Elmer Huntley

An Oral History

Interviewed by Sharon Boswell

Washington State Oral History Program
Office of the Secretary of State
Ralph Munro, Secretary of State

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To generations of Huntley wives.

They stood by their husbands and kept the home fires burning while their husbands pursued outside interests. The Huntley men became true role models, as farmers, public servants, community leaders; and as true and loving husbands and fathers.

Necia Bennett Huntley

“Lord, make my words sweet and kind today, for I may have to eat them tomorrow.”

A prayer introduced and used by Elmer Huntley when he was Illustrious Potentate of the El Katif Shrine Temple in Spokane in 1975.

FOREWORD

Elmer Huntley was an eminent representative and senator from Whitman County. He came to the House of Representatives in 1957, the same year I did. I enjoyed working with Elmer on the House Highways Committee. He had a deep interest in and commitment to providing a modern transportation system for our state. He also worked hard for higher education, particularly the interests of Washington State University.

Elmer was a steady and respected member of the Republican caucus. He did not speak often, but when he did, it was with authority and conviction.

I was pleased when Senator Huntley accepted my request that he join my administration as a member of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission.

Elmer Huntley was a fine citizen legislator. He was also, in the best sense, a career politician; he knew that politics was the art and science of government. He practiced that skill well and consistently, throughout his distinguished career.

DANIEL J. EVANS

Former United States Senator
Former Washington State Governor

FOREWORD

To me, Elmer C. Huntley was the very epitome of integrity. It always seemed as if his every action, both in his public life and his private life, was determined by what was best for the most people. Even now, in dealing with difficult situations, I ask myself, "What would Bud do in this situation?"

I first met Elmer Huntley on a Washington State University football team flight in 1957. The Cougars were going to play Stanford. Elmer was a newly elected state representative from Whitman County. I was a WSU sophomore and student manager of the football team. Talking with him on that turbulent flight I never dreamed I would marry his niece, Betty Nelson, four years later. In the years since, we enjoyed reminiscing about that trip and the game–WSU won in the last thirty seconds.

Elmer was devoted to his family. Since he and Necia had no children, their nieces and nephews and their spouses and children became their family. Elmer was very close to them and was always there to help.

To me, Elmer was much more than my wife's uncle, state leader, and well-known and respected political figure–he was also my very good friend.

PATRICK GILL

Assistant Superintendent
Olympia School District No. 111

FOREWORD

Elmer C. “Bud” Huntley was a man of great integrity and honor. He was destined to be of service to his community and his state.

Much has been written about Bud’s many accomplishments, the organizations to which he belonged, and his ability to reach the top of each. For example, in addition to his distinguished career in politics, he was president of the Washington Wheat Growers Association and became a Master Mason, progressing to the honorary thirty-third degree in the Scottish Rite.

But there was another side of Bud that many people did not see. His friends knew he was a bit of a cutup with a pixie sense of humor.

He took his campaigning for public office very seriously. Yet when he was seen on the streets of a Whitman County town, he would be surrounded by people and they would be laughing.

Sometimes in the fall of the year he would slip away from the campaign trail and show up at the Washington State University football field where the Cougars would be in practice. Once he made a comment to the coach that a certain defensive back was playing a little too wide. The coach said, “Yeah, we have been trying all week to keep him in position.”

One time there was a bill before the House of Representatives that pertained to the game and game-fish committee. The chairman of the committee had a nice-looking salmon that was going to be presented to the Speaker. Just before the fish was taken in, Bud borrowed a lighted cigarette and put it in the mouth of the salmon. That fish was taken to the Speaker with that cigarette in its mouth and the House roared with laughter. The bill passed.

In remembrance for his dedicated service to his state, the bridge which spans the Snake River at Central Ferry has been named the Elmer C. Huntley Bridge. But we will remember him best for his humor–for making everyone he met feel good.

ROBERT F. GOLDSWORTHY
Former Washington State Representative

FOREWORD

Senator Elmer Huntley was one of the finest people I have ever known. He and his wife, Necia, represented public service at its very best. I didn't know Senator Huntley as Elmer, always as "Bud," his nickname.

Bud Huntley was my adviser when I was a young person beginning my career in government. He helped not just me, but all of us who were learning how the system worked. He taught us how to observe. We found out how to detect mistakes, problems, and conflicts of interest. Bud showed us how to effectively represent our own ideas, concerns, and interests in the Legislature. If there ever was a pro at all of this, it was Senator Huntley.

Bud Huntley was always interested in the public benefits and not in his own. Never did I see him show favoritism or advocate selfishness. It was always "How can we serve the public better?"

I wish more people now in state government had the commitment and dedication of Bud Huntley. There are some who meet his standards, but far fewer than twenty or thirty years ago.

When we lose those like Senator Huntley, the loss is permanent. Our entire system never quite recovers. I wonder whether we will ever meet that ideal again. I can only hope that we will.

Until that time, I am grateful for Bud Huntley's example. He gave us a measure to gauge all that we do.

RALPH MUNRO

Secretary of State

FOREWORD

It is an honor and a privilege to be asked to write a foreword to this oral history.

Elmer Huntley was a true representative of the people. He gave his whole life to public service: to the people he represented, and to preserving the system. He also played a big part in starting my own career in public service.

I believe Elmer was as well respected and highly thought of as anyone who has ever served our area. He was probably as closely associated with the people he represented as any legislator could be. He not only knew the people he represented, he knew all about them: their birth-days, anniversaries, and family background. And Elmer always had time for helping his neighbors. I can cite an example. One year while Elmer was harvesting his own crop, he heard that his neighbor, the owner of the next farm, was very ill. His crop was ready to be cut, but he was unable to harvest it. After contacting the family, Elmer moved his entire harvesting outfit and crew into his neighbor's field and did all the harvesting. Then he moved back into his own field to continue his own harvest.

Elmer served as a member of the House of Representatives and, for a short time, as chairman of the Transportation Committee in the House. He was also the chairman of the Highway Commission, now known as the Transportation Commission. He was a state senator, and a member of the Utilities and Transportation Commission.

When you read of his experiences and of his life, keep in mind he was an individual who gave everything he had to the political system. He believed in it wholeheartedly. We can respect his efforts, achievements and examples. And we can all learn from him. He was truly a great American, dedicated to the state of Washington.

EUGENE PRINCE

Washington State Senator

FOREWORD

If all lawmakers in the United States were as good as Senator Elmer Huntley, our country would be a much better place for everyone.

There would be no laws passed out of anger or revenge; no heated, angry, nonproductive argument, no posturing or grandstanding. All legislators would have voted for those things they thought were in the best interest of the state. No blind partisanship would have prevailed. There would have been superb cooperation between the two parties throughout the legislative session, especially when legislation was being decided in conference. Legislative sessions would have ended on time. Confidence in legislative bodies would have soared instead of diminished. The initiative process would have been used as our forefathers intended: only in times of strong dissatisfaction with the performance of our elected officials.

Yes, if all lawmakers had Elmer Huntley's temperament, dedication, integrity and patience, our state and nation would be free of many of the problems we have today.

I became acquainted with Senator Huntley in 1967, soon after I became president of Washington State University. I worked with him for the next five years until redistricting resulted in his untimely defeat. I never worked with a lawmaker whom I admired more than I did this senator. He arrived at what he thought was the right thing by always putting the welfare of his beloved state first.

Elmer Huntley was a tireless, effective advocate for Washington State University and for all state education. He was especially fond of young people. And just as important, he respected them, as evidenced by his support for legislation lowering the voting age to eighteen. We both served during the student unrest era, and had many discussions about legislative and campus issues. Unlike many public officials nationwide, Elmer never attempted to make political gains out of campus unrest.

Senator Huntley was a very capable man, and his ability was recognized by his peers in state government. He was also one of the most modest men I have ever known. As far as I know, all of his

elections and appointments to important positions in state government came as a result of the insistence of his colleagues that he accept or run for the offices he held. For example, when Senator Marshall Neill was appointed to the state Supreme Court, he strongly urged the then Representative Huntley to run for his Senate seat. Wallis Beasley, president of Washington State University, joined Judge Neill in persuading Huntley to run. Huntley was elected.

Following one term as a senator, Huntley was urged by party leaders to let the governor appoint him secretary of Agriculture. In his unique, self-effacing way, the senator refused to allow his name to be forwarded to Governor Dan Evans. Thus he passed by an almost certain appointment to one of the most important state cabinet posts.

Governor Evans later urged Senator Huntley to accept an appointment to the Transportation and Utilities Commission. This time the governor was more successful. Elmer accepted and capped his career of public service in that significant position.

I cannot conclude my comments about Senator Huntley without commenting on his wife, Necia. She was his strength; a steady and faithful helpmate. This foreword reflects the great admiration I have for both of these wonderful people. They deserve a very important place in the history of the state of Washington.

GLENN TERRELL

President Emeritus, Washington State University

PREFACE

The purpose of the Washington State Oral History Program is to document the formation of public policy in Washington State. This is done by interviewing legislators, state officials, staff, and citizens who have been involved in state politics. Their recollections provide unique perspectives on elusive political activities.

Producing oral history transcripts involves several steps. First, our Legislative Advisory Committee selects an interviewee. Program researchers gather background material from government publications, personal papers, newspaper articles, and consultation with those closely associated with the interviewee. Next, we record a series of interviews lasting twelve to twenty hours. These interviews emphasize the subject's political career. The interviewee is encouraged to talk about early experiences which may have led to public service or helped define political values. Important events, achievements, and disappointments are discussed. Much of our dialogue concerns the functions of formal and informal political processes, and how they mesh.

When the interviews are complete, a verbatim transcript is prepared. The interviewer and interviewee correct grammar and punctuation. Repetitions are removed, but extensive substantive editing is unusual. The interviewee writes the dedication, provides the biography and material for the appendices, and suggests friends and colleagues who may contribute forewords. The Department of Printing prints and binds the transcripts, and they are distributed to libraries and archives statewide. The original tapes, transcripts, and research documents are retained by the State Archives.

The Oral History Program budget requires strict economy. Thus, the cursory table of contents is the only index. Chapter titles specify dominant themes, but discussion of some topics occurs in several chapters. We hope readers will be aided by Library of Congress subject headings describing the components of each chapter.

Careful readers may find errors. Editing errors are ours. Recollection and interpretation varies as it does in other historical records–official documents, newspapers, letters, and diaries.

It is the hope of Oral History Program staff that this work will help citizens better understand their political legacy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Washington State Oral History Program owes thanks to many.

Members of our Legislative Advisory Committee have consistently provided encouragement, ideas, and political savvy. They are also invariably friendly and cheerful.

At present the committee includes Senators Eugene Prince, Sid Snyder, Shirley Winsley, and Al Bauer; Representatives Ken Jacobsen, Sandra Romero, Don Carlson, and Kathy Lambert; Secretary of the Senate Marty Brown, and Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives Tim Martin. Ex officio members are Mr. Warren Bishop, Mr. David Nicandri, and former Senators Robert Bailey, George Scott, and Alan Thompson.

We are grateful for the service of prior committee members: Senator Rosa Franklin; former Senators Alan Bluechel, Ray Moore, and Peter von Reichbauer; and former Secretary of the Senate Gordon Golob.

We depend on Secretary of State Ralph Munro for his loyal support. We commend Assistant Secretary of State Donald Whiting and Director of Elections Gary McIntosh for their patience and willingness to offer advice.

Our interviewer, Sharon Boswell, is without equal. She is adaptable, analytical, objective and sympathetic.

Senate Docket Clerk Pat Durham is our transcriber. We appreciate her skill and knowledge. Our part-time editor Clint Robbins is quick, proficient, and witty. During 1995 and 1996 our volunteers Rhiannon Hanfman, Judith Loft, Bob Johnson, and Karen Volkman have provided everything from comprehensive research to perfect indices.

Our oral histories are printed by the Department of Printing. State Printer Lee Blankenship, Production Planner Evonne Anderson, Data Processing Manager Michael Cole, and Estimator Kelley Kellerman are experts. They are also kind, understanding, and reliable.

We could have had no better help with this volume than that given by Necia Huntley. She is tactful, wise, and gracious. In addition to carefully reviewing the transcripts, she has supplied us with superlative material for the introductory pages and the appendices. We cannot overstate our gratitude.

All of those named gave more than we asked. It is a privilege to acknowledge them.

BIOGRAPHY

ELMER C. HUNTLEY

June 1, 1915 - May 13, 1994

The rolling Palouse hills and wheatfields of eastern Washington were home to the Huntley family. In 1915, Elmer Huntley was born to Ernest and Emily Huntley on the family farm near St. John. He grew up on the farm and then enrolled in Washington State College in Pullman. There he met Necia Bennett of Klickitat. They married on September 29, 1935, and began farming in Thornton, Washington, not far from St. John.

In 1956, Elmer was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives. He served five terms, and one term as a Washington State senator. In 1973 the Huntleys moved to Olympia where he accepted the position of State Utilities and Transportation Commissioner. He served as chairman of the State Highway Commission, Toll Bridge Authority.

Mr. Huntley also helped organize the Washington Association of Wheat Growers, and served on its board of directors. He was the first president of the Whitman County Association of Wheat Growers.

His interests and influence went beyond the wheat ranches of eastern Washington. He served on the Board of Trustees of the Spokane Deaconess Medical Center, and the Board of General Telephone. He was a longtime member of the Board of Directors of the Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children, and was a twenty-five-year member of the Board of Directors of the Old National Bank of Washington. He was also a director of Sunset Life Insurance Company.

Elmer Huntley was a Thirty-third Degree Mason, Past Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge in Washington and Alaska, and Past Potentate of the Spokane El Katif Shrine.

His other memberships included the First United Methodist Church of Olympia, the Olympia Rotary Club, the Olympia Yacht Club, the Capitol City Golf Club, the Spokane Club, and the Washington State University Alumni Association. He and his wife were founders and charter members of the Washington State University Presidents Associates.

From: Memorial Service for Elmer C. Huntley
May 17, 1994
First United Methodist Church
Olympia, Washington

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PIONEERS AND HOMESTEADERS

Ms. Boswell: As I said, I think we'll just get started talking a little bit about family background. Tell me a little bit about the Huntley family coming to the Northwest. When did that happen?

Mr. Huntley: My Grandfather Huntley came with a wagon train from Davis, California, to Thornton in 1880.

Ms. Boswell: What prompted them to move?

Mr. Huntley: I really don't know. I think there were stories about the fertile land in the state of Washington. I guess that was probably one of the things that prompted them. If you read that little book, the Huntleys and the Wormells were two of the families that came up together, and when they got to where Central Ferry is today, in fact, that's where that bridge is, they parted and the Wormells proceeded up on the east side of the Snake River up to Asotin, and that's where they homesteaded. My grandfather and his brother and their mother crossed the river and then came up to Thornton and that's where they homesteaded.

Ms. Boswell: Essentially, what kind of farmland was it at that time?

Mr. Huntley: It was all bunch grass. They had really no idea, they were plowing it up and raising grain on it mainly for cattle.

Ms. Boswell: There was a transition going on soon thereafter, wasn't there from cattle into starting grain-raising?

Mr. Huntley: I think that happened very shortly after they came. I know they had grain, at least in the 1890s because most of the farmers went broke, including my grandfather, because of the depression in 1893.

Ms. Boswell: So the whole Huntley family group that came homesteaded in one place then in Thornton?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: And then they got established, and how did your grandfather and grandmother get together?

Mr. Huntley: My Great-Grandfather Baker and Great-Grandmother Baker came in 1872 by wagon train and they homesteaded about ten miles from where the Huntleys homesteaded. My great-grandparents had five daughters and the oldest was Nettie Baker. She turned out to be my Grandmother Huntley.

Ms. Boswell: They also then had taken a farm in the area?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. In fact it's still in the family. My sister owns it.

Ms. Boswell: In what area would that be? Would that still be considered Thornton?

Mr. Huntley: No, that was down closer to St. John. Of course, some of those towns were named at that time. They established post offices later on. In fact in St. John, the first post office was named Coin. I've heard how that came about and also how St. John came about, but I don't recall.

Ms. Boswell: Have you heard any family stories about how your grandparents got together or what–

Mr. Huntley: No, I really haven't. I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: When they did marry, did they continue to farm in the area?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes.

Ms. Boswell: Whose farm did they run, or did they start their own?

Mr. Huntley: My Grandfather Huntley, after he was married, continued to farm. In fact it's the place that Necia and I own today. We bought it from my Grandmother Huntley's estate when she passed away about the middle of the 1940s.

Ms. Boswell: Is it 160 acres?

Mr. Huntley: There's more than that there nowadays. There is three hundred and some acres now. They just kept adding to it as the years went by and as others came available, other pieces of land next to it.

Ms. Boswell: I was reading in the Huntley family book and there was a story about getting one of the pieces of property by trading a dog. Is that a familiar family story?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, in fact my great-grandmother told me that herself before she passed away.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit more about this?

Mr. Huntley: The thing of it was that they were out there miles and miles from anyplace. Actually, Walla Walla was the closest trading center and people would come out and they'd prove up on pieces of land and the women, in particular, got so homesick and–I don't know what you'd call it–out there in the sticks all alone they would, a lot of times, sell their property in order to get out of the country. My grandmother told me that this man that had a homestead next to theirs down by St. John came up one time and wanted to sell his property to my great-grandfather. I guess Great-Grandfather said that he didn't have any money to buy it with. Of course in those days it was all cattle, and he trained the cattle dogs. The neighbor told him that he would trade that land for that cattle dog. Great-Grandma said that Great-Granddad didn't sleep all night, he tossed and turned worrying whether he should trade that cattle dog off or not. The next day he did. I think it was one hundred and sixty acres. My sister owns that today.

Ms. Boswell: That's a great story. Now tell me, did your grandmother tell other stories about the family?

Mr. Huntley: My great-grandma. Yes, she did. In fact, she used to tell me when I was a little kid, I guess I sat there with bright eyes. They had to go to Walla Walla to the fort when there might be an Indian scare. And that's, I think, one hundred and twenty miles, or something like that. It got so that people would ride through the country spreading the word that the Indians were on the warpath and that they'd better get out. They found that a lot of times it was a false alarm and there'd be thieves come through and steal the cattle and everything that they'd left when they went to the fort. Great-Granddad got so that he got on horseback and got up on top of one of the hills where he could watch the place and the ryegrass down in the lower flats in the bottom, Great-Grandma said was six or eight feet high, and he would take Great-Grandma and the five girls down there and hide them out in this ryegrass. Then he'd get up on the hill and watch. If it looked as though there was a danger coming, he'd get down and get them out. But otherwise, they just sat tight.

Ms. Boswell: Did they ever have an experience where one of the white outlaw types tried to come into their farm?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. I shouldn't say that. I never heard of it if they did.

Ms. Boswell: What about with the Indians? Did they ever have any times when they had bad relations?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. In later years my great-grandfather and a couple of others, who had come in there and homesteaded, built a fort. In fact, I remember it was still standing when I was a little kid, with a stockade around it. It was there if they needed it.

Ms. Boswell: Where was that?

Mr. Huntley: That was at Pine City which is about–air miles–would be probably about five or six miles from the Baker place.

Ms. Boswell: They and their neighbors built that for their own protection?

Mr. Huntley: With a couple of neighbors, yes. I remember one of the old fellows who was still living when I was a little kid. His name was Butler. I never did know my Great-Grandfather Baker. He died before I was born.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit about your grandfather. What was he like?

Mr. Huntley: Grandfather Huntley?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: Well, I guess he was just a typical farmer. I remember him quite well because he passed away in 1938, so I knew him pretty well. He was a fine old gentleman in my book. He had left the farm. They moved to Colfax first, I think, about 1918. And a year or two later they moved to Spokane. That's where they lived when both of them passed away.

Ms. Boswell: Why did they move off the farm?

Mr. Huntley: I'll be darned if I know. Maybe they liked the city life, I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: What about your grandmother? Any strong memories of her?

Mr. Huntley: My Grandmother Huntley?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. She didn't die until after Necia and I had been married for several years. Necia knew her quite well, but she was just a typical housewife in Spokane.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about the years on the farm. As a child, you have memories of your grandparents' place?

Mr. Huntley: My father was farming my great-grandparent Bakers' place. That's where I grew up. That's about nine or ten miles from where the Huntley place was. I was just a typical, ornery, little kid, I guess, as far as I know. I know that even when I was in high school, if I wanted to go into St. John for anything, I had a saddle horse I had to ride. In 1929 I started high school in St. John. It was about five miles and my dad bought a Model T Ford for me to drive, so I started driving about 1929.

Ms. Boswell: That was pretty nice. Tell me about your dad. Did he go to the same school that you did?

Mr. Huntley: No. Close to the Huntley place where Necia and I lived there was just a little country school. He went to school there, and then he went to high school in Colfax. He lived with one of his aunts in Colfax and went to high school.

Ms. Boswell: Was that a common practice, to live in town with the relatives to go to school?

Mr. Huntley: I assume it was. The same little country school where my father went to school, Jim Prince also went to school there, and when Jim died he was the executive vice president of Boeing. He and Bill Allen were law partners in Seattle and when Allen went out to Boeing, he took Jim along with him. It was quite a ways from that little country school to the Boeing plant.

Ms. Boswell: Didn't you tell me also that your great-grandparents built a school in the area? Wasn't it your great-grandparents?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, it was. On the Baker place. That was down by St. John.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about that? Did they build a school for their children?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, these five girls.

Ms. Boswell: Was that because there wasn't much else around them at that time?

Mr. Huntley: I think so. I doubt that there was. In fact, I went to school in the same building.

Ms. Boswell: Oh really? On their place?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. After they were gone, and my folks lived there. That's where I was raised.

Ms. Boswell: Your dad was part of how many children?

Mr. Huntley: I don't remember. It was a pretty good-sized family.

Mrs. Huntley: There were eight.

Ms. Boswell: Was that common in your family–large families, or did it have anything to do with farming and needing more help?

Mr. Huntley: I think in those days they were large families. I knew quite a few people that had large families, when I was old enough to know them and recognize them.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of attitude toward farming and work generally did your grandfather have? Do you remember?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't. Grandfather Huntley left the ranch in, I think, 1918 or '19 and moved to Colfax, so I don't really remember him when he was on the farm.

Ms. Boswell: And then the Baker side of the family, were they much of an influence?

Mr. Huntley: As I said, my grandfather Baker died before I was born, but he left the ranch way back in the 1800s and moved to Colfax. And he and two other people started the Colfax State Bank. They owned it. It went broke when the cashier went south with the money in 1929, I believe it was. The cashier ended up in the penitentiary at Walla Walla. That was long after my grandfather had died. My grandmother was still living, my great-grandmother, and I think she got most of her money out of it and the bank paid off pretty well.

Ms. Boswell: That's an interesting time to have departed, 1929. Did he have any forewarning about what was going to happen?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think so. The cashier of the bank was a delightful person. He spent lots of money. He had two sons about my age, and we were very good friends. One of the boys lives in Seattle right now. I'm not going to tell you who it was, but he's been prominent in Seattle for quite a number of years.

Ms. Boswell: Your dad, in growing up, did he want to become a farmer as well? Was that his goal?

Mr. Huntley: I think so. In fact, my great-grandfather Baker, when Dad and Mother were married, put them down on the ranch that they had homesteaded in 1872. Grandfather Baker had already left the ranch about that time.

Ms. Boswell: Was it pretty common in that area to try to keep the property in the family and have different members of the family live there?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, I think so. Handed from generation to generation. That's usually the way it worked.

Ms. Boswell: So then, your father went onto the Baker property and then what about the Huntley property?

Mr. Huntley: It was rented out for a few years until Necia and I moved up there, and we rented it for awhile until my grandmother passed away. Granddad died first and, of course, she inherited his share of it. We just rented it until her death, then we bought the heirs out.

Ms. Boswell: Was there any kind of consolidation within the family, or did just different parts of the family end up running different places?

Mr. Huntley: That's the way it worked.

Ms. Boswell: Did it make any sense to sort of pool it for machinery or other purposes or not?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, we did that. When dad was still living on the Baker farm, we used to harvest together. It was about nine miles south and west of the Huntley place, and in that short space there was easily about a week or ten days difference in the weather in the spring of the year. The Baker place usually dried out enough to farm it earlier than the Huntley place. We traded work back and forth. The same in harvest.

Ms. Boswell: Did your dad ever, when you were a child, tell you about his experiences in farming, such as, "When I was a boy, this is the way we did it" or anything like that?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think so. I just observed what he did and that was about it.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit about what life was like as a farmer at that time, when you were young.

Mr. Huntley: Of course, they were trying to eke out a living. The farming wasn't very profitable, and nothing else was, either, in those days. I know down at Pullman, at Washington State, I signed up to wait tables or wash dishes or anything else in college in the dorms or eating places. As a farm boy going and trying to get a job, as soon as they found out that you were from a farm they said, "Well, you don't need a job." The attitude was that the farmers were wealthy people because they owned some land, but really we weren't. The kids, of course, from the cities whose fathers had lost their jobs–just the same as they are doing right now–they did need the jobs.

Of course, that was the basic of the farm that my dad had at that time, all they raised was wheat, and a good crop was about thirty bushels to the acre. I think the price was twenty-one cents a bushel. That really didn't pay for the harvesting. It was tough going.

Ms. Boswell: I can imagine. When your dad was sort of in the prime of his farming career, did he require in his operation to hire people, or could the family pretty well do it themselves?

