACH  
ENNAHMEDER STADT  
1M APRIL 1945

Translated: “*Here in the middle of the square stood the old town hall of the City of Gemunden A. Main. 1585 to 1896, erected under governing clergy Julius Echter Erbaut. Blown up in April 1945.*”



*Monument in Gemunden, Germany*



**Ms. Kilgannon:** A solemn moment, I’m sure!

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, sure. At this point, the 14<sup>th</sup> continued to advance eastward through Bamberg and then north of Nuremberg and then we turned south. This cut off all supply lines to Nuremberg from the north and east. Other elements of the Seventh Army had secured the area west and south and now Nuremberg was completely surrounded. This was a terrible time. The German officers would not surrender Nuremberg and we watched the Eighth Air Force bomb Nuremberg. What a sight! It went on all day, hour after hour. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of April the command of the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored shifted from the Seventh Army to the Third Army. However, the 636<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion remained with the Seventh Army and we were ordered to assemble in the vicinity of Cronheim. We said goodbye to our new friends in the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division and departed for an assembly area near the town of Cronheim some forty miles to the south and west. During the time the battalion was with the 14<sup>th</sup> our records show that we fired 1,522 rounds of 90 mm, 19,200 rounds of 50 cal and some 15,000 rounds of 30 cal. It was at this time we learned that the 14<sup>th</sup> was going to be pulled off line for some much needed rest.

My platoon had become so far detached from the rest of the company that I was on my own and had to find a passable route to Cronheim. After a big day of traveling, we arrived at our assembly point. Someone told me that Captain Latham, my Company Commander, was looking for me and he was at the Battalion Command Post. As soon as I walked in, he approached me and said he had something for me. “Copeland, it is with great pleasure I give you one of my old First Lieutenant Bars and I want you to wear them, congratulations!” With that he pinned on my First Lieutenant bars. Now, this is where “WE” comes back into play. The men

in the platoon were extremely proud of the promotion for WE had been recognized; WE had been performing well; WE were given special commendation for our outstanding efforts. They all shared in the promotion. I found out later that I had been promoted about ten days earlier but no one could reach me to give me the news.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, the battalion was ordered to move to Wasseralfinger some forty miles south. At this point we learned that we had been attached to the freshest division in the Seventh Army. You guessed it, the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. After a month of rest the 36<sup>th</sup> Division was coming back on line. Oh, boy! The 636<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyers had had three days off line and moved some 110 miles. “Tank destroyers are in high demand,” as the saying went.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did you go from here?

**Mr. Copeland:** The 36<sup>th</sup> was ordered to continue heading south. The next day, elements of the 36<sup>th</sup> were sent in the direction of Bad Tolz and Ulm. The French First Army was in Strasbourg; they were to cross the Rhine in March. However, they were still in Strasbourg and did not move out, so the Army ordered American troops to head west and clear the area assigned to the French. After several days, the French did cross the Rhine—now without much resistance.

I pause here again for an editorial comment: I have no love for the French officers or soldiers. They were worthless, undependable, and generally not to be trusted. They only wanted France liberated and didn't want to risk anything beyond their borders. The bulk of their combat soldiers were from the French colonies—Algiers and Morocco—they were not French nationals. “Me first, and to hell with the rest of you Americans.” If you think I am bitter, you are right.

Now, we were very tired. We had been on line for several weeks continuously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No rest at all? Other units were getting some time off; why you were so essential?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, because we had the only big gun that could stop the German tanks and no Army units went anywhere without the support of tank destroyers. There were just a few tank destroyer battalions in the Seventh Army that were equipped with the 90 mm guns, so we were in extremely high demand. In the entire Seventh Army the most they ever had was seven battalions of tank destroyers, but only three or four had the 90 mm guns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm just trying to get sense of the numbers. So you were a very elite group?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Very elite group, but we were also totally autonomous. We were attached to a larger unit, so we took our orders from somebody else, but as far as engaging the enemy was concerned, that was entirely my decision. I simply did not have to check with superior officers first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you have done that, through radio?

**Mr. Copeland:** You used radio or voice or hand signals, whatever communications were available. But if you waited to see if it was okay, you'd be kind of “late!” We had full authority. Any time we decided that it was in the best interest of the tactical situation to fire, we fired. It wasn't a case of where we were all throttled down in any way, shape or form. So here again, this business of ingenuity of the GI was so terribly important. In a situation like this, under German command, you'd have to wait for a higher authority to tell you to pull the trigger. Not us!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It gave you quite an element of surprise or maneuverability.

**Mr. Copeland:** It gave us the ultimate element of surprise, but it also gave all the junior officers a tremendous amount of responsibility. Just a tremendous amount of responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have to have good judgment.

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet! That was our business: good choices.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever get into a shooting war with comparable German tanks where you're facing each other and they're knocking you out and you were knocking them out? Would that happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer to the first question is yes. The answer to the second question is we won. Confrontation like this did not necessarily occur every day of the week, but we had this happen on several occasions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine you would have your troops blown up on occasion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, I have to tell you, I was very fortunate; I didn't have anybody killed that was under my direct command. I lost several tank destroyers. I had a lot of people wounded or injured, but I didn't have anybody killed, which was something!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm relieved to hear that. You said their tanks were actually technically better than yours. I'm trying to understand what you were facing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. They had bigger guns; they had far more armor plate on side of those tanks than what we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would have to use strategy rather than technical means?

**Mr. Copeland:** We couldn't stand there and slug it out with them. We just couldn't outlast them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what I was wondering, how that would play out.

**Mr. Copeland:** They would win. And our strategy was to always try to have at least two guns so that you would have two guns on a particular target at any time. Once we had two guns on them, our chance of survival was a heck of a lot better. So, oftentimes, we would have one gun fire and then immediately disappear, get behind something. Then everybody would be focusing on that location. As soon as they would shoot at that location, then they gave away their position and then our second gun could immediately pick them up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How far apart would you be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, roughly one hundreds yards, maybe more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was there a lot of smoke and commotion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Smoke and dust yes, commotion no. We were too busy for commotion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard to see?

**Mr. Copeland:** In dry weather, as soon as you fired one of those things, an enormous cloud of dust would develop. And dry snow would do the same thing. You could see the clouds of dust or snow for miles. So quite often, if we had two guns on the same target I would



have one gun fire and pull back and then I'd have the second gun fire as soon as they were "on target." This worked very effectively.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they do same with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. If they could. You had to be there, I think, to really understand and imagine it; the noise was incredible. I had some people with me that were wonderful, wonderful people. Great, quiet, calm, not excitable, steady farm boys, if you want to call them that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you say "boys" I'm still struck by how very young you were when you were doing this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was quite young. I turned twenty-one in April of '45, but most of my troops were probably in their very early twenties. And I had one fellow in my outfit who was forty-four; he was the oldest one of the bunch. But normally, they were really a calm, calm group of guys. But of course, they'd been in combat a long time; they were very steady.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No nerves left to get jangled?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were very, very experienced; they didn't panic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine anybody that was panicking was long-gone out of there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did people ever just reach some state of nerves where they couldn't do it anymore? Where the level of stress reached overload?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But this was seldom. They were immediately replaced. We couldn't have them in the unit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that your judgment call, to think, "So-and-So is really on the edge. He needs a rest." Just out of there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That's right, he's out. The reason for it is, within a tank there are four people; they had to work as a team. If you had one guy in there that wasn't going to do his work, the other three were in jeopardy. They all depended upon one another. This was a team effort and no one man could be allowed to screw up and harm the effectiveness of the others. We didn't have time. I mean, if the guy was malfunctioning—if I had a tank commander ask me to get rid of one of his crew, bang! He's gone. No questions asked. I never screwed around and tried to second-guess the tank commanders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't hold hands at that point.

**Mr. Copeland:** We definitely didn't have time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine if a person had gotten to that stage, they needed to go. I don't even know if it would be a disgrace, it would just be the way war is?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And we had a few officers that were the same way, too. We had one officer in the outfit running around getting in all of the vehicles and destroyers taking the first aid kits. All the first aid kits had morphine. He was shooting himself up; he was on drugs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you can't have that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Boy, just one day and he was no longer with the organization. I have no

idea where he went; I never saw him again. At any rate, what I'm trying to express is that the individual was very much responsible for himself, but it was a team effort. Everybody had to do their portion. If you couldn't cut it, you were gone; you were someplace else. That's all there is to it.

But they were great people. I was walking up a road with one of my tank commanders, going from one gun emplacement to another, when in came a mortar round about fifty, sixty yards behind us. He looked at his watch and said, "One o'clock," and about that time, then another one landed about maybe hundred yards in front of us. "Right on time." I said, "Sergeant, what do you mean, it's one o'clock, right on time?" "Lieutenant, every hour on the hour, they send in three mortar rounds; one of them hits down there, one of them hits up there, and the third one comes in about where we are now. I suggest we take cover." Calm, cool, matter-of-fact, and straight to the point, that's the way they were. Just as nonchalant as all get-out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just as cool as a cucumber: "We seem to be on ground zero, we better get moving along here."

**Mr. Copeland:** With that, we stepped into this little farm building and got back in a little alcove in the house and the third round came in and hit the road near where we were standing only moments ago. "Every hour on the hour."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was it so predictable?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Germans had orders that they were supposed to throw in three rounds every hour on the hour and they did it. Those soldiers of mine were wonderful, wonderful people. Since then I've been to several reunions and visited with them and this guy

and his twin brother haven't changed a bit. Just the same level-headed, calm guys—quite ordinary people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In extraordinary circumstances.

**Mr. Copeland:** Under extraordinary circumstances, those are the operative words: "extraordinary circumstances." Just as calm as could be—cool and collected, never flustered; their own personal safety was never a concern. Noise didn't bother them; they knew they had a job to do and they were out there to do the job. As soon as they saw a German tank, they'd say, "You know, I think we'd better take that one out," in a slow, southern drawl. And by now I had learned that this calm approach worked well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were having these huge experiences. Did you take these values and hold them the rest of your life? Was this was a model for how to get through things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly! It was a very vivid learning experience. You don't go through life without learning about yourself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I imagine after you've already been under fire, what else can happen to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** You learn about yourself. You learn about others. Like somebody said, "You learn by somebody else's mistakes because you can't live long enough to make them all yourself."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Powerful. Did you get much news? You were in your one area and you're fighting, but did you know what was going on elsewhere?

**Mr. Copeland:** Get much news? Hell, we



were the news. Advancing twenty to forty miles in one day is quite an accomplishment. But we had a pretty good idea what going on elsewhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know where the Russians were?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. We were given situation briefings from time to time. However, this information was not nearly as important as what was happening to our “immediate front.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn’t know how informed the people in the actual field were.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. But here is the thing that we didn’t know—and nobody in the Intelligence ever told us—that we would run into concentration camps. Nobody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they not know about them?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know. It may have been that Intelligence just didn’t believe these conditions existed or thought them to be small and isolated. Nobody could imagine the scale and number of camps we would encounter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Too horrific?

**Mr. Copeland:** The frontline troops were never notified that they were going to run into anything like this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you just came upon them? Which ones?

**Mr. Copeland:** The first one was in Hammelberg. This was a Prisoner of War (POW) camp. Others held displaced Polish workers; some were farm labor camps; and still others housed prisoners that worked

in factories. All had varying degrees of conditions. But none of them would be considered “humanitarian” in nature. Of course, the worst were the POW camps. These POWs were housed in sections depending upon their nationality. By all standards, the Americans were treated the best. That did not indicate great treatment. But by comparison, the Americans got the best treatment. Then came the English and French. But at the bottom were the Russians, Jews and Poles. The conditions in which they were kept would not meet “animal standards” in the U.S. today.

The advance had been quick and the overrun of these camps so swift that the Germans never had time to clean them up. Always, there was an area of open graves in these camps. Most all of the Russians, Jews and Poles had been on a starvation diet. They were asking us for food. We simply did not have the ability or supplies to stop and take care of them. We were combat troops, front-line units with our own supplies and nothing more. We saw the desperate need, but we were ordered to press on and continue the advances we were making. We just could not stop and offer assistance to thousands of people starving in a camp. That’s exactly what the Germans wanted us to do and that’s what we couldn’t do. We simply had a job to do and that was to continue to neutralize all of the enemy troops we could encounter. So we went on with no more than a wave and a look over our shoulders as we passed through these camps. Tear-jerking, heart-rending, but that was not our responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had the guards fled?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some of them had, some of them didn’t, and we had to take them out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “By take them out,” do you mean...

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we neutralized them. You understand?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Did you radio back and say: “Hey, there some people here. Get some help in here.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. But here again, Army Intelligence wasn’t in any position—nor did they have any troops that came immediately behind us that were in any way ready to take care of this particular type of disaster, if you want to call it that—or condition, or whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could the Red Cross or somebody...

**Mr. Copeland:** No. They were so far to the rear it would take days or weeks before they could offer any help.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happened to these people?

**Mr. Copeland:** By god, I don’t know! I had some of my tanks run over some of those damn barbed wire barricades to knock them down, but we just did that in passing. But if they could make it through the next forty-eight hours help would not be far off. While this was going on my commanders in the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division would get madder than hell if I lost enemy contact. So we just couldn’t stop.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are showing me a photograph of starved-to-death people lying on the ground, basically. Piles of humanity. Now, what does that do to you, to see that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what does it do to anybody? But like I said, this was not isolated. There was camp after camp, and some people think that Auschwitz was the only camp in Germany. Wrong!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh no, no. They were everywhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s a lot of people to kill so you got to... (big sigh)

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But for yourself, you saw these things. Did it give you—I don’t think you needed more incentive at this point—but did it get you to think, “Well, we’re on the right side, we’ve got to do this.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely! There isn’t any question about it, but you say to yourself, “Why wasn’t I ever told I was going to run into this?” And then you’d say, “Did anybody know?” And then, really, the story has never come out as an earth-shaking thing. Do you remember that even General Dwight Eisenhower was requested to take some press and go up and take a look at one of these places and he really didn’t want to go. I think it was George Patton that insisted that he do it and take the press with him, and I think it was George Patton that said, “You better go because some day, somebody is going to say this never happened and damn it, you’ve got to be there.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And some people are saying that.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. So he took an entourage of people up there, along with the press corps, and they went into one of these camps and saw something like this and of course, many of them just got sick. You can see all of this on television; you can read stories about it, but one thing that you’ll never ever forget is the stench. The odor was just absolutely beyond my description. And were you warned ahead of time? Hell, no! Were you surprised? My god, yes! Was there anything that you could do about it? Keep right on going! If anybody had any

doubt about why we were there, that doubt disappeared in a matter of a few seconds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many people say this was the last war where it really was clear what you were fighting about.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's beyond understanding.

**Mr. Copeland:** So we continued to the other side of camp, right back on the autobahn, right up the road, and I get a radio message, "Are you being shot at right at the moment?" "No sir, I'm not being shot at." "Call me as soon as you make enemy contact."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting assignment! "Here, you be the decoy, you get out there."

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me explain that going up the autobahn, we were called a "point." The very first troops up the road had the honor of being called the point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of the spearhead?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, just going right smack up the autobahn. Occasionally we would have troops going on the right and the left, depending upon the terrain. We normally would have at least two tank destroyers and two tanks, then maybe a company of infantry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In jeeps and trucks? Not marching...

**Mr. Copeland:** No trucks. Jeeps, recon vehicles, maybe a half-track. We would carry some recon personnel, a couple of artillery people and a couple of combat engineers

who would check for landmines and things like that. We also had several motorcycle operators that we would carry messages back and forth, because we were operating under radio silence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Little bit of everything, really.



*Rohrwiler, Germany, February 1945*

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But we had the opportunity to go ahead and create our own shooting war if we had to. Nobody went any place without the tank destroyers because if you were going to run into something, it would be German tanks. Tank destroyer officers were always with the point. We would rotate our troops with the point for a couple of days and then another group the next couple of days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever get a break? How did you keep going?

**Mr. Copeland:** Did I get a break? Oh sure, we would take turns: one day on point, the next day in reserve. The days I was not on point I was back several hundred yards sleeping in the jeep as best I could. You just kept going. From the time we received our 90 mm guns we never really got off line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds hard. Did you get to sleep very much besides bouncing along in a jeep?

**Mr. Copeland:** Whenever you could, you would sleep. Sometimes in a shot-up building, maybe a foxhole, a tank and sometimes even a house.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the adrenalin would keep you going?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What were your rations like?

**Mr. Copeland:** Hard!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wasn't the rations that were keeping you going?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't have a hot meal very often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you eating the famous Spam?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had rations aboard the tank which were called "ten-and-one." They were in a box intended to take care of ten troops for one day or rations for that tank crew for two days. No, the rations weren't very good, but they were the best available. The Army tried to get 1500 calories to a meal. That sounds like a lot, I know, but we were burning them off at a good clip. Rations had everything imaginable, including chocolate bars and cigarettes, even olive-drab toilet paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh my, camouflage toilet paper. They thought of everything.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, absolutely. But the rations came in an interesting cardboard

box that had been completely submerged in paraffin to keep the contents dry. You just grabbed a knife and cut it open and everything was individually wrapped. All this stuff was high-calorie to meet the daily requirements of the troops. Quality bacon we could cook from time to time, chopped ham and egg yolk, and some kind of hash or stew and crackers or "hard tack."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet you wanted some real food after a while!

**Mr. Copeland:** That's about all we ever ate. They had instant coffee that came in a little package and instant cocoa and an instant lemon drink that was very sour.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Trying to get different flavors?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, but they were trying to keep a variety of things going. See, we had no fresh fruits or vegetables.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wouldn't want to get scurvy!

**Mr. Copeland:** We damn near got it anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear! That sounds like something out of some other century.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, as matter of fact, when the war was over the first thing they did was bring in a whole bunch of dentists to our battalion and take care of our teeth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, your teeth. Yes, I don't exactly think you were brushing your teeth out there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we all had pyorrhea or gingivitis. Of course, it was primarily from lack of fresh fruits and vegetables. All of

the troops had very bad teeth by the end of the war. You could wiggle your teeth. The Army recognized that we were in bad shape and needed real dental assistance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Speaking of illness, I wanted to ask you, did you hear about the death of President Roosevelt in the middle of all this action?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. This was on April 12, 1945. We had been across the Rhine River a couple of weeks and were hurtling across Germany. It didn't affect us one bit. Did we have time to stop and do anything or have any commemorative services? The answer is not only no, but hell, no! We just kept right on going. I mean, we were in a combat situation. We were in a hurry. By now Army Intelligence had learned about those American prisoners of war and of their condition. We were interested in getting them liberated as soon as possible. They were on the verge of starvation. If we had delayed another couple of weeks it would have been very severe on many of our POWs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't imagine you coming to a halt, but I wondered what it would be like to have your Commander-in-Chief die in the middle of battle. It seemed like an event to remember, if not to reflect upon. But I didn't know how much state-side news you were given, whether you would even be told.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time "news" was what was going on directly in front of you and to the right and left of you and that was about it. We didn't have real good communications; news was quite sketchy. We did have the Armed Forces Network, the radio in operation that was coming out of Paris at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, let's see. After you joined the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in April of 1945, then where did you go?

**Mr. Copeland:** On the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, C Company was assigned and reported to our freshly shaven friends of the 143rd Infantry Regiment. There they were, in new clean uniforms after several baths and hot meals and there we were in the same damn old stinky outfits. They loaded infantry troops on our destroyer and a bunch of trucks and we departed Gunzburg and headed for Issing. Fighting was light and sporadic. We bypassed Bad Tolz and headed east in the direction of Tegernsee. The column split with half on the west side and the rest traveling down the east side and merging at the south end of the "lake." We arrived near Rottach-Egertr by the end of the lake very late on Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> and set up a roadblock at the major road intersection. Within a matter of hours I received the following:

THESE SPACES FOR MESSAGE CENTER ONLY		
TIME FILED	MSG CEN NO.	HOW SENT
MESSAGE (SUBMIT TO MESSAGE CENTER IN DUPLICATE)		(CLASSIFICATION)
No. 1	DATE 5 MAY 45	
To ALL COMPANIES		
GERMANY ARMY GROUP "G" HAS SURRENDERED, EFFECTIVE 1200H 06-MAY-1945 ALL UNITS HOLD IN PLACE. DO NOT FIRE UNLESS FIRED UPON. FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS BY RADIO IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH		
C CO, 636 TD BN OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF SENDER		2008 TIME SIGNED
AUTHORIZED TO BE SENT IN CLEAR	SIGNATURE OF OFFICER	SIGNATURE AND GRADE OF WRITER
		EVANS S-5

The message that ended the war for the 636.

The message that ended the war for the 636<sup>th</sup>; the best message I ever received! But it was not without complication. We had to stay on our guns. We had no idea what could happen next but we had to be ready. Note that the message was dated May 5<sup>th</sup> and the official notification was not until the 7<sup>th</sup> of May. We simply had to stay right there and wait.



There is a wonderful story to be told by Stephen Ambrose in his book, *The Victors*. On May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> the highly placed German generals and admirals were trying to negotiate a truce with the West only. They simply did not want to surrender to the Russians. Eisenhower would have none of that and insisted on an unconditional simultaneous surrender on all fronts. On Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> papers were prepared and high-ranking German officers came to Reims, Eisenhower's headquarters, in hopes of buying some time or striking a better deal. Eisenhower would not meet with them and instructed General Smith, his chief of staff, to conduct the signing. After several hours of minor bickering, the signing was complete and General Strong (Eisenhower's official interpreter) led General Alfred Jodl into Eisenhower's office. It was now 2:41 Sunday morning. Eisenhower did not shake his hand and, as Stephen Ambrose wrote, "Eisenhower sternly asked Jodl if he understood the terms and was ready to execute them. Jodl said yes. Eisenhower then warned him that he would be held accountable officially if the terms were violated. Jodl bowed stiffly and left." A short time later, "Smith said it was time to send a message to CCS." Many of the staff officers made draft copies for this historic occasion but all were rejected. Eisenhower thanked everyone for their efforts and dictated the message himself: "The mission of this Allied force was fulfilled at 0241 local time, May 7, 1945."

[Stephen Ambrose, *The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys: The Men of World War II*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1998, page 343-344]

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then, suddenly on May 7<sup>th</sup> the war was over. Just prior to this announcement, could you tell that the war was winding down? I mean, were more people giving up or was there less resistance, or was there fighting all the way?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was much, much less resistance. But it wasn't that you could ever let your guard down and make an assumption that nobody's going to shoot at you. We were all very careful; we didn't want anyone killed on the last day of the war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, no. But did you feel the resistance kind of evaporate?

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess you'd say you felt it when talking with the civilians. They were saying, "Why is Germany continuing to fight? This war was over a month ago." At this point the Seventh and Third Armies had cut off the German Eighth Army Group and they had no communication with Berlin. German troops were surrendering every day. We would come to a village and the white flags would have been hung out well ahead of our advance. The civilians were very cooperative and did not want to be any part of a fanatical resistance. They just did not want their homes damaged.

**Ms Kilgannon:** Did they know that Hitler had killed himself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Communications in Germany were almost nonexistent. Most radio was off the air. The civilians had heard by word of mouth that Hitler was dead and assumed the war was over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was it like when the shooting stopped?

**Mr. Copeland:** When I got this no-fire order—don't fire unless you were fired upon—we were happy but careful. We were told to hold in place. We did not know for sure that this was the real thing and we were not going to take any chances. That night and many nights to follow, we still had someone on guard duty all night long. The crews were

in the tanks all day and all night ready for any enemy action. It was a tense time and lasted for several days in that location. Of course, the troops wanted to celebrate, but we just could not allow this to happen. Orders came down: "There will be no celebrations of any kind. And no firing of weapons." If someone got drunk and disorderly, he could fire off his weapon and someone might get hurt or killed. So I immediately took this information and went right to my troops and said, "Hey, you know this is the name of the game. Don't anybody think for one minute that this is an opportunity to celebrate. If you fire one round, unless you are shooting at the enemy, and your ass is going get court-martialed. Plan on it!" So nobody even shouted, "Hooray!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So things got real quiet?

**Mr. Copeland:** Real quiet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Inside, were you feeling a little jubilant?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, you were. But the jubilation was overcome with being tired, just dead tired. Suddenly, the thoughts of eight hours of uninterrupted sleep became very important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine you were exhausted.

**Mr. Copeland:** And this was the first night that there was no artillery going off several times a minute. The silence made it very strange. The sound of silence is all...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Creepy?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. But please understand, we just didn't dare let the troops have the moment of celebrating. It could have been disastrous. We had come this far; we

didn't want to lose someone with an accidental shooting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think that you had been straining yourself to the maximum and then, all of the sudden, you stopped?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that when people fall apart, actually? When the pressure comes off?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, true. That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's when you suddenly feel the things you never felt back there while you were under fire?

**Mr. Copeland:** But by the same token, you see, we never allowed the troops to get relaxed. I never went any place unless I had my side-arms on, my .45 cal. pistol and U.S. troops were not allowed to go anyplace unless they had their rifles with them. They all carried weapons. I mean, that was the part of it that just didn't quit. You just didn't say, "As of one o'clock today, everything is going to be lovely, charming, and darling, and peaceful." That wasn't the name of the game. So there was no celebration, no cheering, no fireworks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And now with the end of the war, you were still under such restraint. What did you do with yourselves at this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** For the next several days we were busy with the stream of Germans surrendering and bringing in all of their equipment, weapons and horses. The German tanks were lined up in a field and U.S. Ordnance personnel rendered them harmless. One German colonel, upon completing the surrender of his tanks, walked up to me and

unbuckled his belt. He then handed me his German Lugar and I returned his soft salute. I still have that Lugar. Then there were the horses. Yes, some of the best draft horses Germany had. And I got the job of receiving the horses from that portion of the German Eighth Army Group. Now, those good old farm boys really came in handy. They all knew how to handle these animals. And they also knew not to let the harnesses become separated from the horses. Keep them together. After several days of collecting horses and tanks, we were asked to do “civil affairs duties” or at best “occupation” duties, neither for which we were trained or equipped. After several days of collecting horses, I was given clearance to move the horses to Reichenhall. I was truly happy to get rid of those fine animals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of shape was the population in?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were in tough shape. The cities were real bad; the little country villages were a lot better off. But the population had suffered from shortages of so many things. And it was going to be some time before things could be returned to normal. The civilians were ready to dig themselves out. This was early May and the farmers were already working their fields and planting crops. They were trying to have normalcy return.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get back to the time-old rhythms of life. Did you run into “true believers,” though?

**Mr. Copeland:** Darn few. During the end of May, we were ordered to move to Kirchheim. This is a small town about ten miles southwest of Ulm and ten miles northwest of Landsberg. There were several small “motels” where the troops were billeted and adequate parking for us to set up a motor pool and maintenance park. Shortly after we arrived in Kirchheim, the Battalion surgeon, Captain Burkhardt,

started a program of “physical exams for all.” Now, this was most revealing. Virtually everyone had gingivitis in some form. This is a condition where the teeth become loose, gum lines recede, and mouth infection is prevalent. The cause can be traced back to nearly a full year of no fresh fruits and vegetables in the diet. Treatment began almost immediately and dentists were rushed in to work on the troops. Part of the treatment was to have the inside of the mouth painted with a purple substance that lasted for several days. It was easy to tell who recently visited the new dentists. That was kind of ugly. We were given small penicillin wafers to place in the mouth to reduce the possibility of infection. The wafers had no taste and seemed to do the job.

We had set up our own kitchen and served three meals a day. All of the food had to come from the States so there was never “fresh” anything. I needed rest but I didn’t realize I—and everyone else—was so tired. One night’s sleep just did not take care of the situation. It became a practice to take a nap right after lunch. We never scheduled anything for the troops till mid-afternoon other than the dentist appointments, physicals, and free time. And then one day we received some fresh oranges! My, what a treat, our first fresh fruit for a year.

This was now a period to celebrate. The battalion was together for the first time in ten months. The battalion commander, Colonel Charles Wilbur, arranged for a big parade. Everybody in clean uniforms marched into the town square. It was at this time the Colonel awarded a number of officers and men with decorations.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yourself included?

**Mr. Copeland:** Myself included. He called up several officers and that’s when he awarded me the Bronze Star.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what did that feel like?

**Mr. Copeland:** I appreciated the recognition. This and a promotion about a month earlier gave me some lasting confidence in my performance as an Army officer. And here again, WE the platoon all shared in this decoration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me about the Bronze Star, what does that signify?

**Mr. Copeland:** The award was for “valor in the face of the enemy.” This was only given to combat troops.



*Tom Copeland's medals, left to right: Bronze Star, Purple Heart, American Campaign, European Campaign with 4 battle stars, Victory Medal, Victory Medal (Belgium), Insigne du Blesse (French Purple Heart), Victory Medal (French), Combat Cross (French), Medal of Defense (French)*

*\*Not shown: Army of Occupation, Croix de Guerre (French unit citation)*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's well-deserved. You would like to be recognized after all that. More than handshake.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Better than a handshake. But then, we were starting to regroup and retrain in order to ship out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What were you training for?

**Mr. Copeland:** To go to the Pacific and probably for an invasion of Japan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, my. That's true, the war was not completely over. Only in Europe.

**Mr. Copeland:** So now we were training all over again. We had a non-fraternization policy which simply stated no Army personnel could talk and visit with the German civilians. This was limited only to official business. However, the ingenious GI found a way to “visit” after hours. Soon the Army realized that this policy was simply not enforceable. So, now the situation changed and we were not in the combative arrangement. We were in a retraining mode and we got all of these troops—many that were in the 636<sup>th</sup> I had been overseas with for nearly three years. There was a method by which you got points for different things. These were all what you would call “high-point men” who would be allowed to go home on a thirty-day leave. All of the men that shipped out of the U.S. with the 636<sup>th</sup> were eligible. Plans and arrangements were made to get these troops home. Colonel Wilbur certainly had more than enough points, but he opted to forgive the leave and remain with the battalion. The military tried to get as many personnel as they could, put them on leave and get them back into the States and have them go see their families. So a great many of those troops left us at that point with the intention that they would be on leave and they would rejoin the unit at a later date. I was one that stayed. You had to have eighty-five points for the trip home and I only had seventy-four. So I was now in the business of retraining replacement troops into combat soldiers. Replacements were coming in by the scores.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you didn't have enough points after all you had been through, I don't know how the point system worked! What did you think of this idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't have a choice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, were you up for this or were you pretty tired of the war by then?



**Mr. Copeland:** I think we were all tired of war, but we were strictly combat troops; we knew what it was like, we knew what to do. It was old-hat for us. If we were told, “Crank up everything and get over here; we’ve got a shooting war going on,” we didn’t ask any questions. We just did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have moments when you said to yourself, “I made it. I’m alive.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That was a major portion of the celebration. We were congratulating each other for “making it.”



*1st Lt. Tom Copeland, Capt. William Latham, 2nd Lt. Wilmer Jones in Kirchheim, Germany, June 1945*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had been wounded at least once; what kind of condition were you in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I got my right arm all ripped open. We were all suffering from malnutrition. My weight was down to one hundred-fifty pounds, my hearing was badly damaged and my teeth were all loose. Other than that I was fine. This is kind of interesting. I went to the Veteran’s Hospital to have my hearing checked and this doctor didn’t even have to examine me. “I don’t need to check your ears. All I have to do is look at your service records and I can tell that you have impaired hearing,” said the doctor. Then he

asked me the most interesting thing. He said, “If they had sound suppression equipment available at that time, would you have worn it? And if you did, would you have been able to survive?” The answer is “no!” to both questions. So most all of us have had hearing problems from that point on. I never had anybody ask me that question before so I thought that was kind of an interesting observation. He hit the bottom line real fast. I had one of my friends—poor guy, Major Dick Danzi—he was involved in a major explosion. An incoming round landed so close it would have killed an average guy. But not him. He was not wounded but he heard nothing for about a week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But his hearing came back?

**Mr. Copeland:** His hearing came back, although not one hundred percent. But for a week, he couldn’t hear anything. It was a constant ringing in his ears—that’s all he heard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering about your condition while you stayed on in Germany.



*1st Lt. Tom Copeland with jeep driver  
Algert Terrys, Germany, 1945*



**Mr. Copeland:** We were all quartered well and the food was improving by the day. We were still maintained as a combat unit. As a matter of fact, the battalion had an embarkation date of October 13th out of southern France, Marseilles, to leave Europe for destinations unknown. The war was still in full swing in the Pacific. Many of the high-point officers and men had shipped out and we were starting to receive replacements. Our first training requirement was to form the tank crew, then hold special training for gunners and separate training for drivers. Replacement troops arrived and we started unit training—some new people and some old timers. Many years later I received a letter from one of these replacements. Let me read you what he wrote:

*Dear Mr. (Lt.) Copeland,*

*I don't know if I am writing to the right person or not, and certainly I don't suppose you remember me. I served in Company C of the 636<sup>TH</sup> Tank Battalion in Germany in 1945 and I believe you were the Company Commander. This was in Kirkheim, Germany and I was new in the "Kitchen Force;" green, right from the States and had just turned nineteen years old. And as I recall, you were one officer that showed concernment for the new replacements. After all these years you were one of the officers I never forgot. And I wanted to extend somewhat "belated" thanks.*

He closed the letter with: "And thanks again for being such an 'understanding' officer so many years ago. Sincerely, Darrell Schick."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quite a testament. Very moving to receive after all those years. It must have been a strange time to join up. What were you doing at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had no place to fire the 90mm guns so in July we were ordered to a small town near Bad Reichenhall in southern Germany, Ruhpolding. The Army set up a

large gun-firing range and this is where we were to do our gunner training. There's a great big, mountain that rose out of the ground there and obviously you can shoot at it all day long and you wouldn't disturb it. So it became natural for tanks to practice firing missions at that target. We also needed to train crews to work together, especially the gunners. The facilities at Ruhpolding were fine for training our new troops. We were getting ready to fight the Japanese. We were not what you call occupation forces. We had nothing to do with the civilian population or the operation of the government.

The Army understood the necessity for rest and recuperation, so leave time now became available. Places like Switzerland, Paris and the French Riviera were some of the most interesting spots. Men and officers were returning to the States which caused a reshuffling of assignments. Captain Latham was moved to battalion staff. I took command of C Company. The Company was one hundred-plus men and five officers, twelve tank destroyers and other equipment valued at millions of dollars. Training responsibilities shifted to me and the other officers. I was just twenty-one and undoubtedly one of the youngest Company Commanders in the ETO (European Theater of Operations).

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you were not very old, you'd had all that experience which would be so invaluable. How long did you spend retraining?

**Mr. Copeland:** On the 6<sup>th</sup> of August the U.S. dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima. That was big news to us. When they first said they dropped the bomb the equivalent of 20,000 pounds of TNT, we were impressed! And then the second one was dropped on Nagasaki on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's incomprehensible. Did you have an inkling of what that would mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not really. I had no idea of the implication of this new weapon. It was not until several weeks later we understood the magnitude of the two bombs. And we certainly did not have any idea that it was going to cause the end so abruptly. However, we were relieved that we would not take part in an invasion of the Japanese mainland. That would have been another story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The prospect of invading the Japanese homeland could not have been a fun one. Were you grateful not to go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly grateful. That didn't appear to be high on my priority list of something I wanted to get done in my short life! September 2, 1945 was now a time to celebrate and I do mean celebrate!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now that the war was over with Japan and you were not going to go to the Pacific, how did they handle all of the troops and the equipment? What happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** The U.S. had over 800,000 troops that all wanted to go home. Now, how many boats does it take to move that many people? We suspended training and put everything on minimum maintenance. Many went on leave, myself included. This was a big change for us. Our direction had to be evaluated. However, we were still responsible for all of the equipment, ammunition and weapons. First, let's take the easy one: the equipment. To the best of my knowledge, the equipment eventually became surplus. Some of it was used in the reconstruction of Germany and later some of the heavy equipment was recycled in the form of Volkswagens and other ferrous metal products. Germany had a real need for scrap iron and I am sure that is where many of the surplus tanks wound up.

Then, there was the personnel. Many of them were combat veterans like myself and

the return trip back to the U.S. took weeks and weeks. There were not enough troop ships to handle the demand. My outfit was the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. It originally came out the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, a Texas National Guard outfit. There was one individual in Texas that wanted to have the 36<sup>th</sup> Division come back to Texas ASAP. His name was Lyndon Johnson. He was the senior senator from the state of Texas and he wanted to have a parade in Dallas!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What could be more important?

**Mr. Copeland:** The 36<sup>th</sup> Division was sent home almost instantly. Senator Lyndon Johnson says, "I've got to have the 36<sup>th</sup> Division come home because that's the Texas National Guard outfit, so send them home." I got called into Colonel Wilbur's office and he said, "Copeland, where is Walla Walla, Texas?" I had no idea what he was talking about. He said, "Tell me you are from Walla Walla, Texas." I said, "You know better than that, Colonel." He said, "You don't get to go home."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you change your story? Were you suddenly from Walla Walla, Texas?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't change my story. The Army knew there was no Walla Walla, Texas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So rest of you had to stay?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Within three weeks, we all got reassigned. Remember Lieutenant Colonel Beall? He was now a full Colonel and the Provost Marshall for the Seventh Army. He selected some officers to be assigned to the discharge center in Bad Aibling, which was under his direct command.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you went there instead of going home?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't get home until almost a year later. The discharge center in Bad Aibling was an airbase half way between Munich and Salzburg. The airbase had fine facilities and was virtually undamaged. These facilities were placed under the control of the 774th Tank Battalion, who reported directly to the Seventh Army and Colonel Beall. Bad Aibling became the discharge center for all the German POWs that were captured in the American Zone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess that would be quite a number. How were they treated?

**Mr. Copeland:** The discharge process was something! The POWs were had a complete physical examination. Oh, it was excellent. The rations and the medical care were just great. Records were brought up to date. All pay allowances were given to the POWs and then they were shipped to their home towns with official discharge papers in their hands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty good treatment. And what was your assignment in this operation?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was assigned to the Battalion staff as the S2 Intelligence Officer with other duties of Communications Officer. However, my main duties included being the Discharge Officer. Accurately recording and completing all of the forms for the discharged POWs was my primary job. This required lots of administrative help. We hired many German civilians to perform these duties. It worked quite well.

We did not just turn the POWs loose. The Army did it right. At the discharge center I had something like thirteen German doctors who were working with me just doing

physical exams. And on a good day, we would discharge several thousand troops. It was amazing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just pushing them through? Now, these are all soldiers who had surrendered at some point?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good heavens. That's a lot of people. Where were they kept before they were freed?

**Mr. Copeland:** We just kept them in camps and in places that were nothing more than great big open areas. However, they were well fed and their medical problems were cared for. Some German hospitals were involved with receiving the urgent care POWs.

The Allies took it upon themselves to give a complete discharge to each German that had served during the war. This discharge was not just a release from the German Army or Navy. It contained all back pay and allowances due; a complete physical that recorded all injuries or sicknesses of the individual; claims against the German government for injuries and the like; and in some cases, records for retirement. And it contained a safe passage to the zone from where the individual made his home. In all, they were treated very well and were later appreciative of all of the work necessary for their separation from the German service.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think many people realize that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Returning POWs to Russia was quite another story. But first I'm going to tell you an untold story that I think is really key to some planning that went with creating a very successful post-war Germany. This didn't come about until later. I joined the discharge center in September and the war had been over in May in the European Theater and

in September in the Pacific. It was probably, I want to say in October or early November, we started getting German POWs back from the United States that had been captured in Africa. These people had been in the United States for nearly four years. In that period of time, they were given the opportunity for some training. In the event that they opted for training, they would take these German prisoners of war would be screened for their aptitude, mentality, training, and background, and then given special classes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the States?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the States. And some of them were taught at universities and colleges all over the country. Now, they came back as prisoners of war. These “packages” as we called them would come in and there would be three to five hundred troops in a package. They were accompanied by an Army officer of field grade—a Major, sometimes a Lieutenant Colonel, who insisted that these people be assigned to certain places. These POWs were trained as specialists in the operation of civilian government. They came back trained in how to operate a transportation system, in police work, in fire protection, in waste management; they were trained in water and tax collection; they were trained in...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every piece that needed to be done?

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything having to do with municipal government or state government and this became a cadre of qualified people to rebuild the cities in Germany.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is amazing. Who thought this up?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no idea, Anne. I haven't seen very many stories written about this, but here came this wonderful group of young, handsome de-Nazified ex-soldiers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And more than that? Pro-American, I'm sure, because they'd had this treatment? That's forethought.

**Mr. Copeland:** Gosh yes, and were they good looking! They were all healthy and smarter than a seven hundred dollar bill. They got assigned to cities throughout Germany—generally their home town—and they became head of the water system, or they were in charge of the police force, or something to do with municipal government. They knew they were coming back home to rebuild their own country.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After the First World War, Germany was devastated and out of that chaos came the whole Hitler phenomenon with the depression and other issues that led to the next war. So I'm hazarding a guess here, to say, if we were going to rebuild this society under a different mold, that this was not going to happen again?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are correct. And rebuild Germany we did. Here came all these lovely young ex-soldiers that had this specialized training. Now they were being transplanted back into their communities, their towns, the places where they lived and asked to put the damn thing back together. I know that they were one of the catalysts that just brought Germany right-smack back to the top. You could always pick these guys out of the crowd because they were so damn healthy and most of them spoke fluent English. Everybody else was emaciated; you could tell that they had met with three good, square meals. These people were in top physical condition; all of them were young—probably none of them over thirty years old. They'd been away from their homeland for awhile, but they had an educational experience and they could come in there now and were perfectly willing to go ahead and apply their newly acquired talent. I don't know whoever dreamt this up, but it was such a good idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how controversial it was to put that many resources into what would have been “the enemy” at that time. I wonder where they had the programs.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know. You’d have to go through the whole research. But they were just absolutely...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody was really thinking.

**Mr. Copeland:** But by the same token, I want to point this out, they were accompanied by the field grade officer to make damn sure that these guys didn’t get shuttled off to some place where they did nothing but dig potatoes. They wanted to make sure that these special POWs got assigned to that particular discipline that they were trained in so they could go ahead and do something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wouldn’t be wasted.

**Mr. Copeland:** True. A whole new echelon of people coming in to the German society for rebuilding purposes. I must add this was all new to us—a complete and absolute shock and surprise to us. We knew nothing about it prior to their arrival.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another communication gap here!

**Mr. Copeland:** True. At any rate, like I said, whoever directed it, whoever thought about it, they were doing real lovely long-range planning. And to take a resource that you picked up in the desert of Africa and brought here to this country and say, “These guys may be valuable someplace down the line if we train them right now.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Great story! So, let’s see what your situation was in the fall of 1945.

You were still there. Were you aware of the Nuremberg trials and what was going on there? I mean, you had seen those concentration camps. You’d be interested?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Nuremberg Trials did not start until November 20 of that year. Yes, we were interested, but we were so preoccupied with what we were doing. I mean, it wasn’t a tourist attraction or anything...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh no, I don’t mean that, but just that somebody was being called to account for what had happened.

**Mr. Copeland:** It wasn’t anything that was real pressing to us. You have to understand that at that time, in a city like in Munich, every other street was designated for rubble. Every other street: north, south, east, and west. First Street was open, Third Street was open, and Fifth Street, but Second and Fourth were designated for rubble. Now, that was the conditions that they were living under. The trials were not our main mission. Returning soldiers to peaceful living was our objective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People were starving in Europe; it was a mess.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. It truly was. Now, I had transformed from being a combat company commander to being one of the administrators of the discharge center in Bad Aibling. A great opportunity for new and varied challenges. I relished this timely intervention and learned to speak fluent German in record time. The bad part about the operation was that we collected a lot of German soldiers whose homes were in the Russian zone. Our instructions were that we were to transport those troops to an exchange point that was the division between the Russian zone and American zone. This was near Lintz, Austria where we were to exchange them for prisoners on a head-to-



head basis. If we took three hundred in, they would give us three hundred. However, we sent trainloads of three hundred and they would always find something wrong with the records. They'd say, "You have to fix these records and do certain things with them, but we will take the troops you are sending." So, with the first couple of train loads, they took the German troops and sent the records back, but they never gave us returning German soldiers in exchange. Then somebody in the big headquarters said, "We were not going to do that anymore." Then we sent another trainload in and the Russians said, "There is something wrong with the records," so we brought the records and the German troops back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think they were doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** We all surmised that they were becoming slave laborers in Russia. They really didn't want to have the records. They just wanted to have the troops and without any records; they were just immediately taking them away for whatever purpose. They probably died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you stop sending people? Realizing what was going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Very, very traumatic time in the discharge center. So then the German troops to be discharged into the Russian Zone began to build-up in great numbers. We simply had no place to send them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you do with all these people, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's just it. They were caught in the middle. A lot of them had families and businesses and really wanted to go back, knowing full-well that it was not going to be a fun time, but they were perfectly

willing to wait in hopes the situation would be corrected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But after they found out what they were going back to?

**Mr. Copeland:** Once they found out that they couldn't even do it on a head-for-head basis, they were really upset. So we made special work details out of them and we made an arrangement with the city of Munich. We got the city of Munich some German Army trucks that were still operative and every day we would send four or five hundred of these Germans POWs to work in the city of Munich.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Clearing up all that rubble?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Loading up the rubble and hauling it out. And then they came back to Bad Aibling at night. Home to them was the discharge center where they had beds, a shower facility; they had a medical facility; they had food.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But their life was in total limbo; they don't know what's going to happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's exactly right. This was very high-stakes politics. We were playing with people's lives and the lives of their families. The waiting and the uncertainty was the hardest part on all concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's painful. The war was over, but it's not over.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So you see, here you are, you think everything is peaceful and lovely and things like that...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, no. You just don't end war one day and peace starts the next.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, you have these great big, huge walls of barbed wire surrounding the Russian Zone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that go up almost immediately? A wall between east and west?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not a wall, but a line. Soon all of Germany got divided up: This is the American sector; this is the French zone and that is the British and this is the Russian. A lot of people didn't understand what the American troops were doing immediately after the war when we had literally hundreds of thousands of German soldiers that had to be processed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Displaced people everywhere. All of Europe was teeming with lost people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. We even had ex-soldiers walk into the discharge center and ask for a discharge. Their unit had had been disbanded—or they deserted—and they literally walked home and then came in later wanting to get their records clear. We took them in and processed them along with all of the others. And this went on for months.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You couldn't just walk away from all the need.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was just too much to do. I do want to add some words that express my thoughts, taken from *The Victors*, by Stephen Ambrose again:

*The standard story of how the American GI reacted to the foreign people he met during the course of World War II runs like this: He felt the Arabs were despicable, lying, stealing, dirty, and awful, without a redeeming feature. The Italians were lying, stealing, dirty, wonderful, with many redeeming features but never to be trusted. The rural French were sullen, slow, and ungrateful while the*

*Parisians were rapacious, cunning, indifferent to whether they were cheating Germans or Americans. The British people were brave, resourceful, quaint, reserved, dull. The Dutch were regarded as simply wonderful in every way (but the average GI never was in Holland, only the airborne.) The story ends up thus: Wonder of wonders, the average GI found that the people he liked best, identified most closely with, enjoyed being with, were the Germans. Clean, hard-working, disciplined, educated, middle class in their tastes and life styles...the Germans seemed to many American soldiers as 'just like us.'*

[Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys: The Men of World War II*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1998, page 333]

That says it all. But it was a slow transitional process that we had to go through from being old combat troops to going back to garrison duty under a totally different environment. When I would tell people that I was there after the war, "What did you do? What the hell was there to do?" Boy, there was so much to do. So that's what I was doing until I came home in August of '46.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, you did come home? Did you apply to come home or was it just your turn?

**Mr. Copeland:** In April, a replacement officer took my job as the discharge officer and I became a Company Commander again, this time the Company Commander of the 774<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion. This Company consisted of seventeen M4 Tanks, five officers, equipment, supplies and what have you. Now I have troop responsibilities again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you getting homesick? Were you getting little tired of this?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was in August and I was interested in getting myself back in school. I had been gone about two years at this time and felt it was time to return. I was twenty-two. By then I was a very mature young man with a keen sense and appreciation for freedom.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you'd like to have your life back?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, that goes without saying. At that time they said, "How many points do you have?" and when I answered, "Well, how come you haven't left before then?" and I said: "I was maintained in the European theater for the convenience of the government for an indefinite period of time." So any rate, that's what I was doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you came home, did you just fly home in an airplane or was there some kind of longer process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Coming home was really kind of interesting. I got to La Havre, France to catch a boat and I ran into a friend of mine from Walla Walla, Master Sergeant Tom Huff who said to me, "We've got a hospital ship going out in the morning. Would you like to be on it?" I said, "I only need a life boat." He said, "I can work that out." He arranged for me to come back aboard a hospital ship "without troops." That meant no additional responsibilities. At that time there were very few patients on the hospital ship, so it was just wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a cruise! So, did you, in effect, come home by yourself? I mean, once you were discharged, were you just on your own?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was not discharged yet, I was just being transferred. And then when I got to the States, I went to the officer's club and they were feeding us T-bone steaks and red wine and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Real food!

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh! It was just wonderful. And all of the sudden, they called my name over the loud speaker system and I was to report to the post commander's office. And the post commander says to me, "Copeland, we have a problem. There is a troop train going to Fort Lewis that's making several stops along the way and the officer in charge of that train is quarantined because of a case of spinal meningitis so you are the Troop Train Commander all of the way to Fort Lewis, Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Congratulations!

**Mr. Copeland:** I now have eight hundred enlisted men that I have to take home on a train and we made the first stop in Birmingham, Alabama.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wait, why would you go south to go west?

**Mr. Copeland:** We went all over the country and dropped troops off as we went. There was something like twelve stops to make from Fort Dix, New Jersey to Fort Lewis, Washington. And I got selected because I was the only officer at that time that had Fort Lewis as his destination point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you got a little tour of the country, a lot of scenery.

**Mr. Copeland:** We got a lot of tour and a lot of scenery. I'm nine days on the train.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what are your duties on this train? Just keeping track of everybody?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm just trying to keep people from getting drunk and disorderly. I have all their records and I'm just trying to get them home!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds kind like a headache to me.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not a good assignment. But I was heading in the right direction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's an understatement. You'd be kind of tired by now.

**Mr. Copeland:** God! I want to get out so bad at that time. I mean, I don't want to court-martial any one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you finally pulled into Fort Lewis. How many people were left, just you and a handful by then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I think I had maybe forty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a small group by then.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but a very happy bunch. We had our own train and whenever we'd get to a destination they just dropped that car off and kept going. The whole train just kept on getting smaller and smaller and smaller as we moved across the country.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very interesting image. Finally, you were this select Washington State group.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that was at the end of the line from Fort Dix, New Jersey.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not exactly a straight line, either. A lot of zigzagging. Were you then finally out of the Army?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, you're not out of the Army; you're out of active duty. You're still in the reserves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's never "over?" But did you still have duties?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For all intents and purposes, you were finally free to go back to your civilian life?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm out of the Army. I'm going home.



*Captain Tom Copeland, 1946, age 22*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were in Fort Lewis. How did you get to Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** My mother drove over and met me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good. You were able to start to wind down a little?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you've got to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have had a lot of stories to share?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. But it was sure nice to get home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel strange when you first got home? You'd been moving around a lot. Now you were at a dead halt being home.

**Mr. Copeland:** Strange would not be a good word, but "stranger" might come closer. So much had changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine you had changed most of all. I don't think you had a parade like the Johnson parade in Texas, but was there any kind of welcome home for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Mother met me in Fort Lewis. Also meeting me was my sister Patty. Her husband was also a Captain, Captain Gary Matters. He was home on leave when I got to Fort Lewis. He was signed up to go back into the Army of Occupation in Japan because he spoke Japanese fluently and wanted the experience of living in Japan with Patty. Gary was scheduled to leave in two days and Patty was scheduled to leave on a Japan-bound ship in about three weeks. Mother and I returned to Walla Walla the next day and Gary and Patty stayed in Seattle. Two days later Patty returned to Walla Walla

after seeing Gary off to Japan. The following day Mother and I drove to Pullman so I could register for the fall semester. We had just returned from Pullman that afternoon when we learned that Patty had been killed in an accident with a horse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How terrible and unexpected. You had made it through all these dangers and then when you got home, this happened. It was a riding accident?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, she was thrown off the horse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were just the two of you, right? So that left you.

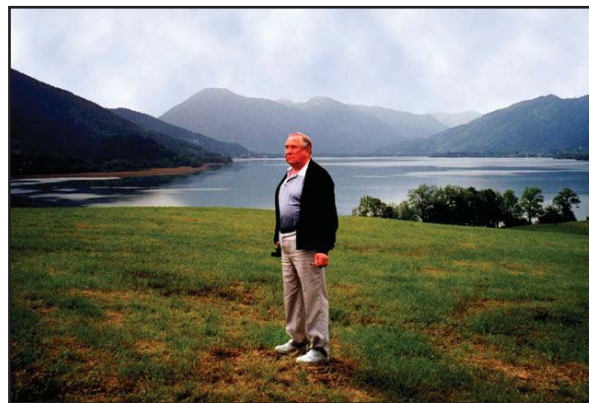
**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Gary was notified aboard ship heading for Japan and another troop ship coming into Seattle arranged for his transfer at sea. I flew to Seattle and met him coming off the ship. Now it was back to Walla Walla for a funeral. This was such a devastating blow to my Mother and Father. The homecoming had been planned for such joyful things, but now was changed to a period of sorrow.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm so sorry.



*The War ended for Tom Copeland at Tegerensee, Germany in May 1945. Notice the tank destroyer in the background.*

*\*Photo has been enhanced*



*Tom and his wife Donna visited the approximate location in Tegerensee, Germany in May 1998, and found it to be beautiful country.*



## CHAPTER 3

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### LIFELONG LEARNING: WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE AND FARMING

**Mr. Copeland:** I was trying to get myself enrolled in school. That took a bit of doing because all of the institutions of higher learning had such a tremendous influx at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody returning from the war was trying to do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the hardest parts about going back to school was finding a place to sleep.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've seen pictures of the WSU campus at that point and there are rows of bunks in what looks like the gymnasium. Were you just cheek by jowl, like you were back in the Army?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Oh, it was just like the Army.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No privacy.

**Mr. Copeland:** Being back in Army barracks. But at any rate, I was fortunate. I just decided to go through rush and I pledged Sigma Nu fraternity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you had a home.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, but the people in that pledge class were something else. About, I think, sixty men pledged. And I think out of the sixty, there were twenty-five commissioned officers, and these are the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a group.

**Mr. Copeland:** I mean, this is not what you call your entry college freshmen pledge group.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you've all been through—a different kind of college! You're coming in with an amazing background. You're not "off the farm."

**Mr. Copeland:** You got that one right. At any rate, for what reason I don't know, I got elected president of the pledge class.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Among this elite group, you stood out somehow?

**Mr. Copeland:** At any rate, as president of the pledge class, we had a pledge meeting and we were all very serious students. We were there to get an education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wanted to get your life back on track.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, but we had some of the people in the House that were young—nineteen years old. A ritual of hazing and "hell week" had been carried on for some time. But this new pledge class took a dim view of the prospects. And they requested me to explain to the House president that there would be no hell week for this group of pledges. We figured we all had enough hell, that we didn't need any more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You think you've been through quite enough?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So I went to George Croaker, the president and I said, "George, this is the name of the game." And George said, "Well, what if the membership doesn't agree?" I said, "George, talk it over with the members and they will see the wisdom of the plan." George, who was a returning B-17 bomber pilot and a Captain like myself, agreed with me and the position of the pledge class.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that would have been so childish seeming after what you had experienced.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the average age of that class was about twenty-three.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were not there for high jinks.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no. So at any rate, George immediately had a meeting of the Sigma Nu chapter members, and they decided not to have hazing. The next day, the word was out on the street that the Sigma Nu pledges had told the members they weren't going to be hazed; every fraternity adopted it within a week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hazing is a pretty weird tradition when you think about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was childish and so we just abolished this. It was a totally different group. The only thing that I can say as far as the campus was concerned, the one constituency that would really be happy about it were the females on campus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes. "The men are back." So you were you the conquering heroes come home at last?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know about the hero stuff, but I did notice some females that wanted to "be conquered!" The girls were in "high demand" and now the males outnumbered the females.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's good! I understand you were one of the lucky ones, that you met your future wife at WSU.

**Mr. Copeland:** I did. Dolly was a junior. Her home was in Olympia. Her father was with the State Printer's office here. So shortly after that we got married and went back to school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, you were there together as married students?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That was not uncommon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, especially after the war. That whole generation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that was a weird time. Never been duplicated. And I hope never again. Campus was a pretty—it was kind of an unfortunate mix of all of things. There some students that were regular—extremely young kids—and then there was this bunch of very mature males and the two really didn't function well together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd hardly have anything in common. Your view of what you wanted to do there was so different.

**Mr. Copeland:** We were living in two different worlds. The only thing that we had in common was going to classes together. We were literally light-years apart.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The eighteen-year-olds would be like little children, comparatively.

**Mr. Copeland:** In my case, I was coming out of a situation of being a Company Commander in charge of one hundred-plus men and millions of dollars worth of equipment. Some of the men in my pledge class were twenty-five or twenty-six years old. By then, I was twenty-two and very mature. Well, there's an old saying: "Maturity comes in three stages. One is a period of physical maturity and there is another period of mental maturity, and there is another period of financial maturity and the unfortunate thing about life, all three of them don't occur on the same date." Right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hardly! There's kind of a spread there.

**Mr. Copeland:** And unfortunately, in the way that we're living today, that spread is becoming larger. That period of financial maturity is getting further away and the physical maturity seems to be getting closer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a good mixture. It should be the other way around.

**Mr. Copeland:** So here you had a campus; it was made up of this great, huge spread of people between the ages of eighteen and let's say twenty-six, twenty-seven years old. And coming out of two different walks of life, they had two separate life experiences; they had different objectives in mind and I have to tell you and this is a true statement—the women on campus were absolutely overwhelmed!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there you are. So you overwhelmed Dolly and she agreed to marry you. And you lived in student housing of some sort? Did she finish her degree?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, she didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was her area of interest?

**Mr. Copeland:** She was a chemistry major. And she was one of those excellent students, you know. She had all these lovely straight A's and stuff like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you ruined her career?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I guess I ruined her career. She didn't know what she was ever going to do with becoming a chem. major but I am sure it would have been great for her. She was an outstanding student.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We should talk about your original reason for attending college—beyond meeting Dolly, what courses did you take? What did you want to learn?

**Mr. Copeland:** I just wanted to take courses in agriculture because I had the full intention of taking on the operation of the farm. I majored in agricultural engineering.



*Agricultural Engineering Building,  
Washington State College, 1947, WSU Archives*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Post-war agriculture was undergoing significant change, partly through what was learned during the war, one thing or another. The use of pesticides, for instance—the chemical part of farming was changing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything had changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The mechanization aspects, the scale.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything, everything. The changes were never-ending. If you didn't take yourself back to a course every year, you couldn't keep up. Just like people ask me today, "You mean you're taking a course in computers today?" I say, "I take courses in computers two or three times a year." They said, "You're kidding me!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they change.

**Mr. Copeland:** I say certainly; nothing remains the same.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think this is where you first developed this pattern of life-long learning? Seeing how things were moving, that you had to keep up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And I took all these lovely courses they had to offer. It was just a continuing type of arrangement. I went to one seminar in the mid to late fifties that was put on by a fellow by the name of Doane, who operated Doane Agriculture Services out of the Midwest. Very fine man. He was a college professor, I think, for Purdue University, and then he went off and did some things for private industry, but he became a very noted speaker as far as agriculture is concerned. And at that time, he was quite an elderly gentleman, but he gave a speech in Dallas, Texas and started right out by saying, "There's been a larger change in agriculture in the past twenty years than in the previous two thousand and I'm here to prove this." All of a sudden, you're going, "What was he doing?" Talking about herbicides that nobody knew anything about; he was talking about fertilizers that nobody knew anything about; he was talking about plant breeding and genetics that nobody knew anything about that. What do we have today, holy-smoley! All kinds of things that nobody dreamed about!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's pretty cutting edge.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is the technology that I'm involved in, and is it changing rapidly? I mean, virtually every day!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it's a revolution.

**Mr. Copeland:** It truly is something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where was your Dad in this? How did he manage?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, he was a wonderful person to work with. He never backed up for one minute from any experiment or research or change in things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was pretty excited about what you were going to bring home?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there ways for him to take courses, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but he didn't want to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was your role? Did you always know you were coming back to the farm? That's what you wanted to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess. Well, I don't know if I necessarily wanted to, but I did. It was kind of an obligation that I had more than anything else and it was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there anything else that you wished that you could have done if things had been different?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure there was. As a matter of fact, the Army offered me a wonderful opportunity. At that time I gave it some thought. When I was processed out

of Fort Lewis, they got in touch with me at that time and I went in and interviewed with this Colonel who said, “We’re offering a few Army officers an opportunity if you’d like to consider this. If you enroll in school, we will keep you on as a reserve officer and we will pay you half-time. If you commit to getting your BA degree, then you have to commit to spending an additional four years to six years in the Army.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did you want to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was somewhat attractive, but I opted not to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have tied you up for quite awhile. And you were an only son. What would have happened to the farm if you hadn’t come back?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All that work. So, was that your legacy, you’ve got to do it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, to a degree, yes. I was all right. It was a challenge—I mean farming. I guess farming would be anything you want to make out of it. If you want to sit there and drive a tractor all day long, you can sit there and drive a tractor all day long. That wasn’t my cup of tea. I wanted to be quite innovative and try to be able to figure out new and better ways of doing things and then improving equipment or employing herbicides or plant breeding or whatever it might be. And to a certain degree, some of us became very successful. I made mistakes along the line and but had some success, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s how you learn.

**Mr. Copeland:** When you pile all them

together, one on top of another, you’re darn right, I was very successful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your father still active on the family farm, then. Did you join him on same spread of land? Which was, at that time, about how much land?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. A couple of thousand acres. South and east of the city of Walla Walla, about six miles. Easy driving distance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And can you describe your land for us?

**Mr. Copeland:** From the city of Walla Walla, if you look east, you’ll look into the Blue Mountains. The city of Walla Walla is at about nine hundred feet of elevation and so when you drive east and south out of Walla Walla you’re heading for the Blue Mountains. You’re going up these foothills; it’s really just a very gradual slope going up towards the mountains. And so as you proceed out of Walla Walla and start heading out that direction, you began to realize you are going up a very general grade, so in six miles from the nine hundred feet in elevation in downtown Walla Walla, you wind up at the ranch and that’s about thirteen, fourteen hundred feet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s quite a bit.

**Mr. Copeland:** So you’ve gone up quite a grade in that length of time, so the entire foothills with this general slope is off to the west.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this is really good soil there? And a good supply of water?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very good. It’s excellent, it’s excellent soil. It’s actually called Palouse loam.





*The Copeland farm in Walla Walla*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if you were part of the Palouse, if it extended into your area.

**Mr. Copeland:** The soil classification referred to it as Palouse loam and the further south you get a lighter soil know as Athena loam. And so it's a combination of those two soils, but it's just excellent farming country.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it kind of a place where you can grow practically anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** Walla Walla has a fairly long growing season. But given the proper amount of water with an average growing season, you can raise lots of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On your farm, what was your Dad growing at that point, when you first came back and joined him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Primarily wheat. He just started into the grain feed business at that time but that was quite in its early stages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all around you, was the main thing still wheat?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One development in Walla Walla that I wondered if it had an impact on your business, was that General Foods opened a Birds-Eye division there in 1946, a plant to quick-freeze mostly peas, but also lots of other crops. Which came first—the growing of the peas or this plant to process them? Did they come in and talk to farmers and say, “We’ll build this plant if you grow the peas.”

**Mr. Copeland:** We were canning peas in the area and the freezing plants came later. General Foods came in and they contacted several growers and asked if they would be interested in raising some green peas and nobody knew anything about frozen peas then. They said, “Here’s what to do. You plant them this way and we harvest them with these machines and bring them into the plant and we’ll freeze them and we’ll give you x-amount of dollars. So it started quite small.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn’t it quite different from growing wheat? The season, the equipment—everything?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. But you see, it’s also a very short period of time. So at any rate, the green pea industry evolved over a period of time. There were several other plants that

came into the area and also started processing. At the same time they were processing the green peas, people recognized that the area would raise and support asparagus and other vegetable crops. And so asparagus started and the same processor would process this asparagus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren't these new crops more labor intensive?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would change the look of farming. If you had to bring in huge crews for harvesting, or whatever. Not like wheat.

**Mr. Copeland:** But at the same token, that was a highly specialized market and not too many acres involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little asparagus goes a long way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, it's very costly to get into the asparagus business. It costs a lot of up-front money because to be in the asparagus business, you have to do all the preparation and put them in the ground and everything else and you don't harvest anything for three years. So there's a lot of up-front money there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what I thought. So would a farmer grow his regular crops and then have some land over here where he engages in more experimental niche crops?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the event that he had the irrigation. That was the whole trick—you had to have the water for asparagus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the building of McNary Dam help with the irrigation issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only to the extent of land that was adjacent to the water behind the dam itself. It was mostly wells.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But previously, had there been much irrigation?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Number one, the amount of electricity that was needed in order to be able to pump was not readily available in the rural areas. Number two, most of the power that was there was single-phased rather than three-phase. That's a technical term, but it's very important. Four-hundred-forty volt. Three-phase is absolutely unheard of in the rural situation. And that's what you had to have in order to be able to drive those big pumps. The transformer that I put on my pump, it's just huge. I don't know if you've ever seen a two-hundred horse power electric motor or not, but they stand about eight feet high and probably four feet in diameter, like that. And when you turn those on, I'll tell you, they make a noise like you can't believe. Ooowee! And they're very expensive, too, but they get the work done. The one that I developed could pump up to 3,000 gallons a minute—a lot of water. But it took quite a bit of engineering, financing, licensing and quite a period of time to get that all in place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were a lot of pieces to this development?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots and lots of pieces. I mean, you're talking about high powered transmission lines and here again, a capital outlay in order to be able to even deliver power out to some of these places where you'd like to locate a well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would all this money come from? How would these pieces come together? Would people clamor for more power so then that area might get developed?

Which piece came first, the need or the power?

**Mr. Copeland:** Congress passed the act of rural electrification sometime in the 1930s and it started very slowly at that point. When the federal government started the R.E.A. they said, “We’ll go ahead and finance this. However, if a private power company wants to come in and do it, we’ll go ahead and subsidize a big portion of the construction.” So they subsidized private power companies to build transmission lines and they gave them certain tax write-offs if they extended their services to the rural areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Private power hadn’t previously served the more rural areas?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, private power simply couldn’t afford it during the Depression.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was more like a partnership, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Big partnership! It didn’t make a difference whether it was the R.E.A. or private. They authorized the implementation of the Rural Electrification Administration—the REAs—and they came in and put in power. The federal government did that under the auspices of county authorization.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would those be like PUDs?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the public utility districts were created later. Then the PUD became an entity of the state in which they would say, “Okay, you can have a boundary around here and you can create a public utility district and the public utility district will be confined in this particular area.” Maybe it would be an entire county, maybe a group of

counties, maybe a portion of a county, and then whatever utility you wanted was authorized within that. So you had a combination of the private power companies, the PUDs and the R.E.A.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The federal government was building dams all down Columbia River during this period.

**Mr. Copeland:** Grand Coulee was the first. The Corps of Engineers didn’t build them all. At that time, several of the counties got themselves created as a public utility district—like Grant County—and they built a large dam at Priest Rapids. And Grant County caused the public utility district to be bound by all of the county. They got a license from the Corps of Engineers to go ahead and build a dam on the Columbia River. So the Corps of Engineers didn’t build that dam; they licensed it, but the Grant County PUD built it and owns and operates it today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about in the Walla Walla area?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were serviced primarily by Pacific Power and Light. They were very big in the area and early on had quite a few installations on some of the smaller tributaries; one of the larger ones is in Mayfield. And they had several hydro-electric plants in Idaho. Pacific could buy from the Bonneville Power Administration, in addition to their own generation capacity. Private power came in—in this particular case, it was closer for a private power to come in rather than the R.E.A.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they finally brought in these big transmission lines?

**Mr. Copeland:** Over a long period of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have made a big difference on your farm. Then that allowed for the pumps and the development of irrigation and different crops? So it has to kind of all fit together.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. All of a sudden you had electricity that you didn't have before. Power usage starts real slowly and as time goes on additional power requirements come about. Then new lines must be constructed to handle the additional load. And it wasn't just power. I remember seeing the Columbia River jammed with ice at Biggs Junction. Some brave souls even walked across the water when it was in that condition. Also, Wenatchee was flooded because of the ice. Portland was flooded one spring because the water could not get out fast enough. And they were generating hydro-electric power like you can't believe it, and did it have an effect? Sure, it did! So it wasn't one of those direct, immediate effects.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes, flood control too. Would people be going to meetings and asking for these things? Who started the process? How does it all fit together?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's an evolution. In other words, a particular power company would run a major transmission line from point A to point B. Everything beyond point B was not accessible. Then the people beyond point B would realize, "If I had the power, I could do following things." Then they went out and said, "Now, can you go ahead and extend it from point B to point C?" "Yes." And somebody else would say, "What about point D? What about here?" And now the power company said, "It costs x-amount of dollars in order to build every mile of transmission line and we only have so much to play with this year. We'll build from B to C this year and from C to D next year." It was the way

it was built, ultimately, if you like to call it a power grid—which is for the lack of a better name...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It becomes one entity, eventually.

**Mr. Copeland:** It became a "power grid." That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been pretty hot as an issue though, because your community would live or die economically if you got this power or if you didn't get it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily true. Power was to be available to all communities. The supply had to be developed and their development required long-term financing available through the private sector or the federal government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it set up a competition among the possible recipients?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, there was competition. Power companies had to have competitive rates or they would be replaced.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you end up with a patchwork of service areas?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we did not. You didn't, because one of the utilities would say, "Okay, we'll service this area and you service this other area."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's now a staunch private power area?

**Mr. Copeland:** Private power had long been established in the Walla Walla region, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Similar to Spokane. And the politics of that area are very supportive



of private power, so you must have felt you were getting good service?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were getting excellent service. Pacific Power and Light has been in Walla Walla for quite a number of years. One of the federal requirements when the Corps of the Engineers built hydro-electric plants, they were obligated to sell some of that power generated out of that dam to the local private power utility companies. So every time a new dam came on line, the private power people were right there in order to be able to buy it and use it. But it was a natural thing. You didn't want to create another entity to go out and build duplicating utility lines.

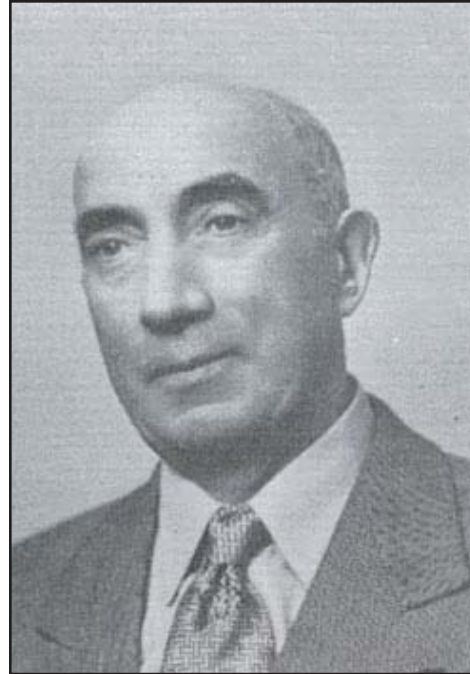
**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes sense.

**Mr. Copeland:** So people ask, "Did you have a big public/private power fight in the Walla Walla area?" No, we never had a big public power fight. Everything was in place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, not like in some areas where everybody was jockeying for advantage. I believe that happened in Thurston County.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. They were just trying to condemn everything that Puget Power had and they said, "The public is going take it over." They had the right to do it, of course. They just had to have approval of all of the rate payers. So did we have a big huge fight? No. Was that the case in Spokane County? No. Washington Water Power was up there; they have been servicing those people for years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your Uncle Henry—another legislator in the family, who served in the Senate, was a big defender of private power. So he was just really defending the local system, I guess?



*Senator Henry J. Copeland  
District 11, 1935-1957*

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Not only the local system but I think also the concept of both private and public power systems. I mean, there was a time and place here in the state of Washington when, politically, there were those forces that wanted to just obliterate all private power companies and telephone companies and take over virtually all the utilities and have them have publicly owned. Then it gets down to the basic question: Who operates the most efficient ship? Public ownership or private ownership? And this got to be a kind of an age-old debate that's been going on for years. Every so often, the federal government or the state government shows that they can do it more effectively than private enterprise and then quite dramatically, the private enterprise shows they can do that a lot more efficiently than the public entity can.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it actually good to have this tension between the two systems so eventually everybody gets good service?



**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it keeps everybody's nose to the grindstone?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's an excellent competition. Of course, you and I are sitting here talking to each other on 30<sup>th</sup> day of August in the year 2001, and it was only last week that the United States Post Office department decided that they were getting out of the business of carrying airmail in their own airplanes and contracted it out with UPS and Federal Express. And the reason that they are doing it is that Fed-Ex and UPS can do it for less money than the Post Office department can. In this business, who is the best one to do the job?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know about the Post Office, but the power debate in this state took on practically a "moral crusade" atmosphere on both sides of the question.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because different value systems supported each side. According to many different points of view, it was the hottest issue in Washington State politics for several decades.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it certainly was when I was in the Legislature. There's no doubt about it; it became very political, very, very quickly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to be on one side or the other.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, there wasn't any grey area on this one. There was no grey area. That was just—bingo!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For you, was it a black

and white thing? You sound more like your thinking is in the "grey area" these days.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, no. I don't say it's a grey area these days; I say the opportunity for competition to be there is always in place and should be. In other words, if you get an entity—let's say private power—that all of a sudden tries to extract too much money out of the rate payer and they're not getting the service and they're paying exorbitant rates, if the public entity can come in and do equally as good a job for less money, it's going to happen. Government doesn't do anything but fill voids. I mean, you create a void in any aspect of your life—I don't care what it is—you create a void and government is going to fill that void.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not free enterprise?

**Mr. Copeland:** They're late! The void is there because they didn't fill it. They are late; they didn't fill it, but the government will. If you leave that void unattended and a private entity is not taking care of it, by god, the government will do it. And I don't care what it is about your life and your living and your well-being, the government is going to be there. If nobody is going to inspect that clothing of yours to make sure that it's adequately put together and so on, the government is going to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it bursts into flames, or whatever.

**Mr. Copeland:** Or somebody was delivering mattresses with pretty poor material and the government filled the void. Now you have to have a license on your mattress to buy it. Right? And in the state of Washington, we have a commission on bedding and beds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you, it was pretty clear? I mean to me, you sound like you can

see both sides of the issue the way you're talking right now, but for you back then, you were clearly a private power supporter? When the votes were counted up and down, you knew which side you were on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me explain again about the evolution. When the dams were starting to be built, the requirement was: if you build a dam and you have a new generation capacity, you sell that to a utility company that is currently in business. You do not create another utility company to come out and put in parallel lines and run two wires to one customer, saying, "We'll beat your rate," and so on and so forth. That would be stupid. So they created the Utilities and Transportation Commission, and the Utilities and Transportation Commission said, "If you're going to make changes in the rate, you have to come and get an approval." So the rates were regulated.

Now, take that backdrop on what we wound up with in the Legislature where we ran into this great huge debate with public power in Thurston County saying, "What we want to do is condemn all of the facilities owned by Puget Power and take them over and make them public." It wasn't the case of additional power coming in, paralleling or anything of that kind. "We're going to condemn the facilities owned by Puget Power. We're putting Puget Power out of business in this area." What is the most prudent thing to do? Take and put a private power company completely out of business? Say: "You're obliterated, you're no longer here; you must sell all your transmission lines to a public entity." Then the question came, "Can the public entity operate the utility better than the private? Yes or no?" At that time, nobody had any records to show that the public could operate any better. So was it a good thing? I think it was a dumb thing. Did it create a situation where the power company became very, very innovative, very attentive to their

business and what they were charging the rate payer? You bet! Did it bring them up on their tippy-toes? Absolutely! Was it a bad thing in the final analysis? No, I don't think so. Now, is that black or white?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds clear. This becomes such a big issue; I was just trying to figure out where you were on the spectrum of the debate.

**Mr. Copeland:** You understand. I mean, the city of Seattle operates their own system. That is something they started years and years ago and they're very good at it. But what keeps them good at it? Is it the fact that all around the city of Seattle are pockets of private utility companies and if they have the rate of fifty-three cents, Seattle City Light better not have a rate of sixty-three cents? Because if they do, bang, here comes a rate payer saying, "How come?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** So it has the tendency for a lovely check-and-balance there. Competition is a wonderful thing, it truly is. Competition levels the playing field pretty fast. If you create a void, you leave the void for too long, and somebody at some point is going fill that void.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I see.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the competitive aspect to that whole thing. And yes, it developed into this great big political thing and a lot of people got taken up in the polarity of the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll be tracing that debate when we discuss those years. But it's good to have this foundation. Back to your situation in the post-war period, was this the issue that

was really taking off for you, then? Were you starting to irrigate your farm?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't start irrigating until the late sixties. And of course, at that time, then we had the power in place at a rate that I could afford.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, much later then. But your Dad was already shifting to other crops? Diversifying from wheat?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was going into peas but he was not in the irrigation business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. You said that your Dad was very supportive of you coming back with new ideas and was always willing to let you try your hand at things. What were your early ideas? You came back from college; you're "newly minted," you're ready to go?

**Mr. Copeland:** The dynamics of agriculture were changing so dramatically. The impact of the war was extremely great, but at that time—during the war—one of the things that was commonly available throughout the world, but utilized for very special interests, was nitrates in any form. The mining of nitrates increased dramatically, but primarily for the manufacturing of explosives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But after the war that would change. Tell me about the fertilizer business. How did it affect your farm?

**Mr. Copeland:** Fertilizer was just becoming available in large quantities and priced so it could be used by most all of agriculture. The retailers were just then gearing up to handle the demand. Wholesalers were setting up warehouses and the necessary supply lines. And production mines were starting to combine and mix various fertilizers into blends to meet the demands of the fledgling

industry. Washington State College was spending a great deal of time developing new methods of soil testing, water requirements, plant response to fertilizers and to adverse conditions that may develop. All of this development came over a long period of time and required a great deal of testing and retesting to prove the results. Wheat, for instance, would respond to the fertilizers very well but would grow so tall and so fast that the wheat straw could not support the additional weight of the head of wheat. The results were that the wheat would fall over, lie on the ground and become subject to mold, mildew, rotting, and lack of complete development. This condition of falling was called "lodging" and would reduce potential yields. So this gave new interest in finding a variety of wheat that had a strong sturdy straw that could support the large, heavier head. This in itself takes several years.

Now, you had all the nitrate mines in place and here was a very inexpensive source of fertilizer. So the advent of quantity fertilizer at a relatively inexpensive price just came in as a natural arrangement of a bi-product after the war. Did we need the fertilizer? Yes! Was fertilizer available? Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you had this great soil?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wheat takes a lot out of the soil, doesn't it? You can't mine it forever, I guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. You can't. Any time you grow anything, it's going to take something out of the soil. So at any rate, you had this surplus of nitrate mining capacity and they weren't building explosives anymore; they weren't blowing each other up. What are we going to do with all the nitrates? Hey! Let's

make fertilizer, let's make fertilizer out of it. So, bang!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A more peaceful use.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. So here I am coming into farming with the advent of fertilizers. DDT was also a product that came out of the war. It is an insecticide that affects the nervous systems of insects. At that time it was used for just about everything from body lice found in concentration camps in Germany and Japan to big stuff like roaches. These insecticides were now entering the agricultural market in great quantities and at affordable prices. Several types were introduced at this time—some good and some bad. But DDT was something new to agriculture and it needed a great deal of research and study. Here again, Washington State College was in the forefront and took the lead on gathering the necessary information needed. But it was a product of the war. DDT even got a Nobel Prize. Since then, it's been outlawed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, true.

**Mr. Copeland:** It got the Nobel Prize because it did such a wonderful thing. I saw DDT used in Europe where these Polish displaced workers were kept in not very sanitary conditions. They lined them up and they would just take and dust them completely with DDT in order to be able to kill body lice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now we know a lot more about DDT, but I know there are all those photographs of people spraying it all over everything from this period.

**Mr. Copeland:** So did my father ever hear of anything like DDT? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you did.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I just happened to be there at the time when it first was used. So all of these things were now coming into the farming picture. Was my father saying, "Oh my god, let's not do that." No, he's saying, "Hey, let's give it a try." So this attitude I shared with my father; he was never a naysayer and I and a lot of my friends had that same saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That can be, potentially, a very difficult relationship when the son is coming on with new ideas and the father still has the farm.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was why he was such a delight to work with. He was cautious but seldom did he say, "No!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's why he sent you to college.

**Mr. Copeland:** But all these things were coming into place. And plant breeding. Did you know anything about plant breeding at that time? No. Was it something brand new? It certainly was. And what could they do with plant breeding? Anything! I mean, it was absolutely unlimited.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been an exciting time to be in farming. There was an explosion of new knowledge.

**Mr. Copeland:** It still is. There's hardly a variety of any crop that you can mention raised on the face of the earth where that particular variety is still in existence today. I mean, it's gone by the way. Anytime you take a particular plant and allow it to exist on the face of the earth, it's going to develop its own predators and those predators will consume it. Now, if you bring in a new variety that the predators have not learned to like, then that new variety will grow and do quite well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're a little ahead of the game there?

**Mr. Copeland:** But during the next ten years, there are going to be new predators that will know how to come in and devour that thing. So you have to develop a new variety in order to be able to accomplish the next generation. So this is an evolving situation and it will continue. There is nothing stagnant about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your college courses were just perfect for this development? You were just coming right on line at an exciting time.

**Mr. Copeland:** But at same token, if you take one college course, by the next semester that may be out of date.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've got to keep up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've told me that you kept taking courses and kept your education going all through these years. Were there journals and things that you would get—scientific literature—to keep up your studies?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. Oh my, lots of them. And then Washington State College would do something in the spring—and, as a matter of fact, they still do it—and this is specifically for the agriculture community. You go up there and enroll and they have a week of nothing but classes and laboratory study on all of the new things. It could be in plant breeding; it could be in something in animal husbandry; it could be in something having to do with genetics. It might be a computer demonstration of new things on water or brand-new equipment. It might be entirely on evolution, a revolutionary thing, or hydraulic motors and transmission power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All pragmatic; stuff you're going to come away with and apply directly on your farm.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, truly. This is an on-going thing; they haven't discontinued that. But it's for those people who want to avail themselves of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be quite a group—a real powerhouse group—to go there, get what they want in a week and off they go. Sounds very stimulating.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. So I just availed myself of every opportunity. I remember, they had some wonderful seminars throughout the entire country. And whenever I found one of them that looked like it was something that I'd be interested, I'd make it available. I guess the last class I took was just eight months ago at the community college. I took another course in computers!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you're keeping yourself fresh.

**Mr. Copeland:** I never quit learning. I take classes all the time. But what I'm doing, I'm taking classes to expose myself to new thoughts, new innovative things and ideas and changes. Nothing is stagnant, everything is changing. If you want to go backwards, you know, just sit still. The world's going to pass you up. There's no question about that. At any rate, it was at that time—and it still is—a very exciting time as long as you want to keep up with it. If you don't want to keep up with it—you don't want to spend the money, and you don't want to make anything new and new changes and so on and so forth—you better plan on getting out of the business because the business is going to consume you; you're not going to be there. So that's kind of a given more than anything else.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's a highly fluid, dynamic situation. You were just going with whatever is the next thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One more question about that time of growth and change: Did the building of Hanford have any impact on the Walla Walla area or was that too far away? When they were building that complex, you were probably one of the closest big towns. I was wondering if that facility had any spillover development for Walla Walla.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think if it did, it would only be secondary. There certainly wasn't the impact like there was in the Tri-Cities. I wasn't there at the time. I came home from leave one time and we just happened to drive by Hanford. The buildings that you could see from the road was just awesome and nobody knew what was going on there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ask yourself, "What on earth is that?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. I think everybody did. Nobody had any of the slightest idea what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just looking back, it's so amazing. Hundreds of people building a huge complex and yet it was really kept secret. I mean, you'd think that it would sort of seep out. I wonder how they did that.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was an absolutely wonderfully kept secret. Nobody really knew.

There's a story that was written and told over and over again and it went back to the Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn. He called his committee chairman in and said, "Gentlemen, we're having a very short meeting. And I'll

tell you what I want you to do. I want all of you to add at least twenty percent to your budgets and don't ask any questions. I'm going to get the Congress to approve that amount of money. Later, I'm going to take that money away from your committee and use it elsewhere and you're not to ask why."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they all just nodded their heads?

**Mr. Copeland:** They did. And Congress set up an entirely separate budget. It was totally unaccounted for. Nobody could really tell where it was going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That wouldn't happen in these days.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I don't think the press in its current form would ever sit still for it, even in a war-time situation. But at any rate, that funded the Manhattan Project and all of the other subsequent projects after that. I mean, the money was appropriated to the Congress: it went to the committees, it left the committees and went someplace else, and they lost track. So you say it was a well-kept secret, you bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The culture has changed so much; you just know that it could never happen like that again.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Well, who in heaven's name knew what was going on under some kind of a special project under the football stadium in Chicago? Why did they call it the Manhattan Project, and who's doing something down in New Mexico and what the hell was going on out in Hanford, Washington?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one had ever heard of Hanford.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nobody ever heard of it. Why was it at Hanford? Because of the Columbia River, but nobody ever understood why. But there they were, so it was an extremely long-kept secret. But at Hanford they had access to the Columbia—they needed large amounts of water for cooling; it was very important to have the ability to regulate the temperature. Where else could you find such a spot in the United States?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it was the perfect location. So did the city of Walla Walla grow during the war years, if not from this cause, any other? Did the population change much over those years as it did in other parts of the state, or was it pretty stable? Wasn't there a bomber training base just outside of Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think the population increased a great deal during the war, no. There was an Army airbase that brought in some extra people, but of course, that went away at the end of the war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty much a stable community, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Thanks. I'm getting a better sense of your community. So, Dolly came back to the farm with you when you graduated. Did she have any kind of agricultural background?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was kind of a revelation to her?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was. It really was.



*Dolly Copeland with the Copeland farm in the background, Spring of 1948*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But as a chemistry major, she could be interested in a lot of same things that were exciting to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, she was. She was interested in soil science and fertilizer and things like that. She knew what she was talking about. She went to several meetings with me on some of those things and as the work progressed, she got herself involved in the farming administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With a lot of farm wives, it's a partnership.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, there is no question about that. So she did an awful lot of the bookwork and payroll stuff and this was pre-computer days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course. Adding machines. Yes, I'm familiar with that. And then you proceeded, of course, to have a family?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had three children? As you told me: Tim, in 1948; two years later David, and two years later Brooke.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Great kids.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have had a very busy, full life?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But on the other hand, you were also getting involved in other things, keeping up your contacts. You told me you were involved with the Farm Bureau, but that it wasn't a major activity for you; still I'd like to just touch on it briefly. It's a national organization that formed about 1920. According to their literature, they worked with a lot of farm extension programs from land-grant colleges; I thought maybe that was the connection—that they would have been at WSU. It seemed like they were a link between the colleges—what was happening at colleges—with what was happening on farms and that they disseminated a lot of literature to farmers about new developments.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that the Farm Bureau kind of latched on to the extension service and used it as a source of information for their membership. The extension service didn't have the ability to go ahead and send out all of the information so the Farm Bureau did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were the link in the process of education?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. But it was at that time when we became very interested in starting to establish research for wheat production. Leading the way on that was Oregon. And they had formed a group down there called the Oregon Wheat League.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This would be eastern Oregon, I imagine?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was all of Oregon, but primarily eastern Oregon. But the Wheat League was taking money, just volunteer contributions, and using it for wheat research. It soon became evident that the only way that you were going to be able to do this was to do it through some means of producers' tax of some kind. So through meetings throughout the entire country—primarily with Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Idaho...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that the wheat belt?

**Mr. Copeland:** Kind of, yes. And to a lesser extent, North and South Dakota, and lesser extent, Montana. Those people were there but they were not big players at the table. We created, or at least put together, the skeleton of state-enabling legislation where the state would authorize or enable a commodity group to put through a referendum to approve the creation of a commission that would collect and receive and disperse money for the purpose of research of that particular commodity. So the enabling conditions were developed during that period of time in the early 1950s.

Then those affected groups of primarily wheat growers, went to their respective state legislatures and asked the legislatures to authorize passage of this enabling legislation. Oregon was the lead-off and passed theirs very quickly and immediately put a tax on—and I think I'm correct—of half a cent per bushel on every bushel of wheat that was produced and sold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that considered a steep tax or not?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, half cent a bushel is

very small. And it was at the producer-level, so number one, it was easily tracked, easy to locate and the first warehouse of delivery was the point. But it was very, very clean—easy to administer. And so they immediately started using their money for wheat research. Then other states began to follow.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Using the same model?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, virtually. The same enabling act. You have to change it slightly in order to be able to fit them in the exact spot of the titles of the RCW and things like that. But technically, yes. Then it became Washington's opportunity to get their enabling legislation through. There was a big effort here in Olympia—one session in order to be able to get it through—and it was just sailing through in great shape until it got to the House. Well, the House members insisted that when it came to wheat, you could only tax one eighth of a cent of a bushel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not very much.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, hardly anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you're not really getting anywhere. What year was this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Nineteen fifty-five.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were on the outside pushing for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. So the one guy that was objecting to this strenuously happened to be a member of the House from Walla Walla.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, why was he taking this position?

**Mr. Copeland:** He didn't like the idea of the wheat commission. He said, "Wheat is raised

all over the world; wheat is harvested all over the world, every day. And there is absolutely nothing you can do in order to be able to affect the price of wheat or the production at any length of time and I am not going to support it."

So we were not successful in 1955, getting what we wanted. Being very disappointed, we had a state meeting and the wheat growers said, "Well, we got this guy and this guy and this guy who are not supporting our position. Why don't we replace them?" So they looked around the table and said, "Who's going to run for the Legislature?" That's the way I got involved in politics. I ran for the Legislature on the basis that I was going make some changes having to do with the creation of the Wheat Commission. Which I did. That was the first bill that I signed on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had better be.

**Mr. Copeland:** And I got it passed. And within the following year, they had a referendum on it and it passed and they started collecting money and the Wheat Commission was formed. The Wheat Commission allocated the money. The following year they had more money. The following year Dr. Vogle had his first breakthrough in short-straw wheat and all of the sudden wheat production in the state of Washington went from an average of about thirty-three bushels an acre to forty-two bushels an acre.



*Washington State Association of Wheat Growers and the Oregon State Wheat League meeting in Walla Walla, 1955. Tom seated third on the right.*



**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess you can have an impact after all.

**Mr. Copeland:** Tremendous impact. Absolutely! I mean, nobody would have forecasted that kind of result.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Such a nice, quick turn-around time, too. Great justification.

**Mr. Copeland:** And somebody says to me, “What did you ever do in the Legislature that was worthwhile?” Well, I did something for wheat. Brought in billions of dollars to the state of Washington. Not millions, but billions. And it did. It truly did. But here again, you’ve got to start someplace. I had to start with this simple little enabling piece of legislation and you have to have that passed; you had to have the referendum; you had to have the people go ahead and put it together; you had to have a commission created; you had to have them allocate the money; you have to have the research people in order to be able to do it; you have to had have good results. And we had a whole series of excellent things that occurred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But that’s a lot of groundwork?

**Mr. Copeland:** It is just one hell of a lot of work on the part of many dedicated people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots of talking to people and getting them to understand and bring them on board, because you can’t skip any of those steps.

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You ran into a wall with the first step, but didn’t stop there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, we ran into a lot more than one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were making it sound pretty easy once you overcame that first obstacle.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were several of them, but at any rate we did a turn-around on two or three, and quite frankly, I think there were five or six of them that got replaced in the Legislature. That’s all there is to it. They got defeated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The wheat growers were to be taken seriously. You had a different vision.

**Mr. Copeland.** It was a good idea at the right time. Some of the farmers had the notion, “Nothing new will change me from my current course. I’m not going to change anything in my farming practices; I’m not going to create, I’m not even going to look at anything that is new or innovative.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this like a generational shift?

**Mr. Copeland:** There’s no question about it. Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were the next guys coming in and you had a different idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. These guys were—hell, they were living in the dark ages. I’ll tell you, they never took an extra class in their life. So it came at the time when things had to happen. But here again, I come right back to: “You create a void long enough, something is going to be there to fill it.” We had this void; other states were beginning to fall in line. Within twenty-four months, there was a wheat commission in Montana and Kansas and Nebraska and Colorado.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were getting results.



**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And we created the whole, entire arrangement without taxpayers' money. All of the funds came directly from the wheat producers. Then we created a national organization and states began to communicate with one another. Now all of those same commissions are sharing information as to what kind of research they are doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's a powerful combination: the void, the model, and then the results.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in the early 1950s, you were getting deeply involved in these different things, trying to push for all these changes and your work on the farm was really taking off. Did you also have some involvement with community groups: the Elks, the Masons, the American Legion? How big an involvement was that for you? Was it more like a social kind of diversion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not really social, a place of contacts that were necessary for legislative input.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people use those memberships intentionally—or by happenstance unintentionally—as springboards for political action.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Elks were totally social and as far as the Veterans were concerned, yes, I joined because I was a veteran.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the Chamber of Commerce?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Chamber of Commerce was very active. The Chamber of Commerce you see, they've taken an entirely different

group of people and encompassed them and focused them on certain aspects of the agricultural entity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is agriculture as a business?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's agriculture as a business. But when we created the Washington State Wheat Growers Association—I mean, this is a volunteer group—but we did it on the basis of: Let us include the guy that sells the tractors. Let's have a contribution from him, and a contribution from the guy that sells the fertilizer, and the guy that sells the irrigation equipment, and the guy that sells the trucks, and the guy that sells the tires. So the community of the Chamber of Commerce became the business focal point of: "What's going on with the wheat association? What are they doing in order to be able to enhance the wheat industry?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And if the farmers were making more money, it would go straight into the community.

**Mr. Copeland:** Were these guys supportive? At first, reluctantly. Secondly, to a degree. Later, whole heartedly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they saw the big picture at last.

**Mr. Copeland:** You go out and put some seed in the ground and you are going to harvest something. You put no seed in the ground, I'll guarantee you'll have a crop failure. Right? So these guys understood where it was. "Sure, we can be supportive of these people in some way in order to be able to get a better research project going. This is going to come home to great dividends." So the Chamber of Commerce of Walla Walla—the chambers of commerce in all of the agriculture areas—

were supportive. They were the umbrella that brought in all of the other groups that were supportive of agriculture.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Traditionally, were the businessmen in town not necessarily allied with the farmers?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a cultural gap there? Was this a new development? As farming became more—I don't want to say necessarily agri-business, but you were buying a lot of commodities and equipment in town. There was, perhaps, a lot more of a connection that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. You are right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were no longer this little self-sufficient operation off on the farm, generating your own things and eating your own food. This is a business.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is now a business. It is now called an agri-business and everybody involved in the agri-businesses understands that. You've got the producer level; you've got the handler level; you've got the supplier level. All of these people in conjunction, they actually make the whole thing run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That changes the relationship quite a bit.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. You have to understand, it was primarily the Chamber of Commerce in each one of these communities that became the umbrella in order to be able to fit all of these entities together and bring them in one room and at least hear the story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they the group

courting General Foods, to bring in the Bird's Eye plant, for instance?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. Absolutely. Did they go out and make overtures with them? Oh, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your involvement with the Chamber? What role did you play?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was heavily involved in the Chamber of Commerce, you bet. And as a matter of fact, at the time we got the enabling legislation for the Wheat Commission establishment through, we had to pass a referendum. The Chamber of Commerce was the forum that put on all these meetings where we would be able to go ahead and give the pitch of how much we were going to collect; how it was going to be dispersed; what we intended to do with it; where's the research facility; who's going to head that up; what are the end results; what they may be. So that was the chambers' role—when I say chambers, I'm using the word in the most plural sense possible. It was the chambers that allowed us to at least go ahead and make our presentation. As matter of fact, on one particular occasion we even came over and talked to the Seattle Chamber of Commerce so they understood what the hell was going on with the wheat industry in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they are an important wheat-exporting port; they would have an interest.

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the sudden, it dawned on them. "My god, if these guys in eastern Washington, rather than raising six billion bushels of wheat, they're going to raise twenty billion bushes a wheat, we're going to be involved."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. It's all connected.

**Mr. Copeland:** “Oh! I didn’t know that that was going on,” type of arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, was this a generational shift?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, this isn’t evolution. I don’t think the generation has too much to do with it. There’s just too many things coming together simultaneously here, coming out of the war economy and things like that that triggered this whole thing off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The post-war years saw just a tremendous boom in all kinds of things.

**Mr. Copeland:** Some were good and some were bad. And this one, this is one of the good ones: it’s coordinated, it’s focused; it has end-results that are just phenomenal, and they’re still making improvements today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The story is not over. I wanted to ask you about some of your other community activities. I see you were involved with the Y.M.C.A. Were your kids active in that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, sure. I wasn’t on the board but I helped with a fundraising drive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it was natural that someone would ask you. You were also a chair for the United Way. Is that the United Way of Walla Walla or a larger area?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was for the county.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you happen to get involved with that organization?

**Mr. Copeland:** I helped them a lot with their fundraiser and I got on the board and then one year, they wanted me to be the chairman of it so I did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is all through the early fifties, 1951 to ’55?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kinds of projects would you do for them? What was the United Way doing in Walla Walla in those years?

**Mr. Copeland:** About the same as they do here. We supported a whole host of charitable organizations. We gave to the Salvation Army and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and all that good stuff. Not only that, it’s a great experience for anybody from more than one standpoint: Number one, to be able to at least get a sense of sharing and giving, and to work with some talented people in this worthwhile effort. This experience is of great value, but you must work it first-hand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anybody stand out in your mind, working with them that you really learned from them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, my friend, John Reese; he was a wonderful person. Some of those people, they were the absolutely the most excellent fundraisers imaginable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you give me some examples of what they did?

**Mr. Copeland:** One was “Dutch” Hayner. He would walk in and say, “I’m here to collect some money for the United Way, but I don’t have the time to tell you about it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s good humor! “Just give me the money.”

**Mr. Copeland:** “I’ll be back next week. However, if you want to write out a check for four hundred dollars in advance, I won’t take up any more of your valuable time.” And that’s all he would say and he’d go away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty effective!

**Mr. Copeland:** He'd come back a week later and he said, "Did you write out a check yet?" and the guy might say, "No." And he'd say, "Well, make it for five hundred because it will cost you an extra hundred today."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that would work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Quite often it would work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What he's selling is a time saver—yours.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So at any rate, they were just wonderful people. Then also, the money was all going in the proper direction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you decide, "What's the most effective way to put seed money here?" or do something over there? I imagine that's what the Board does.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. I'm sure just like any other board throughout the country. We had a director and he came in with this budget of what it was last year, how the agencies did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The ones you had supported? Being on such a board, you would be in touch with and aware of your community in a different way. Different from the Chamber of Commerce—a different group of people with United Way, a different perspective? You would see the needs of your community from the ground up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you get involved in actual projects yourself or just the decision-making part?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I didn't. It was about that time I was becoming heavily involved with the Legislature and then it got to the point where demands of my time were just where I couldn't serve on all of these boards. People really wanted me to be on it, but I just didn't have the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But invariably, you were building your name in the community, learning a lot, and making good contacts. It wasn't necessarily deliberate, but it helped create a political base. Did that enter in to it at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it really didn't. Like I said, you know they said, "Hey, we've got to get this enabling legislation through the Legislature. Who's going to run?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But that's how people are identified to run—usually—in legislative races. They are already somebody well recognized in the community for a lot of things. There you were, you were ahead, a little above the crowd.

**Mr. Copeland:** People in my district went into politics at that time as a natural evolution of the extension of what they were doing rather than the carpetbagger that moves in and says, "I'm a political animal and therefore get out of my way. I'll lead you to the promised land."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "I'm your gift!" Your process was much more organic. I mean, you really were "from there."

**Mr. Copeland:** So. I really wish a lot more of them came by that route I followed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your type of candidate is less likely to be a single-issue candidate.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. You're not a single-issue candidate. Heaven's sakes. That's the way it was then and the dynamics of politics was changing all the time. Today, I think, within any metropolitan area—let's say Seattle—if the Washington Education Association wants to anoint you and say, "You are going to be a member of the Legislature from any district from the city of Seattle. We will get you elected to that office for twenty-four months." And you never have to worry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It changes politics entirely.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. But if you were to go to a little provincial town like Walla Walla, and say, "We have a newcomer moving to town and we're going to elect him to the Washington State Legislature," they're going to say, "Oh yeah?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Show me his credentials."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. "How long has he lived here?" "Well, he's going to be moving in next week. He's renting an apartment." That's the difference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You, at least, had been there for several generations. And involved in politics for several generations.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. I was not heavily involved in becoming a candidate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not like a dynasty, but it's not outside your experience. The Copelands were a well-known entity in Walla Walla. You belonged there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. They're nice people. We didn't have whole bunch of horse thieves in our family.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, good! There was one other little piece that seems to have some relationship to your work with the United Way that I hope you can explain for me. Could you tell me the "Santa Claus" story? It seems to happen somewhat out of the blue, but for me it illustrates some things about you as a person and also how you could get things happening in your community. The story begins with a family that is very down and out...

**Mr. Copeland:** I have a difficult time telling this story because of the circumstances and what transpired. The events that occurred, the timing, the action and the reaction still remain a mystery to me. All of the participants were wonderful. All played a role. However, this is not a story about Richard. This is not a story about me. This is not a story about Vance Orchard. This is a story about faith, love, compassion and the true meaning of Christmas. Did I become a willing accomplice? You bet I did! Right along with a whole bunch of other caring people. Did I plan this? Heavens no! I was a bit player in the scheme of things. Maybe, just maybe, in the scheme of things, on that day we were all touched by the Creator so that "His will may be done." This is the story:

It was late November or early December and my wife Dolly and I were in the kitchen at the ranch. Around ten o'clock the phone rang and just clowning around and having fun, I answered the phone in a husky voice with, "Good morning, this is Santa Claus."

Without hesitation, the high small voice on the incoming end said, "Is this really you, Santa?" Wham! Just like that I was stuck! What should I do? I had several choices, but without hesitation I decided to continue this dialog and see what it led to. "Certainly, this is Santa. How may I help you?"

At that moment the little voice turned away from the phone and in a very loud voice shouted, "See, I told you I could talk to Santa."



Now, I was hooked. And so was Dolly. By now she was running for another phone to hear the ensuing conversation.

In very calm, measured tones, the little voice said, “Well Santa, my name is Richard and I’ve always wanted to talk to you.” Now, I was getting in so deep there was no way to extract myself gracefully. So I continued. “Well, good to talk to you, Richard,” I said, trying to gather my thoughts. How old are you and is that your brother in the room with you?” “No, that’s not my brother, just a friend. I have two brothers and two sisters, but they are not here now.”

“Okay,” I replied, “but tell me how old you are.” “Well, I was three, but now I am four.” “And have you been a real good boy?” “Sure, my Mom says I am nice to my brothers and sisters.” “Well, Richard, did you call me to ask for something for Christmas?” “Sure, I want a red wagon.”

By this time I am so fully committed that there is no way this kid is going to be deprived of a red wagon. All I have to do is find out where Richard lives. “Okay, Richard. I need to know your last name and where you live.” “Santa, I live here in this house.” “Okay, and what is your last name?” “My name is Richard Matoose.” “Richard Matoose?” “No, Santa, it’s Richard Matoose.”

After several more tries, I am no closer than before. Dolly on the other phone can do no better. I asked for a phone number and could not get the little caller to understand what a phone number was. After Richard hung up we realized that this little guy had picked up the phone and called up a random number in front of a friend, supposedly calling Santa Claus. Of all the numbers in the world how many would have reached me? Who would have, in that moment, given a greeting of, “Good morning, this is Santa?”

By now my kids are involved and Dolly is thoroughly programmed to see this to finality. Without hesitation, she suggested I contact the Walla Walla newspaper and ask if

they could help find “Richard Matoose.” Vance Orchard, the great feature writer for the paper thought it would be a timely Christmas story and wrote the article, the headlines reading: “Speak up Richard; Where are you?”

Then came the response from the article. People called to help. Then came the phone call from Richard’s mother. What a sweet lady, apologizing for her son bothering me. How thoughtful of her to be so considerate. By the time our conversation concluded I had learned that Richard’s name was “Richard Mark Toombs.” Richard’s family was living in the farm labor camp. Low income by anybody’s standards. But he had very loving parents.

Vance Orchard’s second article continued the story and it literally exploded this into a major event. Groups of people called to make offers of gifts and donations. Churches called asking what they could do. One women’s organization, the Junior Club, made it a special event and expanded it for the entire farm labor camp. This became their Christmas project. The outpouring of gifts and kindness was so overwhelming.

Absolutely no turning back on this one. Several days before Christmas I requested that all the volunteers arrive at the farm labor camp at noon. Toys, clothing, gifts and Christmas dinner was available for all of the residents; absolutely no one was left out. Of course, there was a little red wagon for a very astonished four-year old named Richard. This was a very emotional moment for a joking Walla Walla farmer.

I have been in touch with Richard over the years. He is now retired from the Navy and is with the Post Office in Spokane. Though we have never been together since that Christmas time, we still send cards each year wishing one another Merry Christmas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Thank you. That is such a moving story. I know that was difficult for you to relate.

46 Walla Walla Union-Bulletin Sunday, December 16, 1979

## Faith in Santa brightened holiday

Recalling Christmases past, one must recall the Walla Walla event of a couple of decades back when a little boy did not give up on Santa Claus.

In spite of constant reminders from his "down-and-out" family that "there ain't none."

Even his brothers and sisters had given up on there being a Santa Claus.

But not 4-year-old Richard, who was in the prime of life.

It was a sobbing Richard who accompanied his mother on a visit to a neighbor at the Farm Labor Camp where the family was living. Finding a telephone, he dialed a bunch of numbers at random, determined to try to reach Santa Claus some way.

The seven digits he twirled proved to be someone's phone number, alright.

"I was sitting in the kitchen at the time," recalls Tom Copeland, 2100 Plaza Way. "When the phone rang, I assumed it was one of the little friends of the kids, so I answered: 'Merry Christmas, this is Santa Claus.'"

"You should have heard the voice on the other end of the line.

"See, it IS Santa Claus," he screamed to somebody."

When Richard could get his breath,

he told "the volunteer Santa" that he wanted a little wagon that he could get into and pedal. Copeland told him he thought he could get him one.

"I never did get his last name," Copeland says. "But, when I had a wagon fixed up and ready, we went down to the Union-Bulletin and told them about it, and they ran a story on the front page with a headline: Richard, Where Are You? Your Wagon is Ready for You."

When the neighbor at the labor camp saw the story, she contacted the paper and the finest Christmas a 4-year-old boy ever had was under way.

It was a great Christmas for the whole town, as service clubs and individuals pitched in.

"You wouldn't believe the Christmas that family had," says Delia Copeland, 611 Country Club Road (mother of Tom) who reminded us of the incident.

"The family was stranded here without work, the father doing all he could to keep food on the table, instead of going on relief," she says.

"The children had accepted there would be no Christmas.

"All but Richard, of course.

"The response of the community

### blue mountain ramblings



By  
VANCE ORCHARD  
Of the Union-Bulletin

was great. One store gave them tires for their car and some mechanics fixed the father's car. A Christmas tree and a turkey were donated and all the children received shoes and some toys.

"The mother of Richard said: 'I'll never again doubt the faith of a little child.'"

*Used with permission*

## CHAPTER 4

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### GETTING INVOLVED IN POLITICS

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's discuss more about your growing political involvement. When did you become active in Republican Party matters? Did you just grow up with it? I imagine your parents were Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they were both Republicans. I don't think there was anything strange about it. I happened to be a Republican. The first meeting that I ever went to was to organize some people in Walla Walla to make contributions to Eisenhower running for President.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a natural progression or was there ever a time you questioned any of the politics? Some people have a little epiphany; for other people it's so natural that there's no question of party membership.

**Mr. Copeland:** Basically, I was always a very conservative sort of a guy. Were there questions as far as party politics are concerned? Oh sure, I always raised questions about that. I'll get into a legislative story now: At the time that they passed the Workman's Compensation Law, the only way that they got it through the Legislature was that they had to exclude agriculture. There were so darn many farmers in the Legislature that they couldn't get it past them. So when it came to

industrial insurance, agricultural workers were not covered and that was kind of a surprise to me. I had never really paid any attention to it but then later on, I realized that we weren't doing anything as far as our employees were concerned. Unfortunately, I had a neighbor that had a very fine workman who was killed and his wife was left absolutely destitute. It was a farm accident, there's no doubt about it. And when I got over to the Legislature that next session, I just said, "We're just going to add agriculture in industrial insurance." And I thought the Farm Bureau was going to die! They had a heart attack. They just had a fit. "That's heresy, code-blue! You cannot even suggest that. You mean to tell me you're going to tax everybody in order to be able to make contributions to the industrial insurance in order to be able to cover workers?" I said, "You've got that right."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had seen what would happen when these people had nothing, no protection.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So I said, "Hey, wait a minute, this is wrong. Those are our workers. It's hazardous work and getting more so every year. We can't live without them; we've got to take care of them. Those workers are vital to the success of agriculture. Now, let's get ourselves out of the dark ages."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just something that hadn't done before so they couldn't imagine doing it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and as time went on, it got to the point where the farm work was more hazardous. More equipment, heavier equipment, more moving parts: it all added up to potentially dangerous work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's also more of a business—the relationships were less personal.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The Republicans were dead-set against including agriculture in there and they had the Farm Bureau and the Washington Grange all locked up and everybody that came from the agriculture area, oh, they were dead set against it. I said, “The hell with it; it’s wrong. It’s basically wrong.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were bucking your own party?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was bucking my own party. There isn’t any question about it. But we got the damn thing passed and got agriculture included. I just felt like it was one of those that the time had been coming; it just had to be done, Anne. And here again, you know, myself as an individual employer, I couldn’t very well tell my people that, “I’m not going to cover you in the event that you get hurt on the job.” As a matter of fact at that time, I had private coverage for my employees before I had state industrial insurance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the farmers couldn’t see that or they just simply didn’t cover anybody?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I’m certain a great many farmers saw the wisdom in having their workers covered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are farm workers part of the community or are they somehow not?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had a growing number of permanent employees but they were all families living in Walla Walla, paying taxes, going to school—regular first-class citizens—that needed this type of coverage. I made a very conscious decision that I was just not going to go along with that any more and I didn’t. Did I get a bad time for it? Absolutely! But only for a short period of time. When

the farmers learned how little it cost them it became a non-issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes you’ve got to take the heat?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, that I didn’t mind at all. All of these jobs that you have, you know, when you’re on the board or commission, member of the Legislature, you’d better realize that those things are temporary. I learned the business about being temporary very, very quickly when I got to Europe as a Second Lieutenant and the Lieutenant Colonel told me in no certain terms that Second Lieutenants are just as expendable as GI soap! His words impressed me. So when you get into politics, don’t think you got locked in a job for wherever you go. Go ahead and do what the hell you can and what you think is right and if you’re out of tune with the voter, you will know soon enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republican Party is a big tent, so there were lots of ways to be a Republican. How would you describe yourself? Where are you in the spectrum?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m a very conservative guy. Now, when I say conservative...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s social conservatism, fiscal conservatism...

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. Fiscally conservative from the standpoint, I just think the state or the federal government could not take care of everybody’s problems with money. There just isn’t enough money in the world to do it, at any rate. The unfortunate part of it is that there’s a small portion of society that, number one, they don’t want to work, never will work, never will cooperate, never will understand rules, laws, regulations, hate the police, and hate school teachers. This business about



everybody has to be a success in life? Wrong! The government can give you the right to pursue happiness. Correct? But you have to catch it yourself. If you don't want to get off your dead-ass and go out and catch it, that's your business.

So what kind of a conservative guy am I? I have all the compassion in the world for the guy who is truthfully out there trying to do something. Give him all the help in the world. But this guy that's saying, "I'm going to drop out of society and you can't tell me what I should do and what I shouldn't do," that's where I draw the line. Rather than "social conservative," maybe a better word should be "responsible citizen." I love responsible citizens. And I especially love people who serve in the military.

Helping workers in dangerous agricultural endeavors was part of my agenda. I made a conscious decision to try the best that I could in order to be able to help the agricultural industry out. But boy, they were madder than hell at me. They were all upset that I'd gone back on Republican traditions. That's not the Republican tradition for Christ-sake. Steps must be taken to care for the injured workers and methods put in place to make the place a safer place to work. All of this must be addressed. The problem is not going to go away just because you don't want to think about it today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you characterize yourself as more pragmatic, more of a problem-solver than ideologically motivated?

**Mr. Copeland:** I felt that I was just meeting the changing times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were coming into politics about the time that a lot of people were getting excited about Eisenhower. Were you one of those people that thought he would make a great president?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever meet him during the war?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. However, he did come to Walla Walla, when he dedicated the McNary Dam in 1954 and I was a member of the group that was introduced to him. I met him at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were already involved enough so that you'd be included in the welcoming committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the political organization like in Walla Walla? Who would have been the leading lights in let's say, in early fifties in Walla Walla? How did one become involved?

**Mr. Copeland:** It wasn't very difficult. I would say that in the early fifties, probably some of the Governors' statesmen of the region were probably pretty much running it. Herb West would be one and I think my uncle, Henry Copeland, was the state senator from that district at the time; he was probably one. Dr. Maxey, the retired President of Whitman College, and a handful of strong businessmen and two or three other businessmen would be heavily involved. But those are all people in a separate generation; within a matter of ten years they were all virtually replaced. And then this new generation that I was part of came on board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At family gatherings, would your uncle talk politics?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, really not. He was nobody's flamboyant person, just a down-to-earth, regular guy. Not a great orator or anything like that.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did having someone in the family involved in politics have any impact on you at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** Really not, no. I very seldom talked politics to Henry at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the generational difference that great?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. Very, very different generation. He was hell of a lot more conservative than I was. If I am not mistaken, he was in the minority most of the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that Walla Walla never went Democratic even when practically everybody else did in the thirties.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But then one year he was in the Senate and had kind of an interesting thing. He was chairman of the Utilities Committee in the Senate. Did you ever read that in Don Brazier's book? And they had eleven people on the committee and all of the sudden he recognized that seven of them were public power people. And somebody came to him and said, "What are you going to do, Henry? You've got more public power people on your committee than you ever had before." He said, "I'm never going to call a meeting!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's one way! Did anybody have a problem with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Apparently not. He didn't call a meeting. He just kind of stone-walled it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Committee chairs were very powerful in those days.

**Mr. Copeland:** Ah! Boy, were they!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's one way of making

sure there is no mischief, I guess. Just never call them together.

**Mr. Copeland:** That works. They just never had a meeting. Apparently didn't. That's in Brazier's book. He told me about that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's hard to fathom these days. I don't think you could quite get away with that.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. You couldn't get away with it now. Goodness sakes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Things have changed. Did the Walla Walla area benefit from the Roosevelt era with the dam building and other developments? The area was so solidly Republican, I wondered how people felt about all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** The entire state of Washington had great wonderful spill-off with the harnessing of the Columbia and the Snake River. There's no question about that. But I don't think that the Grand Coulee Dam was a Democrat dam. I don't think that's the case at all. We had a Republican congressman from that district that worked like the devil to make it happen. Take McNary, that dam was named for a Republican senator. I think all those dams in the Snake River were public works of great magnitude on a natural resource that was waiting to be developed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was this whole tension about should the Columbia area be like the Tennessee Valley Authority? That was quite a hot political issue. Developing the river was one thing, but should it be a Columbia Valley Authority, and who's going to be in charge?

**Mr. Copeland:** TVA, that's one total entity. There was no tension about a Columbia Valley Authority. The Corps of Engineers

have certain generating facilities that they had to license. Some dams were built by Public Utility Districts. They all got built; they were all coordinated; they all got licensed by the same agency, which is the Corps of Engineers. These were federal projects waiting to be started and the time was right. I don't think it would have made a width worth of difference as far as the development of this thing was concerned if we had a Republican president or a Democrat president. Franklin D. Roosevelt was in there waiting for federal work projects more than anything else. And the Snake and Columbia dam projects were on the drawing board and everybody can see down the line that you're going to need this source of power in order to be able to grow and prosper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Electricity and water for crops.

**Mr. Copeland:** And flood control and river navigation and recreational activities and wildlife preserves. And a whole bunch of hydro-electricity!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just returning quickly to the national scene, do you remember who you supported in 1948 against Truman?

**Mr. Copeland:** I really wasn't involved with politics at that time. That was before I was really, really involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Later then, there occurred the wooing of Eisenhower to recruit him for the Republican Party. Was Eisenhower seen as a breath of fresh air—the new generation coming into that party?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More internationally oriented, with different programs? I wondered how that point of view was received in Walla

Walla. Did you have discussions about who you supported?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think we did. I was just getting into politics for the first time and he happened to be my choice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For some people he was inspiring and brought them into politics in a more active way.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Eisenhower came to Walla Walla in 1954. He stayed overnight and then he went in a motorcade out on the McNary Dam on the Columbia River and dedicated that facility. The dams on the Snake River were on the drawing board but construction started later. You see one of those huge dam facilities today and see them operate with a crew of less than twelve people a shift!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is everything automated? A few little dials here and there.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is. It really is an amazing piece of equipment. Twelve people run that little beauty on a shift and you say to yourself, "Wow!" I mean the engineering that went into it is just pretty phenomenal. Here those great big, huge turbines and that little hummer just sits there and doesn't do anything but produce electricity all day long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'd like to see Grand Coulee.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, that's the granddaddy of them all. It is one of the largest single power producers in the world. And it provides water for a very large area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the big promise of the Grand Coulee, that it would water the whole Big Bend region. It transformed the whole area.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it does, it does. A lot of people just don't appreciate how big of an engineering feat it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That also took vision to imagine that sagebrush country green.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything in life takes vision. The unfortunate part of the whole thing is less than ten percent of the people that live in the state have ever seen Grand Coulee Dam.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it is a marvel. Dwight Eisenhower becoming president, I imagine, was a turning point psychologically, at least for the Republicans. The Republicans had been out of the office for so long on the presidential level. Did it feel that way to you—a kind of a boost? Especially being a veteran? Did that aspect have an impact on you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and I felt a lot of veterans had confidence in Dwight Eisenhower. They felt comfortable with the choice. We were all just returning to civilian life and this would be our first introduction into contemporary politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were building your own life. I'm not exactly sure when—early to mid-fifties—you became the President of the Young Republicans of Walla Walla County. What sorts of things did you do with them?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Young Republicans was just more like a social club than anything else. I mean, it had no real command function or anything like that. Actually, we worked on the basic work of campaigns. We did standard ordinary things like stuffing the envelopes. And doorbelling and making calls and getting people to the polls and things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of campaigns? Local ones or state or national?

**Mr. Copeland:** Primarily local campaigns: people to the Legislature and county commissioners.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And somewhere in here, you gained some kind of a profile that people were turning to you. When you were working towards having a wheat commission in this period and your state representative was cold to this idea.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was very much involved in establishing the Washington State Wheat Commission. One of the members of the Legislature from my district was very much in opposition to it—he was not the only one—we had several members from the Legislature from the eastern part of the state and they were all diametrically opposed to the creation and the funding of a wheat commission. They just felt that we were—whatever it was we were doing—was foolish and idiotic and a terrible expenditure of money. So, through the Washington State Wheat Growers Association, we had a meeting and said, “The following members of the Legislature are in opposition to our position.” So they just read off the names and the Washington Wheat Growers Association just took it upon themselves to say, “It's in our best interest if we replace these people at the next election.”



*Growers from Oregon, Washington and Texas visiting with officials from the United States Department of Agriculture at the first annual convention of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers, Spokane, Washington, December 1955. Tom Copeland facing camera on right.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you get identified as the “replacement” candidate?

**Mr. Copeland:** And then we went home and the county wheat growers had a meeting and they said, “We need to have somebody run for the Legislature.” So several names were kicked around. One Walla Walla wheat grower was interested in running; however he was a strong Democrat. And my Republican friends didn’t feel like they wanted to support him. And so they asked me if I’d run and I said, “Why, I never gave it a thought, but I’d have to check out a whole bunch of things first.” So I did; I went back and checked with the family to find out whether or not they felt it was a good idea—should I take time off from the business?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What were the considerations? Was it how it would affect your family, how it would affect your business, that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the above.

June 1, 1956

This letter constitutes the formal announcement of my candidacy for State Representative of the Eleventh District on the Republican ticket.

Many of our mutual friends have urged me to file for this office. Naturally, I have done a great deal of soul-searching and discussed the matter thoroughly with the members of my family before taking the step. Whether I win the office or not, quite a sacrifice in time and money will be involved. Should I be elected the duties of the office will require many hours and days spent away from my wife and three small children. In spite of these personal drawbacks, we have decided that I should “run”, in the hope that I may be able to contribute something worthwhile in the interests of this community and of representative government at Olympia.

Having arrived at this decision, I now pledge to you that, should I be elected, I shall work earnestly and vigorously for the best interests of this community. To do this intelligently, I shall need your advise and support, as well as the advice and support of many others. In order to get an indication of the degree of basic support which I can count on before the active campaign gets under way, I am enclosing a self-addressed postcard for your use.

Thanking you in advance, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Tom Copeland

*Letter announcing candidacy*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In those days, the Legislature met only every other year.

**Mr. Copeland:** Only every other year for sixty days, so that wasn’t much of a slice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was not too bad and in the winter—that’s the slower time in your business, usually.

**Mr. Copeland:** The time that the Legislature was selected was done on the basis of an agrarian economy and they actually selected those dates. So they knew perfectly good-and-well that the farming interests were pretty much a high priority at the time and that was an excellent time of the year for people to come together and meet and take care of the legislative business. This was a consistent practice throughout all of the states.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s so Jeffersonian, the principle that farmers are the foundation of the nation.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s because he came out of the agrarian economy. The nine-month school system was built on the same principle, the very same basis. But you could take time off in wintertime.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wasn’t a severe hardship; it was good timing for farmers to be active in the politics of the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what the heck, you’re still giving up a lot of your time. Of course, at that time, campaigning all by itself was not a lot of work. Campaigning was a very minor part of this whole thing. It took some time, some efforts, some energy, some organization, and things like that, but not like it is now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, and not huge amounts of money. Because you’d been working on



other people's campaigns a bit, did you have a sense of how you would organize a campaign for yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I did that and then the people that came to me and asked me to run—now that I look at it in retrospect—I probably did the proper thing. I asked each one of the five or six people that wanted me to run, “Now, what role in the campaign are you going to play?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Don't just pat me on the back...”

**Mr. Copeland:** Don't pat me on the back and say, “Here is the diving board; go jump in the pool and we hope there is water in the pool.” “Okay, now Keith, you're going to do this and Bob, you're going to do that; Fred, you're going to do this. This is the name of the game.” Well, fortunately, I had those particular players who said, “Okay, they'll do certain things.” By virtue of the fact that they came and asked me to run, those same individuals became the basis of the campaign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they widely based or were they all wheat growers?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they were really quite widely based: farmers, a dentist, a petroleum distributor and an auto dealer. Walla Walla is a very close-knit community—everybody knew one another. We did an awful lot of business on a handshake. We didn't sign contracts and things like that. Same thing—that was the way we did business and it was a good way. So that was the attitude with which I went into politics.

And I told them ahead of time, I said, “There are going to be times when you're going to ask me to make a decision on this and this and you're going to disagree with me.” I said, “As I can tell, this business of being

in politics, you and I aren't going to agree one hundred percent of the time.” But I said, “You've got to remember this, I'm probably going to be a hell of a lot better if I'm with you ninety percent of the time than if I'm going to be against you one hundred percent of the time.” So people understood where I was coming from and I made it extremely clear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Beyond the wheat issue, did you have some positions on issues or did you have to develop them?

**Mr. Copeland:** When it comes to working in the legislative arena, you don't even want to look for issues. You see, we were just coming out of the war situation and people were trying to take on some kind of normalcy. I'm one of these guys that were gone for four, five years and I came back and I tried to carve myself out of a piece of the pie and all that. I'm generating children—I'm generating a lot of kids—and so are all my compatriots. So we must meet the challenges of the problems we are creating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it looming pretty large without having to look for it?

**Mr. Copeland:** So, did I go out and seek issues for the Legislature? Heavens no! They were already built in; they were there. So it was just a case of trying to get some people to at least kind of be ahead of the curve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have kind of a “kitchen cabinet” where you sat around and worked out your campaign and your positions and thoughts on things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, sure we did. Basically, it was these same six guys that came to me originally and asked me to run. We expanded it and all of those, you know—the case of committees and things like that—having



a tendency to expand at one moment and contract at another—maybe a couple of players changed: somebody moves out of town, a new guy comes in, somebody volunteers and wants to get involved and things like that. So there is fluidity about a committee like that that is very hard to put your finger on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But still, you got together people that you could turn to on issues of major importance?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have to raise money?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, but that was really not a problem because we were not spending a lot of money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people use their own money. Other people are against that and say, "Well, if you want me to run, you'd better give me some money."

**Mr. Copeland:** I had contributions from friends and then there was my own money, which is all right and it wasn't that big of a deal. I think I ran my first campaign for eight hundred dollars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard to ask for money?

**Mr. Copeland:** I never liked, personally, to ask for money. That was always one of the ugly things that I always felt that I had to do in politics. And later on it got even worse. I hated to ask people to make contributions to my campaign. We did an awful lot of it by letter writing. But at that time, the Republican Party in Walla Walla County was extremely active and was tremendously successful at fund raising.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was a vital structure there and you just kind of came into it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. That was a great organization at that time. They had resources, the skills, volunteers and they had funds that they could call upon. And if all of a sudden, somebody said, "We've got an expenditure here—five hundred dollars—and we don't have the money in the bank," one guy would say, "I'll call a few people; I'll have the money in here by noon tomorrow." And just like that it was a done-deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's nice. That helps.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That's the way it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were there already set ways of campaigning, places where you would know you're going to speak? Certain events that you would attend? Did you have to invent anything or was it already out there for you to step into?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I was coming out of nowhere, really. There was a certain amount of name familiarity, but nobody knew me in politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They knew your uncle. The Copeland name. I mean, they're used to voting for a Copeland. Did that help?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not a great deal because he was coming out of a different generation. You have to understand that at the same time I won the primary, he lost the primary. So that was not necessarily any kind of a plus. And being in a community like I was, people did not confuse the last name at all and they certainly knew the first name.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your Uncle Henry take positions quite different from yours? Did you

have to kind of distance yourself little bit or just make sure people knew your views?

**Mr. Copeland:** I did distance myself because he was certainly lukewarm on the wheat commission. But I could appreciate where he was coming from, which is all right. This was the first time anybody coming out of the service was entering into the political arena. So what we did at that time is to decide that we're going to go out and put on a series of coffee hours. They were normally held in the morning around ten or ten-thirty. And I would make these, four and five coffee hours every week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have been sloshing with coffee!

**Mr. Copeland:** I had a lot of coffee! Well, what this did is, as far as the community was concerned, it involved an awful lot of the women. So my wife and her friends and their friends, they put on these coffee hours and they would have fifteen, twenty ladies in there and talk politics. A lot of them were involved in politics for the first time in their life. However, these gals were violently interested. And here is where I learned a lot by just listening to these young women talk about their families, their husbands' jobs, their school, their roads, their concerns, their state. What an education! Absolutely invaluable. They wanted to know what is going to happen to the school system. Is the state Legislature going to make funding available? And their husbands are involved: "I'm still driving on a gravel road. Are we going to have any money in order to be able to go ahead and get the road paved from here to the grain elevator?" So a combination of the two things: number one, you're the new kid on the block; number two, you're young and energetic. But who are your constituents? They're virtually the same as you are. So they're looking for a whole bunch

of answers to some problems. Was I looking for legislative issues? All I had to do was open the door—Boom! There they were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's like a wave coming in.

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**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, so the set of circumstances, the events that led up to it...it was not of my making. I didn't create anything. I just happened to come along at the right time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you were just part of a larger thing. I believe you attended the State Republican Convention at this time.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was elected as a delegate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was held in Yakima that year. There, you had a chance to meet at least the Party people but not fellow perspective legislators. You said they weren't there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the other candidates—maybe there were a few, but darn few other candidates from the Legislature there. The State Party didn't support the people around the Legislature and so there was no political necessity for them to be there nor was it beneficial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the platform, the whole convention was directed towards national politics? Not local or state politics...

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who were the state leaders of the Republican Party then, in the mid-1950s?

**Mr. Copeland:** George Kinnear, an attorney from Seattle and later heavily involved in the Evans' campaigns. He was the chairman of the State Republican Party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember any other names?

**Mr. Copeland:** Janet Tourtelott, I remember her. She was big in selecting candidates for the United States Senate. But after I got elected and came to Olympia, on the Sunday before the session started—there were forty-two Republicans got elected to the House—and George Kinnear, the Republican State Chairman, came to that meeting for some reason. And out of the forty-two Republicans, I think George had to be introduced about ten or twelve of them because he had never, ever known them. Never known them by name or

met them at any time. So that was the non-association we had between the state party and members of the State Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was completely normal? No one thought anything of it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no way of judging. It was just the way the State Republican Party operated. They were far more interested in electing U.S. Senators than lowering themselves to legislative races.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. And were you particularly isolated because you were from way down in the far corner of the state, on the other side of the state from Seattle?

**Mr. Copeland:** Isolated is putting it mildly. Few in the Republican Party cared about the eastern part of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** George Kinnear was from Seattle. I gather he did not exactly travel around the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he didn't travel around. You see, in those days the world revolved around Seattle. However, he liked to have the eastern Washington counties pay their dues.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your money went out, but never came back?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. At that time Seattle and King County never reached their financial commitments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the platform and all the paraphernalia of political campaigns, that was all directed to the national level?

**Mr. Copeland:** Virtually all or the most went to the national level.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any kind of a unified message among the Republicans, things that you were all supporting or a shared perspective or philosophy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I'd have to look back in the platform.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did get to at least appear for a bit on the national platform when Vice President Richard Nixon came to visit Walla Walla in 1956 on a campaign stop. He was hopping through the western states and you were part of the organizing committee for Walla Walla. Could you describe what you did there?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the important things that occurred—and this is my first brush with national politics—he had people that would come in first. They were called the “advance men” and they would meet with the arrangements committee and they wanted meet with the local county sheriff and also the police department in order to be able to set up the route that the Vice President was going to take and how many cars are going to be involved, and security along the way, and traffic lights and congestions, and then getting into the city, and then the city police were going to be involved in the crowd control, and things like that. I had never had the opportunity to see anything like this work before. It was very well organized and well planned and these people would come in and they would have a check-off list of things that you and I would have never thought about. They wanted to know if we would have any medical emergency facilities in a crowd. It never dawned on me to have a medical emergency facilities or even an appointed doctor to be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did things go smoothly?

**Mr. Copeland:** Extremely well. Mrs. Nixon was traveling with him at the time and some of the ladies wanted to meet privately with her and they did and they had a very enjoyable sort of an arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your wife get to do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not on that occasion. I know that she met with Mrs. Nixon earlier in the day and then they had a little separate function, the little reception that some of the ladies had for her. So it was a fun thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that they gave the Nixons canned vegetables. I confess I pictured them picking up all kinds of things on a cross-country tour like that. Did they get some Copeland peas?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was part of the Chamber of Commerce thing: local products. I'm sure they came from the Walla Walla canning company. They were probably some asparagus or peas or something like that. You always have the Chamber of Commerce give a big pitch in there. I'm sure if they went down to Pacific County, they would probably give him a salmon or something like that. So that was kind of a standard PR gadget more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could be quite a hamper of goods. But do you remember what he talked about? Was it a typical kind of let's-get-out-and-win speech?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that it was a typical political rally for that particular time. They were getting into the very first stages of building the interstate highway program at that time. And this was big. The legacy that Dwight Eisenhower left the nation, if nothing else, was the interstate highway system.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Previous to that, the roads were just like county roads, I suppose?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very much like county roads. They were not limited-access roads. You see, the difference between the interstate system and the one that they had prior to that—if you owned property adjacent to that, then you were automatically granted access on and off the highway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your little drive-way?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, your little drive-way. The interstate system you see, they also own the land on both the right and the left so that the property owners did not have immediate access, so you can't drive right across the freeway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you couldn't just pull your little pick-up onto that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So this is the importance of the interstate. Where did the idea of the interstate system come from as far as Dwight Eisenhower was concerned? Quite frankly it came from Germany; when he got into Germany and he saw the autobahn and later became president and he said, "Why don't we have a system like that?"

Now, he was running into resistance in Congress and also the states didn't want to spend money on the interstate. So through his advisors, he seized upon a quite unknown little quirk in the law that said, "Hey, you can create presidential powers and do this for defense purposes." And he went on the radio and explained to the nation, "In the event that we are attacked, we have to have the ability to move troops from Fort Benning, Georgia to Fort Lewis, Washington and do it very quickly and we don't want to have a stop sign in the way!" And he sold the interstate system on the basis of "this is for national defense."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people believe that? I mean, this country had never been attacked.

**Mr. Copeland:** Doesn't make any difference whether they believed it or not. The perception—I mean he created the perception—that this was in the best interest of the protection of the nation. In order to be able to have this capability—to be able to drive from New York to Los Angeles, California, and never stop at a stop sign was absolutely unheard of. And he said, "That's what we're going to do."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have seemed incredible?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was, it truly was. So this whole concept of an interstate highway system was promulgated primarily by Eisenhower at his insistence. He pushed and dragged people into the twentieth century, and I mean literally. In order to be able to get this accomplished—and now we look back at it today and say, "How did this transpire?" And you get right back to the roots of the foundation of it; it was the Eisenhower administration that said, "The entire highways system was starting."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, from your own German experience, did this resonate with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, it did. So here we are sitting in the state of Washington and we realize that in this entire mix of things we're going to get a north/south highway and we're going to get an east/west highway. We had better get ourselves in a position where we can go ahead and do it. Now, this brings us around to another thing. The state of Washington has one of the highest costs per mile of road construction in the contiguous forty-eight states. I mean, how many other states have the mountains to go over; how many other states have the I-5 corridor; how many other



states have the extension of the ferry systems? Virtually none. So we really, right from the get-go, have had an extremely high cost of building highways. Now I'll tell you, you can go into the state of Kansas and you can lay down ten miles of highway and it doesn't cost you nearly what it does to go through two hundred yards of Snoqualmie Pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it help people nowadays to understand the funding issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no! Well, people take so much for granted right now, it isn't even funny and they just "feel it." All of life came with air conditioning. You know that, Anne. I mean air conditioning always been here, hasn't it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, I'm not that young!

**Mr. Copeland:** What do you mean, there wasn't such thing as indoor plumbing?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Television!

**Mr. Copeland:** You understand? So you were asking me what was going on at that time and I've got to tell you that was one of the big things that was moving on the national horizon. But you see, by virtue the fact that it was on the national horizon, it required a great deal of time, effort, focus, and money from the standpoint of the states in order to be able to go ahead and program themselves back into it and have it work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's got to all mesh.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Now let me digress for just a minute because I think this is also something important and a lot of people missed this in the history. At the time they were laying out the corridor for I-5, it was never, ever intended that I-5 come through

the city of Olympia. They had a wonderful program where it went east of Centralia and east of Fort Lewis, and completely bypassed Olympia.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did Olympia merchants had a little something to say on the issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** Every little town was the same: "Don't move the highway out of downtown." Governor Langlie was about ready to have a heart attack and he got with a fellow by the name of Senator Carlton Sears, who was the Thurston County state senator, and oh my, they thumped themselves on their chests and they said, "Why, there's no way that we can allow I-5 to run north and south without all the people having a view of the State Capitol Building, so we will relocate it." The federal planners said, "Why, do you realize that this is going to cost a tremendous amount of additional money?" They said, "We don't care. Whatever it will take..." So then they turned around and called on their friends in Congress, primarily Senator Jackson and Senator Magnuson, and said, "You've got to change the layout of the federal highway. We want everybody to see the State Capitol." So they said, "How are you going to do that?" "Well, we're going to cut a corridor over here; we're going to do that; we're going to have a big interchange and come over the lake; we're going to build a series of bridges and this bridge will go over that bridge and this bridge will go over that bridge..." They said, "Boy, that is expensive! We're trying to get from Portland to Seattle; we're not trying to put Olympia on display." They said, "We don't care; to hell with the cost. We want everybody to see the State Capitol." And by god, that's the way they got it relocated; otherwise that highway would have been completely on the east side of Fort Lewis and Olympia would have been sitting here on kind of the side road.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how they managed to twist arms like that, how they had the power to do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** I imagine Governor Langlie had a great deal of effect on it when he went to Senator Jackson and Senator Magnuson and said, “You guys have to change this.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were not members of his own party, though.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s all right, but at the same token at that time, most of the congressional delegation in the House was Republican. And as far as the political mix was concerned, I don’t know that it was necessarily a Democratic decision or the Republican decision; I think it was just strictly local interest and in the interest of the state of Washington. “We want people to see the State Capitol; we want to have this showcase.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is interesting! I was just going to add that the articles about Nixon in Walla Walla mentioned that one of the big things that he and Eisenhower were running on was Eisenhower’s ability to keep the peace in the era of an increasing Cold War atmosphere. The Korean War was over by then, but there were still all the events taking place in eastern Europe; there was the still fairly recent “fall of China” and other threats to international peace during that campaign. And I suppose national defense issues like roads would take on a different meaning in that atmosphere. That would be a justification that would have extra meaning.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the Eisenhower administration brought sharp focus to the interstate highway program: “If you don’t do anything to it, you’re going to be paralyzed. You are going to be a victim of your own inability to do your own things.” And at that

same time that was going on in every state in the nation absolutely concurrently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a pretty heady atmosphere to be entering politics then, when big things were definitely happening.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, lots of things were out there on the horizon that should be addressed. I don’t think there’s any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before we get too far into the story of your campaign, I want you to describe your district for those who have not spent a lot of time in your area: District Eleven.

**Mr. Copeland:** The district was Walla Walla County, no more and no less. However, the district contained several things: Five incorporated cities or towns; one set of county government officials; six school boards with their superintendents; five chiefs of police; twelve fire chiefs; two colleges and one community college coming online; one state institution—the Penitentiary; one very active Chamber of Commerce; and several hundred city, state, county and school district employees. This is quite different from a city district as you have it in Seattle. All of the above mentioned have requests or questions that need to be addressed. I made special arrangements to meet with each group about once a year to discuss their concerns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Walla Walla is the biggest town in your district, right?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Then right next to Walla Walla is another incorporated town, College Place, and that’s where the Seventh-Day Adventist College is located—a fine institution. The school concentrates on pre-med because the Seventh-Day Adventists operate a large medical college at Loma Linda in California, so an awful lot of their

students go there after their pre-med. The two boundaries of the cities are now contiguous. Then of course, the other town is Waitsburg; that's a small town of maybe 4000 people, but one of the oldest towns in the state of Washington. And Prescott.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much driving would you have to do to get from one end of your district to another?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, from the city of Walla Walla to the north end of the county is probably about forty-five, fifty miles. So you're probably fifty miles north and south, eighty miles east and west.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A couple hours either way with Walla Walla in the middle. Did you go around to all the other communities and campaign? Did you have connections pretty much everywhere in your district?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. I knew an awful lot of people in the farming community that farmed quite a ways out of town so I had contacts in each of the communities that kept me in touch with the community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes there are rivalries or bad feelings between towns and the countryside. Walla Walla was not seen as a metropolitan area, but as an integral part of the whole community? Was the district pretty united as a service area for agriculture?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. There were no hard feelings between communities. I understand what you're referring to. You know, "Those of us that live in the city of Seattle, you know, we don't necessarily like King County," and things like that. No, they didn't have that feeling at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that creates a different sense of community. How many people are

we talking about in this area, then, that you represented?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think, at the time I ran, there was probably close to fifty thousand people within the district. Close to an optimum-size legislative district. The cities and county governments always demanded a great deal of my time, and rightfully so. However, the schools were the heavy hitters and this took a great deal of study and understanding on my part. There were darn few people that really understand school financing in the state of Washington.

But you have to remember, the eastern part of the state had pretty substantial numbers of Democrats then—probably more Republicans than Democrats—but it wasn't as if the eastern part of the state was totally controlled by the Republican Party, by any stretch of the imagination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your particular area had voted Republican pretty steadily, even right through the Depression years, however. Was there much of a contest once you got through the primary?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. At that time, we had this election law where we elected one senator and two House members in the district and the law provided that the voter could "vote for two" in the House races. If you had seven people running, you voted for two, either Republicans or Democrats, or a combination thereof. In the primary, the two highest vote getters on the Democratic ticket went on to the general election and the same for the Republicans. Then again in the general election, the voter was asked to "vote for two" of their choice. The two highest vote getters were declared the winners. I mentioned to you earlier that when the wheat growers were asking somebody to run for the Legislature and this friend of mine who was a Democrat wanted to run; I had to

run against him. He ran on the basis of “go vote for two.” So it wasn’t a case where you were running in opposition to a particular individual; it was a case of you were running against three other candidates. It created pretty heavy problems. I didn’t like that at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s not as clear-cut as running against a particular person.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, you see, you are also...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re competing with your other Republican?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct; you’re in competition with the other Republican, too. So that’s why I never liked that particular format and that’s why later on when the Legislature decided to change the format, I was quite interested in becoming a part of that. I was a very strong “yes” vote in order to be able to get that one changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I believe that issue comes up in a couple of years.

**Mr. Copeland:** At any rate, I came out way ahead in the primary. This eliminated a friend of mine by the name of Milt Loney. In this same primary race, Uncle Henry Copeland was eliminated by the other Republican Senate candidate, Herbert Freise, who went on to win the general election. I went on to win the general election handily with another Republican, Maurice Ahlquist. This gave us three Republicans in the Legislature, all freshmen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other election happening at the same time was the first election of Governor Rosellini, and I understand that that was quite a difficult campaign. How did that play in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** It kind of played with mixed emotions. Let me explain why, because I think I mentioned to you earlier that in the event that you allow something to go unaddressed long enough, a void will be created and somehow the vacuum in the void will be filled. And through the whole series of things that happened during the Langlie administration and even prior to that, the Legislature and the executive had neglected the institutions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was horrific by all the descriptions.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. And so Governor Rosellini seized upon this as one of his primary campaign issues, that he was going to make some heavy-duty changes in all of the state institutions. Now, I’m not only talking about the penitentiary—although it was high on the list—I’m talking about all of the state institutions. They’d been neglected over the years—some of the places were old and overcrowded. So here we have the penitentiary in Walla Walla and that became the sharp focus when Rosellini was running for Governor. He came in and explained to people how he was going to ask the Legislature for these appropriations in order to be able to change the penitentiary. So those persons very closely connected to the penitentiary immediately aligned themselves with the Rosellini campaign.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the conditions at the penitentiary considered kind of a shameful thing in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. However, a lot of people didn’t know anything about the conditions in the penitentiary. The community all of the sudden became aware of the fact that there were conditions inside that penitentiary that were really and truly not what you would call acceptable. And prior to that time, I don’t think the community was aware.

They had in operation what they called the “bucket cells.” Now, let me explain to you what a bucket cell is. They were nothing but a series of cages made out of strap iron about two inches wide and a quarter inch thick. There were four cement walls in a rectangular-shape building. Inside that building was another structure and it was made of steel and rivets and it was three stories high and there were these little cells—steel cages—and these cells had individual doors that closed all by themselves. I’ll hasten to say that the brick walls had windows in them. They were at about the ten or twelve-foot level. They could be opened with a chain and a crank, but there was no air conditioning in the building. And you know, when it’s 105 degrees, it’s pretty warm inside that building. They did have running water to each of these little cells, but there were no toilet facilities in there, so everybody had a bucket and that was the toilet. So in the morning when they got up...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been pretty ripe in the summer.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody got up in the morning and stood in line outside their cell and then they marched out one behind another and they emptied their buckets. Now, that was the sanitation facilities that were there at the time that Al Rosellini got elected to the Governorship. Now that was a shameful sight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s like conditions from some other century.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, there isn’t any question about it. At any rate, he did change those things. He went in and said, “I’m going to take these things down!” and he did. And to his credit—I mean, he changed the configuration of that penitentiary immeasurably. It was really something. And

so those facilities were all taken down and new facilities built and a couple other major changes made, things like that. Several appropriations were made and needed improvements were started. This upgrading went on for several years. As a matter of fact, Governor Rosellini made some of the biggest changes in that institution that any Governor had. He got some money for capital improvements that had just been neglected over the years and then not been taken care of. As far as living in those particular cells—a very big concern. Anybody that looked at these living conditions would obviously come to the conclusion that was cruel and inhumane treatment. The first session I was in the Legislature, we appropriated money to start dismantling the bucket cells and replacing them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why had the penitentiary been so ignored before the Rosellini administration came in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Political pressures will always have a tendency to ignore the smallest constituency possible and give money to the largest and the biggest and most vocal constituency and when you don’t have the inmates over there with a paid lobbyist, you don’t pay any attention to them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s plain!

**Mr. Copeland:** And so as far as the institutions were concerned, they were all separate entities. There wasn’t such thing as a Department of Institutions or Department of Corrections. They were all of these sub-divisions in there that reported to the Governor. The Superintendent—or you might call him the Warden—he reported directly to the Governor with his own separate budget.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No larger voices to speak for them, then?



**Mr. Copeland:** No. So you have all of these little-bitty institutions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they competed against each other, too, I suppose.

**Mr. Copeland:** For the same tax dollar. Oh, absolutely. So this is kind of a backdrop. So you said, “Why did it become neglected?” I’m trying to explain its neglect came about because of it being so small; it was really falling between the cracks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was no structure to get any attention.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s really interesting. I understand that, traditionally, it was a matter of patronage appointments who worked in the institutions rather than a professional pursuit. So you would get a different kind of person in there. You could get sort of a broken-down policeman who was either retired or for some reason off the regular force. You could get one kind or another person who had no background to run such a thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct, it was. The job of Warden was a political appointee of the Governor and then of course, that all changed when it went in with the civil service and couple of other things and that took those appointments and put them some place else. And then of course, later on, the Department of Corrections came into being and then came building criteria and categories for what level of professionalism that you wanted and needed to be the superintendent, and so it was no longer political patronage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that bringing in Garrett Heyns was the turning point in this development. He’s often given the credit

for bringing the state institutions into the twentieth century.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Governor Rosellini hired Garrett. And then, I think Dan Evans, he kept Garrett Heyns. I think Garrett Heyns was probably very instrumental in getting a great deal of those changes made. Then, for the first time in history, a competitive test was given and several applicants took the test. The person selected was Bobby J. Rhay, a dear friend of mine—I went to high school with him. He was not a political appointment; he was on the staff at the Penitentiary. He had graduated from Whitman College with a degree in psychology and took a job with the Washington State Penitentiary.

Bob told me on several occasions that when he first went to work for the penitentiary, the system was run pretty much by the inmates. The hired state-employee staff was minimal. Confidential records of the inmates were kept by clerks that were inmates, not by staff. Other administrative duties were assigned to inmates called “trustees,” and their word was law. This type of structure took a long period of time to correct and Bob Rhay was primary in the turn-around at the Walla Walla Penitentiary. Inmates ran the prison! The people that did the administrative record keeping of all of the prisoners were inmates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could they make changes in those records?

**Mr. Copeland:** If they wanted to, they sure as hell could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was the control pushed back into the proper hands?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very challenging. Because of Garrett Heyns, Albert Rosellini, and Bob Rhay, that whole thing got changed around and all of the sudden, they went in and they

had money, they could hire people to come in and do the record keeping. The Parole Board became very sophisticated in their efforts. All of the sudden, they could recognize the fact that those documents that they were holding in front of them were true and correct, that they haven't been "dummied up" by some inmate that was doing a favor for another inmate. That whole transition is another story that should be told by Bob Rhay, the superintendent, because it was a part of Washington State history. People don't realize that we had a major problem at the time. That particular state institution was still in the dark ages. It was a big thing at that time and it took a lot of doing, a lot of work but it has improved immensely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this development would be all through the fifties and sixties?

**Mr. Copeland:** That became one of the sharp focuses as far as the district legislators were concerned. I had to spend a lot of time with that institution—a lot of time with the superintendent going over all the changes that he wanted or at least perceived, and also his budget. So from then on, I became "the budget expert for the penitentiary in Walla Walla," which was a job that I didn't necessarily want or cherish or enjoy, or anything of a kind. I never really enjoyed going into that institution, but I spent a lot of time doing it because that was part of the job. It was just one of those things that kind of came with the territory. I never enjoyed it, but I made many, many visits to the penitentiary and it's not one of the things I would consider to be the highlight of the day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That'd be a duty, not a pleasure.

**Mr. Copeland:** You got that right. It's so depressing to go there and see this huge hunk

of humanity walking around and it isn't worth a tinker's damn. Really! Haven't got anything, never will—but they're there—you have to take care of them; you have to feed them and all that. And to me it's just a gut-wrenching kind of thing to even go out there. Man, it's something else. Every so often Bob would invite me to give the commencement address for the people graduating grade school!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it gives you some clues as to why they might be in there.

**Mr. Copeland:** What do you say to a guy who's graduating grade school who's forty years old? He's getting his diploma, he's learned to read or write, but he's got another twenty years to go until he gets out. And you tell him, "Well, congratulations on your graduation." You know, how in the world did you ever go out and tackle it? Weird!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not the usual commencement speech, I'm sure. Very challenging.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Those first two or three sessions in the Legislature that I served, the penitentiary had its own separate budget. It had its own set of provisos in the budget and that's where I had to pack the load for the penitentiary and it was not much fun. But it just came with the territory. If you had a state institution in your district you were expected to carry the load. When I came in that was just the structure of the government more than anything else.



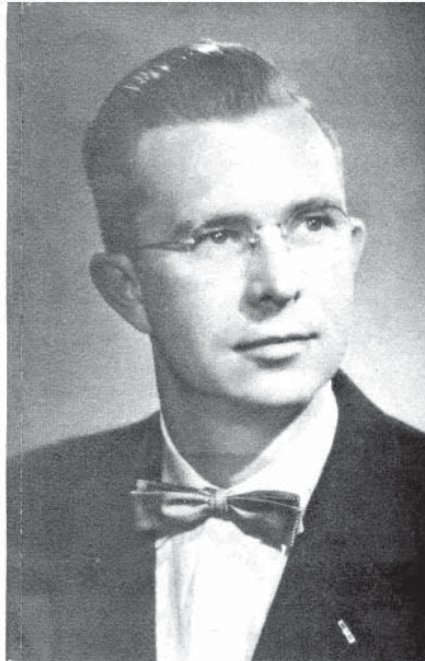
Meet the family.....Dolly, his wife is currently President of ProspectPoint Parent Teachers Association. They have three fine children: David 6, Brooke 4, and Tim age 8. (l to r).

Tom is vitally concerned in maintaining and improving this great State of Washington for our future citizens as well as for the present ones. His ideas are PROGRESSIVE and SOUND.

**I Pledge**

"I intend to 'represent' the thinking of the people of Walla Walla County and to perform, with dispatch, the duties and responsibilities of the office. I will strive for an efficient administration in state government and will always be mindful of the fact that I am representing, you, the voter."

**TOM COPELAND**  
for  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
*Effective - Energetic - Enthusiastic*



**TOM COPELAND**  
for  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
*Effective - Energetic - Enthusiastic*  
REPUBLICAN

**Your Vote**

TOM COPELAND is asking you for the most valued thing that you possess... YOUR VOTE. If you place this trust in him, he in turn will serve you, of Walla Walla County, with energy, effectiveness, and enthusiasm. He will REPRESENT you with intelligence based upon principle.

**Leadership**

Tom's leadership was displayed when he served in the Armed Forces. He volunteered for enlistment in the Army as a private in 1942, received his commission as a 2nd Lt. in the Tank Destroyers and was assigned to the European Theatre where he was in constant and heavy fighting until the surrender. Decorations include the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. He was one of the youngest Company Commanders in the European Theatre and was honorably discharged with the rank of Captain. Tom is young in years, but mature in experience and responsibilities. Few men, older than he, have been called upon to prove their capabilities to the degree he has.

**Enthusiasm**

Tom's enthusiasm for public service is largely due to his combat experience when he promised himself, during those trying times, that his service to his Country should not terminate with the war years. With his deep and honest desire to serve his community with humility and integrity, and at the request of many representative citizens, he has been motivated to file for State Representative.

**Landowner and Taxpayer**

Tom is a landowner and a taxpayer. He was educated in the public schools of Walla Walla and Washington State College. He is engaged in a farming partnership with his father Ed Copeland. The partnership's production is diversified, with main interests in wheat, green peas and livestock. A successful operation of this type requires skills in agronomy, business management, economy, employee-employer relations, an understanding of tax situations, and many others. These interests coupled with those he has in the public school system, transportation facilities, development of our natural resources, soil conservation and our expanding economy, have well equipped him to know the problems of this community.

**Civic Minded**

Although farming is a full time job, Tom, in his energetic way has found time for community projects, some of which are:

- Vice Chairman of Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Committee.
- Co-Chairman of the March of Dimes.
- Community Chest Colonel.
- Chairman of Public Relation Committee of National Wheat Growers Association.
- President of the Walla Walla Knife & Fork Club.
- Chairman of the Publicity Committee of the Washington Wheat Growers Association.
- Member of the Board of Directors of Washington Pea Growers Association.
- Vice-President of the Walla Walla County Wheat Growers Association.

## CHAPTER 5

### FRESHMAN LEGISLATOR, 1957

**Mr. Copeland:** After my first session, I came to the very basic conclusion that there was no way that a part-time legislator would ever keep up with the full-time bureaucrat. That if the legislative branch of government was to remain in its present position, we were heading into calamity. You either had to change the ability of the legislative branch of government or you had to give up and say, “Okay, here bureaucrat, you take and run the damn thing.” For us to meet once every sixty days and try to ferret out all of the morass of information we had and come to any kind of conclusion that was totally valuable and accurate, was the next thing to impossible. So that first session that I went through, it was a sixty-day session, and I think Governor Rosellini and the Democrats did about the best they could do under the circumstances. We met for sixty days and they passed the budget, and at the time they passed the budget, at the very moment they passed the budget on the floor of the House, there may have been one copy of the budget. Now, I’m going to say that again, “There may have been one copy,” but I want everybody to know: no legislator voting for that budget had a copy of that budget on his desk at the time we approved the budget for 1957. It was non-existent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’ve heard that the budget director at that time more or less kept the state

### THIRTY-FIFTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 14, 1957—March 14, 1957

**Governor:** Albert Rosellini

**Senate:** 15 Republican members/  
31 Democratic members/

**House:** 43 Republican members/  
56 Democratic members/

### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** John O’Brien

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Julia Butler Hansen

**Chief Clerk:** Si Holcomb

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder

**Sergeant at Arms:** Elmer Hyppa

(Caucus leadership not recorded)

### Freshmen Republican Members:

Maurice Ahlquist, Tom Copeland, Dan Evans, Robert Goldsworthy, Elmer Huntley, Gladys Kirk, Al Leland, Rocky Lindell, Charles Moriarty, Richard Morphis, Ralph Rickdall, James Winton

### Freshmen Democratic Members:

Samuel Bajema, John Bigley, Eric Braun, Frank Brouillet, Bruce Burns, Keith Campbell, George Dowd, Martin Durkan, Kathryn Epton, Phil Gallagher, Marion Gleason, John Goldmark, Mildred Henry, Dick Kink, Bill Klein, Mike McCormack, Bill McCormick, Gene Neva, Pat Nicholson, John Petrich, Vivian Twidwell



budget figures in his own head so that other people didn't know either; only he grasped the whole picture.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So then, you take a step back and say, "Is this going to happen the next session; is this going to happen the session after that? Is this going to happen the session after that?" I don't know; I'm just a freshman legislator. This was my entry into state government. We go in there for sixty days; we're not given the full story of what in the heavens was going on—you're not going to learn about government in sixty days, anyway. You're asked to vote yes or no on a budget, of which you do not have a printed copy in front of you and the gavel goes down and you go home and that's the end of it and "I'll see you again after the next election."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're still scratching your head saying, "What happened there?"

**Mr. Copeland:** So, what happened in sixty days? There were a couple of cocktail parties; you went to a couple of meetings—there was no schedule of committee meetings. Nobody knew when the committee was going to meet; the committee always met about the time the chairman of the committee would get up and say, "The committee on Liquor Control will meet immediately after adjournment." Or when the chairman of the Agriculture Committee would get up and say, "The committee on Agriculture will meet immediately after adjournment."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And if you happened to be in both of those committees you had a problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you can only make one of them. Was that bad for the members of the Legislature? Yes, but what was it like for the public? They didn't know anything!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They weren't a part of it.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were shut completely out of it. They were never told ahead of time when their particular bill was going to be heard. They were never given advance notice: "We're going to discuss appropriations on something in which you might have some interest." Senator Wilbur Hallauer would sit there for weeks on end and people would come into his office and say, "Senator Hallauer, I'd like to have this inserted in the budget," and he'd said, "I'll do it." The next time he'd come in, "I'll make sure this is inserted in the budget." Was there a public hearing? No. How in the heaven's name did that guy know how to get it in the budget? He'd been around here before and he knew Web Hallauer, and he knew if he got to Web, at a certain time with this particular information, he maybe able to get his money in the budget. Now that's the way it was constructed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in this case, leadership was totally critical, because you can only do what your leaders tell you is okay?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, that's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of your leaders at the time? Did you think they were on top of it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, oh absolutely. They ran the whole place. They were on top of everything. John O'Brien was the Speaker and he was, I think, serving his second term as Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He knew the ropes? He knew how he wanted to get things done?

**Mr. Copeland:** John knew how to run that shop and he did a wonderful, wonderful job for John. About ten days before the end of



the session, John got up and just announced, “All bills held in committee will be referred to Rules Committee by five o’clock tomorrow,” and the gavel came down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not much warning.

**Mr. Copeland:** “All bills held in committees will be referred to the Rules Committee by five o’clock tomorrow night.” Okay, who is the chairman of the Rules Committee?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he is.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Speaker—that’s John O’Brien. So what happens at five o’clock? He scoops up every bill that’s ever been introduced in the House of Representatives and he’s got them in his committee. What bills come out of his committee? Only those that he wants out of his committee. He scoops up the entire state of Washington, puts it right in front of his desk. Now, is he powerful?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Extremely!

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were part of the minority party your first session—fifty-six Democrats and only forty-three Republicans. So he could steamroll pretty much anything, I imagine. What was it like to come in as a minority member and a freshman? I’ve heard it said that you “sat in the back and kept your mouth shut.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably the best entrance that you can make would be to come in your first session in the minority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Time to learn? To look around? You’re not responsible for anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that’s correct. Nobody assumed that you’re going to be responsible, so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s get you situated. You were elected; you came to Olympia, where did you live? Did you live in a hotel or rent a place?

**Mr. Copeland:** I lived out at the Holly Motel. I rented a place out there for sixty days. It wasn’t much of a motel, but there wasn’t much in Olympia in 1957.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you come by yourself; did your family stay at home?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I was basically here by myself. My wife came over on a couple of occasions for some of the social functions. But the children were at home in Walla Walla.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty disruptive to family life and school.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was alright. It was only for sixty days and that wasn’t all that bad. At the beginning of the session, I could get home on a couple of weekends, but at the end of the session, I just couldn’t. It was pretty tough to get out of here noon on Friday, and drive home and then turn around and get back in here for Monday.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was winter, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and travel to eastern Washington at that time of the year is not all that great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Was your social life with other legislators, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but then, there was quite a group of us that spent a great deal of time on

legislation, and every so often people would look at us—I think Augie Mardesich mentions this in his book—that he was in a group that “read bills.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually read the bills? That was considered an astonishing feat.

**Mr. Copeland:** Actually read the bills. And I was one of those guys that read the bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were taking this seriously.

**Mr. Copeland:** People were amazed that there were even people that read bills and they’d tell you, “Why you were spending so much time reading bills rather than going out and doing extra-curricular activities?” But in addition to that—I’m a freshman member of the Legislature, but I’ve also got an obligation—not an obligation, but a high-pressure thing in order to be able to get this bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For your wheat commission?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right, and so I had to conduct myself in a fashion where I had to get a majority member of the House and the Senate in order to be able to get the bill through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you know what to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you have to be able to count. Find fifty votes in the House and twenty-five in the Senate; it’s that simple.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** John O’Brien sometimes gave lessons to freshmen in legislative processes, but was he doing that at your time? “This is how you get a bill passed; this is where you go...”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, the rules of the House and things like that. Gordie Sandison was the one that actually gave lessons to the freshmen class. He was a decorated Marine from Port Angeles, wonderful man.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you familiar with parliamentary procedure at that point? That could be pretty intricate.

**Mr. Copeland:** We were learning parliamentary procedure. The House operates under Reed’s Rules. Thomas P. Reed was Speaker of the House in Congress and developed these rules for a legislative body. Many states now use these rules today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you get one of those little red books and study it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. And so many, many of those pages, I committed to memory and I can recite them chapter and verse. Later on, I did the same thing that Gordie did. I taught classes to incoming members, on the Legislature and the House and Senate rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember who else was a freshman in your year?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. Dan Evans was a freshman and Martin Durkan who became a senator, Elmer Huntley who became Highway Commission Chairman, Rocky Lindell, Bill McCormick, Dick Kink, Bob Goldsworthy who was a Major General in the U.S. Air Force, Frank (Buster) Brouillet who became Superintendent of Public Schools, Mike McCormack who went on to be a congressman, Charlie Moriarty, John Goldmark, Harry Elway—John Elway’s uncle. Some state-wide elected officials that started in 1957 were Albert Rosellini, Governor; Bert Cole, Land Commissioner; John Cherberg as Lieutenant Governor; Bob O’Brien, State Treasurer;

and State Auditor Bob Graham. However, some other outstanding members were serving in the 1957 session included: Julia Butler Hansen, who became a congresswoman; Bob Timm, later Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board, Ed Munro who later served on the King County Council; Len Sawyer who later became Speaker; Fred Dore, later a Supreme Court Justice; Gordon Sandison who became a senator; August Mardesich, who also went to the Senate; and A. L. "Slim" Rasmussen, also later a senator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, quite a stellar group. A very good class. Of all these names, who stood out in your mind as being someone that you looked to as a real master of the process? Who were the stand-out legislators of your first session of either party?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think Augie Mardesich and Web Hallauer. John O'Brien, of course, he was a quite a seasoned veteran at that time. I don't think at that time we had really too many Republicans. There was one gal from Yakima County and she was very quiet and very unobtrusive; she was serving her second term. Later she became a congresswoman; that was Catherine May. But then, the only other Republican we had in the House at that time who really made any attempt to serve any kind of leadership at all was Bob Timm. Bob served a couple more sessions in the House and then he didn't run again, but later on, he became a Nixon appointee and was head of C.A.B., the Civil Aeronautics Board. He was from Harrington, Washington. His family owned a farm up in Harrington, but Bob went to school at the University of Washington. I knew him, but I don't know if he was ever really involved in the farm, somehow. But at any rate, he went with the Nixon administration, went back to Washington, D.C., and spent a number of years back there.



*Representative Tom Copeland with Representative Catherine May*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What made him stand out as a leader?

**Mr. Copeland:** What were his qualities? I think he read bills; I think he knew what was going on. I think he spent some time at it. As far as the Legislature is concerned, they're very much like society. There are about a third of them that don't do a damn thing; there is about a third of them that will work occasionally, and there is another third that make the entire place run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you would be in that working third?

**Mr. Copeland:** I feel I have always been in that top one third of any position I have ever been in. And I've had friends of mine that are very, very successful lobbyists and I asked them, "What was it that made you such a successful lobbyist?" And they said, "I found the top third." I mean, this is just commonplace now, "I find the top third and then I know I am speaking to the leadership group." I thought it was an interesting comment that they made.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some Republicans of your era have complained that your party leadership

at that point was a little too acquiescent, not very dynamic, shall we say. Did that strike you that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** John O'Brien was said to be running the show and the House Republicans were fitting themselves to that program and not seeing themselves in the majority any time soon.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, oh truly. Elmer Johnston was probably in that group. Yes. John, he ran a real fine shop and he knew perfectly good and well that if he took the leaders of the Republican Party and made an attitude of accommodation and took real good care of them and everything else, they would never get mad at him and never go out and try to recruit people to run against his people and so he could maintain himself for an awful long period of time.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But there was a new incoming group of Republicans who didn't quite buy that as their destiny. Would you have been in that category?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. I was in that category. First of all, I want to make this very strong distinction. I was not in there in order to be able to do something "for the Republican Party." I was in there realizing that a part-time legislator would never keep up with the full-time bureaucrat and I could see that the legislative branch of government was doomed to failure if they didn't get their act together. Now, the Founding Fathers just made a very strong decision that there were going to be three co-equal branches of government, and in the state of Washington we were failing dramatically by not recognizing the fact that the legislative branch of government was an important, essential, necessary function to the entire scheme of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had that always been so or was this a post-war "life is getting more complicated...we need more effective government" phenomenon? Do you think the legislative branch had always been weak, but it maybe didn't matter so much before?

**Mr. Copeland:** The things that had transpired since the state was created had shifted so dramatically from "everything was a local issue" and then there was more of a run across county lines, to now more of a state issue. Always before, you confined your own problems to your own community. What happened in Walla Walla was not necessarily a problem to Spokane. You elected your own sheriff; you collected your own taxes; you created your own school board, so on and so forth. What was our communication like? I mean, who did we associate with? Like I told my wife, in Walla Walla County, when she first moved here, she said, "I don't understand why so many people are so closely

related to one another.” I said, “Honey, these people all came from an era when you found a girlfriend, she better be within horseback riding distance. Right?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes! You wouldn’t be able to meet anyone else.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, but you understand? So everything was, you know, community activity, community-based, community problems. You took care of it. So then as time went on, then it became more apparent that you had to have a little bit better communication. Then you got into regulations and you put in regulations and now they had to apply them equally to all areas. So then, all of a sudden, the legislative branch in government began to elevate itself to a higher area of dominance. But who was going to be the daily operator—then it was the bureaucrats and the people that you hired.

So I remember one particular occasion at a particular Appropriations meeting, we had Pearl Wanamaker, who was a charming lady, very dynamic—Superintendent of Public Instruction—and one of the members of the Appropriations Committee said, “Do you have any documents, Mrs. Wanamaker, that will show us that you’d been spending this amount of money for that specific item?” and her comment was, “If I had to bring all of those documents, it would take three or four wheelbarrows and I would have to push them all the way up Capital Boulevard in order to be able to get them here.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, the answer was no.

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn’t make any difference. The point is that she was working offensively as a bureaucrat, though she was an elected official. She didn’t have the ability to share that information with the Legislature and what she was doing in essence was saying,

“Take my word for it. Give me the money, and I’ll spend it like I’m telling you.” Now, two years later, she came back and she said, “I didn’t spend that money that way, but that’s my prerogative.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you do anything about it?

**Mr. Copeland:** You couldn’t do a damn thing about it. On one occasion, we appropriated money for the University of Washington. I remember this distinctly and there was a proviso in the budget that provided that “some of this money will be spent for—as an example—salary increases.” Two years later, we came back in and there were the people from the University of Washington, and we said, “We had a proviso in here, asking you to spend the money for this. Did you do it?” “Nope, we decided—the Board of Regents decided—we would better spend the money someplace else.” And we said, “You didn’t pay any attention to the proviso?” And they said, “Nope.” Somebody said, “If we put another proviso in there, would you pay any attention to that?” and the University of Washington looked at the Legislature and said, “Maybe, maybe not.” There wasn’t a damn thing that the Legislature could do about it. Once you have appropriated the money and it was out the door, they spent it any way they wanted. Now, we had no post-audit authority whatsoever, so what was the legislative branch of government doing? We’re taking some word of some bureaucrats, some agency or department head.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Crossing your fingers and...

**Mr. Copeland:** The majority of the time the money was spent as intended. But it was a “wait-and-see game.” Hopefully, it would work out well. But no guarantees and no post-audit authority.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But still, in the Legislature, you're politically accountable?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, if there was a screw-up, it was the legislators' fault. So I'm coming from an era of a really part-time legislator trying to ever keep up with a full-time bureaucrat. And working without staff assistance. The day I walked into the Legislature, the only permanent staff person we had in that entire House of Representative was Phyllis Mottman. She was the only person in the entire House of Representatives that was employed three hundred sixty-five days a year—everybody else was part-time. Bless her heart. A wonderful, dedicated person with a real keen interest in the institution of state government. She knew that improvements had to be made but her advice was seldom sought. After I got to know her better she became a great resource person. But at the end of sixty days, we would all go home—except for Phyllis—and come back two years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. At the end of session, they all went away.

**Mr. Copeland:** They all go away. And you start a new session and you tried to bring people on-board that had some background, some knowledge, some information on highways or health care, bridges, or agriculture. Where do you get them—you can't find them, so was I frustrated in my first couple years of session? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Deeply. One of the first things that you do in the Legislature is elect your officers, which in this case was Speaker John O'Brien, and since it was a Democratic majority, that was pretty much a given. Julia Butler Hansen was elected Speaker Pro Tempore, but then there was an election of the Chief Clerk, Si Holcomb, which was unanimous, which surprised me. I thought

that was a partisan position. Was he, perhaps, was one of these people who had some continuity and actually knew a few things? What was the story behind that?

**Mr. Copeland:** There's a story behind it. Si had been there for quite a number of years and he was a part-time employee of the House—he wasn't on full salary—but he had been there a long time, and he knew how—he knew the mythology—and he was also real strong. At that time, he was doing exactly what John wanted him to do and John had an awful lot of confidence in Si. Si was nothing more than an extension of John O'Brien in the form of a part-time employee. There was virtually no sense in Republicans even nominating somebody else who wasn't going to be elected anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you just sort of went with it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was kind of a no-big-deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Most of these elections are contested even if the other person hasn't the ghost of a chance so this stood out a bit.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, that was in order to be able to make some speeches on the floor and stuff like that. Si had been there so long he was a "fixture," not a position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that Si had some special services he provided lobbyists.

**Mr. Copeland:** Si made special accommodations for lobbyists—for a fee, it was rumored. Si had constructed a distribution system located in the hallway behind the Rostrum. This consisted of pigeon holes—mail boxes—where pertinent information would be placed for that particular "box holder."

As bills would become available from the State Printer, copies would be available to “subscribers.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just lobbyists?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, just the people who “contributed” to the cost-offset provision.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislators, also?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we got copies in our book.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wanted to be clear about that.

**Mr. Copeland:** This was the only method for interested parties to get current legislative information. It was set up by Si and I don’t think any “contribution” money found its way into state government. The only way you got it was you gave Si one hundred dollars, but if I remember correctly, you didn’t make out the check to the House of Representatives; this was a cash transaction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit more personal coffer?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think it was a little bit personal. It was well understood by everybody. If you had to have a copy of the bills, you became a “subscriber” and the little box had your name on it. Was it something that was highly desirable? Yes. Was it something that was highly ethical? That’s questionable. Is it something that the state of Washington should have been doing for the public? Yes, most assuredly the state of Washington should have been publishing the bills for the state of Washington, but they weren’t doing it.

What else was going on? We had a little thing called the “digest of bills” and who was doing the digesting? Did we hire

staff to make the digest of the bill? No, this was done by a private organization called the Association of Washington Industry (AWI), now known as the AWB (Association of Washington Business), and they had their own people who would get the bills and make a digest of it. There was an attorney that worked for them by the name of Lee Collins. Lee ultimately became the legal counsel for General Telephone. Lee would get the introduction of bills and virtually stay up all night long reading these bills and trying as best he could to write up a summary of the bill and print it and get it up to the Capitol Building and have it distributed and put in the books. They printed it and delivered it to the Legislature at the expense of the Association of Washington Industry. I have no idea how long they’d done it. It had been going on prior to the time that I got there, but I’m sure they did that for quite some time. It cost the state of Washington nothing, but it was a private document that came into the public sector because John O’Brien and Bob Greive wouldn’t spend the money to have the legislative branch of government do it.

Then we had another little document and it was called the “goldenrod” and this was a legal-size piece of paper done in kind of a bilious bright-yellow or yellow-orange—that’s why it was called the goldenrod—and it would have the position of bills. This was produced daily by Johnny Current of the Washington State Research Council, a private, nonprofit organization. What he would do is every day at the close of session of the House and Senate, he would take and run down every bill and indicate where they were and make an asterisk if there had been any change in the position of the bill on the previous day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the document you could use to find if a bill was on Second Reading or had passed or whatever?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, but was this done by the Legislature? If you were a member of the Washington State Research Council, they would send you a copy; they'd mail you a copy of the position of bills. It was done in order to be able to take care of his group of people who wanted to know what the hell was going on—and they were perfectly willing to pay him to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lobbyists, then? He would have clients who would subscribe to this, like a newsletter?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, except that it was a daily thing. Every day he'd send this out so he could kind of track.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would the legislators get these?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we got them free because the private sector put it together. The Legislature would not put together anything that had to do with the position of the bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any other way to get this information?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there was no other facility set up for it. So this was one of the two things on my punch list. The number one, the brief of a bill is an essential ingredient to the introduction of the bill. It is truly a legislative function. It should be financed by the Legislature—funded by the Legislature, operated by the Legislature and staffed by the Legislature. Also two, a daily sheet showing the position of the bills; this is truly a function of the Legislature and should be financed by the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did have those docket books that the Chief Clerk's office would keep. So, as a legislator, could you go up and

read the docket book if you wanted to? Those are big, bound, beautiful, marble-paged books, but there's just one copy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was not too handy, and there was probably less than half a dozen legislators even knew that a docket book existed. I was one; I knew. The reason I did, I took myself in the back room where I said to the gals back there, "What do you do?" She said, "I'm the docket clerk." I said, "What the hell's a docket clerk?" "Well, see this book? Every time a bill moves through I write it down." "Oh good, show me how it works." So I knew about a docket clerk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the docket existed but it just wasn't reproduced in any way that was useful to anyone else? The bills were listed just in that one book?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did other states operate this way?

**Mr. Copeland:** I am sure that all states now have the ability to produce this information. But back in those days it was not "an in-house function."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would many people subscribe to these services?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was some real money involved here?

**Mr. Copeland:** There's money involved here. Is this the function of government that should be done by government for the people of state of Washington? Absolutely! Was it done by the House and the Senate? No!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. So this had been a tradition for a long time and no one had really looked at this?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Okay, now later on, I'll tell you when all that got changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, yes, I know that's not still the situation. But so, you came into the Legislature and you found out that there were these little deals going on, did you look askance at this, or did you think, "Well, it's just the way it's done?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I looked and said, "This is the way it's done," but I said, "Is there a better way of doing it? What is it that should be going on?" The average citizen that walked in off the street that climbs those stairs up to the legislative chambers, he walks in there in awe and says, "What the hell is going on?" He can't figure it out. He's got a bill that he's interested in. "When are you going to hear the bill?" Nobody knows, you can't find out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose John O'Brien would have known?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree maybe, but he never insisted that his committee chairmen have meetings. If the committee chairman just decided he had bunch of bills he didn't want to discuss, he just wouldn't call a meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have had hearings at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** No!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How were legislators getting their background information?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't. If the chairman of the committee didn't want to call up the bill, the bill was dead. That's it—out—never to be considered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the role of the lobbyists in all this? Would they bring information to the legislators? Would that be a way you could know what was going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some of the lobbyists were good. For instance, if you wanted—I'm just going to give you an example—if you wanted to have some up-to-date statistics on agriculture production, you called the lobbyist from the Seattle-First National Bank, who could deliver it to you within a matter of hours, but if you went to the Department of Agriculture, it would take them weeks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would the bank have that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because they had an economist that wanted to be able to get to the bottom of this. So they'd take all of the raw data, and they'd shake it out to the point where it got down to the lowest common denominator and it made some sense. But the Department of Agriculture would allow this stuff to just go ahead and accumulate over time before they ever turned on the...they didn't have a machine, they didn't have a computer; they couldn't push a button and say, "Give me the total on the damn thing."

Running concurrently with this was, like I said, the Seattle-First National Bank, and they were interested in getting to the bottom of that. That was the factual information that they needed. So yes, you could get it from them, but you couldn't get it from the state department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your day, who were the big lobbyists? Seattle-First, obviously, was a big player?

**Mr. Copeland:** Seattle-First was big. Joe Brennan was just coming on-board with them. Boeing was big. The Boeing Company

with Dean Morgan had a large lobbying influence. The Washington State Labor Council's Ed Weston. The WEA (Washington Education Association) had Cecil Hanna and the Association of General Contractors, the Teamsters, the Washington State Restaurant Association, major oil companies, major tobacco companies... A full-time lobbyist, as strange it may seem, was the Farm Bureau and the Washington State Grange.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes. Was it Lars Nelson for the Grange, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Lars Nelson. They were big. The telephone company was large in here, the power people...both the public utilities as well as the conglomeration of the private utilities. The Association of Washington Cities was just really coming on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the teachers?

**Mr. Copeland:** The teachers, of course, were a tremendous element, but the biggest of the bunch was organized labor, The Washington State Labor Council. Ed Weston was the head of that one and later Joe Davis. And Arnie Weinmeister, he was with the Teamsters, and Arnie was quite a pleasure. He wasn't down here as much as Ed Weston and Joe Davis who was his understudy.

But one session, I rented a house on the south side and my children were over here and going to school. Living right across the street was Joe Davis and his wife. And so my kids went to grade school the same place that they did and Joe at that time was having real family problems and the Davis kids probably had more evening meals at my house than they did at their house and Joe and Dolly and I became very, very dear friends, although we didn't agree politically on everything. But we were very, very close personal friends. With children of the same age, we had many things

in common and always thought very highly of one another. We would go out socially and people couldn't understand why I was a dear friend of Joe Davis and I had a hard time understanding why people would even take offense by it. I mean, I'm talking about my Republicans, "Why are you going out and having dinner with Joe Davis?" "Because he's a friend of mine."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's your neighbor.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, my neighbor. Joe and I got to be very close friends.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand, though, that in your time, there was more eating together and socializing together between the parties, whereas now some people say there is virtually none.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. It's polarized right now. I mean, if you want to get something done, try to get it done collectively. You know, somebody said years and years and years ago, "The best thing that we do, we do it together." If you're going to go out and try to reinvent the wheel and make it work and do it all by yourself, it's going to take a while.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a better dialog if you're eating together and have some commonality.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think my first session was probably one of the best foundations. Like I said, to come in as a freshman where you weren't necessarily responsible for anything, though you felt a great deal of responsibility. To commit to read bills like that, and try to understand what was going on in the legislative arrangement and at the same time, have a pretty heavy piece of legislation that you were obligated to pass, which I did. I got the darn thing through the House and Senate and signed.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a freshman, that's quite an achievement.

**Mr. Copeland:** So that's kind of an accomplishment all by itself. Then we had a referendum vote and got the Wheat Commission funded and going. We really put something tangible together within a matter of four months; my goodness it could have been more than four years. We had some dramatic movement in the wheat industry. All of a sudden, people recognized that the half-of-a-cent bushel that they were putting in had just come back to them at twenty-fold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's effective legislation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. But don't misunderstand, this didn't originate with me; it was the work of many people over a long period of time. I just got it into a legislative format and passed and signed into law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but you carried the ball.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, that's correct. But I'm not the one that conceived of the wheat commission or anything of the kind. That was something that was going on, really, throughout the entire nation, but we had to grab hold of it here in the state of Washington. They needed somebody to push it and I was a very willing conspirator—conspirator isn't the proper word, but you know what I mean. But coming in as a freshman, I had to learn and build a lot of coalitions for myself of people that I can get along with to get a piece of legislation by a bunch of Republicans through a Democratic House, through the Democratic Senate, and signed by a Democratic Governor. That's pretty damn good, the first year of office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's extraordinary.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On a different subject, for years and years there were multiple committees that took care of public lands and forests and it was in this year that they finally reached some kind of an agreement and created an agency—the Department of Natural Resources agency under Bert Cole, the Lands Commissioner. Did your area have any issues that were impacted by this development? You were quite a new legislator so you might not have a lot of history here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you're correct. Fragmented is the operative word. During that time and in subsequent years, I became very good friends with Bert Cole and worked very closely with Bert and the people of his department. This was indicative of so much in state government: it was fragmented; there were too many state agencies that had a piece of the action and one affected the others. Quite often, these small agencies would get into turf wars and one would be overlapping the other and then they would have fights, disagreements, jurisdictional disputes and then they were always in a budget fight. I think Bert recognized this early on and was trying desperately to at least focus on those things that were under his province or care, custody, and control, trying to get things together. This continued right on through until the Evans administration when Dan did the big overhaul of creating and combining together these programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The creation of the Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Transportation...

**Mr. Copeland:** Department of Transportation, Department of Ecology—which didn't exist in that time. And so I think Bert Coles' push at that time was the forerunner of trying to

get fragmented government down to the point where at least it was all kind of put together in a neat package.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were two schools of thought on this sort of consolidation. One was—and I’m gathering this is your point of view—that it would be more efficient—it would be more coordinated—if programs would be under one umbrella and much more cohesive and more accountable, because you’d know who was in charge. The other point of view was that it would give that person too much power and some people wanted it fragmented. They wanted these small agencies because they thought it was perhaps more controllable. There was quite a bit of resistance to the consolidation of agencies. Some people thought it gave the Governor too much power, although this one was not directly under the Governor, I don’t think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let’s divide your question. First, consolidation was very important. “Go to one office to get all of the answers.” Second, I don’t think anyone was concerned about anyone having “too much power, so let’s not consolidate.” But let me put it another way. I think that, if nothing else, the 1957 session pointed out to me very graphically that here I was, an incoming legislator, who spent a great deal of time trying to sort all this out and “I couldn’t find my way through state government.” And that’s in quotes. And I came to a conclusion, as a legislator, if I can’t find my way through government, what the hell can a citizen do—virtually nothing! So myself and others began to realize, this thing is now getting to the point that it’s so complicated that the average citizen doesn’t know where to go for help or redress or permits, licenses or questions. So, is it going to be necessary to streamline some of these things so that at least people can find their government? The

answer is self evident. So, did I become part of this business of reorganization? You bet and very early.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s part of why I brought this up. I rather guessed that you would want this development. Governor Rosellini also created the Department of Commerce and Economic Development during his administration, which was another attempt to bring together these small commissions and committees.

**Mr. Copeland:** I do remember when he was pushing for this agency to come into existence. So yes, you create another agency, but you’ve got two of the small agencies out here that are also trying to do some of the work that you’re talking about. So once in awhile, the one agency didn’t quite get the ones on the outside and so now you have become part of the problem in certain areas. People would see a need—a void—someplace in government, so they said, “We really have to have state government look at this,” and they created a little department, or a little agency and things like that, but then they got to the point where they begin to overlap. There were two other things that were very strenuous. Number one was the budgeting. Every time you created an agency, then you compounded the budgeting problem for two reasons. Not only was it another agency that you had to accommodate, but then you created this automatic competition of two or more agencies competing for the same dollar. “No, I wanted it in my department so I can do A, B, C.” “No, I want it in my department so I can do D, E, and F.” So herein, you know, was the competition. The other thing that you created was another agency or department or commission reporting directly to the Governor. The Office of the Governor was absolutely overwhelmed by the number of people that had to report directly to him and there was no filtering process in between

them and the Governor, so it became totally unwieldy. This is why, later on, it became almost mandatory that we make some address to the matter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did these groups report to the Legislature in any instance? Would you as legislators get all your information through the Governor's Office about these programs? You would have no independent information?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. No, it wasn't the best.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll be talking about this issue again. These are the years where this issue comes to a head and then some things are changed.

**Mr. Copeland:** And of course, during that time in 1957, the Legislature had no post-audit authority. Once we appropriated more money for the next year and gave them the money, bang! It was a blank check. People looked at the Legislature and said, "Aren't you responsible for the way that money is spent?" We said, "No, we're responsible for the money that we allocated, but not spent."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a nice little distinction! Well, that was a serious problem brewing that we'll no doubt be examining.

A big issue for the Seattle area that passed in that session was the creation of Metro. Did other cities look at what happened with Seattle and see that as a possible model or did it only apply to Seattle? Was it useful to anyone else as an object lesson?

**Mr. Copeland:** Later it became useful. The thing that was the focal point on Metro was the fact that you had virtually twenty to thirty incorporated or unincorporated cities or towns or areas that made a contribution in one way or another to the pollution of Lake Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not too pleasant. And more of the fragmentation of government?

**Mr. Copeland:** These separate incorporated cities and towns or areas had their own government, their own sets of rules, their own authority to do whatever they wanted to, but they were making a deposit into one central—what do they call it—"agency"—no, not agency, one central "lagoon," if you please. Lake Washington—in the vernacular of the eastern Washington farmer—the lake was getting to the point where it was just almost "too wet to plow!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear!

**Mr. Copeland:** So, did the legislators from other parts of the state care about this legislation? This is one of the most unique things that ever happened in state government once you recognize what the dynamics of the thing were. The legislators from the city of Seattle and surrounding areas were tied up into this terrible arena of opinions: "My mayor from the city which I represent is dramatically opposed to this." Here you had all these King County legislators who had a great, big fight on their hands because they had so many of those districts opposed to this for a whole host of reasons. One was an infringement on little towns' jurisdictional authority; another one was it was going to cost us too much money; another one was a taxing thing; and another one was "you're building a super government;" another one was putting a layer of taxing authority upon another taxing authority. But who passed the Metro bill? Rural legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me about this.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, if there was ever a time when rural legislators had great value it was to be able to pass a Metro bill for the salvation of the urban dwellers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because you could see it differently, or that you weren't so tangled up in it?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were not involved in the conflicts. We could sit there and not have our constituents rise up in absolute wrath and anger. We could see the development of the large picture. We just did what was "right" for the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did some of those Seattle legislators come to you and say, "Help us out here?"

**Mr. Copeland:** The word got out: "We're going to vote on the Metro bill and if you, as a city legislator, don't like this, you better be absent."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did clean up Lake Washington. But before the attempt, nobody knew that it would work and lead to this spectacular job.

**Mr. Copeland:** Virtually everybody knew that if you didn't do something, the results were going to be catastrophic. I mean, to have a beautiful body of water, Lake Washington, sitting right in the middle of King County and having the water quality lower than the Ganges River in India. Swimming was prohibited in the lake. It simply had to work. So at any rate, that's where the rural legislator had great value in solving city problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's really fascinating. Most people would think, off the top of their heads, that rural legislators would have been more unconcerned about an issue touching an urban area only, and perhaps more conservative in their approach to government participation. Some people in the Seattle area thought Metro was a communist plot. Obviously, you could see it differently?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is why I think the time I served in the Legislature, the Legislature really and truly took on some things that were tough, required a lot of leadership and everything else and they went ahead and did it. And they didn't say you were going to study it to death; they didn't duck the issue; they didn't put it off to a referendum.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You bring up a good point. When legislation happens—when it finally comes to the fore—is interesting. Why then? Obviously, this problem had been bad and growing for awhile. It begs the question: Was this new information or better presented information? Was it individuals that assumed leadership; or does the problem get to such a crucial stage that people can't miss it? What exactly happened where Metro passed this year and not ten years before or ten years after? How did those things come together and what are the ingredients that make it happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** A period of low rainfall. We went through a period where it was extremely dry in King County and Lake Washington dropped considerably in its depths.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that concentrated the waste in the water?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, what it did was most unusual. The water level got down to the point where there was some vegetation that could survive by reaching from the shallow water—the vegetation grew and grew during that summer—and this growth that took place from this extremely shallow water, was exposed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort like an algae bloom?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was all kinds of vegetation. Some of it was in the form of reeds, some of it was in a form of like water

lilies; some of it was even to the extent where some seedling trees took hold. Now, what happened during that time was that when this vegetation grows over a period of two or three months, it establishes a pretty good root system. Then some rains came and the lake started to rise very slowly, so now you're beginning to inundate these plants. These plants have a tremendous root structure so what they do is, they just hang on and they actually pull the ground up with them. And so now you have this vegetation that is partially attached to the bottom of the lake, virtually floating and as the water level increases, it goes right up with it. Those that remember sitting at Husky Stadium saw an island in Lake Washington suddenly appear a few hundred feet off-shore. This thing just rose up out of the shallow water.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like the Lock Ness monster?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then it didn't go away. Soon, people began to understand the dynamics of the situation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Something is going on out there."

**Mr. Copeland:** "What the hell is going on out there! This was never here before." So people in King County began and then Seattle began to say, "This lake is changing pretty violently." And then, of course, nobody could see the bottom of the lake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess the water clarity was less than desirable, as well. So the lake itself cried out for help?

**Mr. Copeland:** The lake itself contributed in a measurable way. The public realized that something was going on that was not very nice and needed attention fast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had to put up all those "No Swimming" signs.

**Mr. Copeland:** Take a body of water like that and say, "No swimming allowed in the summer time." What do you do if you're the head of the public parks department? Put up a sign that says, "Don't go near this polluted water." Whew!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another very Seattle-orientated issue that the Legislature dealt with was the plan for the World's Fair in 1962. How did that impact people outside Seattle? In Seattle, they were excited of course, but what about in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, these things were always exciting. I mean, they were excellent projects that everybody could see the benefits from them and realize the economic importance they would have for the area. That's the nice thing about this particular type of endeavor, plus the one they had in Spokane. They were always planned so that when the exhibition was over, that there was a residual that had some great value.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. These many years later, some of the structures are still functioning. It was a great contribution. Did the fair have an effect on the state of Washington, from the standpoint of the overall economy?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet it did. It was a heck of a boost and it added a great deal to the quality of life, not only in the city of Seattle, but the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These days, there's quite a bit of Seattle-bashing in other parts of the state. There's a perceived resentment that maybe Seattle gets more than its fair share and I was curious to know if the feeling was different back then? Did people think that a



good thing for Seattle was a good thing for the whole state?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think now there's just this feeling between east and west part of the state that they are like two different places. This is not Seattle bashing. However, there is a western and an eastern part of the state. Each has different needs and desires. But this does not indicate that there is a "conflict." Political differences were present in all communities. In the city of Seattle, at that time the representation was virtually half Republican and half Democrat. So it wasn't a case of where the political cut was so heavily one-sided as it is now. Both parties had strong individuals in the Legislature. The Republicans had Dan Evans, Slade Gorton, Jim Andersen, and Joel Pritchard to name a few. And the Democrats had Bob Greive, Martin Durkan, Ed Munro, John O'Brien, Mike Gallagher, and several others. There was a balance of political power. So at the time when I was in the Legislature, did you have that great big huge rift between the city of Seattle and everybody else? And the answer is no. That's the name of the game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a good explanation. It is more polarized now, more Democratic and less Republican,

**Mr. Copeland:** Is it ever! Boy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not very healthy, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I don't know if it's healthy or not, but that's the way it is. Just from the standpoint of what did Seattle have to gain from it versus other parts of the state, that never came into sharp focus. We never had the city of Seattle gang up on us—on the people in the eastern part of the state—for anything. It was not a part of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's a big difference, really. That the parties were more geographically balanced in the 1950s.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a huge difference, huge. But another thing, let me tell you about committee meetings during the '57 session. The notification of the committee meeting always came just before adjournment and there would be three committee meetings going on simultaneously and if you happened to sit on two of those committees, "sorry about that," you can only make one. No coordination between committees or committee members or their assignments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine a lot of people just didn't attend. So you'd have to pick and choose what mattered to you. No help if you have two things that mattered to you. So, you were on several committees: Agriculture and Livestock; Education; Forestry, State Lands and Parks; Legislative Processes; and Military Veterans and Civil Defense. Five different committees, varying in importance. What were your most important committees that you always tried to attend, and which of those did you maybe have to let go from those five?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the easiest one to maintain, of course, was the Agriculture Committee because they always met at eight o'clock in the morning. That was just kind of the standard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Farmers got up and got going?

**Mr. Copeland:** The other ones were always on call and they were always difficult and trying to work those in was something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you completely let some drop? Or just run in and out as best you could?

**Mr. Copeland:** The committee on Legislative Processes was a total joke.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I never quite understood what you did in that committee.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me tell you what they did in that committee. At that time, there was a House rule that once a bill had passed both Houses, the originating House would re-type the bill to include all of the amendments. It was in House and Senate Rules that the Committee on Legislative Processes—the members—would then proof-read the bill to one another—the original bill and the final engrossed bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was like clerk-typist kind of work?

**Mr. Copeland:** You have that correctly. Say it again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would legislators be doing clerical work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because that was in the House rules. And the committee would then be given all of these bills and then the members of the committee would sit there and one would read aloud and the other would proof-read from one to the other copy in order to be able to make sure that we didn't have any typos.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's hundreds of bills. Wouldn't this be rather time consuming? Not a very creative use of your time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, yes. And the only people that served on that committee were freshman legislators. But we had no staff to do this type of work. Again, the failure of the Legislature to provide for the skills needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather you changed that eventually?

**Mr. Copeland:** You're darn right we did! Yes. Myself and others abolished that committee and gave its function to the proper people. And those are the great people in the work room and they could do this more effectively and efficiently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you went back home, did you report to your community your activities?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And when you went to the Rotary meeting or whomever and said, "This is what we did," how did you package this for the folks back home? Did you enlighten them as to your frustrations or did you try to put a better face on it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. I told them about my frustrations on how we passed the budget bill and nobody had a copy of it. I told them that the following things got done. And I also told them that the Legislature would have no further function for twenty-three months. But I and some of the other frustrated people that were with me in that session when we were freshmen, we all kind of visited and said, "If we're going to come back, let's change this whole thing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember who was with you on that idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. Dan Evans was, Huntley, Goldsworthy, Catherine May. Then Pritchard, Gorton and Andersen came in the '59 session. But there were quite a few people that wanted to make some pretty severe changes. All agreed, "There's got to be a better way."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** From what I know of that list of people, you were all problem solvers; you

were not ones to sit around and do nothing. You're going to take hold of this situation and do something.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, as best as we could. We had no idea at that time what we could get done, but we darn well knew that it was going to take some time in order to be able to get at them. But nobody had a road map; nobody had any guidance. The political parties themselves were not an entity as far as the Legislature was concerned. They played no function, no role at all in electing legislators. They never came down to the Legislature and said, "This is the position that we've taken as far as the state Democratic Party and Republican Party is concerned."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In a sense, there was huge vacuum there, which might be an incentive for people with a problem solving-nature. Plenty of scope!

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could get creative.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is true. We could be creative and we were. We didn't like to just "go along and get along." A lot of people were in that frame of mind—and I think John O'Brien virtually had his whole caucus in that position. Nobody even thought about challenging John and his authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that was also true for some of the senior Republicans, that they had a method for getting along, that is, getting along with John O'Brien—"to get the crumbs he threw their way." That's how it has been described to me, at least.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, that's correct. The Republican leadership in the House at that time was extremely weak, but by the same

token, we had no facilities, we had virtually no secretary help at all. We had a steno pool, but no offices, no telephones. You had one hundred pieces of stationery and one hundred envelopes and one hundred first-class stamps. That was it. And there were five telephones in the House that had outside lines. We had a switchboard that was manned by some wonderful gals that had been doing this for years and always looked forward to the sixty days that they got to work for the House. They could run the switchboard and that would connect the committee rooms with another committee room. But then, for someone like myself whose constituency was some darn-near three hundred miles away, if you wanted to make a long-distance phone call, that was on your own. The state did not pay for the call. We had no method of charging that long-distance phone call to the state of Washington even though it was perfectly, legitimately, a state function and business call. This came out of my pocket.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you can only carry that for so long.

**Mr. Copeland:** But at the same token, when one of my constituency wanted to call me, they'd get into the switchboard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What, would they have to run around and actually look for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gee, great system!

**Mr. Copeland:** Only thing that you got was a Page bringing you a note. You know, "Jack McDonald called from Walla Walla. He's concerned about this insurance bill; could you please call him?" Well, what are we going to do, write Jack a letter and say, "I can't very well call you because if I do, I have to pay for

it myself.” You went ahead and called him. But the state didn’t take care of any of that.

But this was John O’Brien’s philosophy at that time: “Don’t give them any facilities to work with; don’t give them any phones; don’t do this and they won’t know as much.” So here we were sitting there very much like mushrooms—in the dark and fed occasionally...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And we all know what mushrooms grow from.

**Mr. Copeland:** “Well, Mr. Copeland, he’s a legislator. He knows what’s going on in Olympia.” Oh yeah!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “And all kinds of power.” Well, so you decided to come back at any rate and you disabused people of that idea right off.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. So, at any rate, I think I wasn’t alone in this; there were a lot of people that for all those reasons wanted to begin to make a change. So that’s why I wanted to, I guess that’s one of my functions that I really wanted to start changing those things. I think it’s well to inject at this point that as you progress in the legislative arena, to become real good at it, everybody had the tendency to kind of specialize in one area because you didn’t have time to specialize in everything. So I also found an awful lot of people that I was serving with in both parties, they were specializing in this and specializing that, and I took upon myself not to specialize in any of the committee functions, but I wanted to specialize in what I called the “back room,” because nobody knew what went on in the back room. Nobody knew how those bills were processed. Nobody knew what happened to the mandatory process once it got to the back room. Nobody knew the connection of the lobbyists and how they

functioned in the back room. So that’s when I became a student of the institution. So rather than specializing in appropriations or in specializing in transportation, I wanted to specialize in the institution and how it ran.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would take, I would think, years because there would be a lot of barriers to that kind of knowledge. Just how you’re describing how it was between an ordinary legislator and the back room, as you called it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the reasons of keeping people like you out?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think they wanted to keep a legislator out; I think I was the first one that ever showed an interest who was someone other than leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you did this just by asking questions and by kind of being persistent and following the trail? Shine a little light on things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. All of the above. Well, what makes the system function? Why are the legislators reading bills to one another? Is this embedded in state law because of House rules? Why are there “typed bills” and “printed bills”? No, this is not embedded in state law, this is a House rule. Why is it a House rule? Nobody knew why it was a House rule. “If it’s a House rule, we can change it, can’t we?” “Well, we have never done that.” “Well, why don’t we?” “Who’s going to do the proof reading?” “We’ll hire somebody.” Ah!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were past legislators very quiescent? Why did no one else challenge this system? I mean, these were not revolutionary

questions; they seem quite natural, especially after you've been doing it for hours and hours and you suddenly think, "Why am I doing this?"

**Mr. Copeland:** A great deal of it had to do with tradition. "That is the way it was done in the past and that's the way we're going to do it in the future."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who else besides John O'Brien benefited from this system?

**Mr. Copeland:** Who would benefit from this system? The executive branch of government. "Keep the legislative branch weak and the executive has all of the power." I think what you have to do is you have to back up and take a look at the state government and what was the function of state government? What were the times they were going through, and so on and so forth, and hit the realization that during the thirties and into the forties, state government only had a very small function to play in the absolute daily life of everybody. Yes, the legislators had an extremely prominent role in the educational system and also the creation and the maintenance of higher education, plus transportation. So those three areas—education, higher education, and transportation were the main functions. So if you take a look at state budgets clear back even in the early thirties, the state budget appropriation—maybe we didn't buy a hell of a lot; it was incrementally growing at about the same rate as the population. Now, demands upon the state government after the war became.... That's where we came from. Then of course, we were doing our own work and we became frustrated when things couldn't get moved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Reasons that did not appear to be very good ones: "Just because it has been like that in the past."

**Mr. Copeland:** Why we still did it this way, nobody knew. That's why I became interested in the institution, like I said: the back room. "Why do we always do this?" "Because we've always done it that way." "Why don't we change it?" "I don't know." "Let's change it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You came in with a fresh attitude.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at this time I used to say, "Why not?" a great deal. This was an indication of "let's give it a try," and soon it became vogue to consider changes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you came away from 1957 session with new knowledge and some experience. It was a rare sixty-day session, with no special session.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is what the constitution called for and Governor Rosellini wanted it finished in sixty days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you got to go home. What were your thoughts when all the dust settled and you had time to reflect?

**Mr. Copeland:** I said to myself, "So, if this is the way the government is going run in the future, I don't think I want to have a whole hell of a lot to do with it." Or, "So, if you're going to stick around here, maybe you better be one of the people that want to change it." So did the 1957 Session have a great impact on me? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Opened your eyes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay. Now if this is true, how in the hell is average "Joe Doe" citizen ever going to know what is going on?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's no hope. So you were sitting there and you have this realization.



Did you decide then that you want to stay and fight it out? When did you decide what you weren't going to walk away?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know when that decision came about but I just... People sitting there complaining, you know, "Hey, we're voting on a budget we can't see." I hadn't been there in the previous incidence; I didn't know whether it was normal to vote on a budget like that, that nobody ever saw a copy of it. I had no idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I strongly suspect so.

**Mr. Copeland:** I just felt that was no way to "run a railroad" It was just a case of where the Legislature was not in any way, shape, or form a co-equal branch of the government. And at that time, we had the executive, we had the judiciary, and then this thing called the Legislature was kind of a pesky little thing that truthfully shouldn't be around anyway or just to do what the Governor said and go home. Right? And if they came to town, the thing to do is have them pass the budget and get the hell out of town, forget about them for two years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The way the newspapers wrote about you was as if you were some kind of a scourge of the earth. "The Legislature is in town; oh no, get rid of them."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. We were. I think the press was taking up at the time that the legislator himself—all by himself—had so little input on it that he was almost insignificant to the whole process. Maybe the Governor and four, five guys in the Legislature just ran the whole show. And all the rest of the Legislature totally were superfluous; I mean, you were just there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you just there to weed

out, finally, to figure out who the four or five members were going to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think the four or five guys already figured that out. We just kind of drifted in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You might have a different opinion, after a year or two, whether you were going to be superfluous.

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't want to be superfluous. I wanted to get something done for the state and the people of the state. If I can't find my way around here, I don't think anybody else can. And of course, you have to understand that at that time the press was also cut out of everything, too. The press had no ability to sit in on any kind of executive committee meeting. Everything was closed-doors. All the meetings were closed at the wishes of the chairman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a measure of how much things have changed.



*Eleventh District delegation: Senator Freise, Representative Copeland and Representative Ahlquist 1957*

## CHAPTER 6

### COMMITTED TO CHANGING THE “BACK ROOM,” 1959

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you decided that the Legislature as an institution was something you were going to get your teeth into. But first, you needed to be re-elected. You ran an active campaign in 1958. Was it different running as an incumbent?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a lot easier running as an incumbent. I already knew all of the political operatives. I'd had the opportunity, of course, to meet with all of the service groups and the Chamber of Commerce and go to their meetings and to the school board meetings and listen and try to get as much background as I could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also had the success story of passing the wheat commission bill. That was part of your story that you got to tell, that you did something you promised to do. Did that help?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That was a very important piece of legislation for the wheat industry. It looked like a minor thing at the time. I think I could see the potential, but I had no idea at that time it was something that was going to be monumental.

The bill caused one-half-cent per bushel to be set aside for wheat research and that, of course, just blossomed into a fantastic

#### THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 12, 1959—March 12, 1959

Ex. S. March 13, 1959—March 27, 1959

**Governor:** Albert Rosellini

**Senate:** 14 Republican members/  
35 Democratic members

**House:** 33 Republican members/  
66 Democratic members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** John O'Brien

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Julia Butler  
Hansen

**Chief Clerk:** Si Holcomb

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder

**Sergeant at Arms:** Elmer Hyppa

(Caucus leadership not recorded)

#### Freshmen Republican Members:

James Andersen, Slade Gorton, Jack Hood, Don Moos, Ed Morrissey, Stan Pence, Joel Pritchard

#### Freshmen Democratic Members:

Norman Ackley, Art Avey, Henry Backstrom, Dan Brink, Paul Conner, Bill Day, John Day, Avery Garrett, Paul Holmes, Jon Jonsson, Shirley Marsh, Victor Meyers Jr., Frances Haddon Morgan, W.J. O'Connell, John Papajani, Bob Perry, Roy Ritner, Robert Schaefer, Sam Smith, John Speer, Wes Uhlman, C.G. Witherbee

outcome. Ultimately it meant billions of dollars to the state of Washington in additional agricultural income—and I say billions with the big capital “B,” not millions—billions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were proving yourself to be an effective legislator. Both you and Maurice Ahlquist were re-elected quite handily. So you were safely back in the Legislature for a second term, but a lot of Republicans were not re-elected. You lost ten members in the House and not quite that many in the Senate, but still some. Many analysts point to the “Right to Work” initiative that was on the ballot that year as the breaking issue. The big Republican loss was attributed to the association of Republican support for that measure. Can you tell me a little more about that initiative?

**Mr. Copeland:** The “Right to Work” initiatives were drafted so that there could be no “closed shop” in the state of Washington. That simply meant that if the company had a union contract, then all workers must join the union. “Right to Work” initiatives always brought out large numbers of union voters. The labor lobby in the state loved to have a “Right to Work” measure on the ballot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it helped wrack up big Democratic majorities and kept the Republicans in the minority position another session. You had some of the same committees as your first session and some different ones. You kept the Agriculture and Livestock Committee, but not Education—although originally, you said that was one of the things that intrigued you was how the state supported education. The Forestry, State Lands, and Parks Committee changed its name and function and became Parks, Grounds and Public Buildings, so what you were going to be looking at there was a little different. You did keep Legislative Processes Committee.