Mr. Huntley: No, he hired quite a few men. In horse days, he had about one hundred head, of course, and it took quite a few hired people to drive that many teams out in the field.
So, yes, he had quite a bit of help.

Ms. Boswell: What about you? When did you start helping, or did you, around the farm?

Mr. Huntley: Well, I don't remember when I did, but I did most of my life. I was either doing chores, milking cows or whatever it took, and then in the summertime, when I wasn't in school, I drove a team in the fields. In 1928, I believe it was, Dad bought one of the very first Caterpillar tractors in that country and started farming with mechanized machinery. And, of course, I was like all kids, I couldn't wait to get on to that tractor. I wished a lot of times I'd never seen that. From then on it's been mechanized all the way.

Ms. Boswell: Was he one of the first to mechanize his farm?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: And what caused him to do that, do you think?

Mr. Huntley: I suppose he figured he could probably get the work done better and maybe cheaper in place of hiring so many men. I assume that was the reason he went to the tractor.

Ms. Boswell: It seemed you had to be somewhat more innovative than others if you were the first to try it out and see what happened.

Mr. Huntley: I think that was about the first one in the country because I remember a lot of people came up there in harvest time and rode on the tractor to see how it was doing and we had people coming in all the time who were wanting to ride on the tractor and see how it worked. And eventually, most of them bought tractors of their own within a few years.

Ms. Boswell: Where would that machinery be coming from, Colfax or Spokane?

Mr. Huntley: I think he bought the first Caterpillar out of Spokane, but it was made in San Leandro, California. I remember the name on the tractor.

Ms. Boswell: Were you able, aside from raising wheat, were you able to be relatively self-sufficient during the '20s and '30s when it was kind of tough?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, there wasn't anything else he could do.

Ms. Boswell: So you did raise a lot of your own food?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. In fact that was a false impression to a lot of people, like down at the college, they said, "Oh gosh, if you're a farmer–." But the farmers raised their own beef and their own pork and chickens and garden stuff and potatoes and things like that. So, we never went hungry, but we didn't have anything, but we didn't go hungry.

Ms. Boswell: What about marketing your crops, particularly the wheat, was that just done in Colfax, or how was that handled?

Mr. Huntley: No. Most of the smaller towns by that time had elevators and warehouses where you stored the stuff. And then they had grain dealers that you sold to and they had their places where they sold it.

Ms. Boswell: So the dealers would set the bushel price at the farm?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. That's one thing, the farmer never sets his price. That's one bad thing about it. Everything they buy–tractor, gasoline or anything–they pay the price that they ask for, but when you go to sell your wheat, or barley, or peas, you sell it for what they offer you. That's it, period.

Ms. Boswell: Makes it a little tough.

Mr. Huntley: It was. It still is.

Ms. Boswell: When you were growing up, you said you first went to the school that was started by the Bakers. It seems to me I remember you telling me that you moved schools though, at some point as a child.

Mr. Huntley: In the first grade, I did. Even though that schoolhouse was right on the ranch and probably a half to three-quarters of a mile from the house. I think I told you that my mother had been a schoolteacher and the teacher that I had when I was in the first grade didn't teach phonics. Mother said, "My son's going to have phonics." I can still remember it. Her arguing with the teacher, and this teacher was from a new mold, I guess, and she didn't teach phonics, so my folks took me out of school in the middle of the year and sent me to Sunset, which is about two miles from home. I either walked or rode a saddle horse. In the bad part of the winter, my dad would harness up a team and hitch them up to either a sled or a wagon and take me to school.

Ms. Boswell: You had how many brothers and sisters?

Mr. Huntley: I have a sister that's about two years younger than I am, and my only brother was four or five years younger than I was. He was the one that was killed in the service.

Ms. Boswell: Did they end up going to the Sunset School, too?

Mr. Huntley: No, at the end of the school year and the starting of the next school year, they had a different teacher so I went to school there, and at the Baker School, and that's where my sister started to school. But then when I got into high school, I drove this Model T Ford and my sister and brother went with me.

Ms. Boswell: I haven't asked too much about your mom or her family. Tell me a little bit more about her.

Mr. Huntley: (Question to Mrs. Huntley) Honey, do you have all that stuff?

Mrs. Huntley: Here, I have it.

Mr. Huntley: My Grandfather Schuster, my mother's name was Schuster, and he was born in–

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Mr. Huntley: I believe that my Grandmother Schuster was raised in Chicago and they were married and went on a farm in Nebraska. My mother was not too old when they left Nebraska and came out to Washington.

Ms. Boswell: Did they come directly to the Colfax area?

Mr. Huntley: They came to St. John, that was the trading center.

Ms. Boswell: The Schuster family, how many children did they have?

Mr. Huntley: It was a big family. (To Mrs. Huntley: How many?)

Mrs. Huntley: There were nine.

Ms. Boswell: And your mom, where did she fall in the progression?

Mr. Huntley: There were two families. Grandfather's wife had died, and he had, I think, three children. My mother then, from his second marriage, was the second from the oldest. There was a boy that was older than she was.

Ms. Boswell: Did she meet your dad in the course of living in the area?

Mr. Huntley: She was a schoolteacher. She taught all over that country in little one-room schools. She'd teach a year one place and another year, another place. Those buildings were still standing when I was in college. She taught school in Thornton, and, of course, my dad lived in Thornton and that's, I guess, how they became acquainted.

Ms. Boswell: Had she already had her training before she came out to Washington?

Mr. Huntley: I think she went to what is now the Eastern Washington University–the Cheney Normal School at that time. I think that's where she went to school.

Ms. Boswell: And so she, in those one-room schools, would essentially be teaching whatever age-groups there were there?

Mr. Huntley: I think she taught from the first to the ninth grade, probably. That's the way those little country schools were.

Ms. Boswell: What would you say, looking back from childhood, what kind of a community was it at that time, in the Thornton, St. John area? People were very spread out. Were they still fairly close? Did people know each other well or not?

Mr. Huntley: No, they weren't spread out really. In fact, at the time that Necia and I were married, there were homes on every quarter section of land around. We had close neighbors. When I was a little kid I know they went to pie socials, school doings, things like that. The schoolhouse was really the center of their social life.

Ms. Boswell: What about agricultural organizations? Did they play much of a role?

Mr. Huntley: The Farm Bureau I remember when I was a little kid. And then later on the Grange came along. In fact, I think Dad was the first master of the particular Grange over there.

Ms. Boswell: When you say the Farm Bureau, was that a government agency or was it more like the Grange?

Mr. Huntley: It was like the Grange. A good deal similar to it. I never did belong to it, but I think it was the same philosophy.

Ms. Boswell: By the time you were growing up, had most everybody switched over to wheat-growing as the primary–

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes.

Ms. Boswell: Were there many cattle still around or not?

Mr. Huntley: No. I think most of the farmers had a few cattle. In fact, Necia and I had cattle. When we moved over here we still had white-faced cattle and some sheep, things like that. Most farmers did. In fact, that's all that got them through the Depression. They had not only their own meat, but they had a little cash that they could spend on something else, by raising cattle.

Ms. Boswell: I think I remember reading that the Bakers were really focused on cattle in the earliest years.

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes, they were.

Ms. Boswell: But then also went on to make the transition to wheat.

Mr. Huntley: The Baker place, of course they were there so early that they almost had the choice of any land they wanted. It was high bunch grass as I understand it. There are three creeks that come together right where great-grandfather Baker built his farmstead–the house and barn–and that provided a lot of water for the cattle. There were quite a few springs on the ranches that ran water the year-around. In fact, they still do.

Ms. Boswell: That was fairly unusual for that country, wasn't it? To have that much water?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, it was, and as I said, they were there early enough that they really took the choice land. Other places not too far away from them aren't that fortunate with running water.

Ms. Boswell: What about the political leanings of the family early on? Were they very political? Your grandparents?

Mr. Huntley: No, they really weren't. My Great-Grandfather Baker was a staunch Republican. My Great-Grandmother Baker was a staunch Democrat. They just used to cancel each other's vote when they went to the polls. As I said, I knew her quite well because she was still living when Necia and I were married, but she used to say that she voted for Roosevelt in 1932, but never again. He made the best Republican in the country out of her. In 1936 she said, "No way am I going to vote for Roosevelt again."

Ms. Boswell: So they didn't like the farm programs, then, that were part of the "New Deal"?

Mr. Huntley: I just think it was everything. They could see, in fact she forecast, some of the things that we're in right now.

Ms. Boswell: Like what? Tell me?

Mr. Huntley: The economy. I believe I told you that Necia and I just sold some government bonds not too long ago that we'd been collecting interest on since the 1940s. A lot of the debt we have in this country today is the interest on the money that we owe. That started back in those days.

Ms. Boswell: So she was fairly aware then, of those economic issues.

Mr. Huntley: Yes, she really was aware, for a person that age. She was well up in her nineties when she died, but she was pretty sharp. You didn't put anything over on her. Not that anybody tried to.

Ms. Boswell: Had her role, at least originally, when they were still on the ranch been, what? Keeping the books, or what kind of role did she play?

Mr. Huntley: You mean my great-grandmother?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: I really don't know. I think just raising those five girls and keeping them in clothes and things like that was perhaps her main job.

Ms. Boswell: I had the impression that at least on some ranches that very often the women ended up doing the books as well as a variety of other chores including the child-raising, but I wondered if that was more fictional.

Mr. Huntley: No. I think that that's true. I'm sure that she was the one that handled the funds. She turned out to be quite a financier. At the time she died, she owned, or had mortgages on, seventeen quarter sections of land in Whitman County.

Ms. Boswell: That's pretty substantial.

Mr. Huntley: A lot of that happened through that Colfax State Bank that my great-grandfather had organized. He loaned money out to a lot of farmers and a lot of them would come in and say, "I can't pay you, just take it." He didn't want their land, but they couldn't pay it, so that was a way out for them. After he died, then she inherited that.

Ms. Boswell: Did they make any conscious effort themselves to build on their own pieces, too? Did they have a sense that the land values would be important to them? Was that a philosophy that owning land was important?

Mr. Huntley: I think so because the home ranch that they homesteaded in 1872, there is about two thousand acres in that now. You know, when a neighbor would get tired of farming or couldn't afford it or whatever, they'd

come and want to sell it and he'd buy it as long as he had money to pay for it.

Ms. Boswell: I know that what happened to a lot of farm families over in that area in succeeding generations when there were many kids, there became problems with how do you divide up all this land amongst a number of the next generation. It seems as though that hasn't been much of a problem in your family.

Mr. Huntley: I don't think it was too much of a problem. In fact, my Grandmother Huntley was the oldest one of the five Baker girls and my sister bought out two of the Baker girls' portions of the farms. My Grandmother Huntley never did have any of the Baker land because she ended up on the Huntley place. I suspect that my Grandmother Baker probably loaned her money in order to buy land that was adjoining. I don't think it was too much of a problem.

Ms. Boswell: Your dad was one of eight, you said, or nine?

Mr. Huntley: I guess it was eight.

Ms. Boswell: But he worked the Baker land rather than–

Mr. Huntley: Yes, that's right. But by the time my Grandmother Huntley passed away, and the Huntley estate was to be settled up, there weren't too many of those eight Huntley children living. Dick Huntley was the oldest boy. He was older than my dad. Then there was a scattering of girls through there. Necia and I bought their portion of the estate when it was being settled up. They all lived in Spokane and were married and had families up there, and they really weren't too interested in the farmland except maybe to keep it as a treasure or something like that for when they were ready.

Ms. Boswell: So many of your family ultimately did leave farming and got into various other–

Mr. Huntley: Yes, they did. I don't know if my brother had been able to live, whether he would have wanted to farm or not. He was at the University of Washington at the time he went into the Air Corps. I don't know what he would have done. He would have had a good education, even though it was the University of Washington.

Ms. Boswell: He went to the University of Washington, but you and your sister didn't. You went elsewhere, didn't you?

Mr. Huntley: We went to Pullman. That was too close for him. He decided he wanted to go a little farther away from home.

Ms. Boswell: Was a college education important in the Huntley family?

Mr. Huntley: It would have been if we could have afforded it. My sister or I, neither one, were able to finish college. He would have graduated the next spring from the time that he enlisted in the Air Corps.

Ms. Boswell: Your brother was killed in World War II then?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. He was a bomber pilot.

Ms. Boswell: How did that affect the family?

Mr. Huntley: My sister had married a fellow she had met at Washington State University and they were living over on the coast, over here. And after Gene was killed, my dad took my brother-in-law in as a partner and got him started farming. That's how that worked out.

Ms. Boswell: You were at WSU. What was your major interest there?

Mr. Huntley: Pharmacy.

Ms. Boswell: How did you get involved in that?

Mr. Huntley: Pharmacy and turned out to be a farmer. I don't know, pharmacy looked like a pretty good occupation. I found out later that it wasn't. I think I was fortunate that I wasn't able to finish school.

Ms. Boswell: What attracted you to it, though?

Mr. Huntley: I had an uncle and an aunt who had a drugstore over in the Yakima Valley. It always appealed to me, so I decided that was it.

Ms. Boswell: How did your family feel about it? Did they ever put any pressure on you toward any occupation?

Mr. Huntley: No.

Ms. Boswell: Was there ever a sense that they wanted you to get into agriculture as well?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think so. Again, after you've had to leave college, agriculture is about all you could fall back on.

Ms. Boswell: So it was primarily economic times of the country that interfered with that? How did you feel about that? Was that a tough thing to have happen?

Mr. Huntley: What do you mean?

Ms. Boswell: Having to leave college?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. I would have preferred to stay in college, but I knew it wasn't possible. In fact, the last semester I knew I wasn't going back to school, I'm not so sure whether I took all my finals or not.

Ms. Boswell: Was that fairly common in the farming area?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, it was. I think there were only two out of my graduating high school class that went to college. So that was pretty much the picture in those days.

Ms. Boswell: Does that have any bearing on how your dad got into politics or not?

Mr. Huntley: No. Actually, it was Roosevelt and the New Deal that–

Ms. Boswell: Really? Now tell me about that? Your grandmother hated Roosevelt. Is that what motivated your dad?

Mr. Huntley: No. It was indirect. The New Deal, of course, came out with a farm program. It was hatched up in Washington D.C. The secretary of agriculture was Henry Wallace who later on was vice president. It was dealt out of Washington D.C. and then, as I recall, they had a state office it funneled through, but then each county, as I recall, the county agent who was already in place was the one that was asked to set up community meetings where they elected the local county people to administer the program.

That was in, I think, 1934. And, by that time, even though Whitman County had gone Democrat in 1932, by 1934 the people had a pretty good look at some of the candidates that they had elected in 1932 to the Legislature and a few things like that. They said, "We don't want any more of that." So the three commissioners who administered the farm program were A. E. Olson from Pullman, a former Republican legislator; Archie Camp from LaCrosse, a staunch Republican, and my dad. So the three of those Republicans were elected to administer the farm program that was hatched, dealt out of Washington D.C.

The farmers hadn't seen any money for so long that they came and signed up. They promised to cut their production down in turn for a handout. When this money came, it was channeled through the state office, then to the county office. When it came, and the farmers were notified that the checks were there, they had a double line over a block long in Colfax waiting to get into the courthouse to pick up their checks. My dad happened to be the one that was handing out those checks. Every farmer in Whitman County then knew him just through that. That's about the way it started for him.

Oddly enough, the same thing happened to me. In 1954 I got a call one night from a farmer friend of mine telling me that I had been elected by the farmers on this county committee. I said, "Oh, you're kidding?" "No," he said, "we all want you." And he was a strong Democrat. So, okay, I served on it.

The way that program worked was that each state was allowed so many acres that could be seeded to wheat. Then that broke down into the different Washington counties–the thirty-nine counties–and it was hard to break that down into individual farmers as to who could have what acres. Through the program they allowed each county some extra acres to make up for hardships and things like that. I was on the committee, as I said, unbeknownst to me, I wasn't even at the meeting, but I served. The farmers were cutting down to where they couldn't hardly seed anything, it was cut down that close.

And, as I said, we had some extra acres to, I want to say, play with, we didn't play with them, but a lot of times there were people that we knew that–well, first, let's back up a minute, these acres were allocated on a historical basis. In other words, if you had, and it happened to me, if you had x number of acres in 1907 or '40 or '30 or whatever it might be, well then that's what they based your allocation on. There were a lot of small farmers that didn't have any acreage at all, they just weren't allowed any. One of my major efforts was to see that the smaller farms were taken care of with this extra acreage that we were allowed to have.

I remember one incident in particular. This fellow had unsuccessfully tried suicide a couple of times. I knew it. He was a bachelor. So three of us on the committee agreed that this guy–he deserved it anyway regardless of other circumstances–we decided that, okay, we were going to give him an extra fifty acres or whatever it might be. I knew where he lived. I didn't know him, I'd never seen him, but I asked them if it would be all right on the way home that night, for me to stop and tell him, which I did. He lived way back off the main road. I drove in

there and his brother was with him. I laid out the figures that he was going to be able to have and those that were actually allotted to him in the first place. It was from things like that that a lot of people knew who I was.

Ms. Boswell: I think that it's a position where it could backfire if people didn't perceive you as being fair about it. But the fact that you were probably enhanced your reputation as well. Is that fair, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I think so. I think it was 1954 that this happened, that I was elected to this committee. It happened that the history that they used for the 1954 or '55 crop, whichever it was, was based on the acres that you had in 1951; the acres that you had in 1952. An average of those two. It just happened that in 1951 I seeded an awful lot of soil-conserving acres to legumes, and in 1952 I plowed them under for soil-conserving purposes. So that threw me clear out of the two base years that the history was figured on. The other two commissioners at that time when they came to mind, when we were looking over the different farms, they came to mind and I was way low for 1954 or whichever it was. This is what happened, the reason I was way low. And they, both of them, wanted to give me some extra acres off of this amount that they had to spread around, and I said, "No, no way. As long as I'm on this commission I'm not going to let you do that. If you want to do that in the future sometime, why that's fine with me, but not while I'm on this commission." They never did get around to doing it in the future because that's when I left the committee to run for the Legislature. I had to resign from that committee before I could run for the Legislature. They were two very, very fine people, honorable people, but I never did ask for it, never did even remind them of it, despite what they had told me. I knew what it would be like because there were people coming in from all directions that needed some more land to seed. That's the way it affected me.

Ms. Boswell: You and your dad were both in a position where you were Republicans in a sort of Democratic program? How was that?

Mr. Huntley: It worked out all right because it was handed down. We didn't have anything to say about it, really, except the local administration of it. In fact, the fellow that called me and told me that I had been elected to the committee, he was a farmer friend of mine, a staunch Democrat, and it happens that he's an uncle of Mike Lowry. So you know where he is. But we were good friends as farmers. He was a fine person. So there was no problem as far as I was concerned. I had a lot of Democratic people who, over the years, have given me a lot of support. Probably more than some of the Republicans have.

Ms. Boswell: What was the balance of Democrats and Republicans in Whitman County? First, when your dad was running and then later when you were?

Mr. Huntley: In 1932, of course, it all went Democrat. I didn't have any trouble getting elected in 1956, I guess it was, when I ran the first time. The farmers, most of them, were Republicans. The college, at that time, was an agricultural college really, in most respects, and a lot of those agricultural scientists and the professors, of course, I think leaned toward the Republicans. So that's how I came out in pretty good shape.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

A FARMER'S LIFE

Ms. Boswell: I was asking about the political persuasion of the farmers pre-Roosevelt, or pre-New Deal. Had most of them been Republican in the Whitman County area?

Mr. Huntley: I think that they probably were. I was still at an age then that I wasn't paying much attention to politics. I think that the three legislators from that county at that time were Republicans and they were wiped out in 1932.

Ms. Boswell: So, the 1932 year, is that really the first time that you saw your dad becoming enmeshed in politics, or was there a lot of political talk before that?

Mr. Huntley: No. There wasn't to my knowledge. I didn't hear anything like that. Of course, he was so busy, and I was going to school. In fact, later on, after my brother had been killed, we were in the car going to Colfax to make arrangements for the memorial service or whatever, we were driving along and he looked at me and he said, "You know, I never knew that boy." He had been so busy farming, he was farming a large farm, and Gene was a kid that grew up, and they didn't have too much in common.

Ms. Boswell: Did that change his relationship with you then? Did he say, "Oh well, now, I've got to do that," or you were pretty well gone by then, too?

Mr. Huntley: Oh, I was gone by then. I'd been married for a number of years and farming on my own. It wouldn't have made any changes, I don't think.

Ms. Boswell: Wasn't that the lifestyle of most of the farmers at that time? It wasn't just him, was it?

Mr. Huntley: Oh no, they were all about that way.

Ms. Boswell: It was a year-around, full-time, day and night occupation. It doesn't respect nine to five, that's for sure.

Mr. Huntley: No. Nine at night to five in the morning. Necia used to cook for the harvest crews, and I think we had either fourteen or sixteen at one time. Breakfast was shortly after five in the morning, and a big dinner at noon, and dinner then about ten or 10:30 at night. So, that's about the way the farm life was.

Ms. Boswell: Did your mother do pretty much the same kind of routine?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, she did. Hers might have been even a little worse than Necia's was. She had these men to drive the teams, starting about the latter part of February, first of March, and they were there until everything froze up in the fall of the year. So, she had that bunch to cook for, possibly the year-around.

Ms. Boswell: Did she ever operate any of the farm machinery herself?

Mr. Huntley: No.

Ms. Boswell: Did the hands that she was cooking for, did they also live most of the time on the ranch, or did they just come in for the season?

Mr. Huntley: They were in for the season really, but the season ran from first of March until November sometime. There was a bunkhouse where they stayed, and she fed them at the house.

Ms. Boswell: What about the children? Did you men go out with them? Did you pick up a lot from the men that came in and out?

Mr. Huntley: They had families, but they didn't stay with them when they were working for Dad. I really never did see those kids except in school.

Ms. Boswell: What about the men themselves, did they leave an impression on you?

Mr. Huntley: They were always kidding me as a little kid. I had a tough time growing up 'cause they were always pulling pranks on me. In fact, Mike Lowry's dad and I harvested together in 1929, and he kicked me one time so hard, I can still feel it. I'm sure that I deserved it. No, there wasn't too much camaraderie or anything like that.

Ms. Boswell: So were you sort of expected to work along with the men, or did you have your own special chores?

Mr. Huntley: To start with, dad let you do what you were able to do. I remember when I first started driving the team in the field, I was so small that I had to stand up in the manger to put the harness on the horse. I couldn't reach them. I never was abused any when I was a kid, I can tell you that.

Ms. Boswell: Did you enjoy that kind of work?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, I did, I guess. I don't know. I think I did.

Ms. Boswell: When your dad finished up with the farm commission, did he move straight into the Legislature? How did his political career go?

Mr. Huntley: No, he was a county commissioner for quite a long time. He was president of the county commissioners' association in 1938, I believe, along in there. Governor Martin called him in and also Horace Bozarth who was another county commissioner who was on the state executive committee. The governor asked the two of them to write the gas-tax allocation formula for allocating the gas-tax money to the different counties. Then, prior to the 1940 election, the governor talked to dad about running for the state Senate against an incumbent Democrat. Dad ran and was elected, and so that's really where that started. Really, he was a county commissioner first.

Ms. Boswell: Was that unusual for the governor to ask county commissioners to write a kind of allocation?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think so, because the counties were the ones that were screaming about it. A lot of the counties felt they weren't getting a fair share of the gas-tax money and, I assume, I don't know, that the governor said, "Okay, you guys write it then." I'm assuming that's what happened.

Ms. Boswell: And so they developed a plan. Was it passed, or accepted?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes, the Legislature passed it. The governor saw to that. Whatever dad and Horace Bozarth came up with, the governor told them that it was going to pass.

Ms. Boswell: Did your dad ever get you out to campaign for him once he started running for the Legislature or for the Senate?

Mr. Huntley: No.
Ms. Boswell: Did he have to campaign much?

Mr. Huntley: Not a great deal.

Ms. Boswell: So he could pretty much just go on his reputation already?

Mr. Huntley: I think he did. Of course, while he was county commissioner, there were no paved roads or anything like that in the county. In fact the one state road through there was still gravel. The farm and market roads were just dirt and not even gravel on them. Shortly after he was elected county commissioner, these farmers started coming in and saying, "Hey, get us out of the mud."

They started a program, the commissioners did, for furnishing the gravel and they shifted it in from a pit that the county owned down in the western part and loaded wagons and trucks with farmers and they graveled a lot of their own roads. A little bit later on, in fact when Necia and I were first married and living up there, ours was just a dirt road. One of the neighbors got together a kitty to pay for a lot of the work. We contributed to it. Each farmer did in order to get it done. This word soon got around and the people who had been "stuck in the mud," so to speak, for years, started getting out and they didn't forget that. I remember the mayor of Tekoa, town of Tekoa, and I'm sure maybe you've been there, but it's built up on a hill. It's nothing but mud, they didn't have any gravel streets, they came down and wanted some help and the commissioners did the same with them that they did with the farmers out in the country roads. The city furnished so much–I don't remember if it was in labor or equipment or what–then the county then matched it. That's the way a lot of those little towns got their hard-surfaced streets.

Ms. Boswell: Did it become a fairly common practice in the small towns?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, it did. It's against the law now. Why it is, I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: Oh it is, really?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: Why would that be?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know, but a year or two ago when they were talking about–in the Good Roads Association–about the state wasn't doing enough and I suggested that they put their hands in their pockets, and work with the state or the counties, but there was a law against it. I don't know why. I suppose so that if you had too many

hands in the pudding it probably wouldn't be uniform design and all that.

Ms. Boswell: Was that one of the major issues then, that when your dad went to the state Legislature, that he was interested in, the issues of roads?

Mr. Huntley: Yes it was.

Ms. Boswell: What else? What were some of the other issues that his constituents would have been most interested in?

Mr. Huntley: I suppose most of the agricultural problems that they had that they thought the state could solve. Everybody thinks that the state has lots of money and all you've got to do is get ahold of a piece of it. It just doesn't work that way.

Ms. Boswell: Is that something your dad told you or is that something you found out by yourself?

Mr. Huntley: I found that out.

Ms. Boswell: You were married and gone by the time he went to the state Legislature, right?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: So, just quickly, what were his impressions? Did he enjoy it? Did he feel like he could accomplish something?

Mr. Huntley: I think that he did.

Ms. Boswell: Did he actually move over here to Olympia then, or did he just come over for the session?

Mr. Huntley: No. Legislators didn't move over here in those days. They did like we did later on when we came over, we rented a home and the people went south for the winter. In fact, two sessions, we had apartments over at the Maple Vista Apartments, and they were from girls working up on the hill and taking their vacations and going down south for the winter. No, they didn't move.

Ms. Boswell: How long did he serve in the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: He resigned in the middle of the 1949 session. He was elected in 1940, '44, '48; he was elected three times to twelve years, but the governor asked him to move over as chairman of the Tax Commission which is the same as the director of the Department of Revenue today. So, he resigned from the Senate, I think about the middle of January of 1949. That's when he moved over here and he was on the Tax Commission until 1952. The governor had some problems on the Highway Commission and he asked Dad to go over and go on the Highway Commission. That's when he resigned then, from the Tax Commission.

Ms. Boswell: When you say the governor, who would that have been?

Mr. Huntley: Langlie.

Ms. Boswell: Did your dad enjoy being on the commissions? I guess you'd call it more of an administrative position.

Mr. Huntley: I think he did. He probably wouldn't have done it if he hadn't.

Ms. Boswell: But he actually then left the farm at that time and moved over here?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: By that time, who was running his farm?

Mr. Huntley: My sister and her husband.

Ms. Boswell: So they had moved back over there?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: Now, what about you? You said it was in the mid-50s that you started the same kind of political track?

Mr. Huntley: I think it was 1954 that I was elected to that county-farm committee, and then I ran for the Legislature in 1956.

Ms. Boswell: Prior to that–let me step back for one minute–you were at WSU and then you left and you came back to the farm and then, where did you two meet, you and Necia?

Mr. Huntley: We met in college on a blind date. And I think that she's regretted it ever since.

Mrs. Huntley: Oh no.

Ms. Boswell: Where was Necia from?
Mr. Huntley: Klickitat.

Ms. Boswell: (to Mrs. Huntley) Did you come from a farming family too?

Mrs. Huntley: No. Sawmill.

Mr. Huntley: Her grandfather brought a sawmill around Cape Horn from the East Coast to Lyle, Washington.

Mrs. Huntley: They settled in Lyle, Washington. And then in a few years following the logging, I think they moved it to White Salmon for awhile, and from there they moved to Baker City, Oregon. That's where my dad was born. That's where I was born, too.

Ms. Boswell: What did you think about hooking up with a farming man?

Mrs. Huntley: Well, when you're in love, you don't think much about anything like that. I didn't know anything about a farm, I'll admit that.

Ms. Boswell: So then when you two were married, you went back to live in Thornton?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. The Huntley farm had been rented out from the time that my grandparents left it in 1918 until the time that we took it over.

Ms. Boswell: So you took it over after you were married?

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: How soon after did you buy your grandmother's place?

Mr. Huntley: I think we bought it in 1948, I believe. We were married, of course, in 1935, so we farmed it for awhile.

Ms. Boswell: Did you do anything knowingly, differently than your parents or grandparents had, in terms of farming?

Mr. Huntley: Not except the modernization. There were tractors in place of horses and things like that.

Ms. Boswell: What was the toughest thing about being a farmer when you were farming?

Mr. Huntley: Making a living. It was hard work. Don't let anybody tell you it isn't. It's very hard work, and it's harder on the spouse than it is on the farmer.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me why you say that.

Mr. Huntley: Well, she was getting up and getting breakfast for a crew of men, getting dinner late at night for a crew of men and she had a big garden and lots of flowers.

Mrs. Huntley: And I'd never had to do anything like that before.

Mr. Huntley: And we had two-way radios in the trucks and the base station at the house and if we broke down and I was out in the field, we radioed the parts number into her and she drove to Colfax and had to be back with it before mealtime. She was busy.

Ms. Boswell: (to Mrs. Huntley) Did you ever feel, he told the story earlier, about his grandmother, all the women who were out there that just couldn't stand it any more and wanted to leave. Did you ever have that feeling?

Mrs. Huntley: Probably when we were first married, because I didn't know anybody. I'd never lived on a farm before and he was gone in the fields from early morning–he came in at noon–until late at night. I got pretty lonesome and right at first it was difficult.

Ms. Boswell: What about his mother or relatives? Were they supportive or helpful or not?

Mrs. Huntley: Oh yes, they always were, but they were busy doing their own, so, that's the way it was when you lived on a farm, especially in those days. When we were first married in the old house, we didn't have electricity so that I washed clothes in just a little old round tub with a washboard, and my fingers, here, would just not get healed up from one time–

Ms. Boswell: The knuckles?

Mrs. Huntley: –of the washing until the next time. But, then, I think, in '38, the Rural Electrification Association (REA) came through and we got electricity and I got an electric washing machine. It made a lot of difference.

Ms. Boswell: The REA must have been popular, wasn't it, or not?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. It was a co-op of course, and there was a fellow who lived four or five miles from us. He was quite wealthy. He had a farm, and he wouldn't take the electricity. He used coal oil lamps because the co-op was like mutual-insurance companies. If the

company goes broke, everybody that is a member of it is going to have to pay their share. So he wouldn't take it. He sat there for, I don't know how many years, do you?

Mrs. Huntley: No.

Mr. Huntley: Without electricity.

Ms. Boswell: That wasn't real common though, was it?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think so.

Mrs. Huntley: He was probably the only one.

Mr. Huntley: Right now, though, some of the people out in this country that have insurance companies that are mutual companies that are starting to wonder about all of the losses back in the flood area. In fact, I just found out the insurance on this building is by Marine Mutual of the Midwest. That didn't sound very good.

She didn't tell you, but I think that there was probably one thing that helped her a little bit to adjust. There was a young couple that were married just shortly after we were, and she was from Kentucky. In fact, she'd been a beauty queen. She came out here and she'd never seen a farm either, and Necia and the woman from Kentucky kind of got together and they kind of lived each other's lives together there, for quite awhile, and she remained one of her very closest friends. We had some very upsetting news in the last week or so. She had, several years ago, a heart bypass, and they stripped the veins out of her leg, and it has never healed. She has diabetes and her toes, a couple of them, got gangrene because of no circulation of the blood. They did surgery on her just within the last few days. They tapped in at the collarbone with Teflon and ran it down on the outside of her rib cage to her thigh and tied it into the artery down there in order to get blood to go down into her leg again.

Ms. Boswell: That's astounding, what they can do.

Mr. Huntley: Poor kid. Anyway, that helped Necia, and I think she helped Josephine out that first fall. They could sympathize with each other.

Ms. Boswell: It's nice to have somebody in a similar position who can empathize. What about you, were your friends mostly people you'd grown up with there? Were there newcomers coming in to farm the land?

Mr. Huntley: Where I'd grown up–I went to school at St. John, and this was fifteen miles from there–we didn't get together very much. It was all hard work, wasn't it?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes, it was.

Mr. Huntley: They started a Grange and we finally joined it and that was really the center of the social part of living out on the farm. We used to go to Grange meetings and things like that. Not too much else.

Ms. Boswell: How about religion in those areas. Was that important to people, or not necessarily? I didn't mean to infer that it wasn't important to them, but was that a social center, too, or not?

Mr. Huntley: When I was growing up, why, if you didn't go to church every Sunday, you were goin' to hell for sure. Our family went to church every Sunday and Necia and I have continued to. Most of those small towns, that was the center.

Mrs. Huntley: We had a very active Ladies Aid in Thornton. It drew from women all around that area. Each little town had its own group of people that went to things like that.

Ms. Boswell: Now, when you say Ladies Aid, was that affiliated with the church?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: It was?

Mrs. Huntley: The women's auxiliary, you might call it.

Mr. Huntley: They were the ones that put on the feeds when the church had a special meeting or something.

Mrs. Huntley: And when the church wanted something, we were the ones who put on the dinner so we could get it.

Ms. Boswell: Was that the major kind of fund raising, was to have some kind of a big dinner or whatever?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes, it was.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of religious group? Did each town have several different churches?

Mrs. Huntley: There in Thornton, where we were, there was only the one church.

Mr. Huntley: Well, most of the small towns had several denominations. Several of the towns had Catholic and Methodist and Presbyterian, I don't remember.

Ms. Boswell: The one in Thornton was what denomination?

Mr. Huntley: That was the Methodist.

Ms. Boswell: Did the Grange, ultimately, sort of supplant the church, or did it coexist with it in terms of being a social center?

Mrs. Huntley: I think both.

Mr. Huntley: Both of them. I don't think that one robbed the other.

Ms. Boswell: What about the political end of the Grange? Was it very strong, lobbying efforts or whatever?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, it was. The Washington State Grange–of course, all these little Granges were part of the state Grange–was quite political. They took quite a part in most of the hearings in the Legislature and things like that. I think much more so than any of the other farm organizations.

Ms. Boswell: I remember reading something in the Huntley book–and this is digressing a little bit–about, earlier than the Grange, about there being–

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN

Ms. Boswell: I was asking you whether or not you remembered much about the Wobblies?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. In the very late teens and early twenties, they were a real problem. In fact, there were murders down here at Centralia or Chehalis that you've probably heard of. When they had these big farm harvest outfits like Dad had–I think one hundred and four head of horses and thirty-six men or something like that–during those years most of these fellows would come through riding the rods on the railroad. The roustabout that my dad had would go into St. John to hire some men and bring them out to work and they'd come out and eat dinner in the cookhouse in the evening and eat breakfast in the morning and they were gone. You never saw them again.

In fact, my dad, along in the 1940s, was in San Francisco for something and he went in and was going to register at the St. Francis, and the bellboy walked up to him and said, "Mr. Huntley, how be you?" And Dad hadn't signed his name yet or anything. Dad looked at him and this fellow says, "You don't know me, I know you. I worked for you in harvest one time and I let the team run away, and tore the outfit up and I didn't even go in for my check, I just walked over the hill."

There were an awful lot of transients. Even up into the 1930s and early '40s we had quite a few people who would come through there from Oklahoma and different places. Some of them were very good help, lots of help. But the IWWs, supposed to be the Industrial Workers of the World, but we called them the "I Won't Work."

We had a lot of fires in the harvest fields. In those days it was before they had these modern harvesters (combines) they had a station there separating the bundles into it and Dad lost three or four machines that we burned up. One time, they caught a guy throwing a box of matches in with the stubble or the wheat when it went in.

Ms. Boswell: What good would that do? That would just stop you from being able to hire people to harvest, so what was their point?

Mr. Huntley: Probably like the stewardesses that are on Alaska Airlines today. I don't know that it's doing them any good or not, but I think it's really a pretty similar situation.

Ms. Boswell: Was there hope to somehow unionize the farm workers?

Mr. Huntley: There could have been. I don't know. Actually, I can well remember before they had unions, and I sympathized with those working people. In fact, I could see where they needed a union, somebody to speak for them. The working conditions were pretty tough.

Ms. Boswell: Were there many different ethnic groups who were represented in the farm workers in that part of the country?

Mr. Huntley: No. There wasn't any stoop labor or anything like that. When you get down into Walla Walla and the Yakima Valley area, there's a lot of stoop labor. We didn't have anything like that at all.

Ms. Boswell: When you call it stoop labor, was it just the kind of labor you think, that differentiated it, that it didn't attract Hispanic workers up here?

Mr. Huntley: Well, the white people won't do it. Stoop labor is just what it means, going along with a knife and cutting asparagus off, that type of thing. The white people won't do it. So about the only help that they've gotten in that type of operation has been the Mexicans, Chicanos.

Ms. Boswell: But you didn't see much of that. There's not really much of that in Whitman County?

Mr. Huntley: No. We didn't have any of it at all.

Ms. Boswell: The Grange really fulfilled a very different function. It was more lobbying for the interests of the farm owners particularly, rather than farm workers? Is that fair?

Mr. Huntley: I think that's a fair statement.

Ms. Boswell: Your own interests, once you were on that commission that you mentioned, is that when you started first thinking about politics yourself?

Mr. Huntley: No, I really didn't. Not at that time. It just evolved that way, really. I really didn't have any idea at that time.

Ms. Boswell: Your dad's career didn't influence you much? You didn't say, "Well, maybe, this is something for me"?

Mr. Huntley: Oh, I thought it was nice, the connections and all of that, but I don't really think that it had much bearing on me running.

Ms. Boswell: What was the final event that got you to decide to run?

Mr. Huntley: I guess that the final blow, as you might call it, I started to criticize the legislator that was representing our area. He did some things that I didn't care for, and then I got to thinking, darn it, until you can prove that you can do better, you better not antagonize. That was one of the real things.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of things didn't you like about what he was doing?

Mr. Huntley: He came over here, as a lot of young legislators do, got to drinking and running around, wrecking cars, and one thing and another. That didn't appeal to my way of thinking. I figured that if he was that loose that maybe the things he was supposed to be doing for me, over here, weren't getting done.

Ms. Boswell: What about most of your friends, or peers, over there? Were they particularly interested in what was happening in politics, or did they feel far away from it?

Mr. Huntley: That far away from here, I don't think that they were, really, except when they got their tax bill, and then they–

Ms. Boswell: So they didn't really follow politics, or follow specific bills that might affect them particularly?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. Not a great deal.

Ms. Boswell: What about national politics, same or not? Was there interest or not?

Mr. Huntley: Well, they liked to do a lot of "beefing," but, actually, that incident when my dad was affected, that county agricultural committee, the people at that time in 1934 were awfully distressed at the Congress and the Legislature that had met in 1933. There was a lot of interest in politics in those days.

Ms. Boswell: What about into the '40s and '50s?
Mr. Huntley: No, that pretty well leveled out. In fact, a lot of those people who were elected in the landslide in 1932 really didn't survive very many elections after that. They came from every place. One thing I think I told you before, one of the senators they had to let out of Medical Lake mental institution in order to come over here to the session. I don't know whether he signed the registration, or somebody signed it for him as a joke, or what, but he was elected. There were several instances like that.

I believe it was the 1933 session when the Democrats controlled–I think that the Republicans only had either five or six members in the House of Representatives–the Democrats that had been elected in 1932 were very diverse. In the House of Representatives, at least, they had extreme liberals on one hand and more or less conservative on the other hand; they had an awful time getting along. One time the two got into a fist fight on the floor and the sergeant at arms attempted to break it up. They knocked him down and walked on him and he ended up in the hospital. They tried to get the State Patrol which was in the corner of the same building–not over one hundred feet away from them–tried to get the Patrol to come in and the Patrol chief refused to because the way the Constitution is written, the legislative body and the judiciary and the executive, as you know, are three different, separate–

Ms. Boswell: So, he wouldn't intervene?

Mr. Huntley: He wouldn't intervene, and finally, Governor Martin, I guess, called the chief and told him to get down there and straighten that out. They tore the guy's clothes off and I think, broke some ribs. I don't know what all happened. That was because they had two different philosophies within one party.

Ms. Boswell: You never saw anything like that, though?

Mr. Huntley: No. I'd still be running if I did.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of the Legislature, both for your dad and yourself, and representing your constituencies, did you pretty well just know what people thought or did you have ways of polling people to find out what they wanted or what their positions were on certain issues?

Mr. Huntley: You pretty well knew because it wasn't a very heavily populated county at that time. You pretty well knew, and you had your people in different areas that you could talk to that knew pretty well what was going on.

Ms. Boswell: So, running for office for you, at least initially, was not so much a question of issues, as representations that the people wanted somebody who

essentially thought similarly, or how would you characterize it?

Mr. Huntley: That county over there was pro-private power and a lot of the counties, basically, around the coast here, were PUD (Public Utility District) counties. In fact, Grays Harbor County still is; Snohomish County is; Lewis County is. That was quite an issue in those earlier days.

Ms. Boswell: What would the position have been of the majority in Whitman County about the power issue?

Mr. Huntley: They'd have been private power.

Ms. Boswell: They were skeptical, similar to the man who didn't want to take the REA power?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, but the private power companies did a pretty good job of getting the word out. The PUDs really don't pay any taxes. Their trucks and equipment don't have any licenses on them. They have license plates but they're in place of license plates. They don't buy any licenses. A lot of things like that hurt the people, I think. One of the things, of course, the PUD has the taxing authority, too. That's, I think, one of the big differences.

Ms. Boswell: Besides power, what about water? Was that ever an issue?

Mr. Huntley: No, it wasn't over there.

Ms. Boswell: Did most of the farms have their own water source?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yeah, they had to. There's no public–

Ms. Boswell: There's no public water system at all? There really wouldn't have been much irrigation in that area either, was there?

Mr. Huntley: No, there was none.

Ms. Boswell: So, power and roads. Were there any other major sort of issues?

Mr. Huntley: I don't recall that there were any heavy issues. The college, of course, whether the people over here liked to believe it or not, the three legislators from that county were expected to "bring home the bacon," you might say, for the university over there–of course, it was a college then–and look out for their appropriations and different deals affecting the college.

Ms. Boswell: You were saying, earlier, that the college represented, in essence, a whole separate constituency than the farmer. Did you have to campaign more or spend more time there because it was a concentrated population? I guess what I'm asking, and I didn't say it very well, is did you have to have the Pullman vote in order to carry the county?

Mr. Huntley: It was pretty important, but the college just didn't have that many people back in those days.

Ms. Boswell: It wasn't really a voting bloc, per se?

Mr. Huntley: No, it wasn't. In fact, as far as I was concerned, kind of representing agriculture, I think I said that the college, of course, was a land-grant college and a lot of the professors down there were in the agricultural school. No, they kind of blended pretty well together, even in those days. Of course, after the social science kind of took over, that's a whole new story.

Ms. Boswell: And when was that transition taking place?

Mr. Huntley: Oh it's been a gradual thing over the years.

Ms. Boswell: So when you're talking about primarily in the '50s and even in the '60s, where the interests of the agricultural population were similar to those of the college town?

Mr. Huntley: I guess it started waning, perhaps, in the late '50s.

Ms. Boswell: When you first decided that you didn't think the legislators that were serving you were doing a good job, so either you "put up or shut up," so to speak, how did you go about actually running? What was your process?

Mr. Huntley: I just said, "I was just going to run, period." He's a fine fellow. He's a friend of mine. He decided not to run.

Ms. Boswell: Oh, he did? Did you have to campaign much, then?

Mr. Huntley: Well, there were either five or seven of us running for two spots. There were two House members and a senator. The two House members ran, and whoever got the most votes was elected. I don't think I did a lot of campaigning. But you couldn't do that nowadays.

Ms. Boswell: What about you, Necia? How'd you feel about the new political career?

Mrs. Huntley: I can't remember that I had much thought one way or the other. If it was something he wanted to do, that was fine.

Ms. Boswell: Had you been thinking about moving away from agriculture a little bit, by that time, or did that not have anything to do with it?

Mr. Huntley: No, it didn't have anything to do with it.

Ms. Boswell: Once you were elected, how did the service in the Legislature affect your farming business?

Mr. Huntley: It made a lot more work. I was on a number of interim committees, the Higher Education Interim Committee, the Education Committee, and on the Highway, Transportation Committee. Those took a lot of time in the interim when we weren't in session. I used to leave home at five o'clock in the morning, and drive to the airport in Spokane and fly to Seattle, and drive down here for meetings, and go back and maybe get home at one or two o'clock in the morning and go out and go to work until daylight. It wasn't any bed of roses.

Mrs. Huntley: We had a full-time hired man, too.

Ms. Boswell: That was an innovation once you had to start coming over here?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes.

Ms. Boswell: It doesn't seem like it would be economically feasible to be a legislator, given the relatively low amount of money that you got for the time involved. Was that just not an issue?

Mr. Huntley: No. I think it was one hundred dollars a month that we got when I first came over here. Fifteen dollars a day, I think, for subsistence, while we were in session. I believe that's what it was. Then, so much postage–it wasn't very much–a few dollars, I suppose. We didn't have telephones at that time. Any long-distance calls you made back to your district were out of your pocketbook. There was no money to be made in it, I can tell you that.

Ms. Boswell: So, what was the enticement?

Mrs. Huntley: Good question!

Mr. Huntley: Just to prove I could do it, I guess. The time that my dad was over here, they had five dollars a day for the sixty-day session once every two years. And then they had to run again. I think they got five dollars worth of stamps as I remember. I believe it was ten cents a mile, one-way. If they got you over here, you were supposed to stay over here. It wasn't a paying proposition among either one of us. Times have changed a lot. I think it was twelve hundred dollars a year I got the first few years, well, the first until the very last session or two I was here, a hundred dollars was all I got.

Ms. Boswell: Did that affect who decided to run for the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: It could well have. I don't know any specific cases, but I do know of legislators that really didn't have any jobs, that made this a kind of a paying thing. I understand they're still doing it. They have committee meetings at least once every week and they get subsistence, and the travel to come here. I understand it does, right now, have, in fact I could tell you some of the people in the state elective offices that were in the Legislature, but slept in the men's lounge and ate at the House restaurant. Now they're getting, some of them, one hundred and twenty-five, thirty-thousand dollars a year for the jobs there.

Ms. Boswell: Are you sort of suggesting they feathered their own nests, eventually?

Mr. Huntley: Well, you said it.

Ms. Boswell: But you won't say it directly?

Mr. Huntley: Let's put it this way: They never had a job at home to do.

Ms. Boswell: Was that the case among the majority, or a minority of fellow state legislators with you?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think it was the majority, but there were always a few.

Ms. Boswell: Do you think, generally, that people took advantage of the system when they could, or not?

Mr. Huntley: A lot of them do. I think that you've seen that on the TV and the radio and all this stuff in the last few months. There must be something there, or they'd be sued for libel if there wasn't something.

Ms. Boswell: What do you think about–when you came over here–the differences between, say, a rural county

like Whitman County, and maybe people from the more urban counties of, say, the Puget Sound area? Was there a lot of difference in terms of philosophy or the way of approaching the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. Of course, they had a different constituency to satisfy than I did. In fact, the last few years that I was in the Legislature, that district of mine over there, I would say, would be one of the very hardest districts that there is in the state to represent. You had the conservative farmers on one hand, and the university on the other hand. An awful lot of social-science people out there. They are just two entirely different philosophies. It's hard to represent both of those.

Ms. Boswell: Did you find yourself getting a lot of flak from either one side or the other in whatever you did?

Mr. Huntley: Not really. Every once in awhile we had petition drives to stop the taxes. Really, I don't think anybody paid much attention to them.

These post cards that people send in, they're all printed and sent out to somebody to sign their name on. You know darn well that they never even looked at it when they signed it. They don't really mean much to a legislator.

Ms. Boswell: So you could pretty much just discard that kind of–

Mr. Huntley: Yeah. One personal call on the telephone will do more than a thousand of those post cards.

Ms. Boswell: That's good to know as a voter, if you want to get some influence in there.

Mr. Huntley: Well, you can see if some organization comes in here, and they print those cards out by the thousands, and send them out to different parts of the state, and tell the people to sign them and mail them in, you know that most of those people don't have the slightest idea of what they're signing.

Ms. Boswell: Did your dad face the same kind of thing? Were there the same kind of orchestrated efforts to push a certain piece of legislation, or is that fairly recent?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think that he did, at that time.
Ms. Boswell: He enjoyed living in Olympia, I take it?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know if they did or not. My mother didn't, I know. And, I suppose Dad did, because of the people he was around with, but I don't think Mother did. In fact, down in the Olympian Hotel, down here, the old dining room was real nice. To me, it was a nice place to go. The southeast corner of it had the big windows, but there was a round table there where a bunch of these guys got together every day or two for lunch and one day my dad told the waitress, "I want some pea soup, split pea soup." She said, "I'm sorry, but we don't have any." And he said, "Well, get the chef out here, I want to talk to him." And the chef came out and he said that he didn't have a recipe for a good split pea soup. So, the next time that Dad was over he got ahold of the county agent–that isn't what you call the one. What do you call them?

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

Ms. Boswell: So, now tell me again. He went back to the extension agent?

Mr. Huntley: She gave him a recipe for split pea soup. He brought it over here and he gave it to this chef. Nothing else was said about it. Then, on a certain–I think it was on a Tuesday–across the top of the menu was Huntley's Split Pea Soup. They had that in there for years. It was a very good recipe.

While he was having lunch with these fellows downtown, the camaraderie, mother, I'm sure, was sitting alone. So, I don't think that she really took to it.

Ms. Boswell: And there wouldn't be a whole lot of people from Whitman County that were familiar with their kind of lifestyle over here either, probably. There weren't that many representatives.

Mr. Huntley: No, there wouldn't have been.