**Mr. Copeland:** And I was assigned as the chairman of that committee by the Speaker, John O’Brien. I didn’t know I was going to be the chair until they announced the committee assignment. I didn’t ask for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was quite remarkable. You were not a long-time legislator, not to mention that you were from the other party. Maybe he noticed that you had an unusual interest in that area?

**Mr. Copeland:** He probably did, I don’t know. I was the only Republican chairman of a committee. I was shocked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somehow you’re kind of getting your head above the crowd?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know if I’m getting my head over the crowd or whether I’m setting myself to get my head knocked off!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe he thought, “Let’s give it to this guy; he’s got a lot of energy. Let’s give him this difficult task and keep him occupied.”

**Mr. Copeland:** If you notice, the members of the committee were all freshmen Republicans: Slade Gorton was vice chairman, Jack Hood, Don Moos, Ed Morrissey and Joel Pritchard. So he made me chairman of the committee to “proofread the bills.” It is likely that none of the Democrats wanted to serve on that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting! Well, let’s see what happens with it. You were no longer on the Military, Veterans, and Civil Defense Committee, but you were on the Labor Committee. How you happen to land that assignment?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was not by accident; it was by design. I wanted to serve on that

committee. Republicans were hesitant about serving on the Labor Committee and I was not. It was fine with me; I was just tickled to death to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why were they hesitant? Because it's not their area of interest?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would be controversial but I didn't feel that would create any problems as far as my constituency was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're a farmer—did you have any labor issues as a farmer?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure we do. Agriculture is heavy in farm labor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren't farm laborers mostly exempt from most labor regulations at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Really not. And we were coming into a period of far more regulations than ever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, so maybe you had something to do here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, were you sharpening your focus little bit?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, did you go to John O'Brien for these assignments? How did you make these changes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Each caucus at the time of the organization had a committee—strangely enough, named “the Committee on Committees.” All of the members of the House after they are elected submit a list of

committees that they would like to be on. Then the Committee on Committees sits down and goes over the requests and tries to jockey people into the committees. But here again, you have to understand that the committees formed the previous session were not necessarily going to be reinstated the next year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's like clean slate each year?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. How many committees were created for the '59 session?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About thirty—a large number.

**Mr. Copeland:** The committees that John O'Brien would authorize were predicated on the number of members of the majority party—the Democrats. It depended upon how big his caucus was. John tried to accommodate his Democratic members to a point where everybody was a chairman of a committee or sat on the Rules Committee. That was the big thing. As his numbers increased, then he would just take and increase the number of committees. I mean, it looks good on your stationary: “I'm the chairman of the committee on Pumpkins and Peaches and Wild Salmon.” That was the reason for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are hardly any Republicans. Your party took a real hit. You only had thirty-three members to their sixty-six. A third of the House. And yet he gave one of his coveted chairs to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it wasn't a coveted chair...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know, but I mean, a title is a title. Not the job, but the title.

**Mr. Copeland:** I never really sat down and asked John why he ever did that, but you know, John and I—though we were adversaries, there’s no doubt about it—he always liked me and I always liked John. We did a lot of battling together with one another but he always appreciated the good scrap. I guess I did likewise. But for me this was a learning process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More fun to have a good adversary?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who were the Republican leaders this year? Newman Clark from King County, often called Zeke Clark? And were Elmer Johnston from Spokane and Lincoln Shropshire from Yakima still active in leadership? Such a classic-sounding English name.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Lincoln Shropshire was the floor leader. He was a classic zero. Real classic! None of the three were very effective. We got to the point where we really didn’t have any kind of leaders. But look at the freshman class: Jim Andersen, Slade Gorton, Joel Pritchard, Jack Hood, Ed Morrissey, Stan Pence, and Don Moos! Quite a group of long-ball hitters!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Dan Evans beginning to position himself to move up pretty quickly? Was he already creating a better profile for himself? If you looked around the room, would you have noticed Dan Evans already?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes to all three questions. But nobody creates a big profile when you’re only one of thirty-three as far as the legislative body was concerned. We just didn’t have any occasion to do much of anything. But it wasn’t a significant session. There were no significant changes in the operation of

the House. The public was still closed out of the legislative process. Bureaucrats still stonewalled legislators. With the exception of Governor Rosellini’s executive request bill for the creation of the Budget and Accounting Act, House Bill 373, it was more of the same old, same old. This was Warren Bishop’s project. He was the author and the major player in the creation of House Bill 373, something that was really needed at this time. Warren should be given a great deal of credit for this substantial progress in state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you give me your thumbnail sketch of Warren Bishop? He sounds like an exceptional person in your eyes.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was one of the great guys that the Governor had on his staff. First of all, he was an economist, but he was a very pragmatic technician, too. And so I think Warren came here as a perfect stranger to state government, but soon became a very knowledgeable expert in state government and the financing. By the time Governor Rosellini left office, Warren had become real good friends with Marshall Neill, who was a member of the Senate. Marshall, of course, recognized Warren’s talents and Marshall suggested to the President of Washington State University, that they would be well-advised to hire Warren Bishop and put him on as their finance man. So Warren made the transition from the Governor’s office to Washington State University, and just did a very creditable job over there. Warren has been one of these outstanding people that you meet in state government. Wonderful guy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember the discussion that went with the Budget and Accounting Act? Did Warren Bishop, who headed that effort for the Governor, come and give presentations and discuss how it was all going to fit together?



**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. The way it was being done at that time was the Legislature would appropriate money for departments and agencies. That was their “budget.” What they did with the money was not the responsibility of the Legislature, even though it was implied. The Legislature had no post-audit authority. Once the money was appropriated, the Legislature would go home and the new Legislature would return two years later and see how things were going. The Budget and Accounting Act that Warren Bishop was pushing required agencies in and out of the control of the executive branch to report how they spent the appropriated money. This was step one in giving the Legislature more budget control.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So something was going to happen here at last? I imagine you applauded this development?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Something was going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Governor himself come in and talk about this plan or did he delegate that to Warren Bishop?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he did come in to the caucus one time and talked about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were the Republicans supportive of this idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think generally they were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some legislators didn’t seem to want to deal with it too much. There were some people that tried to postpone the discussion of Substitute House Bill 373 by laying it on the table; you voted not to delay it yourself. You and some others were quite willing to discuss it. It looks like Augie Mardesich was the lead person pushing this

bill. His name is always the one introducing it and pushing it.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was the Democratic floor leader at the time, and of course, John O’Brien and Augie and the Governor, they worked very closely together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was quite a debate, but the Speaker was moving this along. Finally, it was moved to Final Passage. Twenty-three people voted against it and seventy-four voted for it. Many Republicans came on board to pass this bill. You voted for it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I can probably tell you who voted for and against it. A whole bunch of Democrats voted against it. Four Republicans voted against it out of twenty-three.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it’s a bit of mixed bag. I wonder why some of the Democrats were against it? Some people warned that it gave the Governor too much power. But it also held the Governor accountable, which is other side of power: responsibility.

**Mr. Copeland:** I do know that Bill Day was concerned about giving the Governor a lot of power. I never really worried about giving anybody too much power as long as that person had more information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does this give you a written budget for the first time? Did this act give legislators a copy?

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn’t guarantee that you had a copy. No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did it stipulate there was such thing as a budget document? In previous years, I understand, there wasn’t always a document called “the budget.” It was a collection of a whole bunch of information,

not necessarily available to everyone involved. Difficult to grasp as one picture.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the budget itself is an interesting thing. Number one, it was not codified; do you understand what “not codified” is? It means that the final budget doesn’t go into a statute of law. It is not codified. It has a shelf life of twenty-four months so it’s nothing more than a resolution: “You’re authorized to spend x-amount of dollars during this particular period of time.” Then, when that budget cycle ends, that document has no on-going force or effect. From time to time, the Legislature would put in a proviso stating that x-number of dollars “be spent in following fashion: da, da, da, da, da.” But after the Legislature went home and the Governor had the opportunity to look at things, he could veto out that proviso, which didn’t do anything but change the legislative intent. That was his prerogative at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Budget and Accounting Act address any of these issues for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Budget and Accounting Act itself was a big step forward. I think Warren Bishop, who was the head honcho in putting that together, what he was trying to do was to create the very first semblance of a post-audit authority on agency spending. Warren was one of the very first persons to recognize that many of the agencies that we appropriated money to were sitting outside the care, custody, and control of the Governor’s office. I don’t mean to pick on Bert Cole, but most of his money was derived from state lands; he had that money all by himself and he could do whatever he wanted to do. The same thing with the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this especially true of statewide-elected officials?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right, if they had their own income; then they became independent agents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this Act help with some of your frustrations? If people of the caliber of Warren Bishop were working on these issues and you could work with them and you could get things to happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. My goodness sakes! It was delightful to work with him. No, you worked along these lines with people in the Legislature, people in the Governor’s office, wherever. And every so often, you’d find someone who’s really interested in becoming a problem-solver and you didn’t care whether he’s a Democrat or Republican; it didn’t make any difference. “What is it we can collectively do in order to be able to move this thing along? We’ve got to advance the ball,” and Warren was one of these guys. I’m sure he walked in there and thought about the first budget he put together and said, “My god! This has got to change.” I’m sure he said that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. So some things were moving. There was another act that passed that session which seemed quite important too, which was the Administrative Procedures Act. It was described as consolidating the rule making practices. I wondered if this had anything to do with your areas of interest?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I was not directly involved in that at all. That was primarily done by agencies in order to be able to create some uniformity as far as their rule making authority was concerned. Are you familiar with a WAC? The Washington Administrative Code. These are the rules governing how laws are put together and implemented. There are certain time requirements that you have, including giving public notice that an agency is going to have a hearing; telling the public

in advance before you make a rule and giving them the opportunity to come in and testify. So I think this Administrative Procedures Act was trying to at least define those laws as they applied to each agency, within the legislative intent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it seemed like a part of this move was to make government processes more accessible, more understandable.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you're right; however, giving the public adequate notice was one of the most important parts of the change. Even with all of that, there were still abuses. I remember one particular case where the rule change was not necessarily highly controversial as far as the agency was concerned, but the agency actually put out a notice and called for a public hearing on change of rules and the hearing was scheduled at three-thirty in the afternoon on the twenty-fourth day of December.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't really want people to come, did they?

**Mr. Copeland:** I really think that was abusive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'll bet that didn't make the staff very happy.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that delighted the staff because nobody showed up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then it was taken care of? They had had their hearing?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had their hearing and nobody complained, nobody had any objection, so they went ahead and implemented the rule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's one way of getting things done.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. But it is not the proper way of getting things done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another instance—there were broad, sweeping changes that all seem to be happening right about this time. A few years previously, a case had been brought before the Supreme Court by some Olympia businessmen to bring back state agencies to Olympia and the court ruled that yes, state agencies were supposed to be in Olympia. Quite a few had drifted up to Seattle over time, but at least the head offices were supposed to be located in the capital. This of course had a ripple effect: if you were going to have all these agencies come back to Olympia, where were you going to put them? Whoever was in charge had to come up with some buildings and some plans for bringing back all these agencies. This seems to be a part of that movement that you were talking about—how government was now much more complex and so you had to have all these facilities. This involved facilities on a very concrete level. You had to have more buildings.

At that time, only the Legislative Group was located right on the Capitol Campus and the little Institutions Building—now called the Irving Newhouse Building—really, there wasn't much else. The General Administration Building was then built in the late 1950s, but you hadn't really dealt with the issue of growth. This ruling forced the issue. The Legislature and the executive started meeting and tried to come up with a plan—and I don't know if you were involved in this at all. There had been one plan in 1956 to move into the South Capitol neighborhood and take down a whole group of houses and take over that land. Unfortunately, that's where many of the doctors and lawyers in Olympia lived.

**Mr. Copeland:** True.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they had the clout to stop that. So then, there was a new plan

about how to expand into what’s now called the East Campus, which was also an area of houses, but perhaps of less influence than the other location. Paul Thiry, who was a Seattle architect, came on board for part of this plan and the Legislature moved to acquire that property. There were some bills sponsored in 1959, which failed at first, but very soon after that they started to pass. I was just wondering what the discussion was for this development.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were two things that became quite prominent. Number one, the state government, with these agencies returning to Olympia, recognized that they were going to have to expand the physical campus itself. But when you’re talking about going south, through the residential district, that was kind of a strain at best. You have to remember, right across the street was Olympia High School on a piece of property that was much too small for the High School and they were interested in abandoning that location and building a new one, so suddenly that piece of property became available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a pretty substantial piece of property, a good start?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not a substantial piece of property, but it was one piece in the puzzle. Then, directly east of that, was some property that was not highly developed. This became the path of least resistance—I guess would be the best terminology—so far as the East Capital Campus was concerned. That was kind of a natural progression and the easiest route.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was quite a lot of controversy about the design of the East Capital Campus. Some people were disappointed that it looked so little like the main campus, that the buildings were modern

instead of classical. Was there any discussion in the Legislature about what this part of the campus should look like?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was not directly involved in any of that planning. However, if you were going to take and say, “Okay, the new state office buildings are going to have the same configuration, design and materials as the Insurance Building,” you would have a cost situation that would be absolutely astronomical and the voters would have a total come-apart. Your cost per square-foot of a building like that in this day and age would be totally prohibitive. So, are you going to build a building like the Insurance Building all over again? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Never again, apparently.

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer was not only no, but hell no! You’re just not going to find those kinds of craftsmen to go and cut great huge blocks of sandstone and stack them one top of another and put columns up and things like that. I don’t see too many office buildings today built that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That era had passed. That makes sense. As you were on the Capitol Grounds Committee, I wanted to ask about the decision-making process around all the different things that people wanted to put on the Capitol grounds. At that time, the Olympia and Tumwater Foundation, associated with the Schmidt family who owned the Olympia Brewery, wanted to put in a fountain as a gift to the state. In your committee, was there any kind of discussion about setting standards as to who should be allowed to put things on the grounds or what the grounds should look like?

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer to that is “no.” I don’t think the Legislature ever addressed

itself to any kind of long-range scheme that said, “From here-on we will no longer have any additional monuments” or “All buildings should be such and such.” No, I don’t think anybody ever made that kind of address. All of this stuff was just done piece-meal. But when you take a look at our Capitol Campus in regard to other states, we have a beautiful Capitol Campus—there’s no doubt about it. One of the state capitals that probably has more history to it than any other state in the nation is the state of Virginia. It’s got a beautiful capitol building and history in there, with the statute of Robert E. Lee and Thomas Jefferson, and tragically, that poor little building is sitting on less than one square block all by itself, totally surrounded by non-state government. It’s just a little bit of an isolated place, with virtually no parking at all. We have a beautiful Capitol Campus compared to other states with a wide, inviting open spaces, with beautiful lawn and flowers, dotted with memorials of our wonderful past history. As you approach the Capitol, you are impressed by the stately buildings and magnificent surroundings. A real treasure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. The Legislature debated all these projects and within the next several years you started this huge building project. With the domino effect of the construction of other buildings, legislators eventually ended up with office spaces for your own use.

**Mr. Copeland:** We were heading in that direction, but it is a long ways away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One change that you did make that session, a new electronic voting machine was purchased for the House, a move which had been resisted earlier. Did that speed up your voting process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. The first electronic voting was installed prior to 1957. It took

hours and hours away from session time, having to sit there and call each name would take thirty, forty minutes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some members still requested oral roll calls but that was for other purposes.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s done not frequently, but sometimes on highly emotional issues. The voting machine was something that just saved all kinds of time. When you’ve got a hundred votes to cast and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, the Senate still resisted the change.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, the Senate was doing that only because it’s tradition more than anything else, but no, if the Senate did it I don’t think it would take anything away from the Senate’s flavor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They weren’t interested in efficiency at that time?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think the Senate of the state of Washington—or the Senate of the United States—really, truthfully wants to become efficient.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, they pride themselves in being deliberative, not efficient.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, if you call yourself deliberative, waiting for fifteen minutes for one of your members to get out of the coffee shop and stroll into the chamber to vote “aye or no” is deliberative; your definition of deliberative is different than mine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn’t mine, it was theirs! Let’s discuss some of the big issues of that session. Governor Rosellini came in quite forcefully and said, “We’ve run a deficit for



eight or ten years and the tax structure doesn't support the state. We have all these needs; this year we're going to do something about it." He sounded like he had quite a program.

**Mr. Copeland:** He did say that, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many Democrats were calling for an income tax, but the Governor was not. He just wanted an increase in the sales tax and then some nuisance-type taxes, as they were often called.

**Mr. Copeland:** “Sin taxes.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sin taxes or ways to ding people a little here and there that they can't really say much about. So he was ready for this big push but not quite ready for an income tax, although the whole session got hung up on this issue. Some members wanted an income tax and other people recognized that it wasn't going to pass. The Democrats—just to remind ourselves—had the Governor's chair, the majority in the Senate and in the House. I think they had two-thirds majorities in both Houses, but they couldn't seem to pass this measure.

**Mr. Copeland:** They did have the Governor's chair. I don't know whether they had two-thirds in the Senate, but I know they had a two-thirds vote in the House. Thirty-three to sixty-six....

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But at any rate, it doesn't seem to help them any.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to the extent one might think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In fact, they started to split into factions and fall apart.

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which often seems to happen when one party enjoys such a large majority. And so it does here. However, it does seem to be clear to everybody—pretty much—that things had come to a pass and you had to do something. Just what, is the big issue. The newspapers talked about a taxpayer revolt. Was that a common response to raising taxes or only when people used the words “income tax?”

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's only when people use the words “income tax.” I don't think there was a tax-payer revolt per se, but the press might have portrayed it in that fashion. The state was hurting for revenue—if you wanted to do everything that the Governor wanted to, no question about it. You see, it required a constitutional amendment in order to be able to impose an income tax and that required a two-thirds vote in both houses. Even though, theoretically and technically, they had a two-thirds vote sitting on the floor of the House, I don't think they could muster up fifty votes. Maybe they had it at the Senate, but they just couldn't get the votes to do it. That was the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, they couldn't seem to. So the Legislature got a little mired in that discussion—at least the Democrats did. The members just couldn't step up to it. If they had, magically, pulled themselves together, how would the Republicans have responded?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this is a hypothetical question but there may have been a couple—two or three—Republicans that would have gone along with it just to be able to bring it to a head and put it on the ballot and let people vote for it. The only constraint a lot of people had, of course, was the amount of money that the state government was spending. If you take a good look at the amount that they were

spending at that time, a great deal of it was in the social programs and in the welfare. That was one of those things: it was just becoming so huge and growing fast, the people began to take a look at it and say, “Wait a minute, what am I doing here?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it an alarming increase?

**Mr. Copeland:** Virtually, yes. The voters were saying, “Hey, we aren’t going to give that Legislature any more money.” So that was one place where the voters had the opportunity to say, “Enough is enough.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To put the brake on?

**Mr. Copeland:** They did, and applied it real good. I don’t think anybody was going to buy it. That was the people’s way of making an expression, “As long as we can deny you any money, we know you’re not going to spend it.” That’s the way the people voted. But yes, the Democrats surely were thumping around for money. No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There does seem to be a different kind of realization that “we do need some more money here.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. Governor Rosellini did a couple of things. Number one, when he ran and said he was going to do something about the institutions, he really and truthfully did. Of course, I saw it immediately in the changes they made out at the Penitentiary that were proper and prudent. I would have to say conditions were cruel and inhumane and changes were badly needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does take money.

**Mr. Copeland:** It takes a lot of money. This was capital expenditure. Everybody likes to

have their parks improved. Everybody likes to see the school grounds green and clean and neat, but who wants to put money in a penitentiary? So it was a very unpopular thing for him to do—though very necessary at the time and I applaud him for the leadership that he took in order to be able to get it done and he did it. He said he was going to and he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some Republicans—not all—didn’t want any tax increases; they wanted to cut government to live within the present revenue. Near the end of budget deliberations they pushed for a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. That has often been raised as an issue. Why a constitutional amendment?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was political dressing more than anything else. When you talk about budget numbers, you’re taking about a “wish list” at the best. Budget numbers really are not a firm figure. If you’re going to talk about somebody’s budget, how much money they actually spent in the previous year is a very definite figure. It isn’t one of these nebulous things that kind of wash around in the ether like a budget figure that can be increased and decreased at the slightest whim. So when you talk about a balanced budget amendment, what the heavens name were you saying?” In essence, you’re really not saying a great deal. In addition to that, if you had any type of an emergency arrangement, you run right smack into the inflexibility of being able to make an adjustment. Everybody in their household would love to be able to say, “I am living within my budget and I’m going to do this, and so on and so forth.” Okay, except when the roof blows off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. It only works if nothing unforeseen happens. People were very attached to this idea of a constitutional amendment, though. It comes up repeatedly.

**Mr. Copeland:** I recognize that, but it was just not one of those things that was totally realistic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did battle it out throughout the session, but you don't actually pass the budget until the extraordinary session. Meanwhile, let's discuss some of the big issues and some just interesting issues that you worked with this session. We mentioned earlier that unemployment insurance coverage was bitterly fought. You were on the Labor Committee that session and I'm assuming that you discussed House Bill 84 in that committee. The bill was supported for the most part by the Democrats and not supported by Republicans. It was one of those bills that really highlighted what a tiny minority that the Republicans were. It gave an opportunity for Evans to speak, Gorton and Newman Clark. But, in the end, Representative Mardesich pushed it through to a vote. The Democrats won every amendment battle—everything you could throw at them—and the Republicans fought back hard to either delay that bill or amend it. In the end, with their tremendous majorities, you weren't able to do anything. Would the Republicans have discussed this bill in caucus and mapped out a strategy for what you wanted to do with amendments and various strategic tactics? Your floor fight seemed very coordinated and energetic. Did you feel that you had any hope at all here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Did we meet in caucus and discuss a bill? The answer to that is yes, obviously. What the bill did, of course, it just liberalized a great deal of the unemployment benefits, but by the same token, not only did it liberalize the unemployment benefit, it increased the taxation on the employer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So tell me, did “liberalize” in this case mean people got more money for more weeks, or more people got it, or both?

**Mr. Copeland:** More people could qualify for unemployment compensation, they could draw higher unemployment compensation benefits, and maybe the bill relaxed the requirement about actively seeking work. And then, of course, it got into this business of the extended period of time when you could draw unemployment. Unemployment is a tax paid by the employer for the purpose of supporting an individual during retraining or while actively looking for a job. There were periods of time when the state of Washington's unemployment compensation was so high, it was better for you to draw unemployment compensation and sit at home and do nothing rather than actively go out and try to find a job. So that was kind of a background on it. And then, of course, the employer was paying the bill and that just ran up his cost and the only thing he could do when his cost went up is try to extract that out of the customers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, pass on the cost. At the end of the discussion, when the bill passed, a piece was inserted into the House Journal called “the Explanation of the Vote.” It said: “The undersigned Republican members (of which you were one) of the House of Representatives desire to explain their vote against House Bill 84. At the present time, the unemployment benefits in this state make only thirteenth among the states but the present tax on industry per employees is one of the highest in the country, ranking third. This difference is because of the present loopholes and abuses in the system.” Could you give me an example of what that would mean? What would be a loophole that would allow people to abuse the system?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the obvious ones: If you're drawing unemployment compensation—were you actively seeking work? There was no mechanism at that time to define “actively seeking work.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans tried to put in an amendment to clarify that point and it went down in flames. The Explanation went on to say, “We have desperately tried in committee and on the Floor to date to correct some of these abuses.” Would that be your committee, the Labor Committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, but that was a very small committee and of course, in committee there was less than a third membership of the Republicans. So...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you point out these loopholes and say, “Hey, we’ve got to do something about this?” I’m trying to get a sense of your discussion and participation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or were you just kind of run over?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. John O’Brien was the Speaker at the time and he had two-thirds of the vote in the House and did he have to discuss anything with the Republicans? The answer is no! I mean, if he wanted to run a bill, he just went out and ran a bill. He called in the leadership and said, “Okay, I’m going to run the following bills today,” and that’s it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is unemployment insurance still run this way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no. There have been a lot of changes on unemployment bills since then. Now, workers have the opportunity for retraining—one of the criteria for continuing to draw unemployment compensation is the fact that you go into some kind of retraining program. Now, the state of Washington knows that they are making a contribution to support you while you’re going into a retraining

program. By the same token, the Employment Security Department lists you as available for hire within two months of being retrained for a particular job. So now your name is out on the job market. The retraining program instituted between now and then allowed those people to get retrained and they not only get trained, then bang, they go right smack to a job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Employment Security Department exist in these days?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did it do what you just described?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time, there was no retraining. They collected money from the employer and they gave it to the person that was unemployed. They just didn’t have the mechanism to do more. Retraining requires a lot of coordination and knowledge of where that particular job skill is going to be needed and the employers that are about ready to hire that particular job skill, and so forth. It isn’t one of those things that you go and turn on a light switch and suddenly there is instant light. It’s a long procedure. But I think what we did is point out that there were some things that really needed to be addressed, and in the final analysis, they have been addressed. It brought the very sharp attention to everybody. But here we were, virtually number one in the states as far as the employers’ contribution, who weren’t getting much of a bang for a buck out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a period of high unemployment? Was there a reason this bill was pushed so hard this year? Or was this something that had been worked on for several years and it just came “due?”

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it makes good politics to get a bill like this through when the Democrats

have the two-thirds of the House and the majority in the Senate. So, as far as organized labor was concerned, they moved it at the right time in order to be able to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m sure they always had a bit of laundry list as to what they wanted passed, and here was the opportunity?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wait a minute, you said a laundry list of what they wanted passed. Now if the political climate is not ready, it’s not right for that session. Then the laundry list carries over to the next session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that’s what I meant. They keep it in their pockets for the right moment.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Okay, so this is one of the times when laundry list fits the session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so the list comes out of the pocket. This was a good year for certain Democratic issues. Let’s talk about another matter that fits this description, the congressional redistricting that was approved that year. They got rid of that “at large” position. Was that something that you touched at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, that “at large” thing; that was a legislative cop-out because the Legislature knew that they had to do it and they just flat-out didn’t do it and so they allowed this one guy...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don Magnuson, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Here again, the Legislature—and they used the quote a lot of times: “in its wisdom” decided that yes, it would be a good thing for them to go ahead and pass a bill at that time. The political climate was in great shape for them to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was an advantageous time for Democrats to draw lines that would favor themselves?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another difficult issue for legislators, always, was the question of their pay. There was a per diem raise pushed through that year for legislators. I don’t think it amounted to a huge amount—you never were exactly well paid.

**Mr. Copeland:** The first session that I served, we had a hundred dollars a month and I think the per diem was fifteen dollars per session-day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That begs the question, why was it so little? Were you supposed to be virtually working for free? And this was to cover your lunch or something?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The Legislature at that time was predicated on the basis of doing very little. A legislator went in there and was in there for sixty days and then he went home and then two years later, they came back for another sixty days. So nobody bothered anybody when the Legislature was not in session. What did the Legislature do? Well, let’s see. They went ahead and they financed the schools, but they stopped capping the financing so the schools had an opportunity to go ahead and effectively finance themselves through special levies. The state went ahead and did all of the stuff for the highways and how they financed the highways is another story that I’ll talk about at a later time. It was a very simple process. Too bad that it’s not in effect today. The whole budget that we had in the state of Washington that time was something well under a billion dollars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So are you saying that it was perfectly reasonable to assume that legislators



didn't really need to be paid? Or just paid very small amounts?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't say they didn't need to be paid. I am only pointing out that the work load was not all that time consuming. What did the texture of the Legislature look like? And I think I told you earlier that, was not in a situation where I moved into the district with a great big ambition that I was going to run for the Legislature. My running for the Legislature came from a longtime community involvement and that's the way it was in many, many districts. Now, somebody wants to get into politics, they take a look at a voting precinct map and figure out what precinct they want to live in—what district they want to live in—so they can run for public office, and then they move to the district. Now, they move into the district and they take up residence. They rent an apartment and say, "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm your savior; I'm going to go to Olympia and I'm going to take good care of you people." They don't know anything about the district; they don't know who the leaders are in the district; they don't know anything about the business and the economy. They just go in and file.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What you did was part of being an established member of your community?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that low compensation preclude representatives being other sorts of people, the less-well-off?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that doesn't preclude anybody from filing. The average legislator basically would be almost born and raised in his district and he knew everybody up and down the street and he knew the problems. Fred who ran the bakery—you know, he was

a personal friend of his and if he had problems with the state, he knew about it. And the automobile dealer down the street, that was George, and if George had problems with the licensing department, you knew how to take care of it. I mean, it's a very personal type of an arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was compensation such a difficult issue? Again and again, it was just fraught. Was it just hard to ask for little bit more money?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was more political guts than anything else. The legislators didn't like the criticism of going home and hearing, "I understand you ordered yourself a salary increase."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's something unseemly looking about it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the press probably leads the parade on this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, they seemed to like that issue, because it always has a sort of whiff of corruption about it. As if getting paid for doing quite a difficult job, there was something wrong about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, getting paid for it, let's talk about that for a second.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were in no way getting paid for what you were doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't in Olympia to get paid for what I was doing for crimony-sakes, at fifteen dollars a day or twenty-five dollars a day per diem, or whatever it was. I was over there trying to get a job done for the district like a whole lot of other people. But there were people in that Legislature that didn't have the where-with-all to keep themselves there and take that much time off from

whatever business they were in. I mean, if you're in the real estate business and if you're not selling real estate, you don't have much of an income. All of a sudden you take sixty or ninety or one hundred-twenty days off and you are a non-producer for that period of time. Maybe some guy comes up to you and says, “You know, I've got this little item for you and you'll find it in the backseat of your car. I'd sure appreciate a little help on this bill.” I don't know, I can't address that; it never happened to me.

It's a tough thing to be able to say to legislators, “You've got to vote for a salary increase because some of your fellow people can't make it.” But then as time went on, then the state of Washington got Wayne Ehlers and his big claim to fame was to pass the constitutional amendment and create a salary commission that establishes the salary of the legislators and state-elected officials.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that a better method?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is the legislative cop-out, pure and simple, because the Legislature is supposed to set these salaries. Today, they have devised a way to set state employee salaries without legislative involvement, behind closed doors, with only union representatives with the Governor. The Legislature is excluded from the process—again, a legislative cop-out. Damn it, if you can't stand the heat, get the hell out of the kitchen! If you can't stand to be responsible and run the state of Washington as the state of Washington, get out of there; let someone else do it! If you're that worried about getting re-elected, you shouldn't have been elected in the first place. This is what you call a representative government; you do the very best that you can and if you get your ass thrown out of the Chambers, that's tough! But this business of perpetuating yourself forever because you never have to make a tough choice in the Legislature, that's a bunch of horse... All right!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes! Well, I knew that that would be a hot topic, for some reason!

**Mr. Copeland:** When you think about Wayne Ehlers—and here you have Dan Grimm and Wayne Ehlers and Denny Heck—there, the three of them with a big triad down there at the Legislature running the House of Representatives in the early eighties, to the best of my knowledge, their only income was from the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another flaming issue—I've got a whole series for your comment: daylight savings time. That's another one that came up year after year. The legislators pushing it this year, 1959, were all urban—from King County: Slade Gorton, Dan Evans, Ed Morrissey, Ray Olsen, and Wes Uhlman who recommend that it “do pass.” Robert Goldsworthy, a farmer, was against it and then there are several other people who “respectfully report the same back to the House without recommendation.” For whatever reason, they were not going to weigh in on this. Why did the King County members want it and why were others opposed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Ah, that was a big east-west issue. Farmers opposed it because it was going to throw the cows off and affect milking. It didn't make great deal of sense to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't pass.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the Legislature did not pass it. However, it was later overwhelmingly passed by an initiative of the people. Really not a controversial issue after all. Anne, you've got to put the importance of that particular piece of legislation in the same category with state law which prohibited colored margarine to be sold. I mean, these are big, heavy-duty issues!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's amazing how much heat and fire they generated.

**Mr. Copeland:** The dairy farmers were all upset about this. My goodness sakes, “if they allow housewives to buy colored margarine, they’re going to quit buying butter and the price of milk products is going to put us out of business.” Well, what happened to the margarine? How did it become colored? It got passed by initiative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember having to hand-mix that little dot of color into the margarine. But now, daylight savings is here and I guess the cows still do get milked and we still have butter.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, the cows get milked and well, of course, you remember the time when they’re talking about putting in dial telephones. They said, “You’re going to take and throw all the telephone operators out of the business?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually, I’m not quite old enough to know about that. I have more on this list of issues that had a lot of people really excited during this period. The Sunday Liquor Laws—which was really late-night Saturday closing, not drinking on Sundays but Saturday night at 1:00 a.m. That didn’t pass, but it came up over and over until finally it did pass. What did you think was the state’s role in regulating liquor consumption? How did you feel about these issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** I thought the twelve o’clock closing was a hold-over from the “Blue Laws” of the 1911 era. These recited things that could not be done on Sunday. Also, there were other restrictions having to do with morality. Even the bowling alleys had to close on Sundays. Many of the laws were changed over a period of time; however, the consumption of alcoholic beverages was one big problem for many people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, bowling alleys were considered dens of evil at one time.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they have a certain place—a lot of ladies go bowling on Tuesday mornings, but I don’t think it’s necessarily evil. We’ve changed a great deal!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think the government role is in legislating, basically, morality on these issues? Is this just something that you should stay away from?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you never can tell. Can we create morality through legislation? If so, are the laws enforceable?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of this issue, that some groups wanted you to legislate personal behavior? Was your own take on this that you shouldn’t have that role?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature for years had been legislating morality. They had on all their books most of the things that you couldn’t do and some were totally non-enforceable. What you do with a consenting partner? Who is the victim? I happened to be in the Legislature when they repealed that law. All of the sudden, people realized that one, these laws were out of date; two, they were non-enforceable; three, they were something that was none of your damn business anyway. Should the Legislature be involved in the morals of the country? Yes, we should be, but do we have to get very specific and say, “If you do this it is a felony.” Okay, then you come down to this business of enforcement. Well, you can’t enforce it and what are the penalties? Two days in the pillory?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You lose the respect for the law if you cannot enforce it.

**Mr. Copeland:** The worst laws on the books are the laws that are not enforced. Either

enforce the law or remove it from the books. Now, at that time, there was a great “dry” lobbying force in effect in Olympia. And it was primarily church groups who were led by a fellow by the name of Herb Hill. Herb was a professional lobbyist and he corresponded with legislators frequently. Herb set up a network throughout the state of like-minded people out in the hinterlands. I think his ultimate agenda was to prohibit the sale of alcohol in the state of Washington. He had the ability to get in touch with these people and have them write to members of the Legislature. He could mail out a letter, on a particular date, to every county in the state, saying, “A bill is coming up in the House having to do with such and such and I want you to write to the legislators and tell them that you all are in opposition to it,” or whatever. And this network generated and produced lots of correspondence—and I don’t mean a handful, I mean lots of mail! Hundreds, thousands of pieces of mail would come in within forty-eight hours after Herb had sent out the call.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’ve read a little about Herbert Hill’s organization, The Alcohol Problems Association. I noticed that he had a branch in Walla Walla.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What proportion of population do you think in Walla Walla was of that mind?

**Mr. Copeland:** Two percent. That’s a guess!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s very important to know how big of a group we are talking about. I mean, sometimes tiny groups can make a lot of noise. If there is a silent majority out there, you have to wonder where they stand.

**Mr. Copeland:** They weren’t silent and they were not the majority. They could write a lot of letters and they did an extremely good job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you pay them any mind or did you just think of them as cranky?

**Mr. Copeland:** At first we began to pay some attention to them and then it got so repetitive and so canned and so without purpose or meaning that it got to be, well like a nuisance more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When people with different causes send out postcards by the thousands as a tactic, that’s not very effective, I gather?

**Mr. Copeland:** It isn’t to me. As a legislator, yes, I want to hear from them and if they’ve got a position, then that’s fine, but you don’t have to send me fifteen postcards all signed by the same person and have them delivered on fifteen consecutive days in order to get my attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, here’s another big item: gambling. What are your thoughts on gambling in the state of Washington? In these years, dog racing was discussed perpetually. Why was the question of allowing dog racing such a big problem, but horse racing was legal? What is the difference in the industry?

**Mr. Copeland:** Ah! Not a big item. There isn’t any difference. I mean, both dog and horse racing are nothing more than a clever devise for the redistribution of wealth. Gambling in any form does not create wealth. Somebody has to come to the track or the casino with money in their pocket that they earned somehow. Now, I have long held that there are so many gambling dollars available and as long as you can keep a healthy regulated industry, you’re better off to do it than have four or five poorly-run questionable, not well-regulated industries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was dog racing more difficult to regulate than horse racing?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's done in a little bit different atmosphere, a different set of circumstances. The objection to dog racing in this state came from the horse owners who simply did not want to have the competition. Should there be a limit on the number of race tracks? Should there be a limit on the number of casinos? Should there be a state tax on any of these operations? If so, how many? Who should regulate them? The state or the federal government?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are an ever-growing number of casinos. What will happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know. Casinos were actually authorized for Indian Reservations by the federal government, but they do not require an approval of the Legislature. It's my understanding that Indian tribes are now buying land and constructing casinos on newly acquired "reservation property," now part of the sovereign nation. All they have to do is tell the Governor, "I'm going to open up a casino." Neither the executive branch nor the legislative branch can make any move or try to say, "Just a minute, we're going to start regulating you guys."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, hell no! Congress gave them the authority. Are they taxed right now by the state of Washington? No! Are they taxed by the federal government? No! Does any governmental agency require them to have a report and audit? Not to my knowledge. Do they pay any environmental impact fees—no! Does it require any additional policing—yes! Do they make contribution to it—no!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought they did.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to my knowledge. If they do, it's voluntary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then that's a misconception on my part. I thought that that was part of it, that policing got beefed up with the spread of casinos.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this was a congressional cop-out in the worst degree. I also think it was discriminatory. If you are not an Indian, you may not open a casino. Proponents say, "Well, it's employing so many people." And these people make you feel good while they are taking your money. How much money do you have to take away from all of the people that are gambling in order to be able to support them? Think about billions of dollars in the casinos every year around here. I mean, it's huge.

And then there is the Washington State Lottery—here again, a clever device of redistribution of wealth. Boy, what a good deal that is! But you have to have a lottery mentality. What are your odds?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, a zillion to one, I don't know. Terrible!

**Mr. Copeland:** You can tell I'm not a gambling enthusiast. Some years ago, Peter Callaghan of the *Tacoma News Tribune* wrote a story about the history of casino gambling in the state. He recalled that it was Ken Eikenberry, then the Attorney General for the state, who came across information that would be of interest to the Washington State Legislature. As the story goes, Ken called Jeannette Hayner, then Senate Majority Leader, and explained what was going on in Congress about Indian gambling. It seems that Congress was saying if state law allows any gambling, it must be extended to Indians. Now, here are the operative words: "Reno-type gambling" would be permitted in the state



of Washington “for certain charity purposes by permit authorized by the state of Washington.” Ken suggested to Jeannette that if that law remained on the books, this would allow the Indians to claim “their gambling rights.” I think the following is correct: she drafted a bill repealing “Reno-type gambling” which was seldom used, and successfully got it passed by the Senate. The bill went on to the House where it was met with open arms by Speaker Joe King. And guess what? It never saw the light of day. It is my understanding that shortly after that Joe announced that he was running for Governor—and would you believe those appreciative Indians contributed to his campaign! You can read this story which appeared July 18, 2004 in the *News Tribune*.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But as a public policy, what do you think of that method of raising money?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wait, Indian casinos are federally authorized and the states are not permitted to place a tax on them. Now, what about this as a method of raising tax revenue? Answer: fine if it is not earmarked and just goes to the General Fund for legislative allocation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Many people want to justify lotteries by saying, “It’s only going to go for, you know, education.” And not to the General Fund.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is the worst kind of financing. There is no flexibility. Moneys should go into the General Fund and the Legislature should use these funds on those things that are absolutely urgent. I think it is basically wrong for them to say, “It has to be earmarked for this particular thing” and lose complete discretionary authority over the expenditures of that money. Times change and needs change and the Legislature should be prepared to meet these changing situations.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, too many things that tie budget-writers’ hands is not good policy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Every time the Legislature creates one of these entities it allows that to happen. It’s nothing more than a sap to some special interest group, and here again, it falls in the entire category of legislative cop-out! They are afraid to be responsible and manage the total pot of money! That’s their job and they need to accept the responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This list of hot-button issues really gets you on your soapbox. Now, here’s a totally different kind of issue. That year, there was an open housing bill—House Bill 70, I believe it was. “Open housing” refers to non-discrimination in the selling or buying of houses, prohibiting “red-lining” of districts that restrict minorities from living wherever they wanted or could afford. Representatives Sam Smith, Joel Pritchard and Dan Brink sponsored the bill. You voted for it. In fact, eighty-three members voted for it and only six voted against it. It passed the House, but died in the Senate, which was often the pattern, I’m afraid. Were there speeches; what was said, and how did you feel about it? This was not really the beginning of the civil rights movement in the state, although there were things happening nationally that might have brought this sort of issue to your attention.

**Mr. Copeland:** This bill truthfully had to do with red-lining. And to explain red-lining—this was primarily not at the insistence of the real estate industry as much it was the home mortgage lenders. The home mortgage lenders—it’s my understanding—got themselves in the practice of being able to take and draw a line completely around the district and say, “We won’t even loan money on a piece of property within this district.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did they base that on? Did they think that black people couldn't pay their bills? There were middle-class black people.

**Mr. Copeland:** You'd have to ask the mortgage bankers that. It had to do with "not performing loans."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to see, though, that this series of bills failed to pass for about a decade and every time they were brought up, it was aimed at realtors.

**Mr. Copeland:** But it really was not the realtors that were doing this; it was the bankers. Who was creating the red-line? That realtor was interested in selling this fifty-thousand dollar house for three or six percent commission. He didn't care which side of the street it was on, but it was the mortgage bank that was sitting there already drawing the line right down the street, although on that side of the street, but not on the other.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You supported this bill, so how did you feel about that practice?

**Mr. Copeland:** I felt that it was intrinsically wrong to red-line anybody trying to buy or sell a house. I don't care what color they are; those practicing red-lining virtually would not even consider making a mortgage on that property. I mean, it was out of bounds, it was not to be considered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about the civil rights aspects of this issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** The practice was unacceptable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was this bill presented; how was it talked about? Along the lines you've outlined?

**Mr. Copeland:** How was it presented? In a very straightforward manner. No frills, no fluff. The sponsors simply asked the question, "Is it fair?" And should the practice be continued?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember when Joel Pritchard talked about this. He said he just wanted to create a level playing field.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's probably as good an explanation as you can give: a level playing field.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes quite a long time for this bill to pass, but this is an opening salvo; it was a long unresolved issue. Why does it repeatedly die in the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because my guess is, the mortgage bankers stopped it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** While we are talking about this, do you recall Sam Smith and working with him? Was he an effective legislator?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. To a degree. A good legislator has the tendency of balance, but Sam appeared to be uninterested in things like highways, parks, and the like. His main interest was in those things that were "race related." In this arena he was very effective, but in my opinion, he was not a player in the operation of the state of Washington. From the legislative perspective, red-lining wasn't just a black or white issue; this was a bank/real estate issue, and it had to be addressed. Those same lines could have been drawn around a Polish district or a Catholic district; it was more than race-related.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a new perspective for me. I hadn't heard anyone describe it this way. Do you think this bill might have passed sooner had it been framed in the way you're putting it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Maybe, but this is all speculation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The mortgage bankers were too powerful? Or it was just too big of a change?

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer is yes to both questions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was really interesting. Those were some of the issues that came up that session that seemed to say something about the times. Let's turn now to your committee work. In your Agriculture and Livestock Committee, there was a big push that year for the Marketing Act, House Bill 450, which didn't pass. It looked like, to my uneducated eyes, that you were trying to get an omnibus act for agricultural products. In the end, it was concluded that, “Whereas, this bill merits and requires more consideration than could be afforded it during this session and some related bills also need some more study.” The committee requested that it go to the Legislative Council to be further researched and studied. Let's first talk about the role of the state in regulating the marketing of agricultural products: apples, beef... how does that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** They don't regulate the sale of anything. What they do is regulate the grading process. What constitutes a ‘Grade A’ apple in the state of Washington? A grade is established after many hearings have been held, including people from industry and the grocery trade and they agree that the Grade A apple is this and a Grade B is that, and Grade C something else. In the beef industry, grading is done by the federal government. What's considered to be ‘prime’ by the federal government carries over to the state. So, as far as the marketing of agricultural products is concerned, the state is not heavily involved in it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The big thing seems to be honey in this year. That seemed to be the holdup of why this bill didn't pass; they couldn't figure out how to regulate honey production. Is it complicated?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very complicated. The production of honey is something else. The honey producers went to the United States government years ago and got subsidized. Then the producers said, “We can't sell our honey.” So the Department of Agriculture said, “Okay, we'll buy it and feed it to the Army.” Well, the honey reserve began to grow and all of the sudden, the federal government realized that they had more god-damned honey than the country could consume. The honey producers got themselves way over-extended and they got the federal government involved in a cute little gravy train. Let me tell you how bad it became. Washington State producers of honey would report these enormous productions, but they would take hives and move them out of state, retrieve the hives and bring them back to Washington and process the honey here in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so the bees would be out there sipping the Idaho flowers and whatnot and then come back...is that what you mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** In Canada. Yes. There were a bunch of beekeepers around here that were taking bees all the way into Canada. Was the honey produced in the state of Washington? Who knows? For every federal farm program built, somebody knows how to beat it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So are you not in favor of federal subsidies for farming? For the various commodities?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's define “subsidies.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Go ahead, you're a farmer. Tell me about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Farm food subsidies reduce the cost of the product to the housewife. The beneficiary is the housewife.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the farmer doesn't get that money? Subsidies just reduce, say, the cost of a quart of milk...

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. Now, we've gone from 1946 to the present date with one administration after another concerned about one thing and that's cheap food at the supermarket. They will perpetuate any program imaginable in order to be able to maintain cheap food at the supermarket. Where else in the world can an average housewife feed her family on such few dollars in comparison to her income than in the United States? There is no place. And when you hit the bottom line on the major items that you are currently feeding your family today, each has a federal subsidy involved which doesn't do anything but reduce your cost. Now, you pay for it in taxes in order to have that subsidy, but you're very, very happy to be able to continue to pay whatever you pay for the quart of milk or loaf of bread or whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many people do you think understand this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Damn few. I'll never forget the wonderful interview that occurred on television where they had this problem with Alar and Washington-grown apples. CBS was running around talking about this and shoved a mike into this lady's face, "Tell me, what is your take on this business of the apple growers using pesticides?" and she said, "I don't pay any attention to that; I just buy my groceries at Safeway."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where does she think apples come from?

**Mr. Copeland:** The back room of Safeway, along with the milk and eggs. They are all made right there. That's the whole point! She doesn't know there is a farm out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a bit of a disconnect there. You mean meat doesn't grow that way in the cellophane?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right now, if you interviewed a number of housewives, they would be absolutely astonished to think that you actually had to kill to have a hamburger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Most people buy processed food. They don't see the farm animals; they don't see the process. They're too far away and we make sure that the package looks pretty and there is no connection.

**Mr. Copeland:** Frequently the packaging costs more money than the ingredient. Whole-kernel corn, the package costs more money than the ingredient, in all probability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's hard for people to really relate. It's just part of modern society.

Do you recall any other measures that you worked on that session?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we Republicans didn't have much to do that year. We were in the minority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel frustrated, or you were just biding your time?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was just biding my time, but I learned a lot. You can't go through the second legislative session without learning something. You learn something about the process; you learn something about the people;

you learn something about business; you learn about government and all of life as far as I'm concerned—it's a learning experience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly a lot of life goes through the Legislature. It's “representative;” that's where it comes from. You also served on the Highways Committee. Let's look at that area.

**Mr. Copeland:** The House had three very large committees: Highways, Appropriations and Revenue. Normally, a member would serve on just one of these committees. They all met at the same time, generally in the afternoon between two and five. All three of these committees operated with a subcommittee structure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Two to five was “prime” time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. That was a prime time for several reasons. Number one, it allowed us the mornings to go into session and get all the necessary floor actions out of the way. Then in the afternoon, you weren't serving on two of these committees meeting at the same time. It also gave people that wanted to testify on Appropriations or Highways lots of time to get to the Legislature, get themselves set up, and be able to make their input.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These committees—specifically the Highways Committee—were they more open to public input than some other ones?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not at that time. In 1959, the public never knew what bill was going to be heard. The Highway Committee was going to meet, but was House Bill 123 going to be heard? Only if the committee chairman decided that it was going to be heard. Later, when we started the calendar we would always

publish, at least a day ahead of time, the bills that were going to be heard in each committee. So the public knew ahead of time if House Bill 123 was on the agenda to be heard at three o'clock in the Highways Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that committee chairman in 1959 was Julia Butler Hansen. Can you tell me about working with her? She's kind of a legend.

**Mr. Copeland:** She was a real legend, there is no doubt about it. She was an excellent legislator. She was kind of a rough and tumble politician; she'd get up on the Floor and she take off your head in a moment's notice, but you never saw a tear in that lady's eyes. She'd battle with the tough ones and win most of the time. She really did her homework.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know she was highly respected for her toughness. Did she run this thirty-five member committee with an iron hand?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly! That is putting it mildly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of people—I think thirty-five people were on that committee; it must have been cumbersome. Did you separate into sub-committees or how did that work exactly? You had ferries and bridges and toll roads and different things. Was it divided up by function?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, she divided us up into sub-committees. It was very informal. The Highways Committee always received a lot of bills. However, it became a practice that these bills would be screened and later incorporated into the “Highway Omnibus Bill.” This method was developed to coordinate the development of the highway system and improvements.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** This committee had its own money stream, right?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct: gas tax revenues—and this was not commingled with the General Funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you arrive at the decision-making in that committee? Say, there are four different road projects up for consideration. How did you figure out which ones would get the money and maybe the unlucky fourth one doesn't? How did it work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Money was allocated to counties, predicated on the number of miles of road that they had in the county.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was a formula? Everybody got something?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was a formula. Yes, everybody got something and it was predicated on road miles. This was why King County was always screaming their head off: "We're not getting our fair of portion of the road miles."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was not by population, it was by what roads already existed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, existing county roads. Rural legislators always had to make damn sure that we maintained that formula in the committee because that was the only way we could survive. Otherwise King County and Pierce County could get together and say, "We're not going to give the rural counties any money." So rural legislators were always interested in that formula—whether or not anybody was dinking around with it. Otherwise, I think you probably would have had another Boston Tea Party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember Dan Evans making some kind of a statement about not enough King County legislators were on the Highways Committee, that it was dominated by the rural people and that city people ought to take more interest in roads.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's why we were on it. We had a vested interest. But at the same token, Dan came from the Forty-fifth District; how many state highways are there in the Forty-fifth District? How many county roads are there in the Forty-fifth District?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not too many. What about the freeways, overpasses, and all the exits and other infrastructure?

**Mr. Copeland:** They're all federal highways. Now, legislators from King and Pierce counties are all interested in it because they have some road congestion, but were they interested in it at that time—heavens no! The point I want to make is that the Highways Committee did a great job of sorting out requests for new roads, new bridges, improvements of intersections, maintenance, and at the same time operating the ferry system. With Julia Butler Hansen and Bill Bugge, the Director of Highways, we had a real fine system.

But to go back to how decisions were made, under a normal set of circumstances, the money would be appropriated in, let's say, four to five allocations. One would be for feasibility; one for the engineering study, another for road relocation, cost analysis, and so forth. Then there would be probably two lumps of money in the area of construction and the last one, of course, would be completion. Now, that could be either shortened or elongated depending upon the size of the project. But the first allocation of money, of course, would be for the feasibility study of a new project. And a new project might be a road or a bridge or a ferry terminal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would the legislator from that area come in and say, "Julia, in my neighborhood, we need this bridge." Was the request district-up or top-down?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would go both ways. Quite often it would be both ways. It could possibly be that Julia would call him: "We are planning this; it's going to affect your district, but it won't kick in for about three to five years because we have to get this done and that done. Then this will be a priority." So everything got put in the priority category and if you had a specific request, could you get it done instantly? The answer is no, you had to answer, "Where does it fall among the other priorities?" Very few of the highway projects are "single purpose" or of a "specific district" anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, a bridge might be, or a ferry, pretty local.

**Mr. Copeland:** But at the same token, who uses it? It's not a local access bridge. It's part of the highway system.

But let me tell you a story; I call it the "Lost Bridge." Early in the 1957 session of the Legislature, Elmer Huntley came to me and had a suggestion about a bridge across the Snake River to connect Walla Walla and Whitman counties. Elmer was the new House member representing Whitman County and I was a new House member representing Walla Walla County. Elmer was a member of the Highways Committee and extremely knowledgeable about highway matters. Of course I was interested. But this was a large undertaking, requiring lots of planning and funding. How could we ever get legislative approval for such an undertaking? Elmer, being the patient soul that he was, explained his plan to me. "Copeland, this will take several sessions of the Legislature and some very quiet homework by both of us, but I

think it can be done." He explained that he did not want to be the sponsor of the bill but that he would quietly shepherd it through the committee process and into the Highway Omnibus Bill if I would sponsor the bills.

Huntley indicated that a bridge was about to become surplus and we would need to designate in Highways legislation just how to dispose of the old bridge. Well, nothing happened that session and we just had to wait until the next session to see what progress was being made on a new bridge. Sure enough, progress was at hand and Huntley and I met again to discuss the plan. There was going to be a new bridge built at the Columbia River crossing at Vantage on Highway 90. The old bridge was only two lanes wide and not nearly adequate for the anticipated traffic. I agreed to submit a bill and later Elmer had this firmly embedded in the Omnibus bill. Legislation was very carefully crafted to make the recitation that the old bridge would be disassembled and stored in a location "Range 36 E Township 47 section 28," or words to that effect. This language was contained in the Highway appropriation bill and I doubt if anyone except Huntley and I knew that the location was a "Washington State Highway maintenance yard in south Whitman County. The dismantled bridge was resting comfortably for several years, waiting for more progress on the construction of a Whitman/Walla Walla crossing of the Snake River.

First, we needed money for a study to see how much it would cost. So, one session money was placed in the budget for a "study." Subsequent sessions' money was needed for "engineering" and "site allocation." We were at this time moving along quite well until the U.S. Corps of Engineers changed the rules. Now, any bridge built across the Snake and Columbia rivers must meet certain minimum height requirements. That meant we needed to raise the approaches to the proposed bridge some twenty feet, and we didn't have any

money for the addition of thousands of cubic yards of earth to accomplish the changes. So another session went by and lo and behold, some money appeared in the Highways budget for “approach landfill requirements.”

At the time this was going on, several other members of the House were asking, “Whatever happened to the old Vantage bridge?” It seemed to have gotten lost in the shuffle. Representative Mike McCormack wanted it for a crossing at Richland. Several were looking for such a bridge for use in Whatcom County. But no one really knew where it was or its condition. However, all the parts were there: nuts, bolts, beams, cross bracing—everything was in place just waiting to be reassembled. All that was needed now were two bridgeheads, one on each side of the river.

We were about ten years into the project. Then came a call from the Governor. He wanted to see Elmer Huntley and Tom Copeland. He had a simple question: “If we go ahead with the construction of the bridgeheads in Whitman and Walla Walla counties, where in hell are you going to get a bridge?” Well, I sat there very quietly and listened to Elmer very carefully explain to Dan Evans how we had protected the integrity and value of the bridge all of these years by keeping such good care of it and preparing it for the time that it could be useable once again. “Where is this bridge and where did it come from?” the Governor asked. A short explanation followed. And to my amazement, the Governor did not object. Nor did he approve, but I do remember him mumbling something like, “You two country bumpkins just snookered the city slickers right out of a bridge!”

The bridge is in place and being used today. It replaced the ferry at Lyons’ Crossing, one of the oldest water power ferries in the state. Few remember the old ferry, but still fewer remember the bridge that now crosses

the Snake River at Lyons’ Ferry was the Columbia River bridge at Vantage. This is the only bridge in the state that crossed two great rivers in its lifetime. Which brings me to the quote I have used several times: “Persistence and perseverance are the hallmarks of successful legislation.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What an amazing story! Now, I want to go see that bridge! Very sly...it’s a good thing neither one of you went out of office before it was accomplished. Now I wanted to ask about something that we may have touched on but not explored in our discussion of Highways. Was there, in those days, an east/west rivalry?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Really not. The focus was on the entire state of Washington. One thing that was in place at that time—though it was never written or publicized—was bipartisan passage of the Highways funding bills. It was really quite simple: “What percentage of the House or Senate is Republican or Democrat?” That became the basis necessary for the passage of the funding bill. Let’s say there were forty percent Republicans and sixty percent Democrats in the House. When the appropriation bill for the Highway Department came up, the Democrats were going to produce sixty percent of the yes votes, the Republicans were going to produce forty percent of the yes votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just understood?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was understood; that was the name of the game. The Senate became so fine-tuned that seldom did the highway appropriation bill ever pass—especially if it had a tax package on it—with more than twenty-five votes. Those senators knew how to play the game; they knew how many that they had to have out of their caucus and the total had to be twenty-five. They had the

votes all counted and when they went out on the floor to vote for the bill, they knew who was going to vote and they knew what the vote was going to be. As soon as they got to twenty-five, bing! They hit the proper number and it passed. No caucus lined up against the highway budget. Julia Butler Hansen played that role beautifully. I think it was an excellent system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A much stronger system?

**Mr. Copeland:** When was the last time you drove down a Republican highway? When was the last time you drove down a Democrat highway?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not recently! Not so as I could tell.

**Mr. Copeland:** The philosophy of being a conservative or a liberal was not the essential ingredient to the passage. In those days, it was very, very simple: do what was best for the state! I have always felt that the gas tax was a user's fee. If you don't want to pay the tax, don't buy gas. Non-highway users don't pay the tax. It is voluntary! You voluntarily turn your key on in your automobile; you voluntarily go out and use the highways. If you want to be a highway user, pay the highway fee!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What do you think about toll roads and toll bridges and measures of that type? Is that a good method for raising money?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it's a revenue raising son-of-a-gun; there is no doubt about it. We've gone through this on several occasions, and we had tolls. The state constitution allows tolls, but the state constitution also says, once the obligation on the toll is paid, then it comes off, and we've done that twice. Now, can you

re-impose the toll? Yes, you can, if you want to go through the constitutional amendment. Okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably hard to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the ferries? In some places in western Washington, they're considered part of the highway system because you can't get from 'here' to 'there' without them, but in eastern Washington, is there a different idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** The voters of the state of Washington decided that years ago, back in the early forties; they decided that the ferry system was nothing more than an extension of the state highways. I subscribe to that and always have and always will. You cannot take the Olympic Peninsula and say, "Hey, we will not connect you to the state highway." That would be a gross error. I came from Walla Walla and I am a strong supporter of those ferries being able to run.

What the voters of the state of Washington don't appreciate is that highways in Washington are expensive. One reason why they are expensive is because we have a range called the Cascade Mountains and another called the Olympics. The other reason is because we have a body of water called Puget Sound. Now, if you think it's a high-cost state here and you can't afford it, move to Kansas! Figure out how much it costs for us to maintain the cross-state highway in the wintertime. The high cost of road maintenance just goes with the territory.

The amount of money that we're collecting today from the gas tax has not kept up with the rate of inflation. In the last ten years, cars have been getting much better fuel efficiency, so they're driving more miles on the highway for less contribution of money

into the state than what we ever had ten years ago. We have a highway funding problem and if it's anybody's fault, it's the members of the Legislature. And I've got to add, there have been several governors who haven't provided a hell of a lot of leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Great discussion, something to keep in mind. You discussed the Naches Tunnel again that session. It was finally decided that it was an engineering impossibility. Can you describe where that was proposed and what the idea was?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were several routes, but the one that I remember, the tunnel was really quite short. It was probably only about five miles in length. It only cut off the elevation like maybe one thousand, maybe even fifteen hundred feet—just to get out of the snow condition more than anything else. A very expensive piece of roadway. It was one of those things that was just problematic; every time you turned around, the cost escalated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These things never seem to get cheaper. What about the second Lake Washington Bridge? This was also discussed endlessly. Virtually everyone seemed to be for it, but they just didn't know where to put it. And of course it would have a big impact on the growth in the East King County.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it wasn't a question of should it be built; everybody knew ahead of time that it should.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was it so hard to choose a location?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because engineering reports would come in and they would be at odds with one another. Somebody would come in and say, "If you put it here, we can generate x-number of vehicular traffic to go here and it

will come out at this point and everything will be fine." Another engineer would come in and say, "No, if you put it over here, we would be better off here and then you won't have this," and so on. And then somebody would get the figures all screwed up. I'm not kidding. If you had two or three engineering firms get into a fight with one another, you have to ask; "Hey, what the hell is the truth?" So then we would go to the Highway Department and say, "You guys come up with it. Don't send two engineers down here; you come up with something." Then the Highway Department ultimately had to sit down and say, "Okay, we're going to have to adjudicate this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it also political, that some communities would benefit or not benefit depending on where it went?

**Mr. Copeland:** The only thing political about it was whether or not the Republican legislators east of Lake Washington were going to get too much credit for building a second Lake Washington Bridge. It just didn't make any difference where you put that bridge; it was going to wind up in that Forty-eighth District. That district was so big that there was no way that you could build a bridge and not hit the district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who were the representatives from the Forty-eighth District?

**Mr. Copeland:** Al Leland and Jimmy Andersen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they, by chance, on the Highways Committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Al Leland was big time. He was heavily involved in that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did it finally get decided?



**Mr. Copeland:** The Highway Department finally accepted one engineering study and said, “This is correct. This is the best place to put it. We are going to build it on Evergreen Point.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And later, in hindsight, did that turn out to be a really good solution?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. As a matter of fact, if I’m not mistaken, once they got the tolls operating, I think they took the tolls off eight years ahead of schedule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** East Lake Washington area was just exploding with population. The bridge must have played some role in that too, I imagine. That’s a success story.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes. Another success story.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you weigh in on these issues? Did you have opinions about this or were you waiting for it to settle down?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had a strong opinion. I wanted to get the damn bridge built.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about mass transit? Was there any discussion at this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not even a subject.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had various other issues that you were involved with beyond your committee work: Washington Agricultural College became Washington State University that year. Did this mean some kind of qualitative change in what would be happening at the college?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. With university status, you can grant Ph.D. degrees in several disciplines, depending upon the colleges that

you have functioning. You see, Washington State College was granting a Doctor’s degree in veterinary medicine and maybe two or three others. By giving them university status, then they could create additional colleges. So at that time, it was an essential ingredient to the development of the higher education system in the state of Washington. Later on, Western Washington became a university; Central became a university; Eastern Washington became a university.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They began as teachers’ colleges and developed into something larger.

**Mr. Copeland:** Much larger, that’s correct. This was kind of the first step for a whole series of progressions throughout all of the institutions of higher learning in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any rivalry with the University of Washington?

**Mr. Copeland:** The rivalry always came on the basis of appropriations. In other words, you had x-amount of dollars and decided whether or not the University of Washington got more than their share. Institutions of higher learning were always in competition for the same dollars in the same pot. So they had to make their own case for the necessity of their appropriation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would they have tried to block this? Or would this be seen as inevitable?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would not have been in their best long-range interest ever to try to do that. If they would have any attempt to block that one at all, I’m here to tell you the future chairman of the Appropriations Committee would have remembered it. Now, the future

chairman of the Appropriations Committee was Bob Goldsworthy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that he was a very loyal alumnus of WSU, and his father, brother, and everybody that he knew, probably! That would have been a bit short-sighted.

That year, you also took a break from wrangling over other things and designated “Washington, my Home” as the state song.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, my goodness!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How do you choose a state song? Did people come in and sing various songs?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they did. Joel Pritchard did that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there rousing choruses? Did you all have to learn the words?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no! I don’t know if we would have sung it very well!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a state flower was chosen that year—the Rhododendron. You really passed valuable legislation!

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s good. I’m glad to hear that we did. Boy, we couldn’t have lived without that, you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** However, you didn’t quite pass the budget, so you had to have a special session from March 13 through the 27<sup>th</sup>. Despite those huge majorities that the Democrats had, they could not pass the budget. The issue seems to have been how to raise taxes. Like we discussed, some members were holding out for an income tax and other people were going with Rosellini’s plan of just upping the sales tax a bit and adding some nuisance type taxes.

**Mr. Copeland:** What he did was, he put little taxes—nuisance taxes—on a whole bunch of things. But the cute part was that it was going to include a penny a bottle—I think it was—on a bottle of soft drink.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that was kind of a hot issue, wasn’t it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was terribly hot. At any rate, the Legislature passed this big sack full of tax-increase bills, all nuisance taxes and sin taxes. But in there, there was a tax on soft drinks. One of the Democrat legislators was complaining bitterly about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Depriving children of soda pop?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but the Governor had to have the revenue; so at any rate they passed the thing and everybody went home. So what does the Governor do? He vetoes that portion out and says, “My, that was a terrible thing for the Legislature to do, tax those poor little kids.” At any rate, he had a bunch of Democrats mad at him because he told them they had to vote for it and they did and then he vetoed it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had second thoughts on it? But at least you finally got to go home.

## CHAPTER 7

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### REACHING OUT: INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were appointed to the Education Interim Committee in 1959, your first interim appointment. You had been on the regular Education Committee your first session and then had dropped off that committee your second session, so was this the way to keep your hand in on educational issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there something particular that drew you to this appointment?

**Mr. Copeland:** Please understand that heretofore legislative interim committees were rather limited. Not many members were allowed to participate, staff was limited or nonexistent and travel to remote places like Spokane out of the question. Senator Andy Hess went to his friend Al Rosellini, then the Governor, and got his blessing for the Education Interim Committee. Senator Hess then took it upon himself to hand-select members of the committee. I did not ask to be on the committee. He sought me out and asked if I would be willing to serve and said very specifically he would like to have me be there as somebody from eastern Washington. I, of course, was very flattered and accepted without hesitation. So he said, "Fine, I'll make

the arrangements and we'll get you appointed to the committee." I didn't recognize it at the time but other members of the Legislature were beginning to think of me as an "up and coming player" from a rather remote part of the state.

This committee had to be a pretty active. We held quite a few hearings around the state. This is one of our very first steps to have some legislative involvement in the interim.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was a brand-new committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a brand-new committee, but not only a brand-new committee. It was one of the very first committees that was created for a very specific purpose—the purpose being: education. We held meetings throughout the entire state—the first time the Legislature had held interim committee meetings on education statewide. This was the legislators' first attempt to get the public involved and to get themselves out of the box—the sixty-day box, where you're in session for sixty days and that's the end of it. So this was step one. The vehicle was education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a particular thing that you wanted to do or were you just out there to study what was and what could be, in a general sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there wasn't anything particular that we wanted to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering if there was some hot educational issue that pushed this or just a feeling that the Legislature needed to know a lot more than you did?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature needed to know a lot more. Let's back up. At this time,

the Legislature had no permanent staff. We had a desk on the floor of the House and the Senate. We didn't have a telephone number; we had one hundred first-class stamps. We didn't have long-distance phones—I mean, we were cut off from the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That organizational issue was certainly a growing concern for you. Had you also been very vocal on educational issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily, I just think Senator Hess was looking for some bipartisan talent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did he know that you would be keen to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no idea. He had served with me in the House a couple of years earlier. It was a wonderful opportunity for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Hess met with the Governor and requested that this interim committee be convened as an executive request, but it was actually his idea. Was education his special area of interest? What can you tell me about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was. He was extremely interested in education matters for a particular reason: it was big on the horizon and I think he was the chairman of the Senate Education Committee. So it was a natural thing for him to go ahead. He recognized that in the sixty-day time constraint that we had, there was not sufficient amount of time for the public to come to Olympia and make any comment about "education."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he express a sense of frustration at the lack of input?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. I think the real prompt was that the interim committees

in existence were: number one, the Legislative Council, which was a very small committee that was not funded very well and had limited staff. Number two was the Budget Committee, and it was really doing nothing but budgetary stuff. Nobody had a full-blown public type of arrangement throughout the state where the citizens could become involved, go to area meetings with a group of legislators such as this, and say, "These are our concerns about education." So the Education Interim Committee became a vehicle throughout the state of Washington, where the public could come in during an interim and make comments about the overall educational system. With this input, the Legislature could then go ahead and develop some legislation that would improve the public education system. This was done in conjunction with the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office and the budget drafters in the Governor's Office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This whole committee effort strikes me as a new departure not just as an interim committee of a new nature, but as signaling a much more activist and more interventionist approach. It tried to look at education very broadly. Let's discuss the different areas you examined. It was not piecemeal; it was the whole picture. And it was not the Superintendent of Public Instruction taking the lead; it was the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. I think this would be a hallmark of interim committee study for several reasons. Number one, it was touching on education, which is a huge requirement in the state of Washington as far the Legislature is concerned. Number two, this was the Legislature's first really major involvement in getting themselves out into the public, holding regional meetings and having public input. Prior to that time, the Legislature did little or nothing in the interim. I served for sixty days and went home and

did zero the balance of time—zip, nothing. I was on no interim committees, had no input, no knowledge of what was going on in state government, anything of the kind. Two years later I returned to the Legislature and virtually repeated the entire process all over again. So this interim committee was one of the very first steps in taking the Legislative branch of government right smack out to the people and saying, “Okay, we have this subject matter, let’s talk about it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This committee is a breakthrough, then, not only for education but for the legislative process?

**Mr. Copeland:** A real big breakthrough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It really struck me as I read through the report how hard you all struggled to get the most basic information, from the numbers of children in school to just how things were organized.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had a severe problem. The Legislature at this time was most assuredly not considered to be a co-equal branch of government. The Legislature was nothing more than somewhat of a pain in the neck. So consequently various state agencies dealt with the Legislature as “we have to placate them” type of an arrangement. Let’s take the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s Office (SPI). It was very difficult to get figures from SPI that were at all meaningful from the standpoint of the Legislature until this committee was formed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But I understand that if you didn’t support Pearl Wanamaker, the current SPI, when she wanted her budget passed that you would be in deep trouble!

**Mr. Copeland:** She didn’t want you to look at any piece of her budget. She just

wanted the entire thing. She didn’t want to have anybody scrutinize her budget for its internal applications or to see whether or not it contained legislative intent. We were going through this period of time where this business of legislative intent was becoming very important because later on we would pass appropriation bills with provisos that certain money would be spent for certain things. And two years, four years later, we would have some agency come in and we would say, “Did you spend the money the way we asked you to?” and they’d say, “No and what are you going to do about it?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you can only hear that so many times in a row and you start want to tighten things up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you see where we are coming from. This committee was a breakthrough—the first step of getting the Legislature out of this sixty-day, every-two-years mode and putting us out into the field. Senator Hess put some staff together and we were able to start holding public hearings throughout the entire state. So then we began to get information from the public, which we should, and we could put things together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this controversial? Were people against you doing this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Those people who were against things like this were those who were primarily in control and didn’t necessarily want the other legislators to know what was going on out in the hinterland. Some were very reluctant to have the public become involved because they might at some point down the line become a nuisance or become very well educated on the subject.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So keeping everything pretty close to the vest, so to speak?



**Mr. Copeland:** I would imagine that one of the people who swallowed really hard on this whole thing was Senator Bob Greive. All of a sudden, he realized this was a first step to challenge his power base. His power base was structured on the premise: “Don’t allow the public to look in the tent. Keep the process confined to a handful of senators. And don’t tell anyone in advance when you are having a committee meeting.” His process didn’t allow the free exchange, not only of information, but of ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anybody actively try to squash this?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no challenge. Maybe no one knew that it would attract such a degree of public awareness.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So just some private hand-wringing, but no public opposition? I imagine vocal opposition would appear as being against the schools? This is motherhood and apple pie stuff. It would be very difficult to speak out against this.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s look at the committee. Senator Hess was the chairperson, the vice-chairperson was a member of the House, Representative Don Eldridge, the secretary

was Senator Gordon Sandison, and you had three other senators: Web Hallauer, John Ryder, and Albert Thompson. On the House of Representatives side were Eric Braun, Clayton Farrington from Thurston County, yourself, and Frank Brouillet, who became of course, very big in education circles.

**Mr. Copeland:** He became the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a wonderful person. He and his wife Marge were dear friends of mine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You covered a pretty good geographic range—both sides of the Cascades, all parts of the state were included—which I imagine was the point?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. You can see that Senator Hess carefully selected the members for that very reason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you had a study director, Dr. James Nickerson, I think, from the University of Washington. The report praised his work and his staff support people highly. Can you explain to me how this worked to have five sub-committees based on different topics of study? I couldn’t quite understand the committee structure. Did you senators and representatives go to all the hearings or were you on different sub-committees? Did you, yourself, travel all over the state?



*Title page from the Interim Committee on Education Report, Washington State Library Collection*

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think every legislator member of the committee could possibly attend all of the meetings because of the time constraint and distance. But I know that we certainly attended a great deal of them. Hardly anyone missed a meeting. If you look at the names of the people that Dr. Nickerson and Senator Hess put together, this was really a very impressive group of fine citizens throughout the state of Washington who voluntarily gave their time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They also tried to get a big geographic mixture of citizens, different professional people and different types of people representing everything from trade unions, business, banking, agriculture, to Washington Water Power. They had a huge range of citizen input.

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no sense in studying education if you're only going to invite members in the WEA (Washington Education Association), the teacher's union. I mean, you'd only have one voice then. So this is why it was made up of this great big cross-section, which was just excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been really something to get all those people together. I imagine that with input from these hearings and other meetings, you acquired a large pool of knowledge—a lot of reports and opportunity to assimilate all this information. The very names of sub-committees were suggestive of the committee's breadth. I don't know if there was anything missing, but it seems like you covered pretty much everything I can think of that might have been an educational issue at that time.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'll just follow up with what you just said as far as the educational portion of this is concerned and address the final outcome. The final outcome was a report that

then became priority information for all other legislators to put this in their "must read" file. So now, for the first time, they had up-to-date information that had been extrapolated from throughout the entire state with public input. Never, ever before, had a legislator been presented with anything of this nature and in this depth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That just gave you a tremendous leg-up; you had something to work with now.

**Mr. Copeland:** Every single legislator could take an hour's time and go over the report and he would absolutely come away with knowledge that he had never had before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I must say reading the report, they didn't try to solve everything, but they posed an awful lot of questions.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's all we were trying to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To gain as much background and thought around each issue as anybody might require, unless you wanted to make a life-time study of it. Tremendous food for thought—that's how I saw it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. At the time that this report was written, for instance, there were probably less than two dozen people in the entire state of Washington who really understood all of school financing. One of them was my dear friend Charles McNurlin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many would be legislators?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably one, maybe two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yet you're responsible for this function.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but this idea of holding public meetings around the state was a major breakthrough at that time as far as the legislative branch of government was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been a somewhat emotional and heady experience to be that legislator showing up and having people come forward with ideas—I mean, it doesn't get closer to home than education—people's children.

**Mr. Copeland:** We started early in the day and those meetings lasted a long time. Parents and educators had done their homework. Look at the list of people on that advisory group. Boy, did they have things to tell us; they were excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel as a legislator that you had finally arrived at the reason why you went there in the first place? In the sense that you were getting “the goods” at last?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was beginning, for the first time, to understand that this was probably something we shouldn't allow to die on the vine. Trying to figure out what in the heaven's name people are interested in is difficult with only have one sixty-day cut at the ball and one interim.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this is very powerful.

**Mr. Copeland:** Extremely powerful. We were just seeing for the first time the real hunger and interest from the public sector.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before we really dive into this report, let us remind ourselves that in the late fifties, beside the legislative emphasis to do this, there was the social factor. This was the “baby-boom era.” You had schools

just bulging with children, including your own. And—you can see this little thread in the discussion—the Russians' achievement with Sputnik set off a big discussion about American education or lack of science and math preparation. You had best-selling books like *Why Johnny Can't Read* that criticized the schools and got people talking about education. There were all these things pushing on schools, new pressures that schools are supposed to answer. You had a pretty antiquated school structure that hadn't really been looked at since the twenties, the progressive era time. The Depression of the thirties and then the war years prevented many new initiatives, and now in the fifties, people had an infusion of new energy to look at these issues. There was a lot going on.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, goodness, was there a lot going on! During the war we as a society kind of postponed having children. Then after the war things changed. This business of settling down and having families was a very important part of life, and of course...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And not just two or three kids, but four, five, or six.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. It became very startling. This is why the sharp focus was on education. Are we prepared to handle this many children?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was not “here” in some sort of abstract-in-the-future sense, these kids were here now. It was a case of solve these problems now!

**Mr. Copeland:** It was right now. There were several things that were running concurrently with it. Number one, how do we handle the influx of kids in kindergarten, kids entering the school system? Then, number two, the committee said, “If they are in kindergarten

today, what is it going to be twelve years from now? They're going to be coming out of the other end of the pipeline. What do we need to do to equip the institutions of higher learning? "Holy-smoley, we better do something."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not quite adequate to the task. The other piece, of course, was that the society was getting more complex and the need for education itself was growing. What you could do with a high school diploma in the early days was no longer good enough. More and more people needed more training.

**Mr. Copeland:** This was such a huge legislative breakthrough because it grabbed hold of the big paramount issue of the state of Washington. Now when I say paramount, I mean not only paramount in the sense of educating the children, but the paramount from the standpoint of the total influx of children; paramount in the sense of what the Legislature was going to do down the line to not only for kindergartens, but for the first grade through college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what made it so exciting? This was *the* issue and this is what brought out the people; this was where the energy was going to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is the big breakthrough. Finally, we got the Legislature to take the first step and get off their duffs and out of their soft chairs, out of this biennial mode and realize that they have to become involved in the people's business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's your own business, too. What ages were your own kids at this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Two in grade school and one approaching first grade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was right there for you. You had it coming to you on lots of

levels. Let's look at the five subcommittees that you broke this massive study into: there was "education beyond the high school;" there was the "school finance organization committee;" and "efficiency and economy of school management." Of course, since you were going to need so much more money, it would be best to use it frugally. "Improvement of instruction"—actually what's going on in the classroom; and of course, "the teacher"—the training, recruiting, care and feeding of teachers, and eventually their retirement system. This was quite a list, but it does give a sense of the multitude of things that you looked at in this committee.

Starting at the top with the college issue, some of the things discussed were not only the need for more places for more college students, but more variety of what you could take in college—the expansion of the available programs. I imagine this had something to do with the changing nature of work and what people needed college degrees for.

**Mr. Copeland:** Running right along side of that—but not where there was a great deal of visibility—was the underlying current supporting the need for community colleges. I mean, if anything got pointed out in this report that did, subtle as it might be. At that time, we had a very few—two or three—school districts that were operating grades thirteen and fourteen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I understand what became community colleges were operated district by district, and that there was not a statewide system as yet. That school boards originally ran them and they were funded locally for local students.

**Mr. Copeland:** They had some state funding, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I mean local control of the funding, wherever it came from.

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the community colleges—they were not community colleges—they were extended education beyond grade twelve. Further down the line when we began to talk about the possibility of the advent of the community college, we ran into a great deal of resistance by some of the superintendents with a grade thirteen and fourteen in place who were interested in protecting their own turf. So they became the opposition to the establishment of a community college system. You see, the problem was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Several of the issues that you discussed, by implication, the solution was the creation of a system of community colleges?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a need for more variety; there was a need for post-secondary education that was not the four-year program; there was the geographic spread of this need—a lot of things, that in the end, were pointing at that big hole there, which became the community college system.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly! But this report was written in '59, and the community college program didn't pass until 1967. It took several years to get this in place. When the Legislature finally passed the community college bills, "Bing!" they took it completely away from the superintendents. Districts that had grades thirteen and fourteen in place were included in the new "community college legislation" and the control went to newly appointed community college boards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there was the question of vocational-technical schools. Were they part of a different system?

**Mr. Copeland:** The legislation didn't disturb

those at all. Some were highly specialized in certain fields for very special applications. There were also some technical-vocational schools in areas that were privately endowed—that were created by an endowment from some benefactor in that area and they continued to operate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let's say, the Boeing Company realized that it needed certain kinds of technicians and mechanics and wanted to set up some kind of a program to turn out these people with the proper training. Would it work like that or would it be more separate from the actual company?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think several of them were already in place. I know that there was one in Yakima; it's still in business now. It's funded partially by an endowment set up by a family by the name of Perry, the Perry Technical Institute. And then Bates Technical School in Tacoma.

But the real trick in the community college system was at least being able to go to a community college and take English 101 and have it as a transfer as an English 101 credit at the University of Washington or Washington State or another state supported institution. We went through this terrible period of time where students actually took 101 only to find out two years later that it was non-transferable. That was a terrible thing to do with students. This was just one of the problems that came about with the transition that we had to work through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Transitions always involve a little mess and agony for somebody! Another issue that you looked at involved the kids not ever making it to post-secondary education, but dropping out of high school and what was going to happen to them? There was that push for a more highly educated public and the workforce changes. Your committee looked at



how to keep kids in school. One of the things that they seemed to be suggesting was that kids needed more counseling and so you got the beginning of counselors in high schools coming out of this effort—to address the social work aspect of counseling as well as guidance for further education-type counseling. There again, information was scarce and kids didn't know how to get into college or they didn't know about the different programs. Their families couldn't get the information, so there was that gap. You seem to be trying to find ways to fill that gap for the public as well as yourselves.

**Mr. Copeland:** Once you create an educational system—I'm talking about kindergarten right on through college—there then becomes a need for two separate and distinct educational plans. First: assisting the student to prepare for college, such as course selection. Second: preparing the parents to understand their role in a college education—primarily the financial requirement, depending on the college selected. These two items are important, but at that time were virtually nonexistent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For many families, this was the first generation to go to college. College was not a big part of pre-World War II life. Only a small elite group went to college.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, it was expensive!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the sixties, there was more of a mass movement to go to college. This was the transition period.

**Mr. Copeland:** You were talking about persons subject to dropping out. Unfortunately, some of the schools have, through the years, allowed the counselor to be primarily interested in preventing kids from dropping out and very seldom trying to help the better-than-average

student. I remember on one occasion I asked a student, "Have you gone to see your counselor?" He said, "Heaven's no, the only people that go to see the counselors are those who were in trouble." The only time you ever see the counselor is when you are in trouble? It's a sad commentary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think that was quite the intention. What really struck me as I was looking through all this is, we talk about these days as being the age of information. Here was the beginning of people saying, "We need information; where are we going to get it?"

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. At this particular time—now this is prior to computers—we were still doing everything with the typewriter and if you wanted a copy, you added a carbon paper and if you made a mistake, you'd have to erase it—heaven forbid!

Smart kids at that time were not necessarily learning everything that they wanted to know, but they were learning where the information was. In other words, if a child wanted to know how did Frank Lloyd Wright come up with an idea for this particular building, he knew the book to go get in the library in order to be able to find the information. Was he smart? No, he didn't know anything about Frank Lloyd Wright, but he knew where to get the information. And unfortunately, it wasn't where you could sit down to a keyboard and doop! It comes up on the screen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a little bit of a delayed gratification there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. This is where a great deal of the emphasis on education was placed: Where and how do you get information? Well, at that time, the straight answer is from the library.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Libraries at this stage were really growing, too. The State Library finally came out of the basement of the Temple of Justice and got its own building. That development matches up with this new emphasis on information and getting information.

**Mr. Copeland:** And who was coming out of the basement of the Temple of Justice with the new State Library? Maryan Reynolds!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was not accidental that finally these programs were getting attention because they both are needed; they were part of the same system.

**Mr. Copeland:** And as a priority, education was the driver of the whole thing. So yes, who came out of the Temple of Justice kicking and screaming—Maryan! Did she belong in the State Library? Was she going to tear things apart in order to be able to get something done? You better get out of her way! Did she get it done—you're damn right!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She got a beautiful new State Library building, yes! It all fits together.

One more thing that you looked at was standards of admissions to colleges. They wanted testing, which I imagine grew into the SAT system we have now. Apparently, how you got into college previously was a bit arbitrary and people wanted more of a meritocracy rather than possibly who your family was.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They wanted a more standardized admissions process, more open, more accessible. And on the other end of the system, people wanted state support for kindergartens. Kindergartens had been in and out of the state budget, which must have

created a great deal of chaos in the classroom. One year you're funded, the next you're not. They wanted it made a solid part of the school system.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was a big issue. The problem that we had throughout the state was some school districts were offering it and some were not. And here again, it was entirely up to local control to make their determination. If I remember correctly, it was through public insistence of these hearings that I think the legislators came away with: "We want to have the program so it says: "K-12."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That brings up an interesting thread. Through all these discussions was the tension between local control and state control of education. You—the state—are the primary funder of education, but you didn't really control it. You were bumping up against the superintendents, county by county, the teachers, and the local school boards, where the state was recommending and handing down state mandates, saying, "You've got to have kindergartens. You've got to have these things; you've got to do it this way." "Here is the money," or not, in this case. And that tension runs through all the issues that you look at.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it's a normal thought process. "If they're going to give me the money, they're going to tell me what to do with it." I think the state just had to go with the policy now that we defined basic education; at least we wanted able to say, "Okay, 'K' is an appropriate thing for the state to finance."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you handle that issue? Were Republicans more for local control and keeping government close to the community? How did you feel yourself about that issue of defining the role of the state and the role of local school boards and districts?

**Mr. Copeland:** Either in this report or in subsequent reports, it became self evident that the end result was that those schools with a good strong kindergarten program had a faster-learning, better-prepared first grade than those without. So you got a double bang for your buck: number one, you got the kids in an education environment; number two, they were a quantum leap ahead of those that had not had that particular type of half-day experience. So the money spent here was giving us a better product.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes sense. Another theme that ran through the discussion is what some people called “the application of business methods and knowledge to public policy: How can we be more efficient, and what is our goal?” It’s a much more pragmatic approach and bumped up against old traditions, especially with small school districts that couldn’t afford their own high schools but wanted to cling to their little local fiefdom or whatever you want to call that. The state came in there and said, “Look, this is not efficient; this is not a good business method of running anything. You’ve got to get larger because then you can offer more and you’ll save money.”

**Mr. Copeland:** There were many school districts that did not have their own high school and it was just a case of a matter of distance more than anything else. So was this business of consolidating school districts somewhat of an essential ingredient? The answer was yes! It was a very essential ingredient. Did it decrease, in some degree, local control? Yes, it did. But at the same token, to justify a school district that maintains the Superintendent and a staff of teachers and the whole structure for maybe for thirty of forty students was not what you’d call efficient.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, it would impact what programs you could offer to those forty students.

**Mr. Copeland:** But here again, the public had to come to the realization: “Is that what you want to do? How much are you willing to pay? What do you want to have as your final product?” If the answer was, “My school district has only forty students. Our cost per pupil is extremely high. If we give up our local control and put our school children in the existing schools, are we going to be better off?” And they came to a conclusion all by themselves—yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there communities that resisted this, though?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. As a matter of fact, right where I lived we had a school district all by ourselves and we operated a grade school; we had almost two hundred students.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still considered tiny?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the past era, that made sense because if you had to walk to school or take the horse or whatever, you couldn’t get very far away, but this was in an era of better roads, faster cars, buses, so it was different. Perhaps it was time to catch up to the reality of shrinking distances between communities through better roads and the change that brought.

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the roads were improved, the buses were a heck of a lot better and you could find somebody who was perfectly willing to go ahead and drive a bus early in the morning and late in the afternoon just on a part-time basis. So this was one of those things that evolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Beyond dealing with numbers, there seemed to be a new recognition that there were children of many different abilities that needed to be served by schools. There were, on both ends of the spectrum, very gifted children and children with either mental or physical handicaps or both, or different combinations of needs. And those children were also being looked at in this study. Did handicapped children not go to public schools before? This was a new issue; what we call mainstreaming was not yet in place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Handicapped children who couldn't control themselves to the point where they were unable to take themselves to the bathroom and things like that—I know that they were not part of the public education system. How they were handled, I'm not really sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some state institutions but not enough, and then there was that grey area of kids who were somewhere in between needing institutionalization and not...

**Mr. Copeland:** You're not talking about thousands of students.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** My sense from the report was that this was an emerging issue.

**Mr. Copeland:** You're absolutely correct; you used the right words—an emerging issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And likewise for really gifted children, there had been no particular provisions. I suppose individual teachers would have helped them, but there was no organized way of really addressing that issue yet.

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember we had children

through school and for whatever reason, all of the sudden, they'd skip a grade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, skipping grades, that seemed to have been the answer.

**Mr. Copeland:** And this was the way that the districts had of handling the gifted child. So here again, we come back to local control. They made the decision, "Hey, this child is capable of doing fifth grade work so let's skip him to the sixth grade." Bang, then the kid was challenged.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another issue that you brought up—partly because people needed more education and also for efficiency reasons—was to use the buildings and facilities more effectively. You looked at year-round schooling or summer schools. You were very brave! You challenged the traditional school year.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me comment on the first part of your statement: "partly because people needed more education." These are the operative words that speak to the entire value of the Interim Committee on Education. However, the education of "people" was not limited to just "people;" the legislators and administrators needed the same kind of education. The use of buildings and facilities was just part of the large picture. We needed to do a complete update of the system. We were still operating in the nineteenth century.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The nineteenth century farming year model?

**Mr. Copeland:** In those days, the paramount issue was: "We had to get the crops in." That was all that there was to it. This is not that paramount now and so if you're going to redo the education calendar, you probably would have some schooling in June, July and August.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does seem like a sacred cow!

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. How we got to the current school year is easy to understand. How we get out of it, I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. One idea that was floated, which certainly didn't fly, was to rotate kids. Take two-thirds of the kids and have them go to the first two-thirds of the year and then rotate and have the next third or something like that. Use the school building year round, but not with all the kids present at once. But of course, people really flipped about that because they wanted all their kids in school at the same time; they didn't want to have parts of their families in school and part out, or their neighbors in and theirs out. It did, in practice, sounds chaotic, but again, there was an attempt to use the buildings to their fullest extent.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, utilization of the building is one thing and how much. It was back to that old saying, "Top end can absorb no more than the bottom end can tolerate." How much good is it going to do to keep students in school for eight hours if their retention period has been maxed out at the end of four? Quite frankly, I think students of high school age right now are perfectly capable of taking on more days than the one hundred and twenty that are currently required in any one particular calendar year. But I agree, now it is a sacred cow. It truly is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every once in awhile somebody brings it up; it hasn't gone away as an idea.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's kind of an interesting sort of an arrangement. Because of the fact we finance schools based on attendance, this has become quite a driver in making sure

that the children are at school during those required number of days. But when you stop and think what the Canadians schools do, which is interesting: they encourage children to leave during the wintertime if their parents can take them someplace. They take them to Hawaii and they take them to the Caribbean and they take them to South America, and then they give them their books to do their studies, but the Canadians said, "Go take your books. Mama, make sure that they read chapter thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen." And they don't penalize the schools if the child is on vacation because to them, that's a special learning environment and they encourage it. I'm not so sure that maybe we're a little backwards saying, "Oh, you've got stay here; you have to be here Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dollars are connected to seat time in our system.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, that is an interesting way of putting it. The system just does not leave much to the imagination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots to think about. We talked about the need to consolidate some of these smaller districts, get better service out of that, which smacks up against the county superintendent and the role of that person. You looked at all these structures and how decisions were made and how schools were administered. You were hitting up against some real turf battles! Again and again, you came back to the need for better information. There was a quite a push to create research centers both for teachers and for yourselves to get better information on what really worked in schools and what was really going on. I think that you tied their function to colleges; you wanted them to be a resource center for everyone. And you discovered that many school districts had no written policies. You



found a huge range from quite sophisticated urban systems to totally unorganized local areas.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let me throw this in. I think it became a realization after we began to talk to superintendents that the policy that the board had developed in this particular school was little bit different from the policies they had over here. This was okay, but we also came to realize that some school districts didn't write a contract.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For their teachers?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. What they did, they said, "We're going to hire you and this is the name of the game: You get paid so much, and the policy is the driver behind your functioning with regards to other teachers, what your duties are, and so on." It was the policy, not the contract. So some people had contracts and some people had very loosely written policies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you surprised at the fragmentation of these systems?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think everybody knew ahead of time that this was the case. Some people were operating on a policy that they never changed. I mean, they were just a small school district with four or five teachers and they had been operating that thing for thirty years. No, we weren't surprised.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There didn't seem to be much of an overall way for schools to talk to each other or learn from each other. Once it got down to the local level, there was no way to go back up and look at what other people did?

**Mr. Copeland:** Limited at best. All of the sudden, people at the top said, "How did you

guys ever get started this way?" Answer: "We started this way in 1865."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear!

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, that was their policy. If I'm not mistaken, some school districts had a policy not to hire a female teacher that was married. That was the policy. That was local control. They didn't want to hire someone who was married. If all of the sudden a teacher got married and she was gone. Now they had to hire somebody in the middle of the school year. They thought that was terrible, so they just put on the policy. "Only if you're an unmarried female, we're going to hire you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you were taking all this in, were you beginning to formulate some kind of an idea or some kind of image in your mind as to how it maybe should be?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think we were formulating in our own minds how we were going to bring the public into the twentieth century. But what is our basis for operation? Each school district in the state of Washington with a policy, none of which are duplicated. So what can we do now? All of these things are just kind of coming to the top, coming right smack out of the war effort, the Depression, and the economy is moving and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did have a little bit more money now with the economy in better shape, so you finally had the means to start addressing this.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was actually a hopeful situation. You had huge enrollment issues but you also had more money.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were trying not to raise taxes too much, so you were trying to be efficient—the whole efficiency question drives a lot of the discussion, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** The efficiency question got back to this business of operating school districts for forty children.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All these things were just ideas at this point. The idea of purchasing in quantity rather than every little unit getting their own pencils—to order a lot of pencils and break it down. This notion included buying insurance for buildings. You looked at that: “Buying in bulk would be cheaper, so we should do this.” And that approach tied into new methods for school construction where you should have more fire-proof materials, codes and things of that nature and more standardization of architectural drawings. All these things kind of ripple back and forth.

**Mr. Copeland:** I have to tell you about a personal involvement that I had with that issue. It’s kind of an interesting story. We were looking at all of these things that the school districts could do in order to be able to increase their efficiency and it suddenly became self-evident that one thing that schools all had, universally, was lockers. And I had in my legislative district a penitentiary and they had a great big stamping machine that made license plates and somebody suggested that they may be able to make lockers. So I went to the superintendent of the penitentiary and said, “Can you make lockers?” “He said, “I don’t know, we’ll find out.” The next thing I know, he’s stamping out lockers and he said, “What do you think of these?” I said, “Hey, they look like a locker to me. How much are they?” He said, “We haven’t run the cost on it, but I think we can knock them out for couple of bucks a piece.” Wow! So I got the school building industry rather excited about getting

these lockers made up in the penitentiary at Walla Walla. Suddenly, they started making lockers in their spare time because they had nothing else to do. They had punched out all the license plates that were needed for the next three years, so they started making lockers, and they made lockers like you can’t believe it. Soon, I had visitors from organized labor and they said, “You have to stop making lockers because you’re taking jobs away from organized labor.” I said, “Oh, my god, really? I never thought about it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other people made lockers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. “You are infringing on private enterprise and we have union members who want to make lockers.” Well, the pressure got so great that the prison discontinued manufacturing lockers and from there on, the lockers were purchased elsewhere. In the final analysis, all of the lockers came out of Detroit, Michigan, and not a damn one of them were made here in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So not only would they cost more, there was all the shipping and all that. And they didn’t provide local jobs at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. They just discontinued the lockers produced here at a fraction of the cost. Not a damn thing that I could do about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you were up against a greater force...

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was a good idea, but what the hell! That was part of the school efficiencies. There were an awful lot of inefficiencies in schools. The questions were: How best can we handle it? Who’s going to be the funding source, once we get them, and what is the method of distribution? The question of school building construction was big.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, you were building a lot of schools in this era. And many of the schools were in pretty bad state of repair, according to the report. They hadn't been fixed up for decades.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, during the war, you couldn't fix the buildings anyway. You couldn't get the materials; you couldn't get the labor; you couldn't get anything. So they were going through a period of time where there was nothing—they didn't lay a brick. So the buildings coming out of that period were in disrepair. Now that same building was required to hold a hundred more students. Did you build a new one or did you abandon it and go to a new location? Tough decisions!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, you did look at the whole issue of overcrowding and “what is a proper class size” and that is something that is still with us—what is the right number of students per teacher? That drives all kinds of decisions.

**Mr. Copeland:** You know perfectly good and well, there are some teachers that can probably handle thirty kids in a breeze and there is another teacher who couldn't take care of twelve. I don't think this is a case of where one size fits all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, you were having classrooms that were built for thirty with forty kids in them and just crammed to the hilt.

One interesting question that you brought up which reminded me of my own school days was the use of what they called “audio-visual equipment” and the special technicians that would run them. I remember those little film strips that we used to get and the big controversy about whether or not TV was something that should be used in schools. I don't know what you settled on then, but now, of course, the technology in schools issue has been transformed by computers, but here

was the opening salvo with this audio-visual equipment.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. I think the formation of this committee and its operation is evident that the Legislature in its own feeble way was trying desperately to stay ahead of the curve. And I think we were partially successful; it was certainly worthwhile because the alternative, of course, was not to do anything. And that was totally unacceptable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And to go at this very complex issue piecemeal doesn't add up to anything.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Let me also say this. The cooperation, understanding, workmanship, knowledge, input and the development of any final product that came out of this committee was done on a non-partisan basis. Partisanship was never an issue. We may have disagreed on a regional arrangement occasionally because of certain things. We may have disagreed on the height of funding because it was a priority, but we never had the Republicans gang up against the Democrats or visa versa. That was not even an issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that partly a choice that they made of which people would be on the committee—who could work in that nonpartisan way, or that was just that the issue itself was bigger than either of the parties?

**Mr. Copeland:** Partisanship was of such a minor issue in the legislative branch of government at that time. The majority of these people, I can say without contradiction, were far more interested in the end result for the state of Washington than they were in their own personal political gains.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another big issue was the ways schools were funded. That ripples

through every discussion that you were going to have for the next—forever. Where does the state get its money; how levies work; whether the tax structure served this well or not; who disperses the money? Can you describe what the system was, when you came into the Legislature—the levy system and the property tax assessment? Can you give us a baseline view of how schools were funded?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the money was allocated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction from the state General Fund with the proviso that it will be allocated to the various schools on attendance basis. There was a formula of “full time equivalents” (FTEs). High school students were one FTE, grade school students were one FTE, and kindergarteners were one-half FTE. So the amount of money that you received depended upon what was the range. The real problem that the school districts were always in was, if the Legislature got themselves in a crunch funding all of the necessary requirements, it was easy for the Legislature to short public schools. I will say that again: It was easy for the Legislature to short public schools because the Legislature knew that if the public schools got in trouble, they had a levy system to fall back on. No other agency of government that the state funded had a secondary source of funding. Now, this may be good or it may be bad, but it gave the Legislature the opportunity to not fully fund schools. So this is why levies became such an important ingredient in continuing to operate schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what would happen to a school district if their levy didn't pass?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then they were in trouble and the Legislature would do nothing about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they would just kind of tough it out?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what would you say would be the rate of levy failure or passage?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably less than ten percent failed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The poorer districts, I'm guessing, would be in trouble more often than the well-to-do districts?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily, sometimes those, when you say poorer districts, were given a huge tax proviso on a per capital basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Poor in the sense that the residents of that district might not be as well off.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, relative to the taxing base. The property in the area became the taxing base.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe how funding works, how it's tied to property?

**Mr. Copeland:** Within the geographic area of the school district, there is a certain amount of property. On the county auditor's assessment books, there is an assessed amount for that property and that becomes the tax basis for the purpose of the property tax. So some had a large taxing base per capita per student and some had a smaller one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So some districts wouldn't have the ability to raise much money because their assessments would be low?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. The assessment may be higher in the county with less property and lower than a county with a lot of the property.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And assessments were very uneven, too. Wasn't that part of the controversy?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think the unevenness probably was as great as an awful lot of people felt. Quite often the school districts that had a low-taxing base would pass special levies in a heartbeat. And some school districts that had a pretty good-size substantial base and for whatever reasons, either poor management on the school director's part or the superintendent, were unable to pass a levy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The basic problem with equalization was that some school districts had a lot more money than others.

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree. Now you're getting into the equalization formula. You're going to have to read back into Section Twenty-eight A of the RCWs and see when all that came about on the equalization formula. That came much later. There were many factors that leveled the playing field such as "federally impacted areas," those districts with military bases nearby. There are formulas on top of formulas that you have to work through. Clover Park gets special money that comes from the federal government because of Fort Lewis. How many people live in the area from the military? The federal government realized that they were impacting schools, so they give to the "local school district." Not the Superintendent's Office per se. So you have all these little curious quirks in the school funding formula. They just go on and on. But I am not an expert in school funding. I probably knew more than the average there, but I'm sure as hell not an expert. I am not one of those twenty-four people in the state of Washington that "understands school finance."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the issues that was brought up again and again was that funding

rested heavily on property tax assessment and the assessments were controversial. Some counties assessed what was called "true value" and others were nowhere near that and so it created this very uneven system. Members were beginning to discuss that in the Legislature—that school funding was based on this completely out-of-state-control method. And that it didn't work very well.

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, you touched upon several things. You talked about a policy within a school district; you talked about the size of the school district; you talked about whether or not they operated a high school in the district; you talked about what is their taxing base; what was the apportionment that they had, or the assessment and whether or not those were all uniform. So what you're saying in essence is, "Hey, look at what you guys did for the first time in the history of the Washington State Legislature. You created a committee to go out and find out the answer to the question: "Are there inequities in the public schools?" And all we did is develop a report that said, "You're damn right." That's what we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These issues were discussed for years after this effort. This report—there was so much in it that you got to chew this over for the next decade—two decades, still.

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no question about it. All this report did is say, "Yes, there are those inequities. It did not say, "Stop, hold the phone. I'm going to come out with one bill and it's going to absolutely completely solve every problem within the public schools."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that wouldn't even be wise because, of course, the situation is always changing, but it was just fascinating to see all these issues rolled up into one report that then could serve as several lifetimes work for legislators.



**Mr. Copeland:** Now stop and ask yourself, “What did the Legislature have as a basis of information prior to this report. What did they have?” Virtually nothing! They had zero for all intent and purposes. Was this worthwhile? Yes! Was this a big step far as the Legislature was concerned? In hindsight, it was a major step.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, I can see that. Were there particular issues in all these comprehensive lists that really grabbed you that you wanted to take as your own to work on?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they were monumental. As a matter of fact, I think probably what we both should do is go back and read Buster Brouillet’s book and find out if there was something he was so stricken with at that time that he felt that was something that he should take on as the Superintendent. Many of these issues that you brought up today are still issues that the Superintendents of Public Instruction are still wrestling with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He certainly worked on many of these issues. You can see him really coming to the fore in education circles with this activity.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think when Buster was the Superintendent, the ability for the Legislature to understand what he was doing improved immensely. He did a much better job of informing the Legislature than Pearl Wannamaker. She was protecting her own turf; she didn’t want to have the Legislature know to know what was going on in the department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting, as she came from a legislative background, as of course, did Buster Brouillet. Do you think Buster Brouillet’s experience on this committee

shaped his ideas as Superintendent of Public Instruction?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m sure it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This would have been a very formative experience, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, I don’t think he—or any of us—went through an experience like this without realizing the magnitude of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When we look at the bills that you sponsored in the next few years, this was very key. This was where you put a lot of energy. We will be coming back to all these issues, but this committee that you were on for just some months really shaped you as a legislator in a lot of ways.

**Mr. Copeland:** Two years. I think it shaped a lot of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So yes, you published this report and it was widely disseminated. Could you, over the years, see the impact of this report and see people working from it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. The report was well-read. Just as an example: the formation of the community college system began as a result.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly wasn’t sitting on the shelf. That’s good.

**Mr. Copeland:** In summary, of the monumental things that happened: The Legislature created the committee, assembled a great staff, held public meetings around the state and studied the problems, came up with recommendations. They produced and disseminated a long-range report of great value, on a nonpartisan basis, and all in record time. Now, that was a legislative first. Everybody connected with

these efforts gained a better understanding of the magnitude of the “big picture.” As someone put it, “We are about to start a two-inch object moving down a hose. And in some places the hose is only one-half inch in diameter. We better get ready, because sure as hell something is going to happen!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it’s a great image! Get ready!

## CHAPTER 8

### NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW ENERGY: THE SESSION OF 1961

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Serving on the Education Interim Committee was a big experience and then you had another election. If you were going to come back and solve this, you had to get re-elected. You had a bit of a cakewalk; there were no Democratic challengers. Both you and Maurice Ahlquist were again re-elected with no opposition. Of the two of you, you got more votes than he did, so you were evidently doing something right.

**Mr. Copeland:** We oftentimes ran unopposed. You were either doing something right or nobody else wanted this job!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's best not to look too closely at that! At any rate, that was a big election year. Governor Rosellini was running for a second term and the Republicans had a crowded primary gubernatorial election with Walter Williams Sr. and Newman Clark from the Legislature, and Lloyd Andrews, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, all vying to be the Republican contender. Walter Williams dropped out before the primary, I believe and then it became a race, with Lloyd Andrews as the candidate in the end. Lloyd Andrews was seen as not having comparable statewide experience; he was not as well-known.

This was a pretty messy gubernatorial election. There were a lot of charges flying around, some of them questionable. Governor

#### THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 9, 1961—March 9, 1961

Ex. S. March 10, 1961—March 31, 1961

**Governor:** Albert Rosellini

**Senate:** 13 Republican members/  
36 Democratic members

**House:** 40 Republican members/  
59 Democratic members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** John O'Brien

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Jeanette Testu

**Chief Clerk:** Si Holcomb

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder

**Sergeant at Arms:** Elmer Hyppa

#### House Republican Caucus:

**Floor Leader:** Dan Evans

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Damon Canfield

**Caucus Chair:** Don Eldridge

**Party Whip:** Tom Copeland

**Caucus Secretary:** Frances Swayze

#### House Democratic Caucus:

**Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore:** August Mardesich

**Floor Leader:** Mark Litchman

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Daniel Brink

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Robert Schaefer

**Caucus Chair:** Max Wedekind

**Caucus Secretary:** Mildred Henry

#### Freshmen Republican Members:

Pat Comfort, Jack England, Sid Flanagan, Helmut Jueling, Harry Lewis, Bob McDougall, Jack Metcalf, Charles Newschwander, Walter Williams Jr.

#### Freshmen Democratic Members:

Eric Anderson, C.W. "Red" Beck, Arnie Bergh, Jack Burtch, Richard Cecil, Bill Chatalas, Arlie DeJarnatt, Hayes Elder, P.J. Gallagher, James Leibold, Bill May, Drennan McElroy, Dick Poff, Richard Taylor

Rosellini was still battling the “Italian issue,” you might call it. There was still that sort of underlying and occasionally quite public tying of him with Mafia forces and sort of a vague smear campaign going on. There were issues about him being a Catholic and was he really supportive of public schooling? There was a lot of that sort of discussion.

Did the candidates travel around the state? Did they appear in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes. We’re just like any other community in the state. When somebody comes into town and is going to run for Governor, you go out and hear what they have to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember your own thoughts on this race?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I do. Let’s back up to the primaries. Of course, Zeke Clark was involved there. He’d been a member of the House and not a very effective legislator. Zeke was an attorney in Seattle, but he certainly wasn’t with one of the big high-power firms. And I always resented the fact that when Zeke lost the election—the primary—then he wouldn’t have anything to do with Lloyd Andrews, who won the Republican nomination.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wouldn’t get behind him?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He just disappeared?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he just walked off and said, “To hell with it.” He didn’t ask his supporters to back Andrews. Zeke took a walk. And then Governor Rosellini went on to win by a very close margin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think if he had, it would have tipped it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m not saying that it would have.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It might have played a role?

**Mr. Copeland:** It sure would have made a difference; I think Zeke was resentful that somebody from the eastern part of the state beat him, so he had nothing more to do with it. Apparently he could not bring himself to endorse a fellow Republican from eastern Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting! Earlier, you were at least somewhat supportive of Rosellini because of his work on the institutions. Did you want that effort to continue?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. When he ran for the Governor the first time, he said one of the things we have to address is our institutions. We had neglected them terribly and he was absolutely right. I had a big institution in my legislative district and I made numerous trips up there, far more than I really wanted to, but I became very, very familiar with it. And the place was abysmal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He made big strides. Did that color your view of who should be the Governor?

**Mr. Copeland:** That had already been decided. As Governor he did what he said he wanted to. Give him credit for that. Sure, when it came to Governor Rosellini’s impetus on the institutions, I applauded it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wondered if you felt somewhat torn.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not by the Governor. I was very resentful of the way I was treated in the House. The two sessions that I

went through—the '57 Session and the '59 Session—in which, on both occasions, the House passed the budget and there wasn't a single printed copy of the budget ever delivered to the legislators prior to the vote. I resented that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were being asked to rubber stamp something you couldn't examine?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right and I just thought it was an atrocious way to do business. I didn't give a damn who was in charge. But the Governor and John O'Brien and Bob Greive, that's the way they ran the shop. If they didn't give you a copy of the budget then you couldn't bitch about it, I guess. But did I think that Governor Rosellini was a good Governor? I think he was doing what he got elected to do; there is no doubt about it. Were there some things that he did that I think it were great? Absolutely! Did he do some things that I thought could have been done better? Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty much what could be said about any Governor, I guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think about his Italian immigrant background that people were in such a turmoil about?

**Mr. Copeland:** That shouldn't be an issue at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the national level, it was also a factor in the Kennedy/Nixon race where, again, religion played a role in the debate. Did you follow that election pretty closely?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, anybody in politics did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the first time that television had played quite a role in the presidential election. Did you happen to see the famous debates? I'd be interested to hear what you thought of them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I thought both candidates did a wonderful job. As matter of fact, I think everybody came away a winner, the public included.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it feel like a new era in politics, using TV like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no question about it. Did it have an impact? Tremendous impact! Did the people and the press really appreciate it at the time? Hell, no! The hard-copy press was trying to downplay the impact of television.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Watching it, you recognized at the time, "Hey, this is big!" This was going to change things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. It took politics from the standpoint of "out of the backroom, cigar-smoke filled environment" to publicly show two young men who had just come out of getting their butts shot off during World War II, two people that had basically two different philosophies on what they wanted to do and where they wanted to take the country—and how best they articulated that was truly on the line. And from that standpoint, it was just monumental.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You met Nixon, of course, since he had been through Walla Walla as Vice President. How did you feel about him as a politician and as a leader?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that was a couple of years later. He was just one fine politician; he did lots and lots of campaigning and knew



how to do it, and he handled himself extremely well. Very knowledgeable. His wife, boy, she was a trooper, too!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what it takes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, man! The commitment that you have to make and the hours on any given day or week that you have to give up and what you're going to have for lunch and where you go. It's just something enormous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of Kennedy? This was when he really hit the stage.

**Mr. Copeland:** I just thought that he was a fresh breeze on the Democrat horizon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So his message really was new?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, there is no question about it. I mean, from Lyndon Johnson, the good old boys and all that. You know the famous story about Lyndon Johnson when he first got elected to Congress? Somebody went down to one of the county sheriffs in the district and said, "Sheriff, I understand that Lyndon got two hundred and eighty votes here, but you only have one hundred and nineteen registered voters." Well," he said, "Lyndon's very popular here." "Can we look at the ballots?" The sheriff said, "What are you talking about? I'm the head election officer." "But I want to count the ballots." "I turned in the totals and I burned the ballots. Lyndon is a good ole boy!" replied the sheriff. That was the image that people had of "politics." All of the sudden, they looked at John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon as something other than the product of the Lyndon Johnsons, Franklin D. Roosevelt...backroom-smoke bill type of arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something new?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was just a totally new era.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a politician yourself, did you feel inspired?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. I think both those men—of course, they were both relatively young at the time—I think they inspired a lot of people to get politically activated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a big election year—a presidential election, a gubernatorial election, your own election. Maybe a fresh new sense of energy for you, just coming from this big experience of the Education Committee.

In 1959, you had had fourteen Republican members in the Senate to thirty-five Democrats, and thirty-three Republicans in the House to sixty-six Democrats. You were a very tiny presence. That began to change with this election. You lost one seat in the Senate, but in the House you gained: forty Republican members to fifty-nine Democrats. You still had a big gap, but did things look more promising?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The Republican freshmen I remember were: Bob McDougall, Sid Flanagan, Harry Lewis, Pat Comfort, Jack England, and Walter Williams Jr.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You felt like you were having some positive movement there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also had new Republican leadership in the House. Zeke Newman, for instance, left the scene. At your Republican convention in Spokane that year, Dan Evans became the leader of your House caucus. I am

assuming you went to that convention. Can you describe how that leadership evolution/revolution took place?

**Mr. Copeland:** It evolved. I think it was with Dan and Joel Pritchard and myself and two or three others. We just kind of got together and Dan indirectly indicated interest in becoming the floor leader. And we had three others volunteer: Damon Canfield as Assistant Floor Leader, Don Eldridge as Caucus Chairman, and myself as the Whip.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did certain people just kind of rise head and shoulders above other people and became obvious new leaders or how did the selection process come about? Was it the small circle of people that made those decisions or was it a movement that could be felt by all the Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** That whole process came together very quickly and smoothly. It was just by acclamation and the whole slate was elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any resistance or was it just clearly time for new leadership?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, time for new leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The former leaders like Elmer Johnston and Lincoln Shropshire—they were still there though, weren't they? Did they just bow out?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very gracefully. They sat together this session, but this was Shropshire's last session. They just didn't want to grab hold of anything. Elmer never wanted to be in the leadership. Elmer could not stand controversy; he just wanted to be the good old boy—very important to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I understand from what others have said that his whole leadership strategy was to get along with John O'Brien, and get the crumbs from that table for the Republican Party, and that your group wanted to be a little bit more dynamic than that.

**Mr. Copeland:** You got that right, absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you meet prior to the convention and kind of work this out or how did this actually come about?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, there were a couple of occasions where several of us met at the Washington Athletic Club and discussed leadership roles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were emerging as a "mover and shaker" in the party at that time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I decided at that time, "If you want to sit around and do nothing, that's fine and dandy, but I was going on and going ahead and start knocking on the doors." I think I arrived at the time where I was so sick and tired of this whole backroom type of politics thing I was either going to change the entire operation of it or I wasn't going to waste my time. I had been attracted to the Legislature as an institution and knew full well at that time that there was no way the Legislature was a co-equal branch of government. It was probably running twelfth in a thirteen-horse race.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not too impressive!

**Mr. Copeland:** No, and I was not all impressed with the institution or the information that it was putting out to the public or providing to the average legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when the new leadership group came in, did you take a look at the different committees and structures and meet and evaluate how you wanted to go about changing the process? Did you have some ideas in place?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't have the opportunity. John was still the Speaker, so he just created the committees to accommodate his members. All members of the majority were going to be committee chairmen or on the Rules Committee. This was John's format.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still worked for some, then. John O'Brien was having his own difficulties. When you came into the session, his election to the Speakership was contested—not there on the floor, but in his own caucus. Leonard Sawyer came forward and challenged John O'Brien. I know you weren't involved in that contest, being of the other party, but you must have caught a whiff of it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about that particular challenge?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, Bob Greive was still Majority Leader in the Senate and with John O'Brien the Speaker, rather than someone new like Len Sawyer, it was just going to be more of the same-old, same-old.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would you have welcomed this challenge? Was Leonard Sawyer a different kind of legislator, more along the lines you were wanting? Did he want to be a different kind of Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** Would Len's challenge have been welcomed? Certainly. Len was as frustrated as we were with the process. I think he was trying to break out of a mold and he just couldn't get the job done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was a tie vote. The old Democratic leadership group maintained itself, although just narrowly. But I'd like to go back and talk more about the change in your Republican leadership during 1960, after the election. As we saw, you had a whole new leadership group come in to replace Elmer Johnston and Newman Clark and those long-time leaders. Dan Evans emerged as the Floor Leader, Don Eldridge as the Caucus Chair, Damon Canfield as the Assistant Floor Leader, Mrs. Swayze as the Secretary and yourself as the party Whip. Could you explain the significance of that? That's a wholesale change.

**Mr. Copeland:** That particular change of leadership came about because previous leadership was not functioning very well and had little or no communication with the balance of the caucus. For whatever reasons, the previous leadership group kind of held themselves to be a cut above everyone else. And I remember my freshman year, they had a policy that the Republican leadership would select a freshman for one day and they would invite you to have lunch with them so you could become better acquainted with the leadership and their policies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You apparently had nothing to contribute yourself as a freshman?

**Mr. Copeland:** That, of course, was the assumption: that all freshmen had nothing to contribute and so therefore, they would condescend to have lunch with you one day during the session to explain their particular philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me about this lunch, your experience?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was held in one of the committee rooms. The Republican leadership

would make arrangements with the lunch room to send up sandwiches and coffee and we'd sit down and they would look at you and say, "Oh, what is it that you have on your mind, little boy?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel bit like a school boy coming to the principal's office?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, totally demeaning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It put you in your place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not me. It was certainly an awakening and a strong hint of the things that were going on in the institution that obviously were not going to exist very long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they so out of touch as to feel that this was a gracious gesture, rather than a bit of an insult?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have to be fair to the House Republican leadership at that time. They only worked the problem for sixty days every two years and could care less the remaining months. Lincoln Shropshire as the minority leader would go back to Yakima and never be heard from. Elmer Johnston and Zeke Clark never got out of the city limits. They were still living under the regime of the John O'Brien and had for a number of years. John was going to take care of his leadership group if they didn't make too many waves. This group became very comfortable in their minority position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they could not even imagine the Republicans being the majority party?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think they even wanted to be in the majority. I don't think they wanted to assume the responsibility. I don't

think they really had the guts to be able to say, "Yes, we want to be responsible; we have the direction." At that point, with the help of Damon and Dan and myself and several others, we said, "We're going to change this. There is something inherently wrong with this process where you don't have people that are interested in being responsible." So, was it a wholesale turnover? You bet, it was wholesale!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much of the caucus do you think was seething under the pall of this old leadership?

**Mr. Copeland:** The following of the old leadership had eroded by the end of the first thirty days and new players were looking for changes at the next session. Slade, Pritchard, Andersen and several others had joined us and they too could see that the changes were to come soon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your relationship to John O'Brien? How did you feel about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** John and I always had a very cordial relationship. John liked me personally very much and we had an excellent relationship. He knew where I was coming from at all times and obviously I knew where he was coming from at all times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And where would you say that was? What was John O'Brien's perspective? What did he represent? What was his agenda other than being the Speaker? Previously, you said that Senator Greive had no agenda other than being a Majority Leader, but was that true about John O'Brien?

**Mr. Copeland:** John was trying to set a record, and he did. He became the nation's longest serving member of a state legislature

in history. I think the record still stands today. John had a far better understanding of state government than Bob Greive, but he never did have an opportunity to develop a long-range, comprehensive plan. He really enjoyed the status quo or working someone else's agenda. Governor Rosellini set the agenda.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But wasn't holding a leadership position "for something?" Did he want to do certain things, promote certain policies?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if he wanted to promote certain policies. He wanted to remain as Speaker but the problem John had was he was engrained with the procedure, as was Bob Greive. He was engrained with the procedure of not informing the public on what was going on, the continuation of total maintenance of secrecy within committees. The questions of when a committee meeting was going to be called, of when was the committee chairman going to even hear a bill, he was part of controlling access to the answers and so he and Bob Greive—and even Al Rosellini—through the years perpetuated this closed-door "good old boys" society within the environment of the Legislature. So the institution of the Senate had adopted it and John perpetuated in the institution of the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when he saw your group coming to the fore, was that like the handwriting on the wall that things are going to be different?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if he necessarily saw it coming as fast as it did. I think Don Brazier probably put his finger on the main point that catapulted the Evans campaign. It was the public power issue in the 1961 session that became the focal point, an issue that then became the driver of some really dynamic changes within the Legislature. I don't think

that John recognized at this time that the public power issue was going to be the one main issue that would produce a dramatic change in state politics and his political career.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even his own biography indicates that he didn't realize he was going to have a run for the Speakership in 1961. He assumed it was his and didn't see the Leonard Sawyer forces gathering ground either, which was much closer to home to him than what the Republicans were doing, of course. So that year it actually took several votes within his caucus for him to win the Speakership and that must have been a bit of a shake-up. The first vote was twenty-nine to twenty-nine for John O'Brien and Leonard Sawyer and the second vote deadlocked again and then apparently they brought in Augie Mardesich to break the tie, but this time John won.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was held in the Democrat caucus. We Republicans were not in attendance. We only heard about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you heard about it, did you realize that the wall there was not as solid as it might have appeared? That the Democrats themselves were restive and a new generation, like in your own party, was coming into the scene?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if anybody at that time could have perceived a big split in the House Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even beyond this struggle for the Speakership, Frank Brouillet, John Goldmark and different members were, much like yourselves, expressing their frustration with the old regime and were saying something to the effect, "We didn't trust our leadership. They didn't tell us anything, so we wanted to figure it out for ourselves." They were staying late and reading the bills and getting on top



of the process in their own way, somewhat mirroring what you were doing in your party. I thought that was amazing congruence of new energy.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure that the frustrations Buster Brouillet had were the same as I had as far as the institution was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if you communicated about this feeling at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, we did communicate about our frustration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think Washington State was going through the same throes of change as other states? Did other states have as much secrecy as Washington? Was there new "fresh air" coming through and were people all over the country starting to question the way things were done? Were you part of a larger movement?

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer are yes, yes, maybe and no. I was just starting to have the ability to visit other states at that time. Later on through the years, I did and I saw other states bogged down in the same morass as the state of Washington. They simply couldn't get themselves unshackled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Washington a leader in opening up state government? I'm just trying to get the context where you fit in the big picture.

**Mr. Copeland:** We ultimately became the leader; we became the envy; we became the example—yes. In '61, '63, '65, the Legislature just made great huge strides. We just jumped right in to it, like with the advantages of the computer and our exchange of information, our scheduling, and our publications. Then later, we were inundated with other states

coming to visit us, to see what the heaven's name was it the state of Washington was doing that was so good. As a matter of fact, we even had a congressional delegation come and say, "What do you mean, you have all of your Revised Code of the state of Washington in a machine-readable form; what does that mean?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A revolution, for sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** And the Congress didn't even have that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I remember reading in the Legislative Council papers of a year or two before that there was a big discussion about not using the State Printer to print bills, but using what sounded like an early form of a Xerox machine to, in effect, take pictures, so that the proof reading aspect of reprinting would be taken care of and that there would be more copies that could be made available. That was a change in technology and in perspective but it must have rippled through your process in rather big ways.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had to repeal a law that said that the State Printer had to print all the bills. We were working off two sets of bills—one was the original typewritten bill and the other was the printed bill. The size and forms were different and the page numbers were not always the same.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The numbered lines would be different and then people would get confused. It seemed to be just rife with the possibilities for mistakes. And all those poor freshmen having to proof-read all the bills seems like a colossal waste of time.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was a colossal waste of time, there is no question about it. Proof reading was done by a separate committee

that John appointed. We had to sit down and read the printed bill and compare it with the original typewritten bill to make sure that everything was correct, that the amendments went in properly. It consumed a tremendous amount of legislators' time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose it was kind of a school for learning about the bills, but probably not the most effective use of your time.

**Mr. Copeland:** Learning, yes. Most effective use of time? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's good to keep note of these small changes that were going to add up to big changes as we discuss these years in the Legislature.

As a party Whip, can you tell me a little bit more about what your duties were?

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess my duties were not necessarily limited to "any of the above." The four of us would meet frequently with the leadership of the majority party, plan and go over the floor agenda and go over the workings of the House. On an individual basis, Dan would meet daily with the Speaker, Don would preside at the caucus meeting, and I would accept special assignments to work with the Democrats on issues of mutual interest. This leadership group developed a method of sharing information within the caucus of pending bills that may be of some interest to others. We never made any huge, monumental decisions unilaterally if there were policy things. We'd always go back to the caucus and have a full understanding of the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that a new relationship with the caucus where you're bringing them issues and having a real discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, oh certainly. As a matter of fact, one of the very unusual things we started in the caucus was implemented right in the very first weeks of the session. We set aside time in the caucus for every member of the caucus to get up and say, "Now, this is a particular bill that I'm interested in for my community or my legislative district. I'm sponsoring this bill—or I'm going to sign on or whatever it might be—and these are my reasons for it and it's highly desirable for me and my district." We would have that caucus time in order to be able to understand. And somebody else would get up and say, "Well, I have a very similar bill, but mine is drafted a little bit differently ...it's still trying to do the same thing. Maybe we can put the two bills together and have them amount to something."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Be more efficient?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. It also gave an entire caucus an opportunity to understand what the other fellow's problems and interests were. So now we have shared information where previously, the leadership didn't want to entertain that; they wanted to make the decisions. This was a big change from, "What is it you have on your mind, little boy?" from previous leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So legislators lost their feelings of isolation. The spirit in your party, it must have taken a quantum leap here? You are colleagues all of a sudden and could help each other more.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, certainly. Not only did we take a quantum leap there, we took a quantum leap in our understanding and perception of problems in other portions of the state. All of the sudden, we were coming up with pretty damn good legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There must have been more common ground.

**Mr. Copeland:** Our caucus took on a new attitude of cohesiveness. And we were entering a new era of bipartisan sponsorship of bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what would happen to House bills when they hit the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the graveyard?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not necessarily. Sometimes members of the Senate would try to hold a bill hostage until “their bill” passed. Other times you would have to convince the committee chairman to move your bill. This of course required a little skill and finesse. Each bill required separate attention and took a separate path and involved different groups of players. Suddenly, the realization came back to the Senate that these guys over there in the House were putting together some pretty damn good comprehensive legislation, drawing public support. These bills were not put together with personal interest, personal desires, or things like that, so the texture of legislation from the House took on an all-together different attitude than bills coming out of the Senate. The Senate was still producing bills that would have a court appeal attached or would be for a special interest group or as a favor to a friend.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there some counterparts of this new thought in the Senate, though, chaffing under this particular regime? Did you have some allies over there who you could work with?

**Mr. Copeland:** Marshall Neill, the Senate Republican Caucus Chairman, was a

wonderful, wonderful guy. He was so happy to see this happening. And John Ryder was the same way. But there were also some senators who had come out of the House and gone over there and they started to recognize, “Hey.” So all of the sudden, what were we finding over there? That we had friends and allies. We found Senator Gissberg and Senator Durkan. Later on, we had Web Hallauer. We had Frank Foley, who would help us from time to time. Later on, Augie Mardesich.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He came out of this group in the House and moved over to the Senate.

**Mr. Copeland:** See, those people transferred from the House so they began to recognize, “Hey, we’re out of that environment. The environment in the House changed. Now, we’re going to the Senate and they’re still living under Greive’s process.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly some of the members who you just named challenged him for the leadership position.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. So this is what we did in ’61.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s get back to the Speakership issue in the ’61 session. John O’Brien did finally prevail, and brought enough members over to his side and was elected the Speaker. According to various accounts, that did not end the issue. There was, reputedly, this constant feeling of dissatisfaction in the Democratic caucus, which influenced the tenor of the session.

One of the very first things that happened in that session was the Legislature overrode Governor Rosellini’s veto of his salary increase from the previous session. He basically “invented” the line item veto and pulled his own salary increase from the list of those being granted raises.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** According to his version, it was because he was about to ask for a tax increase and he didn't want to be getting a salary increase simultaneously with asking for more money from the people. First of all, what did the Republicans make of this invention of the line item veto? It went to court...

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature in the previous session had granted salary increases to elected public officials. The bill delineated each public office and specified how much the change would be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they all tied together by a formula, proportionately?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there was no formula; they were all different. But the bill itself said the Governor's salary will be, for example, "\$50,000," or whatever. And then, it is my understanding he just drew a line through the entire line of printed material. He very carefully vetoed out that one line referencing the Governor. He did that after the Legislature had gone out of session and were no longer in town. So now we came back in the 1961 Session, and the first bill that we have is the Message from the Governor, "Do you remember, Legislature, I vetoed this particular such-and-such." How did we perceive that? Well, we perceived it as number one, a wonderful political ploy. "Oh, I couldn't possibly take this large salary; I know what I was going to get paid when I ran for the office," and things like that. That was number one. Number two, this was the very first attempt at a specific one-word veto and it went to court and the court upheld it. So Al Rosellini's veto of his salary was virtually meaningless compared to the big picture when the State Supreme Court said, "You may take out one word."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could a Governor then take out a "no" or a "yes," a much bigger issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm not sure if they would have allowed you to take out the "not" word.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would a veto still have to follow legislative intent somehow—or could it change it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. Could he change legislative intent? You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm surprised that the Court thought that was okay.

**Mr. Copeland:** They are reading the constitution and that's what they came up with. So now, what did Rosellini accomplish? He accomplished "cherry picking." I guess this is about as good an example as you can have. And he did that in great shape, but what happened four years later and eight years later? Dan Evans used it like you couldn't believe!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a legislator, weren't you a little alarmed when the Governor can do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well certainly, we had to have a constitutional amendment in order to change it. So that didn't come until several years later. It was legal so you couldn't say that it was an abuse of power. But this business of one-word veto, Al Rosellini did it, but Dan Evans did it so far much more. Governor Evans maintained an attorney in his office to do nothing but read bills and change the bill to do something that he liked. Some of his one-word deletions were absolutely exquisite.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What does that do to the legislative process that you just went through to pass a bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the Legislature began to realize that they were being duped into doing certain things. So they began to write bills very cleverly where it was difficult to take out one word or a phrase and still maintain the meaning. We started being very careful as to how we wrote the bills in order to be able to avoid that situation. The best way was the use of very short sentences.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Obviously, you couldn't foresee all that the first time this happened, but did you have some kind of discussion about the balance of powers?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't until the Governor began to utilize this particular selective vetoing. Then we recognized the fact that on occasions, legislative intent was being thwarted. Governor Rosellini went through his first few years and nobody even thought about tampering with it. Dan got in and he started using it. Later on, there were several attempts made to get it changed and Dan did not want to have it changed. He loved it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's quite an interesting tool.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh! An interesting tool! The press got after him pretty badly because he was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting a little carried away?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, maybe just a "little." I'm being kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that Governor Rosellini then lobbied to get his salary raised. The funny thing is he was so paid such pathetically small amounts of money that it's just hard to say. For the chief executive for the entire state, it was just paltry.

**Mr. Copeland:** What was the salary? Thirty-five thousand dollars a year? I think there were just about three states in the nation that had a salary less than that, but it was ridiculous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting back to our discussion of the opening of session, Governor Rosellini gave his inaugural address and then his budget message and he indicated that with all the changes and all the studies that had been made, he was ready to increase taxes and further certain programs. Especially for Institutions.

In his second term, he was no longer holding back in any way, as he did at first, from increasing taxes. But he didn't specify how much of a tax increase or how he was going to get it or if programs would have to be cut or exactly how he was going to do this. Dan Evans responded pretty aggressively. Actually, it was very notable throughout the House Journal that the Republicans were right there every time something happened and they were responding. Nothing was going by you! Let me read this Resolution by Mr. Evans: "Whereas, the Governor in his budget message"—etcetera—"had proposed the General Fund expenditures by the state of Washington being increased by approximately one hundred fifty-five million, five hundred thousand dollars in the next biennium;" whereas, (paraphrasing now) he has revenue sources that take care of only a small part of that, and then "yet the Governor has failed to specify the taxes which he would increase to provide the funds he believes that are necessary and has abdicated any responsibility for selecting the taxes which are to be increased; whereas, the Legislature believes that the executive branch of government which proposes such large expenditures owes a duty to the people of this state and to their elected representatives to outline specifically the methods by which it believes these expenditures can be made



within the framework of a balanced budget; now therefore, be resolved”—and then it requested the Governor to supplement his budget message by specifying the taxes or by submitting proposed legislation on in that fashion. This was not adopted, however.

**Mr. Copeland:** No! (Laughter)

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like the House Republicans were putting the Democrats on notice. There was much stronger message coming through, on all the different issues.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this part of your plan?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Okay, if you’re going to go with all these new programs, how do you intend to pay for it? Don’t say, “I want to have all these new programs” and turn to Legislature and say, “You make up your mind on how you’re going to do it. We don’t know.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This message comes up at least three times where you again and again say, “Where is it coming from?” It’s your response to the Governor.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. We had an awful lot of Democrats that really supported our position in this. What kind of communication do we have from the Governor’s Office about raising this tax? Is he going to veto it? One of the glitches was an increase in sales tax on soft drinks, as we said earlier. And he absolutely insisted on that increase and the Democrats very reluctantly went ahead and put it in the tax package. After the session was over, he vetoed that section out and said, “Oh, I couldn’t possibly put a tax on the kiddies’ soda pop.” He infuriated a number

of the Democrat members of the Legislature, ones who truly...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who took the hard vote?

**Mr. Copeland:** A painful, hard vote at his insistence that it be in there. They took the hard vote on it only to have him veto the thing out to make himself look like the hero and like they didn’t know what the hell they were doing. “Bunch of dummies putting a tax on children’s soda pop. My, my, how terrible!”

But here again, Dan was only trying to articulate Republican policy. “If you want to have more programs, where do you intend to extract the money in order to be able to pay for them? Don’t give us this nebulous arrangement of ‘We have to have these social programs; we need this, we need that and we hope we’re going to be able to come up with the money.’” This is not good, responsible government. The Legislature was trying to be responsible: “If you want the programs, how do you intend to pay for them? Show us the taxes.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather that the income tax idea was floated and it hung up the whole session. The Democrats didn’t want to go with the nuisance taxes and all the other little things, but they couldn’t bite the bullet on the income tax either and that’s what drove you into special session; you couldn’t finalize a budget.

There was a very curious thing that happened in early February, which I want to run by you. I’m not sure if it relates to our previous discussion, but there was a revolt of freshmen legislators—a bi-partisan group—who provided a list of grievances: “Whereas, the freshman members of the House conducted an important caucus during the evening,” where they discussed these issues, “Whereas, freshman members are required to supply furbelows such as expensive merchandise

such as cigars and candy in order to obtain passage of legislation important to the welfare of this state.” There are several things in here that are somewhat tongue-in-cheek but I think—I’m guessing—there was a core of truth and exasperation felt in this group, that they did not want to be treated this way. They didn’t want to have the old tradition of the cigars and candy and the flowers and all the little ceremonies that seem to be part of the legislative process. They wanted to do away with these traditions and be treated seriously as freshmen. Am I reading this correctly?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But you’ll notice in that it’s not just Republican freshmen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it’s very mixed, it’s both sides.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is nothing more than another class of a freshman class trying desperately to tell John O’Brien and Bob Greive that they don’t like the process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They want the following new practices: They want better positions in the cafeteria lines, they want cigars and chewing gums to be placed on the desks of all freshmen each morning. They’re kind of being cute, but I think that they’re actually trying to make a statement that’s pretty serious.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. What was the outcome of the resolution?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was no outcome. “Debate ensued”—the famous phrase—the motion was lost and the resolution was not adopted. But I suppose they made their point. Did you understand it that way, that they were saying, “No more of this.”

**Mr. Copeland:** I understood it. They were just telling John O’Brien that this business

about as a freshman legislator if you get a bill passed then you have to buy candy and cigars for everybody in the House, that’s a bunch of bullshit. “I’m sure it’s a tradition and all that. I could care less about the tradition.” But over in the Senate, they had Senate Rule 40, that you couldn’t smoke. Well, they would come in on the floor of the Senate in the morning and somebody would smoke a cigarette and all of the sudden, somebody would get up and say, “Mr. President, I noticed that Senator So-and-So is in violation of Rule 40.” So somebody had to get up and say, “I move that the Rule 40 be suspended today.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What good is a rule like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, but you see, if you are in violation, then the President of the Senate would say, “You are in violation,” and Charlie Johnson, who is the Sergeant of Arms, would go up to the member who is in violation and extract twenty dollars or something like that and buy cigars for everybody. I don’t know what cigars cost but I think they cost fifteen bucks and Charlie put five in his pocket. That was part of Bob Greive’s process and John O’Brien was perfectly happy to go along with it. This is what the legislators were trying to scream about—“Stop this business! We just don’t think it’s proper.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, we come to the big issue of that session, the one that dominated, certainly, a great deal of time, which was the discussion of House Bill 197, considered the biggest filibuster in the history of the Legislature. The fight went for more than three days concerning a private power bill introduced by Harry Lewis, a freshman legislator from Thurston County. The substance of the bill was an act relating to public utility districts.

**Mr. Copeland:** The basic thrust of the bill said that before a public utility district could condemn or take over a private utility it had to have an affirmative vote of the affected district. The law was that the PUD commissioners could do this by board action with no vote of the rate payers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which in this case was Thurston County.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Private power was just supporting a bill that required a vote of the rate payers to remove this provision for condemnation of property of a utility. So that was the head-on issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about this bill yourself, before we really launch into this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had the opinion that private power people were certainly entitled to be there as long as they could perform the service at a reasonable rate. Now, if the rate payers want to change the arrangement, they should have the ability to do so. I believe this should be done by a vote. But to completely change and say, "You will not have a private party in the state of Washington; you'll all have public power," to me was doing nothing more than taking full competition away. Once you remove the competition, then you have no basis for any type of the comparison as to whether or not they're really cost-effective. So the combination of both public and private power being in existence as utilities in the state of Washington, to me, was a wonderful sort of an arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To keep them honest, in a sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, there is no question about it. And this is why the public

utility commission, right now, to date, looks over all the records of both private power as well as public power; it determines if they are operating in the public interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds to me that you're willing to go down the middle on this; you wanted both to exist. Was that a common view or were there people who were totally public power or private power?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the majority of the Legislature was to keep both private as well as public power in operation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there public power people that wanted to totally to do away with private power?

**Mr. Copeland:** Darn few of them in the Legislature. But I think it was pretty well written in the platform of the Democrat State Party that they felt that the expansion of public utility districts was part and parcel to their main objective and philosophy of government. Anything that the public can own and run and operate in the interest of the public was far better than having any private enterprise try to do it. So this was just a large philosophical stance that the Democrats have taken. "We would prefer to have all the state of Washington power under public power and not have any private power."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did the Republicans have a corresponding plank? Did you make a statement about power issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think our stance on that was both of them should be able to exist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Public power since the thirties had been growing and taking over more areas and developing itself into a pretty strong group of facilities. Was there a sense

with this bill that that had gone as far as you were willing to see it go and private power supporters saw this as a “this far and no farther” kind of bill? If public power had been allowed in Thurston County to take over that part of Puget Power Company, would that have crossed some kind of line and tipped some kind of a balance that was not going to sit well with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is a pure speculation. However, if a public utility district were to condemn the Puget Power facility here in Thurston County that would have been one step to the condemnation of all private power companies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A kind of domino effect?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And it would just be: “We’ll get Thurston County this year; we’ll go after Clark County next year, and we’ll go after Walla Walla County the following year. Again, pure speculation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So almost, in sense, a cold war analogy: draw the line here, don’t let this go any further.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that was probably it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That helps explain why there was the fierceness with which this issue was fought. I was just wondering if people had read this development as kind of a threshold.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you have to encapsulate it. There are two kinds of parallel things that run simultaneously over the period of years on the development of power suppliers in the state of Washington. The city of Seattle, early on, made a very conscious decision that they wanted to create their own utility company and they did, and I think about the same time, Pierce County did the same thing.

The private power companies were just being officially recognized and they were beginning to get licensed by the federal government in order to be able to do certain things. So consequently, Pacific Power and Light was able to go ahead with private money and put the dam in the river down at Mossyrock. It created a generating facility to provide power not only for southwestern Washington, but I think they even went down into Portland. So they became a utility company servicing quite an area. The next step going in was rural electrification. That is tremendously costly but the federal government took the attitude, “We will not recover our costs for a very long time.”

Meanwhile, these private power utilities had already gone through the laborious efforts of going out and raising private capital, getting federal authority to put in a generating facility, to put in the transmission line, and still be able to show a profit for their investors. What they were doing, of course, was under the control of the Utilities Commission, so they were operating in a regulated environment. Then the question came, “Was the Legislature going to allow private power to continue to exist in the state of Washington?” So that was the philosophical line that was drawn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was for the most part Republicans who were for private power and for the most part the Democrats, who were for the public power, but not entirely. There were public power Republicans and private power Democrats; we have to keep them in mind.

Harry Lewis was a freshman; was he prepared for this battle? Did he know that he was going to get into such a deep issue here?

**Mr. Copeland:** This didn’t come as any surprise at all to Harry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have support in the caucus for running this big bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, my yes. He had the vast majority of the caucus supporting his position. But he was in touch with those people with the private utility companies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he do this on their behalf or was this his own idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** On behalf of the private utilities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Thurston County PUD election had gone the other way. The new commissioner was supportive of keeping Puget Power in place.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And so I think the private power people came to Harry and said, "Well, would you kind of pack the load for us on this?" I would have imagined that Harry Lewis went through quite a crash program of getting himself educated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was his first session; as a freshman, this is a very big assignment. You would think that they would have gone to some more experienced legislator, though he was from the affected district.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Harry had a whole bunch of experienced legislators on his side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just pitting a freshman legislator against John O'Brien and some of the long-time Democratic leaders, those are slender shoulders, so it's interesting.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I understand what you are saying; you may think it was sending David into fight the lions. Maybe the odds weren't all bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that other member from the district, a Democrat, Clayton Farrington was not often present, which was also part of the complication of passing or not passing this bill. Farrington was away, ill.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I believe this was his last session. His absence did play a role in the sheer numbers that this came down to. Was there much comment on that? Was he conveniently absent or really absent? I have heard both interpretations.

**Mr. Copeland:** Clayton was absent and really not a player on this issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he was conspicuous by his absence, shall we say. The sponsors of the bill, besides Harry Lewis, were Margaret Hurley and Avery Garrett. They are both Democrats, Margaret Hurley from Spokane and Avery Garrett from Renton, King County. Can you tell me about their role in this?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that private power just went out and actually solicited Margaret Hurley and Avery Garrett and said that they wanted to have these people sponsor the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering if Avery Garrett came from a private power area as did Margaret Hurley.

**Mr. Copeland:** Avery Garrett came from Renton and I do think that Puget Power was his source of supply. So you had Puget Power that was with Avery Garrett on that, and Washington Water Power was in Margaret Hurley's district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are allegations that the power companies were throwing a lot of money into the 1960 election and that the whole legislative process on power issues was getting tied up with a lot of campaign money.

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't sense that in the sixties.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** In John O'Brien's biography, they stated it quite openly and it has been indicated in several other sources, especially linked with activities by Bob Perry, who as it was later revealed, was on the payroll of a private power company at this time.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, it came out that Perry was on the payroll of Washington Water Power for whatever reason. However, during this session no one had the slightest clue that Bob Perry was "on the payroll" if in fact this was the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard to tell how this was going to affect this debate, how many people were in that situation.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that in this particular play, there was a whole heck of a lot of that going on. Later on, there sure the heck was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In opposition to this bill was Mark Litchman, who was the Floor Leader for the Democrats, along with John Goldmark and several other Democrats who played an active role. Of course, by the time it was all said and done, pretty much everybody had an opportunity to speak. Was Mark Litchman a skilled legislator? Was he a good leader of the opposition?

**Mr. Copeland:** John Goldmark was far more skilled at that than Mark. Who else was in that leadership group?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Democratic leadership consisted of John O'Brien as Speaker; Caucus Chair was Max Wedekind; Caucus Secretary was Mildred Henry, Assistant Floor Leader was Daniel Brink and another Assistant Floor Leader was Robert Schaefer.

Then there were the private power Democrats—Margaret Hurley, for one.

Leonard Sawyer has sometimes been thought of as a private power Democrat, but he voted with the John O'Brien group on this bill pretty much down the line, so he doesn't take a stand.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think he was just going along with the majority, the Democrats. He was perfectly happy to deliver.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The group who became the "renegade Democrats" was definitely not going down the same line. The bill was introduced and sent to the committee on Public Utilities chaired by Dick Kink. It has been said that he gained that chairmanship through John O'Brien's need to placate his challengers. I don't know. When it came out of that committee, did the House Republicans recognize that this was going to be a big issue? Did you have a sense that this was one of those "take a stand" issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was involved in a conversation that Harry Lewis had with John O'Brien. The bill had been reported out of the committee but John was going to hold it up in Rules and he was not going to let it out on the floor. Harry Lewis really did a number on John and said, "Is this bill of mine going to get to the floor for a vote?" There was a long pause from John and Harry followed with, "If we don't have it on the floor by next Tuesday, I'm going to move that it be pulled from the Rules Committee."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which is big—an unheard of tactic—radical.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And a majority can do that. I think it was at that time when John truthfully realized that he was in real hot water, that there was no way that he was going to be able to hold that bill. John told Harry, "Let's do this according to

the rules. We won't make an issue; I'll get this out on the floor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it does come out. Had you, the Republicans, planned for a filibuster by the Democrats or did it evolve?

**Mr. Copeland:** It evolved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was amendment after amendment; there were oral roll call votes, Calls of the House. There was a very lengthy back-and-forth.

**Mr. Copeland:** You'll also find that there were several Points of Order in there. If you noticed, I think I raised half a dozen Points or more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you were trying very hard to get around John O'Brien. You were very active in this debate.

**Mr. Copeland:** But the Points of Order that I am raising, I am constructing a road map. Each time John would make a ruling, I would write it down. The next ruling, same thing. Then when he would try to rule against us, I would receipt the previous ruling he made and suggest this was the same set of circumstances. This placed John in a box and now he had to rule in my favor. I have to give the guy all of the credit in the world; he realized it was fair and so ruled, but he caught all kinds of hell from some of his fellow Democrats for "ruling in favor of Copeland."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And as Speaker, he was one who especially respected the rules.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, on this one particular occasion, I raised a Point of Order and he put the House at ease and he asked me to come back into the Speaker's Office, which I did, and I remember very distinctly John Goldmark

was there. And John Goldmark said to John O'Brien, "You're not going to rule with Copeland on this." And O'Brien said, "To be consistent, I have to. I rule this way with you, I rule this way with you, and I'm going to have to rule this way again and it will be in Copeland's favor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you deliberately set that trap?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not a trap—well, not quite.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had you counted pretty carefully the "no and yes votes" on your side? You knew who was going to vote which way; you knew where you stood?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not on each and every one of those amendments. There was a little fluctuation. You can tell those people who were going to be with you all the time, but you couldn't forecast that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would make someone peel off one way or another?

**Mr. Copeland:** Maybe they came from a strong public utility district. I spent a great deal of time researching all of those Points of Order that I made, so I could create a track record.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were becoming a master of the process yourself.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was. And John O'Brien has always respected me for that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One master always appreciates an able opponent, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. As long as we both play by the same rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Judging from what I understand about him as a Speaker, that was probably the way to go if you wanted to gain control of the process: to go by the rules, but very strictly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you never, ever wanted to have the body overrule the decision of the Chair. That of course, would be a personal embarrassment. I wanted him to rule well and I wanted him to rule fairly. Once you rule that way, if the situation came up again, I wanted him to rule the same way he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you were going to call him on it.

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what about all these Calls of the House: locking the doors and then some people would go into hiding so that would take longer? Were people trying to wear each other down?

**Mr. Copeland:** First the procedure of “a Call of the House.” This requires that the doors be locked and all members answer the roll call and remain in the House chamber. Further, that all the members must vote on every ballot; there is no “not voting” provision. This is not a punitive motion; it is one to force members to be in attendance and vote. In the case of Clayton Farrington, he had been excused and was not expected to be in attendance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were making people put their name down, over and over. Were you also creating a record for future campaigns?

**Mr. Copeland:** First, we were requiring all to vote. The record is created by the vote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any discussion about using this debate, in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think everybody knew that ahead of time. This was so politically polarized that yes, it was a very strong point. I think it’s fair to say that not only did people use it for the political point of view, there were also lobbyists that backed up and took a look at the voting record. There were some individuals that switched back and forth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “He doesn’t know his own mind, can’t count on him?”

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go; that’s correct. So you have all these little innuendos as far as this voting is concerned. Was the Call of the House necessary in order to be able to extract these votes? And the answer is yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole strategy of making this take a long time, what was to be gained by dragging this debate out in this way?

**Mr. Copeland:** There wasn’t an intention to drag it out. I think the emphasis behind this strategy was to bring into sharp focus the false perceptions that all legislators wanted to have the state of Washington go completely with public utility districts. That was not really the majority of the expression of legislators on the floor, regardless of whether Democrat or Republican. The Democrats and John would like to have thought, “I’m going to be able to control this because I am the majority and therefore I don’t want to pay any attention to the minority.” But all of a sudden, John was the Speaker in a situation on the House floor where he was in the minority. Now, this is a very tenuous spot for a Speaker to be in, but he was in a minority during this entire period.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he do things to try to obscure that fact? He wouldn’t want that coming out in black and white because then it would be all over.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can take a look at the votes that were taken there and you can see that he wound up to be a minority on this whole public/private power fight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there some fierce arm-twisting going on there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The pressure was incredible?

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about on your side? Your public power Republicans, was there a lot of pressure on them to stick with the caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there was a great deal of pressure on them. I think the pressure came on some of the public power Democrats who have the tendency to vote for private power. This is where the arm-twisting was. I'm sure that a lot of people talked to Dick Kink and I'm sure a lot of people talked very strenuously to Bill Day and Bob Perry and said, "You can't do this. You know the Democrat Party comes first." "You can't tell us what to do." So, I think this was one area where the political pressure was applied. It was sure simpler than our side of the aisle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did your caucus keep together and keep your strategy going? Was there a lot of shared sentiment?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had some people that came from strong public utility districts like Bob McDougall from Wenatchee, Harry Siler and Morrill Folsom from Lewis County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other part that was so polarized in this debate were different notions

of the public good. On one side they are saying, "The right to vote is a basic American value and how could you be against it?" The other side said, "Private power will buy this election; it will be corrupt. This is not going to be a true test of the people." How did you reconcile those two points of view?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think you reconcile these two points of view. It's a case of whether or not we wanted to just go ahead and have condemnation rights without necessarily a vote of the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any truth to the fact that private power people had a lot of money to throw into elections?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the private power people had a lot of money and I think they recognized that if they didn't do it, it was their own demise. So here again, what is the mother's instinct to survive?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that have made it a corrupt election?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if I can define "corrupt." Here again, that's conjecture and speculation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if there was some evidence already in place, one way or another. The charges were getting pretty pointed here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. I didn't see it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there is a sense of big discussion about "What is representative government?" One thing about this bill that is so fascinating is that it gets to these really quite heartland issues. One side—the "right-to-vote" supporters—said representative government was the people voting directly

on the issue and the other side said, “PUD commissioners are elected by the people and they are supposed to represent the people. This is a representative government issue and not a direct-vote issue.” That was a different view of government; both have value and power behind them underlying the discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** But here again, but I think if you look at the plain print on House Bill 197, it had to do with the condemnation authority. Now, the three public utility commissioners have their right just by simple motion to condemn somebody else’s private power facility—the telephone poles, their wires, their switching gear, and everything and say, “We’re taking over as of this date and let the court tell you how much it’s going to be worth.” Is this how they got elected? Is it in their best interest, because what they are doing, they are obligating the rate payer that they represent, to assume a debt. Is not that rate payer entitled to the opportunity to be able to say, “I’m perfectly willing to assume the debt?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are certainly two points of view on that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure there are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was some force in this debate; there were some very fundamental constitutional-type issues weaving through this debate. And as John O’Brien presided and moved it along, did he use some methods that were not so straight forward, not above board? There were all kinds of charges that he employed “a fast gavel” and dismissed the House when he felt like it and did not “see” members when they were waving their arms or...

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, he did that on a couple of occasions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that this was a fair fight?

**Mr. Copeland:** Here again, I get back to this point. John was presiding at a meeting in the House in which he was in a minority. And so, did he use a fast gavel in order to be able to adjourn on one particular occasion? You’re damn right he did. Was it fair? Sure, he had the gavel. That’s all you need.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently everyone just went bananas when he did that.

**Mr. Copeland:** In that particular situation, you really can’t fault a guy for doing what he did. He did the right thing at the right time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like it was about to get violent. Some people also think that this was his finest moment.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. John had Mark Litchman make a motion to adjourn right in the middle of this furious debate. He recognized Mark, and Mark said, “I move that the House now adjourn,” and just as fast, John said, “All in favor say aye; say no; the ayes have it and the motion carries and we’re adjourned.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anyone say anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he said it that fast. Any rate, he banged his gavel down, accidentally striking a pencil. The pencil flew way up in the air and it appeared as if he had broken his gavel; this thing went flying across the Chamber. Well, before the pencil ever hit the floor, John had exited out the back door and the rostrum was empty. But it was a very dramatic sixty seconds. Then of course, everybody was up on the floor screaming and hollering. When I look back at it, he did the right thing at that time.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what did you think, then? Of course, in hindsight, it's all—the dust has settled.

**Mr. Copeland:** People came up to me and said, “Gosh, Copeland, this is terrible.” I said, “Hey, wait a minute, no. We're winning this battle. Just sit down and take it easy. Don't do anything; keep your powder dry.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were feeling rather cool. It's almost like a tank charge?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was music to my ears, what the heck! We won that round!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, did you see that almost is a symptom of him being backed into a corner and losing control when he had to resort to such measures? Was that an indication that you were getting him where you wanted to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, it was an indication to me that he had lost control of the majority of the House. But he personally did the proper thing in adjourning that particular meeting. It was getting mean and ugly. Some people were about to say things that they would have been sorry for at a later time. So people came to me and said, “Didn't you think it was terrible?” I said, “Hey no, this is the greatest thing that has ever happened to us. This is fine; we're right here and we're going to be right here again in this proper order of business tomorrow and so it's not earthshaking. It was the proper thing for him to do. So we came in the next day and took off from where we were and went on from there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right in the middle of this debate, you held a memorial for the deceased members of the House. That timing of that...It was probably your tradition to do so, but what did that change the feeling in the House?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it kind of cooled the tempers down. The memorial of course, was something the House does; it's a joint session with the House and the Senate. We do this every two years and it's a very important function for a lot of people. We set a time and we tell families of the deceased members ahead of time so they can attend. It's a really a nice ceremony and had been scheduled for quite some time. To disrupt that because we were talking about a private power issue was ridiculous. “Just go ahead and lay a time aside and we will go on from there.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were people able to disengage from this heated debate and have a proper spirit of homage?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is one thing that you will notice about the Legislature as an institution. They have the very unique ability of shifting gears instantly. When you move from one debate subject to another and it's something virtually everybody agrees on, they just go ahead and all of the sudden they're wearing different hats when they walk in there. And so you're not fighting and you're not scrambling. This was just something that had been scheduled and “do not interrupt the schedule.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering, what role does fatigue and frustration and hoarseness of voice play in this sort of debate? What happens to legislation if it is passed after a long struggle in the middle of the night? Is it good legislation or is it marred by people's fatigue—the bills that pass or don't pass under those conditions?

**Mr. Copeland:** John was always a great one to have night sessions and I just disliked night sessions tremendously. When you have people that are tired tempers would flare. And quite frankly, later on, you'll find we had very,

very few night sessions. We concentrated on conserving time by allowing two speakers for a bill and two speakers against the bill. This procedure avoided the prolonged debates and reduced the necessity of night sessions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Partly because the debate went on and on, was that a factor in the Republicans creating these new ways of restricting debate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's call them "limiting." In the interests of conserving time, when we took over leadership in the House and starting doing things, we were trying to conserve time—time spent on Second Reading can become abusive by a minority. We tried to minimize this. The limit imposed was to have two speakers on a side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't both sides have to agree to that kind of change? I mean, it's no good if just one side is doing it.

**Mr. Copeland:** We did several things to assist Third Reading. Number one, we suggested that if there was going to be discussion, then just have two people speak against and two people speak for it. That was kind of a gentlemen's agreement. There are two reasons for it. It gives the presiding officer an opportunity to look at his script: "On this particular bill, I'll recognize the committee chairman first; then I will recognize Mr. Jones who will speak in opposition to the measure; then I will call on two additional members to speak." So this set the procedure. The members soon learned that this was a major time-saver.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I realize that most of the work on bills happens on committees and hearings and not the Floor, but did it limit debate that the public could witness if only a couple of people could speak on each side?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think so. I think that anything that you needed to talk about in bringing up the bill, any particular point could be discussed twice, two on one side and two on the other. Not only that, I don't think it's going to change that many votes anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that very few people are swayed if they have already made up their mind by the time it gets to the Floor.

**Mr. Copeland:** By the time it gets to Third Reading, you are so correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually reading the transcript of the power debate, there were very eloquent speeches. Members went on and on and I wondered why they were bothering if no one is swayed on the Floor of the House. Was it so much wasted breath? What was the point of all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Don't assume for one minute that it's wasted breath because frequently if you ever get into a court of law, the judges are going to go back in and try to discern what was the legislative intent? So that portion of it most surly is not wasted breath. However, you'll find punctuated throughout the House and Senate journals where a member of the House may say, "May I ask Representative So-and-So a question?" and then they'll yield to the question. "Is it my understanding that in the event that this passes, the following things will transpire?" The questions and answers were all entered into the Journal and became the basis for "legislative intent." So they had to be carefully drafted and in most cases the answers were also very carefully structured to give meaningful interpretation of "legislative intent."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There it is, in black and white?

**Mr. Copeland:** There it is. Some time the answer would be, “As I explained in my opening remarks.” Now you are led right back into that eloquent speech—again, clarifying “legislative intent.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have created a deliberate record?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, all the “yielding to a question,” then all the rulings by the Speaker, the Points of Order. Is Point of Order similar to this establishing of intent?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or is it more keeping to the process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that’s correct also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Point of Information?

**Mr. Copeland:** Often, the Point of Information is just a clarification of where you are at that particular point, an order of business, and sometimes asking what a yes or a no vote will mean.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** While we’re discussing all these things, there was a Point of Personal Privilege from Mr. Litchman. Is that where a member would make a statement of any kind, or are there parameters for how that can be used?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not “any kind of statement.” You may make a statement about how something has affected you personally. Such as Mr. Litchman who may have been characterized as being in favor of a bill when in fact he was opposed to the measure. He

would simply say, “I rise to a Point of Person Privilege to let the body know that I am in opposition to the bill.” Or maybe somebody took you out of context, a Point of Personal Privilege would be: “The previous speaker made a quotation totally out of context and that is not my intention.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, it’s your opportunity to say something. In fact, he said, “I believe my motives have been impugned, Mr. Speaker. I would like to answer the statement made by Mr. Evans.” But here is one from Mr. Ackley—this is interesting because it’s totally off topic: “Mr. Speaker and the members of House”—right in the middle of this big debate—he says, “It was my pleasure to find at my desk today a beautiful photograph of the Capitol Building together with a letter which, with the consent of the House, I would like to read from the Chief Clerk, Mr. Si Holcomb.” Was he trying to give you all a break or he just felt compelled to talk about this photograph at that tense moment?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Si Holcomb play any kind of role in this debate, even behind the scenes?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don’t know if it was this debate or something personal between them, but he was seemingly not John O’Brien’s man in this session. They were feuding.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was John O’Brien’s man for many years and during this 1961 Session, this is when Si and John had some kind of differences—but that is not printed in the Journal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some indication that John O’Brien didn’t think as highly of his

work as he used to, or something to that effect. They were having problems with each other. This is something that will emerge as part of the continuing story of the fallout from this debate. Eventually, this bill is defeated; it goes back to Rules because one of the public power Republicans could no longer stay with his caucus and vote for the bill. It was never heard from again. Does this issue rise again during a different session or was it just gone?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not the bill, but the issue of public vs. private power becomes a statewide coalition of forces that launches Dan Evans into the Governorship. It was this particular measure that created the coalition the next session of Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, from this event, flowed a lot of political activity. What happened to private power?

**Mr. Copeland:** They continued to operate. But the point is they didn't have any condemnation either. However, later they became far more active.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the original condemnation issue just faded away?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, public power backed off its position of condemnation of private power property and assumed an attitude of the status quo.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the growth of public power was checked?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was checked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much longer after this did public and private power stop being adversaries and start cooperating with each other?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably two years. However, the issue comes up again in the Democrat State convention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the pinnacle of their fight with each other and then they agreed they would...

**Mr. Copeland:** Co-exist.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a happy outcome for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, to a degree. However, public power became interested in the creation of WPPSS (Washington Public Power Supply System). Now the public utilities are off on this WPPSS arrangement where they are taking the public utility directors and they are putting them in the Washington Public Power Supply System. They had major congressional blessing that Senator Warren G. Magnuson arranged so now they were going to build these plants. All of the sudden public power got a teacup full but WPPSS eventually winds up being kind of a not so holy arrangement. If public utilities are such a good thing, they certainly demonstrated they couldn't run WPPSS. Your question was, "How did public and private power co-exist after this particular session?" I say, they co-existed and then public power went off on their own and got themselves in severe trouble and we are living with that today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to finish that story of HB 197, what was the atmosphere in the House after this bill was defeated? This was a pretty bitter fight; were you able to recover?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. The thing about the legislators at that time, yes, we had our disagreements, but we didn't carry these things on. We didn't pack a lot of animosity. So no, the next thing out is a bill on agriculture, a bill on schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the group that became the dissident Democrats? Did this rankle so much where they became disaffected? Were they unable to recover from this and get back in the fold? Were they treated poorly—the Margaret Hurleys?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that came later on, after the session was over. I think they had a state convention in which there was a resolution made in castigating the people that voted against public power and denouncing them or something. I forget the exact details, but it was not cast in any favorable light as far as Democratic Party was concerned. If the story is correct, those particular members of the House walked out on the Democratic state committee meeting. And if I'm not mistaken, John O'Brien was the chairman of that particular convention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that turned out to be a mistake, then. Generally, doesn't it happen that people try to mend fences after a blowout like this and regroup? But it didn't look like there was any regrouping going on there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Knowing John, I'm sure John ran that convention. I think they condemned those people and at any rate, I think Bob Perry and Bill McCormick and Dick Kink and Margaret, I think they just walked out of the convention along with several others; they were just ticked off at them big time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was pretty severe miscalculation on John O'Brien's part?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was his own doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was such a skilled politician to make an error on that scale.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know; I really don't. But two years later, Margaret gets re-elected,

Bill gets re-elected and McCormick and Kink and Day and Perry. They had more Democrats than Republicans and some Democrats say, "You've got to elect John," and they said, "No, we're going to create a coalition." So that's when they came and knocked on our door and then things went together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll hold that thought; that's a huge story in 1963. Later that 1961 session, you had a slide show on Century 21, the World's Fair. How much of a splash in the Legislature did it take to bring people on board, to be supportive of the World's Fair?

**Mr. Copeland:** They made quite a presentation; there wasn't any question about that. Most of that was pushed primarily by members of the Senate. We were so darn preoccupied in the House, we just didn't have time to do things like that and so all of the sudden, this presentation came along—which was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they still need permission from the Legislature or were they just trying to keep you on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. That was their big PR gadget; they had to have something from the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kinds of things did they show you? Plans for buildings—the Coliseum and all the different facilities?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they had pictures of virtually all of the models. The other thing that was very, very impressive to of the members of the Legislature was the residual effect of these facilities after the fair, what they could be used for. They went ahead and built a coliseum, and they built the Space Needle, they built...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A Science Center.



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, the Science Center. Wonderful, wonderful facility and it is used all the time now. I mean, this is the kind of stuff that you really don't mind spending public money for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think the people at that time even knew how wildly successful it was going to be. They even made money.

**Mr. Copeland:** The city of Seattle and the state of Washington can look back on that and say, "On a comparative basis, compared to some of the other cities that put on a similar type of arrangement in that era, we did extremely well." Some of those other people who tried to put on fairs really hit the bottom of the bucket.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that kind of hanging over you when you were voting for the appropriations; were you worried about failure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not really. I didn't serve on that committee so I wasn't privileged on any of that, but I think they did a wonderful job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go to the fair yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. I took my whole family and all the kids and spent a couple of days there. It took that kind of time in order to be able to see everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was like a showpiece; it put Washington on the map?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, yes. We had lots of lots people come from all over the world. The people that were running it, the real head honchos on the thing, were Ewing Dingwall and Jay Rocky.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they part of the group bringing this slide show to the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and the reason I knew Jay so well is we were fraternity brothers together at Washington State. They did a fine job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you felt like this was in good hands and that this was going to be a success?

**Mr. Copeland:** You never knew at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You just hoped for the best?

**Mr. Copeland:** You certainly did. You really and truthfully couldn't tell.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides bringing in all kinds of tourism dollars and just the prestige of holding it, does a world's fair bring in trade and have a ripple effect through the economy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Hard to mention, hard to perceive. Shortly after that, there was such a tremendous influx of Japanese companies having a presence and offices in Seattle, it was just unbelievable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this, then, a piece in the movement to make Seattle, and by extension, the state of Washington, the Pacific Rim contact point? Would this event be part of building that image?

**Mr. Copeland:** In 1915 and through to the sixties, there was a triangle. And the triangle went from Washington, D.C. to New York to Boston and back and that was the world. If you were outside the triangle, you were nothing, I mean zero. So anytime somebody puts on any kind of thing like this—whether

it be in Houston, Texas, or New Orleans, or Seattle—all of the sudden, people said, “You know, there is something outside the triangle. I went out all the way to Seattle and hell, there aren’t any rattlesnakes and Indians running around!” So, did it have an impact? You bet it had an impact!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which would be the reason for doing all this in the first place, I would assume?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time, we were just starting to fly around in jet airplanes and “Goodness sakes, I can go from New York to Seattle in four and a half hours—unbelievable! Maybe I better buy a ticket and go out there and see what is going on.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not to mention that’s where those airplanes are made.

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go! Actually, it was really a very bad economic time, so to have the World’s Fair at that time and have it be successful—that was really just phenomenal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Seattle really growing at this time; was this a big era for development?

**Mr. Copeland:** God, yes. The city just had their first bridge across Lake Washington; the second bridge hadn’t been built at the time. It was on the drawing board in this session. So, the total population on the eastside of the lake was maybe not even two hundred thousand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just beginning to develop.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just beginning. During that time, Jimmy Andersen was a member of the Legislature and his legislative district ran from Bothell all the way around Lake Washington. Later his district was connected to Seattle by a second bridge.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are several things that happened during the end of the session. The budget was not passed; it took another twenty-two days of a special session, but the Republicans were pretty much on the sidelines. It seemed to be an internal Democratic wrangle to get the budget passed. One of the ideas put forward was that perhaps you should have annual sessions. You were having special session after special session; it was getting to be a pretty regular thing. Both Evans and Slade Gorton floated that idea. How did you feel about annual sessions at this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have to come back to my original premise concluded several years prior to that: “A part-time legislator was never going to be able to keep up with full-time bureaucrat.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you were there every year, regularly, would that help?

**Mr. Copeland:** Obviously. For us to write a two-year budget, and never have an opportunity to relate to it again was kind of a non-functioning arrangement in that the Legislature withdrew from active involvement in how the money was spent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you would be starting fresh anyway with a whole new budget.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was water under the bridge, I guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nothing could be done. We put in legislative intent; they didn't follow it and two years passed. Our budget and our requirements on the state were increasing in a very dramatic form. Big in the whole arena was education and all of the elements pertaining to it running parallel. Here we were coming out of the war cycle, sitting in a baby-boom, with lots of kids—they called it a bubble—going through the public education system. That was a huge bubble! All of the budgetary things were built around that. So there's this whole massive population of kids in the public education system. Funding now became very, very difficult. So, what about annual sessions? Was sixty days, every two years, adequate to manage that side of the budget? What you were doing was writing something in sixty days and turning it over to bureaucrats and saying, "Here, you take care of it; you run it. We're out of here, good-bye." And you'd come back twenty-two months later, to find it wasn't managed that way at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, doesn't the economy go up and down a lot quicker than every two years? I mean, things happen. Revenues could be up or down, or costs up and down.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. And the Governors at that time are very, very reluctant to call the Legislature in session because they had virtually no control of the Legislature. So that's why the Governor wanted to keep the executive branch of government as a supreme authority. The legislative branch of government was miniscule. It wasn't that it was non-existent, don't misunderstand me, but it was miniscule and it could only function

for sixty days. So this business about annual sessions certainly began to surface.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people worried that if you came every year the Legislature would not be representative of normal citizens—members would become professional politicians, I guess, would be the issue. Did you have any concerns that fewer people would be able to serve in the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** My concern was not only on the individual make-up of the Legislature; my concern was whether or not the legislative branch of government was a co-equal branch with the executive and judicial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm just throwing out what people said at the time: "We can't do this because it will create this professional Legislature and we don't want that because it will have all these other implications." There were a lot of ways to look at these implications obviously; that is just one of them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I understand that philosophy: "Let us not have these people become full-time legislators," but at the same token, what were you doing? You were certainly insulating full-time bureaucrats, and could you look inside their budget? Did you find out exactly how they were doing their thing? The answer is no. Did you have staff to do it? No, we didn't have staff to do it. How many people were hired in the interim between the time the Legislature was in session until the regular session? And the answer at that time for the House of Representative was one—O-N-E, and her name is Phyllis Mottman, a lovely, darling lady. She was the only employee full-time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she rattled around in that big building by herself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. I mean, the legislative branch of government was nonexistent for twenty-two months....

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would just disappear?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, we just went away.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that partly why the Legislative Council during these years was getting more active and much stronger and creating a bigger presence for itself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's an alternative to this situation. If the Council had been highly operative and very strong, would that have dulled the need for annual sessions? Would that have taken the place or is that still a totally different thing? You couldn't actually pass bills, you could only conduct research.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislative Council was filling a void to this degree: The Legislature had no opportunity to actually hear any testimony, do any looking around, and investigate anything, receive any information. We had no vehicle to do it with other than the Legislative Council. Actually, we had two things going: one was the Legislative Council and other was the Legislative Budget Committee; those were the two interim committees that were operating before the Education Committee was formed.

So, it was a very few people meeting very infrequently. The Legislative Council would actually develop some legislation that was introduced as "Legislative Council's request." And generally speaking, it was awfully good legislation, but this is the first cut at the ball, trying to get the Legislature some type of continuing staff to study problems throughout the state. Prior to that time, they didn't have anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislative Council also had relationships with other states and other groups so that you could have a bigger picture. You could have better, more comparative information.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the stem out from the Council itself that there must be opportunities to visit with other states and find out how they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been helpful.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. It truly was. Later on down the line, I'll show you how that came into focus when we got into the computer system and what exchanges of information we made with other states, which were just monumental. Good things were just starting!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that will be an important discussion.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE COALITION SESSION, 1963

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the end of the 1961 session, there seemed to be a residual bitterness over the handling of the private power bill with some members. There were a group of Democrats who were upset with John O'Brien and upset about various issues; they went to their summer Party convention and walked out and said they would never vote for John O'Brien for Speaker again. Were the Republicans watching this, paying attention to what was happening, as the Democrats splintered?

**Mr. Copeland:** If we were watching, we were watching it from a distance. We certainly weren't standing in the foyer or anything like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, not that close, but was there some contact at that early date with that group of people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to my knowledge. At that time, the decision was pretty much made by the leadership of the Democratic Party that they really wanted to disassociate themselves with anybody that had any kind of interest in private power whatsoever. And those dissident Democrats took an altogether different position. Were they in touch with Republicans about forming a coalition at that time? Heavens no! We were strictly spectators in the background on that.

#### THIRTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 14, 1963—March 14, 1963  
Ex. S. March 15, 1963—April 6, 1963

**Governor:** Albert Rosellini  
**Senate:** 17 Republican members/  
32 Democratic members  
**House:** 48 Republican members/  
51 Democratic members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** William Day  
**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Ella Wintler  
**Chief Clerk:** Si Holcomb  
**Sergeant at Arms:** Elmer Hyppa

**House Republican Caucus:**  
**Floor Leader:** Dan Evans  
**Assistant Floor Leader:** Damon Canfield  
**Caucus Chair:** Don Eldridge  
**Whip:** Tom Copeland  
**Secretary:** Frances Swayze

**House Democratic Caucus:**  
**Floor Leader:** John O'Brien  
**Caucus Chair:** Avery Garrett  
**Secretary:** Ann O'Donnell

**Dissident Democrats:**  
**Floor Leader:** Robert Perry  
**Assistant Floor Leader:** Margaret Hurley

**Freshmen Republican Members:**  
Duane Berentson, Robert Brachtenbach, Bob Earley, Robert Eberle, Herb Hadley, Charles Lind, Marjorie Lynch, Mary Ellen McCaffree, Don Miles, Mike O'Dell, Walt Reese, Bill Young

**Freshmen Democratic Members:**  
Gary Grant, Joe Haussler, Gordon Herr, Dan Jolly, Charles Moon, Jack Rogers



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the germ of it was there, the walkout from their convention. This led to two things. You had elections that fall and the Republicans did very well. You, personally, didn't have any Democratic opponent in your district and you just sailed through with a good vote count. So you, evidently, had a real, solid relationship with your district; you were doing well.

Republicans gained eight seats in the House; you were narrowing the gap there. You had forty-eight members to fifty-one Democrats coming into 1963—pretty close. You had a lot of new energy coming in: new members like Duane Berentson, Mary Ellen McCaffree, people like Robert Brachtenbach. Marjorie Lynch had been appointed to Lincoln Shropshire's seat and then was re-elected on her own. You had a lot of people coming in that would become active in your party. Were you, as a party leader, in contact with any of these new freshmen to bring them in and welcome them or get them on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, heavens yes. As matter of fact, I even helped recruit some of them. This freshman class consisted of Duane Berentson, Bob Brachtenbach, Bob Earley, Herb Hadley, Charles Lind, Marjorie Lynch, Mary Ellen McCaffree, Don Miles, Mike Odell, Walt Reese and Bill Young.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you part of the effort with Joel Pritchard and that group who were trying to recruit new people and bring in new types of Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** Joel Pritchard never worked outside of King County, to the best of my knowledge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work in more areas than your southeastern region? Did you go all over the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** I went all over the state. Of

the twelve freshmen members, three were from King County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me how that effort was organized?

**Mr. Copeland:** Loose as heck!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you kind of get together and say, "Let's do this."

**Mr. Copeland:** It started with a series of meetings in Seattle. Prominent members of the group were Slade, Dan, Joel, Jim Andersen, and myself and Chuck Moriarty. And we'd meet occasionally in Seattle. It was kind of an informal thing and we were talking about how we could improve our position in the House and whether or not we could do any recruiting and things like that. So I spent a great deal of my time in other counties recruiting people to run, while the group from Seattle was primarily interested in what was going on in King County. Was I involved in it? Certainly! And did we have some pretty good things in mind? You bet! But we had no money, no staff, no official organization, no address, no phone number, and little or no recognition from the Republican Central Committee. When I traveled around the state, it was at my own expense.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** What sort of people were you looking for?

**Mr. Copeland:** People to run for the House of Representatives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, what characteristics would they have? I understand from other people's comments that you were looking for a new type of candidate. Somebody who had run the Community Chest campaign—now the united Way, that sort of thing. Somebody not necessarily heavily tied to the Party already, but somebody that you could bring in.

**Mr. Copeland:** Somebody that was closely identified to obviously conservative views, basically somebody in business, somebody with a high profile, somebody with high energy, somebody with lot of smarts. We recruited and assisted some great candidates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you run little campaign schools about "how to do it?"

**Mr. Copeland:** This was the first year we ran a campaign school. It was held in Vancouver and several members attended and gave us a hand. It was rather crude but a darn good first start. Don Moos, Bob Goldsworthy, Dan, Slade, Pritchard and Harry Lewis all came and made a pitch for the candidates. Out of the twelve freshmen that year, all of them attended the campaign school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would your advice have been?

**Mr. Copeland:** To the candidate? Attend the school and learn as much as you can. The campaign schools were about the nuts-and-bolts of campaigning. They would get to meet other candidates, incumbents and lobbyists all in one place. Nothing fancy, just basics. It was at least a starting point. This

had never been done before. We would also take candidates that had never met any of these lobbyists who shared our views...and we suddenly recognized that maybe, if we got a few of these people aboard, we would affect some real change. So we had several things going for us. Number one, I think were the personalities—the collective personalities of this Republican group at that time were really quite dramatic. I mean, you take the individuals and take a look at them. Some of them had really outstanding backgrounds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they themselves were kind of an attractive magnet for other people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, when I took people around to meet some of the other people that they would be associating with in the Legislature, it was very interesting. They saw bright young people like Dan Evans and people like General Goldsworthy—a real war hero—and people like Jim Andersen, who became a Supreme Court Justice. I mean, this is kind of an impressive sort of an arrangement. I think that many of the candidates looked around and said, "I want to associate with people like that." These guys are really nice people, really smart individuals and every one of them had some individual credentials that were just outstanding. So, was that being a magnet? Certainly it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got some real stars on the team? People would want to join this; you're looking dynamic?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. And this made it a lot easier for us to find people who wanted to join us. Now, those were the individuals. What was the political backdrop? One, we were just coming off the huge public/private power debate, and two was the decision of the Democratic Party to rid themselves of non

public power individuals. This was heavy-duty stuff. So now you were moving into an area where not only do you have impressive, good-looking people within your party that are trying to create some changes, but also you have a segment of the Democrat Party that has been disenfranchised. All of a sudden, you're working with a majority; you're not a minority anymore. So what was the headcount there? Forty-eight? Pretty impressive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Up from thirty-three—yes. It's really a breakthrough.

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much time would you spend meeting people and talking to them and introducing them around and building your new structure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably too much than my businesses allowed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I could imagine that this was exciting, though.

**Mr. Copeland:** It took an awful lot of my time, truly. As I look back on it, I probably took off maybe two months from my normal business function and spent full-time on politics and did nothing but recruit for campaigns and help with elections.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did you feel that you were on the edge of something big?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a good investment of your efforts, because you're going to have a big pay-off if you got all these bright, young people?

**Mr. Copeland:** First and foremost in my mind was not only the political dynamics

of the whole thing, but where my objective, which was to change things, the structure of the institution and get it to hell out of this business of—what was Bob Greive's term? "The process." The process in which nobody knew what was going on; the process in which the public was cut out of decisions; the process in which the public never knew when a bill was going to be considered; the process of which the public couldn't find out anything and neither could the press; the process in which was a closed-door and only-allowed-to-be-looked-at by a handful of people who were in the leadership in the Senate; the process that disenfranchised people. Was I interested in getting rid of the "process?" You bet, big time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Almost all your effort went into recruiting House members. Did you put any kind of effort into transforming the Senate or did you feel that was a lost cause at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think I made any effort in transforming the Senate at all. However, I did visit Senate candidate Frank Atwood in Bellingham.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anyone in your group take on the Senate? I have only heard about efforts to get hold of the House.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to my knowledge. Frank wrote in his book that I was the only Republican outside his district that visited him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it meant a lot to him. The Senate seems to be another country altogether.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only that, they were running every four years, not every two years. There were certain segments you had to

accommodate because they were just strictly kind of holdovers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Much harder to break into that setting?

**Mr. Copeland:** You couldn't affect a change in such a short period of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you concentrated your efforts where you really could make a difference, was that the idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Chuck Moriarty in the Senate by this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he had been appointed to fill a vacancy and then was elected to a four-year term in 1963.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he lonely up there? Were there other people of his stripe in the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Chuck went into the Senate in '61. When Dan got elected Governor, he requested the Senate that Chuck become the Minority Floor Leader, which created a real problem as far as the Senate was concerned. That's another story.

Your basic question to me is: Did I or anyone in the House do anything about trying to recruit people to run for the Senate? The answer is not only no, it's hell, no! We didn't even want to fuss with it; that wasn't our business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have worked with these people after they were elected to make a tighter caucus? You are virtually transforming the Republican Party.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think that just came as a matter of course more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just more natural? You recruited certain types of persons and bringing them in itself does the job of transformation?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of these people who were recruited were all individuals; they're not clones. We didn't expect everybody to look exactly alike, inhale, exhale on time or anything of the kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Republicans were rather noted for being a tight group, sticking together with their voting, and of having a strong message, where Democrats in this period were a little more splintered and were all over the place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the political reality of it is, if you have a legislative body, and you've got two-thirds of the vote, if you have people vote any way they want it isn't going to alter the course of where you want to go. You only need fifty votes to get the job done. So if sixteen people want to go someplace else and run off? Who cares, you still passed anything that you wanted to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Big majorities are not actually always good for parties.

**Mr. Copeland:** There you are, so true. You can say that again—a big majority is not necessarily good for political parties in a legislative environment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You lose all your edge. Just carrying on this thought, parties that have the same leader for a long time, is that not so healthy, either? Then you get, underneath, people getting a little restive and vying for that spot?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that comes as a natural type of an arrangement. Anyway, the leaders won't necessarily stay too long in one spot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it better to have turnover and have fresh people—not every year, but every few years?

**Mr. Copeland:** It depends upon the leadership. Are they keeping up with the times? Are they on top of the issues? Are they in tune with the voters?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Republicans won fifty-two percent of the vote, but that translated into forty-eight seats. This is a number that comes up again and again that session...how the vote was distributed. In some eyes, it was a correct expression of what the people wanted—a Republican majority.

**Mr. Copeland:** You pointed it out. These numbers are skewed. That year we had several House races that were unopposed. That would affect the totals. So as far as the fifty-two percent of the total votes cast, that's a warped figure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was statewide, admittedly. This percentage is what the Republicans used to bolster their position when the redistricting question was raised.

**Mr. Copeland:** I understand. You understand where I'm coming from. That's why I say the figures were warped because of the four or five races that were running unopposed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I do know what you are saying, but it was a nice number to brandish around and it was used pretty extensively.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that election called to the attention of the voters that the Republicans had a pretty good position to offer. Number one, they recognized that public power and private power could co-exist in the state of Washington. Number two, here was a group of some pretty good solid citizens now in the

Republican ranks of the legislative group. The election of 1962 showed a substantial swing towards the Republicans versus what we had two years ago. If you take and web all these things together, you have some pretty good momentum there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Now, let's move towards a discussion of the next session—the 1963 session. You still had a Democratic Governor, Senate, and House, though your new numbers were closing the gap. One of the biggest issues at this time was redistricting. There had been an initiative that year brought forward by the League of Woman Voters but it was opposed by the Legislature. For the Republicans, they could see that they could become a majority and they wanted to work toward this. And over on the other side, there was a group of dissident Democrats who were unhappy with their party and especially unhappy with their prospective Speaker. It looked like it was going to be John O'Brien again.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some time that fall, your leadership group started to meet with these people. I understand you met in Portland and different places. Were you involved in those early meetings?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not in Portland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me little bit about how they went?

**Mr. Copeland:** It is my understanding they were all very informal. I mean, there was nothing structured.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who was meeting with you?



**Mr. Copeland:** Bill McCormick, Margaret Hurley, and Bill Day, from Spokane. Dick Kink and Bob Perry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you delegated to do that or did you just happen to do that or how did that come about?

**Mr. Copeland:** I did not play an active role early on. Occasionally I would meet some of these legislators after a committee meeting or maybe at a football game. We were just visiting with “friends” in the Democratic Party.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who first raised the issue of them joining with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I really don’t know. I don’t know whether Bill Day originally thought this thing up or whether it was Bob Perry or Bill McCormick. I don’t know who really did this or their inter-relationship of how this got together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember at one point saying to yourself, “Wow, they’re talking about a coalition.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But it was more like “suggesting” a coalition. Remember, this was before the election and I was still shooting for a majority of Republicans in the House. I didn’t talk with them too much about what I had going and these dissidents didn’t ask me for information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At what point did it become something real, not just an idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not until after the election when we knew we would have forty-eight seats. The count was now Republicans forty-eight, Democrats fifty-one, of which how many are dissidents? Four, five, six, seven?

At this point, we don’t know. I thought it was just primarily three: Bob Perry and Bill Day and Bill McCormick. It was not until later I learned about Chet King coming onboard. We knew the people that walked out of the Democratic convention and considered them as potential members of the dissident group, but it was now up to us to even inquire. So it was very quiet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they just kind of feeling you out to see how you would respond?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. However, few people knew of the conversations Dan and Slade were having with Bob Perry. But it wasn’t very long after the election that then we began to get feedback from some of the lobbyists who were saying, “If you guys are really sincere, we’re going to be heavy players in here.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So somebody was dropping hints to them that there was this possibility?

**Mr. Copeland:** The lobbyists are smart and they can count. They understood the potential that was there. Lobbyists visit amongst themselves. So they became very interested in the whole thing: committee chairmen, the makeup of committees—where the bills are going to—the whole gamut of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You are getting closer to the session, when does this become a “group?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course the big meeting was the one that we had out on the bay and that was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Sunday night just before session opened. Surely, you met a little bit more to the point before then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not really. The Sunday night was the first time the Republicans saw the

dissidents all together. Now, for the first time, their “count” became dependable. Heretofore, it was all talk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The leaders of the dissident Democrats—Bob Perry, Bill McCormick, Bill Day—did they tell you exactly who all they had with them or did you not get to hear that until close to the end of this development? Did they say, “We’ve got more members, but they’re in the wings?”

**Mr. Copeland:** They were playing pretty close to their vests. I think the first indication that I got came from who actually was there—there were only five of them, and that was Perry, McCormick, Day, Kink, and Hurley. The rest of them were kind of in the background; we never, ever got their names.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had a strong impression that there were more people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, what did they want from you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Their interest was to create a coalition for the purpose of being able to raise the level of awareness of private power. Now, this was their agenda and it was promulgated, sponsored and encouraged by the private power industry. This is why they surfaced and said, “We already made a commitment.” They were not going to vote for John O’Brien again. So this was their alternative: “Would you guys be interested in electing a coalition Speaker?” At that time, I think the position the Republicans were taking, Dan included, was “What the hell do we have to lose? Where are we going? What is the intent of the party? What can we do if we create a coalition now? How is this going to affect our efforts two years from now, four years from now?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you, it was win-win?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there any dangers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. Political danger is something that is perceived and not necessarily, not always...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did you have a discussion about what was the down-side here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. We had a lot of people who were very, very concerned. “Oh my, we would have to be responsible; we would be in the majority. Can we depend upon the members of a coalition?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, working with coalitions can be very nerve-wracking.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Damon Canfield: wonderful, conservative gentleman from Yakima County was on a full diet of fingernails. He was worried that this would be so terrible. Oh, that John O’Brien would get elected and that he would do all kinds of terrible, awful things to Damon Canfield that would hurt him and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That you would not be able to hang together, in other words?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That you would attempt this and fail and then you would be exposed?

**Mr. Copeland:** And then John would take his wrath out on everybody. So what’s he going to do to me, I’m a minority anyway. What’s he going to have, a public flogging, for heaven’s sakes? Now, follow this very

clearly: Politics is an avocation to most all of these people. They all have their own jobs; they have their own careers; they don't have to have politics. It's not that damn important. If they get thrown out of office, they're not going to miss a heartbeat. We have a set of principles we believe in, we're advancing those principles and those causes and all of the sudden, if the voter says, "We don't like your principles and causes," we continue our business, we continue our careers. We don't stop. It's not that important for us to get re-elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that free you? I don't want to use the word "game," but does that give you sort of a license to experiment and push the envelope and try out this maneuver?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan used this terminology over and over again: "Maybe it isn't the popular thing for you to do in your area, but it's the right thing to do." If you enter into politics and say, "I have to do what's popular in my area." You're always running around taking polls. If you enter into politics and say, "Then let us set a course of what is the right thing for us to do in politics." I personally think that the majority of the time, you're going to be correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And if you are a good leader, you will bring the people with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Now you hit the key word—that requires leadership. What is leadership in politics anyway? Leadership in politics is nothing more than advancing an idea, articulating it well, telling the voters where we want to go, and asking them to join in the cause. That's political leadership. Lacking political leadership, you must take a poll: Let's find out what a few people think and decide if we are going to go in that direction. That is not political leadership. And I think

this group in many cases took a very active role in creating political leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you just defined the characteristics of leadership.

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it. But here again I'm going to go back and digress. Take all the people that were there. Who are these guys that created leadership? Did Bob Goldsworthy assert any position of leadership? You're damn right. Did Jimmy Andersen ever do it? You bet! Did Bob Brachtenbach do it? You bet! Did Dan? Over and over again. You bet they all stated their position. And that's true leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like you had a strong core of convictions and it is much easier to stand somewhere if you know what you stand for.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So could you give me the top three or four things that you, as a group, wanted to make sure happened? What would you say you were for?

**Mr. Copeland:** When Dan ran for Governor, he had a "Blueprint for Progress." He wanted to reorganize many things in state government. At this particular moment, I think there were something like fifty or sixty agencies and departments and heads that reported directly to the Governor. How stupid, how absolutely ridiculous. Dan wanted to do away with that.

And we were sitting there, for heaven sakes, running the Legislature through this dumb procedure where the state law says that you have to have a printed bill in addition to the type-written bill. I hated that; I thought it was dumb. I wanted to change that. And first and foremost—I don't know if anybody else

agreed with me, but it was in my mind—the people had no input in the legislative process. They couldn't find it; they couldn't get an authority; nobody had a public hearing; nobody was entitled to come in and have any input.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were going to be this fresh wind blowing through the halls and stirring things up?

**Mr. Copeland:** We're going to elevate the position of the legislative branch of government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had already accomplished a big chunk of it by bringing in new people; that was a piece of this. Let's get to the big meeting in the cabin. I understand you met in the Safeway parking lot, or the Elks parking lot—somewhere in downtown Olympia. Can you walk me through the evening? You came together; you were going to go ahead and have this final meeting before session starts. Who was in the car? Can you tell me what you were doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a very ugly night and raining like a son-of-a-gun and it was decided that we were going to meet at a residence out on Cooper Point Road. I can't even tell you whose residence was out on Cooper Point. And who am I in the car with?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is just one car? There are so many versions of this story.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was one car with five passengers: Dan Evans, Damon Canfield, Don Eldridge, Slade Gorton and myself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Slade was certainly a big player in this, but was Damon Canfield reluctant?

**Mr. Copeland:** You never knew about Damon; he thought the whole suggestion was "heady wine."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you went out Cooper Point Road to some kind of a cabin or cottage, a summer home which Bill Day was renting, as I understand.

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no idea who was renting but Bill was there and Bob Perry and Bill McCormick, Dick Kink, and Margaret Hurley. And to our surprise, Chet King was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a happy surprise? He was a good, strong member?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. Well, it's just one more. So the whole presentation was, "Here we are. You're looking at us. All six of us. We are perfectly willing to go along with the coalition but understand we have some other players. We're not able to tell you exactly who they are at this time."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think they were still rounding them up themselves? Why did they not want to say who was involved?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that they had some people who said, "If this is going to go with more than fifty votes, I will be your fifty-first vote."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were they in a somewhat weaker position?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily, but you just about had to take it for face-value. We could see that, physically, there were enough people. I mean, we were representing forty-eight people. In the conference that they had in the room then there were more than fifty votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The magic number.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So it was tentatively agreed that if the caucus bought in on this, it would be "all-systems go." The coalitionists said, "Okay, on the first vote, we will have six and on the second ballot we will have more." This was the agreement: Show us a gain on the second ballot or "all bets are off."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First of all, who was going to be nominated as the Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** They selected Bill Day. Slade threw out the suggestion that Dan should be the Speaker, but they showed no interest in his suggestion. So we just moved ahead with Bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, why him? What was it about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Bill was a natural. When you began to take a look at the make-up of all of the other people in that group, I think Bill was probably the brightest guy of the bunch and probably not only did he have a demanding posture about him—he was a huge man—but he also was very likeable; he did not offend people. Bob Perry could offend you very quickly; he was a little rash at times. I think Bill had a better grasp of the whole thing than anybody else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they also feel that they had nothing to lose?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had been told on no uncertain terms that they were now "dissidents."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were already pushed out before they did this?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they pretty much drew the line in the sand at the state Democrat meeting over public power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why did these people not become Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's something that can be better answered by them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They are Democrats; they don't leave the Democratic Party. Some of them stay in office for years, actually. Did they just have a different vision that the Democratic Party should be a bigger tent than that and that they should belong in it? Or did their districts demand that they remain Democrats? I wonder if there was ever a temptation for them to become Republicans.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I would have to say "all of the above." A political point of view can become so big and so strong that it starts telling people what to say and what to do, leaving no room for alternative ideas. This may well have been one of those moments for all of those dissident Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you see that they were struggling with this issue, or did they say, "I'm a Democrat and I'm still going to be a Democrat, but I'm going to do this."

**Mr. Copeland:** Every dissident had their own individual set of reasons for being a part of the dissident group. The majority had a reason because of the public/private power fight. Some of the others had additional reasons, "because John O'Brien did such-and-such to me." That's just an example. "I didn't like the way this happened. I wanted to do this," a whole list of reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides supporting private power, were there other issues that you said, "We're going to do it this way," or they said, "We want you to do it this way." Were there other things on the table? For the Republicans, it's always been said that redistricting was the



thing that was on the table, that they wanted to take charge of redistricting. Promises were given to the dissident Democrats assuring them they would be taken care of in their districts and that was part of the trade-off. Is that true?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, that is true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there other things on the table? I noticed that when Bill Day did become Speaker, the first thing that he promised was a no-new-taxes budget. Was that part of the negotiation?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was almost a given, going in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you actually work out the strategy of how the voting would take place in the Speakership election?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Also in attendance was Si Holcomb, the Chief Clerk of the last session. Bill Day had invited him to attend and this proved a very wise move. Si as Chief Clerk of the previous session was the designated officer at the organization of the next session of the House. We were all confident that Si would keep everything in confidence, so we proceeded. I had some Points of Order to go over with him in the event that they came up. The question: Could a member voting on the prevailing side demand "reconsideration of the vote?" Si had his rule books with him, as did I, and pointed out the motion for reconsideration applies to votes on bills and not the election of a Speaker. So this became part of the script.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did Si come to be on your side? There are some stories that he was sympathetic to your cause because he himself was angry with John O'Brien.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is probably a very true statement. But the point is, he was brought there not because of any feeling or allegiance that he may or may not have had toward John O'Brien. He was going to be the presiding officer. The one thing that you don't want to do is create an attitude or atmosphere in which the presiding officer is surprised. "You're going to be involved; you're going to be the presiding officer. Here is a set of circumstances that probably will prevail."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he didn't betray you; he stayed with you and kept his counsel.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And would that have been because of this animosity, perhaps? I wondered if you were aware of it.

**Mr. Copeland:** You'd have to ask Si. I can't answer that. But even if we were aware of it, that was not an issue. The issue was the organization: having the presiding officer there, telling him the set of circumstances which may occur, and in the event that these do occur, briefing him on the things that may happen. And in the event that they do, then you only have this perimeter to live by.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he taking a risk?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there is any question. If this whole thing failed, I don't think John O'Brien would have kept him around for one minute.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was stepping out, taking a chance, too. And you were stepping out because he could have told John O'Brien that this was in the works. If his loyalties lay elsewhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a calculated risk.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, a very calculated risk. You have to understand that in the legislative environment, the only thing that you have worth a damn is your word. Once you violate that, you're not worth a damn. So was it a calculated risk? Possibly. But not a risk if you are working with "responsible" people. So Si was part of this whole thing. He knew his exact perimeters. If you take a look in the House Journal, when the vote finally came and the big shift was made, he not only played his part, I think I'm correct that at one time John wanted to say something and Si didn't allow it. He said, "By your vote, you have elected Bill Day, Speaker of the House." Bang and the gavel went down!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can't help but wonder if you were somewhat gleeful when you were putting this together? I mean, this was quite clever, the whole notion of how you were going to vote in the Speaker.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Damon Canfield probably put it better than anybody else. He said, "This is pretty heady wine." Now, this ended the late, dark, wet and cold meeting and we left feeling good about the progress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You came to all these agreements, hands were shaken, that sort of thing? Next morning, you brought all the Republicans into your caucus room. Can you tell me what happened in that room? Who laid it out, who said, "Good morning, this is what we are going to do?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Don Eldridge was the caucus chairman but Dan explained the proposition to the caucus: "John O'Brien is going to get nominated; we're nominating Dan and they are nominating Bill Day." On the first vote, Bill Day will get five or six votes; there will

be no clear winner at this point. On the second ballot, Bill Day will get additional votes; how many we don't know, but it will be an increase."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, that's the signal?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the signal. If he has more votes on the second ballot we proceed with Plan A. Now, at this point we are in caucus and the plans have been laid and it is twenty minutes to twelve, the convening time. So what does leadership do? They lock the doors! That's right, they lock the doors and don't let any of the members out until it is time to go to the floor. This is just too good to lose. So the entire caucus cooperates very well and we just wait until twelve o'clock.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have trouble convincing all of your caucus to do this? I mean, it had to be perfect or it wasn't going to work. Were there people who thought this was too much for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** One member of the caucus told the caucus that he could not vote for Bill Day, and when the switch in votes came, Dwight Hawley cast his vote for Dan Evans. The caucus understood his reasons and that was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He just couldn't vote for a Democratic Speaker, no matter what?

**Mr. Copeland:** He just—he had a very difficult time. But he was nice enough; he got up in the caucus and told us about it, so that was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As long as it was just one, you were okay?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I mean, we had to have a hard count. We just couldn't trust to luck that we were going to go out there and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you press your members to commit?

**Mr. Copeland:** We just asked, “Is there anybody that can’t go along with this?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The peer pressure must have been pretty intense?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the older Republicans, the Elmer Johnstons and people who had been there a long time?

**Mr. Copeland:** State of shock!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not only have you taken over the party, but look at what you are doing now?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they feel shoved aside or did they feel this was exciting; what do you think?

**Mr. Copeland:** They probably felt like this is something that they couldn’t have caused all by themselves. It took a whole series of events, very dynamic changes, in order to be able to bring this about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you the wild upstarts? Did they think this was good or bad?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn’t think it was bad; they went along with it. Don’t misunderstand, this was fine with them. The circumstances, the time, the players are there, all of the signals. I mean, it was green light. You know, “On your mark, get set, go!”

In the meantime, the Sergeant of Arms is placing the names on the members’ desks. To this point no one knows where he or she

will be sitting for the session. And the rumor was circulating that the Republicans were in caucus for a long time. The Senate became interested in what the hell was going on and so they got called to order by the presiding officer: “Mr. President, I move that the Senate be at ease.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had a tiny bit of the plan seeped out or was there just a kind of sixth sense about it? You had kept a very tight lid on things?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn’t know what was going to happen, but they knew that something was developing. So when we came out of caucus, here were all of the members of the Senate lined up in the House chambers waiting to see what was going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did you just keep your heads down and walked in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This must be one of the biggest dramas of the Legislature!

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. And of course, a lot of the members in the Senate said, “What is going on?” We knew what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tension is growing? What happens next?

**Mr. Copeland:** Twelve noon comes and we all walk out onto the floor of the House to take our newly assigned seats and we are amazed to find the House is full of spectators. The galleries are full, the press tables are overflowing, and the Senate has gone into recess and walked across to the House chambers to see what might be going on. (So much for our well-kept secret; others could figure out that there may be some skull-duggery afoot.) The Chief

Clerk called the House to order and ordered a roll call. With the roll call complete, he then announced that “the nomination for Speaker is now in order.” Nominations were made, speeches given, and he accepted a motion that the nominations be closed and then launched into the first ballot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the first ballot O’Brien got forty-five, Bill Day got six and Dan Evans received forty-eight votes. Voting for Mr. Day was himself, Margaret Hurley, Chet King, Dick Kink, Bill McCormick and Bob Perry.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Chief Clerk announced that no one had received a majority of votes and he started the second ballot. When the next roll call started the place got so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Everybody was riveted on the next vote, many were writing down the tally; nobody was engaged in idle conversation. It was truly an electrifying moment in the history of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this where Bill Day is to pick up some additional votes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct and they delivered as planned. Bill O’Connell from Tacoma came onboard. Brand new body; where in the heavens name did he come from? We don’t know. See, this was the thing that the coalition kept telling us. “We have more votes, but we can’t tell you about them.” So all we said, “If you have more votes on the second ballot, then...”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have some kind of hand signals at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** No hand signals, no interruption of a roll call once it has started. Now, with the gain on the second ballot, the plan was to watch Representative Alfred Adams and follow his lead. So then the third

ballot comes and Dan is sitting directly right in front of me and he turns to me and says, “Tell Al to switch his vote to Day.” Well, Doctor Alfred Adams—he’s number one of the roll call list—was sitting right behind me, so I turned to Al and said, “Switch the vote.” Si Holcomb says, “Adams,” and Representative Alfred Adams booms out with a big, “Day!” With that everybody looks agog. “Dr. Adams? What is happening to John O’Brien?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As he was a medical doctor, switching his vote had another dimension of meaning.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. How frequently would a M.D. vote for a chiropractor?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just added to the punch here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Al Adams switched his vote and then it was just binga-binga-binga-ding! All of the Republicans were voting for Day. So it just went on through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At what point did somebody say, “Hey, what’s happening here? Were people just about falling out of their chairs? Was there pandemonium?”

**Mr. Copeland:** I think John O’Brien saw it just as soon as Al Adams voted for Bill Day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it must have been unbelievable?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. As a matter of fact, sitting across the aisle from Dan Evans was Mark Litchman. He had been elected majority leader. As soon as Doctor Adams changed his vote, John O’Brien, who was seated in the rear of the chambers, came rushing down the aisle and requested Mark to vacate the seat so he could occupy that number-one seat, “You

go back and sit down there, I'll take over this seat," and with that Mark went to the rear of the chambers. The third ballot was completed and before the vote was announced, John tried to gain recognition to make some comments but Si Holcomb ruled, "The roll call was in progress and cannot be interrupted."

I remember John coming to Dan and saying something like: "Dan, why didn't you let me know? We could have worked something out. We can still work something out." And Dan's response was, "School's out, John."

The roll call continued and I continued to write down the votes. The vote of Representative Bob Schaefer came in and it was for Day. The final vote was: O'Brien forty-one, Mr. Day fifty-seven, Mr. Evans one. Representative Hawley voted for Evans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A couple of other Democrats saw which way the wind was blowing and switched their vote to Day: Arnie Bergh and Dick Taylor.

**Mr. Copeland:** At this point, Bob Schaefer moved for reconsideration. I was expecting such a move and I was ready to ask for a ruling after the Chief Clerk announced the votes for the third ballot. He then recognized Mr. Schaefer: "Mr. Schaefer, having voted on the prevailing side, moved that the House do now reconsider the vote by which Mr. Day was elected Speaker of the House."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Chief Clerk next recognized you and you said: "I would like to have a ruling of the Chair as to whether the motion to reconsider on this particular matter is a valid motion." So, was this a part of your script?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. These were the things that we worked out with Si in advance. I needed to know how he was going to rule on a motion to reconsider.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The ruling of the chair was—the Chief Clerk still presiding: "The authority of the Chief Clerk presiding over this House of the Representatives is limited to one thing—that is the election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. A Speaker has been elected by your vote on your last ballot. Therefore, I do not consider it within the Chief Clerk's authority to consider any other business now that a Speaker has been elected." The motion to reconsider was declared out of order.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, with that, there was a round of applause by some and sad faces by others. But the events of the House went forward and the Chief Clerk then appointed Representatives Perry and Adams to escort Representative Day to the rostrum.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been very nice to have a script because then you didn't have to improvise on the spot.

**Mr. Copeland:** I wrote that portion of the script.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you knew your line and he, his.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Photographs exist of the step-by-step voting and different people's expressions and they are amazing. You were keeping your faces pretty straight but I imagine inside, you are little excited? So John O'Brien was jumping to his feet and wanting to say something?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But Si wouldn't even recognize him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The new Speaker—Bill Day—addressed the House. First, of course,



he said he was grateful. And then he said, "Each of us will serve the interest of his or her particular district." He was taking the high road. He went on with his brief acceptance speech, "I have attempted to outline for your examination several of the problems which we must all consider..." He's just going to roll on here. Then on a motion of Personal Privilege, the Speaker recognized Dan Evans. Evans began, "First, I would like to congratulate the new Speaker..." and he tried to set the tone for the session. I'm paraphrasing a bit here. He was addressing more than the members—the galleries were packed, as you said. He said, "This is a new era, a really new era. Most of you probably don't know the Republican Party during this last election polled over fifty-three percent of the popular vote of the state." Citing that number again, as we discussed. "Though we elected only forty-eight out of ninety-nine Representatives. It's been obvious since the last election, the Democratic Party was split and could not by themselves elect a Speaker. Therefore, we could have had a deadlock. We feel that it's our responsibility to take some action that would organize this body and set it on its course." So he was saying that it was your responsibility as legislators—as members of this body—not to just flounder around? The decision wasn't made easily—he fills in a little bit of background—and indicates it was not made on the basis of personality. Was he trying to placate John O'Brien, saying, "This is not personal; it was just, we had to do this." Then he alluded to the Democratic Convention, the split and how that came about. "While this choice was difficult and has many thorns in it, our future course isn't very difficult. Our course is to provide...the best government that we can and the best laws that we can for the state of Washington." Then he said that you were doing this on the principles of upholding individual liberty, of supporting a government close to the people, for fiscal responsibility,

and "to give our children a government that is free from debt caused by the spending sprees of their fathers."

Then John O'Brien finally was allowed to speak: "This was a very unusual position, for the presumably majority party to be in a minority position. We think that it's a very bad mistake for the Republican Party to go to this low type of political maneuvering." He was not going to take the high road here. "In my opinion, it's absolutely politically dishonest and immoral." That becomes the line adopted by the Democrats. What you have done is, if not illegal, immoral, unethical. It gets ugly pretty quickly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only ugly, he's blaming us for something that the dissidents are doing. Because we elected Bill Day, we did something immoral by virtue of the fact that we voted for a Democrat!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the Speaker quickly said, "Mr. O'Brien, let's not impugn the motives of anyone." He rejoins, "I'm not impugning anyone's motives; I'm giving my viewpoint." "First of all, I want to thank everyone who was loyal. You have not only my admiration...you should be proud of yourselves as Democrats. A price was paid here today and we are going to suffer by it."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, a "price was paid." That was a big headline. That was so much political rhetoric.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, quoting John O'Brien: "In my opinion, good government in the state of Washington has been hindered and handicapped and the blame and the whole responsibility is going to be placed on the Republican Party. I will be one that will help in doing this." He's pledging animosity in the end. He's not taking this gracefully; he's going to fight you to the death. He's worried

about the two-party system, the Democratic Party. “We’re going to have people file on the Democratic ticket who have nothing but plans to destroy the party. One gentleman in particular has been planning for months that the Democratic Party had to go. He ran on our ticket; he was successful here today and I certainly think next time Mr. Robert Perry should file on a Republican ticket; he doesn’t belong on our ticket.” So he’s reading people out of his party. And he says, “Now, I’m the minority leader, I say let the chips fall where they may. Thank you very much.” And he sat down. Various other people spoke including Mr. Perry. This is very bitter.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, you regrouped and had the nominations for the Chief Clerk’s office. Si Holcomb is nominated. And various people speak; Margaret Hurley seconds that. She comes to the fore, she, all of a sudden, is very active moving things forward and setting the agenda.

**Mr. Copeland:** She was one of the six original dissidents.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She’s very prominent in this. What was she like to work with?

**Mr. Copeland:** If I say the word “difficult,” it would probably be accurate. Margaret had her own set of agendas; she wanted certain things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they things that you could help her get? What did she want?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Things that were totally unachievable. A lot of special programs for children that had all kinds of problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean developmentally delayed children?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Handicapped children and things like that. She always wanted to have far more money for it than what we could afford.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I had always associated that position with Kathryn Epton. I didn’t know that Margaret Hurley also was supporter of that group. So, was she in a difficult position?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not necessarily. She probably was in a very difficult position with John O’Brien because she and John had been close. Then she departed from John and I think there was a real huge rift between the two of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that in her own caucus she was ostracized pretty heavily at this point. She would walk into a room and people would fall silent or leave.

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m sure of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the other dissident Democrats have that difficulty? How did the caucuses work at that point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you are getting into the function of the whole thing. Whenever we broke for caucus, we Republicans would have our own caucus and the seven coalition members would have their own caucus in the Speaker’s Office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn’t caucus with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I got appointed to be the liaison person, so I would caucus with the dissidents as well as the Republicans. We would jointly work out the program for the day or week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you kept them apprised as to what you were going to be doing next and

they would say, “What about us?” And what kind of answers would you have for them? You kept them on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes and it was a case of “mutual admiration society” more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You needed them and they needed you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you do stick together throughout the session in a pretty remarkable way. Does anyone peel off or do you maintain your solidarity?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we had some peeling off of people when the committee assignments came out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which I understand was a huge battle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Some went together extremely well and some went together with great pain. If you look in the Journal, I think one of the cleverest things that ever happened was the Republicans asked Elmer Huntley to become Chairman of the Highways Committee with the understanding he got to select his vice-chairman. So he reached over and grabbed Kenny Rosenberg, a Democrat, and made him the vice chairman. Kenny was not disliked by anybody—Republican or Democrat. He was a wonderful, personable Democrat, and a very reasonable guy. And so Bud Huntley and Kenny Rosenberg were able to operate the entire session with the Highways Committee with absolutely no problems at all and it was the smartest thing that Republican caucus could have done. It was successful because, all of the sudden, all of the other people on the Committee were

very happy with Kenny and so everything just ran very smoothly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that no regular Democrats would take a chairmanship.

**Mr. Copeland:** True.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I also understand that the one Democrat who did take a chairmanship never regained her place in the party: Marian Gleason. That she suffered for that. That was considered a turn-coat thing to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** Look back at John’s statement. John is trying to blame the Republican caucus for the coalition. This is his method of welcoming the Coalition members back: it was not their fault, hold them harmless, blame the Republicans and bring the Democrats back into the fold. Except: “Mr. Perry should have filed with the Republicans.” Then he actually turned on Marian and said, “You take a chairmanship and that’s it as far as you’re concerned.” So he was perfectly willing to sacrifice any of his people for whatever purpose. It just carried on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Turning to the committees, now, was it part of your long-term strategy or goal to reduce the number of committees? There had been over thirty and you reduced that number down to twenty-one. You were able to push that through.

**Mr. Copeland:** The number of committees! All the time that John was Speaker, the number of committees was determined by how many people that the Democrats had. In 1961, the previous session, there had been thirty-one committees. We got it down to twenty-one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bill Day, the new Speaker, said, “The new committee questionnaires have been placed on the desk of members

who will note the Speaker is recommending that the number of the committees be reduced from thirty-one to twenty-one. This new list of committees combines committees to which few bills were referred during the '61 session and the names of some committees have been changed to conform to the state departments." Is this something you had discussed previously?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. And this was an important step forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "An attempt will be made to reduce the number of members who serve on these because in the last few sessions, committees have become too large and cumbersome." There were to be fewer committee assignments for each member. Members of Ways and Means, Highways, and Rules and Order committees were going to serve on only two other committees.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your case, it was three. He further instructed, "Members not on the major committees would probably serve on not more than four committees. Turn them into the Chief Clerk's desk, so the business of the House can get underway." What happened? Did regular Democrats not want to turn in their forms?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. First of all, they couldn't understand why they couldn't be on five or six committees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't see that there was a problem with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course, the problem was there was no scheduling prior to this and so the committee chairman would get up and say the committee on whatever it is, it's

going to meet immediately after adjournment. Well, three or four committees would do that simultaneously and if you're serving on three of those committees and they're all meeting at the same time...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not only that, how can you keep track of so many different issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** You couldn't do it. This was a departure from the normal. Now you're going to see the Bob Greive process beginning to fall apart. The wall was coming down and people were going to be able to look inside and find out what in heaven's name is going on. So this was the first itty-bitty step for the public to be able to understand the committee system, how it works or how it should work and to be able to have some input.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you realized that the coalition would go forward and you, in fact, would become the majority—even though technically you're the minority—this was your first opportunity? You had your list of reforms that you wanted?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. And as itty-bitsy as it may seem, it is step one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wanted to change the committee structure; you wanted to reduce the number of committees and you wanted the committees to conform more closely to departments or agencies: Highways, Education, Social Security and Public Assistance, Agriculture and Livestock; these fit better. Can you remember what committees were dumped? What happened to that infamous Legislative Processes Committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some committees were combined or integrated. But the Legislative Process Committee went away. However, the committees were arranged so that one

Department could be assured that only one committee would handle all their legislation. The situation improved after Dan got elected Governor and restructured the government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then you could build relationships with agencies because they knew who you were and you knew who they were?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you have a beautiful scenario. Then the committee chairman could at least develop a rapport with the department. If the department heads knew that anything relating to their department was going to go through that committee, he or she has a better rapport with the chairman and members of that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were able to build on this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Several of the departments invited the committee to spend the entire day at the department, getting acquainted with the personnel as well as the operations. This again was a first. The leader in this new relationship between departments and the Legislature was Bert Cole, the Land Commissioner. For the first time Bert Cole had all of the members of that committee out to dinner so he could get acquainted with them. Now, was that enlightening!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you with him.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. So all of the sudden, you had the legislative branch of government involved with the department or an agency. Now they knew each other on a one-to-one basis and were able to communicate rather than have this veil or screen or whatever it might be. Formerly, they didn't know who you were and you didn't know who they were. So this began us to open up the hallways and doorways...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is really big. This is not just tinkering around committees; it's an entirely new approach to how committees operate.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nothing more than the elevation of the legislative branch of government so they could better communicate with the executive branch. However, it did require some effort on the part of the committee chairmen to create this acquaintance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's really important to trace these things because if you kind of breeze through this briefly, you'll miss the significance. How did the committees in the House relate to the committees in the Senate if the structure was different?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the Natural Resources Committee in the House had no counterpart in the Senate? What happened to your bills; where did they go?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the problem. They got shot all over the place. It became vogue in the Senate that if a committee chairman wanted a certain House bill, he would request Senator Greive to have the bill referred to his committee—even though it was not related to this committee. Oftentimes that was "the end of the line."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got half-way. You reformed at least one House, but you had a ways to go to really get this in place. Still, this was a huge step.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, it is. But a lot of people don't perceive it as such, as part of the advance of the legislative branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The regular Democrats, what did they think of this?



**Mr. Copeland:** Kind of depended upon the Democrat legislator himself. Some of those people were so ingrained to the process that they didn't want to see the mystery or the secrecy go away; they objected strenuously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose this was a lot to swallow all at once?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't swallow it all at once.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The nominal majority, they had lost control of everything.

**Mr. Copeland:** Two years later, they didn't turn around, back up and change the whole process back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Once this changed happened, it stayed in place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it remained in place. And then the following session after that, when Bob Schaefer became the Speaker, he didn't regress and change it all back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, after living under it, they understood the utility of it and got used to it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It took awhile to get this session organized because there was a lot of uproar every time you tried to do something. You were pushing hard; you were putting forward a lot of changes. Some people say it wasn't until February that things started to settle down. Did they ever really settle down or did the bitterness and the fighting and maneuvering continue throughout the session and color everything that you tried to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** The committees were formed,

the members were assigned and many of the Democrats chose not to attend the committee meetings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they just didn't come?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't come. We just took the position that, "You're on the committee; if you don't come, that's your responsibility. We are going to go forward. We are not going to stop; we're not going to be fooling around with this bickering; we're not going to..."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it kind of like going on strike for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, but it wasn't universal; it wasn't one hundred percent. And so we just said, "We're going forward with this." After awhile everyone began to realize, "This train is leaving the station; either stand on the platform and wave good-bye or get aboard."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is always the accusation that the different sides don't include each other; don't listen; don't have mechanisms for allowing the minority group to be heard. Did you extend any olive branches here or did you work at all to bring in regular Democrats into the process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Here I come back to Kenny Rosenberg, who was the vice-chairman of the Highways Committee. That was the prime example of where we continued to operate all of the transportation problems with the state of Washington on a bi-partisan basis. A Highways Users group had a party and invited all the members of the Transportation Committee. All the members came, both Republicans and Democrats. This was the "ice breaker." From that point on the committee functioned in a bipartisan manner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There must have been a lot of issues that are really bipartisan that had nothing to do with the parties.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did those issues stay on course or was everything just difficult?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was difficult but it was worthwhile. What were our alternatives? Was our alternative to go ahead and elect John O'Brien, allow him to take the six dissidents and just beat the crap out of them just for drill? I think we did the right thing and I think we conducted ourselves in a very admirable fashion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you try to temper your remarks and keep on your first high road?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. I remember one time, John was very, very bitter and said terrible, awful things on the floor of the House and somebody said, "I want to get up on the floor and I want to cut him into ribbons." I remember saying at that time, "Hey, wait a minute. Listen carefully to what he's saying. He's crying from the minority position. Why in heaven's name did you come down here anyway? Did you want to be in the majority? You are. Why are you complaining about what John O'Brien is saying? Be happy with the fact that he's selecting those words. Don't take him on; that's music to our ears."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In your caucuses, did you continually have those pep talks and regroup and say, "Okay, what's our point here?" and keep on your course of action?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. That's the purpose of the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When I read about this

session in the House Journal, I could just feel the adrenaline coursing through this session.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. But an awful lot of those wounds had to heal very, very quickly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think some people ever got over this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I rather enjoyed the writings of Don Brazier, in his book *The History of the Washington State Legislature, 1854-1963*, in which he observes:

"Meanwhile, a lengthy parliamentary squabble ensued as the new majority sought to reduce the number of committees from thirty-one to twenty-one. Many of the tactics which had been used during the power fight the previous year were repeated. Oral roll calls were repeatedly demanded and members hid to delay roll calls. The impasse came to a sudden and quick halt on Saturday evening. After a recess, three quick motions were disposed of in a period of fifty-three seconds, each on an oral vote. First, a Democrat motion was defeated, then a motion by Representative Hurley to reduce the number of committees to twenty-one was declared passed. Finally, a motion to adjourn was made and orally passed. The hectic first week thus ended, but the fight was not over."

I think an awful lot of it is pretty much water under the bridge after the first couple of weeks, but then when it settled down, we started getting into the routine of the legislative business. Then all of the sudden, the press began to realize we were for real and then the lobbying effort began.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, what was that part like? How did those groups of people react?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the one of the biggest surprises of all—the lobbyists. I can

remember a lobbyist came to me and said, “I’ve been here for ten years and I never met the guy that’s now the chairman of the committee that considers all of my bills because he’s a Republican.” He never met the chairman of the committee because “you always went to the Democrats. You never bothered about the Republicans. I said, “That’s your problem.” Holy smoley!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did they get on board quickly? Were they quick learners?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were on a fast track! You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were lobbyists alarmed or excited?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why, it changed the game plan!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was definitely flagging a big issue, then. The Republicans had been a minority for a long time, except for one little blip in 1947 and then in 1953. This is a totally different mindset. That must have been pretty heady.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. Do you have a list of the committee chairman of that year?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I’ll read them. Agriculture and Livestock: Moos; Banking and Insurance: Hood; Commerce and Economic Development: Gleason; Constitution, Elections and Apportionment: Gorton; Education and Libraries: Mahaffey; Fisheries, Game and Game Fish: Mast; Higher Education: Folsom; Highways: Huntley; Judiciary: Andersen; Labor and Industrial Insurance: McCormick; Licenses: Morrissey; Local Government: Hawley; Medicine, Dentistry and Drugs: Adams; Natural Resources, Parks, Capitol Buildings and Grounds: Lewis; Public

Institutions: Kirk; Public Utilities, Aviation and Transportation: Harris; Rules and Order: Day; Social Security and Public Assistance: Newschwander; State Government, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Civil Defense: Lybecker; Water Resources and Pollution Control: Ahlquist; Ways and Means: Chet King.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you look at the list of chairmen, you can see how the lobbying group was caught completely off-guard. Some were saying, “He’s the chairman? I have never talked to him because he was just a minority member.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Representatives Lewis and Newschwander, for instance, were only in their second terms. Several other members were serving in their third terms: Moos, Hood, Gorton, Andersen, Morrissey, and Kirk. Except for perhaps the private power lobbyists, who had a whiff of this development—they must have been feeling like they were sitting pretty.

**Mr. Copeland:** Others were in a state of shock. Private power was feeling comfortable. Prior to that time, there was a big movement to abolish all private power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that had this coalition not happened, that really would have taken place?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was speculation, but I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were fighting for their lives? Washington Water Power, Puget Power, Pacific Power. What about when the tables are turned; how did public power feel about this? Ken Billington, for instance, how did he react when you did this?

**Mr. Copeland:** In shock.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he feel endangered, defeated?

**Mr. Copeland:** Defeated, no. Public power took on an attitude of accommodation: "We are to co-exist with private power."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in your thinking, you had achieved your objective right there? It was immediately a much a healthier situation when you had a state of co-existence?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So long-range, this development created an entirely different set of circumstances. Previously, the co-existence idea wasn't very courant. People didn't seem to talk about it very much.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, they were always fighting. Public power was interested in chipping away and trying to condemn this private power's areas of servicing and take it over and make it public, and I think, in the absence of the big move like this, that would have been on the agenda.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this changed the whole dialog on power issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did private power people continue to play a big role in this session?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think there were big power bills that went through this session, so did this just put a lid on everything? Is that what the goal was?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why should they push anything at that time?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just keep it status quo?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had taken and removed themselves from being a target for a hostile takeover. What more could they ask for?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know if they would want to go on the offensive and push back in the other direction.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Absolutely not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other issues on the table: the Speaker pledged "no new taxes." That put something of a halt to some of Governor's Rosellini's ideas about what he wanted to do that session. Where was Governor Rosellini in all this? Was he just on the sidelines watching the Legislature do this or did he become involved?

**Mr. Copeland:** He had lost control of the House. I don't think many realized the political significance of the coalition. Just twenty-four months away was another gubernatorial race. So what you are finding was the launching of Dan Evans' run for Governor. This was his springboard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he already talking about running for Governor at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** He doesn't know it yet, but it was in the wind. During the session I had George Kinnear, chairman of the Republican Party, come to me and express his hopes that Dan would consider a run for Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He must have been one of the first with that idea, then. But that wasn't on the table yet?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Not out in public, but the ingredients were coming together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But somebody is going to get that bright idea fairly soon. Do you remember when that talk emerged? Was that later, after this session or even during this session? He was in the limelight now.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. There was an occasional mention. During this session is when people recognized that Dan really had the potential to be a strong leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's your rising star?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. That is right. So what are the ingredients? The ingredients came out of the public/private power fight, the disenfranchisement of some of the Democrat members, the creation of the coalition, the increased political activity on the part of the business community, and the opportunity for the Republicans to say, "This is the course that we should take: the reorganization of the executive and legislative branches of government."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also the reorganization of the Republican Party itself? You had more or less taken over the Party.

**Mr. Copeland:** That came later. What I'm saying is a whole series of things. But at the same token, you will also find that each individual Republican legislator by himself is a pretty damn good substantial citizen in his community. He is very active. People like Bud Huntley and Bob Goldsworthy and Bob Brachtenbach and Bob McDougall were running around the east side of the state. And on the west side: Charlie Newschwander, Slade Gorton, Jim Andersen, Jack Hood, Herb Hadley, Chuck Moriarty, John Ryder, and Al Thompson. All of these guys are beginning to get very high profiles—and if Dan wants to go into a community and look around to run for Governor, if he's going to go to Wenatchee,

who's he going to call on? He's going to call Bob McDougall. Does Bob have the door open to a lot of places? Far more than Dan does. If Dan travels to Ferndale, he calls Jack Hood. Politically, what is it worth? A hell of a lot!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So building this team builds the structure for the new face of government?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the whole platform.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He now had friends in every corner of the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** You've got that right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that done deliberately, or was the Governorship race extra cream on the pie?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a political involvement. Did Dan go out and create this all by himself? No way. Did he use it? Darn rights he did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It only looks planned that way in retrospect because all the pieces were then in place. Just to kind of finish up this little piece, Speaker Day was trying to make appointments to the Legislative Council later on in the session and he was still having problems where Democrats did not want to serve under his appointment. This was still simmering; he was still finding a lot of resistance. Could you characterize him as a Speaker? How did he handle himself? What kind of a Speaker was he?

**Mr. Copeland:** Like I said, he was a very likable sort of guy. Under the conditions he was working, he was a great Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could he win over these people?



**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree. He was practical. But he knew that he would never get John O'Brien back. And Mark Litchman was truly with John and remained that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Bill Day have great people skills?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he did. Bill had some wonderful people skills. I think it was certainly to his credit. Talk about people skills, just holding those dissidents together. Even Margaret Hurley.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were under a lot of pressure.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were under tremendous pressure. We were finalizing the budget and I remember on this particular case, I went over to the dissidents' caucus in the Speaker's Office and walked in and Bill Day said that he was having a problem with the budget. Margaret Hurley had announced to the group that she was going to amend the budget on the floor and I said, "Now, wait a minute, we're all in this together and we all decided that this was going to be the budget." And Margaret said, "Under no set of circumstances am I going to vote for this budget. I want more money for this, more money for that, and I want more money for something else and if I don't get it I am not voting for the budget." And I said, "Margaret, we're in this together and you're going to vote for this budget along with everyone else. And if you don't, you can rest assured that that big guy sitting behind that desk is not going to appoint you to anything in the interim, I mean nothing." She looked at Bill Day and said, "You wouldn't do that, would you?" And he said, "Yes, I would." She voted for the budget without her amendments.

Bill was a big man and as soon as he walked into the room, everyone knew that

he was in the room, but he was a very, very personable sort of a guy. He was not at all abrasive. One thing about Bill, he always did his homework. When he had a position on something, he certainly had studied it. He read the bills and he knew from where he was coming on it, so there was no question about that. But yes, he had a difficult time right from the get-go because of the fact that it was a coalition. He had those seven people that he had to take care of in his own group, plus coordinate everything with the Republicans in order to be able to get the necessary fifty votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a good parliamentarian? Did he know the rules backwards and forwards?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was an excellent parliamentarian. He had help; he brought a young attorney by the name of Richard Guy from Spokane. And to the best of my knowledge, this was Richard Guy's start in politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And of course, he ended on the Supreme Court as Chief Justice.

**Mr. Copeland:** But there was also something going on at the same time. Richard Guy got acquainted with a very good-looking gal that was working in the House at the time. She later became Mrs. Guy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that must have added to the drama of the session.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm guessing—and there is plenty of evidence in the Journal—that John O'Brien was watching like a hawk every parliamentary move that happened and challenged it on what was correct and what was the right procedure.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature as an institution was going to work and so the committees were going to be formed. Almost at the insistence of Bill Day and his group—and of course, the Republicans going along with it—the committees were formed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a rough start with the regular Democrats refusing chairmanships and refusing basically to be part of things.

**Mr. Copeland:** The statement was: “We don’t intend to cooperate.” This laid the groundwork for: “Let us then go forward without them.” As time passed, some Democrats realized that if they wanted to get their pet legislation passed, they had damn well better work with the majority. These, of course, were minor issues, but important to some legislators, so an attitude of accommodation had to be created. And there were those Democrats that preferred not to sit on any committees at all and for all intent and purposes not participate in any of the decision-making policies, which was totally unproductive.

We had other things that were going on. That had created a coalition. A lot of people try to say that it was a personality thing with John O’Brien. That was not the case. The background on it came with public/private power fight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Beyond the power issue, there was also some suggestion that conservative Democrats were worried about the Democratic platform which stated that Democrats wanted to get rid of the loyalty oaths and the McCarran Act and various issues of that nature. Do you remember any of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was all part of it, but it wasn’t anything that was upfront as far as the Republicans were concerned. But the coalition was a combination of so many things. The public/private power fight was

one. The hold that John O’Brien and Bob Greive had on the legislative process was another. The inability for the people to find their government was still a separate item. The inability of a part-time legislator trying to keep up with full-time bureaucrats was another one. All of these things were just beginning to surface and saying, “There’s got to be some changes made.” So what did you have in the 1961 Session? You had the first little glimpse of change. The 1963 session you had another, in 1965 you had another, and so then the changes came about, but all of these began to take little steps one after the other and they escalated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were certain points where there was a breakthrough and this is one of them?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a huge controversy over the composition of the Rules Committee, of which you were eventually a member. Was it an issue over the balance of power on the committee between the three different groups?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you finally become an operative committee? Did it ever come together?

**Mr. Copeland:** We became very operative. And I’ll interject at this point who was on the Rules Committee. Bill Day was the chairman of the Rules Committee and Bob Perry—also one of the coalition Democrats—he was the vice-chairman. And there was Bergh, Braun, Clark, Copeland, Eldridge, Evans, Garrett, Hurley, Johnson, McCormick, Mundy, O’Connell, Pritchard, Siler, Swayze, and Wang. Out of that, the only ones that were on

the Rules Committee that were not coalition Democrats were Arnie Bergh and Eric Braun and Avery Garrett and Roy Mundy and that was it. And now you see Pritchard elevated to Rules in his third term and O'Brien not on Rules for the first time in twenty years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did they get along?

**Mr. Copeland:** They got along fine. John O'Brien had been invited to serve on Rules but he declined. So as soon as he declined, the Speaker said, "Okay, that's it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't Avery Garrett tied in with John O'Brien as his lieutenant?

**Mr. Copeland:** Avery was very close to John. Then later on John reconsidered and wanted to be on the Rules Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much later? A week? Was it too late?

**Mr. Copeland:** Maybe a week or so later. Yes, so he got mad, but it was too late. As far as Bill Day and his group and all of the Republicans, we were trying to put in motion a legislative group that was going to be operative. Now, this was like a train leaving the station. We got delayed departing out of the station for a couple of days. Now, once that train left, if you want to board, that was your fault. And just because you didn't get the front row in the first car, too bad! John O'Brien was always ready to derail the train in any way he could. But once you try to destroy the legislative process and you're totally in the minority, then your effectiveness just goes away. I mean, you cannot stop it, it's already started; the process is in motion. The committees are meeting; they're grinding out legislation; they're putting bills in Rules and on a calendar. For anyone to say, "Stop!" It just doesn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine this coalition dealt such a shock to John O'Brien that he just couldn't recover. He couldn't take it in. He must have had to wake up each day and pinch himself that this was happening. The photographs and his remarks, he looks like a man who just had the wind knocked out of him.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that he felt that the institution could exist without him. He had fostered such a position in his own mind that he was absolutely indispensable to that Legislature. And that's not the case at all. Life is too fragile and nobody is indispensable. And if one player goes away, the world's going to continue to turn; it's going to keep on going. But John is a pro. He recovered and later became a valuable contributor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that you are extremely active this session and that you had become quite a parliamentarian. You seem to be one of the most active in pushing bills forward and keeping the calendar moving along. I'm assuming that you relished that level of involvement?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was my job. The Speaker, Dan Evans, Bob Perry and I would plan the day's operation and it would then be up to me to move things along according to the plan. The Speaker is in a tough position because he can't make a motion, and must depend on someone on the floor to carry out the program. You will find from the very first portion of this session I had done my homework in the rules, knowing full well that during the election of the Speaker somebody might move for reconsideration. And that was my job and it required that I know the rules extremely well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe I'm reading things into the Journal, but I see—between the

lines—a real sense of confidence in what you’re doing. It just looks like you’re dancing through it and having a great time.

**Mr. Copeland:** I see what you are referring to. Moving from one order of business to another is very important. Situations change and we have to change and the order of business on the floor must change to meet them. If there is a bump in the road, the question is, what do you do at that point, how do you take care of it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Numerous times, throughout that session, you came up with the right rule and then the Speaker would say, “Yes, that’s the way it is.” You’ve become a master.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. Put yourself in the Speaker’s position. If you don’t have anybody down on that floor that you can depend upon to either call a Point of Order or, in the event that another Point of Order is raised, to be able to counter that, you wind up with the Speaker standing up with the gavel and having nothing to say. Out of all the members of the coalition, there was no one that knew the rules like I did and they knew it. So Bill Day was tickled to death to be able to have me down there on the floor of the House helping him every step of the way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s look at your committee appointments: you had four. Besides Rules, you also served on Agriculture and Livestock, with Don Moos as the chair. There seem to have been an extraordinary number of bills introduced about agriculture that year—more than some other years. Was farming going through a change at this point, where people are trying to restructure it? Was there a lot more marketing, a lot more specialization?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were lots things going on in agriculture.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There seemed to be more government involvement. Put it that way.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Department of Agriculture’s basic charge is for all kinds of rules and regulations having to do with agriculture and other things. So for that reason, there would be a lot of agriculture bills having to do with marketing procedures, even such things as labeling, weights and measures, standards, grades. It’s regulated for consumers so the consumers would be confident that whatever commodity they are purchasing has a grade established and that they are getting the grade that they thought they were buying. You’ll find an awful lot of these bills are strictly regulatory, like a bill on Bartlett pear standards. Bring it into proper context. Here we are, we’ve come through the war and there was very little being done in any kind of agricultural research. So now, agriculture research was doing a great big catch-up. And there were a lot of new agricultural products being created: cross-breeds, hybrids, whatever you want to call them, under totally different names. Each was a different product, but they all didn’t have their own standards, so their standards have to be adjusted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps new uses for old things, new markets?

**Mr. Copeland:** Markets, certainly. Here was a bill on mushroom processors. Why would you be interested in mushroom processors? Before the war there wasn’t a mushroom processor in the area. All of a sudden, the mushroom processing business became a very viable type of an arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a farmer yourself, what was your involvement with the Department? How did they help you as an individual farmer? How does the government really help farming?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, they grade most agricultural products. When it comes to the production of wheat, the Department of Agriculture does all the grading, so whenever you market your wheat, it always gets the state grade and you get paid on that grade. So, are grades important? Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They serve the farming community well? Did you feel like this was a productive relationship between the government and agriculture?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. It's a confidence builder, especially when you get into the international market. The state grain inspectors inspect all the grain that gets exported out of here. They put it down as "number-two white western wheat." The guy that's buying it in China may not be able to speak English but he understands that it's been inspected and he understands white western wheat. He knows what he's getting and he knows perfectly good and well that white western wheat is going to make damn good noodles, okay. That's what he's interested in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So farmers really need this mechanism?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Our international markets would be absolutely chaotic if it weren't for some type of grading mechanism that was universally understood.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As farming gets more sophisticated and diversified, so does the Department of Agriculture?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your chairperson Don Moos a good leader in this field?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely excellent. Later

he became the Director of Agriculture in the Evans administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And he was a farmer himself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. A wheat grower from Edwall, Washington. Also a platoon sergeant with an Infantry Division in France and Germany, twice wounded—an outstanding military record.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a pretty dynamic committee? Were the members who served on that committee very knowledgeable in this area?

**Mr. Copeland:** Members were extremely knowledgeable in their own field but not all these people were farmers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But they come from areas where farming is important. What percentage of that committee would be working farmers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Three-quarters. Canfield, Clark, Copeland, Flanagan, Goldsworthy, Henry, Hood, Jolly, Moon, Reese, Rosenberg, Savage and Sieler. I don't see anybody there from King County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At one time the Legislature was pretty dominated by the farm interest, but that was no longer the case by now, is it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Two things are inherent in our life today that were carried over from the agrarian economy: One, public schools start in September and get out in June. And two, the Legislature meets in January.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now it's become a tradition, but in the early days the proportion of farmers to other kinds of people was quite high, but what about in mid-sixties?



**Mr. Copeland:** I think of all of the professions represented, there probably were more attorneys than anything else in the 1963 Session. But what were these attorneys, basically? They were young, brilliant lawyers who were perfectly willing and had the time to give up part of their time of their own private practice of law to come down here and serve in the Legislature. Did it have some additional effects? Yes. Was it always a pretty good idea to be able to get hold of an attorney that was a member of the Legislature in order to be able to take care of some of the problems that you might have with the state? Yes. At least he was familiar with the state activity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would also assume attorneys are interested in the law and therefore, lawmaking, that there was a relationship there. To get back to the farmers, was the Grange still a powerful organization in the mid-sixties?

**Mr. Copeland:** Powerful is a misnomer. They thought they were, but they weren't. The Grange got started in the very early days. Normally, every Grange was within horse-riding distance of a whole bunch of farms and so it was a social center as well as a fraternity. They even operated their own insurance company; they had their own kind of a welfare program and yes, they did speak for the farmers. But over the years the necessity to go to Grange meetings diminished. This occurred with the advent of the automobile and then when rural electrification took place and television made it so much more comfortable to watch "I Love Lucy" than to get on your horse and ride five miles in the snow to a Grange meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I had the sense that as agriculture was changing pretty rapidly and changing its nature—becoming bigger and even more commercial, that the groups

involved in agriculture may be operating in different ways by this period.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the other committees that you served on was the Constitution, Elections and Apportionment Committee, with Slade Gorton as the chairperson. Now, you had the redistricting initiative by the League of Women Voters which had failed at the ballot, but you also had a ruling by the United States Supreme Court on *Baker vs. Carr* that what they called "mal-apportionment" was unconstitutional and that added some pressure on the Legislature to redistrict. That year also saw the *Thigpen v. Meyers* district court case appealed and then a stay was requested that gave you a little bit more time. But that's about when the court said to you that the next session, 1965, "You will do nothing but redistrict until you get it done."

Slade Gorton was working diligently in the wee hours countering Senator Greive's moves in the Democratic Senate to protect the Republican interest and also the interest of the coalitionists.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, let's get something crystal clear. Senator Greive never, ever came up with any kind of legislative redistricting program that did a damn thing for statewide Democrats. Senator Greive always came up with the legislative program that did a whole bunch for certain Democrat senators and senators only. He had nothing to do with their counterparts in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would creating a safe seat for a Democratic senator not also help the Democratic House members?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not if he put five Democrat House members in one district. The senator was not interested in the Democrat Party or

the House members. His total emphasis was to take care of thirteen to seventeen Democrat senators in the Senate that would vote to maintain him as Senate leader and that was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He only wanted to keep his majority leader position?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. That was his only interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Slade Gorton? Was he looking at both the House and the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, both were of interest to him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have a counterpart in the Senate? You only hear about those two names in this issue. Was Gorton the Republican point man on this?

**Mr. Copeland:** He didn't have a counterpart in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps it was better to stream it through one brain—all that detail—than to have it dispersed through several channels. How did your committee feel about the court role in pushing on the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just a necessity, Anne.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people didn't believe that the court would redistrict, that no matter how long you took, the Legislature would do it. How did you feel about the court?

**Mr. Copeland:** I knew that the courts certainly had the authority to come in and do the redistricting. I also knew that if the Legislature did not redistrict, the courts would.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that there was danger there that if the courts did it, that you would lose out? There was some indication that Gorton thought, well, if the court does it, let them; that it really wouldn't hurt you.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were two reasons to want to pass a redistricting bill: one, to protect a seat, and two, to gain an advantage over the other political party. Either approach is selfish in nature. So maybe the way to go is to let the court do it. I always loved the "selfish" story about Senator McCutcheon. When he was at the Capitol one time with Bob Greive, he was telling his aide, "Draw the line this way. No, no, no, don't get too close to American Lake; move further away, further away." And the clerk would draw the line and then he'd add, "We'll take in this precinct," and Senator McCutcheon says, "No, no, no, no, I don't want that precinct, move away from American Lake." Finally the clerk said to him, "What is your rationale about moving away from American Lake?" And Senator McCutcheon said to him, "My rationale is quite simple, to save my ass."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Must have made some wobbly line there!

**Mr. Copeland:** He knew enough about it to understand that as soon as he got close to American Lake, then he picked up Republicans. You understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people seemed to get so involved with redistricting like it got into their blood and they knew every little jot and diddle. It doesn't seem to grab you quite the same way. Did you have the patience for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only to a degree. My legislative district was short about eight thousand people, so where do you get that

many people? East, west or north. Okay, you're going to reach out to the adjacent county and grab eight thousand voters, that's all there is to it. Would it affect me politically? Maybe. Would it damage me that much? I don't think so. Was I really all that upset about it? No. I came from this class of legislators who had our own businesses to run. We had our own professions to take care of and this was strictly an avocation. If the redistricting came about to a point where we were not in office anymore, we went right back to work and that's all there was to it. It wasn't the end of life.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For Slade Gorton, this was part of a much bigger plan for your party.

**Mr. Copeland:** Slade was a technician, which is fine. Anyway, I have always been of the opinion that if any member of a political party in a legislative body operates in an extremely credible way—they get in and do the job and do it properly and keep the public informed—they're going to get returned. If they do a lousy job, I don't care what party they are; they're probably going to get turned out of office and they should.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the idea that this little precinct here and this little line over there is actually not that relevant, it's what you do once you're there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, so much energy went into this for so many years that it's hard to evaluate it. In the end, the Legislature failed to redistrict. We will have to keep talking about it as an issue because it does impact the sessions quite a lot.

Your other committee was Social Security and Public Assistance, with Newschwander as the chair. Did these bills

that you sponsored concerning retirement systems and pensions come out of this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had quite a handful: "Repealing the triennial examination of teacher's retirement system," which passed. "Placing non-certifying school employees not covered by OASDI, under state retirement system," passed. Several on "establishing a public pension review commission" that didn't quite pass; "making changes in teacher's retirement systems," which also died. "Requiring all government units to show annual retirement costs as a separate item in the budget," that doesn't quite make it. It went to Third Reading. "Prohibiting additional cities from joining the state retirement system and encouraging those already members to transfer to statewide cities retirement system." That's quite a mouthful. That was getting cities to join a different group, a different retirement plan? I'm a little confused on that one.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was a consolidation. Several cities each had some retirement program that was all unique to that city.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were trying to group them?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Once you got the cities and counties in a retirement system that was virtually the same, then you gave the city and county employees this wonderful transportability. The employee now had the ability to take a job with some other county and not necessarily get his or her entire pension system screwed up. How important is it? It doesn't look very important in the overall mix, but when you've got a county engineer in Omak County, who's an

outstanding guy and he's been there for ten years and you want to go ahead and hire him for Thurston County, you sure as heck want to at least be competitive. What if the guy says, "I can't leave Omak County because if I do, I'll lose my pension." So an awful lot of this is underlying but very important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another one about teachers' retirement. What was happening with the teachers' retirement? I think there were five or six bills to do with straightening out teachers' retirement.

**Mr. Copeland:** You mentioned the one that had to do with non-certified school employees. These are the people who are the janitors, custodians, and the administrative people who don't carry the teachers' credentials, yet they are part of the public school system; they are on public payroll. There was an issue with accountability in reporting exactly what the teachers' retirement systems were doing, whether or not they were a proven investment. See, each one of these districts had their own investment board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot of boards.

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go. Soon to be improved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't you have a bigger pool of money and you could do much better things with it if you didn't have all these different little boards?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So anyway, this was just kind of the first step to create the investment board.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this another one of those post-war: "We haven't taken care of this for a long time; it's time to look at these things?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, when you take a look at the total number of teachers in the state of Washington between the time I entered the Legislature until the time I left, the multiplication factor is probably four—so four times as many teachers. Before you had many small isolated school districts doing well and operating their own pension system. Nobody paid too much attention to it. All of a sudden, binga-binga, the multiplication factor causes incremental growth and people began to look around and say, "Are we doing these things properly? And why do we have twenty-seven different pension systems running here, trying to do the same thing?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, then if teachers were under one umbrella, could they move positions as well the county employees?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, absolutely. This is one of the areas where the transportability becomes very, very important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this is a much more mobile society. People want to be able to move around.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And you wanted a teacher who wants to do some instructing in the community colleges or at the university level to be able to go ahead and move. That's all there is to it. You don't want to penalize them and say, "You are going to stay right here and if you leave, we're going to penalize you for it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a few of these bills pass—several of them are attempts to do the same thing. Some pass, some don't. And the last one creates a public pension commission. Was that a study group to further this along?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. And that passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. So this is a big block of legislation that you're pushing through.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only is it a big block of legislation, there's big money involved—huge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, yes. And lots of people. Doing it right is important.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot of people, a lot of bucks. And doing it right is important. One point, when I looked at the pensions that we had, I think there were as many as forty-two separate pension systems but I abolished one. I actually didn't abolish it, I combined it with another one and it was a separate pension system for liquor vendors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people would that be?

**Mr. Copeland:** About four hundred.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole system?

**Mr. Copeland:** The whole system. Okay, what is a liquor vendor? A liquor vendor is a guy who operates, let's say, a drug store in a very remote town and is authorized by the state Liquor Control Commission to sell Washington State liquor in the back of his drug store. So at some point, these vendors got themselves a pension system and they were contributing to it. But it was too small to be a sound pension system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would have been keeping track of all these systems?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know, that's the whole point. That's why the pension commission was created. Who was trying to keep track of all of these systems?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think there could be abuses that would creep into all these pension systems, because who would know?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are absolutely correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a protection? So you then end up with several large units with some boards taking care of them? Making sure that investments are paying and people will have pensions when their time comes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The Investment Board was created because there is no way in hell that you could get the average school teacher and say, "We're going to appoint you to the investment board for pensions," and be assured that person would have the expertise needed to do an adequate job of investing the money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not many people know how to do that; that's a specialty.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And for the state of Washington to allow that to continue with no expertise, no particular control, was rather dumb, so it had to be addressed and only the Legislature could address it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This article that you gave me from your scrapbook highlighting the pension issues says, "A bill to revise the teachers' retirement system and boost benefits an average of twenty-five percent and at an annual cost increase of 3.2 million in state funds was introduced Monday in the House of Representatives by bi-partisan support." It sounds like the other dimension to this was that people were actually going to get better pension deals.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this measure give the teachers the same retirement benefits



as persons covered by the state employees' retirement system? Were you actually putting more money into this system?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes and yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting rid of all these little administrations and all these separate structures must have been tremendous saving—to group things a little bit better.

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the hard things that you always had to do with any kind of pension system consolidation was to address pension system benefits that were grandfathered in; they guaranteed x-number of dollars at the time you retired and it was a fixed dollar amount.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about inflation?

**Mr. Copeland:** It had nothing to do with inflation; it was just a fixed dollar, no adjustment of any kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A dollar in 1930 is not the same as a dollar in 1960...

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn't make any difference. That's the way the bill had been structured. So number one, it wasn't fair; number two, the pension system had far more money in there than what it was going to pay up. So, how in heaven's name do you dovetail these things together and put them in there? This was late in coming; it took several cuts at the ball before we ever got it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You helped several groups of people tremendously by this reform.

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were very active and pushed through quite a few rather large

bills—a good session for that committee. One thing I wanted to ask you, you were so busy with education issues during the 1961 session and with your service on the Interim Committee, but then in 1963, you were not on the Education Committee. Did you feel like you had made your contribution in that area, or you went on other things, or you were just not re-appointed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, if you take a look at the appointments in 1963, I was on Rules at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were moving around and getting a lot of experience in different committees?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Since you had been working so steadily on education issues, I guess I was a bit surprised to see that you didn't continue, but I wondered if you felt that other people were capable of carrying the ball.

**Mr. Copeland:** You have to understand that whenever you start a new session, you would have an awful lot of requests for various committees. Looking back on it, I do remember that there were a bunch of people who wanted to be on the Education Committee, and we tried to give everybody an opportunity to get their first preference on committee assignments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would have been yours at this time, do you think?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at this time I'm moving into a position of leadership, so being on the Rules Committee is terribly important. If I got my first choice on Rules, why shouldn't somebody else get their first choice on Education? There is no sense in leadership just observing or occupying seats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hogging all the best seats? That makes sense. You have to keep people happy.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you do keep up your interest in education? Is education one of those things where even if you weren't on the committee, you could play a role? It was much bigger than the committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Especially if you are on Rules. Now, you can take education bills that you were familiar with, coming out of the Education Committee, you can be of great help in getting these bills on the calendar.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it just shifts where you put your effectiveness?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. I would ask the Rules Committee to be patient until we had several education bills. Then I would assemble them and place them all on a single calendar for consideration at one time. This made it easier for all to understand and to follow the changes in the educational system. This way was even more effective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That explains it, thank you. Beyond the committees that you were on, there were several big issues that session. You created four new junior colleges in this session.

**Mr. Copeland:** That in itself is monumental and let me explain why. In a few public school districts they had an extension of the K-12 program to grade thirteen and fourteen. Many of them were primarily vocational by nature but quite a few of them were college academic endeavors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you take those credits and transfer them to a regular college?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the problem, the bulk of them were non-transferable to other institutions of higher learning. When we first started to create the junior college system, we were running into the opposition of those superintendents that already had a class thirteen and fourteen because it was their territory. They would wear the hat of the school superintendent one minute and then they would turn around and wear a hat of the president of a junior college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were going to take away a hat?

**Mr. Copeland:** And the Legislature was going to take away the hat. That did not go at all well. I remember a vocal response out of Grays Harbor from a superintendent who happened to have the program going in their school system and viewed this as a great, big threat. I mean, this was going to be earthshaking! All of the sudden, you were going to have somebody else come in there and there is going to be a whole new board appointed and another president taking all this stuff away from "me." So we ran into that opposition and it was just absolutely horrendous. But the Legislature bit the bullet and passed the legislation in spite of all of the flack that we got. The Legislature would first authorize a community college and then two years later, after a study, would create the college.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have a list that tells us what years the community colleges were created: 1961 Highline and Peninsula; 1962 Big Bend and South Puget Sound; 1963 Spokane; 1964 Shoreline; 1965 Green River and Tacoma; 1966 Bellevue and Seattle Central; 1967 Edmonds, Pierce and Walla Walla community colleges.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you see the progress that was made in a very short period of

time. We worked with a wonderful group out of Stanford University that had done some exclusive work in studying community colleges: the demographics and the location, what to anticipate from the standpoint of enrollment, and a whole host of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they suggest what kind of programs would draw these students or anything like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was a part of it. Obviously if you're going to create one in Wenatchee, you probably would have something in horticulture. South King County wouldn't probably offer that same course.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is that one the strength of community colleges? I mean, that they are definitely of and from the community?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is absolutely correct. Quite often, at the offset when they had hearings, they would invite industry and say, "What is it that you people need in order to be able to help the economy in the local area? The Renton/Seattle area wanted to have some skilled people that knew how to build airplanes. There were other places short of people that knew how to weld aluminum. I don't know anything about building with aluminum, but at one time I remember that it was terribly important that you had to have a technical background in order to be able to weld aluminum. So they put together classes in order to satisfy real needs out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be a very flexible system?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Back to the Stanford research people. When we first authorized that first group of community colleges, it was a big chunk to swallow. The Stanford people went into some study and

I remember very clearly they said, "Two years from now if you open up a community college in Walla Walla, you can expect fifteen hundred students the first year and at the end of four years, you will be up to about nineteen hundred." So the Legislature authorized it and the community college opened with twenty-one hundred the first year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More than successful! So there was a real need there. They were really answering something that people were looking for.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. Give the Legislature credit for being gutsy as hell. We had this opposition out there; people were saying, "Do not create a community college system because you are going to disturb my little fiefdom."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would they be whipping up the PTA or other education groups to oppose this? Was it just the superintendent's office or did it go right down to the grass roots?

**Mr. Copeland:** I just remember they came to Olympia and they were very, very vocal and anybody that was at all interested in creating a community college system at that time was certainly on their check-off list. And as far as Grays Harbor was concerned, I know that they marked me "impossible." There was no sense of them sending anybody to see me telling me what a good idea would be for the current superintendent of schools to go ahead with his classes thirteen and fourteen.

You have to understand that every time we turned around, damn-near every legislative session there was a big hump that we were taking that was new and fertile ground of some really dynamic changes here in the state of Washington. This is why I say, "Give the Legislature all the credit in the world. They stepped up to the ball and said, "Okay, we're

going to do this and we think it's going to be accepted." And once it got into place, my god, it was just so overwhelming it wasn't even funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did you get the funding for this? Was this new money from somewhere or did you carve it out of the school districts' budgets?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at that time it wasn't that difficult to find the money because at each biennium coming in, we would walk in to a brand new, fresh pot of money, so to speak. Our total income was not stagnant because the economy as such was growing pretty dramatically. So when we came into the session, we had far more money to spend than we had in the previous biennium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was the golden moment for creating new programs? I imagine there would be some years where you could not create new things like this.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's true. But at the same token, the window was not only there, but the demand was huge. You've got the bubble coming through the public school system. What is it going to do when it hits the end of the line? It took the dynamics of the thing more than anything else. This was not a stagnant state; we were growing by leaps and bounds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You seized the moment!

**Mr. Copeland:** I give the Legislature the credit, and I'm going to include several of the executives; they deserve the credit, too. They, by god, had enough guts to say, "Yes, this is the right way to go; let's go ahead and continue to do it. Sure, we're going to spend some money, but we're going to get some things done. We're going to shake up a few

people along the way. But in the long run, it's going to be the best thing we can do with the state of Washington."

Sometimes, every so often, you have to sit down and say, "Am I going to do the political thing or am I going to do the right thing?" That's a hell of a decision to make for some people. Politically, is it the best thing for me to do? Is it the right thing for me to do? Well, if you found out that it was the right thing to do, go do it! To hell with the damn politics! Who cares who gets thrown out of office; that doesn't have anything to do with it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that consideration actually slowed a few people down?

**Mr. Copeland:** I know that a lot of people got scared and sweaty palms and dry mouth and shaking knees, stuff like that. Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But yet you did it.

**Mr. Copeland:** We did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good for you! Another area: There was still a lot of tension in these years to do with liquor issues. There were several bills dealing with alcohol and its sale this session: the perennial issue of what hour bars should close on Saturday nights—Sunday closure hours. And there was the issue of a liquor license for the Meany Hotel that was located close to the University of Washington. Were there lines drawn around schools where there was supposed to be no alcohol served within the circle?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The prohibition was apparently killing the Edmond Meany Hotel as a business. By the end of the decade, liquor

laws were liberalized, but the Legislature was still struggling mightily with this during these years.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I think it was a cultural shift. Here again, those people that did not want to have any of the liquor laws change were shocked when they got changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just could not accept that prohibition was over? The dries had been quite a force even into the late 1950s, but within a decade, their power seemed to evaporate. What happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** They could not accept it, but there were a whole host of things that happened. Time was one; change of attitude was another—the change of attitude of some of the churches was one. In my legislative district I had College Place, which is mainly the Seventh-Day Adventist group and they are opposed to alcohol in any form.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that Herb Hill, who we discussed earlier, was a Seventh-Day Adventist.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But when we finally got down to the final count on this whole closure thing, a delegation of Adventists came into my office and said, “There are certain things that we do on our Sabbath that we don’t want to have any prohibition from.” And I said to them, “Okay. I understand where you are coming from because your Sabbath starts at sundown on Friday; Saturday is your Sabbath and you honor that—you don’t work, and things like that. So you’re telling me you don’t want to have any state law that’s going to violate that?” And they said, “That’s exactly right.” And I explained, “Now, if you’re going to take those restrictions off certain activities on Sunday, then you know ahead of time, right on the heels of that, the

Legislature is going to be in here saying, “As long as we’re taking restrictions off on that, let’s take the restrictions off on drinking on Sundays, also.” And they looked at us in the face and said, “That’s okay.” And they said, “If that’s the trade-off we have to have, then we’ll accept it.” So just like that, here you had a group that is strictly anti-alcohol but they wanted to maintain their Sabbath and they were perfectly willing to trade off midnight closings of the bars on Saturdays for that. So I’m sitting there as a legislator from their district with full authorization for me to go ahead and vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people would that be? Quite a few?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Seventh-Day Adventists in the state of Washington? That’s a lot of people—and vocal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have never heard this angle before.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. So all of the sudden, here’s one segment of the entire church group that says...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Go ahead.”

**Mr. Copeland:** “Fine with us!” When they said, “We’re going to be perfectly willing to trade off drinking on Sunday, for allowing us to do certain things on Sunday which the 1909 Blue Laws prevent us from doing,” They traded Sunday drinking for Sunday retail opening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very interesting! Another angle that may have helped: some of the different things that I’ve read suggest that as people got more disposable income—the prosperity of the sixties—they went out to dinner more and they wanted to have a glass



of wine with their dinner. Things just sort of eased up. The more people traveled—with the development of the tourist industry—there were all these different factors that started to loosen things up. Perhaps fewer people went to church too, I don't know. Washington is not a big church-going state, apparently.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you know there are an awful lot of people who go to church that drink wine, too. And the more that you get a society that has a chance to travel to other states: “And do you know, we went out to dinner,” they're saying, “with these friends of ours in California on Sunday and did you know that we were able to buy a glass of wine on Sunday!” “Really! You can buy wine on Sunday in California? Why can't we buy wine on Sunday in the state of Washington?” “Well, it's against our laws.” So I mean, what is it that you wanted to do? What is it you were really and truthfully trying to restrict? You want to abolish consumption of alcohol completely?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anybody believe that you can go back to that? Prohibition was such a failure. How did you feel about this issue yourself? Did you feel it was government's role to regulate behavior, or were you willing to loosen up these laws?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was very willing to loosen up those laws. There was no evidence that it ever restricted drinking of teenagers and never indicated anything that a habitual drunk was sober on Sunday, but drunk six days a week. To have a cocktail lounge or have a glass of wine with your dinner, it was perfectly okay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would your district have been a district where previously you would have gotten those thousand protest letters or did that change over time?

**Mr. Copeland:** As soon as the Seventh-Day Adventist church pulled off on it, the letter writing stopped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a pretty good response. Both you and Maurice Ahlquist said, “The position of any Sunday closing bill must have local option provisions,” your position being that the state should not legislate this, that it should be every community deciding its own standards. So, for you, this was not a state-level issue; this was a community issue.

**Mr. Copeland:** Whether or not every community could go ahead and regulate their own was an underlying thing then and is prevalent right now. Certain states have the right to do certain things even though the federal government says otherwise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought it was a good reply: “We don't have the proper provenance here.” That was probably effective.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was, but it's one of those things. The best government is the one that is closest to home that you can control best yourself. You don't want somebody in Washington, D.C. telling you what you can and what you can't do, for crimony sakes. All smarts are not necessarily born in Olympia, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a newly-minted representative from Thurston County that session, Don Miles, who was very upset that there was alcohol present in the Legislative Building. He attacked a venerable institution called Committee Room X. Could you please tell me more of that story?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Committee Room X was located on the fourth floor on the north side. It was like a large closet with no windows.

The House allowed a barber to set up a shop to cut the members' hair. It was difficult to take time out to run downtown to get a haircut so this was a convenience for the members. The barber at that time was a fellow from Cle Elum by the name of 'Brigham' Young, a former member of the House. Some of the lobbyists would from time to time pay a visit to Brigham and drop off a bottle. This was not an open bar like some would like to have you think. But it soon took on the name of Committee Room X. At best, four people could get into the room. Not heavily trafficked and much over-rated. And the members of the House could go get their hair cut and he didn't charge for it; it was a nice service to get a trim once in awhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit of a hangout place?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. There were never too many people there because it was so darn small. I didn't go there; I went out and got my hair cut. People popped in and had a drink occasionally, but no, there was never a great big congregation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were legislators drinking too much, in your opinion? Was this a problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Not during business hours.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What exactly were Don Miles' objections?

**Mr. Copeland:** Remove any kind of alcohol, period. It was a big "grandstand play."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there wasn't really a bad example of drunken legislators as one might gather from his comments?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there weren't any examples of drunken legislators. He was very zealous on this business of being anti-alcohol. When he found out that somebody had had a drink in Committee Room X, he decided to personally have a crusade and make sure that nobody had any alcohol in the Capitol Building. So he made his position quite clear that absolutely, positively we destroyed him and from then on, he was not an effective legislator. And of course, it was the only term he served.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He did claim to have closed Committee Room X, I think. Did the press jump on this or what exactly happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** No press to speak of. Maybe they closed it for one day or something. I forget, but it was of no great, huge concern. Just down the hall from him there were a couple of committee rooms that added a small refrigerator so people had some beer on ice and stuff like that. That wasn't a big deal anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are stories that especially during *Sine Die* and certain other evenings such as Saint Patrick's Day that things could get little wild. That there was at least for some people, some pretty heavy drinking and partying in the Legislature on occasion. Do you think those stories are credible?

**Mr. Copeland:** Like you said, there were probably several cocktails parties going on in various spots throughout the Building. I don't think I saw any legislators or any State Patrolmen, nor did I see any executive or any state-elected officials complaining about it. The requirement of *Sine Die* is that we have to go through certain closing procedures that may or may not require all of the members to be there, but obviously somebody has to

be there in order to be able to do it. Quite often this occurred at one, two o'clock in the morning and you didn't have a whole heck of a lot to do. So some of the lobbyists brought in some drinks. I don't know any specific cases where people got falling-down drunk, but where people had a drink, well certainly. First of all, this is a termination of a session. Not only are you going to leave all your compatriots at that point, you'll probably will never to together again in the same body. Then you have all of the staff people that worked with you, that spent innumerable hours in overtime and things like that. They needed to have some kind of a festivity or party; at least give your secretary a big hug and a kiss and tell her that you just appreciated the hell out of her. I don't think there is anything wrong with it. Public money was not spent. We had no serious business to conduct at that time; we had completed our work. The only thing that we had to do was to bring the gavel down in both the House and Senate chambers and that was it. So, was there any damage done to the state of Washington by having some drinks at *Sine Die*? And here again, I say, "Hell, no!" People want to celebrate the end of the session, something like that and for the most part, they certainly had it coming—God only knows they worked hard enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Representative Miles made such a deal out of it and I was just wondering, did the public care? Did the press care? Was there any kind of a ripple at all or was it just one of those things where it sinks into oblivion and that's that?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Oblivion" is a good word. However, I must point out that if there was a party going on anywhere in Olympia, the press, on many occasions, joined in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, well, then. Let's move on, then. There was something that happened

that session, not in the House but in the Senate, which I was wondering—I'm sure you must have heard about it—but whether it had any kind of implications for you. Slim Rasmussen, a senator from Tacoma, rose and assailed Senator Greive about what was called the "Greive Fund" that operated in the Senate. He made quite a strong statement against Greive's practice of gathering money from lobbyists and different groups and then doling it out for different campaigns in the Senate. Was there any talk about this sort of revelation? Keeping in mind, none of that was illegal at the time. How many people knew about the Greive Fund? Was this a revelation or something that everyone "knew" about?

**Mr. Copeland:** First remember this is before the Public Disclosure Commission. I don't think many people knew about the Greive Fund; I don't think it was really sitting out there in the open for everybody to take a look at. I think Bob created it and for a very specific purpose and that was to elect "his friends." Why did Slim Rasmussen pick on Senator Greive? Because Slim was not one of his friends. The Greive Fund would never give Senator Rasmussen financial assistance for his re-election. This money only went to senators that were going to vote for Bob Greive for Majority Leader. Every so often Bob would take somebody that was not necessarily totally aligned with him and he would run another Democrat against him in his district in order to be able to try to get rid of him and get somebody else in there. But if you read Bob Greive's oral history book—pages seventy-four to seventy-seven, then eighty-two and again on 218—he refers to the operation in the Senate as "the process." If somebody really wanted a bill passed, was there some way they could get money into the Greive Fund? It was almost a necessity to get money into the Greive Fund if you wanted your legislation passed. So it was

also a method that Bob was using in order to be able to get legislation through the Senate. Most always someone had to give money to the Greive Fund in order to get Greive to go ahead and get the bill through Rules. Did many people know about it? Those that understood “the process” certainly did. Did Slim blow the whistle on it? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be quite a big splash?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Not only was it a big splash, but it came from the Democrats. What he was saying in essence, this whole process that Bob Greive had created over the years was part of the institution and nobody could get inside. Even Slim Rasmussen, a member of the Senate couldn't and that's what he was complaining about. Senator Rasmussen couldn't get his own bills past Senator Greive. So here again, could the public find out what the hell was going on in the Legislature? And the answer is no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think when you heard about this? Was this news to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. I had no idea that this was going on; everybody thought that maybe it was, but Slim just pointed it out and he said that this is clearly a shake-down. I think it was Senator Rasmussen that said, “Get the money to Mr. Martonik and maybe your legislation will move through the Senate.” He was the guy you gave the money to. Once he got the money, then he told Bob that the guy was okay. And when Bob got the word that he was okay he would take his foot off the bill and start moving the bill. So it became the standard procedure: contribute to the Greive Fund. So all of the sudden, people began to look around, “Are you kidding me, you have to pay in order to be able to get a bill through the Senate?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a House member, how do you feel about the fate of your bills going through such a process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some bills could be identified as “money bills.” “Some entity really wants this passed. It is worth it to ‘pay a little’ to get it passed.” Bob always could spot a money bill and then made them pay off. Sometimes I would sponsor a bill that didn't necessarily have a huge backing of a group that would have a lobbyist from industry. He'd let that one go. But if it had an industry behind it, as soon as it hit Greive, yes, he wanted to have something before he'd turn it loose.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he ever communicate with House members or was this strictly a Senate operation? So you would work hard and pass your bills, go through the committees and then...

**Mr. Copeland:** Any communication that I ever had with Bob Greive was when we were the majority and I started that whole she-bang and he came over to me and said, “Stop this, you're embarrassing the Senate.” No, he didn't correspond with me or communicate with me at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work closely with the senator from Walla Walla to get your bills through the Senate? I mean, what happened? You'd go through all your House procedures and then the bills would go to the Senate and did you completely lose track of them at that point or were there mechanisms for House members to follow along?

**Mr. Copeland:** I worked with the chairman of the committee and things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were not completely at his mercy. There were other ways to get something through?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was smart enough to know not to put his foot on every bill, but every bill that had some money in it, you bet. And it would be hardly perceptible to be able to say which bills he did and which bills he didn't because there was no reporting. Control was not in place, and did anybody know who was contributing to the Greive fund? Yes, the guy who got the money, he knew. There was no public accountability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Greive apparently kept meticulous records. And at the time, this was not illegal.

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably he did. Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did legislators begin to think that they should have some regulations here? There are some movements to register lobbyists and have a little bit more organization at about this time, but I don't know if there was any relationship at all to this practice.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's get back to the original question. What did the legislators think about the Greive Fund? They probably thought that it was unethical, not legal. But did the Republicans have a similar fund? Not to my knowledge. I don't think the Republicans had anybody that had the same drive and ambition that Bob Greive did, of maintaining a majority in that Senate to a point where he would do anything and extract whatever from whomever he could extract for the purpose of advancing that cause. Be it ethical or illegal, it didn't make any difference about Greive. Bob said over and over again in his book that he was not a crook. And it's kind of interesting for me to read him saying that he was not a crook. I always assumed that he wasn't a crook, but when he said that he "was not a crook," then I began to doubt it. He probably wasn't a crook, but he was probably doing something that probably wasn't ethical and

he probably knew it, but he also knew that it was not illegal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was a lawyer.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Slim blowing the whistle on this and running up a red flag called the attention of the press to this whole thing and I think this was the first salvo of the creation of the Public Disclosure Commission. I think that is the very beginning—that is the basis. It is because of Bob Greive that the PDC is in existence today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you need to be able to follow the trail of money.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So the terminology 'Bob Greive' and the 'Public Disclosure Commission' should all be used in one phrase because if Bob created anything in the Legislature, if he gave anything of a legacy to the Legislature, his legacy is the Public Disclosure Commission. Not that he wanted it, but my god, it's his legacy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have the impression from listening to you that most lobbyists did not want to operate this way. They were definitely involved in campaigns, but they wouldn't necessarily have wanted that close a relationship between votes and money. How did lobbying work in those days? Was it more informational, or was there this blurring of the lines?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lobbying was much more informational. I think an awful lot was done in an informal entertainment atmosphere. But here again, entertaining—I'm using the word very loosely. Let's assume for the sake of the problem, a lobbyist coming down to the Legislature early in the session has a particular bill that he's interested in. Now, he wants to have some of the legislators' time in order



to be able to explain it. There isn't the time in regular daylight hours during the session to grab that legislator and spend some time with him. It was a very standard, ordinary procedure that you would go out with the guy and have dinner and he would at least have the opportunity to explain his bill to you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he's buying access?

**Mr. Copeland:** He's buying access; he's buying the time. Now, what was the legislator's role in this whole thing? Go out and have a drink, have dinner and get the information. The lobbyist at least had a captive audience for an hour or two hours at the outside. He bought him dinner and the dinner cost five dollars and twenty cents and they had two drinks and that's eighty cents a piece. Now, that wasn't all that bad. Any rate, there was an opportunity for communication, but let's take it one step further. What were the other opportunities for communication? Not only on that bill, but other things that may later be coming up or better yet, just standard ordinary information? Case in point: I needed to have some information on agriculture production at one time that was very, very critical to me. In order to get it, I called the Director of Agriculture's office and I said, "I need to have this production stuff." "I can have it to you on Wednesday." I said, "That's too late." "That's the fastest I can get it out." I called the lobbyist at the Seattle-First National Bank and he said, "I'll have it for you in an hour, Tom." The Seattle-First National Bank had the same database as the Department of Agriculture except they could access it and I could call that lobbyist and he would give me the information and it was true and accurate. Did I appreciate my communication with that lobbyist? You're damn right! Did we have a good report? Yes. Did he have a bill that he wanted me to vote for? Hell, no. Was he providing a service? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the other pieces that was perhaps different regarding the Greive fund was the involvement in campaigns. Were lobbyists normally involved in legislators' re-election campaigns?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some weren't. Some were long-term lobbyists that...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Say, if you represented Renton, did Boeing kick in to your campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Boeing contribute as a normal course of business?

**Mr. Copeland:** If you look, they probably contributed to the opponents' campaigns also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now it seems expected or normal, or whatever, that certain businesses are going to kick in to campaigns, but has that always been so? Where did people get their campaign money?

**Mr. Copeland:** Many sources. The first time I ran, I probably funded the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was smaller amounts, then, too. And that was more the norm then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the advent of television in campaigning increase the cost, that then led to the involvement of all these groups?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just the pure cost of the media is running campaigning costs up the wall. It just goes on and on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So just as a digression, if you could get free media, if every candidate

got x-number of minutes on television or radio or whatever for free, would that be the biggest campaign reform measure possible?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Giving somebody free time, I don't think so. I doubt free time on the media has anything to do with it. I just feel this business of going out and meeting the voter and doorbelling and this one-on-one communication are a hell of a lot more important than free time on television. The reason television is so bad, in campaigning it dilutes the message. When I came to the legislative races, the average television station was reaching over anything from two to twenty-some legislative districts—so my message was diluted. You can't do it at all with television and radio is to lesser degree. Newspapers—to a degree; direct mailing, far better; door-to-door, even more so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in some ways, campaigns haven't changed that much?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's still a personal shoe-leather kind of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Here again, I'll get back to my own personal case where in a community like I lived in, you worked on the United Way fund; you were active in a church group; you did some solicitation for the YMCA; you are a member of the Chamber of Commerce; you served on a special committee that did this or maybe you did something with the county fair. All of these contributed to that individual's exposure as doing something in the community. So then when it came to moving into politics, this was an involvement; it wasn't a case where a guy like Slade Gorton moved into town and said, "I'm going to move into Walla Walla and put up a sign: "I just came here from Boston, Massachusetts,

and I know exactly what to do for this district in the Legislature and I will go there and I will be your salvation." If Slade Gorton had moved to my district and said, "I'm going to run for the Legislature," I think he'd have been dumped on his ass so fast that it would make his head swim.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He must have found the right neighborhood somehow because he was very successful.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can do that in King County; you cannot do that in rural areas. It's a different world of politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is one thing that you were doing that was very interesting. You were keeping in touch with your constituents with a weekly community report that you and Maurice Ahlquist and Senator Freise produced. You held a public meeting at the Marcus Whitman Hotel and did a conference call with people gathered there. Can you describe how that worked?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. I started that and it went extremely well. What we would do, I would have my secretary gather together copies of the bills we would be discussing—they had their own bill books and they would stick the bills in the bill book—and then they would meet, I think it was on Tuesday morning. The chairman of the group kind of rotated; it was done in the office of the Chamber of Commerce—they would sit down there and have coffee and breakfast rolls. They had a speakerphone and we would make the call from Olympia. They would all introduce themselves so we knew who was attending.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was like you were virtually there while still being in Olympia?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. Then John Brownell, the local Ford Dealer, would say

to me, "What's become of the bill having to do with the automobile dealer association?" And I'd say, "John, that bill is in Rules and it will probably get checked out and be on the calendar for tomorrow." Somebody else would say, "What about this bill on licensing and contractors? You're going to change that?" That came from Bill Frank. He was one of the local contractors. "Well, that's still in the committee on Labor and let's see, does anybody know anything about it?" "Yes, there has been a big hang-up on that bill because organized labor has their foot on that. And the reason for that was such and such." Or "I don't know, I'll get some information, I'll send it right back to you." So everybody in the room who had a particular interest in the bills was able to talk to us directly and then we could respond, "It's going here; it's doing that; I don't know."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here you were on a local scale, talking about all kinds of things and they know what you are up to.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And then if we didn't know, we'd say, "I'll get the information, we'll mail it out today or I'll call you," and we would mail them out and they'd know what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were very responsive. Was it more of a listening session for you, with quick answers and if there was controversy, you wouldn't get into any kind of debate in that setting?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it wasn't a debating session. It was a case of information; you know: "Where's the bill, what is being placed on it? We can live with it if this following amendment was placed on it. What is the fiscal impact of this?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you could give a non-committal answer if you had to?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were trying our darnedest to give as much of a commitment as we could to our constituents. Some of the questions would jump out and you know, they would know far more about the bill than we did because they were in consultations with the people that were drafting the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't know everything.

**Mr. Copeland:** How true. So it's something—like the Superintendent of Schools, Pete Hansen, he'd asked me things having to do with schools. I'd say, "Pete, I don't know; I'm not familiar with that bill. I'm going to have to look it up. I'll have to find out; I'll talk to prime sponsors and find out why they wanted it, why they needed it." He said, "It's not a good bill." And I said, "Well, somebody sponsored it for some reason. Can you give me till tomorrow at noon and I'll have an answer for you?" That's about the best I could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So on that level, I was just wondering if you would sometimes get into tight spots. Where somebody would try to corner you and make you give a commitment before you were ready.

**Mr. Copeland:** If that were the case, it was so infrequent that it was hardly worth mentioning. Most of the time it was just straight-forward, "point at the bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So pretty friendly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, we just didn't get into it, very, very seldom we'd get into one of these conflicts. Sure, sometimes we would, like maybe all of the firemen wanted to have their pension increased and the mayor and the city council didn't want to do it because they didn't have the funds for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the people in the same room might not be in agreement?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. What the heck, you know, that's one of those things that occur. "Okay now, let's move onto the next subject. We're not going to make thirty minutes worth of debate over this one issue." But the format was structured very informally; it was very, very helpful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a nice mechanism.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. And frequently, people would call and they'd say, "I can't live with this bill." Well, "you know, you brought up altogether different new material. Now you've got those papers in front of you. You make copies and get them to me and I'll get them to the committee chairman." Okay, so he had new material.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you could occasionally pull off something pretty good?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many years did you do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** As long as I was in the Legislature. I think I started that the second week I was there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, being that Walla Walla is nowhere near Olympia, you couldn't exactly run home for the weekend. Was this a pretty good mechanism for keeping in touch?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did a wide cross-section of people come to these meetings?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. I mean, it was open to the public and the Chamber of Commerce

and the newspaper advertised it extremely well and quite often there would be a particular interest that came up that would hit some people. Like one day, we had legislation that had something to do with teachers' pensions. Suddenly, the teachers got all excited about it. We had thirty-some teachers show up at the meeting because they wanted to know what in heavens' name was going on. And why not! It was their business. These are the people that were affected. My decision should reflect or at least consider what they are interested in. How best can I do it? If I can do it using the speakerphone, I'm going to do it on the speakerphone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it also lets you keep in touch with your district. The communication went both ways. Because if you have thirty teachers showing up, you know you're on to something.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, let's look at the process that Bob Greive was running in the Senate. He wasn't even giving the time of day or which day the committee was going to meet, let alone where the bill was and then in addition to that, if it was an interested party, they probably had to make a contribution to his damn fund before he ever let the bill go. Now that was his "process." Mine was a little bit different.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were building quite a record for yourself, interesting to watch. Near the end of the session—you did end up having a special session that year over the budget and over apportionment issues—and of course, the apportionment issues were not resolved. You did end up with a budget. There is one little thing that I want to talk to you about just before the end of session—the sixtieth day, in fact the last day. You rise and you have a resolution that said, "Whereas, it is desirable that certain leaders of the House of Representatives attend the meetings of

the Annual National Conferences of State Legislative Leaders.” Were you considered one of those members yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “In order that the benefits from the participation therein may inure to the House of Representatives. Two members of the House of the Representatives to be chosen by the Speaker because of their leadership within the House and any member of the House on the executive committee of the National Leader’s Conference, if chosen by the Speaker....” That they should go to this conference and the first person on his feet after you make this resolution is John O’Brien and he wants to ask you a question. He said, “Mr. Copeland, as you are well aware, I’m a member of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Legislative Leaders. How about my attendance at this committee?” Was he fearful that Speaker Day would not let him go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Possible. Read on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. And then you said, “Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, we have a resolution that will be offered during this special session in which we intend to grant Mr. O’Brien’s expenses in order to be able to attend these executive committee meetings. These will be written on vouchers to be paid from the money granted to the Legislative Council.” And there were some more assurances from you: “I certainly assure you it is the intention of everyone concerned that Mr. O’Brien and Mr. Avery Garrett would attend these meetings.” If the money went to the Legislative Council and the Legislative Council appropriation was vetoed, did anyone get to attend this meeting?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the money come from some where else, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** It actually came out of the House Appropriations fund rather than the Legislative Council. What we did at that time, we were just re-confirming the fact that we did want to go and attend the Legislative Leaders Conference. Now, let me explain.

Then, the National Conference of State Legislators, I think ultimately became the organization that is currently in existence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This isn’t the Council of State Governments, this is something else?

**Mr. Copeland:** NCSL was different from the Council of State Government. At any rate, this was a fine group and we didn’t want to miss this. Later on, it is with this group that I went ahead and exchanged information that the state of Washington had captured in computers for other things. And when I tell you I took our legislative process that was on computers and took it to other states in exchange for what they had, I brought back into this state information that would have cost us millions to produce ourselves—millions. And so this particular kind of vehicle was so terribly important for the free exchange of information and I didn’t want the existence of the coalition to disturb this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this the first time that you are going to go this conference yourself or had you already become involved with this organization?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I’d been once before. But at any rate, I didn’t want the coalition to disturb this at all and I wanted to have it carried forward. You noticed that I was very, very specific in including John. As matter of fact, if you read in there earlier it says “members of executive committee,” which



includes him. So I never made any attempts to exclude him. He just wanted to make sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted it in writing?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the event that there was any question about it, then he could go back to the Journal and say, “Hey look, this is the assurance that I got. It’s right here in the Journal.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it’s down in black and white. Who all went to the 1963 conference?

Would Dan Evans have gone? How many people would go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. Probably four out of a caucus, maybe five out of the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So quite a few.

**Mr. Copeland:** And the way the meetings were structured, most of them had a central theme, a problem with a speaker—frequently members of Congress would come and speak. But then we would have work sessions and work sessions would be right along our committee structure. We’d have one on transportation; we would have another one on welfare and public assistance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would get the best thinking from all over the country?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. You would sit there and see what other states were doing. In every one of these subcommittees that was just a matter of routine. Every state would report in as to what they did and of course nothing was redundant. If they didn’t have anything to offer that was no new material. So then this became quite a focal point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As it turned out, when John O’Brien went to the National Conference of

State Legislative Leaders in Boston that year after the session, and then came back, Bill Day, who was the Speaker at the time, would not pay his expenses. John came to you and recalled with you that it was inserted in the Journal that his expenses would be taken care of. And then there is a note in John O’Brien’s biography that says, “A little later, Copeland sent O’Brien a note saying, ‘All is well, send your voucher to Si Holcomb.’” Can you tell me what transpired in between John O’Brien coming to you and you sending this note?

**Mr. Copeland:** John had become a very large functionary in the interaction of other legislators and he was on the executive committee of this national conference. Then in the intervening months he was no longer Speaker, but he was still on the executive committee of this conference. So the question came up: “Is he going to attend this meeting on behalf of the state of Washington and should his expenses be paid through House Appropriations?” And my position on this was we needed to have a continuity of people present at those meetings present and to watch the progress of this entire conference and relay the information that we were gathering out of there, virtually on an annual basis. It was only natural for John to go ahead and make those meetings notwithstanding whether he was Speaker or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He certainly is still a legislative leader. Not only Speakers went to these conferences.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. The leaders from both the majority and minority parties went, so it wasn’t just of a case of only John going. But here again, this was a case of where John went ahead and went to the meeting and when he turned his vouchers in—because of the strong animosity that Bill Day and his people had built up against John on a very personal basis

for some reason or other—and I don't know why, but Bill went ahead and denied or at least refused to sign the authorization to pay John. And I remember at that time that John did make some kind of a call in to me and I later talked to Speaker Day and said I had already made a commitment to John that he would be paid, that "this is proper and this is right and this was keeping with what we did." This was a responsible business and I wanted him to go ahead and sign the voucher. I'm sure that he assured me at that time that he would and then I went ahead with the little communication telling John to go ahead and get the voucher and it would be covered. So to me, it was a slam-dunk. John's out there; he's taking his own time away from his business; he's attending these meetings; he's doing something on behalf of the state of Washington; he should be compensated for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Bill Day give any reasons why he didn't sign off on this at first?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. However, I was successful in getting that turned around. John O'Brien was reimbursed promptly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's an interesting incident because of a couple of things: just that strong animosity, as you say, that continued with no attempt to heal it, no attempt to smooth things over. That's a level of bitterness that you don't often see in the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** True on the level of bitterness. I think your operative word is correct and it's something that should have been set aside and allowed to remain in the background because it clouds all of your decisions; it clouds your thinking. Are we there trying to do the people's business or are we there trying to get back at John O'Brien?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mentioned that several people over some period of time did continue to have that level of personal animosity. Did it continue to interfere with legislative business?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Any time you harbor that kind of bitterness, it's got to affect your thinking. It has to affect how you interact with people. You may think it is clever to carry that bitterness but other people can see through it. Other people know that you're carrying a chip on your shoulder, that that's part of your agenda. If you start off a legislative session and place in a bag every piece of bitterness, disappointment, disagreement, misunderstanding and thoughtlessness, you'd soon have a bag full. One must learn to get over the minor hurts and be about the people's business. If not, everybody loses. I mean, you lose your clear thinking and effectiveness. Drop that bag! You can't go though life with this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this true on both sides of the coalition? Did some regular so-called Democrats also carry these bags?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, but as time goes on, a lot of them dropped the bag. One of the big hitters on that whole thing was Bob Schaefer. Bob was very bitter; there wasn't any question about it and Bob was a very dear friend of John O'Brien. But two years later, Bob emerged as a Speaker of the House, and he said to me, "That is all passé now."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was not out there dealing punishment and rewards?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. "Okay, now that I am Speaker of the House, what am I doing here? Well, I'm interested in the people's business." These are the words of a fine man, Bob Schaefer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when he assumed the mantle and he brought himself up to it rather than pulling the Speakership down?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. And you have to understand, you see, when Bob became the Speaker, he took over in very strange circumstances. I mean, here he was coming out of a coalition, becoming a Speaker of the House as a Democrat with the newly elected Republican Governor. He had the shadow of John O'Brien's Speakership in the background so he had to take on a posture of an altogether different type of Speaker than what John was. He recognized that certain changes were made within the institution two years prior to him becoming Speaker. These changes had upgraded the Legislature and Bob recognized that they were for the good and he wasn't about to change them. So he came in as Speaker, but he didn't come in John O'Brien's mode at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe you had to go through this pain to get to a new place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. This type of institutional change is nothing that can transpire overnight. It has to be incremental; it has to be little baby steps. Sometimes you don't even perceive progress but then you back up four years later and say, "We did make progress; we did make these changes. We now allow the public to know when the committees are going to meet." "Oh my, you mean the public is notified in advance when the committee is going to meet?" "Yes." All of a sudden that became a big deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then it became the "norm."

**Mr. Copeland:** And then it became the norm. And now the committee chairmen wouldn't even think about calling a committee meeting

with thirty minutes notice to handle some monumental piece of legislation. They always gave the press and the public notification. So these little-bitty things happened along the line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides this little scrape with John O'Brien, there was another simmering battle that colored that session, one with Governor Rosellini. At one point Dan Evans charged that Governor Rosellini was interfering in committee chairmanship appointments and had told Democrats not to take them. There were other issues. Did that tension continue between the House and the Governor's Office; did that play a role in this session?

**Mr. Copeland:** There isn't any question about it. The Governor was, in fact, furious over the fact that he had a coalition going in the House. Then, when the session was over, we left an operating budget on the Governor's desk, in retaliation for what we'd done, he took the appropriation for the Legislative Council and vetoed it. He took the only interim vehicle that the legislators had for the purpose of studying any ongoing things or having hearings around the state or anything, he vetoed all of those appropriations. He put the Legislative Council virtually out of business and cut off all ability that the Legislature had to communicate with the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the part of the story where he believed that the Republicans and the conservative Democrats would use the Legislative Council to investigate him and smear him with different studies—as he admittedly had done with Governor Langlie himself—to use the Council as a weapon to attack the Governor's office?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure that that was one of his concerns. I always felt that one of the

greatest values the Legislature had were the public hearings held throughout the state. This type of communication was not possible during a legislative session. And for the Executive branch to deny the Legislature this opportunity was not in the best interest of the people of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In Rosellini's own biography, there is a statement saying that even if the Republicans had chosen that method to attack the Governor, his method of vetoing it was politically clumsy. Was it true that Republicans were thinking of crafting the Council's investigations that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think we ever had, at that time, to even get into that. We were busy trying to take care of all the necessary standard things during the ordinary sixty-day session: get a budget written and take care of the schools and roads and welfare and everything else. We weren't sitting there saying, "Boy, we've got a game plan here. We're going to get Governor Rosellini." That wasn't in the cards. So, was Governor Rosellini mad with the Legislature? Yes. Did he veto those appropriations? Yes. Did it come home to roost? You bet it did! And I think, in retrospect, he would say that was kind of a dumb thing that he did and that he shouldn't have done it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe he felt like no matter what he did, it was going to be harmful, so pick the lesser one. It's interesting if you look backwards, it does look like the Republicans had a master plan. But no one says that Dan Evans was thinking of being the next Governor in 1963.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I don't think at the offset of the 1963 Session that Dan was entertaining the idea that he was going to run for Governor. At that time, I never saw anybody try to

position themselves to run for Governor. We were just trying our level best to do what was right for the state of Washington.

## CHAPTER 10

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### “EVANS FOR GOVERNOR” AND LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGNS

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The 1963 Session was somewhat of a struggle, but one of the outcomes was that it positioned Dan Evans as a recognized leader. He was getting things done, getting things for his party, making a name for himself. By the end of the session, I don't know what was in the works, but according to Dan Evans himself, he went back to being an engineer and was at his desk when he received a phone call, from I believe a reporter, saying, “What's this ‘Draft Dan Evans for Governor’ thing all about?” And according to him, that was the first he'd heard of it. There was a group of legislators led by Herb Hadley who started this movement. Interestingly, they didn't start the conversation with Evans; they got hold of the press and it went from there.

I want to step back from what we do know happened to one of those interesting “what-if” questions. What if Dan Evans had not run for Governor in 1964? Were there other Republicans rising within the party who were interested in running for Governor?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, but there was Dick Christensen in the wings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were no other emerging leaders within the party?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. There truly weren't. But here is the uniqueness about it. When Herb Hadley started the “draft movement,” there were four things in place: one, a ready-made statewide cadre of Dan's legislative friends; two, a recognition by private power that they had become a political force; three, a Republican Party that was eager to get moving; and four, a new-found politically active group of church-goers. Now, did Herb Handley do it all by himself? No! Did anybody in the public sector or did anybody in private power do this all by themselves? No. Did the Republican Party do this all by themselves? No. It was all coming together at the same time. This was involvement that all occurred all at the same time. It just evolved and escalated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it happens pretty quickly.

**Mr. Copeland:** It happens very quickly, but let me speak to the introduction of Dick Christensen into the Republican landscape. He ran against and nearly beat Warren G. Magnuson, U.S. Senator for twenty-some years and before that a member of Congress. Dick Christensen surprised the entire body politic in the state of Washington. He had developed a whole new group of people and motivated them politically to do something on his behalf and they performed extremely well. The vast majority of his supporters were first-time entries into active politics. Now, is he going to be a forgotten entity or is he going to be a player to be reckoned with? At the time Herb started the draft movement, little or nothing was said about Dick Christensen, so the Evans forces proceeded on course. However, as time went on, it soon became evident that some address had to be given to the winner/loser in this Republican primary race. I told you how the Andrews/Clark thing was mishandled eight years earlier; well, here was the potential for a repeat performance.



So it was with the efforts of Jim Andersen, and to a lesser degree on my part, that a meeting at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel was arranged with Dick Christensen and Dan Evans. Dan showed up with Jim Dolliver, and Dick Christensen came in with one other guy; there were Jim and myself and maybe two or three others. We went through the entire procedure with them and said, “We’re interested in the gains that we have made as the Republican Party. You guys must have the same interest that we do. We need an agreement that the loser will endorse the winner and pledge to help in their election.” And within minutes we had an agreement. Both parties left and continued their campaign efforts. Then came the September night of the primaries. Within hours after the polls closed and it was quite evident that Dan Evans was going to win, Dick Christensen, true to his word, went over to Dan Evans’ headquarters and was on television and congratulated Dan and pledged his support and urged his eager supporters to work in Dan’s behalf. This moment was monumental. Bingo!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he kept his bargain?

**Mr. Copeland:** The whole thing solidified when he told his supporters, “Okay, we did a fine job, but now we have to support Dan.” That was the clincher. And Dick Christensen brought along most all of his supporters. So, was there one guy that made this happen? Hell, no. Was there a whole bunch of things that made it happen? Oh my, yes. How many? I’m just pointing out some of the dynamics of the whole thing. Were there heavy-duty players in this? You bet! Did Jim Andersen play a big role? Tremendous role! Was it ever written up in the press as something great big and dynamic? Heavens, no! These are all of the components that came about at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We generally know the end of the story, but let’s kind of step through it a little bit. Dick Christensen made a tremendous showing against Warren Magnuson, but he’d never been in politics a day in his life and was considered by many Republicans to be somewhat naive about the political process and his role in it. It has been said that he knew nothing about government. If you all were going to jump behind him, did that scenario make you a little nervous?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only to this degree. If he had been the ultimate winner, there would have been lots of supporters and experts available. That was understood.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he go with that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No problem with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he aware that he really hadn’t any experience? Some people are oblivious of that need.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Of all of these ingredients that came together in this entire thing, one of the ingredients that was still running this whole thing was Bill Day and his group.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where is he in all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was with Dan all the way. So here he is with this group of Democrats that, quote, “were disenfranchised from their party,” and they aligned themselves with Dan. Either very visibly or not so visibly, they were still in that camp. They sure as heck weren’t supporting Al Rosellini at that time. So all of this, these were all contributing factors including—I didn’t mean to skip over and not recognize the fact—the coalition was truly a portion of this whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other piece about Dick Christensen that was very interesting—and it’s something that we’re going to be watching for a couple of years—Dick Christensen was said to have his power base in a newly emerging group who had not previously been active in politics, what came to be called the Religious Right. I don’t think it had a label at that point, though. He had a strong group, with many women supporters from evangelical churches; it was a very new force in politics that he was tapping into. This was also the year that President Johnson was running against Senator Barry Goldwater. “Goldwater Republicans” were not necessarily the same group that Dick Christensen was tapping into but somewhat the same stripe of people. Was the Republican Party facing a major split at this time? Is that part of why you were so worried about unity? They were very different kinds of Republicans.

**Mr. Copeland:** Was the Republican Party facing major splits? The answer is no. Were we worried about unity? Certainly after a primary battle, unity oftentimes is absent. But layer upon this one other very fine ingredient which was Dan’s campaign predicated on a “Blueprint for Progress.” Now, I don’t think that the Washington State voters had ever before seen somebody running for Governor that at least said, “Here’s where we are. This is where I would like to take the state and this is what we’re going to have to do in order to be able to get there. And he really had his campaign staff hammer out and virtually draft legislation: “If I’m elected, this is what I’m going to do.” There was absolutely no question in anybody’s mind what Dan Evans intended to do with the state if he got elected. Prior to that time, any time a Governor got elected, you kind of kept your fingers crossed, but he was the first guy that came out and said, “This is it: the Blueprint for Progress. I’m going to do something about this subject

matter. I intend to take care of something over here. This is where we need to go in this one.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not many people are willing to say. Political brochures are for “motherhood,” but you never get much further than that. It was highly unusual to lay out a plan and stick your neck out like that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Straight-forward political leadership right from the get-go. Suddenly, people began to recognize him as a leader when he sat down and wrote out the Blueprint. Now, did he burn up political capital along the way? You’re damn right. Did everyone agree with everything mentioned in the Blueprint? No, he lost a few. Did he gain a few? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Dick Christensen have a similar plan? Did you have a sense of what he would be for, or do? I read that he said he was just going to stick to generalities. In other words, nice sounding maxims which don’t actually mean anything.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Dick Christensen did not have a plan! Yes, there were just lovely, high platitudes. And I’m sure that he prayed a lot. I like to pray too, but I never found a piece of legislation that had ever been written by Moses and brought down from the hill. You can do a lot of praying but it doesn’t necessarily create a piece of legislation that you want. Dan laid things out very clearly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You belonged to a more activist Republican set that had been running campaign schools and digging up good candidates and reviving the State Republican Party for a couple of years by now.

**Mr. Copeland:** Myself and others started the very first campaign school; we recruited our

own candidates and raised money, and were these efforts embraced by the Republicans Central Committee? Hell, no! Did they have anything to do with it? No! Did they give us any money? No! Don't give the Republican Party any credit for it, because it wouldn't have anything to do with this. It was the legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very important distinction. I didn't mean the Republican Party as a whole; I meant your smaller group of activist Republicans, sometimes called the "New Breed Republicans." You were definitely moving your House caucus into a new era. How much did that help Dan Evans? You had created a good structure.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was never called one of the "New Breed." This moniker was not for people from eastern Washington. We were, however, moving the caucus into a new era. How much did the Republican legislators help Dan Evans? The answer is one hell of a lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did have connections all up and down the state. And you were known for this new approach. You and Dan Evans and the others were making a name for yourselves as being willing to do things with a fresh look and to be pretty aggressive about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, very aggressive. I went out on the road and as soon as we found somebody that was interested in running, we'd give them some help. I remember in 1962 I was down in Longview and made a speech for Herb Hadley when Herb was running for the first time. Now, can you imagine making a speech for Herb Hadley, for crimony sakes? It was October and I had to make a speech at noon, running in competition with the last game of the World Series! I mean, how much enthusiasm can you get for a candidate during the last game of the World Series?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he did win his race!

**Mr. Copeland:** Herb came from a strong Democrat district. But I remember going down there and making a speech for Herb and I looked out at that audience and half of the audience had a portable radio stuck in their ear and they were listening to the World Series. All of the sudden they started cheering and I thought they were cheering for me but somebody had hit a home run! At any rate, we put on our campaign schools and did our own recruiting. We had no contact with the state party at all; they weren't helping us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what was the official Republican Party doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Arnold Wang was the state chairman at that time. They really helped Dan a great deal. After the primary, their efforts were placed on the Governor's race. But as far as the legislative races were concerned, nah! They had the concept that their existence had to do with electing U.S. Senators and Congressmen, maybe the Governor and other statewide elected officials.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you legislators were beneath them? That leaves a vacuum. Did you more active types eventually take over the party structure?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Take over" would be a little strong. We were just trying to make something effective in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The party structure was superfluous to your issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. We were interested in trying to get our point of view across and how best to do it and finding some people that were "electable" and are of our same political philosophy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were actually building a parallel structure somewhere else all on your own? You were just creating your new thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Independent structures with our own objectives. We'd been doing this for several years: electing our own people, putting on our own campaign schools, totally outside the state Republican Party. Dan was running and it was a parallel track—separate but parallel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And raising your own money?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely! Yes, we had to; no one else was interested in us. Do you think we were going to depend on the state Republican Party to raise any money and give it to the legislative races? Get out of here!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you going after competing money or fresh money?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were going to compete. And we were formidable competition. We had a very good track record to this point. We found money; we knew where to go. Sometimes it was stuff in-kind. I remember, for example, Jerry Saling needed help with his campaign. I said to a businessman, "Jerry needs help; would you like to give him one or two rolls of stamps?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty concrete!

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the guy could take two rolls of stamps and hand them to me or Jerry and it was appreciated by all. That's two hundred pieces of mailing he didn't have before. Oh, we did all kinds of stuff. It was so basic. We didn't have any technical background. We didn't have any people coming off of Madison Avenue telling us how

to do it. We tried a lot of things that were good and some that were bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand you tried a lot of things that were primarily "people-powered" things. Doorbelling and handing out pamphlets on street corners, things like that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. I remember coming to Thurston County on one occasion to meet a candidate running from Olympia by the name of Harry Lewis. We met at the Marigold Cafe. He had a bunch of people working on his campaign, including Bill Jacobs. I remember Harry said to me, "I have a lot of people coming to me and volunteering to do things, but I don't have anything for them to do." And I said, "That's the uniqueness about this thing. Don't ever pass up a volunteer. Find something for them to do. Even if it's licking envelopes, whatever it is. Plan an event. Once you've got an event, tell them to show up at the event." And Harry said, "I've had this in the back of my mind. How would it be..." I said, "Harry, we don't know. I can't tell you. I'm not an expert in this, but if it sounds good, try it! If it works, it's going to be successful. If it doesn't, at least you took a cut at the ball." So he said, "Okay."

People would come to him and say, "Harry, I want to help you in the worst way," and Harry would say, "Great! I want you to be at the shopping mall parking lot at eleven o'clock on Saturday." "What do I do?" "You bring a dozen hard boiled eggs." "I what?" "You bring a dozen hard boiled eggs to the parking lot at eleven o'clock on Saturday." All these volunteers showed up and they all had a dozen eggs and Harry had a rubber stamp that said, "Harry Lewis is a good egg." Volunteers stamped their eggs and passed them out. Unique, fresh, innovative! And he had a whole bunch of volunteers down to pass out the eggs. Everybody that came into

the parking lot that day got acquainted with Harry Lewis. It was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s great! I know Joel Pritchard passed out potholders.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, Pritchard potholders were big.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He said no one would throw away a potholder. They probably had those things hanging in their kitchens for years.

**Mr. Copeland:** Jack Metcalfe had a volunteer ask, “What can I do?” So they went out in this guy’s backyard. It was about a third of an acre and he had it all planted to pumpkins. And he carved etched onto the pumpkins: “Vote for Jack Metcalfe.” And those pumpkins grew and grew and grew and just before the election they picked the pumpkins and gave them away. “Vote for Jack Metcalfe” carved in great big emblazoned letters on each pumpkin that had once been the size of a tennis ball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s great. Just in time for Halloween.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Halloween is just before the election. How much did it cost the guy to plant a third of an acre of pumpkins? Not a great deal! What was he going to do with a third of an acre of pumpkins anyways? I think it made the national press. It was entirely different. Here’s a picture of Jack Metcalfe alongside one of these pumpkins, giving it to some little kid with “Vote for Jack Metcalfe” carved on it. It was a unique idea!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s catchy! Well, this was back when politics was still fun and didn’t take a million dollars.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, true. Don Moos was running and it suddenly dawned on him, “I’ve

got to get something charming and attractive.” So he took the front cover of a *Time Magazine* and he had a picture of himself superimposed on the cover.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As “Man of the Year?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely great! Same slick cover and colors and everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** *Time Magazine* didn’t get upset? Was it kind of like advertising for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** No! He had a little disclaimer on the bottom. He passed those out and mailed it. And so you would get one—and it looked like *Time Magazine*—and you just didn’t dare throw it away. You just had to open it up...my goodness, Don Moos was on the cover of *Time Magazine*.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was his literature on the inside, like a tabloid?

**Mr. Copeland:** Inside was his campaign literature. All these were really great, great pieces of campaign literature. And so you began to learn what worked and what didn’t work and who had it. Then in the next year’s campaign school, we collected all this stuff and put it on display and we explained the literature to candidates in attendance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You certainly had a range of ideas—from pumpkins to hard-boiled eggs. Even if people didn’t do the pumpkin thing, it’s like permission: Just think up something! Be clever. Be humorous. Be catchy.

**Mr. Copeland:** You used whatever you could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been fun.



**Mr. Copeland:** In my particular case, in order to be able to carry some of the farm workers back and forth, I had purchased some school buses. I repainted the buses so they didn't say "school bus" and all that, but they were still big old buses. So on a couple of occasions when I was running, I would put these big banners on these buses and then I would get a permit from the city to put a loud speaker on each bus. This loud speaker played very interesting marching music as I drove that up and down the streets.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were your own parade?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. You build your own parade. All of a sudden you'd hear this music coming. And it was not offensive music or anything of the kind. And the bus went by and it says "Vote for Tom Copeland." It's just a little subliminal memory thing, but did it work? I don't know!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it didn't hurt anything.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There has been a lot of study of campaign methods used for this 1964 campaign season. Lyndon Johnson was pulling out all the stops against Barry Goldwater with those famous TV ads with the daisy and the little girl, and all kinds of sloganeering and very catchy, edgy kinds of things. What did you think of all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was always a question in the back of my mind as to whether or not it would have any effect on my race or not. Obviously, it didn't. We were always aware of it. I guess this was motivating the fear factor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there was a lot of very negative campaigning. Your type sounds a little more "just fun," but what about that element of negative campaigning? What did you think of that as a campaign tool?

**Mr. Copeland:** I really don't know. I've never seen any poll reports as to how that played out. Whether that did any good or was worthwhile. I don't like it. I think that it's appealing to the lower end of the mentality. I mean, am I going to say to you, "Run! Run! The glaciers are coming! The glaciers are coming." I don't know, it might affect some people. But when I say the lower end of the mentality, this is what I'm saying: "If you do this, did you know that the world is coming to an end? Are you aware of the fact that you are causing this?" "Oh, I am, by voting? I'm causing this?" I never have truly liked this portion of that particular type of negative campaign. I don't mind a negative campaign when they say, "Did you know So-and-So voted against this bill and it would have done certain things for you?" That's fine and dandy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's the record.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's okay as far as I'm concerned; if you've got the record you can do anything you want with it. But I thought Barry Goldwater got beat up big time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about the Goldwater candidacy? Did you think he was the best candidate or would you have preferred somebody else as the Republican standard-bearer?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't really have anyone else at that time, if you remember. I didn't have that opportunity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nelson Rockefeller?

**Mr. Copeland:** Was Nelson Rockefeller was really a Republican? A very, very liberal Republican. The way he ran Republican politics in New York was certainly no way that I would run Republican politics, I’ll tell you that. Barry Goldwater was the Republican candidate. I was going to vote for Barry Goldwater, there isn’t any question about that. So we just went on from there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you wish there was more of a middle-ground candidate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes! Oh heavens yes, but there just wasn’t. But you know frequently in politics—this is politics all the time. Who do we have to elect? Only those guys who are running! You vote this or that one; we don’t have a “maybe.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The context of the Johnson/Goldwater race was full of Cold War-type foreboding. There was the Cuban situation: the 1961 breaking of diplomatic ties with the revolution in Cuba, the Bay of Pigs invasion, and in 1962, the Cuban missile crisis. Could we think back a minute about those issues, those tensions, especially the missile crisis. How do you remember that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember it as being monumental. I was appalled at the number of people that were so blasé about the whole thing and really didn’t give a damn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They weren’t frightened? They didn’t realize what was happening?

**Mr. Copeland:** They could care less.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they feel very far away from it somehow?

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn’t even want to pay enough attention to it to understand it.

I was amazed at the number of people that really did not understand the gravity of the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did. You were watching this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Hey, I’ve looked down a gun barrel before. And if that son-of-a-gun goes off, it’s fatal. This was monumental and I think the press did about as good a job reporting this as they could. But the stuff they were saying on the evening news, on ninety percent of the occasions was falling on deaf ears. People had just turned it off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that a reaction to fear? “I can’t take this in, so I won’t take this in.”

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it’s not a reaction to fear, it’s a reaction to: “I’m far more interested in what the score of the Little League baseball team is than what is going in the world. I don’t care; I don’t pay any attention to that; I leave that up to my nephew in Racine, Wisconsin—he is a political nut.” I was just absolutely amazed at the number of people that couldn’t begin to understand the concept of an airplane flying over Cuba three days in a row and finding missiles being set up in Cuba and not understanding the importance of it; they just didn’t care. It was just amazing the total number of people that were so complacent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about the world situation then? All these events were building a great deal of tension.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh hell, I was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about President Kennedy’s handling of this issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just phenomenal; he

did a wonderful job. We had the right guy at the right time, at the right place. Any lesser character could have caved on that thing and no telling where we would be today. I mean, did that take political courage? You're damn right it took political courage! Was he worried about spending political capital in order to be able to make a decision? Hell, no! He was interested in doing the right thing at the right time with the tools that he had to work with. And did he do it? You bet! And did he win at doing it? You're damn right!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even when you take these things and line them up, it was an incredible period of time. There was the building of the Berlin Wall, the very beginning of the involvement in Vietnam—although I don't know if people were very aware of what was happening there. There was the very first U.S. space flight by Alan Shepard and then there was the civil rights explosion down in the South, which was also on TV regularly, wasn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The demonstration in Birmingham in 1963; the arrest of Martin Luther King; the calling out of the federal troops; the march on Washington, D.C. How did you feel about national politics with all these events?

**Mr. Copeland:** You could feel that there was the political unrest, especially in the civil rights movement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were exciting times, critical times. Did you feel that you were on the cusp of very large changes in your society?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. My generation was not going to be sitting here watching

things go by. What are the limitations, where can we go, what can we do? I like the famous comment, "Fasten your seatbelt, we're going to take a hell of a ride, folks!" You bet! I felt like we were doing some wonderful things and we were very fortunate that we had some very strong leaders at the time we needed them. John Kennedy was certainly one of them; there is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then, of course, the assassination.

**Mr. Copeland:** Tragic, absolutely tragic. It was just proof of the fact that it doesn't make any difference how strong you are as a nation. There's going to be that "nut" in the world, or several. It's just pathetic to think that those guys are running around. Then on the heels of that, Robert Kennedy gets assassinated, Ford gets shot at, Reagan gets hit. And I cannot think of any good reason why Sirhan Sirhan, Robert Kennedy's assassin, should be alive here today in a jail in California. I still think that if you do what he did, they should go ahead and say, "You hit the death sentence and that's it." But the assassination of the president—terrible—it just threw the whole country in turmoil.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember where you were when you heard?

**Mr. Copeland:** Heavens yes, everybody remembers where they were when that happened. I was on my way to Seattle for the University of Washington/Washington State football game. We were just driving over and listening to it on the radio. Dolly and I were scheduled to meet Don and Parmalee Moos in Ellensburg. By the time we got there and joined Don and Parmalee, the bad news was in and the four of us just sat there in a state of shock.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, dark times. I just wanted to make sure that we had all this in mind, that the background of your heavy involvement in public affairs was also a time of rapid change, of both wonderful and terrible events. You were part of this in your own way. I wondered how it influenced you, what you have thought of it, if it had inspired you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course, I was inspired like everybody else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** An exciting time to be involved in public affairs. Let’s look at the Governor’s campaign then. At the opening of the campaign Dan Evans started with a very tiny percentage number of name recognition and had to build from there.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. Dick Christensen had a larger name recognition than what Dan did going in. When we met in the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, there wasn’t a single soul who could accurately tell you which one of those two candidates was going to be successful in the primary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Joe Gandy? There were other people running besides the two.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not a real player. Never got out of the starting blocks. Totally Seattle-based, nothing in the hinterlands.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was just coming from being president of the Seattle World’s Fair. That was just not enough?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just didn’t cut it. Had no idea what he wanted to do with the state of Washington. He did not have a Blueprint for Progress in his pocket. “If you elect me Governor, I’ll do a wonderful job for you.” Kiss you on the cheek, good bye.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Dick Christensen have any idea what he would do as a Governor?

**Mr. Copeland:** He probably had a little more idea than Joe Gandy did, but not a great deal. I think Dick probably would have been a pretty responsible sort of a Governor. He probably would have surrounded himself with some really sharp heads.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would have been his group of advisors?

**Mr. Copeland:** He probably would have dipped into the legislative ranks and had an awful lot of people at that time. I think he would have recognized the uniqueness of the position of getting elected by a Christian coalition group, but he would have gone right smack down into the business world and pulled together some great people—as Dan did. This business about being Governor, that’s not a singular position; you must surround yourself with some awfully good heads that can help you get through this morass of government. Dick certainly had the potential to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s the one piece that is usually missing in a Governor’s campaign, is who will they appoint? You’re not just electing them, you’re electing an administration. It’s a bit of a gamble for the voter.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Also, because the Lieutenant Governor runs as an independent entity, there isn’t any kind of team effort or continuity or broad-base executive thinking of the kind. It all gets down to gubernatorial appointments. Some Governors have done a tremendous job. Of all of the people that Albert D. Rosellini ever named for anything, one of the wisest decisions that I think that he made was naming Warren Bishop. Warren Bishop was such a stabilizing influence all the way through the Rosellini administration.

Here is a guy coming out of the university, a young fellow with a degree in economics and he was able to sort through all of the political innuendos and partisan bickering. He could always come right smack out with a bottom line and did it in such a fashion that you couldn't fault him. He was held in an extremely high regard. That type of gubernatorial appointment to a cabinet post is so important. And Dan, of course, had Jim Dolliver as his number-one guy. Jim was never held in the same high regard as Warren Bishop. Jim saw his role as a shield, a gatekeeper or a buffer between the public and the Governor and he prevented an awful lot of people getting to the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't sound like a good thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** It wasn't a good thing. Jim was a fine technician but he had brushes with the Legislature that got to be pretty damn severe. He often tried to make amends by sending his legislative liaison. However, in some cases, it made matters worse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan had been a legislator. You would have thought he would have that intrinsic understanding that he had to have that bond.

**Mr. Copeland:** But this is the point. Jim superimposed himself right in the middle. It finally got to Dan after awhile. Dan began to recognize that there wasn't a free flow of information between him and the Republican legislators because of Jim. It is one thing for the Governor to ask a legislator to vote for a bill and it is quite another thing to have Jim Dolliver *tell* a legislator to vote for a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This brings up an issue that I meant to ask you. When all this huge push for the Governorship was taking place, were there

any thoughts in your own mind of leaving the Legislature and maybe becoming a part of the administration?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, really not. I had my own business to run and long-term family commitments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you prefer the legislative branch?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was a part-time politician; I was a full-time businessman. I had a commitment to run the family farm: the business, employees, payroll, leases—all of them put together. And I had eight to ten full-time employees; I had a responsibility to a whole bunch of people. My father at that time was retired from the business and I was making the decisions. I was much better positioned on the ranch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a big operation.

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the larger ones in the area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet you were putting a lot of energy into politics at that time. You were very heavily involved. Sometimes people start to see that involvement as a much bigger part of their life than when they first started in the Legislature, when they are getting into this level of leadership and they start to look at their own ambitions and where they might want to go with this. But from what you have told me so far, it seems like the Legislature itself captured your imagination and was your area, your focus.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think when we started in our conversation I expressed the fact that when people got into the legislative environment, they have the tendency to become specialized and I became specialized in the operation of



the institution and how it ran and what its role was in relationship to the public. Other people became specialists in transportation, in school financing, in appropriations. I was the one that became the specialist in committees: committee structure, reporting of the role of the press, the public involvement, information that we sent out, a simple little thing like the bill digest, calendars in advance, interim committees, public hearings. Those things were of the institution. And when I was first there, I was painfully aware that the public couldn't find their way in. So that's why.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you can be said to have an agenda, it was legislatively based. Let's finish talking about this election. After the primary—when Dan Evans won the Republican primary—of course, that's not the end of the campaign. The real campaign is the general election against Governor Rosellini, who was going for his third term. Some press stories suggested that Rosellini was in a weaker position by then. He had done a lot of different things for the state and pushed through a lot of initiatives, but by this time in his career, he had a track record that could be attacked. Were you involved in any part of strategizing about how to address Rosellini himself as the target of the campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not at all. I did keep the legislative members and candidates advised about Dan's schedule—when he was going to be in their districts or areas—if Dan wanted to appear with them and visa versa. Dan's Blueprint for Progress was something that every Republican legislative candidate could take and say, “I'm perfectly willing to buy this.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were members identifying themselves as “Dan Evans legislators” as part of a team?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One important aspect in the Governor's campaign was the role of Montgomery “Gummy” Johnson. He was quite a political operative and very active. Where he was in all this mix of activity?

**Mr. Copeland:** C. Montgomery Johnson first came down here on the legislative scene as a lobbyist for WEA [Washington Education Association].

**Ms. Kilgannon:** About when would that have been?

**Mr. Copeland:** Nineteen fifty-five or '57. He became familiar with the legislative process and became personally acquainted with some legislators. Then when Dan's campaign began to take off and they were putting campaign people together—this was in the primaries—I think it's about that time that they called on Gummy to come aboard. Let's back up. Dan and Gummy are virtually the same age and if I'm not mistaken, I think they went to high school together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were already acquainted?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were already very well acquainted. And I think they were in the same Boy Scout troop. Gummy was a wonderful political operative. It became a very natural evolution for Gummy to go through the campaign cycle with Dan, get Dan elected and then become the Republican Party Chairman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that really was the “changing of the guard.”

**Mr. Copeland:** That really was the changing of the guard. Let me explain that particular

change of the guard. It wasn't until the advent of Gummy Johnson becoming the state chairman, that the State Party as an organization—this is the first time that the State Party ever took an interest in the legislative campaigns. This was the first time. Gummy instituted that. Now, did I help him? You bet! I forced him into that position. But he was very willing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you must have been rather excited about this process? This was a huge change.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was terribly excited. All of the sudden, we have the Republican Party for the first time that is interested in legislative campaigns and what the hell the Washington State Legislature looks like.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, there's a breakthrough! So, just to be clear, is it the Governor who has it in his power to appoint the state chairperson?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Governor does not have it in his power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How does he...does he just kind of make it happen somehow?

**Mr. Copeland:** All he can do is call up the people that are the state committeemen and women from the thirty-nine counties and say, "You've got to elect a new state chairman and the person we sure would like to have you consider as fit for the job is..."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't really understand the structure. There are precinct-level people and then what is the next rung of the ladder?

**Mr. Copeland:** The precinct level and then there is the county. Each county organization elects a state committeeman and -woman. And they elect the state chairperson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the precinct structure is different from the legislative district structure? There is a whole group of people that are Republicans and are active in the party, but maybe have no relationship to the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Legislative districts are made up of several precincts, and may not be confined to a single county. The state political organizations are formed along county lines with a state committeeman and committeewoman elected from each county. These people—seventy-eight in all—make up the governing body for the state party organizations. And all of this is provided for in the RCWs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's a grassroots-up structure?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a grassroots-up structure, all done on a county basis, so Wahkiakum County has two votes in the State Central Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Same as King County?

**Mr. Copeland:** Same as King County. You see, the RCWs make no reference to population or anything in the county.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the kind of people drawn to that structure are different from people interested in state politics? I'm just fascinated by this idea that there is so little connection between the two. Are they mostly interested in national politics? Presidential races, that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Until the advent of Gummy Johnson they were interested in national politics and certainly not in state politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a big analysis

done about how in Washington State, precincts and the county Republican organizations had been captured—by a large margin—by the Goldwater campaign people. There was some middle ground there and cross-over, but they really were a different group of people from Evans’ people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Most local party organizations are poorly attended. Consequently, in a small county, twenty or thirty activists can certainly take over the party functions. And, so if you’ve got ten counties—ten very small counties—that get together and they say, “Okay, we’re going to take over the functions of these ten counties,” all of a sudden they can wind up with twenty votes in the state’s Central Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And is that where the platform comes from?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But, I’ll back up and give you just an example of the incongruities of this whole thing. One year, when the Democrats and the Republicans were asked to make their own choices of presidential candidates, the Republican Central Committee choice was Pat Robertson and the Democrats’ choice was Jesse Jackson. Now, under no set of circumstances would you have ever been able to go to the electorate and ask for a statewide election and have those two people be selected by either the Republicans or the Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if people with more extremist agendas capture the party...

**Mr. Copeland:** It’s who captured the control of the party at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those who adopt those really strong, more polarized positions, those people tend to be more organized because they have more of a cause.

**Mr. Copeland:** They are in, they are there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other than for the satisfaction of a small group of people who like to do these things, can you tell me what is the point of all that structure? And creating the platforms and hammering out these statements, when virtually every legislator says they ignore the platform. That they do not run on a platform, they don’t want to have anything to do with it. What’s it all for?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let me characterize the platform in contrast to what Dan did when he created the Blueprint for Progress, which was something quite positive in nature. Not only was it positive but it had all of the built-in functions for the interaction of particle A to particle B. On the other hand, the platform can have one plank that is totally divorced from everything else, but just as kooky as hell. The Republican platform might say what we’re interested in is a Federal prohibition and the constitutional amendment prohibiting abortions. And the Democrat platform might say take down all the dams in the Snake River. These are kooky ideas, at least in my thinking. But, if you go ahead and survey the population of the state of Washington, is that their thinking? The answer is hell, no!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, somewhere in the middle.

**Mr. Copeland:** So you get these political activists that take over the organization for a particular thing, and that’s it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yet this is a structure and it is called the Republican Party. Is that confusing for the general public, when the Republican Party makes statements, but they have nothing to do with anything? It’s just a minority opinion.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is terribly

confusing to the general public. This is why I always applauded Gummy; he was trying desperately to keep all of the facets in that Republican Party focused on being able to accomplish those things that Dan and myself and other Republican legislators had set out to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the only way to do that is to be elected.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, many times there are statements that you can read on both sides that say, "I'd rather be right than be elected. I'd rather have my platform," but how is that effective?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course you're going to have to consider the source, who it is that made the statement. And there are a lot of people that aren't that way. Take those college kids that are out there at the campus. They're against corporate consumerism. Of course, I liked the youngster that had the sign, it says: "Demand Peace." That's a fine slogan, "Demand Peace," and "If you don't give me peace, I'm going to stick my tongue out at you." Of course, he forgot that it was a soldier that gave him the peace to begin with. Right? It was a soldier that allows him to vote, right? It was a soldier that even allowed him to take a pen in his hand and write the constitution. We didn't get here the easy way. And everybody thinks we can have instant gratification. Sorry about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, do you think the whole party platform performance is a distraction, a hindrance, a great place to put the kooky members of your party? Give them something to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it can be a terrible

distraction. I think Gummy Johnson probably did the best job of anybody in contemporary politics to be able to hold the Party together to a point where their platform was actually comprehensive and meaningful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something to be proud of?

**Mr. Copeland:** On target. And since then, I think it has been diminished, changed direction, watered down. I think the Democrat Party platform has done the same thing. The Democrat Party platform got so bad that there was probably less than a handful, less than five legislators who could even say that they could endorse it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do the legislators use the platform in any way in their campaigns or do they ignore it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sometimes it was so poorly written you just could not use it. That's the destructive part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your opponent can take it as a stick and beat you with it? "You must be for this, you are a Republican."

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. When Dan was elected and Gummy became State Party Chair, the next election was two years off. Then, for the first time he said, "Okay, the Republican Party is going to not only work on races for U.S. senators and Governors, we are also going to be working on congressional races as well as legislative races. We're going to go out and do whatever it takes to enhance those candidates. We'll try to help them in recruiting; we certainly are going to help in the financing and the coordination." So, he moved the party structure from this, quote, "non-entity" to something that was truly worthwhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that give a more unified

Republican message? You were all on the same page, saying the same thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. What did the platform look like at that time? The platform was a very reasonable, meaningful document.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there instances where the platform was saying things that you were actually opposed to, that you would have to comment on that during campaigns?

**Mr. Copeland:** At the time the Gummy Johnson became the state chairman I can say categorically “no.” There might have been one or two very minor instances. But, under Gummy, it just didn’t happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you could actually use the platform for once? Rather than ignore it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s interesting. One of the things that happened on the statewide level, through the precincts and counties, was that King County, for one, never did support Dan Evans. And they were rather vocal about it. I don’t know how aware you would be in Walla Walla of what was going on there, but the whole county structure in King County was actually opposed to Dan Evans, and opposed to the legislators who were in office at that time. They were a different type of Republican. I’m not sure what they were—they weren’t John Birchers I don’t think, but they shaded off in that direction. Dan Evans eventually had several confrontations with that wing of the party. How much was that an issue around the state? I mean, the Republican Party is a big tent, like the Democrats—and the Democrats, of course, had their fringe elements, but how much of a problem was it that there was this active right-wing element? The most extreme

expression of this issue came up in the sixties with the John Birchers being present in the Republican Party. Did you have any kind of things like that in your district?

**Mr. Copeland:** I could see it, all the time. It was present. But it was pocketed. There would be certain counties where the John Birchers would be very strong. Call them John Birchers or Goldwater Republicans, they were a very, very conservative Christian right. I don’t care what title you put on them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several titles.

**Mr. Copeland:** They would have preferred to have Dan Evans a much more conservative guy than what he was. I mean, that would be their first choice. So, were they an opposition to Dan? From that standpoint, yes. Were they sufficiently an opposition to Dan to the point where they were going to derail everything he had going, bolt from the party, become Democrats, or start a third party? No. But, yes, that element was there. And when I say pocketed, you’d never have found that particular type of demonstrative eminence in Walla Walla County. But in the little county of Asotin, oh absolutely, boy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, as a person moving around the state helping with campaigns, how would you converse with that type of Republican?

**Mr. Copeland:** With great difficulty!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you recall any stories or encounters that would help us remember what that was like then?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had to fill a vacancy one time. We actually appointed a very strong supporter of the John Birch group, hoping that we might be able to convert him and get him



elected. He got up to campaign time and told everybody that he was a John Bircher and he was in opposition to Dan Evans and he thought Dan Evans was a screaming liberal. And of course, he never got elected. So, ppphttt!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1962, I believe it was, there was a libel trial, a rather famous one, up in the Okanogan area, concerning a legislator, John Goldmark, who lost his election because the story got out that his wife had once been a communist in the 1930s. As many people were. It certainly wasn't illegal, but it was not something that people talked about. There was a campaign against him, a kind of a red-smear campaign, you might say, and he eventually won a libel trial against the persons responsible.

**Mr. Copeland:** That would be Ashley Holden, publisher of the Tonasket weekly paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, at that time, there were definitely pockets of people up in the Okanogan and in different places that represented that other fringe. How did the party deal with these people? Did they try to bring them in or did they try to isolate them? Did they try to change their minds, or were they considered lost causes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's back up, and sort through this John Goldmark thing. Yes, John did have this lawsuit going on. John lost in the primary race and was replaced with a Democrat by the name of Joe Haussler, a former county commissioner. Joe Haussler was very popular and he received a lot of Republican votes in a strong Democrat district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he was a legitimate candidate in his own right, but did admit to having this help.

**Mr. Copeland:** True. I met John Goldmark a number of years earlier through my work with the Washington Association of Wheat Growers. John was a very well educated guy, as was his wife, Sally. Later on, it did come out that she was a member of the Communist Party before and during the war. But John was not a member. He moved into Okanogan County and bought a piece of property. He said he was a rancher. I went up to his place on one occasion. Not much of a ranch, I thought. Tough to make a living off that ground. Where did he get his money? I don't have the slightest idea. He was an attorney, a great orator, wonderful public speaker and he got elected to the Legislature the same year I did, 1956. Ashley Holden was the publisher of the newspaper and really took him on big time. Then there was this libel suit. John subpoenaed me, along with Slade Gorton. And I never quite understood why he subpoenaed me, but when I got on the stand they asked me if I ever knew that John Goldmark was a member of the Communist Party. I said, "How in Heaven's name would I know? I'm not a member of the cell; I don't know if he attends the meeting." And that was about the end of my testimony.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't realize you were there at the trial.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did Slade Gorton think of this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let me read to you from Bill Dwyer's book, "The Goldmark Case," published by the University of Washington, from page 104:

"After the holiday we called our last reputation witnesses. State Representative Slade Gorton, a Republican, had come over from Seattle. An outstanding young

lawyer thought to have a brilliant political future, Gorton was willing to tell the truth as he saw it about John regardless of what it might cost him with the right wing of his party. “His reputation was excellent,” he said. “It was not questioned.” The defense, in cross-examination, tried to place John on the extreme left. “He was a leading member of the liberal group of the great bulk of the Democratic Party in the Legislature.” Tom Copeland, a Republican farmer from Walla Walla, gave similar testimony.”

Slade was in the same position I was, you know. “Do you know John Goldmark to be a communist?” He said the same thing, virtually.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were there, in effect, to say no, I guess?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now wait a minute... Who was John Goldmark’s attorney?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bill Dwyer.

**Mr. Copeland:** What did Bill Dwyer later become?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A justice, a federal judge.

**Mr. Copeland:** A federal judge. And who insisted that President Reagan appoint him a federal judge?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, Slade Gorton.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, is that right (laughing)? All right, I’m saying in this little county seat of Okanogan County, right in that court room, there were John Goldmark, Slade Gorton, Dwyer and myself all in on one particular day. Later, and I think I’m correct, John Goldmark joined the law firm of Bill Dwyer in Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, maybe he was impressed with him. Yes, quite a cast of

characters. Well, it’s a very small world. So it was a somewhat preposterous charge?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think that Ashley’s basic premise was that damn near everybody is a communist until they prove themselves otherwise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a broad brush.

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m trying to be as objective as I can. In my opinion, Ashley Holden, if he disliked you, all of a sudden, you became a communist and now it’s up to you to prove yourself otherwise.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Albert Cantwell was also involved in this trial. He was somewhat of the same mindset.

**Mr. Copeland:** When John called, he said, “I’m going to subpoena you as a witness.” And I said, “What are you subpoenaing me for? I can’t do anything for or against you; it doesn’t make a difference.” He said, “I’ve got to get a certain number of legislators.” And I thought, “Well now, this is real strange.” And then I began to ask myself, “How can he subpoena me out of Walla Walla County?” And John reminded me that the Legislature had passed the statewide subpoena bill that session. And I remember I voted for the damn thing and I couldn’t remember why or what the circumstances were. Then I looked it up to find out who the sponsor of the bill was and it was Charlie Moriarty. So, I called up Charlie on Bainbridge Island. And I said, “Charlie, tell me about this statewide subpoena bill. Why did you sponsor that thing?” He said, “I can’t remember, Tom.” He said, “It sounded like a heck of a good deal to me.” I said, “Well, I voted for it. Do you know anything about the background of the bill? Did John Goldmark have anything to do with it?” He said, “I don’t have the slightest idea.” I said, “Well, he’s just

now subpoenaed me as a character witness in his lawsuit.” He said, “Really?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he couldn’t have known then that he would need you. I mean, that seems kind of prescient.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is my understanding that prior to the passage of this bill you could only subpoena a person residing in the county of the trial. This now extended to everyone in the state. Charlie said, “I’m sure it was that in King County we were doing a lot of business and people don’t live here in King County and we couldn’t subpoena them if they lived outside.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a housekeeping thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** A slam-dunker. I just voted for the bill and didn’t think anything about it, and six months later I get subpoenaed to go to Okanogan to go to the John Goldmark trial as a character witness. John wasn’t one of my close personal friends. I was of the opinion that Ashley Holden was just going off the deep end and John was given a bum rap. I don’t think there is any question about that. And I’m quite certain that Slade was of the same opinion. That this really and truthfully was something totally out of control.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would you be interested in making a statement in that kind of context to support a fellow legislator? That a newspaper should not be allowed to do that?

**Ms. Copeland:** If I remember the question, it was, “Do you know John Goldmark to be a communist?” Wow, how the hell would I know?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you would certainly have been a person of a certain profile and of

good reputation, so I can see how you would be an asset.

Let’s get back to your other activities. We’ve discussed the election of Dan Evans, but let’s talk about what happened with the other races. You played a big role in helping people campaign and organizing legislative members to run for office. Yet the House dropped from forty-eight Republicans down to thirty-nine, which given that you were all geared up, I’m guessing was a surprising outcome. I don’t know what happened, but did so much energy get put into getting Dan Evans elected that the House Republicans actually dropped in their numbers in 1965? Or, did the Johnson sweep of the Democrats on the national level help explain that outcome?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Democrats turned out a big vote. Lyndon Johnson carried the state by sixty-two percentage points and Evans carried the state by a little more than fifty-five percentage points, quite remarkable for a Republican. The House Republicans lost nine seats in very strong Democratic swing districts: Herb Hadley in the Nineteenth, Mike Odell in the Fourth in Spokane, Gus Lybecker in the Tenth, Ed Morrissey in the Fourteenth in Yakima, Walt Reese in the Sixteenth in Benton County, Don Miles from Thurston County—the Twenty-second, Bob Earley in Pierce County, Bob Eberle in the Thirty-fourth in King County, Jack Metcalf in Snohomish County, Charles Lind from Bellingham and Ella Wintler from Vancouver.

But we had some new faces to add to the caucus that year. Man, oh man, did they develop into strong legislators. Stewart Bledsoe, Hal Wolf, Max Benitz, Norwood Cunningham, Irving Newhouse, Bob O’Dell, Jerry Saling and Jonathan Whetzel. These guys knew their way around the block! And Lud Kramer was elected Secretary of State and Dan got elected Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't he one of only one or two Republican Governors elected that year?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think you're probably right. Getting Dan elected, that was the big one. We didn't gain any seats in the Senate at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you disappointed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, you're always disappointed, but that's politics. Of the seats we lost, eight of them were first-termers and most of them were from swing districts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you, after all the dust settled, go back and analyze the different races and make some new plans? Was it just considered the Johnson sweep and therefore unusual in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, the Johnson sweep on the national ticket. However, some of those same voters voted for Dan Evans. Something was going on to motivate them to vote for a Republican.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were most Republicans pretty happy to come under the Dan Evans Republican tent?

**Mr. Copeland:** True. And the campaign people learned a lot. Like: "We can do it!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you had some lumps, but actually this is a big step forward to capture the Governorship. I was wondering, in all your work, were you still staying away from Senate races?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, I observed but I didn't do anything with Senate races at all. I had my teacup full with House races.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know that you had some problems with Senator Greive and that he was periodically challenged for his leadership in the Senate. I was wondering if you had any relationship with his challengers, or if you just watched from the sidelines?

**Mr. Copeland:** I just watched from the sidelines, both the Republican Senate races and the Democratic leadership fight. I didn't have any relationship with it at all and was not interested in getting involved. The Republican senators were not necessarily helpful to our efforts of trying to capture the House. No, we were in two totally independent races.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think many people understand how fragmented this can be. When people talk about the Republican Party, I think they see it holistically and don't realize that you're quite a different group in the House.

**Mr. Copeland:** You're right, they don't understand it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's this image of "you are all in it together," but in fact, you're not.

**Mr. Copeland:** But the reorganization of the Republican Party was now underway. The newcomers were simply an outstanding class. Of the ninety-nine members of the House, if you looked at the "top third" you'd almost grab the Republican roster. We were only thirty-nine strong, but there were thirty-nine strong members in the caucus. And we had a new young governor with a Blueprint for Progress. We were all eager to start working, knowing what it is like to be a minority but still make an impact. Without rancor or anger, this caucus pulled together and dedicated themselves to advancing Dan's program as best they could. For me, coming in as Minority Leader, it was quite remarkable.

## CHAPTER 11

### REPUBLICAN FLOOR LEADER, 1965

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After the election, for the 1965 Session, the Senate had thirty-two Democrats and seventeen Republicans. The Democrats were not monolithic by any means, because they were split in their own ways. The House had sixty Democrats and thirty-nine Republicans, which looks like an overwhelming number. But in fact, your party was quite scrappy and you managed to get quite a few things done. Very interestingly, your House caucus leadership changed quite a bit in 1965. Of course, you lost Dan Evans as your floor leader; he becomes the Governor. You became the Floor Leader. The Assistant Floor Leader had been Damon Canfield and that position went to James Andersen. The Caucus Chair had been Don Eldridge and Robert Goldsworthy stepped into that position; Don Eldridge was no longer in the leadership. The Whip had been yourself and then that position went to Robert Brachtenbach. The Caucus Secretary changed from Mrs. Swayze to Mrs. Kirk. Except for yourself, these were all new people in leadership positions. I'm curious to know what happened in your caucus to make such a big change.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a big change and the only major leadership shift was Don Eldridge. Don had been the Caucus Chairman the previous two sessions. Don decided, because of his own personal likes and dislikes, that he would not participate in any of the extra-curricular

#### THIRTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 11, 1965—March 11, 1965

Ex. S. March 15, 1965—May 7, 1965

**Governor:** Dan Evans

**Senate:** 17 Republican members/  
32 Democratic members

**House:** 39 Republican members/  
60 Democratic members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** Robert Schaefer

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Avery Garrett

**Chief Clerk:** Si Holcomb (died Nov. 1965)

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder (Acting  
Chief Clerk after Nov. 1965)

**Sergeant at Arms:** Elmer Hyppa

#### House Republican Caucus:

**Minority Floor Leader:** Tom Copeland

**Assistant Minority Floor Leader:** James  
Andersen

**Caucus Chair:** Robert Goldsworthy

**Whip:** Robert Brachtenbach

**Caucus Secretary:** Gladys Kirk

#### House Democratic Caucus:

**Majority Floor Leader:** John O'Brien

**Assistant Majority Floor Leader and**

**Whip:** Leonard Sawyer

**Caucus Chair:** Frank Brouillet

**Caucus Secretary:** Ann O'Donnell

#### Freshmen Republican Members:

Stewart Bledsoe, Norwood Cunningham, Homer  
Humiston, Irving Newhouse, Robert O'Dell,  
Gerald Saling, Jonathan Whetzel, Hal Wolf

#### Freshmen Democratic Members:

Ted Bottiger, Hayes Elder, Elmer Jastad, Doris  
Johnson, Hugh Kalich, Richard King, Robert Kull,  
Mary Stuart Lux, Dan Marsh, Frank Marzano,  
George Pierre, William Radcliffe, George Sheridan,  
Frank Slagle, Ben Taplin, Alan Thompson,  
William Traylor, Georgette Valle, Gordon Walgren  
(appointed 1966), Frank Warnke



activities electing other people. It appeared to me that he could care less whether we went in as the majority or the minority. And he made it very clear that he just was not going to leave Mount Vernon, and he wasn't going to spend any of his time, money, effort, or energy in order to see to it that the Republicans ever got the majority. He just took himself completely out. So as far as him not becoming the Caucus Chairman again, that was by his own design. His total lack of activity just created a very big void. So, when it came time to get somebody in there that wanted to do something, Bob Goldsworthy said, "I'll sure do it." And Andersen was extremely articulate on the floor, so Jim was just a natural to become an Assistant Floor Leader as was Bob Brachtenbach to be the Whip.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hadn't you had Damon Canfield in that position previously just to hold the party together, to knit the new and the not-so-new people together?

**Mr. Copeland:** Damon was like an uncle or a grandfather to an awful lot of people. Damon spoke to me earlier and indicated he did not want to have a leadership position this coming session. Damon was a real wonderful guy, but Damon did not like confrontation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which Jimmy Andersen is rather famous for courting.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. Because Damon did not like controversy; he sure as heck would be anything but combative. Andersen was entirely one hundred percent the other way. He was made out of different stock. If you wanted to choose Jimmy Andersen to debate, you better get ready to get your head lobbed off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a much more aggressive team. Was this a signal that you are going to do things differently?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. Now, we're getting right smack at the fiber of the whole thing. "What is the institution?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, I know something about you and now I know something about Jimmy Andersen. What about Robert Goldsworthy? What was his style in this mix?

**Mr. Copeland:** Bob filled the void and he did it well. Goldsworthy is one of our real war heroes—a prisoner of war of the Japanese and a retired Major General of the Air Corps. Everyone should read his oral history and appreciate what he went through during the time "he lost his freedom." That is a real tear-jerker. He is such a wonderful guy you can't help but admire and like him. In the legislative environment Bob took on a very strong leadership role in the budget effort.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He served on Appropriations for a number of years.

**Mr. Copeland:** Every session he was in the Legislature. Later he became the chairman of Appropriations. Bob took a strong interest in the budget process, while I became interested in the real mystery behind the House of Representatives: what happens in the back room?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're going to throw some light on it here.

**Mr. Copeland:** The only people who knew what happened in the backroom were the Chief Clerk and Phyllis Mottman. I took a special interest in the operations of the House of Representatives as an institution for I felt I was filling a void.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Robert Brachtenbach? He later becomes a Supreme Court Justice. What was his focus then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Great head, a pragmatist—no fluff, no frills, “hit the bottom line” kind of guy. He’s a brilliant man. There’s no doubt about. He’s sharper than a tack. Here was another young bright attorney, very much like Jim Andersen—and he too could be very combative.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many of you were from the eastern part of the state? You are, of course. James Andersen had been a Walla Walla boy, though now he represented part of King County. Robert Goldsworthy was a rancher in eastern Washington. Brachtenbach was an eastern Washington person. Gladys Kirk was from Seattle. It might be immaterial—based on talent rather than geography.

**Mr. Copeland:** To me it was immaterial. When you begin to take a look at the whole roster you figure out where all the talent was, not only the talent—we had a lot of people who were talented.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there anyone else you would have expected to see in this leadership group who demurred besides Don Eldridge? Was Slade Gorton so preoccupied with redistricting that he didn’t want to be a part of this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Slade had become the specialist in redistricting, and none of the others expressed an interest in a leadership position. Quite frankly, we just put up a leadership team that was primarily composed of those people that went out and got all these new guys elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about Mrs. Kirk? How does she fit into all of this? Did Mrs. Swayze retire?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, Gladys Kirk and Frances Swayze worked this out between themselves. I was not involved. The job was never really

considered to be one of the heavy-duty leadership roles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When are these decisions made regarding who is going to be in the leadership?

**Mr. Copeland:** The caucus meets shortly after the election and prior to the session. We just have an informal meeting and election of officers. We met in Spokane on this particular occasion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any dissention with this slate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Don Moos was nominated at the very last minute for the Floor Leader’s position against me. After that there were no other contested races. Everyone came together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that when you decide what your priorities are for the session? What you’re going to push for and what you’re going to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Don’t misunderstand. We’re in the minority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know you don’t bring forward a program like the majority would. But you must have some ideas about things you would like to try to do? Or at least stop from happening?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan came with his “Blueprint for Progress” which most all of us could sign on either in total or at least ninety percent. So, we always had that as a reference point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s Dan Evans’ plan, but did most House members buy into it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, most all could buy into the plan and our caucus represented a good cross-section of the state of Washington.



*Swearing in ceremony, House of Representatives, 1965*

*Note Tom Copeland as Minority Floor Leader front row, far-right*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Among the kind of people you had been recruiting to run as Republicans, the “Dan Evans Republicans” were always considered more liberal and progressive than the Goldwater Republicans. Since the Goldwater Republicans were pretty active in Washington, I wondered if everyone could get into the Dan Evans tent?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are putting too much emphasis on “Evans Republicans” and “Goldwater Republicans” when it came to the legislative environment. We were just Republicans trying to do a job for the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s an important distinction to keep in mind. One of the first things to do, after everyone is elected and comes into the House and is certified, is to elect a Speaker. John O’Brien graciously nominated Robert Schaefer as the Democratic candidate for Speaker. The Democrats had the majority—but you were also nominated for Speaker. I know that’s a formality, but how did you feel about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Like it’s a formality.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing that interested me, Jack Hood, the Republican from Whatcom County who was your first nominator, used, in a very short paragraph nominating you,

the word ‘dynamic’ three times. “The state of Washington is entering a new era, a dynamic era of industrial development, a dynamic era of a great new young Governor. It is my pleasure to nominate a man who can lead this body well in dynamic new lines.” This was the theme here. “A man who is qualified by heritage, by experience. A man who has great friendship with members on both sides of the aisle.” These were your strengths. “A man with integrity and honesty; a man of whom we can all be proud.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Those are very complimentary words.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it’s pretty nice. Then Mr. Moos seconds that and he concurs that these remarks are exactly what he wished he had said himself. He says of you that you were entering your fifth term, and remarks about “your ability as a leader and your ability to work at being a legislator every day.” That’s kind of an interesting point; you’re certainly not an off-and-on type of person. He also notes, your “ability in streamlining some of the House operations during the last session.” So you’re getting some recognition for your achievements. And he hopes that you will carry on those practices this year. Of course, being that you’re in the minority, you don’t win. But, I imagine this felt good?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Curiously, you picked up one Democratic vote. You got forty votes; Robert Schaefer voted for you...as a courtesy, I suppose.

**Mr. Copeland:** It shows that he is a real gentleman.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this a moment where the Speakership enters your imagination as an ambition?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was certainly in the back of my mind but, obviously when we had a minority, it was not possible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots of people come and go in the Legislature without ever thinking of becoming the Speaker. So the moment when someone does start to think about it is always interesting. Another interesting thing, this was the session right after the coalition session and Si Holcomb was unanimously elected to be Chief Clerk. Was that a sign that members were recovering their relationships after the coalition session? He had been a player in that. John O’Brien, for instance, voted for him; I mean, everyone voted for him. Was that a good sign that you could move on?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is a decision that Bob Schaefer made. And I think Bob did it on the basis that those people that had worked for Si in the House would continue. They were basically technicians—primarily the people who meet “in the backroom;” they weren’t policy makers or anything of the kind. I think it was a good decision on Bob’s part. He avoided making total turmoil of the whole place to try to get somebody in there that probably didn’t know how the process worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is pragmatic.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sid Snyder was elected Assistant Chief Clerk, so he continued. And Elmer Hyppa was the Sergeant at Arms. Those were the main officers. Now that we have the House organized, I want to ask you about a famous story told about this session. It concerns the fear felt by the Republicans—and the extraordinary means used to counter it—that, with this overwhelming number of Democrats in the Senate and the House and a



sitting Democratic Governor for the first two days, the redistricting bill that had been such a hot potato would be pushed through and signed into law.

**Mr. Copeland:** That the outgoing Governor Rosellini would sign it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, in that little window of time before Dan Evans' inauguration.

**Mr. Copeland:** The window was that time between noon on Monday when the House gets sworn in until the Governor gets sworn in on Wednesday. The constitution provides for the Governor to be sworn in on Wednesday. Now, on this Monday, as soon as the Senate was organized Senator Greive immediately had a redistricting bill hustled through the committee system and passed and sent to the House. So the in-coming Speaker, Bob Schaefer, then had a complete redistricting bill delivered to him by about three o'clock Monday afternoon. He'd been Speaker less than three hours and then he had a redistricting bill. In addition to that, he also had sixty Democrat House members. Now, from here it appears it's a slam-dunk for him to find fifty votes. All he had to do was find fifty votes and pass the redistricting bill and run it down to the second floor and have the Governor sign it and we'd have a redistricting act. Sounds easy. That is setting the stage.

What happened in reality was that in the bill Bob Greive—in his zeal to protect and accommodate certain Democrat senators from Spokane County—had given those senators safe districts, but in so doing, he took three or four Democrat House members and threw them in the same district, which would eliminate their seats. Now, they were quite unhappy and didn't like that kind of a proposal at all. All of a sudden, the number did not remain sixty Democrats; it was more like forty-five. Two days of scrambling followed to find out whether or not they could change

Bob Greive's redistricting plan sufficiently to be able find fifty votes to pass it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the Republicans aren't sitting on their hands. You were doing a bit of maneuvering yourselves.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, we were doing lots of things. We called upon certain people that were friends of ours in order to be able to help visit some Democrat House members, especially some freshman Democrat House members who as soon as they walked in the door found that their seats had been virtually obliterated by Senator Greive's redistricting plan. So, now it was a case of trying to get these people to hold still long enough so we could come up with a redistricting plan that would at least leave them in their seats and meet all of the requirements. At this point, Slade was the chief architect of any redistricting plan that the House Republicans had. He became very interested in trying to carve out some suggestions for these several Democrat members of the House to show that he had a better plan for them and to convince a sufficient number of them not to vote for the Bob Greive plan. At this point Slade was representing a majority of the House members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He really just needed a few votes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just a few, but they were big. We went through the balance of Monday and the bill had been referred to committee. It was Tuesday before the committee could be appointed but the bill got to the House floor Tuesday afternoon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If the Greive plan had passed on the Monday, would Gorton previously had a copy of it or was he just seeing it for the first time then? How fast did he have to work here?



**Mr. Copeland:** Did Senator Greive send out an advance copy of his redistricting plan a week before the session? Well, the answer not only is no, it's hell, no! I don't think anybody saw a copy of the Greive plan until it passed the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, I imagine when it did come over, you were immediately studying it and looking for the weak points. But would Slade Gorton have been so familiar with all the little redistricting lines that he could pick this up and pull off the names right away of the people that are going to be unhappy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes! He could glance at a bill and tell you basically what it would accomplish. He found quite a few unhappy Democrat House members. It took some staff time and Slade's time to write a brief on the bill in order to be able to make heads or tails of it. So, Monday the Senate passed the redistricting bill and it came to the House on that afternoon. But first of all the House had to adopt the rules and appoint the members of the committee and the committee chairman. Then they had to have a committee meeting. Then get the bill out of the committee and through Rules. This takes a little while. During that time, they were still unsuccessful in trying to be able to come up with the magic number of fifty votes. You have to understand fifty votes is a constitutional requirement for passage of a redistricting measure, not a majority voting on the bill. And then if the House amends the bill, it must go back to the Senate for their concurrence. If Senator Greive objects it comes back to the House again. So, this was the crate of eggs that everybody was walking on. It was very, very tenuous.

Tuesday, committee assignments were made and a few committees met. The House was at ease and we had caucuses several times. The waiting seemed endless. Waiting to see if the Democrats could come up with the fifty votes to pass the redistricting bill. During

that time Dan was in the building. Governor Rosellini was in his office. Dan, of course, was very interested in what was going on and we were trying to keep in communication with him as much as we could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where was he hanging out? He didn't have a place of his own yet.

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan was in the Secretary of State's office. At that time, Lud Kramer had been elected Secretary of State. The transition of office from Vic Meyers to Lud Kramer was a rather interesting one. Vic invited Lud to come into the office several weeks earlier and said, "Go ahead and set up a phone or a desk or whatever it is you want. You're going to get this thing on Wednesday, anyway. My staff is here, they'll work with you in order to be able to make the transition nice. As far as I'm concerned, I'm going to be leaving on the weekend and so Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday if you want to use the office for any purpose, please feel free to do so." Lud was set up in the Secretary of State's office with phone connections and everything else and he had a fine staff—that was just a transition staff from Vic Myers. So, this is where Dan was. Dan, Jim Dolliver and Ray Haman were together most of this time. And of course, Dan couldn't get in to the Governor's office. So, we tried as best we could to maintain some kind of a continuity of information. We had a limited number of phones in the House that all went through a switchboard, so our communication to the outside left a lot to be desired. Consequently, we depended a great deal on pages. At that time my son, Tim, was one of the pages. He knew Dan personally and also Lud, Slade, Goldsworthy, Andersen, Moss and Huntley. And he knew his way around the building and nobody knew who he was. So, here was this little inconspicuous character that could scurry between Dan and the members of the Legislature and Dan's staff, quite unnoticed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you plan to have him be a page for any particular reason or it was just his turn? This seems rather serendipitous.

**Mr. Copeland:** Serendipitous is a great way to express it. He simply had free run of the Capitol, totally unchallenged by the security people and unnoticed by the others, but a very, very valuable messenger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he had his little page jacket on.

**Mr. Copeland:** He had his little jacket on and he knew the players and he knew where he was going and he knew what he was doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how old was he?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he was maybe fourteen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I bet he just loved this.

**Mr. Copeland:** He had a wonderful time and yes, loved every minute of it. On Tuesday morning in caucus I told everybody, "Here is the game plan for today. Dan is going to be in the Secretary of State's office. He can't get in the Governor's office yet. We're going to do our very best in order to do everything as status quo. We will have a joint session to hear a speech by Governor Rosellini, at noon break for lunch and come back and work some more. We will be under the Call of the House"—which meant the members could not leave the House chambers—"so our communications will again be limited. But, Dan is going to want to know what's going on. We will keep him informed as best we can. Slade will report to us from time to time should there be any progress made on the Greive bill." Again, long waiting. At noon we had a joint session and heard Governor

Rosellini's speech. We broke for lunch and came back in under a Call of the House. And then there were frequent caucuses called mostly by the Democrats. It was apparent that our "page communication" was working very well. Tim was really putting on the mileage. He would run downstairs to the Secretary of State's office and get information to Dan and then Dan was able to respond. So, it was a case of just having to keep him abreast of everything on a moment-to-moment basis. It appeared that there may be some weakening with certain Democrats about the time we broke for dinner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which way weakening? Weakening towards you or weakening towards Senator Greive?

**Mr. Copeland:** Weakening towards the possibility of them going ahead and jamming the Greive bill through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was a pretty nerve-racking time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very! I went out to the Tyee with several legislators and met with Dan and Ray Haman and Jim Dolliver. I know Nancy was there, and two or three others. It was then that Dan decided that he didn't want to take any chances on this one. He told me he was making arrangements with a member of the Supreme Court, Richard Ott, that if we were still in session at midnight, Richard Ott would go ahead and swear him in as Governor. Dan even called his mother and father and they were driving down from Seattle to see their son at the swearing-in ceremony.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the swearing-in just needed to be, technically, the next day? It didn't have to be at a particular time?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the RCWs provide for the Governor to be sworn in on Wednesday.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So one minute after midnight is Wednesday.

**Mr. Copeland:** Wednesday, the Governor can be sworn in at any time. The question that he was posing to me and the other members in the House leadership was, “What are your chances of being able to hold this thing beyond that?” The decisions that changed votes at that point were totally out of our care, custody and control. We virtually had no input. And once the Democrats found their fifty votes, they could decide to run and really jam it and go. My response to Dan at that time was, “I don’t know if we can hold the damn thing or not.” So he said, “Okay, we’ll go ahead and set the machinery in motion. If you guys can delay it long enough to at least get past the twelve o’clock hour, then we’ll go ahead and make arrangements for me to get sworn in.” This conversation occurred during the dinner time and all of it is strictly on the Q.T. so nothing is said to anyone. We went back into session about 7:30 under a Call of the House and again the Democrats were scurrying around. The session was quite chaotic. Nothing was really going on the floor of the House except for an awful lot of conversation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And a lot of nail biting, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot of nail biting. Slade continued to monitor the progress of the Greive bill. It got up to about eleven o’clock. I had been in touch with Ray Haman through messages carried by my son Tim. He sent me written suggested comments that I could make on the floor of the House at an appropriate time. I simply would outline the procedure that was about to take place one minute after midnight.

More time passed and we could see that they were not making any progress. Lots of unhappy Democrats were bitching about

the disagreements they were having. About eleven-thirty to a quarter to twelve it became apparent that they were not going to be able to paste together any type of redistricting bill. The House was at ease so I requested that I have a visit with the Speaker in his office. At this point, Bob Schaefer, the Speaker, was painfully aware that he was unable to find the necessary votes to pass a redistricting bill satisfactory to Senator Greive. So I told him, “Mr. Speaker, here is the game plan. You’ve got a very few minutes to pass this bill. If it doesn’t occur in that length of time, in the North Gallery there are going to be several people, including Daniel J. Evans and Justice Richard Ott. At this point I will address the House and call to their attention two things: One, that it is now Wednesday, January 13, and two, that in the North Gallery Justice Richard Ott is about to swear in the new Governor of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This must have been a real jaw-dropper.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Speaker Schaefer said to me, “You’re not kidding, are you?” And I said, “No, I’m not kidding at all. I’m absolutely dead serious. That is what’s going to happen at twelve o’clock.” He said, “How would it be if we adjourned right now?” And I said, “You’ve got a deal.” Bob said he needed some time to talk with his caucus but felt it was a “go.” I told him I would speak to my caucus also and we both agreed that this would be a very short caucus. I explained to my caucus what was about to happen and we went back out on the floor of the House. I sent a note to Dan and he told him we were about to adjourn.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Speaker do that so that you wouldn’t go ahead with your plan?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. We had a five-minute caucus and the Speaker walked out

on the rostrum and called the House to order and recognized his floor leader. The motion was made that, "The House do now adjourn until ten a.m. Wednesday." So with that, the "greatest speech that I ever gave" was never given.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the next day? Did nothing happen until the swearing in and all the ceremony? I mean, did you proceed with the normal course of business?

**Mr. Copeland:** At noon on Wednesday we had a joint session of the House and Senate. They escorted Daniel J. Evans in and swore him in as Governor in the normal routine of things. But the gravity in the whole thing was really something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unprecedented, I'm sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no question. It would have been fun, but it is better that thing went together in the normal manner. So, the speech that Ray Haman put together merely said I was to call to the attention of the Speaker that it was now 12:01 and this was Wednesday. "The Laws of the state of Washington provides that we swear in the Governor on Wednesday. If you'll please observe the north gallery, there are the players and we are going to witness the swearing in of the new Governor of the state of Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure you could have done it with a straight face, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Who me? Oh, absolutely! There was no doubt about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand the Republicans believed that if the redistricting bill went through, then you would be rendered a more-or-less permanent minority for the next decade. There was a lot riding on this.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, a tremendous amount riding on this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your plan rested on this—your plan to move the state in a new direction; this was the first step.

**Mr. Copeland:** Senator Greive had done an absolutely wonderful job of putting together a redistricting bill that favored the Senate Democrats. But, in so doing he shredded cities and towns; he ran across county borders; he scooped up people here and there. And he did away with several "dissident Democrats" from the last session. He made great huge pockets of Republicans in enormous districts that were way, way larger than what they should have been. Others couldn't possibly meet the criteria for a one-man, one-vote in little, bitty districts that were solid Democrat and they had probably half of what they should have had. There were all kinds of errors and flaws in his whole plan. But if it passed, oh my, it would have been Democrats forever. No question about that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wouldn't have had a chance to do anything about it?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, and were we playing hard ball? You bet we were playing hard ball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, we can do the "what-if" scenario. If you had sworn Dan Evans in at midnight or one minute after, do think that would have had an impact on the session getting other things through? Would that have done damage in a different quarter?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. Speaker Schaefer was between a rock and a hard place. You have to understand we were working with Speaker Schaefer and a whole group of new people that are just coming into the Democrat Party, getting out from the umbrella of John

O'Brien. So it's a different group. They have a different mindset. They were more in my age group with similar experiences and background.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you felt you had more in common with these people than the older Democrats?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there is any question about it. Please understand that I'm not faulting John O'Brien on a personal basis. I mean, this was a method that he had inherited and he'd been with the program since he first came to the House in 1939.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a generational thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's generational and it would become ingrained: "This is the way we do business because this is the way we do business, because this is the way we've always done business." Now all of this was beginning to change. All of a sudden, we've got Bob Schaefer in there, and he's Speaker of the House and what happens to him in the first three hours of him being Speaker, what does he have? He has a whole redistricting bill. He's got a Governor in office of the other party. He's got a majority leader in the Senate. He's got his own agenda that probably is not what Senator Greive was seeking. All of a sudden, Bob is trying to take his own area of responsibility and run it in a very responsible fashion. So, what's he supposed to do in the first twenty-four hours? Jam the whole redistricting bill through? If he does, how many of his House members does he lose in the process? How much cooperation will he get from them for the remainder of the session? And should he push through that redistricting bill knowing full well it may not stand up under a court case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And lose the loyalty of many Democrats that have just come into his House. He becomes the bad guy?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. He comes off as the bad guy. Was he going to break arms and say, "I've got to have you guys vote to do yourself in." Now he's lost ten of the whole thing. And he's got to operate the rest of the session with a fifty or maybe a fifty-one vote margin. He's taking a look down the road and saying, "Wait a minute!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a good place to be.

**Mr. Copeland:** So when I said to him, "At 12:01 this is the game plan." He said, "Why don't we adjourn?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He can't win that other way.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, so that was the smartest thing he could do. Why push this thing to a big confrontation that is going to have long-lasting effects throughout the balance of the session and rebound on him not only on his Speakership but on a personal basis, also. He just knew that the ballgame was over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then Dan Evans was not actually in the North Gallery but waiting somewhere nearby and you presumably got him that message?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was in Lud Kramer's office, I think, with Nancy and his mother and father. Surely Jim Dolliver was there, I know that Ray Haman was, and five or six others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people heard about all this at the time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Those people that were close to Dan and the Republican House Caucus.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not the general House members?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the average guy walking around the Capitol Building at that time didn't have any idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this story come out a day or so later?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. The press learned soon enough and understood we were prepared to do it if necessary. No doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It kind of drew a line in the sand in a way how serious this was. The lengths to which you would go set up a signal that you were going to be tough on redistricting, that you're not going to just take it. So, I imagine that this first very tough performance is going to have an impact on the rest of the redistricting discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's back up here for just a second. I mentioned the transition of government between Vic Meyers and Lud Kramer. There was virtually no transition of government between Al Rosellini and Dan Evans. Prior to this particular date we're talking about, which is January 11, I don't think Dan ever met with Al Rosellini to talk about the transition of government. I think he had Jim Dolliver do it on a couple of occasions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there too much bitterness after that hard campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Mrs. Rosellini invited Mrs. Evans to come down and take a look at the house. That was very nice. So here we're talking about a redistricting bill. But, we're also talking about a newly elected Governor, who is twenty-four hours away

from being sworn in, who is not allowed to go in the Governor's office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that was also true for Rosellini between himself and outgoing Governor Langlie.

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no knowledge but I can't imagine that being the case. I think the following is a fairly true picture of what happened on Wednesday. Here Dan is, about to get sworn in at midnight. That thing goes by the board. Then it is put together for the Wednesday time schedule which we normally do under the House and Senate joint rules. Dan arrives in the State Room and is ushered into the joint session and is sworn in as Governor. He then makes his inaugural speech and is ushered from the House chambers, through the rotunda and down one flight of stairs to the Governor's office. The door is locked. Someone has to find the custodian of the building in order to be able to unlock the door to the Governor's office.

When he gets in everything is so clean, you can't believe it. There is no paper, no paper clips, there are no pencils, there are no notepads. It is a clean, bare office. That is the transition of government. Okay, so now you talk about trying to jam through a redistricting bill; you talk about the transition of government; you talk about the lack of communication. And if you think for one minute Dan Evans had a tough time putting it together, you're right! This became such an embarrassment that I introduced a bill that session appropriating money for an incoming Governor to set up a transition office. I had two co-sponsors on the bill: John O'Brien and "Buster" Brouillet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one should have to go through that, on either side.

**Mr. Copeland:** No one—I don't care who it is, Republican or Democrat—no one should

have to go through what Dan had to go through in order to be able to get into the Governor's office. It just is totally unspeakable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These days we have complex transition teams. That's actually the pride of American government, that the change of leadership is a bloodless, amicable, accepted routine.

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, you may say that again and again! You are so right: "the pride of American government." We like it that way and we want to keep it that way. So that's the backdrop.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll discuss how Governor Evans gets on his feet and starts running for a sixty-day session that is already three days in. The next task before you was to decide the rules under which the House would operate. A series of amendments to the rules were attempted. Let's discuss the meaning of that whole process.

**Mr. Copeland:** The motion was made by Jack Rogers, the way that the committee membership would reflect as near as possible the direct proportion by party of those elected to the House. It had been the practice in the past that frequently there would be, like eleven Democrats on the committee and three Republicans, even though they had been elected with a forty/sixty split. But follow the second part of it. It says "the majority caucus shall select the committee members." The Speaker had always done that before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's an innovation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it looks like it was fairer, but it also reduces part of the Speaker's authority. I thought it was a very clever maneuver on Jack Rogers' part. What he's doing is saying to the new Speaker, Bob Schaefer, "We'll make sure that we select all these through the caucus."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that in response to past practices of John O'Brien? Did John O'Brien use his authority in such a way that he riled some members of his own party?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure. John had gone ahead and appointed all the members. If John O'Brien did not want one of his Democrats to serve on a committee he simply did not appoint that person to that committee. This is a method John used to control the flow of legislation. During the last session, Coalition Speaker Day appointed them. Only, Jack Rogers was saying, "Let's do it with the majority caucus." If the rule had been in place, the majority caucus would have selected the Committee on Committees, and then the Coalition Speaker would not have had that authority. And this is why Jack was making this shot at it changing the rules from the previous session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this window might never happen again? Was this something that was discussed in the Democratic caucus and previously agreed to or was this a bit of a surprise?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was a bit of a surprise to everybody. They went ahead and adopted the amendment but you notice the vote was fifty/forty-eight and one member absent. So, there were quite a group of Democrats that joined the Republicans on this adoption of House rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, for all the amendments that people put forward, the numbers come in up-and-down. There was not a consensus in the Democratic Party about what they were doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Democrats voting with the Republicans on this included: Eric Braun, Bill Day, Jack Dootson, Bill McCormick, Bob Perry, and Jack Rogers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, characteristically somewhat more conservative Democrats?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but you see some dissident Democrats there, also. Now, Bob knew that he had been elected Speaker with sixty Democrats sitting out there before the House. But it was self-evident that he didn't have sixty votes on any one given issue. Does he have fifty working votes at all times? The answer is no. Bob's a very smart guy; I mean, he knew ahead of time how to count and he knew, "Why push it? We're whooped anyway."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The numbers looked stronger than they really were? This is the proof?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is probably evidence of the fact that the numbers weren't there. So, when you say "we were in the minority position," we were in the minority position, there is no doubt about it. They have the strong numbers, but, when push came to shove and you started putting something across the block that had huge political significance that truly hit ideological notes that cast you as a conservative or a flaming liberal, you wouldn't find fifty votes to make it pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a test vote—an indicator.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Representative Rogers wanted the committees structured according to the percentages of how many people were in each party—the Rules Committee, the interim committees, and the patronage positions to be all tied to those percentages. Then you asked, "What about the fractional percentages?" And he says, "It would be my suggestion that all those close fractional questions be decided on behalf of the Democrats." And you say, "Thank you, I receive the message

quite clearly." It was interesting to figure out the subtext of some of the remarks. There was one amusing exchange as Representative Moos and Litchman were going back and forth on the meaning of some of the amendments and Mr. Moos said, "Mr. Litchman, on the advice of counsel, you are wrong." And Mr. Litchman said, "Mr. Day, incidentally, is my chief counsel over here." So that's a little dig from last year? And then Mr. Moos answers rather cleverly, "Mr. Gorton is my chiropractor." So, there were some light moments when you are able—though you're dead serious—you were having a little bit of fun here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, the other issue seems to be what is the constitutional majority for different actions, how to set that number? And, is that part of the need to count every vote because the majority isn't as solid as it looks? One of the issues seems to be whether to eliminate the constitutional majority or not, as Mr. Litchman puts it. And at what point things are going to pass.

**Mr. Copeland:** You see, House rules are written by the House and are subject to change. These House rules cover the procedural conduct of the House. The state constitution prescribes that a majority of the members elected—I repeat elected—must vote in the affirmative to pass any bills. Constitutional majority is fifty percent of the elected body. Okay? Not nearly a majority of those present.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's the critical thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the critical thing. To enact a law, final passage, a constitutional majority is fifty 'yes' votes. A motion to adjourn only requires "a majority of those voting." There are ninety-eight members in

the House so there can be a tie vote. House rules and the constitution both provide that when a tie occurs on a measure “it is decided in the negative.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if all the attention being paid to the rules was because there was a soft majority?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is very hard to know the meaning of what seem to be small things, except for the attention paid to them. Then you realize they can’t possibly be small things. They have to have all these other meanings.

**Mr. Copeland:** You’re absolutely right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the end of all this process you rise on a Point of Personal Privilege and you say, “Mr. Chief Clerk, I would like to have the record show that it was 2:27 when the first gag rule was invoked.” Now, what are you saying?

**Mr. Copeland:** They cut off debate. The motion to call for the previous question cuts off debate. This is not debatable and the Speaker then asks for the yeas and nays. And by his ears he knew that he clearly had a majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, the fast gaveling routine that has occasionally happened in the past is not going to work this year? Giving notice here, in a way?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. That was the only reason to do it. Speaker Schaefer truly ran that session. He had as a working majority, from time to time, from forty-eight to fifty-two votes. And the rest of the time all the balls were in the air.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there’s a sort of creative edge there for the Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. As far as Jack’s rules were concerned and his rule changes, we could live with them. That was no problem. It was an altogether different session than anybody had ever known in the past. There wasn’t a coalition. Nobody cut and broke rank. The Democrats had sixty votes but they were just not getting to shove us around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because this new generation were not as docile? There was that tradition of freshmen being seen and not heard. Was that starting to change?

**Mr. Copeland:** It’s all part of it. The people that were there before are now seeing the changes start to take place. They’ve seen the process that Senator Greive was talking about. They were seeing that come unraveled. They saw the total dominance of the Speakership the way John O’Brien ran it; they’re seeing that go away. They’re seeing that even the Democrat caucus can make a difference if it wants to select the committee chairmen rather than the Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A much more fluid situation.

**Mr. Copeland:** How true. I need to point out another “first.” Early in the session I came across a little used committee room on the fourth floor on the south side of the chambers and I prevailed upon the Speaker to make this space available to the Minority Party. He agreed and the Republican leadership had four desks in the room within twenty-four hours. A phone came a little later, but Andersen, Goldsworthy, Brachtenbach and myself had an “office.” So when Jack Hood says of me that I created some dynamic changes he is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Exciting times! This session saw some real breakthrough movements. Let's keep following through the opening processes. Following the tradition that the outgoing Governor addresses the Legislature, Governor Rosellini delivered his final message. He struck a note that Dan Evans will pick up but in a different way, that the state has a growing relationship with the federal government: the Johnson "Great Society" programs. Interstate highway building started under Eisenhower, but certainly was carrying forward. Other programs such as civil rights legislation and Medicare will impact state programs and shift the balance of initiative between what the states and the federal government. State and federal governments were becoming more interlocking. In Dan Evans' inaugural speech he attacks this development. This was something he was very worried about, that growing relationship. He thinks that the best government is the government closest to the people and that, in this case, is the state and local governments and not the federal government. Is that a fair statement? Would you agree with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not quite. The best government that is closest to the people is the one that does something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh well, yes. That's the other half of the equation, isn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a simplistic statement to make, but if you have a non-operative government, it isn't good at all. Right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, yes. But Evans wanted the action to come from the state level. Not top-down. That seemed to be a major theme. The outline of his speech followed the Blueprint for Progress pretty closely. He began by saying, "This is a time of high purpose." This wasn't just rhetoric; I

think that he saw this as an opening of a new era in government. Did you all feel that way, that this isn't just continuity, this was a new beginning?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't mean to second-guess what Dan is trying to say. But my best read on that would be to back up and take a look at the two bruising years that we had prior to that. I mean, we were just coming out of a coalition where there could be huge fights. Not only from the status point of a public/private power fight but we had a lot of personalities that were damaged and hurt. People's motives were impugned. Then a gubernatorial race; then coming into the first session of the Legislature and we get jammed with the redistricting bill and then we don't have any transition to give government an executive branch. What is Dan supposed to say at a time like this? "Thank you very much, Governor Rosellini. I certainly enjoyed working with you and the transition has been very nice and you've been extremely kind." What is he supposed to say? He's trying to elevate this whole damn thing to a higher level above partisan bickering. So that's what I think he was referring to when he talks about a higher purpose. Let me tell you this. This is the kind of relationship that I had with Bob Schaefer. It was a good one. Bob was a great guy. And did we disagree? Hell, yes! But could we resolve our differences and go on from there? Truly!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was a very hopeful time. It's a great opening statement: Let's take the high road. Let's get something done.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Evans identified education as his first priority. He had several programs in mind. He proposed legislation to equalize the level of local tax support, and wanted to eliminate the reliance on the annual



special levies. He wanted an advisory council on higher education for more coordination and he wanted to increase the number of community colleges. Kind of a leap forward there. He wanted long-range planning on school buildings and to explore different ways of funding schools and improve the teaching profession. Much of his language in this section of his speech to do with education seems to flow from the recommendations of the large interim committee on education. When he was putting together this Blueprint, did that committee work come up? Was he building on that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** It certainly did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, he benefited from some of these studies and work that had been done recently. Were you a part of this discussion in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I did not sit down and talk with Dan before he wrote his speech on the education bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just struck by the close match of his educational initiatives to the work of that committee. Secondly, he discussed the economy. He wanted to open up new markets. He wanted some deregulation, some tax reforms. He made quite a point that “this is the nuclear age.” That Washington was going to play an important role in nuclear energy—what in those days was called “the peaceful use of the atom.” Was this a new discussion, the use of Hanford in this way to generate power, rather than a military use?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is just coming on line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it seem like a wonderful promise for the future? That you would be able to generate a lot of power and this would be a good thing for the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** We are in a region with a surplus of hydroelectric power. But we were also sitting on the potential of being able to develop nuclear plants. The overriding thing is that the state of Washington had a disproportionate number of experts in the field. These were people that knew how to build the plants. So as far as the entire project out at Hanford, my particular focus was on the expert resources available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Today, with the debacle of WPPSS in our recent past, the promise of nuclear energy is much more made up of “shades of gray” than what it might have looked in 1965. Then, it probably looked exciting.

**Mr. Copeland:** When you talk about using nuclear energy for the purpose of generating electric power here in the state of Washington, it is in the shades of gray. But let’s back up. The state of Illinois currently today is producing, I think over fifty percent of their total electric power through nuclear energy. Is it working well? You bet! Where else is it working? Arizona. Do they have a nuclear plant? Right outside of Phoenix. Is it working well? Everybody’s lights run off of that. There are other places. Would WPPSS [Washington Public Power Supply System] have been able to work if it had been managed properly? Yes. Was it managed properly? No!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1965, the promise of nuclear energy...

**Mr. Copeland:** Was just on the horizon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it seem like a wonderful new thing, with lots of potential and no downside?

**Mr. Copeland:** It looked like the advent of nuclear power for the purpose of generating

electricity would be a great and wonderful thing for those areas that didn't have the natural resources the state of Washington did. I mean, we're blessed. We have the Columbia River and we utilize it in many, many ways. Other areas are not as fortunate. They have to have some type of power in order to be able to grow. Now, let's face it, was anybody interested in the generation of electricity through nuclear power for the purpose of running an air conditioner?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, in the hotter states, certainly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Would Arizona be interested in it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes! I'll back up a little bit. This is the era of the early space program and some really, amazing new breakthroughs in science. We even had the iconic Space Needle in Seattle, an emblem of a new age.

**Mr. Copeland:** We even have a thing coming online called a "word processor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whew! Anyway, I wondered if this was part of this wonderful new era, you know, breaking through here.

**Mr. Copeland:** And the answer is yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All these developments in their day sounded really modern and wonderful.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'll tell you, you had to get up a half an hour early in the morning in order to be able to catch up! Are things changing? Rapidly, very rapidly! We were trying to reach state government and get it out of the box. You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is almost like a metaphor in a sense. To continue our list

of what's coming, Governor Evans saw government—at least the way he was phrasing it—as a catalyst to get things to happen. He was very carefully calibrating the roles government should assume. He wanted to encourage tourism. He wanted to rework unemployment compensation. He talked about relieving overcrowded institutions, which had been the hallmark of the Rosellini administration—the improvement of state institutions. He now made the statement that institutions were old-fashioned and the thing to do was create community health centers and get people back in the community and not in institutions. So that was kind of a radical change.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He talked about civil rights, the need for equal-opportunity employment and open housing. The civil rights movement was certainly on the news every night. He talked about calling a constitutional convention to address issues facing county and city governments as their situation was becoming quite constrained. Did you find ways to address their needs through the normal routes of legislation, without having a constitutional convention?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that there probably were some amendments to the constitution about that time that did change some of the authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not going as far as a convention?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Evans addressed his view of the federal government: "The greatest threat to basic freedom to individuals and basic integrity and independence for state and

local governments is increasing usurpation of traditionally local and state authority by the federal government.” There was a note indicating “applause” in the Journal at that point. Was that a widely held Republican view of the Johnson administration?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a widely held view of a lot of people, because the Johnson administration was just embarking on the Great Society. And when you hit the bottom line on the Great Society plan, it was a first big step toward socialized medicine. Even after President Johnson got through enunciating it, he couldn’t find enough help in the Democrat Party to go ahead and implement even a portion of what he was talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was extremely ambitious.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was extremely socialistic. I mean, he really came out with some programs that were quite unheard of in those days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you recall just a couple of the examples for people who aren’t really familiar with his programs that caught your attention at the time?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he was the very first person who was even talking about socialized medicine. I think it was one of his key components. He was going to federalize the state health system and virtually take power away from the states that they didn’t necessarily want to relinquish.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was something a new Governor was definitely going to be alarmed about.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think the electorate expected a newly-elected Republican Governor to come in and say, “I’m going to

adopt Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society one hundred percent and I’m going to give him the keys to the damn vault.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans does an interesting thing with this issue. He kind of turns it on its head in his speech and says—I’m paraphrasing now, “We’ve got to pay attention to what the federal government is doing because there has been a vacuum in state government that it is flowing into. So our job is to make sure there is no vacuum. We have to be activists and take our responsibilities to the hilt here; otherwise the Feds are going to be right here on our doorstep.”

**Mr. Copeland:** I’ll get back to my original concept when you asked the question that “the best government is one that is closest to the people.” And I said, “Provided it works.” This is the vacuum that the Governor was referring to. Whenever a vacuum occurs, at any level of government, there is going to be something, some entity in there in order to be able to fill that vacuum. So, is it the responsibility of the state government to make sure these vacuums don’t occur? And the answer is yes! Years ago the federal government had nothing to do with schools. Now look at all of the federal funds, gifts, grants and programs. And each of these carries with it more federal control. This was one of the “vacuums” to which he made reference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Evans almost sees it as his creative opportunity to push people along. So he turns it into a positive thing, in a sense.

**Mr. Copeland:** He’s saying to the Legislature, “If you see a vacuum occur, don’t sit there and do nothing. Get with the program and do something!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, and “I’ve got the program, by the way.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, let me bring you up forward to what happened in contemporary times. We had a problem with a situation where the state was taxing automobile license tags at an exorbitant rate. Everybody knew it was too high; everybody knew the money was not going to support the roads; everybody knew that there was a problem there. A vacuum occurred and the Legislature did nothing about it. And what happened? An initiative was filed, voted on and passed. Newton's theory comes into play: "For every action there is an equal and opposite." Bingo! You have a vacuum; the hurricane's coming and it's going to fill that vacuum. That's all Dan was saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was very effective. He also wanted to reform and strengthen the legislative interim committee structure.

**Mr. Copeland:** And that got a big round of applause.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm gathering he was alluding to Governor Rosellini's veto of the Legislative Council the previous session, when Rosellini didn't want the investigations to go forward. And he sounds like he's pledging to never do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** You've got to understand that Dan was one of the largest heavy-hitters in this whole effort to elevate the legislative branch to act like a co-equal branch of government. I mean, he truly—he was great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though he's changed hats and become the executive, he came from the Legislature and understood its concerns?

**Mr. Copeland:** He understood what the Legislature was doing and how that the people couldn't find their government and didn't know what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted to reorganize government; he wanted to create several new entities: the Department of Transportation, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Department of Water Resources—which, I gather, has something to do with pollution control. I'm not sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** It ultimately became the Department of Ecology.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you supportive of those ideas?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, oh heavens.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not everyone was. The Department of Transportation, for instance, was very problematic for some people.

**Mr. Copeland:** You see, there were probably eight or ten agencies of government all reporting directly to the Governor that had something to do with transportation, but they weren't under one head.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not too much coordination?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. The ferry system was independent; aeronautics was something else. Then you had a separate thing in Highways; then you had the county roads. They were not connected. But they all reported directly to the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's surprising the roads even met! He wanted to speed up freeway construction and build a third Lake Washington Bridge. He wanted to include rapid transit systems in the transportation system. He wanted more State Troopers, because there had been a rash of car accidents. Didn't it take him several years to get some of these things?

**Mr. Copeland:** He talked about all of these various agencies reporting directly to him in his inaugural speech. But he doesn't implement these things for several years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another one: Evans wanted bills to include fiscal notes. We are so used to fiscal notes now that it may be a shock to find out that bills could be proposed then with no dollar amounts attached. With no idea of what they cost and what the budget implications were.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, you would have no idea. All of a sudden, somebody says, "You know, we're going to give all of the kids in the third grade a Popsicle on Thursday." How much is it going to cost? How is it going to attack the budget? Nobody had the slightest idea. Evans was committed to legislative reforms; this was one example. With fiscal notes the public will be brought up to full speed and know what a proposed change will cost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How do you build a budget without this information? Seems a bit of a hole in the process.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, look at what he's saying. He is directing the legislative branch of government to make these reforms. "You guys have got to have this in order to be responsible." He's elevating the legislative branch. That's all he's doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He also wanted to address local issues with the "Home Rule" bill so that counties and cities could look after more of their own issues. And with a direct slap at the previous administration, he vowed to keep politics out of the appointment process for liquor representatives and estate appraisers. That, of course, had been part of his own political campaign to unseat the

previous Governor. He wanted a disclosure of campaign finances. Was this a new idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was that received?

**Mr. Copeland:** Like anybody that's gone through a campaign, many received it with a great deal of skepticism. Of course, how you implement it is another matter. But at least it was a new idea. He was just throwing these out on the table. Take a look at all the marbles he threw out on the table that we're taking for granted today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a tremendous list. Was the fact that he even had such a list an innovation? Do most Governors come in with such a concrete plan? They tend to deal more in generalities, I thought.

**Mr. Copeland:** Your last statement: "Most Governors don't come in with such a concrete plan" would probably be better stated, "Few, if any, Governors have ever come to the state of Washington with any semblance of a concrete plan."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the engineer in him?

**Mr. Copeland:** At the time that the whole thing occurred; this was the change that people were truly interested in and looking forward to. This was the dynamics of the whole thing, and this is all part of why Dan arrived on this pinnacle at this point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's exciting to have this list to know what the game plan is. He wanted to eliminate capital punishment; now there's a hot-button issue. Politically, why was he sticking his neck out? Is this something that he just so firmly believes in that he will spend some political capital on it?



**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there's any question about it. That was his own personal belief, that's great. I don't subscribe to it, but that's where he was and he's entitled to that opinion and I will defend his right to have it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that with issues like capital punishment and a few others of that kind, caucuses customarily would not take a position and say, "It's your personal conscience. Vote however you like." Is that true?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Given that though, how many people within the Republican caucus would favor the elimination of capital punishment?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if we had a really close count on it at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certain members would bring it up for discussion almost as an annual event.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think it ever had a majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then he said another quite brave thing: "We must face the fact that increased government services may require increased revenues." Not very many people step up to that plate. And then he promised a separate budget message, what he called an "honest budget" a day or so later. The way it normally works, the outgoing Governor creates the budget and hands it to the new Governor, but with not very much time to do anything about it. It's a rather odd system. They may have different policies and priorities.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's archaic. The outgoing Governor creates a budget and frequently it

has all kind of spending but doesn't have the revenue to go with it. It really never should have been done. It gets printed and it gets delivered and then if there is a change in administration, it immediately gets thrown in the ash can or rewritten.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The budget drives policy. Evans alluded to what he calls the shift in a cultural revolution. There was increased leisure time with a need for more parks, more recreation facilities, and things of that nature. We know that Dan Evans was a big backpacker and a Boy Scout and mountain climber. This comes through not only as a policy, but as a personal commitment. He refers to passage of Initiative 215, the Marine Recreation Land Act, as an additional impetus to pushing this agenda.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, let's fast-forward. He also caused a recreational bond issue to go on the ballot, a huge amount in order to be able to build parks and things like that. He did that about two years down the line and it passed overwhelmingly. So the guy was consistent not only in what he said, he made every attempt to do it. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. If it didn't, that was something else. The checklist you're reading from, he probably implemented eighty percent of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In part, why I'm going through this in such detail is that you were going to be his chief lieutenant in the House and it would be your job to help get all this to happen. How much of a discussion did you have with him, or were you just given the list? What was that relationship like?

**Mr. Copeland:** The relationship was great. Did I help him write the speeches? No. Had we talked about these things earlier? Certainly!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For years, no doubt.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nothing on there was a surprise to me, with maybe the exception of abolishing capital punishment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was your job now to implement these things. This is a pretty exciting list. Did you have your own sense of priorities, or did they come through Dan Evans to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at this point Dan can cause certain bills to be introduced as executive request bills. To get them through the Democratic controlled Senate, he had to go through a different entity; I couldn't do that. I couldn't take a bill and assign it to the committee. I couldn't select the chairman of the committee or ask him or her to hold a hearing on the bill. I couldn't move the bill to the top of the list in Rules Committee. You understand?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, your hands were tied there. But you probably did some things in the House.

**Mr. Copeland:** My role was to ascertain how much of the Governor's plans the Democrats were willing to buy into. At this point, I just reported to the Governor. I tried to find areas where they were willing to compromise, who the players were, and what was the timeframe. It was also up to the Governor to work the problem with whatever tools he had available. We could check back again to see and understand the progress, if any. It was a continuously negotiated affair.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So building a base of consensus and doing a lot of talking behind the scenes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. We had sixty Democrats there, but out of the Democrats we

had about ten or eleven that frankly you could call on them for almost anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your job was to build those relationships?

**Mr. Copeland:** If Dan invited six or eight guys out of that Democrat caucus into the Mansion for coffee and said, "I would really like your help on this bill," do you suppose it fell on deaf ears? Probably not. All of a sudden, he had six or eight guys down in the Democrat caucus that were pushing his agenda. He'd tell me about it and I'd know about it. So we would work together. Suddenly, some of the things that he wanted would appear in a bill sponsored entirely by Democrats! It was one of Dan's proposals but it had all Democrat sponsors and all of a sudden, was without much opposition. Came right out of Rules Committee, passed through without a dissenting vote, then it went over to the Senate and the Senate was so embarrassed that they couldn't do anything but pass it. So he got portions of his agenda through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you meet with him often?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you tell him about different people who might be supportive and then he would get in touch with them? How did all that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** We set up a regular meeting with the Governor. It occurred on Wednesday mornings. It was a seven o'clock breakfast meeting—it was a cup of coffee and a sweet roll more than anything else. And the House and Senate Republican leadership would go up to the Mansion. We just got to go around the table and make some kind of report as to where we were with pending legislation. He'd make comments and suggestions as to

bills that he wanted to have introduced. If we hit a snag on this particular bill, he'd assign somebody to work with it. Maybe we could offer an amendment in order to be able to get the thing moving again. Or, once in a while, I may have suggested, "Thanks anyway, Governor, but don't push it. We'll try it at a later date."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you go for a lot of "half-loaves?" Just to keep things moving along?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there certain things that were kind of bedrock, though? I mean, if you're going to have a Department of Transportation, there's no half-way there, I don't suppose.

**Mr. Copeland:** He didn't even make an attempt to do that. That was too heavy-duty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So go for the consensus bills first and build a kind of momentum?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Try to drive those things. You can make some small steps to show some changes. No, that was all you could hope for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would it be part of your job to identify what the possibilities were? And keep watch on things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have other things that you did to move things along?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, you outlined pretty well on how fast we can move things along, but please understand that I had a working relationship with some of those people in the House. On certain issues, when push came

to shove, I could truly say that we were in the majority position. Now, you wouldn't want to do that every day of the week and start using up all your political capital. But every so often, you would get one particular bill that was that important, and so you pulled out all the stops, and looked to see if you could come up with fifty—fifty-one or fifty-two votes and get it through. The answer is yes, we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We're almost to the end of our discussion of Governor Evans' inaugural speech. He promised in the end to use government as a tool for progress. He wanted to solve problems and to de-emphasize ideology and partisanship. And that's the first big speech! Then, was this the night of the inaugural ball? It's your Governor, finally. Is that the first one you went to or did you regularly go to them?

**Mr. Copeland:** I went to all of them. It was a nice formal nice formal dinner party held at the Armory. And of course, a lot of people that worked in Dan's campaign came down from Seattle. It was a very festive occasion with lots of things going on. There were parties all over town prior to the inaugural ball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not many people get to go to the inaugural ball, so what did it look like? What happens?

**Mr. Copeland:** The ball was sponsored by the Olympia Chamber of Commerce. I think they are the ones that started the whole thing. It was a very formal occasion. All the gals wear formal dresses and all the men are dressed in tuxedos. So, there is a great deal of that particular type of pomp and circumstance that goes with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine the mayor of Olympia and all those kinds of people would come? The welcoming committee.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, you'd have the mayor. It was an opportunity for people to meet and to mingle with some people that you hadn't seen in quite some time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it's actually a dance, isn't it? When they say it's a ball, there's a band and there's music? And food, refreshments...

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, you bet there is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And some speeches?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there are receiving lines more than anything else. Everybody comes through and shakes the Governor's hand and says hello to the First Lady and wishes her well and things like that. Then there are the state-elected officials. The Lieutenant Governor is normally in the receiving line and the Speaker of the House. So it's a kind of a very nice sort of arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it is a big occasion for the wives?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely! Isn't it always a big occasion for a wife to get dressed in a formal gown and go some place? The wives were involved in all of the social functions. It was very important for them to meet one another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In thinking about the involvement of the families as part of the legislative experience, I was thinking about your son's role in the great drama that did not happen, which was the early swearing in of Dan Evans. Did you make a conscious effort to bring your son into the civic lesson of what was going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a lot of

conversations at home about the Legislature and the government?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, there had been a lot of conversation about what was going on in the Legislature. But as this particular program unfolded on the second day of the session, he understood what was going on. He understood the redistricting bill; he understood that Governor Rosellini was waiting to have it pass the House; he understood that it would become law if that had been done; he understood that Dan Evans was about to get sworn in on Wednesday, if not Tuesday night after midnight. So certainly, he was well aware of it. But he became a real functionary in the fact he could move around the House and Senate chambers and down in the Secretary of State's office where Dan was, with virtually reckless abandonment. I mean, nobody to impede his progress. He became a real conduit for us. We spent a great deal of time under a Call of the House and couldn't get out. Consequently, this was a real fine opportunity that we had. Tim would just be assigned duties in order to be able to keep communications open between the floor of the House and Dan down at the Secretary of State's office that evening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At one time, pages served for the whole session. But, by your son's time, were they just coming for a shorter period—a few weeks?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was just on there for a couple of weeks, I think, and then it was back in school for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your son help in your campaigns or did he get involved in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he did not; he was young at the time. He was aware of the campaigning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if any of your kids got involved in politics at any level. If you passed that interest on.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, Tim has always been interested in politics. Later on, he did some really fine things in the city of Walla Walla and was very active in the Downtown Development Association and the restoration and revitalization of the community's downtown. Since then, they won several awards for their effort, which is just wonderful. As a matter of fact, their accomplishments were just written up not long ago, I think it was in *Sunset Magazine*. Tim took no small part in that, so yes, he's been very active in civic work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think that having his Dad there and knowing all the players and being familiar with the Governor would be pretty exciting for a teenage boy. A formative experience! Was this his first time paging?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, his first time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He played an important role. This would have been much more complicated without him.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He has his little footnote in history. Of course, Dan Evans was eventually sworn in, in a regular manner, and the session got off the ground. The discussion surrounding the passage of the budget pervades the whole session and finally forced the calling of a special session. As the major policy vehicle, the budget drives everything, but the other issue that hung over that session was redistricting. In the Speaker's first speech, he mentioned that the Legislature was under a court order to do no business other than just setting yourselves

up until redistricting was passed and signed. Redistricting had gone back and forth and through various machinations, and finally the court gave you a deadline—and it was this session. That was going to shadow things for the entire session until you pass that. It took you forty-seven days to get that done. So we have to keep that front and center.

**Mr. Copeland:** True. I think it will suffice to say we could take a bill all the way through Second Reading and hold it in Rules, pending Third Reading and Final Passage. This was the agreement we made with the Senate and we operated on that basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before you reached that understanding, there were quite a few different wrinkles to consider; one of the most basic was how to interpret the court's order. It wasn't understood by everyone what it meant to "not do any business." Some people thought that that meant you just couldn't record the final passage of bills, but that you could work right up to that point. Other members were more uncomfortable with that interpretation. Representative Brachtenbach, whom you have noted as a pretty intelligent member, was worried about that in particular. He asked that the Attorney General's opinion be given to everyone for their perusal. The Speaker did make that available. I'm going to read a little bit from John O'Connell, the Attorney General's letter to the Legislature: "The answer to your question is to be found in the language of the first full paragraph of the court's decree of October 26, copy enclosed." In very legal language it says, "It is further ordered, adjudged and decreed that except for the bills or other measures specifically listed in the preceding paragraph..." and that would be, I think, just the bills that opened the session, "...no bill should be introduced, considered or passed by either House of the Washington State Legislature or any committee thereof until the Legislature shall have enacted into



law a legislative apportionment plan that is in compliance with the Amendment 14 of the United States Constitution to the satisfaction of this court upon review of the same at a hearing to be held as soon as possible after enactment of such apportionment plan.” It goes on like that. That seems pretty severe; it seems that bills were not to be introduced, even. That must have been the phrase that was making members nervous.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I’m sure it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s more: “However, between the time of this ruling and the actual entry of the decree, a memorandum was submitted to the court by the defendant, William S. Day, the former Speaker.” “Among other things, the defendant asked that the opposed decree be modified to the extent of permitting bills on all subjects to be introduced and considered by the two houses.” So that would be First and Second Reading?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty far along in the process, then. “...with the committees of the Legislature being permitted to function in the normal manner.” In support of this request, he said in part. “Not to permit the committees of both houses to function while a reapportionment bill is being formulated will extend the legislative session insofar as the work will have to be performed subsequent to the passage for the reapportionment bill. To allow the House and Senate committees to regularly function would in no way impede the formulation in passage of a reapportionment measure nor impair the court’s control over the Legislature.” Some said that the court had worded it in this really strict interpretation in the first place to put your feet to the fire, to make you redistrict, and to, yes, impede your business. Could you comment on that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think as far as the judge’s order was concerned, that was his aim and attempt. Where, just from the standpoint of the pure practicalities of it...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little too harsh?

**Mr. Copeland:** Definitely. Can a legislative body think about more than one subject matter? The answer is certainly. Should the judge say, “Thou shall think about one subject matter only; thou shall not think about anything else?” He may say that, but is it prudent? No, so I think that this is why this whole thing was asked to be amended. Now if you read all of that...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it says, “After due deliberation, the court decided to grant this modification and accordingly before entering the decree it crossed out certain language so that the decree when entered read as follows...” The words that are crossed out are “introduced and considered.” And it ends up reading: “No bill shall be passed.” So that means “final passage?” You could get right up to it in your process—which is a lot of your business. Subsequently however, questions arose as to the significance of the phrase “or any committee thereof,” which was not crossed out. “In order to clarify the matter we contacted the court on an informal basis both last fall and again earlier this week. We were advised that having crossed out ‘introduced’ and ‘considered,’ the court regarded ‘any committee thereof’ to be surplusage,” a word I guess that means sort of ‘tucked in,’ so to speak?

**Mr. Copeland:** I would imagine so. I don’t use the word surplusage very often.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m not even sure how to say it. “...In other words, the true intent of the court as aforesaid...” this is still quoting from

the letter from the Attorney General. "...was to grant in full the particular modification requested by the defendant, Day, as described above. Accordingly, the decree does permit the passage of bills out of committee into Rules Committee. It does further permit the passage of bills out of the Rules Committee onto the floor of the House or Senate for Second Reading. However, the decree does not permit final passage of a bill by either house for the reason that in this regard the decree has clearly stated." So this is the letter that you received. Did this take care of the concerns?

**Mr. Copeland:** Remember, I said earlier from time to time things will be requested to be put in the Journal and the reason that they do is so then they can go back and say, "What was legislative intent?" This was inserted in the Journal so everybody in the House knew that the Attorney General had written an opinion: "You may take bills up to, but not beyond, Third Reading." This gave the Legislature the prerogative, the right to go ahead and conduct their business as usual with the exception that final passage of legislation would still depend upon the passage of a redistricting bill. All this was, number one, what did the Attorney General say; number two, did he have it in writing; number three, let's enter it in the Journal. Now everybody knows this is the ground rule that we are operating under. So we go from here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mr. Brachtenbach still, however, had difficulty with this. He rose in a Point of Order: "Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to impede the progress of this House and we recognized the urgency of getting on with the business of the state. But, I feel we have a serious legal problem here that may affect the legality of these bills." And then he went back to the original language: "As every member of the House is aware, there

is a federal court decree which specifically says that no bill shall be passed by either House or committee thereof. Now, these bills have obviously been passed by the original committee and they have been passed by the Rules Committee." Was he just wanting to fine-tune this? "Now, the language of that decree is clear. The language of that decree is specific. It says that a bill cannot be passed by any committee. The only basis on which we have to proceed is the Attorney General's opinion." Which he doesn't seem to think very highly of. "Which says that that office has been in "informal" communication with the court. In the first place I question the propriety of anyone being in informal communication with the court. My point of order, Mr. Speaker, is that the legality of these bills is in serious question if we proceed in direct violation of this decree. I think we are proceeding under those conditions. For that reason I rise to this Point of Order and ask for a ruling."

**Mr. Copeland:** Now what kind of a ruling did Speaker Schaefer give?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He basically reread the Attorney General's letter to him. And then he ruled that you could pass bills through Second Reading and they would remain in Rules Committee. "I feel that the opinion in consultation with the courts was in the best interest of the Legislature and the state." And then there was a quite lengthy statement for the Journal—again employing this method—signed by yourself and about ten or twelve other Republicans, explaining your position on this Point of Order. You refer to John O'Connell's letter and the basis of the opinion is that the Attorney General "contacted the court on an informal basis and was advised that the court regarded the language or any committee thereof to be surplusage. We are informed that other parties to this suite do

not agree with the opinion of Mr. O’Connell, but instead maintain that the language does not permit the initial committee to report a bill out of passage.” They contend the court meant what it said. “We do not know which interpretation is correct.” Do you know who these other parties would be—who didn’t agree with Mr. O’Connell’s interpretation?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know who these “other parties” would be. I do know that Bob was concerned about “informal conversations” with the court. I mean, there is no such thing as law being created by “informal conversation with the court.” So he wanted to get it in the record and create the situation where the Speaker had ruled it perfectly okay. Now, once the Speaker says it’s all right, then if you’re ever going to challenge the action it probably would be on the basis that the body knew ahead of time that they were doing it, the Speaker concurred, everybody sat there and said, “You know, we have no objection to it at all, so let’s go on from there.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So again, it creates a statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember if you had a discussion about this in your caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, we had a discussion in caucus on it. But we also knew the Attorney General’s ruling was coming down. That certainly eased up the original decree so that we could go ahead and process bills to Third Reading, which obviously is what we wanted to do. After we got the redistricting thing out of the way, it was kind of a slam-dunk as far as moving a whole bunch of bills stacked up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A big flurry of bills.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was okay. We were still proceeding, getting the work of the people of the state of Washington done. So it was not a case of where you just sat for sixty days waiting for the redistricting bill or something like that to move through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These are all Republicans speaking out. Were Democrats not concerned with the same issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m sure they were. It was just a case of “Let’s make sure it is in the Journal and that it’s recorded properly.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was also wondering if this was some kind of comment on your feeling toward the Attorney General’s actions. Why did he resort to an informal conversation? Why didn’t he ask for a proper ruling?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just the time constraint, more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, in fact, it was cleared up because the Speaker inserted into the Journal a clarification of a Point of Order and the Speaker’s ruling and he got the United States District Court to write a letter saying, “Yes, this is what we said.” So now, it was pretty solid.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a very interesting thing. Was it unprecedented, for one thing? Had the court had ever ruled in such a way before?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, but read the original court order. “Thou shall not have a committee meeting. Thou shall not introduce a bill. It almost said, “Thou shall not inhale, exhale or go to the bathroom.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would get a bill done quickly!

**Mr. Copeland:** Do you understand what I'm saying? That particular first order did get our attention. So some clarification had to be made.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What if the court had said, "No, we mean it. You do nothing." Do you think that redistricting would have passed much quicker than the forty-seven days it took? Or was it so tangled that no amount of threats would have made a difference?

**Mr. Copeland:** It probably would have passed in less than forty-seven days. But it certainly wouldn't have been a case where it would have passed in the first forty-eight hours. There are just too many things to go through on a redistricting bill. Everybody has to look and think and digest. You can make errors in a redistricting bill so easily.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Redistricting ground on throughout the session. It came up from time to time and went back and forth. On February 24<sup>th</sup> you, yourself, weighed in on the issue. You addressed the 'A' and 'B' districts. You acknowledged that it was a compromise, as you said, "a compromise to the extent where all parties involved are not happy and this is the way a compromise ultimately results. Many people have come to see me and ask me in all sincerity and honesty what is going to happen to this bill in the event the House passes it. I want to remind each and every one of you of your position as legislators, when you vote 'aye,' this is an affirmative action; when you vote 'nay,' you are deciding the issue in the negative." You were being very solid here: "Your voting switch on the desk does not have 'maybe.' 'Maybe I will vote for this bill if the Governor were to partially veto it or veto it in full.' That sort of thinking, it's just 'yes' or 'no'

for you. I'm a legislator just like you. When I vote affirmatively on a bill, I am sending with that bill my personal recommendation to the Governor that he can sign the bill as passed." So there's no grey area here in that sense, you were reminding people. You went on: "Many of you are concerned whether or not an 'A' or 'B' district will stay in certain sections of this bill. I personally don't like the 'A' and 'B' section that is inserted in this bill in my particular district and I recognize the reasons for it. It was done for purely political reasons. It certainly wasn't done on the basis that they felt I was incapable of representing the agricultural interests in my district. The language is very cleverly drawn to the extent that it takes three quarters of my ranch and puts it outside the district. But, nevertheless, I am going to vote for the measure because it is a compromise bill. It is probably as close to a compromise as this House will ever see in this session." Can you tell me about this, what happened here? Part of your ranch was redistricted out of your district?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. When I first ran for the Legislature, my district comprised only Walla Walla County. Walla Walla County, all by itself, did not have sufficient population to justify a total district, so consequently we were combined with Asotin, Garfield and Columbia counties. The people in those other counties, since the creation of the state of Washington, always had, quote, "their member of the Legislature," end quote. And now they would be deprived of that by being combined into Walla Walla. So they said, "If we go ahead and draw these lines and have enough people, can we have a district by ourselves?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's where the 'A' and 'B' part come in?

**Mr. Copeland:** So that's where the 'A' and 'B.' Well, in order to be able to do it,

they took everything up to the city of Walla Walla, everything reading from west to east. Then they drew a line, virtually north and south, and said, “Well, okay, around the city of Walla Walla”...and then said, “All of the rural districts and all of the small towns will go into the ‘B’ district.” So that put in Dayton, and Waitsburg, and several of the other small towns. This left them, quote, “their representative.” As far as my farm was concerned, oh sure, three-quarters of it was in the ‘B’ district, rather than being in the ‘A’ district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But your house, where you live, is in ‘A’ district?

**Mr. Copeland:** They very carefully included the precinct that I lived in, which was in the country, but it was only six miles from the community. They very carefully included it so that I would be in the district. Of course, we don’t have the ‘A’ and ‘B’ districts anymore. That was one of the very last situations and it was done for those particular reasons I mentioned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you and Maurice Ahlquist represented that area. Where did he live?

**Mr. Copeland:** He lived in what would then be the ‘A’ district, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would that work? So would you have to run against each other?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. It was known at that time that he would no longer be in the Legislature. He was going to take an appointment in state government with the Evans’ administration. He became head of the Department of Water Resources.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was actually okay so far as the sitting legislators went because it just so happened he was retiring?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you continued to represent at least part of what you had been representing before, but did your area, the geography of your district change? Did a whole lot of people get lopped off that you had been representing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily, no, really not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s a little hard to understand.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is a little bit difficult. It gets a little bit messy when you start taking a legislative district and then dividing it in an ‘A’ and a ‘B.’

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before that redistricting, could two people that, say, live in Walla Walla have run and successfully represented that whole district, but now with this ‘A’ and ‘B’ the second person would have live elsewhere, further into the countryside? To the east of town?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Please understand the transition of things that occurred. When I first ran for the Legislature, the district comprised only Walla Walla County. There were two legislators elected to the House from that district and it wasn’t by position, it was “vote for two.” You had two Democrats on the ballot and two Republicans on the ballot and voted for two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So more like an open field?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was an open field, again. So, when I first ran for the Legislature, that was the situation and it was not really all that cozy and comfortable. Then, subsequent



sessions of the Legislature got rid of the “vote for two” concept. Then they went into this ‘A’ and ‘B.’

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that actually easier for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there were several ‘A’ and ‘B’ districts that involved. Some legislative districts had three House members. It was convoluted at best. The courts were right when they say that we really did not have anything that was even close to one-man, one-vote. All of the time that this was going on, Jim Andersen and Al Leland came from the Forty-eighth District, which at that time was huge. I think it took everything in from Bothell clear down to Black Diamond, which is everything east of Lake Washington and that was all in one legislative district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And growing by leaps and bounds.

**Mr. Copeland:** And growing! The Forty-eighth District had a population that was, one, the largest of any district in the state, and two, about five times the size of the average district. On the other hand, of all of the counties that were over-represented in the state of Washington it had to be Spokane County. Spokane County had five legislative districts all by themselves but they just couldn’t qualify for five.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was an area that produced some of the coalitionists. Didn’t they have some kind of an arrangement with the Republicans that their districts would be protected? Did that hold?

**Mr. Copeland:** By the time this redistricting bill got through, I don’t think anybody was happy, but they would live with whatever they got at this moment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were the Spokane districts straightened out a bit? Did they lose representation?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but not without a hell of a fight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did the suburbs pick up quite a few seats? This was the great age of the suburbanization of the state. At least in the greater Seattle-Bellevue area.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. If I’m not mistaken, the Forty-eighth District, that I just mentioned, ultimately in this session flew into five separate legislative districts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wow, that’s a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** So consequently the legislative district changed immensely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did Jim Andersen ultimately benefit? Did he have a more coherent district, an easier campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** And jammed full with Republican voters. When you start drawing the lines and you get into places like Jim lived, there isn’t anything you can do. You couldn’t help him; you couldn’t hurt him. So as far as his legislative district was concerned, all you were doing was taking the entire borders, the extreme borders, and shrinking them and bringing it down to something that looked more like the area of Bellevue and the surrounding area, that ultimately became the Forty-eighth District.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn’t it easier to campaign if your district is more compact, instead of having to reach, oh, 250,000 people, if you only have to reach 50,000 people? Isn’t that, by definition, an easier task? Instead of these huge, sprawling districts?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only if you're doing direct mailing, I think is the answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about doorbelling?

**Mr. Copeland:** Here again, if you go in on the basis of one-man, one-vote, everybody has the same-size legislative district. But, you take like the Seventh District at that time which was composed of Adams, Lincoln, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's big!

**Mr. Copeland:** It's probably bigger than the state of Rhode Island, but by the same token, it just barely has enough population in order to be able to qualify. When you take that particular legislative district and say, "How many miles of road does it have in it, versus the Forty-fourth District, or some other district in downtown Seattle, it's huge. It's got a different set of problems.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe they should get a special gas ration.

**Mr. Copeland:** They do, but by the same token, a legislator in that district may be responsible to and have as his constituent five sets of county commissioners, maybe fifteen or twenty incorporated cities and towns and twenty or thirty school districts. Now, this presents an altogether different aspect of being a rural legislator versus an urban legislator who is just one of fourteen guys coming out of the city of Seattle. So, is his or her role different? Oh, markedly so. Each and every legislative district has their own little quirks and they're virtually no two alike.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in the end, your district was changed. Did you end up with a pretty good deal?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I still had the original district that I started with, minus some of the rural area that was given to the 'B' section of the district. I still had the city of Walla Walla, the city of College Place, and the immediate surrounding areas. But three-quarters of my farm did wind up getting in the other district, but that was all right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it wasn't the voting end of your farm, maybe? It was just the fields? I mean, was there anyone there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, I had three of my employees that worked for me who all of a sudden were not in my district anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting how you put this, that this was a compromise bill and how as such not everyone was going to be happy, but that individual happiness isn't the point. The point was to pass the bill. Then you said, "I am real happy to vote for this measure. Not that I like it, but because I am a realist and this is the best that we can do at this time and by the passage of this measure we will relieve ourselves of the handicaps we have been working under and will be able to proceed with the state's business." Were you kind of weary of the whole thing and wanted to just pass a bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think we arrived at the best bill we could. Here again, the operative word is compromise. And you work and you work and you work in order to be able to compromise, find a compromise. Now, at what point do you plan to compromise? You find a compromise as soon as you have fifty affirmative votes. Okay? You have not reached a compromise you cannot find. Now, that is the other reason I stated very clearly, "There's no 'maybe' button on this one. You vote 'yes' or 'no.' Now, if you're voting 'yes,' you are asking the Governor: 'I am putting

my personal endorsement on this bill, please sign it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It came to a vote, the question was put. The motion was lost by the following: yeas, forty-eight, of which you are one, and nays: fifty-one; absent or not voting: zero. Mr. Wolf voted on the ‘nay’ side, the majority side, so he could call for reconsideration. Interestingly, immediately there were a few little maneuvers and it came up for a vote again. Now voting ‘yea,’ fifty and voting against—you voted against the Senate amendments—but it was fifty to forty-nine. So the vote count was shifting around a little bit. Mr. O’Brien later then moved that the House refuse to concur in the Senate’s amendments and asked the Senate to set up a conference committee. He said, “Today is a most critical one in the history of our state. The decision we make today will affect us for years to come.” This was the forty-seventh day—you might not have known it at that moment, but you were close to managing this. O’Brien continued, “If my motion fails, then it is the people, not the Democrats that are the losers, for it was the people who voted to put a majority of Democrats into both houses of the Legislature.” It seems like he’s alluding...

**Mr. Copeland:** He’s coming back to the coalition years. See, he’s always trying to take any of the onuses off of himself or his activities in former years or whatever he may have done. “It was a tragic thing that he didn’t get elected Speaker two years ago.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He gave this speech, but then you moved that the House recede from its position and concur in the Senate amendments. You were trying to move this bill forward...

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It kind of goes back and forth a bit, and then you made a speech yourself: “Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, very briefly, you all know what this is about. It’s about—excuse the expression—a lousy bill. There are several pieces in here where this is really a very lousy bill.” Then you gave some examples of some people that had some problems with it. “The point is that this is the best we can do.” Here, bringing this point up again: “We all can’t be happy with it, but we are living with a court mandate and you all realize the consequences of this mandate.” So you were reiterating again, “we have to do this.” Then you said, “There are some awfully big men in this Legislature right now who are probably going to vote for this bill.” I guess you’re sort of saying, “Let’s be statesmen here. Let’s get above our personal interests.” “As much as they don’t like it, but my congratulations go to them because this bigness in these individuals means a lot more to me than some of the people that would like to spend some additional time in order to be able to make some additional political gains. Mr. O’Brien, I’m sincerely sorry that you had to make a few of your comments. I disagree with them, but certainly they are your right to say. The only thing I can say in defense of the entire proceedings is that it would have been grand and glorious if we could have had this job done for us, but we are here at a moment of decision and a moment of truth.” Were you saying, “Let’s stop grandstanding here?”

**Mr. Copeland:** How true! You can understand, you know the frustrations that came out of here. You know you can nit-pick and nit-pick, but yes, there were some people who were ready to vote for the bill when it was not politically in their best interest, but they knew that they were shoveling sand under the wing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You recalled for everyone the reason that they were there in the first

place, which is the business of the state. “My guess is” you said, “that on Monday morning the court will release us to thoroughly process this pile of legislation that is before each and every one of us. The moment of truth is here, so I suggest that we put the business of the state of Washington in top priority and get on with the business at hand.” Did you want to call for the final vote? You were ready?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a few more speeches, I’m afraid. Then the demand for the previous question was sustained, and you voted on the final passage of House Bill 196. Those voting ‘yes’ included yourself. Your side managed to pick up a few votes and get fifty-six people to vote for this. You finally got your number. Do you recall who you picked up?

**Mr. Copeland:** The vote was predominantly Republican. Our whole caucus of thirty-nine members voted for the bill except Hal Wolf who planned to call for reconsideration if necessary, but we didn’t have enough Democrats the first time. Several of the people in the coalition were voting with us on this one, and when the bill was reconsidered, we were able to bring seven more Democrats on board. The vote reflects how well Slade “took care of our coalition friends.” I want to list the Democrats who voted with us: Wayne Angevine, Bill Day, Jack Dootson, Hayes Elder—one of the sponsors, Margaret Hurley, Chet King, Dick Kink, Bill McCormick, Bob Perry and Jack Rogers. So it was really the case that the Republicans prevailed; give the Republican caucus the credit they deserve for passing the redistricting bill. You’ll see the same thing in the Senate. Republican senators strongly supported this measure. That’s the significance of this whole thing. There were several Republicans that voted themselves right out of a job. But we got it done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember how you felt when it was finally passed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it’s just one of those terrible, awful, messy things that you had to do and you had to go through it. But here again Anne, let’s put this in proper perspective. This is the thing that the Legislature is there for. They are there to make these decisions.

It isn’t a case where they took and threw it out the window and let some committee sit and worry about it. There was no legislative cop-out on this. They went ahead and met their constitutional requirements. Give the Legislature credit, damn it; they did their job. Now since that time, we’ve seen a whole series of legislative cop-outs develop. The Legislature no longer redistricts itself. The Legislature no longer sets its own salaries. The Legislature now doesn’t even set the salary of the state employees. There are three huge examples of legislative cop-outs. This was the court case that went to the Legislature and they met their constitutional requirement. They were ordered to do something and they did it. Give them all the credit in the world! Maybe it wasn’t the best bill that you ever could have come up with. But here again, what do you do in a compromise? You work it out until you’ve got enough votes to pass a compromise bill and then you just pass it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, finally.