Ms. Boswell: (To Mrs. Huntley) Did you have that same sort of experience, did you like it when you were over here?

Mrs. Huntley: No, at that time the wives would get together almost every day. To begin with, the first two years, they had a place in the balcony reserved for legislators' wives and we spent a lot of time down there listening and guessing as to what was going on, and then we'd get together for lunches afterwards. At that time, a lot of the wives and families came over with their husbands and put the children in school. Then we would get together and have bridge parties, or lunches. Then the Democrat wives and the Republican wives would get together and have large gatherings and parties, too. So, I enjoyed it, but I was glad to get home, too. We made a lot of friends over here.

Ms. Boswell: Well, I think a nice thing, too, correct me if I'm wrong, was that you were here in the winter when there isn't quite as much to do on the farm, or is that not true?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, that's right.

Ms. Boswell: Although the weather over here isn't much better.

Mrs. Huntley: It hasn't been this summer, I'm sure.

Ms. Boswell: Hasn't it been terrible?

[End of Tape 3, Side 1]

[Tape 3, Side 2, Blank]

STATE REPRESENTATIVE: 1957

Ms. Boswell: If you can remember back to your first experiences coming into the Legislature, when you were elected, what were you expecting? Did you have any expectations before you came?

Mr. Huntley: Not really. Because I'd been around here quite a bit while my father was in the Senate. I really didn't have anything new.

Ms. Boswell: Did your father give you any advice or information before you went?

Mr. Huntley: No, not really. He was over here at that particular time. He had left the Legislature and was appointed, what they call them now, the director of Revenue, at that time it was chairman of the Tax Commission. He'd been living over here, so I really wasn't around him very much until after he left that job.

Ms. Boswell: So, he didn't give you any words of advice. Was he supportive or interested?

Mr. Huntley: Well, I think he was supportive of me all right, but he really didn't give me any advice.

Ms. Boswell: When you first went in to the House, how did you learn the ropes? When you got in there–you did have more background than most people–was there some kind of training? How did they help you to get acclimated?

Mr. Huntley: They do for freshmen, they have sessions where the Speaker comes in and talks to you, the floor leaders, and people like that. They give you some ideas as to what procedures you take to introduce a bill and a few things like that. We weren't really as green as what we looked. They had indoctrination sessions.

Ms. Boswell: How else did you learn the ropes, learn what was going on? Were there other ways?

Mr. Huntley: I guess you'd just sit back and see what goes on.

Ms. Boswell: Did you have any mentors? Were there people who were sort of "old hands" who were willing to help, or who you admired, particularly?

Mr. Huntley: There were those, yes, I wouldn't say they were people I admired because a lot of them I had never met before. I kind of watched their actions, had lunch with them, or coffee with them, or something like that. It kind of took the edge off of it.

Ms. Boswell: Can you remember any in particular that either were an example or that you sort of followed what they did?

Mr. Huntley: Gosh, it's been so many years ago. I guess, maybe, Horace Bozarth, and I've mentioned his name before. There were several others in the House that I became friendly with right away. The old-timers. But, offhand–

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit more about Bozarth?

Mr. Huntley: Well, he had been a county commissioner when my dad was. When Dad was the president of the state county commissioners' association, Bozarth was on his executive committee, so I'd gotten acquainted with him through that. In fact, the first bill I introduced, I went over on the Democrat side and got Bozarth to cosponsor it with me. And another one was Eric Braun who was a mortician in Wenatchee or Cashmere. I guess it was Cashmere. Those were the two that I started out with on my very first bill.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about your very first bill. What was it?

Mr. Huntley: It was allowing areas to set up cemetery districts. They voted on them the same as court districts and hospital districts and things like that. The law had been passed previous to my time over here, but it didn't include areas such as Colfax, and I represented Colfax, and my legislation allowed third-class cities within fourth-class counties to establish cemetery districts. That was the first bill. It was House Bill Number 7 if I remember correctly. And it was the first bill that passed the Legislature that session. And the first one that the governor signed, so I was pretty elated about it.

Ms. Boswell: Was that during your first session?
Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: How did you focus on that particular issue as your first bill-making foray?

Mr. Huntley: Quite a few people out of Colfax had asked me to do it, and my predecessor had introduced the same bill in two different sessions, and didn't get anyplace with it. So, I took his bill and copied it word-for-word, and it passed. My predecessor didn't mix too much with the Democrat side, but it was a Democrat House of Representatives, so I knew that in order to get anything passed you had to have them working with you, not against you.

Ms. Boswell: So, compromise was the way to go.

Mr. Huntley: Oh yeah. That's what legislation is: compromises. Most people don't like to believe that, but that's the way it is.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about your relationships with the Democrats overall.

Mr. Huntley: I think it was very good. I always got along with them. Had many good friends on the Democrat side.

Ms. Boswell: Was there a Republican caucus organization when you first started?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. As far as I know, clear back when my dad was there. That was fifty years ago. Each party in each house has their own caucus.

Ms. Boswell: I was curious about how much influence or help, or support, the party provided within, say, as a freshman legislator?

Mr. Huntley: I wouldn't say there was very much.

Ms. Boswell: So that's not really where your support group lies, within the party itself?

Mr. Huntley: No.

Ms. Boswell: What about other freshmen legislators? Were there ways that they got together?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. You got acquainted in the caucus to start with, and it just took from there. You'd get to dinner once in awhile or lunch, or something like that. It didn't take too long to get acquainted.

Ms. Boswell: What about committees? Committees seem to be an important part of the workings of the Legislature, but how, as a beginning legislator, how did they work that system of committees?

Mr. Huntley: The majority party is the one that picks the committee members, but they sent out a questionnaire for you to fill out. It listed the different committees for you to fill out as to the ones that you were interested in serving on, which I did. I think I got every one I wanted, if I remember correctly.

Ms. Boswell: What were some of your interests that you put down for committees?

Mr. Huntley: Well, of course, Transportation, because my dad at that time was chairman of the Highway Commission, and I'd worked on a lot of roads when I was a kid in high school driving teams and graveling roads. So, I'd always had an interest in better roads.

Ms. Boswell: Any others?

Mr. Huntley: I really don't remember now what committees I was on. I remember I was on Banks and Banking, and Constitution and Elections. That sounded good until I put it down, but it turns out that, in those days, the freshmen had to proofread all the bills, and that was the committee that did it.

Ms. Boswell: Oh no! It was Constitution and Elections Committee? Is that what it was?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. Every bill that went through the Legislature, you had to pair off. Two people. One would read and the other would follow it. You had to have every comma, semicolon, quotation marks, or whatever, because that's the way the law was going to be written and it had to be correct.

There was a lady, she was a freshman, Mrs. Kirk, and someway or another, we started reading these together. We read a lot of them during the session. If we had recesses or anything like that, we'd go into one of the committee rooms and the bills were delivered to us, and we'd read the bills. The chairman of the committee was Mike McCormick. He never showed up. He didn't read any bills, but we just went ahead and, along toward the end of the session, when things were really frantic to get things buttoned up, the Speaker looked over the list of those who had been working on that committee, and Mrs. Kirk and I were both dismissed and Mike McCormick was told to get in there and read some of those bills, which he did. He spent hours and hours, which he had never done before.

But that was a committee that I didn't know what it was when I asked for it, or I wouldn't have asked. It sounded interesting.

Ms. Boswell: What about Banks and Banking? What kind of things did they handle, primarily?

Mr. Huntley: Different banking rules. Of course, the director of Banks and Banking had the authority to make a lot of rules and regulations. Just general, as far as running a bank was concerned. How mortgages are handled. In those days, what do you call those little books? Savings accounts, like passbooks, and such things as that. There wasn't anything earthshaking.

Ms. Boswell: Can you remember, was there anything in particular that you enjoyed the most out of being there?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't really think so.

Ms. Boswell: Did you enjoy it? Maybe that's the leading question. Was it what you expected when you got there? Was it fulfilling?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, I think so. We all looked forward, in those days, to the tenth of March because that's when the constitutional limit was on, when you had to close the session. By the time you'd been there for sixty days you were getting kind of rummy.

Ms. Boswell: What if you weren't finished? What if there were issues that really needed to be handled but weren't? What would you do?

Mr. Huntley: Nothing happened to them. They stayed in the committee where they were. Prior to the time that I came over here, they used to stop the clock. When the record was made, they'd say it was closed at twelve o'clock on a certain day, when it might have been four or five o'clock in the morning. According to the constitution, they'd have to be closed at midnight.

Ms. Boswell: They were not doing that by the time when you were there?

Mr. Huntley: No, because the attorney general had ruled that that was unconstitutional. I don't remember if the courts ever ruled on it or not. The attorney general, I know, said, "Hey, you can't do that." So, then, if there was anything left over, you just didn't do anything with it. It stayed there until the next session. If somebody wanted to reintroduce a bill or bring it up again in a special session, that was the way it was handled..

Ms. Boswell: Did you ever have an experience with bills that you had that were down to the deadline, but never quite made it?

Mr. Huntley: They weren't my bills, but I had several times, especially when I was in the Senate, the director of Motor Vehicles, I remember, was sitting out in the wings and we were just about ready to finish, the time limit was up, and he got my attention and I walked over and he showed me a couple of bills that were on the calendar (daily calendar) that would save the state umpteen thousands of dollars. It would make the office easier to run. So I went back in and the rest of the bills on the calendar, this one was way down, and I went over to the Democrat floor leader and I told him that we should get down to that bill. I think there were two of them that meant quite a bit to the state as far as the revenue was concerned, and it was also beneficial to the running of the office. He said, "Well, I've got a couple of my own in here that I want to get. Just as quick as this one here is passed, you jump up right away and get the president's attention and move that we immediately proceed to that bill." I did, and that director, every once in awhile, even today when he sees me, says "Hey, do you remember that midnight bill that you got out for me?" That's the way it worked.

Ms. Boswell: A lot of those kinds of processes, the way things work like that, usually then it wasn't so much common knowledge that there was somebody there that could tell you, "Okay, this is the best way to go about this"?

Mr. Huntley: Well, there were always experts around. You just call in the department head if it affected any portion of state government. The State Patrol, the Licenses Department or the state treasurer or the state auditor. If there were bills affecting their departments, they were always happy to be sitting in the wings where they could help you if you had questions to ask.

Ms. Boswell: Was that the main source of help for questions? What about lobbyists? What role, or did they play any role?

Mr. Huntley: They did. You don't have to be there very long 'till you know which lobbyists you can trust and which ones you can't. They have their place. There's no question about that.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little more about that. What do you think their appropriate role is?

Mr. Huntley: I think for informational purposes. I depended on them a lot of times in different areas that they were familiar with. They have their place.

Ms. Boswell: Can you think of any in particular that you thought were particularly useful?

Mr. Huntley: There was a fellow by the name of Joe Gould who was the lobbyist at that time for the Seattle First National Bank. He had a pretty good idea of what was going on and he could answer a lot of your questions. In fact, before I ran the first time, I had him come over to my district and I told him I was thinking about running, and told him to scout it out. He did, and came back a few weeks later, and he said, "Well, I've been around and you're not going to have any trouble being elected." He told me, fairly close, how many votes I was going to get out of this area and how many out of that area. What he did, he was one of these fellows who never saw a stranger. He'd go into the different towns, like into Colfax and Pullman, and he'd go into the haberdashery, or the shoe store, or whatever, fiddling around, and get acquainted with those people over the years, and he had a lot of information when he came out. He was pretty helpful in the Legislature. He could tell you pretty much where you had your support and where you didn't have it, and when it was advisable to go ahead to try to push the legislation, or whether it would be a good idea to hold off and wait for a little while until the time was right. He helped a lot.

Ms. Boswell: His main interest in terms of lobbying was banking and banking regulations?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah. But he never did cross me up, and I don't think he ever did anybody else, because I never heard anybody say so.

Ms. Boswell: What about any others? Were there other good ones?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yeah. The farm people. The farm organizations had people who came over to the session of the Legislature and they were always available to answer questions about bills pertaining to agriculture. That's one that I happened to think about right now. There were quite a few people who came to Olympia. They didn't bother you, but they were here.

Ms. Boswell: That's what I wondered. I guess my image of a lobbyist is somebody who's very aggressive, but it doesn't sound like that was the case.

Mr. Huntley: Well, there are those, but you soon know who they are. You kind of duck away from them if you see them coming.

Ms. Boswell: Were there any certain groups or interests that had particularly strong lobbies during your time in the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: The PUDs did. They were trying to get stronger and stronger. In fact, there was a real fight in the 1961 session, I think it was. There is a PUD in this county, but it's never been active, but they started to show their hand and they had power of combination, the PUDs. It was the members of the PUD that decided that they were going to condemn the Puget Sound Power and Light properties in this area. Take it over and make a PUD out of it. I think it was 1961, there was a bill in the Legislature to prohibit them from doing that. For some reason or another, most of the Democrats were against it. They wanted the PUD, and we fought over it for days with amendments to the bill. In fact, the Speaker, John O'Brien, was very much opposed to the bill because he was an auditor for PUDs. He was a CPA in Seattle. And he was the Speaker and the anti-PUD people had the votes, and they knew that they did, to pass the legislation, but he wouldn't let it come to a vote. Finally, they got him so mad one day that he grabbed the gavel and he broke it. Quite a few of the Democrats, I think six or seven of them, that were opposed to the PUDs, and the next session of the Legislature, the 1963 session, they formed a coalition, and they dumped O'Brien as the Speaker. That was his last session as the Speaker. Yeah, there were groups like the PUDs and any organized group like that that had a cause that you always had to listen to.

Ms. Boswell: Did the big companies also have lobbyists at that time? Did Boeing or something else have lobbyists?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, they did. Boeing and the power companies and the telephone companies and the gas companies. They all had somebody down here. If there were bills that pertained to their businesses either one way or the other, they were here to answer your questions.

Ms. Boswell: Was there any hint of impropriety with any of them? Were most of them very aboveboard?

Mr. Huntley: I think that most of them were pretty much aboveboard. Of course, it's like most anything, there's a bad apple in every box. I never had one of them cross me up or anything like that.

Ms. Boswell: You never had one of them try to get you to vote for something in return for something else, or anything?

Mr. Huntley: Oh no. No, I never had to face that, fortunately.

Ms. Boswell: What about the staff? What kind of staff was available to you, say when you first started?

Mr. Huntley: Well, I didn't have any staff at all. There was a secretarial pool. I don't know how many they had. I suppose ten or twelve young ladies that were stenographers and, if you had letters to dictate, you would call the pool and she would send somebody down. In those days they didn't have offices. The only thing that you had was your desk out on the floor. In between sessions, or during the recesses or something like that, the secretary would come down and you'd just sit out on the floor on the big davenports out there and dictate your letter and when it was finished, they'd bring it back down to you.

Ms. Boswell: What if you wanted to draft a bill or anything else? How could you do it with all the business going on, on the floor?

Mr. Huntley: The bill-drafting department is made up of attorneys. If you had an idea that you wanted to amend a certain section of the code, or something like that, you'd go down and talk to one of the attorneys down there as to what you had in mind, and what you wanted to accomplish. They would draw the bill so that it dovetailed into the Administrative Code. That's how you got that done.

Ms. Boswell: You had the idea, but the writing part was usually done by the–

Mr. Huntley: They actually wrote it. I don't think there were many members of the Legislature themselves that, first of all, had the time to research the laws. So you'd dovetail your amendment to whatever you wanted to do, to the code. There were a few attorneys in the Legislature, but I don't know of any of them that ever drafted their own bills.

Ms. Boswell: Was it difficult to get all your work done in sixty days?

Mr. Huntley: You had to. If you didn't, why, that was it.

Ms. Boswell: Did it make it more intense? Weren't the sessions every other year when you started?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah. In the odd-numbered years. A good example is, when you asked if you were under pressure–you had cutoff dates. One of the first things you do when you go to the Legislature when the first session starts, is to draft your rules, the Senate and the House, you drafted your own rules. In those they have the cutoff dates, and the last day you can consider a House bill in the House, and the last day that the Senate can–

[End of Tape 4, Side 1]

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Ms. Boswell: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you.

Mr. Huntley: My first session was Dan Evans' first session. Charlie Moriarity from Seattle, there were several from Seattle who belonged to the junior chamber of commerce up there, and the junior chamber was pushing for daylight-saving time. They wanted legislation setting up daylight-saving time. Actually, I thought it was a good thing. But, I came from a rural farm area, and those people in the granges, and places like that, admonished me: "Don't you dare move for daylight savings." I couldn't figure out why, but, anyway, the last day that we could consider that bill, it came up on the floor of the House I think about eleven o'clock in the evening, and we were supposed to be out of there at twelve o'clock, the last day of the session, and those of us from the cow counties, as we were accused of being, had a lot of amendments up on the desk and each one of them, they would read one and then you'd get up and debate it, and debate it and debate it, then the next amendment would come along and you went through the same process. All we were doing was eating up time. I remember Dan and Moriarity and a couple of others from the junior chamber in Seattle, were running around there like chickens with their heads cut off to try to get us to pull those amendments off. I didn't have any myself, because I didn't feel comfortable with it. Finally, when midnight came, the Speaker of the House banged the gavel and he said that we were adjourned. Their bill was hanging there. That's the kind of an example of what happened, sometimes.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little about, since you brought him up, Dan Evans. What were your impressions of him initially?

Mr. Huntley: Initially? We were both on the Highway Committee. His father was the county engineer for King County, and Dan was interested in highways. We got pretty well-acquainted through that. I liked him. Some of them didn't. They thought he was that young upstart from Seattle. But, I liked him. We got along very well.

Ms. Boswell: I was reading in a newspaper article that I found about you two. It said that he was one of the few people from an urban district, I guess was the point they were making, who really took the Highway Commission seriously and rode around with you, perhaps, and looked at roads. I don't know if you remember that or not, but it mentioned that. That you sort of respected him more because he was willing to take the time to really look at and think about them.

Mr. Huntley: When he was governor, you mean?

Ms. Boswell: No, I think this was before. I think that this was when you two were serving on the Highway Committee.

Mr. Huntley: I don't remember an article like that, but that's true, we did. The Interim Committee on Highways was where the bills were sent to for studies during the interim as to what roads should be on the state highway system, things like that. We did, we traveled around the state quite a little bit. Over on the coast and all different sections of the state. I assume that's what you're alluding to.

Ms. Boswell: I think that this was just making a point of the rural versus urban aspects of the Highway Committee, and at that time there weren't as many urban legislators who were all that interested in, or supportive of, a lot of the highway bills. Is that fair?

Mr. Huntley: We had trouble getting any Seattle people to serve on the Highway Committee. They said, "Oh, we don't have any highways, we've got streets. We're not interested." But Dan was on the committee, and as I said, Judge Moriarity and I don't remember who all now, from the metropolitan areas, but it was true that the average run of the legislators from the Seattle area really wasn't interested in the highways, or transportation, at that time.

Ms. Boswell: Did it ever change? Or, when did it change?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know when it changed, but by the time I was in the Senate there were starting to be quite a few urban senators who were on the Transportation Committee. So, I suppose in the late '50s maybe, 1960, along in there.

Ms. Boswell: You mentioned the interim committees. I'm interested in a little bit more of a description of the interim committees. Tell me a little bit more about them and what they did.

Mr. Huntley: There were eleven House members and ten senators on the interim committee. They did the studies during the interim that had been referred to them. The reason they'd been referred was because of bills that had been introduced in the Legislature, like something to do with the cross-sound bridge or the third cross-Lake Washington bridge, and such things as that. During the interim, then, the interim committee kind of ran those things down and worked on them and reported back to the next session of the Legislature.

Ms. Boswell: Was that a paid proposition, or not?

Mr. Huntley: No.

Ms. Boswell: So that was sort of volunteer time?

Mr. Huntley: I think we were paid mileage and per diem for what days we actually worked on it. That was the extent of it. We had a lot of it that was free gratis. I spent an awful lot of time going around all over the state that I probably should have been home plowing.

Ms. Boswell: I wondered about that. Especially, not only occupationally, but also just locationally, where you were, I would think it would make it difficult to be on an interim committee.

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, it was at that time. The last few years they've been paying, I think, sixty-five dollars a day or something like that, plus the mileage. There have been some legislators that really, as I understand it, and I don't know them, because I've been away from it, that really never held an honest job. They've been living on legislative pay and then they make it a point to have a committee meeting down here probably every week, something like that. And that's the pay that they're getting. But we didn't have any pay at all.

Ms. Boswell: How did they develop these committees? Whose idea was it, and how did they evolve? How would you decide that there was going to be an interim committee meeting on highways, for example?

Mr. Huntley: You mean the establishment of it to start with?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: It goes back to just before my time in the Legislature. Julia Butler Hansen was the chairman of the House Transportation Committee for a number of years. I think that she's the one that really got it started. She and Senator Washington combined the two and started it.

Ms. Boswell: Specifically the Highway Commission? She was the one?

Mr. Huntley: I was talking about the interim committee.

Ms. Boswell: That system whereby a lot of business was conducted during the interim. Had that been common for a long time, or was that a fairly new system?

Mr. Huntley: I think that was fairly new when I came here. I don't think it had been in existence too long. But what they did, we went all around over the state and we held hearings like in Bremerton if they had legislation pertaining to ferries or ferry docks, and other parts of the state where they were needing some work done on highways, and they had bills in the Legislature. We went around, we had public hearings, so that the people could express themselves.

Ms. Boswell: Who would organize those? Who would provide the legwork to make those happen? Like public meetings, for example.

Mr. Huntley: It happened out of the chairman's office, and she had two secretaries, but a lot of these studies we referred to the University of Washington and also Washington State University. They had, from their engineering staff, they assigned people to go along and help with the study.

Ms. Boswell: Would interim committees have permanent staff people, or not?

Mr. Huntley: No, they didn't at that time. I think they do now. As far as I can understand, they do, but we didn't in those days.

Ms. Boswell: What about individually, the legislators, did they have any staff? Was there permanent staff for, say, a regular standing committee, or how was the staff allocated at that time, if the legislators didn't have any? Where did they fit in?

Mr. Huntley: Those staff people, the minute that the Legislature was over, they were done.

Ms. Boswell: So even their positions were just temporary?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, they were just temporary. Just during the session. That was all.

In fact, in 1963, I was the chairman of the Transportation Committee in the House and wrote the highway budget for the state of Washington. It alternated. One year it started in the House, and passed the House, then go over to the Senate. Two years later, the Senate would start it and send it over to the House.

I had a secretary and a committee clerk. About three or four days before the end of the session was when we had to get the budget passed and get it out. And those two women worked all night after having worked all day the day before laying out the budget and putting it together the way that it had been dictated to them. I came in the next morning and I could see that they were just about to drop, and I said, "You go on home. You're going to get paid for today." So they did, and I'll be darned if the chief clerk said, "No, no. We can't pay for two days for one day's work." I said, "All right, it's coming out of my pocket, then." He finally relented and he let them.

It was kind of odd that when we organized in the House in 1963, these two ladies had been working for the Highway Committee for several years during the session. Not during the interim, just during the session. When the House organized out there, the Democrats were thrown out and the Republicans were put in. I was telling of the coalition of the six Democrats, I think it was, that got mad, so they joined the Republicans and made a coalition. I had nothing to do with it because I didn't believe in coalitions. I'd seen it happen in the Senate a time or two when my dad was there, and, really, about all it accomplished in the long run was to make longtime enemies out of longtime friends. So, I had nothing to do with it. One of the leaders came over to my desk after we had elected the Speaker, and he said, "Well, you're going to be chairman of the Transportation Committee." And I said, "Yes, on one condition. That is, that I choose my own staff." He said, "Well, I guess that that's all right." And I turned around and I walked into the Transportation Committee room, and these two ladies were there, and they looked up at me and one of them was–she had a pretty spicy mind–and she sat there and said, "Well, pack your stuff, let's get out of here." And I said, "What's the problem?" She said, "I guess we're out of a job." I said, "Is that so?" She said, "Yeah, you're a Republican, and I'm a Democrat." I said, "What difference does that make? I never have yet seen a Democrat road or a Republican road." And they stayed with me the whole session. Very good help. And at the end of the session, I was telling you, I told them to go home and we'd compensate for that day. They had worked for me and been loyal to me, and I just figured that if the Legislature wouldn't pay it, I would. But the Legislature finally came around and paid their salaries for that night.

Ms. Boswell: Generally speaking, were most of the people you dealt with fairly competent, or do we see some civil-service people here who just don't know what's going on or whatever?

Mr. Huntley: I think that the time I was there, that most of them were pretty competent. I felt so. Maybe they were so far ahead of me that I had to think that, but I've heard of quite a few people who visit the Legislature quite a bit, that have for the last fifteen or twenty years, who have told me that there's no comparison in the people now and twenty years ago. So, you can take that for whatever it's worth.

Ms. Boswell: How do they mean that when there's no comparison? Are they saying the people twenty years ago were that much better?

Mr. Huntley: That's the impression. Well, one of them for instance, I don't think he'd mind if I told you his name, it's Frank Keller, who was at one time the state president of the Democrat Party. I ran into him once, during this last session. He was mad, I don't know what about, but he said, "I'll never work for another damn Democrat as long as I live. You can't trust those people up there. They don't know what they're doing." So, you asked me the question.

Ms. Boswell: Yes, I did, I did. In terms of your own first session, we talked about your first bill, the cemetery district, through there. Any other bills that you introduced that year, do you remember?

Mr. Huntley: I don't recall that there were. I'm sure that I cosponsored with others, probably some Democrats that came over that needed some Republican names on the list.