**Mr. Copeland:** Did the Speaker vote for the bill?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, he voted against it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay now, take a look at his position. Here he is, a presiding officer of a legislative body and he is voting with the minority. Now, you have to understand he voted against it, but he also made certain that it was before the body. He didn’t hold it

up in Rules or anything of the kind. So was he being benevolent about the whole thing? Certainly! Was it in the interest of the public? Absolutely! But this is what the Legislature's all about. This is not—this isn't a marching and chowder society. This isn't supposed to make you feel warm and fuzzy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh no, this was just tough.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But was there a great sense of relief?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Exhaustion? It just seems like you've been slogging with this for a long time—years. You adjourned for the weekend afterwards. Had you had it with each other?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think it was a good idea that we did adjourn for the weekend. The total number of people there is really pretty small, the total number of people. But when you take these people that you have sitting on the floor of the House and they're working long hours and they're very frustrated, it's now a case of how does this reflect on their family, their children, their business associates, the people back home, and so on. They are the ones who may not understand, because what they read in the press is the Legislature isn't getting anything done due to a court order they don't understand. So yes, the frustrations were there. Is it a good idea at that point after you get over this hurdle to give them three days' rest? Hell, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wouldn't think your minds would be fresh enough to do anything else. You'd have to take a break. You're not machines.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, everybody just inhales and exhales and we do it just like everybody else, except we're just under this terrible, awful time constraint. At any rate, I think the Legislature did a very admirable job. But overriding this whole thing—I come right back—this is where Dan Evans and his administration and his "Blueprint for Progress" were beginning to make their very first appearances on the horizon. He can't get anything done; he can't get a bill passed that first forty-seven days. But it's there. I mean, the presence is there, the trench is there and everybody understands it. I gave you all of the ingredients leading up to this. Those ingredients were still in place. Now, what happened with the redistricting bill? In the House, the majority of the Republicans voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After all this struggle, in the end do you think it affected the balance of power in the House or the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there is any question that it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was an outcome, there was an impact on how people were elected?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Senator Greive was trying his level best in order to be able to carve out Democrat districts. There is no question about it. His method of carving out Democrat districts was to make every district that he could find marginally Democrat and then take Republicans and make total Republican ghettos with ninety percent Republicans in. That way he could absorb all of those Republicans in just a few districts. Well, when he did that, of course, then he violated a whole bunch of other rules. Like cutting cities and towns in two, not looking at business interests or things like that. One



of his big faults was he would look after the interest of one particular senator and not necessarily viewing how protecting that senator would affect the House members, too. So compromise had an impact, there isn't any question about it. In subsequent elections, were more Republicans elected? You bet; no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In part, this was so hard-fought because it was part of a larger effort. A lot was at stake here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. We had several ingredients working with us at this time and, of course, one of the big heavy hitters was Slade. Slade was the technician for the House and he would do the work needed to find out what was really in the best interest. I think all of the House Republicans depended very heavily on Slade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did he think of this bill himself? Was he satisfied that this was as good as it would get? Did he come in and say, "This is as far as we can go. Let's just go with this."

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know that those were his exact words, but certainly, that was the feeling at that time. You can sit and nit-pick somebody to death for eons if you wanted to, but at that point there was just no sense in it. Slade just worked his tail off on this. That is not fun and games. I mean, some people would much rather go and play a game of golf than spend all day on redistricting bills!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh no, I don't imagine! There are so many dimensions to redistricting. That was a little out of chronological order, but it seemed important to get our discussion of redistricting done before we discussed the more regular business of the session.

You served on four committees that

session: Aviation and Transportation, Labor and Industries, Rules and Order, and Social Security and Public Assistance. The committee chair for Aviation and Transportation was Representative Avey. Did you take care of airports and things like that, developing them? Were you on that committee because you had an airplane yourself? Or did it have anything to do with Dan Evans desire to create a Department of Transportation.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Aviation and Transportation Committee was created primarily to give Art Avey a job more than anything else. Always before that all of that had been under the Highways Committee. They made a very small committee having to do with aviation and transportation. It wasn't a major committee and I don't think it existed prior to or after that session, and I don't think it existed after that session. You see, at the time they made the committee structure, the Highway Committee was chaired by Leonard Sawyer. They had two vice chairmen, one for western Washington and one for eastern Washington. The vice chairman for eastern Washington was Bill McCormick and the vice chairman for western Washington was Eric Anderson. The Speaker was trying to placate certain people within his party and give them a chairmanship or a vice chairman, or whatever it might be. Here comes Bill McCormick who was a member of the coalition and now is the vice chairman of the Highway Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Being brought back into the fold?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So you will find that an awful lot of this stuff is the fiber and thread that runs through here that's trying to get everybody back under the tent. Speaker Schaefer was trying; he did do his best.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What did you think of dividing Highways into eastern and western

Washington? Nowadays, there's quite a different view of Highways split through the state. Is this a good idea or not a good idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it's a very poor idea. I think this was done so somebody could have a title of being vice chairman of the Highways Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But does it lead to seeing the state as two entities?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think so, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Strictly a political consideration, then. The Labor and Industries Committee, you'd been involved with labor issues for a while. There's a big bill on industrial insurance that comes up this time, Senate Bill 422, that went through this committee. It seemed to be highly contentious. You were trying to reform industrial insurance. Say a workman loses a hand, or his hearing, or he's even killed, you were trying to create an entirely new formula for taking care of injuries and death. Do you recall that struggle? Dan Evans played quite an important role in this discussion. Both industry and labor were in on the discussion, and at that time, there were national reports coming out and new ways of looking at this issue. They were, what some people called more scientific methods, for determining the loss of different body parts, what that would be worth to a person. Representative Adams was upset with the whole issue as he said: "But had this matter been approached in the right manner early in the session a bill would have come out which would have been of considerable benefit to the injured workman and also the bona fide unemployed workman." But that wasn't the attitude taken, he says. "There would have been room for adjustment in these areas had it been approached properly." He complains, that although the manner in which disability is

rated had been worked out very scientifically, "There is a better way of comparing one injury to another than that providing in our present law. This has been completely ignored by the conference committee. I don't believe all the members of the conference committee even saw the bill we have before us. I think they had agreed to sign it and place us in this position of an arbitration committee, which we have been all along. As a matter of fact, I think it would be in order for Mr. O'Brien to tell us who actually put the values in the bill we have before us." O'Brien answers that they had been put there by industry and labor conferring with each other and the benefit schedule was prepared by the Department of Labor and Industries. I think that you were on this conference committee when it came right down to it. You end up with this list of various injuries and how people should be compensated. It's all laid out, even to digits of fingers. It's really pretty complicated. Do you recall what you were trying to accomplish there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Well, it sounds terrible that you have to delineate all of these things like a dollar reward as far as an injury is concerned. I think that the essence of the whole thing was to review and update the entire compensation laws.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was obsolete and money values had changed over time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that was the main objective.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that the figures were adequate? I mean, did you have presentations that said: "Well, this is how we arrived at these numbers."

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't get a set of figures like that. I don't think adequacy ever comes

into it. I think that a better word would be acceptable. It's like any insurance claim. Is this an acceptable figure? What isn't an acceptable figure, and then "we're going to have to go to court. I want to contest what the judge said." So, is it adequate? No, I don't know, hard to say.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered what your process was when you were looking at all these different things.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just updating the current law. But every time you got into those things, and rightfully so, those persons who were speaking on behalf of labor wanted to get the best cut that they could at it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You went through a long battle on this. I am not sure what the Senate was doing to the bill. It went back and forth and that's where the contention was. You didn't like the Senate version. In the final passage you voted against it. Then it was sent back to the Senate. There was an explanation of the vote inserted in the Journal, signed by many Republican members, including yourself: "The undersigned are for increasing industrial insurance benefits. In fact, just last Friday we voted for Senate Bill 39." So apparently, there was another bill discussing this same issue going through which you felt, and Dan Evans concurred, was a much better bill.

"Which will increase such benefits by two and one half million dollars per year for those workmen who have sustained temporary or permanent total disability and to the widows and dependants of fatally injured workmen. We also voted for Senate Bill 422 in the form which it was originally amended and passed by the House and sent to the Senate. We have, however, been forced to vote against the Senate bill in the form in which it is now redrafted by the joint conference committee

for the following reasons. It reduces the benefits to be paid to the injured workman by one and three-tenths million dollars per year."

That's quite a bit of money, isn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "It deletes all provisions to speed up the intolerable two-year timeline before the injured workman's contested case can be heard by the board." So if a workman, say, loses an arm, then is denied benefits, but he takes it to court, it might take as much as two years before...

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know that he would have to take it to court at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So people could be languishing? With a terrible injury unable to work and getting no compensation?

**Mr. Copeland:** That basically is correct. But there was a timeframe where if nobody in the department was at all interested, there would just be a file on somebody's desk and nobody was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you thought this was pretty unjust?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you're a workman unable to work, your bills are piling up pretty fast. In two years you could lose your home, you could lose all kinds of things. I'm surprised that the Democratic Senate was going in this direction. It just doesn't seem very labor-friendly.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that they got two, if not three, bills addressing the same thing here. They do that for political reasons. You would

have to talk to Senator Greive, because I think he and Joe Davis were probably having these bills introduced.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your critique continued: “It deleted the advised award schedule that would have updated our present antiquated reading schedule which is recognized by leading authorities in the field. It is greatly unfair to the injured workman.” It made it all the way through the process but was vetoed by the Governor for the three reasons that you all weighed in on.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that the thrust of the whole thing was that labor was trying to get a vote through in order to be able to pass it and put it on Dan’s desk and force him to veto it. Take a really good look at the hard count on that; I think that it was just a real strong partisan vote, if I’m not mistaken. They’d already passed a bill addressing this, but it didn’t go far enough. So the Democrats went and introduced one that went even further. Then they enticed all of the members of the House and the Senate to vote for it knowing full well that Dan was going to veto it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was this just to embarrass him?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was political. Yes, they’re just trying to get everybody in a position where they can point and say, “You are anti-labor.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s the part that is confusing to me because these provisions that you wish were in the bill sound like they’re pro-labor to me.

**Mr. Copeland:** But it was also said that the provisions were in the previous bill that we had already passed and it was over in the Senate. But they wouldn’t accept that. They wanted to have something even stronger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was that a pretty contentious committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** If you’ve got labor—always. The Democrat Party has a history of being controlled by the Washington State Labor Council. And so, are the people that go on the Labor Committee—the Republicans—are they subjected to some hard shots? The answer is certainly! We were always very careful about who we put on the Labor Committee because you just had to have someone who could, at least, take a punch or two and see if they could roll with each one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that would be yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I was on it for several sessions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in committee, when these punches were being dealt, would you answer back or just realize that was the situation? How would you handle that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, frequently their request would be so completely out of reason that it wasn’t even funny. Of course, it’s just a case of grabbing staff as fast as you can and saying, “What is our relationship to the other states?” And all of a sudden you’d realize we’re paying twenty percent more than any other state in the nation. This is not even competitive. So you’d respond, “Let’s be realistic about this whole thing. Yes, this is what you want, but this isn’t the real world you’re living in.” So they responded, “Oh wow, we didn’t mean to have it twenty percent more than the rest of the nation, so we’ll back down, maybe only five percent.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your role on the committee would be as a sort of check to reel members back in a little bit?

**Mr. Copeland:** When you're on the committee, you have to be a technician, too. You have to know what you're talking about. You have to know how all these things are going to work out. The two subject matters that they always handled were workman's compensation and unemployment compensation. And unemployment benefits and workman's compensation are two very heavy-duty items that all employers are subject to. Can there be abuses of either one or both? And the answer is certainly! And have they in the past been abused? Yes, no doubt about it. Just like the great story about the fireman that got injured shortly after this. He fell and he hurt his back and he was awarded a permanent disability for a back injury. Because of his back he couldn't work. I mean, it was just so terribly painful that he couldn't do it. So he went on a full, one-hundred percent disability pension from the state of Washington. Well, he did make a mistake because he had his picture taken holding up a big trophy that he won when he played in the amateur golf tournament in Everett.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was his case reviewed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, his case was reviewed. Now, is this abusive of the system? Yes, it is abusive of the system. Should he have been given a full pension for a back injury? Yes, he probably should have. Did he ever recover? I think all the golf proved he recovered completely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looks like it. Were those kinds of reviews built in once someone was given a pension—or that's it; you never see them again?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they were not built in; that's the whole point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was just a happenstance that he went "public?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots to work on there! You were on another possibly contentious committee, Social Security and Public Assistance, another difficult area in government.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this is before the reorganization. So now you have probably five or six agencies all touching on these various things. You have the built-in problem of inter-departmental areas of responsibility or overlapping authorities. It was very difficult for the Legislature to sort through. But it was equally difficult for the executive branch of government because the Governor might have five or six people reporting directly to him and each of them have a little bit of authority in one common area. It became self-evident to Dan that shortly this was going to be one of the big areas that he was going to have to address. The title of the committee sounds as if we don't want the Department of Social and Health Services, but at that time there was no Department of Social and Health Services. There was a health department, there was welfare, there was a special one that had to do with veteran's benefits, there was a special one that had to do with women and child custody, and so forth. I can't count exactly how many.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine some people would fall under more than one. It must have been kind of confusing for them, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. They truly didn't know where to go and sometimes they would go to a department and the department could only cover half of their needs.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they'd fall through the cracks?

**Mr. Copeland:** They'd either fall through the cracks or they'd have to go to the other department and the other department would say, "Well, we can go ahead and take care of you on this one but you're going to have to go over here and..." I mean, it was not only confusing to the recipient, but it was it was terribly difficult and costly to administer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you went on this committee, were you starting to look at that lack of organization and lack of clear lines?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the measures you did get passed that year was the creation of a state advisory committee on public assistance. I don't really know what that is; is that part of beginning to study this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Here again, what does it do? It involves the public taking a look at the possibility of reorganizing some aspects of state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this the first step in the creation of DSHS [Department of Social and Health Services]?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are so right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this an executive request? It wasn't until 1970 that DSHS was finally created.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think it was an executive request per se. But I know that Dan was sitting there applauding because he knew that if you read the fine points in some of his "Blueprint for Progress," he alluded to addressing the combining of some of the agencies having to do with welfare and all its

ramifications. So this was just running down the same track, but a parallel track.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did this committee hold hearings around the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you recall other issues that you dealt with in that area beyond organization?

**Mr. Copeland:** It almost got to the point—nothing was written about it—but it almost got to the point where one session you'd handle heavy-duty stuff dealing with the Department of Labor and Industries and the next year you'd handle stuff having to do with Unemployment Comp and the Department of Employment Security.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To take turns?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, they'd take turns. "It's your turn to have heavy legislation this session."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We discussed Governor Rosellini's big push to update institutions and you applauded his work in prisons and mental hospitals and various institutions that took care of people. When Governor Rosellini came in, those institutions were in terrible disarray and neglect and he brought them up to standard. But now, it was a new administration, and a new point of view. Dan Evans came in and said, "Too many people are in institutions; we have to look at this again." So now the institutions seem to be running well but the whole concept was shifting.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's divide the issue there because I think this will probably clear it up. When Governor Rosellini came in, what he was trying to do was upgrade the physical plant of the institution. I mean, that was the part that was in terrible neglect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you graphically described that.

**Mr. Copeland:** When Governor Evans came in, he began to look at it from the standpoint of who are our institutions serving? Are they over-populated; and if they are, are they over-populated for a reason? Is there crowding; should all of them be there? So these are the things that in the Evans administration we get to look at. Not upgrading the physical part. Now, we're talking about the administration and the clients that they had to work with, who was in the institutions, for what purpose? Are they going to be rehabilitated; is it a rotation; are they in there forever?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In a sense, he was free now to ask those questions because at least he was not being distracted by the medieval qualities of the places themselves?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I just wanted to make sure you understood what I'm saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a very interesting progression of issues. Governor Evans wanted to bring in more community-based care, a different way of looking at the issues. And of course, when we say institutions, we're talking about very different kinds of people. Institutions include people who didn't necessarily choose to be in them—as in prisoners and then the mentally ill, what were then called retarded children—it's probably different language these days, juvenile delinquent-type people. Are there other institutions? There were correctional institutions and then the mental health institutions, two different kinds of people.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think if I'm not mistaken that the Old Soldiers' Homes had care facilities, so they were all under that blanket of intuitions. They were not huge, don't misunderstand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But a different kind of need.

**Mr. Copeland:** A totally different kind of need.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Dan Evans have an approach to the two or three different kinds of institutions? Did he also think prisons should be more decentralized and more community based, or just the mental health facilities?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I'd have to refer back to the speech that he made to the Legislature on his "Blueprint for Progress." I think he comes out and he makes some very strong announcements about, "What in heaven's name we are doing with," quote, "institutions in the broadest sense?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the institution in your own district, the prison at Walla Walla, change during this period? Were there more innovations and more initiatives to keep working at improving the prison?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were huge changes during the Rosellini administration. That's when they got rid of the "bucket cells." Those cells were cruel and inhumane treatment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They're certainly not going to rehabilitate anyone.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Once that was all taken down then what other things had to happen? The security of the prison had to be addressed. What was inside the walls? Inside the walls was the maintenance shop. Well, what's a maintenance shop? The maintenance shop had steel tools, iron and grinding. Now that you said iron and grinding, can you make knives inside the shop? Yes, you can make knives inside the shop inside the walls? You mean to tell me that the inmates can make a

weapon inside the walls in the institution at Walla Walla? And the answer is yes, they could. So a new shop was set up and taken completely outside the walls. The whole institution had a tremendous change from being completely walled—though it was not called maximum security—to a point where portions of it were moved outside the wall, including construction of the minimum security building. There were humongous changes in that institution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where those changes just during Rosellini's time or also under Evans?

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. I went up there on numerous occasions. My friend Bobby Rhay was the superintendent up there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he remain under Evans?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Bob was a professional. He was a sociologist, a graduate of Whitman College and then had gone into that particular line of work. He was very, very good at it. And he was doing a job that a lot of people would not care for. I wouldn't. I didn't like to go to the institution. I always came away and I felt very, very depressed. Bob could work in there day after day after day and he didn't seem despondent and depressed. I always say to myself at the end of the day, "What have I accomplished?" There you look back and say, "What did I do? I had nineteen-hundred people that I kept from getting away, I guess." But he was very good at it and he instituted some changes that were just excellent. And the one thing that he did have—and an awful lot of people don't realize this—boy, he had the respect of every one of those prisoners. When he would walk inside and get on the walls—the rule was as soon as you saw the superintendent coming, you stood aside and you got out of his way. And everybody would

just stand at attention while Mr. Rhay walked by. That was the rule and they did. So when you walked through the institution with Mr. Rhay, you knew god wasn't there, but the guy next to god was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good enough!

**Mr. Copeland:** He ran a very tight ship. But to me it is very depressing to be in that environment. I certainly didn't enjoy it. As a matter of fact, Bob invited me on a couple occasions to give the commencement address to the high school and grade school graduation of thirty or forty inmates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what cheering words did you come up with?

**Mr. Copeland:** Try that for public speaking classes and see what kinds of words you select.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure you were inspirational!

**Mr. Copeland:** I probably was very inspirational, but I don't think anybody would do a damn thing about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some prisoners would come out. I mean, they're not all sentenced to life in there. So there is a future.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, true. Well, at least they were working. That was the nice thing about it. And that was one of the innovations that Bob put together through the school district and through the community college classes. Prior to that there was no mechanism for these classes. The prisoner was just warehoused. He was a number and nobody knew anything about him until a certain date came up and then his file was on the top of the stack on the desk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are all these studies that show how many prisoners are illiterate and failed in school for one reason or another. It seems like if you could address education you could really make a difference in somebody's life.

**Mr. Copeland:** I want to insert one thing in here right now because this is kind of interesting. A dear friend of mine who spent thirty years as a parole officer—they don't call them parole officers anymore—they call them counselors, I think. He was a parole officer for inmates on parole. Well, they don't even call them inmates anymore; they call them clients. But at any rate, upon his retirement I remember what he said to me. In the thirty years that he worked with the Department of Corrections, he never had a client that had ever played in the band in high school! I'm not saying you're not going to go to the penitentiary if you play in the band, but if you didn't play in the band you were probably involved in some kind of a contact sport where you were beating the crap out of somebody. And this got so ingrained that all of a sudden it caught up with you and you wound up in the penitentiary. But I thought that that was kind of an interesting point. "I've never had a client that ever played in the band in high school and wound up to be one of my clients."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the message is: If your kids are involved in wholesome activities and involved with adults and teachers and good things, that they're very likely to do well and not end up in prison?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, you're right!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if they are disengaged and not involved, they will have problems?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well then, we should all support school arts programs as a preventive measure.

**Mr. Copeland:** You understand it exactly. Any time you want to start cutting band, or glee club, or one of those other activities that are interactive in nature and elevating from the standpoint of a broadening aspect. It's additional education and training that doesn't involve hurting anyone else. All interaction of high school kids doesn't have to be on the basis of "How many times am I going to beat you up?" I never was involved in physical-aspect sports. I never really liked it. I guess these are things that you just learn as you go and you put them in the back of your mind. That is just kind of a side comment, but I thought it was important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's worth thinking about—a valuable perspective. As we discussed, you were the Governor's floor lieutenant. You conferred with him and you understood his agenda. It was partly your job to promote his requests. Did you help with the reorganization idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan set up a meeting, as I mentioned before, on Wednesday mornings at seven o'clock in the Mansion. He'd have legislative leaders from both the House and the Senate in. There were, of course, some key people on his staff attending. If he had a heavy-duty thing having to do with a particular department on the agenda, he'd invite the department head. So we would all get together and report about where we were with bills that he was pushing. Of course, during this very first session he didn't have many executive request bills. That came later. This was a report session more than anything else. Frequently, it would get down to the point where people would identify the contentious portions of a bill and the Governor

could say to one of his staff people, "Is that particular contentious point, is that an absolute necessity in the bill?" And maybe it was: "No, we really don't." "Well, why don't you go to the fellow that's objecting to it and see if it would be okay to take that out of the bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that his style? A consensus builder, a searcher for compromise?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. But it isn't a case of compromise, where you sit down and you try to, you know...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get as much as you can and keep moving?

**Mr. Copeland:** "How far can we advance the ball?" are probably the best words that I can use right now. And I don't care what area it was: maybe it was in transportation; maybe it was in institutions; maybe it was in welfare, whatever. "We can't go beyond this point, I mean right now, politically."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you start with a pretty clear idea of where he wanted to end up and then you worked towards it? Did he have a very clear vision of what he was aiming at, or was it coming from the other direction of "How far can we go?"

**Mr. Copeland:** During this particular session of the Legislature, it wasn't really clear where he wanted to go or where he could go. He was trying his very level best to figure out how best to restructure government so that the departments of government were sufficiently coordinated that they could of themselves survive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be the big goal that you would be aiming at yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** You have to understand that at the time that he took office there were, I

think, something like fifty separate agencies and departments of government that reported directly to the Governor. Now, this is just absolutely screwed-up management from the word go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He'd studied this; this was already something on his screen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Here again, I'll refer you back to his speech before the Legislature. He said these are the addresses that we have to make. Everybody knew, but you see, he could not have gone into that during the first week and drafted twelve pieces of legislation and said, "I want to combine all these departments."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to build; those are huge ideas.

**Mr. Copeland:** In addition to that, you'll notice these interim committees are beginning to work. I guess you'd say this is a gestation period. You need all of the necessary ingredients. You've got to have a period of time. You've got to have representatives from the affected public. You have to have interested people come in and make some comment and begin to start shaping legislation so people understood what it was doing, where your aims and objectives were. So all of this is just coming together, but it takes a while.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I know that was part of your outlook, that you thought the more the public was involved the better it would be. Was that also Dan Evans' point of view?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he looking for ways to have advisory committees to bring in more and more different kinds of people? When you had this state advisory committee on public assistance, would that be a piece of this?



**Mr. Copeland:** That was just another piece of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would the Governor appoint the people on this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that was the normal procedure. I don't know the details but that would normally be the procedure. Perhaps there would be fifteen people on the committee and four of them would be from the Legislature and the Governor would appoint the others.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he do a pretty good job of bringing people in from different parts of the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** He did an excellent job. One of the best stories about Dan and his appointments was regarding one of his very first appointments. He hadn't been in office but just a few months when he appointed Frank Baker as Superior Court judge in Thurston County. Frank was a very dear friend of mine. Frank was an infantry officer in the war, but Frank had stepped on a land mine and was short one leg. This hampered him a little bit, but Frank really wanted to be appointed Superior Court judge and he wanted me to put in a good word for him with the new Governor. So I did and he got the appointment. Several years later Dan was speaking to the Rotary Club in downtown Olympia and Frank could hardly wait to tell him that all the other Rotarians said that he was Dan Evans' first appointment on the bench. And Dan acknowledged the fact, in front of the all of the Rotary Club, that yes, Frank was his very first appointment. But then he also said to Frank, "You know Frank, since that time my appointments have been getting better and better and better."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear, I'm sure was

joking. Frank Baker was a very prominent person here in Olympia.

**Mr. Copeland:** This business of Frank losing a leg in the war made national news. While serving as a judge, he had an attorney before him that was pleading the case of this—not a juvenile—he was an adult defendant. "He had been enticed into a life of crime because of lack of guidance and he didn't do well in school because it was the school teachers' fault; his parents didn't take care of him; it was the parents' fault; and he obviously didn't have the proper social knowledge and that was the community's fault; and he was a victim of circumstances; that was society's fault." And all the time that this attorney is going on, leading up to this terrible crescendo that it's the fault of all the people of the state of Washington his client is in court. While this is going on, the judge is taking off his wooden leg and he puts it up on the bench and he says, "Yes, counsel, please continue about a misspent youth." I always got a kick out of that. "Why weren't you doing something all by yourself?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Cry me a river here?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Don't tell me it's everybody else's fault, and you're not responsible."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The poor lawyer. Well, that's a rejoinder not every judge could come up with.

**Mr. Copeland:** Frank was something else. There was the other story about Frank that was so cute: He was walking down Fourth Avenue one time. He waited for the light to turn but when got out in the middle of the intersection, one of the screws in his wooden leg came loose and he fell right in the middle of the street. An elderly lady walked right up behind him and said, "Oh my goodness

sake, what happened?" He said, "No problem ma'am, my leg just fell off." And with that she damn near had a coronary!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "It's nothing." I guess you have to have a sense of humor!

You were quite successful in many of your bills. Was your position as the floor leader helpful to you or were you very busy pushing other people's legislation and managing all the legislation? Was this a good record to get seven bills all the way through the Legislature in one session?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's way above average.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you just very well placed to get your own legislation through?

**Mr. Copeland:** Under a normal set of circumstances, it's highly advisable to have both the Republicans and Democrats sponsor a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A practice you followed with one of the main bills of the 1965 session: the expansion of the community college system. You cosponsored a bill authorizing five additional community colleges. But you worked very closely with several Democrats on that bill. Could you talk about the general strategy of cosponsoring and how that works legislatively?

**Mr. Copeland:** First of all, the majority of the legislation that ultimately passes does not pass on a pure-partisan basis. The majority of legislation is strictly done on a bipartisan type of an arrangement where all parties were involved. This of course, was to be a gigantic step in the education process for the state of Washington. I mean, it's just self-evident that it should be done on a bipartisan basis. There's no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kinds of issues would not work that way? Some labor issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some heavy-duty labor issues. Taxes would be another one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anything else that stands out that would be a much harder sell as a bipartisan measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certain areas dealing with welfare eligibility. Requirements as to how long you might be on welfare. Or certain elements having to do with unemployment benefits and whether there should be extended benefits, and to what extent should they be extended, and how much you tax the employer. What percentage of the wages should be taxed; who legitimately is part of the labor market? Are you legitimately part of the labor market if you take a part-time job and on day-one—once you're employed on that first hour—are you entitled to unemployment? Oh yes, this is a very basic question: Are you attached to the labor market within one hour of taking your first part-time job?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what would be the Republican point of view on that?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a training period. The employer is going to spend a lot of money trying to train this young person, or whoever it is that is coming on the job. Truly, that person is not attached to the labor market at this point. So there's a big philosophical difference. The Democrats always took the posture that if you're there for sixty minutes you are part of the labor market; therefore you're entitled to all the benefits, regardless of whether anything has ever been paid in. So the employer was always very defensive. It often came to the point where: "I can't, I'm not going to hire anybody else because if I do that then my potential costs for unemployment and

industrial insurance and social security and withholding tax and the whole smear is so huge that it isn't worth it." So you always had to try to weigh these things together. So yes, that was a large philosophical difference between the Democrats and the Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I always picture the parties as overlapping circles where there's a part that's clearly the Democratic or Republican point of view, and then there's an area in the middle where you overlap and that's the area where you get the most things done. Where there's common ground. That the course of reading the bills through committees and hearings tends to work towards the middle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the middle is the only thing that is going to survive anyway. Something extreme far-right or extreme far-left is not going to make it through. So anything that finally makes it through the legislative process, is it in the middle? Obviously, that would be the case unless you have a majority of one party that controls both the House and Senate. So generally speaking, no, the partisan aspect would only come into play on a few items. By the same token, there are an awful lot of controversial issues that would not be decided on a partisan basis. Quite often some were decided on an east/west basis where you couldn't distinguish a party line. Let's talk about an east/west fight which is prevalent today: the regulation that says "You can not pasture your cow within two-hundred yards of a stream." I beg your pardon? Well, maybe two-hundred yards of a stream here in western Washington is a pretty good idea, but you take a guy who owns a piece of property in eastern Washington and you tell him to put up a fence two-hundred yards of a stream that's running through his place—and let's say it's Crab Creek, in Lincoln County—all of a sudden you're asking him to put up a hundred-thousand dollars worth of fence to

keep a cow from the stream. This gets to be a little ridiculous. Now, what is the fight? Is it a partisan fight; Republican/Democrat? Is it east/west; city/rural? Quite often you'll find that, sure, there's a difference, but it doesn't have a party label on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think transportation issues, water issues, those sorts of things would be east/west issues because the geography and distances are so different, the climate's different.

**Mr. Copeland:** Take water issues: "Save our wild salmon." Of course, the operative word in that whole statement is wild. What the hell is the difference between a wild salmon and a tame hatchery salmon? But "save our wild salmon" or just "save our salmon" sounds like a real nifty thing. But now you say, "Take down the dams on the Snake River in order to be able to save our salmon." Then you ask the question, "What if we did take the dams down?" "Maybe we'll have ten percent more salmon." Well, is ten percent more salmon a good trade-off for taking down the dams? This became a political issue because it was adopted by the state Democrat Party as part of their platform. "Take down the dams on the Snake River; we want to get rid of those things. And the reason we want to get rid of them is to save our wild salmon." That's politics, that's raw, pure: "We're going after you big time." So you have to sort these things out one at a time. Was it a good idea to save the salmon? I think it's a good idea to save the salmon. Is it a good idea to save the wild salmon? I can't tell the difference and I can't find anybody that will delineate to me the difference between a wild salmon and a hatchery salmon.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you'd have to be a biologist to really know.

**Mr. Copeland:** The hatcheries are actually producing salmon that are now of age, mature, and catch-able—a harvestable commodity. How wonderful, don't complain about it. Say "somebody's doing the right thing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me about your process as you're sponsoring bills, you have a sense of which ones are bipartisan. If you want to sponsor a bill, you go around and do what? Just talk it up with different people and say, "Do you want to join with me?" Or do they come to you? Is it pretty obvious who should sign onto it with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Take a look at the sponsors on the junior college bill. I think you'll find Buster Brouillet. We became sponsors because we both served on the Education Committee so we had some background and expertise on it. So it became a very natural process. I couldn't imagine one of those bills even seeing the light of day if it was sponsored by someone who was not on that committee. As you get into the legislative environment, you don't have time to study every bill, but at some point you acquire a cadre of people that you depend upon for their expertise. You have a great deal of confidence in their ability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd go back to those people again and again to work with?

**Mr. Copeland:** They're resource people as far as you're concerned. I never became a specialist in the budget, but anytime I really wanted know something very specific about the budget I would ask Bob Goldsworthy. Bob would always give me the straight scoop and I could depend upon Bob. And there were probably things that I became specialized in and Bob would come to me and ask about. So this is a case where you found somebody that you had confidence in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if a bill comes up and it has a certain sponsor, you would say to yourself, "That guy knows what he's talking about, I'm going to vote for that. Or that guy doesn't, so I'm not going to support this." Would that be the case?

**Mr. Copeland:** "That guy's on that education bill—him being on that bill means he's putting his own personal endorsement on the bill. Now, I have some questions on it." If it's a Republican asking the question, he'd probably ask me. If it's a Democrat, he'd probably ask Buster. That was just kind of a given. In our caucus we would talk about the bill and one of the sponsors on it would explain his position on it. I would imagine that Buster probably did the same thing in the Democratic caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Without necessarily naming any names, would there be certain legislators that if they sponsored a bill you would feel dismissive about the bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were some legislators that would introduce a bill from time to time and we knew somebody had just asked them to do it as a courtesy more than anything else. And it wasn't going to go any place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be part of the winnowing process for you? Which ones to paid attention to or not? I mean, there are hundreds of bills so you would have to have some kind of method here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it would get to the point where maybe you'd get snookered into signing on a couple of these bills the first couple of sessions. But after that, you're wise enough to know that this bill wasn't going to go any place; it was simply window dressing. It wasn't going to do you any good to be a sponsor. So, quite often, you'd turn them down

on that basis alone. When you sponsor a bill, you're putting your own personal endorsement on it and I think that is significant.

There were other circumstances when we would have a great number of sponsors on a piece of legislation. And the reason for the great number of sponsors was to solidify the base ahead of time. This occurred when it just didn't do you any good to sponsor a bill all by yourself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If it doesn't look like you can even get another person to agree with you...

**Mr. Copeland:** Once in a while, you'd sponsor a bill all by yourself, like title-only bills. But most of the time, if you're sincere about it; you're going to get some kind of bipartisan support on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your position on bill sponsoring? Some members sponsor a lot of bills, other people sponsor just a few. Did you have a personal way of looking at that, where you made decisions on how many you were going to put your name on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, you could find a thread and then the fiber and then the fabric develop with a particular legislator. And he would be on the bill dealing with child care, the bill dealing with the disabled, the bill dealing with special rights for the handicapped, and the bill for this and for that. I mean, take a look at all the bills he signed on and they all have something to do with the crippled, the lame, the blind, or things like that. There might be sixty or seventy bills. But none of them are major. But were any of them good? Oh certainly, but if you took the total number of bills and added up the cost of all of them put together, it's just absolutely huge. But, they thought they were doing the greatest service to humanity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is it better to consolidate a bit and have bigger-idea bills, rather than picking away at each little thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily. Some people just love to sponsor all of these bills. This is all kind of special-purpose work. I wasn't that kind of a legislator. I ran very few bills, damn-near nothing that served a special purpose. That was the one problem some people had with me. Adele Ferguson always liked to refer to me as "the wealthy legislator from Walla Walla," or "you couldn't buy him."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a compliment or was she painting you as a person who didn't care? I'm not sure I know what she meant.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I didn't have any special legislation that I had to have—nothing in the Legislature that I had to have personally. Some people felt that they had to do something on a very personal basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about a district basis? Did your district need things?

**Mr. Copeland:** My district did not have a damn thing that was so important to the district that it didn't involve the entire eastern part of the state. Did I work hard on the creation of the Washington State Wheat Commission and its funding? You bet! Was it inherent that it did some good for my district? Certainly! Is that the only district it helped? Hell, no! That thing helped the entire state of Washington—I mean, the entire state. And it wound up not with millions of dollars, but billions of dollars. So, is that self serving? Was that something that, quote, "Copeland had to have." Hell no! But a lot of people reached the point that they had to have a particular bill for a particular thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see, in any given session, there are executive request bills—



the Governor requesting some kind of programmatic measure. There are requests from the Legislative Council. There were agencies coming in and requesting some things that would make their work easier; there were your own ideas; there were constituent requests. I guess lobbyists would come in, different groups with particular interests or needs. Was there any kind of breakdown where bills came from? Which percentages of bills came from legislators' own ideas?

**Mr. Copeland:** I can't delineate that. I don't think I've ever seen anybody break that down. I think that at various times, various pressures would bring about one set of bills that would not have even been considered six or seven sessions earlier.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certain things kind of rise to the top, don't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** Over time, your priorities have a tendency to change; nothing is static.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hopefully, you solve some things and then move onto the next things.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. The only part that we haven't done properly, of course, is create enough sunset acts on some of these old things that we passed and they're still allowed to continue even though they should have been given a termination date. As you progress, you try to meet the changes, such as the case with the community colleges. What caused the community colleges to come into existence? It wasn't that anybody decided, "Oh, would it be a good idea if we had community colleges?" That was about it. What was the major cause of the creation of the community colleges? It was the baby boom! Now, what caused the baby boom? World War II, right? You take eight million men and you ship them off and when they return, you turn them loose

and say, "What are you going to do?" "Well, I'm going to get married; I'm going to raise a family." Bang! Now you've got this huge baby boom. The baby boom starts with the first grade and before long it's in the twelfth grade. Are the institutions for higher learning going to be able to consume these? No way! Are they all wanting to go to the institutions for higher learning? Heavens, no. What do we have in the middle? We have nothing. So there's a void. So what created the community college? It wasn't a legislator's bright idea. It was a vacuum; it was a need; it occurred. Why did it occur? World War II!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, of course.

**Mr. Copeland:** We already had the kids in the pipeline. What were we going to do with them? Legislature, you better get your act together. Fine! There is no mystery about legislation at all. The majority of the legislation comes from a void or a vacuum that needs to be filled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some kind of problem, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Some kind of problem, somewhere along the line that has to be addressed. Certain things happened; certain conditions existed; certain misunderstandings, certain reservations people have; certain concerns about the future, things like that. These are the drivers behind the legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certain issues seem to pile up and reach a crisis point—something that can't pass, can't pass, can't pass, suddenly passes and becomes this whole new area. You wonder why it passed that year and not some other year, and just how it all just fits together. Did a certain legislator take the lead, or did the press run a lot of stories on it, or one thing or another? Somehow, issues rise

up. But why then—what does it take to push it over the edge?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the things I did later in my legislative career was to call the two opposing sides on a major issue into my office. I would simply have them write out all of the items they could agree on. Then we would discuss the items of disagreement. “Now, where are the disagreements and how big are they?” And frequently the areas of disagreement became very minor, very minor. These discussions highlighted where there might be misunderstanding on your part, or where I didn’t interpret you right, or when I thought you were going to go after this thing in an entirely different fashion, but now you’ve said you’re perfectly willingly to move over here in order to advance the legislation. Frequently you could find that all of a sudden this bill was coming together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the walls start to dissolve?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of a sudden, people have a different understanding of it. “I’ll give up this. I won’t insist on this if you don’t insist on that. Fair enough?” “That’s not a bad compromise, now can we go on? Let’s put this in the agree column and go to the next one.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the more in the “agree column,” the more invested people get in making it work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they’ve already got all this agreement. I would think that would have a strong psychological pull.

**Mr. Copeland:** Understand, this you could do in general legislation, but whenever you were talking about redistricting...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh well, that’s different!

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. So at any rate, this was something we could do on many occasions and actually come to an agreement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But isn’t that also the role of leadership? If no one takes the lead to call people into their office and say, “Let’s make this list of agreements,” then very little happens. Somebody’s got to step up and do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Leadership is not responsible to solve every disagreement. To identify and measure the timeliness may well be a leadership role. I mean, if it’s worthwhile and it’s a worthwhile piece of legislation, let’s find an agreement. If it isn’t, let’s junk the thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But somebody’s got to initiate the conversation. And if they don’t, if for whatever reason they can’t get that meeting to happen, very little would get done, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is where leadership plays an extremely heavy-duty role.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** First of all, you have to believe that compromise is how legislation is built, which is not always the case. Not everyone believes that’s the way to go.

**Mr. Copeland:** There are certain things that the leadership assumes. They have to assume that once you’re in the leadership position and you’ve got the majority in either the House or the Senate, then there are certain obligations to go along with it. Such things like departmental request bills. If you have any confidence in the head of a department and the director says, “I’d like to have you

to introduce my departmental request bill because you're somebody that's got some knowledge on that particular subject." Even though that director may be of a different party, I think it's your obligation to go ahead and introduce it. You don't do these things on the basis of, "What the hell, he's a Democrat; he can't have a good idea." That's balderdash and so leadership has got to play a very strong role. Once leadership is not there, it's not evident; then the whole thing starts to deteriorate: "I'll vote for this bill if you give me something over here for me."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's each legislator for him or herself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you're just nothing but a bunch of cannibals. The finest legislators in the world are not self-serving. I think one of the greatest legislators in contemporary times who was not self-serving—absolutely wanted nothing for herself—is Jeannette Hayner. Really, she had absolutely no axe to grind whatsoever. But then she came to do a job for the state of Washington. Is that leadership? You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She was definitely a leader for a long time. That was a good discussion, thank you. You worked on a lot of different things in 1965. One of the things that didn't pass that session was an executive request from Dan Evans providing for fiscal notes on bills. For some reason, it was still controversial and people could not vote for it. It had to be brought forward a few times.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I have to get back to Senator Greive; this was a part of his process. He did not want to have a fiscal note attached to any particular bill. Tracking the cost of a bill would have not been to his liking and it wouldn't have been his method of operating the Senate. If all of a sudden you pass fifteen

bills and you have fifteen fiscal notes and they totaled a million and a half dollars that day, somebody would get up and say, "Mr. President, we just appropriated fifteen million dollars, or whatever. Are we aware of the fact that we did this?" That was not Senator Greive's method of operation. He didn't want to have a fiscal note.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Didn't other legislators think it would be a good idea to keep track of expenses? You can be for this and that program, but eventually it has to be paid for. It must have gotten pretty abstract.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm being kind; this was part of Senator Greive and John O'Brien's process. Only leadership knew what was going on. Only leadership knew what the final budget was going to be like. Only leadership wasn't going to allow this to pass or not pass. Only leadership was in charge of this. Everybody else who was elected to the House and the Senate were not allowed to look in on the process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You again engaged in the perennial discussion about annual sessions and interim pay for legislators, although bills addressing these issues died. Why was interim pay such a difficult issue? There was a sense that somehow you weren't entitled to it. It's always controversial. Yet you must have put in a lot of time outside of session.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time, the legislators drew, I think it was, three hundred dollars a month. I remember it was one hundred a month when I started in 1957 and then it went up later. If you had an interim committee meeting the only items covered were your travel expense and lodging. There was an element in society that wanted all of the legislators to just give freely of their time and spend a lot of time with virtually no

compensation. It got to the point where to serve in the Legislature was a luxury. You had to be able to financially afford it yourself, personally, or you couldn't do it. I said on numerous occasions, "This is the wrong way to go because what you're doing, you're precluding an awful lot of good people that otherwise would have a great deal to offer to the legislative arena."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Makes it less representative, for sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it certainly does. I mean, if you make all of government so only, quote, "rich people can run for it," end quote, no, it's not representative. So are you going to pay them in order to be able to do it? Well, this is the big question. The annual session bill was not well received; it was something way before its time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Annual sessions didn't pass till the late seventies; is that something that just took that long to germinate? Year by year, the issue gets a little more crucial or the problem grows and finally people say, "Alright, we'll go for this."

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what you'll have to do, Anne, is just follow it back and grab any one of the budget references if you can. Let's say the appropriations from the General Fund. When you get back to 1957, I don't know, what was the total appropriation, fifty million dollars? Let's say it was fifty and ten years later it was a hundred million. So the total cost was multiplying so rapidly and suddenly, you had far more people involved in the labor force. I'm talking about teachers, the institutions of higher learning, state government employees, everything else. Demands on the Legislature were escalating on a very rapid basis. Now, how are you going to be able to keep up with this? And here again, I'll come back to this

very same very famous quote, "A part-time legislator is never going to keep up with a full-time bureaucrat." If you want to have representative government and you want to meet for sixty days every two years, forget about it. That legislator is never going to have the true story. I mean, there is no way he or she can ever understand what's going on in state government during the twenty-two months they are in recess, with all of the ramifications of everything the state government does. So, were annual sessions something that was inevitable? And my answer is yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was all this tension around the issue because then people say, "You'll be asking too much from people; we can't give that kind of time. It's going to change the nature of the Legislature." But in a sense, because you're already drawing from only people who can afford to go to the Legislature, maybe you've already got that, but you just look at it differently.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you're getting back into something else: public disclosure. What did the Public Disclosure Commission do to potential candidates? It removed a hell of a bunch of them—took them completely out of the field. They looked at the public disclosure law and said, "If I have to report everything that I've got going in my law firm, now that's my law firm, that's not just from my clients." That law firm just took a look at all of their attorneys and said, "Let me tell you people straight up, this is a law firm and if any of you want to run for public office you have just resigned." Now, that virtually is what happened. So you're saying you're changing the length of time that a legislator serves, you're asking him to do more things and you've added public disclosure. I'm only trying to say, "Layer one on top of the other and see what you've done to the makeup of the Legislature." And then go to the average

Joe Blow and say, “I want you to run for the Legislature. Oh, and by the way, here are seventeen pages we want you to fill out. There’s nothing personal being asked other than your bank account, your Social Security number, your wife’s income, who you work for, and do they ever do any business with the state, how much money you owe and to whom,” and so on and so forth. So Joe Blow just takes the paper and throws it in the trash can and says, “Thanks anyway, I don’t want to serve.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So who serves is...

**Mr. Copeland:** Someone who doesn’t mind filling out the form!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are a lot of hurdles and that would be a big one. But did you think at the time that bringing annual sessions would be not a hurdle of that magnitude?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. There would have been some that would have had to drop out just from the standpoint of the time constraint more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now we have legislators that have no other jobs but being legislators.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. And at one time somebody suggested that we have a salary increase for legislators and I remember this one legislator got up on the floor of the House and said if you raise the salary level of this, we’re liable to attract good people to run for this office!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear. Another pending change: During this period Dan Evans, supported by groups interested in this question, wanted to make such extensive structural changes in government that he proposed holding a constitutional convention.

Discussions of constitutional amendments and the holding of a convention became quite prominent at this time. You can see that idea coming forward more and more.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that was even included in Dan Evans’ inaugural speech. He thought that it might well be that the constitutional convention might be something that would be worthwhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. For students of this whole process, could you describe what a constitutional convention would achieve, why you would need to go to that length, why some things are amendments to the constitution rather than just bills?

**Mr. Copeland:** A constitution convention takes the constitution and puts it all out on the table so that now everything in the constitution can be put together without any requirement for a two-thirds vote. But I don’t think legislators were at all interested in holding a convention. One of the big fears—maybe it was well grounded, maybe it wasn’t—was “if you do that then we were going to have a graduated income tax.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was one of the stumbling blocks?

**Mr. Copeland:** A graduated income tax had been passed on several occasions, I think. Each time it was the court would find it unconstitutional. A flat tax would have been acceptable by the State Supreme Court, but once it got into a graduated tax then it flew into the face of that portion of the constitution that says “all taxes shall be on a uniform basis.” So once some people suggested having a constitution convention, the opponents immediately said, “What you’re trying to do is write in a new constitution to authorize a graduated income tax.” That was



the basic fear and the problem that an awful lot of people had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that would have happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think the constitutional convention probably would have made a provision to authorize a graduated income tax subject to voter approval. There were some other limitations in the constitution that would have been removed also. Like: “legislators shall not receive a pass on a railroad.” Why should that be in the constitution? Is that a big deal now?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sort of dates our constitution. That was a huge issue back in 1889.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. At the time of the writing of the constitution, what was the main mode of transportation? It was the railroad. If you give legislators a free pass on the railroad, they can take their family on a vacation to California!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And incidentally be very friendly to the needs of railroads?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I didn’t say that, did I? You did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the thought in the nineteenth century. It certainly happened in other states. Supposedly, we learned from that experience.

**Mr. Copeland:** It did happen in other states. It was in our constitution, because they were fearful that if there wasn’t a prohibition, the railroads would start giving passes to the legislators and influencing legislation.

But here again, nothing is static; everything has a tendency to change. I was not

that fearful of reentering the state constitution and changing it to authorize a graduated income tax. There’s a great deal that can be said for a graduated income tax strictly on the basis of fairness. But it was something way before its time; it didn’t occur, yet those are the components.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a big discussion. What was the mechanism? Who gets to go to the convention? Are there special delegates somehow elected?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature would create districts and delegates would get elected from each district and then they would select their own officers and go from there. At the completion of their work, then they would refer the matter back to the people and the people would have to ratify it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s a little article in your scrapbook, announcing that you wanted to introduce legislation for, “a fast, easy method to revise the state constitution by opening the way for the Legislature to do the job.” Now, that’s a different way. That’s not having a convention. What was your thinking here?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the reference to the gateway amendment, “authorizing the Legislature to review and revise the entire constitution or amendments thereof. Provide for provision of amendments and submit as a single proposition even though it may deal with different sections.” In short, this says that you could offer an amendment to the constitution and it could encompass more than one section. Otherwise, it took five or six amendments to the constitution in order to be able to accomplish what you wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if it took five, but only two passed, then you wouldn’t really get anywhere?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then the whole thing would fall apart. Trying to work with the constitution is laborious; there is no question about it. The gateway amendment was somewhere halfway between the constitutional convention and our current system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, were you thinking that a convention was probably not going to happen but you still wanted some mechanism to solve some problems?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, but it didn't pass either. This was a good idea before its time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There seemed to be an unusual number of House Joint Resolutions this session. There were at least a dozen that wanted to amend the constitution. Was government going through some sort of rapid change where the constitution becomes a roadblock and everybody starts to look at it and wants to tinker with it? Was this one of those periods when things are coming to a head and there was all this unusual activity?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think if you take a look at the constitutional changes that we were discussing, they all had to do with a particular subject matter. But often you had to reenter several different sections in order to be able to accomplish each change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here's one proposing a constitutional amendment permitting school districts a two-year, ten-mill special levy for operational expenses. And another one proposing a constitutional amendment changing residence qualifications to six months in state, thirty days in county, city, town, ward or precinct. One for annual sessions; for voting at nineteen years of age; one for timber being grown on state-owned lands to be processed within the United States—that's

a totally different area. Here's just one calling for a constitutional convention.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's stop and discuss the things that you went over. This one having to do with voter residency requirement should not be, in my thinking, imbedded in the constitution; that should be provided for in statute law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because it's easier to amend statute law and it's more flexible?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct! Because of that I think it should have been removed from the constitution and be granted the authority of statute law. Then you could more easily take care of it and adjust it. There are several things in the constitution that really hamstring the ability to operate the government.

Let's back up. When was the constitution written and what was the vote at that time? At that time there was very limited communications. The majority of legislators took the train or rode horseback in order to be able to get to the Legislature. They were here for only a short period of time. So it virtually was an in-and-out, raising x-number of dollars, and "you guys go ahead and run it" scene. I'm using the word guys not in a derogatory sense but only to bring back to the whole picture who was the electorate at that time? It was males, not females. Women weren't allowed to vote. So it was a very, very select group—kind of like a good old boys club. They were the ones that were all scared to death of one another. So when they wrote the constitution, they wrote it in a tremendously restricted mode, because they were very concerned about who were the good guys and who were the bad guys and who was going to run off with the store. When they wrote the constitution, it was written on the basis of "all legislators shall be suspect." Okay then, "we're going to require a two-

thirds vote of this and a two-thirds vote of that,” and so on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had so many checks and balances, you were sort of tied in knots?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. But here again, the legislators would meet for only sixty days and say, “Here’s a pot of money, Governor. Do the best you can and we’ll see you in twenty-two months,” and out the door they’d go. Because of the fact that the legislators were there for such a very short period of time government in itself was kind of squishy-squashy. But when you really got down to find out where government was, the big kingpin in every place was the county sheriff. He was the guy; he ran the show. He was the head election officer; he made sure that the people got to the polls and the only people who got to the polls were those people who were eligible to vote and they were all very dear friends of his and he knew them by first name. Right? So back in the days when they wrote the constitution, state government was a very small thing on the horizon. Local governments really ran everything. They ran the cities, the school districts, the courts, and of course, the county roads. State government had very little impact on the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the constitution reflected this world, but then things changed and you were trying to drag it into the twentieth century?

**Mr. Copeland:** Evolution—what transpired during that period of time was the school board’s authority diminished materially. State standards for education became prominent. Now you had the state certification for school teachers. Then the funding by virtue of the constitution became the paramount job. And I don’t use the word loosely—“paramount”—I’m quoting: “This will be a paramount job

for the state of Washington to fund public education.” Suddenly, the state is taking control of public education and taking it away from the local school districts. Superimpose that on top of the county commissioners who started in 1909 and created the first junior taxing district and that was a dike district. Then they later created a drainage district, a fire district, a water district, a sewer district and how about a mosquito district. So all the time this was going on, county commissioners were freely dispensing their authority to some other junior taxing district to take the monkey off of their back so they were not responsible for it. You know, if your house burnt down, “Don’t see me about it; go see the fire commissioner. It’s his responsibility, not mine.” The counties were getting rid of their areas of responsibility to a point where county commissioners are just lined up to be nothing but glorified road bosses. All of these junior taxing districts were running around doing their thing and what does the Legislature do? Then they say, “Hey, we have to control these guys.” So they put regulations on all the fire districts and the sewer districts; they put regulations on this and that. The transfer of power was moving away from the local over to the state government. So the state government escalated very rapidly. But when the constitution was written, state government was not a big blip on the screen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It worked out pretty well for a time. But by this time, it’s evidently not working. Everybody’s struggling with this and trying to rework the basic structure. But the gateway amendment doesn’t pass and a lot of these constitutional amendments don’t pass, either. So, do you find other ways to solve this problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. If it’s a constitutional prohibition, you just can’t do it anymore. That’s the wall and when you hit the wall that

brings you to a screeching halt. So you've got to figure out a way to go around and get over the wall.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I suppose that would be a case by case, issue by issue thing, where if you can't do the big picture you have to just keep chipping away at it? I know this is a live issue for years.

Those were the main issues that you were working on in 1965. Just one last thing: Donald Moos, your colleague in the House, resigned from the House to become the head of the Department of Agriculture about May of that year. What's that like when a legislator leaves to become a head of an agency?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan had just become Governor and he needed to have somebody in there to head the Department of Agriculture. Don wanted this. He made a career in state government. I think he was the only person in state history that was a director of three departments. He was head of Agriculture, Fisheries and Ecology. He became a well-recognized expert as a department head and managed those departments extremely well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Having been a legislator, did that give him a special understanding of how to work with the Legislature? He'd be pretty skilled?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. Don's quite a guy. He was raised on a ranch in eastern Washington in the little town of Edwall. His whole family kind of grew up there. The name Moos is quite common in that area. Don was in an infantry outfit during World War II and got pretty badly shot up on a couple of occasions. When he got out of the service, then he finished his schooling at Washington State College.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of like your pattern.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was very similar. Then he went into farming and ran for the Legislature and first served in 1959. He enjoyed the legislative business a great deal, but he was also heavily involved in agriculture. When Dan became Governor, he wanted Don to do something in the administration. Don felt it was going to be to his benefit not to remain in agriculture, so he decided to leave the farm and make a full-time career out of public service. Don was a skilled "Director" and trusted by the Evans administration. Dan depended upon Don and he performed admirably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was one of the up-and-coming names in the Republican Party and then he took this other direction as an agency director, which is tempting to some people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this is one of the commitments we have to make early on; I made a commitment that I was not going to take any kind of an appointed position like that because I had an obligation to support the farm. Don was in an altogether different position than what I was. He recognized if he went this other route, he could probably make a lot more money than if he stayed on the farm in Edwall. This was just an out-and-out business decision. I'm sure he and his wife Parmalee and son Billy and daughter Mary Kay talked it over and made a collective decision that this was the best thing for the Moos family to do and so they did it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every time somebody joins the Legislature or leaves, it changes the dynamic a little bit. So you've lost his energy, though it reappears elsewhere. If he had stayed in the Legislature, would he have been one of the rising stars?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no question about it. Yet, I think that he was probably hampered because



of the fact that he came from such a rural district in eastern Washington. He had about the same problem I had coming from Walla Walla. I think he made the wise decision. Just one outstanding individual.

We had a good number of outstanding members in our caucus that session, many of whom went on to the Senate and other offices. Berentson was a future Speaker and went on to head the Department of Transportation. Swayze also served as Speaker later. Mary Ellen McCaffree became head of the Revenue Department. Dan also gave appointments to Jack Hood, Maurice Ahlquist, Bud Huntley, Ed Harris and Stu Bledsoe. Slade Gorton served as Attorney General and then in the U.S. Senate. Joel Pritchard went on to Congress after serving in the State Senate. Both Andersen and Brachtenbach became justices of the Supreme Court. A wonderful group!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For a minority caucus you had a collection of real talent and drive. All

your campaign work was transforming your Republican House membership.

**Mr. Copeland:** Look where we started that session! A very hectic first forty-eight hours! But we prevailed—with thirty-nine dynamic and skilled members—we prevailed: Senator Greive was not able to jam through his redistricting bill. Dan Evans was sworn in, in an orderly manner. We wanted to pass a number of Dan's Blueprint for Progress bills—and we did. We conducted ourselves in a very responsible way. We moved forward on legislative facilities. When the court ordered the Legislature to redistrict, we prevailed. It was with a carefully crafted striking amendment by Slade Gorton that allowed overwhelming Republican support that we were able to pass a bill and fulfill our legislative responsibilities. Was the session successful from the standpoint of thirty-nine legislators in a minority situation? You bet it was! We prevailed! We were all very pleased and gained a real sense of confidence.





## CHAPTER 12

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### INTERIM WORK OF 1966

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to explore your work during that 1966 interim period. Towards the end of the session the Legislative Council committees are appointed. You were appointed to two committees: the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, of which you were the chair, and also the Air Safety Committee. I believe you were the chair for that one, too. But would you also attend larger meetings as well as these smaller committee meetings? That would be the commitment as a Council member?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a rather large commitment, then. Robert Schaefer as the Speaker gave a report the following session talking about the interim committee work. He said, "The committee as a whole met nine times to receive committee reports and the committees of the Council had a total of over two hundred meetings during that period." That's a lot of meetings. Obviously, you wouldn't go to two hundred meetings?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you would go to your share? Continuing with his remarks: "We originally had three assignments made to the Council by the House and the Senate. These were extensively increased by requests from

many organizations, individuals, state officials and legislators and resulted in more than seventy specific recommendations in actual bill form." That's pretty productive.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is. See, this is the focus that you have to concentrate on. The Legislature's meeting in a biennium session. During this two-year period of time, you have two hundred meetings, but where are the meetings? They're all over the state. When they meet all over the state, who are they talking to? They're talking to hundreds of people all over the state and are able to get input. Turn it the other way around, the citizens have their opportunity for input. What a wonderful thing it is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He gives quite an extensive report and then you present him with a plaque in appreciation for his services as the chairman, for all that work and organizing. Was this work of the interim committees part of your move to bring the Legislature up to speed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right on!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were making full use of this opportunity.

**Mr. Copeland:** Grabbing every opportunity I could. Now we are operating the Legislative Council with Bob Schaefer as the chairman Two years prior to that Governor Rosellini vetoed the appropriation for the Legislative Council. So we went through a two-year period where we had no money, no staff, and no opportunity for the Legislative Council to go out and create these meetings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Must have had a lot of build up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now we have a new Governor, we've got a new Speaker, and we're off and running. And we get funds. So we go

to the people and say, “Do you want to have some input in this?” And they said, “You bet!” Okay, so we had two hundred meetings, but now seventy pieces of legislation emerge out of them. I think you’ll probably find that probably forty percent, fifty percent of that legislation passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty good record.

**Mr. Copeland:** An excellent record.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let’s look at the areas where you were involved. Perhaps you remember some of the broader-based issues, but that’s hard to reconstruct at this time. Even Speaker Schaefer did not go into detail in his report because there were so many areas you covered.

Of the two committees that you chaired, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee started out with two big issues. One was called “Usage Auditing of Milk.” Your committee discussed regulations on how milk was graded and sold. One of the issues was that Grade A milk could be used for making several products, but certain products are made from lesser grades of milk, if I’m understanding this correctly. The price differential was substantial. Some dairy operations wanted more regulations so that everybody was getting the same payments. Did you go around and talk to all the different dairy producing areas and see what would be the best regulation for that particular industry?

**Mr. Copeland:** We cleared this up with some housekeeping legislation. It was not a big issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other issue dealt with by that committee concerned the need for an animal disease diagnostics center. There was one at WSU, but the facility was apparently

too small for the needs, and that was not a particularly big area for animal husbandry. So people would have to ship their diseased animals over there?

**Mr. Copeland:** They did that on occasion, but what they finally wound up using a building at the Washington State facilities in Puyallup. But it required some new focus on funding. We appropriated money for this specific purpose and then we also gave it to Puyallup, because this is the great population center of the dairy cows to serve King County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was apparently a little lab in the General Administration Building that you were going to tour in one of your meetings. That surprised me that they would manage to fit a lab in that building.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was almost pathetic. These little labs were just dotted all over the place. They had one in the GA Building and if I remember correctly they had one in an office building in Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doesn’t seem very sanitary or safe.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well it wasn’t, that’s the whole thing. Actually they were doing testing in one of the office buildings in King County. At that time the Department of Fisheries had a great deal of their staff located there and it kind of grew and grew. Later, when they moved the state offices back to Olympia, they left the labs there. It created all kinds of problems, but trying to get some of these technical facilities all back into one area became a big turf war.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What part of this was a concern for your committee? Were you looking at an upgrading of standards and regulations about how these facilities might be run?

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. It's not only an upgrading of standard regulations, but it's also: "stop this duplication of effort." Who's in charge of this whole thing? Just like now, whenever you have an outbreak of E. coli, who's responsible for it? They found it in lettuce. Well now, what is the state going to do? Well, if it's from meat, you've got the meat packing industry involved. If it's from lettuce, you don't have the meat packing industry involved. Is it a subject that you want to have the state regulate or at least be able to say we're certainly giving good clean food to our citizens? And the answer obviously is yes. These are always ongoing things that you're running into.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you tour the state and look at all these little labs and things?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't necessarily look at each and every lab. We were trying to find these points of consolidation. Get some recommendation on: "How best can you people coexist?" The need was to upgrade some things but also consolidate and simplify the process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Behind the scenes work, but nevertheless important for public safety. You also discussed timber management in this committee. The controversy of that day, apparently, was boiled down into sort of a formula: Maximum return versus maximum use; those were the two ways of thinking about state forests. One was to get the "maximum return" for schools and the state buildings and what not, which would be cutting down the trees and logging them. "Maximum use" included camping, watershed protection, all kinds of recreational uses that require the trees to remain standing. There was quite a lot of discussion about how to balance these two approaches. How did you reconcile these two conflicting points of view? Did you have hearings?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, let's look at these statements. First, when you say "maximum use included camping, watershed protection and all kinds of recreational uses that required the trees remain standing, this statement implies that trees may not be removed. Not quite so. Selective harvesting is always in play. Good judgment is required. We did have hearings—lots of them. How do you balance or reconcile two points of view? It was not so simple as there being only two points of view; there were several. But the first step was to define the terms: "manage," "harvest," "maximum return," and "maximum use," plus a few others. Now, this was not easy. When we held hearings, we got many interpretations of these words. And always keep in mind "forest fires."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, forest fires are a part of this discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time one of the biggest problems we had in the state of Washington was forest fires. And when you hit the bottom line, we were actually harvesting nearly as much useful wood by forest fires as we were harvesting intentionally. One of the greatest things we had to prevent or contain forest fires was clear cutting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would act as a firebreak?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The areas were selected in a checkerboard pattern. I was one of these people who were very strong on the clear cutting, because of the terrible, awful waste that we were having with forest fires. The Department of Natural Resources and the Federal Forest Service were setting this up very methodically and administering the cutting practices. Then came the ecologists who said, "We don't want you to clear cut." So now we had a major controversy. We

were just trying as best everybody could to find consensus as to what realistically should be harvested. Couple that with the pressures that the Legislature had on how much revenue the Land Commissioner could produce for schools, school construction, and federal funds, whatever. It became very paramount.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much pressure in this period was there to keep the small mills running? That becomes a big issue later as an employment issue and saving small logging towns. Was that already coming to the fore? I notice one of the issues is log exports, that people are getting alarmed that there were timber jobs, but not processing jobs, because the logs are being exported whole.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's back up and take these one at a time. Yes, it would be nice to keep all the mills open, but is that a requirement of the Legislature? No, the Legislature made it clear that it was not their role to subsidize old, antiquated, and obsolete mill that nobody had bothered to spend a nickel on trying to update. There isn't a damn thing that the state government can do. Next, if a buyer wants to pay top dollar for unprocessed logs, should we sell to that buyer? This leads to that question about logs for export.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this when the Japanese market was taking off?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Japanese market was just taking off like you can't believe it. They wanted the logs cut to their specifications, not into the dimensions we were using. Any time you take a log, you intend to apply some value-added to it. A log that might be worth five hundred dollars as a log might be worth several hundred thousand if it's all packaged as chopsticks. That's where the market is; why not sell them the damn log for chopsticks? To stop log exports is like saying, "Let's everybody cut off free trade." Okay, we stop

all the log exports; do we also stop the wheat exports because we want to sell flour only? If we do that, do you think we're going to hear it from the wheat farmers in eastern Washington? So here again, the Legislature got involved in these darn things. Not by design, but we certainly got the complaints.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know this issue is really big in the eighties and later, but I didn't realize this debate began as early as the mid-sixties.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, absolutely. There were even some suggestions that no timber cut off federal land could be used for exports, but state lands could be used for exports. I mean, there were all kinds of attempts made. This is the very beginning of the running gun battle then and it just continued right on through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Looking ahead, there was an initiative measure to the Legislature in 1967, Number Thirty-two, organized by a committee of people that were worried about this issue. There were two co-chairmen of the Committee for Full Employment in Washington, as they called themselves. John Martinson and T. Evans Wycoffe, respectively, are the co-chairs of the Initiative to the Legislature entitled, "Local Processing of State Timber." "An act establishing a state agency to be known as the Full Employment Commission, providing for a procedure whereby timber sold by the state to "any responsible bidder" and removed from state-owned or administered lands will be branded and will receive primary processing in a facility employing Washington residents, located in the state of Washington or within fifteen miles from any boundary thereof and in an abutting state unless permission is granted by the Full Employment Commission for primary processing elsewhere based upon finding that no reasonable market presently exists for the timber at such a facility, and establishing penalties." They got the signatures and brought this to you.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's what I just outlined to you earlier. These were those attempts made to prevent anything being cut on state lands, to prevent them from ever going to export. However, you could still export logs from federal lands. But at the same token, you can understand the people, even at that time, they were...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they see their towns dying. They were threatened. I don't know enough about timber technology; mills are always upgrading and getting new technology. They sometimes lay off people because they don't need so many as they get new equipment; sometimes it's a technological change rather than what's going on with log exports.

**Mr. Copeland:** Here we are talking about things that happened in 1965 and right now today, you've got people like Boise Cascade who are planting hybrid cottonwood trees intending to harvest them in seventeen years and they're harvesting them in thirteen years in certain areas of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those trees are for the paper mills, aren't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, don't use the words "paper mill," because that is rather broad, generic term. You have to use the words "white paper" because that is computer paper. And if you don't think there isn't a lot of computer paper consumed these days...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We haven't exactly gone to the paperless office.

**Mr. Copeland:** In 1965 they didn't pay any attention to white paper because there wasn't much being consumed. So, who was the primary manufacturer of the white paper? Kimberly Clark. Where were they located? Green Bay, Wisconsin. What did they make? White bond paper and Kleenex. What kind

of wood did they use? Aspen. Today, what happens? With this huge demand for white paper, Boise Cascade says, "We can grow trees but we can't grow aspen; let's grow cottonwood. We don't have very good cottonwoods, let's hybrid one. Let's put it in the ground; how soon can we harvest it? Seventeen years—it's growing a lot faster than we thought—harvest it in thirteen." Bang! There's the white paper business and primarily for computers. But it's a new technology; it's a new field.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A new demand.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a new demand. Something totally changed. Yes, but in 1965 if you told people, "The thing you need to do is plant cottonwood trees and turn them into white paper," they'd say, "What the hell for?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are business cycles—all different kinds of cycles—that people can't anticipate. And so holding on to what you've got is not necessarily the best answer.

**Mr. Copeland:** Change, there's always going to be change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's painful.

**Mr. Copeland:** We just have to recognize and accept the fact that there is change and there will be change. Like the fellow said, "I am not going to do anything but sell carbon paper." Okay! His last name wasn't Xerox was it?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No!

**Mr. Copeland:** No, and I guess he's still trying to sell carbon paper. So, here is the forest products industry; they've had some terrific changes. But by the same token, it's because of a new demand. Boise Cascade for instance—their large plant in Walla Walla



County—they were totally incapable of making any white paper there. They didn't have the facilities to make white paper, so what did they do? They wanted to plop another plant right alongside the one that's making brown paper. And was it to their advantage to do it? Hell, yes. Why? Because this is how much white paper is consumed. It changed the entire ranking as far as the timber industry is concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But nobody then could see that one coming.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we didn't talk about computers in those days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how do you help people who are going through these painful changes? Is there anything the Legislature can do to ease the pain, or retrain people, or do you have any role at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** In some cases yes, but in most cases, no. Particularly if their business is going bust and there's no demand for it any longer: "I'm sorry we just aren't selling buggy whips anymore." Now, some of them would go ahead and say, "Okay, I'm going to retool; I'm going to do something else." Others would say, "I've got to sell buggy whips; that's all I manufacture. I make buggy whips." Well, are you going to make buggy whips all your life? Fine and dandy, but what's your next generation going to do?

One of the wonderful histories of successful businesses in the United States is called the American Fork and Hoe Company, which started in the east years ago, and what did they do? They took some very antiquated lathes and they turned hickory and they made hoe handles and then they made forks—they were American Fork and Hoe. Over time, an awful lot of these things became obsolete and they weren't selling as many fork and hoe

handles, but they had all of these lathes. So somebody said, "I'll tell you what we're going to do. We're going to start making golf shafts out of hickory." Really?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now there's a growing industry.

**Mr. Copeland:** So the American Fork and Hoe started making golf shafts. They put a head on the hickory shaft and wrapped the handle and so on. And they sold a whole bunch of them. And all of a sudden, the golf manufacturer said, "You know, those things break. Can you make them out of steel?" They said, "We don't have steel, but I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll sure give it a go." They created a foundry and they started making steel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they change their name?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it's just a subsidiary; they call it True Temper, and that's the golf shaft. Okay, this is where industry changed to meet the current demand. But if we in the Legislature had an industry that was totally incapable—"Cast our feet in concrete; we are not going to make a change and you have to save us;"—chances of us saving you were virtually zero.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering if there's any way to help them start new industries or if there are special districts you can create; if there are any mechanisms. I think that now those timber towns have various programs that help them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Little pockets, little pockets all over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had the big ones: Weyerhaeuser and what else, in those days?

**Mr. Copeland:** Plum Creek Logging, Simpson, Rayonier, and so forth. You've got the big guys in there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And are they modernizing and some people are just being left behind?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure they are. These guys are really running way ahead of the curve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the end of the gyppo logger phase, the romance of the woods and all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** The gyppo logger is kind of a loose term for a guy who goes in and cuts under contract and hauls the logs off. The forest products industry is kind of an entity all unto itself. I think it became unfairly treated by the ecologists in a many cases where they really didn't need to be. In other words, "You can't cut down a tree because of a spotted owl." I disagree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any discussion in this time period about not cutting right to streams?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was an awful lot of discussion in regard to streams and water runoff. Stream bank protection is very necessary; it's important the bank remain undisturbed. People were saying, "Aren't you afraid that if you clear-cut all of this that everything will erode away?" And the answer was, at that time, the industry's method of harvesting was that you did not disturb "the carpet." The carpet, or the floor, was basically the ground, and it was covered with fallen dead timber and sticks and it had moss on it, and so on. That ground was considered to be stabilized, not something subject to huge erosion. Areas that were subject to erosion had just been denatured by a forest fire. Those areas had no floor, it had no stability; it was

just raw dirt with a very light coat of ash. If you had torrential rains on that carpet then you really got erosion. Now you had real problems. So you take the natural progression of harvesting, even in a clear-cut situation versus a forest fire, it's far more advantageous to go ahead and harvest than have a forest fire.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, how forestry people dealt with fire was going through some changes in thinking, too. There was an evolution of how they thought about forest fires. They were coming back to the idea that some fire is good. But I think this was still an era when they put out every forest fire. Controlled burning was not a method that people used in this era.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I don't think every forest fire is good; I think every forest fire is a waste of a resource. Does the forest have a tendency to rejuvenate after a period of time and at the end, is it better than it was? In many cases yes, in some cases, no. At the time that Yellowstone caught on fire they said, "Let her burn." Now the Forest Service is taking an altogether different look at it and saying, "You know, that's a dumb policy. That really and truly is. Yes, it's going to recover, but it's going to take two hundred years to recover. We really should have tried to put those forest fires out." This is ten years after the fact; now they're saying we made a dumb decision.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The science changes as they learn from their mistakes.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you're not going to take away clear-cutting completely; then you better start cutting and maintaining some corridors in these forests that are huge permanent firebreaks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were such different perspectives on this over the decades.

**Mr. Copeland:** Years ago we harvested more timber by forest fires than we harvested intentionally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know there was always such a pall of smoke in certain areas that people remember it as being, “This is what summer looks like.”

**Mr. Copeland:** We have more standing trees right now, today, than we did at the turn of the century. At the end of the Civil War, the one thing this nation had in great quantities was wonderful saddle horses. Today, we have over twice as many saddle horses than we did at the end of the Civil War. But people don’t realize that there has been a population growth. So these people who are fearfully crying, “We’re going to run out of logs; we’re not going to have anything to cut.” That’s folly; we’ve done a fine job of managing things. Sure, there are areas that we could have managed better, but at the time we did this work on the natural resources, we met with the Land Commissioner’s office. I give Bert Cole and Brian Boyle a lot of credit; two great guys trying as best they could to create a real fine balancing act.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We began our discussion saying that forests are there for recreational needs, too. Dan Evans is, as you know, a great outdoorsman and he was bringing that idea forward, that we needed some areas where urban people could get out and backpack.

**Mr. Copeland:** I agree that they should make as much recreational land available as you possibly can. But how many people are actually going to use it? Take all of the land out on the Peninsula. There’s a great big lake out there, Lake Ozette. How many people have actually hiked into Lake Ozette? I bet fewer people than live here in Thurston County have ever been to Lake Ozette. I mean, it’s lovely, it’s a pristine place; it’s something that

you should keep to allow people to go there. But how many people truly go through that much in order to be able to get there? It’s a couple of nights getting in, and a couple nights getting out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But outfitting people for this kind of recreation was a whole new industry coming into Washington in the mid-sixties. Hiking and backpacking and all kinds of activities.

**Mr. Copeland:** Hiking and backpacking cannot be a sustainable industry. You can’t take that much ground and say, “Well, we’re going to create enough taxes or whatever it is in order to be able to maintain this area and give them all they need to take care of themselves while they use it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a way, though, to get this balance, this maximum use versus maximum return?

**Mr. Copeland:** Maximum use is a perception; it is not a definite number. I don’t know how else to say it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There era was the beginning of the movement to set aside wilderness areas—keep some for logging, some for wilderness. And somehow, figure out which places would be best used, which ways.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well look, I can get one environmentalist in here and he’s going to give you one definition, and I get a logger in here and you’re get an all together different definition. Those definitions are going to be miles apart. Reality is someplace in the middle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which is where a legislator, more or less, has to locate himself? So I wondered how you looked on this issue yourself.

**Mr. Copeland:** I would make sure that forest fires were not going to go to the point where they were going to take in 30,000 acres all in one fell sweep. Chelan County right now, today, has burned 30,000 acres of timber. How many fire breaks are in there, how many clear-cut areas? I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anyway, you were in on the ground floor on this argument.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a fine example of one of those things that would just pop up in the Legislature. They'd come to the Legislature and say, "You've got to do something about our problems."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you follow this issue and stick with this over the years?

**Mr. Copeland:** As a matter of fact, I became very heavily involved with everything having to do with natural resources all the way through my legislative career. On one occasion, I joined Bert Cole and some others on a wonderful trip to Hawaii to study their land-use law. It was enlightening. At the time Hawaii became a state, they wrote some land use laws in conjunction with what they called the "Big Five." The government and the landowners.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a conference, some kind of meeting to learn about how they regulated their land use?

**Mr. Copeland:** First of all, understand the eleven western states—the states that are referred to as land-grant states—have an altogether different set of circumstances in which the state governments operate because they own so much land and there are x-number of acres dedicated. It requires an entirely different kind of management arrangement. During this time, the ecologists really first

started a massive movement—and I don't mean this in a derogatory sense, but you know, "Don't cut any trees; leave everything natural; allow forest fires to burn; keep everybody out; maintain the road; and so on." So it was with this backdrop that our Land Commissioner was for the first time...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this still Bert Cole?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was Bert Cole. For the first time, his department was placed in a position of high prominence with a lot of public scrutiny as to what he was doing and how he was managing the land. And of course his aim and objective was to manage the land for maximum dollar-income for the state with all the various uses that the state had for that income.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a moment, I'm guessing he was a bit of an old-school politician? He's very controversial.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seems to be of the era of—you wouldn't call it consensus politics; you would say it would be "my way" and somewhat autocratic and somewhat, where he does what he wants, or feels he needs to do, without a lot of consultation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, you're right about that. He did not come from the school of "Oh, before we do this, we have to go to a public hearing; we have to publish this," and so on. No, he came from the school: it was Wednesday and that was the time for him to sign all of the orders that the following things had happened and then he would ...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was the Land Commissioner and that was his job.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was the Land Commissioner and he was going to do it, so he went ahead. He issued the order that the particular timber interests got their goal: “Log off x-number of acres; my contract said so.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he’s rubbing up against a new point of view, shall we say?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m trying to bring it into focus. All this time I’m in politics big changes are happening. You see, there’s this big change that all of a sudden the public gets to find out what in heaven’s name is going on. The communications have improved; our reporting from the press had improved; the knowledge of how vast the state of Washington is, that is coming into sharp focus. So now the ecologists are beginning to come in and say, “Wait a minute, let’s take a look at this.” The point is that we were not the only state that this was happening in; it was happening in every state. So it was in the general interest of the Legislature to find out what other states were doing, how they were moving and what was it they really were being confronted with.

To resume our discussion of Hawaii’s land use laws, this occurred a very short period of time after Hawaii became a state and now we were going to go over there and study what they did. When we got to Hawaii, we discovered they’d written the Hawaiian constitution to give huge powers to the land use law and it designated certain areas that were going to be used for certain things, it was really quite amazing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine being such a small land mass, they don’t have room to move around. They’ve got to pay attention.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they had a small land mass, but they did have, in essence, some state land. This was state land that was dedicated—and I could be corrected, but I think it was dedicated—from King Kamehameha for

the support and education of the Hawaiian children. So it was, in essence, a land grant state. But then as far as the property owners were concerned they had what they called the Big Five: the sugar companies of Castle and Cooke, Alexander and Baldwin, C. Brewer and Company, Amjac, and Theo Davies and Company. At the time that they were creating the state of Hawaii, they went to the Big Five and said, “Okay, this is what we want to do with land management; now will you guys sign off on this?” Their proposal affected a great deal of property that the Big Five owned but they recognized the fact that they were going to have to do something. So they said, “Sure, we will do it for the preservation of the state of Hawaii. We’re interested in the conserving this; we’re interested in our water resources; we’re interested in growing; we’re interested in our environment,” and things like that. So it was with the concurrence with the Big Five that they created the land use laws in the state of Hawaii. If you take a look at the Hawaiian land use laws and you look at their structure of government, you’ll find that in the state of Hawaii, there’s God Almighty and right under God Almighty are the county commissioners.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do they have a legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, they have a legislature, but the county commissioners are the ones that have the great, huge authority. And every major island is a county unto themselves; the county commissioners in Maui, they run Maui. There is no doubt about it. But the county commissioners have just a huge authority as far as land use law, building permits, roads, public access to land, the beaches—all of the county commissioners designated the beaches public. You do not have a private beach in Hawaii anymore; years ago you did. But when the land use law came in with Hawaii becoming a state, they obliterated



that and gave the authority to the county commissioners. The other thing that they did, they required a total dislocation of the way the sugar companies were doing things. Prior to the time when Hawaii became a state, they had a great number of sugar mills. And these mills would wash the cane before it went through the first stages of the refining process. They would gather the water from the mountains and bring it down, wash it and dump the wastewater into the ocean. Oh, change! “Bang, hey, we’re interested in water management, what are we going to do? We’re going to take all of those sugar mills...”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine it takes a lot of water.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The sugar companies moved their cane washing facilities into the mountains. Washing takes place at the higher elevation and the wastewater is now used for irrigating the fields below.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, use it twice; don’t just dump it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, but that required the approval of the Big Five and they had to go through a lot of expense to do it. But they were perfectly willing to do it. They understood that they had a very unique situation that the water they drink today landed on the state of Hawaii, in all probabilities, in the last five days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have to be much more careful?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. So we were learning how other states were operating. We were asking the ecologists for their input. We were exchanging thoughts and ideas with other states. This was just more evidence of public involvement. These were the first baby steps for the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When we’re talking about this we should differentiate between what you’re calling ecologists—who are basically scientists—and backpacker types. I know they are often clubbed together.

**Mr. Copeland:** I recognized that there is a difference. I don’t know that I know a better definition of them. They all have their own points of view and they all must be heard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s a movement that really takes off about then. So when you came back to Washington, were any of the other states doing things that you could use here, or was our situation different?

**Mr. Copeland:** Our situation with the ecology movement was not different from the eleven western states. This was running right down parallel paths in Colorado, California, Utah, Oregon, obviously, and Idaho, certainly. Oregon and Idaho have very, very similar things that we do—a very large timber industry and they were on the premature panic, if you want to call it that. They’re afraid that they’re going to be completely put out of business and we’re not going to build any homes in the state of Washington anymore and you’ll never be able to use a two-by-four, and so on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Really?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. You know, you’ve got an extreme posture on this side and an extreme posture on the other side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes awhile to find the middle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that’s all the Legislature was ever trying to do. Every time a problem came up, it was the “Chicken Little” thing, you know: “Run, run, run, the sky is falling, or better yet: run, run, run, you know, the

glaciers are coming!” So we always were kind of caught in the middle on those things. Trying to find consensus and make some real honest-to-god sense out of this whole thing takes time and study.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of this was based on fairly new science, just beginning to find its legs.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, right. But we were gaining on public involvement. There were those people that were very vocal in forest management and they didn’t want to have any clear-cutting at all. They just wanted you to go into sixty acres of timber and take out five trees and that’s the end of it. And then come back in a year later and take out another ten trees. This sounds good but from the standpoint of economics, it doesn’t work. So this is another one of the major things. We were learning about “forest management.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The forestry field itself had a wide range of opinions. Within the industry there was turmoil.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, gosh yes; the people in the logging business see a dollar bottom line. They go out and cruise timber and they make an estimate as to how many board feet there are in a particular acre of ground. Pure dollars. The backpacker sees it another way. The ecologists have a separate view.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And as a legislator you’re plunk in the middle? You’re not a specialist. So how did you go about formulating your own position?

**Mr. Copeland:** With a great deal of caring. You would sit for hours on end and receive testimony from all these positions and then you contacted experts in the department, people in other states, and said, “If we go this

way, what’s it going to do? If we go that way, what is the outcome?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These groups tend to see these things in black and white. So if everybody’s a little bit unhappy, that’s the middle ground?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, there was the middle ground.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you try to bring the groups together or would you just find the middle ground yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** If middle ground were to be found they would find it. But this took lots of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They weren’t talking to each other?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, we’d bring them together; we got them in the same room, they were civil. They certainly presented their point of view and they’d take the other person’s bill and ridicule the hell out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they’re advocates; they’re not necessarily listening. You’re there to listen, but they’re not.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. But please remember, this is the first time that they have anyone to talk to. This is their turn to talk. And we simply must be good listeners. Politics is the art of the possible; I guess what we were trying to do was find the possible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what kind of solutions were you able to come up with?

**Mr. Copeland:** Small but progressive. Make people feel better. This was a learning experience for all. But many of them were

heading off some of the extreme positions on both sides, to a point where, “Thou shall not cut any timber in all of Clallam County,” or something like that. That particular stance is not practical. But at the same token, “thou shall cut down every tree in Clallam County,” that’s equally as dumb.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you end up with something that says, “Thou shall cut more carefully and more thoughtfully and you shall do this and this to mitigate?”

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. I’ve got to give that to Bert, because Bert was of the old school. He did not like public hearings. He had to change his entire focus of his department. Now, in doing that his defense mechanism was to run to the Legislature for help to shore up his position. Frequently, the Legislature didn’t agree with his position; but he realized he had to move. The Legislature forced him; there was no alternative. The Legislature opened up the operation of his office to public scrutiny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he able to change? He was in office for a long time; I’m assuming he had some political skills. He could see the handwriting on the wall?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, he did. But here he was, operating a department that nobody knew a great deal about, didn’t pay much attention to. They just knew that he provided an income to the state of Washington. It was winding up in the General Fund and nobody paid any attention to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think timber issues, from everything I’ve read, have always been shrouded a little in this state. Right from territorial days when the big companies were logging public lands as fast as they could, down through the era of more regulation.

Bringing all that into the public scrutiny was a huge process. Even creating DNR [Department of Natural Resources] was in itself a big process.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, there’s no doubt about it. Things were beginning to change and give Bert Cole credit for the changes. They may not have come easily or quickly, but changes were in the mill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Washington a leader among the eleven western states in this area of public land management?

**Mr. Copeland:** In all probability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this be something that the state legislative leaders group would address?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was just an issue of interest for only the eleven western states were involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you continue to meet with the other states, or once you’d gone to these big conferences, like in Hawaii, you pretty much went home and figured it out?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the committees on natural resources in the states kept good communications going. The staff would work back and forth and we’d have free information telling us what was going on in Colorado, what New Mexico was doing and so on. Again, a legislative first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a useful way to solve problems—to share information.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well it was timely, for sure. Just to peak ahead a bit, many bills grew out of these discussions. Some of them were for

new parks, recreational use of state lands—a bill, House Bill 72, did pass to that had to do with regulating that area. Some bills coming out of this interim committee had more to do with tourism—for establishing the Lewis and Clark Highway, one of our historic highways. For using tidelands for recreation—you had a lot of bills that pushed through right about this time. There was one bill to place all state-owned forest lands under the Department of Natural Resources on a sustained-yield basis that did not pass; I imagine that was a bit of a sea change that would take more time to work through.

**Mr. Copeland:** Here again, this is one of the extreme positions. Now, when I say extreme position, if I remember correctly, sustained-yield basis then became a criteria for everything you could do and then you had no flexibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a sort of a buzz word; what does it mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** You had to prove that whatever you harvested, you replaced it. If you harvested 500,000 board feet, you had to show that you had 500,000 growing. The bill had virtually no flexibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this isn’t just a goal, it’s a mandate. It didn’t pass. Would it have been more reasonable to have it as something to strive towards rather than as an absolute “you must do?”

**Mr. Copeland:** The people that were introducing it didn’t want to have it that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that because there was a lack of trust?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, lack of trust, that’s a good way to say it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier, we talked about the agricultural aspect of that interim committee. The bill that called for a Governor’s advisory committee to study the laboratory problem didn’t pass, either. So some of these things, even though they sound rather critical, take a while to move through the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me explain something at this point. Quite often, you’ll find a bill that will be somewhat of a bend in the statutes. “The various departments shall do this having to do with their laboratories,” and things like that. Quite often the bill doesn’t pass, but what happened was the Legislature very subtly put all of the departments on notice: “Get your act together; start combining all these duplication of services.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you do it, not as a bill, but as a regulatory measure within an agency?

**Mr. Copeland:** The departments got together and they said, “Okay listen, all three of us are testing for the same thing. Let’s pool our resources and we’ll just put in one lab and do it under the assistance of our own budget. I’ll put in a third and you put in a third and you put in a third,” and they said, “Okay, that’s fine.” Bing, it got done!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that actually a better solution?

**Mr. Copeland:** Much better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That brings up the whole discussion about why does everything have to be legislated? Why can’t agencies set their own regulations?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is turf; they’re protecting their own turf; they’re protecting their own entity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So even though a bill doesn't pass, they don't take that to mean there's not enough support and they don't have to do anything? They still notice and move on it before you do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, they'd much rather do it themselves than have the Legislature get in there and dink around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as soon as you start having hearings and poking around, then it's a wake-up call?

**Mr. Copeland:** Frequently, in the hearings the question would come up, "If we don't pass this, what is going to prevent you from going ahead and deciding to do this anyway?" "Well, you know, I guess we can."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there's nothing prohibiting them; they just haven't quite gotten to it?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, and oftentimes you can extract certain commitments from them, "Can you guys get together and see what you can do and give us a report on your progress before the next session?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if an agency does move along and solve the problem, does the Legislature just sort of pull back and let a bill die then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, this is the velvet glove approach; this isn't the hammer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's not like this legislation failed necessarily, it's that it did its job without having to go through the whole process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And much legislation—even though it is introduced and fails—puts somebody on notice, "You better get your act together. I think there are areas of improvement here." But here again,

you know, you create these departments and everybody's got their own little walls. "I do this inside of my cubicle and you do that inside of your cubicle and I don't look over my wall to see whatever thing you're doing." But how come we're duplicating the efforts?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the nature of big organizations. It happens in corporations, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All that action fell under the Agricultural and Natural Resources Interim Committee work that you did. But there was a second committee, before we move on, that I wanted to make sure we talked about, of which you were also the chair, having to do with air safety. The only issue that really seemed to be critical was the search and rescue operations. Were there some airplane crashes that were mishandled that instigated this committee's work? Was there some outside event that pushed you along in this direction?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were two things that were going on at that time. Number one, we had a very lax procedure for ownership identification and taxing of airplanes. Airplane owners—and I'll pick on the Spokane area—could take their airplane and keep it based in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. And they would register and say it's an Idaho airplane and bring it over and fly it in and out of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To avoid taxes, I imagine.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, correct—personal property taxes. So the airplane itself became quite migratory. And every time you'd run it down, it would all of a sudden have a new home. That was one aspect. The other aspect was the safety one. We were coming into an era of better radio gear, better communications.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were more and more people flying small planes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots more people were flying planes. Not only that, we have the Cascade Range. And it's a lovely piece of real estate, but a dangerous son of a gun when it comes to flying. You can take off in what you consider to be ideal weather conditions, and by the time you hit the Cascades you can run into weather fronts that are just absolutely unbelievable. But there was available, on a very limited basis, a little radio transmitter, reasonably inexpensive. It had a small magnetic cap on it. If you jarred the transmitter and that magnetic cap fell off, it automatically started to send out an emergency signal. And if you tuned in on that frequency you could tell one of these things fired off. It didn't take very sophisticated gear to be able to identify and locate the signal. So it was an emergency locator. So we were trying to do is get the airplanes in the state of Washington to equip themselves with this. And of course, there was reluctance from a lot of people. "You know, that's an awful lot of expense, what do you have to go through?" and so on. And we thought, "Yes, it's a lot of expense, but at the same time, if you want us to go find you when you're down, are you going to be of any help to us?" So these two things coupled together pushed the airplane safety bills very rapidly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was flying at this time quite unregulated? People could just fly all over the place and nobody knew where they were and what they were doing? I noticed that there was some line in here about registering flight plans that people were resisting.

**Mr. Copeland:** Unregulated is a good word. You can still fly all over, right now today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don't have to tell anybody what you're doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** You don't have to file a flight plan in order to be able to fly from point A to point B. But all good pilots do if they're going to go any distance at all. But if you want to go out here in a little grass strip that's less than a quarter mile from where we're sitting right now and take off in a Piper Cub and fly down to Ocean Shores, you can do it and you don't have to file a flight plan. So no, it didn't get into any kind of a mandatory thing. The air space is still pretty free. There are more and more light planes and commercial planes flying all the time and they will continue to grow.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the little planes getting in the way of the big planes?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. The real importance in all of this was when, all of a sudden, we'd just have a plane drop completely out of sight. Did he have one of these little emergency locaters aboard? If he did, then you could find him very quickly. If he didn't, then it was the old needle in the haystack. "He was flying someplace from Wenatchee into the Seattle area. Oh boy, where is he now?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot of ground. Was it just the expense that people just didn't want to bother? I mean, you'd think it'd be a good thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it's an expense; it cost at that time, I think, it was about one hundred and twenty dollars or something like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But anyone who can afford an airplane can surely afford to buy that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's exactly right, Anne, but here again it was regulatory; you were required to have it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were pilots registered with licenses like car drivers are? Or could anyone fly?

**Mr. Copeland:** All are licensed. That's all done by the federal government, not by the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And these search and rescue operations, according to the minutes of the meetings for that committee, sounded a little haphazard. Nobody was really clear who was in charge, whose responsibility it was, how to reimburse people. When you call together a whole group of flyers from your local area that were going to be engaged in a search and rescue, who would pay for their gas?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were all volunteers. They try to locate them just as soon as they possibly can.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As there were more and more flyers, did that get harder to get people to see that they were part of a community of flyers and help each other out?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, really not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes when you reach a large number like that, some people don't want to respond.

**Mr. Copeland:** They had a pretty good cadre of people that would, certainly. I was based in Walla Walla so I wouldn't come over here for a search and rescue mission that was going on in Snohomish County and vice versa. But if we had somebody down who we thought was in the Blue Mountains in Walla Walla County, we would have fifteen to twenty airplanes in the air within the hour.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you do this yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, on a couple of occasions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever find the plane?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I never did. Search and rescue was coordinated through this Department of Aeronautics at that time; it's now, of course, under the Highways group. They had a budget and it was a very minimal budget. But if you were out on an official search and rescue—the director had declared that there was an emergency—then they would reimburse you something for fuel. Obviously, it cost the guy that owned the airplane a heck of a lot more but he was interested in doing it because he knew that he may be down sometime and he'd like to have somebody looking for him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had the people that were keeping their plane in Coeur d'Alene and made them pay some kind of fee or tax on their plane, would that go into a fund for this sort of thing, or would it just go into the General Fund?

**Mr. Copeland:** The General Fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was a relationship between getting all these planes registered and accounted for and this search and rescue piece?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Several bills, again, came out of this committee. Many of them sailed through the Legislature, so it seemed like people understood that this needed the attention and regulation. One of them increased membership in the Aeronautics Commission. Would that be the group that oversaw this whole procedure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A state registration of pilots, charging aircraft excise taxes, and registration laws are all issues you referred to. "Providing for excise tax on fuel," would that again build this fund?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Granting authority to the Department of Civil Defense to engage in and coordinate search and rescue operations." All these bills passed. Would that be to have better coordination, to say who's in charge and have a procedure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Civil Defense had a piece of it but did not necessarily coordinate with the Department of Aeronautics. And the Department of Aeronautics at that time—it was actually called a department and had a director and his name was Bill Gebenini—but it was very, very small. Nevertheless, it was a department and the director reported directly to the Governor. Later on, Dan folded Aeronautics right into the Department of Transportation, so Aeronautics was just under Transportation.

**Mr. Copeland:** This interim had the most active committees ever in the history of the state. This was due in a major part to Speaker Schaefer. But who was the big winner in all this activity? The people were! Hardly a district in the state did not have some kind of legislative meeting at some point. The press played it up and the people turned out in flocks and droves. This was their first opportunity to have "some input." Also, for the first time, a legislative committee met in another state to view firsthand how they handled land management. What a wonderful educational experience for legislators, department directors, as well as staff. Did I feel good about these developments? You're darn right I did, as well as the press, the public, and the other legislative bodies.



*House members who were private pilots work on bills pertaining to general aviation. Ted Bottiger, Tom Copeland and Bob Goldsworthy meet with Ronald Pretti [second from left] of the Aeronautics Commission in the Office of the Speaker Pro Tempore, 1967.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a tremendous success rate for these bills. Interim committee work really does jump-start a lot of important legislation, in these two cases at any rate.



Walla Walla, Wash., Mon., Nov. 7, 1966 Union-Bulletin 15

# TOM COPELAND

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## STATE LEGISLATURE



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- Every letter regarding political matters written to Copeland has been answered. His mail from home amounts to approximately 1700 letters per session.

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Tom Copeland's sixth run for the Legislature.

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## CHAPTER 13

### MODERNIZING LEGISLATIVE FACILITIES

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's step out of our session-by-session exploration and look more comprehensively at one of your longer-term interests. There was a resolution passed early in the 1965 session that you co-sponsored with John O'Brien to study the facilities, the workload and the expenditures of the Legislature to improve your process. It led to an appointment for both of you—and other members from both the House and Senate, too—to serve on the Joint Interim Committee on Facilities and Operations. You were beginning to study the nitty-gritty of how the Legislature works in a more formal way. You and John O'Brien were both appointed as liaison members to the Senate. Is that a special role, different from the other members' roles? What did that involve, running back and forth to the Senate to organize meetings?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, maybe you should make a recitation with how many people got appointed on that committee first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were six senators: Fred Dore being the chair, Robert Bailey, Joe Chytil, Gordon Herr, Harry Lewis, and Perry Woodall. And then from the House there were James Andersen, Bill Day, Elmer Jastad, Richard Morphis, Ray Olsen, Harold Wolf and then yourself and John O'Brien

as the liaisons between the two groups. So it's a fairly sizeable group. Your resolution opens with: "Whereas the operations of the Legislature of the state of Washington can be greatly improved by adequate facilities for the members of the Legislature and the public." And "whereas, the present Legislative Building is overcrowded and physical facilities are drastically needed for the members of the Senate and the House," and "whereas, the Legislature is required to handle the state's need in a relative short period of time..." That's that quick sixty-day provision. "Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Speaker of the House of Representatives appoint a bipartisan committee composed of five representatives from each party to investigate and inquire into the need for the following: one, facilities for the legislators, the public and news media; two, the workload of the Legislature; three, expenditures and economies of the legislative operations. And be it further resolved that said committee bring its report back to this session and recommend action for this session."

This was an immediate charge, not a leisurely type of activity here. It was adopted and you were all appointed. You were considered the vice chairman, with Mr. O'Brien being the chair. This charge would address the heart of the issues that became your hallmark—the area considered one of your biggest contributions to the Legislature. Did you and John O'Brien get to some pitch of frustration and say, "We have to have something. This isn't working very well." It was interesting that it was John O'Brien who headed this because you've indicated that he was happy with the process and that it worked for him. Did something change for him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. This is called evolution, also. John had just gone through the 1963 session, which was the coalition that he did not...



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Deep shock to the system there!

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. And then he came through the 1965 session and was not elected Speaker. And so at that time I think John had truly changed his position a great deal, but he knew. John was a pragmatist, don't misunderstand; I mean, he's nobody's dummy. He's a great guy and I like him a lot. But at that time he recognized that there were going to be some changes and he better be a participant in those changes rather than sitting on the outside and not having Mr. Schaeffer appoint him on the committee. So that's why he really wanted to be on that committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was repositioning himself entirely?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Saying, "The old ways don't work; let's go for this."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So he isn't saying the old ways don't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or they aren't going to happen that way anymore?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, "Can we do this over a period of time so it doesn't make us look quite so bad?" or words to that effect. He knew where I was coming from. He knew that the public had been shut out on this. He knew that the public couldn't find their way around; this is self-evident. So things were going to change. So there's a whole myriad of things that we're just going to have to back up and take a look at.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a sea change, this is big.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is big; this is really big as far as the Legislature's concerned. This is the start of huge changes. Okay, running right along with this you have to understand that now at this point we have Daniel J. Evans, you know, very interested in this type of change, also. So Dan never backed up a bit as far as the legislative branch is concerned and what their involvement should be. He was a part of the process of this whole thing. We never could have gotten some of these changes put together if it hadn't been for Dan. I mean, it isn't a case of where we drug him in there kicking and screaming or anything of the kind. Dan was perfectly willing to go ahead and make those changes. So we finally decided that we were headed to occupy some office space in what then was the old Highways Building. Dan was perfectly willing to say to General Administration, "Make the space available; we're making the move." So that was an executive decision that had to be made; we could not do that all by ourselves. So what we did with this, we now had a mechanism in place in order to be able to study this and see what we can't do with the facilities we have and how long it's going to take over time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are the people on this committee, were these people that you had been talking to about these issues? Were they on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They recognized the issues and they were ready?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. And you notice that Fred Dore was the chairman of the Senate group. He absolutely insisted that he be on there. Fred was a nice senator but a non-functional type of arrangement. All he wanted was publicity, and that's all he got out of it; he

never did anything. But the key to this whole thing was Bob Bailey. Bob knew—he knew that, quote, “the process that he was familiar with” in the Senate was going to have to change and he was aware. Bob Greive was not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s not on that committee.

**Mr. Copeland:** But he’s not on the committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So Fred Dore was sort of window dressing, in a sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Fred Dore is strictly window dressing. Bob Bailey, Harry Lewis and Perry Woodall—those are the key players on that Senate side. And Harry had just left the House and gone to the Senate and he certainly was a heavy-duty player in that. And as far as the House people were concerned, all of them were just, “Let’s get rid of this business of five telephones.” Because that’s all we had in the House, we had five telephones. And that was it. So no, it was step one and it was a big one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine this was exciting to you; you were going to make some progress here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, at that time you never know whether you’re going to make any progress or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s some movement, at any rate.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Now you have a vehicle. Can we do anything with it? How much can we get done? What is the means that it takes?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you describe how you met and how you went about this?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Senate took it upon themselves that they wanted to meet individually. They did not necessarily really want to meet with the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s why you had to have the liaison people?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was a part of it. It made me feel a little bit more comfortable, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The dignity of the Senate was somehow different?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think the dignity of the Senate had anything to do with it; it was more Fred Dore’s own personal application of what he should be doing and what he shouldn’t be doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you met separately. Occasionally together, or never?

**Mr. Copeland:** If we did it was very occasionally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were most of the issues already well known or did you dream up new things?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Oh, I don’t think we dreamt up anything new. It was a case of what are the constraints that we are going through and how best can we do this? Simple little things like, “What is the Committee on Legislative Process?” the one that required the legislators to proof-read the bills? “Why did a legislator have to do the proof-reading? Can’t we hire a proof-reader, for heaven’s sake?” That would be far more than an attempt to doing something active in the Legislature. And that was just number one. Okay then,

number two, “Why do we have to have a type-written bill and a printed bill?” “Well, it says in the state law that all bills have to be printed by the State Printer.” “So why don’t we change the state law?” “Well, if you do that then the State Printer won’t have anything to do.” “No kidding, they won’t have anything to do? Oh, is that right? Well, let’s back up and review that one.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you have a list in your mind already for this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, you bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m sure, I’m sure you did! Immediately, you’re ready to go and you pull out all these things that had been bugging you for years?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, oh surely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But were people—was it because the questions had not been raised before out of tradition or inertia or what?

**Mr. Copeland:** Tradition.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there ready solutions?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That didn’t come quite so easily?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there were not ready solutions. Here again, Bob Greive is still running that Senate and he’s got his “process” in place that doesn’t include the following. And he doesn’t want to include the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was a major cultural shift for the Legislature. How did you persuade people that changes absolutely had to happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn’t have to persuade people. Well, the first people that we could talk to, of course, were the press and the press wanted to know how this was going to help them. And they could see the handwriting on the wall. “Heaven’s sakes, if we got rid of this gobbly-goop we could go ahead and start scheduling some of those meetings so that people would know in advance when a committee is going to meet and when a bill is going to be heard.” I mean, this was: “You’re kidding me, Copeland, you’re going to do what? You’re going to tell the public a week in advance that the Committee on Education is going to hold a hearing on a bill having to do with the K-12 program?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I notice that one of the things that had to actually be written down was to not just mention bills by numbers but to say what the subject of the bill is.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Give people a fighting chance?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why not? You see, we didn’t have that and then of course, if you follow the fine print, we didn’t have a fiscal note yet. So here we were on Second Reading, a mandatory process, and somebody says, “I want to put an amendment on the bill.” “Is that going to cost money?” “Oh, I think so.” “How much?” “I don’t know. Don’t pay any attention to it; we’ll send that to the Budget Committee later on and they can just add it to the budget.” There was no requirement for a fiscal note, so that was another thing. So you take and start layering all of these things one on top of the other, did we have a great deal to change? And the answer is hell, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There’s a very interesting report. You come back quite quickly, February

19<sup>th</sup> with it. Your process was very efficient. “The State Capitol Committee studies indicate the need of a number of state agencies for more building space than existing Capitol buildings provide.” First point. “New building construction, together with some remodeling of existing Capitol buildings, is required to supply this need and to provide the Legislature with necessary offices, committee rooms, hearing rooms and work rooms now for some time in contemplation.” This is, I think, the first mention of private offices for legislators.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that you would have not just a steno pool, but a secretary and amazingly enough, perhaps room for a research assistant of some kind. Was that difficult to get people to look at? I mean, that is a huge change.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was it because it cost money or were there other issues involved here?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the above. Costs money, too much of a change, a lot more staff, where would you put them, how can you justify the expenditure, and so forth. All of the negatives all thrown up there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But again, it’s this sort of penny-pinching, crabbed view of the Legislature that “you should not have any money; you should not have any resources; you should not have any space.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This does all happen. So, are you at a sort of cusp here where people are starting to say, “Well, wait a minute, this doesn’t work.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, we were there. We arrived; there wasn’t any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a lot of foot dragging on this or was this—once you had ironed out the difficulties of what building you would go to or what exactly it would look like—do people catch onto this idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m certain that all of the new legislators caught onto the idea very, very quickly. It was then the people that had been there for a long time and they were perfectly accustomed to the process and they didn’t want to change anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The older members weren’t tempted by the idea of an office?

**Mr. Copeland:** Were they interested in making those changes? And the answer is, “Hell, no! What are you talking about? You’re going make some changes around here and come bother me? You bet I’m not going to have anything to do with you!” So most of the objections that we had at that point were coming from the Senate; it wasn’t coming from the House. John O’Brien could have been a big leader and a big opponent of this if he chose to do so. But no, you see he chose not to. So now he really came on board with this whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was one of the key things that happened here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, there is no question about it. All of a sudden, he recognized that the time had come, that the Legislature was at a crossroad. Was the Legislature going to ultimately have the same stature in state government that the Judiciary and Executive had? And all of a sudden, hearing-wise, the dimension factor had already set in. And now,

in order to be able to get out of it, he had to go ahead and go along with some changes. So he was perfectly willing to do it. I congratulate the guy for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He's someone who cherished the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** Hey listen, the guy lived and died for the institution. I mean, he wound up being there fifty years. I mean, fifty years in the Legislature, for heaven's sakes! Is that a piece of his life? There are certain things that he accomplished in his legislative career that were great, but there were certain things that he didn't want to see change at the time and all of a sudden, they started changing around him. Now he's in a position, "Hey, they're going to make me change this. I better be a participant in this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You recommend at least one new building on the Capitol site and remodeling of other buildings. I read that the idea was to remove the old Governor's Mansion and complete the Wilder & White plan that had, in the original plan, flanked the Legislature with another building to match, the Insurance Building. It was all supposed to be symmetrical and the Governor's Mansion was in the way and was never removed so that office building was never built. Was that part of this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the part you're missing—this is the story I was told at the time—that the time that Washington State acquired the property the building was occupied, and I can't tell you his name, but it was a doctor here in Thurston County. And he sold that to the state of Washington with the understanding that he got to remain in that house.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor's Mansion?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. That was his home. And it also provided that in the event that he died, his wife got to live there for the rest of her life.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a life estate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. So, they started the construction of the Capitol Building, the Temple of Justice, the Insurance Building—the rest of the Wilder and White plan. The Insurance Building was supposed to be duplicated over there on the site. Okay, then there was the Public Lands and Social Security Building, that they called it at the time...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now called the John Cherberg Building.

**Mr. Copeland:** On the rear. And the Public Health Building. So those were the basic buildings. Well, what happened, the doctor passed away, but his wife lived to be well into her nineties. And when she died, it was during a time when the Legislature had just left. And Roland Hartley was the Governor. Governor Hartley did not ask the Legislature for anything; he just moved into the house. He flat moved in and he took his own personal belongings and he went into the house and he said this was now, quote, "the Governor's Mansion." So that became the Governor's Mansion not by legislative authority, not by some grand scheme or anything of the kind. Roland Hartley moved in!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I didn't know this story.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, so then the next Governor comes in, and the next Governor comes in, and so on, and so forth. It becomes, quote, "the Governor's Mansion." Okay, so not withstanding the White and Wilder plan, there was also another architect that I think was Paul Thiry, out of Seattle. Actually, the



Legislature had asked him to come up with a plan—this is during this time—for expansion of the executive office building. And he came with a plan showing a building where now there is the parking lot, which is the great, big, huge elevated piece of ground directly north of the present Governor’s Mansion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of where they have the helicopter pad?

**Mr. Copeland:** Or even down further where the parking garage is. And he devised a building in there conceptually where there were basically three parts. One was living quarters for the Governor. Another was an entire section of the building which was the Governor’s office and the executive branch. And the third portion of the building was for very formal functions. And this building was designed to have the most beautiful view in the entire state of Washington, where it would look at about a hundred and eighty degrees sweep looking due north right smack up the inlet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d have the Olympic Mountains; you’d have the water...

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and I was very much in favor of the location of this building and the fact that we could build a Governor’s Mansion that would accommodate all of those things and relieve the pressure on the Legislative Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you’d take all of the Governor’s staff right out of the Legislative Building?

**Mr. Copeland:** Part of the Governor’s staff. And then of course, what I had felt should happen, the Secretary of State, the Treasurer and the Auditor had no connection with the Legislature at all and we should relocate them at some other point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now you’re talking radical changes! I bet you were popular.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now I’m talking radical changes! That was at the time that the press came to me and said, “By what authority do you have to give the state elected officials the big heave-ho out of the Capitol Building?” And so I didn’t respond because I knew that Adele Ferguson was there and I forget who else. But I didn’t respond; I just walked through the rotunda and I went down on the front steps of the Capitol Building and I pointed in the air and I said, “What does it say?” And they looked up and there emblazoned in the sandstone are the words “Legislative Building.” I said, “That’s the authority right there. That’s the authority of the Legislature and as far as the Governor, the Secretary of State, the Auditor and the Treasurer, they’re just our guests.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a plan where they should go?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. If you’re talking about expanding state government and what functions they had, they could have been moved out; there isn’t a question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, the Insurance Commissioner was located elsewhere, and the Lands Commissioner, the Superintendent of Public Instruction—those are all state-wide elected officials.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. At any rate, so now let’s talk about Paul Thiry’s building. So Paul spent a lot of time on this. It was a beautifully designed building with the intention that that would be—now, it would allow the vacation of the property where the current Governor’s Mansion and allow the...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The missing matching building?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Wilder and White plan to come into effect with the duplication of that building alongside, which was nothing more than the completion of that, plus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe all those officials could have been in that building?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's entirely possible and a lot of them could have been. But who did I run into? The Washington State Historical Society, boom! So out came the cannons. Boy, were they after me big-time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because the Governor's Mansion was considered an historic building?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely! Yes, and who did they recruit on their behalf? Nancy Evans! And Nancy called me and said, "Tom, what is the idea of you trying to tear down the Governor's Mansion?" And my response was, "I'm just trying to build you and future First Ladies a hell of a lot better facility than you're living in." "Well, this is the Governor's Mansion," was her response. I said, "I don't care; it doesn't have any historical value as far as I'm concerned. Roland Hartley just didn't do anything but interlope on the darn thing because it was—it had been deserted." "Well, but Roland Hartley, you know, he was the Governor." I said, "Okay, then Roland Hartley was the Governor, I'm just trying to complete the Wilder and White plan here."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which also has historic significance.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, far more than what they had in there, oh boy. Then, I think I referred to the Washington State Historical

Society very jokingly as the Washington State Hysterical Society.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think you win friends doing that! So, Nancy Evans, of course, is famous for renovating and refurbishing the present and continuous Governor's Mansion.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but there's a lovely story. It was probably not that long after this was going on, that she had a tea party up there in the summer and some ladies walked out on the porch and the porch is all wooden floor, you know, and painted battleship grey and one of them happened to be very heavy set and she fell through the porch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear! I thought you were leading up to that.

**Mr. Copeland:** So yes! Were there a lot of renovations that had to be made? Oh far more than what the building was worth, but that was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's always been a controversy and it continues to be. I mean, the building was a bit ramshackle and needed a lot of work because it was apparently never properly designed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was build prior to the time of quick lime. And quick lime is the stuff that holds the brick together real good and the stuff—the mortar that's in there right now—is not holding the brick together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is that how the bats get in?

**Mr. Copeland:** I can take and jam my fingers in between any given brick up there on the building if I want. At any rate...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So these are the things that don't quite happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** But no, at the time that the state of Washington—the Legislature—bought that property, they had no intention of that ever being the Governor's Mansion. And Roland Hartley just did that all by himself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting. How did you focus on the Public Lands and Social Security Building and the Public Health Building, the one now named for John O'Brien?

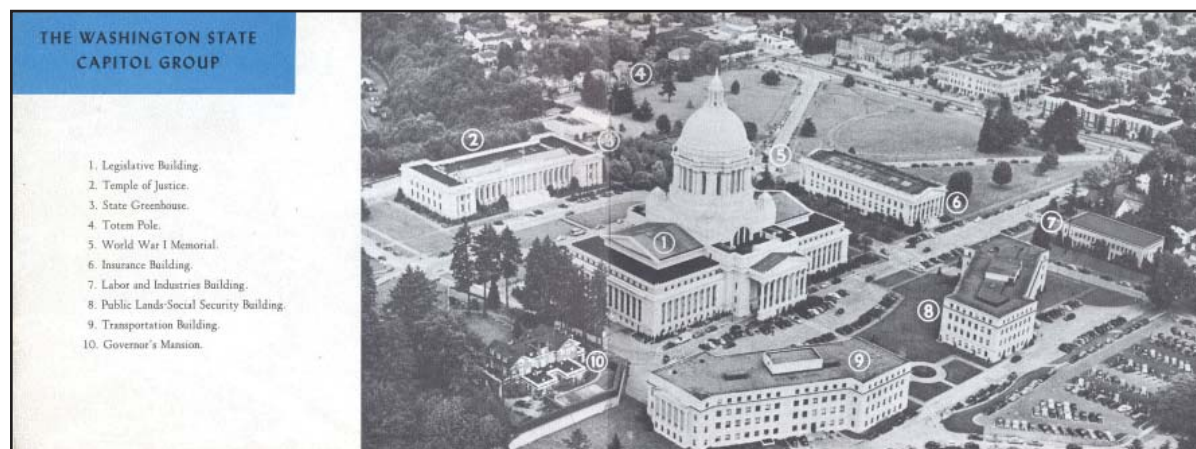
**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at this time the Governor's office was already running down a similar track and so they were interested in developing what they called the East Campus. And that was everything over there on the other side of Capitol Way. And here again, I'm going to use the word evolution; the city of Olympia had grown. There were certain constraints that had transpired in local government and it became self-evident that the Olympia High School could no longer be contained in the building they were in and the surrounding area was not available for expansion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was all houses and a big apartment building over there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, where was it located? Directly across Capitol Way, which is now part of the East Capitol Campus. So what triggered off the East Capitol Campus wasn't anything that Dan or his administration was designing; it was all of a sudden, bang, it became self-evident that Olympia high school had to have a new location. So they were perfectly willing to sell the property to the state of Washington and relocate. Well, once they did that, then that triggered off the normal transition of acquiring the balance of the grounds for the Capitol Campus. Now, what is running along in this whole thing was the Department of Highways saying, "We are absolutely bursting at the seams. There is no way that that building is going to house us and we don't even have to be there. We don't have to be within miles of that place." So it was a given that a large transportation building was going to be built.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was certainly the era of building freeways and highways.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Okay, so, now we knew that East Capitol was going to be; we knew that the transportation building was going to be in existence; we knew that a couple of other things were going to be there. So it was a natural transition. Land on the East Capitol Campus was being acquired



Included in "The Washington State Capitol Group" brochure, courtesy of the Washington State Library pamphlet file

over a period of several years. This is all in conjunction with the Legislature. We are not doing this by ourselves nor was the Governor doing it by himself. It was being done with the full knowledge that when space became available in the Transportation (a name later used for the John O'Brien Building) or the Public Lands-Social Security Building (Cherberg Building), the Legislature would be interested in that space for their purposes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So those buildings, because of their own issues, the agencies within those buildings—the Social Security people and the Transportation people—revolved out of those spaces, anyway. So suddenly, these buildings became available through natural processes, you could call them.

**Mr. Copeland:** We made them available, let's put it that way. It isn't a case of where we put the Highway Department, we kicked them clear down the street or anything of the kind. We made provisions for them to have bigger and better facilities than what they were leaving. And we did the same thing with any other agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the conjunction worked.

**Mr. Copeland:** So the conjunction worked. So here again, this all is beginning to fit together a little bit at a time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And only when the pieces are there does it work.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So this committee truly was starting that off in order to be able to get it out of the way. Did we spend a lot of time working with Dan on this? Sure, we did. He'd say, "Okay, well, how are we going to do it?" I mean, he didn't sit there and say, "No, we can't do it or do you understand that for you to do this, then we're

going to have to build a new building?" We said, "Sure, we know that. How much is it going to cost? We'll appropriate the money." So it was; we had a great working relationship with the executive branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's a matter of having a sort of can-do attitude and then finding the way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Now, take and superimpose Bob Greive and his group on this whole overlay. This movement's going; it's on its way. Notwithstanding what they think personally, it's going. It's a done-deal. It's a slam-dunk. They can sit there and complain all they want to, fine and dandy. We're not going to be like we used to be in the past, that era is gone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a triumph really, to step-by-step make things fall into place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, for the Legislature it is. From the standpoint of the institution of the Legislature, this is a great, huge gigantic step.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, even for the agencies. They must have been similarly constrained. They couldn't do certain things properly because they didn't have the room.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were going to go for the new building. You were going to remodel those other ones. Let's see, just glancing at this. You're going to advise and continue this work with this committee. How long was this committee in existence?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think for two years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were the primary overseers of these very big changes?



**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you get down to the nitty-gritty of how these buildings should be remodeled or did that get put onto, say, General Administration? Who actually did that work of saying how big should a legislator's office be, what should they have, how should the staff be organized? Was that part of the work of this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and who did it for the House? I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me how you were thinking about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we had a firm of architects that were hired to do the House building. They came out of Spokane, Bruce Walker. He was the head honcho. So we would meet with Bruce on numerous occasions and as far as the spaces in the offices were concerned, many of the cubicles already existed. When I say cubicles, I mean the office spaces existed. Some of the rooms that were ultimately converted into committee rooms were pretty badly cut up because of the certain constraints within the structure of the building. Some walls could not be removed, others could, and so it was on the architect's recommendation that "This section of building be maintained for large committee rooms, because we can remove these walls; they're not load-bearing. But over here in this section of the building you can't do it." So we would just really take his recommendations and run with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to work with the actual building, yes. The present configuration of the ground floor is large hearing rooms and some smaller hearing rooms. Did those come in at this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know they've been refurbished over the years.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the only ones that came in at this time were first on just the third and fourth floor. The first and second floors were not remodeled until a later date. That came in at a later time, so there was a slight delay time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now we're used to those big hearing rooms. Where did you previously have hearings? I can't think of a comparable sized room.

**Mr. Copeland:** In the Legislative Building. You didn't have a comparable size. So consequently, people would be lined out in the hall and they didn't even know when the bill was coming up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is, as you say, layers and layers of changes going on here—when you have the space to have large hearings, then you can have large hearings. And at the same time you're actually notifying people, in a new way, that you are having hearings.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the most important part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, but you can't really do one without the other, can you? There's no use announcing you're having a hearing if you have no place to do it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. The hearing, you know, prior to this time is a joke. When the chairman of the committee would get up on the floor of the House and say, "The Committee on Revenue will meet immediately after adjournment." Well, what are you going to hear? Anything the committee chairman decided. What are you not going to hear? Anything the committee chairman has decided not to hear. This is all, this is all...



**Ms. Kilgannon:** This really fits together.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure it does.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a big cultural shift. But also you can't have that shift if you don't have the space.

**Mr. Copeland:** You got that one right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's very concrete. What else changed? You have your offices and you now get secretaries. Does that change how you work as a legislator?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard two sides to this. That, of course, it's more efficient to have your own staff. You have more privacy; you can meet with people; you can do all these different things. But on the other hand, some people had a kind of nostalgia for the days when everyone just had a desk and you were all on the floor and you had that camaraderie of being together in the same space that some people say you lost when you began to have separate offices and people didn't see each other as frequently. So is something gained, something lost?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't need camaraderie; we needed good office working space.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could still go to the cafeteria and eat and hang out together. Sometimes when you make a change—I was thinking it was akin to redistricting—when you move this line over here it ripples through everywhere. How many different things rippled out from this change? Can you describe some of the other effects, the relationship-type changes or the workload or how things were done?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course, the ripple effect from this change was all of a sudden the public had the knowledge that this is something that they could sort through, that they could understand. It wasn't something that was closed to leadership and lobbyists only. So the effect was we now had additional employees, and they were excellent. We have several of our own staff that we could depend upon and they were wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And goodness, you had telephones.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had a telephone! Wasn't that earth-shaking, for heaven's sake? Can you imagine a legislator having his own damn telephone in 1963, his own telephone number? Get out of here! Unbelievable! You see, prior to that point, you didn't. So now you do have this business of open government, but at the same token you've elevated the legislative branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard a story that the telephone ladies—you know the ones that connected the little wires—really had a problem with this because they saw it as their role to keep track of all of the members and know where you were and relay the messages. And they really had a difficult time when you had your personal telephones, as to who was actually going to do that piece of work.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure Agnes had real trouble. Agnes was one of the ladies on the telephone switch board and she always liked to pride herself in the fact that she knew where every legislator was at any time and maybe it wasn't appropriate to tell anybody or everybody where that particular legislator was, but at any rate she tried her best to keep track of everybody. Notwithstanding Aggie, things moved and we just had to get ourselves out of that mode. We just couldn't exist there any longer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All these changes—of course, people have a hard time with change. They can't imagine how it's going to work.

**Mr. Copeland:** The press gave us a bad time. Kicking state workers out of their offices! That was the charge. However, nothing can be further from the truth. We took extreme measures that when moves were required, the people moved to better and far more productive quarters. The Legislature simply was getting a "bad rap." So those who didn't want changes were getting fewer and fewer. Then to have John O'Brien on board with us was great! It really made things much easier. The makeup of the Legislature was changing very rapidly at that time. That was very key. All people that came in at about the same time I did couldn't stand the environment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, members would be coming from, say, their own business or whatever it was they did, and of course, they would have had staff and a desk and a room with a telephone and all these things. Their sense of expectation would be different.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that's the way businesses were run. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it would be very difficult to imagine not having those things.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So at any rate, all of these things came about and I think that the press was shocked, and I know that the lobbyists were shocked. I remember one lobbyist said, "My gosh, with all of this information you're being able to get, you're going to be as smart as I am." I said, "No kidding, won't that be the day!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes! Well, I'm sure they had staff and telephones.

**Mr. Copeland:** "Yes, I understand. I've got lots of staff; I've got all kinds of staff. I've got my own office; I've got my own telephone; I've got my own mimeograph machine. I can call people all over the state. I've got figures and things like that and you don't. Oh, you have them too, now? Oh, I didn't know that."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The lobbyists were still in Ulcer Gulch on the third floor in the hallway there and they had their telephone booths and whatnot, but did many lobbyists keep offices in Olympia? I mean, in the daytime, they could hang around in the hall, but did they also have places to go or did they begin to clamor for more facilities for lobbyists?

**Mr. Copeland:** Ulcer Gulch is another one of these things that kind of evolved more than anything else. A telephone company volunteered and made the installation of that temporary switchboard and message center. I remember the great bundle of telephone wires over the balcony from the fourth floor down to the third floor connecting to the switchboard. The gals that worked there were employed by the telephone company. Later, there was some kind of a structure set up where the members of the Third House, the lobbying group, put together x-number of dollars and could pay for them rather than have the telephone company do it all. After the session the equipment was dismantled then reinstalled two years later. So this was a private endeavor, by a private company trying to, here again, fill a vacuum. There was a need for communications.

So the lobbyists would personally get down there first thing in the morning, and they would go in, and if nothing else they'd merely wave at the gal on the switchboard. And she'd put down that, "I saw the lobbyist from Seattle-First National Bank and I know he's in the building." They had a kind of a bulletin board, and messages would come in, and they'd take and pin it up on the bulletin

board, and if you've been gone an hour, you walk by the bulletin board, you saw a message, you know, "Please call the office in Seattle," and you'd go ahead and do it. So it was a service, it was a wonderful service. So here again, this has a tendency to expand. Now, what happened during this time was various groups realized that they really should not only have a presence in Olympia but maybe a more permanent type. And so they begin to acquire offices and they could lease them and then some later started buying them and they actually owned the facilities and they had their own lobbying facilities here. So this was again more of the evolution of the entire importance of state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everything's getting a little more organized and formal?

**Mr. Copeland:** Far more sophisticated, that's correct. They're grabbing hold of every piece of updated equipment that they can. We haven't touched the computers yet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's coming.

**Mr. Copeland:** But like I say, legislators then didn't know what went on in the back room. All of a sudden, I became very attracted to find out what the hell went on in the back room. So this is why I got involved in the process. Not the process that Bob Greive had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this difficult to change? Was this a hard sell?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, back up this whole thing. So here we have these two lovely groups I told you about, AWI and Washington Research Council, and these guys did a hell of a service; no question about it. But I saw a couple of occasions where the Legislature absolutely beat up on these groups big time. And then at the end of the Legislature, they put together the most wonderful resolution: "Thank you,

AWI, for all the services that you've rendered to us," and so on and so forth. "It's very valuable." And mailed them the resolution thanking them and giving a big kiss on the cheek for spending thousands and thousands of dollars that otherwise should have been a legislative requirement, and did the same thing with the Washington State Research Council. So when we made this big change and we started in doing our own calendars and events and so on, we also did the briefing, we also did the status of bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did those groups go away or did you have a parallel system for awhile?

**Mr. Copeland:** They continued on in a different and more productive fashion for their members.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they happy with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Were they happy? You bet they were happy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They'd been doing this a long time. How did you get the money to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** We just made an appropriation to the Legislature, just flat-out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that difficult?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Usually, that's the sticking point for change. You know, once you get over the idea of change, okay how are you going to pay for this? So members were ready for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the way it was in the past was not very good. Prior to that time,

the lobbyists, who were, you know, the big heavy-duty lobbyists that liked to watch every bill, they had a special pigeon hole back in the aisle, way behind the rostrum and they had their name on it. What they'd do, they'd go in and see the Chief Clerk, Si Holcomb, and they'd sign up for a subscription. And every morning they'd go back to the rostrum, before everything cranked up for the day, and then in their little pigeon hole they'd have a copy of all of the bills. Every bill that had been printed was in their own personal box. At any rate, as far as I'm concerned, with Si and his hundred dollars a session, it was just a scam.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was filling a need. Here's this vacuum again, you know.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, but now we have the bill room and the lobbyists can come down and get the bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the bill room was invented about then?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we had a bill room, but we had a limited facility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how did the bill room operate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the bill room had been moved around two or three times in my legislative session. They'd get the bills and they'd distribute them as best they could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a kind of space with lots of little cubby holes? I think I've seen photos.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, but it's very different now. The bill room's role, number one, is when the bill is ordered printed, they merely take the bill—the bill is assigned a number at the Code Reviser's office—the Code Reviser actually assigns the bill, but it's in conjunction

with the bill room. So then they become the depository of the printed bill. Now, the bill room at that point takes and disseminates the bills to the House and Senate floor, all of the committees, the affected and interested parties—the departments, the Governor's office, press, whatever. I forget what the exact number of copies that are just ordered printed automatically, but it's a good number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that why they were printed, so you could have lots of copies at that stage? So there was some sense to this?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Yes, in other words, does everybody want to be able to read the bill? And the answer is yes and it's imperative. If you're the head of the Department of Labor and Industries and somebody introduces a bill that's affecting your department, do you want to have a copy of the bill delivered to you? Immediately is the answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be the original reason why things had to be printed, because you had no copy machines?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. That's the only way we could read the bills; we had no copy machine. Copy machines were nonexistent. So at that particular time that was the best vehicle we had. With the advent of the copy machine, that duplication of rewriting, and especially into a different format, became totally obsolete. Then the typewritten bill became extremely corny.

So now, that was the original bill. Now the original bill was a copy on the copy machine. The only thing in the spacing on top of that was, you know, the bill number. Then there was a couple of sheets in the back of the bill which didn't do anything but track it: it came out of committee; it didn't pass, recommendations, the Rules Committee passed it out on such and such a date, you

know, Second Reading, do, do, do, do, do, do, do, and so forth, on the tracking sheet in the back of the bill. So at any rate, the bill room then would take all of these bills and physically make the distribution of them. Then we started the whole prospect of “This isn’t too good of quality here and what were we tracking?” Previously, the Washington State Research Council would keep the information on the bill, and they would put it on their little legal-size paper which was referred to normally as a “goldenrod” and it would show all of the bills and what committee it went in. And then the next day when they had a change, they showed that this bill went from the Committee on Agriculture to the Rules Committee and there would be an asterisk alongside the bill showing that it changed within the last twenty-four hours. So they did this as a service to the Legislature at no cost. And that was just kind of a service to the Legislature; the Legislature did not produce that itself. Here it was, stuff that really was necessary business—that is legitimately House and Senate business—and should be disseminated to the public. But through a period of time, it was so nice when you had an outside entity come in and do this for you and you didn’t have to employ anybody!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see how these things would evolve.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, it truly was an evolution. But then human errors, when they made mistakes, then who the hell do you call for it? Do you call up a private agency and say, “Gee, you screwed up and if you screw up again then I’m going to throw you off campus,” or something like that. So, now we come back to this whole thing, what are we going to do with the printed bill? Can we use the Xerox machine? Shall we go ahead and encompass this business of taking and keeping track of the bills and having some type of method that is in-house?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were these changes accomplished as a matter of principle, or because there were lots of mistakes, or was this driven by new technology?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was driven by new technology, that’s number one. And the other thing it was driven by was the great demand from the standpoint of the public to be able to have some advance information, that knowledge, as to what was transpiring and what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking this came about during the mid-sixties, which was a much more activist period of government. And the public was following the activities of government, I think, more than before.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. There is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The trend was that people wanted to be much more involved.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. But at the same token, you have to understand the philosophy at that time. You take a short period of time and you say, “Well, all you have to do here in this next ten years is just double your total capacity in the educational system.” “I beg your pardon?” “Now, that’s all you have to do, is just double it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And beyond the schools issue, then the highways were coming in.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s same thing, that’s exactly what he’s doing: “I need something; just go out and double it.” Okay, how do we do it? Where do we get the money? What are we going to do with the people? How best can we run this? Are there some changes we need to make? Do we have some technical advances here that we may need to incorporate



in this public education system? How many kids do we have? Who's doing the forecasting and are the forecasts accurate? We don't know; we didn't have a good forecasting system—it was by-guess and by-god. Very few people—businesses weren't telling anybody what they had planned; the Boeing Company didn't tell people that what they were planning two years in advance, to some extent, that three years down the line may impact the public school system. Oh!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the thousands.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, do you understand? You see what I'm saying? So the dynamics of the growth, and the requirement of what we did in order to be able to respond to it, was truly awesome.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were just stepping up to the plate, here.

**Mr. Copeland:** We're standing; we're trying as best we can in order to be able to keep ahead of the curve.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But also you have a new Governor who's much more of an activist problem solver; he was going to help tackle this.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, no question about it. But at the same token, he wants public involvement and that was something that he really insisted on. Now, his style and his public involvement did not correspond with Bob Greive's legislative process in the Senate of having only a few insiders that were involved. That was running at one hundred and eighty degrees from what Dan Evans wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So does the Senate becomes a bottleneck for reform?

**Mr. Copeland:** It became an obstacle that had to change. We were just going to change it and we couldn't do it by coercion; we had to do it by embarrassment and public pressure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If the House was taking great leaps forward...

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct and we're including the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a tremendous build-up there, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, so all of this was coming along in the 1965 session. It really moves, boom!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Exciting! When you were on this committee there were some field trips to other capitals; there was the involvement in the National Council of State Legislatures—you were getting input on how other states were dealing with these things. Were there states that were really grappling with this at the same time that you could learn from?

**Mr. Copeland:** Unfortunately, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not too much?

**Mr. Copeland:** There weren't too much. There were states that were not only operating in the dark ages, they liked it that way and they would continue to do so. For instance, the state of Nebraska, for some reason they owned their own telephone system. They didn't have a telephone company bring in new stuff; they owned it. It was so darn old and antiquated it wasn't even funny. They still had switchboard operators that pulled the wires and shoved them into twenty holes in order to be able to hook them up and things like that, and they weren't willing to upgrade anything.

Like the Wyoming senator who said, "Our constitution's all screwed up. It says we

should meet for forty days every two years and what it should say is that we should meet for two days every forty years.” This is a different twist to it. Nobody was using a computer; they were just getting their first Xerox machines. So no, we went to other states to find out if there was anybody that could tackle this whole thing and say how best can we get this thing to a point where it’s up and running.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You turn out to be the leaders?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, there is no question about it. As a matter of fact, I know today if you walk into the legislative environment in the state of Washington—this is the year 2002—if you go to anybody else’s legislature, you will find that this legislature is light years ahead of a whole bunch of other states and has been for years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And here’s the beginning of it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that’s pretty gratifying.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is, it really is, yes. After we got the computers in place, and had the RCWs on computer and all the databases and things like that, we had lots and lots of states come and visit us and say how, “How is it you ever did this? How’d you ever get it done? Did it cost a lot of money?” And we told them it didn’t cost any money; it just required a hell of a lot of...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What?

**Mr. Copeland:** Stick-to-itiveness. That we were able to use the people in the women’s penitentiary in order to be able to do the pick-and-shovel work was just a stroke of genius.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the women in Purdy?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, Walla Walla. After we recognized the fact that if we were going to move the entire Legislature into a computer environment, then the thing we needed to do was to gather all of the information and place it into a database. I worked with Dick White—he was the Code Reviser. Dick was an outstanding attorney and one of the great guys in state government. He recognized early on that this was the way to go, so he knew that it was going to take just a massive effort in order to be able to get all this information into what we called it at that time—“machine readable form.” Now, the machinery was one of those things, you type it up and you put it on a punch card. And these punch cards are about eight and a half inches long and maybe four inches high, with one corner cut off. You could put it in a machine and turn the switch to ON, and then put all of that information on the punch card, and they put it over on a tape, and then the tape had the ability of searching and running back through and finding it and printing it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, these were the huge early computers that filled whole rooms, right? This is the very beginning?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you describe for us the state of computer technology in 1965?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let’s see, where do I start? Okay, the very first rudimentary computer that we had around here that was up and running was in the General Administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just one?

**Mr. Copeland:** One: capable of doing certain things and of course, it was a big old bruiser and it had certain limitations and time constraints.

And so we were trying to get something on there before the legislative session, just in order to be able to have a demonstration for the members of the Legislature. We needed to have something for the legislators to see, feel, touch and realize that it was a useful tool.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember when you first started learning about computers, and how you became aware of them, and what they were good for?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was probably during the 1965 session; I don't really remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you go to some kind of conference, or what was...

**Mr. Copeland:** Every conference that I could find that had anything to do with computers I attended.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there very many in those days?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. They were always huge and they were big, heavy duty stuff, not necessarily—they were kind of like our mining of a great deal of information, but not necessarily massaging it. So it was some was good, some was bad; let's put it that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, very early days for computers still.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot of that was almost totally impossible for us to sort through and use. And did I tell you this story about that time we met with Charlie Trigg and Dick White? Charlie came to Washington State and he was with IBM. They were the only people on the block. There wasn't anybody manufacturing any kind of equipment like that. I was chairman of the committee and we had invited him to come explain some

of these things that we might be able to do. And this is early on; this might have been in 1963. It was more of a presentation: "We have no idea what it could do for you but here's some of the possibilities." Well, Dick got very interested in it—Dick White did, and he came to me and he said, "Do you mind if I ask the lead-off questions?" He said, "There's a possibility this will work, but there's also a possibility that it won't work. And if it will work, then I'm really going to be interested in it. If this equipment can't do what I've got to get done, there is no sense in me wasting my time." So I said, "Okay, no problem." So we had this meeting and we introduced everybody and I told Charlie that our Code Reviser, Dick White, was going to ask a very, very interesting question. So Dick asked the question, "Mr. Trigg, this word processor of yours..." Now, stop there. This was the first time we had ever heard the two words put together: "word processor." I'd never, ever in my life heard those two words, bing, bing, like that and that came from Dick and I said, "You have a word processor, that's interesting."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can almost feel the words turning over in your mind there.

**Mr. Copeland:** "This word processor of yours, here's my problem. When I type a bill having to do with the Legislature and I'm referring to a section of the RCWs, the bill will go back in and change some wording in the RCWs. Now, I have to back up on the typewriter and strike through those words we are removing from the RCW, and then I have to take and back up and underline the new material we are adding to the RCW. Would your word processor allow me to do that? And one fellow said, "Do you do it in entire paragraphs?" And the answer is no. "We may take one word, strike twenty, and insert thirty." And Charlie Trigg said, "That won't be a problem, Mr. White. We'll give you two

alphabets, one already stricken through and one already underlined.” Bing! Dick said, “I am interested!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m in!

**Mr. Copeland:** Charlie Trigg was thinking in terms of fonts and we were still thinking in terms of IBM Selectric typewriters. Just as a footnote, right now today, you can walk into any computer in state government, or any place virtually in the world, and get into the font section and you can say, “Give me an underline,” and you can also put in a ~~strike-through~~. And it starts right there. So that’s what we said, “This is going to be a piece of cake! Let’s go!”

So from then on, Dick said, “Now we have to concentrate on capturing the data,” so that’s when we started looking around. Then several months later, we did the inquiry to the Department of Corrections and said, “What would you think about doing this with some of these women?” “Anything to keep them busy.” The women’s penitentiary was terrible in Walla Walla. A great, big building and it’s in a confined area, not nice living accommodations. These ladies were not here for committing minor crimes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They probably weren’t ladies.

**Mr. Copeland:** ‘Females’ will suffice at this point. So the upshot of the whole thing was we got through an appropriation without any fanfare and we remodeled a room and put acoustical tile in and nice carpeting, painted all the walls—they were all done in shades of blue, and air-conditioning, a little light background music, and all of these machines. And these gals went through a training period. And lovely Dorothy Anderson was the superintendent there and she got all these gals trained and ready to go to work. Let’s

say you were working on 28-A in the Revised Code, which is public education. Two sets of cards are required. The gals would type 28-A, but at a later date would also re-type 28-A. Now you have two sets of cards. You run up to a machine, ccchhheewww, and they had to match exactly. If not, the machine recognized the error and then they would have to back up and find the mistake.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was the way to check if somebody had made a mistake?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yep, bing! They made a mistake, so they had to correct it. So then they’d go back and correct. Then you’ve got all these cards and they’d ship these to Olympia; then they would physically take the cards, put them on a rack and put them on the computer on large tapes. So we went through this entire procedure, not only getting the facilities in place and the remodeling, got the gals in there that had been trained and sat down and started doing it. Got to the point where it was running so wild you couldn’t believe it. And we’d been given information ahead of time by IBM that you would expect—if you have x-number of people doing the inputting—you can expect, you know, so many cards. So Olympia was set up to receive x-number of cards every week. Well, after about the second week they didn’t have x-number of cards in Olympia, they had x times two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, so they were good at it.

**Mr. Copeland:** And so Olympia said, “Boy, what happened? We’ve got to get going.” So they would work on it and the following week they would have x times three. And finally it got to the point we corresponded with this to Charlie Trigg and he said, “This is virtually impossible. There’s no way that

anybody could produce that much data in that short period of time.” And he actually came in and went to Walla Walla to take a look at these gals that were doing the imputing. Well, what did you have here? Here you have a group of ladies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Captive audience?

**Mr. Copeland:** That really is a captive audience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nothing else to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** Think about their surroundings. These are not dumb people, not by any circumstances; they’ve got great minds. Now, here they are in an environment that they’re not worrying about what they’re making for dinner tonight; they’re not worrying about going to the store to shop for panty hose; they’re not worrying about the kids or anything of the kind. And they’re little robots, and Dorothy sits them down and says, “Okay, you may start your machines,” and they run like greased lightning, virtually error-free.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever do a study about whether this opportunity turned their life around in any way, doing this important work? That’s part of this story.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, oh truly. Dorothy had some of these gals that later got out on work release and they were immediately snatched up by people who were doing the same thing and some of them even went to work for state government. And they had a career; they were making money; they could support themselves. Oh heavens yes, which is great. At any rate, we started with this little basement, for heaven’s sake, at a penitentiary in Walla Walla. People couldn’t believe that you could capture that much data and turn out such a quality product and in such a short period of time. So we completed the RCWs—in record time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then what happened to those women; was the program over? Or did you get more projects?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh no, no, no, no we kept right on going. After we got the Revised Code, then we started on Supreme Court decisions and we began working backwards. We would take current things and then we’d get back into previous sessions, years of things. So, where could we capture information of that nature? We didn’t, to the best of my knowledge, I don’t think they really cut up the ball on trying to do any of the WACs because those have tendency to have such velocity of change without any prior notice. Obviously, we did the state constitution and the U.S. Constitution and all of these things. So, as far as the capture of the data was concerned, we did it in such a timeline that it was just unbelievable! So all of a sudden, we have the state of Washington in machine readable form. And people would look at us and say, “How in the hell did you ever do that?” “Well, we did it with our women inmates.” “You’re kidding!” I don’t know why we ever settled on the women inmates other than the fact that Dorothy said to me at one time, “I wish we had something for these gals to do.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you were well placed to help. You happened to be from Walla Walla and you were on this committee and you had that connection.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, truly. That’s correct. At any rate, so it worked extremely well. And like I say to everybody’s surprise, all of a sudden the state of Washington did something that would normally take five or ten years and we probably did it in something less than over a year. Wham! So now we plug this whole thing in and my god, the Governor looks at it and he’s in awe and Dick White is so damn proud of it, it isn’t even funny!



**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet, bursting.

**Mr. Copeland:** So Dick, on one particular occasion decided that, why don't we do a test and find out how many places we have reference to something where it's not consistent throughout the Revised Code? Well, I didn't even know what he was talking about or any problems that he had; I mean, that was when he said, "We make reference to women under eighteen; we make reference to women twenty and over; we make reference to women that are nineteen or less, and we make reference to women that are sixteen." A big old hodge-podge. So he said, "I think I can set the machine up to give me every reference in the RCWs having to do with women and then "blank."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Age?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wild card. Age, understand? And he turned the computer on and my god, it started to print and we thought it would never quit! So then we delivered to Dick White all of these references where there are incongruities, inaccuracies—nothing was really running on a consistency basis. And all of a sudden, he has this in front of him and he is delighted. I'm just amazed at all this stuff and he thinks it's great. Now he can take and introduce a bill in the Legislature by request of the Code Reviser, to amend the following sections so that they all read alike. Well, that was, you know, that was great as far as Dick was concerned, everything across the board was all going to be standard. Well, how wonderful!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what makes code revisers' hearts beat, you know. Consistency and organization.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely! We have one reference to women in age and then we have

another...you see, these are things I don't know about. I'm not a code reviser. I don't live with this; he lives with it and he understands it. This was one of the big problems; I only picked this women-age thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the tip of the iceberg, I'm sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** That would be the tip of the iceberg. That's two cuts of the policy. Then there were others where you've got three probabilities. You've got this one and this one and this one. Okay now, and then he did a bunch of that. So he was, quote, "massaging the figures" and getting reports back to him and then saying, "I can tidy it up so it makes sense, everybody reads it and we have one set of standards." So he spent many sessions doing just that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He must have felt that he was having a major breakthrough, a major impact.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh it was, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, this would just be the dream for a code reviser. To have consistent legislation, wow.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it was just exactly that. And so now he could sit there in his office and he had the opportunity to do all this search-and-sort type of an arrangement. You get a copy back to him and see what happened. Then he had the ability to go ahead and with quote, "a word processor," reach up and strike through a word, a sentence whatever, and put an underlined word in a sentence. So this to him was wow, great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It also must have rippled out in so many ways that legislation was now going to be consistent. If you were a judge

and you were looking at all these different age categories and you're trying to match your situation to all these different enactments, it sounds like the twenty-year old women fell through the cracks.

**Mr. Copeland:** But later on down the line—and this occurred several years later—but the State Supreme Court got involved in it and said, “We need to redo our thinking as far as the judicial system is concerned and what are the incongruities that we have? And where in the judicial system, where do we say one thing, but we say something over here, someplace else?” And so they went through a whole litany of things that took them several years in order to get their house straightened up. And they've done a wonderful job of it. And Bob Brachtenbach, and oh, even Charles McNurlin, out of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's office, and two or three fine people, they were involved heavily in that, going over all of this material and saying, “Let's get it straightened up.” And I remember Brachtenbach said, “Now we're doing this for the Supreme Court, but we also want to make sure that the Appellate Court stuff is directly in line.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the way down through the system.

**Mr. Copeland:** “Oh, I guess we do have the Appellate Court to be concerned with. What we say here is going to be transferable over there and it's going to go right down to the Superior Courts.” We all are sitting down at the same table. McNurlin was sitting there saying, “Hey look, we've got a certain set of standards in the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office; we better have them the same for every school district.” Oh, why not! So, you say, was there a ripple effect?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, huge.

**Mr. Copeland:** Huge! I don't think you could call it a ripple effect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More like a tidal wave?

**Mr. Copeland:** More like a—what's the Japanese word for that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tsunami?

**Mr. Copeland:** Tsunami, there you go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Except not quite as rapid, because I imagine you did one thing and then you say, “Oh, if we can do that, can we do this?” And then it would just grow geometrically rather than by arithmetically.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because each thing would open up another possibility. It must have been very exciting.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh it was, it really was, because everybody, all of a sudden, realized, “I should be involved in this. There is a better way for me to do business than what I am currently doing.” Now, running right down that same thing, and Dan was—you know, he was pushing this and he knew early on in the legislative session. Running like it was the same thing at the same time, totally divorced from all of this other stuff that was going on, was this business of legislative process, the requirement that if you make an amendment that's got an impact, you've got to have a fiscal note.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, yes!

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, bing!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Talk about accountability.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So here comes all of the department heads, saying, "A fiscal note? What the hell is that?" "Well, the Legislature's got a bill on it and it was amended that you're going to have a whole section in your department and you're going to do this and this and this." "I am?" "Yes, what's it going to cost?" "I don't have the slightest idea." "Well now, they're going to require a fiscal note from you." "Oh, my god, what's that?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd have to have whole new group of people that knew how to do that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** But now what they had to do is say, "Okay, I've got it in my budget in my computer so that I can massage my own numbers. Okay, now I've got to take money that was currently in my budget and in my programs and move it over here in order to be able to do this to satisfy whatever it was coming out of the Legislature. I better be ready to do it." And sometimes it was the department head that was requesting it, too. "I don't want to spend money over here for this program, I want to spend it over here; I have legislative authority do it. Here's a bill, what's going to be the fiscal impact? The fiscal impact is going to be zero. I'm transferring money from here to here."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least then you had an answer.

**Mr. Copeland:** But that's exactly right. Everybody had an answer. You knew ahead of time. So now you've got yourself one step up. This is not the word processor. This is back in through the electronic spreadsheet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And because they have this, they could actually come up with these numbers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you're just taking a quantum leap here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you're learning all you can; you're going to seminars; you're talking to IBM. Part of the issue, where do you put all this? You're just on the cusp of getting your own offices and all these things. Physically, where were these computers located? They're large.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we didn't have any place to put them to begin with. Obviously, I neglected to complete this one story. So the one computer got put in General Administration and Bill Schneider was head of General Administration at the time. We just had this group of five or six people that were trying as best we could in order to be able to get some things on the computer for demonstrative purposes. We needed to demonstrate to the Legislature how it would work. It was primarily for bill tracking. So we took all of the information that came from the Chief Clerk and put it right smack on the computer. So as soon as a bill passed, in either the House or the Senate, the docket clerk would sit right there and punch it right smack up to the computer and that was the new position of the bill. So this became the legislators' own quote, "goldenrod," end quote. So it was nothing more than taking what was done with quill pen and longhand, the docket clerk, putting it in a computer and then allowing the printout that then became disseminated on a daily basis. So how much would it cost in order to be able to take and have this production of the position of bills? Virtually nothing, because you were doing it anyway. The docket clerk was already showing "this bill went from Rules Committee

to the Senate” or where it was. But the only difference being you were putting it in a computer and they’d get a printout.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she still produce the big docket book?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there’s still that journal. But then does the same person go and type it on to—was that still punch cards?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, no, they were doing it right smack there before the House. She had an input machine and it was coded so, you know, you had to have certain securities or somebody could get in there and dink up your work and stuff like that. But we had to scuffle through and we were trying desperately to get all of this stuff up and flying before the upcoming session.



*Tom Copeland entering data into the input terminal located on the rostrum of the House of Representatives*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re working in ‘65 for this, so for the ‘67 session you’re getting all this in place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, yes. And so Bill Schneider of General Administration allowed our people to go in there and do the work on the computer and I think it was eleven o’clock in the evening to four in the morning. And so they were doing, I would say, as well as could be expected. But they had a little piece of the computer they could put it in and they could try it or they could massage it and see if it worked and so it was just one little program, but we really needed it for demonstration purposes.

Well, I was in Olympia on one particular occasion, in late November, just before the session started. Bill Schneider called me and wanted to talk to me. He said, “Tom, I’ve got a problem. The people that are working for me would like very much to have you discontinue any work on the computer.” I said, “Well, that is a real shock to me.” He said, “Well, they have convinced me that the computer is probably going to be a very valuable thing and what we are envisioning is that we will go ahead and contract out with other state agencies to do their work and we will have one computer for the state of Washington and we will run it and everybody else will contract with us in order to be able to use the computer.” I said, “Your staff had convinced you of this?” “Yes.” I said, “Bill, there are a couple things wrong. Number one, I need to have this date—this information—for the upcoming session. If we stop now, it is going to be very devastating. Number two, this business of having one single agency controlling all computers in the state of Washington is a policy thing and that should be discussed at great length with the legislative branch of government and not necessarily made by you or your staff.” “Well,” he said, “that’s our determination as of right now.” I said, “Schneider, you and

I are on a collision course. And I'm here to tell you that if you throw me out of here now, I'm going to be on the Appropriations Committee and I'm going to be chairman of the subcommittee that handles your budget and you are going to do business with me in a legislative environment and you're going to try and convince me that you're the only guy in state government that's going to own a computer." And I got up and left. I walked out of his office and down the hall. He caught me at the elevator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "I've rethought my position?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How could he ever have dreamt that he could stranglehold the whole state?

**Mr. Copeland:** His staff had convinced him, "Hey boss, we've got something everybody will need and we're going to be the big moguls, and we're going to be the only people that got any smarts on how to run computers, and we can do it for all of state government, and we can charge for it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't keep that equipment to yourself.

**Mr. Copeland:** And this is what his staff had convinced him that that was the way to go. Only the Department of General Administration would own a computer. However, I must not be too critical of Bill Schneider and General Administration. Later, they played a major role in the coordination of computer systems within state government. About this time Bill searched and found some great computer people to take the lead in this coordination effort, mainly Don Hanson. Again, something quite new to state government.

So with great strain, we finally got our stuff done, and then we accelerated and I told Dick White at that time, I said, "You've got to make some arrangements to get something going." So with the cooperation of the Governor's office and several other places, we found some room in the basement of the Capitol Building and that's where the first legislative computer came in and was under the care, custody and control of the Code Reviser.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were computers phenomenally expensive at this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so when you talk about having one, you're talking about having a mainframe computer?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's correct. But it was capable of going ahead and doing everything that we had to do. So it was—and then, of course it was—you see from the first machine that Dick had that captured these cards, that was like a generation; you know, they say the "next generation, the next generation."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How quickly was computer technology changing at this time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Faster than you and I change our socks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you commit to a system, it's obsolete pretty quickly?

**Mr. Copeland:** By the time it's delivered, it already is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, so even back in the very first days?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, yes, oh certainly.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how did you ever decide, “Okay, we’ll go with this?” Or were you always waiting for the next best thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I’ve got to give Dick the credit for it because he was understanding of the changes but knew he could not afford to wait. Dick and I worked well together with some people in the Governor’s office and they knew the changes ahead of time. “Let’s forge ahead and not let potential changes in hardware affect the progress we could make.” The faint of heart would have said, “Well, why don’t we wait until the next generation of computers to come out?” Well, if that’s the case, they’d still be waiting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They’d be waiting today.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, they would be waiting right now today. So no, we just moved quickly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, PCs were nowhere on the horizon at this stage.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been unthinkable? That they would become ubiquitous—you know, that every desk would have one.

**Mr. Copeland:** Later came some dramatic changes. There was a killer program introduced: Visacalc, an electronic spreadsheet. It was invented by a couple of wonderful mathematicians back at Harvard or Yale or something. I think they sold the right to it for a hundred-thousand bucks. Then came Lotus 123 and still later Microsoft Excel. Well, that took the advent of a very small computer that had the ability to do the little word processing—I’m talking about the advent of a PC. That took the importance of a PC from

being able to only use a word processor plus play games, now you had a word processor and an electronic spreadsheet. So with the advent of the tradition of the electronic spreadsheet that was the killer bee that made PCs. All of sudden, “Wwwhhheeewww! I have an electronic spreadsheet on my personal computer!” “You what?” “Yes, I can enter a value in this cell, and a value in that cell, and a value in this cell, and I can say, ‘Modify this, by this, by this and subtract twenty-seven,’ and I come up with an answer instantly.” “You are kidding me!” So running along, you were saying now, what were the changes going on and that was one of the big ones.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I have an image of, you know, the vacuum tubes and these huge machines and the guys in the white coats, kind of a sci-fi thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** See, all of these things are going on simultaneously. When you say the vacuum tubes, you’re talking hardware; when I say VisaCalc, Lotus 123, Excel, I’m talking software.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you have to have both.

**Mr. Copeland:** So you’re talking all about these things all at the same time. And at the same time this is going on, where’s Bill Gates? He’s in his father’s garage, for god’s sake, right? So yes, are you on the cutting edge of something? The answer is hell, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Exciting, yes!

**Mr. Copeland:** Fasten your seatbelts. Where are we going? I don’t know but I’ll tell you what, you’ll have a good time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’ll be fun, it’ll be fun. So you were learning a lot and now you had to

bring people in and train them. Would they be just data entry people, or would you have a lot of people on the upper end of things figuring out new uses, or was it still a small cadre of people that were working on this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, we had a very, very small cadre of people that really knew how to turn on a big machine, but they were at that time—there was no source that you could go to and say, “All you have to do is hold up the community college, hold up Western State University,” you know, “they’re putting these guys out there, you know, seven hundred a week.” There was not that ability. So, in order to be able to get any of these people to become—and I use the words loosely—computer gurus, you just about had to get somebody who was interested in it and just start with on-the-job training. And you take one good guy and give him five others and see if they could get the other five others up to speed in some particular timeframe. Dick White was always shopping around trying to find someone that had some of this expertise. So it was a transition process that brought a lot of people into the state of Washington that knew a little bit about computers. I mean, nobody knew everything about computers at that time. So everything is—everybody’s on the learning curve; everybody’s experiencing new things; everybody’s got a new program. And then, of course, the word “update;” who ever heard of updates? My god, I never heard of an update until we had computers and “Now, what’s an update?” “Well, you know that class you took last week, we’re updating you.” “Oh my god, what happened?” “Well, we added this.” “Oh really, well, what does that do?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s a whole new language.

**Mr. Copeland:** “It enhances it.” One of the big leaders in computer development was Battelle Industries in the Tri-Cities. They

put on some demonstrations for legislators that were quite impressive. However, there were the undecided: “Boy, what are these computers and what do they do?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were people threatened by this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, absolutely, there were a lot of people that were just...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very new, very cutting edge, very mysterious?

**Mr. Copeland:** And a lot of people in state government—and I’m going to say in the higher management levels—were just dragging their feet just something terrible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you don’t really understand if this is going to replace you or what it’s going to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot of them said, “Listen, I’ve gotten by for twenty-seven years with my way of thinking. Don’t tell me I have to learn something new. I’ll hire somebody that knows something about it, but all I’m wanting to do is give me the paperwork; I’m not going to learn anything about it.” Well, you had that mindset and I’m saying this was in the top management core of state government. And in order to be able to kind of get over that, we just had to haul them down and get them retired. I mean that, I’m dead serious. There was real strong opposition to being and moving in that direction. Conversely speaking, then we had this strong desire to make the conversion in certain other agencies, a la Brachtenbach in the State Supreme Court. Bob recognized early on, “This is the way to do it and do it quickly, and we’ve got to address it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So let’s see, General Administration tried to corner it, but then you did a bit of an end-run around, then what

about other agencies? There wasn't DSHS yet in those days, but the welfare people, that would have been helpful to them, wouldn't it? Keeping track of huge numbers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh well, heaven's sake!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then, education?

**Mr. Copeland:** You know what it's like today. Everybody's got their own computers. Everybody had a source of data and the database that they had to work with on a daily basis that was very, very important to their particular segment of government. These databases were both so voluminous and so numerous, they were totally unknown to me or Dick White, or anybody at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So agencies that dealt in numbers, would they be prone to pick this technology up, but other agencies would be more resistant?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it wasn't until the PC came on and then they recognized the fact that you can take and virtually buy programs off the shelf that would work on them, and do a fine job. There was this longstanding thing that everybody had to develop their own programs and after some numerous, horrendous crashes the state of Washington recognized that, "We've been taken in by these gurus who think they're all smart and they can build their own damn programs. We better start looking around and find out, you know, where's a program that works? And, can you buy it for twenty-seven dollars and get a two-dollar rebate?" You can go ahead and buy rather than spending several million to find out that the damn thing won't talk to somebody else across the block. So there were a lot of errors in the generation of computer programming in the state of Washington. But those errors are—we make them all the time—so much of life is trial and error and this is part of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's expensive, but sometimes there is no other way to know?

**Mr. Copeland:** But at the same token, every so often you try something, and my god, all of a sudden you find that it works real well, so what the heck! So at any rate, this is kind of where we were in 1965, leading into the 1967 session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you stay interested in this development? Was this a thread running throughout the rest of your career? Tracking this and then promoting it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And was it this Committee on Facilities that was the opening wedge for you, that allowed you to take such a lead in this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about people like John O'Brien, what did he think of computers? You said earlier he was pretty on-board with some of the changes you wanted to make, that he didn't want to be left out. What did he think of this piece?

**Mr. Copeland:** John met this with mixed emotion, you know. I think John met all of this computer thing like the guy seeing his mother-in-law fly off the cliff in his new Cadillac convertible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Good and bad, is that what you're trying to say?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, but no, John needed to see the past come to an end. I don't think there's any question about that. But he bought into this; he did not become an obstruction, but he could have if he really wanted to. But no,

he saw the technology was here, the changes were here, it was something that was going to be really good in the future. So he did not complain bitterly about it, not nearly as bitterly as Senator Greive. Senator Greive just was having apoplexy or something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about in the House, were people in the House ready for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I guess they tagged me with an expression that I used from time to time in the House when we ran into that: “If you can’t put up with the computer, then get the hell out of the way.” I mean, I just didn’t have time to fool around with it, that’s all there is to it; we had too much going. And if I had to stop and convince everybody along the way that this was the thing to do, and it wasn’t going to bite them; it wasn’t going to hurt them; it wasn’t going to consume them. The world is not going to come to an end. Fine and dandy, if I couldn’t get it done in that length of time, I just thought, “Get out of the way, we’re going to go!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do things to bring people on board? Did you take them all on field trips to the Code Reviser’s office and say, “Look at this?”

**Mr. Copeland:** When we started the 1967—or it might have been the 1969 session—we had, right there on the rostrum, we had the docket clerk was typing up the stuff just as we went. Everything was up and flying and they were doing the same thing over in the Senate, not to Bob Greive’s liking, but that’s okay. So everybody recognized that this is something; the bill was going to end no longer in the format that came out of the Printer’s office. The amendatory process had been changed and we shortened up the entire period of time that was consumed on the floor of the House in order to be able to handle the legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So with one go, not a dragged-out process?

**Mr. Copeland:** One motion and bang! Eleven amendments are then put into one bill. It was already printed; you had it in front of you, and it has new numbers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would save a lot of time that way. Previously, some amendments might pass, some might fail, and so the whole bill would not have any coherence after awhile.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you’d have to argue, possibly, each amendment without knowing how they fit together?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, and so that’s where a great deal of the confusion began and so it was laborious to have to read these things to find out exactly what in the heaven’s sake had happened. And then of course, once it passed the originating house, then it went to the other body and went through the same procedure and then again. So the general rule—I don’t know why we picked five—but five was the number and we just said, “If you have more than five—five or more amendments—you’ll put them in at one time. Just make a substitute bill out of it, incorporating those five amendments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would smooth out your process quite a bit. More streamlined. And with the use of computers to track everything, it paved the way for change by just showing people how this was going to work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As sort of self-evident, “This is easier, this is better?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. So we're just kind of tippy-toeing in here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were really delivering some services here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, everybody's realizing, "Hey, this is not all that bad," and then Xerox comes out with some things. They started doing their stuff on their high speed copy machine and you look at this and say, "Give me a hundred copies," and wham, wham, wham, wham, wham, that sucker would put those out there and you'd get a hundred copies and it would take you less than one minute? A hundred copies in less than one minute? Unheard of!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you're much more efficient, you're much more informed as a legislator. Does this change people's ideas of how to pass legislation? Because you can do these things, do members start to work differently in the Legislature? Do you begin to pass more bills, for instance?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that it contributed to how the bills are processed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a good thing or maybe not so good a thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know whether it's good or bad, Anne. You can say things for and against that. Let me talk about the "for" just for a while.

We had people that would be suggesting that the Revised Code be changed in order to be able to enhance this or that, what ever it might be. And unbeknownst to you, there were some people in Bellingham that they wanted to do it, and there were also some people who lived in Vancouver; there were also some people in Spokane. Then all of a sudden, three bills get introduced all dealing with the same title of the RCW. Where was

the communication with these three entities prior to this time? There was none. They were all sitting in their own little cubicles saying, "I've got a problem. Can I do this in order to be able..." and it all happened simultaneously. But it was in Bellingham, Vancouver and Spokane, and all of a sudden three bills got introduced. "Wow, I didn't know that you were interested in this." "Oh yes, you see we have this problem." "Really? Well, you know we've been wrestling this. What about Spokane, what's going on?" "Oh, is that right?" "Yes, come on, let's get together."

So were more bills introduced? Yes, now, what happened? Okay, now you had some people that would get together on a common problem, come to Olympia and say, "Hey, we can solve our problem and do this and this and this. Okay, well, let's put it into one bill." All of a sudden, somebody from Toppenish would say, "That is going to interfere with me." "Well, if we change that, will that take care of your problem?" "Yes, that'll do it." So, is it bad that you had more bills introduced? I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It depends on the bills.

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go. I know a lot of bills that got introduced by members of the House and the Senate that were just garbage bills, never should have been introduced. They weren't doing anything, anyway. But all I'm saying is, that by virtue of the fact that we were able to introduce the bills, the printing of the thing was much more rapid, the dissemination of the bills, the press was involved. All of a sudden, whhhhheeeewww, the state of Washington became involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, here's another angle. With the new method of using substitute bills and not having to grind through so many amendments and all these different changes speeding up the process, did you have more time for hearings?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, oh truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So were bills better researched, and better founded in people's real issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, correct. Yes, and people are notified. Copies of the bill are available. "We're going to hear this bill: it's going to be on Thursday of the following week; it's going to be at two o'clock in the afternoon, and you're certainly invited to come in, and so forth." They'd correspond and say, "I need to have any information on such and such."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you had the ability to give it to them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well okay, let's take it again. This is what we did with public education. Spokane says, "I need to have some information." What do they do? They call Charlie McNurlin of the Superintendent's office. "Are you aware of this bill? What does this do to impact me?" Charlie says, "Well, it does the following things." "You know, that's going to hurt me." "Well okay, can we change that?" So then, "Come to the hearing on Thursday at two o'clock and we'll go over the whole darn thing." So bang, all of a sudden, here comes a whole bunch of affected people; they're there. Now we can have some dialog. "We met at ten o'clock this morning and went over this whole thing and all you have to do is strike paragraph three and we're already happy." "Well, anyone object to striking paragraph three?" "Nope." Hell of deal, bang, out it goes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then for each successful hearing and each time the superintendents, or whomever, comes in they learn that that works. So then they come often, and they keep track of things better, so you have more oversight and more information included. So again, that's kind of a quantum leap.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also have hearing rooms now. All of these changes dovetail with each other.

**Mr. Copeland:** They're all coming in simultaneously. I mean, see, at the time we were trying to impose, you could take any subject matter that was before the state of Washington and if you're interested in that subject matter you could take a look at the bills that were introduced, and go into the topical index—you understand the topical index? Okay, and here's all the bills having to do with public education; here's all the bills having to do with transportation; here's all of the bills having to do with agriculture. If you were interested in one specific thing, you could go take a look at all of those bills, find out where the committee meetings were, where the hearings were, follow and track that bill, come in and make comments. Oh yes, so the public is extremely well informed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So within a very short period of time, you have totally modernized the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your dream of making it a more effective branch is coming to fruition through these—some of them are not little—but all these different innovations?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In these years, were you beginning to feel that the Legislature was now a match for the executive branch? Were you getting where you wanted to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have to get back to this comment, "A part-time legislator will never be able to keep up with a full-time bureaucrat."

That's a very, very true statement. But now the legislative branch of government with this ability, plus our own staff, you'd have an even chance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When did you move into the new offices? Do you remember what year that actually happened? When you got the Highways people resituated and the buildings renovated; about how long did that take?

**Mr. Copeland:** 1967.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You must have had to appropriate more money for more staff.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that difficult to convince people? They were ready for that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know that they were ready for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just thinking, legislative salaries were such an issue and people were almost ashamed to ask for more money for themselves, but what about money for staff and equipment? It costs more.

**Mr. Copeland:** It did. It was an item to swallow; there isn't any question about it. But here again, you have to understand the times. The only leader that was at all objecting to this whole thing had to come from Bob Greive and his group. Dan was thoroughly for this. John O'Brien was not becoming an obstructionist. Bob Schaeffer, who was the Speaker when we made the appropriation to these committees, he was fully aware of it and fully on-board. Other people who were in the Legislature at the time that were just going huckley-buck: Buster Brouillet, Martin Durkan, Augie Mardesich. They all knew full-well that this was something that had to be done. So I have to put it in this fashion, that

if there were any members of the Legislature that were obstructionists at that time, they were not long-ball hitters and we just virtually ran over them. I mean that sincerely. There wasn't time for us to stop and placate ten or fifteen percent of the people that didn't want to make any forward perceivable motion; we just didn't have time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you describe to me when you moved into your own office with your own staff what that felt like for you, and what your office looked like?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was one of those transition things that had been coming about but when we finally made the move and got the space across the street this was with the help of the Governor's office, and also General Administration, surprisingly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's their job.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. We finally appropriated the money for it and we knew that this is part of the offices for the legislators and we were concerned that we had a lot of them that were two-person offices at that time because we just didn't have the space.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was your office like? What building were you in?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was in the Legislative Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, when you went to your office, you had your own door, you opened it up and there was your secretary at a desk?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had two of them. By then I was Speaker Pro Tem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Two secretaries? And did you have maybe a couple of chairs or a couch or something for visitors?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had a pretty good-sized office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, when you sat down at your desk for the first time, did you have a deep sense of satisfaction?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's entirely possible that that occurred, but I think at that time we were so god-damn busy trying to get everything else going...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Moving too fast to notice?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it must have made the rest of your work a little easier?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I'm sure it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you didn't spend a lot of time decorating and setting it up?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time I moved into the office very hurriedly, so I had a temporary wall that was between my office and the areas the secretaries operated in. Two years later we put in a more permanent wall. So, it was fine, and that of course, the other thing that transpired was the telephones. It was the first time that everybody had their own telephone and their own telephone number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a budget for long distance calls? You didn't have an unlimited use of this service?

**Mr. Copeland:** The telephone company came to us early on and said, "We are going to create this new thing and it's called a SCAN line. If you want to involve yourself in it, we can go ahead and include all of your long distance calls and you'll just get one bulk charge out of them." And we said, "Great."

And the telephone company was extremely cooperative with us.

My god, the people that they had to send in there. Like any remodeling, you know, you're waiting for the plumber to get out of the way so the electrician can get in, and the painter can do that, and then the telephone guy can come in. Yes, those people, they had crews in there that were working late at night, and overtime on weekends, in order to be able to get us up and flying before the session started and it was, you know, strenuous times in order to be able to go through all that. It took lots of dedicated workers to have all of this up and flying on opening day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this committee still in charge of all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot of detail. You told me a story about your wife noticing the carpet problem. Can you tell that now? That's kind of a metaphor for how hands-on this operation was for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, my! Well, that was a real strange one there. Bruce Walker was the architect in charge of all of this. And he was just a wonderful guy. At any rate, we had it set up in standard procedure where the committee would meet every two weeks during the time. It was more like a progress report. And on this one particular occasion, we were moving along and everything was just coming along fine. My wife, Dolly had come over to Olympia with me on this particular occasion. Well, I was using my unfinished office and of course, they were still do remodeling in there and everything else, but that's okay. We were putting this new carpet down on the floor of the House and the Senate in the chambers. And all the desks had been removed and they'd done some painting and cleaning and

that's where we found the sparrow's nest. I'll tell you about that in a minute. So at any rate, for some reason unbeknownst to me, Dolly went upstairs on the fourth floor in the gallery to look down to see what it was like. So the next thing I know, I'm in there with Bruce and several other people and Dolly came walking in and she said, "I hate to interrupt this meeting, but I just have to call your attention, you've got something going here that is extremely bad." We looked at her; I could tell by the expression on her face she was dead serious. I mean, this was no joke. And she said, "Bruce, you've got to come look at this." He said, "What is it?" And she said, "Come with me." And we walked up to the gallery and here one strip of carpeting was laid and they had put the nap going the wrong way. So here all this carpet was one color except the one row. And they had cut all of the holes in the carpet for the vents and put the holes in the carpet to run wires up, and so on. Oh, my god! How come the carpet is going the wrong way? Then they had to go back to the manufacturer, who was Bigelow Carpet Company, some place in North Carolina. For another hunk of carpet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And get the dye lot to match?

**Mr. Copeland:** To line it up. At any rate, oh boy, oh yes! So at any rate, dodged that bullet! And just getting the carpet in there is something, because here, they can't just throw the carpet down. When you get it in the chamber, I think it took either twelve or sixteen men, and they would take tons of straps and put it around it, and carry it in by hand. There's no mechanical way you can get it in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would have to fit through the door somehow.

**Mr. Copeland:** They'd come to the back entrance and unload it, put it on these straps, and use eight guys or twelve or whatever it was. Everybody would grab hold of a strap and start walking this roll of carpet through the back entrance and then up through the rotunda and in those great big huge doors and then lay it down and roll it out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this time make sure the nap is going the right way?

**Mr. Copeland:** How true!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if she hadn't noticed it, I wonder when someone else would have noticed it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure the desks would have gone in and everybody would have seen it then. But few people recognize the fact that a carpet does have a nap to it and it's got one sheen and one tone and you turn it around and it's got something entirely different.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Got this big strip going down the middle there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear. Now tell me the sparrow story. That's a good one, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was at that time that they were doing the cleaning and painting in the chambers and all of the chairs and desks were out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I understand that the walls were very stained with tobacco smoke, that the place was rather grungy looking.

**Mr. Copeland:** Aaahhh! Everything, you know, because smoking was in great vogue at that time and chewing tobacco had pretty much gone out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not entirely?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, I guess we still had it. Sid Flanagan, he always had chewing tobacco and he had a spittoon alongside his desk that he used frequently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's sort of one foot in each century there. That's kind of interesting.

**Mr. Copeland:** They put this scaffolding up in order to be able to get up in the chambers and redo all of that stuff—do the painting and cleaning. I think there are two of them—one is over the north gallery and the other over the south gallery—a great eagle, with his talon lifted up. It's almost at the top of the ceiling, but it protrudes out and the eagle has its wings kind of partially unfurled, sort of lifted up. Okay, well, that created quite a pocket back behind the eagle's head and these unfurled wings. Somebody got up there and they found a bird's nest, where during the summer months when there was no activity going on in the building at all hardly and you'd open the doors and allow the air to blow through because they had no cooling system whatsoever. So every so often, birds would come in and they would find a lovely place to build a bird's nest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There weren't droppings on the floor?

**Mr. Copeland:** There probably were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But nobody put two and two together?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, Phyllis Mottman was the one that knew all about the birds. She was the Chief Clerk's secretary—Wonderful lady, loved by all. At any rate, when I first got there she was the only full-time employee of the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The place kind of closed

down during the summer, didn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** With the exception of Phyllis, nothing was going on in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So could she see the sparrows coming and going?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure she could. At any rate, so they cleaned out all the mess but it was just kind of interesting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they put something back there so they couldn't rebuild?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think they just left it and thought maybe after that they'd just keep the doors and windows closed to the point where there wasn't any sort of a trap for the birds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Any other surprises that you found when you were remodeling?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not that I can think of. Most of them were pretty much straightforward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand there are a lot of little storage rooms where things got squirreled away.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, the building is cut up pretty badly with a lot of things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now that they're renovating again after this latest earthquake, they're still finding things that have been tucked away and nobody knows when or how in these different little rooms—bits of furniture. Have you ever seen what's called the brass room?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just piles of old light fixtures and things tossed in there. Is this about when you were changing some of the fixtures and furniture?



**Mr. Copeland:** Partially. When we redid the front of the House chambers, there was a big table right in the front. If you walked right straight down the aisle, you'd run right smack into this table. And this table was massive and probably twenty, thirty feet long. It almost took up the whole length of the rostrum. That was where the press sat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people would be sitting at this table at a time?

**Mr. Copeland:** Two, three.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so they had a lot of space.

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't have any press at that time. This is in 1957, '59 session. Maybe it would be crowded if you had a great, big, huge, heavy debate, you know, or something like that, but most of the time, no. So when we started remodeling, we recognized that here's this great, big, huge space down here that's taken up with this press table. We wanted to get rid of the three-man desks and convert to all two-man desks so we needed the space.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislators didn't like the three-man sized desks?

**Mr. Copeland:** The guy in the middle didn't. So I think I was the guy that decided, "Hey, let's get rid of these three-man seats. We'll move eight seats right down in front and we'll put some tables up here on the sides for the press."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there some reason why they had to be front-and-center?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know why that was in the original plan in 1927 when they first opened the building for legislative sessions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they object to being sidelined?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, god! Adele Ferguson had a heart attack, you know. Oh, she thought this was terrible! "Why are you mistreating the press?" and so on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But they could still hear and see everything, couldn't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Oh Adele, you don't have to be so mad. You're not down there all the time, anyway." Oh yes, she had a big fit about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you still accommodated them, they still had a place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure. And so there were two tables that were at the side of the rostrum and they could see everything that was going on. No big deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about on the rostrum, did you make changes up there? Now you have an electronic voting machine and you had some new things; was that changing how it looked up there?

**Mr. Copeland:** There weren't too many physical changes that you can see. We used all of the original furniture and did not change that at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a sense of history there that you were trying to preserve?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, oh absolutely, you didn't want to...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some traditions are...

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh now, you didn't want to change that. So those two units, we're not changing them all. If you take a real good

look at them both on the front, both have the little hand-carved George Washington with the seal of the state of Washington. All of that stuff was all preserved. The only changes we made were electronic, telephonic, computer-oriented, a lot of wires.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More wires. Now, was the building able to stand up to all these new wires?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, because you see, a lot of people don't realize this, but the slope of the floor goes down towards the rostrum and there's a great crawl space underneath either one of them. So the accessibility during all of this wiring was there. I remember the telephone company, when we decided we're going to go ahead and have the telephones hooked in at each one of the desks, the only difficulties that they had were just those few seats right in the very front row. Because the crawl space gets real narrow there. All the rest of them, it's kind of a piece of cake to work on in there. So no, it was kind of a slam-dunk type of arrangement. To be able to go ahead and bring all of this stuff in—you know, we're suddenly using electronic voting machines and there's a wire from there, from every desk, to the rostrum. So we didn't disturb any of the traditional material; we only moved the front row and then redid the foundation. But all of the wiring was something that you couldn't even see.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read a complaint in the Journal that the electronic voting machine didn't always work properly and in a couple of votes the counts were messed up. Did you have some kinks in all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** The electronic voting machine was a combination of two things. Number one, it was a visual board that showed a red light or green light meaning a 'yes' or

'no' vote; that was number one. The second portion of it was the printout. The printout came from sheets of paper that had the little pin drive that rolled the paper up. Do you understand what I'm saying?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, like a ballot?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. But it would do, it had the names of all the members of the House and Senate and then it would show how they voted. But the way they scored this was to punch a hole in that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would that sometimes get out of line?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, you're on it, see. So you said that the electronic voting machine would fail from time to time; most of the failures came from this dumb punch thing that had to punch the paper to show what it was and the punches came up in the wrong place or they didn't...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have hanging chads?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, my god, no! I hadn't thought about that, maybe we did!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'd never even heard that word before, of course now we all know about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh no, how wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you renovate that process, too? Come up with something a little bit better?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, no, we fought with this machine for quite a number of years and then we got a whole new system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the complaints in the Journal was along the lines of “We should get rid of this; we should go back to the old days.”

**Mr. Copeland:** I think at some point somebody did some research on this and the research that I saw, in the number of roll calls that the House took on a sixty-day session, if you determined everything by an oral roll call, you’d have two legislative days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just in a sixty-day session, you’d have two legislative days just to vote ‘yes’ or vote ‘no’ one at a time. So anytime anybody suggested that, then you just got that document out and you shut them up pretty damn fast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There may be some glitches, but nothing like that.

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot happened in a very short period of time. You had had some frustrations as a legislator; did this turn around your own feelings about your commitment and your ambitions as a legislator?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that what we were seeing at that time, we were seeing light at the end of the tunnel. We were seeing that we were making some pretty good strides, that the legislative branch of government was—what am I going to say—coming of age or at least playing catch-up. But here again Anne, you have to recognize that the makeup of the legislators at that time, we had just a bunch of great people. And I mean this in just the true sense of the word. They had their own businesses, their own professions; they had their own things that they were doing, but they

were perfectly willing to give part of their time in order to be able to do something for the state of Washington. Their compensation and their remuneration did not in any way, shape, or form ever, ever, ever cover the amount of skills and abilities that they brought to the legislative government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Truly public service.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly great people, but with the same token, so many of them were just flat-out wonderful, wonderful statesmen. Like somebody said about Jeannette Hayner, “There’s one lady that didn’t have a self-serving bone in her body, really.” God, if we could have more like her and a whole bunch of others, like Bob Goldsworthy. My god almighty, he wasn’t over there grinding an axe for anything. That was the makeup of the people. And so, when it came time to make these changes and accept these innovations and things like this, well, I tell you, they were a great group. I mean hell, grab hold of the throttle and open it up and blow the whistle! Here we come!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those must have been highly gratifying years for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well certainly, absolutely, we’ve got our distractions but we just didn’t have the time to have to fool around with them; we just went straight in. But here again, I mean, give credit to all of those people at that time. John O’Brien could have been a big obstructionist. Who did I have that I could work with? My god almighty, Buster Brouillet, wonderful. Augie Mardesich, he would stick his head in the door and say, “What’s new today, Boss?” I mean, he could see down the road; he could tell what the hell was going on. He had his own political ambitions and he did a lot to grab hold of something that was so darn archaic it wasn’t

even funny. Why not? And it went on and on and on. I'll tell you personalities had a lot to do with it, lots to do with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your own leadership? Don't down-play it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Somebody's got to get up and grab a hold of the bat and take a cut at the ball.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I guess it takes a tank commander to move things along.

**Mr. Copeland:** So you know, you get three foul balls in a row, right? You're still not out and the next thing you know I'm going to "park this one in the center field bleachers!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In speaking about the Capitol Building, there is one more story from this era I'd like to hear which was about the earthquake that occurred April 29<sup>th</sup>. I guess you were in special session, because you were still in Olympia.

**Mr. Copeland:** True.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me, early in the morning—8:29 a.m.—that this occurs, where you were and what it felt like?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had an apartment rented in a complex out in Tumwater, somewhat across the street, in the vicinity of the old Tye or where Costco and Fred Meyers is now. And I was dressed and just going out the door and I happened to have on the television and I looked over and they were having breakfast in the Space Needle and the announcer was saying, "Oh my, I think we are having an earthquake, but don't worry; we're probably in one of the safest places in Seattle." And with that the entire camera began to shake as they were taking pictures on one of the Seattle

television stations, "Breakfast in the Space Needle." And I said to my wife, "They are having an earthquake in Seattle." And with that she ran from the bedroom into look at the television and by the time she got there, then we felt it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it just rippled down the Sound?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, in other words they were that much further ahead than we were. So it shook the building pretty violently. The building was framed construction and it made a lot of noise: it shook, rattled, and rolled, and we had dishes bouncing off the counter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you lay down on the floor or something?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we just stood in the doorway, and Dolly was just kind of standing in the hallway; she stood in the doorway and I was in the doorway in the kitchen. And so we just kind of stood there in the doorway and let it ride itself on out. Things from where I was standing, things just began to walk right off the kitchen counters and fall directly to the floor. Yes, it was quite an experience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it one of those quakes that feels like it goes on forever?

**Mr. Copeland:** You had the sensation, you know, when is this going to quit? But obviously, it's only just a few seconds long, but at the same token it's certainly enough to get your attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Long seconds, long seconds!

**Mr. Copeland:** But then, the amazing thing to me was shortly after that, after we had

redeemed our composure and knew that everything was alright, I told Dolly, “Well, I’m going to go ahead and go to the Capitol Building.” And she said she had something to do and she was going to be on her way. So I said fine. I was leaving, so I stepped out of the apartment and looked across the grassy area and out in front was a swimming pool. And here was this swimming pool with a great big wave that was running back and forth from one end of the swimming pool and headed in a big dive, water would go up to the air and then the water would come down and the wave would go back on the other side and repeat the whole performance all over again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody was in there, fortunately?

**Mr. Copeland:** Nobody was in there, but here was this enormous wave rolling back and forth across the swimming pool and every time it would crash, it would just dump a whole bunch of water out. The action was so violent that it shook probably half of the water out of the swimming pool and deposited it on the surrounding grass and walkways. Then I headed for the Capitol Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the roads okay?

**Mr. Copeland:** The roads were fine; the roads were not damaged at all. And my route up to the Capitol Building...everything in that area seemed to be in real good shape. Then I got to the Capitol Building—I had an assigned parking spot in the garage in the basement—and as I pulled up, there was a State Patrol car; they’d parked sideways right across the entrance into the garage to keep people from going in. So I pulled around to the back of the Capitol Building and parked there and I got out of my car and as I’m going into the Capitol Building, Dan Evans was coming down the stairs from the Mansion heading toward the Legislative Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Mansion must have been shook up, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure! The Governor told me he had just received a phone call from Washington, D.C. President Lyndon Johnson asked Dan if there was anything he could do to assist. Now, that is fast Federal government response time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wow, that’s fast.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was kind of fast, subtle response. You’ve got the President of the United States calling Dan Evans when he was still in the Mansion, even before he ever got to the office.

But the uncanny thing about walking into the Capitol Building at that time was, entering from the backside into the rotunda, the entire area was filled with a fine dust to the point that from the entryway from the back of the Legislative Building, as you looked up the steps through the rotunda, you could not see the walls on the other side, on the far side. They were completely obliterated with all of this fine dust that was in the air. It gave such a really terribly, eerie feeling. Well, we went in the Capitol Building...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you put handkerchiefs over your face? Were you breathing that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we didn’t. We were breathing the stuff, but, you know, coming from eastern Washington, I guess I breathed a lot of dust. But I remember Dan and I kind of took the stairs two at a time and he turned to the left and went over to the Governor’s Office and I went up to the rotunda and then up into the House. And the House floor was in absolute shambles because of the violent shaking that had taken place. The desks, where all of the bill books had been neatly stacked, were virtually bare. All of the books and papers were now distributed



on the surrounding floor. Well, that wasn't the bad part; the bad part was that overhead in the House chambers that was an operative glass skylight. And the bouncing had broken the glass and the glass had come down and fallen down onto the floor of the House and the Senate. And this glass, of every size and shape, littered the entire chambers. Heavy glass—and embedded in the glass was chicken wire for support. And as near as I could tell, the chicken wire didn't do a damn bit of good. It broke right smack where the glass did and all of this glass had come raining down on the floor of the House and the Senate. I remember that Ted Bottiger's chair—like the one you're sitting in right now—a piece of glass had hit it and it made a great, big, huge slice right smack down the leather back of the chair. Someone else, I forget who, had a bill book and a piece of glass had punctured the hard cover on the bill book and probably gone through the first forty pages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, had this happened an hour later, or whatever, people would have been there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let's talk about that, because that is interesting. If we had not been in special session, the Youth Legislature would have been in session at that time. Now, that would have meant that the whole thing would have been crawling with a whole bunch of high school kids at that hour of the morning, I'm sure. And there is no question that there would have been some real serious accidents somehow. So in a way, in true retrospect, maybe it was God saying that wasn't the case. But it was my understanding that at the time that the earthquake hit, Sam Smith, a member from King county, was on the floor of the House at the time, and the story is that he set the new speed record, land propelled. He made it to the middle—from the House chambers—to the middle of Capitol Way in less than ten seconds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure. Ah, that would be a horrible place to be.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose there'd be some kind of noise?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots of noise, lots of noise. But anyway, the whole place was in shambles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there other people wandering around at this point or just you; were you doing this by yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well no, a few people were beginning to kind of come into the building just to be able to kind of assess the thing and then find out, you know, what it is we should do and shouldn't do. It became obvious that we just couldn't have our standard ordinary meeting at that time. Then I know that Dan called Bob Schaefer, who was his Speaker, and also Johnny Cherberg, but he couldn't find Johnny Cherberg. Bob Schaefer and I got together with some leaders in the Senate and we just arbitrarily decided that there'd be no session that day until they had an opportunity to go ahead and assess the damage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wouldn't want a bunch of people in there.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, no, no, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have to make sure that the building was going to not fall down.

**Mr. Copeland:** General Administration and the engineers and the State Patrol, they were extremely active out there trying to be able to find out what were the things that were about to fall, shake them loose, things that were imminent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those big pillars.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, you know, get as many people out of there as you possibly could in order to be able to assess it. As the day went on, we could begin to kind of back up a little and communicate with one another and at that time we had a whole series of bills that were in conference committees. So we had made arrangements with the Tyee hotel so we could rig up a whole series of their small meeting rooms and we used those meeting rooms for the conference committees. So that afternoon, though the House and the Senate were not in session, the conference committees went ahead and met out at the Tyee in order to be able to see if they couldn't conclude their business ASAP.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were people pretty rattled?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, there isn't any question about it. But then, of course, somebody from the newspaper wrote the article and said, "God is sending the Legislature a message."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that's the last thing you needed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Or words to that effect. At any rate, we went into session very briefly in both the House and the Senate chambers and merely made the instructions that the conference committees would continue to work. And I happened to be on a conference committee at that time. We met out at the Tyee for the next two or three days; we completed our work, and then we had a session. I think it was only two or three days after that and we went ahead and completed the work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of wrapped it up?

**Mr. Copeland:** And then I went home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the Senate chamber also damaged?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, oh, it was the same thing. You have to understand that the configuration of the House and the Senate were virtually the same, but the desks, that was the only thing you had, we had no offices or anything of the kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not yet, no.

**Mr. Copeland:** So all of those bill books, like I say, they're just an accumulation of all these bills that are stacked up. Everybody had these dumb bill books, I mean, each desk had a little shelf behind you, in the desk behind you where you could keep paper and books and things like that. Of course those all had come out, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What a mess.

**Mr. Copeland:** I mean virtually everything was, quote, "on the floor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And covered with dust and glass shards?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, papers, letters, notes, reports, newsprint, ash trays, dust and glass and crap and junk and stuff like that. The only material that remained in place was stuff in the one single drawer of the desk. That remained intact. All of the rest was a first-class mess. And you could not tell where the papers came from.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have to pick through everything real carefully.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So people were interested in getting in there and finding out,

you know, "Where are these letters that I got from so and so? Can I recover those? I had them right here, where did they go?" Obviously they were, you know, five rows down on either the floor of the Senate or the House. It was a real good thump and it was amazing that more damage wasn't done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or someone killed.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, that's correct, that is correct. But it did occur early in the morning, it was probably a little bit before eight I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** 8:29 was the recorded time. Did the chandelier swing?

**Mr. Copeland:** The chandelier swung.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For days, minutes, hours?

**Mr. Copeland:** Days, you'd have a perceptive swing four or five days later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are various legends about it and then people refuting legends and it's hard to tell what's the truth.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, from what I saw, the chandelier was swinging; it had some motion to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Must have been eerie.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was extremely eerie. Pat Patterson was up on the fourth floor at the time that the earthquake occurred and he was looking across at the chandelier. And I remember his expression was that it seemed that the building went up and chandelier did too, and then when the building came down the chandelier kind of stayed there, and then it fell and went boom and hit the bottom of that chain.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The chain held, though.

**Mr. Copeland:** And the chain held, but then the chain turned into something very similar to a bungee cord stretched out, and he remembers the thing then recoiling and going back up again and then boom, it hit it again. It did that a couple of times. And then they had another tremor that lifted the building up and down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like an aftershock?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no aftershock; it was still occurring.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he just riveted to the spot, looking at this?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was hanging on for the ride, watching the chandelier going up and down at the same rate that the building was going up and down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your brain wouldn't be taking that one in very well.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was a very young man at that time, but when he left he was about eighty-seven.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The top of the building was shaking a lot more than the bottom.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I'm sure, most everything went straight up or straight down, it didn't...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It didn't go sideways?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it went sideways; some construction moves, including sideways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, I'm glad it didn't crack and fall.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the engineers later found out that one of the most precarious parts of that whole thing was the copula.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, they redesigned that.

**Mr. Copeland:** A couple more—a couple of pretty good thumps and that copula could have gone flying away. Now, if you take that copula and have it fall off in, let's say, six or eight pieces and go six or eight directions down the dome of the Capitol and then wind up in parking lots or real estate like that, yes, your forecast that somebody could have been killed would have been self-evident. It was a very frightening time, but like I said, when you walked in the Capitol Building, you couldn't see across the rotunda; that was so eerie it wasn't even funny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You sound composed now when you're talking about it; how did you feel then?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I had a much more rapid heart rate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your adrenaline level must have been a little high.

**Mr. Copeland:** We knew we had a thump, we just didn't know how bad it was. At that time I think everybody was interested in just trying to assess the damage and find out what was going on and what could be done. I think that many of the legislators—and I know the Governor did—realized that they had a function to perform. This had been a very, very serious thing in the state of Washington. This is not only an emergency thing as far as the Capitol Building is concerned; this is an emergency in the state. So, in addition to everything else, we were trying to make some kind of assessment as how extensive is the damage in the entire state of Washington?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It obviously hit Seattle, where else did it go? How far was the circle of damage?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was kind of a line between Everett, Seattle, Olympia and down into Vancouver, if I remember correctly. I don't think the eastern part of the state ever felt any part of that. One thinks it was only a minor tremor; no, it was right smack up and down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody at home called and said they felt it or anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, no, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were your kids with you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not at that time, they were all at home.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably a good thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but it was one of those experiences that is very difficult to describe how you felt at the time. It's one of those things that as long as you have the experience planted in you, you're certainly not going to volunteer to go do it again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No!

**Mr. Copeland:** Or see if you can do it even on a larger scale. But at any rate, the Legislature, in addition to the Capitol Building, we did have the focus of what extent had the damage been done to the state of Washington. Are there any emergency measures, or things like that, that we should be taking? Well, as the day wore on, later in the afternoon it became self-evident. We'd be getting these reports, especially from the State Patrol.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any emergency management set-up that we have today?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would be...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Rudimentary?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most of the information we got at that time was through the State Patrol office, it was just absolutely excellent in that case. Will Bachofner was head of the State Patrol at that time, just a wonderful, wonderful organization. And I remember, he came in, we just had an informal meeting of probably a dozen legislators, then he gave a report. He said, "There's nothing that really needs to be done. Everything is really in pretty good shape. Sure, you've had the facade fall off of the building in Seattle..."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And in Olympia.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and Olympia, and some of the chimneys come apart going up Capitol Way, but there have been no fatalities. And he had his people and the Highway Department start checking roads and bridges and they found that everything seemed to be in pretty good shape. So he just reported, "With the exception of these things, we'll probably crop up with a later report. Right now it's pretty much business as usual."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's amazing.

**Mr. Copeland:** So that's where we were. The Capitol Building was a mess, so we just kind of moved our focus, went outside, had the conference committees continue to meet. And there was probably—I want to say—a dozen conference committees meeting; we were right in the final stages of the budget, the revenue, capital budget, things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It probably felt good for people to get together and do something normal. Get their mind onto something else.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I know perfectly well that the earthquake itself did bring a closure to the Legislature a hell of a lot faster.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little bit of a catharsis there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of give you perspective, what matters, what doesn't? "We're all in this together and let's get out of here."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. "What are your priorities? Completing the work of the session." Maybe the guy that wrote the article wasn't that far wrong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were already engaged in renovating the Capitol and doing various things. Did that give you a new budget crisis, all these new expenses that weren't exactly in the plan?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, well, we just didn't know exactly what to do at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have an emergency fund for this sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we did, we could call it an emergency fund. But the Capitol fund itself was at that time, if I remember correctly, was in great shape. So we weren't really and truly worried about that. The Capitol fund, if you remember, that was a great deal of land dedicated to the support of the Capitol—all of the Black Hills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you have to cut down trees to make money to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, that's the source of the income. But the Legislature at that time didn't know enough about it to



be able to do anything, you know, create any directive that you'll appropriate a couple of dollars. So it was just a case of, "Let's get the hell out of here and get out of the way and let people assess the damages." In the rear of the House chambers, the door on the right that goes down to the lunchroom, it was jammed shut and nobody knew why, but the door was low. Well, nobody's going to force that door. I mean, nobody in their right mind's going to force that door because you don't know what the outcome's going to be. So when you said, "This door is closed; let's get the hell out of town and let the engineers take care of it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they have it all repaired in pretty good order by the next session?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. They put everything back together in great shape. One thing I remember that they did, some of the marble on the walls had popped loose. If you ever walked around and tapped on those things, you could tell that the adhesive—the cement that bonded the slabs of marble to the interior wall—had broken, I mean, had fallen. Then they would find those, and very carefully take that section of marble out and then put some adhesive backing and glue it back together, but they didn't find too many of them, which is quite unusual.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Jumping ahead of bit, in the next several years into the seventies, I think they did more and more things to make the building safer. With our next earthquake in 2001, there was a great deal of discussion about what they did in the early seventies, late sixties; it seemed to work pretty well. Everybody was pleased with how the building performed, as they say, through the next event. So they seemed to know what they were doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you remember, the earthquake in '65 really damaged the Temple

of Justice more than it did the Capitol Building. Now, the Temple of Justice, basically is four walls, it's a rectangle; it was not really tied together. There were these four walls that were sitting straight up and down. Now, you give that any kind of an impetus sideways, it would be—you're probably in pretty good shape as long as you're going lengthwise with the building back and forth. But if you're going the short way back and forth, you have the opportunity for one of those, or for both of those, center walls to fall out. Now, once that happens, then boom, you've got a pile of rubble. So it was my understanding that what they did with the Temple of Justice is that they virtually gutted the whole thing, but they were trying to save the integrity of the design on the outside. They wanted to put a steel girder all the way around the outside. Well, that would ruin the appearance, so they actually constructed the steel girder that goes on the inside. They took all four walls and tied it into this monumental huge hunk of steel, which is nothing but great, big, huge I-beams, and tied all of the four walls into there. So now structurally, the north wall and the south wall are hooked together where before it was nothing but the rafter sitting on top of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So engineering has come a long way. I wonder if Wilder and White knew this was earthquake country. Engineering at that stage may not have been as sophisticated as what we have now. I don't think people knew as much about earthquake damage then and how to deal with it; they had to learn by doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure that, how many people are going to say, "We're going to have an earthquake in '65 and we're going to have another in 2001."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also 1949, they had a big one then.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you know, three of them in your lifespan, holy-schmoley! Come on, guys! “I’m not going to go through three earthquakes in my lifespan while I’m in Olympia.” “Oh yes, you are.” Well, alright. Of course, I always liked the time I saw the bumper sticker on the car in California and it simply read, “Everything east of the San Andres Fault is going to fall into the Atlantic.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s optimism!

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right, very optimistic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So during all this mayhem, you were also organizing the new offices for legislators. They were not universally greeted with joy. There was still controversy—you can never quite have anything without controversy. There were several sort of crabby-sounding articles in different newspapers picking at this idea. That you were pushing around state workers, that your offices, they said, “will be idle and empty for months on end” and that you don’t deserve them and that it’s causing all of this disruption and that it’s sort of grandstanding on the legislators’ part. One of the persons most often quoted in this little battle is Bert Cole, the Land Commissioner of the day. Can you tell me about some of these squabbles?

**Mr. Copeland:** This squabble that occurred is what you would call “turf warfare.” Now, if you’ll notice the buildings on the Capitol Campus, one of them says Public Health and one says Public Lands and Social Security. What Bert Cole recognized was that at some point his office would be moved. The Legislature was looking at that building as office buildings. He was trying to protect his turf. So he would conjure up whatever he could in order to be able to prove his point,

that “there’s no sense in the Legislature disturbing me.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren’t you going to give him a brand new lovely place of his own? Where was he going to go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Obviously, it not only would be down the line sometime, it *was* down the line sometime.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A *Seattle Times* article of July, 1967 had an inflammatory headline, “Idle State Offices Should Be Used.” It said, “Heads of various state agencies in Olympia are intensifying their efforts to obtain office space,” in what they called “the private preserve of legislators in two structures on the Capitol Campus.” “The most active official in this area is Land Commissioner, Bert Cole, who is making formal request to the Legislature’s interim committee”—that would be you— “on facilities. To allow his employees to occupy some of the private offices created for the lawmakers in the Public Lands and Public Health buildings as part of the effort to improve the Legislature’s ‘image.’” Given in quotation marks—they really get you every time here.

“One million dollars was spent on a crash program to ensconce the lawmakers in individual offices in time for the opening of the 1967 session. The project displaced dozens of full-time employees who had been using this space previously. Several other recommendations for improving the Legislature also were advanced last year. But the private office campaign clearly was the most popular and thus received top priority. After this year’s Legislature adjourned, the interim committee voted to reserve the new offices for the exclusive use of senators and representatives, even though most of the offices will not be used until the next session in 1969.”

But don't you have meetings and keep things in your offices that would be legitimately your offices year-round?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot of talk in these articles about how state workers could temporarily go in there and sit in your desks when you weren't present. Wouldn't that be difficult for them, too? It doesn't even make sense to me how you could do that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They seem to be saying that you were so part-time, you were so marginal that you don't deserve, you know, a chair of your own. Quoting again from the article, "Perhaps committee members were thinking in terms of reducing wear and tear on furniture and carpeting that there's no substantive basis for letting this space continue unused. Maintaining the off-limit status of the offices is plainly absurd in the face of the fact that the state is paying thousands of dollars monthly to lease space in various private buildings in the Olympia area to accommodate the mushrooming public payroll." Of course, that's the other piece that the paper never likes, is that there are state workers at all. "Two new state office buildings have been authorized." And so on; there are several articles in that vein.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the two new offices probably opened within twelve months.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are a couple of articles, besides the state workers and Bert Cole variety, that say that the legislators themselves didn't like their offices, which surprised me. Here's this one: "The cold shoulder for a million-dollar project; solons dislike their new digs. State legislators are not happy with their new offices." And then the

article explains the issue as being they have to walk from that building into the Legislative Building and sometimes it rains, and things of that sort. And that they're unhappy with the long commute. Did you get this sort of complaint afterwards and was it primarily along those lines?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course, everybody wanted to have their office in the Legislative Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was it chosen who did and who didn't?

**Mr. Copeland:** The leadership of the caucuses would choose. It was primarily the leadership in both the House and the Senate that had offices within the Legislative Building. The point being, who's going to commute; who's the guy that's going to run back and forth? Are you going to put the Speaker over in the Lands Building and take a freshman and put him in the Speaker's Office? Oh come on, let's be realistic. You're not going to do it on that basis. I mean, who are the most active people that are, quote, "running the Legislature?" Well, it's the leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A later article said you did provide umbrellas for those that forgot them. And that that was the sort of thing that you had to deal with.

**Mr. Copeland:** Umbrellas! Let me tell you a story about the umbrellas. It was one of these things where somebody came up with a good idea and I thought it was just fine and dandy. A lobbyist came to me and said, "What would it be like if we provided umbrellas because it's raining?" And I said, "Now, that is a hell of a good idea." He said, "I'll provide the umbrellas if you can find some sort of an adequate stand." Well, the idea was if you were going to run from the Capitol Building over to one of the office

buildings you'd grab an umbrella, use it all the way across, and then you deposit back in the stand on the other side. It worked extremely well. The problem being that the umbrellas we got were with Travelers Insurance. The lobbyists for Travelers Insurance put it in and it said Travelers Insurance on there. Well, some other people in the insurance business thought this was unfair lobbying tactics and they raised so damn much hell we finally had to take the damn umbrellas and give them back to Travelers Insurance and say, "Thank you very much." And so they only lasted for about a week or two, but I thought it was a very nice gesture on Travelers Insurance, but it was just one of those things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then did you get some official umbrellas that were unmarked?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we didn't, no. We just discontinued it. But for a week or two, or three, whatever period of time, those umbrellas worked extremely well. But okay, so it was an advertising stunt on Travelers' part; people knew that Travelers provided the umbrellas. But no, the public couldn't stand it and I'm sure the press was involved in it. So we got rid of the umbrellas and that was the end of it. But yes, it rains here; there isn't any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Especially in the winter during session.

**Mr. Copeland:** It rains a lot, so you get wet walking back and forth; there's no doubt about it. Now, the trick is that if you wanted to go from the Senate office building to the House office building you went downstairs and went through the tunnel; there's a tunnel that goes all the way through. Well, there was even some thought about maybe we should build a tunnel connecting those over to the Legislative Building. Well, we weren't in the business of appropriating that kind of

money to keep people from getting rained on or anything of the kind, so we never really pursued it with any great interest. But yes, these complaints were very short-lived; they came about in the case of inconvenience. But once the legislators recognized the fact that at least they'd gotten off the floor of the House and the Senate and they had someplace where they could hang their hat, and they could go in and meet with constituents and talk. They had their own telephone, they had their own telephone number and so on. Then they really recognized the full importance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was picturing, as you described, all the bill books and notes and mail scattered all over the floor of the Legislature, promiscuously, that that might help people recognize that they needed some facilities.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you have to understand Anne, the great majority of the legislators were cantankerous. They're trying to make some press and complain: "You're wasting public money." But it didn't say that the services that we're rendering are necessarily...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They still took them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering if that sort of thing was one of the more exasperating parts of the job.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think that you asked me early on, "How did you accomplish all of this without finding full consensus?" And I told you we never did find full consensus, a hundred percent. Those people that were objecting to it, we just flat ran over them. I mean, we just didn't have any choice; we just flat ran over them, that's all there is to it. And that's the way in the legislative environment, if you've got a hundred people and out of the hundred, twenty of them say, "We don't want

to do it,” and eighty says, “We want to do it,” what do they do? They go ahead. Now, if you’re going to have twenty of them bitch, let them bitch. You just don’t have the time to stop and hold up the show and say, “Well, as soon as you twenty guys come around, then we’ll proceed from here.” We just don’t do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d never get it. There’s an Adele Ferguson article that talks about similar sorts of issues, but from a more positive angle. She writes about “what power means in legislative circles” and she lists: “My office is too noisy: see Tom Copeland.” “Our committee wants to use the House chambers: see Tom Copeland.” “We’ve got a parking problem: see Tom Copeland.” And then on and on like this and she says, “Well, that’s real power; getting things done. He’s the answer to everyone.” The article talked about how many things day-to-day you looked after. So how long did you stay in this role of being the problem solver for all comers? Did you become the person that everyone turned to automatically?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, maybe I became the person they turned to. But quite often they turned to me when it was really somebody else’s expertise.

*[See Adele Ferguson article on page 435.]*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you would know who that would be, anyway?

**Mr. Copeland:** But I knew how to get it done and quickly, without fuss and delays.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a useful kind of role, knowing who to call.

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the cutest things I ever got was a letter from Sid Morrison. Sid was serving his first session and he wrote me this

lovely letter. And it said:

“Dear Mr. Copeland,  
I don’t mean to be on net to complain, but I do want to call to your attention that I do have what is considered a serious problem. Before I came to Olympia I understood that you had very crowded conditions, and I came here knowing full well that crowding was probably something that I could look forward to. By now you should recognize my problem. My secretary has called to my attention my typewriter does not space, so consequently all of the words on this letter are run together. Is there anyway that you can help me out?  
Sincerely yours, Sid Morrison”

It was really a clever letter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He’s good!

**Mr. Copeland:** No spaces. At any rate, we found Sid a new typewriter before that evening.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Adele Ferguson said that you toured the House office building regularly, finding out what everybody’s problems might be.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, I made tours regularly. First, to visit the problems and then later visits to see if the problem had been corrected. I also visited with all of the staff. They were the ones that offered the most suggestions for improvements. Great people, and we all worked together in making the changes. Like what to do about the drapes. They were made by the prisoners in the state institutions. They were beautiful and modern looking, but they are made of raw flax and they smelled like it. They also shed fibers all over the suits of legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then she talks about the ashtrays, how you had these really cool ashtrays with the logo of the Legislature on them and everybody kept stealing them because they were too attractive.



**Mr. Copeland:** Well, see, I didn't necessarily authorize those ashtrays. I remember that the ashtrays came about with Phyllis Mottman and Sid Snyder; they purchased the ashtrays. And they were very attractive; there isn't any question about it. And they bought them in conjunction with the Senate and they did say "House of Representatives" and things like that. They became a souvenir piece. So all of a sudden, these ashtrays began to be migratory and totally unaccountable. Well, I couldn't believe people were doing it. As far as I was concerned, personally, I thought they were a fine thing. But yes, they did become a souvenir, but there wasn't a whole heck of a lot I could do about it. As far as the price on those things, they were probably about five or ten cents a piece, in the quantities we were buying them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the tradition that people could take their furniture with them when

they retired? There are these stories that people could take a lamp or a chair, or did, at any rate.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't know anything about that. No, the only furniture that I know anybody could take were the chairs when we declared them surplus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of the furniture seemed to have been declared surplus at some point because you find state furniture in various antiques stores and different places that kind of left the building at one time or another.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is entirely possible, but the only ones I knew of were when we remodeled and we brought in those new chairs and we took home these old ones. We had quite a nice service in the House chambers and we invited all of the living ex-Speakers and we presented them with a chair. Dan was Governor at the time and we gave him a chair.



*Tom Copeland presiding at the ceremonial presentation of legislative chairs to Governor Dan Evans and Former Speakers of the House, 1969.*

*Seated left to right: John Sylvester, (D) Seattle, 1939-41; Robert Schaefer, (D) Vancouver, 1965-67; Charles Hodde, (D) Colville, 1949-53; Governor Dan Evans; Don Eldridge, (R) Mt. Vernon, 1967-71; Herb Hamblen, (R) Spokane 1947-49; John O'Brien, (D) Seattle, 1955-63; William Day, (D) Spokane 1963-65; Mort Frayn, (R), Seattle, 1953-55.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would these have been the original pieces of furniture from the building?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was from the 1927 session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was at the time of this remodel in the mid-sixties?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So then we had a group of them that we didn't give away, or make a presentation, that we had. So we worked it out with Bill Schneider, the head of General Administration, whose purview this would come under. So he said he would have to declare them surplus, but he'd have to put a price tag on them. So then we circularized the House and said, "For those of you who would like to buy them, we're just going to take them in order of seniority. The most senior member has the first crack at it and then down the line. Would you like to buy one? They're twenty-five dollars."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Twenty-five dollars? That's cheap.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the price that Bill had set on the chairs, and he had no idea how much they'd bring. So at any rate, you could sign up and say, "Yes, I want to buy a chair." And hey, they all got sold off. As a matter of fact, you're sitting on one them right now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I recognize that.

**Mr. Copeland:** So they got sold off very quickly and they became a real kind of antique heirloom memorabilia and I thought that was a lot better than handing them to some used car lot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the alternative thinking at the time?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know, well, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No one thought of valuing them any more?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, they were going to get out of the Legislative Building, that was for certain. As a matter of fact, they were already out of the Legislative Building. Bill Schneider had them in the surplus warehouse, wherever that is. So we just made the arrangements and took them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For people who would cherish them, or at any rate, know what they were?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, right. I go in some of my friend's homes now and find that they have one of the chairs in their house, sure. Well yes, there were objectors; there were a lot of people that objected very strenuously to this whole business of having offices and telephones and things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But at the end of the session of '67, did that die down?

**Mr. Copeland:** They began to understand what their problems were and they began to understand that they had had better lines of communication. They began to understand that if one of their constituents wanted to call, they had a phone number and that somebody was going to answer that phone. You were going to be notified that you had a phone call, where prior to that time you weren't, or if you were it, was just more by happenstance than anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With very little way of calling the person back. Except at your own expense.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, like I told you, there

was no appropriation made for a legislator to make a long distance phone call. You paid for that out of your own pocket.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which, if you're from Walla Walla, I imagine, it adds up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly, I mean, how else can we do it? And we had our conference call program. We always tried to make it just as personal as we possibly could. We started that in the 1957 session and a lot of legislators from throughout the state caught on to that and it just mushroomed from there; hell, they're still doing it today. It was a good shot at communication and it worked both ways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were pretty far away from home. You had to invent something. Were you still flying back and forth? Are those the years when you were flying?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I never really made an attempt to take my plane back and forth in January, February, and March. The weather was always so bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be more like for summer meetings?

**Mr. Copeland:** You get down there and then bang, the weather closes in and you couldn't get back. It was—I mean, that was just more of a catastrophe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about your family? Your wife came with you sometimes; did your kids also come during these later years?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, as a matter of fact the kids came in the 1959 session and they went to school. We put them in school up on the west side. And they went to school there and I rented a house and it worked out quite well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they like it? Was it an adventure for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was, sure. With kids that age, it's always kind of an attractive thing to have something new and different.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These days, kids are all involved in sports teams and clubs and it's really hard to move them around during the school year. Their schedules are as tight as an adult's.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were only out of school for a couple of months. They were all in grade school at the time so that was too much of a hardship. Later on, when they got into high school they didn't want to come over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that would get a little harder. So would your wife sometimes come with you for the whole session, or just come back and forth?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, she just came back and forth, basically. Kind of depended on a couple of schedules that were going on. Some of the nice social events, of course, she'd love to come over to those. And there was an informal group called "The Legislative Wives."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had kind of a group?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they did. They had a real nice group and they had nice people on a very bipartisan basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were all having the same experience.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, and it was very, very charming and friendly and darling, and very civil. Nobody had bad words to say about one another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's good. What about the legislative husbands, there must have been a few of those?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were a few. But most of them had their own business and were not here on a full-time basis. They were strapped with all the money supporting their wives in the Legislature, so they didn't have much choice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You accomplished so much in this period. It amounts to a revolution, all the changes you were bringing in.

**Mr. Copeland:** We truly made great strides forward. We were able to appropriate funds for acquiring legislative computer equipment. We created the Legislative Facilities Committee which accelerated the development of the East Capitol Campus. But those were minor compared to the really big one: the domino effect of the earthquake of 1965. All the buildings on the campus received some damage. The Temple of Justice probably was the hardest hit from a structural standpoint, but the damage sustained by the Legislative Building was the impetus behind extensive repairs. The Legislature hurried quickly to finish the business at hand and adjourn *Sine Die*. We had no idea at that time the extent of the damage to any of the buildings, but the Capitol Committee [the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Commissioner of Public Lands] tackled the big job before them. One discovery led to another. We found that the skylights in both the Senate and House had to be repaired or replaced. Scaffolding from floor to ceiling in the chambers was required to determine the extent of the damage and to be able to develop suitable measures for correction. To make room for the scaffolding, all the desks from each chamber had to be removed. This further damaged the already worn carpeting which then had to be replaced.

So long as we had the scaffolding in place, we decided a cleaning and painting would be in order. Like I said, the domino effect was in full operation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That dangerous phrase used during remodels: "might as well."

**Mr. Copeland:** The Capitol Committee quickly made the determination to move ahead with all of the above. And what was their timeline for completion of this mammoth renovation? "Before the start of the next legislative session!" Fortunately, capital funds were available from their funding source established with the creation of the Committee and activity started immediately. The Facilities Committee was originally charged with the movement into the Public Lands and Transportation Buildings, but now the Capitol Committee gave us the additional duties of refurbishing the House and Senate chambers and remodeling the fourth floor offices. At the formation of the Facilities Committee, we had no idea that there would be such a work load. We simply took it in stride and moved ahead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds complicated. How did you manage all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were all just "playing it by ear." We were winging it, one day at a time, one problem at a time, one crisis at a time. We all worked very hard to create a schedule and made every effort to keep on schedule. Oftentimes, this would require some extra pushing and shoving. One of the early decisions was to replace the legislators' chairs in the chambers. Now Anne, this requires some explanation. The members were fast becoming concerned about the long range condition of the chairs. They had a design fault. When you leaned back in the chair, you stretched out a tension spring. After years of

use these springs began to break. When they did break it was always with a large “bang” and the occupant was immediately sent over backwards and was on the floor. I think it was Chet King that experienced a major fall and lacerated his scalp in the mishap. But the most vivid “spring failure” occurred when Frances Haddon Morgan had just concluded a fiery speech and she sat down with a great deal of vigor. Sure enough, “bang” went the spring and she was upside down on the floor! This messed up her hair, displayed her underwear to the gallery, and disturbed her composure, just to mention a few things. And with that she hastily righted herself and turned to leave the chambers via the center aisle only to stumble over some books that had fallen to the floor and again she went down with another audible crash. By now, everyone was convinced that the old chairs must go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear! That was definitely the limit! Now I understand better why you didn’t treasure the historic chairs. That makes a great deal of sense.

**Mr. Copeland:** All the time this was going on, Dick White was trying to get space for his equipment in the basement of the Legislative Building. Working with Dan and the Capitol Committee and the architects was wonderful. The Legislative Building reopened on time. This in itself was quite an accomplishment. Give credit to many, many people!





# adele ferguson reports:

## What Power Means In Legislative Circles

OLYMPIA—"My office is too noisy."  
"See Tom Copeland."  
"Our committee wants to use the house chambers."

"See Tom Copeland."  
"We've got a parking problem."  
"See Tom Copeland."

The man to see, obviously, for anything that has anything to do with the business end of running the House of Representative is Tom Copeland.

He's the Walla Walla farmer—wealthy type—who wanted to be speaker of the house and lost out to Rep. Don Eldredge of Mount Vernon.

But he didn't just go down the tube.

Copeland wound up as administrative officer, and he's got an office as big if not bigger and fancier than Eldredge's.

Which bothers Eldredge not one bit.

"We have a real good relationship and I'm just real tickled the way it's working out," Eldredge said. "After the election, all the problems of getting organized for the session came just when it was the busiest time of the year for me in my stationery business. Tom took over, they don't plant peas in November—and he's just done a fine job."

What Copeland does is serve as a sort of overseer to all the employes of the legislature, some 200 plus. He sees to it that this one gets a better typewriter, or that one's office has the ventilation improved. He negotiates with the senate for the house on matters of salary and parking and the like. He has help, of course, particularly from Asst.-Sgt.-at-Arms Gene Prince.

And he loves it.

"Me?" he says. "I'm happy just to be alive."

There is no doubt that he would rather have been speaker but he's still doing what he's a master at, and that's organizing.

He tours the House Office Building regularly, finding out what everybody's problems might be, like what to do about the drapes. They were made by prisoners in the state institutions and they are beautiful and modern looking but they are made of raw flax and they smell like it.

They also shed fibers all over the suits of the legislators.

And he has the problem of umbrellas to worry about—legislators don't always remember to bring theirs from home and the trek between buildings can be a wet one. He's got some loaners set up.

And he's got the problem of trying to hold on to the ashtrays. Some nice black plastic ones were made with House of Representatives on them and of the original 144, only 15 have escaped the souvenir hunters as of this writing.

Besides all that, Copeland serves on the rules, state government and labor and employment security committees.

"Everything that has anything to do with running the house other than presiding and chairing the rules committee, Tom can do and I think it's great," Eldredge says.

"Besides," said Eldredge, "The real joy in being speaker is not in the power or the staff or being able to rap the gavel on people. The real joy is that the speaker has his own private head in a corner of the office, and that is the ultimate in the legislature."

February 6, 1967

\*Used with permission

## CHAPTER 14

### REPUBLICANS IN THE MAJORITY, 1967

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you still heavily involved in recruiting, training, and helping people around the state run their legislative campaigns in this period?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, big time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were you still working with Jimmy Andersen in the same capacity as the two previous years?

**Mr. Copeland:** Andersen and others, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have new tactics or did you just do more of the same?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had far more involvement in business interests in the 1966 election than what we had in any previous election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you account for that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think we can account for it because we just virtually knocked on their doors and said that “you should be involved.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this movement coming to some kind of maturity, where you really had your methods figured out and you had—I wouldn’t want to call it a routine—but you were really getting good at this?

#### FORTIETH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 9, 1967—March 9, 1967

Ex. S. March 10, 1967—April 30, 1967

**Governor:** Dan Evans

**Senate:** 20 Republican members/  
29 Democrats members

**House:** 55 Republicans members/  
44 Democrats members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** Don Eldridge

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Tom Copeland

**Chief Clerk:** Malcolm “Dutch” McBeath

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder

**Sergeant at Arms:** Eugene Prince

#### House Republican Caucus:

**Majority Leader:** Slade Gorton

**Assistant Majority Leader:** Bob  
McDougall

**Caucus Chair:** Robert Goldsworthy

**Whip:** Stewart Bledsoe

**Caucus Secretary:** Gladys Kirk

#### House Democratic Caucus:

**Minority Leader:** John O’Brien

**Assistant Minority Floor Leader:** Mark  
Litchman

**Caucus Chair:** Frank Brouill

**Whip:** Leonard Sawyer

**Caucus Secretary:** Doris Johnson

#### Freshmen Republican Members:

Otto Amen, Paul Barden, Alan Bluechel, Don Brazier, Richard Chapin, George Clarke, Virginia Clocksin, Charles Elicker, Caswell Farr, Carlton Gladder, Tim Hill, Dale Hoggins, Francis Holman, Vaughn Hubbard, William Kiskaddon, Jerry Kopet, Bill Leckenby, Brian Lewis, Joe McGavick, Sid Morrison, John Murray, Gordon Richardson, Richard Smythe, Keith Spanton, Tom Swayze, Pat Wanamaker

#### Freshmen Democratic Members:

John Bagnariol, Dave Ceccarelli, Robert Charette (served in Senate), Edward Heavey, John Merrill, John Rosellini, David Sprague, Gordon Walgren

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think so. I think we were bringing together a whole new array of faces. And they were diverse in many, many fields, but I think they were very focused on a couple of things as far as state government is concerned. They were interested in far more citizen involvement than we previously had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you meet prospective candidates for the Legislature at public hearings and community events? Where would you find these people, this new kind of politician?

**Mr. Copeland:** In a whole variety of ways. Often they would just come out of the woodwork. Somebody said, “You really should go down to Clark County and talk to the telephone company because they’ve got a big interest in this whole thing.” So we approached the telephone company and all of a sudden, Dick Smythe surfaces as a candidate. There was a group of people up in Whatcom County who got together and said to Dr. Caswell Farr, “You know, you really should think about running for the Legislature.” And Cas said, “I never even gave it a thought. Okay, I’ll do it.” So a whole host of different combinations occurred. In the case of Dr. Farr, he became interested because of his involvement with the Washington State Dental Association.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were bringing in a new type of person who had not been previously involved. Did you do a lot of work with them to bring them up to speed on what the issues were and the new Legislature you were trying to forge?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. They were very, very enthusiastic about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you’d meet with them, and can you describe how you’d go about doing that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’d call ahead and let them know I was coming to their city and would like to visit. I usually had material to drop off. On one occasion, I met with a group from Spokane County who were each running. Out of that group, Carlton Gladder, Jim Kuehne, Gordon Richardson, and Jerry Kopet were all elected. On another occasion, Charlie Newschwander asked me to meet the candidates from Pierce County and out of that group Tom Swayze and Homer Humiston were successful. These people we were recruiting were all just barely in their forties or a little bit less.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So about your own age.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and these were people who were pretty well established in business in their communities. They had their own careers; they were pretty well-to-do, not destitute by any stretch of the imagination, very articulate, quite handsome, good family people, had kids in school and a real interest in their community, and quite frequently were running against a very elderly person of the opposite party who’d served for some time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you weren’t too worried about taking on incumbents?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, we didn’t mind at all; as a matter of fact we relished the opportunity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about incumbents of your own party?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very seldom.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you give them tips on public speaking and door belling and how to run a meeting and that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, they’d ask us, “What can you do to help us?” Our response often was, “We have a campaign school coming up

soon with a kind of road map of suggestions.” “Oh, and by the way, I would like have you meet these gentlemen from Puget Power, Seattle-First National Bank and the Boeing Company,” as an example.

**Mr. Copeland:** I told you about Harry Lewis and the hard-boiled eggs. One of the things I did in my campaign, I would send out sample ballots. The sample ballots were like the real ballot but were produced in miniature size. You couldn't print them on white paper so I used colored paper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, you had to make sure it wasn't the real looking thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** And the people that worked at the polling places on Election Day would say, “You can't believe the number of people that walk in and they've got this little yellow sample ballot you sent them.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because they'd written their notes on it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, to most people this was something of temporary value.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you maintain a pretty active campaign even though you'd been in the Legislature for quite a while now? Did you still campaign pretty heavily in your own district—still get out and “meet and greet?”

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I was running unopposed that year. But yes. There was a very strong obligation for you to be in all of those public functions. Even though you were running unopposed, you didn't just become a no-show.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, people notice.

**Mr. Copeland:** They'd be quite ticked off if you didn't show.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if they want to participate, you've got to, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. They wanted you there to listen. “Look, if we're going to send you to Olympia; here are the following things we want you to take a look at: one, two and three.” So when whoever was putting on the program would invite the candidates; it didn't make any difference, you went.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your family help campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. The family is involved in the campaign. However, the family really gets involved if you get elected. When I would be gone for over sixty days, my Father and Mother would have to do an awful lot of the work, including taking the children out of school and things like that, so the family involvement—it was tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this become a substantial burden? You were away a lot—all these meetings, you know.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. During this time, I took a great deal of time off from the ranch in order to give this my full attention. I hammered for two months working on it. You see, we had no staff; we had no real help from the State Party. The State Party was just beginning any involvement in legislative races, but they didn't have any money budgeted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, not everyone did this, obviously, to the extent that you did. Why did it engage you in such an important way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, if you're going to be effective, you're got to be in the majority. Otherwise, you're just sitting there for most of the time. I'd already done that; I'd had enough of being in the minority. So I just



wanted to see whether or not we could really put something together to the point where we could elect a majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel “this was the year?”

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you made it. You did create a majority for the first time in, what, twelve years?

**Mr. Copeland:** But please understand, I did not do this all by myself. There were others who worked on this project, including legislators, lobbyists, party workers, and elected officials. As House Minority Leader I was simply the self-appointed coordinator for House races. Not only that, you see, we also had Dan sitting in the Governor’s office. He was just a super help. I mean, without him—I think if we had Al Rosellini there—I don’t think we could have done it. But Dan was very, very cooperative with this whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he go around the state also working on campaigns?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. Every time he went into an area where we’d have a brand new candidate running he would give them a good word. We always kept good track of his itinerary. We knew where he was going and would give our candidates a “heads up” on his travels.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the Governor would make an appearance with the House candidates?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Gummy Johnson kept everybody informed. It was coordination more than anything else. It wasn’t that there was one big super plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you work to recruit women as legislators as well?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. We had several on the horizon. We elected Virginia Clocksin that year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were women coming to the stage where they could become more active?

**Mr. Copeland:** We never ever tried to discourage any women from running. But those women were few-and-far-between who really wanted to get into the rough and tumble of politics. And so for that reason, no, we didn’t find too many of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that several—two, three, maybe more—successful women candidates came out of a background of work with the League of Women Voters. Was that a school for potential legislators? Was that a good route for women to prepare them for office?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the League of Women Voters at that time was a very active group and I really think they tried desperately to be as “non-partisan” as they possibly could. But sure, the League of Women Voters was just an excellent forum for the introduction of politics and what’s going on in government. Many women went into the League of Women Voters and for the very first time asked, “What kind of a government do we have?” Binga, binga, bing and all of a sudden they were running up to speed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s a group intensely interested in government so it would seem like a pretty good recruiting ground for a certain type of candidate. Men candidates tended—from what I’ve read—to belong to the Rotary or Kiwanis or the Jaycees or some



kind of service group and women tended to come from that slightly different angle. They all end up in the same place, but the recruiting ground for legislators by gender was slightly different. Women also seemed to come from school board positions more often than men. How many people would be city council types or county commissioners? Would that be a recruiting ground for the next step up?

**Mr. Copeland:** City councils, oh surely. Not so much out of the county list; people that had served on school boards and served as members of city councils, oh absolutely. Two reasons: number one, they'd already been an active candidate for elective office; number two, they had a certain amount of expertise in a particular field and probably had a pretty good cadre of a certain amount of support.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine the connection between being a school board member interested in education issues would be naturally lead you into the state arena, since the state is the one that has the money and regulates education so much.

Previously, you had said that the state Republican Party was just more of an anomaly as far as their involvement in state elections and really kind of indifferent to state level politics. But you now had a new state chair, Montgomery "Gummy" Johnson. He was a much more active person, as you have described. Can you tell me about the changes he made in the state organization?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan got elected in 1964. And through Dan, Gummy Johnson was elected as the State Chairman of the Republican Party. So then we got into the election of '66 Gummy didn't have the organization set up to go out and help with legislative races. He was trying to put together an organization that was somewhat in shambles. It had an awful lot of problems, much of it was money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would he be dealing with precinct level officials, was that his purview?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he was trying to restructure the entire Republican Party right from the precincts up. I think there are five thousand precincts in the state of Washington. Every precinct is supposed to have a precinct committeeman. I think when Gummy took office, there was only something less than a thousand precinct committeemen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he had a lot of recruiting to do to.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, he had a structuring problem. I visited with Gummy frequently during this election cycle and occasionally he would come up with some really fine ideas. But as far as being a central figure, the head clearinghouse, or anything like that, no, that wasn't the case at all. The State Party had a separate arrangement over in the Senate that was totally independent of the House election cycle. We would occasionally visit, but we didn't coordinate our efforts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least he was interested, which must have been quite different.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was the first state chairman that felt that the Republican Party should do something other than elect Governors and U.S. senators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he also a believer that you could be the majority party?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no doubt about it. I'm not trying to diminish Gummy's role in this. And I'm not trying to diminish Governor Dan's role. I am trying to point out that there were several entities working all at the same time. I am the coordinator of House

racess—the Minority Leader, if you will. We exchanged thoughts and ideas frequently. We were interested in, number one, trying to find attractive candidates that had several qualities. And one of the qualities we looked for was the candidate’s own personal ability to organize volunteers and raise money locally. This shows us real support.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a good litmus test: do you have local support or not?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct and this is where Gummy didn’t have the organization set up to get involved but we could do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had his hands full.

**Mr. Copeland:** Gummy was one of these wonderful persons that believed that if you worked and labored long and hard in the vineyard of politics, at some point you deserve some kind of a reward. He was a great guy. He didn’t like people that all of a sudden wanted to become a national committeeman and the only thing they’d ever done was write out one check for thirty-five dollars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he diplomatic?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most of the time Gummy was diplomatic; he did have the propensity to on occasion hit his trigger and just tell people, “You’re an obstruction; you’re in the way; I just don’t have time.” But he’d do it very politely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you looking for candidates that would be described as moderate Republicans, or did you take anybody of any stripe?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn’t go out and say, “Are you a moderate?” or anything of that kind. Each candidate knew his district and

instinctively knew how to position himself. That was not a matter for me to address. I was not in the business of screening candidates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bring this up because there has been a lot of attention paid to Washington Republican politics in this era, this split between what are called Goldwater Republicans and what are called the moderates—or whatever label you want to use—“Evans Republicans.” It came to a head in this mid-sixties period. Through the work of Montgomery Johnson and other people, Dan Evans took a stand and said there were certain kinds of people he didn’t want to have in the Republican Party and he worked toward getting them out. That’s something that had been simmering for awhile. Governor Evans had taken the extraordinary step of publicly weeding what he calls the John Birchers out of the Republican Party in a rather famous speech at the Port Angeles meeting in May of 1965. But what is it that pushes that over the edge? I wondered how this played out while you were out there recruiting.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not in focus at this time, Anne. That happens after the close of the ’65 session, correct? But you see, the Birch Society people were fully focused on Dan Evans; they’re not focused on “the Legislature.” I think the John Birch Society read Dan’s Blueprint for Progress and all of a sudden they had something and somebody to get mad at. I mean, Dan was beginning to tell them in so many terms that, yes, we did have certain responsibilities that we were in charge of and we better address them. And I don’t think they really wanted to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were kind of a minimalist government group. I am really struck by this meeting where Dan Evans says, “You are not one of us.” There’s an interesting quote from Gummy Johnson:

he says, "Their interests are neither in the Republican Party nor even in the two-party political system. They are particularly incompatible with the principles and traditions of the Republican Party." He calls them "irresponsible extremists" and differentiates this group of people from what he calls "responsible conservatives." There was at least one self-identified Bircher who was in the House about this time and I don't know if there were other people of like-mind. Was this just something that the Republicans had to override and overlook?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature simply did not pay any attention to them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does this at any point become a critical issue for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. It was never a "critical issue" for Republican legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just one of those remarkable political events. In context, it was a good Republican year, nationally. The Republicans gained fifty seats in Congress, so there must be some kind of a movement here. It was not a presidential election year; those mid-term congressional elections often go for the other side. Ronald Reagan was elected Governor in California. Was there a feeling of: "It's our turn; it's our time," for Republicans?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think we were so concentrated on what we were supposed to do, we were not paying too much attention to the national politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To return to the state election then, the results of all your efforts were spectacular. You helped elect twenty-four new Republican members; that's a very large freshman class. The House Republicans

gained a majority for the first time since 1953. So, finally, for the first time in your years of service, your caucus is in charge.

**Mr. Copeland:** When you look at a list of the newly elected Republican members of the House of Representatives, now, that is a great group!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When there is such a large freshman class, does that shake up the whole structure? Do they become kind of an entity themselves?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me tell you who was shook up, it was the Third House. It shook up the lobbyists. The lobbyists were dumbfounded.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They couldn't afford to ignore such a large group of people?

**Mr. Copeland:** The lobbyists were absolutely stunned that the Republicans, for the first time in years, had control of the House. And now they had to at least meet the person who was going to be chairman of a committee of which they were going to appear.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they're used to playing with certain people.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were routinely used to dealing with the same people. And when the new committee chairmen were assigned, all of a sudden the lobbyist would say, "I've never even met this guy and he's been here for two sessions. Now he's the chairman of the committee. I better get acquainted with him."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. Was there already wheeling and dealing as to who would become the Speaker for the 1967 Session?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to my knowledge prior to the election. The caucus decides that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had been working your way up the ladder. You had been Whip and then the Minority Floor Leader. It was kind of a natural progression. This is a big question, how does that get decided within the caucus? I know that you dearly wanted to be Speaker.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, what were you doing and what were others doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I was playing it just as up-front and honest as I could. And I was working with all of these candidates and trying my very best to get them elected. But at the time that I first met these candidates, I never went up to any of them and said, “I’m going to help you with the understanding that if you get elected, and we have the majority, you’re going to vote for me for Speaker.” I always thought that that was a very inappropriate way to approach people. And so I never did that. This, to some, may have been a mistake because Slade Gorton seized on that. After the election he went to these people and said, “Did you make a commitment to Copeland to vote for him for Speaker?” And they said no. So at this point they were free to vote for any candidate for Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, when I said it may have been a mistake, erase, erase; that wasn’t a mistake. If I had to do it all over, I’d do the same thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, without saying you were doing these things to become Speaker, was it somewhere in your calculation that this wouldn’t exactly hurt?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was carrying out my duties as the Minority Leader in the House and Jim Andersen as Assistant Majority Leader. However, we did not want to be in the minority. If I was going to be Speaker and Andersen was going to be Majority Leader, we’d have to be in the majority. That was a given. I took off from my work for two months and devoted myself to the House campaigns. I felt it was necessary if we were going to be successful in gaining a majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What—for you—was the attraction of being the Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** I felt that at that time I had really earned the position. And I wanted to follow through on the reorganization of the Legislature. All of the ingredients are there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that’s the position from which to do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When did you become aware that you had a rival?

**Mr. Copeland:** I went to a football game immediately after the election. I was in Seattle and I ran into Charlie Newschwander. And he said, “Did you know Slade Gorton is running up and down the west coast trying to get Don Eldridge elected Speaker and himself elected Majority Leader?” And I said, “You’re kidding me?” That was the first time I’d heard anything about it. I was surprised. I was surprised at the selection of Don except for one reason: He was the senior member of the caucus at that time. But there had been basically little interest or activity on Don’s part in the last several elections to assist other Republicans become members of the House—it had been absolutely zero. He’d done nothing and in my opinion, he certainly hadn’t earned the position.

I had done a lot of recruiting and met all of the candidates. I'd campaigned in most of the districts; I helped them raise funds; I knew who they were. That was my first objective: winning a majority. Becoming Speaker was the second objective. I really felt that if we won the majority that I had earned the position of Speaker. Coming out of a very successful session, as Minority Leader, this would have been the normal progression of leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that the usual role for a prospective Speaker to take the lead in helping people with their campaigns? Is that a role one associates with the Speakership? Did John O'Brien, for instance, do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** To answer your first question, I simply don't know. You'd have to ask John for the answer to your other questions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to emphasize that this is likely a whole new level of activity.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a brand new activity; there is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Slade run around the state and help people with their campaigns, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** To the best of my knowledge, only in Seattle. Not the rest of the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why then would Slade Gorton do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think Slade would have liked to be the Speaker. Even Eldridge alluded to this in his oral history. He knew he could not get elected but he could get someone from the west side elected. He seized upon the idea that the caucus should elect a Speaker and a Majority Leader from the west side.

They felt really uncomfortable about eastside Republicans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain that?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were perceived to be "rural people, not real people from the city," a different kind of Republican than what we are," quote, end quote. Legislators from eastern Washington don't think like King County does; they don't think like the city of Seattle does. These are rural people. They were not the "new breed."

The way that the people in eastern Washington operate is considerably different than western Washington. That is, people from eastern Washington know a whole bunch of their constituents. They know all the mayors in their communities; they know all the county commissioners—and many of them have twelve county commissioners in their district; they know all the superintendents of schools—and they have six or seven school districts in their area. But in western Washington, and especially downtown Seattle, they don't report to the city council; they don't converse with the mayor; they don't have any kind of dialogue on a one-to-one basis with the county commissioners. So it's really this kind of tight, little popularity contest within a geographical district that represents lots of people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It begs the question, were eastern Washington legislators of either party much more grounded in their communities?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. I don't think there is any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have to know everybody? Does that make you more accountable?

**Mr. Copeland:** There isn't any question about it.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** That doesn't sound like a weakness; it sounds like a strength.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it is, but at the same token, this is terribly foreign to somebody that's a legislator from downtown Seattle. I remember one time when a legislator introduced a bill having to do with pensions for firemen. I went to him and I said, "You know, this is going to just absolutely fracture the city of Seattle if you have this kind of pension for the firemen?" He said, "You don't understand, I have more firemen that live in my district than I have members of the city council." I said, "Well, you've got a point." It was a very popular thing in his community. He didn't care about the city of Seattle, whether or not they were going to survive under that or not. He was going to satisfy just the firemen. It was the popular thing for him to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to throw a wrench in that line of thinking, wasn't Jimmy Andersen from Bellevue one of your closest supporters?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but in the mid-sixties being from Bellevue, he was almost considered by people from the city of Seattle to be somebody who's from out of state. You see, he lived on the wrong side of the lake.

Slade knew that he could not be elected Speaker but would be happy as Majority Leader. So he hand-selected Don Eldridge to run for Speaker, with himself running for Majority Leader. Now, Don had done little or nothing in the past four years to help Republican legislative candidates get elected. His attention was in his little stationary store in Mt. Vernon. After the election, as related in Don's oral history interview, he got a phone call from Slade, saying, "Now get ready next weekend. We're going to get in the car and make some calls." So the two of them started a tour of the Republican members of the House

on the western side of the state, promoting the candidacy of Eldridge/Gorton for Speaker/Majority Leader.

During the period that I was working with candidates, prior to the election, I never asked for a commitment from them to vote for me for Speaker. I was helping them get elected. I was helping them raise money. I was helping them get in touch with some interested people. Asking for a commitment at this time I always thought was most inappropriate. So I had no commitments from anyone. Information came back to me that Slade inquired of several members if they had made such a commitment and learned that none had been given; he considered them "free agents" and solicited their support for the Eldridge/Gorton combination. In my opinion, Slade had worked hard in the Republican ranks and deserved to be in a leadership position, but Eldridge's past performance in assisting other Republicans did not warrant him being considered for the Speakership. This was hurtful to me personally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you do anything to counter this when you first heard about it? Did you then start up a campaign yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that would be contacting legislators?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What kind of things could you tell them, that if you were Speaker you would want to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** I called a couple of them and I said, "I understand that Slade was here. Did you make some kind of a commitment to Slade?" "Yes, I made a commitment with Slade; I'm voting for Don." And I said, "Got

any good reason for that?” Sometimes I got a response, “Yes, he guaranteed me certain things.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You mean like committee chairmanships and things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Possibly. There was nothing I could do to make a turn-around at that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it customary for candidates for the Speakership to hand out candy like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know; see, I only went through that once. But within four days after the election, I had Slade running around saying, “Did you make a commitment to Copeland?” “No.” “Okay, I’ll tell you what.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he’s pretty fast out of the gate there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you feel about all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Hurt. Real hurt in many ways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, stung. What did you do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, there wasn’t anything. Interestingly enough, one of the guys that got involved in this thing at this point was Gummy Johnson. He was madder than hell at Slade. He said, “What the hell are you trying to do? Tom’s a natural at this whole thing; he’s worked hard for it.” And Slade told Gummy, “This is a caucus matter and you’re not part of the caucus and we’ll take care of it.” So he just told Gummy to shove off.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there personal animosity between you?

**Mr. Copeland:** There always has been. I’ve never been a dear, close friend of Slade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So had this been brewing for a while, in retrospect?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, only to the extent that everybody knew ahead of time that Slade had a political agenda when he first came to the state of Washington whereas I was interested in the legislative branch of government. Slade was called the “biggest carpetbagger” that the state of Washington has ever known. Some people think that maybe I and others are a little harsh in referring to Slade as a carpetbagger, but my *American College Dictionary* defines “carpetbagger” as: “A person who takes up residence in a place, with no more property than he brings in his carpetbag, to seek special political advantages for himself.” As the story goes, he moved here into the state and one of the first things he did was get a list of all the legislative districts. He selected the Forty-sixth District, a newly created district Republican in nature with no incumbents—two open seats. He moved into an apartment there. I don’t think he’d been a resident of the state twenty-four months and he filed for public office. Slade himself tells the same story about moving into a district where he didn’t know anybody and then running for office in an interview he gave with Peter Han for his book, *Nobodies to Somebodies*. You can read the interview online. I found it to be very enlightening.

So Slade got Don elected Speaker of the House and ran the whole shop as far as the politics was concerned. But the unfortunate part about Don Eldridge occurred a few years later when Don got appointed to the Liquor Board and Slade was the Attorney General at that point. Out of the clear blue sky, what

happens? The Attorney General sues the Liquor Board: Jack Hood, Leroy Hittle and Don Eldridge. These guys, all of a sudden, cannot be defended by the state of Washington. The Attorney General is suing them. They've got to reach in their own pockets and get their own defense lawyers. Here's the Attorney General suing Don Eldridge, his dear friend, for crimony sakes, who's now spending thousands and thousands of dollars trying to defend himself. What is the purpose of this whole thing? Was it just to make the Attorney General look real good because the headline says he's even suing Republicans?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a kind of political ruthlessness...

**Mr. Copeland:** I'll make no comment on that. Let's back up. Here's the Attorney General for the state of Washington; here's the Governor for the state of Washington, and here are three Evans appointees on the Liquor Board. Now, if the Liquor Board is doing something wrong, it seems to me, all they'd have to do is call Dan and say, "Let's get together and tell these guys to knock it off." The whole thing would have been taken care of. But no. This was a grand jury investigation. This whole thing goes on for several years. Then Slade finally drops the lawsuit completely in 1980. By this time Don, Leroy Hittle and Jack Hood have exhausted themselves with all kinds of legal costs. Then sometime later it was brought to the attention of the Legislature that, if the case is dropped, then the state of Washington is responsible to cover the legal costs incurred by the defendants, Eldridge, Hittle and Hood. So the Legislature had to appropriate funds to cover this obligation. In the final analysis, it was the Washington taxpayer who got stuck for the bill. And Don was sitting there saying, "Why did my dear friend Slade do this to me?" He used him; he used him, again, for political advantage, for his political agenda.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you the first or most spectacular victim of this particular agenda?

**Mr. Copeland:** Victim may not be the best word; however I am sure I was an early target.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it catch you unaware?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'd spent so much time, so much effort, so much energy in order to be able to get a majority elected to the House that it never dawned on me that Slade would do this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why was he able to sway people to his agenda? I know you say he promised chairmanships, but surely those people would have been chairman anyway, under you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Possibly. But there was also this east/west thing; it was huge. "Don and I can do a better job than Tom and Jim."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what was the feeling within the caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** Split right down the middle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then what? Did Slade have any plan for what to do with you? You're a force in the Party; you can't just be shoved aside.

**Mr. Copeland:** Two questions: I'll cover what Slade's plan to do with me in a minute. But as for me being a force in the party, he knew that was the case. I had already set up all this machinery in order to be able to modernize or bring the Legislature up to date. Immediately after the caucus election of Don Eldridge as Speaker and Slade as Floor Leader, Slade came in and said, in essence, that he didn't

want to disturb anything that I had going. He encouraged me to go ahead and continue, with full authority to do anything as far as legislative reorganization was concerned, but he indicated he'd run the politics. And in addition to that, he said something to the effect that he certainly wanted me to be the chairman of the Employment Committee, which was a pretty good-sized hump, too. So I just kept right on going with the total reorganization of the Legislature and he never, ever got in my way and neither did Don. Don got elected Speaker and he didn't do anything unless Slade told him to. Slade then took the position of a powerful Majority Leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he redefine that job, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** He redefined that job to the point where he was making political policies, not the Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this must have changed the Speakership as well?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes. Always before, the Speaker was an extremely strong character. But with Don, Slade was the number-one guy; he was calling the shots.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the Caucus Chair? Did his role change? Was everything shifting around? When someone grabs for power in one area, does it rearrange the other positions?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not necessarily. Bob Goldsworthy remained as Caucus Chair. No changes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was also an eastern Washington Republican. Was he impacted by this shift of power?

**Mr. Copeland:** He wasn't impacted by the

shift. Slade was smart enough to know that he didn't dare take on both Bob and I at the same time. He would have really had the tiger by the tail

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The job that you were doing—all the reorganization—normally, would that have fallen under the Speaker's purview?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, however the jobs that I was working on, prior to the election, were committee appointments, House remodeling, computers, office space—all of the above—and then in my spare time I did help people get elected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking of your work with space allocation and the other reforms you were pushing through. Had you been Speaker, would you have been able to carry out that role better than you did as Speaker Pro Tempore?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it would have been much better if I were Speaker. But in my role as Speaker Pro Tempore, while I was doing all this reorganization, I made a very obvious point to check with Don. I didn't do anything that he wasn't aware of. I mean, I told him in advance, "Hey, this is the program." Like the weekly schedules; nobody had heard of a weekly schedule before that—a legislative first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was amenable to all these changes, I gather?

**Mr. Copeland:** Don is a real nice guy. He had never even given a thought to a weekly schedule before. And all of a sudden I came in and I said, "We're going to add a weekly schedule." And he said, "That's a good idea. Go ahead." So I went ahead and created the whole weekly schedule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your relationship with

him—was he supportive of you and you didn't challenge him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. He was supportive of me as far as the House "reorganization" was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Speakership is a big job; I was wondering if it turned out to be a good thing—not for you personally, but for the Legislature—to split that job because of all the new things you were doing. If you had also been Speaker while you were trying to put through all these changes, would it have been difficult to cover all the responsibilities?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think so. I've always been a great one to feel as long as you have all this talent in the caucus, to go ahead and delegate authority to other people that had some talent and let them do it. We have more work than any one man can take care of. I always like to delegate authority to good people. When I delegate authority, I delegate the responsibility, too. So here we had all this wonderful talent, people that really were just excellent in what they could do. Hal Wolf was probably a great example. I selected Hal to be on the Employment Committee with me. Why Hal? Very, very simple: Hal was a local legislator. He knew the pool of local talent that we had available here to work with as far as people coming to work at the Legislature. He knew those people personally. Now, why should I say I'm going to be chairman of the Employment Committee and not have Hal involved in it when he knows those people? It would have been dumb. So that was a decision for me to make. All of a sudden the caucus gave me the green light and said, "You're going to be chairman of the Employment Committee." I said, "Fine. Hal, you're number one and Lenny Sawyer, you're going to be the Democrat man on the committee." We worked extremely well together, but I

didn't have to have Slade's okay and I didn't have to have Don's okay. He already told me I could do it, so I just went ahead and did it. I mean, like the very famous statement of Norman Schwarzkopf, "If you're going to be in charge, take command!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'd like to hear more about your relationship with Don Eldridge. It sounds like you did work out some methods of working pretty well together. What was that like for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Strenuous. Don always felt like he was uncomfortable doing what he was doing. I mean, he knew in his own mind that he wasn't a strong Speaker—that Slade was running the show. But he was willing to play that role. But, did he ever come to the caucus and say, "I have a great new idea." No, he was just a nice guy who would sit there. He read the rule book occasionally and he was a pretty good presiding officer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did the Speakership shrink under his command?

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm imagining, any vacuum there, you would step into it? Did you push around on the edges to find out what you could do?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I knew what I could do and that was the limit. I just went ahead and ran that section of the shop. I took care of the employment and did the scheduling and organizing of committee meetings, including computer involvement, space allocation and notifying the public. Once a week, every Thursday morning, I would have all of the committee chairmen in my office and we'd look at everything that was held in committee for the week—all the bills in



all the committees. Then we'd collectively allocate times to committees: "How many times are you going to have to meet next week in order to be able to cover the bills you are holding?" Frequently, the committee chairman would say, "I have five bills and they all have companion bills in the Senate. I don't intend to do anything with these five bills until I find out what the Senate is going to do. I won't need any time next week." So that would free up a block of time for maybe somebody else to fill in that may be in an overload position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That session, there were about twenty-one chairmen. In the end, were you able to accomplish pretty much everything that you would have done as Speaker? So you didn't lose in that sense—at least your wish-list didn't lose out. Were you able to put aside what must have been some bitter feelings to accomplish this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Bitterness is not the correct word. "Move on." My approach was "get the job done and do it well." That's part of politics.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You swallow hard and...? Speaking of internal politics, we've gotten ahead of the story. Choosing Don as Speaker and yourself as Speaker Pro Tempore was done within the caucus by election before the session opened. When the caucus was split in their vote, how was that resolved? Did people make speeches, what happened in the caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was never resolved. There were short speeches, a secret ballot and Ed Harris announced that the caucus had elected Don Eldridge Speaker. He didn't give the vote count. And within a matter of seconds Helmut Jueling got up and moved that "the rules be suspended and Tom Copeland be

elected Speaker Pro Tempore." This is the answer to one of your earlier questions: "Did Slade Gorton have any plan for what to do with you?" And I knew right then that the whole thing had been wired and Helmut didn't vote for me. Then the caucus elected Slade Majority Leader and Bob Goldsworthy Caucus Chairman and Jim Andersen Assistant Majority Leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you ever able to ascertain who voted for you and who didn't or was that something that was just not worth knowing?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was very easy to figure out. Most of the western Washington group voted for Don. There were a lot of people that came to me and told me how they voted. Some other people that I knew hadn't voted for me and said that they were going to. But at any rate, it was extremely close. Unfortunately, Ginny Clocksin was not voting because her race had not been decided at the time. That was one vote I could have counted on. It was not a huge margin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. And this is all rather public. This is face-to-face politics with your own group. Did you take a walk and compose yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that wasn't necessary. I don't think I had anything to say at that time. I mean, did I address the caucus or anything like that? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The quotes in the newspapers immediately after this, you sound, well, not cheerful, but you took the blow and you know what you're doing and you're quite collected. That just showed a tremendous strength, a purpose, on your part.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I sure as hell wasn't

going to play sour grapes and run off. Hurt, did I feel hurt? You're damn right, I felt hurt. Some of the members of the caucus that didn't vote for me could hardly look me in the eyes. They knew what they had done. Others that had supported me shared in the hurt. But the caucus had an agenda and I'm part of the caucus and assumed of the functions I was assigned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these were new functions for the office of the Speaker Pro Tempore. You were bringing in new approaches.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely. Always before, the committee chairman called a committee meeting whenever he—or she—damn well felt like it and announced it ten minutes in advance. Now, like I said, we always set the schedule on Thursdays. We did that then because we wanted to allow time to have the calendar for the following week published. That gave the press the opportunity to announce, "House Bill one-two-three will be considered at one o'clock in the Appropriations Committee and they will be discussing salaries for school teachers," or whatever. Now the public got a notice that that bill was going to be heard at that time. If we got the schedule out on Thursday afternoon, the press had the time to write it up and let the public know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the press seize their opportunity?

**Mr. Copeland:** They loved it! As soon as the weekly calendar came off the copy machine, the press was just all over it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they'd refer to bills not only by number but also by description. Now, there's a breakthrough! Did the Legislature get a lot of good press out of this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, oh truly. We got good

press. Did people see this was a major breakthrough? No, not really—more of a wait-and-see attitude.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every change hurts somebody?

**Mr. Copeland:** About the first time that we came out with the weekly schedule, my secretary came in the office and said, "Mr. Copeland, you have a delegation from the Senate." Senator Greive walked in and he had with him Senators Bailey, Gissberg, Mardesich, Cooney and maybe a couple of others. I learned later they had asked to see the Speaker but he had referred them to me. Senator Greive said, "Copeland, we don't like your weekly schedule. We don't do that in the Senate. Now the press is after us so they could have some advance warning when our committees meet. What you're doing is embarrassing the Senate and we want you to quit." And I said, "Thank you very much Senator, message received." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "We're going to publish the schedule. I think it's right. I think the public is entitled to know in advance when bill will be heard."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would have thought Senator Mardesich would take more your point of view, or was he just there to see the fireworks?

**Mr. Copeland:** Senator Mardesich was sitting in the background and he's pretending like he was clapping his hands when Bob Greive couldn't see him. And so was Gissberg.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those two, at least, were not exactly allies of Senator Greive.

**Mr. Copeland:** I simply made my statement. I was not going to argue with any of the fine senators. The meeting was very short and the

senators departed. No further exchange of words. They knew that my caucus was going to move ahead with scheduling. I reported the incident to the caucus and they were delighted with the outcome. I think it was a couple of weeks later, the Senate started a small limited calendar of their own. For the first time you could find out when in the heaven's name a bill was going to be heard. It was monumental.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A big change in culture.

**Mr. Copeland:** A great quantum leap. Another legislative first. It couldn't have happened without a change in party leadership. I don't think the House Democrats were in the position to go ahead and make that drastic of a change. Senator Greive probably would have just put a kibosh on the House doing it if the Democrats would have been in control at the time. Obviously, he tried to swat our effort.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to go through all these different issues, but I don't want to lose track of the initial parts of this discussion. We've talked about your relationship with Don Eldridge, but what about with Slade Gorton, your Majority Leader? How did you work with him?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was so busy making all of this policy stuff that he didn't pay a lot of attention to what I was doing. He passively agreed that all of these changes were certainly in the best interest of the operation of the House. So I'm talking about the institution of the House. But the caucus understood the need for public involvement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were operating, it sounds like, in a different sphere, not bumping up against your own leader too much. Or he's not straying into your area too much. Did you have things you needed to run through him?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Nothing whatsoever.

I kept Don informed so there would be no surprises.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were able to operate pretty much as a free agent?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Very early on, Don said, "Go right ahead and do all these things." And from that moment on, I never turned around and checked backwards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So who were your allies? Hal Wolf? Bob Goldsworthy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think that most of your party could recognize what you were up to and could work to support you?

**Mr. Copeland:** There is no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think you could have done it single-handedly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nothing is done single-handedly. It does need a little encouragement, a little push, a little shove, a little kiss on the cheek.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there ways for you to explain what you were doing and bring people on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** I went over everything with the caucus way ahead of time. As a matter of fact, I'd even done it with candidates, because in the event that we were in the majority, we were just going to change the way we did business. So I didn't do anything but follow through the commitment that I'd made way back in July or August of that previous year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly had

enough to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody was expecting that if the Republicans were to have the majority of the House, something was going to change and it was going to be very drastic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Speaker Pro Tempore position, you took it to a whole new place and everybody recognized that. Don Eldridge, during his acceptance speech in the House when he was elected Speaker spoke of you by name, which I think is a little unusual. About all that you had already done: the new office space, new equipment, improved communications, the new organization, the pre-filing of bills, early appointment of chairs and committee members. All the different things that you had been putting in place, he thanked you publicly for all your work. And he, more or less, announced that the Speaker Pro Tempore position would be this new entity.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me set the stage. This is the first day of the session and we are in newly refurbished chambers. Everything is new, bright and shiny. This is a new era for the Legislature and the members are, for the first time, beginning to recognize their total involvement is state government. A legislative first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A fresh image we should hold in our minds. Also, Representative McDougall, when he gave the nomination speech for you, spoke about all the work that you had done and were going to do and always the emphasis was: "This is a new thing." So I wanted to look at some of the previous Speakers Pro Tempore, the people that had held that position, and ask if you could tell me a little about what the position was like under them as a way of measuring the extent of the changes being made under your watch. Julia

Butler Hansen challenged John O'Brien for the Speakership, but didn't make it and served instead as Speaker Pro Tempore in 1955, '57, and '59—some of the same years you were there. Was she an activist in that position?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was very, very honorary. She was chairman of the Highways Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed that women three times in the last little while were elected to this position. Jeannette Testu was the next Pro Tem in '61 and then Ella Wintler. And then Avery Garrett in '65. Was that something that you gave to a senior member to give them an honorary title?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's all it was. It wasn't a real functioning job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** None of these people really used that position as a kind of bully pulpit to do anything, then? I was just trying to measure if this is just a clean break with the past.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a huge break from the past, actually. I saw the position as one with a great deal of authority and responsibility as authorized by the caucus. I assumed the responsibility and carried out the function to the best of my ability. Did I assume additional duties that were not otherwise assigned? I certainly did. Waiting for an assignment may take the entire session. I just wanted to "advance the ball." All the Speaker Pro Tems had been title-only; I made it a functioning office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wanted to clarify that. McDougall in his speech said about you, "It's the intent of the majority leadership to drastically change this position and to create a working position." That's an interesting

way of putting it. And he notes that you'd already begun your work, that basically for several months you'd been doing all kinds of things. And he says, "On your shoulders fell the responsibility of working with the contractors and carpenters and arguing with certain senators." I think he's alluding to the space issue and the office issues and some of the other things.

So you carved out a whole new role in the Legislature for yourself. Looking ahead, has anybody else used this position this way, to your knowledge? I guess I'm asking were you unique in your use of this title? I'm just not aware of any other Speakers Pro Tempore doing much of anything like this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was authorized by the caucus to continue my efforts of many years under the auspices of the office of the Speaker Pro Tempore. Yes, this role was new to that office and that title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It gave you an unusual platform. Those who seconded your nomination were Hal Wolf, who seemed to be your able lieutenant, and Robert Goldsworthy, your caucus leader. He remarks that you have a rare ability to get along with everyone, which is a pretty special accolade in the Legislature. As he said: "Both sides of the aisle and up to and including Mr. O'Brien." Were many or any other Republicans in that position to forge those relationships?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not many. John and I always had a very strong working relationship. I mean, he and I could disagree without being disagreeable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can I venture a guess that it's because you both cared very deeply about the institution in a way perhaps others might not have? That was your common ground?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely! Your perception

is excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, he is famous for that and you are certainly demonstrating the same thing. If you had an agenda, that was it. And John O'Brien was very much with you on all the bills

**Mr. Copeland:** I got along extremely well with John. You have to understand, once this whole thing got going, John endorsed it immediately. The problem John had was with Senator Greive and the Democrats in the Senate. They were the ones that were always putting the frown on this whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he ever talk to you about that? Did he ever allude to that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Once it got going, he did, sure. In private, he frequently said, "Really, we should have made these changes quite a few years ago," or "This is certainly a good idea."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I always thought the House and Senate operated somewhat separately, you know, pretty independently of each other.

**Mr. Copeland:** They do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Other than these futile attempts to come over and tell you not to do things, how did the Senate have any power over you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most of the time when John was Speaker and Bob Greive was the Majority Leader, Albert D. Rosellini was Governor. So John couldn't do a whole lot independently. He was somewhat strapped. I happened to be on the scene at the time that the changes should and possibly could be made.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a change of party at this



time was helpful? You had a whole bunch of ideas which predated being elected Speaker Pro Tempore. You wanted better orientation for freshman; it sounds like you wanted to give them a kind of immersion in state issues. You wanted them to visit institutions and have meetings with department heads and preview the budget, to study all kinds of issues. You wanted them to visit Hanford, the Columbia Basin, the penitentiary, and food processing plants on the east side for westerners who might never have seen such a thing, and little bit the other way, too. To introduce a state legislator to his state.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this to give them a bigger picture so that they could help represent the entire state, not just their little corner? What made you think of doing all of these things, this crash course?

**Mr. Copeland:** I remembered after the 1956 election, some organization invited all of the newly elected legislators to Spokane. They had an all-day session and some of the heads of departments came in and explained what they did in each of their departments. This was very helpful to me as a freshman legislator. And I didn't even know these other legislators. I'd never met all of the Republicans before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, you've suddenly got to work together.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, because we had nothing cohesive during the election. So at any rate, it was put on, on that basis. The number of people elected to the Legislature at that time who said, "This is the first time I've ever been in eastern Washington," impressed me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would stick in your

head.

**Mr. Copeland:** Look at that as the backdrop. Here's a whole host of people coming into the Legislature for the first time who had never been east of the Cascade Mountains, never in their lives. They don't even know what it looks like. They don't know the people who live there; they don't know the cities; they don't know the towns; they don't know the state institutions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet they have to legislate for the whole state.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. So I'm saying, "Hey, we really need some orientation here." I looked around the Legislature and said, "How many people have been in the thirty-nine counties in the state of Washington?" Less than a half-dozen!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would more eastern Washington legislators have been in the western part of the state—gone to Seattle, for instance, than the other way around?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Eastern Washington legislators were very accustomed to traveling great distances to get to their constituents. No doubt about it. But the average King County legislator had never been in eastern Washington. I was trying to change all that. There's nobody that can come home from an experience like that without learning something, even to be able to say, "My gosh, I went to Colville or I went to Hanford and saw a reactor." Or, "The fields sure are big in eastern Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Hanford starting to open up a bit? Could you go on a tour? That was still kind of a secret place, wasn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. A limited tour. And

legislators would go over there and they'd take a look at the Columbia River for the first time and be astonished at its immensity. And they were amazed at the number of dams on the Columbia River and Snake rivers that were under construction at the time. It never was a waste of anybody's time or money to take legislators on a tour like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And I understand you wanted to actually make some funding available for these trips. You weren't expecting it to be out-of-pocket.

**Mr. Copeland:** I've always thought that education and any type of thing like that was always in the overall interest in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you successful? Did these things happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, not to the extent that I would like to have them, but oh certainly, they happened.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understood that in earlier years John O'Brien would give classes in legislative procedure and the rules for freshman. Is that something that carried on? Getting to know the state is a whole new push here, but did you still also have those other classes to teach the basics?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, when I first went to the Legislature, a class was given that generally ran for two or three evenings. It was about legislative procedure and rules. The class explained why Reed's Rules had been adopted rather than Robert's Rules of Order and how you adopted House rules and how a bill went through. It was all kind of nuts and bolts—a primer. An awful lot of people just make an assumption that everybody knows ahead of time, when in essence, they really don't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unless you have a reason to

know, that's a pretty arcane thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** But it's also very essential the legislators understand this. Because, if they don't, then it brings you to a screeching halt and it grinds the institution down, waiting for everybody to catch up because they don't understand what's going on; they don't understand the procedures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a huge freshman class. If they were all just sitting in the back with their mouths shut, you'd have lost most of your crew.

**Mr. Copeland:** The point that I'm trying to make here is: The faster you can put them on any kind of an education track and get them up to speed, the sooner they are going to become functional legislators. Sit them in a dark room and don't allow them to hear what's going on and things like that, at the end of the session they're still not getting things done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or they might not bother to come back; it's a waste.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you play a role in choosing who would go on what committees? Was that something that you had a hand in?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had nothing to do with committee assignments. Slade made the assignments; however he had certain limits. For example, there was no sense in him even thinking about telling Bob Goldsworthy that he wasn't the new chairman of the Appropriation Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, he was your star player. Since you knew a lot of these members and their backgrounds, I thought perhaps you

might have had a chance to help them find their best places in the Legislature, but that was already wrapped up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody finds their own place, eventually. However, members from western Washington were leery seeing one legislative district in eastern Washington with the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the chairman of the Highways Committee. This made Goldsworthy and Huntley two very powerful legislators. This was just using talent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at the mix in leadership, then. Besides Don Eldridge as Speaker, yourself as Speaker Pro Tempore, Slade Gorton as Majority Leader, Bob McDougall was the Assistant Majority Leader. Where was he from?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wenatchee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Stewart Bledsoe as Whip was from central Washington, Robert Goldsworthy from Whitman County as Caucus Chair, Gladys Kirk from King County as Caucus Secretary—a somewhat ornamental office as far as I can make out. It was somewhat of a geographical mixture. That was the lineup. The Democrats were almost entirely from western Washington: John O'Brien, Mark Litchman, Leonard Sawyer, Frank Brouillet and Doris Johnson.

**Mr. Copeland:** Doris was from eastern Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The main leadership was pretty much from the Puget Sound corridor, including Sawyer and Brouillet from the same area. Seattle and Tacoma—Pierce County at any rate—and almost nowhere else.

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the rest of leadership

and the committee chairmen, this was nothing more than a display of talent; I don't care where they were from. However, most of them came from outside of King County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Another thing you were able to do was reduce the number of committees. There had been thirty-one and you reduced it to twenty-one. That helped your scheduling right there so that you wouldn't have so many conflicts.

**Mr. Copeland:** Thirty-one was just a totally unmanageable. Just window dressing. It just didn't do anything but impede progress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wanted the Senate to follow your lead and have matching committees so that a bill could move from one like committee to another. But that didn't quite happen. The Senate has several committees you didn't have, and some that you had and they didn't. Some with different titles. And they had more committees than you did.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was totally up to them, I think. If a bill came from the House, it was up to the Majority Leader of the Senate to assign that bill. Quite frankly, Bob Greive would go ahead and put it in any damn place he wanted whether or not it looked like it should be in that committee. No, there was no sense in us even thinking that the Senate would go ahead and align at that time. Bob Greive saw a great deal of his power and authority erode once we got the schedule going. He was threatened by the vast changes in the institution of the Senate as well as the House and that's why he complained to me, "We don't do business that way. This is an embarrassment." And I do remember him using the word "embarrassment." I was in no position to argue with him or carry on the debate. I remember I just cut it off and the

members of the Senate just sat in my office and looked at me. Bob was just absolutely blown away; he didn't think anybody could talk to him that way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard to argue with someone who's not going to argue. Did you have any resistance in the House to reducing the number of committees? Were there disgruntled people who'd lost their anticipated chairmanships?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, because we had such a heck of a freshman class coming in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was fortuitous, I guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** Most everybody that was a member of the freshman class got to be vice-chairman of a committee or something like that, which was fine. And that was about all anybody could expect. Before, when John was Speaker, gosh, newly elected freshmen would become chairman of a committee—Dikes and Bridges—but that committee wouldn't get a bill, not one bill. And so it was just kind of a title-only. It looks extremely good on the stationary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be a little frightening to be a chairman before you even knew what to do otherwise. Before we really jump into the session, this is probably the only time we will really pound out all these early issues. Si Holcomb had been the Chief Clerk for a long time, thirty years or something. He had died the previous session and Sid Snyder, who had been his assistant, was asked to step in and hold it together for the session. And there was some expectation among some people that Sid Snyder should become the Chief Clerk—enough for it to get into the newspapers and to be commented on. And there was a kind of a line up; some people

thought that Gene Prince should become an assistant Chief Clerk as he had been something like assistant to the Sergeant at Arms. That did not happen. Did you have any feelings about that yourself? Did you have any say in who should take these offices?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I didn't have any say at all. That was pretty much a call for Don to make.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Malcolm McBeath, who was a close friend of Don's from his legislative days—he had been a two-term member from Whatcom, but wasn't reelected or retired or I'm not sure of the circumstances—but he became Chief Clerk. And Sid Snyder continued as Assistant Chief Clerk and Gene Prince was elected the Sergeant at Arms, replacing Elmer Hyppa. These are party patronage jobs, aren't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gene Prince, I think, had been around in one capacity or another for awhile. He knew the process inside out and could help out in a lot of ways.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, Gene knew his way around the Legislature and everything else. Frankly, if I had been elected Speaker, Gene would have been the Chief Clerk. We didn't have anybody else who really knew how to run the shop like Gene did. But as far as a good working relationship in the House was concerned, Sid, of course had that. He's just such an outstanding individual all by himself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He seems to be in a different category for most people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes. Everybody knew that Sid was a Democrat; everybody knew that Gene Prince was a Republican. Their

party affiliation didn't make the difference. They worked; they were interested in doing something for quote, "the institution," period. And that was it. I never knew if a lot of the employees ever belonged to a political party. I had no idea what political affiliation Phyllis Mottman had. I mean, that lady truly was involved very heavily in the operation of the House and I don't think anybody was going to fire her, just because she served a previous group at another time. I mean, these people have so much institutional knowledge you just don't want to replace them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, they're professional.

**Mr. Copeland:** They're pros. But at the same token, they act like pros.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've just got to keep somebody like that? In whatever capacity.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was Malcolm McBeath as Chief Clerk; did he understand the role?

**Mr. Copeland:** He enjoyed the role, but "Dutch" was not a very forceful person.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what qualities does it take to be a Chief Clerk? Highly organized, I would guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but if you also knew the background of the operation of the House it would help and he certainly didn't. He had served two previous sessions and had not done a whole heck of a lot. He fulfilled the role as Chief Clerk very well, but Phyllis Mottman and Sid Snyder were the main technicians. Without them he would have fallen flat on his face.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you'd had someone like

Si Holcomb who had been there so long—this is kind of an awkward way of putting it—but when he dies, does that make bringing in all your reforms easier because that "institution" is no longer there? Would he have resisted your changes?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet he would have resisted. Si Holcomb was a one-man band. John O'Brien let him run unsupervised.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was that also—again, an awkward thing to say—fortuitous? You've described some of his—I don't want to call it a side business—but certainly all that would have disappeared under the new way of doing business.

**Mr. Copeland:** A lobbyist doesn't have to give anybody a hundred dollars to get a copy of the schedule of events. And we don't give money in order to be able to get a service that really should be public information. Si was continuing to live in the dark ages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anyway, so you had Sid Snyder, you had Gene Prince; did you, in your capacity, work pretty closely with them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very closely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how did they feel about all of the things that you wanted to do? Were they on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were definitely on board. Very helpful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As I understand it, the Sergeant at Arms is a person who looks after security, but they do a whole bunch of other unnamed things. It's one of those elastic sort of offices. What kinds of things would Gene Prince be able to help you with?

**Mr. Copeland:** Once Gene Prince came in



my office and said, "Mr. Copeland," one of the employees in the House is suspected of selling marijuana." I said, "Just from the standpoint of the institution, we cannot have this go on." I did not consult with Don Eldridge or Slade Gorton. I called the sponsoring member of this employee in and said, "I want Sergeant of Arms Gene Prince to tell you what he thinks is going on," and he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this total news to the sponsor?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. And that particular member looked at me and he said, "What do you suggest?" And I said, "I suggest that he be on a bus and get out of here by noon today. We're not going to say anything and you're not going to say anything, but he's gone. And that's the end of it." And I don't know whether the kid was really doing it or not. But I didn't want to have that kind of negative publicity that would have come with a long protracted hearing process. The press could have spent all kinds of time and effort and printer's ink on what's going on down in the House. And so he left very quickly. There probably were fewer than four members who even knew about the incident.

Gene came to me with another incident where a member of the House was not conducting himself properly around the pages. And I asked Hal Wolf and Len Sawyer to join me and I called the member in and I said, "This is strictly an allegation." And he said, "I didn't do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even the whiff of such a thing is just...

**Mr. Copeland:** I said, "I don't want to hear you say that you did or you didn't. You will have no more contact with pages, that's it." And he left and that was the end of it.

Gene did his job well, very quietly,

very efficiently. But in cases like these, he had to have somebody like me back him up. And Hal Wolf and Leonard Sawyer were there every step of the way. That was the Employment Committee. We just dealt with it, that's all there is to it. So, was Gene's job a big one? Sure, it's a big one. And by the time we got the new offices across the street and all of the members had a secretary, let's see: lots of machinery, lots of personnel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Lots more staff.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just a great huge growing pain, but it was absolutely necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did members bring their own staff, or did you find them staff? Where did the staff come from?

**Mr. Copeland:** Combination of both. An awful lot of people would bring people from their legislative district to Olympia. As far as the Employment Committee was concerned, if they didn't have anybody, then we'd have a pool that they could draw on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would those be year-round jobs?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, at that time they were just session jobs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that previously the Legislature would kind of borrow staff from agencies or different places. And then those people would return to from whence they came. I imagine it must have been a little chaotic for the agencies.

**Mr. Copeland:** It worked to a degree, but not well. It kind of put them in a difficult position. It would have been nice to be able to say the committee clerk of Revenue is somebody that is employed with the Revenue Department

who knows what they're talking about. But it didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you'd be either taking their staff that they didn't really need—and you didn't really want those people, or taking their top staff, which would leave them in the lurch. That's not a really great situation for anybody.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And then, of course, whenever you got into the partisan politics, are they beginning to make policy and things like that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, are they representing their agency or the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. It would have been a nice idea, but you're dreaming if you think it's the best scheme.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I always wondered how that worked. But also, were there hordes of qualified people running around who only wanted a session job and were willing to head back into the woodwork afterwards? That's pretty hard to maintain.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had a lot of qualified people looking for session work, but these were mainly tour guides, secretaries and so forth. This was why the whole thing ultimately evolved itself to where it is now, to a point where you've got this permanent staff because this cadre of people that are there now have been working on that same subject matter for years and years and years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does take some expertise.

**Mr. Copeland:** It truly does. A good example is Victor Moon, who is still employed in the House. Victor has been working on legislation

that pertains to city and county government for almost thirty years now. Is he an expert in the field? He certainly is. Does he know his way around in that area? He certainly does. Does he make policy? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He knows where the line is.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, but he's good at it. And I don't mean to separate out Victor; there's a whole cadre of people that are absolutely excellent, excellent people that the Legislature is depending on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this is—like we keep saying—a quantum leap right here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to keep going through all of the things that you brought to fruition. This is your legacy, these are huge changes. You advocated the pre-filing of bills. I've read that a lot more bills were pre-filed that year. I don't think anybody did a study, but you made a remark in one place where, yes, things were moving much more quickly, that this was a useful tool. Can you describe what it means to pre-file a bill and then how that jump-starts the whole process?

**Mr. Copeland:** Prior to that time, what would happen? The Code Reviser's Office did not necessarily have the authority to handle anything pre-filed. And so it was just a case of working with Dick White on this proposed change to find out whether or not, number one, physically, was it possible, and number two, would it be in his best interest in order to do it? Well obviously, Dick concluded that yes, it would. But frequently, pre-filing of bills also incorporated bills that had been filed in the previous session. So it was not "brand new material." The bill may have been altered or

amended or changed, but the substance was there only in a new form. Dick and his staff would then take a bill that had been introduced in a previous session and make maybe only modest modifications and put it out. Then they would establish a numbering system that was not permanently attached.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So all these legislators could start putting these things in the hopper?

**Mr. Copeland:** The bill would be held in the Code Reviser's Office and not necessarily delivered to anybody. But number one, it was publicized that a bill on teachers' pensions had been filed and another one on highways had been filed. People began to know ahead of time that "these things were coming into sharp focus." The pre-filing of bills allowed the Code Reviser's Office to get this stuff out of the way. Otherwise they would have been hit with it the very first day of session. Once you get that stuff going into the Code Reviser's Office on the first day, you created such a backlog instantly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So everything slows down almost immediately? What proportion of bills could be pre-filed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh fifteen, twenty percent easily.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So pretty substantial.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very substantial. You will find that in the House and Senate journals there was quite a list of bills assigned to committee on the very first day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it's one hundred and seven.

**Mr. Copeland:** They went right across the rostrum and were assigned to committee and bang! The first day or second day of the

session and you've got the work in front of you. Not that that's going to be all of it, but it's a start.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it even out the work process a little bit so that right away you're doing work instead of having this lag and then a huge crush at the end?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. A great percentage of bills that were pre-filed had passed one body the previous session. They had not passed the other one. And the reason they hadn't passed are probably numerous. Maybe there was some objection in the House or Senate and they wanted to have certain things changed or altered, but time ran out. Now maybe the new pre-filing had that alteration. With a pre-filed bill, frequently the committee chairman would come in and say, you know, "This bill passed ninety-two to zip and the Senate objected. They wanted to have this on it and I've made the changes." This is the same bill we had before and so just like that, it would be elevated to a fast-track. It would come sailing out of the committee and be in Rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many bills would die in the session just for lack of time? Is there a kind of natural attrition, where things just kind of fall by the wayside because you can't look at every thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** I never counted. But here again, what kind of a priority did you put on it? There are several things that can happen. There may be six or seven bills on the same subject matter. So bills A, B, C do not even surface, but D does. So that's one reason. Number two, yes, this is a good bill, but the people that it's major impact is going to be on somebody and they are objecting to it strongly and there is no sense in wasting the time because it's just not going to get any

place. Number three, a bill would come in and be totally inappropriate; there is no way we can float that project. It's got so damn much money involved in it that we'd have to raise the sales tax to twelve percent to be able to do it. So each and every bill had its own reason for passing or not passing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were more bills introduced as the process became streamlined? Does the number start to go up?

**Mr. Copeland:** More bills were processed by the Code Reviser's office early on, especially departmental request bills. Does the number start to go up? To a degree. However, the bills are better prepared, with fewer errors, fewer duplicates, and far more visibility.

Frequently, a good committee chairman would have three or four housekeeping bills that were introduced that would all fit onto the same title. And he'd combine them into a substitute bill with the subject matter that was all contained in three bills and put it into one. As the session progressed, we published a booklet showing all of the bills by topic. And let's say the topic would be "schools." My goodness, there could be ten or more bills having to do with schools in some fashion. Then you could research those bills to find out how many were overlapping. So when you're looking at raw numbers, it's unfair treatment to say, "Well, the Legislature introduced five hundred bills and only a hundred of them passed!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's actually success, not failure.

**Mr. Copeland:** It truly is. Just because we printed that many bills doesn't necessarily mean that's bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, no. For instance, you pre-filed several of your bills and one of them had to do with establishing one hundred and

fifty-six primitive state parks. Was part of something that had been worked through for awhile?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is part of the Department of Natural Resources request legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a whole cluster of DNR bills that I wanted to talk about in a moment. This bill was just one that made it into the press that this was pre-filed and "this was going to happen." And so your system of giving notice was working in that sense, because there was a nice little article about it and people interested in this would be on notice that this was happening and that they could participate in this discussion. So it worked in that case. Did it give legislators more time to marshal information and talk to the right people and figure out how it impacted their districts, or whatever, because the process was a little more spread out?

**Mr. Copeland:** True, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And lobbyists too, I imagine, and the press obviously, because they're picking up on this.

**Mr. Copeland:** The affected parties knew well in advance what was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was part of opening things up.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is about trying not to surprise anybody; not: "Don't tell anybody the Legislature yesterday passed a bill that's going to impact your business because they raised your taxes."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would already be too late. This is an important piece in your reform package, then. There are a couple other things that I want to ask you. When you first set up

the session, you customarily discuss your rules of procedure. Two changes were proposed which were thought—in some news articles—to be quite significant. One was related to the effect of a motion “to lay an amendment upon the table.” The issue was whether that tabled what’s called “the main question” or just the amendment, I guess. Could you explain that to me as a lay person?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it’s important because if there is a motion to amend a bill and a subsequent motion is made “to lay it upon the table,” which means debate will be cut off. The question is: does this apply only to the amendment or does this apply to the main bill?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it previously apply to the whole bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** See, that was the problem. There was a big discussion about whether or not you took the whole bill with the motion to lay it on the table. I think this is just a clarification. In the proceedings you’re in the amendatory process. The motion took in only the amendment; it did not take the main bill. It was a case of procedurally clarifying different interpretation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you do go to use it, the whole discussion comes up again. It seems to be something members have to work through. It certainly seems more efficient not to think you’re going to kill an entire bill by just laying aside an amendment.

**Mr. Copeland:** That depends on what side you are on. Do you make a simple motion and kill a bill? Of course here again, we get back into reading Reed’s Rules. Reed’s Rules are written very specifically for a legislative body. They get into the process of a bill and what the amendatory procedure is and things like

that. Reed’s Rules goes to great lengths about conference committees and what a conference committee should do. So we just wanted to make darn sure everybody understood the House rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also discussed was reform of the voting procedure in the Rules Committee. It’s something that Slade Gorton was pushing through as some kind of streamlining and of course, the other party doesn’t necessarily like it. The other piece that was an innovation or clarification, I’m not sure which, for the use of the Committee of the Whole. It was said that this had been long used in the Senate but was a new method to use in the House. The Republicans wanted to use it especially during discussions on appropriations to circumvent the use of roll call votes on amendments. The way it was worded alluded to the fact that embarrassing amendments could be an occasion for a roll call vote so that a record would be created that could be used in elections against people. It didn’t say that flat-out but that was sort of between the lines. The Committee of the Whole is what; how does that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** This also is provided for in Reed’s Rules. And the literal interpretation means that the entire body is now on that committee—not just the Appropriations Committee—everybody is on that committee. Thomas Reed’s Rules state that in the operation of the Committee of the Whole voting on amendments will be by voice vote only. That’s the key. So rather than bringing up an appropriation bill on the floor of the House and somebody saying, you know, “I have an amendment here that will raise the salary of all the firemen by forty percent.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those are those so-called “hero amendments.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you know them. And so



if your party's putting together the budget, and you have to say no, okay, you voted against the firemen. The next minute you have an amendment for a thirty percent increase in police salary. And you say no! So then you vote against the policemen and then you have another one for nurses. This is a political tool that has been used over and over again. The way to get around it is to have no recorded vote. Frequently, the minority would object strenuously because they were trying to build a negative type voting record. If you kept track of all of these amendments that had to be voted down and you put a dollar amount on them, frequently they would have increased the budget by thirty or forty percent with no means of paying for it. But it's hard to explain to the public that: "I didn't vote against the firemen; I didn't vote against the policemen. I was trying to maintain a level of budget we could afford. If I had voted for all of those things then the budget level would have gone up forty percent. Are you going to go along with the sales tax increase of twelve percent we'd need to cover that budget impact?" "Oh."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's no quick answer and lots of people don't look beyond that. So, were you pushed to use this because this record keeping had been abused in the recent past?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One more preliminary question: The Republican caucus chose James Andersen as the Assistant Floor Leader, but then he was immediately appointed to the Senate to replace Al Thompson, the senator who was appointed to the Liquor Control Board. Was that a big loss for you? He was your close colleague.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. I explained earlier

that I wanted Jim to be the Majority Leader and when that didn't work out the caucus made him the Assistant Majority Leader. However, he moved to the Senate on the first day of session and Dick Chapin was appointed as his replacement from the Forty-eighth District.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a surprise; did you know this was going to happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was something that Senator Al Thompson had worked out with the Governor. I was not forewarned at all. I don't think Jim was, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't the mechanism that the county commissioners of the area get together and choose the successor when there is a vacancy?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the mechanism, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was announced just when session started. Kind of an unfortunate timing I would think, to rearrange everybody.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did James Andersen have an ambition to be in the Senate? Was this something he welcomed?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think Jim welcomed the change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was replaced by Bob McDougall as the Assistant Majority Leader. Joel Pritchard also went to the Senate that year. Whenever one person makes a move, of course, it rearranges a lot of things. Did that make a difference in how the House was run? He never was in leadership, but he was part of that inner circle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it made a difference.

Joel always made his presence felt; a very capable guy. But it was not at all surprising that he would make the move. Charlie Moriarty was the senator in that district and he decided not to run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think Senator Moriarty went back to his private law practice. You can almost see this as a kaleidoscope as different persons shift around. Now, let's look at the session of 1967. This was a year of great accomplishments and change.

**Mr. Copeland:** When you look at it, we had



*Tom with his administrative assistants,  
Joyce Kornmesser and Mary McLaughlin*

a Republican majority in newly refurbished chambers, with offices for members. They even had their own telephones and an administrative assistant for each member. We had new and larger committee rooms with adequate sound systems and additional staff. We were putting out weekly committee schedules. The first major steps to bring computers into the legislative environment had been taken. We provided an orientation

to the departments for members and had greater communication with the Governor's Office. We even improved relations with the Senate. Most all of these achievements were legislative firsts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something to note and celebrate!

## CHAPTER 15

### SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE, 1967

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**Ms. Kilgannon:** This will be a very busy session for you, as we said the Republicans' first majority session since 1953. Tell me about your plans and goals.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I recovered from the defeat of running for Speaker. I concluded that I had a great deal to offer and that there was much work to be done. I made it extremely clear to the caucus that I had been and would remain a "team player." I took the assignment of chairman of the Employment Committee before the session started. Also, I continued my role on the Legislative Facilities Committee in the final stages of remodeling and expanding office and hearing room space. I had the plans developed for committee scheduling and now worked on the implementation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Enough to keep you fully engaged. And now Dan Evans had the House with him for the first time; the Senate, of course, was still Democratic. He had a lot of executive requests and things are moving along. It was a very long session. You had your regular session and then fifty-two days of extraordinary session—a one hundred and twelve day session back-to-back. These long sessions—you have a family, you have a business, a farm. You've already spent a huge campaign season on the road. How much impact does this have on your private life?

**Mr. Copeland:** It impacts it dramatically; there is no doubt about it. I've got the operation to run at home and so anytime I could grab a couple hours on the weekend I'd run home and try to do some farm work. I took up residence in Olympia in late November. As chairman of the Employment Committee we had the largest number of employees to bring on board in the history of the House. The other members of the committee were Len Sawyer, a Democrat, and Hal Wolf, a Republican member.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel, not overwhelmed, but stretched with all these different responsibilities?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the answer to that is yes! I was stretched, there's no doubt about it. And my farm operation is such that we began seeding peas in March. That was a big deal for us. I had to have contracts all signed and things like that. I was trying to do all of that and legislate, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just as everything's at the crunch hour at the Legislature. Did your heart sink a little when the special session is announced and you knew it was coming?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I knew that the special session was coming. I got frustrated with the pace in which everything was moving. We sat there and waited for the Senate to get off their dime and do something. We never knew from one minute to the next whether or not they were doing anything or how they were going to handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder what kind of internal conflict that brought up for you. You're really supposed to be at home working on your other life.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And you know everybody else is in the same boat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though farming has a certain impetus in the spring.

**Mr. Copeland:** But take the attorneys in the Legislature. They've got clients that want to have an answer and they just haven't been able to get back to the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They can see their practice crumbling before their eyes?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is not an understatement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a huge sacrifice. I don't know if the general public really understands that.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think the general public understands that. I often felt depressed with the way the press wrote it up. Many think that the members of the Legislature are just nothing but a big bunch of buffoons collecting a per diem and running around getting drunk every night. And that is just not the case at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you certainly worked long hours.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, as a matter of fact, if we were getting paid by the hour we would have been below minimum wage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What made the session so long that year? Was the Democratic Senate trying to hold the line or was it because the agenda was so huge?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would be a combination of all kinds of things. Dan had come with a very ambitious program. This is the time he really unveiled his "Blueprint for Progress." He was trying to do the state reorganization. And so it was a case of where we were just

trying desperately to get a whole bunch of things passed by the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, no more nibbling around the edges; he's going for the big things.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was his time to make the move.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it also a case of needing to create a record? He was going to be up for re-election at the end of this term.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think Dan had any idea of whether he was going up for re-election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't mean to suggest he was just pushing his program for re-election purposes, but because this was what he wanted to do. You can't guarantee you're going to be re-elected, so if you have certain things you really want to do, you better do them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Once the Democrats realized that this whole thing was in the basic overall interest of reorganizing state government and they got off of this business of being just a purely political kick, then things began to come together. If you read the fine print about how some of those executive requests bills fared in the Senate, Senator Greive may not have been in tune with it, but they passed. And I know that Dan depended very heavily on Democrats like Augie Mardesich, Frank Foley and Bill Gissberg and four or five other people in the Senate to get his agenda through. Of course, he didn't have much of a struggle with getting it through the Republican House, but it was with a great deal of conscious effort on his part—political lobbying, whatever you want to call it—to get it passed. Some of the roll call votes show it was not always very easy. From time to time it almost looked like a coalition of Republicans and Democrats. But Dan was crafty enough to prevail. So, yes, he deserves all of the credit in the world for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that he was also aided by some of the splits in the Democratic Party that were certainly heating up in these years, the challenges to Bob Greive's leadership. Members were doing end-runs around him. Certainly Augie Mardesich and Bill Gissberg were in that camp. They had their own things they were trying to accomplish and they had no problem aligning with Republicans to get things done. So again, fortuitous that the Democrats in the Senate had these issues with each other and you were able to use them to further all kinds of legislation.



*Senator Augie Mardesich, Representative Tom Copeland and Senator Bill Gissberg, n.d.*

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan really went out and cultivated this cadre of people in the Democrat Senate and just sat them down and said, "Hey look, this is the direction that I think we want to take state government. Now, it has nothing to do with partisan politics. I know that you're going to want to play politics with it in the Senate. But damn it, in the end result, this is the right thing to do."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes you can do the right thing for other reasons.

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the things that the Governor had to deal with was government reorganization: putting some of these fifty or more different agencies together or putting

several of them in a department or agency where they could work in harmony with one another; it made great sense. But yes, there were political ramifications that always came up. When he sat down and he said, "Now okay, what do we do? What's the right thing to do?" A certain number of legislators came to the conclusion it was the right thing to go ahead and get reorganized. So he was able to get it passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Governor Evans was using a new kind of language. He reworked those issues to make them fresh. He created a different climate. And he was a different kind of politician, so he could, perhaps, break out of old patterns.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your side got a lot of good press. There's a Legislative Summary put out at the end of the session by the Republican caucus, a retrospective of how the session went. This phrase caught my attention: "Our two-fisted Governor and the Republican majority in the House took the position that doing a responsible job for the future was more important than temporizing under favorable economic circumstances." That's a dynamic image. This was just one description of the session, but all the descriptions are somewhat in this mode. Let's look at the action and see what you did. Your position is different, of course; you had been the Governor's right-hand man in the Legislature. But now that is Slade Gorton; were you a little bit more removed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that hard for you to give up?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that was Slade's assignment. I had my work cut out for me. I



knew what role I was to play and I performed very well. I continued to work the problem and make the changes I felt were necessary. It was more of a shift in emphasis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Slade Gorton as good a spokesperson for the Governor's issues? Was he very effective in getting Dan's program through?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes to both questions. I think his problem—if you can call it a problem—was that he didn't have many friends on the Democrat side. I felt that the members admired Slade's intellect but they did not like him and did not trust him very much. Being in the majority, he didn't need them, whereas the session before I needed them badly. But we were all charged with pushing the Governor's program. That was a given.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's not that you were, maybe, frustrated watching? It did work, just a different style?

**Mr. Copeland:** Frustration only occurs when you are in the minority. There is one hell of a difference when you are in the minority trying to push the Governor's agenda and when you are in the majority pushing it. No, this was fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it allow you to shift your focus? Less on the Governor's executive requests to a different list of things that you wanted to do, or were you still pretty much tied to the Governor's agenda?

**Mr. Copeland:** I continued to work on Legislative reform; the Governor was interested, but not a player. We had a very good understanding and a good working relationship.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pushing through the Governor's bills would, I imagine, take up

a lot of energy. But if that became Gorton's role, then did that allow you to do some other things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly. It was obviously Slade's job to get all of that stuff pushed through. But please understand, in the caucus he didn't have any adversaries. So it was kind of a slam-dunk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it an exciting caucus? You had all these new members and you were really doing a lot of things. Did it have a feeling of heightened awareness that a lot was going to happen? Not only were you empowered now, but there was a lot to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** I've just got to say without fear of contradiction, it was probably one of the most exciting caucuses in years. Three reasons: one, we were in the majority and members loved being committee chairmen; two, we gave the members all the new tools plus staff to work with; and three, the Governor was feeding us an agenda that would normally choke a horse. So did the caucus have a feeling of heightened awareness that a lot was going to happen? If a member didn't feel that he must have been sound asleep! Not only were we empowered now, but there was a lot to do. We were ready for the challenge.

Couple that with the physical facilities that had come about for the first time and the opening up of communication and the fact that a legislator could at least call a constituent without having to pay for it himself. You put all of those things together and it was a totally new atmosphere. Three sessions prior to that, nobody ever dreamt that it was even possible. But it came about and it functioned and it functioned well. A legislative first!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a big time for the state. There's a big growth in population, a fairly prosperous time. But growth brings its own

challenges. Stepping up to that huge number of kids coming into the school system and different issues, it takes your full attention. The 1967 session marked the second half of the first Evans administration. We'll be looking at how much his agenda drives the legislative agenda for Republicans. I'm still wondering if his agenda overwhelmed yours, or if yours was the same as his, or if you fit your ideas in around the edges of his, or how it all worked. He just has so many things he wants to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's easily answered, Anne. There was truly only one "legislative agenda." When you're talking about a legislative agenda, you're talking about cutting across a total spectrum of state government. And only Dan and his staff had the ability to put that together. Don't read too much into "his" versus "ours." Now, individual legislators or groups of legislators had pieces and small hunks or phases or parts.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Their own ideas, things for their districts, whatever their constituents have brought to them?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is right. When Dan first got elected Governor, he came in and he used the "Blueprint for Progress" and this was kind of general, broad guidelines of what he had in mind. So as time went on, this actually got reduced down into more precisely delineated pieces of "the legislative agenda."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actual bills?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, then it actually got into bill form. During the time it was being developed and put into bill form, surely there were a lot of people in the Legislature—and I mean both Democrats and Republicans—who had particular things they felt very keenly about. And they would sometimes say to

the Governor, "Did you ever think about the possibility of incorporating this or changing this in order to be able to improve the situation?" And so some of these things began to get folded into the actual legislation itself. It was kind of an amalgamation of a lot of ideas. And so, before the bill ever got into printed form, it had already gone through a great deal of dissemination, digestion, consideration, and suggestions. Consequently, he had very strong legislative support for his programs.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So Dan had already made connections with the members?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, he did not try to push this through all by himself, *carte blanche*: "I'm going to go do this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it doesn't come down from on high and then you look at it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Negative. This has been through the crucible of the fire and the distillation process. And when I say the Republicans and Democrats, I mean this very sincerely. You can take a look at Augie Mardesich who had numerous opportunities for input on a lot of this legislation; Bill Gissberg was in the same position. There were just a lot of legislators. As a matter of fact, I think you'll find that Buster Brouillet was heavily involved with some of the things having to do with schools. So it was not a case of where Dan had just made a pre-announcement and said, "Hey fellows, take it or leave it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We have these speeches of Dan Evans—the inauguration speech and the State of the State. He delivered these to the Legislature and it created a package. But in fact, it's a two-way street? It's not just coming out of his office to you; legislators are coming to him with ideas?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have a lot of ways of meeting with legislators, more than, say, other Governors? Was he in touch in a new way?

**Mr. Copeland:** You ask me about other Governors; you see, I had only had the opportunity to serve under two Governors so I don't know. But I do know as far as a legislative liaison type of arrangement with the Governor's office, it was remarkably improved with Dan over what it had been with Albert Rosellini.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what about over the course of his administration? He was in office twelve years although you did not serve with him the entire twelve-year period, but does he get better at it? You mentioned there were barriers at first.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly. Legislation developed over a slow, very tedious period of time. Hardly anything in state government is a new idea. It was suggested someplace along the line, years and years ago, but you know, the right thing at the wrong time is still the wrong thing. I mean, it may have been a good idea, but it was the wrong time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So much happens in these couple of years, 1967, '68 into '70, is this finally the right time? All the pieces have come together?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, everything's coming together. The economy was good; I was—myself and my generation—were contributing to this. We were the ones who had all of the kids immediately after the war. We just busted the seams of every school district in the state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the need, but the ideas were there to address the need.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. The ideas came along because the need was there. Here we had this rapid period of growth, we've got a fine economy, and we just needed to address these things. And the Legislature and the Governor's Office were in a position to go ahead and seize the moment and grab the opportunity of creating necessary leadership to move it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you had the leadership. That's one of the ingredients.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. This is the role of the Governor. In other words, the Governor shouldn't be somebody who just kisses a baby and gives first place to the annual spelling bee. I mean truly, the part that is necessary for a good viable state is having a Governor that has some ideas and is at least willing and able to articulate them and try as best he can in order to be able to put them into legislative perspective. And that's just what Dan did, there's no doubt about it. You can see writings today that reflect back on everything that's happened since then and many writers will tell you they haven't had anything like the leadership in the Governor's office since Daniel J. Evans was there. He took on things that were monumental. In addition, as long as we are speaking of leadership, let me add that the Governor did not suppress the legislators and their leadership roles. Quite to the contrary, he encouraged them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look at some of those issues now. Evans' 1967 State of the State address listed about sixty executive requests. We're not going to go through all of these, but let's hit some of the highlights. He had five big areas of concern. One, he saw mounting urban conflict in the bigger cities with the civil rights movement really taking off and the anti-Vietnam war protests. This was the cusp of those really big protest years; he saw that coming.

Secondly, Evans wanted to upgrade and reorganize state government. Part of that reorganization was the creation of one transportation agency from all these different little groups that have something to do with transportation. Part of what was driving that was the sheer impact of growth; he thought you were going to have a crisis if you didn't get a more coordinated approach. He considered rapid transit part of that issue. He was concerned about traffic safety; there was a lot more press about drunken drivers and a call for more troopers. This would be his second try at achieving a Department of Transportation.

And then there are the human needs. I don't know if rates of poverty are going up or down, but poverty was certainly much in the public discourse, stemming partly from President Johnson's "war on poverty" and the heightened rhetoric around it. Evans had several different specific ways of addressing this.

Then, the control of the environment: there was going to be more and more discussion about that. Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" had been published in the early sixties and helped kick-start the entire discussion—not all alone, but it was a big piece. Evans wants to begin looking at the issue of open spaces. He's concerned about air and water pollution. He wants the establishment of the Environmental Quality Commission and a Department of Water Resources. The creation of the Department of Ecology is a little further down the road; I don't know if anyone's using that word yet to bring all those things together. That's a whole new area for government.

He wanted an Office of Community Affairs to look into trade issues; he was trying to bring some of those pieces together.

Some of these topics seem perennial, but they spike in interest that year. Then of course, his tax reform, we'll look into that one, too. Again, he asks for a constitutional convention.

Governor Evans came before the Legislature on January 23 and gave a major speech on natural resources and outdoor recreation. His language seems new to me; I want you to tell me if, thinking back to that time, whether this struck you the same way. He said, "The position of government in assuming a greater protective role over the intangibles of natural beauty is bound to be debated," but he was bringing it forward as a duty and a responsibility of government. I don't recall ever hearing a Governor talk about taking care of "the intangibles of natural beauty" before. He considered our natural heritage to be one of "perpetual abundance; today we must view it as a vanishing asset." He was speaking of the forests, about water, wilderness areas...

**Mr. Copeland:** Streams, beaches, lakes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the ocean beaches. Does this seem like a new emphasis?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that what he was trying to point out there is that we have a very unique state. And the uniqueness of it should be protected. We have a lot of things that Kansas doesn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, we have mountains; we have the ocean. So this is the price we pay?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now you hit the operative word, this is the price we pay, okay? Dan was right on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this in part reflective of the urbanization of the state? It's only—some people believe—when things are being paved over that you notice there aren't endless forests, streams, wetlands, or those shore areas. When they start to fill up with houses and shopping malls and offices, they become more precious?

**Mr. Copeland:** Of course, you can't necessarily designate all of the state of Washington as a wilderness area. There's always this trade-off. Can we do it in any kind of a reasonable order to the point where yes, we do have the growth? We have the people living there; we have a community; we have a neighborhood; we have an environment; we have all of the essential ingredients and they're all taken care of in an orderly fashion. And I think this was the emphasis that was placed.

Now, you have to contrast this new protective role of government with a great deal of growth that took place prior to the war, which allowed huge residential areas to be built with no central sewage system. Everybody had their own septic tank and many of them had their own well. So their source of water was twenty feet away from their septic system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a good situation.

**Mr. Copeland:** This was slowly corrected and not allowed to be perpetuated in the growth of the state of Washington. Case in point was in the West Valley in Spokane, where literally thousands and thousands of homes were built with no central sewage system. And now you say, "Why didn't they do it?" They had no administrative control over that portion of building requirements.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it happen piecemeal and people didn't really look at the big picture?

**Mr. Copeland:** People didn't look at the big picture and then of course, once they started down that road they said, "Well, the guy that built here last month, he got to put in a septic tank. Why can't I put in a septic tank?" So it became a political pressure against the county commissioners to not necessarily enforce anything. Urban growth is going

to occur; the question was, was it going to occur in an orderly fashion and was it going to ultimately have all the necessary ingredients for a good healthy environment? A good healthy environment just cannot mean that your water system is just ten feet away from your neighbor's septic system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were studies made or did people start to get sick? I mean, did it start to show up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why certainly, they got sick. Out there in West Spokane they were coming in virtually daily to the health office complaining about their water and wondering if their neighbor's septic tank was contributing to the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this issue also have an east/west component to it? A lot of the urbanization is happening, of course, in the Puget Sound region and not so much on the east side of the mountains. This new, heightened concern with saving some open spaces—a lot of the areas set aside were in the Cascades and places more to the east. Did legislators from different parts of the state look at this issue differently?

**Mr. Copeland:** Legislators that were worth their salt were looking at everything from the standpoint of the overall picture. What is the right thing for the state of Washington? There are obviously some legislators that are looking at this thing only from a standpoint of their legislative district. How it affects them individually and personally. But you asked whether or not this is a regional type of arrangement, yes, certain things do take on a regional aspect.

Like when we created Metro. Metro, in essence, created a separate unit of government and overlaid it right on top of the existing governments. There's a good question as to whether or not it was constitutionally



authorized, but I'll not get into that. But if there was ever a valuable time for rural legislators to upgrade the state, it was at that time, because rural legislators could vote for Metro without fear of reprisal from an affected property owner. But what the Metro bill said, in essence, was if you own property adjacent to Lake Washington, "thou shall not dump your raw sewage in Lake Washington anymore. Notwithstanding what your title says." Now, that is paraphrasing, but that is what it was all about. And I remember the debates on the floor. In the vernacular of somebody from the eastern part of the state, Lake Washington was "becoming so polluted it's just a little bit too wet to plow." This is when legislators from the eastern part of the state were able to say, "Yes, let us create Metro. Let's begin to focus on our environment and let us not kill off some of the wonderful things like Lake Washington that we have in the state of Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would somebody from the drier part of the state value water more, take it less for granted?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most of those people had a sufficiently broad overview that it was very clear where we should be going. But all of the little villages and towns were used to dumping their raw sewage into Lake Washington for years. "My goodness sakes, this is going to cost us ten thousand dollars to put in a sewage treatment plant. We can't do that; we don't have the money for it." This discourse was all part of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the state-wide conversation about these issues, it's not that Dan Evans was radically new, it's that he was putting it into a program a little more step-by-step? This is where, "if we have a vision where we'd like to be, now let's get there before it's too late." It sounds like he's kind of ringing a bell and saying, "It will be too late if we don't move on this."

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that there was any question about the fact that he was ringing a bell; I'm not sure if it was a bell—I think it was more like a siren! But you see, Dan was surrounded by a bunch of legislators that were truly gung-ho in order to get something accomplished. There wasn't any question about it. You didn't find a whole bunch of foot dragging, and nay-sayers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he's also, himself—as were several legislators—a backpacker and aware of what was happening in these areas. Former Boy Scouts with first-hand experience out there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. However, don't suggest that the legislators from the eastern part of the state were not "great outdoorsmen." Remember, hunting and fishing were just a few steps away for quite a number of eastern legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, of course. Evans did create the Department of Water Resources; you passed a clean air act and the Water Pollution Control Commission with expanded responsibilities.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Department of Water Resources was a combining of a whole group of agencies and everybody had a piece of the action. When I say everybody, I mean a whole bunch of state agencies and departments and bureaus and cubbyholes that had something to do with water and/or the environment. They all reported directly to Dan and seldom communicated with one another even though they were all doing much of the same function.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, the engineer's mind would not be happy with that situation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's right. Part of the

impetus behind this entire reorganization, is to try to grab hold of this whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Helping and pushing this program—and part of this expression—was a movement called Forward Thrust, coming out of King County. It was trying to put together some things on this level for urban issues. They wanted to expand Metro; they wanted Community Affairs to be a cabinet level office; they wanted to change how minor taxing districts worked. They were looking at sewers and water systems and talking about rapid transit. The construction of the Kingdome somehow falls into their purview. They brought all these things together. There seemed to be a lot of movement in this era of pulling things together and not doing piecemeal reform, but big picture reform. Even if it was a lot of different little items, of packaging it, so that people could see the whole picture. You can see this mushrooming in a lot of different directions and coming forward through the Governor's office and through the Legislature. Was it harder to pass these large packages than to try piecemeal reform—taking things apart and then passing them? Or were these large packages conceptually easier to grasp? As a legislator, when you're given these large packages to look at, do you just vote them up or down? What works best?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's divide the subject matter here. Forward Thrust was primarily headed by Jim Ellis. Jim and his group worked very closely with the Governor's office, but this was more like a forum to be able to sit down and say, "What is it we've got today? What are the resources we have at hand and what would we like to see in the future? What do you have planned for Seattle twenty years from now? How do we get there?" Now, I think as far as Forward Thrust is concerned, this was an absolutely magnificent opportunity for people to say, "Let us not be concerned

about today as much as where we are twenty years from now and let's talk about it. How best can we get there; what are the resources do we have?" Once you start down that road, then you say, "What are the restrictions? Are we authorized to do this, and if not, why not, and if not, can we be?" So the forum started with nothing more than piecemeal ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it's a vision?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a vision. But you take these piecemeal ideas and you say, "Okay, if I get the authority to do this, then in addition to that, I can do something else." So now, the fragments can be put back together, but with a new direction and a new focus. So now the question becomes, is it easier to pass these great big pieces of legislation or do it piecemeal? And the answer at that time was it was a hell of a lot easier to pass them in one great lump than it was to start dinking around with these things a little bit at a time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not sure how these bills came to you, but you had the Kingdome mashed in with rapid transit, mashed in with some other things, as part of a vision of how Seattle, the metropolis of the state, should develop and how these things fit together.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing enables another; they were envisioned as a whole. If members had started to pull out pieces that they liked or didn't like, or whatever, would the vision crumble or was it better to keep it together?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was much better to keep it together. King County just had a restructuring of government, so with the restructuring came the opportunity for the change of authority of that class of county government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the success of Metro inspire these bigger visions? “Hey, we did clean up Lake Washington; we did do something good here.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Metro was the first major piece of legislation that cut across all political subdivisions and virtually jumped right through incorporated cities and towns and pieces of non-incorporated county area. It ran through water districts, sewer districts, school districts; it changed everything, no question about it. But by the same token, Metro itself virtually had to be done. There was no other method to coordinate even small efforts between the little village of Kirkland, which was a very small village at that time, and the city of Renton. But they had a common interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If one cleaned up their sewage, but the other didn’t...

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right, it was for no avail. So Metro was the real key to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had success almost immediately when they finally got it in place; it was clear that the lake would revive. So were you building on success here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And a certain amount of trust? There was a great deal of suspicion about Metro beforehand, but afterwards I think people felt quite differently about it. They saw that it wasn’t this sort of socialistic conspiracy, but actually a good thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** The residents around Lake Washington went through a period of ten years, in which swimming in Lake Washington was prohibited by the Health Department. All of the beaches were posted,

“No swimming.” And all of a sudden the lake began to get cleaned and clear up and one summer the Health Department took the signs down. Suddenly the residents realized they had a gift—a real tangible gift that they hadn’t had before. I think that was when confidence came in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were on a different path, from suspicion to confidence. That gives you renewed energy to try the next step.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. And immediately upon that we had the introduction of a whole new sport, called water skiing. How ‘bout that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a way to celebrate the lake. There was a trend in these Evans years of putting things together and solving large problems with consolidation. That was one of the ways he went about restructuring government, which is not a trend that goes on forever. After a while, some things started to break off and reinvent themselves. But in this era, Evans was working toward creating the Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Transportation—these are big agencies to do big things. It’s a hallmark of this era that at that time was very successful.

**Mr. Copeland:** You said the Department of Transportation, I think it was nine or eleven agencies that had something to do with transportation and he put them all under one head.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That takes a while because of all the turf battles.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, all of a sudden, what was going on in those several departments took on an altogether new type of environment. Now they were forced into this business of

cooperation and coordination and the timing of this project in relation to somebody else's.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Department of Transportation does not go through that year yet. It fails in the Senate Rules Committee. The sticking point...

**Mr. Copeland:** The Governor's authority to appoint.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would have fallen under the Governor's umbrella and people were worried about putting too much under the Governor's authority, I guess. He did create a Department of Revenue out of several older tax-related commissions. That's not talked about quite as much as these other agencies he creates, but did that allow for a more coherent discussion of taxes? Tax reform is the thread running throughout the Evans administration. He's always trying for it, though he was not necessarily getting it. It was one of the vehicles that he wanted to use to transform government.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's an important piece. It doesn't have all of the pizzazz a lot of others did. But it took all of the taxing that was going on in the state of Washington and put all of the reporting of the taxes collected, revenues, and so forth, under one head. So now you had all of the junior taxing districts reporting to the Department of Revenue. Now, you could go to the Department of Revenue and you could say, "How much is generated from the standpoint of Water District Number 173 in King County?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could get real information?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Prior to that time, you couldn't get it from the Department of Revenue; you had to go to King County

because King County was the only depository of that information. So all it was doing was just bringing all of the revenue reporting and putting it into one office so at least somebody could get a handle on it. Now you're really able to talk about things like making forecasts on anticipated revenue; where growth security is; how much are we spending in this particular area versus a year ago, so on and so forth. Revenue sources and the expenditures were all beginning to get into sharp focus; we didn't have that ability before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds rather key, especially if you're dealing with tax reform. If you don't have good information, it's awfully hard to talk about. So this would be a step. These were some of the big-picture items that were happening in this area.

You did complete a process that you had been engaged in since the early sixties of creating the system for community colleges, including they would be governed and administered. This was the year that the Community College Act passed. You'd gone through various stages of weaning them from school districts, or school board control, to opening up how many could be built and this was the final piece. Marjorie Lynch, a Republican from Yakima, was the chair for this effort. Could you tell us how she shepherded this last piece through and if there were difficulties or still issues to work through, or if this was just the final puzzle piece that fell into place. What was the strategy for finalizing this effort?

**Mr. Copeland:** Don't give Marj Lynch more credit than she is due. Yes, she was the committee chairperson, but by this time there was real impetus built into the Community College Act. It was self-evident that it was going to go. The baby boom bubble was already going through the grade schools and the high schools and it was soon going to be

hitting the institutions of higher learning and how best could we take care of that? Well, the best, most efficient, cheapest way was to go the community college route. The Stanford report that we commissioned had projections so overwhelming it hit the Legislature with total disbelief. They indicated that the new community colleges would be full immediately upon opening. Everybody was just taken aback by the total number of students that were going to enroll on day one. So it started out with those very first few community colleges that were authorized, with the understanding that two years later we would come back and re-assess where we were at that time. And so we did and we addressed the forecasts that the Stanford research people made and virtually in every case, exceeded them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a fairly judicious process. You didn't just step off the cliff and go from day one. You revisited it every couple of years and this 1967 act was the final piece in this whole process.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, back to Marge. She had taken a very special interest in the development in the community college systems. As a normal legislative procedure and practice, we liked to find someone to channel their efforts and energies and focus on one specific area and do a good job—and Marge did. She not only did a good job but she went through the pains of convincing school districts that had their own extension of high school—their thirteenth and fourteenth-year programs—to remove that out from under the care, custody and control of the local board and giving that authority up. And it was with the superintendents that she had her big fight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody likes to give up power.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nobody liked to give up the ground at all. We had a dozen or two school districts around here that were operating an extension of the high schools, grades thirteen and fourteen. They fought her every step of the way, just hook, line and sinker. Fortunately, we prevailed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she just have a very steady approach? “This is where we're going.”

**Mr. Copeland:** Her approach was often very conciliatory at first but then she'd get right to the bitter end and if they couldn't do it, she'd just close the books and say, “Thank you very much for your input. Now we're just going to go ahead and move forward. All those in favor say yes, all those opposed say no. The ayes have it; we're out of here.” So bang, and that was it. If they couldn't change their position, we just flat ran over them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the final piece, what happened in 1967? What was left to be done?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was creating the Governor's authority to appoint each and every member of the community college boards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The trustees?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is a gubernatorial appointment. Every community college board member is appointed by the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor would probably pick local people—but the control was coming from somewhere else, not the district? Even though you may even end up with the same kinds of people on those boards, the local leaders, the direction was different?



**Mr. Copeland:** The Governor was required to select people from the community college district. This is local control. It was set up on the basis that it became a very prestigious appointment and people were requesting that they be appointed to the board. They enjoyed this brand new institution in their area; they wanted to see it develop. It took on a very local achievement aspect: what is it that we need right here in this community college that's unique?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was room in the Act for local interest still?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Not only was there room in the Act for the local interest, but it created a situation where the needs could change from time to time within that local interest. The most beautiful case in the point is the community college in Walla Walla. They are now offering a two-year course in a very little known subject of viticulture.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, wine making. That's a big new industry in that area.

**Mr. Copeland:** Wine making, right from the growing of the grapes to the final product. The nearest place you could get any kind of a similar course is at the University of California in Davis, California. And here in Walla Walla they now have a wine making course. This would have absolutely-zero interest in Bellingham. Bellingham might have an entire program on fish or shellfish culture. It would have absolutely no interest in Wenatchee. So this is part of the uniqueness of the community colleges.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a wonderful system that has the oversight, but the room in it for variety. Flexible, yet controlled. That's a great achievement.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, so this is why this whole thing just kind of came together. But it was a big step, it really was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did members realize that this process was complete now for a while? Or did you feel that you would be coming back to it and revisiting it?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had no idea of the magnitude, that there were going to be that many people involved, that many courses or the curriculum. Not one person in the state of Washington could even conceive that it would grow to this extent. Oh, heavens no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People said, "Oh, the state government is really growing and we've got all these state workers." But we have to remember that something like the community colleges were part of those numbers and that was a relatively new piece of government that is a true service to the community. People wanted this service—and it was not just people sitting at desks and cubicles—this entire system was added to state government. During the Dan Evans years, government really grows, but we have to remind ourselves where some of the growth is in this community college system.

**Mr. Copeland:** This system introduces so many things to so many people that ultimately become job skills that, number one, are needed; number two, that they're attracted to; number three, they can go out and make a living at a career and make a hell of a contribution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Definitely. And you played a role in the growth in another college arena; you were a cosponsor of HB596 that created this yet-unnamed new four-year college. You went through quite a process of deciding where to place this new institution of higher learning in the state. Can you tell me how it was decided that it would be in Thurston

County? You had several competing areas that wanted that college; what did that process feel like?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think at that time the emphasis on a location for that was someplace in southwest Washington. Hal Wolf from Thurston County was the prime sponsor and the real mover and shaker on this bill. I knew that he had Thurston County in mind. But it was a natural. So I think that it was almost a given that it was going to wind up here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people wanted it in Snohomish County.

**Mr. Copeland:** Maybe, but not much of a chance with Western Washington University located nearby. The bill was not met with open arms or rapture by the people from Washington State or the University of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it numbers-driven? Were there were so many students that it made sense to begin a whole new institution or was there competition to expand WSU or some others?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was competition for the tax dollar.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it seen as taking away from the existing institutions?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. The University of Washington viewed it as: "If we create a new college, then all they're going to do is take money away from our budget."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that true that there was a certain "higher education pot" and that was that?

**Mr. Copeland:** In essence, yes. But here again, on a per capita basis, per student basis, Evergreen ultimately would be handling far

more students and getting a bigger bang for the buck than what we could get out of the University of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you begin with a discussion of just enlarging the existing institutions or did you move to: "It is time for another new college?"

**Mr. Copeland:** A combination of both. The geographic was very, very important. But as far as growth was concerned, every institution of higher learning was growing by leaps and bounds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you looked at the answer as being a new institution rather than growing these other institutions? Is there a sort of proper size for a university or college beyond which it becomes unmanageable or loses character, or did you just want it to serve another geographic region?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm really not qualified to address this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any discussion about the nature of the new college? That's the piece that ends up being interesting and different.

**Mr. Copeland:** Negative, there wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whose role was it, once you decided to build it and place it, to then go ahead and design it? Did that pass to some other group?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that whole authority got transferred to Dr. McCann, who was the founding president.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if you had any legislative intent to create a different type of college at that point, or if that was even part of the discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think it was even part of the discussion. I don't think the Legislature had any preconceived notion that the college was going to turn into something even vaguely familiar with what it is right now. I thought they were just going to create another college just like all the other colleges.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lid put on it though about how many students they would allow to enroll. Did you want to keep it smaller for a reason?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. There is a certain size that you can do and beyond that, you get in real trouble unless you get into this next echelon. The Legislature was reluctant to allow a college, independently, to get to the size where they were in financial difficulty, where they couldn't produce the students and their faculty had grown in order to take care of all these programs, and it wasn't cost effective.

Let me also put this into a little bit better perspective. This was 1967 and ten years earlier a whole host of colleges went broke throughout the entire country. Now, what happened? The war was over; the federal government gave returning veterans educational grants. They rapidly expanded colleges—the bulk of them were private colleges. They put in place, not only the physical structures, but they also put in all of the faculty and so on, and ran the entire bubble only to find that they had this great, huge institution and few students.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of a gap between the returning GIs and the baby boomers?

**Mr. Copeland:** There you go and whap, it hit them right smack between the eyes. Many of the private colleges at that time either folded or they immediately asked to bail them out. There are many colleges that actually were

absorbed into state institutions of higher learning by virtue of the bankruptcy courts at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would give you pause when you were looking at expansion?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are so right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet the numbers were pushing you in this direction.

**Mr. Copeland:** The numbers were pushing, but please understand what I'm saying. Once you build one of these institutions, you don't want to have it collapse for any reason.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a lot of money.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a hell of a lot of money. And so the Legislature was looking back at this fiasco where these small colleges got too big, too rapidly, expanded with too many programs and things like that and then boom! One of the colleges in the state of Washington, privately owned, who resisted the growth—who wanted to stay solid—was Whitman College. They were criticized very substantially by people saying, "You should really expand your college." But Whitman took the attitude, "We're here for the long run. If we expand and this whole thing collapses, we're dead. If we remain the same, we can weather the storm and we'll be here twenty years, thirty years, fifty years from now."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a big lesson. That provides the whole context for this discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** It really does.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes a great deal of sense. This was stepping out; this was taking a risk creating this new institution. So yes, you would want to have a lot of controls.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, the numbers did justify it. And the growth of a whole new institution, in the end, did not destroy anything else and did not destroy itself. So your formula seemed to work out quite well. This proposal went through in one session, which is remarkable to me that you could do that much thinking and creating in one session. That's a big thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think an awful lot of that was over a long period of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some discussion and then it finally came together?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes and then I also mentioned the Stanford Research Group that was giving us forecasts on what we could expect.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they also saying that you needed a four-year college?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know that they did; it could have been that that was a part of it. But the thing is that they were giving, I guess you'd have to call it conservative, but sure as heck, what were not bogus figures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Since they were borne out in the community college part of the study, would that have bolstered your confidence that, "Yes, we can rely on this number?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would help. While you were doing all this other institution-building work, you were also looking at your own processes in the Legislature. You were a cosponsor of a legislative ethics bill. What were the ethics issues that would call upon the Legislature to create a board of ethics? Was there something particular pushing this, or was this just a good-government effort?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was the press. I could be in error, but I think the League of Women Voters also had something to do with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several different bills. An article from the *Daily Olympian* talks about "a dedicated citizen's advisory committee, who had many hearings and conducted exhaustive research and then came up with a package for this epic bill." It said, "The key measure in the package was the one establishing the board of ethics and empowering it as a watchdog over the ethics of legislators." I gather this was brought to the Legislature but that the Legislature then came up with their own bill in answer to this need. But this article for one, charges that, "Neither of these substitutes comes close to the original bill. They represent only a questionable compromise on the sensitive question of ethical behavior." And the Seattle Jaycees threatened to run an initiative to enact different ethics legislation; in fact, they don't actually do that, but they make some noise in the press about that. Why all this attention to ethics all of a sudden? It's not something that comes up regularly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Why all this attention all of a sudden? This was the cause: the Greive fund. Remember Senator Rasmussen being a whistle-blower on the Greive fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You co-sponsored this bill with quite a few members: Representatives Swayze, Cunningham, Bottiger—and about ten, twelve other members. The bill called for creating a Legislative Council advisory committee on legislative ethics. It was put forward as a House Concurrent Resolution and pushed through. Do you remember this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, it was all part of "good government" legislation. Everybody wants

good government. But few want to do the dirty work of raising taxes or allocating state funds. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder; what would be a perfectly good ethics bill for you, probably would not be...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you remember the gist of it, though? Are we talking about lobbyists' practices, campaign contributions?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably all of the above.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These ethics bills come up periodically and they are attempts to define legislative ethics. Is it problematic or a good thing to have a pretty defined code of behavior as a legislator? How minute do the rules need to be? It seems in our efforts to regulate campaign finances, for instance, it's endless. They create rules and people get around them. It doesn't seem to change how campaigns are run or the fact that they cost more and more money. So I'm wondering, as a legislator, how you view this sort of effort. Is it futile or is it a good idea; should there be these codes of ethics?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time we were operating without a code.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a very new discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is all a very new discussion, so it probably was a good idea. But to have the code of ethics to the point that it is now—with campaign finance reporting or public disclosure—we certainly didn't envision it at that time. I guess the basic answer to your question is how important is it today to have a code of ethics in place, in law, in statute? I guess that's in direct proportion to how bad the Legislature is. If you have a good Legislature and you get a whole bunch of good legislators—they're all honest and they're all

truthful and they're all above-board, and you have the same thing with the lobbyists and the same thing with all the department heads and agencies and presidents of universities—you wouldn't have to have one. That would be a perfect world; we're not living in a perfect world!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does this protect good legislators and help weed out some bad apples?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, your question is a good one. The answer is all legislators don't need the bill. Some need supervision. The public wants to be comfortable. How best do I put it in readable form? So I think this is a perception more than anything else. But you hate like heck to see these regulations "have to be in place." But ultimately, the public demands it and they have good reason for it. And the reason for it is you've got some bad apples.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there ways for legislators to police themselves?

**Mr. Copeland:** If they wanted to, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Previous to agreed-upon rules would there be pressure amongst yourselves to keep to a certain code? Where, say, somebody was taking money in suspicious ways, would there have been a discussion amongst legislators to say, "You can't really trust that guy," or that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Enforcement would depend upon what kind of strong leadership you had in either the House or the Senate. In the House during the time that I was the Speaker Pro Tempore, I just took it upon myself to have very strict enforcement on a lot of things, and many things that we enforced I did through a bipartisan committee of legislators. We seldom wrote anything down.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you could go to someone and say, “You need to clean up your act?”

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. And it was always with a unanimous agreement that we’d move forward. I’d call the legislator in question into the office, along with a few select members like Len Sawyer, Bob Charette and John O’Brien—always someone from the other party—and say, “We’ve discussed this whole thing and we’re not going to debate it. It isn’t for any argument and we’re telling you right now you are going to change your method of operation as of this minute and there is no appeal. If you want to make an issue of this, we’ll take it to the press and they’ll eat you alive.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be your enforcement weapon? “We’re going to open this up to the press if you don’t comply?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you ever called upon to go that far?

**Mr. Copeland:** Never.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a pretty real threat that anyone would understand.

**Mr. Copeland:** And some of the press knew about it and could have written about it, but they appreciated our enforcement policy so much they never violated that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But that kind of method could only be in place if someone’s taking it upon themselves to put it in place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Exactly, you had to have strong leadership. Also, after the matter was concluded, I would inform the Speaker of the actions taken. There was never any objection on Don’s part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you didn’t, then, need this code in writing?

**Mr. Copeland:** You really didn’t need it. But here again, a lot of people want to see it in print, then they want to watch you enforce it. We had, I don’t know how many minor cases; we had some that I consider to be quite major. But most of the minor cases were handled very quickly; some of them would take maybe a phone call to three or four people. Ding! The decision was made and the violator was notified and the offense was terminated and he or she never got in that area again. That was the end of it. We never publicly reported it back to either caucus or made an issue out of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But would it be widely known that there was this oversight?

**Mr. Copeland:** For those that were interested, they would know; those that were totally disinterested wouldn’t pay any attention, but they knew it was there and had been taken care of.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I mean, were members aware that you did this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, the leadership in both the caucuses knew what we were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this continue—was this something particular to you or did it become institutionalized?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don’t think it ever continued after that. It degenerated very, very rapidly with simple little things like dress codes and things like that. I remember on one particular occasion, Hugh Kalich—he was flamboyant—came in the House chambers one day dressed in his work clothes. He had logger’s boots on, a pair of Levis, plaid

shirt and he was just showing off more than anything else, but it was the wrong thing to do. It was totally improper. I happened to be presiding that day, so I just asked Mr. Kalich if he'd leave. And he made a little fuss—he gave me the finger—so I told the Sergeant at Arms to remove him. Everybody in his party agreed with my action, that he was way off-base and he shouldn't have been doing what he was doing. So it was just taken care of very, very quickly and nothing was said beyond that point, which is the way it should be handled. I mean, legislative ethics are fine and dandy, but it's tough to have to go ahead and start writing this out, saying, "Thou shall not do this and thou may do this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How you are dressed shows respect for the institution and your fellow legislators. What would be the other realms of misconduct; was there much corruption? Was that a concern or was that such a gray area that it's hard to know?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, how you are dressed shows respect and if you are "out of uniform" this shows disrespect. But was there much corruption? I guess the word corruption probably is a little bit heavy. The answer is no, but there was a gray area. If you read Bob Greive's book very carefully, it not only was occurring but it was requested and—get this—it was expected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were things changing where that type of system was no longer considered all right? Was there a shift in political culture, beginning to move to a new era? You were already bringing in more openness and more processes where people could get involved. Was this another area where people wanted to open things up to more scrutiny?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Within a few years, the Public Disclosure Commission was created and there was a huge change in how people were looking at this. Was one of the incidences or steps in this shift?

**Mr. Copeland:** There no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm gathering you were at least somewhat supportive of it since you are a sponsor of this bill, even if you don't think it's the most useful way of going about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** In anything like this, it's a good idea to at least have a discussion and you sure as hell want to stay ahead of the curve. If this is a useful vehicle to bring the proponents and the opponents together in order to be able to go through this whole process, it probably is going to be worthwhile. But it's difficult to define "sin." And it's even more difficult to define minor vices. And of course, who is the "victim?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Much greyer area! Sure, certain things are clearly wrong and other things are more circumstantial.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And now, if a lobbyist wants to take you out to dinner, you know, that's something sinful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's an assumption there.

**Mr. Copeland:** There's an assumption. But by the same token, there's only x-number of hours in a day. The lobbyists were using this as merely a block of time that legislators were going to have a meal. It was a time when the lobbyist could superimpose himself upon the legislator's time in order to make his pitch. And I never ever considered it inappropriate that the Seattle-First National Bank lobbyist or another lobbyist wanted to take me out and

buy me dinner in order to be able to sit down and say, “We have this piece of legislation coming up with a new banking regulation that is going to damage us greatly. These are some technical things in this bill that will raise absolute havoc with this part of our operation.” I never considered that meal as any kind of a bribe or innuendo that they were giving me something. I was allowing myself a block of time to be with them, to hear their concerns. Okay, other people viewed it differently and said, “No, you are getting something, a thing of value.” Then the best thing for me to do is not listen to the concerns of the Seattle-First National Bank? I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they want you to just have them make an appointment in your office and talk to you there but have no eating involved? Is that the crucial difference? You could still listen to them and take them into consideration but you can’t accept a meal?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, with the current public disclosure laws and the way they are in effect now. But we also have a different legislator now than what we did. We’ve got a legislator now who is virtually full-time and may be subsidized by some entity that supplements his income in order to be able to keep him in office. We had some of that when I was there but I think it’s more prevalent now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that change beginning to come in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, as far as the ethics are concerned, and then later the Public Disclosure Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But that new type of legislator who doesn’t have another profession? When would you say that kind of person starts to dominate in the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Surely after my time there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1967, it would be fair to say that the majority of legislators would not be in that category?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had their own businesses; they had their own professions. We were only down there on a part-time basis. We were there to try to do the right thing for the state of Washington. That’s all there was to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the stickier things beyond ethics you had to look at that year was taxes. The economy, in the mid 1960s, was improving—it was growing but it still wouldn’t take care of all the pressing needs. Your tax base was growing and your population was growing so you were getting more money, but you also had a whole bunch of other things that you were trying to do. So you still needed to work on taxes, even though the whole pot was growing.

One of the battles that year was about property taxes and assessment. That’s complicated. Property is assessed locally, by locally elected assessors all over the state. But one of the issues seemed to be that property was not being assessed at its true value. Money that could have been collected from property taxes was not being collected and had to be made up elsewhere from some other kind of tax. There was this seemingly longstanding reluctance to collect fully on property taxes. The assessments were always somewhat below what they might have been, and varied quite widely. Why was this such a problem? Why was property not assessed properly? It seemed to be an easy answer on the surface to the revenue problem.

**Mr. Copeland:** The easy answer is you have thirty-nine county assessors. So you have thirty-nine different individuals that are looking at property through different colored glasses; that’s all there is to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there be local pressures to keep the assessments low?

**Mr. Copeland:** There are two schools of thought. Number one, I think a lot of the county assessors took great pride in the fact that they were keeping the taxes extremely low. Then there were assessors that would literally say to the county commissioner, "How much money do you need this biennium in order to be able to run and I'll adjust the property tax rate to match the budget." Now, those are two extremes and you had everything in between. So, was there uniformity as far as the taxes were concerned in the state? The answer to that is no, but then of course what constitutes uniformity? A house that is constructed for thirty thousand dollars sells for thirty thousand dollars in Wahkiakum County, but is that thirty thousand dollar house worth the same amount of money in King County?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What role does the state play in all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were trying to create some kind of accountability. The pressure came about because of the school districts. The school districts were always saying, "We just have to have some kind of a uniform rate so we can depend upon a relatively constant tax in order to be able to supply the necessary income for the operation of the school district." Did it always occur on a uniform basis? No, so these are attempts to pressure the Legislature to make a correction.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because property is locally assessed, did the state have the actual power to say to those local assessors, "Do a better job?" Where is the line between local and state power?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislature did have the authority to tell the assessors, virtually,

what they could do, but they never used that authority. Politically, it was not going to happen. Most of the pressures, here again on the basis of the property tax, came from the metropolitan areas and not from the rural areas. And the reason is almost self evident. With the metropolitan areas being so heavily populated, the number of people there versus their limited property taxing base was entirely different than what it was in the rural areas where they had lots of land and lots of property and very few schools and kids in school. So you had this natural opposition that was sitting there at all times. My county and school districts could get along just fine on x-number of dollars in property tax. But say, in Bellevue, you couldn't make it with those dollars. So here again, this became a huge rural/urban problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was the issue of uniformity itself the problem? Should there have been several tiers—different categories?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only from the standpoint of how best it affected the public schools. If you had a county and the schools were in great shape but you didn't want to collect more taxes to support your local sheriff, nobody cared about uniformity. It always came back to whether or not it was money collected for the support of public schools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the companion piece concerning equalization for school districts where richer districts would give money to poorer districts. But would there be some resentment? You know, "Why don't those people collect their property taxes better?" Would there be some of that feeling? "They're getting away with it."

**Mr. Copeland:** Both, yes. They were, in some cases, getting away with it, but by the

same token, they had the legal authority to do it. The local assessor would just look you straight in the face and say, “We are very pleased with where we are right now.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what mechanisms would help? How could the Legislature deal with this problem? It seems like a Gordian knot to me.

**Mr. Copeland:** It truly is, and always on a piecemeal basis. It became very convoluted with special adjustments for this particular type of school district and allowances that were dependent on whether or not you had a nice school in the district and so forth. And it still is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then of course, you take all the complications with the property tax issue and combine it into the discussion of all the taxes. People always wanted to link these taxes. As an individual, you pay a lot of different taxes; you don’t really care in a sense where it’s going. You just know what your bill is and people get worked up about that. But these different taxes go to very different things. This article about the property tax issue says, “Strong Evans supporters are not anxious to pass the property tax measure without its being tied to the Governor’s proposed flat rate income tax. The reasoning is that once the property tax reform is approved, the Legislature is unlikely to act on the income tax.” So not only was the property tax measure a complicated issue, but you were trying to tie it to another complicated issue? And in back of this, of course, was also the discussion about the sales tax. How did you sort out these tax issues? Is it good to link them up or does it so complicate the discussion that it sort of implodes under the weight of all these details?

**Mr. Copeland:** In this session we do not pass a great big tax reform package.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you don’t, but was it because this was such a complicated strategy or was it just plain necessity to tie these things together instead of breaking them apart and doing them one at a time?

**Mr. Copeland:** At this point, Dan was injecting a flat rate income tax, which can be passed by the Legislature all by itself. But whenever you say a flat rate income tax, you fly right smack into the face of standard ordinary Democrats who just say, “No way am I going to go with a flat rate income tax. It’s going to be graduated or none at all.” The graduated part requires a constitutional amendment and a flat rate doesn’t.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a graduated income tax would be harder to pass; it would take a two-thirds vote of both houses. And then doesn’t it have to go to the people?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that’s a much steeper road. But the flat tax, because of its nature, it’s not a constitutional issue, right? It’s just a majority vote of both houses.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you tie these different tax issues together because your point is you’re not raising taxes, you’re just adjusting how you’re getting them?

**Mr. Copeland:** The question is always, “Are you changing the property tax rates for equality purposes or are you doing it to generate more revenue to support general government?” Once you get over that hurdle, you say, “No, we’re doing it in order to support general government.” Then you have to ask, “Why don’t you just go with a flat rate income tax and you’ll raise revenue to support general government?”



**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had gone with the income tax, could you have lowered the flat rate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you have then have lowered either the sales tax or the property taxes because you would have had this new other source?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of the promise of this measure? Is that why they were linked? "We'll fix this, but we have to have this other thing?"

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's enormously complicated and the discussions, of course, were interminable. They went on for years. Was this pushed by the school issue? There were beginning to be problems with passing levies.

**Mr. Copeland:** Schools, by virtue of the tax structure that we have in the state of Washington, are the recipients of a relief valve. And if you short the schools, they do have the opportunity to go to the tax payers and say, "We will create a special millage for one year in order to be able to get us over this period of time if you people will approve it." Now, the Legislature knows this. So, if we short the schools because we don't have enough money, then the schools can go to the people and say, "Will you support it?" And if they say, "Yes, we will," then everybody gets the money. There were several occasions when the school forces came to us and asked us to support the schools one hundred percent with state money. Occasionally the Legislature would say, "Okay, we'll do that, but we're

removing from the books the opportunity for local school districts to ask for special millage." They'd say, "Wait a minute, whoa, we don't mean that; we want to have that, too!" So this is always been a huge conflict.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because schools want more than the basics, especially the well-to-do school districts?

**Mr. Copeland:** It kind of depends upon the school district. The school districts will, for their own particular reasons insist on financing certain things with millage, perhaps it's for the band or the football team. As far as the Legislature's concerned, if the people want to do it locally for the band and the football team, be my guest. I mean, those are conscious decisions they made. So we didn't argue with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you don't have to get involved in that kind of conversation? Because your responsibilities are on some other level

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. We don't have to get involved in that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there's a ceiling on your responsibility and if they want to go above that, that's their issue. But it got so levies were being passed for what seemed to be basic education, textbooks and things. I don't know where the other money's going, but this is still an issue. Even with the passage of the Basic Education Act in 1977, that still seems to happen.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, of course, there's this whole thing of what constitutes a "basic education" now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a legislative and legal term.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a legislative term, but put the quotations around it and it's also a moving target. Basic education as defined by the terminologies used in 1967 is not necessarily basic education today. Or was when I went to school. Did I ever hear of a school counselor in junior high school when I was in school? You're kidding me, I didn't even know what a counselor was; I never heard of one. My county superintendent's office was a guy and two secretaries. That was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That era is definitely gone.

**Mr. Copeland:** The bureaucracy within any school district administration right now is humongous. I don't know why it has grown so much. The WEA [Washington Education Association] seems to like it. So when you're talking about basic education and you say to me, "Mr. Copeland, were you supporting basic education when you were in the Legislature in 1967?" I probably was. But that basic education does not relate to anything that you and I currently know today as basic education.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People are always putting things onto the schools and saying, "Here's this whole new social problem that you need to address." School mandates have been loaded to the hilt with all these extra things that people say schools should do.

**Mr. Copeland:** I just learned in the paper not too long ago that they now have grief counselors in schools. They can go out and hire these grief counselors to come in counsel the children because of particular things that happened in the school. I never heard of a grief counselor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you probably weren't having mass school shootings in your day either. But certainly schools have been

redefined over time by society as they pick up more pieces that the family and community and church used to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** But by the same token, I look back at the schools we funded from 1956 through 1971, there wasn't a single one of those school districts that went broke. There wasn't a single one where all of the graduates couldn't read or write. So from the standpoint of hindsight, do I feel comfortable in the way that we financed them? And the answer is hell, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To get back to what we started talking about, we know with hindsight this tax reform discussion goes on for years and it's never really solved. But year by year, do you affect a sort of series of compromises and patch together enough different kinds of taxes so you're not hitting anyone too hard to create revenue streams that you needed for government? And should it be like that, year by year, tinkering along? Or would it have been a major breakthrough to get an income tax, to do these different reforms that everyone had talked about for so long?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, it would have been a major breakthrough if all of a sudden the voters approved it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would the state be in better shape today?

**Mr. Copeland:** It kind of depends upon the level of taxes that you'd have. The state probably would have some additional revenue. Would they spend it judiciously? I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's the getting and then there's the spending. But were you, yourself, unhappy with the tax situation? Was it a burning issue for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was always a question of who in the heaven's name is paying the lion's share of the taxes. Who are the big taxpayers?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In this case, you're a fairly large property owner. As a farmer, was this something that you could really relate to?

**Mr. Copeland:** I could relate to it very, very, quickly and do it on a personal basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have preferred to be hit up with an income tax? Would that have been more fair?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, any day of the week. All of my property tax is a gross tax and had nothing to do with whether I made any money or not. If I had one winter that was a complete bust and I lost money farming, it didn't make a difference; I'd still have to pay on my property tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a rural issue, for sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, everything that I purchased, all of the cars and the trucks and the equipment carried full-bore sales tax. So I had the property tax to take care of and I had all of the sales tax on all of the machinery and so forth. And we had to get all of our produce to market so I had all of the gasoline taxes to pay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So all your costs are being taxed. But not necessarily your actual income.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. But when I made a comparison of myself and my income to a dear friend of mine who's an attorney, and how much he contributes to Washington versus how much I contribute to the state of

Washington and I'm about thirty, forty times more than he and we have virtually the same income.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's inherently unfair.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, was he at all interested in an income tax? The answer is no. But this is the way that the tax structure had been generated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would the pressure to reform property taxes come from the rural areas? Were rural legislators able to get together on this and say, "This is something that we need to look at?"

**Mr. Copeland:** The rural areas already had their property tax taken care of because of the county assessors.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that was their method?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right, because we would have a reasonably low assessment rate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It all depends upon your perspective. Let's return now to more discussion of the 1967 session. You were on three committees: Rules, for which you were the vice-chairman; Labor and Employment Security; and State Government and Legislative Procedures, newly combined in one committee.

You were involved with sponsoring several bills and pushing them through. Many of the bills had to do with your work on the Legislative Council committees the previous session, addressing issues having to do with aeronautics, labor, and laboratory facilities for agricultural purposes. You also strayed quite a bit into conservation forest issues, tourist issues and even some, what now are considered parks and recreation type issues in that session, which was a bit new for you.

You co-sponsored a bill, again by Legislative Council request, authorizing development and acquisition of outdoor recreation areas by the Department of Natural Resources. Would that be the beginning of being able to camp out in state forests, part of Dan Evan's move to open up areas for people to hike and camp. There was some other legislation of that type that looks at the use of state lands for different purposes. Some of those purposes were also recreational, but the whole discussion about forestlands is really big in these years. The notion of a "sustained yield of forest lands" seems to be a new doctrine that was coming in. Is that reforestation or is that a different way of cutting trees? What is sustained yield?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the above. Right on the heels of this particular type of legislation that was the first movement of "Let us never clear-cut any forest." This was the hope of some of the environmentalists to always maintain our forests and our national pristine conditions. "Let us not log." It was more of an extreme position on the other side.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is sustained yield the middle ground?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, sustained yield is something that public and private foresters were starting and it was just truly in its infancy. First of all, they had to have the availability of young trees to plant. This became very paramount in not only the variety of trees that they wanted to grow—what could grow—but did they have the seed stock? Did they have the little nursery crop in order to be able to even get these things going? I think you can credit Bert Cole, the Land Commissioner at that time, for taking very strong leadership at developing these nurseries in order to be able to start the seed production. The evidence, of course, is the Department of Natural Resources nursery right up here in Nisqually, where they

virtually raise millions of trees from seedlings. Selection was key. This is what Bert and his crew did; they started this whole process of being able to develop facilities and personnel to test and selectively produce seed and raise seedlings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd have to have the science to back up the whole process of how best to do this: how to raise these seedlings—of course, which seeds—and then how do you do it?

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see the flip side to this whole thing was can you really make this thing go? Can it be "sustained yield?" In Thurston and Mason counties, just as an example, there were trees that were planted at that time that have since been harvested and replanted on both public-owned ground as well as private. So, was there a big push? The answer is yes. But the whole thing had to come on a very, very conservative effort right from ground-base zero.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had there been, previously to this, no method for doing this? I'm thinking back to the twenties and thirties, the companies that were doing the logging would just abandon the land and it would revert back to the county for unpaid taxes. It was worthless. They tried briefly to get people to settle on that land for farming, but it wasn't any good for farming. Was it now that the science and the methods came together so that they could go back to those cut-over lands and reclaim them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure. You see the problem with any kind of reforestation is that once you cut the trees down, if you leave it unto itself, there's going to be vegetation that is going to grow; that's a natural process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is a cycle, but it takes a long time.

**Mr. Copeland:** What is going to be the predominant thing that's going to grow? Well, it's going to be the strongest little plant. And here, I think it's the alder tree that's probably the fastest growing one of the bunch. An alder tree could grown alongside a Douglas fir and pretty soon the alder tree would be twelve feet high and the Douglas fir would be about eight or ten inches. And it would block out all the sunshine and the Douglas fir would just have a terrible time making it. So foresters recognized they had to plant some good fast-growing evergreens of some type that could be made into useful lumber. And not allow the competitive growth to run away. So, not only was there the seedling problem, but there was also the problem of going back in and cutting out the undesirable trees. So when you abandon a piece of ground, you're telling Mother Nature, "Do the very best you can and we hope everything works out alright."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It will, but it'll take hundreds of years.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. But by the same token, if you can take the competitors out and allow the good stuff to grow, then it's a lot better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is almost like forestry as farming.

**Mr. Copeland:** It had the emotional and the economic effect. It alleviated the fears of those who were saying, "Don't do this to our lands; we don't like to look and see them completely cut and nothing ever growing there again." Fortunately, people like Bert Cole and obviously the broad thinking of the management people at Weyerhaeuser and Simpson Forest and Rayonier and a dozen other major timber companies was based on the real advantage in this whole thing and they were perfectly willing to go along with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would they come to the Legislature—what would they need from government to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** They needed to have the research done on selection; they needed to have the opportunity to say, "This is a better variety of tree to raise in this area than the other one." They needed to have the full knowledge that if you're going to buy these seedlings, what you're actually buying is a hundred percent correct. You don't go out and buy a hundred-thousand little seedlings of Douglas fir and all of a sudden you put them in the ground you find out you planted cottonwood trees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This discussion is making me think about your wheat board contribution. Would this work in the same way? Would the logging companies contribute to a fund just as the wheat growers did and then support this research in the same kind of way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, they recognized at that time that this was in their own best interest and so they were perfectly willing to go along and help this whole thing. But the Department of Natural Resources needed to have the legislative authority in order to be able to expand and go into these areas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the logging aspect of DNR and then there was the recreational aspect. So there were two strains going here looking at forests in a much more intense way.

**Mr. Copeland:** There's no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some other bills related to Dan Evans' recreational push. You sponsored a bill to transfer certain tidelands to State Parks. I'm not sure who had jurisdiction



over tidelands previous to this, but they wanted to bring these areas into public use.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know the exact history of it, but I'm going to say sometime in 1911-1917 or 1919, along in there, there was an "established mean waterline." It was a point certain, halfway between the high and the low tide that established ownership. And the mean waterline was something that you could use as a reference point. Well, on the coast, through a whole series of natural things, accreted tidelands began to develop. That means sand is deposited above sea level through wave and wind action. This happened in Ocean Shores in 1910. A whole bunch of this land was developed and it exceeded the mean tideland. And in some point in one of those legislative sessions they decided to find out about the ownership of that new land. If I'm not mistaken, the Legislature said, "Let us claim to it and put it into a state entity. This excreted tideland will be the property of the State Highway Department." The only state entity at that time that owned any ground was Highways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that where the driving on the beaches comes in? But now they were rethinking it and they want to maybe make part of it a public park? A better use for a beach.

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan recognized maybe we better go ahead and transfer some of this land. So if you look back in the legislation, I think that you'll probably find that the Highway Department owned this ground and they wanted to be able to transfer it and put it in Parks and Recreation. In 1910 there was no Department of Parks and Recreation; but by the 1960s things had changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It also fit with Dan Evans' promotion of more recreational space.

**Mr. Copeland:** He was putting it into an agency that probably was "interested in doing something with it." The Highway Department wasn't interested in doing anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are several bills of this type that demonstrate a shift—a new kind of attention being paid—in how the state uses land; how it administers it; what its purposes are. It's interesting to track through these bills this shift in consciousness.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had several other bills: one with Representatives Goldsworthy and McCormick to tax split pea manufacturers and processors. It doesn't actually pass but as a pea farmer yourself, what were you aiming at here? What would the tax be for?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that it may have been that a commodity commission wanted to have this tax and the money would be used for research and development. It would be very similar to the Wheat Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seems to be a very good mechanism: the most interested parties get together, tax themselves in some way and get a benefit.

**Mr. Copeland:** During my time in the Legislature a lot of industries—agriculture and non-agriculture entities—came to us and asked us for help in certain areas. One of the great stories was when the potato growers came in and said they were in dire straits. They were having a terrible awful problem with a plant-borne disease called net necrosis and it was killing potatoes. They came to the Legislature and said, "We really need your help. We've got this problem and it's going to wipe out the entire potato industry." They wanted to have—I don't know—two-hundred

and fifty thousand dollars or something in order to be able to help eradicate it. So I was listening to this testimony and I finally said to them, "How much money do the potato growers intend to put into this research?" They said, "We are not allocating any of our own resources to go for the eradication of net necrosis." And my response was, "On that, I think the state of Washington can match you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Fair is fair.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, I was dead serious. If the potato industry was not interested in putting up one dime in order to be able to take care of a problem in their industry, I think that the state should put up an equal amount. And you know, laughter broke out and I think there were a certain amount of tears that broke out simultaneously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your other calling could be as a stand-up comedian; your one-liners are just deadly!

**Mr. Copeland:** Within a matter of weeks, the potato industry found some money. They had an interest. Okay, now the state helped them out. Were they able to take care of the necrosis problem? Jointly—yes. But without industry involvement, why should state government be involved? I was always of the strong impression that if an industry came to the state of Washington and said, "We have a problem," it was not unwise for us to look at them and say, "How much money are you going to put up?" And if they said nothing, I felt that we should match them, right? If they said they were going to put up half the money, at least they were interested in it. Do you understand where we're coming from?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Especially if other commodity groups are putting up their own money. That becomes the standard.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were a lot of people that wanted to have the state of Washington come with the taxpayers money and do something, but if you don't want to participate... That's the name of the game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Very interesting! You participated in several concurrent resolutions. As we've discussed, you co-sponsored a resolution to create a Legislative Council advisory committee on legislative ethics. And then there was another one to create a joint interim committee on Legislative Building space allocation—a perennial issue. Now, just to be clear, with a concurrent resolution does that mean the Senate puts forward the same bill?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, if it's a concurrent resolution; it is passed by both houses. A joint resolution is a constitutional amendment. A joint resolution says that "we are going to change the constitution in the following fashion" and that requires a two-thirds vote of both the House and the Senate and then it has to be referred to the people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, but a concurrent resolution is just a statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Oftentimes, those resolutions were introduced and not necessarily passed. But in the interim, working with the Governor's office and the executive branch, we could go ahead and get things done when the executive branch was willing to go along and make certain changes in-house without necessarily having to create the separate committee. So much of this was an introduction to what we would like to have accomplished.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting it on the table?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, the bill didn't pass, but

all of the information was still there. So then, in the interim, it would just be a case of where the Legislature would go to the Governor and say, “Governor, we would like the following things to happen; can you help us on these?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would these sorts of things not pass, though? They seem like housekeeping measures.

**Mr. Copeland:** Because we could take care of it without necessarily passing it. At least we brought to the attention of the public that this is “what the Legislature had in mind,” or at least had a thought or an idea. And in the case of space allocation, it was where the Governor’s office would merely sit down with the Office of General Administration—because they have the care, custody and control of all of the buildings—and say, “Why don’t we transfer this over to legislative authority, and let them go ahead and do this and this and this.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you still with these allocation committees working on office space and things of that nature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the staff still growing at that point—you were still building that whole new way of doing things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you’d still be jostling for space?

**Mr. Copeland:** Space is always a real tough one, so yes. And here again, you got into turf wars: “Well, my office has been within ten feet of the Legislative Building or in the Legislative Building for all these years and I don’t want to move.” It didn’t make any difference to us; we just had our job to do and

we just had to move somebody, that’s all there was to it. We just flat moved them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes that’s what it takes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was nice in a way, but it was tough in other ways. The biggest hurdle we had was to get the Highway Commission out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Eventually they got a brand new building and a much bigger space. And it was long overdue.

**Mr. Copeland:** Number one, they were running out of room. That’s when they still had the Highway Commission and their own little offices across the street. They were on the fourth floor and even put in their own elevator so that, in the event that things got too difficult, the commissioners could immediately extract themselves from a meeting, walk across a corridor and get on an elevator that ran from the fourth floor to the first floor and get out of town.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, my! Under what circumstances would they need that? Were they often in hot water?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, sure. But was the elevator there under the original concept? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No back stairs for them? Rope ladder out the window? That’s kind of an expensive thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was an expensive thing, but what I’m saying, number one, they outgrew the building; number two, they didn’t want to move; number three, this was a turf war more than anything else. What did it take to get the Highway Commission out? We had to build a new building for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't need to be right there on campus.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. The same thing happened to a whole bunch of other offices like Social and Health Services, and the Department of Natural Resources. It was a leap-frog type of an arrangement, the domino effect. Now, please understand, the departments knew the changes were coming as far back as 1957 when we first started development of the "East Capitol Campus." So don't feel sorry for them or give me a bad name for displacing them to new and better quarters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At least you didn't kick them out into the street.

**Mr. Copeland:** We took good care of them and it improved their efficiency, too. Yet, to an awful lot of them, it was very much like pulling teeth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People do not like change; it's difficult. It's very disruptive, you've got to pack and it's hard work. Another one of these requests was for a study of data processing systems applicable to legislative processes. So this, of course, was another piece that you were working on all through these years. Would you then get yourself on that committee and do that study?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then there was one creating a citizen's advisory committee for legislative facilities and operations. So when you were going through all these changes, you had a committee of interested citizens? What kind of people would those be?

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot of the lobbyists wanted to become involved, certain interests groups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would these be good-government type groups? Like the League of Women Voters?

**Mr. Copeland:** Good-government type groups, oh yes. The League of Women Voters were involved; even the Washington State Historical Society got involved. They wanted—and rightfully so—to become involved as far as input was concerned. "What are you doing; where are you going? What does it look like down the road? How best is this going to fold into what we have?" We involved the city of Olympia very heavily so that we never surprised the city council and also the affected school district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were bringing in a lot of people.

**Mr. Copeland:** There are two things: We were bringing a lot of people in, but we were also dislocating or relocating residents in certain areas. That action could impact a particular school. Sometimes you would relocate a building and housing would immediately go up around the new location which would create a need for a new elementary school. So what this citizens committee was doing was saying, "Okay, let's take a look and see how best can we expand this? And can you people at least be comfortable with it and can you sign off on it?" Any time that you are going to make moves, as far as the Capitol Campus was concerned, you always had to be considerate, I guess, is the operative word. Considerate of how you're going to affect other people. You had to be considerate of the city council and the school district; you had to be considerate of the police and fire departments. So this is why you tried as best you could to never surprise anybody but always allow for, "In the event that we do this, how is this going to affect you? What steps can you take in order to be able to plan for this relocation?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I had no idea the Legislature was sensitive to the needs of the city. You're a little bit like the elephant in the living room. But I didn't know that there were ways that the Legislature worked to bring people in and have that conversation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, all the time I was there, we tried very diligently to develop the East Capitol Campus in harmony with quite a number of entities. This long-range planning had been on the drawing board for quite some time. It included—but was not limited to—the Thurston County Courthouse, Olympia High School, the city of Olympia and others. Today, people don't even realize that Olympia High School was located on Capital Way, right across the street. For the Capitol Campus to grow, we didn't have too many choices. If you went north you fell off the cliff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. And there is that body of water there—Capitol Lake. And south was a built-up neighborhood.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me get back to your earlier comment about being sensitive to the needs of the city of Olympia. Please understand that this planning was over a number of years. The Legislature did not just give people the heave-ho as characterized by the press. Before a move was made, there were always plans for accommodations. I think the Legislature just got a bum rap from the press. The affected departments were transferred to far better quarters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Let's move now to some of your other activities. That session again saw several attempts to amend the constitution. It became a focal point with a lot of interest, both in the Legislature and in the wider community in Washington during these years. As we've discussed, amending the constitution was pushed by Dan Evans,

but also by many other people concerned with its archaic structure. In 1965, through a bill sponsored by yourself and Representatives Klein and Burtch, the Legislature established a constitutional advisory council. This advisory council then issued a report to the Legislature during the '67 session. The content of the report was embedded in resolutions that you started to work through in this session. But there were a lot of other activities in this area as well. There were several conferences held in 1966 between the sessions. The Governor sponsored a conference called "On Decisions for Progress" held in June that also urged constitutional revision. Did you attend any of these conferences?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. There was much talk but little to do about changing the constitution of the state of Washington. Certainly, improvement could have been made, but as I said, the overriding fear—and I emphasize the word fear—was a graduated net income tax. People were not about to open up Pandora's Box and run the risk. Remember, when you open up the constitution to amendment, the whole document is open to change, not just that one section you want to amend. So gateway amendments, constitutional conventions, major drafting of joint resolutions were simply not doable. It was all virtually forgotten.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the end result, but at this point the conversation was just heating up. I wanted to at least list some of your involvement because you were evidently in the thick of things. There was an Institute of Government conference put on by the University of Washington and a joint conference in October sponsored by the University of Washington and the American Association of University Women. They held a mock constitutional convention and drew up a new state constitution to use as a point of discussion. These sounded like fairly lively



discussions with lots of speakers and points of view. What were the leading arguments, do you recall, either for or against holding a real constitutional convention?

**Mr. Copeland:** The bottom line was that they ultimately got into state financing and that all always got back into this business of the state income tax. But they were also interested in getting rid of an awful lot of archaic stuff that is currently in our constitution today that is not necessarily applicable. Everybody was very suspect of government when it was written. So the question is, if you go into a constitutional convention you're depending upon who winds up in the convention. Are they going to be equally suspect or are they going to allow greater latitude?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was there still that suspicion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. I think that the temperament of the electorate today in 2002 would write one that would look very much like the Ten Commandments and start out with: "Thou shall not." That's one of the real concerns.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it instructive as a legislator to hear the different points of view and sort out for yourself how you thought it should go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only was it instructive for legislators, it was also very instructive for the average lay person just coming off the street for the first time to see that there were some competing ideas here. One said, "Let's open this thing up to the point where there's no restrictions on anything," and there was another group that said, "We don't mind up opening it up, but you're not going to redo everything."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it have been possible to have a convention to just look at pieces of the constitution, or was it an all-or-nothing thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is the uniqueness of a constitutional convention, because once you start with a constitutional convention you'll open up everything. So once you get the document drafted, then you just turn it loose to the people. Now, are people going to buy it, yes or no?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this have been a statement of confidence in the sensibility of the people that in 1967 or thereabouts, you had enough faith that people would be able to handle a new constitution? You were pushing up against it in government, but was there enough public discussion that you had confidence that the outcome would be good?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is just testing the water to find out whether or not there was enough sentiment in order to be able to see if a constitutional convention could succeed. So it was just a trial, but little more than anything else. I think the Evans administration had the strong belief that one of the problems was the state's tax base, and would it be easier, better or more accommodating to go ahead and have a state income tax? Ultimately, it came to fruition in the early seventies when Dan was able to get through the Legislature a joint resolution authorizing a state income tax. And then when he took it to the people and said, "Would you authorize a state income tax?" they immediately looked on it as very suspect. As one person put it, "The authorization for a state income tax is nothing more than pushing a pot of gold alongside the desk of every legislator." Anytime anybody wanted to have a special project all they had to do was reach into the pot of gold and they

had the money to spend. So the voters just turned it down.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you view it that way yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I did not. No, I just always thought legislators would use good judgment along the line. You can build all kinds of limitations, but I think one of the greatest limitations is the fact that in the event government gets out of hand, you've got a short twenty-four months or forty-eight months and you can damn well throw the rascals out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there's always that.

**Mr. Copeland:** I just don't harbor that particular type of "fear," but there are an awful lot of people that like to predicate all of their actions on fear alone. I'm not one of those guys; I never have been. If all of my actions in life had been predicated on fear, I never would have taken a gamble. I damn-sure wouldn't have been an Army officer in the outfit that I was with. So no, I'm just not of that cut.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In this year, 1967, Governor Evans, after all these conventions and conferences and a fair amount of discussion, appointed a constitutional revision committee that was chaired by Secretary of State Lud Kramer. You were a member of this group with appointed citizens and experts such as Dr. Hugh Bone and Dr. George Condon as well as John O'Connell, the present Attorney General. There were people from chambers of commerce, county commissioners, the mayor of Yakima, the Association of University Women, teachers—many different kinds of people. There were also four state legislators: yourself, Representative David Sprague, Senators Greive and Pritchard who represented the Legislature. You studied several methods

of revision that had been discussed in all these various conferences. There was said to be a very spirited debate in your group. You ended up just analyzing the different methods and decided there was no one best way but that a combination of techniques, in your opinion, would help push this forward. An initiative put forward by John O'Connell put it to the people to call a constitutional convention, but it didn't get enough signatures. So that method didn't look like a really good way to go. It did get a public discussion started, but it didn't get on the ballot. Your group thought that perhaps an initiative to the Legislature might be more successful, as well as your preferred method employing a "gateway amendment." That method of amending the constitution eventually became one of the bigger pieces of the discussion. What do you recall of the debates, your meetings, and how you conducted this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, to this extent, I think everybody looked at it on the basis of what is doable? So when you embark on a discussion of what's doable, the first thing you have to do is get on the table those things that are not. Having said this, then you move on to those things that are not necessarily doable, but close.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you look at what other states had done?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, but I don't remember that that was anything huge. But I think that the gateway amendment approach was the result of this committee. If you look into the suggestions on the gateway amendment, they focused on the means to open up certain sections of the constitution that could be revised without getting into the entire subject matter. Read the definition of the gateway amendment in the report.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “A gateway amendment simply described would be a change in the existing constitutional provisions for an amendment designed to ease the present restrictions and to facilitate amendments by legislative process. A gateway amendment could, for example, ease voting requirements on constitutional changes and the law revision of an entire article of the constitution or amendment of a given subject matter throughout the constitution. A gateway amendment would require a two-thirds vote of each house of the Legislature followed by a majority vote of approval of those voting on the proposition at a general election.”

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s the definition you should use. But here again, that required a separate act of the Legislature to first authorize the gateway amendment, so in other words, it was just a step—no great big loaf, maybe a half a loaf.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But an important one. Would you have preferred this gateway amendment to a constitutional convention? Is this a much more measured approach? It would take longer, but would you get something better?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In some of these reports it was said that some people preferred the gateway amendment approach because they thought the crucible of legislative discussion—the back and forth and the compromising that takes place by definition in the Legislature—would craft a better constitution even if it took longer than an up-or-down vote of a constitutional convention.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think there was this fear of conjuncture as to whether or not the gateway amendment approach would create a better constitution, but here again, what were the

alternatives? I think it was the state of Louisiana—because of the constrictions in their state constitution—they wanted to make several changes in their constitution. So the Legislature gave voters an opportunity to vote on these changes, but the problem was, I think there were something like twenty-four separate ballot measures.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just too much for the citizens of the state of Louisiana even to begin to understand. And so I think in that election they just took all twenty-four and dumped them in the bucket. All of their effort was for naught and it wasn’t that any one piece was a bad change in the constitution; it was just too much for everybody to assimilate. Now, back to this whole thing, would you ultimately create a better constitution? I don’t know, I don’t think anybody did at that time. But here again, if the constitution is heavy-duty, is it a real stumbling block? Maybe the best way to go is with this gateway amendment method. So what did this committee do in its operation? It brought to sharp focus that, yes, maybe the best way to do it is to consider the gateway amendment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there people on your committee who didn’t think this was a good thing to do, that preferred some other method? What would be their arguments?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure. They just wanted to have a full-blown constitutional convention. Some people just wanted to have a great sweeping change in the constitution with virtually no restrictions on taxing authority and things like that. They just wanted to open the whole thing all at once. The timing wasn’t right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it doesn’t happen.

There's another piece of this that seems important: a gateway amendment would require a two-thirds vote of each house of the Legislature followed by a majority vote of approval of those voting on the proposition at a general election. When I first read that I didn't quite understand the importance of that last phrase: "the majority vote of approval of those voting on the proposition at a general election," until I read some other pieces that talked about the drop-off rate. Many people would vote for their legislators or the Governor and for various offices, but when it came right down to these constitutional amendments, they would leave that blank so you couldn't get that majority. But if you counted it differently and only counted the ones that actually voted on the constitutional amendments, rather than everybody eligible to vote, it was much easier to pass these amendments. So that seemed like a pretty important piece of language there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very important. You're to be congratulated in the fact that at least you even caught it. Just like in the Legislature, when you have final passage on a bill, you'll notice the presiding officer will say, "Having received the constitutional majority." What is a constitutional majority? In the House, the constitutional majority is fifty or more votes. Now, it doesn't say "a majority of those present." It says, "Fifty or more votes." Now, what are they talking about is a constitutional majority in order to be able to pass the gateway amendment; it says "the majority of those people voting." Okay, so people file into the voting booth and they don't vote on this, and they not only are not voting yes, half of them vote no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But few people, I think, would understand that.

**Mr. Copeland:** The point being that it's

restricted. It says a majority of those people who are going to take the time and effort to go to the polls and vote are going to have to vote affirmative. So now you've got to have a pretty substantial majority of the people in the state of Washington that are interested in it and willing to vote in the affirmative; that's very important.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's the difference between passing and not passing it, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had several meetings; they sounded lively. Was John O'Connell one that wanted a full-blown convention? He was pushing his initiative and I was wondering if he had changed his mind.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think he changed his mind, but at that time I think he recognized that maybe the timing wasn't just right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was also thinking of running for Governor and I was wondering how much that would play out in a committee like this where you have people with real vested interests in a particular outcome.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that there was more than a little bit of it. I think everybody knew that John was going to be running at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a fairly distinguished group. Ludlow Kramer who chaired this committee, what role did he play in this? Just simply as moderator or did he also have an opinion as Secretary of State?

**Mr. Copeland:** He probably had an opinion but I think he was just strictly a moderator in this particular case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There continued to be conferences about this. In June of 1968, the U.W. Law School hosted a state constitution revision conference. They got together all their experts and continued the discussion. Also in June of that year, the Constitutional Revision Committee asked for a commission and so a commission was appointed by Governor Evans to look more deeply into these issues. Again, you were a member of that, too. Dr. French, who is the retired president of W.S.U., chaired that committee; there are nineteen members of whom you were one along with Representative Ted Bottiger and Senator Web Hallauer, and many other prominent citizens, including some retired legislators. You issued a report in June of 1969, the following year. The executive director was George Condon, who had been involved previously in these studies. James Dolliver served on that committee and different prominent citizens such as Harold Shefelman and George Weyerhaeuser. Lee Collins, the chief assistant code reviser, staffed that commission. You were charged with various duties: to examine, first of all, the need for constitutional reform and get your arguments in place; then the best arguments for attaining that reform, and then you were supposed to draw up a model state constitution. In your deliberations on that commission, you came to the conclusion that calling a constitutional convention was probably not the best idea. You noted how it had failed in various places, both in Washington previously and in other states. By then Attorney General O'Connell's initiative had failed and you took that as an indicator that people were not ready for a constitutional convention. You noted the difficulty in achieving reform of the magnitude that you were promoting with the present amending procedure. Other states had had some success with piecemeal amendments and this was where you really came out again for the gateway amendment as your biggest

recommendation. Could you comment on the work of this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think what this committee ultimately did in their final report was draft a hasty constitution. It was drafted in such a fashion that it cleaned up all the extraneous material that is currently in the constitution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you go through the original 1889 constitution, bit by bit and say, "Well, we don't need that anymore; we don't need this language; we want it this way."

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think it was the other way around. I think that the way that this was constituted was by subject matter, the declaration of rights. It was just written up and then people would look at the old constitution and say, "How much did we change this?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so you started fresh? With new language?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. This was a brand-new approach laid on the table. And if you wanted to superimpose the existing constitution to see where the changes were, it was evident how much stuff got thrown away and how much stuff got left.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your model was much more succinct?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What principles did you use to construct this new constitution?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that the basic principles were derived from where the staff had gone through virtually all of the other states and said, "What is the simplest, cleanest statement in regard to the Declaration of Rights? What is the simplest, cleanest statement in regard



to the Legislature? What is the cleanest, simplest statement in regard to the executive office?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That in itself: "cleanest, simplest," is a value that was not used in the original constitution. It was kind of diametrically the other way.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you arrive at those kinds of value statements, what a state constitution should amount to?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just on the basis of asking, "What is the simplest statement that you can make in regard to the authorization of the power for let's say, the Legislature? How best can you boil this down into a few very succinct, understandable, readable words that convey exactly what you want to get done?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a different way of looking at what is a state constitution all about. In your mind, what does a state constitution—that document—do; what's it for?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's put it around the other way. This is just like the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were all written in the negative, "Thou shall not." This particular draft is "Thou shall." I mean, that is the cut. Here is a document that says, "You are authorized to do the following things." It's not decorated with a whole bunch of "thou shall nots."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That, in itself, was a revolution in how to look at this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there's any question about it. But here again, it's the formant, the approach, and the method that you're using. If your format and your method

and your approach is one of suspect, one of fear, one of anxiety, one of concern, you're going to write it entirely differently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting away from fear and suspicion to the confidence that was behind that new look, what was your discussion to move from that one point of view to the other?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, a lot of concern for how best can people understand their government. This was kind of the underlying reason for an awful lot of the stuff that we were doing at that time. This was 1967-69; ten years prior to that people couldn't find their government; people didn't know where to go, and nobody could explain it to them, and everything was written in such a fashion they couldn't understand it. Now ten years later we're saying, "How best do we create a document that is understandable, that most everybody can read, that is pure and simple and is not cluttered up with a bunch of extraneous materials?" So that's where we were coming from.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** 1967 and 1969 were tumultuous years politically and culturally. The civil rights movement had entered a different phase, the Black Power phase, you might call it. There were demonstrations in the streets. There was the terrific chaos of the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. Did that impact your discussions in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you take that energy, that violence even, and say, "Okay, how are we going to do government now? We've got all these new groups coming in that want attention."

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that took our eye off of the target. We were concentrating

on a constitution and a constitution does not address itself to day-to-day activities. A constitution truly is nothing more than the authority for government to act on behalf of the people and in so doing, do the people of that particular state understand the authorization they have granted to "their government?" I don't think that any of the day-to-day things you mentioned got involved in our discussion, even though they were in the background. Everybody was aware of the demonstrations and that there were certain things going on that were not all that bright and shiny and warm and fuzzy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was part of this movement to make government comprehensible and open?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let's put it the other way around, Anne. If all of a sudden everybody on that commission was suddenly taken up on all of the civil rights issues, they would have started writing "thou shall nots," and it would have just diluted the entire prospect. I don't think anybody was at all interested in doing that. Everybody stayed focused, on target, and just went straight ahead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But in some ways, perhaps obscurely, you seem to be responding to the message of the people pushing for reform in the streets in the 1960s to make government more accessible, more open, more the people's. There was a surge in the democratizing of society, you might say, bringing more people into government in the sixties. And perhaps this is a more rarefied discussion perhaps, but of the same impulse, of making government comprehensible and accessible to people. Like you say, language that anyone can understand, demystifying government, perhaps.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that's a good word, "demystifying." I think that the state of

Washington made a great deal of progress "demystifying government." And I'm here to tell you, without fear of contradiction, many other states had not made that much progress and were still sitting around in the dark ages. The dynamics of what Dan was trying to do: "Can we make our government better?" is just extenuated by the quality of people he got involved in this greater understanding of government. I mean, this list of people that were serving, there's not a dud in the bunch. These are people that gave freely of their time in order to be able to sit up and do something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you express your interest in this area so that you would be again and again chosen to be on these commissions? Were you just known to be fascinated with this or was there something in particular you wanted to do here?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the legislative process so much goes on that you cannot become an expert in all fields. As you serve in the Legislature you have a tendency to specialize in an area of government. When I first served in the legislature I was very interested in "what went on in the backroom."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is this a continuing thread?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is nothing more than a continuing thread. Then I became interested in the legislative process, then in the legislative restrictions; then in the legislative authority; then in the legislative staff and the lack of ability for us to have any good information. Then I became interested in communications and this manifested itself into physical facilities. Then it got into state government and the constitution. I was not involved in the nitty-gritty of writing the budget; I was not involved in the nitty-gritty of doing highway projects. Consequently, I was focused on

the areas I mentioned and it was a natural development.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the connection. Jumping ahead a little to the 1969 session, your group gave their report and discussed two House Joint Resolutions concerning the gateway amendment. House Joint Resolution One was submitted by Legislative Council request and was sponsored by Representatives Bledsoe and about twenty members from both sides of the aisle. It simply said, “Providing for a gateway amendment of the state constitution.” There was another one, House Joint Resolution Twenty-four, with yours as the first name in the list of sponsors, and then Representative Bottiger and a whole slew of names—at least twenty names. It was also bipartisan. This bill mentioned, “enlarging means of amending constitution.”

**Mr. Copeland:** It passed the House, but read the names of those people that voted no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The members that voted against this included Representatives Otto Amen, Barden, Benitz, Berentson, Bozarth, Clark, Newman Clark and George Clarke, Flanagan, Gladder, Haussler, Hubbard, Hurley—who actually always voted against all of these issues—Jolly, Kuehnle, May, Richardson, Schumaker and Spanton—eighteen different members.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very conservative Republicans, virtually all of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And some conservative Democrats. Were they just fundamentally against the revision of the constitution; was that the heart of their remarks?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So anything that opens this up makes them tremendously nervous?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it does, because then you could put a gateway amendment together and then there’s a possibility that you could have a vote on a graduated net income tax. That’s enough for them to vote no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The measure seems to die in the Senate. What’s going on in the Senate? The other resolution goes to the Senate and also just disappears off the record.

**Mr. Copeland:** They just didn’t want to even bring it up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had senators on these various commissions and committees, but was there no one in the Senate carrying the ball? There’s just no energy there for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, emphasis on “there.” Dan put together many legislators in the Senate that were willing to pack the water on this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a Democratic majority, but this doesn’t seem like a partisan issue. But you needed a leader?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Greive who was still, I believe, the Senate Majority Leader was on at least one of these committees. What position did he take?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, he’s all in favor of it, but by the same token, now all of a sudden is he going to pick up the baton and help pass one of Dan Evan’s bills?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, so was this too associated with the Governor for a Democratic Senate to support? Would it hand a success to the Governor that he didn’t want?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, Bob Greive wouldn’t touch it with a ten-foot pole.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did a lot of work; you went to a lot of meetings, but it doesn't actually go anywhere. You then had—and I didn't track all of these—a tremendous number of constitutional amendment bills before the Legislature that year that address the obsolete language in the constitution.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was the only method that was left. Everybody just shied away from a constitutional convention. And so consequently the only way that we could start addressing any of that clean-up was by a piecemeal approach, one hunk at a time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you were still trying to get the gateway amendment, it looks like you were saying, "Well, let's at least get a start on this."

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. But this wasn't "a must—you had to have it." A lot of people said, "This wasn't high priority."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Session by session, you could probably clean up quite a few items. We've had a pretty far-ranging discussion, but looking at the constitution was a big focus in this period. Thank you for your analysis. Let's bring ourselves back to the 1967 session and review where things stood.

**Mr. Copeland:** The 1967 session was one of great accomplishments. The Republican-controlled House produced so many outstanding and long-lasting legislative changes. And we developed members into great legislators. We passed outstanding legislation for the good of all the people of the state of Washington. And this session we were able to add an appropriation in the budget to purchase a computer for the Legislature. This was a big main-frame that required a special temperature controlled room and lots of heavy duty wiring. It was a very major undertaking on the part of Dick White and his staff.



**SPECIAL CEREMONY**—The state house of representatives in Olympia paid tribute to Speaker Pro Tem Tom Copeland of Walla Walla and Mrs. Copeland in a ceremony last week. A silver candelabra was presented to the Copelands by Rep. Ed Harris, Spokane Republican, (left) and Rep. John L. O'Brien

of Seattle. Democratic minority leader (right). O'Brien was quoted as saying he often disagrees with Copeland politically, but found him to be an "extremely hard-working and efficient speaker pro tem."

*Courtesy of Tom Copeland's scrapbook, 1967*



## CHAPTER 16

### INTERIM ACTIVITIES OF 1968

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For several years you were appointed to the Legislative Council to work in the interims between sessions. The last year of the Rosellini administration, he vetoed the funding for the Legislative Council, effectively cutting it off, so you can't really compare that work with the Legislative Council under Evans. But does the Legislative Council gain a new profile under Governor Evans? It's not really a Governor's area, but it seems like the Legislative Council becomes quite strong in these years.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislative Council was the only continuing staff that the Legislature had. So that was very, very important to us. Our committee clerks were only hired during the session and they didn't continue. So when Governor Rosellini vetoed the appropriation for that one year, we had to let a great deal of that staff go. An awful lot of them got assigned other places in state government. The following session we virtually had to put that legislative staff back together. But the fortunate part about it was that Don Sampson, who was the number-one guy in the Legislative Council came right back to work as soon as funding was there and restructured the Legislative Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he make any changes when he came back?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, because some personnel that had taken other jobs. But at any rate, the Legislative Council was back in business again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it work the same every year or were there changes there, too? You were reforming the Legislature, also the Legislative Council?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Legislative Council was getting updated right along with everybody else and had new functions, new roles, new attitudes, new focus. We started very quickly making sure that the continuity of the committee structure was there. In the Legislative Council there was a Committee on State Government. We made sure that the people that were serving on that committee were also people that were serving or had served on the corresponding committee in the House or the Senate so that when Legislative Council request bills came out of that particular committee they didn't fall into a committee that knew nothing the study that had gone on, or anything of the kind. After that session the Council was reconstituted. Later on, it got to a point where they had a very, very substantial track record; of the number of legislative bills that came out as Legislative Council requests, sixty-five percent of them did pass. This is phenomenal, really. So this goes to show you that the members of the Legislature were placing a great deal of confidence in the work that had gone on during the interim period and that the product the Legislative Council was creating was a pretty good document. So at any rate, the Council became a real strong part of the Legislature because of the fact that we just did not have any other vehicle on a full-time basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For this stage of the process—eventually the Legislature gets to a different place—but right now, it seemed to be



doing a pretty high volume of business and as you say, its success rate was very good.

**Mr. Copeland:** The success rate was excellent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So to be appointed to the Legislative Council was to be right in the thick of things?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did some legislators not want to be appointed; their business was such that it would hurt their private life?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were some—not many—who just couldn't handle that additional time. But coming to the front on this was also the Budget Committee. The Legislative Budget Committee was nothing more than an extension of the Appropriations Committee. Running concurrently at the same time was a strengthening of the Legislative Transportation Committee. That committee served both the House and the Senate on matters having to do with transportation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why is transportation special, in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Transportation is special for two reasons: number one, you can identify and focus on its aim and objective, and the other reason is, two, it had its own separate funding sources. In addition to that, the interim Legislative Transportation Committee functions were financed out of highway-generated funds, not the General Fund. By virtue of the fact that it had its own separate funding sources, it then became focused on how those funds were integrated with federal moneys. That required a full-time person on staff, or several, to coordinate our efforts with the Highway Department and determine how we would constitute legislation that would

allow the state of Washington to become qualified and fully funded by the federal government. Writing all of the bills so that they were parallel to federal requirements for this funding requires a unique and specialized ability.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there is no other area of state government that has that particular problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not that much Anne. In other words, you're now entering into this great huge area of the federal network of roads and what are the state's requirements? Many of them are a result of the federal government saying, "Okay, we'll build a road from point A to point B; however, the states have to accomplish the following things: one, two, three. And in addition to that, they have to meet safety requirements; they have to meet ecological requirements; they have to meet requirements for impact." The states might have sound and pollution control requirements, I don't know. Where does the water go off the highway? Does it run into an incorporated city or town? How best do you take care of it? So this all became a unique set of circumstances in the legislative environment that was strictly "transportation" and that all fell on the interim Legislative Transportation Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If education is the paramount duty of the state, why isn't there a big committee on education in the same way that there is on highways? But you've really explained how highways are different and how you wouldn't need that kind of oversight in education.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. So from this point on, then you will find continuing dependency on staff for study and work in the Budget Committee, the Legislative Council and the Legislative Transportation Committee. This increasing dependency ultimately phases in to

the full-time staff concept of the Legislature we have now. So this was just a conduit—it was an expansion and a phasing in of a very necessary ingredient and it's soon to come into fruition. But here again, the little baby steps that you took at that time were not perceived as great huge strides, but later on, then they are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read a line in one of the reports that kind of caught my eye: it was that the Legislative Council, in this time period, surpassed lobbyists as the chief source of information for legislators. I don't know how they would measure that, but it was a statement made in one of the reports.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that's wonderful. The Legislative branch is in a catch-up mode. They now have their own staff. Another legislative first. When I first went to the Legislature, it was so void in good staff, reliable staff. When you needed economic information about the state of Washington the best source that you could go to was the Seattle-First National Bank. They could give you better and faster information than we could find any place in the Legislature; we had no other source to go to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, were you still calling Seattle-First, but you also had these other reports? Now you had more tools?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. But we were still calling Seattle-First.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But these reports gave you something more to look at, to compare?

**Mr. Copeland:** First of all understand that the importance of all of this knowledge is beginning to expand every place else. Seattle-First had a department that would track the economics of the state of Washington. Now all of a sudden, other businesses began to

realize they have a role to play in this, too. The private power people could begin to start tracking how many new people they have on line; what is our growth rate or demand for kilowatt hours; what are our forecasts for the next five years or ten years. Then they became players in this whole thing. The Boeing Company: "We're building airplanes and we're consuming x-number of this," and so forth; now they become players. So virtually the entire economy of the state of Washington then became involved in this knowledge base. So when you say, "Well, you only have twenty lobbyists down in Olympia when you first came there," that's a very, very true statement, but what happened in the interim? All of a sudden the state of Washington is really and truly involved in virtually "everybody's economics." And so now you bring them in and say, "How best do you fit in with the overall scheme of things?" When Dan came into office, he said to industry, "Hey, don't sit on the outside. Don't complain about anything; we want you in here as a player and a participant. This is a participant sport; this is not a spectator sport and we're all in it together." So the executive branch and the legislative branch and "the people that owned the businesses," now had to have an exchange of ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can see how this is the beginning of what's called the "information age." Where everyone suddenly realizes the value of more information and decisions based on more paperwork.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, there is no question about it. And it's not only more paperwork, but it's also the ability to go ahead and update things. During this interim Dick White and crew were completing installation of the new computer system. In the late fifties, the information that we were receiving was out of date the day it was printed. But that's the best we had. We were trying desperately

to get things pulled together to a point where everybody could make sense of this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you're still messing around with carbon paper and what not, it slows you down. There are also comments saying that legislators were becoming too dependent on staff: "Staff are the new legislators; this is a danger." It was something that people worried about.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's balderdash! This business about becoming dependent on staff; it kind of depends upon the legislator. Does he really want to take the time and effort in order to sort through this whole thing? How many of them "read the bills?" How many of them understand what the importance was of this particular piece of legislation? How important is the staff report? What resources and the background information are needed to be able to arrive at any kind of conclusion? Certainly, they had a certain amount of dependency on staff; that's the way you communicate, this is the information age. How best can you get it; how fast does it get there; is it authentic? It isn't a case of where the individual legislator has delegated any of his independent thinking to "a staff person;" not by any stretch of the imagination. It's just that the report was developed by staff and then it became self-evident.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would strong legislators continue to be strong, based on new information, staff work, whatever? Those same legislators would have been the ones reading the bills and burrowing into all the issues before and now they just had more tools? And weak legislators would have been depending on someone else anyway? Is that kind of the way it would have gone?

**Mr. Copeland:** What you just said is just absolutely true. I said before that in a legislative environment, a third of the

legislators virtually do nothing; a third work on the problem occasionally. And the other third make the whole damn show run. Nothing has changed; that's human nature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you just have more ways of getting better information?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. Remember at this point the Legislature was meeting for sixty days every two years. Not much time for a legislator to get up to full speed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's your job to take advantage of the information that's out there.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, but being able to bring all of this information together is terribly important. Frequently, you'd get conflicting reports but that was okay; don't misunderstand, there was always a reason. Maybe they were approaching the entire problem from a different perspective and maybe the ingredients that were going in were not just exactly the same as somebody else's. So you had to sort through these. Anybody can make an economic forecast and nobody's going to have the same figures, and we understand that, and so you have to accept the report for what it is. They are, at best, educated guesses, in many cases. So when you say "information age," what do you do with the information once you get it? How best can you reach conclusions?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've still got to do your homework.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So you take the report back out to the affected people, and say, "Now, this is what the forecast is." I gave you one of the wonderful cases where the Stanford Group did a study on how many people would enroll in the community college system once we opened it up, and it was astronomical.

People said, “Oh, we can’t create all these community colleges; we’re not going to have anything near that.” So it was with a certain amount of skepticism that everybody said, “They’ve got their figures way too high.” Well, in actuality their figures were way too low because when we opened the doors, we had two and three times as many students as what they forecast. So you get these reports and they were, ostensibly, the best that you could work with. We were just doing the very best we could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still looking at the Legislative Council, traditionally the Speaker was the chair of the Council because there was always one more House member than Senate members. Did different Speakers have different strengths; did it matter who was the chair? Is that more of a figurehead position or did they really run the Council?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Council was strengthened by the time that John O’Brien was the Speaker. He did this by design in order to have a very strong role in the interim and determine what legislation was going to be proposed or studied. So the Speakers had a very strong role in that. That was much to the chagrin of the Senate—some of the members of the Senate chafed a great deal under that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They’re not used to being second best. I’ve always been curious to know how the House pulled this off. Must be almost the only instance where the House predominated over the Senate.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think there’s any question about it. I think John O’Brien was the one who put that together and pulled it off. He just wanted to have the role of the Speaker to be very paramount and in the forefront and that was the vehicle by which he could have it as an accomplished fact.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the vice-chair always a senator, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who chooses who’s going to be appointed to this Council?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was turned over to the caucuses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the parties get equal numbers, or was it determined by who was in the majority?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, generally on the basis of what was the percentage cut in both the House and the Senate. And generally speaking, you’d take all of the interim committees, the Legislative Transportation Committee, the Budget Committee, and the Legislative Council, so there’d be x-number of seats available. We never had a situation where one member was serving on the Legislative Council, the Transportation Committee and/or the Budget Committee at the same time; you had a choice of one of the three. Seldom did a freshman ever get appointed to any one of those. It was always your more senior people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With three committees; by the time you eliminate the freshman, every senior member could have a spot. But if you didn’t want to serve—your business was such that it didn’t allow you the time—could you let that be known and then your name wouldn’t go forward?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. The caucus would select who they wanted to have on each one of these interim committees and then those names were merely forwarded to the Speaker. The Speaker would read them off and the House would then concur on the Speaker’s appointments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If there was going to be a subcommittee on some burning issue coming up and a legislator was well known to be interested in that, would that be a natural appointment for them? Was that sort of thing taken into account—members' actual legislative interests?

**Mr. Copeland:** The chairman of the Highway Committee, in both the House and Senate, would always serve on the Legislative Transportation Committee. That was just kind of a standard rule, and the chairman of the Appropriations Committee would always serve on the Budget Committee. This is what you had as continuity for the interim.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed you were first, for a couple years in a row, on the subcommittee for Agriculture and Natural Resources. Was that because it's presumed since you're a farmer you know a lot about agriculture?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's a kind of a connection there. For the 1965-67 interim you were also appointed secretary, so I wanted to know your duties.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just a title. The staff handled the work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that put you as part of the little leadership group that decided how you were going to do things? I see Senator Gissberg was the Vice-chair.

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess you could call it a leadership group within the Legislative Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Generally, of the meeting minutes I looked at, they were held all over the state, but you attended most of them; your

attendance record is very good. How much time would you spend in the interim doing this kind of work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we got to the point where it was just about every other weekend.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Coming from your corner of the state all way up to all these places. Did you ever have meetings in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we did once in a while. Meetings were frequently held in Seattle; Pullman also was a wonderful place to meet, and some were in Yakima. But most of them—obviously the bulk of them—were over here on the coast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, definitely all the travel involved was an added burden for being active in this committee, but you certainly get to see the state. You served on three committees that interim: Agriculture and Natural Resources of which you were the chair; Labor; and Air Safety. Which would have been your most active committee? Are they all equal or would some meet more than others?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they were all about the same, and each one of these committees would meet separately and then of course, the Council would meet quarterly, I think.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was the Council and then there were the subcommittees and reporting back to the Council. You were also on a joint interim committee on Legislative Space Allocation again in 1967-69, which was not part of the Council; it was another interim committee altogether. You chaired that one. You were going to a lot of meetings.



**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. Yes, and the one having to do with legislative space allocation was the heavy-duty one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would most of those meetings be in Olympia?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. This became the group that was the focal point for the Legislature to be able to have space available for the members. And the people who were there were very resentful of the fact that they were getting "uprooted." Everybody—for their own particular reasons—wanted to be within baseball throwing distance of the Governor's office. And we just couldn't have it, that's all there was to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine this also dealt with parking, which also gets rather fierce, and we don't even want to touch that!

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything was involved in it. The East Capitol Campus development—obviously General Administration and the Governor's office were. But here again, it all came back to the Legislature in the form of the capital budget and our authorization for the expenditure. This was the vehicle in which we were kept fully informed as to what progress was being made.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of tracking. The Agriculture and Natural Resources committee was looking at several issues. There was more discussion about long-range land management policies for state owned lands. And there was discussion about green pea marketing issues: how to get better contracts for farmers. There was a lot of dissension between the growers and the processors and you were trying to sort that one out a little bit better.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I worked on all of them; none of them were huge issues. All of them concentrated on a small area of the economy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But for the people involved they'd be big issues.

**Mr. Copeland:** For the people involved, they were big, but just from the standpoint of the overall requirements of the state of Washington, no, they were not big.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The one that seems to stand out as more of a policy issue, rather than something for a small group of people, would be the land management policy. What should the state do with the lands granted to it by the federal government back in the territorial period?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was getting into the Department of Natural Resources and understanding a lot more about how they could get private timber companies involved in reforestation, as well as dealing with the public.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These state-owned lands generate revenue and that revenue goes into the General Fund, I believe; it wouldn't come right back to DNR. Then DNR would be granted appropriations from that to run its programs. Lands Commissioner Bert Cole wanted some of that money to come back more directly to him, if I understood that correctly. Some legislators were worried about that and they wanted to put a cap on that fund. They wanted to know how much money they were going to get and have some control over it. But Bert Cole seemed to be saying that he wanted his board to make that decision if he got x-number of dollars one year where it should go, and that he wanted that more of an in-house decision than the Legislature—the Appropriations Committee. Am I understanding that correctly?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you're understanding it correctly, I don't remember the details about it.

It was always a case of where any department or agency did not like the Legislature “mucking around in their affairs.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But don't you get, then, a bunch of earmarked funds that aren't very flexible, if you start granting this sort of request?

**Mr. Copeland:** They wanted to have the money go directly to them without having to go through legislative appropriation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of like the gas tax? I gather the Legislature didn't agree with that. That's your primary function after all.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the Legislature didn't agree with that. Bert made a run at it but there was nothing unusual about that; anybody that generated their own money, they always wanted to keep their money to themselves. They didn't want to have to go to the Legislature for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But if, for instance, their revenue dried up a bit, they would certainly come hat in hand to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So in this case, would you listen politely to Bert Cole and decline, for instance, to support that particular initiative?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. I was always a good listener. However, in this issue of the department “having their own funds” I disagreed with the Commissioner. This came as no surprise to Bert Cole. He had always been aware of my position.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Labor committee that you were on looked at industrial insurance coverage and employment for disabled

workers involving retraining. I was impressed by the number of places you went to learn about this issue. You visited the UW Hospital, the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation department and some other rehab places. Would you, in all these areas, build up a certain body of expertise so that you could really get to the heart of these issues? Is that what these Legislative Council meetings allowed you to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Number one was to get the legislator at least acquainted with the facilities. Let's take this whole thing on rehabilitation: what facilities were there; what were they doing; what was the progress and so on; that was number one. Number two, the staff then was able to get on the basis of a one-on-one conversation with people that were delivering this service and the recipients of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it puts a face on it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It puts a face on it, that's exactly right. Now the staff, rather than hearing about this nebulous thing called rehabilitation, could say, “Oh sure, I went and I saw Dr. So-and-So, and this gal was the head of this and we talked to this patient and this patient and this patient.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “This is what this really means.”

**Mr. Copeland:** That is exactly right. We also went back and we talked to the employers and asked, “How did this occur? Was it an accident that was on the job; could it have been prevented? What have you done to prevent future accidents?” So it was nothing more than an education process for a whole bunch of people. Now, the patient knew that someone was interested in him; the doctors knew that, yes, this was going on; the care providers were involved; the legislative staff was, and the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they could tell you how it worked; you could see for yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Now, these things were done by design; otherwise we're just talking about faceless numbers, cases—instances without any honest-to-god connection.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think that would do a tremendous amount for a legislator to make that connection and to know on a more visceral level what it meant to be injured on the job and then what policies actually meant in real people's lives. So when you went to amend them, or add or take away, or whatever, you would have a picture in your mind how that would play out. I would think that would make a huge difference.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. I mean, are you kidding, you can't write a book and have all the legislators sit down and read a book and understand it quite as well as you can go right in and sit down and go through the thing on a step-by-step basis with the doctors, with the patients and with the nurses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Makes a more indelible impression.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the legislators who went on this sort of tour, when this issue comes up in the Legislature did you then, in caucus or on the floor or in committee, stand up and say, "I know about this and I've been here and this is what it looks like and this is what it does." Does that kind of knowledge—that experience—get passed on so that it reaches a much wider group of people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And are those the kind of stories that move people—not numbers, but "this is a real person, this happened."

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. In other words, what you're trying to do is bring reality into sharp focus. Who are the people that are affected; how are they affected; to what extent; who else is affected by this? And if you could have two or three members of the Legislature, let's say in both parties, get up on the floor and say, "Yes, this was the case. This is exactly what we saw; these are the conditions that we have and we need to change it in the following fashion and we concur that these changes are necessary." You bet it made a difference!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that would have real impact?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Another legislative first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've often noticed certain things that go through the Legislature, if there's a personal story attached to it that either hit the news in a big way or was one of your constituents, that you could come in and say, for instance, "It happened this way with this person," and that would grab people's attention in a way that a report or just numbers didn't. So this seems very effective.

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only is it effective, but it's an educational tool from everybody's standpoint. I've got to emphasize this—one of the important things was the educational portion on the part of the staff. Now they had that person that was doing the delivery work in the field that was not faceless. If they wanted to have a follow-up, they could call them. This was invaluable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're building all those relationships, which can only be face-to-face, at least in the beginning.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, but here again, this is nothing more than an extension of folding the public back into the legislative environment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They also got to know you. So say, if something came up, did any of these people phone you and say, "Well, you were interested in this. Are you still, because this is what's happening now."

**Mr. Copeland:** Right, suddenly, I wasn't a faceless guy either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were there, you cared; you were interested.

We've talked about the Air Safety Committee before. Your work that interim seemed a continuation: registering airplanes, getting revenue sources, beefing up the safety programs. It's the same kind of work that you did before, but it's important to note that you were still involved.

As Speaker Pro Tempore, you went that year to the annual National Conference of State Legislative Leaders, a different kind of get-together from these other councils and committees. What kind of educational experience was that for you? This is national, so this is people from all the states.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is the National Legislative Leaders' Conference and that ultimately transformed itself into the National Conference of State Legislators. This group was just in its infancy. As a matter of fact, all states did not participate in it. We tried to use it as a vehicle to share information: "Okay, this is the set of problems we have and in order to be able to accomplish it, we're doing the following things." Another state would say, "We already went through that and we found that approach didn't work so we had to back off of that and go with another plan."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you don't have to invent

the wheel all by yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's exactly right. Now, we're talking to contemporaries who are struggling with virtually the same set of problems, but they found a better way to handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or sometimes you would be the leader.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. So this was a case of exchanging ideas and saying, "Maybe we should take a look at that and see if it would be applicable to our set of circumstances, and could we do it?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's like a great laboratory?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's an experimental laboratory. As a matter of fact, that's what democracy is all about: the states are laboratories of many of the things that ultimately get infiltrated into the federal government; this is an extension of it. So here you would become better acquainted with other states and the players and participants in that state in order to be able to have this exchange of ideas. This is the very first step toward the future exchange of information about computers in the legislative environment that we were working on at that time. Years down the line, we began to make the exchange of what we developed for the state of Washington was concerned. We would give that information to another state in exchange for something that they had developed. And it was an announcement to other states that "this is a project we're currently working on." The other states would say, "Let us not embark on that particular thing; let us try something else, but keep in touch with the state of Washington and watch their progress. Later on, maybe we can exchange what we are working on, which is in a different realm, from their project." Now we had a clearinghouse where everybody

wasn't trying to invent the same damn wheel. Everybody was trying to do something that was applicable to their organization. So the institution of the Legislative Leaders' Conference became a vehicle by which we had this free exchange of ideas amongst all of the legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you also bring in speakers or different people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Must have been a rather rich several days.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it was. And at the conferences we'd have maybe have fifteen or twenty subject matters going simultaneously; one guy couldn't take them all in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, you'd have to have a team.

**Mr. Copeland:** The entire delegation from the state of Washington would meet and agree, "Okay, you take in the committee on this, and you go to that one, and you go to this one, and you go to that one." So we had somebody from the state represented at each session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you'd come back and report in some way?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people from Washington would go to this conference?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh fifteen, twenty people from both the House and the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's a pretty big group. You had a sizable group of people who were getting this infusion of new thoughts, excitement, and stimulation of that kind.

**Mr. Copeland:** Another subliminal portion of this thing was that once you saw how some of the other states were operating, you all of a sudden recognized that, "By god, we're light years ahead of the average." The legislators from the state of Washington realized they were beginning to progress in quantum leaps compared with how rapidly other states were moving.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What is it that made Washington so progressive?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sheer guts and responsibility on the part of some legislators and the cooperation of the executive branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what made some states mired and lacking in progress?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lethargy, resisting any kind of change, status quo...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Clinging to tradition?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just like the famous statement that was made by the senator from Wyoming, who said that, "The constitution of the state of Wyoming is all screwed up; it says that we should meet for forty days every two years and what it should say is the Legislature should meet every forty years for two days." There was an attitude that prevailed in our Legislature at that time. You had to work at good government; you had to study and do a lot of reading; you had to understand; you had to go to a lot of meetings; you had to hear a lot of words.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There is a general feeling that it was the South that was slow to take up new ideas and new methods; is that a true statement? That they had a higher regard for the past than western states that haven't as much history, is the way people have analyzed this.



**Mr. Copeland:** If you go to some of these Legislative Leaders conferences, you'd sort find that the Legislature was totally ineffective in some of those states; truly they didn't do anything. The whole show was run by the executive branch of government. The Legislature was perfectly willing to assume that role, but those are states that truly were not very progressive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** States like Wisconsin, California, Washington, and Massachusetts—who would be some of the other leaders?

**Mr. Copeland:** California had to be one of the big ones because just the total dynamics of the immensity of the state make it so. A state that was sadly lacking, strangely enough was Nebraska, with their unicameral legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's mentioned in the House Journal that they came to visit Washington and have a look around.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, they sent a delegation out to see what we were doing in a computer environment and they were amazed to see that we had offices; they were amazed to see that every legislator had his own telephone number.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you hadn't had them very long.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I went back to the Nebraska Legislature and I found out that their Legislature had purchased and owned their own telephone system within the House but hadn't upgraded it since then—I think it was since 1926.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to see how much variety there was.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, certainly we found states

that were just sadly lacking. Then we found states that were interested in doing something about it. We started out at zero and it wasn't any time at all and the state of Washington was just running up there amongst the leaders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You certainly got up to speed pretty quickly. That seemed like another opportunity to get information and develop yourself as a legislator. You continued to serve on the Legislative Council the following interim, the 1968 period. By then, Don Eldridge was the chair and Senator Gissberg was still the vice-chair; Walter Williams was appointed as the secretary. That year you seemed much more focused on constitutional issues. There were still all the subcommittees, but what really shows up, in the records of the executive committee especially, are these constitutional issues; there were three that were the big ideas that year. You were discussing the line-item veto—the power of the Governor to strike small passages—and you were moving towards prohibiting that power and saying that vetoes needed to involve whole sections, not bit by bit strike-outs. Legislators were pulling back on that power and reclaiming that for the Legislature. This was the first time I've noticed you discussing the line-item veto in such a pointed fashion.

**Mr. Copeland:** The restriction was “no to a one-word veto,” but okay to a line-item veto.” Governor Evans was infuriated by the “no one-word veto.” He did not like that idea at all because he was afraid that that would negatively impact his administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, since he was so fond of using it...

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, he was fond of using it, but some of his staff were fond of abusing it. There were several occasions where it was totally out of hand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you began to discuss this issue, did he not consider pulling back from his use—or overuse—of that mechanism to kind of quiet the discussion a bit?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he did, but it's one of these things are hard to perceive. There's no quantitative measurement you can make on what would have been. I just think, from the standpoint of good government, that change to allow use of the line-item veto, but not the one-word veto was necessary. Use of the one-word veto had become very predominant, but its abuse had also been there and I just didn't like the idea. And I didn't particularly care who was Governor or what party he came from; I felt strongly about this business of changing legislative intent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could it reverse intent?

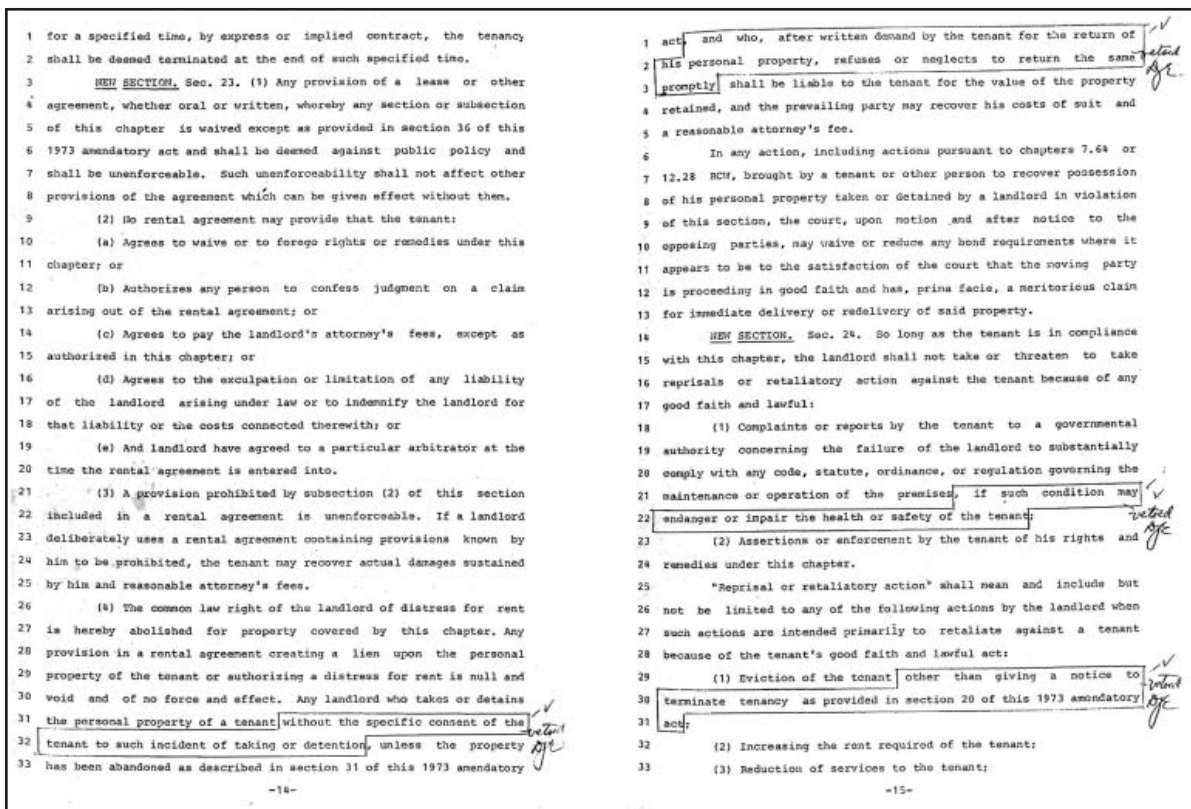
**Mr. Copeland:** That was never tried. That would be an extreme case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But legislation is crafted very carefully and to pull out words here and there and phrases—I mean, nothing is in a bill accidentally—it all has meaning.

**Mr. Copeland:** At some point, we discussed this with Dick White and some attempts were made to draft bills that were far more veto-proof. His staff worked very diligently to make sure that bills were crafted so they escaped Dan's pen. You can appreciate what I'm saying. It was always in the minds of legislators, when they started drafting bills that they ran the risk of his one-word veto power.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been an added tension in writing bills.

**Mr. Copeland:** No doubt about it. Look at this document, where Ray Haman has gone through and several words have been stricken right out of the bill. There were a couple of them that were just absolutely unbelievable!



Examples of Governor Dan Evans' partial veto for Substitute Senate Bill 2226 "1973 Printed Bills of the Legislature," Washington State Library

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when you get that report back, tempers would flare a little, I imagine?

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, that occurred after the session was over with; you couldn't do anything about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, you wouldn't be pleased to get that sort of treatment. Did you ever have a conversation with Dan Evans about this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, lots of times.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how did he defend this?

**Mr. Copeland:** He liked the idea of being able to veto just one word.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he had been a legislator; he couldn't understand?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, he could. But he was wearing a different hat. He'd say that he was just trying to help clarify it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know they're allowed to correct grammatical errors and things of that kind, but this is a different thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Definitely, from his perspective it was clarification; from the Legislature's perspective, this may have changed legislative intent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it somewhat of a statement that this one person knows better than every one else, the other one hundred and forty-seven lawmakers?

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess the statement is, "I am the Governor of the state and I can use this power if I think it is needed." Right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. The other big constitutional reform issue you discussed—and this was the first time I think I've seen this phrase—was instituting what you called "continuing sessions." It involved the ability of the Legislature to call itself—not the Governor—into session with a two-thirds vote. Continuing sessions becomes quite a discussion in a few years, but I hadn't realized that you were beginning to think about it at this early date. Was this just a natural movement—you're having a lot of special sessions; you seem to be having pretty much annual sessions, anyway. Although the resolutions for annual sessions don't always go anywhere, was this a way for the Legislature to go to the next level? This involved a somewhat radical change in that you wanted to call yourself into session and not wait for the Governor to call a special session. It was a different "feeling your oats" kind of statement.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is natural transition that occurs when you write a biennial budget. In so doing, you're taking the best possible revenue projections that you can, and overlaying that on anticipated expenditures for two years in advance! We were not capable of any type of reasonable accuracy. Here again, this is a case of when the Legislature is out of session and you have some problems going on, is the Legislature involved in the correction of them? The Governor was very reluctant to call special sessions because, to a Governor, that was opening up Pandora's Box. So the Legislature was using this as kind of a suggested means more than anything else of saying, "Maybe we better just take a look at this." This is nothing more than the first salvo of the constitutional amendment authorizing an annual session. This is just a kind of a wake-up call to the public that it's in their best interest to have the Legislature in session more than on a biennium basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In 1969, Boeing started laying off workers by the hundreds; it was the beginning of what is known as the Boeing bust. Was this the kind of issue where the Legislature felt it should be in session to deal with this, that you could not have predicted the year before when you drew up the state budget?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is just an example of the dynamics of the whole thing. In other words, you make certain assumptions that the economy is going to go percolating along at this particular clip. You made certain assumptions that the revenue was going to be such, and then all of a sudden they proved to be erroneous. Now, what do you do? Do you adjust for it? “Oh, we can’t adjust, because we are not in session.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this instance give you great credibility on this issue? It did happen rather suddenly.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think there’s any question about it. And now you see this entire fine fiber that has been running for twelve, fourteen years, elevating the Legislature into a coequal branch of government. So now the public and the media are recognizing, yes, the Legislature does have a role to play in here and yes, if you do have an economic downturn the Legislature should be around in order to be able to do something about it. There were many options available. Do they need to put more money into Employment Security’s unemployment compensation program? Do we need to talk about retraining programs? What is it these Boeing workers are going to do? Is there ability in the community colleges for them to retrain for something else? What are their job skills? Are any out there that are in high demand right now? We don’t know. So it’s the Legislature that needs to be aware of the alternatives and make plans.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, Dan Evans was hesitant to call you into special session on a regular basis. But when you look at the 1970 special session, some people label that as the first annual session.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did a tremendous amount of work that session, not all of it on an emergency basis. So, would he have supported this continuing session idea or would he have preferred to have the power to call you or not call you rather than have you call yourselves? Did the governor ever weigh in on this issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know that he did. I don’t even want to second-guess the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had such a huge legislative agenda. He was a much more activist Governor than his predecessors. I would think he’d need you there as partners to push through this agenda.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no doubt about it; he was not going to sit there and run the government without some real dynamic changes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don’t move on it immediately; you wanted more study of that one.

**Mr. Copeland:** The idea of a continuing legislature hits a gray area. Could the Legislature recess indefinitely and call itself back into session and things like that? What type of constitutional change would be needed?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Leonard Sawyer as the Speaker in the early seventies tried to bring in this idea.



**Mr. Copeland:** There were legal questions as to how much he could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a little bit hard on legislators' private lives, never knowing when you were going to be called in for a certain number of weeks, and then you would go away and have to come back. It was, perhaps, a little chaotic feeling if you were trying to hold some kind of job.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very, very disruptive. You sure as heck didn't want to create that. He recognized we were still operating with legislators who have their own businesses and professions, their own work, their own investments and homes and family life. Some consideration had to be given to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly. It was an attempt to be sensitive and responsive to what was going on in the state, to come in and out of session as need be, but eventually it was found to not work very well. But this was the first time I'd seen the phrase "continuing sessions" so I was interested. Several groups supported it: the National Governor's Conference on Constitutional Revision; Attorney General O'Connell supported it in a report that he submitted; the Committee on Economic Development, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The last one surprised me a little bit. So this was an idea that was floating around, not just in Washington State but nationally. That's quite a cross-section of groups that supported this notion. I always thought that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was for minimalist government—a little bit more conservative view of government—so I was surprised to see their support for this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't aware of that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The newspaper accounts mention it. During this time, you were, of

course, still on the Legislative Procedures and Facilities Committee. You gave a report in November 1968 saying that you'd almost completed the coding of the State RCWs online. You also talked about a program—the "ADP." Could you tell me what that acronym means? Everybody uses it but nobody says what it is.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's the Automatic Data Processing. I don't know where the terminology came from. It was an acronym that got placed on all of the work that was being done. Transferring the Revised Code of the state of Washington to a machine-readable format so it could be stored and handled by computers. Dick White had this now in position; he was catching all of the information coming out of the women's penitentiary in Walla Walla and assembling and putting it into the computers. Credit goes to Dick and his staff for this major—and I do mean major—part of the development of ADP. Gathering all of this information, converting into machine readable form is one thing. But getting it to perform in a manner that can be quickly usable and reliable is quite another matter. It required the pragmatic approach of White to produce such results. Not only was it a tremendous success right at the beginning, but other states soon learned of his accomplishments. It didn't take long and Dick's reputation grew to enormous proportions and he was placed in high demand to come visit other states that were interested in making this type of monumental change. Another legislative first. Needless to say, he accepted and shared his knowledge with others. With all of this exposure, the state of Washington was soon accepted by other states as the leader in the field.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A very valuable colleague to have, indeed. One thing that you discussed in these meetings is that you wanted to make



sure all state agencies and governmental groups used a common computer language so that your machinery could talk to each other. I can see the potential for total chaos. Were there, at that time, totally different systems and people were piecemeal adopting them and you wanted to have some oversight?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, there were. There were several different formats that you could capture data in and these formats were not compatible with one another. All of them had their pluses and minuses; all of them; virtually all of them could accomplish what you wanted to have happen and all of them were expensive. Capturing data was terribly expensive. But once you got your database together and another agency got its database together, you now had two separate databases and no ability to communicate with one another. This diluted the value of the material. And I had staff come to me early on and say, "This not the way to go."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you looking at having some kind of committee or commission or some kind of agency that would oversee everybody so that this did not become a problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we didn't have that type of control. All we were trying to do is make everybody aware that whatever they were trying to do, make sure that everybody could read it later on. I mean, here you are writing something in a different language; how many people understand that language? Well, "everybody in our department does."

"Well good, how about somebody else's department?" "Well, they don't speak our language." Please understand that particular format fit better for them than anything else. But each agency was trying to run down an individual path.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this still so new that people couldn't see where this is going to go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, it was in its infancy. Now, so we're just trying to call this to their attention.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be the mechanism that you'd have to work out to get people to get all on the same page? Just persuasion or did you actually have something a little stronger?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was all persuasion. We'd have their staffs get together and make sure that data was totally compatible and could overlap with somebody else if needed. Let me summarize: Dick White was the main mover and shaker on this one. He encouraged others to cooperate, communicate, and interface with one another. However, in the background, these departments and agencies knew that the Legislature was way ahead of the curve. So if they screwed up or disregarded our suggestions, there would be hell to pay at some later session of the Legislature. They would be held accountable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was the big stick?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's standard ordinary procedure. So no, we didn't have any great big club; no, we didn't have any laws that said, "thou shalt not." This is all just in its infancy. "Let's sit down, communicate, talk to one another and help each other."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now we take all this for granted, so it's very interesting to see when the question was raised and that somebody had to pay attention to it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were working through all these interims, but of course, there was still politics, and there are still elections. Lyle Burt of *The Seattle Times* wrote of the 1967 session, “The Fortieth Legislature is down-rated by politics.” Then he went on to predict, “Next year will be a big political year and this session provides an ideal opportunity to make political hay.” He was looking at what Governor Evans was doing. Then he says a curious thing that I’ve never seen anywhere else but maybe you can help me with this: “Governor Evans’ first term will end next year and he will decide whether to seek a second or to try to wrest the United States Senate seat from Senator Warren Magnuson.” What about this notion that Dan Evans might not have run for a second term and gone for the U.S. Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that was just pure conjuncture on Lyle Burt’s part. He was probably throwing out a trial balloon there just to see.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were assuming that Dan Evans would go for a second term?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Earlier, someone floated your name for Lieutenant Governor. Was this another trial balloon to see if you would go for it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have ever any interest in that office?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I understood that it came up, but here again, with the dynamics of Washington State politics, to elect somebody from the eastern part of the state is just the next thing to impossible. Parochial isn’t mainstream, that’s the name of the game and I recognized it early on and I knew that this was the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have other ambitions? Did any of these offices interest you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not necessarily. It’s nice to be flattered and talked about and things like that, but no, that particular move was not an interest of mine. I had my own business to take care of and it was booming along in great shape. It was far more attractive for me to stay at the ranch and do that than it was to become a Lieutenant Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the idea, also floated, that you would become the chair of the Republican Party for the state and replace Gummy Johnson?