Ms. Boswell: Was there a push to sponsor or cosponsor bills? Was that considered to be something you needed to do to be successful, or did it make any difference? What was the attitude toward bill-sponsoring?

Mr. Huntley: There were a few people in the House that tried to get their name on every bill that there was if they thought that would look good at home. I don't think that there's any advantage to it.

Ms. Boswell: Why?

Mr. Huntley: Just their attitude, at the time I was there, they were just trying to build up a, I guess a résumé, is the best way you could put it.

Ms. Boswell: What was your own philosophy about it? About bills, or even your whole experience in the Legislature? Do you have any guiding principles?

Mr. Huntley: I didn't introduce too many bills unless there was something my constituents really wanted. I cosponsored quite a few bills with Democrats that came over and wanted me to work with them. In fact, I believe my last session in the Senate, I think I cosponsored or sponsored myself, I think it was twenty-two bills. By that time I was getting to be pretty senior, and I think there were twenty of them that passed. So I didn't have too bad a record, really.

Ms. Boswell: What would be a common average of number of bills passed to number of bills introduced?

Mr. Huntley: I really don't know. In later years, as I said, some of the newer legislators thought that they had to have their name on a lot of bills. There were lots of them that were introduced that are very expensive as far as the cost to the Legislature is concerned.

Ms. Boswell: So it would be fair to say that for a lot of legislators, at least, they would probably get less than half, or twenty percent?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know how I could measure that. It depends a lot on the legislator. Some of them are very popular and they have no trouble with their bills. But they're the ones that don't rush out and introduce a lot of them, too.

Ms. Boswell: What process would you have gone through in order to decide to cosponsor a bill? What kind of arguments or how would the process work for you to get involved in cosponsoring a bill?

Mr. Huntley: Well, they'd have to tell me what their objective was, and what they wanted to do. How it would affect state government and the people. Then, I'd just have to sit down and think it over as to whether I wanted to cosponsor with them or not.

Ms. Boswell: What were the advantages, in terms of passing a bill? Was it helpful to have a lot of people's names on the bills, or did that sometimes backfire?

Mr. Huntley: I never did have a lot. I always really had the farm area that I used if I had bills that I wanted to pass. I would get a sponsor or two from across the aisle, and I always tried to get the name of the chairman of the committee that that bill was going to be sent to. Also a member who was on the Rules Committee. If you get those two, you've got it pretty well locked up because the chairman of the committee that the bill would go to, if you want to see to it that it gets pretty good treatment if his name was on it. And the same way with the Rules Committee. If a member of the Rules Committee had his name on that, he's going to do what he can to get it out of Rules.

Ms. Boswell: Does that tactic usually work pretty well?

Mr. Huntley: It did for me.

Ms. Boswell: Was it hard to convince people, say the head of the committee, to join one of your bills, especially if he was from the opposite party?

Mr. Huntley: No, I didn't have any trouble.

Ms. Boswell: What would you do to convince them?

Mr. Huntley: As I said, I'd just explain to them what the advantages of the bills were, and what the purpose was, and how it affected the constituents, and even their constituents.

Ms. Boswell: I guess what I'm getting at, was there much horse-trading? You hear about back rooms and "I'll do this for you, if you do this for me." Does that really happen?

Mr. Huntley: It might, but I didn't work that way.

Ms. Boswell: So, it was: "These are the merits of the bill and you can support it or not"?

Mr. Huntley: In fact, I was the principal sponsor of the first, maybe I told you this before, the first seat belt bill in the state of Washington.

Ms. Boswell: No. Tell me more about that.

Mr. Huntley: In the fall of 1962, a Democrat–we called him "Wild Bill" because he drove like a maniac–he tried to straighten out a concrete bridge up north of Spokane. I went up to the hospital in Spokane to see him, and we were talking about his accident. He had been using seat belts, even though they weren't the law in those days. He made the remark to me, he said, "Elmer, if I hadn't had a seat belt, I wouldn't be here talking to you." His speedometer on his car, they had told him, was stuck over one hundred miles an hour when they pulled the car out of the bridge. I said, "Well, let's do something about it." Then I sat down and picked up a piece of–I think it was Sacred Heart Hospital–stationery and we wrote that seat

belt bill right then and there. Then, in the spring of 1963, we cosponsored it and passed it through the Legislature.

Ms. Boswell: So you did get it passed right away, then?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. But it wasn't a mandatory bill that you had to wear a seat belt. Our bill said that every new car that was sold in the state of Washington after the first of January 1965 had to be equipped with a seat belt. That's what our bill said.

We had some John Birchers in the Legislature at that time and they opposed it because it was against their constitutional rights. They couldn't force them to use seat belts. My story was that I wasn't telling them to use them, but that they had to be in the car. Then, if they didn't want to use them, it was up to them. Anyway, that's the way that bill got started, was in a hospital room.

Ms. Boswell: That's a great story. Any others like that that had that sort of unusual impetus?

Mr. Huntley: I can't think of any right now.

Ms. Boswell: You were telling me earlier about the coalition of Democrats who kind of bolted to the Republican Party for awhile. Tell me a little bit more about that. We didn't talk about that on tape before.

Mr. Huntley: It started because, I think it was six Democrats, and most of them were from Spokane. They leaned toward private power, like Puget Power, Pacific Power and Light, and things like that. They got their ears rapped down in the 1961 session when the Speaker, who was of their own party, went against them and crossed them up. And that's when that coalition was really born, was right there in 1961.

We came to the Legislature in January 1963, and these, I'm sure it was six, and our leadership, the Republican leaders, had got together and decided they were going to form a coalition. They were going to elect a new Speaker. I don't know how many meetings they had before they got this all together, but I was sitting with Dr. A. O. Adams, who was an orthopedic surgeon, and the fellow that the coalition wanted to run was a chiropractor from Spokane. Can you imagine in those days a chiropractor to an orthopedic surgeon? He just kind of went up in the air.

Our strategy was that we, the Republicans, were going to nominate Dan Evans for it, the Speaker. The Democrats, of course, were going to renominate John O'Brien, who had been the Speaker before. These six Democrats that broke ranks were going to nominate Bill Day, the chiropractor.

Well, I think we went through three different roll-call votes, and each time they ended up the same. It was tied between O'Brien and Dan Evans. I believe it was on the third roll-call vote, Dr. Adams, of course, is the first one on the roll call, and they called his name and he voted for Bill Day, who was the chiropractor. The public said, "That can never happen. You're not going to have a medical doctor voting for a chiropractor." But he did, and that's how the coalition was started.

[End of Tape 4, Side 2]

COALITION: 1963

Ms. Boswell: So the coalition was born.

Mr. Huntley: Dr. Adams, of course, was the lead-off voter for the coalition when he voted for Day. And John O'Brien was sitting about three rows over from us and he couldn't come straight through, the way the desks are positioned, so he jumped over one and he came over to where Dr. Adams and I were sitting and he put his hand on Doc's shoulder and he said, "Let's talk this over a little bit. Let's talk this over." Doc says, "John, we've been talking this over for the last few years." The vote then, it was for Bill Day.

Ms. Boswell: And so Bill Day actually won out over both of them.

Mr. Huntley: Pardon?

Ms. Boswell: So Bill Day won instead of Evans, then?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yes. Evans didn't want it.

Ms. Boswell: Oh he didn't? Why not?

Mr. Huntley: He didn't want it at all. He was just nominated to offset John O'Brien. And then, of course, Bill Day came in and picked up the six Democrat votes.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about O'Brien. What are your impressions of O'Brien?

Mr. Huntley: I liked him. He ruled with an iron hand, but sometimes you had to do that in his position. That's a tough spot.

Ms. Boswell: What makes it tough?

Mr. Huntley: Making the decisions. You've got ninety-eight people out there that you've got to try to–it's kind of herding a band of sheep–you've got to keep them all together. I could tell you one instance, you want another story?

Ms. Boswell: Yes, you bet. I love your stories.

Mr. Huntley: There was a fellow in Spokane who I had known in college. He was a good friend of mine. His name was Pooch Petrogallo. He was a prize fighter. In fact, he held the Golden Gloves title when he was in college. He and his brother owned a bottling works in Spokane. I don't know if it's Nesbitts now, or what it was, but Governor Rosellini needed a few dollars for his programs. He always went to either the cigarettes or some little thing like that to pick up a little money. And he helped the Democrats write the budget from the Senate right down in his office. He had a penny-a-bottle tax on soda pop, and Pooch Petrogallo and his brother had been at the ice hockey game in Spokane and they started home and they heard on the radio that this bill had passed the Senate and there was going to be a penny-a-bottle tax on the soda pop. They didn't even go home. They just pointed that old, black Cadillac toward Olympia. They got ahold of me and my seat mate, Bob Goldsworthy, who was another friend of theirs, in fact I think a fraternity brother.

Ms. Boswell: What was his name again, Goldsworthy?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. They got ahold of us right when we got to the Legislature that morning, and said they had driven all night. They had heard the story that it was up to the House now that the Senate had already passed it. They wanted to know if we could stop it. Bob and I looked at each other, and looked at Pooch, and said, "We're just the minority." I think we only had thirty out of ninety-eight people. We said, "What we'll do, we'll take you in and introduce you to the Speaker, John O'Brien." And we did, and they presented their case to him, and, of course, they were real strong Democrats, and they let him know that. And he said, "I'll do everything I can to help you. I'll help you out."

When the bill came up on the floor, one of us had an amendment to strike the tax on the soda pop out of the bill. It came up for a vote, and it wasn't a secret vote or anything like that, and O'Brien said, "Everybody in favor of the amendment stand," which was to take out the tax. The chief clerk at that time–John O'Brien had been giving him a bad time–the chief clerk stood up there and they had us stand, in place of a voice vote, they had us stand, and he pointed out like this and he counted them, and he turned around to Speaker O'Brien and he said, "It's tied. You have to cast the deciding ballot." Of course O'Brien couldn't go against his governor, so he almost fainted. He voted to keep the tax in. And these two Petrogallos, sitting up in the gallery, they just almost fell over because O'Brien had promised them that he would do what he could. Well, the tax stayed on.

And then the appropriations bill went down to the governor's office for the governor's signature. He called a press conference before he signed the bill and he scratched out the tax on the pop. Then he told the press, he said, "I don't know who would think of putting a tax on these little kids." He got a lot–(to Mrs. Huntley) remember that?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes, I remember.

Mr. Huntley: He got a lot of press out of it. He was a big guy, but, oh, it made some of those senators mad, because they had gone to the depths to pass his bill, and the people in the House did, too.

Ms. Boswell: And so O'Brien, who had made his stand thinking he was doing what the governor wanted, ended up kind of in the hole, too, as you might say? He must have lost some support there.

Mr. Huntley: Yes, he did. He lost quite a bit.

Ms. Boswell: Is it common, this notion of following your governor if the Speaker and the governor are of the same party, are they sort of beholden to the governor?

Mr. Huntley: I would guess pretty much so. I've never been in a position like that, but blood is thicker than water, you know.

Ms. Boswell: How much of a presence, or influence, did various governors that you served under have in the Legislature? Who was in when you started?

Mr. Huntley: Al Rosellini. He was elected governor the same time as I was elected the first time. He'd been a senator, and he'd been the Democrat leader in the Senate. He had it pretty well buttoned up. The House and the Senate were both solid Democrat so they gave him pretty well what he wanted.

Ms. Boswell: How effective as a governor and leader do you think he was?

Mr. Huntley: I think he was a good governor. That sounds strange coming from a Republican, but that isn't an easy task down there.

Ms. Boswell: Can you elaborate a little bit? What was it that you thought made him a good governor?

Mr. Huntley: No, I can't. It's been too many years ago. There were instances when I think he bent over backwards to do what was right. The story is, that, of course, he was a very strong Catholic, and he had had a reputation of–not all that great–and the story is that the diocese in Seattle sent one of their priests down here and he gave him a pretty good talking to. He said, "Now, don't you embarrass us. Stay on the straight and narrow." Whether that happened, I'm not sure, but that was a story at the time which might have had a little effect on him.

Ms. Boswell: When you say "straight and narrow," what do you mean?

Mr. Huntley: Well, no shady deals.

Ms. Boswell: That's very interesting. What about Evans? Were you serving when Evans was governor?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah. He appointed me to the Highway Commission, and also to the Utilities and Transportation Commission. But then, after I left the Highway Commission, I was in the Senate while he was governor. Yes.

Ms. Boswell: He would be more to your political taste, wouldn't he?

Mr. Huntley: Dan leaned a little more to the social science.

Ms. Boswell: Social welfare?

Mr. Huntley: Social work, yes. I'm not sure that he was wrong, but he had a different idea of it than I did.

Ms. Boswell: Going back to your early years in the Legislature. This whole notion of party and party affiliation. If you were asked, for example, to cosponsor a bill with somebody from the Democratic Party, did that affect your standing amongst the Democrats? Was there ever a large partisanship or not?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. I don't think so. In fact, I was never very close to the Republican Party organization in my own district. They had a lot of ideas that I didn't believe in, and I didn't argue with them, but I just kind of went my way and they went their way.

Ms. Boswell: It's interesting. I haven't talked to a lot, but the few people I have talked to that were in the Legislature, most of them claimed to me, whatever party they were, that they weren't partisan. I don't know whether to believe it, or is it something that legislators like to say? Were there a lot of people who really didn't take party very seriously?

Mr. Huntley: I think so. I didn't. My relationship with the Democrats in the House and the Senate both were more of a friendly type than it was party type. I think a lot of them from the Democrat side weren't too pleased with a lot of their Democrat cohorts.

Ms. Boswell: Was that just that particular time? I don't know if you know during your dad's era, was party more important or not?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. In fact, I think twice, while he was in the Senate, there were coalitions. He didn't think much of them and I didn't either, and I told you awhile ago it made longtime enemies out of longtime friends.

Ms. Boswell: If you're not partisan, it would seem that coalitions make sense. That's why I guess I can't understand.

Mr. Huntley: Actually, it wasn't really Democrat or Republican partisanship that caused the coalition. It was the fact that there were some Democrats that were run over, and there were some Republicans that were run over in the 1961 session. Actually, what they thought they were doing was for the good of the people that they were representing. I really don't think that partisanship had too much to do with it.

Ms. Boswell: That's interesting. In my notes I also noticed in a conversation we had before, you mentioned to me that somebody had advised you that if you really want to get a piece of legislation passed, that you shouldn't introduce it but that somebody else should. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

Mr. Huntley: George Adams, Representative George Adams. That was a piece of advice. He said that if you had something that your people really want, and you're going to have to go out and work for it, it's better if you get somebody else to sponsor the bill. Then you can, when the bill comes up on the floor, just debate it until heck freezes over. But, if it's your particular bill, why somebody's going to get suspicious and say, "Hey, wait a minute. What's going on here?"

Ms. Boswell: And did you think that that proved to be fairly wise or useful advice?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, I think so.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit more about Adams. I don't know much about him.

Mr. Huntley: I didn't know much about him. He's been deceased for years. He was an Indian from out by Shelton. In fact, there's a salmon hatchery named after him out there. Just the other side of Shelton on the right.

Ms. Boswell: Did you generally follow that advice? Did you pick your bills carefully to sponsor or cosponsor?

Mr. Huntley: I thought I did. I got most of them through, so maybe it didn't hurt too bad.

Ms. Boswell: Are there any you're particularly proud of– or not proud of–in terms of bills that you sponsored?

Mr. Huntley: You know, it's been so long ago that I don't really remember what I sponsored or what I cosponsored. I did have quite a bit to do with most of the traffic-safety legislation that was passed in those years, both in researching it and also cosponsoring with other people and having my own bills.

Ms. Boswell: How did that interest arise?

Mr. Huntley: I really can't tell you now. Of course, I'd always been involved with highways since I'd been in the Legislature, and we wanted to make them as safe as we could. I guess that's probably the biggest reason.

Ms. Boswell: What were the big safety issues at that time? Seat belts obviously were very important.

Mr. Huntley: And the implied-consent legislation.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about that. I'm not familiar with that.

Mr. Huntley: DWI, driving while intoxicated. I either sponsored or cosponsored that bill several different times. It always got into the Judiciary Committee some way or another, and the attorneys wouldn't let it out. Finally, the citizens, through the initiative process, passed it.

Ms. Boswell: Why wouldn't the lawyers let it out? What was the problem?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know. You can't pin them down. They were trial lawyers and you can't tell, they probably had a vested interest somewhere. They didn't want anybody to take their business away from them.

Ms. Boswell: When you said "implied consent," tell me how that relates?

Mr. Huntley: Well, let's see. How does that work? If you're picked up and the officer suspects that you are

intoxicated, he implies that you are, and makes you consent to take the breathalyzer test.

Ms. Boswell: But you were never able to get that one passed?

Mr. Huntley: No, I never did.

Ms. Boswell: What do you think today about all the drunken-driving publicity that there is? MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and all that? Is that still a proper realm for the state to get involved with?

Mr. Huntley: I think that those women are conscientious in what they're doing. I think they have probably lost family members or something like that. I think it's a good thing that they're interested in it.

Ms. Boswell: What about the argument that many Republicans make about too much government, and too much regulation, and too much interference in what should be either local or private, or individual matters?

Mr. Huntley: I think they have a valid point. Seems as though you can't do anything without getting a permit for it anymore. But, if you have somebody that's going to commit carnage out on the highway, you have to do something about it, and we figured that this was the best way to go.

Ms. Boswell: Other elements of traffic safety. Was the speed limit part of that, too?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. The whole gamut of it.

Ms. Boswell: Was that ever an issue, the various speed limits as highways progressed? Is that a job of the Legislature or the Highway Commission to set the speed limits?

Mr. Huntley: The Legislature can pass it, or the Highway Commission can set the speed limits. They are authorized to do that by the Legislature.

Another bill that I either sponsored or cosponsored was allowing you to make a right-hand turn on a red light or on a stoplight. In other words, if there was nothing coming on the left, you could turn right. That was one of them that I know most people used.

Ms. Boswell: What was the rationale behind that at that time? Was it just ease of driving, or was there something more to it?

Mr. Huntley: It was the ease of driving and speeding up traffic. If you were sitting at a stop sign, and even though there isn't anybody coming, you're holding up a line of cars behind you. If there isn't anybody coming, and it's clear, why can't you turn to the right? That's what we felt.

Ms. Boswell: I know another obviously big area for you was agriculture because your constituency was heavily agriculturally interested. Were there any specific bills on agriculture that people wanted that you were involved in?

Mr. Huntley: I don't remember any right now.

Ms. Boswell: I don't know if there was any burning issue at that time that related to agriculture.

Mr. Huntley: The daylight-saving time issue. Those farmers didn't want those young whippersnappers from Seattle telling them they had to get up at a certain time in the morning.

Ms. Boswell: It would seem to me that agriculture would like daylight-saving time. Giving them more time in the summer when you needed it for harvesting or whatever it might be.

Mr. Huntley: One of the big things that they were afraid of was these little kids standing out waiting for a school bus that they would ordinarily get on at eight o'clock in the morning, and they'd have to be getting on at seven, and it was still black and dark. That was one of the arguments that they used.

Ms. Boswell: I see. But you think that behind it was that they just didn't want to be told what to do by–

Mr. Huntley: Well, that could be. That could be.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me, you were in both the House and the Senate. Tell me about the differences. Did you like one better than the other?

Mr. Huntley: Well, the Senate is a little more slowed down a little bit. You get ninety-eight people in the House and you've got to rush, rush here and try to make all your committee appointments. It's a slower pace in the Senate. I really think I liked the Senate a little better, because of that arrangement, if nothing else.

Ms. Boswell: What about the people that you served with? Were there differences in the kind of people that either wanted to run and got elected to the Senate than the House, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I don't quite–

Ms. Boswell: I wondered if there were any kind of differences among the people that you served with. Was it noticeable that somebody would choose to either run for, or be elected to the Senate, rather than the House, or was it pretty much the same kind of people?

Mr. Huntley: Well, I don't think–in fact most of them in the Senate had been in the House at one time. In fact, Bob Bailey was here with me. He had been in the House, was elected to the Senate. I could name a lot of them that went from the House to the Senate along about that time.

Ms. Boswell: Were there any particular privileges or–

Mr. Huntley: Perks?

Ms. Boswell: Yes, perks is what I was going to say. I was trying to think of another word for it, that the Senate had that the House didn't?

Mr. Huntley: I don't really think so. Maybe I just didn't find them, but I don't recall that there would be.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about your appointment to the Senate. How did that all come about?

Mr. Huntley: Well, Senator Neill was appointed to the state Supreme Court, and I was from his district. He came to me and told me he was going to resign because the governor had offered to appoint him to the Supreme Court. He told me, he said, "I want you to take my place in the Senate." I kind of backed off because Bob Goldsworthy and I were good friends, from the same district, and I kind of stumbled around for awhile. Then Marsh told me, he said, "If you don't take it, I'm not going to take the Supreme Court." He was from Pullman. I kind of hesitated for a week or so because I was on the Highway Commission and I was happy where I was. We were designing and building the highway from here to Bellingham at that time, and it was a tremendous project among a lot of others. I was also on the toll-bridge authority which was financing the new ferries and the ferry docks. I was happy where I was.

One day the acting president of Washington State University–that was in between presidents–Dr. French had just retired, and they hadn't appointed Dr. Terrell yet, but Dr. Beasley called and wanted to know if he could have lunch with me over here, and I said, "Yeah." We went to lunch and he demanded that I take it. I have an idea that maybe Marsh Neill might have been talking to him. And that's how I was appointed.

Ms. Boswell: After the fact, how did you feel about your decision?

Mr. Huntley: I guess it's all right. It's so long ago that I really don't know how I felt. I really didn't feel jubilant about it, but I thought it was all right.

Ms. Boswell: What about the whole processes of the Senate? Were they really much different than the House in terms of getting bills through, sponsoring legislation, whatever?

Mr. Huntley: It was about the same. By that time there were some senators there that I had served with in the House and probably cosponsored bills with before. It wasn't much different.

Ms. Boswell: So the processes were pretty much the same. Anything that sort of sticks out in your mind about your Senate term, in terms of issues or particular bills?

Mr. Huntley: No, I don't think of anything offhand.

Ms. Boswell: You were on a Senate committee for highways. How did their responsibilities differ from the House committee?

Mr. Huntley: It was about the same. In fact the two committees worked together a lot. When I was chairman of the House committee I worked very closely with the chairman of the Senate committee developing legislation and studies, and one thing and another. It was very similar.

Ms. Boswell: What about working with the governor. Was there any more or less contact as a result of being in the Senate or the House?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so.

Ms. Boswell: If you had to pick the committees that are most influential in the Senate, what would they be?

Mr. Huntley: Well, things have changed so much today. I suppose you'd want to be on Ecology and all those things.

Ms. Boswell: I was thinking more of when you were there. Were there committees that were particularly important?

Mr. Huntley: Nothing was outstanding. I was on the Transportation Committee and Banks and Banking, and I guess Libraries. I really don't remember.

Ms. Boswell: I actually have a list here of what you were on. I was curious about Ways and Means or Appropriations. Was that a fairly influential committee then?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. In fact, coming from the district that I did, and I suspect that that's the reason that the president of the university came over and practically demanded that I take–

[End of Tape 5, Side 1]

Mr. Huntley: The legislators from that district, whether the rest of the Legislature wanted to recognize it or not, they were really responsible for the university budget. That was a big thing because that's the biggest part of that district, Washington State University.

Ms. Boswell: So they wanted to be sure they had somebody in there that knows the university and will support it.

During one of your terms, I think it was when you were in the House rather than in the Senate, weren't you also involved in some changes at Washington State, from it being designated a college to being a university? Wasn't that part–

Mr. Huntley: Yes. I was in the House, and Marshall Neill was in the Senate, and, of course, he lived in Pullman, and the people from the college came to us and wanted the name changed. They said it was more prestigious as far as getting the topnotch professors and grants, and things like that that they could get if it was a university rather than a college. So they finally convinced me, I hated to do it, but they finally convinced me that it was all right. Again, we didn't want to put our own names on the bill, so we got Senator Pat Sutherland, who is now the prosecuting attorney here in Thurston County, to introduce the bill. It was his bill that changed the name to the university. Again, we could get up and answer the questions that were pointed to us and speak on the legislation.

Ms. Boswell: Would there be any opposition to that kind of bill, and, if so, why?

Mr. Huntley: No, there wasn't any serious opposition. There were the University of Washington legislators that were always giving us a bad time, coming from the "cow county" over there, and they always called it the "cow university." I think of one legislator in the House, Zeke Clark, who was a dyed-in-the-wool Husky, in fact, I think he coached the crew at one time, he told me when the bill was over there and up on final passage, he told me he was going to have an amendment up there to call it in place of Washington State University, he was going to call it Pullman University. And I said, "Why?" and he said, "So I can call it P.U." There were fictitious things like that, but there was no real opposition to it.

Ms. Boswell: That's awful. When you fill somebody else's term, do you automatically go into the committees that they were on already?

Mr. Huntley: I did. The Democrat leadership, I'd served with most of those people before, and I came right off of the Highway Commission and they put me right on Transportation Committee.

Ms. Boswell: It made sense, obviously, to do that. What about the leadership of the Senate at that time? Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

Mr. Huntley: The leadership. Of course, they were Democrats. I've forgotten even who the leadership was now. Bob Greive, I guess, was the Democrat floor leader.