**Mr. Copeland:** That never was very attractive to me either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was attractive to some people partly because they were upset with Gummy Johnson, and for other reasons.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was not a participant in any objection to Gummy. Here again, somebody just made the suggestion that I be the chair. It wasn’t anything that I conjured up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m just clearing away the brushwork here. There was some notion that Gummy would go up to the national level and that you would then become the state chair. I gather your name would come up for jobs like that because you were so active in campaigning around the state. You did have a state presence unlike some other legislators.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s understandable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had been this state GOP leader, would you have had to leave the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Pure conjecture, but I think so. Prior to this time, Arnold Wang was the state chairman for a very short period of time; he was a member of the Legislature. But I had my own business to take care of and there was no way I could ever be the state chairman and run my own business at the same time. That was a foregone conclusion. That was not attractive to me; I never even entertained the thought.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody was entertaining it about you. Were you as involved in the '68 campaign as some of the earlier ones? Were you at all active in campaigning for Governor Evans' second term?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was more involved in the Legislature's campaigns. But in many cases it dovetailed with what Dan was doing and we communicated with Dan's campaign staff. We always knew where he was going to be and frequently we would work in joint functions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd get more punch that way, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So we should still picture you as recruiting and campaigning and helping people around the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct and when you've got candidates that are running for the Legislature, you always try to give them as much heads-up as you can—you know, any information that you've got. Here you've got an incumbent Governor that's running for reelection—if I can get a candidate to piggy-back off of him, I'm sure as heck going to do it. I mean, the Governor's going to draw the crowd and it isn't going to hurt our candidate to go out and appear with the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was still very popular, and of course, not an unknown quantity. Your own election seemed to come off rather easily. You did have a challenger in 1966, John Drumheller, but you won by a huge majority, almost double the number of votes he got. By 1968, you had no Democratic challenger; you were solidly in possession of your seat. Did you still campaign as hard so as to not look complacent and to keep in touch with your constituents?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of things about running unopposed is that there were those standard ordinary forums that you simply could not miss. You must show up or they would think...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "You couldn't be bothered."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And so running unopposed was not as much of a cake walk as you might think; it still required the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But was it more relaxed in the sense that you knew the outcome? But yes, you have to be engaged. Again, in 1970 you had no Democratic challenger. Was this a message that you are very solid in your district and there was no use having some sacrificial lamb go up against you?

**Mr. Copeland:** The district was pretty substantially Republican and I'd done my homework.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was your challenge not to look complacent?

**Mr. Copeland:** It wasn't a challenge because I never was complacent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there ever any kind of muttering about this "no challenger" business? Is that a bad thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think it's a bad thing. But by the same token, I think around the state, there were probably ten to twenty percent of all the legislative races, on both sides of the political spectrum that were running unopposed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people think that it's better for politics—it's better for the engagement of the public—if there are challengers—real challengers. That every district, if it was a swing district, would heighten the debate and that people would get more involved. Not that you can design your district, but what do you think of that sort of statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, to a degree if you want to measure each segment of the state by their legislative districts and say, "Every legislative district should be a swing district;" that would be a very tight political rope to have to walk. That wasn't the case, but by the same token, you could say the same thing about some of the districts in downtown Seattle and what the political cloth was there. I've always felt that if a legislator is being re-elected without a challenger, number one, he's doing his homework; he's paying attention to his constituents and he's got a pretty substantial agenda in mind. And here again, with Dan being the Governor, he put out kind of format, a program, a plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A blueprint?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Blueprint for Progress was there for everybody to read and if you didn't like it, of course, you certainly were labeled a complainer. All of the ingredients were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because your district was so safe, were you able to take some tough votes that somebody in a swing district might have shied away from?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that is just a foregone conclusion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for the people who think swing districts strengthen the Legislature, you could look at it the other way and say a certain number of safe districts allow a lot of good legislation to get passed because people are not worried about their neck being on the line.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me back up and answer that question: Could you take some tough votes that others may want to shy away from? Let's just analyze that for a minute because I think that this is something that really should come into strong focus. The passage of highway measures had, at that time, always been done on a very strong bipartisan basis. And if it were a requirement to increase, let's say, the gasoline tax, there was never any written rule about it. It was just a gentleman's agreement and an understanding that if the Republicans had sixty percent of the House, they would come up with sixty percent of the affirmative votes for a gas tax increase and the Democrats would come up with forty percent of the affirmative votes for a gas tax increase. Now, does it get down to whether or not a guy can take a hard vote on something and because of his particular position in his own district, not feel the retribution of the voters because of a gas tax increase? And the answer to all of that is yes. However, I had this very unique thing that was built in—not by my desire or anything of the kind. Part of the gas tax revenue allocation was done on the basis of road-miles. How many road-miles does the county have to maintain? So anytime that we increased the tax on gasoline my legislative district got more money than the district paid in because we had a greater number of road-miles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't that be true for

many places in the eastern part of the state? Small population, long roads?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. But that was not true with some of the heavily populated metropolitan districts in King County. So if it was necessary to increase the gas tax, I could do it and explain my vote very carefully by pointing out that it truly was not a total drain as far as the taxpayers were concerned. But here again, I was in an agriculture community and those people understand that the farm-to-market network of roads was so terribly important to them. They would always sustain or support what I did in regard to the gas tax. So it became a very important ingredient in the support of the highways. This bipartisan arrangement was duplicated over and over again as sessions went on. Unfortunately, I forget what year, for some reason or another the Legislature decided not to go ahead and raise the gas tax on the proportionate basis of a bipartisan arrangement. One party had to assume the total responsibility for the gas tax increase. That point began the dismantling of our support of the highway system. And right now, today, you're reaping the benefits of lack of leadership, lack of foresight, lack of understanding of the entire financing of highways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not to jump too far into the future, but could that coalition of eastern and western interests be put together again—Democrat/Republican sharing of the transportation budget issues—can that be rebuilt?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, it has to go back together. It's an absolute requirement. We don't have Republican roads; we don't have Republican schools; we don't have Democrat roads; we don't have Democrat schools. This is all in the interest of the state of Washington and legislators have to address that. Now, as

far as an increase in the gas tax is concerned, in 1991 the Legislature increased the gas tax by one cent and in 1992 they increased it by another cent. What if we had allowed that to go on for ten years? We would have a system of highways right now that would be second to none and no one would know the difference. A gas tax is not truly a gas tax; it's a user's fee. You do this voluntarily; if you want to pay the gas tax, you drive your car; if you don't want to pay the gas tax, you stay home. We have a state that has very high costs for highway construction. I can show you states that have very low costs. Now, do you want to live in Kansas or North Dakota? They are beautiful states, but both are flat as a pancake and their highway costs are minimal compared to ours."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could call it the Mount Rainier tax. We're going to get into a discussion of some hard votes in this session, so I just wanted to lay the groundwork. But still looking at this election in 1968, of course it was infamous on the national level. There was the assassination of Martin Luther King; the assassination of Robert Kennedy; the escalation of war in Vietnam with its attendant marches for peace and other issues; the disastrous Democratic Convention in Chicago was another item. Elections and campaigning and politics were taking a very high profile in the nation. You can certainly comment on any of those events here, but does any of that heat—I won't say light—come back to the state level for your campaigns, or the Governor's campaign? Was there a different kind of scrutiny and energy going into electioneering in 1968 than other years?

**Mr. Copeland:** Those concerns and those events may have influenced the election; they were all there. We had just a total national concern. Where are we; what are we doing; are we on the right track?



**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a person involved in politics, what did you think and feel when you see a presidential candidate shot down?

**Mr. Copeland:** Such a tragedy. Nobody forecasts those sorts of things; nobody ever wants it to happen. You just shake your head and say; you know, “Why? Where are we going? How many senseless people are there out there in the world? How insulated do we have to be—how many security people; how guarded? It was a terrible, tragic time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any ways of addressing any of this in talks you were giving? Did people ask about it; did you have to allude to it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Occasionally, you were asked about your feelings in the case but you couldn’t answer with positive steps that could be taken. These were federal issues and totally out of the legislative arena.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still, I wondered if people on the local level would be asking you to take a position.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had no authority to do it at all. I don’t even remember any memorials to Congress that said, “Stop the war,” that ever surfaced in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some memorials to Congress, but nothing really prominent. What about the student strikes and the marches, say, at the University of Washington campus?

**Mr. Copeland:** Those things were always present.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this kind of turmoil make you rededicate yourself to solving problems through the political process or does it do the opposite? Did you feel more needed than ever or more alienated by the whole thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think probably more needed than ever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Later, the Watergate scandal filtered back to the local level where people’s distrust level covered everybody involved in politics.

**Mr. Copeland:** Then everybody in politics is tainted with that brush. There isn’t any question about it. Right now, every CEO in the country is suspect of being a cheat, a scoundrel, a no-good for nothing, a bum, an extortionist, whatever. “What is your job?” “I’m the CEO of a Fortune 500 corporation.” You’re immediately suspect. So, getting tarred with the same brush, there’s a very good example. Same thing with politics, okay, so somebody in politics is found to be cheating: “Everybody in politics cheats.” But that’s the way that the press likes it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s surprising how common that kind of statement is. Still, it’s hard to swallow. Anyway, your work this session was against this background of all these national events. Richard Nixon swept into the presidency. The Democrats and President Johnson were discredited with their handling of the war and other issues. Were there Republican coat-tails, in that sense? Did Nixon’s victory help anyone else other than himself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably to a degree, but it would be very minor. Some presidents have that power but I don’t think you can find any point in contemporary history where you would say a presidential election swept a bunch of Republicans into office since Dwight Eisenhower.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans won his re-election, at any rate. His opponent had been Attorney General John O’Connell whose campaign was marred by a few scandals and

some ineptitude. Slade Gorton ran for the position of Attorney General; he had a much narrower victory against John McCutcheon. Every time a leader in your party makes a move—say, when Dan Evans went for the Governorship or when Slade Gorton went for the Attorney General position—was there a lot of shifting around of positions within your caucus? What kind of impact would this have had?

**Mr. Copeland:** When you say shifting around, first of all you have to understand every session there's a change in the caucus. Some of the players move out and some new ones come in. But those that stay add an additional two years of experience or four years of experience

so they become a lot better legislators. It's kind of a natural upgrading of the people in the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there much impact of Slade Gorton moving out of the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Did it create a void? No. It didn't impact the caucus; the caucus was reconstituted with a new group of people. We had fourteen new members of our caucus and we continued our program of upgrading the Legislature. We had made big jumps in our data recovery and applications. We had achieved several legislative firsts that session, as I said, and we went right on with what we were doing. We were in good shape for the next session.



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## CHAPTER 17

### THE LONG SESSION OF 1969

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the 1969 session you reached a pinnacle of the Republican majority; you had fifty-six Republicans to forty-three Democrats. The Senate was still Democratic, but you were gaining there too; you had twenty-two Republican senators to twenty-seven Democrats. So I imagine that's a good feeling for your Party. Again, Don Eldridge was elected Speaker; were there any challenges to that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were again elected Speaker Pro Tempore, but the rest of your caucus experienced some shifting around. Stewart Bledsoe became the Majority Leader, replacing Slade Gorton; that's a new role for him obviously. Assistant Floor Leader: you now had two; instead of Robert McDougall you had Irv Newhouse and Representative Whetzel, who were new to leadership. Robert Goldsworthy decided not to be caucus chair again and Norwood Cunningham stepped in. Could you tell me something about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Norwood came from, I think, the Lynwood district. He was involved in the school district in the Edmonds area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he a teacher?

#### **FORTY-FIRST LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

January 13, 1969—March 13, 1969

Ex. S. March 14, 1969—May 12, 1969

2<sup>nd</sup> Ex. S. January 12, 1970—February 12, 1970

**Governor:** Dan Evans

**Senate:** 22 Republican members/  
27 Democratic members

**House:** 56 Republican members/  
43 Democratic members

#### **OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP**

**Speaker:** Don Eldridge

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Tom Copeland

**Chief Clerk:** Malcolm "Dutch" McBeath

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Sid Snyder

**Sergeant at Arms:** Eugene Prince

#### **House Republican Caucus:**

**Majority Leader:** Stewart Bledsoe

**Assistant Majority Leader:** Irving Newhouse

**Assistant Majority Leader:** Jonathan Whetzel

**Caucus Chair:** Norwood Cunningham

**Whip:** Hal Wolf

**Caucus Secretary:** Gladys Kirk

#### **House Democratic Caucus:**

**Minority Floor Leader:** John O'Brien

**Minority Organization Leader:** Robert Charette

**Caucus Chair:** William Chatalas

**Assistant Minority Floor Leader:** Gary Grant

**Assistant Minority Floor Leader:** Richard King

**Assistant Minority Floor Leader:** Mark Litchman

**Assistant Whip:** Ted Bottiger

**Assistant Whip:** Daniel Marsh

**Caucus Secretary:** Avery Garrett

#### **Freshmen Republican Members:**

Max Benitz, Art Brown, Floyd Conway, Robert Curtis, Charles Evans, Chet Hatfield, Axel Julin, James Kuehnle, Joe Mentor, Lois North, A.J. "Bud" Pardini, William Schumaker, George Scott, Ned Shera

#### **Freshmen Democratic Members:**

A.A. Adams, George Fleming, Peter Francis, Geraldine McCormick, John Martinis, Robert Randall, A.N. "Bud" Shinpoch, Al Williams, Lorraine Wojahn

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. And a nice guy, but as far as Goldsworthy was concerned, he remained the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. He had his hands full.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a natural thing for him to want to concentrate his forces; those are two huge roles.

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the job of caucus chairman is concerned, yes, it's an important job but it's not a full-time thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just making sure everybody's happy and bringing them into the process? What about the Assistant Floor Leaders, Irv Newhouse and Jonathan Whetzel? They were fairly new players in the leadership of the caucus; were they rising stars?

**Mr. Copeland:** Irv certainly was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was said to be a very brilliant legislator. I've heard him described as not exactly a "back-slapper," perhaps a bit reserved.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. Irv was a very brilliant man.



*Left to right: Representatives Tom Copeland, Irving Newhouse, Don Eldridge and Stewart Bledsoe at the rostrum.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Representative Whetzel?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very intelligent guy, but here again, somewhat reserved. Stu of course had a style all by himself. He was very flamboyant, very gregarious, liked to joke, but very, very serious and very intent, an outstanding individual. You couldn't be around Stu without liking the guy; he was just as common as an old shoe. And Stu got along very well with the Democrats, showing them a willingness to listen and understand their position. Most everyone felt comfortable talking to Stu and myself. Much of the success of this session could be credited to the relationships between Stewart Bledsoe and Robert Charette, one of the Democratic leaders.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that sounds like quite a good team.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, because Stewart Bledsoe moved up to Majority Leader from the Whip position, Hal Wolf came in as Whip. He strikes me as what people call a workhorse, really diligent. He shows up in a lot of places; he was very active.

**Mr. Copeland:** Hal and I became very close and he worked with me on many, many things. I enjoyed working with Hal; he was such a great guy. Hal again, was a member of the Employment Committee, along with Len Sawyer when I was the chairman. And yes, he spent more than the average amount of time being a legislator. He was the "local" legislator and knew personally many of the new employees, so with this relationship he was of great value on the Employment Committee.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was part of one of the “top third” that was doing things?

**Mr. Copeland:** There’s no doubt about it.



*Left to right: Representatives Stewart Bledsoe, Tom Copeland and Hal Wolf*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had to characterize this new caucus leadership, would it be very similar to what you just had, or a little bit more conservative, or just a change in personal style?

**Mr. Copeland:** Change in style more than anything else. I think a lot of people view Stu’s entry as kind of a welcome sight because Stu was so much friendlier than Slade. Slade appeared to be very standoffish and people had real difficulty communicating with him. Stu was very open, very frank, a good listener, and certainly welcomed people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a more effective style?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think so. Especially in a legislative environment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We also need to mention Gladys Kirk as your caucus secretary; she was a long-time member.

After Don Eldridge was re-elected Speaker, in his acceptance speech, he talked as much about you as about the session and what he wanted to accomplish. He really complimented you and John O’Brien together for improvements and renovations in the legislative facilities. This was kind of the culmination of a lot of your work this year; it’s done; the members are in the new facilities. He made a big point of thanking you and mentioned the automated data processing that you got in place and all the changes that you managed to bring in. So that was kind of nice that he really recognized all your accomplishments and that you worked very closely with John O’Brien. I think that that was part of your success, that you were a team.

Then he congratulated John O’Brien on his service as the chair of the National Legislative Leaders Conference. I couldn’t tell, but it seemed between the lines that John O’Brien was retiring from that position, is that true?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he had a one-year term but to be elected took a bit of doing. John had been very instrumental in the formation of the group and putting it together. It was a worthwhile organization.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was an honor for him as well as Washington State to be in the leadership, so that was a nice thing to note.

**Mr. Copeland:** From that organization ultimately came the National Conference of State Legislators—the NCSL. At this time, all states were not members of that group. I’m sure that all states are now members of the National Conference of State Legislators. And this is where a few hours—and I mean this very sincerely—a few hours together enabled legislators to find out what was good and what was bad; this translated into saving



millions of state taxpayer dollars. So John was on the right track and he deserves all the credit in the world for his contribution in this area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Business groups do that. If it works for other groups, it would make sense that legislators should take that approach. I wouldn't want to call it professional development, but that sort of more serious attitude towards how you learn things, a little less hit-and-miss.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the legislators got a bum rap from the press. The press always played up many of these meetings as junkets, boondoggles, and trips with taxpayers' money, which really couldn't be further from the truth. These meetings always had an extremely interesting and productive agenda. They'd bring in just the best people possible to make presentations on some very timely issues. You could learn from others their mistakes and successes, but seldom did we get good coverage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Issues that might be coming down the pike that you haven't even thought of. What's that saying: "penny wise, pound foolish?" Spending a little money is sometimes an investment rather than a waste.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly. For Don to give John any kind of credit for his work at the National Legislative Leaders Conference was certainly the right thing to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was one of the highlights of his career. So to carry on with the organization of the session, you were nominated for the Speaker Pro Tempore position, as we said, by your good colleague Hal Wolf and seconded by Irv Newhouse. You'd gone through a huge phase of renovation and bringing in a lot of new things; did you have more ideas on your list—a next phase or new initiatives?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was no more than just an extension of what we currently had in the mill. And as far as the computer aspect was concerned, in a legislative environment that was just in its infancy; it had a long ways to go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You still have plenty of work to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Dick White and his staff had the computer up and running at the beginning of the session—and I mean with all the RCWs loaded into the machine. The work at the women's penitentiary paid off. Again, a legislative first. It wasn't until this session that we could search the RCWs for redundancy and contradiction. Dick was ready to do great things. He spaced out the clean-up over several sessions. We simply couldn't handle it all at one time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't know if you'd gotten to a certain stage where you were ready for something new, or you were still so involved that it was just a continuation.

**Mr. Copeland:** You never know exactly when you are going from one stage to another until you get there. It was an evolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to invent as you went along; it's not like you were following a road map that somebody else had laid out for you and then you just filled it in.

**Mr. Copeland:** We had no road map. We had to feel our way into this and we made mistakes, there isn't any question about it. But they were legitimate mistakes but we were perfectly willing to go ahead and accept those mistakes and then figure out the better way to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How else can you learn? Was there a kind of agreement that nobody would

make political hay out of those mistakes; that there would be some experimentation and that it wasn't skullduggery or anything like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't have any kind of a formal agreement. We had an understanding that we were just going to go ahead and move along these lines. The biggest hurdle that we had was whether or not the Senate wanted to go along. That hurdle had been overcome the year before. Under Bob Greive, there was a tremendous amount of reluctance to sign off on this. Bob knew in his heart that any type of an evolution in which we had computers; in which we had open meetings; in which we had the public involved, would erode his power of secrecy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He'd carved out a little way that worked really well for him. He saw it differently.

**Mr. Copeland:** He saw the legislative environment as something totally different than what I did. I mean, he was a one-man show, and he ran it, and he ran it for and in behalf of Bob Greive. So when we started this whole "change" thing, the Senate did not sign on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The next organizational steps for the session were appointing members to the committees and finding agreement on your rules of operation. Because you were the majority, the Republicans set the rules for that session. There was, again, a fair amount of resistance from the Democrats. They inserted a remonstrance in the House Journal. Again, it involved the two measures they didn't like previously: the Committee of the Whole, which your caucus wanted to use primarily for budget discussions, and the issue of open government; they get fairly exercised about that, too. The statement was signed by all the Democrats and begins, "We the undersigned,

fearful of the loss and erosion of the people's basic right to be informed, place ourselves on record opposing the promulgation of the secrecy rules instituted by the Republican majority at the Forty-first Session of the Washington State Legislature...The process can not work for the best interest of the public if the public is denied the voting record of its representatives," alluding to the Committee of the Whole.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, there is nothing secret about the "Committee of the Whole." Anyone may watch the proceedings. This was just the Democrats way of complaining about the use of the committee. It is difficult to explain and understand, but it is a very useful tool in the legislative process. It is used frequently by the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. When the Committee of the Whole is called everyone serves on that committee, Republicans and Democrats. It is most frequently called when we are considering the budget and there is not enough money to fund everyone's pet project. The Committee of the Whole allows amendments to be made without a recorded vote. It allows those pet projects to be offered as amendments, knowing full well each one would be voted down. Now, for the Democrats to complain about it, that was political stuff. They were talking about secrecy—it's not secrecy! If you offered that same amendment in the Appropriations Committee, it probably would be turned down and there still wouldn't be a recorded vote on it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand for some of these amendments that there were people in the galleries taking photographs as the legislators rose to vote.

**Mr. Copeland:** You need to understand what's going on. The Appropriation Committee knew that it simply could not allow additional

expensive amendments to be added to the bill. There was just not enough money to cover the costs. But people wanted to have an opportunity to go ahead and say, “I want to offer this amendment in order to be able to take care of my pet project,” whatever it might be, but there are just not the votes to be able to sustain it and there isn’t the money to pay for it. So calling a Committee of the Whole from the standpoint of the philosophy of the whole thing, it’s not a bad idea. The vote isn’t recorded on how that particular measure got dumped. That’s where the political ramifications come into it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s interesting. That discussion occupied legislators more than once during these years. Another discussion concerning “secrecy” had to do with opening up Rules. And that seemed to be more playing with the Senate; the Senate, of course, did not want to do that!

**Mr. Copeland:** There was a lot of play made about the Rules Committee and making it open. Let me give you my take on this touchy issue. Over time I had learned to appreciate the screening process the Rules Committee performed. Many poor pieces of legislation were stopped in the Rules Committee and rightfully so. Now, this required some pretty tough heads to accomplish a good functioning screening procedure. If the question is: “Why didn’t this bill come out of Rules?” the answer was it simply didn’t have enough votes. But now, with an open Rules Committee, it is: “What were the members’ names that killed the bill?” This is an altogether different matter. So you see, on this very controversial issue, I come down on the side of closed Rules Committee meetings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There continues to be sparring on this issue with the Senate and with the press. The House did have a provision that

a vote of six members of the Rules Committee could okay a request that a certain issue be “open.” There was a kind of a window there. But basically, the Senate held to their secrecy and the House wasn’t going to go much further than they were going. In your day; did this committee ever open up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not in this session. Here again, it’s sparring with the Senate. The press wanted to know whether or not we would open up the House Rules Committee and the obvious answer was: “Yes, if both Rules Committees get opened.” The Rules Committee performs a real tough screening process. If you have a terribly controversial bill or maybe some legislation you can’t afford, do you want to bring them to a vote and find out how many people are voting no? Do you want to put that out in front of the press? Now, these bills are not on final passage; Rules decides whether or not they should be considered. So the press is saying, “We would like to have that,” and we were saying, “We’ll do it if the Senate does.” And the Senate said, “We’re not going to do it.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It put the onus on them?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Senate was also saying, “Have the House do it so we can have political ammunition against the House members on Rules, but we won’t open our Rules Committee.” Again, this is the control Bob Greive had on the Legislature. There was no way under any set of circumstances that we were going to give up political maneuvering for Bob Greive’s great huge gain.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, your heads would be on a nice little platter there.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, was I opposed to the House opening up Rules and not the Senate? Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Beyond the question of House or Senate, what about the whole concept of opening it up at all? A lot of people regret that; they say that that's where things started to really go. That a lot of those tough decisions were no longer made.

**Mr. Copeland:** I personally—and this is several years down the line—feel that there was real benefit to having the Rules Committee responsible; at the present time they're not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They've lost their function, in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** They have truly lost their function; they're not a screening process anymore. They have little or no capability of preventing a bad piece of legislation from getting out on the floor of the House and the Senate. This is my own personal feeling. But by the same token, I don't know that we have many legislators right now who are perfectly willing to step up and take that kind of responsibility. At that time, I'm sure we did. You had to have some pretty tough guys in order to be able to it. However, you didn't necessarily take those real tough guys and subject them to all of the criticisms of every political power player. It was a combination of a group of people that said, "No, we're not going to consider this particular measure at this time." I don't know that you have that kind of discipline or political guts now.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The atmosphere is so different now. Perhaps it requires a different kind of person who can survive in the new open atmosphere?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think so. I think the legislator that you have right now is pretty much committed to the agenda of a certain political group, or whatever it is, and they're going to do their bidding, where before, I think

legislators had to make judgments on the basis of not necessarily what was good, but what was right. I mean, we all would like to vote for an appropriation to double everybody's salary. But is it the right thing? The answer is no, it's not right because you don't have the money, so you don't do it. A role of the Rules Committee was to allow certain things to come to the floor for consideration. But now if you want to talk a little bit about the secrecy of the Rules Committee and how they do things and how they screen things, take a look at the Congress of the United States, both the House and the Senate. Do a lot of things stop in Rules Committee? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they haven't adopted this measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Have they gone public? No. Will they ever? Probably not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there any way to go back? Once you've opened Rules and committed to certain reforms, as they're called, if they turn out to be a mistake and more is lost than gained, could you in your wildest imagination think that the Legislature would go back to a closed Rules Committee? Is it too late?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's too late and I think the reason for it is the press. I don't think the press would necessarily buy into it. I think the press truly, by itself, has contributed to this free, open-type of an arrangement in government—which is fine; don't misunderstand. But the press no longer sits and just makes an impartial comment about the news; the press puts spin on the ball and indicates their preference as to whether it's good or bad.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of this discussion about openness in Rules and waiting for the Senate is pretty serious. But in a way,

were you somewhat relieved that the Senate wouldn't do it? Perhaps you were just as happy that they wouldn't do it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure this was the case at that time. I think we made tremendous strides as far as opening up the committee system. It was just a case of trying to allow the public to assimilate what we had done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure and yourselves, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** This has been a big step. Now, at least the public can see the construction of a bill; watch its progression; know those people who are in favor of it and speaking for it and against it and some of the reasons why. They may not understand all of the little innuendos or the intricacies of the bill but...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The main outline, yes. You've had all these reforms and they were pretty big; was it a good idea now to just work with them and figure out if there were unintended consequences or what the ripple effects might be and really get that solid before you then take the next step? Is it important to have a session or two where you try things out before you go to the next level?

**Mr. Copeland:** I would have hoped that would have been the case, but that wasn't. I think all of these reforms were an experiment in government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if that is why they call it a "laboratory." An issue came up that session that I'm not sure how to interpret. There was a fairly long-standing practice for the floor sessions to be taped for the benefit of the clerks who were typing up the Journals and keeping a record of what had happened. But there was a new uneasiness about it for some reason. There was a Point of Inquiry for Mr. Bottiger that he directs to you as chairman of the Facilities Committee, "Could you explain

how a member could get a copy of today's proceeding off the tape recorder?" You quickly say that you really have nothing to do with the tape recorders, that that's not what your committee does. Mr. O'Brien moves an adoption of the rules; he wanted to insert, "That tape recordings of the Committee of the Whole proceedings shall be made available to any member upon request." That motion was lost; the Republicans have the majority and you're not going to do that. But the issue doesn't go away and the Democrats really press the Republicans on this. They want to know: are the tapes edited; who's got them; who's in control of them; who can hear them; are they available; all those sorts of questions. Speaker Don Eldridge says, "You have a lot of new processes." He talks about the electronic data processing and how that weaves together and how you're trying to get all your electronics to coordinate and build better processing of information. He says, "The purpose of the taping of every word uttered here in this chamber is for us to back up legislative intent. In the past, the Journal has reflected the action of the House, but perhaps has not gone far enough in relating actual debate as to what the intent of a member or a sponsor of the bill is on a particular issue. Now, we have better capability, we're going to try to do this." And then the Speaker begs for some leeway here, some benefit of the doubt and he says, "It's so new that we really haven't been able to formulate a policy on it. I think if you will bear with me we will do whatever is right." I don't know how far the Democrats trusted you with that. In fact, they press for transcriptions; they press for instant replays, which you then tell them is not really possible because it would disrupt the proceedings. But it's still tied in with the Committee of the Whole trying to create a record, and they still keep trying to amend the rules to include this, although it doesn't really fly. Do you recall anything about these tape recordings? Why the new attention?



**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this inquiry took me by surprise. I had never heard of a request like this before but I knew instantly where they were coming from—trying to create embarrassment for someone. Tape recordings started way before I got there. Keeping a journal of the proceedings is a requirement of the state constitution, Article 2, Section 11. The tape recordings were done primarily for that purpose. You'll notice in the record of proceedings that appears in both the House and the Senate Journals, if a question is asked of a member, "Mr. Speaker, may I ask Representative Goldsworthy a question," the Speaker would then respond and say, "Mr. Goldsworthy, would you yield to a question?" It might be on the budget. "Mr. Goldsworthy, I understand there's a proviso in the budget that grants a salary increase to professors at the University of Washington. I see that there is an amount of money in the budget, but it can only be used for salary increases; is that correct or incorrect?" The answer that would come would document legislative intent. The question was trying to get one very specific subject matter up in the forefront to document or clarify legislative intent of an appropriation or whatever it might be. So from that standpoint, it's a very, very useful tool that was used over and over again. The State Supreme Court would go back to the Journals and say, "Is there a question; can we dig out legislative intent?" Frequently, they would find it on these tape recordings or the published record and that would become admissible evidence to the Supreme Court as legislative intent. So there was nothing mysterious about these tapes at all; they had been used for quite a number of years and it was a very fine way to document the proceedings. Now, are you going to take and transcribe all of this stuff and put it in hard copy? The answer is no, few people would read it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would be a lot of work.

**Mr. Copeland:** And a great expense. So the leadership of the House and the Senate, long before I got there, took the understanding that taping would not be used for political purposes and its operation was really in the purview of the Chief Clerk. This request for copies of the tapes was now an attempt to get into the Chief Clerk's area and start using the tapes for political purposes. And this was a Republican defending the fact that, no, we are not going to use them for political purposes and John O'Brien—had he been on the stump at the time—would have ruled the same way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But Bottiger is just giving it a little try there?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. He's doing this with tongue-in-cheek, and I know it and he does, too. They made an assumption that the Facilities Committee was in charge of taping and that's not the case. It was strictly the Chief Clerk who was responsible to produce the Journal at the end of each session. That's his job and the Journal's real basis came off of those tapes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a very long session. The Forty-first Session started January 13 and went until March 13; then March 14, you were back in session until May 12, another sixty days. And then, you had another special session the following January for another thirty-two days. Governor Evans had a very large agenda that he brought to you every term. Were you trying to do too much? When you have a sixty-day regular session, and then a sixty-day special session, what does that mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** Is this when Dan came in with his big agenda that included all of the reorganization of government with a new Department of Social and Health Services?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Here's a headline from that session: "Evans plan to streamline state government unveiled." You also were tackling tax reform, which is not a quick subject. On January 22, 1969 his message to the joint houses was that he would introduce seven major governmental reorganization bills within the next few days: legislation to establish a Department of Transportation, a Department of Environmental Quality, a Department of Social and Health Services, a Department of Manpower Industry, a Department of Community Affairs and Development, the Office of Program Planning and Fiscal Management, and a bill to provide for the merger of the highway personnel system into the State Department of Personnel."

**Mr. Copeland:** Stop right there. You just read the creation of seven departments of state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, huge.

**Mr. Copeland:** And then you asked, "Why was this such a long session?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, there's my answer, plus the income tax discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** That in itself was big. Is it difficult for the Legislature to assimilate these types of suggestions? The answer is yes. The next question, can the public assimilate this in a relatively short period of time? And the answer is hell, no! All of a sudden, "Whoa, you mean you're going to take the program in my little neighborhood or in this department or whatever it is, and combine it with another agency, which I don't know anything about?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do all these proposals in effect throw everything up in the air? That's a little unsettling.

**Mr. Copeland:** I agree. But I'm not going to fault Dan at all. Prior to this, he had fifty-some agencies, commissions, boards reporting directly to the Governor. It was not good management. He was trying to get government to a point where, as an executive, he'd have maybe ten or twelve agencies reporting to him directly. This is good government. Now, can you assimilate that in sixty days?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably not! But you didn't know which pieces would work? So you just threw them all out there on the table, was that it? See who sinks and swims?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think this is Dan's forte; this is his style of management. When he saw that reorganization should be done, he said, "Let's go ahead and just take it head-on." I was part of the whole reorganization thing and it was a big one to swallow. Yet everybody knew it was needed; it wasn't mysterious or anything of the kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It made sense to do this. But as House Republicans, you're the standard bearers; did you just take a deep breath and say, "Alright."

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan was looking to the House with a comfortable majority to get in there and do it. So that's exactly what we did and it took a lot of doing. But by the same token, there were certain senators willing to go ahead and buy into this whole thing and keep it moving. A great deal of this was passed over Bob Greive because he really was not all that enthused. But he knew he was shoveling sand into the wind to come out in objection.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not many majority parties want to hand a victory to the other party if they can help it. You Republicans were probably the same way. I was just curious strategy-wise whether this was just overwhelming

or exciting. Once you get people's minds wrapped around reorganization, was it easier to just say, "Let's really go at it," or should it have been a little bit more piecemeal?

**Mr. Copeland:** It couldn't be piecemeal because there were so many fragments. I mean, it was very much like the domino effect. Once you started dinking with this one, that had a relationship to the other, to the other, to the other. So it was a case of where you just about had to do it on this magnitude in order to be able to get it done because of the proliferation of government. Just in this one area, the Department of Environmental Quality had about fifteen agencies that had a piece and a part and a function to it, and all of those had to be brought in under one head. You had water quality; you had sanitation; you had state health involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, public health issues were in there. Even beginning to use the word "environment" indicated the first step—that you were looking at the whole rather than the parts.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. The guy that took the big leadership role in the creation of that department was Senator Bill Gissberg. If it hadn't been for people like Bill and Augie Mardesich, Dan wouldn't stand a chance at getting all of these things through. Was Dan playing both sides of the aisle on this? He had to. But at any rate, the original bill created the Department of Environmental Quality. I don't think it was ever called the Department of Ecology until later. I think Gissberg amended the title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand it was all in place and then the name was changed. Martin Durkan also had a hand in crafting that bill.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, so you asked me, was this a long session? Oh!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You don't know at the beginning of session just how long but you can guess that it's not going to be a cakewalk. Do you get your affairs in order and hit the road?

**Mr. Copeland:** It just took a lot of hard work and time. You go through all of the hearing processes which brought out strenuous objections. "I don't want to have my department combined with this because I have a piece of this action and we never have gotten along with those people," and so on. You had layers of bureaucrats in Olympia complaining about this, "Go ahead and combine these two agencies together, but don't put me under it." The changes were monumental.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, the Governor wanted departments like the Department of Transportation to be accountable to him—for the buck to stop with the Governor. But a lot of these agencies were run by commissions. There was a diffusion of power and he was trying to gather it all into one structure. And of course, there was resistance anytime the Governor—any Governor—tries to do that. So Evans never did get the Department of Transportation quite the way he wanted it. That remained out of reach, yet it was so important.

**Mr. Copeland:** But by the same token, he didn't mind throwing this out; I mean, he didn't mind the controversy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, he doesn't shy away from it. This was a big plate that you're stepping up to here. You served on three committees. Another thing that was different, I might note, is that the committee structure is becoming a little more streamlined; you're not on six different committees, you're on three. Because of your function in the House, you were the vice-chair of Rules—of

course, the Speaker is the chair. You also served on Appropriations and the Labor and Employment Security committees.

We talked about how, as you worked on the budget, you resolved into the Committee of the Whole, but did that change how the Appropriations Committee operated in any way before you got to Second Reading? Were members coming to you, letting you know what amendments they might want? Did they first come to the committee and if it didn't really fly with the committee, then would they hold on until the Committee of the Whole met?

**Mr. Copeland:** The function of the Committee of the Whole allows the body to offer amendments to the bill. Once the bill is finalized, then the Committee of the Whole concludes their business and this bill is not amendable. Are there ever amendments authored that are "hero amendments?" Oh, yes. And occasionally, do we go through this laborious procedure of hearing them all? Frequently that was the case, but in many cases we would reach an agreement: "Okay, you get to offer six amendments. And if you don't do that, we're going to go to the Committee of the Whole." And often they would reply, "Let's just offer six amendments and go from there."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you were present during the hearings and all the different parts of Appropriations process, did you specialize in certain things that you really knew about and understood, or did you try to grasp the whole? What was your approach?

**Mr. Copeland:** During the session I was on the Appropriation Committee, I did not take a full participation in the Appropriation Committee. I did not become a subcommittee chairman because I just did not have the time. So consequently, I probably did not make

too many committee meetings. So no, I was not a heavy-hitter as far as the Appropriation Committee that session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any particular input that interested you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you see yourself as a sort of watchdog of spending? Did you have a point of view that you represented? Members go on Appropriations for different reasons. I was wondering what your particular interest was.

**Mr. Copeland:** We knew our spending limitations. My particular interest was being able to have an opportunity to discuss legislation, especially with the committee chairman. Then when the bill came out of committee and it got to Rules, at least I knew something about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you consider Rules your primary committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. One of my main focuses was on the scheduling of all the committee meetings. I was in charge of creating the time slots for each committee to meet throughout the week. The huge amount of reorganization that the Governor had put a much sharper focus on some of the committees. Often, I would schedule a joint meeting of two committees that were involved in this reorganization. This enabled them to sit down and go over some of these reform arrangements including functions that maybe things were going to be combined.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's not just finding a room for people to meet; it's being really aware of the whole process of what legislation was moving through; who should be looking

at it; how they worked together or not. So you had to be on top of all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And really tracking in a much more detailed way, than, "I set the calendar." What you're saying is a much more complicated task.

**Mr. Copeland:** A far more complicated task. We'd have maybe two or three committees sitting jointly in order to be able to hear testimony on a reorganization bill that had to do with the creation of a new department. They could jointly discuss how a particular program or agency would dove-tail with somebody else or how it may be combined into this new one? By having joint committee meetings, you had the opportunity to short-circuit the requirement of having several separate meetings. Consequently the scheduling became a real process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It becomes a vehicle, a mechanism. It's not just a good thing; it was part of the necessary procedure here.

**Mr. Copeland:** We would take maybe a day a week and between eight and eleven o'clock, we'd have three committees meeting on this reorganization bill and another three committees meeting on that reorganization bill. Nothing could happen on the floor because we had so darn many of our people tied up in those two meetings reading reorganization bills. It was a truly productive time. Then we'd come into session at eleven o'clock and just have roll call and a couple of perfunctory things before lunch, and bang, we'd be right back into session again at one o'clock and run all day long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sessions have rhythms where there's intense committee time and

then floor time. But anybody casually coming to the Legislature and getting up in the gallery and wondering where the members are, probably would not have a very good understanding of those rhythms...you're not just going to lunch.

**Mr. Copeland:** I started a practice early on where the committee chairmen would regularly meet in my office. The first question that I'd ask was, "Does anybody need extra time this week for a specific project, time other than what we normally would allocate?" In this particular session, when we had all of these reorganization bills, the immediate response was often. "I don't know a thing about this reorganization bill that's going take these three commissions and boards and put them all under one new department," and so on. Another committee chairman would say, "I've got the same problem because a couple of the commissions I'm representing are going to be put under this department, too." So then it would be a natural arrangement to have a joint meeting. That came together and another and another. We would structure this whole thing to a point where we'd try to make as few conflicts and have as many on-time meetings as we could. We would create the final calendar on Thursday morning; I'd give a draft copy to the caucuses on Wednesday afternoon and say, "Okay, if there are problems, let us know. If not, we're going to press." Thursday morning it came out and everybody knew the schedule of hearings for the following week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard to imagine how you could have ever done any of this reorganization without those scheduling meetings, just to underline the point.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the previous environment was chaotic. Just before adjournment, a committee chairman would get up and say, "The committee on such-and-such will meet immediately after adjournment."



**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it's sort of an atomistic way too, where there's no relationship to what anybody else was doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, why did this particular session take so long? If the Governor had chosen not to offer this huge reorganization, I'm quite sure that we could have gone through quickly with no problem at all. But no, this is heavy-duty stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it's important to understand when you read this sort of headline, on the ground, what does this mean to a sitting legislator? How do you deal with this; what do you do then? It's hard to go from this headline to that very concrete experience of making it happen.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me speak to that in this way. The news comes out on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January. The legislator is informed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, but he hasn't had an opportunity to read the bills that come later. So it's a suggestion; it's there on the surface. Maybe two weeks later, the plan finally gets into printed bills. But there have been no sponsors, so nobody knows who's heading up this whole thing. There are certain assumptions made and maybe all of these bills will have the little moniker: "by executive request." So the bills get circulated and all of sudden you find that you have bipartisan support for this particular measure, but not for that one. In the background, opposition is building up. Where does the opposition come from? It comes from all of the people that are directly affected; people who don't want to have their feathers ruffled or a change in who they're reporting to; people who don't want to have their border commission abolished. There are usually the vocal minority. And so you listen and acknowledge all of these objections to see if there's a reason to take a different course of action. At any rate, there's a certain amount

of gestation period, or whatever you want to call it, that it has to transpire. Pretty soon you begin to find some bipartisan support for this whole thing; then you find pretty good-size segments signing on to this particular area. You find that maybe organized labor is not going to object to this reorganization in the Department of Labor and Industries if they get a little bit tidied up here. Maybe the Washington Education Association is okay with this one and the Department of Revenue, and things like that. So then it just kind of comes together slowly, real slowly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor presents all this to you but then he doesn't just walk away. Was he out there talking and explaining and building a picture for people? What role does he play; he's got a pretty strong role here, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before offering the reorganization package, did he come to various people, especially Republicans and said, "I really want you take the lead on this, can I count on you?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People who have an interest in transportation or social services or whatever it is, would he find the best person to be the leader on these bills and meet with them?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know for certain, but I imagine Dan visited frequently with Bill Gissberg and Augie Mardesich on a whole bunch of this stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would he also be going to editorial boards and interest groups and getting the public on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, he took the lead on this. Dan was a big heavy-hitter; he took it right out to the public, you bet! This is the kind of leadership that Dan provided. Give the guy all the credit in the world; sure, he took on real heavy-duty things, but he had it in his heart to do it. He felt it was the right thing and he didn't mind going out and working on it full-time, right out in every town, village and hamlet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you wouldn't feel like you were just out there as a legislator, with your neck way out there. You had the Governor; you had these people that he marshaled so it would feel more like a movement—that you were part of a bigger thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** If you look at a list of sponsors on those bills, you're going to find some long-ball hitters on every measure. And I'm talking about both Republicans and Democrats. That says a lot for the Governor; that really does!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had some very forward-looking Democrats who could see the value. Was that part of Dan Evans' strength? Was his plan more to the middle of the political spectrum so that Democrats could sign on without selling the store? Did he position issues in such a way that they are good-government things rather than Republican programs, necessarily? Did he step away from some of the labeling and just fashion it that way, and bring people in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, there was no question about it. Sure, he had the Republicans in the House to work with but he didn't have them in the Senate. He had to create something there that was going to be meaningful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that make for better legislation?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. When I knew ahead of time that I had eight or ten real good Democrats in the Senate who had already signed on to some of this legislation, it didn't make it difficult for us to get some Democrat counterparts in the House to sign on. When that happened, it just became a matter of details to get these things passed. So, Dan's leadership was monumental. I mean, things that I was doing in the computer environment could never have gotten off of dead-center without Dan's blessing and his okay for the money. He knew ahead of time that this was going to be a long haul and he knew that it was going to be damn well worth its while.



*Left to right: Governor Dan Evans, Paul Durand Jr., Tom's intern, and Representative Tom Copeland, 1969*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just one more committee type question that I wanted to ask you. You were on the Labor and Employment Security Committee; this seems to be a growing interest of yours. What was it about Employment Security that engaged your attention?

**Mr. Copeland:** That committee had to do with industrial insurance as well as employment security. I had for a long time been advocating that the exemption of agriculture from industrial insurance was wrong. Early in my political career, I announced to my Republican Party that I could not and would not support their continued efforts to have agriculture exempt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What was the origin of that exemption? That does rather stand out why agriculture workers beyond anybody else should have no workman's compensation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Washington's economy then was based on agriculture. I think if agriculture was exempt they could get workmen's compensation passed; if agriculture was included then they would never get it through the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But what puts agricultural workers in such a different class from every other worker? Workmen's compensation passed just as agriculture was beginning to mechanize and there were still huge gangs of people bringing in the crops and working on farms. But that's no longer true. By the late sixties, isn't that getting a bit anachronistic? Aren't agricultural workers more and more like other workers who deal with machinery and perform certain kinds of work?

**Mr. Copeland:** That of course is your sixty-four dollar question. I took the attitude that the agricultural workers were one of our tremendous resources and we had to treat them as a resource. For us not to insure them for industrial injury was just absolutely the wrong way to go. The cost at that time was certainly reasonable and it was a protection for the worker. I'd seen too many examples in farming where a workman was hurt on the job through no fault of his own and his wife and his children suffered immeasurably because of it. And I just said, "This is not the right thing to do; it is not the correct way to treat your workers." I gave a speech one time and said, "Some of you farmers will actually spend more time and money taking care of your animals than you will your farm workers. If your horse gets hurt, you will stop everything you're doing in order to be able to get him to the vet. If your farm worker

gets hurt, you say, 'The hell with it.' This is wrong and I am not going to go ahead with this line of thinking any longer; I am going to do something to make sure that that the farm worker is covered. If he gets hurt on the job through no fault of his own, somebody is going to be responsible and I'm going to take part of that responsibility."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much of this had to do with the migrant issue, and also the fact that many farm workers were undocumented immigrants? Did that make it easier for other people to step away from that particular class of worker because they were not there in front of them all year round; because they passed through?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the responsibility didn't feel quite as close?

**Mr. Copeland:** It dehumanizes everything. The agriculture worker, an apple picker, was just a necessary evil that came into a farmer's orchard for two weeks. Whether he fell off the ladder and broke his leg was of no significance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not to mention he had no place to live, go to the bathroom or take care of his children. It's been a real struggle to see that farm workers are not just a pair of hands, but a person, with a family.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We're not done with that one even yet. It's interesting to see you stepping up to this. Were you able to make some progress through this committee affiliation?

**Mr. Copeland:** As a matter of fact, we finally got agriculture covered under workman's comp.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a resolution that you sponsored with Representatives Newhouse, Haussler, Bennett, Jolly, Bledsoe, Morrison and Berentson—mostly all eastern Washington or farm districts—Berentson not quite as clearly as the others. You say, “The director of the Department of Labor and Industries has adopted an administrative rule requiring compulsory coverage under the industrial insurance and medical aid acts for certain agricultural employees in the hop and tree fruit industries, effective April 1, 1969.” And then you went on to say, “This rule has created confusion within Washington’s agricultural industry. The director therefore calls for a study by the Legislative Council of all facets of workman’s compensation; this may apply to agricultural workers.” You then got behind that and asked for this study, a two-year study concerning the feasibility and applicability of workman’s compensation coverage to agricultural workers and employers. And you recommended, “What changes, if any, should be made in the existing law to permit orderly and economic coverage of agricultural workers and other workers presently excluded from the mandatory provisions of the law.” There were attempts to amend and tweak that a bit and then, I gather, it happened?

You had some big names on that bill with yourself. Was there a lot of confusion within the Legislature on this issue? Is agriculture one of those things that only some people care about and therefore a bill could go through if you got the backing of certain farm district legislators?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, there was a lot of confusion if I remember correctly. I think all we were trying to do was to get some sharp focus on this whole thing and obviously we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seems like you got the coverage, but it was not really going too

smoothly for some reason.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. And some of this I think was having to do with the hop industry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hops were mentioned, and tree fruit.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was some kind of a contract labor arrangement, if I remember correctly—a contract with a guy to do certain things and he’d go out and hire workmen who were not covered.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So compliance was a problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. I served on the Labor Committee for quite a number of years and that was one of my ongoing interests. Unemployment comp was also always interesting to me, and the issues with migratory workers. Let me talk to you about migratory workers because I think this is important. At one time, I made a very special point to call Employment Security and I said, “I hire non-documented workers; tell me what am I required to do in the state of Washington with these non-documented workers?”

And they replied, “Get their Social Security number and fill out these documents stating how many hours they work and pay into Employment Security so much money and then they will be covered.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do they even have Social Security numbers? Isn’t that an issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that is. The agency representative asked, “Do they have a Social Security number?” And I said, “No, they don’t have a Social Security card.” “Well then, put down N/A.” “Okay, I put down N/A; then what?” “Well then, you go ahead and pay the money.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can they collect it?

**Mr. Copeland:** And I asked, “Can they collect the money?” “Ah, probably.” I said, “Well, that’s interesting.” Then I called Social Security and asked, “What do you want me to do if I hire non-documented aliens?” “Well, we want you to get their Social Security numbers and send a percentage of their salary to us.” I said, “They don’t have a number.” “Well then, put down N/A.” And I said, “Well, that’s interesting. Now if I put down N/A and I send the employer’s contribution to you, when they reach retirement age, will they be able to get their money?” And they said, “Probably not.” I said, “Okay, now that’s interesting.” So then I called the Department of Labor and Industry and said, “I hire non-documented aliens; what do you want me to do?” “Well, you get me the Social Security number, write down the number of hours and type of work they are doing and pay us at such and such a rate.” I said, “But they don’t have Social Security numbers.” They said, “Well, put down N/A.” I said, “Okay, that’s good; put down N/A. Now, in the event that I do this and the guy gets hurt on the job, will he be covered?” And they said, “Oh sure.” I said, “He’s a non-documented alien.” And they said, “We don’t care.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least that was a ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ rather than ‘we don’t know.’

**Mr. Copeland:** At least I went to the trouble of making inquiries of three separate agencies, but I got three different answers. Social Security said, “Pay the thing, but they won’t be able to get their money.” Employment Security said, “Pay the thing and maybe they’ll get their money.” And Labor and Industries said, “Pay the thing and they’ll get covered anyway.” So with this information I continually kept going to this committee and saying, “We still don’t have definitive

terms of how you get this whole thing sorted out.” Then came the Simpson-Mazzoli bill in Congress in 1986. It said, “Any farm worker that has worked in the last five years can reenter the United States and get reinstated by virtue of that fact that he or she brings in pay stubs, a canceled check, or something to show that he or she worked.” We would then sign that worker up for Social Security, unemployment comp and worker’s comp. All of a sudden, throughout the northwest—I can only speak to the northwest—they set up all kinds of places where these people would come in and sit down and say, “Yes, I worked for So-and-So in 19-whatever it was and the next year I worked for So-and-So picking cherries; then I picked this, and I did that, and so forth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of these jobs are longstanding arrangements.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, some of them would even say, “But in this year, I worked under such-and-such a name and I gave them this social security number and in this year I worked under a different name and gave them this number.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that could be fun to track.

**Mr. Copeland:** And damned if the federal government didn’t accept it. A whole bunch of these people got qualified and had five or six years of being a legitimate worker in the United States, making contributions to Social Security, and things like that. That was all contained in the Simpson-Mazzoli farm bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I want to back up for a second and ask you why did none of these agencies ever said to you, “You’re not supposed to be hiring those undocumented people.”



**Mr. Copeland:** That's not in their department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They don't care? But were you violating the immigration laws?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not at that time. That's when the Simpson-Mazzoli farm bill said, "Now, it's going to be up to the farmer to ascertain the fact that the workers are entitled to work in the United States and that they are citizens of the United States." They turned around and put the ownership back over on the farmer. The reason I'm telling you all this is because you asked me why I continued to serve on the Committee on Labor and Employment Security in the Legislature. The reason is because I was involved in it right from the get-go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot to iron out here.

**Mr. Copeland:** I always brought back a certain amount of continuity to the committee year after year after year, because I knew a great deal about the history, background and the development—or non-development—of some of these things that came about. I also knew the players quite well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a very complete answer. This act of Congress kind of rearranged the furniture here; how much can a state do? How much of this is federal and how much does the state react to the federal provisions that come down from on high? How much leeway did you have?

**Mr. Copeland:** The federal government really runs those programs but they give the state a certain amount of latitude. In other words, we could go ahead and exempt people—like the time that farm workers were exempt from workman's compensation—that was perfectly okay with the federal government. But as

far as Employment Security is concerned, no, that's heavily operated by the federal government. As a matter of fact, the bulk of the contributions go into funds that are operated by the federal government and all of the claims are taken out of those funds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, would a lot of this be keeping up with what the federal people are doing or not doing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you come in with your own particular bent? You wanted to make conditions better for migrant workers, farm workers. Did you see much progress over the years, or change in attitudes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh gosh, yes. The progressive farmer was interested in getting a good stable labor force for the period he required. But it required a lot of coordination to get this worker up here. The asparagus industry took the lead as far as hiring massive amounts of this particular type of worker. These people would come up and work through the asparagus harvest and about the time that the asparagus was winding down, what is coming in? Cherries; so they go right smack into the cherry harvest; hardly miss a beat. As a matter of fact, on numerous occasions in my own operation, I would terminate cutting asparagus because I knew that these growers were going to start the cherry harvest; they called me and said, "We are going to start picking on Wednesday." And I said, "I'm just going to quit; my last day of cutting is on Tuesday."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you grow asparagus, too? I thought you grew green peas.

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. I'd give the workers a day off to get some rest and they'd start picking cherries on Wednesday morning.

And they were happier than hell! You know, one day's cutting to me isn't that big a deal but it was a big deal to the guy that had the cherries.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All these things are pretty time-sensitive.

**Mr. Copeland:** All it did was require a little bit of coordination. I was happy to do that. I was on the front end, but as these people moved through the system, they'd pick cherries, then they'd go harvest some other crop and work clear out into the apple harvest. And did they do well at the end of the year? If they had a consistent type of a work arrangement, yes. I'd have these families come in and they stayed in the same farm-labor camp from April until October. Then they'd go back to Mexico or Texas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you'd have the same families year after year, I imagine?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd kind of work out this pattern and know where they were going to go?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, maybe I have a different style than anybody else, but my style was that I would send these people Christmas cards. And the Christmas card not only was Christmas greetings, but it was: "Thank you for your service last year and we hope that you're going to be back with us next year. Please let us know just as soon as you can." Invariably I'd get letters or phone calls back, "Mr. Copeland, we're going to be back with you, but Jose isn't going to come, and Barbara, she's not going to come either, but we're going to have these other people coming. By the way, I need a couple hundred dollars for transportation." So I'd correspond and say,

"Great, glad to hear that you've got your crew all put together. Let me know when you need the money." And that was it; I mean, that was my recruiting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked.

**Mr. Copeland:** It did. But I had people coming back that knew the operation; they knew the land; they knew the fields, and so on. They were worth a lot more money to me than strangers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They'd be skilled and part of the team.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you said you got up and made those speeches in front of other farmers, did this advocacy ever hurt you in your district?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I'm sure it did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did anyone ever challenge you on this position?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, some of the farmers just thought it was terrible that I'd do things like that and advocate coverage for farm workers. I just didn't care. I just don't think it's the right way to treat people. I had a lot of wonderful people working for me. If they got hurt, by god, they're going to get taken care of. I didn't cause the accident, but I sure as hell don't want to have it harm them. And if I can get insurance for them, I'm going to do it. Now, if I had insurance coverage for workers on my ranch and you don't on your ranch and a guy wants to come to work, who's he going to go to work for? That's where you're going to be if you start bucking this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a persuasive argument? It made sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** To a lot of people it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is farm work a competitive field? Did workers have any kind of ability to play one employer off another, in that case? Would that be a factor?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, you bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And isn't it more of a level playing field if everybody pays in?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would it work if somebody was and somebody wasn't paying in; it's quite a different outcome.

**Mr. Copeland:** They all are now. Employer payments for workman's comp or industrial insurance is in categories relating to the type of work they performed. In other words, there's a classification of farm work that is "mechanized." That's the person who handles the machinery: trucks, combines, tractors. Through the years, government has built a historical record of the incident of accidents. There's another category of farm workers, non-mechanical—the terminology might not be exactly right. This is where the asparagus cutters fall; they're not driving heavy equipment—they're not on a bulldozer. Yes, they do have an asparagus knife; yes, they do stick the darn thing in their leg accidentally, they whack a finger or whatever it might be. Their incidents of these accidents are much less and so their rate is less. So, the rate of payment for agricultural workers depends upon the type of work and varies with the categories. But then you take people like in the logging industry...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whole new class of possible injuries.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were some paying over four dollars an hour as the employers' contribution. It's that hazardous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would your payment be, as a farmer? Just as a comparative figure.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just pennies. Now, when I said pennies, I was talking about the asparagus cutters. The one that was handling machinery, obviously his rate was a little bit more. Don't misunderstand, yes, there was an additional cost to the agricultural workers. It was kind of an add-on. But by the same token, this is a resource with which we cannot live without. You have to take care of that resource. That is a primary function. "That agricultural worker is just as important as the dirt you're planting your crop in." I think I used that in my speech.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you find when you first started saying that, people were quite taken aback, but after a while it was more accepted?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose there would still be hold-outs no matter what. But it would become an idea that would be current?

**Mr. Copeland:** I had people with the Farm Bureau and the Grange say, "Copeland, you can't do that; you know you're going to break every farmer in the state of Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there be some resentment? "You have a pretty big farm; maybe you can afford this, but what about the smaller guy?" Would there be that kind of discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely. But it got down to the point where, okay, how much money are you talking about? You're not talking about this guy that's working for you full-time; you're just talking about this seasonal guy that's picking your asparagus. How many acres of asparagus did you say you had? You have just fifteen acres and your total contribution is going to be one-hundred and two dollars for the year!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That shouldn't break anybody, really.

**Mr. Copeland:** As soon as you distilled it right down to the dollar amount, then their argument was just watered down immensely. It was the psychological thing about having government tell me that I have to do something whether it's right or wrong. An awful lot of that attitude came about with the great independent farmers who would do anything they cared to because "it was my land and my horses," and they thought it was a case of "my employees," also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The wild west; it wasn't so wild even back then. Well, that's fascinating, an important discussion. I want to look at some of the bills you worked on before we discuss some of the larger issues of the session. You're not a huge sponsor of bills; you were not a bill-making machine like some legislators. The things you did turn your attention to garnered more importance then. You sponsored or co-sponsored a whole group of bills that had to do with making the institution of the Legislature work better. You had bills on getting data processing purchases in place, systems organized and coordinated, and policies in place. You had an interesting bill looking ahead at the problems regarding release of information by state agencies made more complicated by the use of computers. That was the first time I have noticed

anything to do with the privacy issue related to how computers facilitated a whole flood of information, but with that ability comes this new modern problem of "anybody can read it." A lot of different forms have people's Social Security numbers and things like that. You were a co-sponsor of a House resolution with Representatives Bottiger and Wolf to begin looking at that issue.

**Mr. Copeland:** It didn't take long and we began to realize that each department wanted different information and maybe a different form. Yes, privacy was to be considered, but so was the operation of the state of Washington. Some departments wanted the Social Security number because it was the only one that would be constant. Others wanted health records, while still others wanted to know if you had title to a piece of land within their jurisdiction. At this point the Legislature was simply not in a position to limit the amount and type of information required by a department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It remains an important issue. You had some appropriations for purchasing data processing systems and for creating policies in that area, which we've discussed. You also had the normal sort of bills that fell to your office, providing for publication of session laws and getting everybody started and set up for the session.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was also the chairman of the Employment Committee and the Employment Committee had the responsibility of getting all of the session help for the House. All of the secretaries and other temporary employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you still have the steno pool?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, thank goodness. That was now behind us. Did I tell you the story about when the reading clerk read out the

memo: "Members of the House are hereby authorized to take advantage of the girls in the steno pool!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a good one! As members had their own staff now, did some of those temporary people become staff? They were pretty experienced. What happened to them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Session workers were all temporary employees; none of them were permanent. We were just transitioning in now to get permanent help. But each legislator had his or her own office and secretary, now called an administrative assistant.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have had anything to do with the hiring of the docket clerk and all people sitting up on the rostrum?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they are recommended by the Chief Clerk. We screened everybody and we would create the positions. We also established a salary for each position. And from time to time, if it became necessary, we would discipline some employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you also be mentoring them and helping them along to do a better job?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. We had very large meetings right at the offset where all of the employees would come in. And there was training, training and more training. Then the employees would be broken up into smaller groups and one group would go—let's say that they were in the security group—with the Sergeant of Arms and he would explain exactly what their duties and functions were. Another group of people may be assigned to the garage and they needed training. Many training classes were with the departments—an orientation course for new employees on

the operation of a particular department. Then all of the secretaries would get together and they would be given an orientation in order to be able to find out what was available on the campus, how to get this information. So it was a huge learning process right at the get-go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And how many people would this be?

**Mr. Copeland:** There'd be close to a hundred people at the offset. We always tried to bring them in as early as we possibly could. The session would start on Monday morning. So we'd quite often have Sunday afternoon as orientation, kind of like the beginning class.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd want everything to go smoothly.

**Mr. Copeland:** You didn't want to slow down the first twenty days of the session down because you're training new legislators as well as staff. So you tried to get things up to speed as fast as you could. The first session where everybody had their secretaries was a very difficult time because we had so many people to train all at once. After that, we had a lot of those carry-over so they could help us with the training program. Running concurrently, we had a training program for all newly elected members of the House. They were given classes in parliamentary procedure, campus facilities and what was available and how to get information. So we always had these training programs that ran right at the very beginning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who gave those?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I gave lessons on parliamentary procedure to the freshman House members for several sessions. Various people that had shown some interest: Senator Gordon Sandison, Len Sawyer and I taught



some classes. Hal Wolf taught classes on “working in a legislative environment.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a bipartisan effort?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. And the classes we gave to the stenographers and everybody were done on a bipartisan basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that’s a kind of lesson in itself, I suppose, that you’re all in there working together.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is. The first thing that an incoming legislator has to do is understand the rules. Once you understand the rules, then you’re going to get along all right; if you don’t understand the rules, then you keep running into the brick wall. “Why can’t I do this?” “Well, that’s outside the rules. If you would have done this back here, then you could have gotten to here.” It’s just a case of trying to lay the ground work so that everybody understands. Once that is accomplished, then “everybody’s singing out of the same hymnal.” Now we can make some progress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is the machinery at the beginning of a session a little cranky in the sense that people are still learning and they’re not quite on top of it?

**Mr. Copeland:** We tried to make the learning experience a lot of fun. You would find that both the new employees as well as the new members were like a bunch of learning sponges—eager, willing, and excited.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They’re probably scared to death.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they’re very typical of what I was my first session. I was quite awe-stricken and I didn’t understand the ropes and I

didn’t understand the rules. It took a great deal of time and study to do that. Consequently, when it came to rules, I was extremely well grounded. As a matter of fact, I could make recitations of rules, chapter and verse without even picking up the rule book.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be impressive to a freshman; they’d be looking at you and thinking, “Will I ever be like that?”

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. At the time you’re teaching the class people look at you and say, “How did he ever learn all that stuff?”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you practice. It’s very patterned once you get into the language of it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right, very structured. Anyway, the front end of all these new sessions was extremely busy with all of the new people. Then of course, we were running into new facilities every time we turned around. We were coming out of the late fifties where the entire structure of the Legislature was so completely secretive and locked-up and run by so few people that it required a great deal to get a bill through the Senate. This is where the frustrations came as far as the members of the Legislature were concerned. Now we were beginning to open this up to a point where the public knew what the hell was going on; everybody was given advance notice. New people coming in were now seeing the Legislature in a bright new light for the first time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were the freshman aware of the big changes that were in progress?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they have any way of knowing how it had been so they could

appreciate how far everybody had come? Sometimes when new people come in, and you've been working for years and fixing things up, they just take it for granted and then they want the next ten things.

**Mr. Copeland:** They knew these changes were being made, but they certainly couldn't have the sense of appreciation that I harbored.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it exciting for them to be in on the revolution, so to speak?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely, and if they'd been there twenty years earlier, they would not have been part of the process, because the process was not about to change. At that time; it was so tightly held you couldn't blow them out of the mold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, in your classes did you bring them up to speed on all the things that had been going on? Give them all that background so they could see where they were in all this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. Everybody was brought up to speed just as fast as we possibly could. Basically, this new class of the legislators was not a group of slow learners. I mean, give them all the credit in the world. These guys are placed in an environment where the learning curve is pretty severe and they were up to the task. This is a room full of very bright people, there isn't any doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you think of any rising stars in the Republican Party that you maybe would have your eye on and foster along? Were there ones that you'd be particularly thinking, "Well, I'm going to help that young person along and see how far he or she goes."

**Mr. Copeland:** I saw a lot of them. Just to give you an example, Jerry Saling came in about 1969; later on he served for two terms in the State Senate. Alan Thompson was serving in the House for about his second session. Later, Alan became a member of the Senate and he was also an administrative assistant to Julia Butler Hansen in Washington, D.C. and then he became the Chief Clerk of the House. Sid Morrison came in 1967 and here in the '69 session, he was a committee chairman for the first time and later he became a member of Congress and then Secretary of Transportation. Stu Bledsoe was in the group. 'Bud' Shinpoch and Lorraine Wojahn were freshmen members that year. I'm just bouncing off some of these people. George Scott was a member in the 1969 session—he was a freshman at that time; he later served for about twelve years in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did these people that have that extra quality? When they first started and you were offering these classes, could you tell who was probably going to go far?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you can at least see that they've got the potential. I'm going to go back and say this again: the Legislature is a small microcosm of society. About one-third of the people serving there do very little work; about another third of the people work somewhat diligently; another third of the people work hard and make the whole show run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you can tell pretty quickly who those are going to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, within a few short weeks you could tell which freshman really were taking any kind of an interest in it. People oftentimes referred to myself and Buster Brouillet and Augie Mardesich and two or three others as "legislators who even read bills!" Adele Ferguson once wrote an

article: “If you want to get something done in the House, go see Tom Copeland.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “All roads lead to Tom Copeland.”

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just a case of having to have someone given the authority to go ahead and do it; kick it off and make it run. And that’s exactly what I did. That article points it out quite well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You, of course, had a great deal to do with facilities, but there was one thing that came up that year that was a little different. You got involved in the discussion about providing some murals for the Legislative chambers. When the building was first designed, there were spaces in both chambers set aside for art work, but nobody had ever figured out what kind of artwork you should have, or how it would happen, or even who would pay for it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m going to correct you. There were also spaces in the rotunda of the Legislative Building and in the front entrance and back entrances. There are a whole bunch of spaces, I think thirty some areas that were actually intended by the architect to be used for murals. Don’t limit it to just the chambers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that’s true, not just the chambers. But those are the places that became the most contentious.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** John O’Brien was very interested in those murals but there has not been too much said about what the discussions were like, just that there were discussions as early as 1969 about what to do with those spaces. Do you remember how you were thinking about them then?

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember what I was thinking about. It was about that time that I had an occasion to go to the Capitol in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania along with some other legislators. And in the Capitol in Harrisburg, you walk in the front door and you have to approach quite a group of steps going into the center portion of the building. There’s a very large rectangular area in which they have a mural. This mural depicts William Penn who, as a British citizen, was the Governor of the territory and was deeded by the King of England a vast area of the United States. So here is a picture of William Penn giving the state of Pennsylvania to the citizens of Pennsylvania. Now, that’s history! This, to me, is what I thought the architects were trying to do, reserve places in the Capitol Building for a portion of Washington history.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a narrative story in realistic style?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. And when I saw the black figures of Hercules and the acrylics that were placed in the Senate, was I happy? I was so disappointed it wasn’t even funny. I thought it was totally inappropriate, totally out of place, shouldn’t have ever been considered, and obviously the people doing that work, they sure as hell had never visited Harrisburg.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did that happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** It did not happen in ’69. John O’Brien was trying to get something going there as far as murals were concerned. When I got back from Harrisburg, I said, “John, have you been to Harrisburg? Have you seen that mural?” They had it in picture postcard form and he became quite interested. He got some of his staff to write to other states asking for pictures of their murals. He put together a pretty good collection and had the committee meet and we went over each one. I kind

of steered him along the idea of a pictorial history. Then John would start talking to artists to determine if they had the interest and ability. But the artists would come back to him and say, in effect, "This isn't the kind of work I do; I do this type of stuff."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** More abstract or modern?

**Mr. Copeland:** "So you really should consider what I do, rather than you telling me what you want."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the whole conversation got turned around?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, time went on and I wasn't there when the decisions were made on who got selected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was sent to a commission, I believe.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was. But what they finally came up with was not what anybody ordered; it was the artist's expression; it had no relationship to the state's history. And I could be in error on this, but I think in the acrylic that they had in the Senate...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be Alden Mason's painting?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know who the artist was. But I understood someone asked what the picture represented and the answer was, "It's a stylized dragon and he is going to consume the earth," or words to that effect. Now, isn't that a lovely thought! And to have it on the back wall of the Senate! The senators had to sit under this thing and try to tell everybody in the state of Washington that things are lovely and charming and darling?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're making quite a face

as you say that! Not really the inspiration you were looking for?

**Mr. Copeland:** That only lasted, what, twelve months and it was taken right down. Then they covered the "Labors of Hercules" and tried to give them to the community college but the community college said, "No thank you, we don't want them." When Joe King became Speaker he had the covers removed and they went on display again until they finally came down. I was so happy to see those things come out of there. They didn't fit, didn't belong.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn't really a question of art; it was a question of what was appropriate? I mean, whether or not you liked the paintings, were they the right paintings for the purpose?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, as you tour other state capitols, you've got to come to the conclusion that we have one of the most beautiful capitol buildings and campus grounds in the entire nation. There is absolutely no question about it; it is truly a thing of beauty and allowing somebody to go in there and cobble it out as badly as that was very, very disappointing to me. And I say this with all professional respect to the artists, because they were doing the best that they could, I would have preferred to have an artist who would take directions from some kind of committee that says: "This is what we want," rather than "You give us what you want."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn't really meant to be an individual expression, an exercise in that.

**Mr. Copeland:** But school kids would come in and look at it and just glaze over. But when you walked into the capitol of Harrisburg and you see William Penn; boy, in only five minutes you have had a history lesson in the creation of the state of Pennsylvania. And

you sure as hell didn't have a history lesson looking at the "Labors of Hercules."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Almost no one liked them, it seems. In 1969, when you first started discussing this, were the times just not right, nobody was quite ready to take this on? It just goes away—the whole discussion doesn't come back for a decade. I'm not sure what happened there; it just doesn't get off the ground.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this was an extremely low priority in the mind of a legislator who's only there for a very short period of time. And it seemed unreasonable for him or her to spend many hours or days selecting murals when his phone was jumping off the hook and his constituents had this problem or that problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just wasn't going to happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, not only that, you couldn't find anybody that really wanted to serve on the committee. They just were not interested. So from the standpoint of the individual legislator, there was no fire in the belly to put murals in the Capitol.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When it did happen, did it take the leadership of an O'Brien who really wanted it to make it happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** I know that he wanted to have it happen very much, and I also know he was disappointed in the final product.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just one of those curious little things that you got involved in.

**Mr. Copeland:** You're using the wrong words—it was a curious huge mistake. But the unfortunate part of it was not only did the

House make the mistake, the Senate made the same mistake. It was a coincidence that both bodies could screw up so simultaneously running down individual paths.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, at least it wasn't your fault! Working through some of the bills that you were involved in, you had several election issue bills, small corrections sometimes, but it's not always easy to tell. There was one that involved providing rules for political party conventions. Now, this was on the heels of the fiasco in Chicago at the National Democratic Convention. I was curious if this would be more of a party issue. Did political parties set their own rules for how they run their conventions or was that something to legislate?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the parties do, but the RCWs—which is the authority—the RCWs set the patterns to recognize the political parties. They not only recognize the political parties, they also specify the names of the officers. The RCWs also say that they have reporting periods that they function under. In the event a vacancy occurs in office, they say that the political party shall submit to—as an example, the Board of County Commissioners the names of certain people in their party that they would like to have appointed. All of these recitations in regard to political parties are imbedded in the RCWs. So, does the control of the state have some authority over the political parties? The answer is yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, but what about over their conventions?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think conventions and the selection of delegates and things like that are pretty much in the purview of their own organization. I don't know whether it's imbedded in state law or not.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a bill that changed the Metro Council to include an elected county executive. Was that a new position?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was John Spellman coming in, wasn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** You'll have to get back in the organic act of the creation of Metro and the council itself. Metro was created by the Legislature and it encompassed those jurisdictions that were abutting Lake Washington. Metro was multifaceted, but the main purpose was to prevent political subdivisions from dumping raw sewage into Lake Washington. It wasn't until after Metro was created that the county government of King County changed and the county council became in existence. You didn't have a King County Executive. So this legislation was saying, "Okay, Metro, you're still there, but you really should now recognize that you've got a new echelon of government here that should be represented."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's meshing the systems or getting the lines of authority figured out?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You weren't a sponsor, but there was a big discussion of two different bills lowering the age of voters: one to eighteen, one to nineteen. Did you have a strong feeling either way about these measures?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't have a real strong feeling, but I certainly went along with the age of nineteen and ultimately it passed. And it was one of those things that had been talked about for quite a number years and on this particular occasion it had developed into

something that was more than just passing interest. And students came, a lot of them from the University of Washington and Washington State and other institutions, in order to make some expressions felt.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the influence of the Vietnam war?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "If we're going to be drafted' at least let us vote," kind of statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would one choose eighteen or nineteen? It's interesting that there were two separate answers here.

**Mr. Copeland:** In politics, you're always playing the art of the possible. Were you able to get enough votes for age eighteen to get it passed? Questionable. If you change it to nineteen, can you pick up some additional votes to a point where it would pass? In all likelihood. So the art of the possible came into sharp focus. "We would prefer to have a nineteen-year old vote rather than no change." I'm quite sure that this was the cut of the gin at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if it muddied up the argument altogether because they had the same justification, but one's one year and one's the next. I wondered if it split the vote; somebody would be favoring one over the other?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, as a matter of fact, by virtue of the fact that it was nineteen they were able to get more votes. There were not too many eighteen year olds that got drafted because the way the selective service is set up. There was a numbering system in the

criteria and age was one of them. Twenty was the draft age. Then it went from twenty to nineteen, and then it went to twenty-one, and then it went to eighteen and it went to twenty-three. See, it played goalie in both directions. We had nothing to do with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was a federal issue.

**Mr. Copeland:** That was truly national, those were the selective service rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it would give one age more profile than another, especially if you're linking it to service.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think the general philosophy is that selective service never wanted to draft anybody out of high school. I mean anybody who was attending high school didn't get drafted, period. Even in World War II, I don't think anybody got drafted out of high school even though they were registered. If nothing else, they gave them deferment until they finished high school. However, as I look back upon this change, maybe we should have added: "If there is no draft in effect, the legal minimum voting age shall be twenty-one."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Along those lines, you did help sponsor several bills that had to do with Vietnam veterans, some of which are concerned with the demonstrations happening in Seattle and other places. You have one that: "Provides a procedure for expulsion or dismissal of disruptive persons at state colleges and universities." Were the demonstrations against the war getting a little out of hand and you wanted some method of taking action about them?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think I would have done anything along that line unless I had some kind of a request from one of the institutions of higher learning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On a very much lighter side to do with college students, you were involved with two bills about football, urging the use of the UW stadium for professional football and trying to open up the use of the stadium for the public, which in effect would be for football—professional football, but they didn't really go anywhere. Were you trying to get a stadium for football without having to build another one?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time this was the part of a first run of trying to get professional football. And the logic behind the whole thing was pure and simple: use state facilities. The football stadium at the University of Washington is under the care, custody and control of Board of Regents of the University of Washington, which it should be, but it is a piece of state-owned property. And here is an entity in the city of Seattle that has need for a facility that won't require any great big, huge major overhauls or changes or anything of the kind. "May we use the facility?" And the answer came from the Board of Regents: "No." Well, there were several of us that felt that this was not full utilization of state facilities, because at that time the University of Washington was playing the ten-game schedule a year. Five of them were in the city of Seattle and five were away. So out of a fifty-two week period of time they were occupying the stadium five days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they ever use the stadium for other sports?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not to the degree that they would have that kind of a seating requirement. So it seemed to several of us that maybe the University of Washington better take a better look at allowing, quote, "Those that may not have attended the University of Washington an opportunity to use a state-owned facility for another football endeavor."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was part of the issue that it was a professional team and they were a private entity?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think was it; they were perfectly willing to go ahead and pay for the facility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it would even be a money-maker?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it would have the ripple effect of all the fans coming in and it would be an economic incentive?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. Then of course, some of the objections started coming out of the residents around the University of Washington; they didn't want to be disturbed on a Sunday with a professional football team playing there. The University of Washington alumni had a pride of ownership; they didn't like the idea of somebody else playing on their turf.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody was tempted by the money? It would be quite a revenue source.

**Mr. Copeland:** The revenue didn't weigh in. At any rate, having a joint operating facility, that whole plan was just benched without much fanfare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a very powerful group, the alumni of the University of Washington. I imagine if they want something or don't want something that they could make it happen.

**Mr. Copeland:** They flat didn't want to have it happen and it didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happened to professional football in Seattle?

**Mr. Copeland:** They went ahead and I think they played a few games but not many and then the county built them a facility; they got the county to pay for it. But as far as the Legislature was concerned, nah!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of them would be UW alumni.

**Mr. Copeland:** Some of them thought it was heresy that anybody could play on the University of Washington's grass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now that is really a turf battle, a classic one! You did put in a bill for WSU, your alma mater, to authorize the sale, lease and exchange of public lands by their regents. Were you much in contact with WSU? You maintained those ties?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. I was in close touch with the administration at Washington State University. And I think at that time Pat Patterson was the alumni director and Warren Bishop was the vice-president in charge of financing. So I did whatever I could in order to be able to help those guys out. Of course, they were just like any other institution of higher learning; they had their own line-item on the appropriations bill and so they were always interested in that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would each university have their people in the Legislature—their alumni legislators—that they'd go to first?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was kind of a natural sorting out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The connection would be there. Would UW alumni vastly outnumber WSU?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of how they came to be the premier institution; they just had more backing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think there were two things. Number one, when they started the University of Washington it was located in downtown Seattle. When they realized that they needed to have a larger campus, they got the authority from the Washington State Legislature—this is early on—to purchase some land. But in their wisdom at the time, they decided not to divest themselves of the ownership of the original campus and so consequently it became the property on which the Four Seasons Hotel stands. The University of Washington still owns that property today, and it's a revenue producing son-of-a-gun for them. It was good business planning.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was only going to increase in value. They also had Senator Warren Magnuson hauling in a few good things for them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh well, the grants that Magnuson got for the University of Washington were just absolutely incredible. At that time it was very vogue to have U.S. congressmen and senators making special grants for cities and counties and things like that. He got the first appropriation through in order to be able to have the World Expo in Seattle.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The University of Washington has a huge presence and I wondered if WSU is somewhat—not second class, but not quite on that same level.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think anybody intended that the Washington State University would be on the same par as the University of Washington. When they divided it up, Washington State was the state agriculture college; that was its primary function. And

being the agriculture college, it was also the intended college of veterinary medicine. The college of medicine and the law school were at the University of Washington. And when Washington State College became Washington State University, several other colleges and amenities were added. That of course, put them on an altogether different scale.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes sense to specialize. We have discussed some of Governor Evans' reorganization efforts and your involvement in that area. There was a bill this session—almost a perennial bill—to create the Department of Transportation as part of that package. You weren't a sponsor, but perhaps had some feelings about the creation, or re-creation in a sense, of the Office of Program Planning and Fiscal Management. That was putting, I believe, two different offices together, the Central Budget Office and the Planning Department. The creation of the Department of Social and Health Services came about in the special session in 1970 when the bill finally went through but was part of this plan. You've alluded that you had some kind of involvement there. Could you tell me that story?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was involved as one of the original sponsors on the Department of Social and Health Services reorganization bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Representative Marjorie Lynch was the prime sponsor of House Bill 329. There was a huge list of co-sponsors; it ends up as a substitute bill. During that time there was quite a lot of discussion about aid to dependent children and how the case loads were really growing. The federal government's involvement in state programs of this kind was changing too, under President Nixon. They were starting to talk about block grants and different ways to regulate and contribute to what the states were doing; it was kind of

a push-pull situation where the states were looking at it, but they were also being forced to look at it by the changing federal scene. I don't think the creation necessarily of DSHS has anything to do with that, but I wondered if that made the discussion more complicated, if you recall some of those issues.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't remember that being a part of it, but it is entirely possible. As far as Bill 329 was concerned, here was the format that Governor Evans used on all of these reorganization bills. We had a meeting in the Governor's Mansion; it was a breakfast meeting, but you can't call it breakfast because all you got was a cup of coffee and a hard roll.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll call it a continental breakfast.

**Mr. Copeland:** Alright, but it sure as hell wasn't ham and eggs. Dan called in the Republican leadership of both the House and Senate. The format was he couldn't introduce these executive request bills so he had to find one of us to be responsible for handling each bill. If you were responsible for x bill, either you sponsored it or you got a sponsor on it; somebody to run with the ball on this particular measure. So they just took the pile of executive request bills, the original drafts, and passed them around. One of the members of the House leadership would say, "I'll take this." And then you would pass the rest to the next guy and then the next.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would shuffle through the pile and say which one you liked or which one you felt you had an affinity for?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Going around the room from the Governor in a clockwise fashion, I happened to be sitting at his right and so the only one that was left over when

it got to me was the Department of Social and Health Services. I had never served on the committee and didn't have the foggiest first-hand knowledge of the intimate working of the departments there. So I immediately went to the gal that was the chairman of the committee and said, "You got her, baby," and that was Marge Lynch. So no, I was not the original sponsor; I was given the bill by the Governor who said, "Here Copeland, you go find a House sponsor."

Now, the same bill was also sponsored in the Senate, so they were cross-filed. But that was the mechanism that was used in order to be able to get these nine reorganization bills introduced. So yes, did I get the Department of Social and Health Services? I carried it out of the Governor's Mansion, that original copy, and immediately went to Marge and said, "Here, this is something that is going to be terribly important to you and everybody else." It was a big bill because it took, I think, fourteen separate agencies and combined them all into one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It included some big agencies: Department of Corrections, Department of Health, Public Assistance, whatever it was called. And Veterans' Affairs too, which was kind of hot issue to throw in there. Did you feel that creating these "super" agencies was a good solution?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let's put it around the other way: I felt it was a bad idea to continue having sixty separate entities reporting directly to the Governor. Anything in order to get government down to the point where you could find it was a step in the right direction. Now, whether or not this was the only way to go, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who decided what all would be in there?



**Mr. Copeland:** Dan's staff put that together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that wasn't something that Marjorie Lynch would have done? It would have already been handed to her in that sense.

**Mr. Copeland:** No way would Marge have drafted that bill by herself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would she go about welding together a plan for getting this through? Would she go find people that cared about each of these places and say, "Okay, it's going to be better?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the mechanism of putting it together was based on who are the affected parties; what is their position on the bill; are they for it or against it? If they're against it, maybe we should make some recommendations as to how to modify it: what are going to be the long-range ramifications, especially the physical changes as well as the financial arrangements? So I know the course that followed was that all of the committees affected by these reorganization bills would have hearings and call in the affected parties and say, "Can you buy off on this?" "Yes, I can, providing you move this from here to here." "Well now, wait a minute, if you do that, that's going to affect So-and-So. So-and-So, would you concur with that?" "No, I don't want it done in that fashion; I want it done in a slightly different fashion." "Can you people excuse yourself from the hearings and see if you can reach a compromise and we'll pick this up next Tuesday?" It was this kind of a format that everybody had to go through because government agencies do not like change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was the most complicated super agency that was created. DOT was nothing compared to this. This is the big one.

**Mr. Copeland:** You are so correct. This is the big one; there isn't any question about it. But you can see, I mean, Marge Lynch is the chairman of the committee; she's been working on this for years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was she the obvious choice; you knew right away who was going to be the right person?

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't going to be it. She was chairman of the committee; that was her interest, that's what she was doing in the Legislature. She was focused on childcare; she was focused on welfare; she was focused on corrections; she was focused on health.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So she was already an expert in this field.

**Mr. Copeland:** And I wasn't. And so she, obviously, was the one to go ahead and head up the thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did she have any hesitation in taking this job on?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was she excited about this reform?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd have to be to accomplish this. This would take some tenacity, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes! Just this one bill would be so time-consuming it would devour her energy for the entire length of the session. I mean, she wouldn't have time to think about anything other than this one bill. It was just that big. Now, multiply that by all of the rest of the bills and this is the heavy session that we had. It was a tough one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Long and hard.

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. You had all of these people from state agencies who were affected so whenever you'd have a committee meeting, and it was just standing room only! [whistles]

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you attend some of these hearings?

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't on that committee, but I did look in on a couple of occasions. I couldn't get my way in the door. Did I go to the sign-up sheet and indicate I'd testify? No, I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who helped her, do you remember? Were there other legislators that helped pick up some of the pieces or was it really her thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** There were other legislators who would have certain interests in certain specific groups.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could she delegate? Say, she had a legislator that was an expert on corrections. You had the Walla Walla Penitentiary in your district; would she come to you and say, "Well, how did you feel about this?" Or would that not really be in the discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I was in the discussion of how did this ultimately affect the Department of Corrections? The first thing I did was contact the penitentiary superintendent in Walla Walla. By then he had a copy of the bill and had come to the conclusion it was going to affect him in a negligible way; it was not going to be monumental. He was completely neutral on it; it didn't make any difference to him whether or not the Department of Corrections was standing alone or under so-

and-so health services; he still was a portion of the Department of Corrections.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was being swallowed whole; he's not being changed in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, the function did not change, so this was just a case of reporting authority more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Marjorie Lynch had fairly recently been involved with shepherding through changes for the community college system. I was speculating that the skills that she would have had to win that particular round would now come into play again with a different set of people.

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the community college reorganization bill, that was kind of a slam-dunk that had been set in motion for years coming.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But people resisted it; it wasn't totally easy.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, my goodness, people had been resisting it for years. The shouting and screaming started years before Marge ever got there. Grays Harbor had their own community college and the school board at one time wore a hat as school director and the next time they wore a hat as regents of a board of a state college. So they objected strenuously, but we were not going to allow the development of the community college system to be delayed, thwarted, or denied because of Grays Harbor and I frankly told them so. So they went off kicking and screaming and several years later they were back there kicking and screaming again and we just repeated the scenario. Finally, we got a bill together and said, "Okay, this is the year we're going to pass this."

Government reorganization was heavy-duty stuff, there's no doubt about it. It

would be kind of interesting to go back and get the nine bills and find out who the prime sponsors were on each one of them. Marge had a big chunk with the whole DSHS thing. You'll find that it took lots of heavy arm-twisting on this in order to be able to get that bill passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes a year.

**Mr. Copeland:** Our real problem—it was actually the Governor's real problem—trying to get all of this pulled together, was the engrained authority of state employees that had been there for years. It was those people who were most vocal and most strenuous in pleading the case, "Make all the changes in state government you want, but do not affect us."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Anybody but us?

**Mr. Copeland:** "Make a specific exclusion for my agency or my little department," and so on. That same story would be repeated over and over, and over and over again; everybody wanted to be excluded. Well, if you started excluding, you'd have to exclude everybody, so it was tough from that standpoint. "Sorry about that, fellow; you're on the wrong side of this issue. All those in favor, say aye; all those opposed, say no."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it's the voting members who actually decide, not the agency staff.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's right. You had to do it; you had to do it sometimes and this was tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides state agency people, were any legislators hesitant to create these super agencies?

**Mr. Copeland:** The legislators were not as hesitant to create them. Seasoned legislators

had gone through the anguish of having to go to five or six different places to get one straight answer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they would have their own experience with this chaos.

**Mr. Copeland:** They all had had it right up to here. To put it another way, when a failure in providing a service was questioned by asking, "Who's in charge?" And the answer is, "They are," and then you go to "they" and ask who's in charge and they say, "Those people over there." Then you'd go to those people over there and they'd say, "It's the guys in that other agency." After five or six of these trips, the basic answer was: "I'm not responsible."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In fact, no one was?

**Mr. Copeland:** You got sick and tired of hearing that so you said, "There has to be a better way; somebody has to be responsible. Somebody has to be in charge, the buck is going to stop." That's why legislators were so damn interested in getting all of this stuff pulled together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Governor did succeed in creating several of these agencies, but he never did get the Department of Transportation. Why was that so indigestible?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because he wanted to have the authority to appoint the head of the Department of Transportation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doesn't that follow what you said that there should be someone in charge?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was always somebody in charge at Highways. It was not that the agency was divided where somebody had a piece of the action and somebody didn't,

or somebody wasn't responsible for the department; it was a totally contained unit. We were coming right out of the era of Bill Bugge, who was the head of the Department of Highways, a very dynamic guy, a very strong person, very articulate. He worked with a Highway Commission that could hire and fire him; they approved of the actions; they approved of the expenditures, and so forth. But Bill Bugge ran a one-man shop and did a hell of a fine job of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a totally different situation? Don't mess with success, was that part the issue of not wanting to create DOT?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it came back to this business of who gets to appoint the successor to Bill Bugge; does the Highway Commission or does the Governor? Governor Al Rosellini wanted to do it and Dan wanted to do it, and it's gone on from there. They all wanted to be the appointing authority and have the director report directly to them rather than to this separate Highway Commission.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as a legislator, would have you been somewhat cool to Dan Evans' wishes here? Would you go to him and say, "Well, you know, this is a different thing."

**Mr. Copeland:** I could object to the Governor having the full appointing authority as long as Al Rosellini was Governor because that was political. Now with Dan in office, it became very partisan and the Democrats would object if Dan wanted to have the authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you were in the majority.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just because we were the majority that didn't necessarily mean that Dan had the majority of votes. Did he have Elmer Huntley and people like that siding

with him, saying that the Governor should have the total authority? And the answer is no. If there was any committee that was non-partisan it probably was the Highway Committee—they really didn't play politics. They didn't play a Republican district off against a Democrat district. So you talk about a group that could get things done, this Highway Committee always did; they got along real well. So sitting in the wings of this whole thing were the people who served on the Highway Committee. They liked it the way it was and they didn't want to have the Governor trying to tell them what to do. The members on the Highway Committee had a greater clout with the Highway Commission than they would have had the Governor been given the authority. So the Highway Committee realized they would lose some of their authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's nothing in this for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when these pieces of paper would go around the breakfast table, would the one that ended up with the DOT task...

**Mr. Copeland:** If he was on the Highway Committee, he would do it with tongue in cheek.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He would make a very faint effort?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there any other pieces of the reorganization, other than DOT, that just didn't fly? Or was that a special case?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was the strong Highway Commission a legacy from the era of Julia Butler Hansen? Was her influence still felt by 1969?

**Mr. Copeland:** Julia contributed to it most heavily, but you see, Julia also had Bill Bugge in there. As a matter of fact, I remember reading an article in the newspaper shortly after Bill Bugge retired and it said, “Now We Have a Department of Transportation Looking for a Bill Bugge.” The people that followed Bill Bugge have never reached the prominence or the stature or the dynamic of Bill Bugge, including the way he created things and moved that department to make them happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that have been the golden era of highways?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, when the pieces of paper went around—to get back to our image—you also ended up with the piece about creating the Department of Manpower and Industry. You were the sponsor of that bill, House Bill 330. It was introduced very late in the session; what were the strategies involved here?

**Mr. Copeland:** After a certain amount of time spent sorting out unemployment training and retraining issues, the Governor’s Office finally got so much pressure they decided that maybe we better create a separate department.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this part originally thought to be part of DSHS, but it got pulled out?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe DSHS was going

to be even larger, but this particular piece just wasn’t going to meld?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So then they came to you to make this a separate piece? These employment issues didn’t fit under that umbrella?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. That was with the Governor’s approval.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were the prime sponsor, with Newman Clark, O’Dell, Shera, Sprague, Brown, Bluechel, and Pardini on board with you. The bill was by executive request. It ended up being a substitute bill so it seems like it went through quite a few amendments. It was picked up again in one of the special sessions, with more amendments, more work. You must have had a lot of hearings, I imagine, on this.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that’s all we did. We just had hearings on these reorganization bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When this bill came up for discussion, you were acting as Speaker on a bill for which you were the prime sponsor. Do you, then, delegate one of your other cosponsors to carry the ball?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and I don’t speak when I have a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you do anything to help the bill? I was just wondering if there were small ways of easing it along.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I’m sure you could do some parliamentary maneuvering, but this is a case of where the bill is going to ride on its own merit. Just because I was presiding I wouldn’t try to hammer someone into voting



for it that didn't want to. It didn't make any difference whether I was presiding or somebody else did; by the time most of these bills got to Third Reading, everybody pretty well knew that you had enough votes; it was going to pass anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did labor have much to say about this?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't remember specifically, but I really doubt it. I don't know what kind of a vote it received when it got to Third Reading.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was introduced, sent to Rules, then Second Reading, then re-referred to Rules, and when it came up again, it was a substitute bill. John O'Brien said, "I know it is rather late to raise this Point of Order, but Engrossed House Bill 329 moved pretty fast. You brought out the substitute bill and distributed it; some of the members didn't have an opportunity to review it. You made a major change, apparently, incorporating the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Coordinating Council for Occupational Education into the bill. Of course, this is understandable with all the confusion. The copies were being distributed as you were acting on it and in the copy I had, the pages were upside down. You made a major change and put it through while these copies were being distributed for us for our review." So he was complaining about the process. "It appears that the action was contrary to good legislative process." You answered him and thanked him for his comments and kind of moved right along. Representative Grant proposed some amendments. There was still some shuffling around looking for the right copies; there was debate on the amendment, but there were still questions about what people are talking about—there seemed to be a lot of confusion about the actual copy of

the bill. Some members wanted to postpone discussion; there's a lot of back and forth, and you had a Call of the House. The question was, should the bill be indefinitely postponed? You won on that side, but it just went on and on for quite a while. The Democrats were dragging their feet trying to postpone it. They just don't seem to like this bill very much. Sid Morrison had a lot of amendments and Mr. Wolf had some. And then it was engrossed and passed back to Rules. When it was sent to the Senate, it never came back.

**Mr. Copeland:** Hey, that got messy; there is no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think it showed up again in the special session.

**Mr. Copeland:** Like I said, this was a case of where you were disturbing people's business: what they were doing, who they reported to, their authority. Sometimes it was enhanced; sometimes it was constricted; sometimes they would lose people in their department. It was not a fun time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when this went to the Senate, where there was a Democratic majority, would they have had much less interest in passing the Governor's reorganization bills? This bill just falls right off the page at that point.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that's not the case. It falls off the page but it probably got picked up and incorporated into some other bill. That's the whole point. The Governor was relying very heavily on some real strong people in the Senate to help him get legislation through. The leaders in that group, of course, would be Bill Gissberg and Augie Mardesich.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, their names come up repeatedly. What Republican senators were

there that you would turn to when these bills would hit the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** There would be a whole bunch of them: Frank Atwood and James Andersen were members of the Senate at the time. But you also did a lot of picking and choosing among others depending up on the issues. Augie, Bill Gissberg, frequently Bob Bailey—just a whole group of people were interested in this whole thing. So it wasn't that the, quote, "Democrat Senate" was in lockstep against any kind of reorganization. But this whole session was a big heavy-duty arrangement reorganizing state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, was there any corner you weren't looking at?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, there really wasn't. By the time you got through with this whole bunch of bills there was hardly an employee in state government that wasn't in some way going to be either directly or indirectly affected. I think Dan was well advised to just bite the bullet and say, "Let's go." Then you could see the overall view of how the whole thing would shake up, but if you just did it one little section at a time you could never see the landscape. You were always just taking a look at the window in the barn; you didn't see the hill behind the barn. But this way you really and truly—you saw.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have studied this in the Legislative Council?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. This was—the best expression, I guess is "on the job training." After Dan had been Governor for a period of time and he recognized the real shortfalls, as far as the executive was concerned. He can't do this; he's prohibited in doing that; if he does this, it's going to take an extra long period of time because So-and-So has got a piece of the

action. And so the Governor was beginning to understand his constraints; the Legislature was beginning to understand their constraints, as in finding who's in charge. There was frustration, not only in the legislative branch of government but also in the executive branch. So it was just a case of where the impetus to reorganize arrived on the scene at the proper time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Speaking of the big picture, you were also still trying to amend the constitution and get the gateway amendment. Was that any part of this reorganization? That was more to do with taxes, perhaps.

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the gateway amendment is concerned, it was part of the whole scheme of things. Some people were just fearful that opening the constitution would cause some kind of a runaway type of an arrangement; they just didn't want to have the constitution tampered with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a feeling, as there is often with the national constitution, that there's something almost sacred about constitutions and you really are not supposed to mess around with them?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's inherent with a democratic form of government in which you have a fully operating republic. Now, I said a fully operating republic and the reason I say that, embedded in the constitution are the rights and prerogatives of the states, so once you start saying we're going to add an amendment to a constitution that takes away the rights and prerogatives of the states, then you suddenly have everybody reacting with fear, "I know what the constitution says; I know that I have this right; I know that I have this authority; I don't like to have those changes."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a different kind of change.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right and at that time, everybody is also saying anytime you're tampering with Washington's constitution, the thing you're trying to do is impose a graduated net income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which, in fact, you were. Maybe not graduated, but an income tax; this same year you're also discussing the income tax.

**Mr. Copeland:** These are all functions of government. If you want the service, how are you going to pay for it? "I guess I'll depend upon the state lottery, but the public was told those funds are earmarked for public schools." But this business about earmarking funds...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I read an article recently where they called them "designer taxes." That was kind of a catchy phrase. A tax just for this thing and a tax over here just for this thing; everything has a revenue string tied to an exact tax, and in the end you kind of worry about where's the big picture? How do you tie it all back together?

**Mr. Copeland:** You really don't. Your requirement to service any part of state government never remains consistent throughout the years. You always have some years where this type of service is in high demand versus this one over here, and in another set of circumstances the roles reverse. During World War II, enrollment in public schools fell dramatically. Consequently, we didn't have a high demand for school teachers. So that service requirement was constricted. Was there in existence a Department of Employment Security? Negative, during the war, Congress abolished it on a federal basis. No federal employment security and no state

had an employment security office—they went completely out of business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because there was virtually no unemployment, was that it?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no unemployment. Unemployment was not an issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they didn't keep any kind of skeleton crew? They just simply closed the door?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, they didn't even mothball it; they just discontinued it. It stayed that way for quite a few years after the war; then they started to reassemble it. Regarding this business of designer taxes; you say you're going to need a tax for this, but there's going to be a period of time when you don't need it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you might need something else.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you can't move the money that is earmarked, that's the whole point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, is it a case of short-term thinking?

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it make it more palatable when people call them user fees?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is different. I think there is a place for a user fee. In other words, is that gas tax appropriately applied when the motorist pays the tax on a gallon of gasoline and that money is dedicated for the support of the highways? I think that is a given.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's certainly been our tradition for a long time.

**Mr. Copeland:** The gas tax is a user fee. Is it a tax? In the literal interpretation of a tax, no, because it is not uniformly applied to all people. It is a self-inflicted wound. If you want to drive your car, you pay the user's fee; if you don't want to drive your car on the highways, you don't have to pay a user's fee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, using that analysis, are sales taxes not taxes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Tax, yes, because that is uniformly applied to everybody.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you don't have to buy things.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, that's your prerogative, but it's uniformly applied; that's the whole point. It is also true that the gas tax is a designer fee because it goes for the support of the highways. Let's take another example; at the time that the voters approved a lottery, they were told this money would go to the support of schools. Somebody in the campaign may have said, "The money derived will go to the support of the schools," which in essence is a rather true statement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if it goes to the General Fund...

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Was it ever written that any money that is generated from the lottery would go specifically for the K-through-12 programs and no other function? And the answer is no. But this is what you would call a real designer fee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about property taxes, how do they work in this light?

**Mr. Copeland:** Property taxes primarily go to the support of local and county governments.

They are broken into a whole litany of things and this is basically at the purview of the county commissioners.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of the argument for an income tax that we'll be discussing shortly was that the money from property taxes was going for the schools and that it wasn't equitable.

**Mr. Copeland:** A portion of the property taxes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that a system designed to benefit all should not be paid for by one group of tax payers was one of the arguments. And that that is one of the reasons why some people thought an income tax would be "fair." That the property owner should not bear the burden unduly, compared to other taxpayers for the support of schools.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think is kind of secondary effect. From the standpoint of a businessman who is a property owner like myself, the high property tax can be assessed whether they make any money or not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Property or the Business and Occupation Tax?

**Mr. Copeland:** Property. When you talk about an income tax, if your business is prosperous and you make some money, you owe some taxes; if your business is not prosperous you don't owe any money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's a really interesting analysis by Mary Ellen McCaffree—who takes the lead on tax issues this session and other sessions too, for that matter—in her memoirs she says, "The current structure of taxes has been based on convenience in an archaic adherence to the sales tax and property tax as the major source of revenue. Instead

of taxing wealth as it was earned, we tax that part which was spent. The inequity of the tax structure was even more glaringly apparent when we considered the property tax. The cost of providing the quality education we desire for our children was borne almost entirely by the property owners.” She adds: “And the percentage of the tax burden which property owners had to shoulder had been increasing rapidly.” There was a discussion of placing limits on that tax and that the operation of the schools was in jeopardy. Part of the motivation for arguing for an income tax was to better support public education.

**Mr. Copeland:** In other words, what Mary Ellen is saying is that the schools are beginning to have a much higher degree of reliance on the passage of special millage to support themselves for operations and maintenance. So they had to have these special millages—which were nothing more than an additional tax on their property—in order to be able to support the schools. In my particular situation as an agricultural producer where I owned a lot of property, the increase in the property tax for special millage is applied to a piece of ground. But I can raise a crop at a loss and I still owe the tax, so that tax to me is a gross tax; it has nothing to do with whether or not I made any money. Is it fair for you to extract money out of me because I own a piece of property and I lost money on my endeavor that year?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if people like to eat, that can only go so far.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, you asked me, how did you come to an understanding of this business of an income tax being the better way to go? I’m saying because of the inequities of the property tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did business have the same argument with the B&O tax which was also a gross tax?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. Now you’re making my case for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was not based on their earnings, either. How did Washington State get two of this kind of tax going and yet we can’t seem to get an income tax that would be fairer? Why do people want to hang onto this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, they made a run at it. Look at the history of how many times they tried to pass it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly in 1969 you were trying the bill again.

**Mr. Copeland:** Quite frankly, I think that what they should have done was say, “Okay, we can’t get a graduated tax, so we’ll give a shot at passing a flat income tax.” Whether or not they would have been able to muster enough votes to do that, I don’t know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did end up with a referendum, right? They went for one kind of tax and then—what was it, five years later—there would be a referendum and people could rework it if they so chose. That was one of the big fights throughout that session. They did actually get that far after quite a lot of haggling because the Republicans preferred a flat income tax and the Democrats preferred a graduated income tax, each for their own good reasons. So they found some middle ground; they started with one and with the option of moving to the next level if the people chose. The people didn’t choose in the end, so it was it all for no point. Why did the Republicans favor flat over graduated; what was the wrinkle there for them?

**Mr. Copeland:** There are a couple schools of thought. One set of proposals dealt with the graduated net income tax and the graduation



rates were predicated on the graduated rates which the federal government assessed. These proposals left the graduation rates to the whims of Congress. Another scenario is that the state would establish all of these rates and they would be in total control. There are some states today who have an income tax and use graduations based on the federal rates, while other states create their own rates. So Republicans had a fight on this business of a graduated net income tax. Who's going to establish the graduation rates; is it the federal government or is it the state government? Well, this always got to be a little squishy and nobody really ever came out and said, "We will establish the rates." This is a very difficult thing for the Democrats to do, so they were always saying, "Let's tie it to the federal government."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it was simpler?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think "simple" is probably about the best inclination you can make out of it, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was something that people could understand; they already knew about it; it was familiar?

**Mr. Copeland:** They kind of understood it. But even that graduation has some substantial inequities in it. The top ten percent of the people paying income taxes represents about seventy percent of the income taxes paid into the federal government. So the graduations the federal government currently have are heavily loaded on the top end and lightly loaded on the bottom.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Mary Ellen McCaffree shepherded the tax bills that session, of which there were several. There was House Resolution Forty-two, a constitutional amendment that would allow the income tax.

But that was predicated on the passage of House Bill 582 which would amend the tax structure; that had to pass first and then the other one would be operative. It called for a referendum so there were lots of phases to this effort. As Mary Ellen McCaffree introduced the bill there were a lot of amendments proposed, although many of them are not adopted. You proposed one yourself quite near the end of the discussion. She did a tremendous amount of work and in the end got a standing ovation from the House members for her efforts, as recorded in the Journal.

**Mr. Copeland:** The amendment that I proposed clarified the fact that non-profit organizations were not subject to a state income tax, nor were municipal governments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When final passage was called for—the roll call vote—the bill passed the House by sixty-three to thirty-five. But the referendum measure was lost at the next election; the people don't get on board. In Mary Ellen McCaffree's memoirs, this loss was remembered as a hard moment for her. About the only bright light was that her own district did vote for it, so she felt some solace that she was at least able to convince her own constituents that she was on the right path. But as we all know, the income tax never passes despite all these efforts. A lot was weighing on the passage of that measure—you were going reorganize all kinds of things—but that all kind of went by the wayside.

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't surprised by the fact that it didn't pass. By the same token, when you consider how much we were reorganizing at that time you have to ask how much can the average layman accept as far as change and concern in one short period of time? There was a lot of pain and anguish along the way and always imbedded in this whole thing, as far as the voter is concerned, is a disgust of the elected officials.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly skepticism.

**Mr. Copeland:** You're putting it mildly. I call it distrust. But at any rate, I think that that is kind of the underlining; people just are worried.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must be challenging to work within the understanding that the general public won't really let you go too far or be too creative and really solve certain things on your own best notions of how to do it; there's an absolute limit on that.

**Mr. Copeland:** In the layman's terms, the Legislature has been asked to serve on the board of directors of the state government. When they have something they have to refer to the people and the people say, "No, we disagree with you, that is not necessarily the way we want to go," the people have a right to do it and this is the way it should be. So as far as the consequences are concerned, be happy with the consequences because that is, quote "what the people wanted."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We should keep in mind that you were still trying for the gateway amendment and working on a whole slew of constitutional amendments.

**Mr. Copeland:** At this particular juncture was it would have been so much easier if we had the gateway amendment which would allow us to virtually take all of these eight or ten proposals and put them into one package and ask for the voters' acceptance or rejection rather than having to shred the things into these little bitty pieces. So this is nothing more than a demonstrative way of being able to say, "This is being done according to rules at the present time; now, if we have the gateway amendment we can change it in a much more expeditious manner." But there were those people that had a mindset

where nobody was going to tamper with the constitution, period.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What proportion of the Legislature was of that attitude?

**Mr. Copeland:** About one-third of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a sizeable group.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was just trying to point out to the public, "These are the rules we have to live by; the gateway amendment kind of short-circuits thing and makes the process a little bit easier."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which may have made that group more nervous? If they can't stand the little ones, they're not going to swallow the big ones.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I'm sure it made them more nervous. You need a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate; then of course, when it goes to the people, you have to have a majority there. So this was a big one, but at that time could we get it passed? No. And put this on top of an income tax!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a little bit too much of an uphill thing here? Yes, and people were linking those measures, definitely.

**Mr. Copeland:** Put this on top of reorganizing the Department of Transportation; put it on top of reorganizing Social and Health Services; put this on top of the creation of the Department of Ecology.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislators were still digesting the fact that they have offices! Would it have been more strategic to spread that out a little bit more?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was an executive

decision Dan made and I have to concur that no, it probably wouldn't have been more strategic to spread it out over a period of time. I think Dan wanted to make a very strong pronouncement that state government needed to be reorganized and the best way to do it was to roll up our sleeves and get with it. That's number one, this is the perception to the public. Number two, when you started this on a piecemeal basis, whatever you did in reorganization always affected a different agency—if not completely, then only partially. Next year you'd do something else and it would affect another agency, not completely, but in part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see how the reorganization bills need to come as a package, but what about an income tax, plus other constitutional amendments?

**Mr. Copeland:** These are changes you're asking the public to buy into all at once. It was too much to sow at that time. But by the same token, Dan got the majority of the reorganization bills passed during that session and he got a few more the next session and a few more the session after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's true, once the ball started to roll.

**Mr. Copeland:** So you understand what I'm saying, we had to start someplace. An executive decision was made to start with a great huge package and go from there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was definitely an effort; I just wondered if you felt a little frayed by the end of it. And those weren't the only hot issues of the session; you really had quite a busy time. A different area that you were looking at—which certainly was a measure of the changing times—was the continued effort to repeal the Blue Laws. You had repealed

many of them in 1966, but you were still grappling with a lot of liquor issues: really hot ones, like can women sit on bar stools; the regulation of windows in taverns; employment of eighteen-year old musicians within bars; what entertainers can do in bars. Probably the biggest issue to do with liquor in 1969 was the wine bill, House Bill 100, a Legislative Council request bill. The prime sponsor was Dave Ceccarelli. It had to do with the sale of California wine in Washington; there were at that time trade barriers in place that were meant to protect the fledgling Washington wine industry. There were different perspectives on this. Some people thought that if you kept the protectionist laws in place the wine industry in Washington would gain time to mature and become a real viable industry. Other people thought quite the opposite; that so long as those trade barriers were in place and there was limited competition, Washington wines would never become a sophisticated industry. They would continue to produce the lower quality dessert wines and some of the other products that they had been focusing on for years. So some thought that the trade barriers protected an industry; others thought it hurt the industry. The bill was being lobbied pretty heavily by California wine interests who had, of course, their own point of view. And then there was a growing section of the population who wanted better wines; wine is becoming more of a commodity that people want to purchase. People's tastes are changing in the sixties as more people traveled and experienced wine drinking in California and Europe and various places. So—a lot of different groups with different agendas. You come from eastern Washington, not exactly the wine growing area yet, but it becomes a big wine growing area. What was your take on how the Washington wine industry should be regulated or promoted or taxed?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Washington Legislature

in previous sessions had made special appropriations to support the Washington wine industry and to encourage their research on different varieties of grapes that could grow in the state of Washington. So yes, the Washington State Legislature had a great hand in developing basic research for that and they were very supportive of developing Washington wine. This particular bill granted grocery stores permission to sell wine; without this it was only sold in the liquor stores. I think this is the barrier that you're talking about.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's one of the barriers and it has to do with whether they could sell it at competitive prices or whether there has to be an added tax on out-of-state wines. The grocery stores and various other people wanted to do away with that add-on.

**Mr. Copeland:** So what you're doing is you're allowing grocery stores to sell wine and market California wine for less money than Washington wine. Now, Washington wines at that time were just a kind of a blip on the radar screen. They were not a big factor as far as the shelf space is concerned; they were just in their infancy. So the mixed emotion came on the basis is this going to hurt or is it going to help Washington wine? In the final analysis it helped Washington wine immensely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It took a while for people to come around to that idea.

**Mr. Copeland:** It took a while for the Washington growers to develop grapes and get into the production of wine before they could actually get a good wine on the market. At this time, 1969, there were probably less than a half a dozen wineries in the state of Washington and now there are over five hundred. So there's been a huge, huge shift. The amount of Washington wine has risen at an astronomical rate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Plus the quality. It was a fiercely lobbied bill and quite controversial. You voted against it yourself. Irv Newhouse, also from your area, was against it; he wanted to give growers more time to produce a better product and thought protectionism would grant them that breathing space. Were you of that perspective?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would guess with your involvement with WSU, the place where this research was being conducted, that you'd be pretty familiar with their efforts?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was well aware of what they were doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hal Wolf, who often partnered with you—and who happened to be the owner of a grocery store—was of the other opinion, that this would be a good thing to bring California wines in at a reduced rate. So it was not a partisan issue; it was depending on where you sat how the issue looked. It was a revenue issue as well; members were worried about losing that extra revenue if the California taxes were reduced and how would you make it up. You proposed a remedy along those lines that raised the tax to twenty-nine percent instead of twenty-six to make up part of the projected shortfall.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a revenue issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The numbers that people were talking about here seem fairly substantial; not something to shrug off.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me tell you about what happened as far as the research on Washington wines are concerned. We got the appropriation through for Washington State University to go ahead and get these varieties of grapes and

grow them at the experiment station in Prosser. I don't know the dates, but if I remember correctly, I think that Washington State University went out and found a huge number of different varieties of grapes throughout the world that were growing at approximately the same latitude that we are and tried to duplicate that particular type of grape. So they put them in the ground; they got them through the growing season and the next test was to find out if those grapes were winter hardy. That particular winter we didn't have any real good killing frost and they all survived!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wasn't really a test?

**Mr. Copeland:** It just delayed the whole thing for a year. That next year they had extremely cold weather and out of the thousands of varieties of grapes only about one hundred of them survived. Now you've thinned it down to something else; now you're looking at reality.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So from your perspective, the agricultural perspective, you just needed more time?

**Mr. Copeland:** We just didn't want to kill off the fledgling wine industry with this great flood of California wine coming in that probably would diminish the opportunity and the efforts for us to continue on the track. I mean, give this thing a chance to work; don't just come in and club it over the head and drown it in a gallon of Gallo wine. We had a lot of money invested in it but that's what these research projects are for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This would then become quite a huge thing in Walla Walla; now when you go to Walla Walla there are wineries everywhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right now, I think Walla

Walla County has forty-two wineries. They have more wineries in Walla Walla County today than they did in the entire state when this passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The wine bill did pass. Even under these conditions, were you able to keep the nascent wine industry going and then somehow give it the right conditions and off it went?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, we had to keep Washington State University and the Washington Legislature in focus on this new industry. In the long run it's very, very important to the economy of the state. We were talking about some long-range consequences so don't kill off a fledgling industry.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you couldn't actually prevent this juggernaut from California coming over the hill, so long as you could keep the funding for the research going and keep some of the other pieces in place you could do the job?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When this passed and the protectionist taxes were repealed, or however you put that, did you then switch your attention to making sure those research programs were protected?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we continued to pay attention; we didn't switch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this passage feel like a loss to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, but I think someplace along the line we may have extracted a couple of votes from some of the people who agreed to vote for the appropriation to continue our research on the development of Washington



wines in exchange for a vote to pass the California wine bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a very hard-fought battle. Fiercely lobbied—lots of stories about some of that action. Were you approached to change your mind or were you so hard-core that nobody bothered talking to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots of people talked to me; I just didn't want to kill off the small industry. Agriculture's always looking for new opportunities. We were just taking a cut at the ball and seeing if whether or not we could get things going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Judging from the quality and quantity of wineries in Washington State now, it paid off handsomely. Washington turns out to have wonderful growing conditions for many kinds of wines.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly. It's just that in my short span in the Legislature, we've had two big things going on with agriculture. Number one, was the development of the Washington State Apple Commission and the Washington State Wheat Commission. These agriculture commissions have meant additional gross income to the state of Washington in the billions of dollars. The second is the development of the Washington State wine industry. It is just another example of how the Legislature got involved in the very formative stages and was able to help a fledgling industry go through the painful process of research and development and get themselves in a position where they could start competing, not only in the United States, but now they're competing worldwide. And they're doing a wonderful, wonderful job. Did the Washington State Legislature do the proper thing in doing all of these things? And the answer is hell, yes! I think we've got a fine track record. Was there opposition to all

of this stuff? You bet there was. Where did it come from? Downtown Seattle mostly, because they don't understand agriculture to begin with. I'm not faulting them for it, don't misunderstand. It takes a lot of education and re-education in order to be able to get some of these things done. But I think the outcome of this whole thing is the most important part of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have opposition from people who are leery of government investment? Some people do not think that government should invest in the economy, that it's not a proper role for government.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm sure there were some people who didn't feel that we should be taking taxpayers' money and doing research work on agriculture. Of course, my counter to that was, "You do it at the University all the time with granting certain money for medical research and things like that. This is all part and parcel; it's all in the interest of the public."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did get a little press. Here's an article from February of that year talking about your fiscal measure trying to raise the tax a little bit and then it goes through some of the discussions about the back-and-forth. There were several eastern Washington legislators who were on the side of wanting to give the industry more time and then the article countered that Representative Dave Ceccarelli, a Seattle Democrat, answered "that the state wine industry has had thirty-three years to improve its wines." He insisted that the wine bill will actually help the industry; there's that argument. So as it turned out, I guess in some ways you were both right—or at least the industry was not hurt or destroyed by this, but for different reasons became a really viable thing for the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** First of all, let's talk about the basic organic act of not allowing grocery stores to sell other than just a limited amount of wine. The philosophy behind that particular act—and that was put in there way before I got to the Legislature—was running right in conjunction with the Steele Act which is the one that created the state monopoly on liquor sales.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With the end of prohibition, they addressed how to handle liquor through government regulations.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. So they said, "The State is going to handle all of the wine, so anything that gets imported, will be handled through the liquor stores." When that was embedded in law, there wasn't any type of a wine growing industry in the state of Washington; there weren't the competitive forces between California, and so on. We had very few bottles of California wine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People didn't really drink that much wine.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. So at the time that it first got embedded in law—which David was trying to remove by the passage of this act—it had nothing to do with the wine industry in the state of Washington because it was non-existent. That was just because of the monopoly embedded in the Steele Act.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of different agendas going on with this one bill; it caught several interests in the crosshairs. That was something that took all session to work through. There was another bill that ground its way through the session that had also been introduced the previous year that came back again and required quite a lot of discussion and that was the abortion bill. You're rolling your eyes! I can't believe how many really

hot-button issues you dealt with during this session, but here's another one. Contrary to most people's current thinking about abortion legislation, this was a Republican measure, not a Democratic measure. Democrats, many of them, were against liberalizing abortion and many Republicans were for liberalizing abortion; the reverse of what we have today. That fact is now so little known that some people would even find it unbelievable. Joel Pritchard, who at that time was in the Senate, teamed with Lois North, a House member, to work this bill. Apparently, trying to get it through the committee system was quite an effort; a lot of intense maneuvering took place. In the '69 session, when it came to the House, it actually came as an amendment to another bill, which had nothing to do with abortion and it was introduced without much notice by Lois North. The vehicle was a Senate bill, sponsored by Senators Jim Anderson and Gordon Walgren that allowed police officers to arrest a person who committed certain misdemeanors though the act was not in the officer's presence; well, that has nothing to do with abortion.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'll explain. If you take a look at the section of Andersen's bill that was being amended, this is where the abortion bill could fit under that title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was ruled within the scope of the bill.

**Mr. Copeland:** After the enacting clause, the amendment read, "strike the material and insert the following" so an abortion bill did legitimately fit under that particular title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The two sponsors of this bill were said to know nothing about this amendment until it was introduced and they were a little surprised.

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember talking to Andersen about it. All of a sudden he said, "Did you know that I am now the prime sponsor of the abortion bill?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was somewhat taken aback, I understand.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some discussion on this bill and Representative North rose and moved the adoption of her amendment on abortion. There was a pretty immediate outcry, despite the surprise, by John O'Brien and various people, to kill that amendment. To lay it on the table, or do whatever; there were a lot of quick responses which were voted down. Then they tried to send it back to Rules, but that didn't work. Somebody asked if this amendment was germane and the Speaker ruled that it was, that the title of the act was broad enough to cover the amendment. More amendments were proposed to do with consent of the husband, the time period they were talking about. If they couldn't kill it outright, the opponents were going to amend it to change it substantially. Margaret Hurley, another representative, tried all types of maneuvers to change the content of the bill. These amendments were all lost. Then Lois North herself made a motion to defer further consideration. Do you remember the feeling in the House during this debate; what were you yourself feeling and thinking? Were you privy to any of this; did you know that she was going to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Second Reading was difficult because there were so many amendments, but everybody had to go ahead and try them out to see if they were going to fly. And Margaret and John, of course, were the opposition leaders. The Catholic Church had made a very strong pronouncement that they were in opposition of any kind of an abortion bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was split along Catholic, non-Catholic lines, for the most part.

**Mr. Copeland:** And Margaret and John are two very strong Catholics. They were representing a point of view that needed to be represented, no question about it. So we had to go through this entire amendment procedure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senate Bill 387, the original Andersen-Walgren bill was deferred and when it came back to the floor a couple days later you discussed it again and "with the consent of the House" Representative North withdrew her amendment. So they made a strategic decision that that wasn't really the way to go with this bill. The abortion amendment died at this point; Senate Bill 387 went on to be passed, but without the amendment. You picked up the discussion about the abortion bill in a different way in the special session of 1970, but at this point it was dead because Lois North withdrew the amendment. It doesn't go anywhere else. The sponsoring senators were pretty upset that it was going to kill their bill because it was so contentious, so she agreed to withdraw the amendment and try a different tactic. But you made such a strong statement about it in a Point of Personal Privilege that I'd like to hear your comments.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what Lois did at this point, she grabbed the vehicle and just tried to shove the abortion bill right smack on the title. I'm sure it got Jimmy Andersen a little bit ticked off at that point. If you take a very simple little bill like Jim Andersen and Gordon Walgren had from the Senate and then scalp off on that a major bill and send it back to the Senate sponsored by Jim Andersen and Gordon Walgren, who are two pretty heavy-hitters in that Senate, do you think that they're going to concur in the House amendment to, quote, "their bill"? The answer is a very strong no!

I don't think that Lois truly realized it was not going to be successful in the Senate when she proposed the amendment in the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think she learned that pretty quickly.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think she learned it very quickly, that yes, it's cute, yes, it's charming, yes, it's darling, but you start dinking around with a senator's bill in the House and then ask the Senate to concur on it, you might have a very chilling reception.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In her recollections of this story, Lois North admits to being very green and on a pretty high learning curve, you might say, as to how things are really done and you can see that between her proposal and her withdrawal of the amendment, she went through a learning process that this was not the way to accomplish this.

**Mr. Copeland:** This was the reason for my Point of Personal Privilege. I was trying to point out that if you're going to have to vote on her withdrawing her amendment, this was not necessarily a vote for or against abortion. "We're not doing that. We're voting only on the withdrawal of the amendment."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The vehicle.

**Mr. Copeland:** The vehicle, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So I have to ask, how did you yourself feel about liberalizing the abortion law?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was for the abortion law. I was interested in getting it passed, but you're not going to pass it if you fly in the face of the Senate. What's the old saying? "The right thing at the wrong time is still the wrong thing." It might have been the right thing, but it sure as hell was the wrong time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you as a more seasoned legislator have counseled her about a better method?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think in the next session of the Legislature that Lois reintroduced the bill, but the sponsors of the bill are virtually all of the women of the House that wanted to sign on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not quite all the women, but yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** It wasn't until the next session that it passed, correct?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** 1970, during the special session. They started over then; the same senators sponsored it. They did tweak the language a little; there was a little more leeway there. They didn't want to accept amendments because they wanted it to go through cleanly. They did actually accept some language that they didn't originally favor, just to get something. This time there was a referendum clause that allowed some members to say, "I'm not for abortion, but I'm for letting the people decide," in the same kind of way that members approached the income tax. They could say, "I'm not for the income tax, but I think the people should vote on this." It gave some members a little bit of cover. That seemed like a really good strategy.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. I don't remember that there was anything in the bill that said it had to go to referendum. I do remember that it did not have the emergency clause, which obviously prevented it from going to referendum. The emergency clause was not there so it could be referred to the voters at the next General Election. But we went through the laborious procedure of Second Reading again and we again considered all of the amendments that we

virtually had in the 1969 session. When it got to the Senate there was virtually no action on it. Lois was getting very, very upset. So, now if my memory is correct, it was the middle of one afternoon and late in the week. Bill Gissberg was chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate and he came over to me and said, "I think we've got an agreement on the abortion bill, but we're going to have to have just one small amendment. Would it be okay if we changed it from two calendar months to two lunar months?" This was only a slight change from the original bill, but I remember going to Lois and saying, "Okay, the Senate's going to pass the abortion bill with this amendment. They're going to send it to us this afternoon and if you accept the amendment, we can just go ahead and we'll pass it this afternoon." "Oh," she said, "Tom, I don't want to have that happen; I have the girls coming down from Seattle on Monday." And I remember telling Lois, "I could care less about the girls coming down from Seattle. You've got the votes to pass it now; let's get it over with."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don't stall here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. So they sent the bill over to us that afternoon and I made arrangements with the Speaker that we handle it immediately.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it because it was too hot to handle; you just wanted to get it out of there?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right; we wanted to get rid of it. So I suggested to everybody that we'd go right-smack into caucus, everybody would caucus on it, and we'd come out. There would be two speakers on either side, two against, two for.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To wait could have jeopardized the whole thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then it would have been a TV piece and there would have been no end to the debate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that inflame and stiffen the opposition?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, surely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that would be counterproductive?

**Mr. Copeland:** Can you imagine the number of pulpits on the following Sunday that would have had some comment on the abortion bill? I just didn't want to go through another weekend with the bill hanging out there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's better to keep a low profile on some of these things?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was it spoken of in your caucus? Nowadays, in many Republican caucuses being anti-abortion is a litmus test for party loyalty, but certainly not in 1970 in Washington State.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. As far as we were concerned—and I still am—that's somebody's right to privacy; that's not for me to tell you, "No, you may not."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was primarily a privacy issue for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The thinking is so different now, it's important to realize it was seen very differently back then.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was, but by the same token, by virtue of the fact that it did go to



referendum, we said, “You citizens make a decision on this.” As soon as I got home—and I probably wasn’t home forty-eight hours—I got a call from the Walla Walla Ministerial Association and they wanted to talk to me about what my position was on abortion. I went down and I met with them and all of the ministers from the community were there at this meeting. I just went in and said, “There are the provisions of the abortion bill and you can all read them. It’s going to referendum and I certainly welcome you to go ahead and suggest to your parishioners vote for or against it, whatever is in the interest of your conscience.” But I said, “On this particular measure, there’s no sense in me saying this is going to be the law of the land; it’s now entirely up to the voters and whatever the voters want to do with this, fine and dandy.” Walla Walla County did not agree and they voted against it. But as far as I was concerned, I got out of there totally unscathed; they didn’t get mad at me because I was for the abortion bill. They expressed themselves. But, the balance of the state was for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there were no repercussions for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Politically, no. I was up-front with everybody right straight across the board. “I voted for it. It’s on the ballot; if you don’t want it, you vote no. Now, this is a decision for the voters of the state of Washington to make. We’ve wrestled with this thing and there’s no sense in going over it over again and wasting a lot of time.” The meeting I had with the Walla Walla Ministerial Association probably lasted less than fifteen minutes. And when I said, “Are there any questions,” I don’t think I got a single one. Everybody said, “Thank you very much; we certainly appreciate it and we appreciate what you’re doing,” and “we’ll take it from here.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some members, of course, did suffer repercussions.

**Mr. Copeland:** I realize that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it’s really interesting that you didn’t, even though your county was not supportive. You must have given them a construction that they could understand why you voted for it in a way that was unequivocal.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I guess that’s pretty much the way I was; I can’t remember any real votes where I voted for pure political reasons. Most all of my votes were just on the basis of what the hell is right. I mean, how long I was in the Legislature and was I going to return were not primary as far as I was concerned. God only knows, I had enough to do without that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you see any signs that this would become the divisive issue that it is now?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this just too early? It wasn’t in the lime-light like now?

**Mr. Copeland:** Could I see the Republican Party getting divided on this? Heavens, no! Could I see that the Christian Right was going to use this statute as a litmus test for running for public office? No, nobody could. And now that you mention it, I remember the cartoon that somebody devised that ran in the newspaper before a recent election. This guy is standing up and says, “I am running for dog catcher,” and the gal says, “Yes, but I want to know what is your stand on abortion?” Has it come into sharp focus? Tremendously!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thing about being early

out of the gate with this issue was that the national debate hadn't really gotten off the ground yet.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Washington was ahead of most of the nation on this. So maybe that helped you get it; it hadn't reached that profile.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly. As long as we're on this subject, what were the final passage numbers and what date did it pass?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the end, Senate Bill 68 passed the House sixty-four to thirty-one, four not voting, and that was February 4, 1970.

**Mr. Copeland:** And it did provide for a referendum.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think that helped.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there's any question about it, no. Darn-near all of Spokane voted against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, one could analyze all the votes and try to figure out patterns, but on the face of it, it was largely a Catholic issue. There's a very strong population of Catholics in Spokane, but also Spokane is a generally more conservative area.

**Mr. Copeland:** Gladder, Harris, Kopet, Hurley, McCormick—yes, a whole bunch of the Spokane people voted against it, even Gordon Richardson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if that's one of the cultural divides in this state. Different issues play out, but Spokane, on more than one occasion, is kind off to the side of what other areas are supporting.

**Mr. Copeland:** That should be a discussion all into itself. They had a cozy attitude of accommodation for one another.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Spokane members all kind of stand together on things?

**Mr. Copeland:** They had a non-written agreement that, regardless of how they voted, they'd never go back to the city of Spokane and speak ill about another Spokane legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a solid delegation. Other areas, I gather, didn't have any kind of agreement like that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you explain that in any way; just a tradition that they carried on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I think it was a defensive mechanism they had, more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, that cohesiveness shows up in anything to do with power issues. Washington Water Power legislators voted as a block, that's pretty clear. But I didn't know that that would hold together on other issues. Did it become a habit, in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you think the origin of being a bit of a block had to do with power issues or is it a sort of rivalry with Seattle?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was more than just a power issue; it was a whole bunch of things. It was the *Spokesman Review*; it was, quote, "eastern Washington."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you're from eastern Washington, too.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, I'm from eastern Washington in the eyes of people from eastern Washington, but I'm not eastern Washington in the eyes of Spokane. "You're 'rural,' you don't qualify." They had five legislative districts there: five senators and ten House members. Oh yes, they always got in a lock-step. So, with hot issues like this, they would have a tendency to kind of all stick together so that no one guy got shoved down and was voting all by himself as far as the Spokane delegation was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or the newspaper?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and the newspaper always was very kind regardless of their party and how they voted with respect to one industry versus another. It was very pro-Kaiser Aluminum and their efforts with the Mead plant, where there is a small community north of Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a big industry there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Democrats from Spokane would then be extremely kind to Kaiser Aluminum, but the next vote they'd just beat the crap out of business on something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting. No other part of the state operates like this, in quite this fashion?

**Mr. Copeland:** King County never really voted in such a massive block like Spokane did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a kind of a critical mass—is there a certain size that can hang together and then after that it's just too big and too unwieldy? King County is a lot of people.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this was kind of a whole new world from the days of Joe Drumheller. When Joe Drumheller was the senator from Spokane, the Democrats had the numbers. One-third of the Senate was made up of conservative Democrats and they passed anything they wanted to. On one particular issue, they'd go to the one-third liberal Democrats and say, "Okay, this is the way it's going to be," and the next moment, up they'd go to the Republicans and say, "Okay, this is the way it's going to be."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They'd get it both ways?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. All five of the senators from Spokane belonged to this very conservative group and ran the state for quite a number of years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they doubled their power even though they were not a majority; they could wield quite a club. That would explain a great deal.

**Mr. Copeland:** On one occasion, I had an opportunity to stick it in the ear of the Spokane delegation. Right at the early days of a legislative session, they wanted a special appropriation made for the big World's Fair in Spokane. They had to have this money very quickly. They all got up and gave eloquent speeches about how "this is going to help the economy," and said, "this is an emergency measure," because they wanted to have the money appropriated right then before the budget bill ever came up so they could get federal matching money. So I said to them, "I'm going to vote for this and want you to know Bill May and Margaret Hurley and Ed Harris and Bill Day and Jerry Kopet and Bill McCormick are all voting for this; it's a wonderful bi-partisan effort. These names that I've just read off, I'm going to read back to you before we have the final passage of the

budget bill. We gave you your money now, but when the budget comes up, I don't want to hear any 'no' vote from Margaret Hurley or Bill McCormick or Jerry Kopet or Bill Day or the others I mentioned." And I sat down. Later on, when the budget bill came up, I said, "Before we vote on this, remember what I told you, because you said that you were going to be there on the budget bill. The time has come; we gave you your money, now here's the budget."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Several of those members were pretty hard-liners on the budget bills.

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't like it very much, but I read it back to them, chapter and verse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's fascinating. You served on an interim committee for the World's Fair; you were part of the legislative advisory committee. Were you keeping your eye on this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, however we had absolutely nothing to do with the day-to-day operation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** While you were working hard in Olympia, the nation itself was in great turmoil. I wanted to recall the mood of the times as you dealt with all these controversial matters. It was an angry political year, with lots of street politics. In Seattle, besides the rise of the Black Panther movement and other protests, Edwin Pratt, the leader of the Seattle Urban League, was murdered on his doorstep. There was just an ugly feeling about that year. The state commissioned a study about racial relations in Washington called the Commission on the Causes and Prevention

of Civil Disorder. The study was led by Secretary of State Lud Kramer, who came out pretty strongly decrying the situation and saying that the police were not handling things very well. That was kind of the backdrop to an event variously described. On February 28<sup>th</sup> a group of Black Panthers came down from Seattle to the Capitol. There are different stories about what their purpose was; they said they merely wanted to meet with legislators and in fact, had been invited to do so. But they came armed and made kind of a show of it on the front steps of the Capitol, which set off alarm bells throughout the building. Doors were locked; a lot of State Patrol appeared. Can you tell me what it was like for you that day and what happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** The State Patrol was aware that this potential was there. Their intelligence was so great—their intelligence was just indispensable at this point. Consequently, they were able to let the legislators and the people in charge of security know that this was a potential. In the final analysis, it was handled so calmly and so well that it was hardly a ripple on the water. It could have been absolutely terrible had it not been for real cool heads. And the guy that really was in charge of this was Will Bachofner, chief of the State Patrol. He and his immediate subordinates did a beautiful job of meeting with these people and explaining their rights very calmly. Everybody then knew what they could do and couldn't do. It just calmed everybody's temper. And they came to the Capitol Building; they were asked not to take any arms inside, and they didn't. And it truly was a huge display "without incident." Nobody panicked and the entire situation was just almost immediately diffused before it ever started.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any role to play in your Speaker Pro Tem position?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I did not become an active participant in it at all. It was strictly up to security, and the security of that building is entirely up to the State Patrol and the guy in charge who was running the show. At that time I was using the phrase: “one riot, one chief.” If you’re going to have a problem, let one guy be in charge. Don’t everybody start running around and assuming authority. We just went about our business very quietly and very coolly. We informed the members of the House and the Senate that there was some presence outside and we suggested that they not go out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So everybody more or less just stayed put?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Our Capitol Building is really quite an open place.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you think of changing that? Did this spill over in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it wasn’t until the next session that they actually put a barrier up in the galleries so that area could be locked off from the public. It was built on a very temporary basis out of plywood and two-by-fours. About two sessions later it came down, so it was only up for a very, very short period of time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you ever nervous as a legislator that anything would happen there? Did the Capitol feel like a safe place to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it certainly did. And the reason that I wasn’t nervous—I know that everybody else probably felt the same—was because the State Patrol and Will Bachofner were pros; they knew what to do. They had

good communications; they could call on reserve troops and stuff that we knew nothing about. They didn’t run around and publish their game plan in the *Daily Olympian* or anything of the kind. They just hammered away very, very quietly, very professionally, and it was just virtually without incident.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that’s good to hear. We were talking about all the contentious issues that you were dealing with that session. What with abortion and one thing or another, a lot of people were coming down to the Capitol and pressing their cause. This is just one more of those pieces where tempers could have gotten out of hand; all kinds of things could have happened, but didn’t, as you say.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. You’re putting the emphasis in the right place; in that one session we were handling so damn many heavy-duty things all at once. Many of these things built up over a long period of time and were just coming to a head. They just came crashing in on us all at the same time. Now, you take any one huge block of that—let’s call it state reform: the reorganization of government, that in itself would have been enough. But nationally, you know, throw in a couple assassinations, sure, it creates turmoil. Then you have other things that come about and these are just added on to it. So, did we have a great, big load during the 1969 session? You bet, we probably have never had one that huge since.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did all the national turmoil have an impact on you as a legislator? Did you feel that the society and culture was changing pretty rapidly and you had to respond in some way?

**Mr. Copeland:** The national focus on that turmoil was tremendous; there wasn’t any question about it. By the same token, here



we are, just one of fifty states, trying to do our own little thing. It was not in our purview; this was all pretty much a national issue and it's something that had to be handled on that basis. It was front page on the news—everybody knew what was going on. But it wasn't anything that we had to stop and address immediately.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was something going on just outside of Olympia in the Nisqually Valley, what are now called the “fish wars,” with protestors and a lot of action out on the Nisqually River with the Nisqually Tribe trying to assert their fishing rights and having a running battle with the Fish and Wildlife authorities. Did that play into the legislative hopper at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** That played into the legislative arena. It came into sharp focus during a time the Legislature was not in session. I think Don Moos was the chairman of the Department of Fisheries at that time and he had a real confrontation with the Indians right to the point where both sides were armed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, there was violence.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, give the credit where credit is due, and I think a great deal of credit needs to go to Don because that was handled in a very cool-handed fashion and diffused without major consequences. But it wasn't anything the Legislature needed to address. The laws are on the books; they were clear. The Director of Fisheries was doing what the law prescribed; he was doing it totally within his bounds and his authority. So there was nothing for us to get ourselves concerned about. The issue was handled and handled well. Some real cool heads prevailed. Probably, his experience as an infantry platoon sergeant during the war came in very handy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The entire action had a celebrity status, what with Marlon Brando and Dick Gregory on a hunger strike down there. It was a little inflamed.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's absolutely correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose those were federal issues and court issues, not really state issues.

**Mr. Copeland:** They have a tendency to overlap. And there are certain scenarios where state regulations kick in and there are others having to do with the federal. This is why I said cool heads prevailed. Anything other than that could have been very, very messy. So no, I think as far as the state was concerned, the way that the state people handled themselves was admirable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then, it went to court, so it got settled in a very different way. Just part of a hot-tempered year. Did you, in your role as Speaker Pro Tem, keep a sort of council going on keeping people cool, as you say, keeping the debate from flaring out into these issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** We, collectively, the two caucuses—I know that the leadership of both parties got together and just kind of made it a general rule, “Let us discuss this in caucus, but let us not allow ourselves to lose the focus and the requirements that we have in front of us. We have a full plate, we need to utilize our energies and efforts and take care of those things that we're responsible for. Let us not run off into areas that are not necessarily our direct concern.” For that reason, we just took it back to caucus and said, “Hey look, these things are going on, but that's not our responsibility. I know you want to talk about it, but this is not the place, not the time, and we're not responsible for it; let us go ahead.”

And yes, we had a couple of small resolutions. They were expressions of thoughts and feelings and emotions, but we didn't...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, there is a little bit of an outlet for that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Those things are proper for a legislative body to do. Sure, you pass a resolution having to do with the grace in the mourning of the assassination of any leader, whoever it is. I mean, these things are proper, but the legislative body cannot lose sight of their main aim and objectives. They have to remain focused and that's what we were trying to do, to say, "Let us keep our eye on the ball."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's important to realize in the background, there was a lot of turmoil—the whole country was kind of in an excited state. It would be hard to keep your focus.

Let's talk about the special session. After *Sine Die* in March, you were immediately back for a special session. These are very long sessions; you stayed from March 14<sup>th</sup> to May 12<sup>th</sup>. Governor Evans pulled out almost the same list of things he still wanted and called this special session, which perhaps stretched the traditional definition of what is an emergency a little. He wanted tax reform; he still wanted constitutional reform—the Gateway Amendment; he was still pressing for executive reorganization. He listed recreation and environmental issues: a water safety act; a bill to regulate surface mining; something to help with solid waste disposal; he wanted an inventory made of rivers and shore lands—a kind of a new emphasis there. Evans talked about human resource needs: he wanted a licensing act for healthcare facilities; a bill to provide an examiner system; bills improving parole and the penal system. And I think in this case he was moving in a different direction from institutionalization. He was trying for

more of a middle ground, I understand, to have more community-based prisons, and a stronger parole system.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was more of a concentration on halfway houses.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He talked about development of low cost housing and a fair housing act. He pressed for an appellate court to be established and you did achieve that. At that point, there was the Supreme Court and the Superior Courts on the county level and then there was nothing in between?

**Mr. Copeland:** Nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so the Supreme Court was getting pretty clogged with cases that people were beginning to think were not really their task and that there should be an intermediate court?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain in a little bit more detail about what an appeals court or an appellate court would be?

**Mr. Copeland:** First, let's talk about the appeal process. The appeal process can be on the basis of any one of several things, but the major reason for the appeals process is that the court did not perform its duties and functions properly. According to the rules, that immediately is cause for an appeal. It has nothing to do with the conviction; it has nothing to do with the constitutionality of the law; it was that the court did not operate properly. So an appeal went to the Supreme Court. Now, the Supreme Court had to sit there and listen to arguments as to whether or not the judge was lawfully within his bounds in order to admit certain things into testimony and things like that, which is nothing more

than technical functions of the court. And this all came to the Supreme Court; it was the only “court of last appeal.” Consequently, the case load was getting to the point where it was overwhelming. I don’t mean to diminish the fact that there were also cases decided in the Superior Court that had constitutional questions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And those are more correctly the job of the Supreme Court?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely! There were also questions as to what is legislative intent? Did the Superior Court judge rule properly on legislative intent? Well, an appeal was filed. Where does it go? It goes to the Supreme Court. So consequently, this court was just getting to the point where it was loaded. Other states had gone through this arrangement of creating an Appellate Court system which sets a layer, an echelon, between the Superior Courts and the Supreme Court. So it was kind of a natural progression to say, “We’re so overloaded here on the top, let’s insert this and see if we can settle an awful lot of these cases here.” This was a large step, an expensive step, but by the same token, it was a necessary step in order to be able to upgrade and improve the court system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also the issue of “justice delayed is justice denied.” You’d have cases sitting around for a long time if you didn’t create this new level.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Now, right at this time—I think I’m correct—the Congress of the United States recognized that the U.S. District Courts were also in real trouble. Congress passed an act that said, “If a federal criminal case is not heard within twelve months upon its receipt, the person charged in that criminal case shall be set free.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That puts the heat on.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see what I’m saying, this was part of this whole emphasis on getting the courts to accomplish their work in a timely manner. And, we were just trying to go ahead and create the Appellate Court system and get things functioning to a point where it was going to help the entire judicial branch of government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was every one concerned about this; there no resistance?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, a vast majority of the Superior Court attorneys throughout the entire state and most assuredly all of the people on the Supreme Court were just going as fast as they could. And please understand, we had a very strong membership from the Bar Association sitting in both the House and the Senate; we had a lot of attorneys. They were perfectly willing to go along with this thing and take care of the technical details in crafting the bill. It was a slam-dunk coming out the gate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was one of those obvious reforms that had just never happened before because nobody had quite stepped up to it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a case of where the pressure had to build up so dramatically that you just had to address the problem. And here again, you can say what you want to, all of these things that truly have to be addressed, if they don’t have the executive’s backing and wholehearted support, chances are they’re really not going to get very far. But when you’ve got the Governor telling the Legislature, “I’m going to join you in this whole thing and we are going to get it done.” You get it done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the last piece falls into place then?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is it; it requires executive leadership in order to be able to get things moving.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that was a big accomplishment then; this was a major bottleneck that was solved. You did a good piece of work there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me put it around from another standpoint; I came to the Legislature and recognized the shortcomings of the legislative branch of government and knew that they were being short-changed in the entire arrangement. I also knew in my heart that I felt the best kind of government was to have three equal branches of government: the executive, the Legislature, and the judicial. We had made some very substantial steps in advancing the ability of the legislative branch of government to function in a fashion in which they should. This legislation was just another piece of the puzzle in order to be able to take care of the judicial branch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's their turn.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, this session was a long, productive and tiring session. Why? Because of a very aggressive and hard-working Governor. I was trying to upgrade the legislative branch and he was working on the executive branch. His agenda was far larger than mine and required a great deal of legislative time. I think that a great deal was accomplished, but it required some damn heavy lifting by a lot of people. But the main man in this session was the Governor. Give him the credit; he deserves it!

## CHAPTER 18

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### THE LEGISLATURE IN “FULL PRODUCTION,” 1969-1970

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In this interim—the summer and fall between this special session of 1969 and the next one that opened in January of 1970—you again served on the Legislative Council. And you were still on the House Space Allocation Committee with Don Eldridge, Bob Charette, Hal Wolf and John O’Brien. You continued to work on the facilities issues and get things up to speed. Were your relationships with the Senate more productive? Did they at last share the same goals that you wanted?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think we did have the same goals. It was just a case of how much can we get accomplished in this year; how much can get accomplished in the next two years. My acceptance by Senate members had steadily improved over the years. Bob Greive no longer had such a tight grip on everything concerning the Senate. Other members began to listen and assert their thoughts into the process rather than having Bob make all the decisions for them. So it was a case of just trying to address those things that were really paramount. From the previous year we learned some things didn’t work well, so changes were required.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine there were always things coming up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes: telephones. See, we were just envisioning the impact computers could have right now. And then we also had the House and Senate remodeling that was coming up inside of a year or two. So this was all in the planning stages. When are we going to do the remodeling? How much is it going to cost? Who’s going to be the architect? Who’s going to be in charge of selection of things like carpets, and are we going to get new chairs; if we’re going to get new chairs... So all of this was just in the planning stages.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be a lot of meetings, a lot of coming back to Olympia.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How are you getting any farming done?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time I owned an airplane. I took up flying in order to be able to get from point A to point B. I was spending a lot of time traveling from Olympia to Walla Walla and back.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a long drive. What was the road like then? Was the Columbia Gorge road built by then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, the Columbia Gorge Road was in and I would use it if I could not go over Snoqualmie Pass. The commercial airline connections were not all that great; there were no flights to Olympia. So I just said to myself, “God, my time is such...”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There had to be a better way?

**Mr. Copeland:** I owned an airplane with a friend of mine, Bob Loney. Bob and I decided that neither of us could justify the ownership of one airplane, but the two of us together



probably could. So it was a great relationship. We had a Cessna 210, single-engine aircraft with retractable gears. Small, but it would cruise about one hundred and twenty miles per hour.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people would fit comfortably in the plane?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, four easy and some luggage. I did not become an instrument pilot. If you're an instrument pilot, you really have to fly under instrument conditions two or three times a month just to remain proficient and I just didn't want to devote that much time to flying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever have any narrow escapes?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I never tried to get myself into a position where I was in any danger.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You flew only in good weather?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. There is an old saying: "There is no such thing as an old, bold pilot." I would check the weather and if it was bad I would just call and say I would not be making the meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was it the difference between making it possible—or not—to be in the Legislature? It would have taken so much more time to drive—that would have been prohibitive?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And I did enjoy the flying. I enjoyed it immensely. When you hit the bottom line—the cost of the aircraft versus the all-day driving, staying overnight and related costs—it comes out about the same. It got to the point where I'd fly into Ellensburg and pick up Stu Bledsoe

and we'd fly over and make a meeting; then I'd drop Stu off on my way home. A couple of times I picked up Bob Goldsworthy in Whitman County or Bob McDougall in Wenatchee. Vaughn Hubbard flew with me on several occasions. Traveling from the eastern part of the state isn't all that much fun. It just takes a long time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then arriving tired from the drive. It's a quality of life issue. But flying would be a different kind of commute. Without that this would have been much more onerous for someone from eastern Washington to be this involved.

**Mr. Copeland:** And not only from Walla Walla to Olympia, but we would meet other places. Stu and Vaughn Hubbard were both old Navy pilots, so they liked to fly the airplane, too. Quite frequently I'd pick Stu up and he'd fly the airplane over and I'd do some reading or whatever. So it was great from that standpoint. It allowed me the opportunity to get around to various places that I never would have been able to do otherwise. I could, on a good day, take off out of Walla Walla by seven-thirty in the morning and get in here at the Olympia airport quite easily in two hours time. I could make a ten o'clock meeting and strap myself in the airplane by four o'clock in the afternoon and be home in time for dinner. It wasn't a night away and wasn't the five or six hours driving time which it would normally take. The only thing that I was subject to on that was inclement weather. I would just call up and say, "I can't make it." I wasn't going to fly off into bad weather conditions.

And then another aspect to it was that the flying public of the state of Washington found out I was in the Legislature and they wanted me to handle all their aviation legislation. This translated into more work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, pretty dashing! We'll hold that image. Now besides all

these facilities issues, were there any new developments working on campaigns or did you continue with the same kind of things you've been doing all along?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only on the basis that it was better coordinated; there was better communication and we had far more sophisticated meetings in communities where we were interested in getting candidates. Quite often, there'd be three or four of us that would meet with business leaders and ask them what they wanted, what they expected out of the Legislature. Did they have anybody in their midst that was at all interested in becoming a candidate? And frequently that was the source of recruitment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And again this year, you attended the National Conference of State Legislative Leaders. You attended, along with the Speaker, the Chief Clerk, the Assistant Chief Clerk, and three additional members of the leadership from each caucus. So that'd be quite a good group.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is where we were talking to other states to find out if they had any computer programs that they were working on that would be applicable to state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you were still having that rich interchange.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, this particular type of interchange was so good. At those meetings, all of the Chief Clerks from all of the states would have their meetings running concurrently with ours. And they would get together and say, “What are the problems that you have as far as administering this legislative branch of government?” The Chief Clerk and the Secretary of the Senate would get together and say, “How can we

improve our situation without necessarily having to reinvent the wheel?” So it was just a wonderful, wonderful exchange. The state of Washington was one of the leaders in the computerization field; we were far ahead of all of the other states and we had something to give them—our experience. So we had far more people come visit us because they realized that maybe these computers are not just a flash-in-the-pan like the hula-hoop. It's entirely possible these computers were going to be here for a long period of time. In his oral history interview, Dick White, the Code Reviser, tells about his visits to other states to explain the computer involvement in bill drafting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting that Washington State is a leader in computer use well before Microsoft hits the headlines. You were already there, long before Washington State is thought of as the home of Microsoft.

**Mr. Copeland:** If it hadn't been for people like Dick, his staff, Dan Evans and myself dragging these people into the twentieth century kicking and screaming we would never have done this. Dick was the “main man.” Without Dick that whole thing would have died.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The right people in the right place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, and give credit to the Governor; he could have poo-pooed this whole thing. He realized there was some real value in this. At any rate, the Legislative Leaders Conference was a wonderful opportunity to arrange for the sharing and exchange of computer information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the highlights of your career, I think, was going to these meetings and having these exchanges.

**Mr. Copeland:** We'd have seminars. On a couple of occasions, I was the featured speaker on things that were going on in the state of Washington. We came away recognizing we were virtually light years ahead of more than half the states as far as the conduct, the operation and facilities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you find a way to talk about this highly technical subject that would bring people in rather than overwhelm them with technical jargon that nobody could understand? Did you invent a way of making this accessible so that people would get excited and not intimidated?

**Mr. Copeland:** I found experts to do the technical things. I could easily explain the practical application. I could talk to people about computers in a way that they would begin to understand. We had so many wonderful technical people, but they couldn't get out of the technical language.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your role to be the person in the middle who understands the technical aspect but also understands how to convey it to lay people?

**Mr. Copeland:** My role in life has been so much on the basis where I had become a teacher or an instructor. I started that in high school with the reproduction of the mammal. And as soon as I got in the Army, what was I doing? I was training other people and giving classes. Then the operation of the ranch, what did I have to do? I had to train all of the people that were going to work that year. We had to teach them how to run the equipment. I had to learn first, but then I had to teach somebody else, because I couldn't run all of those pieces of equipment. So all my life that's all I've been doing; I've been an instructor all my life in little bitty things or great big huge things. And so this was just kind of an adjunct to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, by then, perhaps you had some finesse in how to do this: how to present information, how to reach people, how to get them excited and on board. So you were well placed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. It's like the lovely story about the Reverend whose congregation was so large a reporter came to him and said, "Reverend, why do you have such a large congregation?" He replied, "It's real simple. Before I start the sermon, I tell them what I'm going to tell them and then during the sermon I tell them what I want to tell them, and before I close I tell them what I told them."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just in case they missed it. In a subject like this, laying it out so that it can be grasped is really important. Figuring out "How did I used to think about this before I knew what it was and how did I learn it?"

**Mr. Copeland:** You're correct. In other words, "Get out of the box, open up your mind; don't have the doors close in front of you. Find out if there's something out there that's brand new, different, exciting and thrilling that might be able to change your way of living to improve your lifestyle." I taught lots of classes in "get out of the box."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You know, some people do have this idea that farmers are very, you know, slow to change and kind of stuck in tradition, but you just blew that one apart!

**Mr. Copeland:** My biggest critics were people who just didn't want to take the time to understand computers. Bob Greive was one. He called me a "computer-happy" legislator. I don't think Bob or the others ever tried to learn what potential a computer could have on their lives. Their minds were closed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly you were busy doing all these things. Then you went back

to what was beginning almost to amount to annual sessions. The Governor as much as acknowledged that when he called you back into session January 12 until February 12, 1970. At first, it was thought that you were going to take care of a whole lot of business within twenty-one days or so, but then you gave yourselves a little bit more time—thirty days, but you had a big plate again. Before we open our discussion, however, there was one change that may have made some difference in how things were run. Ward Bowden, who had been the Secretary of the Senate, died suddenly and Sid Snyder, who had been your Assistant Chief Clerk, was invited to take his place in the Senate. Sid Snyder had become somewhat of an institution in the House, helping out over the years. The House replaced him with Don Wilson. Did that make a difference in how things were run, having to bring in a new person?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we just knew that was a short session and 'Dutch' McBeath was the Chief Clerk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would have some continuity there.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a natural progression for Sid to go to the Senate. He possessed the greatest knowledge of the Legislature of any of the state employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes a difference. What you're doing here was really compressed, so all the systems had to be functioning pretty top-notch to get this done.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's well for you to bring this up because at the time Sid was the Assistant Chief Clerk, we had made an earlier agreement with the Democrats.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To take turns with that appointment?

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody knew from time to time the makeup of the House was going to change. The agreement was that the majority party would select the Chief Clerk and the minority party would select the Assistant Chief Clerk. So Sid was the selection of the Democrats but when he left to go to the Senate, the Democrats selected Don Wilson.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Part of getting things off the ground in this concentrated session, you announced early on that you had new forms for amendments. You said, "These will be pasted together and there will be automatic carbons. When you present amendments, the Chief Clerk will be able to have one copy and you will have a copy. These won't be available until next week, but when the new forms come out we will be able to handle the procedure much easier." Were you beginning to do away with the multiple carbon copies, or what is this little innovation here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Prior to this, somebody could go up to the desk with a piece of paper, not necessarily written in any real good form, and say, "This is an amendment to House Bill 123." The form we were introducing created the trail audit. It said, "This is an amendment to 'fill in the blank' on section 'blank,' insert the following." Now you could attach printed material to the form. This product had actually come out of discussions that our Chief Clerk had with other Chief Clerks as to how they were handling amendments. He created a number on each form: "This is number fourteen, so this is amendment fourteen, but it's only going to go to that one bill." The next one was fifteen; now the Chief Clerk could follow these things in numerical order. In the event this bill got delayed the amendment remained attached and when the bill came up for reconsideration, the amendment was still there. It created a trail audit on amendments and gave some continuity to the whole thing.

Now the Chief Clerk could know that there was one amendment on this bill; there were three here; there's five here, and so forth. So he was able to handle these in a very orderly fashion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm always amazed at what it must have taken to keep the paper trail straight. Occasionally you see in the Journal complaints and comments: "Where's this; where's that," and "I don't have this on my desk," —a lot of complaints and you get the picture that managing the paper was a bit of a nightmare.

**Mr. Copeland:** I heard on television just two days ago, the Lieutenant Governor was reading an amendment on a bill, "Amendment Number 485." Now, this does not mean there were 485 amendments to that bill; this is the 485<sup>th</sup> amendment that has come across the desk in the Senate and so this is part of the trail audit. That's why the whole thing began right here: so that the Chief Clerk and the Secretary of the Senate could start numbering these amendments so they knew where they were and follow them. Now, even in the Journals, you can go in there and say, "Whatever happened to Amendment Number Twenty-seven? It was voted down and it says so in the Journal." You can track it. A legislative first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Paper management has got to be an issue in a place like that. So this innovation brought in 1970 is still good, people are still using this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it difficult to train the members to fill out the forms?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just a case of having them realize: "We've got to make a change.

There's going to be improvement. This is the name of the game and so bear with us."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were continuing to tweak and tighten the system and bring in ideas to make it work more smoothly. I wonder if you had a role in this next instance. Because you were going to have this very compressed session of thirty days, there was a lot of work put into setting the calendar so that the work could really zip along. Apparently it worked very well—you had joint hearings with the Senate and House so that you didn't have to duplicate—people didn't have to come down twice and testify. And some of the committee meetings were held jointly. This seemed to bring everything together in a way that was new. You had a very big agenda and you or the leadership tried to persuade members not to introduce a whole lot of little bills for their districts but just keep it fairly uncluttered and stick to the big ones. Did you have conversations in caucus about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes we did, we had conversations that essentially said, "We've got enough legislation on our desk right now. If there's something that really is earth shaking you want to introduce, it's got to be on an emergency basis." We just didn't have the time to handle it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any resistance or resentment that the agenda was pretty much Governor-set instead of coming out of the Legislature? Everybody was on board with that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. A great deal of the material that was handled in the Extraordinary Session in '70 were bills we just could not get through in the '69 session; it was just too much. Now, this business of having the joint sessions, that was now coming about because the Senate was also running on a calendar. After all these years...



**Ms. Kilgannon:** They're finally on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** They finally got to the point where they were going to publish ahead of time when their committees were going to meet. Consequently, they went ahead and adopted approximately the same format as the House. That was done on the basis that "the Big Three," which would be the Appropriations Committees, the Revenue Committees and the Transportation Committees of the Senate and the House, would always have a block of time in the afternoons. Normally that time was from three to five o'clock, or two to five in the afternoon. Because of the fact that they had concurrent meeting times, we could go ahead and schedule some joint House and Senate meetings. A fruition of having the House and the Senate operate on the calendar enabled us to schedule joint meetings and conserve time for the general public to come in and be heard.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How well this worked seemed to really be a hallmark of this particular session.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but don't misunderstand, other committees were also having joint meetings. In the 1970 session, we sat down and went through the same format we had started before. "Can we have a joint hearing on this particular measure with the Senate?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would you have your counterpart in the Senate in there helping you?

**Mr. Copeland:** The chairman of the House committee would go to the chairman of the Senate committee and say, "Can we have a joint meeting?" If the answer was, "Yes, we can on Tuesday between ten and eleven," he or she would come right back and say, "Fine, put it down: joint meeting Tuesday ten to eleven." It was like clockwork.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was timely, getting all that in place, because you were trying to do a lot of business. There was talk also of getting your members to, I guess, downplay their political considerations and realize that a lot of the big bills would be initiated by the Senate and not the House. How did you get House members to acquiesce in that particular arrangement so that bills would get through? If there was a competing House bill, the process might get bogged down. How did you go about getting your members to see it that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, frequently the bills would be cross-filed—duplicate bills would be introduced in the House and Senate. Quite often it would depend upon which bill was going to truly grab the head of steam and move forward.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the big bills were House bills, but a lot of them were from the Senate.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, but you have to understand on the big bills, the possibility of a big bill passing was enhanced if it was introduced in the Senate first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then you wouldn't want to monkey around with that too much, I guess.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. You didn't go over there in the Senate and start telling them what to do. The Governor was working the course in the Senate, trying to get the legislation passed. "If he gets this bill and that bill out of the Senate, even though we do have them cross-filed in the House, let's not push our chances. As soon as that Senate bill gets over here, let's move on it." We were monitoring those bills on a daily basis; we knew which ones were going to get pushed out of the Senate to the House. And so, from that standpoint, the process worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were persuasive? Members were able to dampen down their need to have their names on bills?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had to work on the basis of having the Senate initiate the big bills. If we ran with a bill first and everybody in the House put their little twist on it, frequently, it would get to the Senate and the Senate would say, “The House has got this bill so screwed up, we don’t want to have anything to do with it,” and that would be the end of it. I’ll say again, the chances of one of those major reorganization bills passing was far better off if it passed the Senate first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that also a way of bringing the Democrats on board for these big changes? Let them put their names on it; let them take responsibility for it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. They were looking for credits. Don’t take that away and then fail to pass the entire thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** House members were definitely watching what’s going on and occasionally digging in their heels and refusing to concur with the Senate, but only in certain areas. The Senate wanted to spend more than the House did. The Republican House put the brakes on that and they did say, “No, we’re sticking to this level,” and that did hold. I guess you had to pick your battles.

**Mr. Copeland:** At this point we would defer to Bob Goldsworthy, the House chairman of the Appropriations Committee. He kept a running total of projected spending and would alert the caucus if we were reaching limitations. He was wonderful at this type of control. And he asserted himself on more than one occasion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As groundwork for our discussion, let’s look at some of the big bills

that the Governor wanted. This, of course, is known as the environmental session and definitely that was the highest priority for the Governor; he called for a whole series of environmental bills. Certainly, given what you accomplished, that’s a true name. You created the Department of Ecology, and you got, I think, six different big bills through that dealt with the environment. Unemployment compensation also turned out to be a rather large issue as well. Executive reorganization was still on the plate. Another one that became rather contentious was a measure to allow local governments to raise their own revenues. Low-income housing and the eighteen-year old vote are also in there.

When the session first opened, the Democrats weren’t buying that list; that wasn’t their program. They said, “No, no, this is the welfare session. We’re going to take care of welfare issues.” They had a very different construction on what they were there to do. The Boeing bust, so-called, was well under way by 1970; the economic fall-out had begun a year or so before and many people were unemployed, especially in Seattle and the surrounding areas. I imagine that’s what the Democrats are looking at: a lot of union people are unemployed; the economy was in a bad place. You, yourself, with John O’Brien called on Congress in a House Resolution to provide remedies. A lot of this pain stemmed from the cancellation of the SST order by Congress, which threw a lot of people out of work at Boeing. You were calling on Congress to provide remedies—perhaps a new contract to help Boeing, or I’m not sure what the remedies would be—but what did you consider to be federal responsibility here and what was a state responsibility to deal with the Boeing crisis?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think the federal government had a role to play in the whole thing. They’re the big dog on the block, there’s no doubt about it, and how they treat

their states is really something. Could you read that resolution so I can get into the details?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's see: "Whereas, the major industries including aerospace, forest products and metal companies of the state of Washington are experiencing extensive economic recession..." So this is actually bigger than Boeing, but it certainly ripples out. "And whereas, due to this critical economic situation in which the aerospace industry alone has been forced so far this year to reduce its workforce by approximately 5,000 employees who are residents of the state; and whereas the projected work force reduction for this industry during 1970 is estimated to be about 18,000 persons; and whereas these payroll reductions are adversely effecting the entire economy of the state, the vitality of the state and local government services and the future of orderly growth and development of this state; and whereas other industries within the state are unable to absorb these employment reductions because of their own economic slowdowns of workforce reductions; now, therefore, be it resolved that the House of Representatives requests members of the United States Congress and the President to do everything possible to ease or offset the fiscal and monetary policies causing economic distress to residents of the state of Washington. Be it further resolved that immediate measures be taken to help provide employment for those who are unemployed; and be it further resolved that all steps be taken to restore the economy and to prevent further unemployment within the area; and be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent," etc. Would a new contract to Boeing have taken care of this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Partially.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have other things in mind?

**Mr. Copeland:** Unemployment comp probably was something we had in mind—you know, the federal government has the ability to be able to say how long you get paid benefits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do some federal dollars come into unemployment compensation?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. States pay into the fund. Only under emergency conditions can additional money come back from the fund to the affected state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the Feds regulate it?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Feds and the states regulate it. So they have the authority to go ahead and extend the benefit period if they want to, but not at the expense of another state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And the state can't do that without federal say-so?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct, because we pay into a fund and they manage the fund. Of course, they manage the fund collectively, so quite often they will use money that is in somebody else's account to take care of some other state that may be in trouble, but that's immediately replaced with federal impact monies. We were only saying, "Hey listen, fellows. We're in trouble. You caused an awful lot of this by canceling the SST program."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you working closely with the congressional delegation and the senators from Washington?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a method the Legislature has of being able to get something to the congressional delegation, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what was their response?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very minimal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had no recourse, you were stuck with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's one of the reasons the Boeing problem got worse.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you surprised that the federal government didn't step in?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had pretty much made of their minds and that was that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think the federal government at that time had any kind of a response mechanism built in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they didn't actually have any way of doing anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** Congress will react if the situation's terrible; Congress will not react if the situations bad—it's a matter of degree.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the state would have had to break off and fall into the ocean before you would have gotten anything?

**Mr. Copeland:** Awfully close.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, this was the era of President Nixon and his new federalism and block grants to the states and what not. Some people liked that and other people thought that too much money stuck and didn't come back to the states. Do you have any feelings about how that worked?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, strong feelings! Whenever

you gave money to the federal government in order that they could reallocate it back to you, you got thirteen cents on the dollar, something like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you would have just as soon kept the money in the state?

**Mr. Copeland:** But the Congress of the United States was trying to do all of these lovely things. I remember the case of where it became very vogue to say everybody needs open spaces. So Congress, in their wisdom, passed an appropriation so that states could buy open spaces. The states owned them and the residents could go there and go into the timber or out on beaches or whatever it is, so every state would be involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To be fair, this was an era when cities were melting down so that people wanted to go somewhere else for respite.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So Congress went ahead and appropriated all this money. They allocated it out to the various states on a population basis. The populated states got a lot of money; those states that didn't have any population didn't get much. But I remember what the Governor of Wyoming said, "What am I going to do with all this money, go out and buy open spaces for the state of Wyoming?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wyoming's nothing but open spaces.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is the case of so many of the federal programs. Congressmen said, "My state needs this so let's give it to all the states." This was vogue at the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Actually, the Governor of Washington State was talking about open spaces too, for that matter.

**Mr. Copeland:** I know the Governor was talking about open spaces here; there isn't any question about. And he needs open spaces when he's on Sixth and Union. But just a little bit east of Republic, Washington, I don't think they need a whole lot of open spaces. And there are a lot of open spaces around Washougal, and Cathlamet's got a bunch of open spaces.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there would be no really equitable way to deal with any of this? Broad-brush solutions very rarely work in specific cases, so that's not too surprising.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If the federal government did not really help you with the Boeing bust, what could the state do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very little. We were trapped and we knew that our revenues were going to drop. About the only thing we could do was make sure we didn't spend money that we weren't going to get in. The best revenue forecast we had was showing we were going to be taking in less money. We needed to construct a budget that was not going to break the bank.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But wouldn't you also have a higher call for social services? Unemployment insurance, welfare... People were getting pretty desperate.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And judging from your resolution, Boeing was not the only company in trouble.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had other areas

in the state—the forest products industry was mentioned here—that were also having difficulties, but maybe of a slightly different nature.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would they have more intermittent unemployment, boom and bust cycles or was just the whole thing slowing down?

**Mr. Copeland:** The timber industry has always been very cyclical over the years as far as employment is concerned. You are not going to go out there and work in the woods when it's twenty below zero and there's twenty feet of snow on the ground.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, that doesn't work.

**Mr. Copeland:** These things are inherent with the industry. But when you have a downturn in the economy like we did and all of a sudden the building trade falls off and the price of lumber drops to nothing, then the loggers don't even go back to work in the summertime. So that's not cyclical; that is unemployment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all the support industries: the trucking and the smaller industries that operate around all of these bigger industries would also be hit and it would ripple out pretty far. So the state had a crisis on its hands of pretty big proportions. You did have a spate of bills dealing with unemployment insurance. According to different press reports, Washington had one of the lowest rates in the nation of payment for unemployment insurance. Apparently nobody had been studying it or doing anything with it for about eleven years and it had lost pace, you might say, with costs of living and other things that drive these numbers. Three



bills were introduced in the House dealing with unemployment insurance; you were a co-sponsor of one of them. They all went into the Labor and Employment Committee and never came back out of that committee. You were in that committee; what kinds of solutions were you looking for?

**Mr. Copeland:** One that could get passed by both the House and the Senate, but to no avail. It had been some time since the Legislature looked at the issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps this was one of the occasions where the House members sat on their own bills, because it was the Senate bill that went through. Maybe you were all working on different amendments and different issues but hold them and you go with the Senate bill. The prime sponsor was Senator Greive—this was kind of his area of expertise. Senate Bill 8 became the vehicle for unemployment insurance; it came to the House and a striking amendment was placed on it which pretty much stripped the Senate bill and put the various House pieces in there. Was that a mechanism for getting what you needed, but keeping Senator Greive's name on it so that it will go back through the Senate with more ease?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a mechanism for getting the bill into conference. The House amended a Senate bill and sent it back to the Senate and asked the Senate to concur in the House amendment. See, occasionally the House comes up with the best idea.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it goes through, it works. There was occasional sniping about this issue, primarily from Representative Gary Grant. He has some sort of set-to with Speaker Don Eldridge—a lot of sarcastic remarks back and forth which was somewhat uncharacteristic of the Speaker, at least. One

thing I wanted to note was that Don Eldridge had broken his arm in five places before this session and he was, I think, in a fair amount of pain; I don't know if that frayed his temper a little or if just the rush of events but anyway there was some temper here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but understand, Gary Grant could fray Don Eldridge's temper a lot more rapidly than a break in his arm.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He'd rather break his arm than dealing with Representative Grant, is that it? It even gets into the newspaper, which is a little unusual. There's a P.I. article that says, "The House Democratic caucus has chastised Speaker Don Eldridge for a lack of decorum," and what they call "his prejudice against some members." By that they mean Gary Grant. And they send him a letter complaining about him, but he's not really buying this. They refer to what they call "Eldridge's flair of temper" during an exchange with Representative Gary Grant about this bill when Grant asked "when is it going to come out and when are they going to hear it." And Don Eldridge replies that he's holding it because there's a negotiating team between the Democrats and the Republicans working on this issue and he doesn't want to mess up their negotiations. And he's part of the negotiating team himself and wants to kind of hold off to let their work go forward so that the House, presumably, can have a more of a united front for when they address the Senate bill. Is that your recollection of events?

**Mr. Copeland:** You put it well. At this point you have to understand where Gary is coming from. First of all, he was Bob Greive's counterpart in the House; he is for all intent and purposes labor's lobby sitting on the floor of the House. Anything that labor wanted Gary Grant was thoroughly in tune with. So this is his opportunity to be an antagonist. The bill has now come over and immediately

he's up on a Point of Personal Privilege, "Why aren't you acting on the bill right now; why don't we pass this bill right now?" Of course, we had to follow the normal procedures and refer it to committee and find out whether the committee had even heard the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he wanted to have it come out immediately, skip a few steps?

**Mr. Copeland:** He doesn't want to have any kind of a compromise on it. He just wants to have the Senate hear it first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he's making the Speaker a little testy here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. This is called "grandstanding."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just part of the game?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is all part of the game and Don happened to get a little bit...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wasn't quite in the mood that day?

**Mr. Copeland:** I would think that was the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These negotiations carried on, nonetheless. The Speaker's committee included Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Charette and Sid Morrison as well as himself, two from each caucus. Eventually on January 31<sup>st</sup>, not too much later, it was brought to the floor for Second Reading and members of that committee—Sid Morrison taking the lead—had a series of amendments beginning with the striking amendment, which is, of course, the biggest kind of amendment you can have. And they laid out a whole new bill, I don't know if you want to go into the details of the provisions of this bill.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were recording the whole bill in the Journal, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They speak in favor of it, Representative Grant and Jueling speak against it but the striking amendment is adopted. And then things moved rather quickly. Hal Wolf moved to suspend the rules so that the Second Reading would be considered the Third and go onto final passage. Representative O'Brien, one of the members of the Speaker's committee, spoke in favor of that. Seventy-four members voted aye, including yourself, of course. At this point you rose on a Point of Personal Privilege to commend the members of that committee and draw attention to their work and congratulate them for what looked like a fairly grueling activity. There was a round of applause acknowledging their work. The bill went over to the Senate and they accepted it. It was duly signed it and went to the Governor's desk. A real achievement.

**Mr. Copeland:** What you've done here is recitate of how you can reach a compromise position in one of the two houses. Sid Morrison was taking the lead on the whole thing. He became a very recognized authority on unemployment bills. What they did, they crafted a compromise bill and notwithstanding what Gary Grant said or even Bob Greive, the Senate bought it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They accepted it.

**Mr. Copeland:** But I think that you'll probably find that Gary Grant voted against the bill in the House. Read the 'no' votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Amen, Barden, Benitz, Berentson—it's bi-partisan, by the way, who's against it—Clark, Curtis, Flanagan, Gladder, Goldsworthy, Grant, Harris, Hubbard, Jueling, Kopet, Litchman, Mahaffey, Pardini, Perry, Richardson, Shera, Spanton, Wojahn and

Wolf. A real mixed bag, it doesn't turn out to be a partisan issue at all. You had a huge number of Democrats who voted for it as well as Republicans. I remember reading a statement from Senator Bailey saying, "Labor doesn't love it, industry doesn't love it; it must be a good bill," or something to that effect. You found the middle ground, is that how it happened to work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you have to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were a lot of remarks about Joe Davis being involved and working with Gary Grant very closely. Now, would he be able to step back and say, "This is as good as we're going to get right now, so let's go with it?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably. As soon as he realized how many people in the House had voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A big number.

**Mr. Copeland:** Then he probably went over to the Senate and said, "Let's do it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes the writing's on the wall?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was surprised that the Senate just went right with it.

**Mr. Copeland:** You had the bipartisan agreement in the House that paved the way; it was a slam-dunker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you had a large number of Democrats on that bill. Now, there's another bill like that in a way, the local taxes bill. Another kind of bi-partisan effort, you might say. This was a House bill—this broke

the pattern of the big bills coming over from the Senate; this originated with the House. Did this bill to allow counties and cities to adjust their tax rates originate with them, or was this something where the state was saying, "We want you to pick up this responsibility and therefore we're going to give you the means to raise your revenues if you need to?" Do you remember where this discussion started?

**Mr. Copeland:** It probably would have been on the basis of where the county came to the Legislature and said, "Can you give us the authority to go ahead and adjust?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, all through the sixties, the burden on the cities was growing. All across the country you see cities really struggling with trying to provide all these services and more populations within cities pressing for more things. It was getting to kind of a crunch time. Representatives Wetzel and Newman Clark were the sponsors of this bill, "Authorizing cities and counties to impose a sales and use tax." I know what a sales tax is, but what is a use tax? Is that a sort of a fee for certain things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, there are all kinds of use taxes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The bill came out of committee with some amendments and there was a point of inquiry which I think sets the stage for this bill. Representative Barden asked Representative Haussler, "If the intent of this act is to make the cities and counties more responsible for their own expenditures and to grant them the authority to fund their own programs, what is the purpose of this artificial cut-off date," which was part of this bill, "which in effect is going to bring the Legislature and cities back into a bargaining position." And Representative

Haussler answered, "Mr. Barden, personally, I would rather have no termination, but I think in deference to the passage of the bill it is necessary that there be a termination date. Also, by that time we will know what happened to the income tax and we will be able to take a new look at the entire problem of local government." So you were trying to solve some problems, but the whole tax issue was in a somewhat fluid state and pinning anything down was, I guess, getting complicated. Would this be the mechanism they would use when they said, "Let's just try this for a few years and then come back and look at it."?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were all kinds of amendments proposed, quite an extensive debate. There's an amendment proposed by Representatives Marsh, Zimmerman, O'Dell and Smith that said, "Any city of the state located in any border county of second class or smaller, which county borders a neighboring state or province, which state or province does not oppose a sales and use tax and which city does not levy a sales and use tax under the provision of this act, then such cities shall receive its prorated share of the ten million dollars from the General Fund appropriation appropriated by the Legislature in Section III in the same manner it would have received distribution if this act had not been enacted." You voted for that amendment. Did you consider your area of the state a border county?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was more debate, but that seems like the sticking point for a lot of people, whether these border areas would get a different provision.

**Mr. Copeland:** The problem you have quite simply is, any time you raise the sales tax, then Oregon residents who would normally trade with you would say, "It costs me eight or ten percent more if I go to Washington to buy it," or whatever it is. And any time you begin to raise that sales tax you automatically have extra dollars flowing out of the state and going into a lesser competing arrangement. So you think you're doing something nice for the cities and the counties by giving them the authority to raise their tax rates, but it cannot be applied uniformly to all cities and counties because of this border problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So your provision would have found funds for them without them having to raise their rates?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct; of course the Legislature wasn't about to buy into that, but this is just pointing out the problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that constitutional to have different rates here and there? I thought they all had to be uniform?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know if it would be constitutional or not; I don't think the question was ever raised. But what I'm saying is when you start dinking around with sales tax and you've got a state that you're bordering on that has no sales tax, then you run into competing forces. And yes, it may sound like it's a nice thing to authorize the cities and the counties to go ahead and authorize their own sales tax, but it cannot be uniformly applied.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's a solution for some, but not for all?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct; I mean this is very similar to the open spaces again. "What am I going to do with the fifty thousand dollars to buy open spaces in Wyoming?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they probably needed money for other things. Now, Representative Grant was inserting himself into this debate—again in a sort of scrappy manner—and pushing the edges of this debate. Was that his normal mode of operating?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it was. Gary always was very contentious and very abrasive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that very effective, in your opinion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not over the long haul.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just wondering, over the course of a session, what that was like.

**Mr. Copeland:** You hated to see him even get recognized because you knew it was going to be not a very pleasant moment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some charges that the Speaker stopped recognizing him.

**Mr. Copeland:** That wouldn't surprise me at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather that's within the prerogative of the Speaker to just simply not see some one?

**Mr. Copeland:** True. In the interest of the House it may be better not to have a confrontation at that time. That is a decision the Speaker must make.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just keeps hitting the newspapers as a story.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think often Gary Grant was doing this in order to be able to have the newspapers write about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It worked. Anyway, it

was a fairly contentious debate, a lot of the amendments were lost—a lot of them having to do with border counties—and in the end, it was a fairly close vote: forty-nine to forty-two, with eight being absent. You voted against the bill; you never did buy onto this provision. It did eventually pass though, so that's one you lost. When it went to Third Reading, members were still trying to bring amendments. There was a Call of the House: fifty-two members voted for it, forty-four voted against it in final passage.

**Mr. Copeland:** Fifty-two aye? That's two extra votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And again, it's not a Republican/Democratic issue; it was a geographic issue. The vote was real mixture: there were Seattle people voting against it; I couldn't make a pattern myself.

**Mr. Copeland:** I can't believe it. Read the 'no' votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ackley, Amen, Bagnariol, Barden, Bottiger, Brouillet...these are not border counties. Conner, Conway, Copeland, Curtis, DeJarnatt, Flanagan, Fleming... here's a Seattle vote, Gallagher, Hoggins, Hubbard, Hurley...she's from a border county, Jastad, Juelling, Kalich, King, Kink, Litchman...again Seattle, Marsh, Martinez...not a border county, May, McCormick...he's Spokane, Merrill, Moon, O'Dell, Pardini, Perry, Randall, Rosellini, Savage, Sawyer...that's certainly not a border county, Schumaker, Shinpoch, Smith, Thompson, Williams, Wojahn...again Pierce County, Wolf, Zimmerman...Zimmerman is from a border county. I can't figure it out; maybe some of these votes are ideological; maybe some of them are geography. I don't have a sense of the why or wherefore for some of these votes.



**Mr. Copeland:** That really is a mixed bag.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Gary Grant voted for it so apparently he was happy in the end. It went to the Senate, the Senate had amendments that they wanted to offer but they're more technical; they don't seem to have anything much to do with border counties. It's not recommended that you concur and they finally agree to recede two days later, they sign it and you have the bill. So there was a lot of heat and not much light on that bill.

**Mr. Copeland:** Lots of heat!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature again addressed the abortion issue. House Bill 116 was sponsored by Lois North, Chatalas, Kink, Smith, Scott, Charette, yourself, and Sprague. It passed the House, but it died in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Then Senator Pritchard's Senate Bill 8 became the vehicle which passed both houses and went to referendum. It was voted in and Washington State became one of the earliest states to have a fairly liberal abortion bill—ahead of the federal government and ahead of most states.

Turning now to the main issue, when the Governor had called the special session, he listed the environmental issue first and that is, of course, the biggest accomplishment of the session. Even before the session, the Governor had called a meeting of legislative leaders and environmental leaders of the newly formed Washington Environmental Council for a meeting at Crystal Mountain. Were you part of that meeting?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've never seen a full list of those who were there. Were you aware of the meeting being called?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much did other members know about what was being discussed there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think that the people who were sitting on the committee who had been hearing those bills and the committee chairmen in both the House and the Senate were in attendance. And I'm sure Dan invited people from the environmental community to come in, you know, forest products people, and the Sierra Club—I mean, you name it. Everybody was there so they had a piece of the action.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed to be what made this a success. It was an environmental summit with all the main players. The Governor put all these people together, stuck them up on a mountain and they hammered out a program.

**Mr. Copeland:** This obviously is the best way to do it. Try to get as many of the antagonists together as you possibly can in one room. Then all of a sudden, they begin to realize, "This guy that I don't particularly like and this guy I don't particularly agree with are just like me anyway; you know, he puts his pants on one leg at a time just like I do and maybe he isn't as bad as I thought."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose many of these people have never met each other before. They don't exactly run in the same circles.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And all of a sudden, maybe what you think is a great big huge issue, by comparison, may be just this one small point. Then they say, "You know, maybe I better back off on this one." So it's a heck of a lot easier to find common ground if you get all of the players together and just start visiting about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And if you get a Governor who's really on fire about something and pulls you together and leads you in one direction, is that the ingredient that makes it happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Dan was excellent at this. He chose to risk an awful lot of political capital by taking a leadership position. He would do this time and time again, and politically, it was not the correct thing to do because it was so risky. But it worked out in the long run; it was the right thing to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is the first year celebrating Earth Day. The environmental movement was still new, but it was in a take-off phase. Was that clear to legislators, that this was the next "big thing?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Not at that time, no. I think the only thing that the legislators were truly aware of was, number one, we had to do something about that damn department and try to get a handle on some of this stuff. What they did in the future was something else. But for the Governor to call these people together and say, "Okay, let's sit down and see where we can get on it. Ladies and gentlemen, this is where I am." Now, they knew exactly where he was standing. How close can sides come from the left and the right and the front and the rear? "How close can you people move to where I am?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would you put yourself in this discussion—I mean not on Crystal Mountain—but the whole environmental movement?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was interested in getting all of the controls under one agency.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you it was more of an administrative issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, we just had so many little pieces of an agency who had a little bit of control here; another department had a little bit of control there; another somebody had a little bit of control here. And you couldn't find the guy in charge! See, that is the assault on government: "I don't know where government is; I don't know who the responsible guy is; and you walk in and say, 'Who am I supposed to see?'" and the guy points his finger and says that person over there." So no, I was interested in first, finding out who in hell is in charge; once you find out who's in charge, then you can work on the direction. The Sierra Club was more interested in the direction rather than who's in charge. Do you understand what I'm saying?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, I do, but philosophically, besides this real need to streamline things and bring them together, how did you feel about environmental issues yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some of the environmental issues I felt real keenly about and that, yes, government should be limited in control, but some of the other things that some of these people were doing, like putting spikes in trees so you could screw up somebody's chainsaw were ridiculous; this was not the way to do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every area has its fringe element. So, there were water pollution issues, air pollution issues, solid waste issues...

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Herbicides, pesticides...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about Hanford? Was Hanford on the table in this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably. I think that there was some comment about it. It wasn't until later that they said, "There are people living

downwind of Hanford who have cancer and they're all dying. Consequently, we need to find out how many of them have contracted bad diseases because of Hanford." I think it got blown way out of proportion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also the issue of Hanford dumping the water back in the Columbia River in not quite the same state they took it in the first place. You're not downstream from that but you're in that geographic corner.

**Mr. Copeland:** In that corner, but not close. The Hanford plant was located there because of the Columbia River; they had to have this huge water source for cooling purposes. I read someplace that at one time they warmed that river eight degrees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** Does this affect the fish downstream? You bet! Well, do we continue, do we discontinue? That kind of depends. At the time that they were manufacturing weapons-grade plutonium in order to put together a bomb to keep me from having to go to the Island of Honshu and wade ashore in an invasion of Japan, I thought it was a heck of a good idea!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see that! One of the things that came out of the Crystal Mountain retreat was an agreement to put forward a certain number of bills and keep everything else off the table—not go for the whole pie—but go mostly for reorganization in certain key things and agree to stick to it and leave everything else to some other day.

**Mr. Copeland:** As I said, the most important thing that they were trying to address was get the department together and find out who was in charge.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of it was reorganization. You were a co-sponsor of House Bill 47 with forty-one other co-sponsors. That's a pretty remarkable thing right there. To get all those people on board. Was that part of the strategy to bring a lot of people in and get them invested in this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, like some of the other bills, it was the Senate Bill, Senate Bill 1 that became the vehicle. This was a complicated process with a lot of hearings, a lot of talk, a lot of negotiating, and the press started to get antsy and say, "Oh, you're stalling; you're not doing your job." Governor Evans started to get a little nervous, too; he went on television—somewhat unprecedented—and really hammered this. He used television as a bully pulpit in a way that I don't think had happened before to quite that degree. And apparently a deluge of letters and phone calls hit the Legislature to do this. Did that help move things along or were things moving along except in a more invisible, underground way?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the public responded to Dan's request and wrote to some members of the Legislature and they decided to get off their duff and start moving. I think the whole thing really got held up in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It wasn't that you were just going through your normal processes, there was some foot dragging?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Now, let's get back to this one thing again, the potential of that bill passing is greater if it passes the Senate first. There's no sense of us taking the forty-one people that signed on that and pushing that bill if the Senate can come to an agreement and get something through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you have shown that you're there with all those sponsors. That's kind of like waving your flag, isn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct, but I think that you'll find that those sponsors are going to have a great big bi-partisan shot on that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, quite remarkable. It was apparently the duty of the Washington Environmental Council to move the Democratic-majority Senate; that was their charge. The majority-Republican House members were already in Evans' camp and had their instructions, so to speak. So the public push would give the Environmental Council some extra leverage there, I gather.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so that worked; it did actually move things along. It's a remarkable achievement.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you're going to find that Bill Gissberg and Augie Mardesich finally got aboard and started to push that legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also Martin Durkan.

**Mr. Copeland:** And Martin Durkan, but you did not have Bob Greive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet he was the prime sponsor of the bill. The actual Senate sponsors were Greive, Durkan, Peterson, Sandison and Nat Washington. All Democrats...

**Mr. Copeland:** I know, but Greive didn't push it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think this was when Martin Durkan takes hold and something really starts to move there. And of course, Martin Durkan was thinking of running for Governor.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, he wants that bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides this very important reorganization bill that created the Department of Ecology, I believe Dan Evans got several different bills—really big ecology bills—through that special session. Oil spill legislation, the siting of thermal nuclear plants, a bill dealing with strip mining; there was just a whole series of difficult issues. The one that did not make it through the grind was the Shorelines Act. Was that too much legislation or was this one particularly difficult to work through? Do you remember the discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just such a big bill; it touched so many people in so many ways that it just was going to require a heck of a lot of study.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, "shorelines" is not just the ocean beaches.

**Mr. Copeland:** That includes all of Puget Sound as well as the streams and rivers and tributaries and things like that, and that's where it impacted so many, many people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it really bumps up against property issues? That was the difficult part?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. I think at that time there was a question as to whether or not all of the cattlemen in the state were going to have to fence off all the streams so the cows couldn't walk into the river. So everybody was taking a look and saying, "Whoa, wait a minute, what are we doing?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's really big.

**Mr. Copeland:** I mean, you tell an Ellensburg cattle rancher that he's going to have to fence

off the river so that his cattle can't get down there and walk in the streams, you're talking about major impact on property rights.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did bring it back the following year and pass it as a referendum. How did you figure out how to word it so the public could understand and support it? Did a group take it on and study it and come up with some solutions?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan had a full-time group working on it. I don't think I was involved in the wording of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of all the big ecology bills, it's the only one that goes to referendum. Was that because it impacted so many different people that you had to bring it to the public and use the referendum as the mechanism?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did legislators, as well as Dan Evans, step forward and talk about this issue in public forums, and on television, in newspaper editorials, that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. I think the reason for the referendum was just to be able to bring the entire thing to light as far as the public was concerned. Saying, "This has significant impacts and you should take a real good look at it and understand it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you leave the job up to the Governor of really talking about it to the public or did the Legislature play a role in the campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Governor. The language in the bill itself, in the organic act, was very broad. There were an awful lot of things left to be done at the discretion of the proper local entity and so much of the implementation

details was to be determined by other people in future debates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And in the courts, as we've seen in recent years.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, once you got into the courts, then that was something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For difficult legislation like that, is that actually a good way to go? Let it work itself out bit by bit?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes and no. Frequently, in a big piece of legislation like that, I think you would probably have to come down to the words: Is the public properly informed? Now, is the public properly informed as long as we had a hearing and a committee meeting in Olympia and there were thirty people in attendance?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably not.

**Mr. Copeland:** You answered it yourself, probably not. If it goes to a referendum and the entire text of the bill is at least available to the voter, is the public properly informed? The public is informed, but the operative word there is "properly." Does everybody that votes on it understand it? Maybe not. Did they have the opportunity to? Yes, they did, so you come full circle in the entire thing. The public did have an opportunity to look at it and they voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure the environmental groups and the groups opposing it were out there pounding the streets, getting their voices heard.

**Mr. Copeland:** No doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We'll probably touch on



that again when we get to the next session where the issue of shoreline regulation comes up again. Besides all the ecology bills and some of the other issues that we talked about, another issue that threaded through that session—and certainly another difficult one—was gambling. Slade Gorton as Attorney General was taking the lead on this and pushing pretty hard for reform of the gambling laws. It looks like the House Republicans, for the most part, supported the removal of the criminal penalty for bingos and non-profit raffles—the sort of church-basement, school-PTA level of gambling that many people have no objection to, but where it shades off into something else that seems to get the attention.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Las Vegas type gambling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Casino nights, or whatever you want to call that. Was there a way to regulate gambling where there's a clear line between these small non-profit situations and professional gambling or gambling that has any kind of opportunity for crime syndicates or any of those elements to creep into it? How do you draw the line?

**Mr. Copeland:** You can't draw the line. I mean, there isn't such a thing as being a little bit pregnant. Are you gambling; what is the definition of gambling? You put some money on the table and you take your chances. Some win, some lose, but the majority loses because the odds are against them. That's gambling.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is the real issue the amount of money that you're putting on the table? If it's a quarter, it's one thing; if it's a hundred dollar bill, it's something else?

**Mr. Copeland:** What is the sin and who is the victim, right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's the tenor of the discussion, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what is the sin? The sin is gambling your money away. It occurs because the odds are stacked against you. Who's the victim? The person who bets the money. Define professional: undertaking or engaging in gambling as a means for profit. Define amateur: cultivates an activity for personal pleasure—instead of profit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is this one of those areas where you try to protect people against their own weaknesses?

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, you're legislating morality, correct? Okay, who's the victim? Who got hurt in a gambling casino? The person who gave the casino his money? Who got hurt in a church lottery? The person who reached into his or her pocket and gave them a hundred bucks in order to be able to win a trip to Honolulu, but didn't win. But he lost a hundred bucks, so who's the victim?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are you less of a victim if you're giving money to, you know, help rebuild your church porch than if you're going into a professional place where it's for profit? Is it different?

**Mr. Copeland:** How do you know that the professional place isn't going to, out of the goodness of their heart, write out a check to the Little League baseball players? Most every gambling casino in the world gives money to charity; how much they give, that's something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And do they do that to make themselves look a little better?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, certainly they do; there's no doubt about it, but by the same token, where did your dollar go?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who knows?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm pointing these things out from the standpoint of a legislator sitting down and trying to decide, "Yes, we can draw a line here. Over that line thou shalt not step."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That is what this bill was all about.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. In other words, you're kidding yourself when you think you're sterilizing gambling by saying it's done for non-profit. Any time the odds are in favor of the house it is for, quote, "a profit."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a real danger of crime elements getting involved or was that something that people used as an argument to scare people away from gambling?

**Mr. Copeland:** The word "crime" probably is not proper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Mafia," then, I guess. It sounds a bit like a B-movie.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think "professional" probably would be a little bit better than crime or Mafia. People who are, quote, "making an honest-to-god living" out of a gambling type of casino and stuff like that, were they always present? The answer is heaven's yes. There are those people who want to be involved in the business of gaming devices of all kinds. It's a good lucrative business; there isn't any question about it. It generates lots and lots of money and lots of excitement. And so from the standpoint of the Attorney General, he was trying to get some legal lines established. At that time in the state of Washington I think we were limited to horse racing only.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also seemed to be a tolerance policy where these activities, of

course, were happening, but people were not really looking at them. So that leads to some hypocrisy, I guess you'd say.

**Mr. Copeland:** You used the words properly: a tolerance policy. In other words, "We have a line, but we're not going to pay any attention to the line."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he just trying to clean up that line issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Or as other people were arguing, this was a wedge. You bring in bingo, the next thing you know, you have casinos. For them it was like a slippery-slope kind of argument.

**Mr. Copeland:** You're correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They didn't want any of it because this is "the beginning of the end." How did you feel about this yourself and as a legislator?

**Mr. Copeland:** I personally felt it was a slippery slope and that the state was going to ultimately wind up with some additional gambling of different kinds. Hidden behind this gambling issue was the full knowledge on the part of the legislators that gambling in the state of Washington, if taxed properly, could be a revenue-producing son of a gun! At this time we knew nothing about the Indians and their involvement with the Congress of the United States. And frequently anytime a legislator wanted to have more money for state government, he or she always said, "Well, why don't we go ahead and allow gambling and we'll tax gambling?" So we were looking at it as a source of revenue that at that time we currently were not utilizing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sort of a voluntary tax?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was always in the back of a legislators mind: “If there’s going to be gambling, let’s tax it, at least.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** “Let’s get some good out of it.” What about lotteries? This year the House was supporting bingo, but the Senate was talking about legalizing lotteries; that was resisted by the House. Aren’t they really the same thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. The lottery was setting up a whole new mechanism, a particular game that was state-oriented, state-operated, and things like that. What the Senate was talking about in the 1970 session was virtually what we have today, but that didn’t come about until ten years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be the arguments against it, that it would be too close to the state—that the state should not promote gambling, itself? Gambling can be this activity that is allowed, but that the state itself should not be involved?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, let’s talk about healthy industries that you would like to have in your community. Does the lottery generate a healthy, good environment in anybody’s community? It doesn’t do anything but take spendable income away from residents in the state of Washington on virtually a daily basis—now it’s not a weekly basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it’s money that doesn’t go to produce anything; it doesn’t ripple through the economy in a way that builds jobs or goods.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. But there’s that mentality of people that want to go ahead and make a contribution of one or two or five or ten or

twenty dollars a week, betting on seven-billion to one that they’re going to win a million dollars. And their chances of winning are...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Miniscule.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct, but here again, it’s a revenue producing son of a gun. So it all depends. At what time do you implement it? And the answer to the question is: At that time when revenue is so important and so paramount and so primary in your thinking that all other considerations are secondary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You obviously hadn’t reached that pitch in 1970.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It’s interesting that it comes up again and again and again and it is a temptation to certain people. “Let’s solve our problems; let’s have a lottery.”

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s what I’m trying to point out. When the demand for revenue gets so great all other considerations: morality, business-wise, effective gambling, or so forth become secondary; that’s the time it goes over the top.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the midst of all these arguments and all these discussions and all these issues, something happens that only in Olympia would it matter, but the Tyee Motel burns down. You had stayed there periodically; did you happen to be there that year?

**Mr. Copeland:** Was I in the Tyee? No. I had a residence elsewhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were not one of the ones in the parking lot in your pajamas?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, at the time I was home

in bed. I went down to the House the next morning to hear the news that the Tyee had burned down and that it was pretty traumatic. I look back on it now and I'm surprised that some people didn't perish.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine it was kind of scary. How did it start, do you know much about the story?

**Mr. Copeland:** Apparently it started in the kitchen. The building was an all-frame structure and something about the draft caused the fire to get into, I think, it was the attic and burn and then go right down the hallways.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people have to jump out of windows to get out?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, as it was getting smoked-filled, good cool heads decided that they'd go down and beat on everybody's doors and tell them get the hell out of the building, that it was on fire, and they were able to get everybody out. The fire department just could not control the fire, so it spread through those great big long corridors in this two-story building and it just burnt to the ground.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand it was a total loss. People lost all their belongings and what not, whatever they had in there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely. I don't think that there was a central sprinkling system in that facility. If there was, it sure didn't work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That had been a really popular gathering spot for legislators, lobbyists, and different people. Did you have to regroup and get yourselves a new place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we weren't going to be in Olympia very long; this was a special

session, so that didn't have that much to do with it. But at that time, the physical facilities that the Tyee had were not duplicated anyplace else around town.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had meeting rooms.

**Mr. Copeland:** There were some pretty good-sized meeting rooms and things like that and they were available. As a matter of fact, when the earthquake occurred at the end of the session of '65—we were still in session—the condition of the Capitol Building for a few days was questionable. So we even had some conference committees that met out at the Tyee in rooms they made available to the House and the Senate. So yes, the Tyee had those facilities and it was natural for the Legislature to use them. When the building burned down, then of course, they weren't available.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Olympia was not very well endowed with that sort of space.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time they really weren't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the people that were in the habit of staying there would be forced to find other accommodations which would not be that easy. I was just trying to picture where they would all go, because that was a fairly big place.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is during an extraordinary session in 1970 and it was a real short session. I don't think that it was a problem.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's still a very intense session; if suddenly in the middle of all that activity, you lose all your clothes...

**Mr. Copeland:** I think we adjourned very shortly after that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Tyee was a center and is often mentioned with some affection and a lot of memories packed into there. It was very traumatic for the people involved.

**Mr. Copeland:** Especially if you were one of the residents that night.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are several stories of people racing out of the building in a state of dishevelment.

**Mr. Copeland:** I had one of my friends who left the building when they told him it was on fire and all of a sudden he realized he left his wallet in his room.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he go back in?

**Mr. Copeland:** And he went back in. A fireman stopped him and he said, "I've got to get my wallet." The fireman said, "It isn't worth your life, fellow. Don't even think about it." And he didn't recover any of his stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he could have died from smoke inhalation.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a lot going on in this very intense special session. Towards the end of it, just to make things even more complicated, it became known that Don Eldridge, the Speaker, was in line for an appointment to the Liquor Control Board, which sets off a whole train of events, of course. For himself, the appointment had to go through the Senate and some senators were kind of holding up the appointment and trying to tie it to votes. He has described how he basically tossed them out of his office and said, "I don't need it that bad. Either give it to me or don't give it to me, but I'm not going

to play games here." So that was one piece that was out there floating around. Of course, for yourself, it opened up the whole issue of the Speakership again. When you learned of this appointment, were you again interested in the Speakership?

**Mr. Copeland:** The election of a new Speaker was still an election away so we had to go through an entire statewide general election and we didn't know who was going to be in control, whether the Republicans or Democrats were. So it was everybody back to square one. But as far as Don getting appointed to the Liquor Board, he never called me in advance and told me he was considering it. I was first aware of the fact that he was even interested in the darn thing when I read it in the paper. I had no idea he was planning on leaving Mt. Vernon; I had no idea he was going to sell his business; I had no idea that a divorce was possible. That was all new material to me, so I was not privileged to any advance information; I was just a bystander.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly a time of turmoil for him and this may have made the whole thing much more difficult for everyone concerned. Immediately after it was known, it became a bit of a political football because different people within your caucus started jockeying by positioning themselves or at least letting their interests be known that they would like to be considered for the position. And the press, of course, had a field day with this because they love that kind of political speculation. I have no idea what was going on in your caucus, what the discussions were, or if you had discussions about it. How did that play within the caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** We didn't have any discussions in the caucus about anything other than just getting out of the session. And it was just understood that if Don were to resign from the



Legislature that the House, if they wanted to, could elect a new Speaker or in the absence of electing a new Speaker, I'd become the acting Speaker. That's the road map; that's what was set up according to the rules, and everybody was operating under those rules. There wasn't anything mysterious. To the best of my knowledge, the House, never considered the possibility of electing a new Speaker at the 1970 sitting of the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Eldridge was destined to leave office, I believe it was a month after the end of session; he wasn't supposed to pick up his new job until then, so there was a little transition time. But, at the least, the press started to speculate about you, Stewart Bledsoe and Irv Newhouse. One thing that interested me was that you were all from eastern Washington. Now, this is a little different maybe. Was the strength in the Republican Party more in eastern Washington than in other parts?

**Mr. Copeland:** Talent, pure and simple. You just named talented guys. I think that that cut had nothing to do with eastern Washington or western Washington. I think that you had three individuals who had proven a certain amount of leadership, a certain dynamics and things like that, that were in the forefront of the Republican Party and were sitting on the House floor at the time. It had absolutely nothing to do with where they came from.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some discussion, again in the press, about some infighting that they claim started to impact how bills were working through the hopper and that at one point there was a promise made by Stu Bledsoe and Irv Newhouse that "they will not engage in politicking about the Speakership." They actually came to the press and said, "We're not going to deal in this, so everybody just needs to stop saying that this is going on." Do you remember that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I sure do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what was behind all that? Was that another press-generated phenomenon? Or was there a lining up of different people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me answer this one question at a time. What was the reason for Irv and Stu to say, "We're not going to become involved?" The important thing was that we had an election to go through. "Let's, first of all, know ahead of time that the Republicans are going to be in control of the House. In the event they're going to be in control of the House, then we'll make the selection of a Speaker."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So get the cart behind the horse?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But were other, different Republican caucus members jockeying around, lining up behind different people so that they could be in the "in group" or whatever you want to call that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several different analyses about the different possibilities. Some articles were critical of Stewart Bledsoe because they thought he was too liberal and that he was pushing too hard on the caucus members to pass certain types of legislation—that he was too far out in front. They also occasionally sniped at you for being too close to the Democrats and by that they meant John O'Brien. You're making a face! Anyway, all these things were sort of floating around out there. Were there some issues within your caucus where you were getting a bigger spread between points of view, which would people to look for cracks?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me address this criticism of me being too close to John O'Brien and the Democrats. We had just come through several sessions of being in the minority, with a new Republican Governor. Now, at that time, was I working with the Democrats in the House? You bet I was. I was the minority and we got a lot of bi-partisan legislation passed. That was my job and I think I did it damn well! Complain if you may; we were "moving the ball up field."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's often hard to tell what is a press-generated event and what is really happening.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. Okay, the reality is: We are in a special session in 1970; we have an election to go through; the election will occur in September and November of 1970. There are many unknown factors out there. For people to speculate and say, "I want to be this; I want to be that; I want to be something else," and so on, it's just ill-timed. Now, if the press wrote a bunch of stuff and said, "These forces were working to do this," this is all press-generated.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, of course, the natural process takes place in that you're in the line of succession and when Don Eldridge went to the Liquor Control Board on March 12<sup>th</sup> of that year, you are appointed the interim Speaker. You're sworn in by Justice Marshall Neill, which was a nice touch. Wasn't he a friend of yours?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very dear friend of mine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, was that a special ceremony in the House chambers?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not in the House chambers, in the office. Marshall just thought it would be kind of a fun thing to do.



### **New Speaker**

State Rep. Thomas L. Copeland, Walla Walla, was sworn in Thursday as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Administering the oath of office was Supreme Court Judge Marshall A. Neill, long-time friend of Copeland and a former member of the state legislature from Pullman. Moving up from the position of speaker pro tempore, Copeland succeeds Don Eldridge, whose appointment to the State Liquor Control Board became official last week. Copeland has represented the 11th district since 1956 and has served as speaker pro tempore since 1967.

*Walla Walla Union Bulletin, March 15, 1970*

*\*Used with permission*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a touching image. What were your duties as Interim Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just exactly the duties that the Speaker has; in other words, the Speaker is still responsible for all of the operations of the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The physical operations?

**Mr. Copeland:** Physical operations. Payroll, all of the money, the expenditures that had been appropriated for the House, things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the administrative duties.