Ms. Boswell: What about Greive? Do you have any stories about him? What was he like?

Mr. Huntley: He was a character. He didn't get along in his own caucus. They tried for a number of years to vote him out of the leadership position. In fact, that was one thing, I wasn't going to mention it, but when I was up for election in 1972, and Senator Donohue was running against me because we'd been put in the same district, a couple of Democrat friends of mine came to me and they told me that–they half-heartedly apologized to me–but they said they were going to have to go over and help defeat me. They came clean. They said that they were having problems in their caucus, and they had to make some changes, and they lacked a vote doing it, and that they knew that if Donohue was elected he would vote any way they asked him to. And so they did, they sent a young Senate employee over to work the campus to defeat me. I'm quite sure he wasn't on the Senate payroll at the time he was over there because it was between sessions and at that time we didn't have too many people on the payroll in the interim. You asked me about Greive, and I suspect that he's the one that they were after.

Ms. Boswell: Yes, I bet so. Interesting. How did you feel about that when they told you that? Obviously they respected you or they wouldn't have told you.

Mr. Huntley: I had always considered them friends of mine. I thought that I knew pretty well what their

position was and I respected them for having come and told me. They apologized to me for having to do it.

Ms. Boswell: What about that race? Was the redistricting, itself, a way to sort of get you out, too? Was that a Democratic ploy?

Mr. Huntley: No. This state when you divide it up to one person, one vote, it's almost impossible to divide the state up. In fact, I guess it was the courts that finally wrote the redistricting legislation.

Ms. Boswell: So it just happened to come at that time when you were going to run again?

Mr. Huntley: The Legislature was ordered by the courts to redistrict. And when they didn't do it, as I recall, the courts did it for us. I've forgotten. It's been too long ago.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit about that race. I know you didn't have to campaign much in the past. Was that one where you did?

Mr. Huntley: I've never mentioned this to anybody before, not even my wife. College in Pullman hadn't started yet at the time of the primary election. The registration books had closed prior to the primary election. After the primary election the registration books opened again for the general election. My campaign committee went to the county auditor who was at that time the county election officer, and bought a list of all of the new registrants who registered after the books opened again. I sent a personal letter to each one of them saying who I was, and welcomed them as a new voter. In fact, that was the first year the eighteen-year-olds voted. I told them who I was and that I was running for re-election, and would appreciate anything they could do for me.

After I mailed those, it was first class and had my return address on them, a week or so later the mail carrier–because we lived out in the country we had a mailbox out front of the house–he came to the house with one of the big postal canvas bags full of letters and they were all returned. It said "no such address." You've probably seen those. There were a couple thousand of them that came back.

During the time that the registration books were open, these kids were on the campus, the first time that the eighteen-year-olds could vote. I was on the campus quite a little bit for different things. The president called me down to talk about something, and I was down different times to talk about it. These kids were sitting on the sidewalks, and it was weather just about like this, and some of them had a pasteboard box in front of them and some of them an apple box or anything, and they were taking registrations. That's how the kids registered.

Ms. Boswell: So there were some fishy things going on there.

Mr. Huntley: Yes, and you see, that was a federal election, too, because of the presidential election. I don't remember who the United States district attorney was, but I refused to cooperate with him. I didn't think that my opponent and the young fellow that these fellows had sent over to Pullman–I wanted to always believe that they didn't know anything about it. And these kids, I didn't want to get them in trouble. It was the first time they could vote and they were probably jubilant. But you know it's a felony to tamper with voter registrations. And I didn't want to get those kids in trouble, and I certainly didn't want to bring trouble onto my opponent, or this young fellow, because I doubted that they knew anything about it. I think it was just the kids in their exuberance that–

Ms. Boswell: Do you still believe that?

Mr. Huntley: I want to. I understand that Hawaii had a case that went to the Supreme Court, and there is no statute of limitations on voter fraud. That's been twenty years ago, so it still isn't a closed case. I wouldn't do anything about it because I don't want to get any of those kids in trouble. They're probably doctors and lawyers and maybe even some farmers. I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: But that must have been hard. How did you-

Mr. Huntley: Well it was, but you bite your lip and you take it. Necia has always been real upset about it. She knew the person that they sent over there and she still doesn't speak very well of him.

Ms. Boswell: It seems very noble of you not to say anything. I think it would be very difficult not to want some justice.

Mr. Huntley: I really didn't want it that bad to get some innocent kids in trouble. They weren't really innocent, but I could see how they could do that real easy.

The funny thing of it was, I voted in the '71 session to allow the eighteen-year-olds to vote. I was one of them that passed it in the Senate. They're good kids. They'll turn out all right.

Ms. Boswell: Once that election was over, what was your feeling then? What were your plans at that point?

Mr. Huntley: I really didn't have any. I was tired out. That was a huge district. I was driving three or four hundred miles a day from one end of the district to the other end for dinner meetings, and meetings in the evening. We went to Jamaica for a couple of weeks, I guess. I just wanted to rest up.

Ms. Boswell: But then, it was back to politics again.

Mr. Huntley: I came home from Jamaica, and I got a telephone call the next morning from a friend in Othello, Washington. He wanted me to come down there. He said that there was a group of farmers in that area, mainly livestock people, that wanted me appointed the director of Agriculture. I said, "Listen, I'm not interested in something like that." And they said, "Well, they all supported you in the election, and you owe it to them to come down and at least tell them personally that you don't want to do it."

So I did. I went down. They took me all over that country. Moses Lake, Othello, Warden, all over that whole country, and insisted that if the governor would appoint me that I'd take the director of Agriculture. But I didn't want it. I told them I appreciated their efforts and all that.

But then, I think I told you before, I got a call from Dan Evans one morning. He said that he wanted to appoint me as the Utilities and Transportation commissioner. I said, "Well, Dan, I hadn't even thought of anything like that. I don't know that I'm interested in it." He said, "Well, I'm going to make a change." And we talked a little while. Later, I said, "Well, I would sure want to talk to Necia about it first." He said, "Of course, I want you to. I want to know by ten o'clock in the morning." And that's how I was appointed to the Utilities Commission. I hadn't asked for it. I didn't know anything about it. I didn't know whether anybody had pushed me for it or whether it was just his idea. I don't have any idea. So here I am, twenty years later.

Ms. Boswell: That's great. You know what–

[End of Tape 5, Side 2]

THE "BARBERSHOP"

Ms. Boswell: I wanted to start by going back and asking you just a couple more questions related to things we talked about in an earlier interview. One of these is something that the people in the program were serious about overall, and I wanted to ask you a question, and that is, when you came into the Legislature, in the very beginning, did you ever have a sense that you were part of a class or part of a kind of a group of legislators who had a common agenda or a common purpose? Was there that sense of being part of a class?

Mr. Huntley: No, not really.

Ms. Boswell: Did you feel it any other time, that sometimes there were groups of legislators that seemed to have a common goal or agenda?

Mr. Huntley: Well, it's like you have the public-utility people or you have the forestry people, or you have the agricultural people who have more of a common thread among their programs. They get together, sure.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of just one time period where people get elected, is there a sense that during certain years or certain times, there are issues that sort of overtake the electorate and they end up voting in certain people, a lot of people who have the same kind of beliefs? You didn't really see that in your times?

Mr. Huntley: I didn't really notice it.

Ms. Boswell: I've not talked to anybody, myself, who has really noticed that particularly. But it's something they were curious about.

Mr. Huntley: I didn't have any part of it.

Ms. Boswell: Wasn't the first year you came in a year when it switched from Republican dominance to Democratic dominance, or was it the following year?

Mr. Huntley: The poor Republicans had been stumbling along ever since 1932, really.

Ms. Boswell: I think they were in the majority during a lot of the '50s, though, in the Washington Legislature.

Mr. Huntley: In the later '50s. Well, Mort Frayn who just passed away, was Speaker of the House in 1948, that took a Republican majority, of course, to elect him. Governor Rosellini was elected in 1956, the same time I was elected. It really wasn't a swing. You couldn't call it a Republican swing, but I did get more votes than Eisenhower did, come to think of it.

Ms. Boswell: Did you really? You mean within the state of Washington?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. In my district. 1956 or something like that.

Ms. Boswell: That's quite something.

Mr. Huntley: He was running for re-election.

Ms. Boswell: He was still quite popular at that time.

Mr. Huntley: He was. He was a war hero to an awful lot of people.

Ms. Boswell: Did you find that national politics, and again, the swings of the electorate had any effect on your election or on local elections in Washington state?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. Not at the time that I was involved.

Ms. Boswell: Sometimes they talk about the coattails, coming in on somebody's coattails. You didn't really see that happen much?

Mr. Huntley: That happens, but I've really never been involved in it. I was always on the wrong side, I guess.

Ms. Boswell: I think Washington state, generally, though too, is pretty far removed or at least has been in the past from the centers of power, so to speak. Is that fair?

Mr. Huntley: Of course, for so many years Magnuson and Jackson were the heads of the ticket on the Democrats' side. They used to carry quite a few people with them. In fact, a lot of their campaign funds, as I understand it, went to them; they didn't need them, so they just scattered them around here and there to different people in the party that they wanted to.

Ms. Boswell: Did that ever happen among the Republican leadership, say the caucus chairs or whomever, that they would build up sort of political funds for other candidates in their parties?

Mr. Huntley: It didn't happen in the caucus I happened to be in. If it was, I was one of them that wasn't getting any of it.

But you asked about Senator Greive. I guess that did happen there quite considerably. He was the one who was the recipient of the contributions, and then he dished them out to the people that he wanted to be friendly with him in his caucus.

Ms. Boswell: How do you feel about that as a practice?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think that's a good idea, really. People were giving him funds and I think most of them thought, "Well, we're helping Bob Greive along," and then they find out later on that the funds really didn't go to him, they'd gone to wherever he'd wanted to spread them around to.

Ms. Boswell: You didn't see that happening much within the Republican Party?

Mr. Huntley: No, I didn't. I was just a dumb kid from the country. Probably a lot of things I didn't know about.

Ms. Boswell: Another thing I wanted to ask you about that I noticed in re-listening to the tapes, one thing you mentioned, and we didn't talk about it any further, was the role of the John Birch Society and some of the farther-right groups in terms of policy. I think it came up when we were talking about seat belt legislation, but I was just wondering if you could elaborate a little bit on the role that the John Birch Society may or may not have played in terms of legislation. How powerful were they?

Mr. Huntley: They weren't as powerful as they thought they were. They did elect a lot of people I think about 1964, along in there someplace, or 1962, I don't know, but we had quite a few of them in the House of Representatives. They had a philosophy, whether it was a true philosophy with them or whether it was just something they just picked up, they were always concerned about losing their constitutional rights, this and that, and something else. That was the main thought that they had in mind. It might be yours, but it's against my constitutional rights, so I'm against it. That happened quite a little bit. It had to be the 1963 session of the Legislature.

Ms. Boswell: How did that affect the rest of the Republicans? Did it change any votes?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think so. I think most of them just didn't pay any attention to them.

Ms. Boswell: Where were most of them from?

Mr. Huntley: A couple I can think of were up around Bellingham. I think there were several from the Spokane area. It's been so long ago, I really have forgotten.

Ms. Boswell: I just wondered if they were mostly from rural districts as opposed to urban, or not?

Mr. Huntley: Up around Bellingham and toward Blaine I suppose they were more rural, but there were several from Spokane, but they weren't rural legislators. They were elected by the larger districts.

Ms. Boswell: Were they ever associated with any companies or any particular other advocacy groups?

Mr. Huntley: Not that I recall.

Ms. Boswell: I just had a friend who worked on some projects about the late '50s in Boeing, and it seemed as though there was a group within Boeing of people who were interested in John Birch philosophy, and I was just curious whether they ever got mixed in terms of legislative practices?

Mr. Huntley: It didn't show, at least. I didn't see it.

Ms. Boswell: Another thing I wanted to ask you about, and this is maybe a more frivolous question, tell me about the House barbershop. Wasn't there a barbershop?

Mr. Huntley: It really wasn't a barbershop. There was a former House member by the name of Brigham Young, and I don't know if he had been defeated or didn't run, or what, but anyway, he was assistant sergeant at arms, and he was a barber by trade. So, up on the fourth floor there are some little rooms, cloakrooms, he would cut hair up there. If somebody needed a haircut, they'd go up and if he was there, fine, they'd get a haircut. I never did have mine done there. I never had too much to cut.

Ms. Boswell: I've heard tales that they also would go up there for a little drink, too. Now, tell me if that was true?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, that was true. What did they call that, Committee Room X, didn't they?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes, I think so.

Mr. Huntley: But that was the same place. He had an old beat-up davenport that had probably been thrown out of the committee room someplace, and he had a refrigerator in there and I guess the guys would go in there to get a haircut and sit around and shoot the breeze and have a drink or two, or something like that. I never did, since I wasn't that type of a person. I've seen in there. I've looked in there, but I never participated.

Ms. Boswell: So it's up on the fourth floor? We were trying to figure out which room it was.

Mr. Huntley: It was off of the rotunda, between the House and the Senate galleries. We've got the rotunda down here, and across the end, of course, is the marble wall clear across. It was in there. There are a couple of little rooms back in there. In fact, I had one once before we had any office space or anything. I managed to con somebody out of a key to one of those, and I had a couple of filing cabinets in there where I kept my correspondence and things like that. They were just real tiny. Very small rooms.

Ms. Boswell: When he was doing this, he wasn't really a member of the House. He just was sort of a semiretired person.

Mr. Huntley: Yeah. A lot of them just couldn't turn loose. They'd either get defeated, or didn't run again and they'd find some kind of a job to come back over and work at. I remember there was an old fellow from Waterville whose name was Jones, that was the paymaster. He gave you your check at the end of every month or week, or whatever it was. You never saw him around there. I don't think I ever had a check from him, but it was just someplace for him to come to. I don't think he even had a salary. I doubt if he did. But, it was someplace to come and meet his old buddies and things like that.

Ms. Boswell: I would think it would be hard if that's been your life for a long time to suddenly end that, and the camaraderie that was there.

Mr. Huntley: The barber was probably the same thing.
Ms. Boswell: Was drinking a problem in the Legislature? Not a problem, but were there a lot of people who drank during the sessions?

Mr. Huntley: No. I don't think so. Maybe I was so stupid clean I didn't happen to get into it. You mean around the Legislature?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: I don't really think so. I think that the, what do you call them, the "watering holes," Tyee or someplace like that, in the evenings, I guess there was quite a bit.

Ms. Boswell: Were there places where people gathered that were into that in the evenings or other times outside of session? What were some of those places?

Mr. Huntley: Of course, the Tyee was fairly new at that time, and the Olympian Hotel downtown. They cut up their lobby. They had a real nice lobby for a hotel that size. They cut off one end of it and made it into a cocktail bar. I don't know where the other places were. Different places around the county.

Ms. Boswell: I was just curious. I'd heard about the barbershop so I wanted to find out more.

Mr. Huntley: There's another story that goes with that. Dr. A. O. Adams from Spokane, even though he was an orthopedic, he was a real good doctor. He was sitting next to me and the sergeant at arms came running down the corridor, grabbed hold of him, and took him up to Committee Room X. The barber was cutting a guy's hair up there, and he had a call, he had to answer a call someplace, I think it was the sergeant at arms, and he left these two guys sitting there and one of them said, "Do you want some scotch?" and the other one said, "Yeah," so he wanted an extra blotter. This one fellow reached into the refrigerator and got some scotch and poured out a tumbler of scotch. He looked around for water and he didn't find any, but he found the barber bench, there was one of these glasses, he just mixed it in with that and gave it to him. He took a swig of it and his eyes lit up like a pinball machine. It was formaldehyde. He used to dip his combs into it. He ran down and got Dr. Adams, and Doc ran up and got his finger down this guy's throat and got him to vomit it up. He came out all right.

Ms. Boswell: That's a great story.

Mr. Huntley: This fellow had a real deep voice. It came clear from here. He's the one that poured the drink. After it was over with, and everybody was okay, he said, "Well, hell, that's the way we drink 'em up in Stevens County."

Ms. Boswell: I like that. That's a great story. I can't wait to share that one.

Mr. Huntley: There are a lot of people who know who were around the Legislature at that time. It was quite a common story.

Ms. Boswell: I wanted to primarily talk today about various commissions and things that you've also served on at various times. I want to clarify, because I'm not totally clear on how some of them relate, or how you got involved with them. I made a list, but I want to go back to the earliest one, and one would be the state Toll Bridge Authority. Tell me first of all what the state Toll Bridge Authority is and how you got involved with that?

Mr. Huntley: The state Toll Bridge Authority was an authority that financed the new ferries. The bond issues and stuff like that went through the Toll Bridge Authority.

Ms. Boswell: Was that an agency prior to the state–I mean today the ferries would be–there's a Washington State Ferry, what? Association?

Mr. Huntley: Department of Transportation.

Ms. Boswell: So this was part of Transportation then, too?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. But it was separate from the Department of Transportation in that it was the financing agency for the ferries and the toll bridges.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about the ferry system at that time. What was its relative size? Was it a pretty good-sized agency then?

Mr. Huntley: I don't remember how many ships there were. Governor Langlie, over my dad's objections, bought the ferry system from Captain Peabody, of the Black Ball Ferry Line. He didn't buy them all, but a lot of those original ferries that the state had were Black Ball ferries.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me why your dad objected?

Mr. Huntley: Because he thought down the line someplace, and he was correct, that it would be cutting into the transportation budget. In other words, the highway budget. And, of course, there's a provision in the constitution that you, I'm sure, are aware of that you couldn't spend gas-tax money on anything other than the highway itself. And that played a part in it.

Ms. Boswell: But Langlie went ahead anyway?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, he did.

Ms. Boswell: When you were on the state Toll Bridge Authority, how did you get appointed to that?

Mr. Huntley: I can't remember whether I was elected or appointed. I followed Charlie Hodde. Have you interviewed Charlie Hodde by any chance?

Ms. Boswell: No. What is his last name–Hodde?

Mr. Huntley: What is it? H-O-D-D-E?

Mrs. Huntley: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: He was the Speaker of the House in the middle 1940s, I guess. He still lives here in town.

Ms. Boswell: Oh, does he?

Mr. Huntley: He could tell you more in fifteen minutes about the state than I or anybody else could in a lifetime.

Ms. Boswell: I'll ask them about him. I'm not familiar with him. I've not been doing this real long so it may be he has been asked, I don't know.

Mr. Huntley: I haven't seen Charlie in the last couple of years because I've been laid up, so I don't know what he's–

Ms. Boswell: I'm pretty sure I would have heard if he had.

Mr. Huntley: He's been through it all. He ran for governor once or twice. Was Speaker of the House, and he was director of General Administration, I think. I believe director of Agriculture under one of the governors. He's been way around. He's been clear around.

But I followed him on the Toll Bridge Authority, and I don't remember whether it was an elected position at that time or appointed by the governor.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of duties or responsibilities did you have?

Mr. Huntley: We were the ones that sold the bonds after the bonds were issued by the Legislature to build the ferries and also the toll bridges. It was kind of a financial clearing house, is what is was. We didn't actually run the ferries, no. The Highway Department ran the ferries.

Ms. Boswell: So this was just more seeing that the system is in place and getting the funding for it?

Mr. Huntley: I think that would be a good statement.

Ms. Boswell: How many people were on the Toll Bridge Authority?

Mr. Huntley: It was disbanded a long time ago, but I think there were five of us, if I remember correctly.

Ms. Boswell: Was it essentially nonpartisan?

Mr. Huntley: I think it was pretty much nonpartisan, as I recall.

Ms. Boswell: Given that your dad had some opposition to the ferry system, what kind of position did you take on the commission, in terms of how you viewed the system should be set up?

Mr. Huntley: Well, it was all said and done before I came into the picture. I always kind of felt that maybe it might have been a mistake for the state to take over private industry, but as time has gone on, probably the private industry couldn't have raised the funds to build the ferries or keep them going.

Ms. Boswell: How long did you serve on that committee, do you know?

Mr. Huntley: On the Toll Bridge Authority? Oh, a couple of years. I don't remember. That's been a long, long time ago.

Ms. Boswell: Yes, 1965. It's been a long time. Is there anything in particular that stands out in terms of that service, as to what happened or what was important?

Mr. Huntley: Not really, because it was all financial, like going to New York to sell the bonds at Chase Manhattan Bank, or whoever was bidding, or something like that.

Ms. Boswell: Was it common at that time for legislators to be on these various authorities. They weren't really part of the Legislature, they're not like a committee assignment, they were sort of beyond that, weren't they?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. Of course, this was after I was in the Legislature. It was in between when I was in the House and then when I was in the Senate.

Ms. Boswell: So you wouldn't necessarily have kept that position once you went back to the Senate?

Mr. Huntley: No. There wasn't any reason to, anyway.

Ms. Boswell: In '65 you were also chosen to be on the state Highway Commission, and you made the decision to leave the Legislature to do it. Tell me a little bit about it. How did that all come about?

Mr. Huntley: That was in 1965. I got a call from the governor one day and he said that he wanted to appoint me to the Highway Commission. It was a five-member commission. I guess there were two or three Democrats on it, two Democrats, I think. And the Democrat Senate refused to confirm them, so there were two vacancies. In fact, Bill Gissberg was one of them that came to me and asked me if I'd like to serve on the Highway Commission because he had a friend in Everett that would have been on the Democrat side. There were two openings there. So that's when I went on the Highway Commission. I resigned from the House during the middle of the 1965 session.

Ms. Boswell: Why didn't the Legislature confirm the previous recommendations?

Mr. Huntley: I don't remember. Ernie Cowell, who I replaced, was from Walla Walla. He was a friend of mine. He was a Democrat, and he ran for the Legislature down there on the Democrat ticket, but never got very far. The other one who they wouldn't confirm, I've forgotten his name, I think it was Davis. But his claim to fame was when he was in Harvard or Yale, was eating a bunch of goldfish. (To Mrs. Huntley: What was his name? Davis, wasn't it?)

Mrs. Huntley: I don't know.

Mr. Huntley: I don't think that had anything to do with his not being confirmed. The Senate Democrats just didn't want either one of them, and they controlled the Senate.

Ms. Boswell: So you were appointed by Evans. What convinced you, ultimately, to do it?

Mr. Huntley: Of course, I'd always been interested in highways, and the governor and I had gone into the Legislature at the same time, and we'd been on the same committees, and things like that.

Oh, another thing, too, the 1965 session is when the courts ordered the state to redistrict. That was starting to throw me into the, put me in with Bob Goldsworthy who wanted to be elected out of the two spot. I didn't want to do that. It was just the opportune time to change.

Ms. Boswell: Looking back, are you glad you did?

Mr. Huntley: Oh yeah, it worked out all right.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit about the operation of a commission like that. How does it actually work?

Mr. Huntley: They hire and fire the director and also the captain of the ferry system. They work, I say command, but it isn't that tight. They set the rules and regulations and they hire the director and the captain of the ferry system to do the running of the business.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about some of the responsibilities that the Highway Commission takes on.

Mr. Huntley: The weekly routine when the Highway Commission met, I think it was every Monday. I don't know, it was too long ago. We had our engineers, and especially at that time, it was when the federal highway interstate system was in its infancy, and they started building the Interstate 5 from Vancouver north to, I think they got clear to Olympia before I was on the commission. Our engineers did all the engineering and all the things like that. But, after they had engineered a section of the road, like say, the one from here to Tacoma, they came before the commission and they spread their maps across a broad area and I think they had one–

[End of Tape 6, Side 1]

STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN: 1966

Ms. Boswell: So they were spreading their maps–

Mr. Huntley: The engineers of course, had their favorite one, but then they also had two alternates. The commission, after a lot of consideration, would agree on one or the other and tell them, "Okay, go out and buy the property and let's build." That's kind of the way it worked.

But, at that time, the attorney general had ruled that the majority of the commission had to attend all of the location hearings, the right-of-way hearings, and all this thing. So, for two years, I spent an awful lot of time right between here and Bellingham. Up through Highway 405, and I'm sure you know where that is. We'd go into the little communities where we were going to have to build the highway through. A good example is on 405, and I've forgotten the exact location, but most of the land that we were going through was virgin land. There were little stump farms and some dairy farms and things like that. These people out there really didn't want to give their little pieces of land up or their homes, but they realized that they couldn't stop progress, they didn't want to stop progress, so we had the habit of sending in our engineers a couple of days ahead of time, in a schoolhouse or grange hall or wherever they were going to have the public meeting, and let these people come in and look at all the maps and what it was going to do to their place and the place next to them. The engineers would spend a day with them, very graciously pointing out and asking questions, because a lot of those people from the commission came and sat in the hearing itself, where they were reluctant to get up and say very much.

Ms. Boswell: But when you talked to them one-on-one they–

Mr. Huntley: It answered their questions as to what it was going to do to their farm. I remember this one place, the people that were there I would say were a fifty-sixty-year-old group. They were dressed in the best clothes they had which were blue denim overalls and things like that. Nothing wrong with that at all. It was the best they had. This one hearing, I remember, they questioned this lady and she said, "Well, you know, our well is over here and a lot of the engineers said they were going to drill you a new well." Things like that. And she said, "I was born and raised here, and I don't really like to give it up, but I don't want to stop progress." Another one or two the same way.

And the next one that came up to the stand was a guy probably about thirty-five years old and he was dressed like he'd just come off of New York, and he was sworn in, and he said there was absolutely no way they were going to go through his parcel of land. I think it took five hundred feet the length of forty acres, or something like that. He said there's no reason to go through there, you can move it over a couple of hundred feet. Well, that would have wiped out some poor, little old farmer. This guy just kept persisting, "There's no way you're going to go through there, I won't allow it."