**Mr. Copeland:** The administrative duties, but when I say payroll, any expenditure that was made by or on behalf of the House including members' travel, had to be approved by the Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would guess you'd be fairly familiar with all that; you'd been doing a lot of the administrative work anyway.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. However, remember it also included being the Chairman of the Legislative Council.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this just a little bit more or did you get to do wholly new things?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think there was anything wholly new that I got to do. It was just a case of where the frequency of an awful lot of this required somebody had to be there at least an absolute minimum of once every two weeks and probably almost weekly to sign all these vouchers. So it was a case of where I just had to be in Olympia about once a week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you're the point person; you make it happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, when the creation of a payroll depends upon your signature, you damn-well better be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, people like that. As you said, through this appointment you became chair of the Legislative Council. You were still, of course, on the House Space Allocation Committee, as you had been for several years taking care of all those physical issues. So you sound like you were in Olympia quite a bit that summer.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's something that happened in June of that year which I want to ask you about. A case went to the Supreme Court having to do with the constitutionality of the forty dollar per day payment to legislators. The court upheld that. There was a lot of discussion about: what did that mean in

practice? Besides a little raise for legislators, in that your pay was not limited by the constitution, would, I guess, be the core issue. I think in one of the original readings of the constitution there was actually a dollar amount written in and then that was revised over time, if I understand that correctly. And this was kind of like the final nail in that whole concept when the Supreme Court ruled that your pay could be increased. Some commentators thought that that helped clear the way for a full-time, but still citizen, Legislature, because it helped with the money issue—that you could be reimbursed a little bit more. How did this play out for you? If legislators can be paid a little bit better, can they afford then to spend more time being legislators and it would not be such a hardship for them? And then some people argued more ordinary citizens could be legislators because it was not such a financial hit. Did that argument follow for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think your question is, being a legislator, is that a financial hit? At that particular time, to be a member of the Legislature it was a financial hit on everybody that served. I think anybody that was serving in the Legislature that was worth a darn could say to himself in all honesty, "If I didn't spend this much time in the Legislature and I went ahead and worked as hard in my own environment, in my own discipline, I could make more money and therefore it would cost me a heck of a lot less."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Serving really is public service.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, being a member of the Legislature really is public service. At that time, was there an awful lot of out-of-pocket cost to me? The answer is yes. Was it the same way with a whole bunch of people? And I'd say with the vast majority, it didn't do anything but cost them a lot of money in order to be able to serve in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly forty dollars a day is not a great amount of money.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time it sounded like forty dollars a day was lots of money, but that is just not true. For you to come over here and maintain yourself for let's say a week, making all of the necessary meetings and find yourself an adequate hotel room and eat all your meals out with forty dollars a day, you're not making any money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're going to run through that pretty quickly.

**Mr. Copeland:** So as far as the court ruling was concerned, its immediate effect on the average legislator was negligible. A long way down the road it cleared the air to a point where it said yes, the Legislature can go ahead and set per diems to virtually any level that they say that is deemed necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When people talk about this full-time idea, they actually don't mean the California model where people who are legislators are fairly well paid and that's their job. They mean different things by that. One of the mechanisms talked about was that committees that you were on during the session would remain in effect throughout the year; they'd be standing committees and you would still serve. Say, if you were on Highways, you'd be on Highways in the interim too, and you would keep your hand in, I guess would be the idea. You would have a continuous interest and possibly more hearings and more fact-gathering and more writing up bill language during interim periods, and then they talk about "getting a head start for sessions." There were different ideas about how to do that, whether you need a constitutional amendment or whether there were simply rule changes that the Legislature could pass themselves. What did you think

of the idea of these standing committees, and pre-filing bills, and hearings during interims? It was more continuous; does that make for better legislation?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was of the opinion that this was something that was going to occur down the road. At that time there was not any huge desire on the part of the majority of the legislators to change that process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One gulp at a time, I guess. One thing this ruling wanted to address were all those very long special sessions you were having—whether this was going to make this easier.

**Mr. Copeland:** The special sessions we were having were not generated because of whatever the Legislature did; the special sessions that we were having were generated primarily out of the Governor's Office with all of the governmental reorganization.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would this have been a way for the Legislature to regain the reigns, shall we say, of their own organization and not be so driven by the Governor's agenda, but decide themselves how they wanted to address all the issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the Legislature had made some dramatic steps in order to be able to gain their posture. But they just happened to be running concurrently with a very ambitious Governor that had a very ambitious program and it just required a lot of legislative action. And this legislative action requires a lot of public input, which takes time. At this point the lobbyists get involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was part of this whole mix: strengthening the Legislature in their relations to the executive. Lobbyists, of course, worked year-round for the most part, unless they were from very small organizations.



**Mr. Copeland:** That is self evident and it's something that is very natural and not unique in the legislative environment. I said early on that a part-time legislator will never be able to keep up with a full-time bureaucrat. That was true when I first got to the Legislature; the Legislature was running behind, we were not given the proper information and we were trying desperately to play catch-up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you pay attention to this court ruling? Did this strike you as making progress?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just one of those doors that opened up for us, but the possibilities were way down the hallway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. And, like you said, there was a general election to get through. Did you still move about the state and help different people with their campaigns?

**Mr. Copeland:** Same thing that I'd done before, correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've read some compliments about your activities, some people in the hinterlands were very thrilled that an experienced legislator would show up in their district and help them. So you have had some notice there.

**Mr. Copeland:** How about that! Any help you can get like that, especially the first time out when you're running...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It meant a lot to people.

**Mr. Copeland:** No question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it apparently was fairly rare; you were one of only a very few legislators doing that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well yes, it was rare and I knew that. However, I felt it was going to be very helpful in the outcome of the election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It looks like it was. Your earlier practice when you were helping people was not to extract promises or even really bring up the whole issue of the Speakership. Did that change at all now that the Speakership was again an open question?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I always felt the most inappropriate thing I could ever do was to say someone, "I'm down here to speak on your behalf if you will pledge to vote for me for Speaker." That simply is not my way of doing business; that is simply not me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've got to get up in the morning and look at yourself in the mirror. I know you believed that even if things were going smoothly in our election in Walla Walla you should still campaign there and still show up and do the normal campaign things. You didn't have an opponent that year so there was no one to debate, but yet I'm assuming that you continued your practice of being active in your own district?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly. We had those political functions that you're expected to attend and I certainly did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't think we've discussed your seatmate for quite a while. You now were running with Vaughn Hubbard—since 1967 he had been the other representative in your district. Can you tell me something about him?

**Mr. Copeland:** Vaughn was a great guy, an attorney by profession, and a very brilliant individual. On the outward appearance, Vaughn was not particularly attractive, not a real dynamic person; he kind of shuffled



around and didn't make a lot of waves. But whenever it was his time to say something, whatever he said was always straightforward, honest, very succinct and very well thought out. Vaughn gained a reputation very rapidly of being a real brilliant guy. He spent a lot of time on highway measures. He was most interested in all kinds of transportation and later served on the Highway Commission. Also, he was quite instrumental in assisting Duane Berentson becoming Director of Transportation. Vaughn and I worked well together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a good match for you. Was he a person you helped recruit, by any chance, or did he come up on his own?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, Vaughn pretty much came up on his own. I didn't have anything to do with his recruitment. But as soon as I found out he was interested in the appointment, I called him and said, "Go Man, Go!" Serving with Vaughn was just great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you still doing the programs that you mentioned earlier where you get together in the room and broadcast to Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's not on the radio, that's on a conference call via telephone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, but I understand that then it was broadcast on the radio in Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** They'd tape it and then they'd pick up excerpts of it to broadcast that they thought were real good questions and answers of great interest to the people of the Walla Walla area. We continued the practice that I started with friends in the Chamber of Commerce who felt they would like to have this particular kind of a contact. At the

Chamber office, they would go in on a very informal kind of do-drop-in basis. They'd have coffee and doughnuts at about seven-thirty on Tuesday morning. In Olympia we'd get together, generally in my office, with the other legislators from the district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So Vaughn would be doing this with you by this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, by then Vaughn would be doing it and at that time Hubert Donohue was the member of the Senate so he would come over to my office. We would go through the events of what happened in the previous week and then kind of lay out what the calendar was for the coming week.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you try to give it a district slant, a "why this matters to you" kind of statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most all of the conversation had a real district slant. If the issue related to the Transportation Committee, Vaughn Hubbard would have first-hand knowledge of where it was, so Vaughn would answer the question. If somebody else had asked another question about a Senate bill we'd defer that one to Senator Donohue. That was the format we used and it was very, very successful. But the real success of the whole thing was the dialogue that occurred. From time to time they would ask a question, "What's happened to so-and-so bill?" and we would draw a blank and say, "We don't know; however, we will look it up and next Tuesday we'll have an answer for you." In the interim, frequently, we tried to make it as standard practice, if we got the information together and if there was printed material on it—copies of the bills, and so on—we'd mail it to them. So that following Tuesday they would have the answer. Baker Ferguson, President of Baker-Boyer Bank—a large, old local bank—would ask, "What

happened to so-and-so bill?" "Baker, did you receive a copy of the bills?" "Yes, thank you very much, I got the packet." "Now, let me tell you what happened to the bill in the meantime. It went to a hearing in the Senate, but they amended it substantially; the bill not only does such-and-such, but it also gets clear out into this new area. Now, my question to you is, do you want to have that section of the bill remain in there?" "Oh, I had no idea that it was in there; that is going to change my attitude towards the bill immensely." "Well then, please talk to your contemporaries and let me know how you want to have us conduct ourselves over here."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A real dialogue.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely and from time to time, we'd have guests in and on several occasions we'd have the Governor in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that demonstrate that you were well connected? That you had the muscle to get these people to do things for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but you see, this is the open line of communication that I've always been talking about; this is the way we conducted ourselves. Not only was it successful for us, other people copied it too, to a degree. They thought it was very, very beneficial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think it would help increase the awareness in your district of all these matters and how the process really worked, that a bill can be amended to the point where it changes it and all these different subtleties that you deal with every day. You were bringing that home to your district in a way they could understand.

**Mr. Copeland:** Some of the people at those meetings every Tuesday morning were key players. Who would be there? The mayor

of the town would be there because he was interested in what was going on. The superintendent of schools, he was always there. The newspaper had a reporter in attendance. Strangely enough, the chief of the fire department was virtually always there. Chief Adams was always at those meetings because he wanted to know what was going on with all of the bills having to do with the firemen. In addition to that, did we have people from the agriculture section? You bet: the head of the Grain Growers Association was always there; the president of the local wheat growers was always there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though you may have no wheat bills you might have something else?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, but the point is, if you wanted to know what was going on, you attend. We would send the weekly calendar and any other pertinent information in time for the meeting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were certainly well-placed to know what was going on in the session and how things were moving and not moving.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but we also made arrangements for the Chamber of Commerce to be the recipients of bill books; they had a full set of the session bill books.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that common to do that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it was not common to do that. Whenever a new bill got printed, it came to us. We would bundle them all together and send them to the Chamber of Commerce and they would update their books. So if somebody from Walla Walla wanted to look up a bill that had been printed, all they had to do was go to the Chamber of Commerce.



*Representatives Vaughn Hubbard and Tom Copeland with Senator Hubert Donohue using the speaker phone in Tom's office, 1969*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did you have a whole pocket in Walla Walla of highly educated, highly aware voters?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think over time this would permeate the community and you would have a whole group of people who would understand very clearly how the Legislature works and where their interests are. It must have made the whole political discussion when you went home to your district on a much higher level than in other districts.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no question about it. When you say permeated, it permeated through the entire community.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your local press use this very much?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure they did, they had some kind of an article in the paper virtually every week, you know, “Legislators discuss the construction of a bridge,” or something like that, “at their weekly telephone conference.” “Hot issue going on. The Walla Walla County

Teacher’s Association appeared at the meeting in order to make their point of view known on the teachers salary increase.” And this came in the paper weekly and people would become accustomed to reading about the Legislature and their legislators on a regular basis. Oftentimes, this would trigger a phone call to one of us: “I read in the newspaper that... Please, explain,” and they would get an answer right then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just thinking of some communities, if there’s really no forum—if the local papers don’t really cover state politics—the whole discussion in those communities would be at a much lower level than what sounds like Walla Walla could achieve.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, I don’t think the newspaper in Walla Walla could afford to send somebody over to Olympia.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, but you could give information to them.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. So this was just kind of an open type of arrangement. As soon as I got elected to the Legislature, one of the very first things I started was this weekly telephone conversation with the Chamber. Sometimes things would be very quiet and you wouldn’t have too many people attending—maybe ten or twelve; other times the moderator would get on and say, “I’ve got to tell you, we have a standing-room only crowd here today.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What sort of issues would pack the room?

**Mr. Copeland:** It could be maybe two or three issues, or maybe only one issue, that would just attract an awful lot of people. The Teacher’s Association—they had a whole bunch of teachers come down; it was the

first time they'd ever been there before—and they wanted to be able to sit there and talk specifically about what the Legislature was going to do about teacher's salaries. So yes, it was a first-time opportunity for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just an amazing service; I can just imagine what that does in a community to have that kind of dialogue. So certainly, you were a known quantity. Your voting record, your thoughts, your almost daily activities, would be out there. Did you have specific legislation that would help your district? You certainly did a good thing with your wheat bill, but did you continue to have things that you could come home and say, “I helped Walla Walla in this way?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But frequently you'd have bills that helped the entire state and they would have an impact on Walla Walla, too. One piece of legislation that I worked on—of course, it took quite a number of years—was this non-residence sales tax exemption bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain what that is?

**Mr. Copeland:** In Walla Walla we have a lot of people that are residents of Oregon living in Freewater, just six miles away. Because of this bill they now have the ability to come in and get a sales tax exemption. It's a little card that shows they have registered with the Department of Revenue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so if they come into town, say, to shop...

**Mr. Copeland:** They could come from Freewater and all they have to do is present that at the time they make their purchase. The merchant just merely records that purchase as exempt from state sales tax. Is that something to help Walla Walla and the merchant? And the answer is: oh heavens, yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It brings business into town, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Did I have to great deal to do with it? And the answer again is yes. Now, is that what you call, quote, “pork barrel?” No. This is nothing more than good business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly wasn't special to your community; it involved the whole ring around the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** But how were we able to get it passed? We depended upon all of the legislators whose districts were on the borders. I had to go out and solicit help from all of the border representatives in order to be able to get it done. Were the people in downtown King County and Seattle going to help me pass that? They wouldn't give you the time of day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It just doesn't touch them in the same way. Well, what a busy special session!

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the great accomplishments: I was able to see the legislative improvements in full production. That is: communications, legislative interaction with departments and the Governor's office, just to mention a few. Some fine-tuning needed to be done in certain limited areas, adjustments made, but by and large, the Legislature was operating extremely well in spite of the heavy load requested by the Governor. The public was now the big winner. The Legislative branch of government was working and that is the way it should be. The public was now involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And a new position for you as Acting Speaker.

**Mr. Copeland:** That involved some slight changes. I had to be in Olympia more



frequently. Other than that, it was business as usual. So many changes came about during this interim it is difficult to list them all. But they were all significant and a long time in the planning and implementation. Then in June, there was Dolly's passing.



*W.L. "Shine" Minnick presenting Tom with an award from the Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce for fourteen years of service to the community, May 1970, with Tom's wife Dolly on the right. "Shine" and Tom also share a special bond as "co-grandfathers."*

## A FAMILY TRAGEDY

*The following story was written by Tom Copeland. He felt that the subject was too sensitive to relate using the interview format.*

Early June of 1970 the Walla Walla valley was green and lush with all of the new spring growth. The green pea harvest was approaching and preparations were now underway for the startup in about one week.

Mother and Father joined Dolly and myself for lunch that day. Father and I had some business to go over and after lunch we left the ranch to go visit a neighbor who had just started pea harvest.

On our trip to the neighbors, the journey was interrupted by a distressing call from our head mechanic, Dean Halter. He seemed very disturbed and said something terrible had happened to Mrs. Copeland. He urged us to return to the ranch immediately. At this time we could not make out what had happened but started heading back to the ranch house. Subsequent radio calls indicated that Dolly had suffered some type of seizure.

I found Dolly on the couch in the family room, unconscious, with Mother by her side. Mother explained that they were visiting after lunch and that Dolly had simply risen from the couch, placed her hand alongside her temple and screamed, "Oh, my head!" And with that she fell back upon the couch.

The ambulance had been called and within moments my oldest son Tim arrived on the scene. It seemed to take forever for the ambulance to arrive and but soon Dolly was transferred to St. Mary's Hospital. Dr. Peter Brooks was there upon our arrival and took charge of everything.

Within a few short minutes Dr. Brooks found that Dolly had suffered a very severe aneurysm and that the prospects for this type were not good.

The next few hours at the hospital were hectic and uncertain. Several friends suddenly appeared out of the blue. More doctors arrived to consult with Dr. Brooks and they began a series of tests.

More waiting and more waiting, until late in the afternoon I was summoned by the hospital staff saying that I had a long distance telephone call. It was Billie Andersen. I have no idea how she found out but her voice was calm and reassuring. I gave her the best information I could under the circumstances. And with that the brief conversation ended.



Later, Tim and I went to a nearby restaurant for a bite of dinner and then returned to the hospital to find Dr. Brooks there. He had no additional information. Just that we would have to wait to see what changes developed.

The next morning I went to the hospital, arriving at 9:00, and visited again with Dr. Brooks and the other doctors who were assisting him. No change. We would just have to wait. At that moment I looked up and there stood Jim and Billie Andersen. And for the first time I cried.

Billie was such a dear friend of Dolly's, and Jim and I had been friends for so many years, going back to grade school. I was just simply overwhelmed by their presence. Jim, in his customarily calm way, quietly asked the hospital sisters if there was a chapel in the facility. Of course, the sister took Jim and Billie with her and I did not see them again for a short period of time. The waiting continued and no changes. I spent most of the day with the Andersens at the hospital. The following day they returned to Bellevue.

On the evening of the fourth day, the family was all at the ranch house when Dr. Brooks called to tell me of Dolly's passing. "We did all we could," I remember him saying. With that short conversation ending, I announced the event to the children.

It seemed like only minutes and Rev. Thomas, our local Congregational minister appeared. What a blessing to have him with the family at this time of need. He hastily arranged and performed the most wonderful private service for the family. It was truly appreciated even though we were in a state of shock.

After going through more than two hundred combat days during the war, I had become conditioned to death and dying. Two days after returning home from the service my

sister was accidentally killed by her horse. And now, the suddenness of Dolly's passing was too much. I lost a beautiful wife, a devoted mother, and my very best friend. Life seemed cruel. And I had no explanation.

Several days later funeral services were held. Again, the Andersens returned. Billie was most helpful at this time. It seems that at a time of crisis like this someone appears and takes charge. And she did just that. I will never forget their kindness.

The Congregational Church was overflowing. Dan and Nancy Evans, Don and Parm Moos, Bob and Jean Goldsworthy, Martin and Lolly Durkan, John and Mary O'Brien, Jack and Jane Sylvester, and many from the House staff, including Phyllis Mottman, attended, just to name a few.

My dear friends were so kind to me and so supportive, but it could in no way make up for the loneliness that followed. I engaged myself in my work, both on and off the ranch. I made a trip to Bellingham for a political speech. I felt it was good therapy to get back into a normal style of living, for life, as painful as it was for me then, was going to go on.

My son Tim performed many necessary functions for me and my mother was so comforting and caring. All of this was necessary to the transition that had to be met. As the weeks went by harvest was completed. My daughter Brooke was getting ready to attend the University of Washington and my number two son, David, was returning to Tempe, Arizona to continue his schooling at Arizona State University.

I wish now that I had known about "grief counseling." I could have used some help at this time. I probably made some mistakes that could have been prevented. But those were not "fun days" in the life of Tom Copeland.

## CHAPTER 19

### THE LAST SESSION, 1971

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The election this year didn't go as well as previous elections for the Republicans. Your majority slipped; you had had fifty-six members and you slipped down to fifty-one. The Senate—you lost a couple there, too. You had been moving forward, making progress and getting more seats; now you started to slip backwards. Can you account for this?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'd have to take a look at each and every one of those seats in order to be sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you have a narrower majority like that, do you organize differently? Do you have to bring your caucus together a little bit more, that sort of thing? You don't have as much room to maneuver.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. You don't have the wiggle room; you have to make sure that you've got virtually every one of your votes. So no, when you're that close, if you have two or three people defect, you're no longer the majority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The last time, I believe, the numbers lined up like this was the coalition session of 1963; you're kind of on the other side of it now.

#### FORTY-SECOND LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January 11, 1971—March 11, 1971

Ex. S March 12, 1971—May 19, 1971

2<sup>nd</sup> Ex. S January 10, 1972—February 22, 1972

**Governor:** Dan Evans

**Senate:** 20 Republican members/  
29 Democratic members

**House:** 51 Republican members/  
48 Democratic members

#### OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

**Speaker:** Thomas Swayze

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Tom Copeland

**Chief Clerk:** Malcolm "Dutch" McBeath

**Assistant Chief Clerk:** Donald Wilson

**Sergeant at Arms:** Eugene Prince

#### House Republican Caucus:

**Majority Floor Leader:** Stewart Bledsoe

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Sid Morrison

**Caucus Chair:** Irving Newhouse

**Caucus Coordinator:** A.J. Bud Pardini

**Caucus Secretary:** Lois North

**Whip:** Hal Wolf

#### House Democratic Caucus:

**Minority Floor Leader:** Leonard Sawyer

**Chair, Executive Committee:** John O'Brien

**Organization Leader:** Gary Grant

**Caucus Chair:** William Chatalas

**Caucus Chair Pro Tem:** Charles Moon

**Campaign Coordinator:** Robert Perry

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Richard King

**Assistant Floor Leader:** John Rosellini

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Dave Ceccarelli

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Ted Bottiger

**Assistant Floor Leader:** Robert Charette

**Caucus Secretary:** Margaret Hurley

#### Freshman Republican Members:

Scott Blair, James Costanti, Ken Eikenberry, James Gilleland, Donald Hansey (served in Senate), John Jones, Paul Kraabel, William Paris, William Polk, John Rabel, Michael Ross, Warren Smith

#### Freshman Democratic Members:

Albert Bauer, Stan Bradley, Donn Charnley, Jeff Douthwaite, Charles Kilbury, Walt Knowles, Edward Luders, King Lysen, James McDermott, Peggy Jean Maxie, Dan Van Dyk

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the coalition is concerned, that was a dynamic way over and above the Republican Party and the individuals concerned. That was another story unto itself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I only bring it up because there was talk about a coalition forming for the next session. It may have been merely a press phenomenon. The composition of the caucus was changing a bit with twelve different freshman legislators coming in. When it came down to the organizational meeting, where the decision within the caucus of who was going to be the Speaker, I don't know if the freshmen had new ideas or what happened. Can you account some of the machinations?

**Mr. Copeland:** The freshmen were not players in that decision at this time. What happened was that there were quite a few people who had been elected for the third time—these people were in the class that got first elected in 1966, including Tom Swayze and Sid Morrison. Tom and Sid made a conscious decision that they wanted to have someone in their class become the Speaker. I think that Sid was probably the odds-on favorite from the standpoint of who probably had the respect of the caucus and the innate ability to do it. But here again, he came from “the wrong side of the mountains” and the people from western Washington just couldn't quite buy this business of aligning with someone from eastern Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because he comes from a more rural district, he just didn't have the power base?

**Mr. Copeland:** Power base? If you like that term, I guess that is correct. So then you put that in the mix along with some of the people that are surrounding Lake Washington and in Pierce and King County. They felt that the best thing for them to do would be to settle

on somebody from western Washington, so that's why they decided that they'd go with Tom Swayze.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this also a sort of generational thing? They felt that your group had had a lock on power for long enough and they were going to break through and have their turn?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don Eldridge had been in the Legislature since 1953 and you had been there, this is how many terms now? Since 1957. Quite a few years. And at the top, you had Dan Evans. Did that lock on the plum positions cause this sort of eruption?

**Mr. Copeland:** That, plus the fact that people from western Washington didn't want to think about the possibility of having anybody from eastern Washington. I think this is one of the reasons Sid took himself completely out of the play—but you'd have to check on Sid with that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was interesting earlier that the people whose names were being thrown around were all from eastern Washington; there were no western Washington people being discussed.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that kind of start something?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that particular class wanted to elect “somebody from their class,” period. Notwithstanding anything else, I mean that was *the* one thing that they wanted to do. It had nothing to do with the qualities of Irv Newhouse, class of 1965; had nothing to do with the qualities of Stu Bledsoe, class of 1965, or Tom Copeland, class of 1957. They wanted to elect somebody from their class.

Now, couple that with the fact that “we must have someone from western Washington.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That about wipes all of you out of the running.

**Mr. Copeland:** It certainly does the same thing for Sid and Stu and Irv and some of the people from Spokane.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did the eastern Washington members feel about this east/west split? You were stalwarts of the party.

**Mr. Copeland:** The point is, in reality, there isn't that kind of a split; we don't have this change in political philosophies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet they couldn't seem to buy somebody from eastern Washington, regardless of their ideas, but they just simply had the numbers and that was that?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a source of frustration for eastern Washington legislators? Did they feel they would not be able to break through that issue, that they would never have the numbers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I think it is something you know ahead of time, already going in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But did that have a sort of dampening effect?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think most eastern Washington legislators realized ahead of time that if you're going to get someplace in the Legislature, number one, coming from eastern Washington is not necessarily a plus. If you represent a district in eastern Washington and want to do anything in the Legislature that is going to be worthwhile, you have to be a much better legislator. And I think that an

awful lot of eastern Washington legislators proved that over and over and over again, that they did a hell of a job and worked the problem. I mean, take a look at the chairman of the Appropriations Committee for criminy sake, Bob Goldsworthy: absolutely great guy! Elmer Huntley on Highway issues, the same way. Marshall Neill from Pullman, later a Supreme Court justice. We had many from eastern Washington. They were just truly excellent legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a little adversity in this sense is actually good thing? At what point could you see which way the wind was blowing for this? You did still want to be Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** Which way was the wind was blowing? Not until the vote was cast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a close vote?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some accounts say it was just by one. There are also some accounts that say you were thinking of challenging it, that you weren't necessarily going to go with the Tom Swayze decision. Bob Goldsworthy himself says that you came to him and tried to work out how to contest this right on the floor and see who would vote for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is not true. The selection of a Speaker by way of a coalition was never in my thinking. Immediately after the caucus elected Tom Swayze Speaker, they elected me Speaker Pro Tempore for the third time. I told the caucus at that time I wanted to think it over before accepting. I was again hurt and reacted in a normal fashion. This was in November and during the next week or so several people came to me to ask that I continue to be Speaker Pro Tempore for the sake of harmony within the caucus. Among those were Tom Swayze,

Sid Morrison, and Stu Bledsoe. Even the Governor was involved in this request. I agreed to do so with the understanding that I would be granted an opportunity to decline a nomination made from the floor. All of this was scripted and there were no surprises.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bob Goldsworthy did then get up and nominate you; he says it was one of the hardest things he ever did in the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** There is some confusion here; let me clear up this point. Bob knew—and the caucus knew—that I was going to decline the nomination in favor of Tom Swayze. Again, all of this was scripted out ahead of time; there were no surprises. Please read what it says in the House Journal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After Tom Swayze was nominated for Speaker, Bob Goldsworthy was recognized and he said,

“I’m going to place the name of Tom Copeland in nomination for the Speaker of the House. I do this with some real deep emotion and some mixed feelings on my part, probably more so than at any other time I’ve stood here on the floor of this House and talked to this legislative body. It’s not generally that we have two people nominated from the majority party to be placed in nomination for Speaker, but I do this gladly, even with my mixed feelings. I’m going to be a little bit beyond areas of past protocol because I think this position of Speaker of the House deserves the most attention, the most consideration of any position that can be filled in the state of Washington.”

Then he went on to say:

“Now, it has been no secret on that side of the aisle or this side of the aisle, of discussions going on regarding this position. Traditionally, it has been that any leader or any

party’s leader that is chosen for this position comes out as a strong man. In my time that I’ve served here, the Speakers of this House have always been very strong individuals not only within their own party, but within the state structure and I believe that in nominating Tom (Copeland) we are keeping with tradition. In Tom Copeland, we have a man that has proven himself under fire many, many times in this body. The only way you prove yourself under fire is to get shot at. I’m talking, then, about an individual that served here in positions of authority and in positions of leadership, holding up the traditions of seniority, proving himself so ably that I have no hesitation whatsoever in standing here before my own party and the minority party and nominating a second man for this position.”

He was really laying out that this was a bit unusual. Then he went on to enumerate your accomplishments—all the things that you’ve done for the Legislature, all the things that we’ve discussed over and over about all of the modernizations. Then he nominated you for Speaker. Then you speak and you thank everyone and say that you owe people an explanation for this nomination:

“For those of you who know me well, know I try as best I can to serve in the capacity for which I am assigned. I did serve you for the last few months as your Speaker; I would like to have continued that role. By a vote of the caucus, the decision was made that Mr. Swayze would become our Speaker. I’ve had many people come to me and ask if I would like to participate in reversing this decision and let me read in part a letter I wrote some time ago: quote, ‘I have never refused to accept a responsibility that I felt I had the time and talent to fulfill, and again I shall not refuse this assignment; nor shall I refuse any responsibility,’ end of quote. But for those of you that are Republicans, in the interest of party harmony, I’m going to decline this



nomination and ask all Republicans to join with me in electing Tom Swayze. I do this with the full understanding that I accepted my commitments all the way down the line to every member of the Republican Party this past year. I made no deals with anybody; by the same token, I didn't win, but in losing it, I do it properly and proudly."

And then there was a standing ovation for you. Stewart Bledsoe commends you; he says that's "kingsize" what you just did. So was there some tension, some turmoil behind this?

**Mr. Copeland:** No turmoil, no tension. I appreciated Stu's timely comments.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Members were evidently coming to you and weren't a hundred percent happy with this.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was now a done deal, so let's move on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When some said they weren't completely happy with the Tom Swayze decision, what could you say? How did you wrestle with this one?

**Mr. Copeland:** I said, "Let's work together for the good of the state of Washington. Okay?" I just went ahead and did those things that I had normally been doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Here's an odd question, were you doing such a good job as Speaker Pro Tempore that people wanted to keep you there? That they thought, wow, we can't get along without Tom; we need him to do this job.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know, Anne.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had taken that position to heights it had certainly never achieved before and transformed the entire office.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had you become indispensable, in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, I don't think anybody's indispensable. As far as being able to get things accomplished and make changes, there are risks. I didn't mind the risk-taking part of it. So if I had been doing a good job in the reorganization of the legislative branch of government and people appreciated it, fine and dandy. But there were an awful lot of people—Republicans and Democrats, members of the Senate, lobbyists—who didn't understand why Tom and Sid and that class wanted to even take this on. Unfortunately, and I say this with as much respect as I can give Tom, his tenure in office proved to be something less than what we expected. The election results the following the year were devastating.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Will we uncover why that was so as we go through our discussion of this 1971 session? Was he just simply not the right person?

**Mr. Copeland:** I am not suggesting that he was "not the right person." Poor political and personal decisions were made that had ramifications on the upcoming election the following year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is apparent, as you go through the record of this session, whatever the origins of it, that towards the end of the 1971 session there was a fair amount of discontent. There was even what some people called a revolt where there's a run to replace Tom Swayze with someone else. Was that a series of, as you say, bad political decisions or was that some regret or that they had miscalculated somehow? Did people come to you and say, "Well, we made a mistake?"

**Mr. Copeland:** We could have been out of session about five or six days earlier, but right at the end of session Tom Swayze made a decision all by himself that there were a couple bills that he wanted passed that he felt were being held hostage in the Senate by the Lieutenant Governor. He held up the process of closing down until he got those bills out of the Senate. These were a couple of his own personal bills that had nothing to do with the operation of the state of Washington. And it became self-evident that we had no business being there; we had concluded all of our work, the budget was all done and everything else, and it was just a case of not operating. So, were the frustrations running high to close up the shop?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a very long session. You went from January 11 to March 11 and then started up again March 12 to May 10; that's a long haul.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's a long haul and there was really no reason for us to be there that long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a pretty contentious session; there was an undercurrent of tension, frayed nerves, bad temper; it didn't have a good feel to it. Was that an impression you had at the time, or am I just reading into different things that I'm pulling out of the Journal as I'm trying to find out what's going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think you're misreading it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was just a real testiness to what's going on there.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was a real testiness to it. The majority had slimmed down to a point where it was hanging in the balance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That certainly added to it.

**Mr. Copeland:** The people that are the long ball-hitters on the Democrat side at that time were being very antagonistic and yes, there were some pretty hard shots taken. But by the same token, I was not a part and a parcel to that. Tom Swayze was building the political agenda and he was creating the calendar of events that came up and his selection of bills was just absolutely atrocious.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you give me an example?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, what the heck: increasing the interest rates on credit cards. That was a dumb political maneuver.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who would that benefit?

**Mr. Copeland:** The people that own credit-card companies. It was one of those things that never should have been considered, but Tom absolutely insisted that the caucus vote on it. I was in Rules Committee; I told them I didn't even want to vote the damn thing out of Rules. I didn't want to put anybody to bat and he said, "Oh no, we have to do it." I said, "Why don't you let it go through the Senate first if it is that good; as soon as the Senate passes it, bring it over and we'll entertain it." Well, he said, "It isn't going to pass the Senate." I said, "If it isn't going to pass the Senate, then why the hell are we even bothering about it?" But he insisted. Later on, it became a huge political negative. "Look at all these Republicans who voted to increase interest rates." At that time Jimmy Carter was President and the interest rates were about eighteen percent and we were voting to increase interest rates. It was not a very popular thing, but Tom Swayze insisted that the caucus vote on that. The caucus marched up, they voted on it, and they killed themselves in the process, and then they lost

the majority. Is that a good political decision in the legislative session; is that something the Speaker should be pushing? And the answer is no; not only no, but hell no! Now, that is what I call a “dumb political decision.” This is the leadership that the class elected, leadership that wants to increase interest rates.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I gather that you, with your years of experience and political wisdom you had gathered over time, they were not interested in hearing it? Were you feeling alienated, a little...

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Politically, we just handed the Democrats a club and quite frankly, in the next election they beat us with it. I still think this one issue was a great contributor to Stu Bledsoe losing his race for Congress the next year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I’m wondering how to characterize this new class. Your class was pretty closely tied to the Governor and the Governor’s progressive agenda. Was this class quite a different group of people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Quite a different group of people. As a matter fact, some of them were of the very ultra-conservative wing. A lot of them elected to the Legislature at that time thought Dan was one of the biggest flaming liberals that was ever seen coming across the pike.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some splits on the horizon—I don’t know about this year, but soon there were some real divisions in the caucus and that seems to be the line. “Are you a Dan Evans Republican or are you something else?” And there were people that formed other groups; there was one group called the Renaissance Republicans that were clearly not supportive of Dan Evans’ program. Was this already apparent in 1971?

**Mr. Copeland:** It’s just coming into focus; they didn’t really become an entity until the Spellman administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you starting to notice—maybe in retrospect as much as at the time—that there was a difference?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the advent of Tom Swayze becoming Speaker gave an opportunity for these people just to come to the surface very quickly and show that they were of this ultra-conservative type of an arrangement and Tom had to deal with it because they supported him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were these new people more conservative than Tom Swayze or was he actually their spokesperson?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t think that anybody knew exactly where Tom was going to be politically. They only knew he was from that third-term class and from western Washington. I think everybody knew where I would be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were a pretty known entity, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** Somebody wrote one time about me and said something to the effect, “I can almost take any bill that will be before the Legislature and predict ahead of time how Tom Copeland’s going to vote because his voting record is so consistent.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You stand for something, you have clear political principles? Not to mention a long record.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. At that time everything about me was so transparent it wasn’t even funny; I was very predictable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Generally, that's thought of as a compliment.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'd like to think of it as a compliment. Those people that came into the Legislature with me, virtually all of them were of that vintage. I mean, we still believed in this business of, "I told you ahead of time, this is where I was going to be and that's where I am a year later and I haven't changed." Nobody bought anybody off, or changed his mind, or took a walk or anything of the kind.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The political analysis of Congress in the early seventies talks about a new type of legislator in Congress. The freshmen are feisty; they're not taking time to learn the process—they want to be in charge right away. But it's interesting to find it also on the state level—that how legislators are behaving is actually changing. They're said to be more individualistic and less party oriented. We're not quite in the era of one-issue campaigns, but it's sort of trending in that direction. It's just a different era.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me help you with that. This was when the very first portion of some legislators coming in whose only livelihood was being a member of the Legislature. If your only livelihood is being a member of the Legislature and for you to continue to be employed you have to get elected, you're going to look for those people who are going to help you get elected. What do they want in order to be able to help you get elected? That you are going to support their views. Then they are going to give you the money and the wherewithal to get you elected. Now, are those views similar to what you had when you first came to the Legislature or are they changed somewhat? If they changed somewhat, well then, now you are not a man of strong principles who believes what you said earlier, that "this is the way I'd like to see state government move."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are you saying you were seeing a loss of integrity?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm not saying integrity; that isn't the word. It's a case of: "What is the primary motivation for taking a political stand?" And the primary motivation is to get reelected.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And this was a new phenomenon?

**Mr. Copeland:** If you go down to the Legislature and you look at the people sitting there today, almost a third of them derive their only income from the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That definitely changes the picture of what's going on, and so this was the first wave?

**Mr. Copeland:** Paramount amongst the entire arrangement is the tenure of Bob Greive and Bob relates in his book, "When you buy me, you get the Senate." I mean, the guy was open and above board; he just said he was for sale and Joe Davis bought him. Once Joe Davis bought him, he bought the Senate, because Bob was going to control the Senate and Joe was going to tell Bob what to do. Bob did exactly what he told him to do because Joe was a major source of income to his law firm. Okay now, you take and transform that back into forty or fifty seats and there you are.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a whole different ballgame.

**Mr. Copeland:** It sure is.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you start to have some feelings of dissatisfaction? Did you start to feel less at home in the Legislature with this shift? Of course, it's just beginning here, but was it a little bit less congenial?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think at that time I knew in my heart I was serving my last time term in the House. The western Washington members let it be known they didn't need my style of leadership. They didn't approve of the time I had spent on recruiting and electioneering. They didn't appreciate that I helped take them into a period of being in the majority. They could achieve their goals and objectives without T. Copeland.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And that changed things for you. Were there certain things, if you felt it was your last term, that you wanted to get done or that mattered to you—you wanted to do them a certain way—did this feeling heighten some of your activities?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I was just still going to be responsible for those duties assigned to me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But was there that feeling of wanting to wrap up a bit, or get things a little more solid in certain areas?

**Mr. Copeland:** Really not. That was going to come about all in due time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On the surface, how did you get along with all these people?

**Mr. Copeland:** I just continued to do business as usual; that's all I could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have a feeling of either frustration or even resignation, in the sense that you could see that you'd gone as far as you were going to go there and that it was time to think of something new?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were all kinds of charges that the leadership was inept—the word “amateurish” is used—partisan,

doctrinaire; there were some rather harsh epithets about the whole scenario for that session. Would you go that far yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't have those feelings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these descriptions actually came from the Governor in speeches he gave. There were still some of the old guard in your caucus leadership. You're the Speaker Pro Tem and the majority floor leader was still Stewart Bledsoe. How did he fit in with this new group?

**Mr. Copeland:** Stu came to us early on and indicated his desire to go ahead and work in that capacity with the understanding that he was going to run for Congress. So we all knew ahead of time that Stu had his own political agenda that he wanted to promote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did that play into all these different arguments, if he was trying to make a name for himself?

**Mr. Copeland:** To the degree that he was spending a great deal of time in communications with areas within that congressional district. And don't misunderstand, this is not a bad way to conduct oneself.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But his attention was not fully in Olympia?

**Mr. Copeland:** His attention was not wholly on, quote, “that session of the Legislature.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that part of the unraveling? If the Majority Leader is not paying attention, I imagine a lot of things can get a little messy.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Speaker is in charge.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hal Wolf was Majority Whip. He'd certainly been a long-time colleague of yours; was he able to pick up some of the pieces?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your Republican caucus chair was Irv Newhouse. Where was he in this picture? As a caucus chair, was he able to lead; was he able to bring people together and inspire them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, look at the players you just mentioned: Hal, Irv and Stu. All of them came into the House in '65 and all were passed over by the "class of '67." Each one of them was carrying a certain amount of hurt. But they were being good soldiers. The majority we had was very slim and so...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which calls for greater leadership in some instances.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct and so running a tight ship at that time was not there as far as the leadership was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was not an easy thing to hold together?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think Irv spent more time trying to help Stu run for Congress than he did on the caucus.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you've got two distracted leaders, well, that doesn't help. The Assistant Majority Floor Leader was Sid Morrison. The Caucus Secretary was Lois North. You had a Majority Caucus Coordinator, Bud Pardini. Was he one of the third-term people? I don't think you've ever had that position before; is that just a title?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I think they just gave him that job as a title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was he an up-and-coming member?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, a very conservative up-and-coming member.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's look a little bit at the Democrats who played an important role in this session. They were neck-and-neck with everything your caucus was trying to do and challenging you all the way; this was said to be an extremely partisan session. The Minority Floor Leader, Leonard Sawyer, was a longtime member. Gary Grant was the Democratic Organization Leader, who you've said before was a fairly ferocious legislator on the floor.

**Mr. Copeland:** Highly partisan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Their Caucus Chair was Bill Chatalas. Their Secretary was Margaret Hurley; it's interesting to see her come back into leadership when she'd been on the outs since the coalition. They had John O'Brien as Executive Chairman—I'm not at all clear what that is—their senior person, of course. Then they had a Democratic Caucus Chairman Pro Tem, which is another interesting title: Charles Moon. And a Democratic Campaign Coordinator, Robert Perry. And five Assistant Floor Leaders: Dick King, John Rosellini, Dave Ceccarelli, Ted Bottiger, and Robert Charette. They found ways to pull in a lot of people. This is quite a group. Are they acting in a pretty unified way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Pretty unified.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do they slow you down? Can they impede your program because they've got this tight group?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Often the Democrats are said to be all over the place and the Republicans

are tight, but I think in the 1971 session we're seeing that reversed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the Democrats have a good program; did they have creative things to offer? They complained that they were constantly left out of the process. Were they just a negative force or did they have things to bring to the table?

**Mr. Copeland:** Both. I think they were a negative force on some of the left-over agenda items we had as far as the Governor was concerned—reorganization legislation that we had to fine-tune, and stuff like that. Did they have anything that was positive or well thought out, quote, “a total agenda?” And the answer is no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were the classic opposition party?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were truly an opposition party. But you just read off a list of names: good heads, good sharp-thinking people and virtually all of them are good hard-working legislators.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much of this session is overshadowed by the fact that this was the session before a gubernatorial election? This is the record that people will be referring to when they then run for Governor as to who gets what done. The Democrats had their standard-bearer Martin Durkan who was planning to run against Dan Evans. It was assumed—although not yet announced—that Dan Evans would go for a third term. How much of a factor was that during the session?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's something that was present but I don't think you could see

it manifest itself on a day-to-day operation. So as far as what we did on a daily basis, it didn't change a thing. But did that group of Democrats have the ability to go ahead and make their point well known? You bet! The majority that the Republicans had was pretty dicey. So that's the reason it was kind of a tough session; well, it's always a tough session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This one seemed particularly tough. The other thing that hangs over this session was another redistricting. Keeping all that in mind, let's explore this session of 1971. Right after the Speaker's election is the nomination procedure for the Speaker Pro Tempore. You were handily elected, of course, being in the majority and were escorted to the rostrum and sworn in. Then you made a very short speech: “I think I'm correct in the fact that I'm making history today serving you as Speaker for the shortest term ever. By the same token, I will be serving you as Speaker Pro Tem for the longest term ever.” And that is definitely, in your case, a huge accomplishment. That was not a pass-through office in your hands, by any means. Then you went on to thank everyone who had helped you and supported you. You spoke a little bit about your work of updating all the legislative facilities and processes. And then you said, very briefly, “I'm looking forward to this session; I'm looking forward to 1971. 1970 wasn't too good for me.” And you must be alluding to your personal life there? And then you added: “But I have been sustained by a small motto that I might pass on to you, it simply states: “*Illegitimi non carborundum est.*” Where did you get that motto? It's not exactly common knowledge.

**Mr. Copeland:** “Don't let the bastards grind you down.” Where did I get the Latin phrase? I don't know where I came across the phrase.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you obviously loved it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it's intended to be taken with a great deal of humor. I was trying to express that everybody might have hard times and problems along the line, but don't let them get in the way of progress. I don't know that everybody there got the literal interpretation there, but it was intended to be in good spirits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought it was very catchy! Moving on from that high point, then there was the election for the Chief Clerk, Malcolm McBeath, and the Sergeant of Arms, Eugene Prince for their third terms. Also to start up each session you have to discuss the rules that you're going to operate under and as usual there's a rather lively discussion. There were quite a few challenges to the whole operation from various Democrats about how the Rules Committee operated. They wanted it more open; they wanted the votes recorded; they're trying to do away with secrecy. You got a little exercised over that and were quoted in several newspaper articles not agreeing with that at all. Gary Grant called the Rules Committee "the graveyard of legislation," which of course is a very pithy phrase for the press. You maintained that "was how it worked."

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me insert something here, if Gary Grant called the Rules Committee a graveyard of legislation, the only thing I can say is hooray! At some point there has to be somebody—some committee, some entity—that will do a logical job of screening and not allow every single bill that's introduced to come to the floor. I mean, you would just be in session for an interminable length of time. This is a screening process and that's exactly what it's intended to be. Many bills that never got out of Rules Committee didn't get out for a good reason. A couple of real

good reasons are: one, the Senate might be working on a similar bill and was going to pass the bill before the House did, so Rules just didn't put it on the calendar so you cut down on the duplication of effort. Another reason might be that several of the sponsors of corresponding bills got together and decided that collectively they would introduce one bill rather than three bills. So yes, the Rules Committee was, quote, "a graveyard," but by the same token, that was the proper function of the Rules Committee. Gary Grant was just playing to the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So when that sort of statement is thrown around...you maintain that the Democrats were just simply trying to embarrass the Republicans and that the process works as it should and it's orderly and functional.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. But it was. You used the operative word: it was pithy language for the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The whole rhetoric about the Rules Committee was heating up, and eventually Rules was opened and its function changed. There was a lot of pushing going on about that right now. Why would either party want that if the Rules Committee functions, as you say, in a necessary way? Eventually, the Democrats will be back in power; why would they want to change the rules that will, when it's their turn, not be good for them, either?

**Mr. Copeland:** I agree with you—it was just a press point, that's all there was to it. I mean, sitting right across the aisle from me at that time was John O'Brien and I know perfectly good and well he didn't agree with what Gary Grant was saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had the majority; did you just roll over this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several things the Democrats wanted to do: they wanted to record the votes in Rules instead of having a secret ballot or a voice vote; that's defeated. They wanted a five-day limit for bills sitting in Rules. Everything would have to come out or would you have to actively kill it? There would be no just having shuffling a bill to the bottom of the pile?

**Mr. Copeland:** Their change was that if the bill was in Rules for five days, then it would come on the calendar. Here again, you defeat the screening process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they trying to force you to take a vote—a recorded vote—to kill something rather than just keep it under the pile?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. They're trying to embarrass the majority party, that's all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Stu Bledsoe claimed that it would make what he calls "a garbage chute" out of the Rules Committee—a colorful phrase. There was all this jockeying going on. They were still, of course, upset about the use of the Committee of the Whole. Another thing that came up, some members were concerned that the Highways budget was its own entity; they thought that the Appropriations Committee should review it even though it had its own revenue stream. They called it "accountability." How would that have changed how that budget works?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it doesn't happen. Again, this is a press ploy more than anything else. First of all, the dedicated fund that we have in the highway money is embedded in the constitution; it says it may be used only for transportation purposes. So now you've

got yourself a constitutional barrier about the intermingling of highway money with general appropriation funds. So any suggestion along that line, at this particular time, when you're discussing the rules, of having the highway budget go through the Appropriations Committee, that is strictly balderdash; nobody was really seriously considering it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe that's why it caught my eye. I had never heard of anyone thinking that was a good idea before. You did, of course, get through all this discussion, and moved forward on the session. The issue that hangs over you, though, throughout this session is redistricting. It's a new decade—new census figures were coming out; you're constitutionally supposed to redistrict. Redistricting all through the sixties was this issue that took over session after session, and for long-term members like yourself, was this an unwelcome task?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. It is a legislative must.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you hoping to invent a different way of doing it?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, really not. I didn't go to the Legislature with the idea that I was going to make it any easier on legislators. And I'll say that again, I had no intention of making it easier on *legislators*. Now, as far as the process is concerned and your ability to gather information and work more efficiently, making it easier to do that, that's essential. But the alternative to this is you turn issues like redistricting over to somebody else and let them worry about them. That was not part of my game plan at all; I had no intention of doing that. Nor did I have any intention of dodging the responsibility of setting the salaries of the Legislature and other state-elected officials. That is a legislative function: that's what a legislative body does; that's what

they're supposed to do. If you can't stand up to that kind of heat, don't file for office!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Perhaps this was again a press thing, but redistricting was written about with such trepidation and such resignation and girding and all that sort of thing. It's hard to get a handle on what it actually meant to a sitting legislator: how tense was it, how all-absorbing, or how much of a distraction?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was as much of a distraction as you wanted to make it. It's one of those things that are required. So all of a sudden, the population shifts and there are three House members that are sitting in one district; that's the way the cookie crumbles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As a legislator from a more rural area, I don't know what the feeling would be in your part of the state as each time this comes up, you would lose some representation to the west side.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. As the metropolitan areas grew, we knew that ahead of time, that's part of the game. I mean, everybody cannot have everything remain status quo. In your lifetime you've known some mean old crotchety bastards at one time were little bitty babies, right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even their mothers loved them.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's right, but they changed, didn't they? So does the size of a legislative district; so what? Don't cry over it! Keep on going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're more philosophical than many. The Democrats were pretty testy about it and they charged the Republicans with not having their hearts in redistricting and hoping to push it off to the courts; other people dispute that. Was there any truth in that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think so. I think everybody was trying to find that area of compromise and agreement where you could find the necessary votes to go ahead and pass it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that is always the trick. The people sitting there have to pass it so you have to deal with the incumbents. The charge was that the courts would somehow favor the Republicans. The insinuation was, generally, that the person who would put the case to the courts would be Slade Gorton, as Attorney General. Of course, he's a Republican and certainly a past redistricting champion for the Republicans. So, was that like a conspiracy theory version of what's going on there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it's a theory. I'm sure you could make conspiracy theories of all kinds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It comes up frequently so I just thought I'd at least lay it to rest.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, it comes up: "He's the Republican Attorney General and you're going to have a Republican court do this," which is just so much balderdash. I mean, you can't tell a federal judge what to do. So no, it was just a case of trying to work through the process and see whether or not you could come up with something and we worked through the redistricting process and found that we could not and that's all there is to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just too far apart?

**Mr. Copeland:** We went on from there. Then later on, the courts went ahead and did the redistricting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It did come down to that.

**Mr. Copeland:** And did it favor the Democrats? Yes, it favored the Democrats.



Once you started a redistricting program, King County was going to gain and there was no way Spokane County could maintain five legislative districts within the county boundaries. When you started to divide the districts up in King County, the predominance of them went to the city of Seattle. Every time you created an additional legislative district and took one away from the eastern part of the state of Washington and put it in downtown Seattle, it became a Democrat district. That was a foregone conclusion and everybody knew that ahead of time. So what did the courts do? They created new legislative districts and they put them in downtown Seattle and they became “Democrat districts,” including a district that the court took away from Spokane County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though interestingly, many of your Republican leaders were from downtown Seattle, so it hadn’t always been Democratic. Something changed.

**Mr. Copeland:** I realize that, but as they drew the new lines Republican districts were gone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the nature of the city change as well? With the growth of the suburbs?

**Mr. Copeland:** The politics of Seattle have changed immensely. Oh yes, from the standpoint of the city of Seattle, it’s a solid Democrat area. You can’t find a single Republican legislative district in all of the city of Seattle. Pritchard’s old district; Evan’s old district; Gorton’s old district. The “new breed,” you know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And was that becoming true right about in the seventies or so; it hadn’t been true before.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there was more than one thing going on here; it’s not just redistricting—it’s the changing nature of these neighborhoods?

**Mr. Copeland:** It’s a changing nature of the city of Seattle with King County, that’s correct. And does it become more and more Democrat? It certainly does.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the ring around Seattle becomes more Republican.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let’s not say around it; let’s say to the northeast. In Seattle, we used to have what you considered to be safe Republican districts like Queen Anne Hill and several other areas in Seattle; they changed immensely. The population shifted. The thing that did change it, I think, was property taxes went up very substantially. People began to recognize the fact that the Seattle public school system was on a pretty dramatic downward spiral. It was not turning out a real quality student and concerned parents were interested in getting their children someplace else. I think property taxes were going up substantially. And they wanted to upgrade their homes and they knew that the neighborhoods they were currently living in were not being upgraded—they were being downgraded—and so they departed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they moved to Bellevue, Kirkland...

**Mr. Copeland:** And they moved to other areas so that they could have a more active participation with their children in the public school system. They departed and the city of Seattle was left with the residue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes when we look at all these things, we want to have it be simple; we want to say it was redistricting, but in fact, it’s much more complex; it’s a whole social change.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's the economics; it's the environment; it's the educational opportunities; it's the tax base; it's the growth factor; it's the accessibility to my work; it's the accessibility to recreation, so on and so forth. They're all kind of all thrown in the pot together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even changing tastes in housing styles.

**Mr. Copeland:** And then you couple that with simple little things like city zoning, building ordinances, building requirements, city building permit systems, how long does it take you to get a permit to build, how long does it take you to get a permit to remodel?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The freeway system was now in place and those extra bridges that you've been building opened up whole new areas for development and now you were starting to reap that change.

**Mr. Copeland:** It opened up whole areas, but by the same token, now you put in a freeway and adjacent to that freeway there's a noise factor. And if the wind's blowing out of the northeast, the people on the southwest hear the freeway all the time and they don't like it, so they're really interested in selling their house and moving and leaving the problem to somebody else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So redistricting was just one piece of this huge puzzle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, it is not the end; it's not the beginning; it's not the start; it's not the cause; it's not the answer. It's just another thing layered up on the population. The voice of x-number of residents must be represented in Olympia. I always took redistricting with just a grain of salt. I knew in my heart, coming from a rural area, that the demography of everything was going to change, and my

district was going to get geographically larger because it needed more population. I didn't necessarily own a seat in the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you have an unusual attitude! That certainly was the tenor of the discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** I was always there to get something done; I wasn't there to be there in the perpetuity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You introduced, right on the second day of the session, a House resolution that called for the enactment of a redistricting bill within a hundred and twenty-one days and you wanted to assign penalties of legislative salaries and allowances if that was not accomplished. Did anything come of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I didn't think so. Where did you get the one hundred and twenty-one day part? Were you just making a statement?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the length of two sessions, plus one day. I was trying to point out the fact that we really and truly should address it. No, nothing came of it. Not a great deal of people were interested.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You wanted to put their salaries on the line and get their attention?

**Mr. Copeland:** When you're talking about someone else's salary, that's pretty tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It would have been your own as well.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but I didn't have to have that salary to live. To some people it was a must.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a gesture, saying, “Let’s get on with this.” There are accounts that redistricting gets woven into all the work of the session where people are trading votes on redistricting and that it was even impacting the budget. There were charges again and again that members were letting redistricting take over the session.

**Mr. Copeland:** This was more of a press observation than reality. I don’t think I knew of a single legislator that said, “If you vote for this particular version of a redistricting bill, I will vote for the budget. If you don’t, I will not vote for the budget,” or whatever. I don’t think there was even a hint or a suggestion that this was going on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they were basically looking under the beds for things that were not happening?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that’s correct. It’s interesting reading—redistricting is terribly uninteresting reading if there isn’t some subterfuge; if there isn’t some cloak and dagger; if there isn’t “I am going to get you; I am going to create a legislative district that will no longer have you in existence.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That did occasionally happen.

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember a legislative redistricting bill that took John O’Brien’s house and went completely around it and down Lake Washington Boulevard a few blocks, across the lake and took in all of Mercer Island and came right back and hooked up to John’s house. So they just got John’s house and they put John in Mercer Island, which was the strongest Republican ghetto in the state of Washington. He looked at that and said, “Who is doing this to me?” This was done as a joke and obviously it did get his

attention. Did we ever do it with the intention of having that happen? Heaven’s no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that Slim Rasmussen’s house was treated in that fashion on one occasion. And not as a joke.

**Mr. Copeland:** More than one occasion. Bob Greive wanted to get rid of Senator Rasmussen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it’s not totally mythical that these things happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** For the Republican side, you had Speaker Swayze taking the lead with Sid Morrison and Art Brown leading up the charge. With each redistricting some kind of office is formed where there are lots of maps and data collected. And each time also, there are various accounts of how much access people have to the maps and how open the process is. This is a new cast of characters for redistricting for the Republican side; did they do it in a new way?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were computers starting to come in for redistricting?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not yet. Census data gave us a count within a designated geographic area. But you see, this becomes the hard part: all of the redistricting figures we had to work off of came from census tracks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which are not the same as precincts.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is correct. It is not the same as precincts. A census tract is a political subdivision that is used once every ten years,

then it goes away. It's a nothing, but that is what we had to work on. So you could take a group of census tracts and say, "Within that census tract, there are x-number of precincts in District X," and come up—I'm going to say—within five percent, which is pretty good, really. Always the problem was that census tracks were not in line with anything; census tracks oftentimes didn't even pay any attention to city limits!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to follow natural boundaries: county lines and city limits; what are recognizable neighborhoods.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. A census track was drawn by the people that took the census and said, you know, "It's easier for us; go count these apartment houses and then put them all in one census track." Were they in the same school district? No. Were they in the same block? Oh, heaven's no. Did they run across several blocks? There was maybe a group of apartment houses with fifteen different apartment owners, and there is a freeway in between them and one group of apartments is in one city and one's in another, but it was a group of apartment houses, so they put them in one census track and that was it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not the handiest tool to begin with and a totally different logic.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. We tried to take an incorporated city and put it entirely within one legislative district. This is just kind of the general rule of thumb: don't take a city and divide it up and put it in two or three legislative districts. That's a community of interest; that was part of it. But you see, census tracks didn't have that rule, so we had to violate census tracks in order to be able to put it together.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you start with a map of really obvious districts?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like "here's a county, here's a small town," and then you'd start with those places and then work around those?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It takes up a lot of energy. Did you feel that your team did a pretty good job?

**Mr. Copeland:** Working under the guidelines that they had, sure they did. When you begin a redistricting process, there is a natural tendency for things to fall into place if you follow the guidelines, but the thing that triggers this off is, where do you start with that first district?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That fatal first line.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. See, if you start in the upper left hand corner, or the lower right...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nobody wants to start in the middle!

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, even starting in the middle—doesn't make any difference—where do you create that first legislative district? Once you create that one and keep within the confines of the rules, then the second one will come into place and keep within the confines of the rules, the third will come into place. Some rules apply, but it will begin to change all of the lines as you develop.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They all ripple out.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you set that one aside and start a whole new plan and start in the lower right hand portion of the state and start with number one there and then begin to work up

and work to the northwest across the state, then the lines will always come out different. So how many ways are there to redistrict the state, trying to get it done on the same population basis? Thousands!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In previous redistricting efforts, you'd had Slade Gorton who was, by some accounts, a genius at this. Did you feel that this redistricting effort was comparable?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think people give Slade an awful lot more credit than what he's entitled to as far as redistricting is concerned. When you begin to work with raw data numbers in the large areas, there's much that has to fall into place and there's not a lot of flexibility. Slade knew that the Forty-second precinct voted fifty-five percent Republican and therefore he wanted to have the Forty-second precinct in a particular legislative district; that's where he had a great deal of interest, input, credibility. Okay, but his entire focus was on just a very few legislative districts, primarily in King and Pierce County. The balance of the state was just almost so inflexible you couldn't change it very much. I mean, what could you do in Okanogan County? You couldn't go over the Canadian border; you couldn't cross the Cascade Mountains and get into King County. How far east could you go? And even if you did go east, what were you doing? You were taking in five more precincts, and if you took in seven, then you got into another county? See, so that's a slam-dunk, you can't do much. Give Slade all the credit in the world for what he did internally within the Forty-fifth and the Forty-sixth legislative districts in Seattle. But by the same token, the demography of that entire area changed within the next few years and so all of his work was virtually worthless. It didn't make any difference. I mean, we just went through a whole litany of things that changed in the city of Seattle, so

the entire city of Seattle did a complete flip-flop and bang! All of those legislative districts became Democrats, so it didn't make any difference what he did. It had no lasting value whatsoever. I always felt that if Slade had spent as much time on candidate recruitment and campaigning as he did on redistricting, the results would have been far better.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's leave that discussion for now. It's there all throughout the session, so we'll just keep that in the back of our minds.

You were next assigned to committees: you were only on two, and when I was looking at the committee distribution, other members were only on two or three. There were a few that had four, but the whole structure was pulling down into a tighter list of duties. The old days of having five or six committees are gone. You were the vice-chair, of course, of Rules and Administration, and you were on the Transportation Committee—the old Highways Committee, which was new for you. Did you choose this yourself? Were you as busy as you wanted to be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The chair of Rules is the Speaker, and the chair of Transportation was Duane Berentson in this case. This is a big committee; there was a lot going on in that committee. It's not quite the environmental session that 1970 was, but you still did a certain amount of environmental business. The big discussion that session was the shorelines bill that had not been reconciled the last time; it was the last big piece from the original list. It passed this time and went to a referendum. Do you remember taking part in this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was not one of the heavy players in that, no.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Last time we discussed the reason the shorelines bill was so difficult, because it really hit home with property owners in so many different areas of the state. Was the mechanism of going to a referendum adopted because it was so difficult and contentious as the way to get this through?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly, this is pretty far reaching.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't even know if people understood at the time how far reaching; they're still working through that. It's a complicated measure. House Bill 584 "establishes a shoreline management act to submit to the voters, provides that local government will have primary responsibility for regulating shorelines, including all water areas except those of statewide significance," which are very large lakes or other specifically mentioned areas. "Provides that the Department of Ecology must submit proposed guidelines to local governments within one year, and following their modifications would resubmit final guidelines." So it sets up the whole process of how this is going to happen: "Mandates public hearings within eighteen months of the guidelines being adopted by the Department of Ecology. Local governments would have to adopt a master plan for shorelines." It's that really interesting mixture of local, state and also the private ownership of land which makes this more complex than some other measures. "It prohibits substantial development," and they define that, "on any shoreline without a permit from the local government authority," creates an appeals board, talks about fines and how it's going to work. It passes though, so people saw the need for this and agreed that this mixture of the state and local governments should regulate this. We've been working with it ever since trying to fine-tune what exactly that means. So it was a big chunk done; it was a major accomplishment of the 1971 session.

Environmental regulation was coming into its own. In the transportation area, you were dealing more and more with environmental issues there, too. You had just gone through—and were still going through—a huge highway and freeway building era in the state. But there was starting to be a bit of a backlash; people were starting to protest, even in the streets, about freeway construction, "the paving over of the state" as some people put it. How did the state look at that? Were you starting to slow down development or examine your processes in a new way as to where freeways would go?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the state was going ahead with the transportation system. Now, let's back up just for a second. For those of you old enough to remember, the city of Seattle had five great big approach bridges that sat for fifteen years before they were ever hooked up by the city of Seattle. The state built them, put them in place and the bridge ran right off in the middle of nowhere.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They did look rather odd.

**Mr. Copeland:** They sat there for at least ten years while the city of Seattle made up their minds as to whether or not they were going to hook them up.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And sometimes they did decide and sometimes it was defeated.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was the city of Seattle's move; that was their section of the road—that was not the state's section of the road—and they just sat there. There were five or six or seven sitting out there in the mid-air, south of downtown Seattle. People complained about it for years, yet the city did nothing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did the state know at all that they were going to run into this heavy

resistance? Would it have been better not to put them there?

**Mr. Copeland:** How were we to know that the mayor and the city council were going to listen to somebody that had an environmental problem about putting too much pavement in, and building roads? So they didn't build the roads.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder why there wasn't more coordination. I mean, that would have cost the state a lot of money to build those roads to nowhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** Alright now, if you'd asked for coordination, you never would have built it. The state went ahead: they bought property; they put in necessary barriers; they put in the retaining walls; they built the bridges; they put in the off-ramps and everything else. Then they said to the city of Seattle, "Now, hook them up," and the city said, "No, we don't want to."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was more talk, suddenly, about noise mitigation and pollution issues to do with freeways. At first, freeways were considered a godsend; they were going to save all these communities and solve all the problems, but now that they were actually in place, people started to look at them differently. Did the state transportation people have answers for people wanting the mitigation? Did you start to build freeways differently with noise barriers and that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think where people in the transportation industry and the engineers missed it was just strictly on the basis of the growth factor and how fast it would occur. What did you have in the city of Seattle? Well, you had 500,000 residents. How many thought it was going to go to 800,000 residents

in two years time? Nobody. There was probably .8 of an automobile per household at that time, but how many thought you'd have 2.2 automobiles per household? Nobody. So did you hit your projections properly or did you underestimate? Obviously we underestimated. What was the vehicular traffic count that would be possible for I-5? X, and what is it now? X plus five. All of these things are not phenomenon that is isolated to the Pacific Northwest; this thing repeats over and over again. However, some other states and communities stayed ahead of the curve. They expanded: they built parallel roads; they built bypasses; they relocated to take some of the drain off—they stayed ahead of the curve. King County and the city of Seattle have natural geographic barriers. You've got Lake Washington forty-some miles long and you've got Puget Sound. Now, in between there are some places less than six miles wide where you're trying to funnel all the traffic through that corridor. It's like jamming everything through a funnel. Is it bad? Yes, it's bad. The Legislature probably should locate and finance a new I-5.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where would you have put it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I can envision one that would probably take off out of Centralia and go through the eastern part of Fort Lewis. Come out someplace in Issaquah and come back in at Everett.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A much wider swing around?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. And if you wanted to come from Canada and you were going to go to Portland, you'd never come anywhere near the city of Seattle; you'd shoot right on through. I think a corridor like that is probably going to be built sometime. It

should be on the drawing board and it should be financed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That'd be different. This raises the issue of financing. What was the method of raising the gas tax and other fees in your time in the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, this is one of the most interesting points about maintaining a bipartisan approach to all highway matters. When it became necessary to increase, let us say, the gas tax, the Legislature used a proportional "yes" vote to accomplish the desired results. An easy explanation: If the House was controlled by the Democrats by fifty-eight to forty-two, that meant the Democrats came up with fifty-eight percent of the yes votes. In order to pass the House, the Democrats would provide twenty-nine yes votes and the Republicans would provide twenty-one votes for a total of fifty, which is the constitutional majority. Same thing would apply in the Senate. If the Republicans controlled the Senate twenty-six to twenty-three, the Republicans would provide fourteen yes votes and the Democrats would provide eleven for a total of twenty-five yes votes. Now, this was only an unwritten rule. It was an understanding that had been in place long before I came to the Legislature. It produced a bipartisan approach to most all highway matters and it was well known and understood. Too bad they don't have this procedure in place today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds very effective. There was also the beginning discussion of rapid transit and other methods of getting around. If that had passed back then in the 1970s, would we also be looking at a very different picture now?

**Mr. Copeland:** Rapid transit is one of those things that is really tough trying to sell to the

American people, "We want you to quit falling in love with your car. We understand that your car is a sanctuary; it's a case of privacy; it's a case of ownership; it's a case of pride. It's vehicular transportation, but we want you to give that up and we want you to get on the bus." Now, once you're able to sell that, fine and dandy, but you're going to have to start someplace and I think the place you're going to have to start is in junior high school. You tell the people in junior high school, "Don't look forward to the day you're sixteen and you get a driver's license, because you're not going to have a car to drive. And by the way, when you're eighteen and you go to the senior prom, it's going to be cool because you get to take your date to the senior prom on a city bus; we're going to have special buses running for you." Now, once you're able to sell that, then you're going to be able to sell rapid transit. Do you understand where I'm coming from?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. There are two kinds of rapid transit: there's inside-the-city rapid transit and then there's between-cities rapid transit. They're not the same thing; they handle different loads. What about that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's talk about rapid transit between cities. Wouldn't it be nice to get on a bus and go to downtown Seattle? You get on the bus here in Olympia and it takes you to downtown Seattle and you get on the bus at 4:30 in Seattle and you come right back. But can you do that? No. Why can't you do it? Because the bus goes through somebody else's jurisdiction; it is a union jurisdiction. "Thou shalt not take a bus through my jurisdiction; you must stop the bus; unload the bus and transfer those passengers to a bus in my jurisdiction in order to pass through my jurisdiction." Inter-city transit is totally incapable of running a bus from Olympia to the city of Seattle because it passes through

the jurisdiction in Pierce County. Okay, that's a union rule. Now, you're asking me, how do you satisfy this inter-city thing? Why don't you go back and talk to the labor unions about it and see if they are at all interested.

However, you have to understand that I am a big believer in paying quite a bit more money in highway taxes. I have always said that the fee the state collects on gasoline is a user's fee; it is not a tax per se. If you want to drive your car a lot, you're going to pay a lot more for your gasoline; you're using the road—it's a user's fee. What are we paying for gasoline now? At \$1.56, we probably are on the lower end of the spectrum of what gasoline costs currently are in the United States today by maybe twenty cents a gallon, thirty cents a gallon. If that whole thing had been translated into paying an additional ten cents a gallon, we would have a system of roads in this state right now that would be second to none and we virtually would not have these problems. But that's hindsight. Can we do it now? Yes, it's just playing catch-up: get with the program; start playing catch up, that's all you can do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you went on to the Transportation Committee, was it because you had these pretty strong views, these interests in how it was all put together? Things were percolating quite a bit in this area; was this part of what drew you to this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think at that time everybody was pretty well convinced something really huge was going to have to happen to transportation, and the budget was always a big constraint. But I never found it difficult to vote for an increase in transportation costs because you're not doing anything but paying for roads you're going to be driving on ten years from now. These are upfront costs that you're trying to take care of. I didn't mind that at all. I never felt that the gasoline taxes were exorbitantly high. It came back

to the premise of this is a user's fee; if it's really an undesirable tax, don't use it, that's all there is to it. But I don't think there was any one particular thing about being on this committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a few things were accomplished in that area—and some were not. Again, the creation of a Department of Transportation did not pass. That seems to be something the members just were not ready to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was always primary with the Governor and citizens that he would appoint the Director of Highways and you can appreciate that that would be a high political agenda item as far as a Governor is concerned. But the Legislature at that time was very, very protective of this business of whatever we do, we do this in a very, very bipartisan basis. We never looked at roads as if: "this is a Republican road and that's a Democrat road." This business about any kind of pork barreling output: "That special road project in my district, if you vote for it, then I'll vote for your special little project," hardly any of this went on at all. It was truly on the basis that everything was done with the engineer's study and recommendation, the engineer's area of priority. And if your particular road—your district, remote as it might be—didn't meet the criteria, you just didn't get it through the committee, that's all there was to it. It was a dead duck.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there a feeling that the system worked? If it's not broken, don't mess with it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not on the basis of "It's working fine now;" it was on the basis of "Politics is pretty well taken out of this." And how, quote, "political" do you want to make it, end quote? A lot of people just didn't want to make it very political.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had been a standard-bearer for Governor Evans on various reorganization efforts. Did you have anything to do with pushing his desire for a Department of Transportation, or did you also leave that alone?

**Mr. Copeland:** I pretty much left that one alone. Was I out there leading a charge for him? No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a call at this time to repeal the state constitutional amendment that restricts gas tax money to highway development only and use it for mass transit. That failed to get through Senate Rules, as I understood. Had this come to the House, do you think it would have failed there, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** Would it have passed at that time? No, I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We talked a little bit about the idea—that went nowhere—of taking the Highway budget and making it more connected to the Appropriation Committee's process. There were, nonetheless, some changes about how the Highway budget was figured. You had your own revenue stream but you hadn't always paid for everything that Highways touched out of that revenue stream. It used to be just for road construction. But they started to tuck more things into that funding source. There was more money for the State Patrol coming out of the motor vehicle fund; there was more tourist promotion coming out of that same funding; ferry funding was changed—instead of just being tied to fares, they started to scrape off some money for ferries. Were these just little incremental changes that add up or was this a shift in understanding of how it's all one big system? What was the thinking here?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a shift now; this is

all one big system. The ferries are nothing more than an extension of highways in the state of Washington. That was a constitutional amendment. But here is the problem: you always had these people that really wanted to spend more money on general administration, more money on education, more money on welfare. They were always looking for money. "Look at Highways; they have a lot of money. Let's take some of that." Then somebody got the bright idea, "Why don't we put some extra charges on automobile license tabs and we'll use the revenue for county government?" "Oh, good idea. Let's call the counties in and see if they'd like to participate in this and maybe they can lobby it." So what do they do? They increased the automobile license tab fees and they said it would be used for juvenile justice courts. Had nothing to do with highways; had nothing to do with transportation, but it was an opportunity to put a fee on something for a specific arrangement. Well, it became vogue. And it got to the point of where a normal license tab on a new car would cost you eight hundred bucks for two consecutive years. Where did the money go, did it go to highways? Oh, hell no!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It went everywhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** It went everywhere imaginable. It was just ludicrous the way the Legislature did that. But you see, people were looking at all this transportation funding to siphon off for pet projects. All that came about until Initiative 695 and what happened? People jumped on that like you couldn't believe it and passed it with over a sixty percent vote. And now all of the county people blame Tim Eyman for it; it's his fault. Yes, Tim Eyman and sixty percent of the voters—it's his fault?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a jerry-built structure that was just vulnerable?



**Mr. Copeland:** That's right, it shouldn't have been there. Nobody wants to increase taxes, but they all want to have money for these special projects. And they say, "Well, we'll only put a couple bucks on new cars; you know, we'll put it on 'new' cars. If anybody can afford to buy a new car we'll stick it to them." Well, they stuck it to them alright; they stuck it to them big time!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It kind of grew over time.

**Mr. Copeland:** It grew and grew and grew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was easy. Where should they have gone instead?

**Mr. Copeland:** They should have gone to a sales tax increase. Where do you want to go with your sales tax in the state of Washington? Do you want to have a ten percent tax on everything you buy in the state of Washington in order to be able to support the state government? If that's what you want and you've got justification for it, vote for a ten percent sales tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was kind of a back-door approach?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it is a back-door approach.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe this was an opening wedge in this kind of thinking in 1971. This was both how they got the money and what they were using it for, kind of tucking it into highway transportation-related kind of things. It just expands.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you fight this at the time; how did you feel about it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was a firm believer in that for highway purposes. If it had to do with motor vehicles, use the money for highways, but don't inter-mingle the two. Once you inter-mingle the two, you're going to be raising the gas tax in order to be able to support public schools or welfare or something else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see how ferry funding relates, and the State Patrol.

**Mr. Copeland:** The State Patrol is nothing more than the enforcement arm of the state highways. And you damn well don't want to do without them. Not only that, the Washington State Patrol is one of the greatest assemblies of great people that are doing an otherwise ugly job in a very, very professional fashion. It's a great institution and you don't want to dink around and destroy them.

Now, the state decided to go into the ferry system and do away with privately owned ferries—like the Black Ball ferry that ran in Seattle—because the privately-owned ferries were losing money. They passed a constitutional amendment saying, "We will be in the ferry business and it will be an extension of our state highway system." So sure, you have to support the ferries; there isn't any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did it work before, when ferry costs were tied to ferry fares? How sustainable was that? Would fares go up and down?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Utilities and Transportation Commission set the fares and being as political as they were, they knew it was unpopular to raise the fares beyond a certain point. But the private owners said, "Hey, we've got x-number of dollars invested and we expect to have some kind of return on our money. And if you aren't going to go along with a fare increase to a point where we can have some

kind of a return on our funds, we're going out of business." And the state said, "Okay, our option is we either raise the fares to a point where you can be sustained, or we take on the responsibility and run the ferry system ourselves." And that's what they did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If fares wouldn't support it, then they had to turn somewhere else for the money?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Not only did the fares not support it, but they used gas tax money in order to be able to offset.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Aren't fares, in that sense, like a permanent toll? If you've got to pay, oh say, ten dollars every time you want to get to Bainbridge Island forever, is that the same as paying a toll on a bridge to Bainbridge Island forever? And the toll would never come off. Or is that a different thing altogether?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it's a different thing, but I'd have to look up the definition of a toll. But a toll to me, that's a fee charged that allows you to go from point A to point B in order to be able to take care of the cost of construction of that road or bridge or whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The Legislature did go through that whole discussion where they were going to put in all those bridges and then that never happened, so people were left with ferry boats.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no way they were going to build a bridge from Seattle to Bainbridge Island.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That does seem like quite an engineering feat. But there were those big discussions about cross-Sound bridges in the late 1950s.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can have a discussion about them. But when you get to the engineering reality of it, you're not going to do it. A cross-Sound tunnel might be a heck of a lot more appropriate in today's engineering development than anything else. But as far as cross-Sound is concerned, about the best way you can get across there is by boat and go around; now you've got two choices. The boat is the shortest route between two points. So the ferry system was in existence and the state didn't do anything but come in and assume responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was also a move to include the sales tax on the building costs of highways. There was an article discussing all this in the *Daily Olympian* and they quote, "One of the largest of the drains on the highway fund as a result of this session was the tax bill designed to balance the budget which passed in the last hours of the session. It instituted the sales tax on labor costs and highway construction. This means the estimated 6.9 million dollars the tax will generate for the General Fund will come from the motor vehicle fund in the form of higher contract costs."

**Mr. Copeland:** What it did, it extended the sales tax to labor. Apparently, the sales tax had not been included on labor for that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was just another way to raise money?

**Mr. Copeland:** For the General Fund, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it ends up costing more out of the transportation budget.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, but it also made the application of the sales tax on labor uniform.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like there was movement to put more and more things into that budget and find more and more revenue there for other things. The whole thing was kind of growing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In another transportation development, there was a bill addressing an issue that we touched on, sponsored by Representatives Hurley, Kiskaddon and Douthwaite that called for environmental impact statements before highways could be constructed. This bill passed and you voted for it. Margaret Hurley as a representative from Spokane was really troubled by what the freeway did to Spokane when it cut that swath right through town. She was casting about looking for ways to prevent such activity in the future. So given that there was this beginning resistance to freeway construction and then this new environmental awareness in the Legislature, was this a natural progression? How did this look in 1971?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know why we had to introduce a bill that said that you had to have the environmental impact study before it was ever built; I thought that was done anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She didn't totally trust the Highway Department; she thought there should be some other way of reviewing what they were doing.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's entirely possible that they hadn't done it in a case or two because they were not required, so this was just a requirement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that seem reasonable to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much of an impediment to building a new highway would such an impact statement be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not much.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it provide more for mitigation, or hold up projects?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would only just bring into sharp focus what in heaven's name they were going to affect. Was there going to be a noise problem? Was there going to be a pollution problem? Were they going to change the location of a stream or a river or something like that?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, this has a huge impact on wetlands, for instance. Nowadays, that's always an issue.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You co-sponsored several bills that would fall under Transportation. Transportation includes highways, but it's now more than highways; it's airports and other facilities, isn't it? What all is under that umbrella in this committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** Everything imaginable that was related to transportation, including mass transit. At that time of course, we had a Department of Aeronautics; we had already gone through this whole thing about putting it under Transportation, so that it would include all of the flying public, plus all of the excise tax on airplanes that was collected by the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of your bills this session have to do with regulating airports and aircraft, licensing of different kinds, even requiring aircraft to have rescue transmitters if they should crash. I remember from earlier

sessions, you had an interest in regulating aircraft and getting the taxing of aircraft straightened out and that sort of thing. But then, a curious thing happened near the end of the session. You were working away on transportation issues and were involved in lots of legislation, but on the fifty-third day of the session you were pulled off the Transportation Committee and moved over Appropriations. How did that come about?

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the members on the Appropriations Committee, a Republican who became very upset about the way the Appropriations bill was written, wanted to have some things in that Appropriations bill that probably were not appropriate. So he said that he wasn't going to sign the bill out of committee. And at that time the committee structure was such that there was only like a one-vote margin.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, you were pretty close.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was very close. So I talked to my friend Bob Goldsworthy about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be a major headache for him?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a major headache. Bob indicated that he didn't think there was any reconciliation on it at all, and he wanted to get the budget out the way it was written. So I said to him, "Let's do it the easy way. I'll just move from Transportation to Appropriations and we'll put him on Transportation."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just switch places?

**Mr. Copeland:** We just merely had this change announced by the Speaker and I went on the Appropriations Committee and signed the bill out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It may have been the simple thing, but it was an unusual move, wasn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was probably an unusual move, but by the same token, it was one of those things that was kind of "necessary."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, this member, did he go quietly? What happened?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he didn't go quietly; he was very upset about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you bring him into the discussion or just simply announce it?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think he was aware—it was not total news to him. We told him he had a choice. He decided he was going to get replaced but he didn't think that he would be replaced. So we just made the swap.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he was willing to call your bluff and you did it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Expedite...I think that is a good word to use at this point. I was really very good at expediting!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He couldn't see the light?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, I don't know, he had his own particular reasons for it. But when you work in a legislative environment, leadership has to be prepared for these things, and when they come about, try as best you can in the easiest way possible to relieve the pressure points. And here Goldsworthy and his crew had done everything they could to put the budget together, but they just needed one signature. We just announced that we were making a change on the committees; Bob got his signature, and bang! The bill goes out and it's on Second Reading.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked. I don't think I'd ever seen that particular maneuver before.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, you probably haven't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did the caucus leadership discuss this and say, "Yes, we're going to do this."

**Mr. Copeland:** We went into caucus and Goldsworthy said, "I've got to get the budget out and I'm short one signature. Here's the solution: we'll go ahead and make these changes on committee assignments." And the caucus said, "Fine and dandy, go." They didn't object. There was only one objection to the whole thing and that was the guy that got replaced.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting. He had really isolated himself from the caucus. I guess that wasn't part of his consideration.

**Mr. Copeland:** We just moved on. In the fifty-eighth day, when you've got the budget, you want to get it out. Leadership must be prepared for conditions like this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it kind of takes precedence over any personal considerations. We'll talk about the budget in some detail because that turned into quite a royal battle. But I want to first talk about an industrial insurance bill that also took up a fair amount of energy during the session. It went all the way through to the end, too. Representatives Sid Morrison, Bill McCormick, and Vaughn Hubbard took the lead on that one. There were a lot of amendments, a lot of discussion; it was a pretty intense effort. The whole labor issue seemed to be in turmoil because of the Boeing bust and the weak economy. There was a great deal of need and a lot of pressure. What were they trying to accomplish with their bill,

do you remember? They were reforming industrial insurance, but in what direction?

**Mr. Copeland:** The basic thrust of the bill was to create a workers' compensation insurance condition which we called three-way comp. With three-way comp you could go with state coverage; you could go with a private carrier; or you could be self-insured. Organized labor took the position that they did not want to allow businesses to self-insure and they did not want to have private coverage. They wanted the state to have a monopoly on workmen's comp that would be operated by the Department of Labor and Industries as a monopoly insurance company. Consequently, we had this big confrontation between organized labor and the business community. At that time, our costs to the employer—compared to other states—were probably the highest in the nation. And because of the fact that there was no competition, the cost could be anything imaginable.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did other states have a similar system to Washington?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not many, probably less than ten.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's always interesting to know if Washington is markedly different.

**Mr. Copeland:** The cost of the insurance is one thing; the benefits schedule, of course, is something else. And our benefits schedule was something that was probably far more generous than any other state in the nation. But when you had private industry saying, "I can write you the same coverage for half the cost," it became attractive to businesses to take a look at it. Then you had the big gorilla, the Boeing Company, who said, "Our workforce is at such a point we can do the same thing, but rather than going out and buying it on the



private market, we'll cover ourselves; we'll be self-insured." So this is the scenario. At this point, Sid became a real leader in this whole field—recognized as an expert in the intricacies of industrial insurance. His effort with the business community and organized labor trying to find some area of compromise was something to behold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were pretty far apart when you started, at any rate.

**Mr. Copeland:** It starts way, way far apart. Ultimately, they never get the three-way.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You get two-way instead.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Some people called it two and a half, but it was two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And some people said, "Business isn't happy; labor isn't happy, so we must have done the right thing." They kind of cut it down the middle somewhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's kind of a cop-out, but yes, I guess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Bill Jacobs was head of Labor and Industries, appointed by Governor Evans, and he seemed to accept what you came up with as better for more people than what you had before. The only people that really lost according to him were the private insurance carriers. So you were able to bring in the system the self-insured status that Boeing wanted as well as keep what labor wanted and had some kind of compromise there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides Boeing, were there other companies that were big enough to self-insure?

**Mr. Copeland:** There may have been one or two others, but it was written in such a fashion that you had to have more than 50,000 employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty much Boeing.

**Mr. Copeland:** You don't write legislation and say, "Only the Boeing Company can use this." You write legislation and say, "In the event that you have greater than x-number of employees, then you've qualified." Then you suddenly look around and say, "Oh my, the only one that would qualify would be Boeing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Legislation has to be general and not specific.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we never say, "We are doing this for King County." We always say, "We are doing this for double-A counties only." The only one is King County, but you don't say it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One of the statements made was, "The former workmen's compensation law covered only extra hazardous employment. The new law covers almost every worker in the state except those casually employed." Casually employed—did that still include farm laborers?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, farm laborers were already covered. A casual employee, I don't know...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those by-the-day labor situations?

**Mr. Copeland:** A baby-sitter, maybe.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It went on to say, "This will add 35,000 new employer accounts to the Department of Labor and Industries files."

It's a huge increase for them. Most of the gist of the article described how Labor and Industries would cope with this new influx. Three-way insurance becomes a political campaign issue, at least in the next election and probably after that. I remember seeing articles where candidates were taking stands on it and saying, "I'm for this" or "I'm against this" on their campaign brochures. Did you come out in that sense, about this issue?

**Mr. Copeland:** You don't even have to come out; in other words, if you already had an opportunity to sit there and vote on any of this stuff, you've created a trail audit that you are for three-way comp.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You did vote against this bill in the long run, and actually, so did Sid Morrison, which surprised me. It had been amended extensively and I was wondering if the bill changed in nature such that you didn't feel you could support it or if you were actually not for this.

**Mr. Copeland:** It went to the Senate; it was amended by the Senate, came back and the House did not concur on the Senate amendments. It went back to the Senate; the Senate did not recede and they requested a conference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, did they change it markedly?

**Mr. Copeland:** They changed it markedly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's why both of you pulled back and say no?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely, yes, everybody else went ahead and voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they figure this was as good as they were going to get this session—that sort of vote?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I can't imagine anything other than the fact that Sid was on that conference committee and they had the powers of free conference.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which means they can amend it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Anyway they want to—they can rewrite the whole damn bill as long it's under the title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you trying to hold out for the three-way? What would be the sticking point?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that at that time you were holding out for anything; it was a done deal. Everybody there was just probably indicating displeasure with the way the bill was written. But it appears it was all Republicans voting against the bill, including the Speaker and the member of the conference committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I believe Goldsworthy also vote against it. You had quite a line-up of luminaries that were voting against it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I said, "It isn't good if the Free Conference Committee and the Speaker of the House are voting against it. Goldsworthy is there and a whole bunch of Republicans. So obviously the Democrats prevailed on this one and they certainly got enough people to pass it. But at any rate, like I say, they wound up with two-way. They got something, but it isn't really what they wanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a half-measure, I suppose?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, probably.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was one other little

piece to do with unemployment insurance. You were one of the co-sponsors of a successful bill to make all the state laws line up with the federal regulations having to do with this. Was that more of a housekeeping measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were several issues reconciling state law with federal law in this session, and there was a lot of speculation about what the federal government was going to do on several fronts. President Nixon was bringing in a different way of looking at the federal and state relationship. And changing some of the ways programs were funded—some of the strings attached that the federals had had under President Johnson. Did you notice this shifting around?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was a great deal of effort at that time made in the area of federal and state relationships. In the area of definitions, every so often the federal government would have a different definition than the state and it would create conflicts. You know, “We define an engine in one way and the Federal Government definition is different.” Or the Feds say: “A workman must be off work for two weeks and our statute say ten days.” So here, we had this myriad of things within the federal and state relationship that just were not dovetailing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The other big discussion, of course, is always the budget for the biennium. Perhaps the discussions about the budget that year were heightened or exacerbated by two things. Certainly, you were still feeling the effects of the Boeing Bust: a poor economy, high unemployment—a weak situation generally. It was also an election year for the Governor and many other members. There was a lot of jockeying for position and just the

whole thing takes on an even higher profile than usual. Governor Evans doesn’t seem to duck anything even though he’s running for re-election for a controversial third term. I don’t know when he made the decision to run again, but he presented a pretty hard budget.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was self-evident. He didn’t leave any doubt in anybody’s mind on the fact that he was going to run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of Evans’ ideas addressed the slow economy; he put forward a program called “Jobs Now, Washington Future” which involved quite extensive public works. It was certainly a jobs program, but it was also a program that addressed several environmental and other issues around the state. He advocated for a bond program that addressed water quality, garbage disposal—things of that nature that he saw as important issues anyway. Is public works the way to jump-start an economy, is that a good program?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was his approach to it, but in addition to those things that you said, there was also a parks and recreation bond that was pretty substantial.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And expansion of the system of community colleges—there was quite a variety.

**Mr. Copeland:** Is it a good thing to use that particular format? Certainly, the answer is yes. I think it was rather self-evident that the state needed something like that at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine that many of the unemployed were people with the skills needed to do these big engineering works that he was thinking about. Or at least the kinds of people who were unemployed could possibly step in and do these kinds of jobs.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the unemployment was right across the entire spectrum, from the highly skilled to those without any skills. But at any rate, yes, those jobs could be filled very quickly, no question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there any other way to address unemployment on that scale?

**Mr. Copeland:** When you've got such a large employer like Boeing writing out the pink slip and then duplicating it and handing it to thirty thousand employees, that's a whack. But what an awful lot of people don't recognize is that when the Boeing company lays off thirty thousand people, that also drastically affects a whole bunch of small people that service the Boeing Company, or make the small component parts for them or things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all the services those people would have been able to afford before...

**Mr. Copeland:** An awful lot of them are affected here in the state of Washington, but there are lots of people that get affected in other states in the nation, too. So it's a big thump; there's no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the government has to step in and do something?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's highly desirable if they can, that's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was another blow to Washington State from the federal government. I think the Boeing slump had several causes, but certainly one of the final nails in the coffin was the canceling of the SST program. A little later, the federal government also cancelled a Hanford nuclear power plant project, which threw a lot of people out of work and reduced the amount of potential power available to

Washington State. These decisions coming from afar—coming from the national capitol raining down on the state—was there anyway to influence decisions made elsewhere or did you just have to tighten the old belt buckle?

**Mr. Copeland:** The answer to that is no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They weren't listening?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not only were they not interested, but the force and effect that a legislative body would have on a congressional decision like that is virtually zero. It's one of those things you wished hadn't happened, but it did and you just have to live with the consequences. The decisions were primarily budget driven. Or in the case of Hanford, there may have been an awful lot of that driven by emotion and environmentalists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was the Atomic Energy Commission that made the decision to close the plant; I'm not sure how swayed they are by that sort of point of view. Even though the federal government was a Republican administration, it was not helping you any. Was there a feeling of hunkering down and saying, "Okay, we'll just take care of it ourselves?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody had to hunker down; there's no question about it. When things like that happen, you find a substantial drop-off in the amount of revenue to the Department of Revenue. So now it's affecting what you have budgeted for the current biennium and whether or not you're even going to have money enough to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And substantial new needs with unemployment insurance and welfare and all the things that ripple out from unemployment.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is absolutely correct. So you just have yourself a whole new ballgame, but it affects a whole bunch of agencies simultaneously. It affects your income; it affects the amount of money you get in order to be able to run whatever you budgeted for, and it has a very significant effect on what you're going to budget in the coming biennium.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was curious to see that Governor Evans, while grappling with this pretty deep emergency—which in some cases would lead to short-term thinking—still kept that element of long-term thinking, of how he was going to plug the holes with projects that will benefit the state for years to come.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly. Give the guy the credit for it; he was working not only for the short-term things, but he was also working on trying to solve the long-term arrangements. You'll find that another twenty-four months down the line he's going to recommend that the state change the constitution to allow a graduated net income tax. It doesn't make any difference which side of the issue you're on—it took a certain amount of political guts for a Governor to do it and Dan didn't mind doing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can see he's kind of working himself around to it, with all these discussions about taxes.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As many Governors do in times of emergency though, he's looking for money wherever he can find it, to hang onto some of these programs and fill some of these needs. He looked to the pension system, which was pretty controversial. He wanted to defer 148 million dollars in pension funds for two years to fill the budget gap. That was

teachers' retirement funds, state workers—those people. How does that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** The way it's set up in the budget, the budget specifies that they will put x-number of dollars into the pension fund; once it goes into the pension fund it's completely out of the care, custody and control of the Legislature and the General Fund. So to fund it properly would require one hundred percent funding, but what he was recommending here was that he would delay all of that funding so a portion of it would be what he would call the "unfunded pension system." In other words, we, the state of Washington, would owe that pension system x-number of dollars.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hoping for better times to put it in there then?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And this particular method had been done on several occasions by other administrations so the Evans' administration was not the first one to use that mechanism. But the whole pension system at that time was in a real hodge-podge state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had really multiple systems, didn't you?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was multiple systems, all disjointed and separate. They didn't have one investment board that was handling them. I think, at that time there were probably thirty-three separate pension systems in this state.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's quite a patchwork. That's an issue in itself.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Later on, they started getting all of these things put together so that they could have one pension investment board in order to be able to maintain the integrity of the funds in a much better fashion than what



they were. These pensions systems grew over a long period of time. Somebody would want a pension system and the Legislature would create it, and then another group of people would come in and somebody else would create a new one for them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Got a little out of hand, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** The firemen had one pension system; state employees had one; the teachers had one; the volunteer fireman had one even though they weren't paid; the county employees had one. It just went on and on. I think there was even a separate pension system for the liquor vendors of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's really particular.

**Mr. Copeland:** And there were only a couple, three hundred vendors. I think the amount that the individual contributed was something like ten dollars a year or something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I can see how as a legislator, you wouldn't want to touch this because you can only make people mad. It sounds bad: "raiding the pension fund."

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. You've got this whole herd of sacred cows.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With a substantial constituency and loop of sympathy around them.

**Mr. Copeland:** True. And so whenever you said, "You're going to have an overall pension system," boy, somebody's running up red flags all over the place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine it would be like the tax issue; they don't trust you to do what's

going to benefit them. Pension reform could actually make for a better system and you might even get more money or make it more secure, but nobody will believe that.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the nature of the group, but by the same token, what you're doing is you ultimately are handling a lot of money for an obligation that you're going to have down the line. But the majority of these pension systems were not actuarially sound.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What happens when the Governor defers payment into these funds? Then what happens to those funds?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then he just put off paying into the fund for future years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But these funds earn in investment dollars, right?

**Mr. Copeland:** In the event that they've got the dollars to invest—if they don't have the dollars to invest, they're not getting anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, they're losing real dollars as well as investment dollars when he pulls out and defers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now looking ahead, even in good times, how much money does the government really want to devote to just putting money in these boxes? Was it a strong temptation not to do this?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time I don't think there was that much money in there. Everybody knew that if you're going to have a pension system it was going to have to be—at some point—funded. The total of our unfunded liability was reaching very severe proportions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't there a point beyond which this is really not a good idea?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is like looking backwards and saying, "Well, where is the point of no return?" It's very difficult to bring a projection forward on that one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was just imagining at some future time if this continued as a method, you'd have to actually shut down present government programs to put money into the pension.

**Mr. Copeland:** You could not continue to do this particular type of funding for an indefinite period of time. You just have to recognize the fact that at some point you're going to have to play catch-up, that's a given.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is a bit of a swamp here, getting into this. Still, Dan Evans proposed this and certainly took his lumps for it. Do you eventually go with this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It seemed like you were really looking under every rock for revenue. That must have been quite a job. You had demonstrators in the halls; you had pressure from the press, and you would be feeling, I imagine, some pain yourselves trying to solve some of these issues.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You again looked at property taxes, trying to get them into shape. A House Joint Resolution was sponsored to tackle this problem. You were still discussing "true and fair market value." Is that ever figured out to anyone's satisfaction?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, every time somebody's property tax goes up, it's not to that person's

satisfaction. But you can appreciate it from the standpoint of the property tax owner: he gets an increase in his property tax but he hasn't changed his lifestyle; he hasn't done a single thing. He isn't asking for any more goods and services; he isn't sending any more kids to school. He's probably sending fewer kids to school, really. But his neighbor sold his house for more money than what he paid for it and therefore there is a current sale, which is a benchmark that indicates that this may be the value of the property or that's what he could sell it for. He has no additional money; he has generated no additional income, but this is the nature of the property tax assessment. It is predicated on value; it is not predicated on need. It doesn't say, "I only have x-number of square feet or linear feet of street in front of me; therefore I will pay for the street in front of me." It has nothing to do with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's hard for people to understand that. It's akin, I guess, to farmers' property values suddenly going up because developers are encroaching on farmland. And if you sold your farm to a housing development you'd get quite a little bundle, but if you're just trying to farm...

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, what method did you use to assess it? And the answer is, "I used the highest and best use." Here's a guy and he's raising carrots and another guy comes in and he puts a great big expensive plant next door to him. What is the highest and best use for that land? It is to have it as a huge high-rise or a warehouse or a fabrication plant or something, not raising carrots. In King County, they started assessing some of these farms on the basis of the highest and best use. Well, here's this guy who's raising carrots and they're asking him to go ahead and pay the property tax predicated on that new use value. The property tax pushed him out of business. He simple can't make that kind of money raising carrots.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You got involved in this discussion. You put in an amendment during this process to limit property taxes, including special levies, to two percent of value. It didn't pass; some members wanted only one percent.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just the rate of increase. You know, a guy gets hit with a property tax statement and all of a sudden his property tax has gone up thirty percent in one year. "What in heaven's name; I budgeted x-number of dollars for my property tax and all of a sudden my property tax has gone up thirty percent, why?" Well, because the house next door sold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you wanted to put a lid on that increase?

**Mr. Copeland:** Just trying to manage this rate of increase more than anything else, because most anybody can go ahead and make an adjustment—a modest increase along the line, incrementally through a period of years. When people got hit with a huge tax bill that they weren't planning on, yes, this is dramatic. So it was just an attempt to manage the rate of increase.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have constituents that were actually losing their homes? There are always those stories that, you know, "I'm going to be driven out of my home."

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think I can specifically recall one that was actually losing their home over it. I think there were some people that were driven to sell their homes, but what were their alternatives? Was it was better for them to sell their house at the inflated value, take that money, move someplace else, find a piece of real estate that was not nearly as expensive and within their budget means. Now, a lot of people lived up on Magnolia Hill had an

income of ten thousand dollars, and at that time you could afford to live on Magnolia Hill for ten thousand dollars. Twenty years later, ten thousand dollars was not going to keep you on Magnolia Hill. Were they forced out of their homes? I don't know that "forced" is necessarily the operative word. They still had a ten thousand dollars income but they were living in a neighborhood that would require maybe fifty thousand dollars to live there. So they had to make a readjustment, there was no doubt about it. So, did I know specifically people who were forced out of their home? The answer is no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This article talks about the mix between assessing a true and fair value and all the different issues with the assessors and who was going to decide that. Then they say, "The last Legislature cut the forty mil substantially by half, but this action was statutory rather than constitutional; it could be changed anytime by the Legislature. Representatives Otto Amen, Ritzville Republican arguing for passage of the measure said it was totally unfair that the continued increase of the cost of government should be born by the property owner." Then it went on to say, "Leonard Sawyer, Puyallup Democratic Minority Leader, moved that the measure be reconsidered immediately. Then Bledsoe moved to adjourn and the Republican majority shouted approval. 'We wanted to send it to the Senate and get it passed there to show we didn't care which one was passed; we just wanted to get it on the ballot,' said one Democrat." It sounds like you were jockeying back and forth with the Democrats trying to resolve this, but that they had a very different take on how to do this than you did.

**Mr. Copeland:** They didn't want to limit the rate on property tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But wouldn't the people that that would hurt be their constituents, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, the schools didn't want to have any limitation on property tax whatsoever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh I see, so this would be for them a schools measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though Republicans are for schools, too, as you say. You were just trying to get a balance between the two needs: the property owners and the schools?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have other ideas about how to fund the schools if not this way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this cut across the board on all property taxes, but at this time the state was collecting a substantial portion of the revenue that came from the property tax. And the local government and schools, of course, were involved in it, also. So whenever you talk about rates on property taxes, then you're talking about the amount of income for schools; you're talking about the amount of income for the county government; you're talking about the amount of income for city government, as well as what the state does.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, property taxes support all those things.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. It cuts across the spectrum of everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you had been able to limit property taxes, would you then have all the schools on your doorstep saying, "Well, now what, how are we going to be funded?"

**Mr. Copeland:** The majority of the high tax

increases came in King County. They went up so substantially it was really frightening. And so all this attempt was trying to do was limit the rate of increase. But the schools and the cities and the counties were opposing that. They didn't want to have any kind of a limitation on it whatsoever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's not that it would be reducing school money, it just wouldn't be increasing it at that rate, was that it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, not at the astronomical rate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did schools have astronomical needs at this point; did they need that rate increase or were they just...

**Mr. Copeland:** They saw it as restriction in their potential income in future years, I mean, even though it was statutory. But that was their hue and cry, "Don't limit the amount of money I can collect out of the tax payer." In the entire spectrum of things, from a Democrat's standpoint, high property tax is akin to a graduated net income tax. High property tax is progressive. If you own an expensive home, you're rich and therefore you'll pay more than anybody else. High property tax is one in which everybody doesn't pay according to their needs; everybody pays according to a value; not what you're demanding from the standpoint of services. The more money you have, the more money you're going to pay. "You have a higher tax on your house because you've got four bedrooms and I've got two. You've got to pay a higher tax on your house because I live in Bellevue rather than West Seattle." So this is the part and parcel to the entire concept of who's going to pay the tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would be the Republican point of view on that?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Republican point of view is: “Let’s find some kind of a balance here to a point where we can support things without necessarily throwing somebody completely out of kilter.” All of a sudden a guy owns a house and his property values have gone up thirty percent in one year! What did he do to cause that to go up? And the answer is nothing; he didn’t do anything all by himself, but he’s getting hurt by it. But Democrats could say, “We don’t care,” or words to that effect. “Have him move and let somebody else buy the house that’s going to pay the higher property tax.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that really comes right down to it, doesn’t it?

**Mr. Copeland:** It hits right smack in the business of what is the best way to finance government? Who are the taxpayers that are going to support government? Then, as these property taxes begin to accelerate and the rates go up, it took people like myself in agriculture industries, where we had large land holdings and it didn’t make any difference whether you made any money or not, you still owed the money. It was a gross income tax. It has nothing to do with your income.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for you, an income tax would have been a fairer system for more people?

**Mr. Copeland:** Infinitely. I don’t mean to be picking on the attorneys, but you take a farmer and he’s got several hundred acres and he gets taxed on several hundred acres, plus all of his farm machinery. What is his contribution as far as the total tax take is concerned? Let’s say it’s x. The attorney—let’s say he’s got the same income—now, what’s he got?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little office.

**Mr. Copeland:** He’s got a little office and some law books, you know, two typewriters and a copy machine. What’s his contribution to taxes? Virtually nothing. Okay, if he makes money, does he have to pay his property taxes? Sure, but how much is it? Insignificant. The farmer out there, if he doesn’t make any money, does he have to pay the property tax? Sure. Is it substantial? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It makes sense the way you say it and yet it was so difficult to convince people that this system didn’t work very well.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, that’s the nature of the group.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it because it was the system they knew and they couldn’t envision a different system?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they don’t trust the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this one of the most frustrating things about being a legislator, trying to be seen as acting in good faith for what you saw as the public good?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you know, I’ve heard legislators give speeches on this and I remember one guy: “Let me tell you about a graduated net income tax. It’s akin to putting a pot of gold alongside every legislator’s desk. What is it you would like, dear constituent? I shall reach down in here in my pot of gold with my right hand and I shall come up with enough coins to take care of your needs.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would this be an argument that would resonate in your district though, of farmers and people of that kind; would they understand that the property tax needed to be reformed?



**Mr. Copeland:** They understood. But the professional man was not at all interested in having any kind of reform for that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, you battled on. There were different arguments. One is that the Legislature would be forced to adopt a one-year budget. “That it was just too difficult to write a two-year budget. You didn’t have the projections; you don’t know what’s going to happen, so you were kind of reaching out into the future—it was too speculative.” What did you think of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** All budgets are predicated on a certain amount of assumptions. And it doesn’t make any difference whether it’s a one-year or a two-year budget. Under a normal set of circumstances, those assumptions are going to ring true and correct. So writing a one-year budget versus a two-year budget is not that big of deal. I had never, ever seen a special session caused because all of a sudden there was an upturn in the economy and the Department of Revenue was having more money coming in than what they had anticipated. I never saw the Legislature being brought back in for a special session, in order to spend more money for the last half of the biennium than what they budgeted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But the reverse was true if there was a significant downturn.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. Can you make adjustments? Yes, you can if you’re on the low end. Can you make adjustments if you’re on the high end? Nobody ever did. So, is it necessary to go to a one-year budget in order to be able to accomplish it? And the answer is: no, it’s not necessary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The discussions swirling around all have to do with the extraordinary situation with the Boeing bust and the closing

of Hanford. “We couldn’t have anticipated these things, so maybe this is the future—that it’s always going to be, you know, a little out of control here.” But you saw this as more of an aberration?

**Mr. Copeland:** There is this feeling that permeates through every legislative body, as soon as there’s a downturn in the economy and you missed your revenue forecast: Take the Chicken Little approach, you know, “Run, run, run, the sky is falling, the sky is falling.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d been there for a few years; I’ll bet you’d seen the sky fall more than once. Maybe you could take it more calmly.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But on the reverse side of the coin, there’s the situation that occurs when you have lots of revenue and the Legislature would take a certain amount of money and put it away in a rainy day fund. That’s a good idea; however you have to understand: “The Legislature knows how to make it rain.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As do Governors. Just to be fair here. There was another big discussion about what was called the Oregon System. The *Argus* talked about it in some detail. They say, “There, in Oregon as here, the Governor’s budget experts prepare his version of the budget but the legislative process is different. Instead of two or three committees in each house holding hearings and preparing their versions, a joint committee of the Legislature prepares the legislative budget. It is composed of five members of each house with the political parties equally represented.” That’s an interesting idea. “These men,” —and I imagine they’re all men in this case—“serve on no other committees. They have their own staff of budget experts. They and the Governor’s budget men face each other across the table and debate their differences before the committee.”

**Mr. Copeland:** I took a delegation from the state of Washington down to Oregon at one time in order to be able to take a look at this. We spent some time in Oregon with the Oregon legislators going over this and some methods and procedures that they were using, which some were good, some not. But this particular mechanism that you are referring to, that's their emergency type of adjustment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, this isn't their normal approach?

**Mr. Copeland:** It only comes into being if the Governor declares an emergency. This is their mechanism for not coming into special session and being able to take care of emergency expenditures or conditions very quickly. They can't write statute law but they can reallocate money within the budget. It had some merit. But it isn't that they can completely redo the budget. They can't shut down the schools and give all the money to health care or anything of the kind. They've got some latitude to shift the money around within. In some legislative environments, it would work well.

We have similar measures to what the state of Oregon does, but we have dissimilar measures. The similar measures are we only tax two legs of a three-legged stool. Oregon only taxes property and the income; they don't have the sales tax. We tax sales and we tax property, but not income. We're dissimilar in the way we do it. We all arrive at the same thing; we each run pretty good states. But do we have to have the same exact form of government, the same exact style of legislative procedure? And the answer is no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was each state its own laboratory, how all these functions can be handled?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, let somebody experiment; if they fall on their face, that's a

lesson not to do it. If they're a huge success, that's a lesson that maybe you should take a look at it. The conference committee in the state of Washington will ultimately wind up and give you the total appropriation measure. With the system in Oregon, that committee is ongoing and can later, during the biennium, change the amount of money that is actually expended in each one of the departments or agencies. Whatever that conference committee comes up with, it has to be approved by both the House and the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If a conference committee finally hammers out a budget, can you reject it? Does that happen very often?

**Mr. Copeland:** Seldom, and the reason for it, on that conference committee there's somebody from each one of the four caucuses who reports back to the caucus. And so before you ever take that final draft to either the House or the Senate, you know ahead of time whether or not it's going to pass.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You never do really come to the point until you're really ready?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds like a good safeguard. The press tends to see them as a closed, smoke-filled room kind of deal.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's just the press perception. They felt that they've been closed out of something, so they like to make conference committees look like some kind of a boogie man, which it really and truly wasn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don't you, at some point to make decisions, have to get in a room and sit down and come to agreement and if you have six people rather than a hundred...

**Mr. Copeland:** I will reiterate that the conference committees' report has to be accepted by both the House and the Senate. Now, is there some merit and some value in having five or six people sit down in a private room and discuss things that necessarily don't have to be reported to the press? I mean, I've been in conference committees where they were swearing at one another and I don't know that necessarily has to be reported in the press. The conference committee ultimately came up with a report that was accepted. What went on in the conference committee and the details of it are unimportant; the conference committee report is terribly important. So what are we talking about here? Are we talking about methods or are we talking about results? I think the mechanism of the conference committee report had some real honest-to-goodness merits.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What you said just triggered a whole train of thought for me. I would venture to say that in the early seventies and onwards, that method did become as important as results, in some people's opinions—and began to even overshadow results. Open meetings—all the different measures that were passed in the seventies and onwards—transformed how the legislators did their business and these were completely immersed in method. And some people argue that results were forgotten in some of these discussions. What do you think of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'll give you an example that could occur. You have a legislator that really wants to have a particular item in the budget for a specific thing, in a specific district, for a specific cause. And because of haranguing; because of pressure; because of tenacity, that legislator makes sure that item is in the budget when it passes that particular body. The expenditure of that money may not reach the high priority everything else does, but it is a personal thing with that legislator. Six people

get into a conference committee and they look at it and they say, "Is that our highest priority?" And suddenly those six people say, "No, it's not; we're taking that out." I don't think it needs to be put in the public record. Now, the consequence is that group of six people did a service to the state of Washington, not withstanding the desire of one legislator. And that has happened in conference committees over and over, and only because of the fact that the conference committee had the ability to discuss things in private.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what happens when that privacy is lost?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then, of course, you have the pressure from all of the bleeding hearts in the world, "And you better not kill my bill. After all, I've got all of these constituents, you know, and they know that you're the one that voted against it, and we're going to get you at the next election."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which would definitely sway some people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. Those legislators made a conscientious decision and I don't think that you should castigate those guys or women, for making that decision.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I know reformers, when they opened the committees, had their reasons, but were they aware of this other side? That there were things to be lost as well as gained by opening every committee, opening every room, you know, putting all the decision makers in the fish bowl? Did they understand that sometimes good things will be lost?

**Mr. Copeland:** Did they fully understand what it's like to have open committees all the way through? And the answer is no, they certainly did not; they didn't understand to what extent it would go, or could go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So is governing much harder now? Is it harder to make those decisions, to take those votes?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it is much more difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So consequently, are people not making those decisions and not taking those hard votes in a greater proportion than before?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that one of the reasons the Legislature is beginning to give away its responsibilities and shove them off onto somebody else is because they have no ability to make these decisions without fear of retribution with everything so open. What was the motivating force right now, this year, to create a bill that said that teachers or state employee salaries would be decided in the Governor's office under closed conditions, no press, no nothing and a report would later be delivered to the Legislature stating the pay that would be established? And the Legislature would have no input. What was the motivating reason behind that? It was fear of retribution on the part of an individual legislator. He or she is scared to death of those voters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people call that accountability, but it can have a different meaning altogether.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's not accountability; the highest priority in today's thinking is "my re-election!"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, is this new or just more?

**Mr. Copeland:** More.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot more?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, not a helpful trend?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not a helpful trend.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you see this coming?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Everything had to be aligned just right to push this one through. Even the press is excluded from these hearings. A real contradiction to the "open meeting concept." But the Democrats pushed it through and Governor Locke signed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there a measure of openness that's healthy and then beyond that, not so healthy?

**Mr. Copeland:** It is not healthy. There is no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were part of reforming the Legislature, so where would you have liked to draw the line? With hindsight, of course.

**Mr. Copeland:** I certainly would have had Rules Committee closed any time that the chairman wanted to close the meeting. He could go ahead and say, "The meeting is going to be in executive session; it will be closed." Give the chairman the responsibility; let him work it out. If he wants to have all open meetings, let him do it. If he wants to have closed meetings, that's his choice. He's hard put if he doesn't have the support of an awful lot of other legislators. But for them to sit there and collectively, year after year, give away their authority, dodge their responsibility, duck the issue, not come up with the answer, put off until a future date, whatever it might be, this is nothing more than diminishing the legislative process.

The county commissioners did that years ago. In 1911, they started by coming to the Legislature and saying, "We don't want to be responsible for drainage and diking." So the Legislature created a diking district and they authorized elected commissioners on the diking district to take care of the drainage in Whatcom County. Well, all of a sudden, they needed it in Wahkiakum County, and then they needed it in Clark County. And every other year they created diking districts and drainage districts, water districts and sewer districts, fire districts, cemetery districts, library districts, and it goes on and on and on. They all have commissioners that are elected and have their own money and their own budget. Well, what did the county commissioners do? Over a period of time they just virtually gave away all of their authority. They created all these junior taxing districts and gave away their authority because they didn't want to handle it. Are they ever going to get their authority back? No, never in this environment.

But now, look at the Legislature; they're starting to do the same thing. What do they do? The first step they took was, "We can't decide our salaries; we must create a commission to allow someone else to decide our salaries. We don't know what we're worth. We don't know what the Governor should be paid. We can't accept that responsibility. We must have a separate agency that does this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And redistricting.

**Mr. Copeland:** And so it goes on and on and on. And now we get to teacher and state employees' salaries. "We can't assume that; we have to send it down to the Governor's office. But let us not have the public peek in on it; let us make sure that it's a closed door. And then when the report comes out, we will look at it."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That must have been hard for you to watch.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it is. The speech I gave to you about the county commissioners, I gave that speech to the County Commissioners Association. I told them that over a period of years, their predecessors has petered away their authority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet they didn't want to hear it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, they just looked at me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But all these things must overlap with each other. I would think that if you're draining and diking, that's going to affect mosquitoes and various other things. I'm just not really sure where the lines are between all these different areas. And there must be some holes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Wait a minute, you bring up a very interesting point because on one particular occasion years ago I happened to see an overlay of a King County map where it showed all of the sewer districts; there were about thirty of them. Then, they put another overlay of that the fire districts in King County on top and there were about twenty of those. But none of the lines were continuous.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you happened to live in between there?

**Mr. Copeland:** This becomes a problem as far as the county assessor is concerned because you get taxed for the rate in Fire District One, but I get taxed for the rate in Fire District Two even though we live across the street from one another. But we are both in Sewer District Number Seven. So at any rate you asked me, what about the legislative authority and what should they be responsible for? They should hang onto their responsibilities and not get like the county commissioners. The county commissioners did away with all of this stuff.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Let's return to the budget discussion. That did have to be solved one way or another. This year, was the House taking the lead?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've noted that Senator Durkan, who was the chair of Senate Ways and Means and also was running for Governor, had his own version going and he was using it as a bit of a platform for his run against Dan Evans. But your Republican counterpart in the Senate working on the budget was Frank Atwood, so you had a good spokesperson there. The talk about tax reform—the voters had turned down an income tax in 1970, so that doesn't seem like a direction that you can go. You've got to stick with the tried-and-true methods and balance the budget that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were some fairly drastic discussions going on. The Governor proposed cutting institutions: he wanted to close Northern State Hospital; he wanted to close—or reduce—some soldiers' homes; things of that nature. Would you have consolidated institutions or closed down a whole state institution? Were those not as populated perhaps and you were going to move people around or just have fewer services, or serve these people in some other way?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I think it would be to serve the people in some other way, but close down the facility. Some of those facilities were pretty old and antiquated and probably should have been closed down. But here again, sacred cow! You know, "Don't you dare touch my little thing."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With all these discussions, you ran out of time. Constitutionally, you

have sixty days and the clock came right up to the midnight of the sixtieth day and you were not done. But you continued to meet and deliberate and pass bills until, I understand, about four in the morning. What happens to those bills, are they in some kind of strange limbo in legal terms?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, always before they were never challenged in court and they always were assumed to have passed during the regular session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Apparently Slade Gorton, the Attorney General, came down and advised you that you were on slippery ground there.

**Mr. Copeland:** No doubt about it. But the slippery ground that we were on was real firm as long as nobody challenged it in court and raised the question as to whether or not the Legislature acted improperly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So long as you just accept it, you're all right. Eventually that issue goes to court, doesn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. It goes to court later on, then the court has to rule and they rule "sixty days is sixty days" and the clock ticking, it ticks and when it says, twelve o'clock, that's the end. Anything you do beyond that, you know, that's out of bounds.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That practice of going past midnight ends. So then would you have to go into special session?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's not like you just go home with no budget; you have to have a budget. Of course, when you're short of money that makes budget deliberations more difficult. But there were other things going

on that probably exacerbated the situation. Many of the really tough votes were strictly partisan votes; the Republicans had to carry the whole ball and the Democrats, according to some of their counts, pulled back and let you take the tough calls. It was an election year; they were going to—apparently, by the looks of it—throw it all on your doorstep. That was maybe a little tougher than usual; didn't you usually have some more bipartisan efforts going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not tougher than usual; when you're in the majority, you have to accept responsibility. The final product is something that you created and you're going to have to accept responsibility for it. Now, what you're going to vote on and how you are selective in that; that is pretty much up to leadership. You'll notice in that entire range of legislation, for whatever reason, the Speaker decided that the members were going vote on whether or not to increase the interest rates on credit cards. I advised against even considering it. But he absolutely insisted it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why would he want that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because he apparently had told some lobbyist that he would have it out for a vote. And so he took his troops out there and insisted they vote on it, and they did, and a lot of them lost their re-election because of that one vote, because the Democrats made a huge issue on, quote, "raising interest rates," end quote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well sure, especially in tough economic times. And what do you do in that situation, do you take the lumps too, and vote down the party line? Hold your nose, may be better choice of words.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, I did, but I didn't like it at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What would have happened if you had just said, "No way, I'm not voting for that."

**Mr. Copeland:** Then I am the "caucus spoiler." Tom had done a lot of homework and had contacted the majority of the members of the caucus and had extracted a commitment to vote with him. By the time I heard about it, it was pretty much a done deal.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Things were pretty touchy in your caucus. There was a revolt towards the end of the session. The freshmen were jockeying around at different times and they were restive, shall we say. Bledsoe and different people in your party were trying to keep the caucus together, but it seems to be a little more difficult than usual; there was a lot more in the press about discord in the Republican caucus. There are jokes about it, even, about how you're worse than the Democrats. You know the old saw about the Democrats being each in their own party; people were starting to say that about the Republican Party. Bledsoe, in one remark alluded to "beating up the members" to get them to vote the caucus line. There just seemed to be this dissatisfaction. He said in a Point of Information in the Journal at one time after a discussion about a tax issue:

"On three separate occasions now, we've had on the floor of the House measures on the calendar dealing with revenue and increase in sales tax on cigarettes, one on liquor, and this one dealing with the extension of the sales tax to local governments. These measures have emerged from the Rules Committee with very hard partisan support. It was quite obvious in the discussions that have been going on between leadership on both sides of the aisle that we must join with some commonality of interest on these. It is for this reason that we are not suggesting, or even hinting, that we perceived a full conclusion

on this measure or any other measure dealing with revenue until we have had a look at the budget and then arrive at some common position where hopefully those on both sides of the aisle can find some measure of support. It is for this reason we wish to work no further on this bill.”

It seems an unusual statement, fairly frank, at any rate.



*Left to right: Representatives Tom Copeland, Bill Kiskaddon, Carlton Gladder and Stu Bledsoe*

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it is not an unusual statement. What he’s saying in essence is, “Let us not talk about revenue until we see the budget. At the time we find out what the budget level is going to be, for all of you people that want to have a higher budget, then you must stand ready to vote for the taxes in order to be able to support it.” Do you understand the legislative hypocrite who wants to vote for every appropriation measure possible but never, ever votes for the taxes to pay for it? That is one worthless legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he’s calling members to account?

**Mr. Copeland:** He is calling to account; he’s saying, “Okay, we’re not going to do any more revenue measures until we see the budget.

Then we’re going to find out how many of you people are going to vote for the budget. And all you people that are going to vote for the budget, you better be standing right there ready to vote for the necessary revenue in order to be able to pay for it.” That’s exactly what he’s saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What seemed unusual to me was the level of frankness. It’s usually a little more veiled.

**Mr. Copeland:** This method was used on many occasions. I did this to the Spokane delegation. We discussed that one time that they had to have that special appropriation for the Spokane Expo Fair, and they wanted to have this money up-front real fast, early in the session. I read their names off and said, “Now, when it comes to the budget, you people all remember—I’m going to read these names again, because everyone of you are going to be asked to go ahead and finance it.” And they didn’t believe me, and about fifty-eight days later I got up and I read their names back and I said, “Okay, you asked for the money, we gave it to you. We need the revenue; you’re voting for it, and here’s a list of names.” Margaret Hurley and Bill Day, and so on and so forth, right down the line of the Spokane delegates and they were not at all happy with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whatever is going on in your caucus, there was a surprising development. The papers even reported it; they don’t usually get right into caucus matters. They say, “There was an overt leadership crisis last Friday.” This was in early May. “When there was a move to replace House Speaker Tom Swayze with Representative Tom Copeland. It was an interesting maneuver engineered by the only semblance of a strongman in the House: Representative Robert Perry, a Democrat from Seattle.” This is the part that really caught my attention, “To extract concessions from the Republicans.” It didn’t happen.

“But it exposed the shaky foundations of the GOP leadership.” It seems extraordinary to me that a Democratic member would insert himself into Republican caucus matters to that extent. Robert Perry, of course, was an unusual Democrat. He was a leader of the 1963 coalition, not too long before, and had always held a somewhat ambiguous position ever since. Can you tell me a little bit more about what was going on here?

**Mr. Copeland:** We truly didn’t have any business being in session May 12<sup>th</sup>. Everything had been decided, with the exception of a few things perhaps that may have been a private bill that the Speaker wanted and so he actually held us in session for several days trying to get some other measures through. Then of course, he insisted on his bill, increasing the credit card interest rates. So members of the Legislature realized that we shouldn’t even be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were getting a lot of heat for being in session for so long.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. But the Speaker decided that he was just going to hold us in session until he got through certain things, and so the frustrations were there. So everybody said, “Okay, if nothing else, let’s change things and close up shop.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would that happen? How would you have removed a sitting Speaker?

**Mr. Copeland:** There’s a mechanism by which you can announce that at the next day’s session if the majority wants to, they can elect another Speaker.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you involved in this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** People talked to me about it, but I didn’t think it was a very good idea. But they came to me and asked me if I was unhappy with the Speaker’s procedures at the time. And I was. Some of the things that he was doing just were not well-advised.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this tempting to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. However, just the suggestion by others to replace the Speaker was enough to shake thing up to a point that Tom and Sid then changed directions and closed up shop.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it seem a little outside what you thought should happen?

**Mr. Copeland:** “Outside of what should happen” is not the best choice of words. Better to say this would be a major shake up and should be avoided. I let it be known that I was not a party to any change in the Speakership. I had at that time made up my mind pretty much that I had outlived my usefulness in the House. I could be of no further service to that body at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That makes a big psychological difference. At what point did you make that decision; somewhere during this session?

**Mr. Copeland:** When they decided to elect Tom Swayze. I just wasn’t one of those “new breed” type.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet you had enough of a following for people to be putting this out as a serious idea. Was Bob Perry thinking that—I wouldn’t go so far as to call it a coalition—but would he be putting together a group of Democrats as well as Republicans who would have, in his mind at least, deposed the sitting Speaker and put you in his place?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't speak to Bob Perry. I don't know what he was thinking. This is all supposition. But certainly, it would have to be done with Democrat votes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like the splits were pretty serious if they could come to this level of discussion.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think you'd have to read back on days prior to that, you know, where Bledsoe was talking about having to beat up on his caucus in order to be able to get them to vote a certain way. The Speaker decided he wanted them to vote that way, and it required a great deal of persuasion in order to be able to do it. It wasn't as if he was taking the troops down a path that they really and truly wanted to go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What were your caucus meetings like at this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were cantankerous. There was disintegration. They weren't fun; they weren't nice. And this is pretty much the Speaker's responsibility.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you take a lead or did you just kind of step back?

**Mr. Copeland:** I would voice my objection to some issues. It fell on deaf ears as far as the Speaker was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not the rank and file; it sounds like at least some were not too happy.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Speaker and his group did not develop an agenda for the session. There were no benchmarks. There were no priorities set. The caucus was shredded, without a compass or leadership. Their interest was in the class of '67 and perhaps increasing the interest on credit cards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It says something about the role of the Speaker. They can push through an unwanted bill over the objections of many people?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, knowing good and well that it wasn't going to pass the Senate anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it's like you're all falling on your swords for nothing?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, you have that right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some newspaper accounts connect this movement to replace Speaker Swayze as having something to do with the interim committee appointments; a different line-up of assignments was preferred, I'm not exactly sure. And that then the Legislative Council would be led by you, for instance. Whatever would change the agenda, they favored that. Was there any substance to that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Again, that would be conjecture at this point. I don't think there was any substance to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Finally, the legislators do get out of there, but the press—and also the Governor—really laid into the members. There were articles like this one: "The Session Lacked Leadership." And quips like this one from the *Argus*: "There's no lack of ability in the two Capitol wings, although it can't be denied that House leadership was inept and amateurish. And both House and Senate Republicans showed little desire to further their Governor's proposals, which is another sign of breakdown. The predicted Evans appeal direct to the people did not materialize." Robert Cummings from *The Olympian News* said, "We all have heard much about the two-party system, but in the state



House of Representatives we now have the Democratic minority and fifty-one political parties in the Republican Caucus.” It kind of went on in that line. You had been in the majority for only a couple sessions, not twenty years or anything.

**Mr. Copeland:** Three.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d had a Republican Governor for two terms and he was running for his third. Were you all running out of gas? Governor Evans was re-elected, but by a very small majority. And the House Republicans lost their majority. Is that a natural cycle? The party is in for a bit, and then you use up all your good ideas, and then you start to sputter? Or was there something else going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Here again, it was the Speaker’s decision—or call it leadership, whatever you want to call it—to select those bills that the body was going to vote on. He was starting to vote on bills that had political significance, but not any great significance as far as the requirements of the legislative session was concerned. He didn’t give the Governor’s agenda the priority it deserved. He allowed himself to drift off into these things and he just killed his caucus, he just did them in. He insisted that they vote on things that they shouldn’t have been voting on. When you do that, you aggravate the troops and they don’t like to vote like that. He could care less about them; he could care less about creating any kind of new leadership.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You also had an interesting situation where the other top people in the caucus, yourself and Stewart Bledsoe, were considering going elsewhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no secret at that time; Stu was going to be running for Congress. However, I feel if the caucus had been properly guided, Stu Bledsoe may have

been elected to Congress. Everybody should have recognized that particular session of the Legislature, that group of Republicans and that caucus should have conducted themselves in a manner that was one hundred percent responsible, and that they had an agenda that was fairly identified, and that they were not going to handle a bunch of stuff that was subordinate to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Keep their focus? It was never suggested that you were distracted, but several times press articles pointed out that Stewart Bledsoe clearly had his mind elsewhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think they targeted Stu more than what he’s entitled to. Sure, he had certain things that he wanted to occur that would have helped him a great deal as far as his run for Congress was concerned. But to complain about it or say that he was distracted because of it, that’s a severe complaint I don’t think he was entitled to it.

So often the perception of the press is one thing, and of course that’s what people read.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about you? Were you ever tempted to run for Congress?

Mike McCormack, a Democrat, represented your area. Was he vulnerable to a Republican challenge?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sid Morrison ran against him four years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was an occasional mention that you should think about running for a higher office. Was that something that interested you in any way?

**Mr. Copeland:** We kind of toyed with the thought from time to time but I really didn’t give it too much credence. And at that time, I had a great deal of responsibility at home and with the ranch. My father was certainly fazing

out of farming and more of the responsibilities were coming on me. The operation at the ranch had grown in size and scope. It required a lot of hands-on management. I just didn't have quite the latitude and flexibility a lot of people did in order to just say, "Yes, I can walk away from this with no consequences." I couldn't do it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it's one thing to run about the state, but to spend all your time in Washington, D.C. would be of a different magnitude altogether.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And I had hold of a farm that was a pretty substantial arrangement.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How old was your family at this stage?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of my children were out of high school, but my father was then into retirement age. They were very supportive. My daughter had started her first year at the University of Washington in 1970.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your kids are fairly close together in age. That's kind of intense, those years where you're putting your kids through college and helping them launch. That's an undertaking.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. But you see, my personal life was not really very nice at that time. I just lost my wife and that was no fun.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a time of re-evaluation for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** It really was. There were some things that I did at that time, as I look back on them, they were truly mistakes and if I'd had the ability to have some kind of counseling or suggestions maybe, I would have done things differently.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a lot on your plate.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you don't lose your spouse of twenty-some years and the next morning get up and it's business as usual.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be truly devastating.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was very, very difficult for me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Besides your own life, the Legislature doesn't seem to be going through a really great period just then. Governor Evans wanted major legislative reforms and he was pretty upset. In some speeches in June of that year, after the end of the session, he remarked, "It was a case of the system itself breaking down. It wasn't the lack of merit of the legislators; it was the legislative process itself that just didn't work." He was still looking for systemic changes; he still wants that constitutional change that he keeps asking for.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Governor said, "It was a case of the system itself breaking down." He certainly did not aim that at me personally. He just didn't get his legislation through and he was angry. And rightfully so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He wanted the usual list that came out every year and it was not passed. He called for alterations in the Legislature—in its own processes. He wanted to couple a call for annual sessions with an annual elections bill. He thought that the ballot that people got every two years was enormous and too complex and he was looking at the idea that if there were annual elections, it might be something that would bring government closer to the people. They wouldn't have to study so many measures every two years. What did you think of that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was in favor of annual sessions, not annual elections. We had reached a

point where annual sessions were just a foregone conclusion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whatever you called them—whether they were special sessions or whatever—you were already meeting every year.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was looking towards campaign contributions being more regulated; he thought there should be some kind of lid put on that.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can talk about campaign contributions all you want to; this is all fluff and window dressing as far as the press is concerned. The press wants to have every playing field absolutely positively dead level. Nobody can raise more money than anybody else. Okay? However, if you're rich and you finance your own, that's okay; you're on the spending side and there are no limits. This business about campaign contribution limitation is just up one side and down the other. And every time you turn around there's a loophole in it. So yes, Dan

loved to talk about it at that time but it never got any place and I don't think you'll find any of them that will.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about this idea that the Legislature should have a professional, full-time staff?

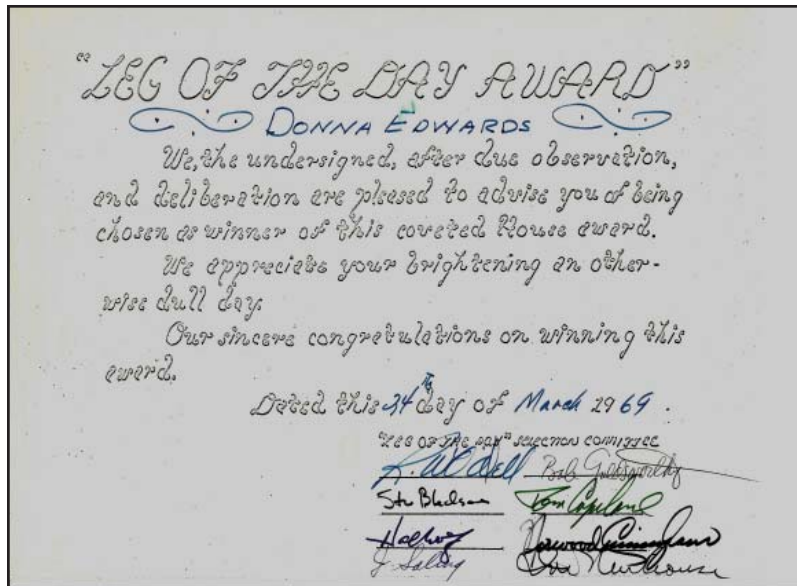
**Mr. Copeland:** The answer is yes. I'll get back to one of the very first quotes that I gave you when we started this interview: "Copeland, you have to understand a part-time legislator will never be able to keep up with a full-time bureaucrat." And that's exactly right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unless they've got some staff behind them?

**Mr. Copeland:** And this is only in keeping with what I said all the way along it's very, very important that we have good, competent staff that the Legislature hires and trains. If we have confidence in the fact that they know what we're talking about, we don't have to take suggestions from a department or an agency that may have their own personal axe to grind.



*Valentine's Day, 1971 in the office of the Speaker Pro Tem. Gifts for the ladies are on the table. Left to right: Muriel Smith and Loretta Hayes, both with the Republican Caucus; Stephanie Hammer, daughter of Tom's cousin serving as a page; Tom Copeland; Alice Flake and Tom's daughter Brooke visiting; Mary McLaughlin, Tom's secretary; Donna Edwards, Stewart Bledsoe's secretary; and Joyce Kornmesser, Tom's secretary*



*"From time to time some observing members of the House would spot an attractive lady in the gallery. After much discussion and consideration the members would then agree to make the "award." This was done with the assistance of a page delivering this document to the recipient. Often times creating a reddening of the face. But most always a smile and an abbreviated wave. Of course at this date I had no idea that Donna Edwards would some day be my wife."*

*Tom Copeland*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I found it interesting that the Governor—who certainly had his own professional staff—would come out championing staff for the Legislature. What's he got to gain by doing that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only the fact that knowledgeable staff would be like an independent agency coming out with the information. The legislators' problem was always taking department figures. The department said, "We need x-number of dollars. And if you dare cut our budget by ten percent, we will absolutely and positively wither up and die. We will go away; babies will starve." When in reality, you could cut their budget ten percent and they wouldn't miss it in a heartbeat, but we don't know. But if we have our own staff working constantly and they're reviewing and they're doing their audit and they're finding out—then we can at least have somebody—without fear of getting

fired—who can give you the straight story. "A ten percent cut would not affect the agency that drastically." So, as far as the Governor being able to say that the Legislature should hire staff, it was only in keeping with what I had going six years earlier, you bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was helpful to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He talked about reforming the committee system: having the same structure in both houses; having the interim committees consistent with the committees during session; having the Legislative Council include all members. So whatever committee, say you served on Education Committee during the session you'd be on the interim committee for Education. Now, this was something that I think that you had been talking about for a while.



**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And having the Senate committees have the same line-up as the House committees, so they were your counterpart.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a good idea; however, the House and the Senate made their own rules. Not the Governor. If the Senate wants more committees, they simple create them by virtue of the Senate rules and the Governor has nothing to say about that. It was two years later, when Leonard Sawyer became the Speaker that he went and implemented some of these things. It was time for it to occur. But what they did, rather than having everybody be on the Legislative Council, they abolished the Legislative Council but members continued to sit on the same committees during the interim. They would have committee weekends here in Olympia and would meet whenever it was necessary in the interim. So this is just nothing more than an extension of what we had started and it was great. It was an enhancement of the legislative environment; there's no doubt about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it wasn't in your time, but when this came about, you watched this with some interest?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was in the mill. It was something that should happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Evans is somewhat of a forerunner here. He talked about the introduction of a breathing spell and having ninety days in hearings and then recesses and back and forth. It's not quite the same thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me help you out here. All of these legislative changes that came about during the time that I was in the Legislature, every one that I was even vaguely responsible

for, came about with Dan's blessing. We could only get so much done in any one session. We couldn't do everything all at once. This was a very slow transition into a new environment and into a new level of continuing education from the standpoint of the Legislature. So all of these things came about over a period of time very slowly; it could not happen overnight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's as if these ideas are larger than any particular party because the Democrats pick up a lot of these ideas and put them into force. These ideas seem to have a momentum and a time in themselves, and it doesn't really matter, in a sense, who was there; it's their time. Is that true?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's very, very true.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You laid the groundwork; you'd created a foundation, and then it happened to be a Democratic administration that brought in the next level.

**Mr. Copeland:** Once you start this momentum, everybody picked up on it and sees where it's going, so you take it to the next level. That's correct. Now let's back up and talk about years earlier. We passed one session in the Legislature in which the Governor got very furious with the Legislature. So what did he do? He reached in the budget bill and he vetoed the appropriations of the Legislative Council, which is the money that we had for staff to run during the interim. He took that money out. So we had no money to pay staff to carry on for about a twenty-month period of time, and so the Legislature sat there: no staff, no meetings, no nothing. He completely starved the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you'd like not to be that vulnerable again?



**Mr. Copeland:** You've got that right. This is where the executive branch of government just did not want to have the legislative branch of government see the light of day. But Dan was never that way, and of course, he came from the legislative process. He always felt that if you had a well-informed Legislature and if you had a Governor with any kind of leadership at all, then the Legislature and the Governor could go ahead and advance causes that everybody agreed to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is unusual to see a Governor talking about detailed reform of the Legislature. It seems like there should be a legislator talking about that, but he was deeply involved.

**Mr. Copeland:** Look, he is talking about reforming the Legislature so that the Governor could go ahead and advance ideas, programs and plans that can be implemented. He is a part and a parcel of this whole thing. The executive cannot go ahead and create something that the Legislature is not going to buy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though you're occasionally jockeying to keep your balance.

**Mr. Copeland:** You've got to run them in conjunction with one another. So the only thing he's trying to do is get the Legislature to a point where they are at least officially informed enough that they can go ahead and make their own decisions right along with him. Now, it takes a Governor with some leadership to be able to go the next step. It does absolutely no good if you have a Governor with zero leadership, zero ideas—doesn't want to do anything but kiss babies and go to parties and sit there and do absolutely nothing. Then you have a void in the vacuum. Now, somebody's going to grab something and run with it. Leadership

is—that's not one of these things where you take somebody and take their index finger on their right hand and plug it into a socket and all of a sudden you turn on 110 volts and they have, quote, "leadership," end quote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The press—I don't know how much they understand the inner workings, or how much they look from the outside and make educated guesses—but the general tenor of their remarks was that the Governor was a little more remote, a little harder to reach than usual; he seemed less engaged in the process. There was varied speculation about fatigue setting in. Did it feel that way from the inside for you as a legislator, that Dan Evans was either frustrated, or distracted by the end of his second term?

**Mr. Copeland:** I never felt that Dan was disengaged from the Legislature at all. I think that he felt more than a degree of frustration by the lack of rapidity in which the Legislature would act on some of his pet bills. And I think that this frustration was widely known. Yes, the Republicans controlled the House, but they didn't control the Senate and so his frustration towards the Legislature maybe was more directed at the Senate than it was at the House. I could share his frustrations in some things, but some of the things that he suggested as legislative reform were quite like window dressing and tongue-in-cheek. Like suggesting that we have disclosures on where we're getting our campaign contributions and his suggestion of doing away with the Rules Committee and allowing all bills to go directly to the floor. I don't think he was really sincere when he said that. I think that he understands that the Legislature has to have a screening facility of some kind; all bills just can't reach the floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had been a legislator; he knew very well the function of that committee.

Were a lot of his bills being lost in, say, the Senate Rules Committee? Would that have been part of why he would feel the Rules Committee needed to be reformed?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know specifically why he got angry with the Rules Committee. But there are a lot of people that would complain bitterly because the Rules Committee would not allow something to come to the floor. Generally speaking, if it didn't come to the floor, it didn't come to the floor for some very good reasons.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is not bringing it to the floor sort of an admission that it would have failed on the floor?

**Mr. Copeland:** Many times a bill would be held up in Rules Committee because the other body was working on a very similar measure, and the other measure may in effect have a much better chance at passing. Some accord, some accommodation, some agreement had been reached and if we just not pass the one, quote, "in our house" and allow the process to continue, we're going to have a pretty good bill coming out. Quite often this was the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people pointed out that his original chief lieutenants—when he first became Governor—were starting to leave for other posts and were not there. So there was some thought that it was just a little harder for him; his lines of communication were not as tight as they had been in an earlier time. Members who he would have customarily turned to were out of the Legislature or out of power.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is not untypical of any administration. You're going to have that turnover anywhere; there isn't any question about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it harder for him to make new bonds?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think that that was the case at all. I think that whenever he had somebody depart, there was always somebody that he could look to that would just go ahead and pick up the slack and go on from there. But there was always enough carryover. Of course, Jim Dolliver was there throughout the entire length of his administration. Don Moos of course, was one of the directors who was there for the full twelve years and there's probably another dozen or so more that were. So I don't think Dan really had a mass exodus of his staff to the point where it depleted or diminished.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wasn't thinking of his staff so much but the people he had the closest ties within the Legislature. The Slade Gortons, the Joel Pritchards, the people like that who had left, who weren't there to pick up his ball in the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** He had other people that he could turn to; I don't think that was necessarily crippling. Any Governor should know the job of being a member of the Senate or a member of the House is not a permanent appointment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Within his party, was he starting to see some active opposition where some of the new Republicans coming in were not necessarily "Dan Evans Republicans;" they were something else? They might not have had that feeling of being on his team in the way that your generation perhaps did, or some others that kind of grew up in the Legislature with him. By 1973, a group emerged that opposed some of his policies, particularly his tax policies: the Renaissance Group of Republicans, who openly disputed his policies and were not there to promote

his causes. According to their statements, they wanted to “take back their Party;” they wanted to work more within the legislative realm and not so closely with the executive, and they wanted different policies. They moved to initiate a very different look for the party. There was some kind of shift going on there. Evans always had problems within the party structure—the King County group that opposed him and different groups—but by the 1974 Republican convention, two measures that censured his policies were just very narrowly defeated. That seems significant.

**Mr. Copeland:** The two major groups were those for an income tax and those opposed to an income tax. There was a shift going on here, but I think Dan could see the shift. I mean, it was pretty much up to him to take care of it. I think he probably did the best he could, but success isn’t universal. Obviously, he couldn’t change everybody’s mind; they had one point of view and he had another. That’s perfectly alright; that’s a very healthy situation. No, there was rising at that time within the legislative branch, a very strong, far more conservative attitude than what the Governor had displayed in the past.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about yourself? Were you running into this shift in attitude yourself? You were considered a Dan Evans Republican; if you’re trying to put things through, did you notice some resistance?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’m considered a Dan Evans Republican by people in my district, but I’m not considered a Dan Evans Republican by people in Joel Pritchard’s or Slade Gorton’s district. Do I make myself clear? To Joel and Slade, if you didn’t come from King County, you were nothing! It didn’t make any difference if you were one hundred percent for Dan Evans or not; it kind of depended upon where you came from. I was referred to as, on

many occasions, you know, “Copeland, he’s a Republican, but he sure as heck isn’t one of us,” whatever that meant. Even Senator Greive is quoted as saying, “Copeland is not one of the New Breed.” But there have always been these factions within the Republican Party who point their finger at one another and say, “He is not one of us.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But attitude-wise and the policies you supported, you did fit more in that camp than in the new group, the Renaissance Group camp, for instance?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So for yourself, did you feel a bit of a gulf there, from this new rising group and their ideas? Was it harder to get things done; was there resistance within your own caucus?

**Mr. Copeland:** Only to the degree it may have been harder to get things done if you’re talking about philosophical fiscal matters, tax policies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans had, still, these long lists of things he wanted to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** Many of them were good; some of them may be were a little too far-reaching for the average guy. But no, Dan arrived on the scene at the time when a hell of a lot had to be done. We were coming out of a period where state government had languished through about a twenty-year cycle of virtual stagnation and nothing being done. During all of the war years and immediately after that and they just didn’t know how to react. And then, of course, I was one of the contributors to all of the baby boomers and nobody in the legislative arena knew exactly how to take care of them; they started looking over the fences and saying, “My god, did you see

this crowd of kids walking down the street? They're all going to school next year and we don't have any schools for them." So it was a period of time when an awful lot had to be done. Now, a lot got done and several years later all of a sudden a new group of legislators came in and said, "Why are you guys doing all this?" Well, they didn't understand the set of circumstances that we had when we arrived.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's what I'm trying to get at: did this feel like the opening of a new era where people came with different ideas and different issues?

**Mr. Copeland:** People come with different ideas and they come with different issues, but they always make the assumption that life has always been the way it is today, you know, previously. When they arrived in the Capitol Building in 1970, they said, "You mean to tell me you didn't always have air conditioning? You mean to tell me you didn't always have telephones; you mean to tell me that you didn't always have television?" They just assumed that you've had them forever. Okay, wrong assumption. But it's a mindset that you have to deal with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The next generation! Well, this was not exactly the closing of an era and opening of a new one; that's probably too pronounced, but this shifting around...

**Mr. Copeland:** It's evolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the evolutionary wheel here. Every once in a while though, there's a bit of a marker where you can see the shift of the wheel, where it just feels like the ground gets a little shaky for a while and then some new thing emerges and the picture changes. This feels like one of those times—from the outside looking in; I don't know what it felt like for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree, but by the same token, even when Dan first came in, the great strong conservative voice at that time was Perry Woodall. Perry was not objecting to Dan; Perry just had a particular posture and a stand on what government should be doing and what government shouldn't be doing. And he was opposed to an awful lot of proposed programs that he felt were just totally unnecessary and not something for government to be dinking around with. And he said, "I'm not going to spend money for those particular services. Yes, they're nice and they're beautiful, but that's not our role in government." And that was Perry. Now, the Governor thought, "Well, we need to expand and finance government in order to be able to take on some new obligations and some new roles and some new responsibilities." So all of a sudden, where was Perry? He was scooting to one side of the bench and Dan was scooting to the other. Now, did Perry Woodall begin to affect change later on down the line toward far more conservative government? People probably can't find a thread of evidence that's the case, but from the standpoint of evolution, that sure as heck is where it was. It's just very, very gradual. So Dan realized that within in his party, he was confronted with far more conservative thoughts and attitudes than previously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that tend to rein him in and kind of bring him more to the center? Is that how that works?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think that it reined him in. I don't think that brought him more to the center; it just made his job a little bit more difficult.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He'd have to work differently at any rate, and have different assumptions about who's there with him.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But does it kind of slow down the program if you've got more resistance from within, you can't keep pushing so hard? You have to spend a lot more time cajoling and bringing people on board.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you only have fifty-two votes, then it makes it a little tough. If you only have forty-eight, then you've got another ballgame. So no, that just slows down the program and forces a change in your attitude. "Well, wait a minute, in order to be able to get it done, I have to talk to So-and-So."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot more often.

**Mr. Copeland:** You have the operative words, "a lot."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, both parties go through these swings in character, where they have certain leaders that really bring them forward and then for one reason or another it goes off in a different direction.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's interesting to kind of put our heads up a bit and look at the big picture and the trends and see where this was heading.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. And I will say again, the majority of the time when Dan was Governor, he was operating with a Democrat Senate and the Democrat Senate was headed by Bob Greive. Bob, by himself, as a leader of the Democrat Party, never put together an overall game plan. He never structured a picture of how he envisioned the state should look, or what programs we should be encompassing, and how they should fit and jive with something else. And for that reason Dan was able to go ahead and create a vision of what state government should be doing with virtually no opposition.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a blank slate out there?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. He was the only guy with a game plan in town. He was the only one with the Blueprint for Progress. No one else ever came out with any kind of a promotion, an idea—I use the word loosely—a combination of ideas of any kind of a conceptual nature of what the state would look like in the future if we went this way rather than going the way Dan wanted it. So for that reason Dan was very, very successful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly having a plan will get you somewhere, whereas having no plan, the status quo becomes the plan.

**Mr. Copeland:** All Bob Greive wanted to do was be the Majority Leader in the Senate. He didn't want to take the time to study state government long-range programs; he didn't want to get involved in the minutia of how difficult it was to run the Department of Social and Health Services; he didn't particularly care about, "What is the health care program going to look like twenty years down the line?" All he wanted to do is just be the Majority Leader; he didn't have a program. He was also surrounded by some other people: Frank Connor, Paul Conner, John Cooney, Don Talley, Reuben Knoblauch, George Kupka, Fred Dore, Karl Herrmann, Jimmy Keefe, Dan Jolly and several others. These guys weren't senators that had great, huge, monumental directions for the state of Washington either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When you describe the Dan Evans plan, that sounds like the proper job of the executive. Was there ever a Senate Majority Leader who did have a game plan?

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly, Albert D. Rosellini, before he got elected Governor, I think



had some pretty good things in mind. He articulated them very strongly, and he got elected Governor on that basis.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about House leaders? Were there House leaders that came in with a game plan or were you so involved with Dan Evans' plan that you didn't need one?

**Mr. Copeland:** We came in with Dan, more than anything else. Yes, we all had certain things that we wanted to have as accomplished fact, but ultimately, very early on, it got folded into Dan's Blueprint for Progress. There was a whole bunch of stuff that he had in there that evolved right out of the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He had enough for everyone?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, it wasn't as if he took everybody in the Legislature and totally ignored any thoughts or ideas or things like that they had. Whenever he could, he certainly encompassed them into the famous Blueprint for Progress.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When he developed the Blueprint and his early plans, were they so monumental and detailed that by his third term he still didn't need a new plan, he was still working off the original plan? Those were all long-time big reforms that he was working on. Was he less inclined to have to come to these new Republicans and say, "What would you like to do?" because he still had a plan?

**Mr. Copeland:** His plan always incorporated this whole business of the reorganization of state government, which obviously was a big one. But when you do that, several years down the line it has to be readjusted and retuned. If you create something, you just can't walk off and leave it and say, "Okay, that's finished; that requires no additional care, maintenance,

or love and affection from here on out. So going into his third term, did he have to reinvent a new plan? No, he didn't have to reinvent a new plan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But does that create a situation where these new Republicans coming in—if the plan was already in place—it's maybe harder for them to feel part of the process? And they want to make their mark and they want to bring in their ideas, but was there room for their ideas? I'm just trying to understand the source of their unrest.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this is entirely possible, but I think it is more perception than anything else. I think that's a question better put to one of those new Republicans. I don't have the capability to answer that. But within a few years, the city of Seattle had no Republican members of the Legislature. And remember, the average new legislators coming in, I doubt really felt that they were going to go in and shake the place up and get an awful lot done their first session. I think that comes later on.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these members had been in the Legislature for a little while, but they were starting to have more of a presence in the early 1970s. But finally, that session did end and you were given two appointments during the interim. You continued to serve on the House Space Allocation Committee. Did you continue to work through restructuring how the Legislature used office space and its different facilities?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. There was still a lot to do. At that time we were still taking over some office space in what was the Public Lands-Social Security Building, now known as the Cherberg Building. We hadn't finalized that so there was an awful lot of shifting. We had moved into a portion of the Transportation

Building—now John O’Brien Building—but not all of it, so there was still work to be done in that area. And we had just about gotten to a point where all of the computer information that we were gathering was then transferred to Dick White at the Office of the Code Reviser. So we were working on all of this stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You continued to have a hand in that computer revolution in the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. And we continued gathering information—the data input at the women’s penitentiary. It was still continuing, even in 1971. We hadn’t completed it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And computers themselves were evolving so you had to keep up with that too, the ever-emerging technology.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. We were trying to hire people to train others to use, care for and maintain the computers. So, were we busy in the Legislative Space Allocation Committee? The answer is yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And you were also a member of the Legislative Council. There are several articles that discussed what the Council was doing where you’re identified as leading the drive for modernization of the Legislature and are given much of the credit for what had been accomplished in the past twelve years. And then you were quoted rather bluntly saying: “Some of these people,” meaning the senators, “just don’t realize the seriousness of the situation. They don’t realize that the people aren’t going to put up with the old performance much longer.” You were talking about getting things done in a general way, I gather. Was the Senate still dragging their feet on a lot of the new things you were trying to push through?

**Mr. Copeland:** The Senate and especially Bob Greive drug their feet on virtually every single legislative reform proposal. It didn’t make any difference what it was, he objected; he didn’t want to have it happen; he impeded progress; he did whatever he could. He liked the way the system worked; he liked the way that he did things; he liked the way that if you wanted to get a bill through the Senate you gave contribution to the Greive fund.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked for him.

**Mr. Copeland:** He liked the closed Rules Committee. Those are the things he built in the Senate and he did not like to have anybody change anything. Now, we had changed in the House and all of a sudden the public and the press realized that we were having a frank, open type of a legislative body and they were looking over at the Senate who said they were not making changes. This is the reason for my remark when I said, “these people.” I was talking about the members of the Democrat Senate. They didn’t realize the seriousness of our insistence that they change.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This article alludes to the Legislative Council continuing to push for reform proposals and working on your part of the agenda. They addressed the open meetings issue, how conference committees work—different things. At the end of the article, it went back to you after describing these different reforms and said, “Many legislators believe there are indeed good and compelling reasons that the public has lost confidence in the whole legislative process. This was the urgency that Copeland spoke about.”

**Mr. Copeland:** It is well to remember that legislative change comes about “one house at a time.” Most substantive changes are in House and Senate rules. I could only push so far. I could only get some things

accomplished in the House. I had no authority in the Senate. However, you will find that in later sessions I did “shame” the Senate into changing their rules.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you still had your eye on the public perception of the Legislature and you’re still singing the same song that the Legislature had to respond to public needs. But you’ve made some strides. The article went on to describe: “In mid-1970, a group called the Citizens Conference on State Legislatures made a critical study of the legislatures of all fifty states, grading them on what they call the FAIR system. Are they “functional, accountable, informed, independent and representative?” The Washington Legislature rated nineteenth. And then they went back to you for comment: “This sounds pretty good, Copeland says, until you realize that a lot of the states rated below us in the scale are one-party states from the South or states far older than we are.” So this would be a kind of a report card for legislators?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you use it in the Council to push for more reform?

**Mr. Copeland:** We could, yes. At that time we were exchanging information with other states on how they were doing things. We’d get them to recognize that, “Well, I didn’t have a report earlier, but I think an earlier report on that would have probably ranked us about forty-second, forty-third, forty-fourth.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you’ve come a ways.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had your sights on being a little closer to the top in the rankings here, it looks like. Some of the

things discussed in the Legislative Council that year: A constitutional amendment for annual sessions, which seems to be a perennial topic, with a companion measure to allow the Legislature to convene itself rather than having to be called into session by the Governor. A measure to allow joint introduction of bills with joint House and Senate committees, to make testimony and the hearings more coordinated so people wouldn’t have to come down twice, once for the House, once for the Senate. You wanted to change how conference committees worked and narrow the mandate of free conference committees. You were still talking about the open meeting rule and there was still controversy generally around the operation of the Rules Committee. So you’re busy: you’re going to meetings, you’re still pushing along. Were you as involved still in the Legislative Council this time as some of the earlier years?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Different legislators bring forth plans that they wanted the Council to consider. Representative Pardini and Hal Wolf proposed a constitutional amendment to establish a corporate income tax of twelve percent. They wanted to replace the B&O tax and alleviate some of the pressure of property taxes and close some loop holes with this new tax. Did that receive much attention?

**Mr. Copeland:** Does it address corporations only?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Many businesses resented the B&O tax; how would they have felt about a corporate income tax instead?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was one of the real sticking points on the Business and Occupation tax. The Business and Occupation tax is a tax on gross, and you can be losing money in your

business, then you still owe the tax. You didn't make a profit, but you still owe the tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would this idea be fairer?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was an attempt to try to say, okay businesses will still pay their tax on their property, not on their gross business. So yes, was this an attempt to try to change the impact it would have on business from the standpoint of, "Did you make money in your business this year?" where the answer is no. And then of course, you would be relieved of paying any tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How difficult would it be to pass such a measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** From the standpoint of the Democrats, it would be very difficult unless this was attached to personal income tax, also.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They couldn't see this as a step?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they didn't want to separate that out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it be that if you got some reforms, then you'd never get the big reform; it had to be all or nothing? How did you look on this?

**Mr. Copeland:** It would have been highly desirable if this had been the case, but politically, you knew that it wasn't going to happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Still they bring it up. Is this tilting at windmills, was this that difficult?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, not only tilting at windmills, but if you took this same proposal

and incorporated that and included a personal income tax, you'd never get Pardini to vote for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He could envision this, but not a personal income tax?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, absolutely. I mean, he was one of these strong anti-income tax people as far as personal income tax was concerned. But he could go for having a twelve percent income tax on business if they made a profit, but for heaven's sake don't ever put it on personal income. So no, you lose Pardini once you incorporated that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hal Wolf said, "I feel that one of the real hang-ups in attracting industry to the state or in asking industry within the state to expand their plants to produce product lines, retail stores or create jobs is the complete uncertainty of our dishrag-type legislation. The one thing I hear most from industry is, 'We don't know where we are tax-wise in the state of Washington.'" So he's actually trying to promote a couple of different things here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A more fair tax policy and bringing in industry—you were still in a job crunch in the early seventies—maybe this would help diversify. This is the only mention I've ever seen of this measure; does it go anywhere at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** It just doesn't go anywhere at all, period.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, was this a case of wanting a full loaf and never going for the half loaf?

**Mr. Copeland:** Never could get enough votes to be able to get that thing through.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hal Wolf had another idea; this time he teamed with you. You went to Evans to ask the Governor to look at unemployment compensation. You were unhappy with how it was being administered and you asked for a citizen's committee to study the whole issue of welfare and unemployment programs, which, again, were at a critical stage with the Boeing Bust and other economic issues of the day. It was said that people didn't like how DSHS was handling welfare—or practically anything else. There was a great distrust of DSHS, almost immediately, by many people. They were really uncomfortable with that super agency. Here, you were focusing on the unemployment program: Is there enough support for people who have lost their job through no fault of their own? Is there too much pressure by the large unemployed group on the welfare rolls; have people stopped looking for work and were just sliding onto welfare? You were just plain running out of money with all these people in need. Were the support levels actually taking care of people; were they too much, too little? And does a generous welfare policy act as a disincentive for people looking for work? There were all kinds of philosophical and very practical issues that you were looking at here. The Governor did not go this route; he did not appoint a citizen's committee. He appears to want to give DSHS a little more time—they were a fairly new agency; they'd only been organized in 1970. This did turn into a bit of a campaign issue for you so I wanted to look at this more closely. What were you trying to do here?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think we were trying to look at the entire picture. Let's back up just for a second. Yes, there was a certain amount of disgust pointed at the Department of Social and Health Services. But here again, it was created out of a whole host of functions of state government that were all good, righteous,

holy, sacred cows—an amalgamation, a litany of bureaus that you could call on that all were kind of pulled together; they were all doing something in the interest of humanity. So that's why the thing came to be called a super power, because you had aid to dependant children in there, and you had a separate one for unwed mothers that was doing something, I forget what it was, and then you had the veterans rehabilitation, and you had training programs, and then you had the standard welfare that you're getting from the federal government. So it all came together. Now, you used the word "super agency," and that was coined by the press because it was the largest department in all of state government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It had Corrections, Health, quite a few things.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes. Health and health care, health administration, and all of that came under the Department of Social and Health Services. Here was the problem: it was such a big department to operate. The people that came in to run the Department of Social and Health Services all came from these agencies that had been combined. Each one of these individuals wanted to maintain, to a degree, the autonomy within the department of their previous agency, department, board, commission whatever you want to call it. It was like a great big quilt and each one of these pieces didn't quite blend in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Didn't quite touch.

**Mr. Copeland:** They touched, but they also had a little fence around them. And an awful lot of the administrators kept those fences there. So they build little empires of empires within it. Quite often they didn't communicate real well. So this was the frustration that the public and the Legislature were feeling about the department. This was coupled with the



reality that Boeing was having a substantial reduction in force, plus the fact that the funds we had accumulated in Employment Security were getting drawn down at a far more rapid rate than anyone had anticipated. So there was kind of a common interest in saying, "Maybe we better take a look at this whole thing." Dan, of course, took the approach, "If they do, they're just going to criticize. I don't think I'll have anything to do with this."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he have an internal look at it? Did he try to get a handle on this in other ways?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, oh he could look at it any day he wanted to. He just didn't want to have the Legislature look at it because he knew it was terrible.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Kind of vulnerable?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's interesting. In many other cases, he had citizen groups out there studying and looking at things; that was one of his big mechanisms for bringing people on board.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not on this one. Not right then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this one's a little too fragile? Was it partly that it's so new that he wants to give it a little time?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's entirely possible that's the case. See, it's difficult to combine these agencies and I mean this with all sincerity and don't mean to be critical. But if you were head of some little agency, or commission, or board and all of a sudden you got combined, you'd kind of like to keep your own autonomy and your order, and make sure that whatever it was

that you were in charge of was from here-on and ever-more defended and funded and, you know, was nurtured and growing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hopefully you cared about your program, so you're going to want to keep it.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. So this is not an unreasonable thing for those people to do; it's just how rapidly can they blend into the whole overall picture? It's strenuous; it's tough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it doesn't happen overnight, and it doesn't happen without a lot of work, and not everybody would be on board, obviously.

**Mr. Copeland:** Bud Shinpoch later came on board as director of DSHS when Booth Gardner was Governor. As I understand it, he found that the Department of Social and Health Services had seven layers that you had to report to from the top to the bottom. Booth wanted his suggestions and Bud recommended getting rid of four or five layers. It was just too big a shake-up within the Department of Social and Health Services for the Governor of the state of Washington to take the director's suggestions. I think it was at this point Shinpoch was replaced. I think every student of government would tell you if Booth Gardner had taken Bud Shinpoch's advice and gone right ahead and bit the bullet and just did what he said at that time, yes, there would have been a huge blow-up in Olympia, but only in Olympia. Few would have felt it anyplace else but Olympia. Because, you know, "You're on my turf." But if he'd gone ahead and done it, it would have taken about a year and everything would have come back together and he would have been a heck of a lot better off. But he didn't do it, so that's the way it goes.

That, coupled with the fact that

Department of Social and Health Services had the misguided opinion that they could build their own computer model to fit their own work, and they went ahead and contracted and went through building three—all of which have been a failure. They wouldn't go out and buy one off the shelf. They were convinced that they had the expertise to build their own.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That didn't quite work out.

**Mr. Copeland:** Incredible! One was called Aces. And I forget which one it was, but after they got three-quarters into the program, they realized they couldn't transfer data from existing databases into the new program; it all had to be re-key-stroked. You don't build programs that way!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Fortunately, you didn't have to tear your hair out over that one. No fun to watch from the sidelines, though. During the interim, when you were working on the Legislative Council, the Legislature had to come back into session, partly to deal with redistricting, and in part to adjust the budget. The economy was still very weak and you needed to address some of those issues. You got involved in addressing some of the redistricting issues. Your relationship to redistricting is sort of in-and-out. You definitely had opinions about it and weighed in on it, but it was not something you seemed to want to really grab hold of in any way.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, you just about never wanted to grab hold of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Like a snake?

**Mr. Copeland:** There was no doubt about that. It isn't that I weighed in and weighed out of redistricting; redistricting affected

every member of the Legislature. This was a case of press perception; they'd grab you and say, "What do you think about redistricting?" And of course, often whatever comments you made, they made it look like you were weighing in on it very heavily, when really you weren't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Occasionally, you had a plan that you put forward, not just a sort of offhand comment. Actually, you had some suggestions for making this work a little better.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Early in 1971 you had wanted to get redistricting done within a strict deadline. Well, that didn't happen. Again, redistricting was hanging there. But you came up with a plan that you put forward in September of '71, phasing into the next session. You again pressed for a timetable. You and Jim Andersen were working together on this issue; he was, at that point, the Senate Minority Leader. You wanted to force the Democrats to have a timetable and it looks like you tried to separate redistricting out from the normal legislative issues of unemployment, job creation, taxes, welfare...

**Mr. Copeland:** Legislative redistricting was already a separate issue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your plan went further. It proposed some weeks of meetings to introduce legislation, and then a recess. Then you talked about reconvening just for redistricting and getting that accomplished, and then going back to your regular business. You talked about it as a cleaner process because there wouldn't be vote-trading holding up people's votes on some other issue for redistricting or vice versa. You thought that could get done by the end of March. It would be cheaper, quicker and better. Of course, it doesn't happen; nobody was going to go that far.

**Mr. Copeland:** When you take the redistricting proposal and move it to a separate time frame all by itself—where you have no other subject matter before you—then you don't have anything to trade votes with. So now it just becomes the centerpiece. Number two, knowing that there's a deadline, a time-certain when you must have something final or somebody else is going to do it, is taking the Legislature and really and truly putting their feet to the fire. Number three, this is meeting legislative responsibility. This proposal that Jim and I were making met all those three requirements. It met legislative responsibility, it brought it to a conclusion at a time-certain, and it put it in an environment where that was the main subject matter, and that was all, period.

Now, even to this day, I still think it was a damn good idea and it should have been implemented, but it wasn't. And from thereon, what happened? The courts did it. In subsequent sessions of the Legislature, the Legislature abdicated their position and said, "We can't redistrict; we'll let somebody else do it." They threw up their hands and walked away from it. Well, that is nothing more than a political cop-out. They were elected and constitutionally required to go ahead and make these decisions and they should have done it. This was just an example of a mechanism and a method for them to meet the constitutional requirements; that's all it was, pure and simple.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And they don't do it. Did you go around and talk this up with lots of people and try to get them on board?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And did you carry the ball for the House and Jim Andersen for the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, to a degree, but we just couldn't get it done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any allies in the Democratic Party?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** None of them would look at this?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that slows you down right there.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well sure, stopped cold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wondered if any of them were as frustrated as you were.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were still holding out that they were going to make it work for them? Senator Greive, who was still in charge of the Senate redistricting for the Democrats, intimated that this was a ploy, that the Republicans really were not sincere in redistricting but that they wanted to force it into the courts where the courts would appoint a master, who he maintained would favor the Republicans. I'm not sure if I can follow that whole line of thought, but this was something that he said was going on. Would the courts have been a better solution?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have no idea where he got the absurd idea that the courts would favor the Republican position. I do know if Bob Greive were in charge of redistricting, you can rest assured it'd be sloped for the Democrats. That's a foregone conclusion.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that was the norm. He

also charged that the Attorney General, Slade Gorton, who had been the House redistricting mastermind in the 1960s, was still involved. He complained that the AG's office had computers, that they were doing redistricting and that this was improper. But Gorton flatly denied any of this. Was there any substance to that?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't have the slightest idea if it's all just a story or not. I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You, yourself had a little tangle with Slade Gorton. You had a different point of view about how all of these things should be happening. Slade Gorton was going around the state—he had four public meetings addressing various issues, I guess, redistricting being one of them. And he was putting forward the idea that there should be a bipartisan commission that should do redistricting; he also wanted to limit legislators to twelve years of service—to have term limits. And have legislative rules set by statute rather than hammering it out each session as you customarily did. He also had the idea—and this one surprised me—that the number of legislators should be reduced from one hundred and forty-eight to eighty-four. He had a lot of things on the plate here, none of them very complimentary to the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, he's no longer a member of the Legislature; why should he be complimentary?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is pretty harsh. You, of course, took exception to this.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, this is so very typical of Slade. He'll put forward these things, I think, because they make good press but aren't realistic. Just as an example: His suggestion the House and Senate rules be placed in statute law. This means the Governor has to approve the House and Senate rules. Further, it would

take weeks to change a simple rule. Come on! Let's be realistic. The Senate and House are not going to give the Governor that kind of control over the Legislative Branch. Slade knows better, but it makes good press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was saying what he thinks people want to hear?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he's saying what he thinks people ought to hear. This is for his political advancement. This is for the enhancement of Slade Gorton; it has nothing to do with the Legislature of the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It doesn't make your job easier!

**Mr. Copeland:** Why, not only does it not make my job any easier when he's out there running around saying that the Legislature is no good; it should be changed. I think it's all done for the political advancement of Slade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You answered back immediately.

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet I answered back. But just think, who else was there in the House caucus that would answer back to Slade Gorton?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the article describing his program, it also said, "On his heels, came Representative Tom Copeland." You say, "He's breeding a lot of distrust in the Legislature rather than building confidence in the Legislature. I resent the fact that he is complaining about the Legislature." You believed, of course, that the Legislature could handle redistricting. You pointed out that if the Legislature were reduced in numbers, that eastern Washington would have even fewer voices and that this was not in their best interest at all. And that the western side of the state would completely dominate.

In this discussion you came out as not in favor of term limits. You certainly had a longer service record than twelve years. Term limits now begins to come up for discussion, a conversation that only grows over time. Did you share the opinion that long-time legislators have a great deal to contribute and that term limits would harm the work of the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think the very basis of term limits is: “You don’t want to see somebody stay there too long,” quote, end quote. What is too long? I’ve always felt that when I was first in the Legislature if I wanted some advice and counsel, quite often I’d seek out some of the older members and go ask them questions. I got better answers from the older members of the Legislature than I did from the new people because they had the historical background; they had the institutional knowledge; they had the political savvy of what you could do and what you couldn’t do. I never have subscribed to this business that the limitation of terms was an answer to everything, a fantasy, a fix-all. Certainly, we have a case of people serving in the legislative body that have been there too long. But by the same token, the guy that first gets elected, he hasn’t been there long enough. How much experience does he have on day-one? He’s had one day. Is one day enough experience to truly say that he’s legitimately qualified to pass the budget bill? The answer is no. Is three days enough?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is three years enough?

**Mr. Copeland:** Is three years enough, no. As far as Slade was concerned, with his litany of things that he suggested, every one of those at some time has been suggested or proposed, and has been rejected. I understood what Slade was doing, but I certainly wasn’t going to sit around and let the press think this was going to go unnoticed. Certainly, he was

making these comments, but were they well-founded, well-reasoned, something that was really and truly an answer to some legislative reforms? And the answer is no. It had nothing to do with the Legislature and it didn’t have anything to do with me personally.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This was a somber-feeling session for you. You do make some strides forward, but there is a deeper sense of frustration, too. Your career in the Legislature had turned some kind of corner.

**Mr. Copeland:** It had more than turned the corner. This was the end of a very difficult session where a lot should have been accomplished. The press reviewed the session correctly. I was ready to leave the House and I did so with the thought that I had, in my short time there, accomplished a great deal. I am very proud of these accomplishments, most of which are in place today. So was it all worthwhile? Certainly. Do I wish more had been accomplished? Certainly. If I had it all to do over, would I do some things differently? Certainly. On balance, I was leaving some pretty good footprints on the institution of the House of Representatives.



## CHAPTER 20

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### 1972 EXTRAORDINARY SESSION AND THE LAST CAMPAIGN

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The special session called for January 10<sup>th</sup> of 1972 was upon you. It was dubbed “the year of the economy.” Certainly the economy was not in good shape. Your main role was to pass the budget, which you were not able to do in the regular session of 1971. You were again on the two committees, Rules and Appropriations. This special session was unfortunately dominated by redistricting; your plan was not used. The court ruled in *Prince vs. Kramer* that the 1965 redistricting—so hard fought, was now outdated and obsolete because there was a new census with the new decade, and that you must redistrict by February 25, 1972. So you had a new deadline. It was the whole song and dance again; a replay of the sixties in many ways, with some different people but many of the cast of characters was the same. Same issues, same efforts. Political brinkmanship, trading of votes: all kinds of issues get wrapped in there. And the Legislature did not make the deadline. At that point the court stepped in and ordered a special master, Richard Morrill, a University of Washington geographer, to redistrict and took it out of the Legislature’s hands. I think they gave him one month. He was locked away in a room with some graduate students and other people to help him—he was not doing it single-handedly—but he did tackle it differently from how the Legislature

would have done it. He used different criteria; he was not told, nor did he ask, where incumbents lived. He didn’t have to pass this through the Legislature—always that was the stumbling block, or one of them anyway, for the legislators who were concerned that their districts not be changed and therefore would not vote for it. He didn’t have to do that, so he came up with a very different looking map. Some legislators, who had been in different districts are suddenly clumped in the same district and would have to run against each other. No sitting legislator would have drawn the lines that way. But that’s the way it was, so this is what you were going to be facing next election, this very new map. It’s out of your hands. You don’t approve, judging from your earlier remarks on this method, but was this some kind of relief? At least it was done?

**Mr. Copeland:** As far as the demographer was concerned, he had the ability to go ahead and redistrict the state without any prior knowledge of where a legislator lived. However, the community of interest was violated time and time again. For example, where is the major trading area for the people of Yelm? The answer is Olympia. But Yelm was added to South Pierce County. Not a good call.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I thought communities of interest and natural boundaries were the supposed criteria?

**Mr. Copeland:** Didn’t quite make it. Interestingly enough, he started with my district. He took the number of people that was a requirement for the optimum for a legislative district and that became the criteria. So he grabbed Walla Walla County and went west until he had the correct number of people and that became District Number One. This included all of Walla Walla County and Franklin County and twelve precincts from

Benton County. He didn't care about areas of community of interest; he didn't care about legislators. It was just a raw-number type of an arrangement. Within any type of a legislative district plan, the makeup of the whole thing rather depends on what corner you start in. And then, of course the last legislative district you form is just what is left over.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He could have started up in Whatcom County, but he started in the other corner.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. It's the old domino effect. At any rate, he started with Legislative District Number One and then he just kept on from there. So what he did was meet the criteria of the population. No other criterion was of interest; it was the population.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, let's look at your district now. It shifted over and you had a whole new group of people that you were suddenly representing and presumably you also lost some people that you had represented in the past.

**Mr. Copeland:** Walla Walla County got combined with Franklin County. Franklin County previously had been combined with Benton County. Let's look at this. A community of interest is like the Tri-Cities: Kennewick, Pasco and Richland. Here are three cities, all within baseball throwing distance; they're divided by a river—the bridges are easy, but they have three Chambers of Commerce; they have two sets of county commissions; but they have a community of interest—they have an interest in the Tri-Cities.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that should be a district?

**Mr. Copeland:** But it wasn't. He divided that; he took Pasco and just cut it off because that was in a separate county. Okay, so the criterion was not a community of interest. The criteria were thrown out the window; it was just raw population. And who are you to say he was wrong or right?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You weren't asked to contest this, that's for sure. So previously, your district had included—maybe you could describe the boundaries and then say how they changed.

**Mr. Copeland:** My district included all of Walla Walla. The Eleventh District included the city of Walla Walla, so the community of interest was the city of Walla Walla. But then it was also the adjoining counties of Asotin, Garfield, Columbia and Walla Walla. So that was all just one legislative district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And all, this area would be primarily agricultural: big spreads, big ranches?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Doing their commercial trading, or whatever, in the city of Walla Walla? That's the metropolitan area for this larger community.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there's a definite relationship between the town and the countryside.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a community of interest. And the Tri-Cities was a community of interest.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Describe now the new boundaries.

**Mr. Copeland:** The new boundaries: he just drew on the line of Franklin County plus Pasco; they would join with Walla Walla County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So suddenly Pasco is kind of yanked out of its area and made to relate to Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. On the other side of the river was Richland and Kennewick and they were put in a separate district by themselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And what did you lose?

**Mr. Copeland:** Then you lose Garfield, Asotin and Columbia County and they joined in with Whitman County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that make sense, though?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it doesn't, because all of the trading that Columbia, Garfield and Asotin counties do is really with Dayton and Walla Walla; they very seldom go into the Pullman area. Four counties lay south of the Snake River. From Clarkston on the east to the confluence with the Columbia River is a distance of nearly two hundred miles with only two highway bridges across the river. There is a real "community of interest" south of the Snake River in the state of Washington.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this is actually a distinctly separate geographical region?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Whitman County, where would those people go to town?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, they go to Colfax or Pullman. But they also picked up this piece of Adams County, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This really does break up old patterns, entirely. So over your years of legislative service, you had become well acquainted with the people in these other places: Benton and Asotin and Columbia counties. But they're no longer your constituents, so they're thrown to the winds there and you suddenly have to relate to a whole new group of people over here in Pasco and the surrounding region. Did you have any ties to these people at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** None.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had they ever heard of you? You're nothing to these people over there—they don't know you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very little. No, I'm a real foreigner to the constituency of Franklin County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who had formally been their representatives?

**Mr. Copeland:** We were combined with the Sixteenth District. The legislators were Dan Jolly in the Senate, from Connell, and the House members were Doris Johnson and Charles Kilbury.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All Democrats, I see. So you'd have to start fresh and become acquainted with your new constituency. They don't shop in Walla Walla; they don't have any ties? And you don't really go over there much?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how do you create this new relationship?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's it, I didn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Optimally, you would have to start showing up at their Chamber of Commerce meetings and their community events and get acquainted?

**Mr. Copeland:** Of course, the court order came down in what June or May or something like that. And the election was in November.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it didn't give you much time. So your name recognition was not going to be real high.

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that true for the person running against you as well? They've got a handicap going the other direction, don't they?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So does that even the playing field here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not quite.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, this was something that was just hanging over you for after the session. We'll need to keep this situation in mind as we discuss this year. It's part of the backdrop.

Besides the budget, the big piece of work for the special session of '72 was the passage of Dan Evans' package to address the job and unemployment issues, his "Jobs Now, Washington Future." He had four-hundred and thirty-five million dollars worth of public works projects. As we said, he wanted to use these bond measures as an economic stimulus package and do this without raising taxes. Although a lot of it was for environmental building projects that had a long-term impact on issues for the state—it addressed the mill closings in Everett, the issue of clean water supply, mass transit, some things for air

pollution—he primarily worked it as a jobs measure. This is a huge project; how did you go about getting this through? Would the jobs angle help?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the whole thrust—the creation of jobs. But I think also at this session we had to approve the bond issues to go before the voters. There are several of them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, a bond for waste disposal facilities, water supply facilities, public recreation facilities...

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the parks.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** ...health, social service facility bonds, public transportation improvements, and bonds for community college facilities.

**Mr. Copeland:** Okay, how many of those passed? All five?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think so.

**Mr. Copeland:** I do, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were pretty successful; that's a big program.

**Mr. Copeland:** You used the words "without raising taxes." All of this was without raising taxes, but by the same token, what do you do when you bond something? You borrow money that you say you're going to pay back in years to come. So it's going to take some taxpayer dollars in order to be able to pay off these bonds, plus the interest. So you will ultimately have to do something, extract the money from taxes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just not right away? Does that soften the edge there; does it make it easier to pass?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, in today's age, with the average teenager, they think credit cards are something you charge everything but you never have to pay for it. Right? And an awful lot of people say, "It's just a bond issue; we never have to pay for it." But yes, there is a due date; there's a point where you're going to have to pay for it. I think you're correct; I think they all passed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you approve of this method of getting things done?

**Mr. Copeland:** I most assuredly helped to put them on the ballot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. You were pushing pretty hard on the environmental front. But there was an unresolved issue: On one hand, the state was going forward very steadily and making a lot of progress. On the other hand, there was a new discussion—true or false, I don't know—that some of the big initiatives on the environmental front were what closed those Everett plants to the tune of eleven-hundred jobs being lost and that you were going to have to start balancing out social costs. Some people were saying, "We've got to slow down on the environmental front if we also want to go forward on the jobs front." Dan Evans appears to be saying "No, we can have both; in fact, the environmental front will create new jobs because we'll have all these new things we'll need to do." How did that look to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this was the first time the state Legislature seriously looked into the environmental impact on a statewide basis. The creation of jobs was only a spin-off of the real requirements. And key among the projects were the large polluters such as the smelter at Ruston in Tacoma.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, ASARCO.

**Mr. Copeland:** I mean, come on now. Right in downtown Tacoma? That was not what you would call environmentally friendly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, they're still cleaning that up.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think all these environmentalist requirements are something that have to be very carefully sorted out. The plant in Ruston emitting that fume, number one, not only smelled bad, but I'm sure it had a dilatory effect on, if not plant life, animal life. But to require a farmer to fence off a stream so a cow can't walk across the stream? I think this is going a little bit too far. So, some place along the line there's got to be a balance in this whole thing, and quite often there wasn't a balance.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a new field; the progress will be somewhat jagged as we learn.

**Mr. Copeland:** You have to take it very slowly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some notion that if you're going to make the environmental requirements more stringent, then communities would need help meeting these new requirements. Was it like those unfunded mandates, in a sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** As long as you're on that subject, the Legislature for years had been terribly abusive of that requirement. We require counties to do this; we require cities to do that, and then we don't fund them—we don't give them money to do it. But we say, "Thou shalt; thou must; you will."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And "you figure out how to pay for it."



**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and at your own expense. Here again, that's a legislative cop-out. If you want to insist that the cities have to put in a crosswalk for the handicapped at every intersection, get them the money. Tell them, "You dig up the sidewalk and you put in the new one," but if you told them to do it, you finance it. Don't just tell them to do it and then force them into paying for it. This is not the way to run government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does seem like the state was stepping up to that issue here. There was discussion about how ports could help. You could have pollution control facilities in port areas and there was talk about how to do this. You were not just mandating and walking away; you were still trying to solve the issues and find ways to do this.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the authorization for the existence of a port facility in the state of Washington is extremely broad and it was written that way probably intentionally. Ports have the ability not only to do some very creative financing, they have a bonding capacity; they have a taxing authority. And so ports really can have an enormous role to play in the event that they want to.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You look like you're urging them to pick up the baton here.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I can't think of a single entity in state government as a political subdivision that has a greater authority than the ports. They are an island all unto themselves when it comes to bonding capacity and taxing authority; when it comes to regulation authority and approving contracts; when it comes to building facilities for people that will lease the property.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder how many people understand that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very few. No, when you get into reading the organic law covering the authorization of the operation of port facilities in the state of Washington, you will be amazed at what they can do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a port commissioner would probably have more power than a county commissioner?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's a smaller jurisdiction type of an arrangement, but yes. I think—and I will use the words kind of loosely—when it says, what can a port facility handle? I think the authorizing words allow ports to handle grain or coal or rock or other materials for export. "And not necessarily limited to any in the above." They can handle anything they want to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's pretty open.

**Mr. Copeland:** Very open. The way the organic law is written, port facilities are like a seven-hundred pound gorilla. They can do just about damn-near anything they want to and levy taxes or issue bonds to pay for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did ports begin to have pollution control facilities on their turf? Did they help out in this area?

**Mr. Copeland:** They can. Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see, so this was a good plan. I just want to touch briefly on a couple other issues from that the session. They're harbingers of some movements to come, cultural markers in their way. Consumer protection was coming to the fore in the early seventies. It was a new area in government that was receiving a lot more attention. In this session you looked at the regularization of franchises and at the operation of private campgrounds. You also passed an odometer

bill. When cars are resold there had been the practice of turning back the odometer so it would make them look a little bit newer than perhaps they were, and the state decided that should be regulated—good for consumers, for sure. No-fault insurance was also discussed, but that died in the Senate.

There was also a constitutional amendment that works its way through the Legislature for the Equal Rights Amendment. You were not actually a sponsor, but could you respond and tell me your feelings about this constitutional amendment, what you thought of it? This is another big cultural shift.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that we were the thirtieth or twenty-eighth state. They tried twice before and never really got it completed, but on this particular session they were able to get it through. There was a huge movement within the women's organizations to support this amendment. And within the structure of the Democrat and Republican Parties, they had improved the language. So it was kind of a slam-dunk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they brought it to the caucuses and asked for support, is that how it worked? Do you remember that discussion, how it went?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. The discussion on it at that session wasn't as huge as it had been in a previous session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there'd been a lot of education along the way and you were now ready?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did this seem like a sensible piece of legislation to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn't think it was a very good idea to allow women to do combat duty,

but they insisted that that be in there. I thought that was dumb, but I wasn't going to argue the point. All I could tell them, that the time that I was in combat, a female would have been a distraction. I didn't want to have that kind of an element with me in a combat team of any size.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you would have some reservations about this measure?

**Mr. Copeland:** I did as far as allowing women in combat situations.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Any other parts of this that troubled you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just that. Well, it did pass. Community property laws were also reformed at this time. All part of a cultural shift in the seventies.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have helped this along in any way or did you kind of stay out of this discussion?

**Mr. Copeland:** I stayed out of it. It was one of those bills—it didn't even need help. We had enough women that were working on the bills. I didn't see too many males that were out there in front of the whole thing; it was some of the lead women in the caucus—they wanted to do it. There was quite an ownership; this was a gender thing. "We are going to do this—we, the women of the House; we, the women of the Senate," whatever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, there was a sense of pride in getting it passed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And great interest. Not all the women members were for this but of course, many of them were. Did other male legislators feel similarly: sort of “Let them do it? It’s their time, let them have it?”

**Mr. Copeland:** True, let them have it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you vote yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** I voted for it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are there such things as: “This is the time: this issue has come to fruition?” It has a sort of momentum all on its own?

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Another very big measure that you looked at was the creation of the Public Disclosure Commission, the PDC. Was this another issue that just reached a certain head of steam and it was time?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just that. The press, of course, were after that thing. The issue had been discussed but one of the big pushes was from Slade Gorton. He was chomping at the bit trying to get this thing going, along with the Governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this a “good government” kind of platform?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I suppose it’s pretty hard to be against this. Because then it looks like you have something to hide.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it sounded like you were operating entirely on subterfuge and making decisions in, quote, “smoke-filled back rooms,” end quote.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And being bought and sold?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the perception. “We want to know how much money you’re worth.” I don’t think what I have in my bank account necessarily affects how I’m going to vote. And embedded in that entire legislation are certain restrictions having to do with attorneys. It’s subtle because it says words to the effect, “If your company, or corporation, or whatever, represents people before a regulatory committee or commission in the state of Washington, you must reveal those clients.” That has virtually taken a huge number of the lawyers and disenfranchised them from running for the Legislature or Attorney General because there will be clients that will walk into the law office and say, “I want you to be my legal counsel, but if you reveal who I am and that I’m one of your clients, I’m not going to be your client. Do you understand the private relationship that I have with you, Mr. Attorney? If you make it public, I’m not here.” So I think there were some law firms that categorically just told everybody, “There’s no way you can run for a public office if you have to make any public record of what we have here in the law firm.” Now, was that something truly in the interest of the people of the state of Washington? Was that something that was highly desirable?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To bar most lawyers from serving? No.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is one of the fallacies in the Public Disclosure Commission and their requirements to report.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there have been a way of limiting that? So that it wouldn’t have that impact.

**Mr. Copeland:** Certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of the arguments were: “What about these lawyers that have retainers from different firms and then are passing legislation to benefit those firms?” That was one of the relationships that people were most concerned about.

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, they were really concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you get at that, but not necessarily the blanket prohibition?

**Mr. Copeland:** You could if you very cleverly crafted the legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it was too broad-brush, is that what the problem was?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Has anyone ever gone back and looked at that and maybe tried to correct it? I mean, there were quite a few consequences that flow from that language, perhaps some of them unintended. Or is it now set in stone?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know. You’d have to ask somebody who’s awfully close to the judiciary or the Washington State Bar Association to see if they ever truly wanted to correct it. I remember the time that Jeannette Hayner got elected. I understood that she had to have a special dispensation, a special letter from the Washington State Bar Association that created some kind of an exemption for her and eliminated her husband from having to report any of his clients that he represented before any state agency. Do I think that that letter of exemption changed or altered her voting capability any way? No, not one iota.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could other lawyers apply

for that? Is it because it wasn’t her practice; it was her husband’s?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don’t know if they could. But if she’d been an active member of the firm, then they never would have been able to give her an exemption.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would have been a loss if she had then chosen not to serve.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is what I’m trying to point out is a very high percentage of the attorneys in the state of Washington are, in effect, prohibited from running for the Legislature.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, it’s a great loss of talent and expertise to the state, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** But by the same token, it got down to the point when they first passed this bill, it was applicable to members of school districts and all of a sudden members of school districts said, “I have to give you a report of my personal finances when I come down here and serve at no pay and go through weeks of budgeting and running this school system? And you are telling me now I’ve got to go through all of this financial disclosure?” And they said, “Well, wait a minute, maybe we didn’t mean school districts after all.” You see what...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** This whole thing, this Public Disclosure Commission sounds so good, oh, it is beautiful. But what are they doing? They’re fining most of the time some guy fifteen hundred dollars because he was thirty days late on filing his C3 or some dumb thing. Sure, they’re finding a couple of big ones and things that are just blatant, but their enforcement ability is so small it’s not worth while. So all

of a sudden, what if they get a lobbying group like the Washington Education Association (we will use them just as a for instance.) and they tell the PDC, “Notwithstanding what you say I can’t do or can do—I’m going to go ahead and do it. And if you catch me, you’re going to fine me a thousand bucks. So what, I have a budget of four-hundred thousand; a thousand dollars to me is “chump change.” If this were to occur, the WEA would just view this as “part of the cost of doing business” and could continue to violate the rules. So where is the real effect of PDC right now?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It certainly changed the picture for attorneys. Do people campaign differently now or do other things differently, other than have a lot more record keeping, with the advent of the PDC?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, it changed the whole ball game.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So was this still a watershed of major proportions? It was run as an initiative to the people that year; signatures were submitted and found sufficient. Did this change the picture substantially for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’re still willing to run and exist under this system?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. But, let’s back up for a second. You know, all the time that this is going on, nobody asked the Attorney General whether or not, with the passage of this, it would affect how many attorneys would run for Attorney General.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You indicated that Slade Gorton was supporting this measure. Was this in effect closing off the field?

**Mr. Copeland:** I didn’t say that; I said nobody asked the question. It is my understanding he was definitely for it and pushing it. But nobody ever asked him the question.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine that would have quite a significance.

**Mr. Copeland:** It had a hell of a significance!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are there other pieces to the PDC, unforeseen at the time? Besides knocking attorneys out of running? Were there any other groups affected by this, to this magnitude?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, the lobbying group was dramatically affected. Now, they can’t buy you lunch without disclosure. Formerly, a lobbyist would frequently say to you, “I really would like to visit with you about the bills I have before the Legislature. What are you doing Thursday for dinner?” Thursday for dinner became a business meeting, and we had dinner. But the lobbyist would always work his bills into the conversation. And he’d buy dinner and you’d go home. But you knew more about his legislation and lobbying efforts than before. Now, he has to report whenever he buys you lunch or dinner or whatever. But at that time, he didn’t have to; so he became a big boogey man in the eyes of the press.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if you have lunch too often with a certain lobbyist, then you’ve got a problem?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. “The Seattle-First National Bank lobbyist is seen having lunch with Tom Copeland.” So? What was the big deal? “Well, Seattle-First National Bank bought you lunch; that was a thing of value.” The lobbyist from Seattle-First National Bank wanted to have some time with me and it was convenient for us to do



it during the noon hour. Now, is that a bad thing? “Oh absolutely, it was a thing of value; he bought you lunch; you should buy your own lunch.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had bought your own sandwich, you’d still be spending time sitting there with that lobbyist. Is that somehow materially differently?

**Mr. Copeland:** I guess in the eyes of those that are so distrusting, I should have gone to McDonalds and gotten a hamburger and brought it over and had lunch at Seattle-First National Bank. I don’t know; it’s one of those things. I just think that the PDC for all its good intent has probably brought more evil than good. You see, it’s not only the Legislature—this affects all of the county commissioners, and all of the city councilmen; this runs all the way through all kinds of government officials who have to report. Well, all of this reporting—all of this extra activity that you have to go through—it just starts eliminating an awful lot of good people that otherwise would run for public office. And I’ve had many people who just frankly told me, “I looked at this PDC report and I decided I’m not going to go through that paperwork. I am not going to run for public office if I have to put up with that.” I believe there are virtually thousands of people in the state of Washington who have looked at PDC reports and just thrown up their hands and said, “I’m not going to do it.” And I don’t care whether it’s the city council, or a member of the Legislature, or county commissioner, or any other thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to have some balance here, were there any good sides to the formation of the PDC?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I think the good side was at least the public was probably made aware for the first time how much money was spent

on political campaigns, and where the money came from, and who the big donors were. I don’t think that the state of Washington, prior to that time, recognized the fact that the large political campaign contributions to the Legislature came from the Washington Teachers’ Association. I think that the public was totally unaware that they were a huge contributor. Now that being said, it was good information—at least it was a heightened awareness. But my real concern about the PDC was the fact that they disenfranchised a certain group of people from running for the Legislature. And what the PDC said, in essence, was that if you represented anybody in professional life that did any business with any of the regulatory agencies in the state of Washington, you must disclose those. So the real fallout from that group of people, the attorneys in the state of Washington, has been just dramatic.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A huge pool of talent that we’ve lost.

**Mr. Copeland:** Following on the heels of this, it became self evident that throughout the state, people who were running for the school boards were suddenly confronted with this laborious process of having to file reports to the PDC. Serving on the school board, you know, was just kind of a labor of love and something that people did in order to be able to further advance their community and then give of themselves to community service. If I’m not mistaken, a special written dispensation was needed in order to allow school directors to run for public office and be exempt. So these things have a very substantial effect on who wants to run, or who can run. And the more obstacles, and the more barriers, and the more restrictions, and the more reporting, and the more public information that you require, the fewer people are going to be out there who are willing to run for public office. From that

standpoint, I've always said that the PDC has been one of the biggest contributors to the degradation of the quality of people that we currently have running because so many good people just have said, "I am not going to go through all of that to offer myself up for public service."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the whole notion of public service changes now and you get semi-professional politicians, I guess. People who are willing, who have organized their lives so they can be in a fishbowl?

**Mr. Copeland:** I have to back up and say, when I was in the Legislature the make-up and the composition of the men and women that were there were such that all of these people were doing this as a part-time service for their communities. And none of them depended upon the legislative salary or per diem as their source of survival. It was not all-important to themselves and their family. Being a member of the House was akin to a community service. So you take and you put the combination of two things together: People that are volunteering to come from a community of interest to represent that community in the Legislature, and take of their time in order to be able to do it. They served sixty days once every two years, plus a special session or something like that. They served for a very short period of time; then they went right back to work. It was strictly voluntary and there were some very, very high quality people. Now, you have to jump through all of these hoops, and you have to make all of these reports. And those people were all busy people—successful business men and women—and they don't want to take time any more in order to jump through those hoops and file those reports.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that many people seem to view the PDC forms as

"guilty until proven innocent." That the whole cast of the questions is: "Prove you're not on the take," instead of starting with the assumption that these are people working for public service reasons and the good of their community.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. It is now perceived almost to the point where people are saying about anybody that is volunteering for public service, "Why is he doing that, what's in it for him or her?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're treated with suspicion rather than...

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember when I started first doing some community service work, I was out collecting money for the March of Dimes. But nobody asked me, "What's in it for you?" We had a lot of people—hundreds of people going out every year and collecting money for the March of Dimes; it became a quasi-social function as well as some portion of it was almost obligatory. It was one of those things that you frankly did. And you were expected to give that much of your time and effort. And everybody did it, and was perfectly willing. And did they get compensated for it? Did somebody cover their travel expenses? Oh heavens, no. Did somebody go out and buy them something in order to get them to do this? No. With the atmosphere of mistrust today, everybody's looking around, saying, "Well, why's he doing this? What's in it for him? How much money is he making on the side?" So yes, you're correct; it's a case of perception. You're almost guilty until you prove yourself innocent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is there any way to climb back down from this position? It seems like this is detrimental, shall we say, to getting a good representative Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know. I think it is detrimental, I really do. I think that an awful lot of good people otherwise would be in active politics. When you think about the people that founded this nation, they put everything on the block.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, their necks actually.

**Mr. Copeland:** Their lives, their sacred honor, and all of their property, right? And who were they? They were some of the wealthiest men in the country that did it—that waged that war. And now you hear people say, “I don't want to have anything to do with politics; I don't want to get involved.” Well, you're taking some real high quality people and completely disenfranchising them. Now, how do you turn that around? I don't know.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's very difficult to speak against the whole system.

**Mr. Copeland:** True.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Maybe there were some campaign practices that were not seeing the light of day that should have. But has the PDC changed how money is given and the connection between money and votes? Is there any way to deal with that?

**Mr. Copeland:** The PDC has changed the way money is given and the way it's exchanged. We truly didn't have any laws on the books that disallowed people from putting in print in their pamphlets statements that were untrue. The PDC corrected that to a great extent. But it could have been done without creating this huge reporting morass?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So maybe the seed of the idea is okay, but it just went too far?

**Mr. Copeland:** It not only went too far, the

reporting got laborious. Then you get the secondary effect of where do the lobbyists spend their money, and can they go out and buy a city councilman lunch, and if they do, why did they buy them lunch? And right back to this whole ethics arrangement, “what's in it for me” type of an arrangement. So the press is always questioning—the press wants to know, “Why did you buy him lunch; what's in it for you?” Obviously, according to the press—or at least it's a perception, that if somebody bought you lunch—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not, “you're hungry” but you are for sale?

**Mr. Copeland:** You are for sale. And or they owed you something, because of a favor that you did. Or maybe they were trying to persuade you to go ahead and vote on something that was to their liking, and things like that. And quote: “What's in it for me?” I mean, there isn't such a thing as a friendly lunch anymore.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it's all loaded.

**Mr. Copeland:** Nobody ever goes out and says, “Let's you and I go to lunch; I'll pick up the tab.” You know, “I buy your lunch one day; you buy my lunch the next day.” No, they don't do that. “What's in it for me? Why did you do that?” Obviously, you know, you and I, you had lunch with Anne because she does such and such and you wanted her to do this.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It does degrade the entire relationship.

**Mr. Copeland:** To really get the story on the PDC, talk to some of the lobbyists who have to go through their particular share of reporting, and all the hoops that they have to jump through, which is just a nightmare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet there are more and more lobbyists. It has not changed that fact, not slowed down the virtual industry in Olympia of people lobbying the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** There's a flip side to that coin, too. Not only has it not slowed it down, but the PDC is limited on how much they can assess as far as fines and penalties are concerned, such as the what-if case mentioned dealing with the Washington Education Association. As I said, that's just part of their cost of doing business. The penalty doesn't amount to anything as far as they're concerned, in light of the overall scheme. So, is the PDC doing a good job with limits that are set by the Legislature that are realistically too low? When you begin to add up all of the pluses and minuses of the PDC and you hit the bottom line, are you with a negative figure or are you with a positive figure? Quite frankly, I think it's on the negative side. When Don Brazier quit the Public Disclosure Commission, I think he felt, "It doesn't work; it can't work, and the Legislature doesn't want it to work."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We can't solve it today, but that was an illuminating discussion. Let's get back to our exploration of this last session. A very difficult question, as usual—and one that never seems to be solved either—was tax reform. This may have been the most perennial question of all: there was another attempt to address tax reform after the failure of the resolution of 1970 was voted down. There was an attempt to put through a bill, Joint Resolution 82. There was a lot of discussion about how to approach this issue. Schools were hurting in the early seventies. They continued to have a heavy reliance on levies, which were failing at kind of a rapid clip, which was getting quite a bit of attention. You talked hard and long about it. People are still talking about how do we evaluate property; senior citizens—how to deal with

them; whether they should get property tax exemptions. This was also a time of growing inflation with stories of elderly people living on cat food—a lot of heart wrenching stories about people being hard hit by the economy and how they needed some relief.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is a case where some property taxes went up thirty percent in one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were different exemptions discussed: for logs, for sugar beets. Everybody's got a piece of this that they are trying to work. Legislators don't seem to come to a conclusion as to what's the best way to formulate this. The Governor does form a big citizens' committee with some legislators on it called the Committee for a New Tax Policy. This was one of his mechanisms for really getting at an issue—he employed it with the constitution, he did it with some other issues. It was headed by Mary Ellen McCaffree, his tax expert. The other Republican members were Bill Kiskaddon, Irv Newhouse and Representative Flanagan. The House Democrats were represented by Bill Chatalas, Charles Moon, Alan Thompson and Bill May. Frank Atwood was one of the Senate Republicans and Damon Canfield. Some good solid budget types there. This committee met all over the state and talked to people. So did the Governor stump the state; he really worked hard on this. He came to Walla Walla at one point. Were you part of setting that up?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how would that work? He would forward his schedule or something and then you local representatives would get up a good crowd of people to come down and hear the Governor?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. That is the format that we used, certainly. We made sure that everybody was notified and then always, the affected people would have an opportunity to come in.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How many people would show up for something like this?

**Mr. Copeland:** A couple hundred people would.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this was a hot topic?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, certainly. I mean, everybody was involved.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you were sitting up on the stage with the Governor would that imply that you were for the income tax?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, that wouldn't imply anything other than we wanted to hear if anybody had any fresh or new ideas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there any new ideas in tax policy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Are there any new ideas in tax policy? The simplistic answer to that question is no, there are not any new ideas. The underlying problem of tax policies in the state of Washington is that you have a large segment of the people who are recipients of state taxes that, the bottom line, don't want to change tax policy. They are the Washington State Education Association.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though this old tax policy was hurting schools?

**Mr. Copeland:** If you want to change your tax policy, then you want to talk about full funding of schools. Now, if you're talking about full funding of schools, you're going

to say, "The Washington State Legislature will fund schools one-hundred percent." The Washington State Legislature will appropriate money for the schools and that will be it; there will be no opportunity for special levies. But the Washington Education Association says, "We want to have full funding for schools, but we also want to have all the special levies, too." Do you understand what I'm saying?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Both ways?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right; they want to have it both ways. So they really don't want to have the tax policies changed. They just want a larger slice of the pie.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Even though all of this discussion is about whether this is good for schools?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the rest of this is strictly window dressing. When you hit the bottom line you say, "Okay, we will fund schools one hundred percent with legislative appropriation and that's it. You're going to live with what we give you." And they respond, "Yes, but we want to have the opportunity to go out here with all of the special levies." So they really don't want to have the tax policy changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you're saying the entire argument gets a little disingenuous?

**Mr. Copeland:** It gets terribly disingenuous. Now, the source of their taxes—maybe they want to have that changed—but they sure don't want to relinquish their ability to have special levies as far as the school financing is concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So as the Republicans who were really pressing for this, and hone in on this, does the support kind of melt away underneath?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly, very rapidly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. That helps explain. Because that's the Governor's line: "We want to support education." He's the one talking about the constitutional mandate.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And soon enough, it's going to go to the courts, and that's going to be the recognized "paramount duty" of Washington State. He also wanted property tax relief and the B&O tax reduced—and this was partly to create jobs. Tax policy touches on every single thing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Running right along this whole thing at the same time that the Governor's talking about this, the Washington Education Association is saying, "We want to have all of the special levies passed on fifty percent of the votes that are cast at that election; we don't want to have any kind of a super majority in order to be able to levy taxes. If we have a special levy on the ballot that's going to put an addition on property taxes, and two hundred people come to the polls and vote, and a hundred and one of them say yes, we want to go ahead and say it passed and that's it. We want to change the law to allow that to happen."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So I gather you liked keeping a bit of a brake on that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, certainly they'd love that if that happened. Every time the Democrats would offer some of these things that would change the basic structure in which special levies were passed, the WEA would get up and say, "You know, you people are opposed to schools." "We're not opposed to schools; we're not talking about schools. We're talking about the method in which property is taxed."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Interesting. Always, when this is talked about, the message that you were trying to get through—which people just don't buy—was that you were not trying to raise taxes; you were just trying to rearrange how you collected them.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Whatever level of taxes you're talking about, take any particular period of time, and there are always some school districts that are very, very successful with the money that they have and the job that they're doing. At the same time, there are also some school districts that may have exactly the same amount of money that are doing an absolutely lousy job. Now, is the answer to the entire problem: Throw more money at the great, big, huge picture; give everybody more money in order to be able to bring this lousy school district up? Yes, there is the basic premise that the WEA adheres to. So any time you ask for any kind of a reporting period that would compare school district A to school district B, the WEA does not want to become involved in that. They don't want to have any kind of a comparison as to how this school district is doing versus this one. And I don't think they like ratings or merit pay. They want "union scale." They are a true labor organization.

But you understand what I'm saying? I personally think the state of Washington can take all of the revenue that they collect in any one year and give it to the K-12 program, and I don't think you'd have enough money. They'd find ways to spend it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happens if you stood up to this? Is this political death?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, it's not political death, but of course the headlines would read, "Copeland is Against Public Education." That's a perception.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was this the sort of thing that no matter what you'd done in the past, all your support, all your work, it's for nothing if that kind of line gets out there? It's not your record, it's a perception?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think this is a case of the story about the congressman that's running for re-election and he has his dear friend that he went through high school with that came up to him and he says, "Congressman, you know, I'm not going to support you during this next election." And he said, "Well, John, I don't understand." He said, "You and I have been friends for years." He said, "Yes, I know we've been friends for years." Well, he said, "You called on me and you wanted to have some help with your farm loan and I got that." "Well yes," he said, "That's right, you did. I realize that."

And the congressman said, "Well gosh, then there was that time that you were having trouble with your income tax and I got somebody to get that all straightened up for you."

He said, "Yes, that's right." And he said, "And then there was the time when you wanted to have your boy go to West Point, and I got him an appointment to West Point." He said, "That's right." He said, "Well, I don't understand, why is it you're not supporting me now?" He said, "Well, you've done all these nice things for me, but what have you done for me recently?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Which leads to all the campaign promises: "Well, I'm going to do something for you if you just would elect me."

So the Governor, and perhaps some of these committee members—Mary Ellen McCaffree, for one—stumped the state for the income tax. How close were they to getting this to happen? Was it a fifty-fifty chance?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was a prelude to Dan finally getting the graduated net income tax on the ballot. And he did prevail. He finally got the Legislature to go ahead and pass it only on the basis that they didn't necessarily as individual legislators have to endorse it. They were barely saying, "I'm going to approve it only so it can get on the ballot so the people can vote for or against it." The graduated net income tax worked its way through the Legislature and went to the people and then it was just absolutely shredded. A coalition of forces got together and decided they just didn't want to have anything to do with a graduated net income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is it true with those issues that you don't even have to get people to be against it, you just have to cast enough doubt about it so that people will vote no because they're not too sure what it will do? They know the system they've got, so they don't want to change if they're not really clear about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think it was fear of the unknown more than anything else. "I'm fearful that this is going to do this; I'm fearful that it's going to do that."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just don't want to take the chance?

**Mr. Copeland:** They don't know how they want things to change. You run into political philosophies that just run head on into one another, and are diametrically opposed. And all of a sudden, they wind up on the same side of the question but for different reasons. Voter A was a no vote on income tax because, "It would increase my taxes." Voter B voted no because it didn't increase taxes enough.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** On voter A? Not on him.

**Mr. Copeland:** On voter A, that's correct. So these are two no votes. "No, I don't want to have my taxes increased;" that was voter A. Voter B said, "You didn't put a high enough tax on voter A, so I'm a no vote."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's no way to answer that one.