Of course, we had the right of eminent domain; we could go where we wanted to. We tried to work with the people. I think most of them appreciated it. After this fellow sat down, this assistant attorney general that I had there representing me, sat down and I said, "Hey, who is that guy?" He said, "He's the president of NBC, National Biscuit Company." His wife is a granddaughter of a fellow who homesteaded a little piece of land up there that had never been fenced, it was virgin timber, never used, they didn't plan on using it, but that was just the attitude that this guy had. Well, I don't think you'd have to guess too hard to know where the highway went. It was just such things as that. They were hard decisions for us to make because we needed to build the highways, but we still wanted to cooperate with the people, too.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about the origins of the idea for 405, in particular. Did that come when you were on the Highway Commission?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, about that time. I wasn't directly involved with it. I was with the hearings as to where the location would be, and things like that.

Ms. Boswell: What's your general sense, though, of why they thought that road was necessary at that time?

Mr. Huntley: I really don't remember. Of course, it was to carry Boeing traffic up to Everett on the back side.

Ms. Boswell: Was that essentially Boeing's road? Did Boeing really push for that?

Mr. Huntley: I don't think they did, too much. They had a shortcut off of what's now I-5, over to the 747 plant at Everett. That's what they were after, was that diagonal

cutoff. We could see that. We built that. They had an awful lot of traffic in there. Still do, and it's getting worse every day.

Ms. Boswell: Was there a lot of lobbying by private interests, individuals, too, but bigger interests over where a highway would go, or if you would put one in to meet the needs of a private company?

Mr. Huntley: There was some of that, yes. Anytime you have to make decisions that affect the public, you're going to have people on both sides of the question.

Ms. Boswell: Did companies try to exert pressure to get roads to where it might be convenient for them?

Mr. Huntley: No, I didn't get any pressure. I didn't call it pressure, and I'm looking back at it, and I know it wasn't, but one of the Boeing people invited Necia and me to come up and view the 747 when it was still in the hangar while they were still working on it. So we went through the mock-up in Renton, and saw the actual interior. And we went up to Everett and saw the regular fuselage. It was a huge thing. I guess we have a picture someplace. No, I never received any pressure. Or I didn't feel that it was. Maybe I was so dumb I didn't recognize it. Boeing is really the Northwest. The only thing that I ever did have as far as Boeing is concerned, do you know where the aerospace center is at Kent, down in the Kent Valley?

Ms. Boswell: No. Actually I don't, but tell me about it.

Mr. Huntley: You can see it from I-5. It was the first building down in the Kent Valley. The first one of Boeing's. I got a call from the governor one day, and he said he'd like to have me come over to the office at such and such a time. He gave me no indication as to what it was about, so I went over, and I got there, and I think it was President Allen of Boeing who was there. If it wasn't, it was one of the top people. The mayors of Auburn, Kent, Renton, the superintendent of public instruction, and myself, and they swore us to secrecy. They said on such and such a date they were going to throw the first shovelful of dirt for an aerospace center down in the Kent Valley. They had a critical path lined out, such and such a date, this, this, and this. I think the day that the plant was to open there were supposed to be five thousand employees, which was something awful big. And, they had it figured out for every employee, I shouldn't even say figures, because it's been so long ago, but it seems as though it was three people for every employee that they were hiring, that it would take three people, the butcher, the baker, the buyer, and all that.

They turned around to the superintendent of public instruction, who was Louis Bruno at that time, and said that on such and such a date there were going to be so many schoolchildren knocking at the door. They turned around to the mayors of Auburn, Kent, and Renton and said that we're going to have to have housing, we've got to have apartments, and you name it.

I raised the question at that time, and I still think it was a legitimate one. Moses Lake airport, the Air Force had just given it up, because the war was over, it was one of the largest ones in the world, and I said, "You've got all kinds of power over there from Grand Coulee Dam and Bonneville Dam, and you've got good highways there already leading into it." They said, "Yeah, but there's no housing over there." So, that's the way the cookie bounced. If the Moses Lake area, Quincy or all those areas could absorb so many people of the first thrust, it would have worked out all right because housing would have followed it. There were apartments and things like that up in the Kent Valley, Renton, really, Bellevue, that did absorb the original crush. But, anyway, that's the kind of things that you faced.

It hurt me very, very much, because at the same time that I was sworn to secrecy, there were a lot of little homes and dairy farms up and down the Kent Valley that were being sold for taxes. People couldn't make it. They were just giving it up. And here I knew what was coming down the line in a year or two.

Ms. Boswell: What do you do in a situation like that?

Mr. Huntley: I just kept my mouth shut. That's all I could do. But there were a lot of good people up in that Valley that lost their homes to taxes, that if they could've hung on another six months it would have been coming out in pretty good shape.

Ms. Boswell: It is really hard, but what could you do?

Mr. Huntley: That's one of the decisions that you ask for when you take the job, I guess.

Ms. Boswell: You served on it and then you were asked to be chairman. I get a sense from these newspaper articles that at first you said, "No. I'm not doing this. I don't want to be the chairman." But, then somehow then you did accept it. Do you remember that decision-making process?

Mr. Huntley: The chairman of the commission?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: No. I didn't want to go on the commission in the first place. It was the Senate that I didn't want to go into, and leave the chairmanship of the commission, but I don't know that I ever said I didn't want to be chairman of it.

Ms. Boswell: It could have been just plain wrong, too. There was just a little article that probably said that you never wanted the position, and it's not worth it. You don't get paid anything to do this, and it's a huge amount of time and it's just not worth it. Then all of a sudden, you're it!

Mr. Huntley: I might have felt that way. I don't know whether I did or not. I don't think so, because I wouldn't have gone through with it.

Ms. Boswell: I think that sometimes the newspapers just sort of print–

Mr. Huntley: Oh yeah. They have to have something to talk about.

Ms. Boswell: Print whatever. In terms of the Highway Commission, I think before you served on it, and I'm going back a little bit for a minute, but I read something about long-range planning, and that you had been involved in some legislation, and probably more in the Legislature, even before you got on the Highway Commission, about long-range planning for highway development. Can you tell me more about that? Was that part of the Highway Commission, or was that before?

Mr. Huntley: It was before.

Ms. Boswell: It was before?

Mr. Huntley: I was chairman of the House Transportation Committee, and Senator Washington, who was chairman of the Senate committee, we worked very closely on long-range. Setting up legislation establishing the long-range transportation projects. We'd go out and do these O&D studies, which was origins and destinations studies, and when we built the highway through here, we were looking twenty years ahead. What's the traffic going to be twenty years from now? Well, of course, the engineers missed it by a mile. It just developed so fast that it wasn't true to the expectations.

Ms. Boswell: It seems that that was a period of tremendous growth during that time. How was planning carried out? Who did you rely on to help you with the information to base planning on?

Mr. Huntley: Mainly our employees. I think we had five thousand engineers about that time in the Highway Department.

Ms. Boswell: Oh really? Five thousand? I didn't realize it was so large.

Mr. Huntley: That was just a follow-up for the federal highway interstate system which was Eisenhower's program. It passed in 1956. A good many of them were our own engineers, but it got to where we couldn't hire these engineers, because everybody in the country was after them. There was such a demand. We did contract out quite a little bit of contract services to different engineering services.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of that, how does that fit in with the Good Roads Association, or does it? Where does that group come in, and what does it do?

Mr. Huntley: The Good Roads Association, I haven't read this, but I imagine it goes back to the very beginning, mainly eastern Washington people were the ones that put together the Good Roads Association and the Cross State Good Roads Association. They worked very closely with the Legislature, the members of the highway Good Roads Association. They had quite a little input as to the appropriations and things like that for the different parts of the state.

Ms. Boswell: Were they primarily fund-raisers?

Mr. Huntley: No, they weren't fund-raisers; they were the ones that were pushing for good roads. "We want a highway here, you figure out how to pay for it."

Ms. Boswell: Did their recommendations or their lobby come to the state Highway Commission, too, ultimately, when you were there?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, to an extent. But, by that time, actually the Highway Commission was, you might say, born and fledged under the Good Roads Association. They were the sponsors of it.

Ms. Boswell: Oh really? I didn't know that.

Mr. Huntley: One of the major reasons to start with, was that the districts that weren't represented too well in the Legislature usually went home with the bacon, so to speak. The Good Roads Association got to be strong enough that they pretty well kept a handle on that. That really is where they were most active.

Ms. Boswell: Did they get some of their members elected to the Highway Commission, or did they, just by being there and presenting information, did they just influence–

Mr. Huntley: I don't know. See, there were only five members on the Highway Commission and that was scattered all over the state. You couldn't have more than two from any one side of the state. No, they didn't have it loaded with those people, but the Highway Commission paid quite a bit of attention to them.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of your service having to do with roads and transportation generally, another commission you belonged to ultimately, or were appointed to was the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee. Tell me a little bit more about it. Obviously, it's at the national level, but how did that come about?

Mr. Huntley: The N-H-T-S-A is the abbreviation. You have to have an abbreviation for everything.

Ms. Boswell: So it's National Highway Transportation Safety Advisory Commission.

Mr. Huntley: National Highway Traffic Safety Commission.

Ms. Boswell: So, tell me about that.

Mr. Huntley: We had projects that went around all over the United States. In fact, they were called the ASAP program. I can't remember exactly what the ASAP was for, but we furnished State Patrol cars for different segments like from Seattle to Vancouver, or something like that. We paid the state troopers, was what we did. It was an alcoholic safety program, was what it was. I can't remember what the ASAP stands for.

We had several demonstration projects around all over the United States. One of them was in Florida. In fact, the commissioner from Florida was the attorney general at that time. I don't know who went down there, but I was assigned to Phoenix. I spent a night down there just riding in a patrol car that we had furnished, we were paying for it. You'd be surprised how proficient those troopers get. The beat that I was on was from east Van Buren from central clear to the city limits into eastern Phoenix. We'd be driving down the street and meet a car, and the trooper would say, "Well, there's a drunk." He'd go up and turn around and come back and stop him, and sure enough, he never missed. I asked him, "How do you know?" "Oh," he says, "It's an instinct."

We met another car, I remember, and it was a dry, hot evening, and he had his windshield wipers going, and that trooper says, "He can't see. He's fogged up." He turned around an followed him, and, sure enough.

And, another time we met somebody, I don't know what the tip-off was there, I really don't remember, but we turned around and followed him for a ways, and pulled him off to the side, and he was really too drunk to drive, so I sat in the passenger seat. I didn't get out of the car, and the trooper went around and got hold of the fellow and told him he'd better get in the back seat and go for a ride with us. The trooper didn't do it on purpose, but he had his hand on the guy's shoulder, and just as the guy started to duck under it to get into the back seat, just at the same time that the trooper gave him kind of a shove, the guy threw up his head and he just split it wide open. We took him down to the city-county jail in Phoenix, and the trooper drove up, and a great, big old burly sergeant came out and says, "Get him out of here. I don't want him in here." So they took him over to the emergency hospital and stitched him up a little bit.

While we were there, I was dumb enough that I went in with the officer I was riding with, and they had these people, the d.t.'s or whatever that is, lying on these cots in there and a great, big officer, some of them weigh three hundred pounds or more, just lying over them, holding them down, and they were screaming that they had snakes in their boots. I don't want to ever see anything like that again. Anyway, those are some of my experiences on the–

Ms. Boswell: Tell me a little bit about how you got appointed to it.

Mr. Huntley: I really don't know. The next administration called and wanted to know if I'd like to be on it, and I said, "Yup," so that was it. Period.

Ms. Boswell: When you said that, you were still with the Highway Commission. Right?

Mr. Huntley: No. I was in the Senate at that time.

Ms. Boswell: So, if anything, you were on the Toll Bridge Authority, but you weren't on–

Mr. Huntley: I think I was probably off the Toll Bridge Authority, too, by that time. I think I was just in the Senate. I have an idea it was the secretary of Transportation that appointed me. He was a former governor of Maryland. I've forgotten what his name is now. I think that's where my appointment came from.

Ms. Boswell: Did you ever meet Nixon?

Mr. Huntley: I had met him. Not during that time, but, yes, I had met him. I knew his brother when his brother lived in Seattle.

Ms. Boswell: Was it Donald?

Mr. Huntley: Donald. Yes.

Ms. Boswell: What was he doing in Seattle?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know. I don't know where he is, whether he's still around or not.

Ms. Boswell: What did you think of Nixon at that time?

Mr. Huntley: My contact with him, naturally, was a few campaigns here. He comes to town and he blows in, and you're supposed to be part of the welcoming group and all that. My cousin, who lives in Seattle, is a stewardess for United Airlines and she was assigned to Nixon. (To Mrs. Huntley: I think she liked him, didn't she?) That was all during the campaign, she was assigned to that particular plane that was the campaign plane.

Ms. Boswell: That wouldn't be too bad. That would be kind of fun I would think. Kind of exciting, anyway.

So, how did the government ask you to be on this commission? Did they just call you on the telephone, or what did they do?

Mr. Huntley: I think I got a letter, if I remember correctly.

Ms. Boswell: Now, you had some hesitation about the state Highway Commission. Did you have any hesitation about this one?

Mr. Huntley: No, because it wasn't leaving the state or anything like that. I was back there about once a month, or something like that. That was a strenuous thing, though. I was living in eastern Washington and flying out of Spokane to Washington D.C., and they didn't have a direct flight. You had to change planes at Minneapolis or Chicago. And National Airport was closed to anything that came any farther than from Chicago, so I bounced around from Friendship Airport in Baltimore to Dulles. You name it, I've been in all of them. I know you have, too.

Ms. Boswell: Was there a lot of traveling involved in the National Highway Safety?

Mr. Huntley: Yes there was. Quite a bit. Around all the United States on different programs that we were espousing, like drunken driving and safety features, and things like that.

Ms. Boswell: Did they have a full-time staff with that?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, they did. I called them a bunch of eggheads.

Ms. Boswell: Why?

Mr. Huntley: Ralph Nader's people. He still doesn't like me.

Ms. Boswell: Really? Why not?

[End of Tape 6, Side 2]

11

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Ms. Boswell: You were telling me about Ralph Nader's eggheads.

Mr. Huntley: There was another commissioner from Yuma, Arizona. His name was Braydon. Forest Braydon, and we all called him "Frosty" for some reason. He was a pretty down-to-earth guy. We went back there to a commission meeting one time, and these eggheads had a resolution drawn, ready for our signatures, making it mandatory to have air bags in all cars after 19, I think 1975. The date's immaterial. They gave us a big spiel about how safe they were, and how great they were, and all this and that, and we really didn't question it. For the type of guys who were working, we did kind of question it. So this Frosty Braydon and I took it on ourselves to do a little inspecting ourselves. We found that they weren't really safe. That's, you have to remember, twenty years ago or better. There have been lots of improvements since. But at that time, if you were going down the highway and you happened to hit a good bump, it would blow up in your face. A lot of times they wouldn't release. So, here you are, you're going down the road at sixty miles an hour or better with that thing in your face. Another thing was that they were no good for a side hit. When a car hits you from the side you still had to wear a seat belt. So, we refused to sign the papers setting it up.

Ms. Boswell: And they didn't like that, I take it?

Mr. Huntley: No, they didn't. They'd been working for months to get us in a position to where we were going to have to sign that.

Ms. Boswell: Some of the "eggheads," so-called, were actually staff members of the Transportation Board?

Mr. Huntley: Highway Safety Board.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of influence did Nader have?

Mr. Huntley: I think he had a lot on those guys. In fact, he probably got them their jobs in the first place. They were there, lock, stock, and barrel before Frosty and I were ever on the commission.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about the backgrounds of some of the other people on the commission at that time. You were a legislator. What about them?

Mr. Huntley: Frosty owned a Caterpillar implement business down in Yuma. As I mentioned, the attorney general from Florida was a commission member. The chairman was president of State Farm in Wisconsin, or wherever their headquarters is. He has since passed away with cancer. There were some pretty good people on that committee. I've forgotten the rest of them. It's been too long ago.

Ms. Boswell: Generally speaking, the people were fairly competent? It wasn't just sort of a political appointment?

Mr. Huntley: Oh no.

Ms. Boswell: Obviously you had a huge expertise, but I just wondered if many of the others–

Mr. Huntley: I think that the rest of them did, like this fellow from State Farm. Of course, you know that that was one of the largest insurers in the United States, and they had a lot of experience with insurance coverage and safety features, and things like that. He was a very, very good chairman and straight arrow right down the line. There was no monkey business with him.

Ms. Boswell: How much did the administration, itself, try to either influence your work or offer agendas for what you were to do?

Mr. Huntley: Not very much. We were kind of on our own.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of the committee, what kind of role did you find yourself playing other than fact-finding for the eggheads?

Mr. Huntley: Like I told you, I rode with Dixy Lee Ray when she was governor. One of her biggest accomplishments being governor was to ride in a State Patrol car. I was assigned, as I said, in Phoenix, and things like that around all over the United States that had to do with traffic safety.

Ms. Boswell: Was it fun?

Mr. Huntley: It really was. It was awful tiresome, though.

Ms. Boswell: Was it essentially a full-time job to do it?

Mr. Huntley: Oh no. (To Mrs. Huntley: What did I do? Go back there about once a month, didn't I?)

Mrs. Huntley: I think so.

Mr. Huntley: We met in Miami one time because the attorney general was from there. They had some kind of a test set up to see how much alcohol you could drink before it affected you, this way or that way. You've probably seen those. It was kind of a Link Trainer. I was a pilot and you go into this Link Trainer and you fly that thing. But this was a Link Trainer and you were out on the highway, and right out in front of you, just like that meter out there, was a picture of all the traffic and turns and everything that you were supposed to be doing. I remember one evening after dinner, they had this thing set up and they were going to test you to see how much you could drink before you got to this position, and how much you could drink before you got to that position. I think the attorney general, he was just a young fellow, was the main participant. He blacked out like nobody's business. But, it was such things as that. They were telling you, you know you better watch it if you drink so much, something like this.

Ms. Boswell: They've cracked down even more nowadays.

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, I understand that.

Ms. Boswell: While you were on the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee, I think that I have it down that you were also on the Joint Commission on Highways. Is that sort of a Western–

Mr. Huntley: Joint commission?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: I was on the Washington State Highway interim committee which is a joint committee between the House of Representatives and the Senate. I think what you're thinking about–

Ms. Boswell: I have 1970, so I was trying to–

Mr. Huntley: I was in those things so many times off and on. I was also chairman of the Transportation Committee of the Legislative Leaders Conference of the thirteen Western states, British Columbia, and Alaska, Hawaii and Guam. The thirteen contiguous western states, plus those others. That may be what you're referring to.

Ms. Boswell: When did you join that group?

Mr. Huntley: It was legislative leaders. That's what it was.

Ms. Boswell: Who does the selection of who's involved in that?

Mr. Huntley: The different legislatures. In other words, like in the state House of Representatives, the Speaker would help or good graces of his committees, would select those members for two years.

Ms. Boswell: How did that work differ from some of these other commissions?

Mr. Huntley: We were assigned to quite a few studies from each time that we met. We met once a year regularly, and there were always a bunch of resolutions that had to do with this and that, and something else. The committee, during the year, or two years, whichever it would be, made appropriate studies and reported back to the group as a whole.

In fact, there was one that I was involved in at the time I left the Senate, and I left that committee that I was chairman of. The group had asked for a study of air traffic and airports, so we hired the Los Angeles Aerospace Corporation to make the study for us.

Ms. Boswell: What was it called, again? I couldn't really hear it clearly. The company you hired?

Mr. Huntley: Los Angeles Aerospace Corporation. I was down there a number of times to see their progress. At that time, and again, that was just when I was defeated for re-election, I just dropped out of it, at that time this study indicated that Moses Lake should be a regional airport for Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and western Montana, with commuter flights. It was such a huge airport, and it's usually always open the year-around, with commuter flights then, into Seattle or Portland or Boise or whatever it happened to be. Later on, in the Legislature, not too long ago, a legislator from over there, he died shortly after that, but he came up with this study of this levitation, I forgot what they called it, very, very high-speed rail. It was some kind of levitation.

Ms. Boswell: I know what you're saying. Like an air cushion type of thing.

Mr. Huntley: Yes. I think the Legislature, within the last year or two, did quite a bit of study on something like that, which would run from Moses Lake to Seattle in place of short commuter flights between the two places.

Ms. Boswell: Were highways in competition, essentially, with other transportation means, or were a lot of these sort of overlapping in terms of jurisdiction?

Mr. Huntley: Some of them were overlapping, there's no question about that. You had a lot of the same people involved.

Ms. Boswell: There were some issues that were sort of overall transportation issues, and then some that just fell into very specific highways or–

Mr. Huntley: That's a pretty good way of putting it. What's going to happen, and this study bore it out, was that one of these days, maybe sooner than we think, that the offshore flights will be landing in Denver, forgetting about SeaTac. There's a lot of fog at SeaTac, and one thing and another, and if you're from Chicago or New York or wherever, you're not going to land in Seattle and then get on another plane and go. I think you'll see a lot of fly-over over Seattle, and they'll be landing in Denver, which Moses Lake could have taken that.

Ms. Boswell: What helped defeat that notion that Moses Lake would become a regional airport?

Mr. Huntley: You're from Seattle, so I won't say anything. Those people won't give up anything. They gripe, and they holler, and they scream about the airport noise, which I don't blame them, but if you look at those people, you'll find that that airport was there a long time before they were. Then they talk about a third runway and, "Oh, no, we don't want another runway." Well, pretty soon, they kind of run out of patience with people like that.

Ms. Boswell: Well, I know the third one by now is a big issue, but the opponents are now suggesting not Moses Lake, but down more by Chehalis or–

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, they've been talking about this whole area down in here.

Ms. Boswell: What do you think about that?

Mr. Huntley: I think Moses Lake is far superior to it for the weather, if nothing else. I guess you drive quite a bit to eastern Washington, but you probably never go through there in the Moses Lake area, Kittitas, Moses Lake and Ellensburg, but what you see those big 747s flying, circling around. Those are Japanese pilots that they keep over here at Moses Lake, and they train 'em over here with the Boeing planes.

Ms. Boswell: So, it's big enough to handle those, it could handle a lot more. So, the Seattle lobbies, the SeaTac lobbies, were able to essentially–

Mr. Huntley: You said it, I didn't, but I believe it.

Ms. Boswell: Generally speaking, are the interests of those interested in roads, adversarial to the interests of people for rail or people interested in air transport? Are you fighting for the same dollars, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I think they are now. Of course, I've been so far removed.

Ms. Boswell: Were they then, too?

Mr. Huntley: No. No, they really weren't. The rapid rail and those hadn't really come on the scene too strong when I was still involved in it.

Ms. Boswell: If you were on the state Highway Commission, and you believed that the rail system needed to be upgraded, would just looking at the issue of rail be a part of your duties, or would that be a whole separate commission?

Mr. Huntley: No, I think it should be all together. Gosh, unannounced, they've gotten to the gridlock era. In highways there's no place else to go, so why not use some rail?

Ms. Boswell: Was that being forecast then, the notion that the growth was going to be such that they needed to really expand the system?

Mr. Huntley: They were talking about it, but it never got to a serious discussion stage.

Ms. Boswell: I guess one of the reasons I'm interested in the linkage between them, is that I did notice that there was an article in the scrapbook about hearings on the abandonment of some of the Burlington Northern track, especially for farmers in eastern Washington. Tell me a little bit about that issue.

Mr. Huntley: It was more or less the Milwaukee through eastern Washington. You know where it is. Some of the horseback people, and some of those wanted trails, and that's nice, but through that country from about

Ellensburg there on east, it goes through an awful lot of real powdery, dry country, and cheat grass would get to about that high, and it's full of gun powder, really. You drop a match or anything, and swish, it just covers the whole countryside. Most people from over in eastern Washington, a lot of them have been burned out in their farms and their grain fields. At the time even when the railroads were running there, because the friction from the rails and the drivers on the locomotives, there were an awful lot of fires over in that country. Those people are pretty leery of it, of a bunch of strangers just coming through that really had not too much interest in where they were going or what they were doing. That's, I think, the main criticism and fight that I've heard. I don't know how it's coming, I haven't heard for a long time. There were a number of lawsuits over it. Whether it's been settled or not, I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: I think I told you I did some interviewing over in Adams County, and there were a couple of stories told, essentially from very early in the century, about the sparks, and fires, and a fire that had burned quite a bit of acreage that they believed was just a spark from the railroad.

Mr. Huntley: There's no question about it. The drivers on the engine, if they slipped a little bit, why it was going to throw sparks off into that cheat grass, and that's just like throwing a match in gasoline.

Ms. Boswell: Let me ask you about one other commission that I read about. The National Proratio and Reciprocity Commission? Tell me about that one.

Mr. Huntley: I think we talked a little bit about it. I think that in the state of Arkansas, if you wanted to buy a car license for practically nothing, you could get a post-office box down there. Send your five dollars in and they send you a license. They were driving all over the United States on them. The truckers, a lot of truckers, were licensing their trucks in, I believe, it was Arkansas, but I could be mistaken because it was so long ago.

This Reciprocity Commission, we met pretty well all over the United States in different states, and came up with uniform legislation. Most of the legislatures, I think, most of the states, have passed that uniform-licensing system.