**Mr. Copeland:** There truly isn't.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Then there's voter C saying, "I don't understand it so I'm going to vote no."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the other guy. And then of course, there is the guy that gave the speech, you know, "Put a pot of gold alongside my legislator's desk, and all he has to do is reach down there and scoop it up."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how do you go about persuading people?

**Mr. Copeland:** You just do the best you can and go on from there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you talk it up in your community?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And were those the responses you got?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were all over the lot. I saw people that were just absolutely furious with the Governor because he even suggested a graduated net income tax.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, this is one of these issues—there are only a handful, really, that will do this to people and this is a big one.

**Mr. Copeland:** They just gave it lip-service;

they really weren't all that interested in it. They knew if they got the graduated net income tax that the state of Washington would take on full funding of schools and cut off the special levees. They didn't want to have that happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, when you're getting into conversations about this, do you have to maintain your cool and not get too worked up but yet be passionate enough to be an advocate? How do you do this face-to-face with your own community?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time you just stated where you were. All of my political life, I've been able to study, visit with groups affected by the issue and then go ahead and just let everybody know which side I was on and go from there. A lot of times the people didn't agree with me, and they let me know. Most of the time they did agree, but I sure as heck never took this attitude that seemed to be quite present today, "Oh well, any way you want to decide is fine with me." That was—and is—a political cop-out.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were willing to put yourself on the line here?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This leads us into the discussion of your re-election campaign because this comes up quite a bit during that election. Before we jump to the election, was this a painful issue for the Republicans? Many Republicans are against the income tax.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it certainly was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And yes, many were saying, "I'm holding my nose; I'm just going to let this go through because the people should decide."

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What percent, do you think, of your caucus was actually supportive of this policy, rather than just holding their nose?

**Mr. Copeland:** Probably half.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a huge number. Did you get a sort of sinking sensation when you were trying to address this?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I don't think so.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, tax policies became a campaign issue. But first of all, your name is batted about for running for Congress. Your caucus was changing, though, with Stu Bledsoe soon to be gone and your good friend Hal Wolf running for Lieutenant Governor. And you made the decision to run for the Senate. You talked about how you felt you had done everything possible that you were going to do in the House and it was time to look around. You were running against an incumbent, though, weren't you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Tell me about what's going on in your district that made the Senate look like a good chance for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** This is where the court did the redistricting. But what the judge did was come up with the total population of Franklin County and Walla Walla County and he put the two together. When he hit the total button he found that he was probably within maybe less than a thousand people of being exactly correct to the demographers' requirement of what would constitute a legislative district. So he added a small portion of Benton County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And at that point you knew what your district would look like? So

suddenly you're handed a map? Here's your district and there's not a thing you can do about it but quickly get to know a lot of people you've never met and make connections, right?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was probably April/May something like that, sixty days, thirty days before the campaign season. I had no idea that it was going to go that way at all. As a matter of fact the day it came out, the Governor was touring the state of Washington at this time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he was also running for re-election.

**Mr. Copeland:** He had no idea what the court was trying to do. So we had nominally agreed that he was going to be down in the Clarkston area and I would go to Clarkston and be with his group going through Clarkston and Pomeroy and Dayton, in that area. The day before this occurred, the court came out and announced the new legislative districts. And I remember I sent the Governor a note and said, "Rather than me going to Clarkston, I'll meet you at the county line because I've got a new legislative district." So I'd been cut off from any relationship with Clarkston and Pomeroy and Dayton.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had already decided to run for the Senate, though?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. There was no place for me to go but run for the Senate or quit entirely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you flirt with quitting?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I certainly did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what made you tip and run for the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because as soon as everybody knew that that district had been created and that there was another senator there who was up election at that time, I think the Republican members of the Senate just expected me to do it, more than anything else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, so they actually came to you and said, “Please Tom, could you take a try at this?”

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that is correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your district had a Democratic senator at that time.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we had a Democrat, Hubert Donohue. But he was now in the new Ninth District with Senator Huntley from Whitman County. Let me explain the new makeup. When Walla Walla County was combined with Franklin County, Dan Jolly was the senator from the old district. So if I were to run for the Senate I would have to run against Dan Jolly. Also, Columbia County, along with Asotin and Garfield counties, were combined with Whitman County. That put Senator Donohue and Senator Huntley in the same district. In addition to that, the new districts placed Bob Goldsworthy in Bill Day’s district and Bob had to run against Bill for the Senate seat. Jolly had never run in the Walla Walla County area; he’d always run in the Franklin County area. So it was not really an open seat.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Jolly was a quasi-incumbent then? It was partly new territory for him, too. So did that even the playing field then?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan Jolly was the incumbent. Yes, much of the district was new to him. There was far more in the play than a new district for Dan Jolly. Bob Greive was sitting

in the Senate and Dan Jolly was one of his disciples. And Bob Greive then counted his votes to figure out how many senators that he would have remaining that were going to re-elect him the Senate Majority Leader. It was absolutely imperative that he have Dan Jolly’s vote or he would not be the Senate Majority Leader. Greive knew he had no support from Bill Day and certainly not from Hubert Donohue.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Greive’s interest—or need—adds a little heat to your race, then?

**Mr. Copeland:** A little heat is a gross understatement. Now there is a chance the Washington State Labor Council may not own the Senate anymore. Now, the whole political interest shifts. Bob Greive is hanging on to about a one-vote margin. If Dan Jolly gets elected, he’s the Majority Leader; if Dan Jolly does not get elected, he’s not. Augie Mardesich would be the leader.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, he does have a challenger within his own party.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. So organized labor now has an immense interest in this race.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you aware that all this would be unleashed upon you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let’s see, “aware” I guess is a good word, but how to campaign was something else. I was aware of the consequences of winning, but I was not aware of their campaign strategy. This was quite an unknown quantity.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So did you do what you always had done, but just over a bigger area?



**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. But I could only do those things that were a normal as far as a standard ordinary legislative campaign was concerned. I'd never run in Franklin County before, and this is a substantial portion of the district. So I had to meet those people all as brand-new. But it was a very lack-luster campaign. On frequent occasions, Dan Jolly didn't show up at meetings. He was out of town, incapacitated or something. So I think that in the entire campaign I only saw Dan twice; he was just nonexistent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So would you campaign on your record, or what you stood for, what you were going to do next? How would you present yourself?

**Mr. Copeland:** All of the above.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If Labor and the Democratic Party were helping Dan Jolly, did the Republican Party help you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, to a degree. However Senator Greive was running Dan Jolly's campaign. Organized Labor was "helping." But here again, you know, you could not see any activity on the part of the Democrats. I mean, nothing was going on. They weren't having any huge rallies; there was the normal yard signs and stuff like that but no mailings, no nothing. You know, very, very, low-key.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if this was really important to them, why were they doing so little?

**Mr. Copeland:** I said, there was nothing perceived; we couldn't see anything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a little eerie for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well certainly, it was.

There was little interest in the race to a point most observers assumed I would win quite handily.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was like a shadow campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** Why, certainly. Then, all of a sudden, the Friday and Saturday before the election, the average household in the district got three to five mailings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just a little overkill?

**Mr. Copeland:** The mailings came from separate entities but all of this stuff was produced by Bob Greive. Read his book on page ninety-five where he talks about the mailing and how good he became. And he writes, "We perfected mail before anybody did. We'd call it our 'blue letter' and we'd make the mailing." That was the source of the 'blue letter' and the 'pink letter.' And everybody in my district got a blue letter and a pink letter. And the signature on both those letters, to the best of my knowledge, was a person that was nonexistent. And the addresses from which they were mailed, also to the best of my knowledge, was nonexistent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this would be supposedly in the voice of a local person, but as it turns out, a fictitious person?

**Mr. Copeland:** As phony as a seven dollar bill. If I remember correctly, the one that wrote this letter about "Tom Copeland's no friend of the elderly," this came from a nurse in Tacoma. But there's no such address.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much credence would people give such things?

**Mr. Copeland:** A lot. Especially when they got five letters in two days.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And there was no way to answer it.

**Mr. Copeland:** They were delivered on Friday and Saturday before the election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Short time span. And also, if you'd even been given more time, what can you say, "These things are bogus."

**Mr. Copeland:** And there is no law against such mailings. The mailings all came out on Friday and Saturday and then over the weekend, there was a mammoth doorbelling effort. And they went very selectively to certain areas and just door-belled like nobody's business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So a real stealth campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had done the leg work; you had done the normal things, but this was different, this was a different scale.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was a negative campaign on a huge scale.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When did you first hear about this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Friday afternoon. I was concerned that something was coming and it was very difficult for me to act or react to it. Any ads that were going to run in the newspapers had to be in by noon on Thursday. I couldn't do anything before it hit. And by the time it hit, it was too late. But it was well done, very well orchestrated, and very expensive campaign—very expensive campaign against me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Five mailings, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** One of the mailings was about the interest rate paid on credit cards. I mentioned to you how Speaker Swayze insisted that the House members vote for and pass this bill. I had cautioned him about the bill but his leadership group was uninterested in my point of view. So this election many of our incumbents were hit with the same charges. Something like: "Copeland interested in increasing your interest rates." Then it was followed right up with a saturation of radio ads, and ads in the newspaper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a full-body press!

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. In my case, the ad in the newspaper contained a picture of my desk on the floor of the House and the fact that I wasn't there when it said, "Do you know that Representative Copeland missed over five hundred roll calls?" The statement did not identify "excused votes."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, the average person doesn't know what that means.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. I mean, "Do you want to be represented by an empty desk?" and I'd missed over five hundred roll calls. Well, in sixteen years, with over a thousand legislative days, I would imagine I did miss that many.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Although they're not all important.

**Mr. Copeland:** But some of them were. You know, "Where were you when roll was called?" "Well, I was in the Governor's office having a meeting." But you see, that was recorded as one missed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like you're in the bar drinking or something.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. Bob Greive and organized labor did it to me; Dan Jolly had

nothing to do with this campaign. Bob Greive just orchestrated the entire campaign out of his shop in West Seattle, as he did with several others. And in the final analysis, Bob Greive got re-elected as the Majority Leader in the Senate again.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well yes, he did it because it worked.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did Dan Jolly feel about this? He just went along with it, he thought it was okay, or was he somewhat embarrassed?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dan Jolly was a very, very nice guy, but I don't think he had any sentiment one way or another as long as he got elected. Once he got there, he didn't do anything but what Bob told him to. Just like Senator Talley, Senator Frank Connor, Senator Cooney and the others that benefited from the Greive fund. I mean, Dan Jolly was owned by Senator Greive lock, stock and barrel.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How long did he last in the Senate?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was his last term.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they wiped you out, but they didn't really gain anything long-term?

**Mr. Copeland:** Organized labor had no further interest in that district. Charlie Kilbury decided he'd run against Jeannette Hayner and of course, Jeannette won.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel that you ran an honorable campaign and were taken out by a dishonorable one?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm not going to say it was

dishonorable; at that time there was no law against it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm not talking legal; I'm talking something else.

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I didn't say it was a dishonorable campaign; but sending out letters with a signature of a non-person might be pushing it a bit much. If the PDC had been in effect at that time, they probably could have found somebody guilty of putting out false information.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Senator Greive was a campaign master.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, he had the resources; he had the money. He had the Greive Fund. If I had asked the Republican members of the Senate to come up with an equal amount of money, they would have just said, "You're kidding, nobody's going to spend that kind of money on a race."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But he didn't get it from other members.

**Mr. Copeland:** He "accumulated" it from lobbyists, donors, interest groups, grateful individuals, trade associations, and the like over quite a number of years. And so I didn't run against Dan Jolly; don't misunderstand, I was running against Bob Greive. It wasn't a case of where I could debate my opponent; my opponent was running for the Majority Leader of the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's no way to address that. The average voter would not know what on earth you were talking about.

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it has to be asked, how did you feel?

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me summarize it this way. When I first got to the Legislature I didn't like the way things were run. I tried to change several things and was reasonably successful in doing so. But it was always with the objection of the Majority Leader in the Senate. And in the end of my political career, who is the one person who really defeated me? The Majority Leader of the Senate.

At this same election, Stu Bledsoe lost his run for Congress. Bob Goldsworthy, Elmer Huntley and I all lost our races for the Senate. However, four years later the Senate seat went to that wonderful lady from Walla Walla, Jeannette Hayner. She later became Majority Leader of the Senate and was truly an accomplished legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** As you say, you were not the only one; actually, that was a tough race for many Republicans. Dan Evans was running for his third term and it was an uphill climb for him too, especially in the Walla Walla area. He had a competitor from within the party, Perry Woodall, who was not happy with his policies, especially his tax policies, but also some other things. He did very well in the polls in Walla Walla. How did Perry Woodall get such a good foothold in your area? What was his message?

**Mr. Copeland:** Perry was a very, very conservative sort of guy. He was very colorful and very much of a showman. One of the things he liked to do was carry a whole bunch of quarters in his pocket and when he'd get up to speak he'd reach in his pocket and he'd shake his pocket and you could hear the coins rattling around. And he always said, "Now, I've got some coins in my pocket." He said, "I tell you, there are politicians out there that want to take every one of those. Now, I want you to put your hand in your pocket and feel your coins; I want you to keep those because there are other people that don't." He had very, very clever things that he did like that.

It was unfortunate that Dan and Perry clashed as frequently as they did. When Dan was in his first term as Governor in 1965, he asked the Republican members of the Senate if they would have Charlie Moriarty be the Minority Leader of the Republicans in the Senate.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To replace Perry Woodall?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. And rather than trying to work with Perry, he chose Perry as an adversary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were just on different wavelengths, or he just wanted his own man, or had he written him off somehow? It seems like a strangely clumsy thing to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** He wanted to have his own man in there, which is one thing. But here he was, picking Charlie Moriarty who was serving maybe his second session in the Senate. This alienated Perry and some other conservatives.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, certainly if Perry had been the leader, he would have had a group that was supportive of him.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So what happened to that whole group of people? They'd be pushed aside?

**Mr. Copeland:** This is what I'm saying. I think this was Dan's way of getting rid of Perry. Dan wanted Charles Moriarty to be the Minority Leader of the Senate. Charles was capable, but he did not have the experience of Perry Woodall. That did not diminish Dan's interest in changing Senate leadership. I remember one time when this whole thing was going on, Marshall Neill, who was a member of the Senate at that time, warned the Governor, saying something like, "If Perry

doesn't want to back down on this, if you push him, you're going to lose." Well, Perry quietly retreated, but didn't forgive or forget. I don't think Dan ever went to Perry and said, "I understand that you're a heck of a lot more conservative than I am, but let's find out where we can work together."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Isn't that highly unusual for a Governor to get involved in an internal caucus matter?

**Mr. Copeland:** Highly unusual for a Governor to get involved in the selection of a Senate leader. That is a caucus matter. Now remember, this all happened in 1965.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Evidently there was that simmering hurt— still—that comes out in this challenge.

**Mr. Copeland:** It went on for years!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were no olive branches after that?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. Not to my knowledge. And please understand, I was not privy to an awful lot of information that went on between Perry and Dan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But nothing evident, at any rate. Well, that's burning some bridges.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, it did. So at any rate, now, back to your original question. Perry ultimately was shown a warm reception throughout the state by some people who were more conservative than Dan Evans. He kind of became their hero, and so they were quite interested in seeing what Perry could do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was a new group of Republicans coming up, as well as the old guard who are not happy.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There were quite a few Perry Woodall campaign ads in the Walla Walla paper. I wouldn't go so far as to call them attack ads, but they were fairly strong statements. Was there any spill-over? Did this make your campaign more complicated?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, really not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did Dan Evans come often to Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** In the general election, Dan was also running against his old adversary, former Governor Rosellini. This was a very colorful election. There was a last-minute smear campaign against Rosellini from the Republican side. Some tainted remarks about Rosellini's Italian background—not issues, just innuendos. Were elections getting dirtier?

**Mr. Copeland:** I wasn't close to the Evan's campaign at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans squeaked through and was re-elected to his third term by a small majority. And you didn't quite make it. When the numbers were rolling in and you could see the pattern, how did that feel to watch?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was very disappointing to me personally, but also, to two of my dear friends, Elmer Huntley and Bob Goldsworthy. Both had gone through a very, very similar situation to what I did. Both were elected to the House from Whitman County the same year I was elected from Walla Walla County. And then through this entire redistricting, Bob was thrown in with Spokane County. So he got chucked in an unfamiliar district and ran



against Bill Day, a Democrat from Spokane, who was also an incumbent member of the Senate. And Elmer was running against Hubert Donohue from Columbia County.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, Bob Goldsworthy is from way down in the Palouse. Suburban Spokane might not resonate, exactly, with who he was.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. Here again, I just think the world of Bob; he is such an outstanding individual. He's just a great guy personally, but also with a military record a mile long that would be the envy of anybody. So at any rate, when the results came in, Elmer, Bob and I were losing; Stu Bledsoe lost his race for Congress, and the Republicans lost the majority in the House. It was not a good night for this crew.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it apparent, pretty early on, that the numbers were not good?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we knew very early. Eight or ten House races were going down the tube. The Democrats were going to control the House. The Democrats were going to control the Senate. They damn near took Dan completely out of the picture.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, he was barely hanging on.

**Mr. Copeland:** The Democrats, I think, gained one congressional district.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Joel Pritchard made it into Congress, but he was the only Republican from the whole state in the D.C. delegation. It was a decimation; the end of an era, in a way.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was. But I gave you a couple of reasons for it. Oh and by the

way, it would be well to point out that in the race Bob Goldsworthy ran, they also used his vote on increasing the interest on credit cards against him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You all paid dearly for that one.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely. And I tell you, to this day, I just lay that right smack at Tom Swayze's door. He got sold a bill of goods by some people and he never, ever, ever should have even touched that thing. It was a dumb political decision on his part and on the part of some other people around him, like Sid Morrison.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One, perhaps happy note in your area was, as you said, the election of Jeannette Hayner. Did you help on her campaign?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure, anytime I could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** She had been a school board member and active in the community. I imagine you knew her from Republican circles. What role did you play in her development as a new representative?

**Mr. Copeland:** Dutch and Jeannette have been dear friends of ours for years. As a matter of fact, Dutch was my attorney. He also served in a Tank Destroyer unit just like I had. Our families each with two boys and a girl who were all in school at the same time, going through preschool and high school.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a pretty tight-knit group.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a small community, people know each other.

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody knows most everyone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your son married Dutch Hayner's partner's daughter?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's correct. At any rate, Jeannette came to me early on. As soon as she found out I was going to run for the Senate, she said she was going to run for the House. And there were two other people that wanted to run for the House at the same time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a crowded field.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a very crowded field, the primary. But the other people that were running, I knew them also; they were all dear friends of mine. But I just knew that Jeannette was going to prevail.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some people just stand out that way?

**Mr. Copeland:** There are two things. All by herself, Jeannette is a very dynamic woman. And she had been able to endear herself with an awful lot of women in the Walla Walla area who were perfectly willing to take the time and effort to go out and run a political campaign. And this was her real main thrust. She had a lot of gals out there, and they were doing lots and lots of legwork for her. And she was able to take that same generation of interest and transfer that right smack into the new district. And so she got a lot of women working in the new district. Now, she was able to run a campaign not cluttered with any baggage or previous voting records, like having to vote for increases in credit card interest. So, going into the general election, she was standing alone on that. She was running against a guy that I didn't feel was too much of a candidate. It came to this

realization that it was going to cost Jeannette's campaign a lot of money to win that primary so she and Dutch, apparently, just sat down and said, "How much is it going to cost?" And Dutch just said, "I don't think we even care; we'll just write out a check for it." I'm dead serious. I think that she and Dutch made the conscious decision: "Whatever it will take to win this race, we're going to spend our own personal resources in order to be able to do it." So with the financial resources and the commitment of many volunteers, she went sailing through the primary, and then she was in good shape in the general election.

You were asking what role did I play in this? I made it a special point to go out and talk to her other two primary opponents and say, "The one thing that you have to do is, after the primary, agree that whoever wins you will support them in the general election."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, get behind that person.

**Mr. Copeland:** "This is a foregone conclusion and I just want to make sure that I have your word that this is the case." So that I did for Jeannette.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you the lead Republican in that area? You were the "father figure," or the recognized person who would have that kind of personal authority?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did that also get used against you? There were some press reports about the "Copeland Machine" and choosing Hayner as an insider in the "Copeland Machine." Where did that come from?

**Mr. Copeland:** I never heard of such a thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was your relationship with the press changing? Previously, it seemed like you had a very good, solid relationship with them.

**Mr. Copeland:** I had a good solid relationship with the local press. I think the reason that I had such a good relationship with the local press is that I kept them posted way ahead of the curve. This was a case of, oftentimes, a heads-up that “this is about to occur and you should be aware of it. There will be a report come and it will be published on Thursday that will have a dilatory affect on business and you should be aware of it,” or something to that effect. I kept them informed. So my relationship with the local press was very good from that standpoint. Sure, they would criticize me on certain minor things. As far as I was concerned, they were pretty much right-smack down the middle with me.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s about all you can ask for, isn’t it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The newspaper was fairly even-handed in their statements. And then the headlines read, “Big legislative surprises, Hayner, Jolly, Kilbury lead.” There were some interesting pieces here about how the campaigns were run. Dan Jolly is quoted as saying, “There were some anti-Copeland votes as well as pro-Jolly votes.” He said that was kind of a trend. And then he talked about College Place as voting against you rather than for him; that was pretty much the way he seemed to be putting it. He talked about a letter that went around College Place. Would that be one of those letters that you spoke of? It was reputed to have quoted you as having said in a committee meeting, “Scratch College Place, who needs them?” That really doesn’t sound like something you would say.

**Mr. Copeland:** No! I never said that. It’s one of the letters that I mentioned earlier. The letter went out on the Friday before the election. That article was written after the election.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right. It goes onto say, “It charged Copeland and the Republican Party machine in Walla Walla with selecting candidates to run for the state Legislature by channeling financial and party support to them.” And they were specifically talking about Jeannette Hayner. And the article went on to say that College Place voters were more or less expressing their independence and they weren’t going to go along with it. This letter charges that your daughter married Jeannette Hayner’s son—which is not true.

**Mr. Copeland:** Would you call these things “small inaccuracies”?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. Then in brackets it says, “Actually, Copeland’s son married the daughter of W.L. Minnick, law partner of Mrs. Hayner’s husband.” So it’s pretty sloppy stuff, hard to answer. What’s your daughter got to do with it anyway?

**Mr. Copeland:** My daughter didn’t have anything to do with it. “Sloppy” is an understatement. But the person who signed the letter was never identified. Purely fictitious. However, it was legal; maybe it was not ethical, but it worked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It must have been quite a mess.

**Mr. Copeland:** You see, this is what I was trying to point out. These letters that Bob Greive put together; they make recitations of things that were not true. But there was no way you could challenge them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But it has this sort of sinister implication: this is “machine politics,” and

everybody's intermarried and the money is all in a big pot.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well now, talk about machine politics! Bob Greive was operating a sort of machine politics out of West Seattle big time! And then this quote, you know, "scratch College Place." I never treated College Place on that basis at all. However, you will note that Bob Greive never signed that letter. It was a false statement by an unknown individual and there was no law against it at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What's really interesting, though, is that, yes, as you say, there *was* machine politics of a sort going on here. Bob Greive certainly had a campaign machine. That's kind of interesting that they were trying to tar you with that. The newspaper story continued along those lines, but it was quite a surprise to read this. And that Perry Woodall won in that area for the Governor's race was also interesting.

**Mr. Copeland:** But that was in the primary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Nationally, didn't the Republicans do better? President Nixon was re-elected.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dan Evans had been elected initially in a fabulous Democratic year, and now, in a seemingly Republican year, he had a harder time. Were there clear trends that year or was everybody all over the place?

**Mr. Copeland:** Everybody was pretty much all over the place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I don't know how much of those things mean anything on the local level, or the state level.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, all politics really and truly are local when you hit the bottom line.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. There was a crowded ballot: twenty-four different measures on the ballot as well. It was a big political year with a presidential election, a Governor's race, and this massive ballot. Initiatives, referendums, resolutions, bond issues; the ERA constitutional amendment; greyhound racing; the regulation of liquor sales; litter control; regulating shoreline use; the creation of the PDC—Initiative 276. There were other measures that would have dealt with lobbyists and campaigns in different ways. Just a tremendous list of issues. Was this an age of great political activism, a watershed year; what's going on here?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I guess you'd say it just happened this way. Dan generated a lot of political activism. Dan got the troops stirred up on both sides of the political spectrum. And so everybody was coming with initiatives and things like that, and they were getting on the ballot.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's an exciting year.

**Mr. Copeland:** How many ballot items were generated by political activists and how many were generated from the Legislature itself? I will tell you very quickly. Five initiatives and six referendums. So five of them were generated by the people and six were generated by the Legislature; then there were some House Joint Resolutions, a whole series of them. The top of the ballot was so totally confused.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does this bring people in and get them all excited about the election or is it just overwhelming?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's overwhelming and it turns them off, quite frankly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** By the time they get to page thirty-five of their ballot, are they tired? Is this not a good strategy?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some studies on this reveal that more questions on the top of the ballot generate more negative votes. As soon as people see that many, they don't want to read them all, so they just go right down the line and vote 'no' on everything.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Although the Equal Rights Amendment does pass, as did the Public Disclosure initiative. It's especially a banner year for things to figure out if you were faced with that ballot. Did things feel different as you went around and campaigned, or doorbelled, or went to meetings? Could you feel there was something different going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. There were way too many initiatives and referendums on the ballot that year. Too confusing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would you characterize this campaign of 1972?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was certainly not business as usual. There was an awful lot of dissatisfaction and resentment all the way up and down the line, on a whole host of issues. You could sense that was the case.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nationally, the country seemed in a rather sour mood with Vietnam and various things. When historians and political scientists look at this year, they're not happy.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, the real hard-core Republican base had been turned off, and they were non-existent as far as this campaign was concerned. They were not there as campaign workers; they were not there as party activists; they were not there financially, either. They

just stayed home and they sat on their hands, and they didn't do anything. They didn't do much to help Dan; they didn't do a great deal to help any of the other Republicans, either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yet, within a couple of years, you would have the Reagan revolution and those people will come out of the woodwork. Are they just waiting for their dream candidate and for their issues to make it to the top?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, but that was 1980 and this was 1972. However, at the close of this session I knew that I was serving my last term in the House. I had accomplished a lot. I had instigated a great number of improvements. The Legislative branch was now nearly on par with the other two branches. I could see that the membership in the House had shifted and I was now considered someone who was not one of the "new breed," whatever that was. And I certainly was not one of those super-ultra conservatives.

I don't want to give the impression that all of these changes that came about in the last sixteen years were by my efforts alone. There were many others aiding and assisting in the overall picture. Each little step along the way, from one session to another, marked our progress. I was willing to see the gains, no matter how small, come about session after session after session. So it is very reassuring to me to see most of these changes are still in place in the Legislature today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You made a permanent contribution to the institution—as much as anything can be.



## CHAPTER 21

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### NEW LIFE AFTER THE LEGISLATURE

**Ms. Kilgannon:** After election night and the count showed that you didn't win a seat in the Senate, what did you get up and do the next day?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was still farming. I hadn't changed a thing from that standpoint at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** True, but this has been an intense activity for you for, what, sixteen years. All that suddenly just falls off your back and you have to remake yourself, and figure out, "Now, what do I do with my Saturday mornings?"

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it doesn't transpire overnight; it takes some time and some readjusting; there isn't any question about it. But I just went ahead and continued on like I always had been and kept right on going.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was there any relief in this for you? Were you tired?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was tired.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So this wasn't a major tragedy; this was maybe an all right thing? I mean, after awhile.

**Mr. Copeland:** Now I had the opportunity to take a winter vacation and that I did. And so it was just a case where you're going to

have to sit down and re-evaluate where you're going and regroup from there. But you see, I was working on the farm every day and we had pickings going on; I had crews out there; I had payroll to meet. I had decisions to make. That was ongoing all the time I was in the Legislature—even when I was running. I mean, I didn't stop that. So it just continued; that's all there was to it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were saying your father was retired by this time period.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he was really pretty much out of it at that time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were "it."

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's right, I am it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How old are you at this point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Forty-eight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Midlife. Did this give you a chance to step back and take a look at where you are and what do you want to do next?

**Mr. Copeland:** It sure did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd gone through the tragedy, of course, of losing your wife. These were a lot of big changes in a fairly short period of time.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Well, right on the heels of this, then of course, I became acquainted with Donna, which was a real plus-plus. My life came back together very quickly, with the advent of Donna's presence. We were married in '72. One of the nicest things that ever happened to me was marrying Donna. She is a real darling and in addition to that, my very best friend. I will always be grateful for her tremendous assistance and love. And I love her immensely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So wonderful for you that something nice was happening with your life! A time of new energy. Did you start to do new things on the farm? You've always had a huge interest, so it's not a renewed interest, but obviously, you're going to have more time to do new things.

**Mr. Copeland:** We started some new ventures on the farm. The farm itself was pretty good-sized and I was working on plans for even greater expansions. First of all, I developed an irrigation system, including a six hundred-plus foot well, which is mammoth unto itself. I did most all of the engineering work on the irrigation system myself. Developing that entire irrigation system was pretty massive. It took about seven or eight years before I had all of the ground on the Home Place under irrigation—that's about six hundred and forty acres.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** That is a lot! But we had to put the pumps and all of the electricity and then—well, it required just a great deal. Once that was in place, then, of course, it just changed the entire crop arrangement. I was always trying to work like about a year in advance of everything. My days were spent with probably ten to twenty percent of work that would occur a year from now. Planning what kind of crops we were going to raise and how we were going to situate ourselves for that. Maybe we were expanding the irrigation and it would then be a different type of a crop arrangement. Some land would come available for us to go ahead and lease, which would expand our operation, things like that. My work was keeping ahead of the curve. At that time I had Jerry Zahl who was my foreman, a great guy. He was the guy that was doing the day-to-day stuff. We'd sit down virtually daily—maybe I wouldn't see him

for a couple of days—but we'd sit down and work everything up pretty much in advance, like a month ahead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a really complex operation.

**Mr. Copeland:** But I was always working about a year ahead of the crew. So then I got into this business of raising two crops in one year. I'd seed a crop of peas in March and harvest them in June. And as soon as we got through with the harvest in June, we would immediately plow that ground, irrigate it very lightly and work it and then we would seed green beans. We'd irrigate that all through the summer and raise a crop of green beans and then we'd harvest those green beans in September and October. So we were actually taking one piece of ground and were taking peas and green beans off that particular ground in one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Twice as much production, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** So yes, I got into this whole pattern of just extremely intensive farming. It required a lot of manpower, a lot of coordination, a lot of additional expenses—different types of machinery—in order to be able to make it fly. So that's why we ultimately developed a shop where we could go ahead and take care of all our equipment and everything else. Every piece of equipment that we had came through the shop once a year; everything was always on a schedule.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to keep it going, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** We would bring every piece of equipment—from the smallest lawn mower to the largest combine—into the shop during the winter months. Check it over, fix it, alter it, whatever was required.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's a huge plant to keep up; you have to pay attention to the details.

**Mr. Copeland:** I had six full-time employees but during the harvest season we had sixty people. These six full-time employees would be through with our harvest season in October, and in the shop from October through March servicing lots of equipment—at one point, someone counted and I think we had over three hundred tires on various pieces of equipment.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were not just relaxing and enjoying your down season!

**Mr. Copeland:** You never relax with all of the machinery; it requires too much maintenance. And we did everything imaginable in the shop: welding, engine repairs, machinery modification, automotive electrical, woodworking, equipment painting, etc. The only thing that we didn't work on, we didn't rebuild diesel engines in the shop. They required too many specialized tools.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's expensive.

**Mr. Copeland:** So if we needed to have an engine rebuilt or something like that, we just grabbed hold of it and pulled the engine right smack out, put it on a truck and ran it into town. They'd rebuild it for us and we would bring it back and drop it in and off we'd go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did your father start that kind of regimen going or was that an innovation that you brought in?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was an evolution. He kind of started it and then things progressed as the business grew and we had greater demands placed on us to do the additional work. At one time, I had up to 3,000 acres of green peas in any one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a lot!

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Lots of green peas. When we harvested the green peas we ran those crews twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, with two shifts of twelve hours each. And we normally started around the first of June, and we finished in the middle of July. We just had crews going all the time, so it was a hectic time before we got into the wheat harvest. For awhile, it was kind of like going "down to the office." You'd get up in the morning and you'd go work and when it got dark, you'd go up to bed. A standard work week is eight-to-five, five days a week, with time off for holidays and vacations: two-thousand hours, approximately. The work on the ranch totaled about three-thousand, five hundred hours a year. We would cram a year and three-quarters into a twelve-month period. This is labor-intensive and machinery-intensive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The "simple life!"

**Mr. Copeland:** It required a great deal of coordination with the processors that I was selling to. They had to be a very major player in this whole thing, otherwise I wouldn't have any place to go with my crop. But by the same token, I had to be a major player to them—for they had to set up their machinery in order to be able to catch all this harvested crop. So they had to know that I was a very dependable source of supply. The whole program required a great deal of care and feeding.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** All the pieces had to be in place.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, all. However, the additional income made it all worthwhile.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, that type of farming, would that have been impossible while you were in the Legislature—that degree of oversight and coordination?

**Mr. Copeland:** I don't know that my being in or out of the Legislature necessarily had that much to do with it, because harvest came at a time when we were normally in recess.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was wondering if your energies were freed up to re-intensify your efforts on the farm.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh sure, you only have so many hours of the day where can you spend your time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You still showed up in the newspaper on occasion. There's a nice article featuring you in 1976. You were raising soybeans by then. That was a new product for you.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you still taking courses and learning about new trends in farming and

the biology of the new crops, the conditions they needed and that sort of thing?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. Yes, as a matter of fact, I took some of the crew and we went back to the University of Minnesota and spent some time back there with some of the plant pathologists to be able to determine what varieties of soybeans would grow well in our part of the country. Soybeans are one of those plants that are light-sensitive and they do well in a latitude—you know, the southern variety doesn't grow well in the north and the northern—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to pick the variety for your spot on the planet there?

**Mr. Copeland:** So we had select varieties; we had kind of a narrow area.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This soybean idea, where did that come from? Was that the new coming thing?



*“State Director of Agriculture Stewart Bledsoe signs an order establishing regulations for a state certification program for soybean seed, the first new food crop to be certified in over a decade. Watching is Tom Copeland of Walla Walla, one of nine farmer founders of Pacific Coast Soybean, Inc., organized to produce soybeans for export”*  
*Unsourced article from Tom Copeland's scrapbook, quote was attached to photo.*



*Tom Copeland with Dick Kelley in the background, looking at soybeans in an experimental field, August 1978.*



Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

# Copeland sings praises

By VANCE ORCHARD  
Of the Union-Bulletin

International trade, especially to Japan and the rest of the Orient, is mighty important to Eastern Washington businessmen and farmers.

That is the major thrust of the message which Tom Copeland, former speaker of the Washington House of Representatives, will deliver at a trade seminar in Richland June 16.

The Walla Walla farmer and president of Pacific Coast Soybean Inc. of Walla Walla, will be the featured speaker at the Rivershore Inn.

The seminar is sponsored by the Washington Department of Commerce and Economic Development.

Copeland and Pacific Coast Soybean is in the midst of a rapidly expanding

*"The export business is a precise and complicated matter, but when you know the ground rules, it gets easier."*

— Tom Copeland



market for soybean sales to Japan, and he is primarily interested in this commodity.

But, all agricultural products in their broadest concept can be considered in this growing commodity-exporting

business, Copeland says.

"These include alfalfa pellets, cut flowers, onions, there's just no end to the export commodities the rest of the world needs," he says.

Copeland just concluded a second

Sunday, June 6, 1976 33

# of trade with Orient

contract with a Japanese firm for more soybeans. While the order with Pacific Soybean is considerable, it is not the entire crop for Copeland this year.

Nor is it the entire purchase being made this year by the Japanese firm, Copeland said. What it bought from Copeland is only five per cent of its total, he said.

A year ago, Copeland put 300 acres into soybeans.

This year he has 3,000 acres planted.

"And, I'm real encouraged for even more in the future," he says.

The Richland seminar is aimed at improving the export business for Washington. The point Copeland will make in his remarks is that all the tools for improving that business are at hand.

"It's just a matter of knowing where to get them," he says.

"The export business is a precise and complicated matter, but when you know the ground rules, it gets easier," he says.

A first rule is learning how to deal with the Japanese and others of the Orient, he says.

"Dealing with the Oriental is far different. Many of them get cut into a transaction for some of the action."

Copeland said he got the basics in the answer from an expert on how to deal with Japanese.

"I asked, 'How do you deal with the Japanese?'"

"I was told, 'Their way.'"

Once one learns that fact and does not try to disturb the family ties and many years of tradition, one deals far better with the Oriental, Copeland said.

Washington looms more and more important to Japan as a source of the

several agricultural commodities it needs, Copeland says.

Soybeans grown in Walla Walla County can be shipped across the Pacific Ocean from Seattle in nine days to Japan, he says.

This is far better than the 20 days needed to get soybeans to Japan from a Gulf of Mexico port, Copeland says.

And also far less cost than shipping it by rail across then country, then by boat to Japan, he said.

"As the price of energy increases," Copeland says, "the closer the state of Washington gets to Japan."

And, the better the state looks as a place from which to purchase not only soybeans but a host of other agricultural commodities.

Most of which can be grown in the Walla Walla area.

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Article has been altered to fit the page. It was originally printed as one piece.



**Mr. Copeland:** The way we got started with that was quite interesting. Two things occurred almost simultaneously. First, we were looking around for other crops, because processors were no longer interested in canning or freezing a huge supply of peas; the consuming public's taste had changed. But there was a growing demand for vegetable oil in the Pacific Northwest. We had no vegetable oil processing plant and no oil crops under cultivation. So soybeans were looked upon as a possible first step towards satisfying the need. MacDonald's was French-frying potatoes nearby and importing all of the vegetable oil. A potential buyer was close at hand.

The other thing that happened was a gentleman from Japan suddenly appeared on the scene who was interested in some very selective soybeans. He corresponded with me and wanted to know if it would be possible that we could raise some.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So he came to you? How did he pick you?

**Mr. Copeland:** I really don't know exactly how he picked me but I think it kind of came through some inquiries at Washington State University. They were interested in finding farmers who were interested in doing some experimental work and things like that.

So, we actually were contacted by Japanese interests, who were interested in having some soybeans for miso soup that they were producing. They were looking at a new growing area that could produce a variety suitable for their production that would not be intermingled with other varieties.

Speaking of this latitude, during this particular period of time the Walla Walla County extension agent came to me and said he had some people that would be in town and he wanted to bring them out to the ranch for a visit. I had no idea what he had in mind. I

said, "Well, Howard, who are these people?" He said, "They're people from the Food and Drug Administration." I said, "I'm going to be in town on Tuesday and if you want to bring them out, fine." So he replied, "We can be out there about ten o'clock." When County Agent Howard Burgess arrived, I think there were five in the group with him. We sat in my office at the ranch and they started in telling me that what they were looking for was somebody to raise a very special crop. They had looked around the country and found that we were on a very similar latitude to the latitude where they had previously been able to get a supply of what they needed. But, now that supply was no longer available. So I said to them, "Well, why are you here? You come from Washington, D.C.?" "Yes," the guy said. "And where are you from?" And that fellow responded, "I'm from Cleveland, Ohio." And another guy said he was from Peoria, Illinois. I asked, "Why have you converged upon me?" They said, "Because you're on the same latitude of the people that have been raising opium poppies for us in Turkey." I said, "I beg your pardon?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They just drew a line around the world and came to Walla Walla?

**Mr. Copeland:** They absolutely drew a line around the world and I was on the same latitude as some place where they had a source for opium poppies. I inquired, "Well, why are you interested in opium poppies?" They replied, "We're from the Food and Drug Administration and the United States wants to have a supply that is not generated through foreign sources, because if they dry up, we're in bad shape. The purpose of raising these poppies is for morphine for the pharmaceutical industry, physicians, doctors, and hospitals. They need to have morphine available in the United States." And I said, "Well, isn't that interesting? Now, what is it you want me to

do?" And they continued, "We want to find out whether or not you would be interested in raising some opium poppies for us." So I said, "I don't know, it sounds a little scary. What do I have to do?" So they explained the whole thing. One little guy was just sitting there; he hadn't said a thing. And I said to him, "What role is it that you play in this whole thing?" He replied, "I'm the security officer." I said, "You're the security officer; what do you do?" He said, "I set up all of the perimeter fencing and the guards and the fencing devices around the field to make sure nobody enters the property. I'm the warden."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This project was taking on a whole new image here. So a part of your farm would have been sequestered behind what, razor wire or something?

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm not sure, but something like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm trying to picture this. Guard towers?

**Mr. Copeland:** Some kind of tower, or some kind of electronic sensing devices and they were planning on having personnel there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your farm workers would have passes or something to go in there and cultivate? Or get their pockets checked on the way out?

**Mr. Copeland:** Apparently. At any rate, we got into this business of what I was supposed to do. I said, "This sounds like it's very extensive. Now, what happens the next year in the event that some of those opium poppies go to seed? You know, they volunteer." "Well," the FDA man said, "then we would, of course, require you to those volunteer poppies." And I asked, "Are you going to pay me for it?" They replied, "I'm glad you brought that up because

our budget calls for you to raise the opium and we will guarantee you as much money as you can currently get raising wheat." And I said, "Wait a minute, you're asking me to do all of this extra stuff and you're not going to compensate me at all for any of the extra expense? That's all you're going to give me for raising this opium crop?" And the guy looked at me and said, "That's all we have budgeted." I said, "I'm just flat not interested. I can see costs in this whole thing that would be way over what you're talking to me about. You're not even interested in saying, 'We want you to raise this; we will talk to you about the expenses, we will cover your costs, and we will make sure that you make a profit.' You're just giving me a flat dollar amount and saying, 'Go out and do this.' I am not interested in seeing how fast I can lose money on your project." And so that was the end of it. At any rate, the upshot of the whole thing was that they tried several other places around the area and found absolutely no takers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I wonder if they ever went back to the drawing board and figured out the flaw in their plan.

**Mr. Copeland:** I never followed it beyond that place. And quite frankly, I wasn't that interested in it. It was just one of those things that just dropped out of the sky.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's pretty different! I guess they have to get it from somewhere and they would probably want to have assured source and some control over it, but that doesn't seem like a really viable way of going about it. Wouldn't you have to buy special equipment for harvest and whatever?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. They wanted me to take on all of this expense and then they wanted me to be responsible for anything that grew a few years later.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That stuff blows around pretty easily, I imagine.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. I just didn't want to get involved with that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The crop would have been pretty, but that's about it.

**Mr. Copeland:** I'm not in the farming business to be pretty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's fascinating. When you were working out these arrangements with Japan for a much more orthodox crop—even if it is a very special crop—did you go to Japan? Did they always come to you or did you get to do some traveling?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I went to Japan eight times. The soybeans that we were raising at that time were primarily for miso soup. Miso is a real staple in the Japanese diet. Miso comes in two categories: one is called shiro miso which means white; the other is aka miso, which is red. Shiro miso is the most expensive because it has to be made from a soybean that is very, very pure and it has to have a white hilum on it; that's the little attachment or the little germ on the seed itself. And so they can only use a few varieties of soybeans for shiro miso. If you mix different varieties of soybeans—an awful lot of them have a dark hilum—and make miso out of the mix, it will always turn red because of that little coloring factor.

The Japanese fellow's name was Komatsu and he was interested in finding a new source of supply of white hilum soybeans for shiro miso. He came to me and asked if we could raise them. And I told him I thought we could. The upshot of the whole thing is that we were given test varieties from the University of Minnesota plant pathologists and found we were able to raise them quite

handily. Later, we got ourselves in a position where we were shipping a pretty good supply of cleaned, containerized soybeans to them. It was very, very readily accessible as far as they were concerned.

Then we had a problem. This is the time that President Carter decided to normalize trade with Red China. And in the exuberance of Congress to normalize trade with Red China, they granted China "favored nation status" and said to the Chinese, "We will allow you to buy U.S. agricultural crops on a credit basis and we will charge you two percent interest. You may buy wheat, and you may buy soybeans, and you may buy this, and you may buy that." Well, China was quite interested in doing that. So the agreement was made and China immediately put in an order for a huge quantity of soybeans to be shipped to China. Well, if you know the geography of China, the major portion of the population of China is in the southeast corner of China. The major production area of soybeans is in the northeast section. Soybeans from the United States were shipped into the southeast portion and purchased at an interest rate of two percent. So China merely took the soybean production that they had in the north, and said to Japan, "We can sell you our soybeans and ship beans to you across the Sea of Japan for less money than you are currently paying because transportation costs would be less." And so, by a request of the Japanese government, no trading company would buy U.S. origin soybeans. I was in Japan when they said, "We will no longer buy U.S. origin soybeans," and we were out of business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just like that! Could you sell to China, or was it not worth it?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I couldn't possibly sell to China.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The price differential was prohibitive?

**Mr. Copeland:** They were buying in huge, enormous quantities. They didn't care what the soybeans looked like; beans are beans to them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the extra care you were putting in for this special crop was no longer worth it?

**Mr. Copeland:** No longer needed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you stuck with a full crop at that point? Were you able to halt production?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I'd actually sold that year's production. However, there was no sense in even planting soybeans the next year because they just were not going to buy. That was the end of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Agriculture is very up and down that way, isn't it?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, this is just like Newton's theory, you know, "For every action, there's an equal and opposite reaction." Yes, it sounded like a real fine thing to do this as far as normalizing trade with China was concerned, but once you did that, it just—

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Had some repercussions.

**Mr. Copeland:** Major repercussions!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before that happened, had you worked out a special relationship with the Japanese there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are all kinds of books about how to relate with the Japanese, how to sell to them. Did you have to learn special cultural ways of doing business?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you learn the hard way. Our business with them had to go through the trading companies. The major Japanese trading companies play a very, very important role to the business users of virtually every product that gets shipped into Japan. None of those users would buy anything other than through the trading companies. So because of this kind of vertical integration with the trading companies being in that line-up, each trading company would establish within their organization people who would specialize in one thing. We learned who was the soybean specialists were in each Japanese trading company that we did business with. And so if you were doing business with Marubani, you always went to Mr. Nomoru—he was the head soybean guy. If you were doing business with Mitsui, you talked to Mr. Kashida.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there's some competition, but it's very controlled?

**Mr. Copeland:** Very controlled.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It also sounds very stable. At least, you'd know where you were. In farming, wouldn't that be a good thing? You'd have an assured customer.

**Mr. Copeland:** To a degree it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Before you plant, you already know who was going to buy your crop?

**Mr. Copeland:** Each one of these trading companies had their own group of customers. So you'd sell to one trading company and you'd supply maybe six or eight customers. You'd sell to another trading company and supply another six or eight.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was okay to deal with more than one company?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you didn't have to actually go out and find the individual customers; they already had that?

**Mr. Copeland:** They already had the customers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds helpful.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, their customers had been buying goods from that trading company for years and years and years and years and they wouldn't think about going to another trading company.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, it's a very different system.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. So I couldn't sell directly to a customer that wanted to buy. I couldn't sell to that customer unless I was selling soybeans to the one trading company he traded with. So you had to sell to a lot of them to reach all the customers. So, at any rate, we had to learn all of these things.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you go about learning all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh goodness sakes, we did it by guess and by gosh and by a lot of mistakes. Fortunately, I became very well acquainted with the people at the United States Soybean Association, and their representative in Tokyo, a nice fellow who spoke extremely beautiful English because he was raised in the United States. His name was Jack Yamashita. Over the telephone you didn't even know he was Japanese.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A foot in both cultures so he could help you bridge that gap?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, and he oftentimes would. He was in touch with all of the people in the trading companies. He knew all of these people by first name and things like that. I wasn't out there to reinvent the wheel so I relied on Jack's knowledge and experience.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to do it their way.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, you do it their way. Once in a while I asked the question, "Could I sell to this person directly?" And they said no. I said, "Why not?" And they said, "Tradition." That was it, tradition.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It many cultures, that's the answer. As soon as you learn the rules, you're set?

**Mr. Copeland:** By the same token, the guy that I wanted to sell directly to had no method set up where he could buy direct because he had no mechanism for the exchange of money. When we were selling to the trading companies, we always used a letter of credit. The letter of credit was issued by the Japanese, normally to a bank that we would name. Certain things would have to occur to get each container of soybeans to Japan. We would take our product to a freight-forwarding company here in the U.S. and the freight-forwarding company would take our documents. The product would be inspected and then shipped, usually out of the Port of Portland. The freight forwarder would take a look at the papers; then the papers would be delivered to a bank in Japan. The bank would look at them and say, "Everything is in great shape," and they would approve the authorization to transfer the letter of credit, and money would wind up in our bank account.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's an important middle-man position.



**Mr. Copeland:** It is, it's a very, very important role. So you see, this is why you didn't sell to the end-user. They didn't have this mechanism. Large trading companies, of course, did. So we were doing remarkably well; the new soybean industry in the Pacific Northwest was going along in good shape and we felt that there was a hell of a potential for future growth until the shoe dropped.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Quite a learning experience as well as a business experience.

**Mr. Copeland:** I wouldn't have traded that experience at all; it certainly was. It opened up new things for me. It was an experience for Donna, too. She worked full time at no charge and handled much of the international shipping. She enjoyed that immensely; she also enjoyed a couple of trips to the Orient and meeting with those people. There were just really nifty people to do business with.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A whole other world. Did you go to other countries, or just Japan?

**Mr. Copeland:** We only sold to Japan. I did sell a few little items, oh, a couple little shipments into Taiwan.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But when you traveled, would you stay just in Japan or would you travel around extensively while you were over there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, we went to Hong Kong; we went to Korea—Seoul, Korea on one occasion, but that was part of a people-to-people tour; it wasn't a business trip. We were primarily focused on Japan. It got to the point that I'd go to Japan once or twice a year. I'd go sometime in October, November, about the time we finished the harvest and were shipping product in there and they were getting it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that personal touch—that personal relationship would be pretty important?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was most important. In the Orient, they like to do business on a one-to-one basis; they like to put the name with the face. Once they do that and you perform, then they have a great deal of confidence in you. And then when you come back the second time, and third time and the fourth time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They have a relationship with you. You are a known entity.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right. And not only that, then your relationship broadens. Like one of the customers will come in and he'll bring a friend of his who is in a similar business. And he will sit there and he'll say, "I'd like to have you meet Mr. Copeland. I've done business with him for three consecutive years and every year he has done a splendid job for me; he did what he said he was going to do." Now, this is an introduction that indicates I'm getting a new customer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't beat that.

**Mr. Copeland:** You can't beat that. I mean it, really. This is the kind of relationship that is so damnably important in doing business in the Orient. Because there is a certain amount of distrust any time they meet somebody for the first time. However, there's much less distrust if somebody in the room says, "I've done business with this man for three consecutive years and he has always treated me well, and he's very dependable."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've been given the stamp of approval.

**Mr. Copeland:** Just like that, all—about ninety percent—of this mistrust or distrust

begins to fade away. Now the playing field is pretty level. So this is why all of these visits were just so terribly important. So I'd go there primarily in November, when they were first getting the soybean shipments; often they were actually arriving there at the time I visited. The companies were running them through their plants and seeing the product we had and processing it into miso.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it kind of exciting to see your soybeans over there?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was very exciting, no question about it. And then I'd go back in February or March and then we'd talk about, "How much do you want for the following year," so we would know what we could expect to seed. We'd also discuss their requirements—additional products, to whom it was going to go and things like that. It was wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So at the height of this effort, what percentage of your production would be devoted to soybeans? How big of a business was this for you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, at one time we had about five thousand acres going. We grew them on the ranch, but also had other growers growing for us.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Subcontractors?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, we were growing them in eastern Oregon and we also raised some in Idaho. We were trying them in the Idaho area to see if they could raise them and handle them and if they had the facility to clean and store them and things like that. It worked out well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But was half your business would be soybeans, or a third? Do you still

have your peas and green beans and other things?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh no, not a half or a third. We always raised some on the irrigated acreage, but you see, I set up this company, Pacific Coast Soybeans (PCS) which was a totally separate company from the farm. It was not one in the same. PCS contracted with the soybean growers, myself included, to supply the quantity and quality needed by our Japanese customers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had all kinds of things going on.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, I had two companies that were running simultaneously—separate organizations.



*"For exceptional leadership in the agriculture, state government and Washington State University communities, having served as a State Representative and President of the Alumni Association," 2003*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** One thread of this that is certainly indicative of how you approach life is your connection with Washington State University. Your continuous involvement and relationship with the college: learning new things and keeping up with research and whatever is going on in agriculture and all your various interests. Was that true all

through these years? You've told me you took courses; you kept up on things, and that you liked to go back and stay current.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. When we were first doing the preliminary research work on soybeans, that first guy I contacted was at Washington State University. I told him what I was interested in. He said, "I think the guy you need to get in touch with is this fellow back at the University of Minnesota." And that fellow seemed to be, to the best of my knowledge, the world's greatest expert on soybeans of this particular variety. And so it was through Washington State University that I met Dr. Wilkin. I took some people with me and we went back to the University of Minnesota and spent several days with him going over all of the different varieties that might work. He was just wonderful. But by the same token, that door was opened through Washington State University. That institution is just outstanding.

Here we are in September 2003 and the state wine grape producers are about to harvest one of their largest wine crops ever. And it was not too many years ago when we got that very first appropriation through; I don't know, I think it was twenty-thousand dollars for Washington State University to have some very first cuttings planted in Prosser, Washington. And now they're going to harvest a crop that's worth billions of dollars. I mean, give somebody some credit for it along the line!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you ever tempted to go into the wine growing business? It's huge around Walla Walla. Everywhere you look there's a new one.

**Mr. Copeland:** They're actually growing grapes out there on the ranch today. But I'm not involved with it, because I couldn't bring anything to the table. I know nothing about viticulture; that's something totally out of my realm.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a whole new field.

**Mr. Copeland:** The only thing I can tell you is it's a very intensive arrangement. But by the same token, the gross dollar income per acre off of real good grapes is, it beats the heck out of raising wheat. But it requires a lot of water.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the irrigation.

**Mr. Copeland:** It comes right back to that whole thing again. If I hadn't established that irrigation well, that whole farm would not have been able to do what it's doing today. I made the commitment to go ahead and stick my neck—and I really stuck my neck out financially on that one—but it has fortunately paid off.



*Tom Copeland with his daughter Brooke on the Copeland farm, June 1970.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it hard to retire from farming?

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you finally reach a point where you thought you'd like to do something else?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. I had become a very major player in the production of green peas. And the green pea industry was phasing out, very, very rapidly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Why?

**Mr. Copeland:** Because it was no longer of in such huge favor as far as a green vegetable on the plate was concerned.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So vegetables go in and out of fashion?

**Mr. Copeland:** What transpired was all of a sudden you could have fresh broccoli year round. And the reason you could is because they began to ship it in from primarily South America. So in November through February you were finding green beans; you were finding sweet corn; you were finding broccoli; virtually any vegetable that you wanted, fresh, that you did not see ten years prior. So I could see that the American housewife soon would “know no season.” She may have anything she wants at a price. Once that housewife knew that there was no season for fresh vegetables, then processed vegetables were of diminished value.

So I reached a point in the farming that I was not at all interested in grabbing hold of these leases and continuing them for an additional five, six or seven years. I had a new foreman on the ranch who wanted to be independent and my wife, Donna, wanted to go back to school and get a Master’s degree and so it just worked at that time. It was the best thing in the world for me to go ahead and get out of farming and come over here and do something else and have Donna go get her Master’s degree because this is what she wanted to do. So we had three entities there: Mike on the farm, myself and Donna—all three of us were very, very pleased with the move.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And your children were not interested in running the farm, so it wasn’t as if you were carrying on in that sense?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know—mentally, at least—that you would stop farming at some point and that became the point?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Though you put so much effort into it. Were you excited to start something new? You’d sort of done that and now you were ready for a new phase of life?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well sure, why not?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Farmers are usually thought of as very traditional and really wanting to hang on to the land.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I guess I’m not that traditional. No, I never thought that the best thing in the world was to go out and see if you could always plow a straight line. I’ve already done that, what do I have to do? Do it over and over again for the next forty years? Maybe we don’t have to plow the ground in a straight line; maybe we can do it a different way. So, when I decided to depart from farming and come to Olympia and take on new responsibilities, I didn’t mind it at all.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you came to Olympia. Donna, of course, had a plan; she wanted to go to school. Did you know what you wanted to do, or were you just kind of open to opportunity? Is that when you began your work with Employment Security? What kind of work were you doing there?

**Mr. Copeland:** I was doing all of their legislative work. At that time they were having a terrible, terrible shortage of agricultural labor. And I had been recruiting labor out of Texas in order to be able to take care of the asparagus harvest. I’d become very familiar

with the issues surrounding migratory workers that come into the area in order to harvest the crops. And I'd been working very, very closely with the Department of Employment Security. So I corresponded with the Director of the Department of Employment Security and told him that I was thinking about making a change and I thought I might have something to offer as far as he was concerned. And he took me up on it so fast it would have made your head spin. So I met with Isaiah Turner and Ernie LaPalm and they said, "How soon can you come to work?" It happened to be in the month of August and we were just winding up our last bit of harvest, so it hit right in a transition area where it worked out real well. So I went back to Walla Walla and talked it over with Mike and he was delighted with the whole thing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he buy your farm from you?

**Mr. Copeland:** At that time, he was just leasing it. Later, we made arrangements for him to buy the equipment over time. So it worked out extremely well.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had, of course, spent a lot of time in Olympia so it wasn't a new community for you. But living here year-round was a change.

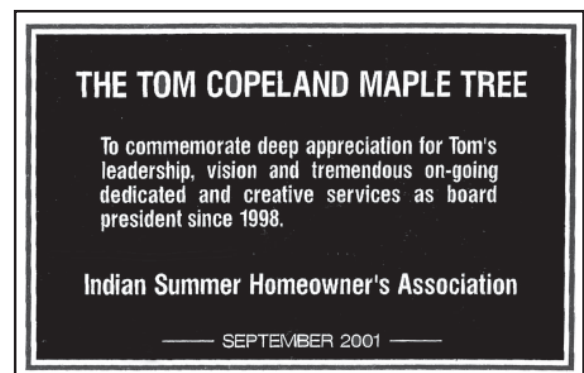
**Mr. Copeland:** Yes it was; it was a change, there's no doubt about it. We came over in late August of 1987. Then, of course, Donna soon enrolled in Evergreen in the graduate program of public administration.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you feel different about being in Olympia as a community person rather than as a person, not exactly passing through, but not living there, either? Were you able to put down roots in Olympia?

**Mr. Copeland:** When I finally moved into this community I certainly put down some roots.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This community being the Indian Summer development in southeast Olympia.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. When we moved to Indian Summer, I think we were the fourth house that was occupied. We built our house in 1994-95. I served as president of the Home Owners Association for quite a few years. As a term of endearment, some residents called me "the Mayor and High Sheriff" of Indian Summer. They even named a tree for me!



**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a beautiful neighborhood. The clubhouse is often used for events like retirement parties and other gatherings. There's quite a network of former legislators and former and current officials of one kind or another in Olympia; did you get in touch with this group?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, always have been in touch. We'd have lunch together frequently and still do on more of an infrequent basis. But yes, there's this group of former legislators and lobbyists and department heads and things like that; we all get together and visit.





*Back row, left to right: Walter Williams, Don Eldridge, Sid Morrison, Irv Newhouse, Duane Berentson, Don Brazier and Joel Pritchard  
Front row, left to right: Bill Jacobs, Bob Brachtenbach, Jim Dolliver, Jim Andersen, Tom Copeland, Charles Moriarty and Dick Marquardt  
n.d.*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You'd all have something in common.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, Will Bachofner was the Chief of the Washington State Patrol when I was in the Legislature, and I always like to visit with him. Then, of course, Warren Bishop; he's one of my favorites, just a great guy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You've all been through so much together, and I'm sure you all still have opinions about how it should be done today.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. That group of people who are still around here, they're not reluctant to voice their opinions.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They never have been, so why should they stop? They have something to offer. You stayed at Employment Security for what, three years or so?

**Mr. Copeland:** Close to that. I did a lot of things for Employment Security that were very important to them. One time they made a list of all of the employers in agriculture that were

making their unemployment compensation contributions to Employment Security. The list also identified their covered employees. We took that over to the Department of Labor and Industries and said, "This is our list; what does your list look like as far as agricultural employers that are covering their employees with industrial insurance?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did it match up at all?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. It didn't match up. There was this huge disparity between the people that were covered under L&I but not under Employment Security and vice versa; it worked both ways. We had people over here that were not making any contributions to Labor and Industries but were paying Employment Security. So it was a two-way street.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I bet they thought that was pretty interesting.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was. And so the director, Isaiah Turner, came to me and he said, "Do you want to take a look at this?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "I'd like to have your recommendations." And I said, "Well, let me do some studying on it." So I met later with him and Ernie LaPalm. I said, "You have the legal authority to go with your enforcement people and go ahead and get these employers who are not making contributions to this as far as the workers are concerned." "But," I said, "if you do, you're going to have some political ramifications that I don't think you really want." I said, "I've got a suggestion and that is, let us take the very first crop that's harvested in the state of Washington," which just happened to be asparagus and I said, "I can get a list of all of the asparagus growers. And then we can contact them to make sure that they are paying in, not only to Employment Security, but they're also paying into Labor

and Industries.” I said, “Then, shortly after that, then the cherry harvest will begin.” And I said, “It’s very easy for me to get a list of virtually every cherry grower and repeat the whole process.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you looking for coverage for the same migrant workers that are going from crop to crop?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So if they’re getting L&I here, they’re going to need it in the next place too, right?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. But I said, “In order to be able to alleviate your political pressures on this, let me contact all of the legislators in the affected areas so that they know ahead of time what it is that we’re doing, so that they are not embarrassed or surprised.” At any rate, I laid out the entire program and the Department bought into it. We started this whole thing. On this one particular crop year, we started with the asparagus season; we listed all of the asparagus growers, contacted those out of compliance and it worked out quite well. We ran through the cherry season and listed all of the cherry growers—the next crop. And then we found that these people were beginning to realize they were required to pay into Employment Security, as well as Labor and Industries. So the employees began to get their coverage all the way through. As time went on, the whole thing just worked very smoothly. But there were no political ramifications because of the fact that all of the legislators were involved—they all knew about it; all of the county commissioners knew about it. I’d made certain that we’d touched all the bases, told everybody, “This is what we’re going to do.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it be true that if the asparagus growers and the cherry growers had paid this, that there would be a certain amount of social pressure? That the next grower—you know, the apple growers—had better pay into it, too, because they’ve paid? Is that a level playing field?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, there was that pressure. But you see, it also came on the basis of the individual workers.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Their expectations?

**Mr. Copeland:** Their expectations. They would go to the next employer and say, “Well, you’re taking out for my social security, you’re taking out for industrial insurance, as well as for my unemployment compensation.” “Oh yes, I guess we are; yes, we will.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you’re educating both groups all the way through?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. Now let me tell you the punch line. So Employment Security went through the whole season without an enforcement officer ever doing anything and they looked at their books and they had an additional seven-hundred thousand dollars income, just like that, in one year.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was a lot of missed people.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. So was the program successful? Terribly successful. So did I do something for Employment Security? You’re damn right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you had been a farmer yourself—an employer. And a legislator. You knew from the inside how that worked. You were well-placed.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct. But I also will hastily add to this whole thing, that at the time that I was looking at all of these employers I even found one or two legislators who were farming, who were not paying into both Employment Security and Labor and Industries. And so I made a very special point to have a very personal visit with them and they would say to me, “Oops, don’t tell anybody.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Get them on board here. Well, yes, I’m sure it was pretty widespread.

**Mr. Copeland:** So at any rate, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about undocumented workers, how did that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you see, that’s the messy part. As far as Employment Security is concerned, they don’t care; all they want to have is a number. And Labor and Industries is the same way. So coverage as far as Labor and Industries is concerned, if the guy is covered and he gets injured on the job, he’s going to get medical benefits and they don’t care whether he’s an undocumented alien or not. Employment Security is not going to worry until such time that they have to send him a check, but they’re not going to send a check to Mexico. An awful lot of these people would have addresses in Texas.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So they’d have some way?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, many were U.S. citizens. But the whole thing—as far as the illegals are concerned—is a case of where the Federal Immigration Service has never done anything significant to address the problem. And I don’t see any change on the horizon. But all we wanted was to have the employer make their contribution. Whether or not

ever got to collect when needed is something else.

Quite a few years ago, the Feds all of a sudden said, “In the event that you’ve been working three consecutive years here in the United States, we will allow you to get a green card. And we’ll allow you to bring all of your records up to date without penalty.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So the money they have contributed, they can somehow access?

**Mr. Copeland:** They would go into the Social Security office and say, “Well yes, this year I worked under the name of Jose Gonzales, and this year I work under the name of Pedro Martinez, and this year I worked under the name of such and such.” And Social Security would sit right there, “How many hours did you work, and who’d you work for? Okay, and your name is So-and-So and we’ll give you a new card and count those three years.” And the federal government just backed up and brought them all up-to-date.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren’t there various phases where employers would get into trouble for hiring undocumented workers? You hear about raids and things.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well then, Congress passed the Simpson-Mazzoli bill, and the employer was made responsible to hire nobody but legal citizens and it put criminal penalties on the employer. It is a tragic thing to do—to require the farmer to become obligated of committing a felony in the event that he hired a non-documented alien. How was he or I to know? I hired a lot of people and I didn’t know whether they were non-documented aliens or not. If they gave me a Social Security card, I’d write down the number. And I remember I hired one and he said, “Oh no, my Social Security card is back at camp.” I said, “Well, I have to have a number on you.” So at any

rate about three or four days later he moved around there and I said, "I still have to have a number on you, give me a number." So he looked at me and said, "525-345-0123" and what he gave me was my telephone number!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, my gosh, something familiar about that set of numbers!

**Mr. Copeland:** He gave me my telephone number. And I put it down and that became his social security number; I didn't fuss beyond that point.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Your eyebrows might go up a little.

**Mr. Copeland:** I thought it was rather resourceful of the Mexican to be able to think of that. And it was so frustrating from the standpoint of the employer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever have the INS come?

**Mr. Copeland:** Not on my farm; they came to a neighbor's farm and had quite a raid on the place.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you were kind of living under this threat that it could happen, that you could have this?

**Mr. Copeland:** Years prior to that, we had what they called the Bracero Program. The Bracero Program worked extremely well. What it did, these seasonal Mexican workers would sign up to come to the United States for at least ninety days in order to be able to work in the agriculture endeavor. You had to have an employer or group of employers sponsor these people to come in. And you had to have a camp for them; you had to have someplace for them to stay; it was highly regulated and we had all of these facilities. So we'd bring

the Mexican workers in and they would work for a particular period of time. But when you paid them, you could only pay them half of the amount that you owed them for their work. The other half went to the U.S. Department of Labor. So at the completion of their work, then they would go back to a place called their port of entry. They would either take themselves back or the employer would actually buy them a bus ticket to get back. And by the time they got to their port of entry and were headed back to Mexico, the Department of Labor had that account and would give them the balance of their money.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So it was a sort of control mechanism?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a control thing, and it worked extremely well. Well, one thing led to another and somebody decided in Congress, or someplace that there were literally thousands of unemployed United States citizens that were perfectly willing to cut the asparagus and pick the cherries and thin the apple crops and go out there and harvest the apples. And we should do away with this terrible, awful Bracero Program. So Congress just all of a sudden said, "No more Bracero Program." Okay, there wasn't any Bracero Program and the next year we went in to harvest the asparagus and there was nobody here to do the work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What era are we talking about, when did it end?

**Mr. Copeland:** This was in the 1960s. There was just nobody here to harvest. So, some very resourceful people started recruiting workers down on the border; they thought they were recruiting United States citizens and they weren't. And then people started coming across the border in flocks and droves to find work and Immigration didn't do anything with

them. Since that day on, we have just virtually had an open border. As we discussed earlier, Congress passed the Simpson-Mazzoli bill in 1986 and the centerpiece of this legislation was requiring the employer to determine if the worker was legal or illegal. If the employer “knowingly hires” a non-documented alien he may be put in jail. Will this dry up the labor market because workers will not want to come across the border? “Don’t close the borders; have the employer do this.” And if the employer hired illegals, the employer could be guilty of a felony and put in jail. Well, this was never enforced and the whole thing was a miserable failure. In addition to the above, the bill granted amnesty to millions of non-documented aliens. This was in 1986 and 1987.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So we have both harsh measures, but no enforcement going on?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. Immigration was trying to do some things. But in 1990, a federal census was taken. And if you read carefully, in the constitution it says that every ten years, “Thou shalt count the inhabitants.” It doesn’t say “citizens;” the word is inhabitants.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who is actually there?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. To digress, I think it was President Carter in 1980 who put out an order that “Immigration and Naturalization Services shall not create any raid for any purpose on agriculture workers or anybody else, unless it’s ordered by a federal judge.” Then he also put out a directive to the federal judges, “You will not implement a raid by the immigration authority unless you clear it by me first.” Well, do you suppose that the non-documented aliens in Mexico found out about those orders within twenty-four hours? And they came across that border like you

couldn’t believe. We had more workers in 1980 than you’d ever seen in your life. They knew that they weren’t going to be harassed. When these people who were doing the 1980 census started counting them, these migrants were perfectly willing to say, “I’m here.” And they were. And all of a sudden, that little town of Granger in South Yakima had more people than they’d ever had before and the entire upshot of the whole thing was that the state of Washington virtually gained one Congressional district. I am not kidding at all! The census takers counted the “inhabitants.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were they there year-round?

**Mr. Copeland:** Most of them. Fewer and fewer would ever go back to Mexico after that. I mean, they became integrated in the society. And they got drivers’ licenses, became home owners and registered voters, probably without becoming “citizens.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now they contribute a great deal to the economy of the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. This is kind of a sideline—the standard ordinary procedure was when non-documented people would get picked up for traffic violations, the law enforcement agencies would immediately take them right to the county jail and notify Immigration. “I picked up some non-documented aliens,” and Immigration would come, pick them up, and take them across the border. But I was in Phoenix in February and right there in the *Arizona Republic* was a news article that read something like: “Immigration was notified today that Maricopa County had picked up x-number of people that were non-documented aliens. And Immigration said, ‘We don’t intend to pick them up;’ INS turned them loose.”



**Ms. Kilgannon:** At some point, the nation will have to come to grips with their practices and their laws and make them mesh a little better.

**Mr. Copeland:** I agree. You either enforce it or you take it off the books. And at the present time they are just virtually not enforcing them. Well, about three years ago, they had a raid in Mason County and it occurred in November when workers were cutting Christmas trees. Probably eighty percent of them were non-documented aliens. INS rounded them up, put them on the buses and they took them down and escorted them across the border. Most of them were all back in Shelton within three days-time. So if you're going to enforce it, you've got to have the wherewithal to do it and you've got to have the desire and the ability. But when they passed the Simpson-Mazzoli bill and they, quote, made me "a felon" because I hired non-documented aliens, that didn't work either.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When the whole system is just porous.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, it just sounded like it was a gorgeous thing. I kept telling my congressman, who at that time happened to be Sid Morrison, this was a dumb bill, the wrong approach. "Well," he said, "Congress feels like they're doing something." So they passed a piece of legislation that they might as well have pasted to the wall, that's all there is to it; it didn't mean anything.

Let me tell you a story. My grandfather, on my mother's side emigrated from Sweden. His first job here in the United States was working in the logging industry in Minnesota. Many Swedish people immigrated to Minnesota because that was kind of a focal point so an awful lot of his countrymen had come there. But at the time that he arrived, which would be right after the Civil War,

the standard, ordinary procedure for all immigrants was to get a job, and go to work, and work all day long. And as soon as you got through working, you had a little something to eat and you went to night school. At the night school you would learn how to read, write and speak English. It was a private school—the immigrants had to pay for it; it was not publicly supported. But everybody did it because they needed and wanted to understand the English language.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did he come over here by himself as a young man?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. He was about eighteen and he came over here all by himself and just said, "Okay, I'm going to carve out something here," and away he went. By the same token, not only were the Swedish people doing that, the Slovaks, the Bohemians and a lot of people from Italy and Spain were doing the same thing. That was repeated over and over again through nearly every community in the United States. These night classes were going on in order to be able to have everybody converse in English.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So how was that story passed down to you? Was this kind of a lesson or just a signature story in your family to say what your immigrant background was?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was just an answer to the question: How did you learn to speak English? And the answer was, "I went to night school."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you know that grandfather?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did he settle? Did he eventually come to the Walla Walla area?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, he came into the Spokane area and got into the mining business. He was quite a guy. He spoke English with very little accent and did very well in his business endeavors. The schooling for immigrants was available but that was an individual effort on everybody's part. It was not federally funded, or a grant, or anything of the kind. You just flat-paid for the schooling and did it at your own pace.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that self-reliance, that "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" kind of story, was that quintessentially American to you?

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. This business of "doing for yourself" was engrained in those immigrants. They understood self-reliance. They understood "the tools are there if I know how to go get them." So it was just like on-the-job training with the satisfaction of knowing that it can be done and the tools are here. It just took some effort on the individual's part.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That seemed to be a piece that stayed with you. To continue your education—to be in charge of your own advancement.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, certainly. Don't sit around and wait for somebody else to do it for you. Go do it; make it happen!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that an important value often articulated in your family?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that's something that has been in my family for a long time and I know, certainly with me, I haven't been one to

sit around and wait for something to happen. Just get it done; make it happen!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With the same immigrant lesson of "get up and do it yourself," was another piece of the immigrant story—of giving back to your country that's given so much to you—was that also a part of the lesson?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not every family has that value, but you certainly have it to a marked degree.

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, it is well to note that with families with values like this expect the younger generation to do the same. Family values encourage these traits. And your peers admire these traits.

Case in point and so demonstrative: right now, today, just outside is this young fellow that's currently mowing my lawn. He came from Vietnam just two years ago. He speaks English well and he's doing extremely well in the landscape maintenance business. He has a hard-working wife now employed by the state of Washington and two very bright children, one that will soon be graduating from college. He moved here from Vietnam not for himself but for his children. But he's out here and he's making it happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there still is that ongoing immigrant story. You can see which people will make it.

**Mr. Copeland:** There still is. That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well thanks, that's a piece of your heritage that we hadn't really captured.



*Courtesy of Tom Copeland's scrapbook*

**Mr. Copeland:** Anne, like I've said before, I always thought that the Legislature was a microcosm of society. That even in the Legislature, where things really happen, about a third of the legislators did practically nothing. And I mean this sincerely. Another third would work the problem occasionally, and there was another third that made the whole show run.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's truly representative of society?

**Mr. Copeland:** It's truly representative, that is a very, very interesting and operative word.

But I've had many very successful lobbyists say to me, "The real success in my lobbying effort was being able to discern which people belonged in the top third because these were the guys that were going to make my legislation pass or fail. I didn't have to spend any time with the bottom third." And they were very successful lobbyists.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's human society.

**Mr. Copeland:** I think I was very, very fortunate to be in the Legislature at the time that I was because when you take a look at

the people that were there and what ultimately they did with their business and their families and things like that, the vast majority of them all wound up to be very successful individuals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was a great era.

**Mr. Copeland:** It really and truly was. We were coming out of a crucible where I guess we got our metal tested pretty damn fast.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We've talked about how several things came together and because they were all present, all the elements, you could take this quantum leap. Certain people were there; certain means were there; certain things were opening up.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it was an era of so many things all coming into sharp focus simultaneously; there was no doubt about it. You take the hunk of society that I served in the Legislature with: where else and in what period of time would you have had so many young men that had been thrust out of society and into the military environment where they were tested on the basis of their leadership and proved to be leaders? And ultimately they came home and recognized the fact that they did have leadership skills and beliefs and were able to go ahead and assume responsibilities. To have them all surface simultaneously for one effort in itself was quite a phenomena after the terrible, awful things they'd gone through; this particular cadre of young men and women that were perfectly willing to step up to the plate and take a cut at the ball and give some of their time and effort and talent.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were a remarkable, pragmatic group of people on both sides of the aisle.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly. Nobody had a particular thing that they necessarily had to

have. They were all interested in getting the job done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They were multi-issue people; they looked at the big picture rather than one thing at a time?

**Mr. Copeland:** You know, they all got up out of bed in the morning and said, "What is it I can do for the state of Washington today?" That was the bottom line. And now it seems quite vogue to say, "What can I do for me today?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It is a different world?

**Mr. Copeland:** It is. So, yes, I'm really glad that I served with this group. They were a hell of a bunch, right? I just learned a lot from many of them. And I think there is some modicum of success they may have learned from me. But this is a part of the entire process. At any rate, yes, I think that all of us that were in the Legislature could probably point back to some of our grandparents who had to go through some of this learning curve and agree that each of us had to "get off our butt and go do it ourself."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you consciously look at things that way; did you think about your grandparents on occasion and say, "Well, they did it."

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. And my parents, too. They were the "movers and shakers" in their time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Certainly, coming from Sweden, or wherever, and not speaking English and coming all the way over here and making it, that's a winnowing process itself.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, here are these people coming into the country, both men and



women, and they're teenagers; they're in their early twenties. They don't have a crying dime to their name; they can't speak or read or write the language in the country they're coming in. And within thirty years they have all established themselves in business; they're very successful; they're raising wonderful families; they're contributing to the community. Are they successful? And did they help each other? You bet!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, for your generation, it was the war. For that generation, it was the immigrant experience that sorted the wheat from the chaff?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh truly, they were a bunch of hearty souls. I mean, how many of them wanted to get on a horse and a wagon and say, "It's going to take me two months to go from Joplin, Missouri to Walla Walla, Washington." Are you ready to pack up for two months and say, "I'm going to be on a small camping trip, but when I get there I don't know what I'm going to do. When I get there, I don't know what I'm going to eat, and when I get there, I don't know what I'm going to make a living at, and when I get there, I don't know if I'm going to survive through the winter?"

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But, "I have faith that I will."

**Mr. Copeland:** You talk about tough hombres, both men and women! No kidding, they were a gutsy bunch.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you have to live up to that if you've got pioneer grandparents. The bar is pretty high.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's the heritage and the background. Which is wonderful.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, now that we've got our history lesson, it really matters.

**Mr. Copeland:** We got our history lesson and then some.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's a great tie-in to what I want to discuss with you next. Could you step back and reflect on your years of legislative service? I'd like you to recount some of the changes you witnessed—and participated in—over time. A lot of your legislative story involved taking the institution from post-war—we might even call them the doldrums—to a very fast-paced Legislature by the early 1970s. Your years of service were really on the cusp of a lot of changes. One thing we discussed was how the Rules Committee changed over time and how important those changes were. The Rules Committee played a central role in legislative processes; how Rules evolved over those years is really a very important piece of this transformation. One point illustrated this for me—you related how Jim Andersen as a committee chair was able to work with the Rules Committee then in a way that would probably not be the case today. Could you describe that method?



*Rules Committees, n.d.*

*Left to right: Representatives Tom Copeland, John O'Brien, Robert Charette, Bill Chatalas and Chief Clerk Malcolm "Dutch" McBeath*



**Mr. Copeland:** Jim was chairman of the Judiciary Committee and implemented this entirely on his own with the understanding that it was going to be a trial arrangement. And not only was it very successful, but he continued it during the period of time that he was the chairman. What he did was, when the Judiciary Committee would report a bill out of the Judiciary Committee to the Rules Committee, as the actual bill was transported from the Judiciary Committee to the Rules Committee, he pinned an envelope on the bill addressed to the Rules Committee, marked “confidential.” Jim, for example, would write in there his own personal comment related to the bill. Frequently it would read something like this: “This bill has the full endorsement of the Washington State Bar Association; the Police Officers Association supports the bill. King County is very desirous of having it. It may not affect the other counties very much because of the nature of the bill, but this certainly recommends it being put into a high priority position. I want you to know that I am giving it my personal endorsement. Sincerely, yours.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a very clear signal.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. Now, what the Chief Clerk would do was merely read this statement to the Rules Committee.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But conversely, didn’t you also say sometimes he would say quite the opposite?

**Mr. Copeland:** I’ll get to that. The Chief Clerk would read that to the Rules Committee. To my knowledge, the Rules Committee made an unwritten agreement that upon reading it and everybody understanding it, the Chief Clerk would dispose of the letter so it was no longer a matter of record. And that was kind of a standard procedure.

Sometimes we would get correspondence from Representative Andersen and it would read something like this: “Dear Members of the Rules Committee. One of the members of the Judiciary Committee was requested by one of his constituents to introduce this bill. It was introduced and the Committee on Judiciary took it under advisement and we are forwarding it to you at this time. My own personal comment is that the member of the Judiciary Committee who introduced this bill has completed his obligation to his constituent. Any further consideration of this bill should not be forthcoming. If you—the committee—in your wisdom decide not to bring it up, I would heartily applaud your action. Sincerely, yours.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Again, very clear.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that point the letter was disposed of. There was no further record of it or anything of the kind. Most of the time that bill never got out of Rules Committee. This was a type of screening process that is so terribly important to a legislative operation provided the person doing the screening had the recognized expertise, impartiality, and full support of, in this case, the Rules Committee. Now, what Jim did, he put the bill in proper perspective as to whether it was a priority item. He was fulfilling all of the obligations he should be filling as a chairman but he was also taking it one step further in helping us make a decision on what bills go on the calendar and what bills do not go on the calendar. It’s almost too bad that particular type of procedure isn’t followed today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, because Rules Committee is now open, you could never have such a correspondence, and you certainly could not shred the evidence.

**Mr. Copeland:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does it now throw it back on the responsibility of the committee chair to act as the Rules Committee once acted and stop a bill at the committee level, or is that much harder to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was much harder to stop it at the committee level than to stop it at the Rules level during the time I was serving on the Rules Committee. So now the committees have a very, very difficult time stopping anything. So consequently things just go to Rules and that's it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does Rules still take the hard votes though, and say yes and no?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, Rules doesn't take the hard votes. The name of the game now in Rules is that every member of the Rules Committee gets to select one bill of their choice to be considered for the calendar. And so they limit the number of bills merely on the selection of one bill per committee member. So if nobody really and truly is fascinated with that particular bill in all probability it will never see the light of day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So there's still some mechanism?

**Mr. Copeland:** There's some screening, but it's not screening on the basis of priorities. Now, conversely speaking, if a member wants to go ahead and request a bill of extremely low priority, or of no value, or even silly and frivolous, he may do so, and it may wind up on the calendar. But with the screening process that I've just outlined, what the chairman of the Judiciary Committee was doing with screening was much better and was thoughtfully done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was Jim Andersen the only chair that did that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, he was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever go around to other chairs and ask them if they would consider doing that?

**Mr. Copeland:** We did to a degree. But it takes a special sort of a person to use his authority in this manner. Jim Andersen could do it gracefully and make it work successfully while other committee chairman would have difficulty with the practice. But I personally thought it was just a wonderful thing. If the information had been made public, I think Jim probably would have been subject to a great deal of criticism. But by the same token, Jim had that character and was a very strong person, and he didn't mind—that was fine with him.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He considered that part of the job?

**Mr. Copeland:** You just have to love the guy; he was doing the people a great service. He simply made it "part of his job."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You talked earlier about how that implied great trust, that you would take it under advisement and then that would be the end of it—that piece of paper would disappear.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct, and the piece of paper disappeared, that's all there was to it. The envelope was attached to the bill, inside was a letter, the only person that ever read the letter was the Chief Clerk. He took the envelope, read the letter in a closed meeting of the Rules Committee. That was it; it was gone and there was no track of it. But it was just as if Jim had walked into the Rules Committee and said, "These are the facts. Here is my own personal recommendation." And it was just worth its weight in gold.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you go to committee chairs and have a verbal exchange on certain bills if they weren't willing to commit it to a piece of paper? Could you still go to them and say, "Well, these bills are coming up and what do you think?"

**Mr. Copeland:** If you did, it would be as an individual member of the Rules Committee; it wouldn't be the committee in-total. That was the essence of the whole thing. And like I said, it was just that one document, a very, very simple statement and it did not get into any great detail, but it did give you enough background that some logical conclusion could be drawn as to the importance of the bill and how best to place it in some type of a priority.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it sometimes be the case where a member of Rules would say, "Well, no, I'm not buying that recommendation. I want to bring this out."

**Mr. Copeland:** That might have been on occasion. But I would imagine—I would have no way of being able to track this at this time—that Jim's recommendations probably were taken, let's say, ninety-nine percent of the time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I noticed his language seemed very respectful of your process and gave you the full responsibility to vote it up or down, as was your right. He didn't presume.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was both: "Well, here are my thoughts, but now you take it where you're taking it." That's an unusual degree of civility, I would think.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct. The other thing that I think that you had to do was place

a great deal of confidence in the ability of the Judiciary Committee to make sure that the technical drafting of the bill was correct. I don't think that anybody doubted the fact that any bill that ever came out of Jim Andersen's committee was ever anything but technically correct. And so it was always with confidence that whatever Jim put his approval on was not faulty; it was good solid legislation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine it could be said that wasn't always the case. Were there committee chairs where you wouldn't necessarily take their word?

**Mr. Copeland:** Jim's committee was the only one in which the method really worked. Handling the volume of the legislation that we did, you always ran into some that were faulty, or an amendment that was not placed properly, or it was worded to a point where it didn't cover all of the ingredients that were contained in the bill. But, they were infrequent. An awful lot of the shoddy work really came at Second Reading when the bill was before the entire body and was amendable at that point. Members would hastily draft an amendment that didn't fit, or its meaning wasn't clear, or it had dual interpretation, and things like that. So quite often that was where we really had had problems with the amendatory process.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And where in the process do you then clean that up? Does it go back to committee?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, on Second Reading the adoption of certain amendments normally wouldn't go back to committee at that point. It would just be referred to Third Reading and come out in total form. Occasionally, in Rules we would find that the amendment was incorrect and it would be on Third Reading. Then we would move that the bill be reverted back to Second Reading for the purpose of the

corrective amendment. And we would correct it at that time and go on. But those corrections were infrequent. Even so, legislation got by that was not one hundred percent properly drafted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you have to come back the following year and say, “That doesn’t quite work.”

**Mr. Copeland:** On a couple of occasions we even recommended to the Governor that he veto a bill because it was faulty.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s why the legislative process has several hoops to jump through—they all have their reasons. Hundreds of bills are introduced, but in the end, only a certain number are fully passed, signed and in effect.

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s right. By the time a bill goes through the entire process, it’s been pretty thoroughly looked at, there’s no doubt about it. But like I say, there are those things that do occur. I’m not saying that they occur, you know, ten percent of the time, or fifteen percent of the time or more. But there are mistakes and it’s understandable; we’re bound to make them.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh certainly, it’s a human institution after all. You were a proponent of opening up the process, but did you ever come to the point where you wanted to open the Rules Committee? Or were you convinced that Rules should remain closed?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, I always felt Rules was the place that really and truly should be a closed meeting. Let me explain why. In the committee process you can go ahead and start amending a bill. As a matter of fact, you can amend a bill so severely that it is doing just exactly the opposite of what the title says. But

in the Rules Committee, you’re only deciding whether or not that bill should be presented to the floor; you’re not rewriting anything. We’re not changing twenty-thousand to fifty-thousand. We’re not saying “thou shall not” when it says “thou shalt.” All we’re doing is making a determination as whether or not it legitimately is a priority need for this session. And is that bill properly timed to go out on the floor? Are the votes there? I always thought that good strong people in leadership serving on Rules could make a decision as to whether or not it was a go or a no-go. And for everybody to be looking over your shoulder at that time—for opening it up—I always thought was bad business.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now that it is open, can you imagine how it would go nowadays?

**Mr. Copeland:** Like I said, the Rules Committee sits here and the Speaker of the House or the Majority Leader of the Senate will say, “I want to have these ten bills out of Rules.” Normally, they go out on a pure political partisan vote. Then everybody on Rules gets to draw one. Again, what is the priority? Conversely, on frequent occasions we would build a calendar in which we would grab all of the bills, let’s say, pertaining to community colleges and bundle them all together. And we would vote those all out of Rules onto the floor. Maybe there’d be six or eight bills relating to community colleges. What that did for legislators was give them an opportunity to say, “Okay, we’re in the community college mode today. We’re going to see what this bill does, and how it relates to this bill, and how it relates to that bill.” And there was a huge subject matter before the body on that day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, how could you do it piecemeal? You wouldn’t know how they would rub up against each other.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, now everybody's sitting around the room, and this person gets to have one on parks, and this one gets to have one on bike trails, and this person gets to have one on highways, and somebody else wants to have one on higher education. So you don't have any gathering, any continuity, or anything of the kind. This is why I say this business of trying to put together legislation in what you would call a grouping of priorities, or whatever in an orderly fashion gets destroyed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does that development help explain the trend in later years of having "omnibus" bills? Is that an attempt to recreate that situation where there's, for instance, an omnibus bill on welfare reform; I remember a big one on the AIDS issue, and one on juvenile justice. Is that an attempt to re-bundle things?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, by virtue of the title "omnibus bill," it is something that is all-encompassing, or taking care of a whole bunch of things all at once. That type of legislation really and truly wound up to be kind of nebulous anyway. It wasn't accurate enough to do anything. We frequently tried to put together a day set aside for deliberation on legislation dealing with highways or community colleges or juvenile justice. We'd wait until we knew ahead of time that several bills were out there in committee. And oftentimes we would bundle these bills together and publish our intent to consider them ahead of time. People on the outside of interest then knew that on Thursday they were going to have all of the bills in the House having to do with police and firemen's pensions. If they happened to have an interest in that, and they wanted to see the floor action, they could be there in the galleries. By virtue of the fact that they were in the galleries, they witnessed that if you had a technical question

you could put the House at ease and go off the floor of the House and ask the person who had the answer, and come up with it instantly. So these things have value. But this required a Rules Committee that didn't have the press or the public on their case saying, "You should have let this bill out rather than that bill," criticizing you for not allowing this bill to come out, or killing that bill. It wasn't that we were killing the bill, per se; it was where did it stack up in the priority of things?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Also, wouldn't there be bills of similar nature and you'd pick the best worded one?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oftentimes, we'd have a bill in the Rules Committee that was okay, but we knew that there was a counterpart in the Senate that was on the Third Reading calendar. Why should we take the time on the floor to operate on that bill when we knew that the bill was coming over from the Senate and we could take that same bill and in ten minutes do it rather than having to do it twice? So once you had that knowledge, then you could act appropriately. Now, by virtue of the fact that they've opened up the Rules Committee, this has diluted the opportunity of the Rules Committee to operate and get things done in what I consider to be a very proper manner.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you somewhat relieved not to have to deal with the new look?

**Mr. Copeland:** Really, I just think it is difficult working under that. It's a different time, different group of people. What is it you have now? I think at the present reading, you have over a third of the members of the Legislature whose only income is their legislative salary. I mean, to them, this getting re-elected, that's their job. Do they have to spend a great deal of their time following the political wind that is blowing at that moment? You bet, it's a different world.



**Ms. Kilgannon:** Let's talk about that. You might think back when you first got to the Legislature, through your years there, about what you know of how it operates now and just tell us what you think about how it changed over time and what you saw there.

**Mr. Copeland:** The very first session that I served, we were there only for sixty days. I think on the night of the fifty-ninth day we were passing the budget and nobody on the floor of the House had a copy of the budget. A copy was nonexistent. When you're passing legislation and you don't even see a copy of it, this is not good legislation; I don't care whose Legislature you're in. So I knew at that time that if this thing was going to continue, the public would not be happy and it would remain a disservice to them. The times changed with added demands on state government and the sessions, each one of them got a little bit longer. We went ahead and short-circuited an awful lot of stuff, implementing legislation that reformed and opened state government and the legislative processes to our citizens. Here again, much to the credit goes to the Rules Committees in both the House and the Senate that ran a real stiff shop. We had priorities. Out of all the bills that were referred to the Rules Committee, maybe a third of them made it to the floor of the House, probably even less than a third. Okay, now what does that say for the amount of time that is required on the floor of the House? It says a great deal; we did not consume a lot of time talking about legislation that wasn't worth a darn, wasn't going any place anyway and shouldn't have been introduced to begin with. We just short-circuited an awful lot of stuff and that would have contributed to a longer session, there is no doubt about it. And now, when you have to handle every piece of legislation that gets introduced, and hope that it dies someplace along the line, this is kind of dumb, you know.

I just don't believe in taking a bad piece of legislation and trying to see how long you can keep it alive.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Does trend lead to more posturing and speech making on the floor?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh yes, all those hero speeches. So much of the legislation now that is coming before the body sounds so good. How could you vote against free tuition for children trying to get to college? It's very, very difficult to do. If you vote against it, then you're voting against the children. But can you afford it? Well, the answer is no, you can't. The point is that somebody's going to have to pay the bill and how much money does the state have to spend? Now, you get into the priority. Okay, what are the results? It gets you just exactly where the state of California is right now, looking at an enormous hole in their budget. These hero speeches sound real good, but they just can't fly in the long run; the state just doesn't have the wherewithal to do it. When I first was elected to the Legislature as a young man, a sage person came to me and said, "Remember Tom, when you're in the Legislature, your job is to promote the general welfare, not provide the general welfare."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, very different!

**Mr. Copeland:** That's still true today. The Legislature should promote the general welfare but the Legislature cannot provide the general welfare.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A crucial difference. Now, you were in the Legislature in a period of great activity; there's no other way to characterize it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Truly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had a very activist

Governor. You had a dynamic generation of people that were out to solve problems and rebuild the world. You served from those post-war days until a new era opened in the early 1970s. Could you see the shifts in different generations of legislators, or different eras?

**Mr. Copeland:** You bet. I think one shift that I've seen is that, during my time in the Legislature and for a short while after, the federal government was not involved in education to any great degree. That was something totally up to the states. Through a whole series of events, the federal government has become involved little by little in education, through either grants or edicts or a little reporting, or whatever it might be.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Every dollar having a string, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** And every federal dollar having a string on it. Then the federal government got into this lovely thing—which is like being on dope—called the matching fund. “If you states do such and such, we will give you x-number of dollars.” This is another one of those, “Boy, that sure sounds good!”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Hard to stare down federal money, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** At any rate, you would go ahead and appropriate money and they'd give you matching funds. You'd start a program and it would use that money to operate for one or two years but by the third year there'd be no federal money and you've got the program going. Now what do you do, discontinue the program or do you go ahead and fund it totally? So here's another one of these things that sound good in the beginning.

Now, back to my original point. What transpired during the 1950s and up

to the present date is that we don't have a clear definition on the federal level of their primary responsibility. In my way of thinking, the primary responsibility of the federal government is national defense. That, the states cannot do for themselves. Okay, another priority of the federal government is the operation of the Treasury. Again, the state governments cannot do that for themselves. There are a whole bunch of other things that the federal government can and should properly do. But this business about granting money to the states for a bicycle trail. Is that really the responsibility of federal government? Can't a local county, for heaven's sake, build a bicycle trail without having to go to the federal government for a cash grant?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But hasn't all of that money flowed to the federal government so they can trickle it back to the states and counties? Of course, it sticks a little along the way.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's exactly the whole point. All I'm saying is: outline what it is that each branch of government should do and go from there. I was one of the proponents for local government. I always felt that the county government should be the purveyors of the wholesale on services and the city should be the purveyors on the retail of those services. And that there should be a very clear delineation of what the county does versus the city. Now, I always felt that that made some pretty good sense and was a pretty good line of demarcation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I like that phrase, but could you give me an illustration of what you mean?

**Mr. Copeland:** Right here in Thurston County, the county should be in charge of the collection of all of the sewage from the city sewer lines and in charge of the waste disposal

plants. And every city should run their sewer lines and say, "We own all of the lines; we got them this far; now it's yours, county; you process it." Okay, what does the city do? They're the retailers of the service. What does the county do? They're the wholesalers of the service.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, that's a good example. Very concrete.

**Mr. Copeland:** Is it a requirement of every city that they have to go out and drill all these individual wells in order to be able to have enough water? The county should do that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The water table is a bigger thing than the city limits.

**Mr. Copeland:** The water table is a huge thing. Sometimes you have to pump the water up the hill and come down the other side. Okay, who's going to do it? The county should do it. No doubt about it. I just think, in this last fifty years people have lost focus of what the heaven's name that echelon in government really should be doing. You look in the constitution, it says, "The Congress of the United States shall pass no laws abridging the rights of states." Right? And that has been trampled on something terrible. I mean, the states have their right of being. Now, if you want to change the whole thing, and not have a republican form of government and abolish all the state lines, that's something else. But I just think we've missed the point of this whole thing.

The education system today, right here in the state of Washington, is somewhat in shambles, if you take a look at the testing reports that have just come out recently. We've got some schools that scored six and eight in a reading test when the national average is sixty-eight or thereabouts!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's quite an indictment.

**Mr. Copeland:** It's quite an indictment of that particular school. Well, what should be done with that particular school? If I had my way, I'd have it shut down today. If they can only score six or eight in reading when the national average is sixty-eight, they're wasting the time of an awful lot of students.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Something's clearly very wrong.

**Mr. Copeland:** Something is clearly very, very wrong. Now, why are we going along and continuing this trend? I have no idea. I just think that something extremely drastic should happen.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was just a few years after you finished your service that the Basic Education Act came into play. The courts reiterated or brought to everyone's attention, again, that the paramount duty of the state was education, and whatever that entails.

**Mr. Copeland:** Of course, we all knew that ahead of time; the only thing that we, the Legislature, knew in addition to that is that we had x-number of dollars to work with. We could give public education x-number of dollars and this would provide for what we considered to be basic education. Anything over and above that the schools would have to use their own funding source through special leverages. Does the basic education include the uniforms for the band? Does basic education include the football team?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, now you're talking really tough stuff!

**Mr. Copeland:** Does basic education include that the football coach is the highest paid teacher in the school? I didn't think that that was part of basic education. I was perfectly willing to go ahead and support the basic education part. The people are certainly

entitled to pass a special levy for anything over and above that—band uniforms and football and things like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you continue to watch the activities of the Legislature and keep up generally with politics closely, still today?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, oh certainly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Do you watch TVW? Do you participate on that level?

**Mr. Copeland:** Do I watch TVW? Yes, good programming. Denny Heck has done a wonderful job on that. He should be commended on that entire arrangement. He has given the public an opportunity to better understand the operation of state government. It is a great service.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's available, I think, all over the state.

**Mr. Copeland:** Even so, it's available if you want to take the time and effort. But some people really don't want to watch a legislative hearing or view action on the floor of the House or Senate. They don't understand it; it has no interest to them. But to me, it's nothing more than continuing education. You're just finding out what's going on today.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking of your efforts to make hearings public and to bring the people in. Do you see that as a continuation of your early efforts, of informing the public? Making sure people have information about what's going on in the Legislature?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure. It's another door that opened to allow the public inside their government, their Legislature. The other day, a news article came out and said, "Oregon and Washington have the highest percentage of people using the Internet on a daily basis

than any other states in the nation." I thought that was most interesting. It tells me, number one, you've got a highly educated group here. Number two, you've got people that are computer literate. Number three, they have a certain amount of interest in what's out there. Then the article got down into the top ten of the things that people looked at on the Internet—and in the top ten was Washington government.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's very heartening!

**Mr. Copeland:** Now, I want to take some credit for that. I really do, because I helped—along with many really fine people—get those computer programs started within Washington government to a point where their databases could be accessed through the computer for the benefit of the public. And now I'm finding, here, sixty-eight percent of the people in the state of Washington not only use the Internet, but Washington government is in the top ten percent of the sites they choose. I think it's wonderful. And if you think I should take credit for a little bit of it, you're damn right!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think you should have a plaque on some wall somewhere.

**Mr. Copeland:** It has become self-evident that all of this wealth of information that we were inputting back in the 1960s—the entire Revised Code of Washington—is the absolute foundation for what we have today. And I say this without fear of contradiction: Washington became the number one leader in the use of computer technology for general state government and for the legislative environment. My footprints were there, but if it hadn't been for people like Dick White, with an awful lot of perseverance, and the Governor, this would never have come to be. Give these two a great deal of credit.

Another thing of major importance is that employee training has permeated throughout all of state government in the last twenty to thirty years. There has been a continuous effort—and I mean major effort—on the part of every department head to say to his employees, “These classes in computer training and upgrading—or whatever subject—are offered and we’re going to pay for them. You may take the time off but we’d like you to share the information you learn with your coworkers when you return.” That has been so dramatic in positively affecting the level of competence and the level of efficiency of state employees.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A machine without the training—you have to have both pieces.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. You need the foresight and the enthusiasm to send those people off for training, like to the Legislative Information Services. And it’s gratifying to be able to see all of these people learn and grow. I even gave some of the very first little classes in computers. I’d explain, “This is how it happens.” You’d look out and they would inhale, they’d exhale. All of a sudden, boom, the light bulb turns on! Yes, it’s just thrilling to be able to see a group of people who walk in as complete blanks and then all of a sudden bingo, they understand and love it!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That’s a wonderful legacy, for sure. We are near the end of your interview now. Could you give me the big picture, a summary, if you would, of your career and contributions?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, it really is quite simple. I had three careers. Each followed my young days in school and growing through the teenage period. Before these careers, the first big change in my life was when my mother married Ed Copeland, my stepfather (although we never referred to him in that fashion.) He was a very kind and gentle man and so caring and loving

to my mother and sister. He and Mother set examples for me that I carried through my lifetime. At one time, my mother said to me, “Whatever it is you are doing in your life, just ask yourself the question, would Mother be proud of me?” That is still with me today.

Now, about the three careers. First was the military. It was quite an accomplishment for an eighteen year old to be accepted into Officers Training and another thing to complete the very vigorous course and be commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army at the age of nineteen. I learned leadership and what it required. I matured, of necessity, very quickly. I learned things about myself and others. I was able to perform under combat conditions that no amount of training could prepare you for. I was recognized for my leadership and ability to make “good choices” by receiving a battlefield promotion. And later I was twice given command of a company of five officers and one hundred and ten enlisted men, plus millions of dollars worth of equipment. This, by the way, made me one of the youngest Company Commanders in the European Theater of Operation during World War II. During that time, I met some fine men, those that served under me and those I served with.

I was now ready to return to civilian life and resume my studies at WSU. Soon after, I began my second career in farming with my father. Then I married the lovely Dolly Doble and with her raised three super children. The farming aspect was challenging and rewarding. As the years went by, it grew in size year after year. More equipment, more land to farm, more workers to train and skills to develop. My association with the business leaders and others in the farming business gave me great insights. These experiences were invaluable and the friendships that were developed were long-lasting.

This brings me to the third career, that of the Legislature. This experience really “takes you out of the box” and puts a whole new emphasis on so many things. The learning



requirement of a legislative career is the most important. What an opportunity! What a chance; how rewarding! I feel very fortunate that I had this experience. And couple all this with the opportunity to meet and work with so many outstanding individuals. This, in itself, is worthy of special remarks. Governor and U.S. Senator Dan Evans, Major General Robert Goldsworthy, Chief Justices James Andersen and Robert Brachtenbach, U.S. Senator Slade Gorton, members of Congress: Sid Morrison, Catherine May, Joel Pritchard, Rod Chandler, Mike McCormack, Jim McDermott and Mike Lowry. And of course, Secretaries of State Ralph Munro and Sam Reed, Attorney General

Ken Eikenberry, Senator Jeannette Hayner, and Speaker John L. O'Brien, to name just a few. Now, I look back on all of the legislative accomplishments and my association with these and other leaders, I feel my time and effort was well-spent in the service of the citizens of the great state of Washington.

So, as I reflect back on all this, I am reminded of what my mother told me. And if she were here today reading this, I think she would say, "Yes, Tommy, I am very proud of you."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Thank you, Tom. I'm sure she would be right.



*The Copeland family celebrating Tom's eightieth birthday in Olympia, Washington on April 17, 2004. Back row, left to right: Tim Copeland, Tom's son; Donna Gardner; Tom Copeland; Donna Copeland, Tom's wife; Brooke Saindon, Tom's daughter; Dorothy Copeland and Alex Hendler, Tim's youngest daughter and husband Front row, left to right: Jason and Dr. Elizabeth Copeland with their daughter Delia, Tim's son and wife; Tricia, Tim's oldest daughter, with her children Paige and Ryan, and her husband Terry Lubach*



*Richard O. White, Washington State Code Reviser, 1951-1978*

## APPENDIX

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An Interview with Richard O. White, Gay Marchesini and Tom Copeland on “The Introduction and Use of Computers in the Washington State Legislature,” 2004

See also <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/oralhistory/white/> for more features.

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** I'm Dick White, Richard O. White. My major career has been as code reviser for the state of Washington, from 1951 to 1978, when I retired. I rather backed into the position. I'm from California and I graduated from Hastings College of the Law, which is one of the colleges in the University of California.

I was in a wartime class, it was 1942. I immediately applied for a commission in the Navy and while that was pending, I came to Bellingham to visit my parents who had moved up here a couple of years previously. So, I did the Navy for almost three years and came back to Bellingham, but I now had a wife and a child, with another one on the way, and I needed a job. I was told that perhaps the Supreme Court was hiring people to become law clerks for one of the justices. And so my wife Jackie and I came down to Olympia in our little black Ford roadster and I went into the court absolutely cold and I interviewed with Chief Justice Walter Beals. Walter was a courtly gentleman, he was a lovely man, but, alas, had no openings.

Somehow or other, the talk got around to my having a Bellingham connection and there was a common name mentioned. This gentleman whose name was mentioned was a fellow who had brought my wife's family chocolates every Sunday, so I said to Justice Beals, I said, "My wife is out in the car." "Why doesn't she come in?" Well, it was old home week then and by the time Jackie got through talking to him, he said, "Well, we have one justice—Justice Mallery—who's never had a law clerk, but I think he should! Would you please go in and talk with Justice Mallery?" I did and I became Justice Mallery's law clerk. We had a wonderful relationship; he was a great guy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This would be the late 1940s?

**Mr. White:** This would be mid-Forties. Of course, that was more or less not a career job. So the Californian in me was pointing me south and I had law school connections and I ended up as a deputy district attorney in the little cow county of Yolo County. The county seat was Woodland, and so I was deputy D.A. and I had a little private practice on the side and it was much to my liking. But as I mentioned earlier, my dear Washingtonian wife was starved for a little greenery and water so we came back to Olympia.

I had made contacts in Olympia when I was with the court so I managed to get hired by Attorney General Smith Troy as assistant attorney general. At that time, the Legislature got its bill drafting help from patronage lawyers on a temporary basis, with each House having its own staff. The attorney general furnished a few lawyers to come over to the House and do that and that was one of the assignments that I got from Smith. That was more or less the beginning of my learning about legislation and bill drafting.

I did that for a session—I think a whole session, and perhaps an extraordinary session—and when that was over, I was given the task of indexing the session laws. During all of this, the location where I worked was in the Temple of Justice. About that time, 1951, the Legislature was beginning to wake up that perhaps they needed a state operation to take care of bill drafting and code revision. And I threw my hat in the ring and got the job.

Prior to the beginning of the 1951 statute law committee, the Legislature had their own little staffs and the codes were published privately. There was no official state code. There were two publications—one was Remington Revised Statutes; it was cited as R.R.S. That was published in a series of hard-bound books and it was supplemented by a cumulative pocket-part supplement that folded into the rear cover in the back of the book. That was cumulative and was re-done



every two years. Occasionally, it got too bulky and they would publish a new volume.

Frank Pierce had Pierce's Perpetual Code, which was the competitor, and it was a huge tome—about a foot in length and very heavy. Both of these were annotated, that is to say, each section in the code was followed by a series of footnotes which summarized the various cases of the courts that construed that particular section.

The numbering systems used in both codes were peculiar to each code and neither one had, as a result, adequate room for expansion and you ended up with a real donkey's breakfast of numbers, like a string of seven numbers and then an alpha, maybe another number. They were badly outdated; they needed help.

So the Legislature in 1951 created two committees. One was a temporary—that was in the name of the bill—the Temporary Code Publication Committee and the other one—and this was in the name, too—the Permanent Statute Law Committee. The Temporary Committee was charged with preparing the code for publication. It soon went out of existence and the Statute Law Committee took over.

One of the first tasks we had was to decide the format and to sort of outline what we ought to be doing. I was given the opportunity to take a barnstorming trip to go to a few other states—I went to five states and talked with their revisers of statutes and got some idea what ought to be done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Can you tell me, did most states at that time handle it the way Washington did it, or was this search for a better way something common that was happening across the country?

**Mr. White:** It was becoming common. But when we got into the act, I think I went to five of the most prominent ones, which were:

Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, Colorado, and Illinois. These guys were all very nice. So, that's where we started business.

The code itself had a rocky beginning. It had been revised by yet another committee that started in the early 1940s, which undertook to really re-write the code, to revise the language and set up a good numbering system. The code was presented for enactment in 1949, and the Legislature adopted it. There was a faction of old, crusty, well-established practitioners that had objected mightily to this revised language.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because it was changed somehow from the original?

**Mr. White:** They contended that it would change meaning. For example, those revisers would take what we would call a proviso and make a condition of it. There is a difference. A condition would be: you may have an ice cream cone if you wash your hands, and it would be stated: you may have an ice cream cone provided you wash your hands, and it becomes a true condition. A proviso, on the other hand, creates an exception. For example: All classes of cities and towns shall have a mayor-type of government, provided, however, that third-class cities shall have a council and executive manager type, thus carving out an exception from the general rule. And the guys that put this thing together did violence to the code, so these objectors got their heads together and went to Governor Langlie, and as a result, Langlie vetoed the act.

Meanwhile, more work went on—1949, the 1951 biennium—1951—the code was again adopted, this time signed by the governor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was it a different group of legislators pushing it?

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** Pretty much the same ones. But there had been a little improvement during that biennium by this temporary code publication committee. But it was enacted only as a *prima facie* expression of the law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could you explain what that means?

**Mr. White:** Yes. What you got in the code was the law, unless someone could cite the language of the original session law and point out its differences, in which case the original session law language would govern. So, how could you rely on a code that had that sort of a handicap?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like people can second guess it a lot.

**Mr. White:** Correct. So we got into business, and we had primarily three duties. One, of course, was to maintain for the benefit for the Legislature a professional, confidential bill drafting service. The other was to publish the code and supplement it at the end of the session. And the third one, which went on for a duration of ten years with much work, was to examine every word and every section in the entire code, to point out these differences that had occurred, document them, propose corrections, and take them before a subcommittee of the Statute Law Committee, which would invite specialist practitioners from all over the state to sit in and go over each title, word by word, sentence by sentence.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are we talking about thousands of pages?

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I just wanted to get a sense of the magnitude of the task.

**Mr. White:** Ninety-one titles.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot.

**Mr. Copeland:** What he is saying is over a ten-year period they went through all the entire revised code...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Title by title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lay person would have not much of an idea, say, how many shelf-feet of paper we're talking about.

**Mr. White:** Well, it resulted in that set of telephone book-sized volumes, of a shelf that is at least two feet long.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I ask this so that a person reading this can have a picture in their mind what we're talking about.

**Mr. White:** So, our enabling act provided that once the restoration of a title was approved, the committee could enter a so-called restoration order which detailed the whole thing and file it in the Office of the Secretary of State, and then re-publish that portion of the code, according to those results. And then that portion was relieved of its *prima facie* nature and thus became primary law.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To make sure that I understand it, they take and compile all the different little pieces and then you make sure that there is one final reading of the different versions of the same thing—reconcile all the differences—and then say, “Okay, this is the version we are going with.”

**Mr. White:** Yes, “this is the authentic version.” And then those would be filed with the Secretary of State and printed in the code.



We were also authorized alternatively to restore a title of a code by presenting it to the Legislature in the form of a revision bill accompanied by explanatory notes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Taking back, restoring what the law was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had the authority to decide the final version?

**Mr. White:** We had authority to do this and we explained everything in the back of the bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay, I think I have seen some of those.

**Mr. White:** Yes. Those are known as the reviser's bills and there was a tacit understanding among legislators that they were not to be a vehicle for their amendments.

**Ms. Marchesini:** They couldn't amend them.

**Mr. White:** It would have been a perfect thing for them to drop their favorite amendments on. And in fact, if an amendment succeeded, the bill was dead.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, well, that takes care of that.

**Mr. White:** I don't think that ever happened.

**Ms. Marchesini:** One was never touched. Never touched.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** These were not controversial things? They were more housekeeping measures?

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** First understand, when the reviser's bill came up, it would deal with one title only. And they had gone through that entire title, totally, and maybe made dozens of corrections in there or eliminated things that were duplications...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, irrespective of subject matter, it went to the Judiciary Committee. Because it was, you know, "a clean-up bill."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, that's the committee where all the lawyers served.

**Mr. White:** Used to be, but now there aren't too many lawyers in the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** By that time, it had a label: "code reviser's request" and you knew it had been really thoroughly gone over. Then it was also a signal to the Legislature to "keep your hands off this, you do not amend this bill." You go ahead and we just handle it, this thing: zing!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, those bills would just sail through, at that point?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Marchesini:** And you wanted them passed fast because then that would become the vehicle that they would amend in a subsequent bill if they wanted to substantively change something, to amend that section of law as enacted in the reviser's bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay, here is another question: Would legislators be able to request: "We really want to do some legislation in this area; could you clean up those bills first and then we'll work with them?" Or would you have your own order of working through the code, just going through it: one, two, three. Like that?

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** I'm not sure I understand what you are saying.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There are all these codes—would you hop around in a subject matter, or do all the laws in one area at a time?

**Mr. White:** No, we took them title by title.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, just follow your own order; it wouldn't be that a legislator would come to you and say: "Could you look at this section for me?"

**Mr. White:** No.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Following your own order, then—that would be much less chaotic, I believe. No skipping around?

**Mr. White:** Yes, yes. And we took numerical order...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, no special pleading to clear up anything?

**Mr. White:** I believe there is some confusion here. The reviser's bills were housekeeping measures to reconcile conflicts and correct errors which resulted from linguistic liberties taken by the original revisers. Their sole purpose was to restore the original legislative language so they would be primary law rather than *prima facie*. They must not be confused with the usual, ordinary requests to us from legislators to prepare substantive legislation, which was our stock in trade as the official bill drafting agency of and for the Legislature.

Also, we vastly improved upon the numbering system used in prior codes. In the new code, we adopted a numbering system that enabled almost infinite expansion to codify the new laws in proper order. The code numbering system has three elements: title, chapter and section. The resulting number

is digital. The statutes were divided into ninety-one titles which represented major subdivisions of statute law par. ex. all laws relating to motor vehicles are codified as Title 46. These are further subdivided into chapters and the chapters are further subdivided into sections. Thus the portion of the motor vehicle title relating to vehicle licenses was assigned the chapter number 46.16. Chapters are further broken down into sections and assigned a section number and name. All numbers are expressed as decimals, thus in the above example the first section in the above chapter carries the number 46.16.010 with the caption "Licenses required—Penalties, exemptions."

We also left holidays between numbers to allow for expansion. For example: chapter 46.16 is followed by chapter 46.20 relating to driver's licenses, thus allowing the reviser to later insert chapters according to affinity. In the example above, chapters 46.17, 46.18 or 46.19 would be available for newly enacted materials. Similarly, expansion was provided for in the numbering of the sections. 46.16.010 would be followed by 46.16.020, leaving space for the insertion of new material as 46.16.011, 46.16.012 *et. seq.* In its ultimate expansion, if the degree of affinity required it, a new section numbered 46.16.0111 might be inserted between 46.16.011 and 46.16.012.

The components of the code are cited as follows: A reference to the entire title is cited as Title 46 RCW. To chapter 46.16 is cited as Chapter 46.16 RCW, while reference to section 46.16.010 is cited as RCW 46.16.010.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if whole new areas of law came into being, you would have a place to put them?

**Mr. White:** Yes. We would have a logical place to put it.

**Mr. Copeland:** They allowed for expandability right at the get-go.

**Mr. White:** Yes. And this system has been almost universally adopted among all the states and their local governments. It's called a Yetter system, after some guy by the name of Yetter.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You learned this when you visited other states?

**Mr. White:** I don't know where we learned it. Yes, we didn't invent it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did any numbers ever get retired?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes. To avoid confusion we never used the same number twice.

**Mr. White:** Yes. And when a section was repealed, we would recognize that in a table published in the code as the "Sections Repealed" so it was easy to find your way back out of the cave. There were very elaborate tables for that. And we also formulated cross-reference tables from session law numbers into code numbers.

Now, you understand that at the end of the session, the first public appearance of the laws of this session are in a work called the Session Laws, published first as a temporary pamphlet publication and then finally as a bound unit. Now, those are compiled in the order of passage without any relationship, without any classification of subject matter. They're valuable to the profession because that's where you find the bill title, enacting clause, the general tenor of the bill...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would that be the legislative intent?

**Mr. White:** You can sometimes derive legislative intent, and also from the Senate

and House Journals.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be with the place where the courts would go to determine that?

**Mr. White:** So, if you're a practitioner, you go into the code to find the area that you want to be in and then you would find at the end of each section a so-called history note which gives you the session law reference to the bill's origin and subsequent amendments. And that you would go to—to take your research further—and go into the session laws and really root around like a root canal!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it's leaving a trail...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh sure, you can trace anything.

**Mr. Copeland:** At that point, then you get into the House and Senate journals and see every action that occurred on the bills and frequently there would be some debate that would go on, but the most important thing in that whole debate section was when one legislator asks a question of another legislator, "May I ask you a question? Does this bill do the following?" And the answer, "Yes, it is the intention of the bill to accomplish A, B, C, and D." This has for years become the court's foundation for legislative intent.

**Mr. White:** Yes, legislative intent. Unfortunately that was too infrequent and it was only on very controversial things that you could find much comment.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, every time you see that in the journal, that's a deliberate mechanism to lay down this foundation of intent?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Foundation. You bet.

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** That's correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not just an idle question, then.

**Mr. Copeland:** It became quite vogue that the question would be asked: "There are provisos on this bill that say ta da, ta da ta da. Is this the legislative intent?" "Yes, indeed." Well, of course, what this did in essence, it told everybody that was reading: It was the legislative intent to have that proviso there. Then, if the governor wanted to veto that proviso, he oftentimes got into trouble.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see.

**Mr. Copeland:** So, it was kind of a further step that this is legislative intent. What Dick is saying, you can look at the session law and then take it and track back everything having to do with that bill, if you want to take the time.

**Mr. White:** Right, absolutely, yes. So let's see. What should we touch on now?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There was some controversy about this whole committee. The people that had previously been involved writing up the session laws, they didn't just go quietly into the night?

**Mr. White:** Yes, it wasn't the people writing the session laws; it was these patronage guys that were hired to draft the bills. And we took our licks from those guys. There was great resentment because the advent of our operations reduced the legislative patronage. And they had for years had their old war horses come back. I was confronted by the Senate caucus one time, "Why do you have to come here and do this? We've got all these old guys. They know all the tricks." Well, they did know all the tricks and that was what the problem was...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, can you maybe describe what the difference is between, say, patronage lawyers and your work?

**Mr. White:** Our enabling act, RCW 1.08.027, enacted in 1951, in effect rendered us the official bill drafting service for the Legislature.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let him describe the tricks first.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, I want to hear about the tricks, of course.

**Mr. White:** The favorite device was to write a new act and declare at the end, "All acts and parts of acts in conflict herewith are hereby repealed..."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But not name them?

**Mr. White:** So, you are left at your peril, you know, but it's handy. You can run those through easy. Those were some of the tricks, and it ended up in chaos. And if you're the code reviser, what did you do? You're at your peril to decide which bills were superceded, so you probably end up doing both, publishing both. And so our job was really a complementary task. On one hand, we were supposedly experts on what's in the code and therefore, when we drafted an amendment or a new bill, we were supposed to know which sections you expressly amended, which expressly were repealed and do it that way. And then there's no question.

The other complementary angle is that—we knew the code well enough—sometimes a member would come in and request that we write a bill and we know that there is something already on the books, it's just an enforcement problem that he has. And so we would advise him and then avoid that kind of duplication. The flip side was that

having drafted the bill, a new act for example, we would in the drafting process decide where it ought to be codified and we would expressly add it to a certain section of the code, so it was that knowledge that helped us both ways.

Finally, in the early 1950s, we took our brick-bats from some of these guys, especially the Senate caucus. I had a couple—as I put in my notes—I had a couple of luaus with the Senate caucus and I was the pig! These guys were merciless, but as you know, Jim Owens, the football coach of the Huskies, always used to say, “We’ll fourth quarter ‘em,” and that’s what we did.

First of all, one of the handicaps that we had was that of location. We were located clear across the courtyard in the Temple of Justice.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Weren’t you kind of tucked in under a stairwell?

**All:** Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not exactly salubrious quarters?

**Mr. White:** I was there twenty-seven years Anne, and I never got moved out of the basement! First in the Temple of Justice and later in the Legislative Building.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You could think of yourself as the foundation of the process, I suppose.

**Mr. White:** A good joke!

**Ms. Marchesini:** We were up on the committee rooms, though, for awhile.

**Mr. White:** So anyway, we fourth quartered them because they still had some of these old hangers-on taking all the short cuts. Those guys would go home on weekends and the senators would be wandering around—you

know they were pretty urgent for bill drafting assistance. We were there and we gradually built confidence by being there when they really needed us, and finally we moved across the street. Gay, were you with me when we were in the Temple?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes.

**Mr. White:** Yes, when did we finally move across the street? In 1955?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, we moved, it was in 1954, we did the 1955 bill drafting in the hearing room.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was that a “you have arrived” kind of moment when you were moved into the Legislative Building?

**Mr. White:** Oh well, it wasn’t that simple. It took quite a little time.

**Ms. Marchesini:** See, the Senate, at that point, still were digging in their feet. Some of these guys still wanted their own drafting set-up. But they took one of our people, Lee Collins, and he went over there—not right in our office—and he drafted bills upstairs in the Senate on the fourth floor.

**Mr. White:** The “satellite” office.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, and so, but what really sort of did the trick is, for some of the key senators—Lee could only do the best he could—because the drafters were still doing all the political stuff—helping their buddies because they were all patronage. The key senators were coming down to us—we were doing only House bill drafting then—coming down to us and saying, “Couldn’t you draft this bill for us?” So that’s the way we gradually got the Senate.



## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Kilgannon:** By being competent, being there, being ready and willing, you carved out a niche for yourselves?

**Mr. White:** And I didn't have any appropriation to pay my people overtime and I would be on pins and needles, sitting up on the bench in Chief Clerk Si Holcomb's office waiting for him to cut some checks for my people's overtime, hat in hand.

**Ms. Marchesini:** That's right.

**Mr. White:** And that was not pleasant. We had some mountains to climb.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You were sort of out there on a limb being available, but not necessarily being paid?

**Mr. White:** Yes. In fact, you see, during sessions we ourselves hired part-time lawyers to assist because we can't afford enough people year-round for that opportunity, but we got good guys. We paid them and our regular guys overtime, except for me and Lee Collins, and a reasonable salary going in. But every session, I would be called before the Appropriations Committee and have to argue the overtime bit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But yet they wanted the service?

**All:** Oh sure.

**Mr. White:** Every session. Anyway, what should we talk about next?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, would it be alright to name the senators who were your supporters who helped you?

**Mr. White:** We got most our help from the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that why you started your work in the House? Because the Senate was...?

**Ms. Marchesini:** The Senate was doing their own and were reluctant to give up their patronage.

**Mr. White:** Well, the House was doing it, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They both were. But was the House, did you have a little bit more movement? Were there particular members that championed you and helped you?

**Mr. White:** Well, we had, you know, a couple of guys on the Statute Law Committee, like Bernie Gallagher and then in the Senate we had Chuck Moriarty and Jim Andersen, although Jim was a bit of a Tartar at times.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, but he was a good supporter of ours.

**Mr. White:** You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** People could see the value that you were providing after a certain point? Did these "war horses" as you call them, did they gradually retire and disappear?

**Mr. White:** Yes, yes, it was a war of attrition. And even after we were sailing along in overdrive, we took some brick-bats, you know. I remember Al Leland, he would come in and he called us "bill rustlers!"

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, bill rustlers.

**Mr. White:** Bill rustlers. Freddy Dore would come down and say, "You snookered me." You see, legislators get on the bandwagon of a popular subject. If there are any heinous crimes somewhere, everybody wants some

act to regulate it. So they all come in with their bill request and we never say “boo” and we’re absolutely confidential. We don’t tell them somebody else has one in the works in here, you know. And so, first come, first served; they found out that they were low man on the totem pole and then they would accuse us. The funniest one was Slade Gorton who paid us the most wonderful backhanded compliment. Slade came in with blood in his eye one day and he just raised the roof off of my office because there had been a comma misplaced and it was a public power bill and he accused us of deliberately doing it. And of course I resisted it, but the wonderful backhanded compliment was, he said, “I know you did it. Your people don’t make that kind of mistake.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You get your compliments where you can!

Now, who set up the original ethics of the office and what your rules would be that would govern your behavior, first come, first serve and that sort of thing?

**Mr. White:** Ah, that evolved like Topsy. We had, you know, certain things in our statute that says services should be confidential, and in fact, we make it like a regular lawyer/client relationship. We wouldn’t tell nobody nothing!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, well, how else could you survive?

**Mr. White:** No, and you asked me where did we get our power? I don’t like that statement—to think of our authority as power, but I know what you mean. I know what you mean. But that’s where it came from.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How about your security?

**Mr. White:** Ah, we kicked few guys out of the office. Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I can see, Dick, that one guy. He says, “That’s all, brother!” He just grabbed him and threw him right out.

**Mr. White:** A lobbyist. And there had been some Boeing guys poking around the offices and we’d find them and kick them out. Otherwise we had really good security.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did people—did they try to pressure you to reveal certain things?

**Mr. White:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can safely stay behind your counter top and say no?

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** We just act dumb: “I don’t know.”

**Mr. White:** Tom, who was the very urbane black fellow in the Republican caucus from Seattle?

**Mr. Copeland:** Charlie Stokes.

**Mr. White:** I don’t think it was Charlie Stokes. He’s a younger guy.

**Mr. Copeland:** Mike Ross?

**Mr. White:** I don’t know. Maybe it was Mike. Anyway, this was a very urbane young representative. He always joked and he referred to himself as the only black Republican in the Legislature.

We had an elaborate system of tracking bill requests. Procedurally, the requester would come to my shop and I would interview him and find out what he wanted and I would summarize that on a sheet and then send it along to one of the attorneys. But we maintained a log of drafting requests and

## APPENDIX

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whenever the bill went from one person to another, one process to another, they would initial it off and so we would know at all times where to find a bill request in progress.

And this young fellow came in and we had misplaced—we rarely misplaced requests—but we had misplaced a request, so I hemmed and hawed and I looked at the log backwards and forwards and finally I said to him, “Which one of my draftsman did you talk to?” He says, “I don’t know, all you honkeys look alike.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Turning the tables a little.

**Mr. White:** Oh, we had some humor along the way. But we spent long hours, long hours: we often were there at two o’clock in the morning, having started at eight. And some of it was just sort of standby time and it was like fireman duty. And so we all got to know each other pretty well and we had a tremendous esprit de corps.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You’d have to.

**All:** Oh yes!

**Mr. White:** And we hired extra girls, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. I want to know a little more about the physical process of what you did. I’ve heard about these carbon copies and other complicated things.

**Mr. White:** And when we started out, all we had was an IBM typewriter...

**Ms. Marchesini:** No, manual typewriters. We didn’t have electrics. No, absolutely not. Not to start with.

**Mr. White:** Well, alright.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Then we got the used electric ones from Paul Zech.

**Mr. White:** Yes. And we used sets of six pages with lines numbered in the left hand margin, interspersed by carbons, and one went one place and one another and so on. And we were forbidden any erasures because it would be evidence of tampering. So the gal might be down to the next to the last sentence and blow it and throw that thing away and start all over! And there were carbon smudges everywhere and girls’ nerves got frayed and so on.

The next step was that we got a pretty good Multilith machine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Now, what is that?

**Mr. White:** Multilith machine: a copier that used a much more crude process than Xerox—in those days there was more than just Xerox copiers, although Xerox got into the business later. And so we hired operators there and we would make one master and then make the multiple copies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It works something like the mimeograph machine? I’m trying to picture this.

**Ms. Marchesini:** In a way, only little bit more sophisticated. Then you just had to type one copy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That made your life a little easier?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, did it!

**Mr. White:** It sure did. It sure did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** When the Legislature is amending a bill, don’t you have to type the entire bill and then show the changes somehow, the cross outs and amendments?

**Mr. White:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Some of these would be pretty huge typing jobs?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Everything that you're taking out is in double parenthesis and lined through and everything you're adding is underlined.

**Mr. White:** We pretty much initiated that, didn't we, Gay?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, yes we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Right, so that you can show the changes. And then the Legislature would get copies of these so they could know what the bill was doing?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh sure, the bill that was introduced was like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But how many legislators—would everyone get a copy?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Sure, that's in the bill books like that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would be producing hundreds of copies for hundred-page bills?

**Mr. White:** Oh, it'll go to the state printer.

**Ms. Marchesini:** After it's printed, from the printer.

**Mr. White:** We would give the legislator a few copies so he could circulate the bill and then once it went into the hopper, then it went immediately to the state printer.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The hopper really was just a wire basket on your counter top?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where did that come from? Was that long time institution?

**Mr. White:** Gay, you could answer that.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Long time, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Somebody probably just stuck something there at one point and it stayed?

**Ms. Marchesini:** It was just an old wire basket ....

**Mr. Copeland:** That was for the introduction of bills?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes. You drop them in.

**Mr. Copeland:** What he was saying, he would give the legislator—the prime sponsor—several copies so they could circulate. This was the period that the prime sponsor would solicit other legislators to sign on as cosponsors of the bill. Once the signatures were on there, then that particular signed copy would go on to Gay, and that would go into that basket and that is where the introduction started.

**Mr. White:** We had a cover sheet.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, we had a cover sheet for the House, Senate, and departmental bills.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you have any security issues at that point?

**Mr. Copeland:** Wait just a minute. Let's follow that. Once she got it, then they would produce the cover portion and the code reviser would then take and make notes as to who signed on the bill, then they would have those bills delivered to the Chief Clerk or Secretary of the Senate and then they'd get read in the

## APPENDIX

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next day and ordered printed. This is the continuity. But it always came back to Gay's office before it ever got introduced.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes, and then we backed them. See, we had a regular bill backing when they go in the hopper.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What does that mean?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, it's just a cardboard cover and the back of that is pre-printed. That cover sheet follows—it shows first reading, second reading, when it goes from one House to the other and is signed by all the various people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, that's what gets recorded in the journal?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But then, when does it get sent to the state printer?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Immediately, after it was read in. It's read in, referred to a committee, and ordered printed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Ordered printed." And then you were telling me, Tom, that the printed version is, of course, not paginated the same as the versions you were working from?

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Now it's just photographed, but then it wasn't. It used to be type was set, so no lines were ever the same.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With real lead letters and all.

**Mr. Copeland:** The copies that came from the state printer then went into the bill books.

The original copy that Gay was talking about never went into the bill books before.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No. They were your working documents?

**Mr. Copeland:** That was the one that was actually in progress all the way through the House, that was not in the bill books.

**Ms. Marchesini:** See, at that time when you amended it you had to amend the original and the printed so you had to cite two different sets of lines and pages and stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did any bills get confused that way?

**Ms. Marchesini:** The House and Senate had pretty elaborate systems. Every page was numbered and that that was not very easy to do.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's a human-made document. I just wondered how it was you never had any mistakes, but it sounds like you had lot of checks. Did you have proof readers?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, see. A bill then, after it's read in and ordered printed, it's referred to a committee, then the committee process is they go over it, you know, a lot and then they have committee amendments before it ever goes to the floor.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it's really worked over. Is that the committee that you told me about earlier, Tom, where the poor freshman legislators had to sit there and check the bills?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, no, no. This was after final passage.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A different one. Just to make sure, one final check, okay. It passes through



lot of hands. It's interesting that nothing gets lost.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes.

**Mr. White:** And Gay was the gatekeeper. She was wonderful. She was the front man.

**Mr. Copeland:** If you couldn't get by Gay, you couldn't get into the office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see!

**Mr. Copeland:** People kept asking me, "Why do you take Gay candy?"

**Ms. Marchesini:** Those were fun times though.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, these Remington and Pierce copies, that just stopped? That was no longer a service that was provided?

**Mr. White:** Yes. They were published privately and were discontinued. Let's talk a little bit about actually publishing the code. We examined various methods for binding and so on and we ended by thinking that a loose-leaf binding would be the ultimate for keeping up-to-date.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you could just put things in and move them around?

**Mr. White:** Yes. And so I'm sorry to say that we tried that. We had special good looking hard-bound binders with the seal of the state and so on, and the first couple of times we tried to supplement it, we tried a true supplementation basis. Page by page, and then you'd slop over to another page. We ended up with an instruction sheet to the poor user about like this [gestures with fingers a few inches apart] and nobody could follow them. Nobody could cope with it. It was cruel.

And plus, it was an inventory problem for us because we sold the codes and every year we would have to update the codes that we had on inventory.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wouldn't every lawyer need this?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, because they've got to keep up-to-date, right?

**Mr. White:** Yes. It was awful.

**Ms. Marchesini:** At that time, we had lot of lawyers in the Legislature. They would come on their way to the Legislature with a box and just say, "You straighten this out," and just dump it on us. Because their secretaries, they didn't follow it, and then if you dare get behind, then you really couldn't follow it.

**Mr. White:** We had a vault across this hall from the office that was just a miserable situation. And we were accountable for this stuff. You know the auditor was looking down his nose at it! So eventually, the next step was, we gave up on this page by page thing and so we created supplements similar to the pocket parts that were in the Remington's thing and those just fit in the loose leaf binder following the title. And we put a distinctive tint on the paper. And the first guy that I showed it to, I said, "What do you think of this? It's a little bit different," and so on and he looked perplexed. Finally he said, "You know, I'm color blind."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, dear!

**Mr. White:** When we first published this set, I took a set over to the guy in your office, [Office of the Secretary of State] Kenny Gilbert, Kenny...

## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, Kenny.

**Mr. Copeland:** Great guy. We worked closely with Kenny.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** He was director of Elections for a long time.

**Mr. White:** Kenny—I'll never forget what he said, "Well," he says, "it's almost looks professional."

So, that's where we were, still doing that supplement thing, when we were able to create the legislative information system.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay. So approximately where are we now?

**Mr. White:** Mid 1960s?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Sixty-one maybe.

**Mr. White:** That early?

**Ms. Marchesini:** I think so.

**Mr. White:** I got an invitation to go back to the University of Pittsburg, to witness a demonstration by Professor John Harty of the University of Pittsburg who had compiled all of the public health laws of the state of Pennsylvania and put them on a tape using IBM punch cards and that, of course, was the time when your computer was big as a semi truck you know...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh yes, I understand it took up a whole room.

**Mr. White:** And so he had these on tape, but it would only run sequentially and if you wanted only a little bit and it was clear at the end of the tape, you ran the whole tape to get it. But he employed something called Boolean logic that you regularly have now on your computer

when you do a law search. You'd crank in, for example, the word "cat" and it would spill out all instances of the word cat. Then he can refine that by saying, "I want cat separated by the word yellow, separated by four words, and all those kinds of requirements are within the same sentence of each other."

Well, crude as it was, it was effective and I came home and I thought, gee, what can we do with our code? Well, the number of key strokes and number of punch cards you had to do to do the whole code was just about prohibitive labor-wise. Somehow or other, some genius suggested that the gals down at Purdy could...

**Mr. Copeland:** It was Walla Walla, the Women's State Penitentiary. That was before Purdy existed.

**Mr. White:** Was it, yes. Thank you. Yes, Walla Walla. Tom, was it you that set this up? It may well have been.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We're in the presence of a genius!

**Mr. White:** The women prisoners needed to learn a trade and so they brought in a whole bunch of key punch machines, taught them keypunch. And at the end of the day, we got the revised code in machine-readable form. It was apple pie and motherhood...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they get paid?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, not at the end of the day.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** End of the program?

**Mr. White:** "The end of the day" as people in Washington, D.C. popularly say.

**Ms. Marchesini:** It was perfect, it was great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It was good for them—the women prisoners, too?

**Ms. Marchesini:** They got out of prison and could get a job. It was wonderful.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let me add a little side note on that that is quite interesting. At the time that we got the key punching started with the women inmates, it took quite a training period in order to be able to get them thoroughly adapted and things like that. The people with IBM had come to us and said, “You could expect to produce  $x$  number of cards, you know, during a week period of time,” or whatever. So the gals started and we had a lovely person by the name of Dorothy Davidson, who ran the program. And I’d go off to the penitentiary and visit with her frequently. She said, “We’re producing a few more cards than what IBM said we could,” and it never registered with me and so she kept sending these cards to Olympia, where then they would take the cards and put them on the disk. Dick and his crew were beginning to catch these cards as they came in, and they said, “Wait a minute, you’re sending more cards than what we had anticipated. We’re not quite able to keep up with all of these.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just swamped?

**Mr. Copeland:** So people from IBM came out and they were astounded. I think it was Charlie Trigg that actually came to Walla Walla.

**Mr. White:** Yes, Charlie was in on it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. He came down there and he could not believe these ladies—and I’m using the word loosely—these women—doing

this key punching and they would sit there and would be just like little robots, and they would key punch for hours and this Dorothy Davidson would have to walk around and shake them and say, “It’s time for you to take a break,” and Charlie Trigg, would say, “How could you do it, you know, produce this much?” Well, these women didn’t have to worry about what they were going to cook for dinner tonight...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had nothing else to do.

**Mr. Copeland:** Whether the kids were going to be home from school...

**Ms. Marchesini:** That’s right. They have not another thing on their minds.

**Mr. Copeland:** Whether their pantyhose was on straight or any other thing of the kind and they absolutely blew everybody’s mind on how fast they could run this stuff out. It was just—nobody, I’ll have you know, even had the slightest idea that they were going be able to capture that much information in machinery performance in such a short period of time.

**Ms. Marchesini:** It was great. They were just coming in by the boxes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh boxes.

**Mr. White:** So, how did we get transcribing?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, what did you do with all this stuff?

**Mr. Copeland:** General Administration had the computer at the time and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And it was just the one?

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. Copeland:** That was the only one we had at the time, remember.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those big things with vacuum tubes and all that?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, they put all the data in large disks. Well, of course, in Walla Walla, what they'd do, they'd type the information into machines that would punch holes in cards for transporting the information to the machines that would read the cards and transpose the information in the computers. One "key operator" inmate would punch in a section of the Revised Code and a second operator would punch in the same sections of the Code. Later the two sets of cards were run through a machine that checked for accuracy. Both sets of cards must be the same. If not, the machine would stop and the error must be found. This was "quality control."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sounds like a great system.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. I remember Dick White saying, "I don't think we had better send the criminal code to Walla Walla."

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, I remember that, too. We didn't dare let them mess with that. Title Nine stayed in our control!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you get all these cards, and you'd take them over to the GA Building; is that where you have this big computer and feed them in somehow?

**Mr. White:** I think that's what happened.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And then out comes a big printout, or what?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, they'd go on these huge big disks on a big tape. Later we transferred them to a heavy portable disk.

**Mr. White:** Well, I can take it from there a little bit, Tom. Let me just set the stage. Here we had a constitutionally mandated sixty-day, every two-year session...and that was based on the old Jeffersonian principle of the citizen legislature. Well, the state was growing, things were getting more complex, technology was bursting and so we ended up at that time with more and more extraordinary sessions, on top of the ordinary sessions. Tom and some other progressive legislators realized that there's got to be a better way, and so, when did we do the legislative information legislation? Would that be?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sixty-seven I think.

**Mr. White:** Sixty-seven. I haven't revisited that statute for awhile. But it enabled us to set up a staff and acquire machinery and Tom was shepherd of all this and got us the money and we just started with a clean sheet. We had to hire people, hire technical staff. We got a whiz from Pennsylvania...

**Ms. Marchesini:** George Byfield.

**Mr. White:** George Byfield. He programmed something called "document processing" and we developed all these programs.

**Ms. Marchesini:** He brought in a lot of great people; he hired good people.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so these are the very first computer people?

**Mr. White:** Yes, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were there many of those floating around the country? It was still so new.

**Mr. Copeland:** No. They were hard to find and their work was very difficult.

**Mr. White:** You know, it was hairy times. But we ended up with a computer room. We didn't ever have air conditioning, but the damn computer got it.

**Ms. Marchesini:** The computer got it. Wouldn't work without it—smarter than we were!

**Mr. White:** Great big mainframe and a half a dozen random access disks... We could now do random searches rather than sequential.

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct, and printers.

**Ms. Marchesini:** High speed printers, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Pretty good stuff?

**Mr. White:** Yes. And so ultimately then, as far as that affected the drafting process, if we desired to amend the code section, we did not have to type it all up. We would draw a code section up from the computer and massage it...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Put a double parenthesis and the underlines and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Dick's looking very happy now, just thinking about it!

**Mr. White:** Absolutely revolutionary.

**Mr. Copeland:** I've got to digress and bring this story into proper perspective as I think it is very important. I mentioned the name Charlie Trigg—he was the head guy with IBM and was coming to the state of Washington with some others to convince us that maybe we needed some of their equipment. "IBM was the only kid on the block" and so we

didn't have too many choices. But at any rate, I was the chairman of the committee to look into this anticipated purchase and Dick, as a member of the committee, had some unanswered questions that were unique to the code reviser's office. All this is in its infancy; we had never heard about this—as a matter of fact, I don't think I had ever heard the two words put together: "word processor" in that order.

**Ms. Marchesini:** That's right.

**Mr. Copeland:** I called the meeting to order and we had the standard introductions of everybody present. At this point I called upon Dick to ask the first question. If answered in the affirmative, the code reviser's office could become heavily involved. Dick started out saying, "I'm the code reviser. Here's my problem. I have to type a bill and then we have to back up to underline words that we are putting in and strike through words that we are taking out. Can your word processor do this for me?" And one of the people said, "Would you do this to whole sentences or whole paragraphs?" I said, "No, I may reach in and say strike 'twenty' by striking through and insert 'thirty' by underlining" And there was a long pause. Then Charlie Trigg said, "That's not going to be a problem at all, Mr. White. We'll give you two new alphabets: one already stricken through and one already underlined." Phew—there it was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So that's one keystroke instead of going back and doing all that work?

**Mr. Copeland:** Charlie Trigg was thinking in terms of fonts and we were thinking in terms of a typewriter. He had simply given Dick two new fonts, accessed as simply as a "key shift" on a keyboard. So with that one suggestion, Charlie had removed all of



## APPENDIX

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Dick's reservations and the word processor was equipped to handle the code reviser's very unique needs. This was a major breakthrough: Dick just jumped over all of the obstacles that he had.

**Mr. White:** Yes!

**Mr. Copeland:** And right now, to date, in a current computer, you can underline and strike through. Microsoft Word, right now, has that ability.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is where it started?

**All:** Yes, right.

**Mr. Copeland:** He requested it. And he got it.

**Mr. White:** So, that was the greatest assistance in the world, so far as drafting a bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sometimes people say computers actually bring more work because they make more work possible. Did your work load shrink at some point or grow?

**Mr. White:** No, no. We got some lovely bells and whistles out of it. We got a daily status sheet...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, you could really provide a better service?

**Mr. White:** Yes, yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** And the digest works.

**Mr. Copeland:** Let's put this all together. Prior to the time Dick got this bill drafting program, he also got a couple of much needed items of information: the daily position of

bills—the status sheet and the digest. These two items were of great importance to the Legislature and were produced by two private organizations.

**Mr. White:** That's right, I'd forgotten.

**Mr. Copeland:** The status sheet was produced by the Washington Research Council, a private group that accepted donations from businesses and other interested groups to help them locate the position of a bill at any time. The gentleman in charge was an extremely personable fellow by the name of Johnny Current.

**Mr. White:** John Current, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** He produced this status sheet called the "Golden Rod" so-called because it was printed on a bilious orange-yellow paper—hence the name—and it had the bill numbers in sequential order and then there would be an asterisk on that bill number showing that it had changed since the previous day.

Now, with the information that Dick had on the computer, it was only a matter of a few keystrokes and he could produce a status sheet. Better still, he could show if the bill had been amended or substituted.

Then there was the "digest of the bills." This had been produced by A.W.I. [Association of Washington Industries]

**Ms. Marchesini:** A.W.I. or A.W.B. now. [Association of Washington Business]

**Mr. Copeland:** A fine young attorney by the name of Lee Coulter was the main person to write the digests. Early in a legislative session, bills were introduced each working day—thirty or forty bills in a single day. Lee Coulter would then often work late into the night trying to "digest" the bill into a paragraph or two. This was then printed on notebook style

paper and placed into several hundred “digest books” throughout the Legislature. All of this was done at no expense to the Legislature.

**Mr. White:** That could be slanted.

**Ms. Marchesini:** That definitely could be slanted.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Wait a minute. What you do you mean by slanted?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, okay. If Lee Coulter wanted to make a brief of a bill and slope it anyway he wanted, he had...

**Ms. Marchesini:** If he didn’t like the bill, he could ....

**Mr. Copeland:** ...he had the liberty to do it. Now, this is a private organization doing this. This is not in-house stuff. It could be subject to some abuses of “putting a spin on the bill,” though this was never proven to be a widespread tactic of AWB, it did emphasize the Legislature’s lack of control over legislative information.

**Mr. White:** Especially the language: it was his interpretation.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was his interpretation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, it’s not strictly the bill language, it is some kind of summary?

**Mr. Copeland:** It’s a brief.

**Ms. Marchesini:** It’s a brief, sure, sure. And if you didn’t like it, how you would write about it... and if you loved that, how you would write about it...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see.

**Mr. Copeland:** Or maybe the brief didn’t contain all of the stuff that was in the bill...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just part of the bill, the part you wanted to highlight?

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct. So the Legislature had no control over these at all, none whatsoever. These were private organizations, financed substantially by contributions and these were things that the legislators worked from, that were given to them by private organizations. But they were not one hundred percent accurate. But we had no care, custody or control over that whatsoever.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That could lead to abuses!

**Mr. Copeland:** That’s correct.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Just to be clear.

**Mr. Copeland:** Then, with Dick’s work, the Legislature came of age. They had the ability to produce all the information we needed as a legislative body. The dependency on outside sources for information came to a much needed end. The Legislature took responsibility for their actions. And the code reviser’s office was at the very center of this information system.

We got everything produced to a point we could get our own bill drafting done, then all of this other information was just sitting there and all we had to do is extract it and put it into this particular formula.

**Ms. Marchesini:** We just had to hire a digester or two. Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, then you got the real language of the bills?

## APPENDIX

---

**Mr. Copeland:** That's correct.

**Ms. Marchesini:** It really did it.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Could legislators still get these annotated things if they wanted?

**Ms. Marchesini:** They were phased out.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Pretty soon nobody used that stuff.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And so lobbyists and other interested parties could also get these digests?

**All:** Oh sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Everybody is now on the same page?

**All:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** But you see, it's running concurrently: at this time, we went ahead and repealed that statute that said the state printer had to print the bills. And so we repealed that section so now the state printer is gone.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, were there cries of anguish?

**Mr. Copeland:** No. We would take the original bill and then we just take it and copy that and that became the bill for the bill books at that time.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No more two copies?

**Mr. Copeland:** No more two copies.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With all their discrepancies?

**Mr. Copeland:** Correct.

**Mr. White:** We had a little nicety for the benefit of the members of a private status sheet and we called it the legislators' trap-line. It would be issued daily, and it would show the progress of all bills that he was a sponsor on, plus any group of bills of particular interest that he was...

**Ms. Marchesini:** That they requested.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, a person could come in and say, "Any highways bills, I would really like to see that?"

**All:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Anything in my district," or whatever?

**Ms. Marchesini:** And you'd get it every day.

**Mr. Copeland:** My particular trap-line had all the bills that I introduced; then I wanted anything that had to do with the penitentiary because that thing was in my district. Then I also made a request on certain bills having to do with agriculture because I was specifically interested in that.

So then, like he said, just as an add-on, then everyday I had to have a print-out, and I would have three subject matters and I'd know exactly what happened.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes. And then there is always a little asterisk that shows that status had changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, "something has happened in the process."

**Ms. Marchesini:** Otherwise you could glance and if you saw that, you knew something happened to your bill.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. I just don't know how legislators can get along without this. I mean, how would you ever have tracked all that information previously?

**Mr. Copeland:** It was not fun.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well and unfortunately, it was impossible for a member to read it, all those big bill books.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You can't.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I mean you just couldn't and at least this way...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had a hope.

**Ms. Marchesini:** They're aware of what their interest is anyway. And then you just have to trust the committee process. Oh and your caucuses will tell you.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, but not every little thing?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, caucuses go over what's on the calendar every day you know, so yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It's just the sheer magnitude of it. Did that allow legislators to specialize a little more? I'm always interested in impact—when there are technical changes of this sort, and then what does that do to the actual legislative process? Do you write better bills; do you come up with better legislation; do you feel more effective as a legislator because you can track things better?

**Mr. Copeland:** I think that the thing that is interesting here is over time the code reviser's

office in the Statute Law Committee had by that time, created such a tremendous respect of confidence. Nobody ever challenged Dick's office about anything and so when the bill was ordered printed, you could just, you know, without fair contradiction, say that it's properly drafted.

**Mr. White:** Good stuff.

**Mr. Copeland:** It is good stuff. So, that was the confidence that everybody needed, not only the legislators, but the public did, too.

The flip side to this whole thing right now that Dick is talking about, is that this is the first time that this particular type of legislation—in that format, with the digest, with the daily bill tracking—was really available to the public. The public had no really easy access to it prior to that time, so all of these things moved very quickly—bing, bing, bing—in a short span of probably three sessions.

**Mr. White:** The legislative information system was only one facet of what I call a proper exercise of the separation of powers. Legislators suddenly woke up and this attitude was fostered by the national conference of the state legislators. They finally woke up and said, "Heck, we're the Legislature. We are an equal branch of government. The executive has good quarters, and at those quarters, the executive has adequate staff, the executive has technical help. We deserve the same thing..."

And so Tom and these other forward looking guys took off on this and they changed the whole thing. I don't know—previously members didn't have any offices?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No, nothing.

**Ms. Marchesini:** No! No offices. Unless you're the committee chairman.

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** What did you have, one secretary?

**Mr. Copeland:** No, we shared secretaries in the steno pool. And then there was the time when Si Holcomb, the Chief Clerk of the House, handed to the reading clerk the note that read: "Members of the House are hereby authorized to take advantage of the girls in the steno pool."

**Mr. White:** And after, things were never the same and it was deserved. It was absolutely deserved, but nobody particularly took it upon themselves to do it.

**Ms. Marchesini:** And here these members were getting hundreds of letters and nobody even to help them with it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** They had nowhere to put them.

**Ms. Marchesini:** No. That was a real big step, big step.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The needs, the insight, and the means came together.

**Mr. Copeland:** Simultaneously.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** If you had one of those pieces missing....

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, if Dick's shop couldn't have made this total upper mobility, all of this other stuff would have been just been for naught. You might as well have forgotten about it. But it was a fact: here's this two-track arrangement, both going in the same direction and complementing one another very quickly.

But, I get back to this original comment: you know, who in heavens name is the recipient of this, and the answer is

the public. The public suddenly had greater access to legislative information than they ever did before. The public knew that a bill was introduced. They suddenly knew when that bill was going to be heard; they knew the bill was going to be before the committee, or things like that. So the public ultimately become the recipient of this great big huge wealth of information.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Sure. They could immediately say: "I want to testify on that..."

**Mr. Copeland:** Right.

**Ms. Marchesini:** And they could.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it was more activist age too, in the 1960s; everybody wanted to get involved in something.

**Mr. White:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You know the famous John Kennedy line about what are you going to do for your country? It struck a chord.

**Mr. White:** Now, one of the things that was a great boon to us was the ability to search the laws. For example: at one time, possibly due to the feminist movement, there were bills that wanted us to remove all gender bias in code.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Ah, yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh my god, I remember that.

**Mr. White:** And so in other words, they wanted us to change "fisherman" to "fisher" and "fisherperson", and what other ones? "Fireman" to "firefighters" and so on. Ah, it was duck soup. All you did was punch those in a computer and it would tell you every place in the whole code where those occurred.



**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, it was great.

**Mr. White:** Otherwise, you know, it would take you months, but you'd never be sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. There would always be some missed, hiding in some corner.

**Mr. White:** I wondered what ever happened to that bill.

**Ms. Marchesini:** It was a big bill, too.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, language, of course, in the law matters.

*[interruption in conversation]*

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay, we're back from our little break. We never did introduce you properly, Gay. Can you tell me how you came to work, when you came to work in the code reviser's office?

**Ms. Marchesini:** My name is Gay Marchesini, and I was seventeen years old and graduated from Olympia High School and went to work for Labor and Industries, and that was like December of '52, no October of '52, and I worked there two months and then Dick White got this job, as head of the Temporary Code Publication Committee, I think it was called. And I knew Dick from Bellingham, and he wanted to meet with me. I lived at home with my mother and he came up there and he said, "I would like you to come work for me." I told him where I was working, I made a hundred and seventy dollars a month...and he said, "I could probably start you at one hundred eighty..." And I said I've got to give two weeks notice and I did, and went to work.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Were you a clerk typist or something at that point?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** And you made that big switch for five bucks!

**Ms. Marchesini:** No, to work for Dick.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that's what I'm saying!

**Ms. Marchesini:** I would have done it for ten dollars less!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Don't tell him that!

**Ms. Marchesini:** But anyway, it was a wonderful job and I worked there until I retired thirty years later.

**Mr. Copeland:** Still making a hundred eighty.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Just a little bit more.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would hope. You were, you became the office manager, I understand?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Eventually, yes. That took some time but it was just, I mean there were only—when I went to work, we were still at the Temple of Justice, downstairs in the basement and there were only two other ladies and me. They didn't speak to each other, so one of them would say, "Gay, would you tell Grace this?" and Grace would say, "Gay, would you tell Adele this?" and it was terrible.

**Mr. White:** I inherited...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Dick inherited those two.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You didn't get to choose your staff?

## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Marchesini:** No, no. But anyway, I got along great with both of them and it was a wonderful, wonderful job.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, as a staff person, was one of the requirements a certain amount stamina and adrenaline just to get you through? You told me you never worked less than ninety hours.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, we worked! But those long, long weeks or long, long days went faster than an eight-to-five day when it wasn't session. I mean they just—you know when you're really busy—they just race by.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** This is a full-time year-round job?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because, when it's not session, you're also doing all these other tasks?

**Mr. White:** Yes, yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, publishing everything. Then the Washington Administrative Code, all their rules and regulations are filed, publishing those, having to handle the filings.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Getting all those straightened out.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Indexing everything, publishing the opinions, the decisions. I mean, it's a big job.

**Mr. White:** Yes, I could talk little bit about this.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure. I just wanted to make sure I understood how Gay fit into the picture.

**Mr. White:** Well, because we seemed to be sort of a constant engine that never quit, the Legislature continued to put new tasks our way and a major one was the Washington Administrative Code. The Legislature adopted a Uniform Administrative Procedures Act.

Prior, up to the enactment of the Administrative Procedures Act, each agency had its own statutory rule-making power. Interestingly, what administrative rules are, as opposed to statutes—the Legislature recognizes that a certain amount of regulation has to go on—but that kind of regulation takes more mini-management that the Legislature has time or the desire to do. So, the Legislature grants some broad authority to an agency to make the necessary rules to regulate its province. For example, the Legislature doesn't want to worry about how many stanchions you could have in a cow barn so the director of the Department of Agriculture, or whatever it is, sets down these rules. And they enforce the law, and before the advent of the Uniform Act, these agencies pretty much had carte blanche as to what they were and how they were published, what the duration of the rule would be, etc. and very little access to public hearings for adoption of the rule—almost to the point where if there is a controversy involving one of these rules, that the agency could adjust the rule to, you know, one in the agency's favor right in the middle of the controversy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How would anyone even know what these rules were?

**Mr. White:** Right.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was kind of picturing some poor dairy farmer...

**Mr. White:** Yes! Oh yes, and the regulating agency would publish a little random pamphlet or something.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see. So, some inspector would come and say, “Well, you’re not up to the code here.”

**Mr. White:** Yes. So, the act provides that the rule-making process should be opened to the public. There should be a notice of the hearing and that notice should be published.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Is that about the same time as this other development?

**Ms. Marchesini:** No, later.

**Mr. White:** This was 1968. And so the act said that: “Mr. Agency, any rules that you wish to continue after this certain date, you must file with the code reviser; otherwise they’re dead.” And so on this certain date, a few weeks before this certain date, the agencies trooped in and just dumped...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Dumped!

**Mr. White:** ...the biggest file case drawer full of junk.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Unrecognizable bits and pieces?

**Mr. White:** It was un-bailed hay.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To keep with the farm metaphor.

**Ms. Marchesini:** There you go.

**Mr. White:** And so we were charged with the duty of codifying it, publishing it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How much time were you given?

**Mr. White:** Well, there was no real time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, that’s one good thing.

**Mr. White:** Yes. I don’t recall there was.

**Ms. Marchesini:** No! I’m sure not.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, there weren’t any unreasonable deadlines?

**Mr. White:** Did we hire anybody else to do it? We hired that crazy kid.....

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes and then a couple of other clerical people helped him. Edna and...I can’t remember.

**Mr. White:** Anyway, to make a long story short, what was the fable of the stable? Where the guy got held up in the old Aesop’s fable? That’s what it was.

And we decided to go loose-leaf on that. I don’t know why, I guess we didn’t have any better sense. And we published in-house on our own dumb little mimeograph. And the problem was that the agencies were continually amending and repealing their stuff and so we could never get a title finished because all the amendments and repeals kept piling in on top of them. Eventually, it got going. Eventually, due to the Legislative Information System, we now publish everything in the same format, almost.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Those were the WACs?

**Ms. Marchesini:** The Washington Administrative Code, right.

**Mr. White:** And we published an administrative register which had all the public notices and agencies have the power to promulgate emergency rules, which had to be published. We publish those in the register.

**Ms. Marchesini:** But an emergency would be, you know, something dealing with forest fires: they have to do something right now.

## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, really immediate.

**Mr. White:** Fishing regulations changed every day. For different areas and so on. And eventually we got it under control, but it was another strength to our bubble.

And then later on, it was decided, even before Tim Eyman, that something ought to be done about the initiative process. And so the Legislature dumped that on us: the duty to review the form and style of any proposed initiative before it got filed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What about the recent controversy where supposedly someone from the code reviser helped more than they should have?

**Mr. White:** I think that was decided against the code reviser. The confidentiality that applied to bill drafting did not extend to the process of reviewing the initiatives. That's where we're on that. But I don't know. Maybe as we speak, the Legislature's dreaming up other activities...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did they add more staff, more facilities, or just more jobs?

**Mr. White:** Oh, you know how the Legislature is.

**Ms. Marchesini:** More work.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, if you continue to pull off the miracles, then I can understand their temptation!

**Mr. White:** It's like the old Mexican says: "*Mucho trabajo y poquito dinero.*" "Lots of work and not much money." Any way, it's been a really interesting activity, yes.

We had such a real reputation for neutrality that one time, a time when John Bagnariol and Walgren got into trouble on those bribery charges, some people were saying, "Well, the reviser ought to be made interim Speaker." The crazy thing is the Speaker doesn't have to be a legislator.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, I didn't know that!

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, no!

**Ms. Marchesini:** I remember that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You would have been the impeccable candidate?

**Ms. Marchesini:** A real compliment anyway. Really, we had a great reputation.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I imagine you had to have this reputation. If you ever had any kind of problem coming from your office, it would call everything into question.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Did you ever have any people come in and say, "You tampered with this?"

**Ms. Marchesini:** No.

**Mr. White:** No, never. A newscaster got on the air one time on Channel Seven and pointed out that I was at a meeting in New Orleans, when I was supposed to be in Olympia. But that's the closest we ever came.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh, he thought you had better be on the spot and not going to a conference or something?

**Mr. White:** Yes. Yellow journalism.

**Ms. Marchesini:** That's right, I'd forgotten that one.

**Mr. White:** I had the opportunity to serve on the executive committee at the national legislative conference and as an associate member of the Uniform Laws Commission and so that made my job more interesting, because I could get out of the office once in awhile. I also served as legislative representative on the State Data Processing Committee and its successor, both of which have been superseded by another agency.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Here is another statesman that we were talking about, that Dick went to a lot of these meetings with: Fran Holman.

**Mr. Copeland:** Great guy.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, just wonderful, Senator Holman, Francis Holman. Oh, was he something.

**Mr. Copeland:** But let me just expand on this thing about Dick being on the executive committee of the...what's it called—the National Legislative Conference?

**Mr. White:** National Conference of State Legislators.

**Mr. Copeland:** This particular type of interaction with other states at that time—and still should be today—was so terribly important, because then you can have a free exchange of information between legislatures and even exchange things without necessarily having to reinvent the wheel all by yourselves.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was technology changing in all these different areas, so now trying out new things was tied to this emerging technology?

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, you see, this is where we started making the exchange of the legislative information that Dick has assembled out of just a simple little thing like creating a bill and tracking it through the Legislature. We took that program and exchanged that with other states for information that they had.

**Mr. White:** We were really in the forefront of the fifty states. We were sort of IBM's poster child in the field of legislative information. They invited me to give lectures at various seminars and so on. We got good stuff. I got invited to go to Zagreb, Yugoslavia one time. But they weren't going to pay my way and I wasn't about to go with ...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That would be expensive, I suppose.

**Mr. White:** The idea was they were pretty ruthless in those days. They wanted you to have all their equipment; they had a magic word "bundled," and they didn't want you to 'unbundle' them. Somebody else's .....

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That sounds familiar. Sounds like we still have that issue just a little bit.

**Mr. White:** Yes, but that's about where I left the show and the capabilities of the Legislative Information System outran its charter. There was so much partisan stuff that could be done on computer and it was contrary to our charter. And so it ended up, the Legislative Information System was dissolved. And of course, technology had advanced so far that now I guess each House, each party, has one—their own computer capabilities.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Mr. White:** You know, it came to the point where the caucuses wanted us to run campaign



## APPENDIX

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literature and newsletters and that kind of thing and...

**Ms. Marchesini:** We wouldn't do it.

**Mr. White:** That's contrary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Of course, that's not your mission.

**Mr. White:** So, it's not today at all like it was back then and you said you wanted to know primarily how it was back then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's your area, your experience. What about when the Office of Program Research came in, in the early 1970s? How did that change what you did? Didn't they pick up some of the bill writing duties that in had been in your area?

**Mr. White:** No, no.

**Ms. Marchesini:** They did a lot of their own briefing...

**Mr. White:** I don't recall that.

**Ms. Marchesini:** After we left, that got much more expanded, where they'd bring in a disk and they'd already done their drafting.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I had thought the research staff attorneys also drafted bills?

**Ms. Marchesini:** That wasn't when we were there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay.

**Mr. White:** I think you know, that thing expanded the capability and it was no longer the exclusive thing that we had.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There's more and more staff now, and more people on both the caucus and

non-partisan staff, so there's just a lot more capability.

**Mr. White:** I don't think that my successor has the same face-to-face relationship with members that I had, because they would all come into our shop and make their requests.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Now it's staff. Now you deal with staff; you don't deal with members. It's not like it used to be.

**Mr. White:** I think that's a bit unfortunate.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, it's bad because you don't really—because the staff guy tells you what his boss wants, and maybe his boss is not getting what he really wants, where, you know, they would come in and talk to Dick, or talk to any one of our attorneys.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** The more people a message passes though, the more it's changed?

**Ms. Marchesini:** You bet.

*[brief interruption]*

**Ms. Marchesini:** You know, not one of us ever expressed at all who we were going to vote for or...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Probably not even to each other.

**Mr. White:** Guys like Tom made it possible. There were some guys around that were confronted.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I would think extreme neutrality would be the safest bet.

**Ms. Marchesini:** The only thing, the one good thing about it was, it got you off the

hook. When somebody was collecting for a political contribution, you'd say, "I just can't. You know I would like to, but I can't." That was that.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it would look unethical or something. That's for sure.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes. We couldn't—no.

**Mr. White:** That makes it unbecoming.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** At the very least.

I know you told me little bit about the Statute Law Committee from the very beginning and that certain people were very helpful on that committee. Can you tell me a little more about some of the personalities involved that had this vision as you did, to have this work a little more organized?

**Mr. White:** Well, Bernard Gallagher, I think was the state representative, a Democrat, from Spokane, soft spoken, but very tenacious and positive guy. And he was steadfast all through: all the arguments, the pros and cons and so on, but right in there pitching with us. And he was really the main legislative guy way back then that I can recall. Do you recall, Gay?

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You talked about Senator Gissberg at one point.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes.

**Mr. White:** Gissberg was never on our committee, was he?

**Mr. Copeland:** He was the chairman of Judiciary Committee.

**Mr. White:** Oh yes, okay. He was a great.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would there have been more progressive legislators than the 'old guard' that would put the brakes on what you were trying to do?

**Mr. Copeland:** Put this on as backdrop: Dick is talking about this over time, over a period of time. You see, he went through quite a few periods where the membership on the Statute Law Committee changed.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, of course. I was trying to get a sense of who we should credit.

**Mr. Copeland:** Bernie Gallagher was one of the first persons to ever to serve on the Statute Law Committee.

**Mr. White:** Yes, way back in '49.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, so he was trying. Bernie and that particular group were trying to get the thing started even though there were a great many people that were detractors that were in total opposition to them, so the progress that Bernie made was slow. But like Dick said, he was very—he was very right on-track. He wanted to keep moving. He would accept the fact that he couldn't get to the goal line in this session, he could only get to the twenty yard line on his side, but he would be perfectly happy to get to the twenty, knowing good and well he was going to be at the forty next session.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would it also be true that each advance that you made would show how useful you were and that it would give you a better foundation for the next advance?

**Mr. White:** I suppose.

**Mr. Copeland:** That goes without saying. Absolutely. Every, every session, the esteem that people had for Dick and the Statute Law

## APPENDIX

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Committee, and the code reviser's office, and everything, it just kind of grew incrementally. Every session, I mean, it came into a very sharp focus. But it's through Dick's guidance, it just stayed on course and he maintained this non-partisan effort. He maintained this confidentiality; he maintained the accuracy; and so on and so forth. So it was a very natural thing for everybody to have a great deal of confidence in his entire endeavor.

**Mr. White:** I look back, you know, on my career and the career of my people, and it's a feeling that we performed a service.

**Ms. Marchesini:** You bet.

**Mr. White:** I feel good about it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Did you begin with a fairly clear idea of how it should be or did that evolve?

**Mr. White:** Oh....

**Ms. Marchesini:** Probably not.

**Mr. Copeland:** No we didn't.

**Mr. White:** It grew like Topsy.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You couldn't know then what computers would bring to your working capability...things like that?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, no.

**Mr. Copeland:** That's all evolution.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you had certain principles that you followed?

**Mr. White:** Yes. I have an article that I wrote for the library journal that I'll pass along to you. It'll give you little bit more background of what it's like to be a code reviser.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "Code Revision in the Legal Process." I'm sure this is a best seller!

**Mr. White:** Gay and I don't care. We never wanted to be famous.

**Ms. Marchesini:** But we're proud of what we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it would take a special kind of attitude to work there...to be a little self-effacing, to be able to focus on the process rather than climbing some kind of a ladder.

**Mr. White:** We had a young fellow, a new member of our Rotary Club and they have to give a little speech, and he was an engineer by trade. He said somebody asked me why I became an engineer, and he said, "Well, I was good at math, but I didn't have the charisma to become an accountant."

**Mr. Copeland:** I love that.

**Mr. White:** That's kind of where we were.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Was working for the Legislature something that kind of got into your makeup and once you were there, you wouldn't want to leave?

**Mr. White:** Sure.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes, oh yes.

**Mr. White:** And there were those, you know, that might have said—in my case for head of the agency—they might have said: that guy lacked ambition, you know, stayed in the same godforsaken job for twenty-seven years. But I never looked at it that way.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, no!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I'm sure that there were always new things to learn.

**Mr. Copeland:** Wait just a minute! He's just being modest. The job did not stay the same for twenty-seven consecutive years!

**Ms. Marchesini:** And you know, every session...it was not only the freshman, but when the session started—it used to be only every two years—all these old friends would come back, old staff people that only came to work for the Legislature. And they were truly good friends, lots of them, and that was fun! And then you would feel terrible when somebody got defeated, but then you met the freshmen and then you liked them real well! And you know, you almost had to take the freshmen by the hand and...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand that you did do that.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, I don't know about that!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Various people have credited you with helping them get a start.

**Mr. Copeland:** I am here to attest to that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** With helping, writing bills, and thinking about the process.

**Mr. White:** In the later years, I gave a spiel to the freshmen and it was always well received.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I've heard from other legislators that as a freshman, the first place that you want to go is the code reviser's office. So that you can figure out how to do it...

**Ms. Marchesini:** That's good, that's good.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Who really runs the show? But that would be one of the foundation pieces: if you could understand the office

of the code reviser, you could make it in the Legislature.

**Ms. Marchesini:** You know it makes you almost feel like—when you see somebody who starts as a freshmen—you can almost pick out the really bright stars to watch. And later on when they're really, you know, they're chairmen and this and this, and this, and maybe run for governor, you know...you almost...you feel a real pride in that maybe you helped them a little bit.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes. Did you get to talk about ethical issues and things like that? I mean, here's an office that has this bedrock reputation.

**Mr. White:** I don't understand.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would you help legislators understand how to work through the system?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Sure.

**Mr. White:** I guess, I can. Maybe Gay did.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes, you bet we did.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A little hand-holding?

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Would people come to you for advice beyond bill drafting?

**Mr. White:** You mean "Dear Abby?"

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, because—let me say it this way. They trusted our confidentiality so much that many times, I'd have them come and say, "I don't want to look dumb, asking this. Will you help me?" You know and that's the reputation that our whole office had.

## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Kilgannon:** Understanding the laws? And how it all fits together?

**Ms. Marchesini:** You bet. Where to go from here.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, if a legislator brought in a bill that was just kind of all over the place, kind of a mess, would you help them with their thinking as well as their bill drafting?

**Mr. White:** That was our job.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Sure, oh yes. They'd come in. We had a lot of them from a bar—a cocktail napkin—some idea scribbled down.

**Mr. White:** It ranged the gamut from that to a well-drafted piece that...

**Ms. Marchesini:** A lawyer's firm did.

**Mr. White:** And when a well-drafted piece came in, we'd still scrutinize them...For form and style anyway.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh sure, to make sure, yes.

**Mr. White:** By statute, we had no jurisdiction to advise as to constitutionality. That stemmed from these old practitioners who were the original members of the Statute Law Committee. They didn't want to get into a law suit vicariously because we staff people might have given out bad advice. So we would often refer constitutional questions to the Attorney General's office which was the proper office to handle such matters.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But you could...

**Mr. White:** But we could sort of drop a hint now and then.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** "You might want to not do this."

**Mr. White:** Yes, right. That's as far as we'd go.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I see.

**Mr. White:** And there were pitfalls, little known sections of the Constitution. For example: one, that the law must be of a general nature, and so in municipal law, you couldn't write a law to justify the city of Walla Walla by name because it was not a general application. So you have to say: all cities of the third class on the Walla Walla river...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Define it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I think I read one of those examples once. You know: it had to fall between  $x$  and  $x$  and suddenly just got all boxed in and there it was, you knew exactly who needed it.

**Mr. White:** Those were fun challenges.

**Mr. Copeland:** Like the story that I told you about when we had to replace the bridge at Vantage, and we had the old bridge dismantled and stored in Range Twenty-seven, Township Twelve, Section Four, and nobody knew where the hell it was. These are not the correct coordinates, these are just an example.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Only some people knew what you were talking about.

**Mr. Copeland:** Right. So we hid the bridge for ten years.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it worked. Here's a totally off-the-wall question: Were lawyers better at drafting bills? Legislators who were lawyers...than other people, or were they



sometimes more problematical because you would get more complicated bills?

**Mr. White:** Both, both. Yes, you know, they could see the Indians behind the trees and so, if that's problematical, that's the way it was, but the end result was more apt to fly than if you didn't see those Indians.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand someone like Augie Mardesich was a genius at bill drafting.

**Mr. White:** Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** And other people weren't so good at it. Other people would be coming in with a napkin with a scratched-out idea and you would have to go from there.

**Mr. White:** Not so much from the standpoint of form and style, but ideas that had to get things done. That's their job. I mean, they're the idea guys. Our job was to supply the proper language to get the job done.

**Mr. Copeland:** Bob Bailey told us all to keep stories about Mardesich. When Bob first went to the Senate, before the session started, there was a comment made by somebody who said, "What we really need to do is get a bill through that does the following things." And Bob Bailey took note of this and then the session started and he had almost forgotten about it, so he dashed down later on to have the code reviser put together the bill, only to find that Augie had already passed the bill out of the House.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** No moss growing on him!

**Ms. Marchesini:** I believe that.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Are there other stories like that, that come to mind?

**Mr. White:** I might think of something later, Anne.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Where you played some kind of a role in the middle there? There were a lot of famous legislators coming through in those years. All kinds of things were happening.

After your turf battles with these older lawyers that had had that job before you, were there other instances of where your work shaded into someone else's and there was any kind of conflict? I understand that there were some jealousies about who had the most computer time, who had the access?

**Mr. White:** Yes, that was after our time. Bill Gleason, over at the Senate, who was the assistant secretary or something, was really pushing hard to ban the Legislative Information System and get each House into its own computer system and I guess he succeeded. We could see that coming right at the tail end. The problem was that, understandably so, the caucuses wanted to use the Legislative Information System for political purposes such as electioneering and newsletters, activities which were contrary to the politically neutral status of our agency which we guarded jealously.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I told you a story about my run-in with Bill Schneider, in General Administration. When Dick was getting all these punch cards.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Because there was only one computer in all of state government and you needed to use it, too?

**Mr. Copeland:** We had to share time with General Administration. I think they were doing the work between ten o'clock at night and four in the morning.

**Mr. White:** Oh right, yes. And then that's

what really got Tom really on the horse. I mean because it was impossible.

**Mr. Copeland:** So this was at the time he was catching all of this information in machine-readable form. Bill called me in one day when I happened to be over there and said, “My staff now wants to terminate our relationship with the Legislature; we don’t want to have you in here running it anymore.” I said, “Wait a minute, you understand we’re trying to get this and we have a session coming up and we’re not interfering with your time.” He said, “My staff has convinced me that General Administration should own the machine and everybody in state government should then buy the service from us.” And I said to Bill Schneider, “Wait a minute, you want to be the only person in the state government that owns a computer?” He said, “That’s right.” I said, “Bill, you and I are at cross purposes. I want to get this thing finished, but if you’re telling me that you want to have General Administration own the only computer in state government, I want you to know I’m going to be on the Appropriations Committee and I’m going to oversee your budget.”

**Ms. Marchesini:** Good for you!

**Mr. Copeland:** And he caught me at the elevator and said, “Wait a minute, come back in,” and that’s the way we finished it. And Bill’s staff actually had him convinced that that was the way to go! And Dick and I and everybody else knew where these computers were going was monumental, but he was trying to grab a hold of all the computer turf and say “this is ours.”

**Ms. Marchesini:** And then everybody would rent from him.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, that was the plan of General Administration.

**Mr. White:** After we got our system, there were two inter-branch committees charged with oversight of all state computer systems. One was the Data Processing Advisory, which regulated pretty much computers all over state government including higher education, and I served on that as a legislative representative. That was abolished in favor of a data processing committee which had more authority and that took quite a bit of my time. I was fending off the executive branches wanting to regulate our computer and it was essential that I be there and was successful at it. Eventually, that committee was abolished and there was, I think, some sort of state department regulating computers, but there was a protective measure that worked fine.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I was thinking that there had to have been more turf battles...

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, there were.

**Mr. White:** They had a guy—they hired a director—and I sat in on the hiring. A guy named Clinton DeGabrielle, a computer hot shot, he ran that data advisory committee. John Cherberg was chairman of the committee then. Then we had a guy sitting in there from Social and Health Services, Department of Transportation, and so on, and they were always adopting these grandiose regulations to affect all computer operations on the hill and I had the strenuous job of maintaining the position that we were a separate branch government and “to heck with you!” It worked, but it sure took a lot of time.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, you bet.

**Mr. White:** So, there was that ...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Yes, the Legislature, to keep any kind of momentum going against the executive branch, would have to have its own resources.

**Mr. White:** Sure, sure.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, all you have to do is take the information away from the legislative branch, then you diminish their ability and of course, you know, go ahead and jerk all of the computer ability out of the Legislature right now and they're blind!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're right back to square one.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** It sounds like a lot of issues funnel through the code reviser's office or that you played a role in several pieces of this development.

**Mr. Copeland:** It was a very natural thing for him to become the depository of everything relating to use of the computer in the legislative environment. It was a very natural thing. It worked in well with the bill drafting and the whole thing, so. It wasn't that Dick White was just a pretty face; it just happened to be that he was at the right place at the right time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Nor necessarily empire-building, either.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh no, not empire-building, no.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, it just would make sense.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I'll tell you, both Dick and Will, Lee, and Mac—people that worked there. We were and still are really proud as anything of the staff and what we did. You know, I haven't got a regret or anything about

anything we did because it was done in a right way, for the right things. You bet.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You had to be very clear.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes, oh yes.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How did you learn all these skills? Did you take special courses? Did you go to conferences?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Hard knocks!

**Mr. Copeland:** Right by the seat of your pants.

**Ms. Marchesini:** School of hard knocks. That's right!

**Mr. White:** Learn by doing.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You're inventing whole new processes here as well.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Everybody that came to work for us, I don't know if they were just the right kind of people or they turned out to be the right kind of people, but they were wonderful people and when you talk to them, like, you know, Cathy Sangster?

**Mr. Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Okay. Cathy came to Mac's funeral and she went up to Dick White, grabbed his hand and started to cry. She said, "Those years I worked for you were the best years of my whole life!" And you hear that from people and it makes you really proud.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Well, you've been through something amazing together.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes.

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. White:** We learned—I learned quite a bit through the National Association dealing with other guys in the same field, and you learn as much having a drink after dinner with those guys as you would in formal sessions or maybe even more.

**Tom Copeland:** Sure.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's where you could really chew over your shared problems. So, was Washington a leader in this area?

**Mr. Copeland:** Modestly, I would say: light years ahead of everybody else.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Okay, modestly!

**Mr. Copeland:** I remember the comment that was made by a senator from the state of Wyoming that was attending one of these meetings and he said, "You guys are, you think you're a way ahead of us, but I want you to know the Wyoming Constitution should be changed. It says that the Legislature shall meet for forty days, every two years and what it should say, the Legislature shall meet for two days, every forty years."

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Not a big fan of government activism there.

**Mr. White:** It got to be a bit much, though, when you guys ran into the middle of May or almost...

**Mr. Copeland:** It was totally unnecessary, really, when you think about it, but you know of course we had the whole redistricting thing which was so...that was a bugger to handle.

**Mr. White:** Do you think that's been improved by farming it out?

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, to a degree, I guess

so, Dick. When Bob Greive was there, the redistricting thing just became such a focal point with him and everything was on the table as far as he was concerned. He'd swap you any kind of a bill for a vote on redistricting.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** That's the bad part.

**Mr. Copeland:** Absolutely. That is the *the* bad part and of course Bob was so, so focused on *quote* "his group." I don't know whether you remember, but on one occasion he had a terrible time in Spokane, because he had three senators in Spokane that were *quote* "his boys" so it may have been Dean Foster who was told to save these three senators and in so doing he took five house members and put them all in one district!

**Mr. White:** Oh, no.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So much for that.

**Mr. Copeland:** So it was. You know, Bill Day and Bill McCormick, and two or three others in Spokane, all wound up in the same legislative district.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Keith Campbell!

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, Keith was involved also.

**Mr. White:** I can remember Sam Smith fought redistricting. They would break out the map you know, there was gerrymandering going around. And he'd say, "And you got this puppy dog tail going up here...!" Sam was a wonderful guy.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, you bet.

**Mr. White:** Oh, he was a peach.

**Mr. Copeland:** Well, I remember McCutcheon, Senator McCutcheon, one time was down...

**Mr. White:** Oh, the older one?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes, and he was working with Bob Greive and he said, "No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, don't get too close to American Lake. Move over here little bit more, that's fine."

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, I can just see him.

**Mr. Copeland:** So any rate, somebody said, "What's your rationale, not being too close to American Lake?" "Well, the rationale is to save my ass!"

**Ms. Marchesini:** That was John.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That was redistricting. Did redistricting have any impact on your work?

**Mr. White:** A lot of work, a lot of hours.

**Ms. Marchesini:** No, except just the bill—the drafting of it.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Drafting of those very detailed bills?

**Mr. White:** Redistricting and the appropriation bills kept us going all night...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh, over and over and over all night.

**Mr. White:** And tax bills. And Bill Schneider would come in and say, "I got the go-home bill in my pocket." Bill went from General Administration over to the Department of Revenue and was involved with the omnibus tax bill which in every session must be enacted in order for the Legislature to adjourn.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I can just hear him.

**Mr. White:** "I got the go-home bill." That was a crock; that wasn't going to fly.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** What if you couldn't physically do it, if they needed a copy and it was so huge and so large...

**Ms. Marchesini:** We did it! I mean...

**Mr. Copeland:** You just did it.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Well, you did it. I mean, if took all night, you worked all night, and if it didn't get done till noon the next day, you just kept working 'til it got done, you know. But it always got done.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** There weren't times when...

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh no, the staff would never go home, oh no, oh no.

**Mr. White:** Then other guys would drift in, you know.

**Ms. Marchesini:** We'd send somebody home to sleep for couple of hours and somebody else, you know...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Take turns?

**Mr. White:** It was like fireman duty, some of it. You just had to be there.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So lots of coffee, lots of...? You're saying: yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes!

**Mr. White:** And then we had a couple of legislative free loaders that were always coming in and grabbing whatever snacks there were on.



## APPENDIX

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**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes!

**Mr. White:** They licked us clean and they never say thank you!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So you had a little candy dish? Big donuts or something?

**Mr. White:** Oh, we had chips and stuff.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Always stuff around.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** To keep yourselves going?

**Mr. Copeland:** Gay always had a box of candy in her desk. Somebody walked by and gave her some. I know I did on several occasions. People always said to me, “Why are you giving her candy?” I said, “Because I know how to get into the front door.”

**Ms. Kilgannon:** You have to keep up your stamina somehow. You were talking about the days when it was a literally a smoke-filled room and...all the things that are now are no longer permissible.

**Mr. White:** No more.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Nobody thought anything about that, really.

**Mr. White:** Well it’s interesting. If you’re on T.V. late at night, some night and you see one of those old movies—they all smoked.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I understand later, when they cleaned the Legislative Building, that the actual paint colors in the Legislative chambers were totally different from what they thought they were because of so many years of cigarette smoke.

**Mr. White:** Yes.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh I mean, there were thousands of not only ashtrays with House and Senate all over them, but spittoons, you know, that were everywhere. Oh yes.

**Mr. White:** Governor Hartley made a big thing out of spittoons. They had big brass spittoons with four corners. Hartley went campaigning with one of these, campaigning through the state as to what an extravagance it was, but the Senate had spittoons in there for years.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Then, in every elevator were the big ash trays filled with sand, you know; you just put your cigarette out before you got into the elevator—maybe!

**Mr. Copeland:** In the original House and Senate in 1927, every House and Senate desk was equipped with a brass spittoon—every one.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** A lot of chewing.

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes. So, any rate, over time these all became surplus and at one time they decided to sell them and some of the legislative wives found out about it and went down there and they were auctioning these things off. And my wife bought two of them for three dollars a piece.

**Mr. Copeland:** And then they broke for lunch and they went back to start over again and they said, “You know, they’re auctioning off these spittoons. Boy, a lot of people went down there, and when they started up at 1:30 and the first one after that went for thirty dollars! I got two of those brass spittoons.

**Ms. Marchesini:** You’ve still got them?

**Mr. Copeland:** Yes!

**Ms. Marchesini:** Good for you.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I got a couple of good chunks of the marble.

**Mr. Copeland:** Oh, that they took off after the earthquake?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes.

**Mr. Copeland:** Is that right? Oh boy!

**Ms. Kilgannon:** How was your office hit by the earthquake of '65? Did paper fly all over the place?

**Ms. Marchesini:** No, we had some damage... we had to leave and go over to the IBM Building for a while.

**Mr. White:** I remember Sam Smith turned white as a sheet.

**Ms. Marchesini:** See, what happened was, it used to be when they stopped the clock—an artifice sometimes used to pretend the Legislature was in session after the actual sixty days had expired—the members didn't get any more per diem...Well, Sam Smith didn't have any more per diem and he ran out of money so he was sleeping up in the Democratic caucus room. And so he was up there in the House chambers...this earthquake was before 8:00 in the morning...And he's the only one up there. Well, I mean, great big things of glass were falling down. That's when they all said, "Sam Smith turned white." I mean he was so scared...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Sure, that's terrible.

**Mr. White:** I don't blame him.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Oh yes, that was scary.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** That's not the place you want to be.

**Mr. Copeland:** The story is he made it out of the House to the center line of Capital Way in six seconds flat.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I bet. That was a scary time.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** But your office, you had to move out for this?

**Ms. Marchesini:** Yes, but we didn't right away. No, there was just some structural damage. But we finished the session, certainly, and it was in the summer when we moved.

**Mr. White:** And our shop was so sparsely furnished out that ...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** ...there was nothing to knock over?

**Ms. Marchesini:** He just crawled under the desk.

**Mr. White:** I had a dumb old camp bed in my office.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, not very plush. Spartan?

**Mr. Copeland:** Plush! Wait a minute. You forgot to add the green eye shade.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** We can close with this image. The dress regulation of the office?

**Mr. Copeland:** The green eye shade that Dick...for that was a thing of beauty and it was the trademark of the code reviser.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I loved it.

## APPENDIX

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**Mr. Copeland:** I always loved it, the green eye shade.

**Ms. Marchesini:** I told Tom that green eye shade was the brunt of many Christmas party gifts.

**Mr. White:** It was.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** So, this was something that you wore?

**Mr. White:** It was a celluloid green eye shade.

**Ms. Marchesini:** You wore it when you were working. You bet.

**Mr. White:** It was helpful.

**Mr. Copeland:** You should have seen the lighting in his room. He had one sixty watt light globe hanging from a cord.

**Ms. Kilgannon:** Oh dear, a little like Dickens, you know.

**Mr. White:** Anyway, anyway...

**Ms. Kilgannon:** I picture you in a high stool like in the story of Scrooge.

**Ms. Marchesini:** Not quite!

- Adams, Alfred 239, 248, 337  
 Ahlquist, Maurice 114, 143, 193, 248, 266, 272, 330, 360  
 Ambrose, Stephen 36-38, 44, 56, 67  
 Amen, Otto 668  
 Andersen, James 136, 137, 145, 170, 199, 222, 226, 227, 233, 248, 250, 281, 300-302, 314, 331, 360, 380, 438, 444, 446, 451, 466, 572, 582, 583, 631, 698, 764-767, 775  
 Andersen, Billie 630, 631  
 Anderson, Eric 336  
 Anderson, Dorothy 399, 400  
 Andrews, Lloyd 193, 194  
 Atwood, R. Frank 228, 572, 676  
 Avey, Art 336
- Bachofner, William 425, 755  
 Baker, Frank 346  
 Bailey, Robert 380, 382, 452, 572, 608  
 Bachofner, William 589, 590  
 Barden, Paul 608, 609  
 Beall, Lieutenant Colonel 25, 62, 63  
 Benitz, Max 298  
 Berentson, Duane 226, 360, 650  
 Bergh, Arnie 240, 252, 253  
 Billington, Ken 248  
 Bishop, Warren 145, 146, 289, 290, 563, 755  
 Bledsoe, Stewart 298, 360, 458, 508, 533-535, 557, 596, 621, 635, 636, 638, 640, 641, 668, 677, 681, 728, 733, 735  
 Bone, Hugh 502  
 Bottiger, Ted 421, 484, 505, 508, 540, 541, 554  
 Bowden, Ward 599  
 Brachtenbach, Robert 226, 233, 300-302, 314, 325, 327, 360, 402, 407, 775  
 Brando, Marlon 591  
 Braun, Eric 176, 252, 253  
 Brazier, Don 101, 247, 723  
 Brennan, Joe 129  
 Brink, Daniel 161, 211  
 Brooks, Peter 630  
 Brouillet, Frank "Buster" 122, 176, 191, 200, 311, 349, 412, 418, 458, 557  
 Brown, Art 648  
 Brownell, John 272  
 Bugge, Bill 166, 569  
 Burt, Lyle 527  
 Burtch, Jack 500
- Callaghan, Peter 160  
 Canfield, Damon 197-199, 232, 234, 237, 255, 300, 301  
 Canwell, Albert 297  
 Carson, Rachel 474  
 Carter, James E. 637, 747  
 Ceccarelli, David 578, 581, 582  
 Chandler, Rod 775  
 Chapin, Richard 466  
 Charette, Robert 486, 534, 595, 607  
 Chatalas, William 641  
 Cherberg, John 122, 421  
 Christensen, Richard 280, 281, 282, 289  
 Churchill, Winston 30  
 Chytil, Joseph 380  
 Clark, Newman "Zeke" 145, 153, 193, 194, 196, 198, 199  
 Clocksin, Virginia 440, 451  
 Cole, Bert 122, 131, 147, 245, 369, 370, 373, 427, 428, 494, 495, 516, 517  
 Collins, Lee 127, 505  
 Comfort, Pat 196  
 Condon, George 502, 505  
 Cooney, John 452  
 Copeland family:  
     Copeland, Brooke 88, 433, 631, 753  
     Copeland, David 88, 433, 631, 753  
     Copeland, Delia (mother) 7, 69, 630, 631, 774, 775  
     Copeland, Dolly (Doble) 72, 73, 87, 96, 130, 413, 414, 419, 420, 630, 631, 774  
     Copeland, Donna (Edwards) 740, 750, 753, 754  
     Copeland, Edwin (father) 3, 5-7, 75, 84, 630, 631, 682, 774  
     Copeland, Grant 4  
     Copeland, Henry 80, 100, 101, 106, 107, 114  
     Copeland, Henry S. 1  
     Copeland, Patty 3, 70  
     Copeland, Tim 88, 306, 307, 324, 325, 433, 630, 631, 753  
     Matters, Captain Gary 70  
     Wallace, Thomas 1
- Croaker, George 72  
 Cummings, Robert 680  
 Cunningham, Norwood 298, 484, 533  
 Current, Johnny 127
- Danzi, Major Richard 60  
 Davis, Joe 130, 339, 608, 639

## INDEX

---

- Day, William 146, 214, 220, 231, 232, 234-237, 239, 240, 243, 248, 251-254, 275-277, 281, 312, 380, 588, 589, 678, 729, 735  
Dingwall, Ewing 221  
Dolliver, James 281, 290, 306, 307, 505, 687  
Donohue, Hubert 626, 729, 735  
Douthwaite, Jeff 658  
Dore, Fred 123, 381, 382  
Drumheller, John 528, 588  
Durkan, Martin 122, 136, 203, 412, 543, 614, 631, 642, 676  
Durkan, Lolly 631  
Dwyer, Bill 296, 297
- Earley, Robert 226  
Ehlers, Wayne 157  
Eikenberry, Kenneth 160, 161, 775  
Eisenhower, Dwight D. 30, 31, 52, 56, 98, 100, 102, 109, 110, 112  
Eldridge, Don 176, 197, 198, 202, 234, 237, 252, 300, 302, 444-451, 453, 454, 458, 459, 461, 486, 521, 533, 535, 536, 540, 595, 606, 607, 620, 622, 633  
Ellis, James 477  
Elway, Harry 122  
England, Jack 196  
Epton, Kathryn 242  
Evans, Daniel J. 122, 136, 137, 145, 153, 154, 157, 166, 168, 196-199, 202, 204-206, 219, 226, 227, 231, 233-235, 237, 239, 240, 241, 249, 250, 252, 253, 276, 278, 280-283, 289, 290, 291, 295, 296, 298, 300, 302, 305, 306, 309-311, 315-322, 341, 342, 344, 346, 355, 381, 389, 396, 402, 420, 421, 431, 440-442, 448, 468-471, 473, 474, 476-478, 490, 494, 496, 502, 510, 512, 521-524, 529, 532, 541-543, 547, 565, 569, 578, 592, 594, 611-615, 631, 633, 638, 642, 655, 665, 667, 676, 682, 684-691, 695, 696, 714, 725, 727, 733, 734, 738, 775  
Evans, Nancy 310, 387, 631
- Farr, Caswell 438  
Farrington, Clayton 176, 210  
Ferguson, Adele 350, 386, 416, 430, 557  
Ferguson, Baker 626, 627  
Flanagan, Sid 196, 255, 415  
Foley, Frank 203, 469  
Folsom, Morrill 214, 248  
Ford, Gerald R. 288  
Frank, Bill  
Freise, Herbert 114, 272  
French, Clement 505
- Gallagher, Michael 136  
Gandy, Joe 289  
Gardner, Boothe 696  
Garrett, Avery 210, 252, 253, 275, 454  
Gates, Bill 406  
Gebenini, Bill 378  
Gissberg, William 203, 452, 469, 470, 472, 515, 521, 543, 546, 572, 585, 614  
Gleason, Marian 243, 248  
Goldmark, John 122, 200, 211, 212, 296-298  
Goldwater, Barry 282, 286, 287  
Goldsworthy, Robert 122, 137, 157, 172, 227, 233, 250, 255, 300-302, 314, 349, 418, 449, 451, 453, 455, 457, 458, 496, 533, 534, 541, 596, 602, 631, 634, 635, 659, 662, 729, 733-735, 775  
Goldsworthy, Jean 631  
Gorton, Slade 136, 137, 143, 145, 153, 157, 199, 226, 227, 231, 234, 235, 248, 250, 256-258, 272, 296-298, 302, 305, 306, 336, 360, 444-447, 449-451, 453, 457, 458, 465, 470, 470, 532, 533, 616, 645, 650, 676, 688, 699, 717, 719, 775  
Graham, Robert 123  
Grant, Gary 571, 606-608, 610, 611, 641, 643  
Gregory, Dick 591  
Greive, R.R. "Bob" 127, 136, 176, 195, 198-200, 207, 228, 245, 256, 257, 268-270, 274, 298, 305-307, 309, 310, 335, 339, 353, 382, 383, 389, 393, 396, 409, 412, 452, 453, 455, 458, 459, 469, 470, 487, 502, 508, 535, 537, 538, 595, 598, 606, 607, 614, 639, 648, 688, 690, 692, 698, 729-732, 737, 738  
Grimm, Daniel 157  
Guy, Richard 251
- Hadley, Herb 226, 250, 280, 283  
Hallauer, Wilbur 120, 123, 176, 203, 505  
Halter, Dean 630  
Haman, Ray 306, 307, 309, 522  
Han, Peter 447  
Hanna, Cecil 130  
Hansen, Julia Butler 123, 126, 165-167, 557, 570  
Hansen, Peter 273  
Hanson, Don 405  
Hartley, Roland 385, 387, 388  
Hawley, Dwight 237, 240, 248  
Harris, Edward 248, 360, 451, 588  
Haussler, Joseph 296, 608, 609  
Hayner, H.H. "Dutch" 93, 735, 736  
Hayner, Jeannette 160, 161, 353, 418, 732, 733, 735-737, 775



- Heck, Dennis 157, 773  
Henry, Mildred 211, 255  
Herr, Gordon 380  
Hess, Andy 174, 175, 176, 177  
Heyns, Garrett 116  
Hill, Herb 159, 265  
Hitler, Adolf 56  
Hittle, Leroy 448  
Holcomb, Si 126, 127, 218, 236, 237, 240, 242, 304, 394, 459, 460  
Holden, Ashley 296, 297  
Hood, Jack 143, 145, 248, 250, 255, 303, 314, 360, 448  
Houghton, Lieutenant 24  
Hubbard, Vaughn 596, 625, 626, 660  
Huff, Sergeant Tom 68  
Humiston, Homer 438  
Huntley, Elmer 122, 137, 167, 168, 243, 248, 250, 360, 634, 729, 734, 735  
Hurley, Margaret 210, 211, 220, 231, 232, 234, 239, 242, 251, 252, 583, 588, 589, 641, 658, 678  
Hyppa, Elmer 304, 459
- Jackson, Henry 111, 112  
Jacobs, Bill 284, 661  
Jastad, Elmer 380  
Johnson, Charles 207, 252  
Johnson, Doris 458, 712  
Johnson, Lyndon B. 62, 196, 282, 286, 287, 298, 420, 531, 663  
Johnson, Montgomery "Gummy" 291, 292, 294, 295, 298, 440-442, 447, 527  
Johnston, Elmer 145, 197-199, 238  
Jolly, Dan 255, 712, 729-732, 737  
Jones, Lieutenant 42  
Juelling, Helmut 451, 607
- Kalich, Hugh 486, 487  
Kennedy, John F. 195, 196, 287, 288  
Kennedy, Robert 288, 530  
Kenyon, Mrs. (teacher) 12  
Kilbury, Charles 712, 732, 737  
King, Chet 231, 234, 239, 248, 435  
King, Joseph 161, 559  
King, Martin Luther 288, 530  
Kink, Richard 122, 211, 214, 220, 231, 234, 239  
Kiskaddon, Bill 658  
Kirk, Gladys 248, 300, 302, 458, 535  
Kinneer, George 108, 249
- Klein, William 500  
Kopet, Jerry 588, 589  
Kornmesser, Joyce 467  
Kramer, Ludlow 298, 306, 310, 311, 502, 504, 589
- Langlie, Arthur B. 111, 112, 114, 311  
LaPalm, Ernie 754, 755  
Latham, Captain Bill 33, 39, 40, 46, 61  
Leland, Al 170, 331  
Lewis, Harry 196, 209-211, 227, 248, 284, 285, 380, 382, 439  
Lind, Charles 226  
Lindell, Rocky 122  
Litchman, Mark 211, 215, 239, 240, 251, 313, 458  
Locke, Gary 674  
Loney, Milt 114  
Loney, Bob 596  
Lowry, Mike 775  
Lybecker, Gus 248  
Lynch, Marjorie 226, 479, 480, 564-568
- Magnuson, Warren 111, 112, 280, 281, 527, 564  
Mahaffey, Audley 248  
Mardesich, August 122, 123, 153, 200, 203, 412, 418, 452, 469, 470, 543, 546, 557, 614  
Martonik, George 269  
Maxey, Chester 100  
Mason, Alden 559  
Mast, Fred 248  
May, Catherine 123, 137, 775  
McBeath, Malcolm 459, 460, 599, 643  
McCaffree, Mary Ellen 226, 360, 574-576, 726  
McCann, Charles 482  
McCutcheon, John 257  
McCormack, Mike 122, 168, 220, 681, 775  
McCormick, Bill 122, 231, 232, 232, 234, 239, 248, 252, 336, 496, 588, 589, 660  
McCutcheon, John 532  
McDermott, James 775  
McDougall, Robert 196, 214, 250, 454, 455, 458, 466, 533, 596  
McLaughlin, Mary 467  
McNurlin, Charles 177, 402, 411  
Metcalf, Jack 285  
Meyers, Victor 306, 311  
Miles, Donald 226, 266-268  
Minnick, W.L. "Shine" 737  
Moon, Charles 255, 462, 641

## INDEX

---

- Moos, Donald 143, 145, 227, 248, 255, 285, 288, 302, 304, 313, 359, 591, 631  
Moos, Parmalee 288, 631  
Morgan, Dean 130  
Morgan, Frances Haddon 435  
Moriarty, Charles 122, 226, 229, 250, 297, 298, 467, 733  
Morphis, Richard 380  
Morrill, Richard 710  
Morrison, Sid 430, 557, 571, 607, 633, 635, 636, 641, 648, 660, 661, 662, 681, 735, 760, 775  
Morrisey, Edward 143, 145, 157, 248  
Mottman, Phyllis 126, 223, 301, 415, 431, 460, 631  
Mundy, Roy 252, 253  
Munro, Edward 123, 136  
Munro, Ralph 775
- Neill, Marshall 145, 203, 622, 634, 733  
Nelson, Lars 130  
Newhouse, Irving 298, 533, 534, 536, 579, 621, 633, 641  
Newschwander, Charles 248, 250, 258, 444  
Nickerson, Dr. James 176, 177  
Nixon, Richard M. 109, 112, 195, 196, 531, 564, 604, 663  
North, Lois 582-585, 641
- O'Brien, John L. 120-124, 126, 129, 136, 138, 139, 143, 144, 154, 195, 197-199, 203, 207, 210-212, 215, 216, 220, 225, 232, 236, 237, 239-242, 247, 251, 252, 253, 275-278, 303, 304, 310, 311, 312, 333, 337, 380, 381, 384, 392, 408, 412, 418, 445, 454, 455, 457, 458, 460, 486, 514, 535, 536, 540, 541, 558-560, 571, 583, 595, 602, 621, 622, 631, 641, 643, 648, 775  
O'Brien, Mary 631  
O'Brien, Robert 122  
O'Connell, Bill 239, 252, 325, 328,  
O'Connell, John 502, 504, 505, 525, 531  
O'Dell, Robert 298  
Odell, Mike 226, 609  
Olsen, Ray 157, 380  
Orchard, Vance 95, 96  
Ott, Richard 307125
- Pardini, A.J. "Bud" 641, 693, 694  
Patterson, Pat 423, 563  
Patton, George 30, 52  
Pence, Stan 145  
Penn, William 558  
Perry, Robert 211, 214, 220, 231, 232, 234, 235, 239, 242, 252, 253, 641, 678-680
- Pratt, Edwin 589  
Prince, Eugene 459, 461, 643  
Pritchard, Joel 136, 137, 143, 145, 161, 162, 172, 197, 199, 226, 227, 252, 253, 285, 360, 466, 467, 502, 582, 611, 688, 775
- Rasmussen, A.L. "Slim" 123, 268-270, 484, 648  
Rayburn, Sam 86  
Reagan, Ronald W. 288, 297, 443  
Reed, Sam 775  
Reed, Thomas P. 122  
Reese, John 93  
Reese, Walt 226  
Reynolds, Maryan 182  
Rhay, Bobby J. 116, 117, 343  
Rockefeller, Nelson 286, 287  
Rocky, Jay 221  
Rogers, Jack 312  
Roosevelt, Franklin D. 16, 17, 30, 55, 102, 103  
Rosellini, Albert D. 114-116, 119, 122, 132, 140, 145, 150-152, 172, 173, 193-195, 200, 278203-205, 249, 279, 289, 291, 305, 306, 311, 315, 341, 440, 455, 473, 510, 569, 690, 734  
Rosenberg, Ken 243, 246, 255  
Ryder, John 176, 203, 250
- Saling, Jerry 284, 298  
Sandison, Gordon 122, 123, 176, 555  
Sawyer, Leonard 123, 198, 200, 211, 336, 445, 458, 461, 468, 486, 524, 534, 555, 668, 685  
Schaefer, Robert 211, 240, 246, 277, 278, 303-305, 309, 310, 312, 313, 314, 327, 361, 378, 381, 412, 421  
Schneider, William 403-405, 432  
Schwarzkopf, Norman 450  
Scott, George 557  
Sears, Carlton 111  
Shefelman, Harold 505  
Shepard, Alan  
Shinpoch, A.N. "Bud" 557, 696  
Shropshire, Lincoln 145, 197, 199  
Siler, Harry 214, 252  
Sirhan, Sirhan 288  
Smith, Sam 161, 162, 421, 609  
Smythe, Richard 438  
Snyder, Sid 304, 431, 459, 599  
Spellman, John 561, 638  
Sprague, David 502  
Struthers, Gene 18, 23, 24

- Swayze, Frances 198, 252, 300, 302  
Swayze, Thomas 360, 438, 484, 633-638, 648, 677-680,  
731, 735  
Sylvester, Jack 631  
Sylvester, Jane 631
- Taylor, Richard 240  
Testu, Jeannette 454  
Thiry, Paul 385, 386  
Thompson, Albert 176, 250, 466, 557  
Timm, Robert 123  
Toombs, Richard Mark 95-96  
Tourtelott, Janet 108  
Trigg, Charlie 398, 399  
Truman, Harry S. 102  
Turner, Isaiah 754, 755
- Uhlman, Wes 157
- Vogle, Dr. 89
- Walker, Bruce 390, 413, 414  
Walgren, Gordon 582, 583  
Wanamaker, Pearl 125, 175, 191  
Wang, Arnold 252, 283, 528  
Wedekind, Max 211  
West, Herb 100  
Weston, Edward 130  
Weyerhaeuser, George 505  
Whetzel, Jonathan 298, 534  
White, Richard 397, 398, 399-401, 405, 406-408,  
462, 463, 509, 512, 522, 525, 526, 536, 597, 692  
Wilbur, Colonel Charles 58, 59, 62  
William Jr., Walter 196  
William Sr., Walter 193  
Wintler, Ella 454  
Wilson, Don  
Wojahn, Lorraine 557  
Wolf, Hal 298, 333, 380, 445, 453, 455, 461, 468, 482,  
534, 536, 554, 556, 571, 579, 595, 607, 641, 693, 695, 728  
Woodall, Perry 380, 382, 689, 733, 734, 738
- Yamashita, Jack 749  
Young, William 226  
Young, Ralph C. "Brigham" 267
- Zahl, Jerry 741  
Zimmerman, Harold 609