Ms. Boswell: I remember that story. Who would have selected that commission to do that?

Mr. Huntley: The Reciprocity Commission?

Ms. Boswell: Yes.

Mr. Huntley: I was on by way of being chairman of the Transportation Committee in the House of Representatives.

Ms. Boswell: Did it originate, this idea for this, with you?

Mr. Huntley: Not with me, personally, but with this group, yes. We met pretty well all over the country so that each state had its input.

Ms. Boswell: It sounds like a good idea. It's a little bit like the ships that fly under flags of other nations so that they can get away with spilling oil everywhere or whatever else terrible thing they can do.

Mr. Huntley: I think that most of the states have passed this, but again, you get away from it for a few years, especially twenty years, and you kind of lose out on it.

Ms. Boswell: Besides all these various different highway and transportation committees, I was also interested in two other, well, some of them are still related to transportation, but one of them was the Water Resources Advisory Commission.

Mr. Huntley: I never was real active in that. It didn't really affect my legislative district, and I always limited myself to the things that affected my own district. A lot of the people went out and wanted their names on this committee, and that, and that, and that, and pretty soon they had more than they could handle. So, I was really never very active in that.

Ms. Boswell: Who would have been? What legislators or what areas were most interested in that?

Mr. Huntley: Representative Maury Ahlquist was always very active in water resources. He had a little farm out west of Walla Walla, and it was an irrigated farm, so he was interested in water resources. After Dan was elected governor, he appointed Maury as the director of Conservation and Development, or whatever it is, and he was interested in things like that. Not that I wasn't interested, but I was just involved in too many other things.

Ms. Boswell: The last one is the Utilities and Transportation Commission. Again, how did their duties or responsibilities differ from some of the other commissions that are more highway oriented? Tell me a little bit more about that.

Mr. Huntley: The UTC is a regulatory commission. In other words, we set the telephone rates, the gas rates, the power rates, and in a lot of places where they have water districts, we set the water rates. Things like that. It was really a rate-setting thing, is what it was, and also trying to keep them running good companies.

Ms. Boswell: How did you get involved in that one?

Mr. Huntley: Dan called one morning about ten o'clock and he said, "I want you to be the Utilities and Transportation Commissioner." I said, "Dan, I really don't know much about the regulatory part of state government," and he said, "I've got confidence in you." And he talked, and he talked, and wanted me to take it, and I said, "Well, if I did that I'd have to move to Olympia and it would be an entirely new life, and I want to talk to Necia first about it." And he said, "Well, sure. I want you to talk to Necia. I want to know in the morning." But that was it. I had nothing to do with putting anything together or anything else. I was just asked by the governor to do it.

Ms. Boswell: What made you decide to do it?

Mr. Huntley: Of course, I had been defeated a short time before that, and I really wasn't looking for anything to do, but finally, I just thought that maybe that's something we should do. It hurt her no end. Her roses, and her flowers, and stuff like that. I'm ashamed of myself every time I think about it. I drug her away from her home. Anyway, that's the way that came about.

Ms. Boswell: I know you worried about Necia, but tell me, was it hard for you to leave, or did you not have quite the attachment?

Mr. Huntley: About that time of the year, the snow on the ground, the ground is frozen. You go out and you feed cattle and freeze your ears, and your nose, and your toes off, and it doesn't take much convincing, really.

Ms. Boswell: But then you stayed over here, too. How did you make that decision?

Mr. Huntley: We built, I thought, a nice home out on the bay out here, and at that time, I was, even yet, at that time, having heart problems. The doctor was telling me, you get away from snow shovels and anything like that. If you live in eastern Washington and don't shovel snow, you don't go anyplace.

Mrs. Huntley: That was the deciding factor.

Ms. Boswell: It seems that so many of the former legislators that I've talked to are now in Olympia. It's interesting, because they're from all over the state, but they end up here, and I wondered if there's sort of a pull here?

Mr. Huntley: There wasn't for us. In fact, neither one of us are really very crazy about Olympia. You run into this. You won't in your position, but the Legislature, you have three distinct groups in Olympia. You have the legislators, the administration, and the city people, and none of the three of them, I don't think, ever cross over into the other group. But we built a nice home out there, and with my heart problems, we decided to stay.

Ms. Boswell: What about the work of the Utilities and Transportation Commission? If you made that move over here, was the appointment just at the governor's pleasure?

Mr. Huntley: It's a six-year appointment, or the governor's pleasure, sure.

Ms. Boswell: So you would know that you would be there for at least six years, unless something major happened.

Mr. Huntley: When Dixy was elected, I still had two years and I'd been confirmed by the Senate, of course. I didn't get ahold of her because she was flittin' around someplace, but I got ahold of one of her lieutenants, Joe Zaspel, I think his name was. I went to coffee with him, and I told him that I felt that if a governor was elected, that he should have the privilege of appointing his own staff, his own people, and his own commissions.

[End of Tape 7, Side 1]

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER: 1973-78

Mr. Huntley: I told him I'd be very happy to resign my last two years. I really didn't care. And he said they wouldn't stand for it.

Ms. Boswell: That was a nice vote of confidence.

Mr. Huntley: So I stayed.

Ms. Boswell: Tell me about the regulatory work. Were there any highlights for you? What did your duties consist of, primarily?

Mr. Huntley: There are thousands of pages of transcripts that you have to listen to, or else read. I attended all the hearings. Bob Bailey and I usually ended up sitting on the bench. Frank Foley, the other commissioner, for some reason, didn't care much about sitting up on the bench. So, it turned out that Bailey and I did most of it. A big power company comes in and wants a rate increase or decrease, or whatever it is, and they present their case. It's just like a court case. They present their witnesses and you go through this rigmarole, sometimes for days, and days, and days. It's the same way with all those utility companies. After the hearings are over, you three commissioners get together and go through the findings and the testimony that was given, and sooner or later they write an order, either approving, disapproving, or whatever they do.

Ms. Boswell: How did you enjoy that work? It was quite a bit different from some of the other things you've done.

Mr. Huntley: Actually, there were three commissioners. Bob Bailey at last. He wasn't there when I went on. He was the chairman, and they're usually the ones that do the hiring and the firing and the things like that. Then there's the transportation commissioner, and that's who I was. And then the utilities commissioner, and he's supposed to really be the honcho over the different utility companies.

Ms. Boswell: So you really have a more specified area?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, immediately. However, since Foley wouldn't sit on the hearings, somebody had to, so Bailey and I did. I didn't really, because of my assignments, I didn't really need to, but I just felt that the commission should be represented out there.

Ms. Boswell: It certainly looks better for public consumption and otherwise, and also, more than one set of ears to hear what's being done and said.

Mr. Huntley: In fact, let's see, Dixy was elected in–my term was up in, I guess, the first of January 1979, and I didn't really care whether I was reappointed, or whether I wasn't. And, along in December, she called and she said she understood that we had some large utility cases before us. I don't remember whether it was telephone rates or power rates or what. She was honest about it. She said, "I can't reappoint you because I'm not going to appoint anybody that Dan Evans appointed." She was up front about it. But she said, "I was just wondering if you would mind serving for a little while longer after your term is up," because of these cases that we'd been hearing with thousands of pages of transcripts. And a new commissioner coming in would have to read all that transcript. So, I told her, "No, I didn't mind." So I stayed until about the first of May. My term was up the first of January.

Ms. Boswell: So they could just sort of give you an interim appointment of some sort?

Mr. Huntley: Pardon?

Ms. Boswell: They could just give you an interim appointment of some sort?

Mr. Huntley: There wasn't any change at all. I just continued on.

Ms. Boswell: That notion of Dixy's that she couldn't keep you if Dan Evans had appointed you, was that pretty common from administration to administration?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, it was. I don't know why it should have been, either, because he really treated her royally when he stepped out of office and she stepped in. The transition went super. In fact, I was in the governor's office just before Dan walked out. In fact, I walked out with him, and he left a chilled bottle of champagne for her. She never acknowledged it, she never said anything to Dan or anybody else about it.

Ms. Boswell: Was that sort of indicative of Dixy in your mind?

Mr. Huntley: I guess so, I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: What about Dan Evans? What are some of your impressions of him as governor?

Mr. Huntley: I think he was a good governor.

Ms. Boswell: What made him good?

Mr. Huntley: He was more progressive than most of the Republicans were. In fact, I'd been criticized for even having been seen on the street with him. I think he was ten or fifteen years ahead of a lot of people in social issues and things like that.

Ms. Boswell: Was he an effective governor in terms of getting things done, in your mind?

Mr. Huntley: Yes, I think he was.

Ms. Boswell: Did he work well with both sides, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I think he did.

Ms. Boswell: Going back to the Utilities and Transportation Commission, how much did the commission hear in terms of nuclear-power issues?

Mr. Huntley: We weren't really involved in that.

Ms. Boswell: So the WPPSS or the Satsop project didn't come before you?

Mr. Huntley: No, that was a federal agency that handled that. I was down there a number of times as a guest. So was Bob Bailey. We went down there several times and were guests of Satsop. We went through the plant up there and had lunch and one thing and another, but we really had no connection with them at all.

Ms. Boswell: Just out of curiosity, what was your feeling, either then or now, about the relative merits of nuclear power versus the other kinds?

Mr. Huntley: I think they should follow through with it. I'm not afraid of it. Of course, I'm a few miles away from the plant, but they're going to want those one of these days. The power shortages in the middle 1970s, I guess, I was on the board of directors of the Old National Bank in Spokane and we had floodlights, the whole bank had banks of floodlights up around it. In fact, I called the president one day and I said, "Shut those lights off," because it was kind of a poor image for a big concern like that when there was a real shortage of electricity, so he shut them off. I don't know if they're back on yet, or not.

Ms. Boswell: So you see it as an alternative power source that is necessary?

Mr. Huntley: I think so. Oh, someday somebody will come up with some new things that we don't even think about now, but for the present that I can see, I think we're going to need it. All the thousands and millions of people that are moving into this country, how are you going to provide power for them?

Ms. Boswell: Certainly some of the so-called renewable resources are certainly not all that easily renewable. I'm thinking of oil, and gas and other things. What about, in terms of Utilities and Transportation, were there times when some of the public utilities tried to take advantage of the system? Where they sort of blatantly raised rates, or whatever, that weren't in the public interest?

Mr. Huntley: No, because I think we had them under our thumb enough that they couldn't do that. It isn't retroactive. In other words, if they wanted an increase, that's for tomorrow or next year, or on down the line.

Ms. Boswell: Are there any others that I've not touched on that you want to mention? You did so much, I don't know how you can keep them all straight.

Mr. Huntley: I've got to tell you, maybe I shouldn't, but Jolene Unsoeld never missed a beat when we had hearings, especially on the telephones. She just hated the telephone company. Why, I don't know. But she would grab a seat in the very front row in our hearing room, and there are thousands of pages of transcripts to be introduced, evidence both by the companies and our staff, and the public when they come in, and she demanded a copy of every one of those transcripts. She had them piled up about this high beside her desk. I know darn well that she didn't have the slightest idea what was in them, but it looked good.

Ms. Boswell: She was, what, trying to project an image of the watchdog kind of thing?

Mr. Huntley: Well, I guess so. She was running for the Legislature, is what she was doing.

Ms. Boswell: So this is even before she was a member of the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. That was before that.

Ms. Boswell: Were there other people like that? Really watchdogs?

Mr. Huntley: There were a few, but sometimes I just kind of wondered whether they really were watchdogs, or whether they weren't. You have to take them on face value.

Ms. Boswell: What about the role of public-utility districts? I used to live over near Newport, Washington, so they had a PUD there. How did they fit into the whole scheme of public utilities?

Mr. Huntley: Was yours a public utility or an REA, rural electrification association?

Ms. Boswell: In Newport, Washington, it was a PUD. I know right over the border in Idaho, it was a co-op. But, in Newport, it was a PUD, so that would have been Pend Oreille County, I guess.

Mr. Huntley: Because when we had a summer home, I told you, that we built on Coeur d'Alene Lake years ago. That was an REA. I think it was a co-op, so I wondered if maybe where you were might have been the same thing, but evidently not.

Ms. Boswell: Where we were was right on the border. Actually, we were in Washington, but you could only access it through Idaho, and when we finally got power up there, it actually came through Idaho, so we were actually on the Idaho system. Technically, if you were on the Washington side, you would have been, in any normal circumstances, under the PUD there.

Are there co-ops in Washington state, too, or are they all Public Utility Districts?

Mr. Huntley: I think most of them are co-ops. I've never been involved with PUDs so–

Ms. Boswell: So they wouldn't be regulated under what you were doing, then?

Mr. Huntley: Oh, no.

Ms. Boswell: What kinds of public utilities would be regulated?

Mr. Huntley: Those that are, I guess you'd say, privately owned, because they're owned by Puget Power or Washington Natural Gas or whatever, but they are regulated in the rates, of course, and the Supreme Court in the state of Washington and the United States Supreme Court have both ruled that a regulated industry must be allowed a certain percent of income on their property. That's entirely different than a PUD is because it's an entirely different setup. The same with the REA.

Ms. Boswell: Do they regulate themselves, or is there a body that regulates the smaller–

Mr. Huntley: I think there's a PUD association, I believe.

Ms. Boswell: But, technically, they're considered to be in the public interest to begin with, whereas these other corporations if they are essentially privately held, need to be regulated in order to keep them in the public interest? Is that right?

Mr. Huntley: They have to be because you've got shysters in every line of business.

Ms. Boswell: Looking back over your career, would you say you preferred legislative service versus the service on commissions? Is there one that you preferred more, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I enjoyed both. I enjoyed the Legislature, the camaraderie and everything that went with it. And the commissions, of course, I always felt that you were accomplishing something for the people that you were representing on them. As I said, I was a transportation commissioner, and we were the ones that approved or disapproved all of the applications for the ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission) permits. In other words, if you wanted to go out here and start hauling logs on a truck, you'd have to get an ICC permit, and, before you could get that, you'd apply to me and I would list it on a docket, and all of the other people that have trucks that are in the same business then have the opportunity of coming and either protesting you or approving.

It was quite a detailed job of issuing those permits. Some of those are very, very expensive. Like going back for general freight. Some of those permits go back into the 1930s. You might have a permit to haul lumber from point A to point B, or general freight, or anything like that. If you wanted to break into that business, it was real tough, because those people that have the business are going to come in and protest you. About the time I was leaving the commission, I recommended to the Legislature that the wording be changed to where if you came in and asked for a permit, it would be up to the company that was going to protest you to prove that they were doing the job. The way it is now, you have to prove that they aren't doing the job. "Here, here, give the certificate to me because they're not doing the job."

Ms. Boswell: Is there usually only one, or is it also a question of letting more in to divide up the work?

Mr. Huntley: I don't really think that it gets down that close, but there are an awful lot of permits out. There's a fellow here in town, he had a brand new–he had lunch with me every Friday–he had a brand new real bright red Mazda pickup. These other guys and I were having lunch with him, we kept saying, "Well, what are you going to haul on that thing?" And he says, "Nothing. That's my going-to-church car." I went up to the head of the department up here that I had just left, and he fixed up a certificate. He gave this guy permission to haul chicken manure from the yacht club to some address out here in Lacey at three o'clock in the morning. That was his permit. It was just a joke, you know.

Ms. Boswell: As transportation commissioner, what other kinds of regulatory efforts were there in terms of transportation?

Mr. Huntley: You mean when I was on the Utilities Commission?

Ms. Boswell: Uh-huh.

Mr. Huntley: All of the freighters have to have licenses, and those all came before me. If somebody new comes in and wants to buy, why you set it up for a hearing. If nobody bothers about it, well, okay, then we issue a permit to you. If half of Washington comes in and says, "No, we're doing a good job," then it was up to you to prove that they weren't doing a good job and that you were wanting to fill that.

Ms. Boswell: What kind of criteria did you find most persuasive in making the decision whether or not, say, it was issued to somebody else, but you made a change?

Mr. Huntley: It depends on what kind of service they were giving. There are a lot of things that entered into it.

Ms. Boswell: Was there actual fact-finding or research done by staff, too, to look into it?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. And we audited their books. In other words, the trucking companies that we regulated were allowed a certain rate of return on their investment. We had auditors that were in the field all the time auditing different trucking firms and transportation firms.

Ms. Boswell: Were you involved with other transportation networks, too? Rail, for example?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, I had rails under me. But, at that time, they were all under the ICC–Interstate Commerce Commission–except the intrastate rails.

Ms. Boswell: So that would be what you would regulate?

Mr. Huntley: Yes. It was the same with the trucks. Intrastate. There are an awful lot of interstate trucks that are regulated by the ICC that the state really doesn't have any authority over.

Ms. Boswell: Let me just ask you a couple of real general questions overall about your career. Are there any highlights, looking back, some certain memories or experiences that you particularly treasure or feature on?

Mr. Huntley: Right off hand I can't–

Ms. Boswell: I know it's hard.

Mr. Huntley: I really can't answer you, to be honest, just like that.

Ms. Boswell: What do you think have been the greatest changes that you saw in the time that you were involved in public service in terms of, let's say the Legislature first? Were there any major changes that you saw taking place?

Mr. Huntley: I think a lot of attitude changes, both among the legislators and also the public. They don't have the basics, as far as I'm concerned, that I was raised under. I've had people that have been lobbyists up on the hill here for years that tell me that there's absolutely no comparison in the quality of the legislator now and twenty years ago. In fact, one of them said, I don't think he'd care if I said his name, Frank Keller, he owns a couple of units here because he comes down here and lobbies, he was president of the state Democratic Party for a couple of years–I saw him last spring–"Huntley, I'll never vote for another damn Democrat as long as I live." I kind of laughed, "You know you'll change your mind."

Ms. Boswell: He thinks that today you don't have as high a quality legislator?

Mr. Huntley: That's what he told me. I've had other lobbyists, and people who followed us over here, tell me that.

Ms. Boswell: Are there certain reasons why you think that that change might have taken place?

Mr. Huntley: Maybe it's just lax on the people themselves, on the legislators involved.

Ms. Boswell: You mean their own sort of personal philosophies?

Mr. Huntley: Yeah, I think so.

Ms. Boswell: In terms of process, when you started there was still just one session every two years.

Mr. Huntley: Yes.

Ms. Boswell: Do you think the work of the Legislature has increased proportionally, or decreased?

Mr. Huntley: It's increased dramatically, but I'm not sure that it was all necessary.

Ms. Boswell: In what areas might it not have been necessary?

Mr. Huntley: Well, they're making a job out of it. When I first came to the Legislature, when your sixty days were up, that was it. Period. You go home. But it wasn't until a few years that they decided well, we've got a few–there's some of these people over here, some of them are state elected officials right now that never worked a day in their lives. They were getting the legislative pay, I don't know how much it is now, plus the per diem for hearings, and they would hold hearings down here three, four, five days a week is what I'm told. I don't know.

Ms. Boswell: Any other changes that have particularly struck you as being important?

Mr. Huntley: I guess not. I've gotten so that they don't talk to me much any more.

Ms. Boswell: Do you think it's possible these days, based on what you've noticed, for somebody to have two full careers? One outside the Legislature like you did in farming, and another with the Legislature? Or, because of the longer terms and the longer, the more frequent sessions, is it possible to do a good job with two different careers? One being the Legislature?

Mr. Huntley: I think it all depends on the individual and what's involved. I know of a legislator that has taken bankruptcy within the last sixty days, and most of the property that he had, he had inherited, but he was spending way too much time in Olympia on committee meetings. I think he's a good legislator. I'm not running him down, but he was just letting things at home go and he wasn't keeping qualified help to run the business and it wasn't long until it caught up with him.

Ms. Boswell: So there really is that danger of not being able to balance both appropriately?

Mr. Huntley: It's easy to get that glitter in your eye when you're over here. You think, well, I shouldn't go, but I'm going to.

Ms. Boswell: Did you ever find that temptation? That glitter in your eye? I should ask Necia that.

Mr. Huntley: You ask her that. I don't know. I don't think I did.

Mrs. Huntley: No, I don't think so.

Ms. Boswell: Is there anything, looking back, that you'd do differently?

Mr. Huntley: Well, of course, we don't have a family. I think I told you that my only brother was younger than I was, was one of the first bomber pilots that was killed in World War II. My dad and I were going to the mortuary to set up, and things like that. We were driving along and he looked at me and says, "You know, I never knew that boy. I was busy in politics. I was here, I was there, he was growing up, and I really never knew him." You can get so involved that you let things like that catch up with you.

Ms. Boswell: Was that part of your decisions about family and other things, if you were going to be in politics?

Mr. Huntley: No.

Ms. Boswell: I read a newspaper article about you where someone had interviewed you, I think it was relatively early in your career, but you did say something about politics being in the blood. Does politics get in your blood? Is it something that's sort of there that you can't describe?

Mr. Huntley: You can let it happen. I tried not to. (To Mrs. Huntley: Did I?)

Three-thirty, four o'clock in the morning, drive to Spokane to catch a plane to Seattle. Drive to Olympia, back to Seattle, back to Spokane and home at one, two o'clock in the morning.

Mrs. Huntley: There were times when legislative work did interfere with his farming, especially during harvest. Fortunately, we did have a good hired man. And a wife that did a lot of running around to keep everything running smoothly.

Mr. Huntley: She did most of the work.

Mrs. Huntley: Keeping things going so the men could carry on.

Ms. Boswell: (To Mrs. Huntley) Did you find that you, because of his position, end up not only having more responsibility, but having a different role on the farm than other women in the area?

Mrs. Huntley: Not a great deal. Because, before he would leave, he'd have the work pretty well planned out. It was when things would break down while he was gone that my role would come in, because I was the one who would make the trips to town getting the parts and getting them back and still had meals to prepare for the men. So, it was more responsibility, yes, but on the other hand, he made up for it, too.

[End of Tape 7, Side 2]

Ms. Boswell: I just had a couple more general, maybe too general questions, but tell me about your idea of public service. It seems to me that maybe, and I don't know if this is true, our society's whole notion of public service has changed a little bit. I wanted your comments about it. Your father was involved, and I think it goes beyond politics. It is more of a notion of public service. I wondered what your thoughts were about it, and about whether people's ideas of public service have changed.

Mr. Huntley: I really haven't heard anybody too much express themselves. You always have a few people that think that if "John Jones" is trying to put himself forward as a commissioner or school director, he's got something in the back of his mind. I don't think they give the guy full credit for what he's trying to do.

Ms. Boswell: In other words, the change that we see taking place is more of a public perception that somehow there has to be an ulterior motive if you're a politician?

Mr. Huntley: I think that some people look at it that way, yes.

Ms. Boswell: Why do you think that attitude has come about?

Mr. Huntley: I don't know. Well, back up a second. The savings and loan scandals, the post office scandals, the you-name-it, and the people are saying, "Aha! I been telling you that guy is no good."

Ms. Boswell: How should we, as society, either teach our kids or deal with the issue of public service so that we get good people, if in fact there has been a change and we don't have quite as good people anymore, how do we attract those people? How do we get young people interested in public service again?

Mr. Huntley: I think it will be hard. The PDC. I have known very, very capable, competent legislators or attorneys who would be just top-rate legislators, but there's no way that they're going to go in and show the PDC–

Ms. Boswell: And disclose what they make, in other words.

Mr. Huntley: Yes, and his clients. Okay, maybe he's got one of the wealthiest people in the community as a client, and he might also have one of the poorest ones, he's not going to disclose those. In fact, Perry Woodall, Senator Woodall, I think I mentioned this to you before when Bob Bailey was here, there is starting to be quite a movement underfoot for reporting campaign contributions and things like that. The Legislature established a committee, I've forgotten what we called it, Bob Bailey was the Democrat from the Senate, I was the Republican from the Senate. The representative was, I can't think what his name was, from Longview was on as a Republican and a Democrat was on, John O'Brien, Speaker of the House.

We met for two years periodically, trying to write legislation that would cover all the problems that had been brought before us. We held hearings, and we pretty well had the consensus of most of the, not the lobbyists, but the people who were pushing good government, anyway, so we came up with the legislation. That had to be in about 1971 or along in there someplace.

We introduced it, and Senator Perry Woodall got up on the Senate floor and he just ranted and raved, and raved. He said, "There's a haberdasher in my little town of Toppenish who gives me a hundred dollars for my campaign each year. If he knows that his name is going to be listed in the newspaper for giving me a hundred dollars, that's going to dry up. He isn't going to give me a hundred dollars." So we went back to caucus and I told Perry, "Perry, you better pass this legislation. If you don't, you're going to have an initiative, something that you can't live with at all." He said, "I'll take my

chances." And he did. The people passed an initiative setting up the PDC.

Ms. Boswell: Do you see that limits on campaign spending would be effective, or not?

Mr. Huntley: I think that in some way it should be controlled. I don't think there's any easy answer to it at all.

Ms. Boswell: If you had to, in just a few words or sentences, sum up the philosophy of governing or of the way you conducted yourself in terms of government, what would you say? Would you tell me about your overall philosophy?

Mr. Huntley: I was raised by a pretty strict mother, and the golden rule. I pretty well, all my life, tried to govern myself by something like that. It isn't easy sometimes. I think that you can control yourself.

Ms. Boswell: And the temptations of power are just that, temptations, but nothing more?

Mr. Huntley: That's been one of the elements over the years.

Ms. Boswell: Thank you very, very much for all the time.

Mr. Huntley: I've enjoyed visiting with you.

[End of Tape 8, Side 1]

[End of interview series]